

FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

Thursday, 12 September 2019 at 1.30 pm in the Bridges Room - Civic Centre

From the Chief Executive, Sheena Ramsey

| Item | Business |
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| 1 | Apologies for absence |
| 2 | Minutes of last meeting (Pages 3 - 8) The Committee is asked to approve as a correct record the minutes of the last meeting held on 20 June 2019 |
| 3 | Safeguarding Children - LSCB Annual Report and Plans (Pages 9 - 76) Report of the Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing & Learning. |
| 4 | Annual Report on Complaints and Representations - Children (Pages 77 - 94) Report of the Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing & Learning. |
| 5 | School Exclusions - Performance Update (Pages 95 - 100) Report of the Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing & Learning. |
| 6 | Ofsted Inspections / School Data - Progress Update (Pages 101 - 104) Report of the Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing & Learning. |
| 7 | Work Programme (Pages 105 - 108) Joint report of the Chief Executive and the Strategic Director of Corporate Services and Governance. |

8 Exclusion of Press and Public

The Committee may wish to pass a resolution to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the following item on the grounds indicated:

| Item | Paragraphs of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 |
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9 Monitoring Report - OSC Review of Children on Edge of Care (Pages 109 - 114)

Report of the Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing & Learning.

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, 20 June 2019

PRESENT: Councillor B Oliphant (Chair)
Councillor(s): M Hall, D Bradford, C Buckley, L Caffrey,
B Clelland, C Davison, S Gallagher, L Kirton, K McCartney,
E McMaster, M Ord, I Patterson and J Reay

CO-OPTED MEMBERS Tim Kynoch and Jill Burrell

APOLOGIES: Councillor(s): P Craig, S Craig, R Oxberry and N Weatherley
Co-opted Member(s): Maveen Pereira and Cheryl Lain

F1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor S Craig, Councillor P Craig, Councillor Oxberry, Councillor Weatherley, Cheryl Lain and Maveen Pereira.

F2 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

RESOLVED - The minutes of the last meeting held on 4 April 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

F3 CONSTITUTION

RESOLVED - The Committee agreed the constitution of the Committee and the appointment of the Chair and Vice Chair for the current municipal year.

F4 ROLE AND REMIT

RESOLVED - That the remit and terms of reference be noted.

F5 FOETAL ALCOHOL UPDATE

The Committee received an update report on the work underway to review the diagnoses of Foetal Alcohol Syndrome and Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

It was reported that it had been identified that there was some potential diagnosis without the relevant diagnostic criteria being clearly evidenced, therefore some children and young people were recalled for face to face appointments with

clinicians. The focus of the recalls were on LAC, this was done through their Review Health Assessment.

The figures provided were as at April 2019, showing how many cases were reviewed and how many of those were rescinded or confirmed.

The point was made that previously the Committee had been told that there was practically an epidemic in relation to FASD, but now this seems to have been scaled down. It was confirmed that from Dr Palmer's database not all of the cases fulfilled the diagnostic criteria and there was a lot of cases with missing evidence. It was confirmed that, of the 223 cases, 56 appointments were offered to LAC, this was due to clinician capacity, therefore there still remains 160 cases that are not known as of yet.

It was questioned as to whether there is any impact on Education Care and Health Plans for those young people who have had their diagnosis rescinded. It was noted that for these cases there are still additional needs however FASD cannot be evidenced. For the cases with no FASD evidenced but additional needs clinicians have referred them for such things as ADHD and learning disabilities.

It was questioned what the situation is in relation to those cases with outstanding information. It was confirmed that some young people have had genetics bloods taken and this can take eight weeks to progress. For some cases further discussions are ongoing with Social Workers, attempts have also been made to contact birth mothers, however to date nobody has got back in touch.

The review is ongoing until January 2020 when all Annual Review Health Assessments will be complete. Initially the upper end of the age scale has been a priority.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the report and the progress to date be noted.
 - (ii) That a further update be brought back to Committee at a later date.

F6 YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE PRIORITIES AND PERFORMANCE

Committee received a report on the Youth Justice Service key priorities for 2018/19 and performance from April 2018 to date.

In terms of progress over the past year it was reported that the contract to provide the Liaison and Diversion scheme within Gateshead has been awarded to Northumberland Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust (NTW). The impact of this is being awaited and it was requested that information on this be brought back to a future meeting.

The Restorative Service Quality Mark (RSQM) was awarded and approved for a further three years. Adverse childhood experiences are routinely discussed in assessment and the Trauma Recovery training is planned for March 2020. This

training will help staff to incorporate appropriate responses to trauma within young person plans.

It was reported that the number of first time entrants is decreasing, the figures are positive in terms of the regional figure. There are two young people in custody, this is below the Northumbria PCC regional average and the national average.

In terms of re-offending the Gateshead figure is below the Northumbria PCC and national averages. Of this cohort 75% of re-offences were committed by males and 25% committed by female offenders.

The proven offences were by young people aged 12-18 years old, they were predominantly by 17 year olds with the average age of offender being 15.5 years old. There were no offenders aged 10 or 11. In relation to the type of offending the majority were public order and violence against the person, which includes common assault up to serious harm. Criminal damage is the next highest offence.

It was reported that the You Only Live Once (YOLO) project is being funded nationally by the Home Office to tackle knife crime. This has just been launched across the Northumbria Police Force area. The Youth Justice Service is working with Newcastle and Sunderland Football clubs, referrals are made into the project and the young person is assessed and referred into either football club to be mentored to reduce the risk of offending. It was pointed out that the funding is very recent and already a number of young people have accessed the project. It was requested that further information be brought back to Committee on the YOLO project.

Committee was advised that Susan Butler, Youth Justice Service Manager has now retired and Linda Kelly is now the new Service Manager.

The Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2019-2020 will be submitted to the Ministry of Justice in August. This will set the proposals for the year ahead and the key priorities for the Youth Justice Service.

It was questioned whether any of the cases of violence against the person was towards parents or carers. It was noted that this information would be sought and reported back, it was also acknowledged that Gateshead is a forerunner in terms of child to parent violent programmes. Gateshead has recognised this risk where many local authorities do not.

It was also questioned as to whether a high proportion of offenders are LAC. It was noted that LAC are slightly over represented, however benchmarking data tell us that the proportion of LAC who offend in Gateshead is not as high as in our Statistical Neighbour and North East neighbour authorities on average, also work is ongoing with partners around joint planning for these young people. There are also models of restorative work with young people where the information is being used to develop disruption plans across the borough if other young people are involved. In addition, Northumbria Police do a 10 point check and look at reparative work to keep young people out of the criminal justice system.

RESOLVED - (i) That the Committee receive regular updates on the

key priorities.

- (ii) That the Committee's comments on the report be noted.
- (iii) That updates be provided on the areas of work identified by the Committee.

F7 CHILDREN AND FAMILIES - MAKING GATESHEAD A PLACE WHERE EVERYONE THRIVES - END OF YEAR ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE AND DELIVERY 2018/19

Committee received a report on the year end assessment of performance and delivery for the period 1 October 2018 to 31 March 2019 in relation to the Council's Thrive agenda.

For children and families 31 overarching strategic indicators have been identified to measure performance in respect of the Thrive agenda, 19 of which have improved (58%). The indicators fall under the following three thrive pledges;

- Put people and families at the heart of everything we do
- Tackle inequality so people have a fair chance
- Work together and fight for a better future for Gateshead

In terms of the 'putting people and families at the heart of everything we do' pledge it was reported that Complex Child in Need and Wrap around service has now embedded a model for safeguarding teenagers. This is showing positive signs of how the service is working with these young people. Another achievement is that the service restructure within Assessment and Intervention has reduced the number of potential changes in Social Workers. All three actions identified in the last report have all progressed as anticipated.

Actions for the next six months in relation to this pledge include the development of forums within Children and Families Service to gain views of families, and using online tools to gather families feedback for service improvement within Early Help.

Under the 'tackle inequality so people have a fair chance' pledge improvements have been made for six of the indicators but declined for seven. It was noted that reporting and oversight of children's issues through the Health and Wellbeing Board has improved. Public Health has been working on tackling smoking in pregnancy through a task and finish group. Training has also been undertaken to schools to ensure children and young people with hearing and vision impairment can be supported to have equal access to the curriculum. It was reported that the development of the audit process within Children and Families and Early Help and the writing of plans will continue to be developed following the feedback from the last Ofsted inspection. In terms of work over the next six months this will focus on the updating of core practice standards for Social Work and Early Help staff to build

consistency of practice for families.

In relation to the 'work together to fight for a better future for Gateshead' improvements have been made for all seven indicators. Following service restructures and reviews this has resulted in empowering families through an improved Child in Need offer. There has also been a safe reduction in the number of children who are looked after and subject to a Child Protection Plan. It was acknowledged that there is still more to do regarding the development of the Domestic Abuse Service, however the service has received favourable feedback at the last Ofsted inspection. In relation to the actions for the next six months it is proposed that the service builds on the work from the Team Around the School model, linking mental health professionals to schools. Work will also be undertaken with Adult Mental Health Services to see how work with parents who need specialist services can be improved. There will also be the development of the Reducing Parental Conflict programme.

Further information was requested with regards to the decline in the Progress 8 scores of vulnerable children. It was agreed that further information would be sought on this and reported back.

Committee was concerned at the decline in the number of children being offered a place at their preferred primary school, which is often due to outside decisions around house building. In particular the impact on poverty when people do not obtain a place at their local school. It was agreed that this question would be raised with the service and reported back.

It was questioned whether there are any cost implications in relation to the reduction of LAC. It was explained that these families will still be receiving services, albeit not in the Child Protection framework, therefore resources are being used differently at the edge of care. A report on the edge of care work is due back to Committee in the Autumn.

It was questioned what is happening now the Young Carers Contract has ceased. It was confirmed that support is still available through Gateshead Carers and Crossroad Carers.

Committee was concerned about the level of smoking in expectant mothers. It was reported that a lot of work is ongoing with the early help team, 0-19 public health nursing team and maternity services. A Task and Finish Group has been set up to look at what other support can be provided to expectant mothers. A number of the 0-19 team have been trained as smoking cessation advisors and training in very brief advice has been offered to the early help team. It was noted that there has been a reduction in the figures for quarter 3 for 2018/19 when compared with the same quarter for 2017/18 but this is not necessarily a trend. Committee requested that a further report on smoking in expectant mothers be brought back to a future meeting, looking also at whether there is any correlation with low birth weight.

The decline in the reduction of excess weight in 4-5 year olds was raised as a concern. It was acknowledged that the increase equates to 11 children and that work is in progress by the lead 0-19 service around breastfeeding and healthy weight and nutrition. There is also the whole system approach to healthy weight

which has been agreed by the Committee.

Committee requested that further information be brought back to the next meeting around the declined educational indicators, when there is an officer from education in attendance.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) Committee was satisfied that the activities undertaken during October 2018 to March 2019 are achieving the desired outcomes, in making Gateshead a place where everyone thrives.
 - (ii) The areas noted above were identified by Committee as requiring more detail and further scrutiny.
 - (iii) Committee noted that Cabinet will consider a composite performance report at their meeting on 16 July 2019.

F8 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received the work programme report setting out the provisional work programme for the Committee for the year 2019/20.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) Committee noted the provisional programme.
 - (ii) Committee noted that further reports on the work programme will be brought to the Committee to identify any additional policy issues, which the Committee may be asked to consider.



TITLE OF REPORT: LSCB Annual Report 2018-19 and Safeguarding Plan 2019-20

REPORT OF: Caroline O'Neill, Strategic Director, Care Wellbeing and Learning

Purpose of the Report

1. To present the 2018/19 Annual Report of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), and to provide an overview of the new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements for children in Gateshead.

Background

2. As set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015), every Local Safeguarding Children Board is required to produce and publish an annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area (s.14A Children Act 2004). The annual report sets out the arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Gateshead and provides an assessment of those arrangements. The report also sets out how the LSCB discharges its statutory functions. The Local Safeguarding Children's Board continues to provide leadership, accountability and vision for safeguarding in Gateshead. The LSCB has a strong commitment from partners to working together, holding each other to account and seeking to learn and improve together.

Gateshead LSCB Annual Report 2018-2019 and MASA Safeguarding Plan 2019-2020

3. The [LSCB Annual Report 2018-2019](#) details developments for both the LSCB itself and its partner agencies, in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the borough. Key areas include developing early help strategy and work regionally, developing integrated tools and further integration of processes – performance datasets, QA frameworks, policies & procedures, training, and practice review arrangements.
4. The report also contains an analysis of data, numbers or contacts and notifications have reduced. The number of children on child protection plans have decreased, as have numbers of children in care. The timeliness of assessments and conferences remains high.
5. A major focus of work during 2018-2019 has been around developing our new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (MASA) and safeguarding plan – [link to safeguarding plan](#)

6. The proposals for implementation in September 2019 represent a transitional process. Some streamlining is proposed to the current arrangements, with greater integration between the children and adult boards; however, much of the current structure will be retained for at least 12 months.
7. During the course of 2019-20, further work will be completed on integrating functions across the Northumbria footprint, and a wider structure review will be undertaken in the spring of 2020. It is envisaged that in September 2020 new arrangements will be introduced.

Recommendations

8. The OSC Committee is asked to note the contents and make any comments.

Contact: Paul Ennals – Independent Chair
Saira Park – Safeguarding Children Business Manager



Gateshead
local safeguarding
children board

Gateshead LSCB

Annual Report

2018-2019



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1. INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

Foreword – Sir Paul Ennals, LSCB Independent Chair

It has been a pleasure and a privilege to chair the Children’s Safeguarding Board for a further year – indeed, for its last year, since in July 2019 we published our plans to become the Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership. The essentials will remain – the engagement of all agencies who are working with children and families, the commitment to work together to improve outcomes, and to hold each other to account. “High support, high challenge” remains our approach. The new arrangements, however, streamline our systems somewhat, allow us to focus more directly on local practice, and build on the collaboration across the Northumbria region.

The year has been very constructive, with significant progress being made on several fronts. Just after the year ended, Ofsted inspected the council’s Children’s Social Care; the judgement of “good” was a proper reward for their hard work, and the report was very praiseworthy of the quality of partnership working in Gateshead.

I am grateful to all partners for their input, and particularly to the Business Manager Saira Park and her assistant Joe Lowrey for all their hard work. The children and families of Gateshead can be grateful for their commitment.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Ennals". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Sir Paul Ennals
Independent Chair, Gateshead LSCB



2. SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

2.1 Purpose of report

As set out in *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, every Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is required to produce and publish an annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area. This report sets out the arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Gateshead and provides an assessment of those arrangements. The report also sets out how we discharge our statutory functions.

2.2 Overall LSCB progress

A major focus of work during 2018-2019 has been around developing our new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (MASA) and safeguarding plan – [link to safeguarding plan](#)

Current safeguarding arrangements within Gateshead are robust and well respected. Outline plans for a more streamlined structure and system were agreed in principle by statutory partners during 2018-19, subject to final approval. Since then, real progress has been made in strengthening regional collaboration across Northumbria, with the support of DfE Early Adopter funding. This programme is exploring which key safeguarding functions can be more effectively undertaken across a wider footprint, and which functions need to retain a place-based focus at local authority level.

The proposals for implementation in September 2019 represent a transitional process. Some streamlining is proposed to the current arrangements, with greater integration between the children and adult boards; however, much of the current structure will be retained for at least 12 months.

During the course of 2019-20, further work will be completed on integrating functions across the Northumbria footprint, and a wider structure review will be undertaken in the spring of 2020. It is envisaged that in September 2020 new arrangements will be introduced.

Considerable work has also been undertaken between LSCB meetings by our sub groups, task and finish groups and highly committed members.

2.3 Progress against last year's objectives

Our Business Plan was monitored by LSCB Executive. By year end all of our priorities were signed off or due to be signed off imminently.

In terms of **Leadership** we strengthened our links with our local communities, education settings and other partnerships to improve the visibility of the LSCB and ensure that safeguarding children was still a priority for groups with an adult or community focus. We also continued with work to engage children and young people with the work of the Board.

2.3.1 Early Help & Early Intervention

The Early Help (EH) Strategy has been updated, with input from LSCB. Ofsted commented positively about the EH strategy and the EH service, and their impact on children and their families.

“Early help arrangements in Gateshead are a strength. There is a coherent multi-agency strategy which underpins the delivery of these services.” OFSTED

Children and families are benefiting from a broad range of targeted family support delivered by well-trained, skilled staff. Partners are well engaged in the delivery of the early help offer, completing a high number of early help assessments. Pathways into targeted early intervention are clear and the threshold is appropriately applied.

Higher risk cases are escalated swiftly to children’s social care or are stepped down when risks are reduced. Early help workers stay involved with their families when cases step up to statutory services. This means that children and families are benefiting from consistent support from a worker with whom they have established effective relationships. The service is making a positive difference to families and is reducing the number of children needing statutory help and support.

During the last year Early Help has developed a robust performance management framework and workbook, modelled on that of children’s social care. It has also developed a comprehensive data dashboard which details performance. The Early help team are able to evidence low re-referral rates into Tier 3 services which are measured at 6 and 12 monthly intervals. The Early help team have also gathered strong qualitative feedback from families.

Scrutiny for the performance and effectiveness of Early Help is provided through Early Help performance clinics, Gateshead LSCB (performance sub group), Children’s Services Portfolio meetings, Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Health and Wellbeing Board.

Following the Team Around the School pilot in 2017/18, the programme has been extended to include more schools. Gateshead is the regional lead for the Reducing Parental Conflict Programme and has strongly reinforced Early Help as “everyone’s business”.

Domestic Abuse is highly prevalent in the experience of children who are referred to children’s services. A review of the existing service was completed in July 2018 and a single domestic abuse team is now in place to respond across Early Help, Safeguarding and Care Planning and the IRT. This new service ensures a consistent response to those who are referred by social workers. Children and adults are now seen by the same service.

- **Operation Encompass**

A total of **85** schools in Gateshead participate in the Operation Encompass model for sharing information on domestic abuse incidents the morning after an incident where children are part of the family involved, with **1,113** notifications made during 2018-2019.

Since the restructure of the service, the new domestic abuse team have introduced a dedicated twenty-four hour, seven day a week telephone line and mail box which makes it easier for service users to access support. A referral pathway and operational procedures have been developed and the service is currently developing a child/young person friendly risk indicator checklist.

Governance of Domestic Abuse is through the Community Safety Board and the LSCB, as well as the council’s own governance arrangements.

- **Integrated Referral Team (IRT) - Front Door**

The local authority has recently restructured its front door, supporting an effective response to referrals. Professionals appropriately contact the integrated referral team (IRT) when they are concerned that a child needs help or protection.

“The front door is strong and effective, and thresholds are well understood.” OFSTED

The co-location of the police, early help and health 0–19 service, with the addition of other partners through virtual arrangements, supports effective screening, triage and referral systems. The daily screening of all police notifications, including children who are missing and domestic abuse concerns, is effective and means that children receive an appropriate and timely response, with the swift identification of services.

The introduction of an Edge of Care Team now provides timely support to families in crisis, including out of hours, intensive intervention to prevent family breakdown. It delivers a systemic approach which focuses on strength-based relationships.

2.3.2 Voice of the child

Views of children and young people have been sought and fed back via partner agency engagement and surveys.

The LSCB held an event with young people in January 2019. Further events will be held during 2019-2020 (as well as attendance at Children and young People’s events being held by partner agencies, where appropriate). The Voice of the child is an overarching priority in the new arrangements – more information about the Young People’s event and other consultations is included at appendix 5.

2.3.3 Child Sexual Exploitation & Missing Children

The process for reviewing young people who are missing, sexually exploited or trafficked has been reviewed. The name of the MSET group has been redefined to incorporate all types of child exploitation (Missing, Slavery, Exploitation, Trafficking). The Exploitation Framework has also been updated and is now shared regionally. This means a more consistent approach to risk assessment and disruption across the region. A comparable structure for adults has been established and is being piloted (AMSET), with progress and learning shared. The shared children and adults approach is anticipated to improve the quality of partnership scrutiny at the point of transition into adulthood of some very vulnerable young people.

The protocol for responding to missing children has been updated, and all children who go missing will now be offered a Return Home interview (RHI), regardless of how long they have been missing or how often. The RHI form has been reviewed and updated, to ensure push and pull factors are considered and to allow for more narrative (including any previous missing episodes). Guidance notes for completion are available for workers who complete RHIs. RHIs are now recorded on Carefirst (the social care system).

2.3.4 Communication & engagement with the frontline (including schools)

Distribution lists have been reviewed and updated, so that information can be targeted to the right people. LSCB members are proactive in ensuring information is shared within their own agencies.

The LSCB and Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) have developed and launched a new bespoke safeguarding website www.gatesheadsafeguarding.co.uk. Child protection referrals are submitted online via the website and information is kept updated. We have received excellent feedback from partners in Gateshead and beyond.

The website includes:

- Information about reporting concerns and online child protection referral form
- information about the safeguarding boards
- policy, procedures and practice guidance
- practical information and advice, including publications and our training directory
- advice and support for parents and carers
- news and updates

We are continuously reviewing information on the website and have updated the section for advice and support for parents and carers which now also includes safer sleeping advice (learning from regional serious case reviews).

As well as the new website, we are also able to communicate via social media. The LSCB and SAB launched a twitter account (@GatesheadSafe) in February 2019. The account is very active and it is an excellent way to engage with other safeguarding partnerships, the Voluntary and community sector (VCS), and the local community. The twitter account allows the safeguarding boards to share news stories, launch new publications, promote events and link with partners locally, regionally and nationally.

Communication with frontline staff has improved. School staff, social workers and early help workers have all reported they feel more involved and aware of the work of the LSCB.

Gateshead NHS Foundation Trust – A Safeguarding Conference was held at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Education Centre in September 2018. The Conference was organised by the Children and Adult Safeguarding Teams within Gateshead NHS Foundation Trust and was chaired by Sir Paul Ennals. Speakers included Jasvinder Sanghera talking about honour-based violence and forced marriage and the Brook Foundation providing comprehensive information about online safety. Gateshead's LSCB business manager and sanctuary social worker also stepped in at the last minute (due to a planned speaker having to drop out) and took the opportunity to talk about the MSET process, screening tool and risk assessment. 102 delegates attended the conference from a wide variety of disciplines within the Trust along with colleagues from the Local Authority, Housing, Police and Probation services. Feedback was extremely positive.

2.4 Board effectiveness

We continue to collaborate with LSCBs across the region regarding future safeguarding arrangements. The final shape of arrangements across all 6 areas will be determined by how much agreement can be reached on integrating the safeguarding processes and how we can coordinate delivery around some specific safeguarding issues

The LSCB Business Managers across the 6 areas have a workplan for developing integrated tools and further integration of processes – performance datasets, QA frameworks, policies & procedures,

training, practice review arrangements, and CDOP arrangements are being considered, in light of new statutory guidance.

More information about the new safeguarding plan and regional collaboration can be found at section 5.

We are satisfied that we have highly effective partnership arrangements in Gateshead which are built on trust and honesty. Agencies have the confidence to challenge each other due to robust working relationships.

The LSCB Business Manager's role is crucial to the work of the Board to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and drive delivery of the Board's Business Plan. The Business Manager provides a link between the Board, sub groups and other partnerships. The LSCB Chair also chairs the SAB and this further strengthens joint working and the transition agenda.

As a Board, we are confident that we have effective training that responds well to LSCB priorities. Despite increasing pressures on partner agency staff we have a skilled pool of trainers who deliver a significant number of our sessions "in house", but we also have the resources to commission specialist sessions when appropriate. We continue to carry out work to ensure that our training has an impact on frontline staff to ensure that the sessions lead to improved outcomes and provide the Board with best value for money.

2.5 Summary of sub group progress

At the Executive group meeting held in January 2019, members agreed both the training and policies & procedures sub groups should be streamlined and joined with the learning & improvement group, in readiness for the proposed new structure.

At year end we had five sub groups, one of which is shared with the Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB). They are:

- Gateshead Local Child Death Review Group
- Joint LSCB & SAB Strategic Exploitation Group
- Learning & Improvement Sub Group
- Licensing Sub Group
- Performance Management Sub Group

The LSCB Missing, Slavery, Exploitation and Trafficked Sub Group (MSET) also reports into the Strategic Exploitation Group.

The **Education Reference Group (ERG)**, continued during 2018-19. The group includes wide representation from primary and secondary schools, and from all parts of the borough, including our Jewish schools.

It is sometimes difficult for all members to attend every meeting, due to school commitments, however use of email ensures good communication and engagement between meetings and members remain committed.

Feedback has been positive, and several key issues such as domestic abuse, child exploitation, and training have been discussed. The group have also been involved in testing out the new regional safeguarding audit tool for schools.

The reference group provides a means whereby school concerns can be brought to the board, issues discussed within the Board can be brought to the attention of schools, and schools can increase the level and quality of their multi-agency working. A lot of work happens outside of the ERG meetings, including seeking feedback on multi-agency strategies and procedures; members of ERG are also included in any task & finish projects to ensure education input.

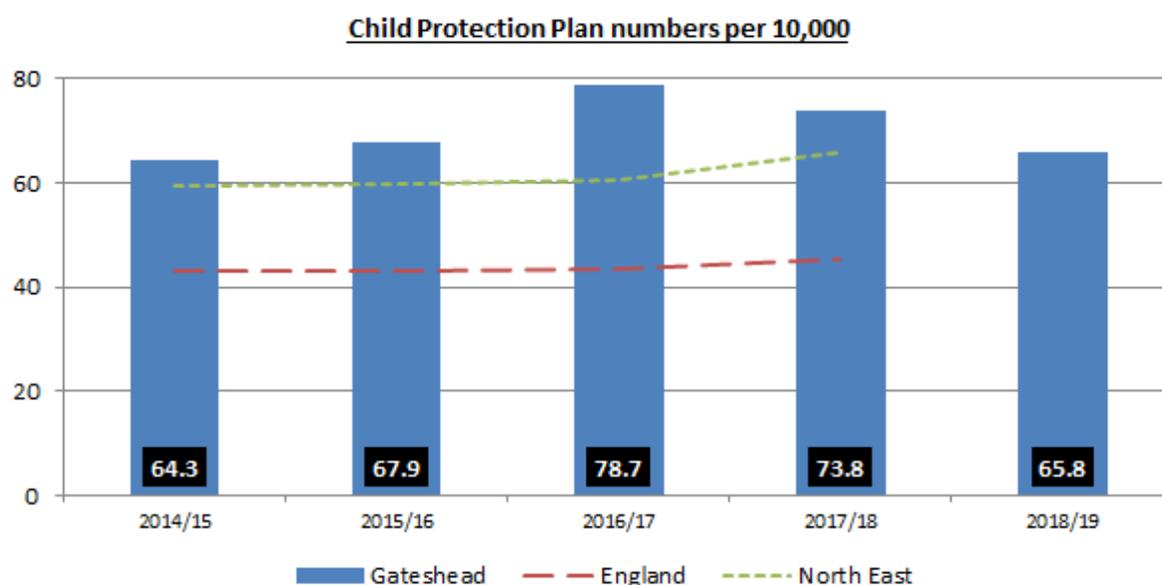
Some successful workshops have been held with schools, to help staff to understand thresholds to services, and the interface between Early Help and statutory services (including step-up and step-down). There is evidence of some excellent work amongst many senior leadership teams in schools.

Throughout the year our sub groups continued to work towards their own work plans and towards one or more of our priorities of **Leadership**, **Challenge** and **Learning** and specific details of this are found in the sub group reports in Appendix 4.

3. PERFORMANCE DATA AND INFORMATION

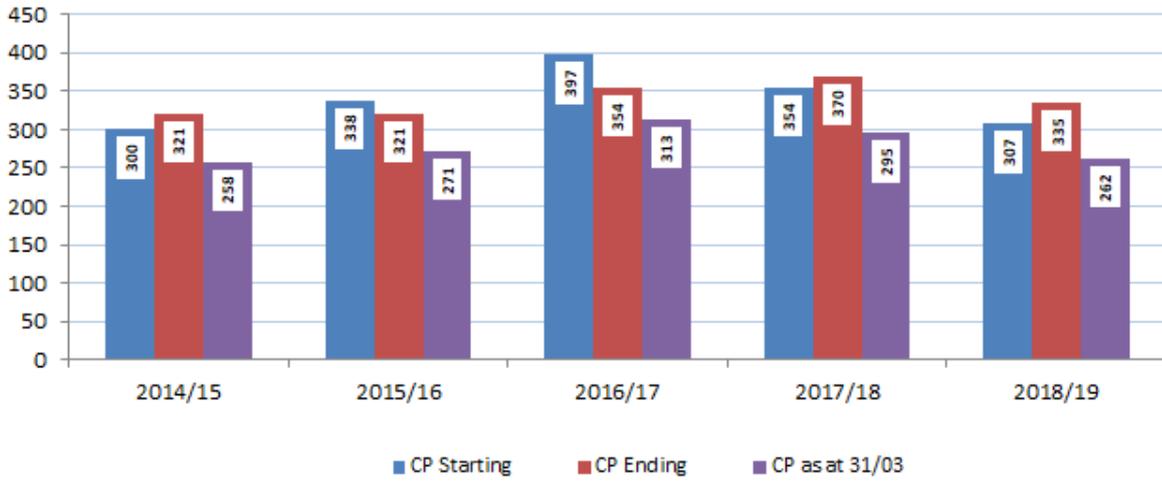
3.1 Performance Data

The LSCB Performance Management Sub Group monitors performance information on behalf of the LSCB and reports regularly to the Board against an agreed data set/performance dash board linked to priority areas.

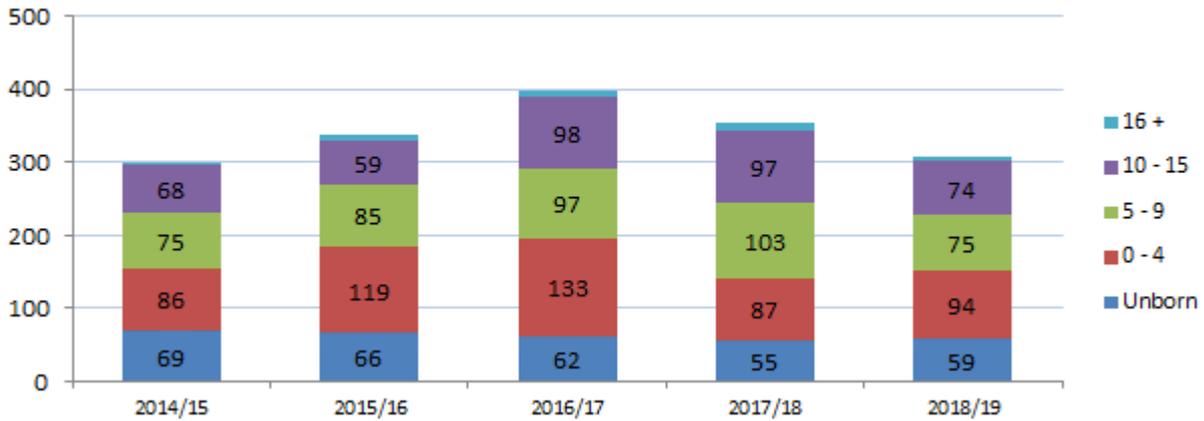


At year end there were **262** children from Gateshead subject to a Child Protection Plan, which is a rate of 65.8 per 10,000, which is higher than the England rate of 43.3 per 10,000 reported in 2016-2017. However, it is in line with the North East rate of 65.7 and a decrease of 8 per 10,000 on the previous year in Gateshead.

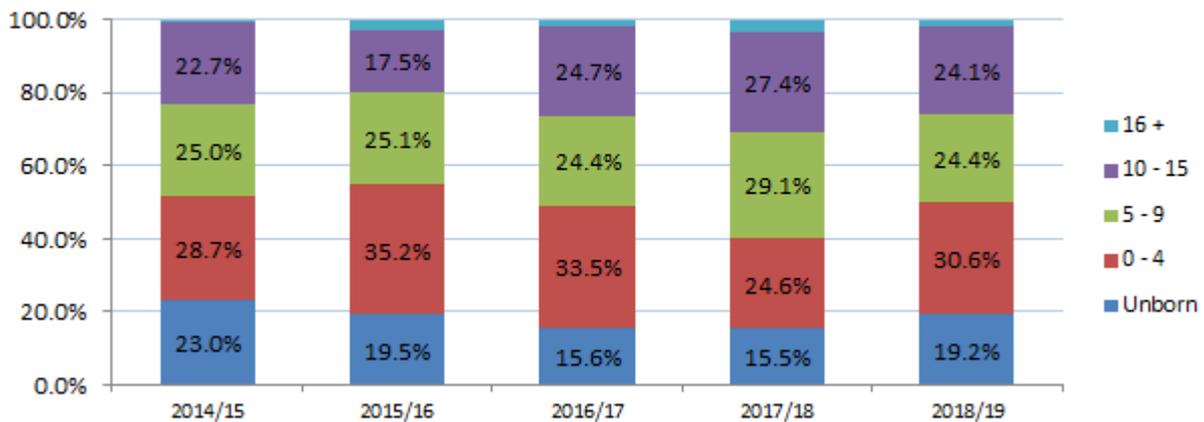
Child Protection Numbers



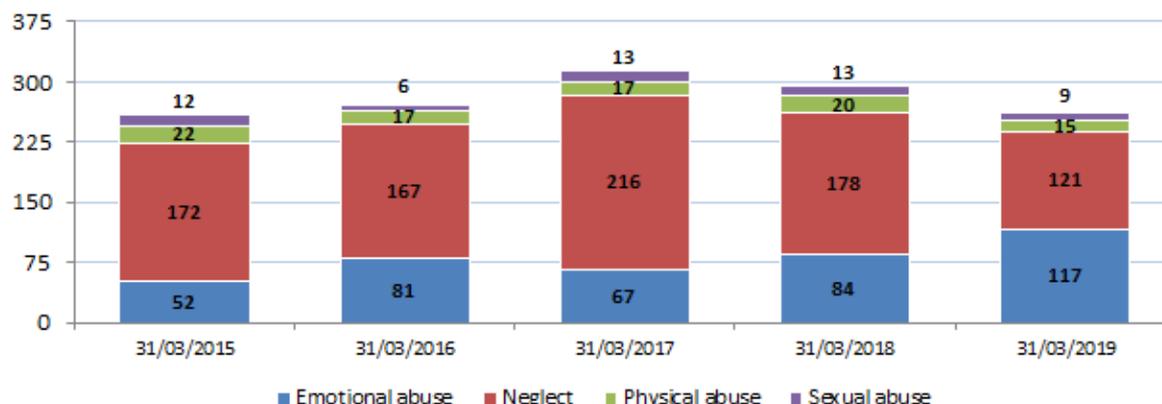
Age of Children when placed on a Child Protection Plan (Apr-Mar)



Age of Children when placed on a Child Protection Plan (Apr-Mar)

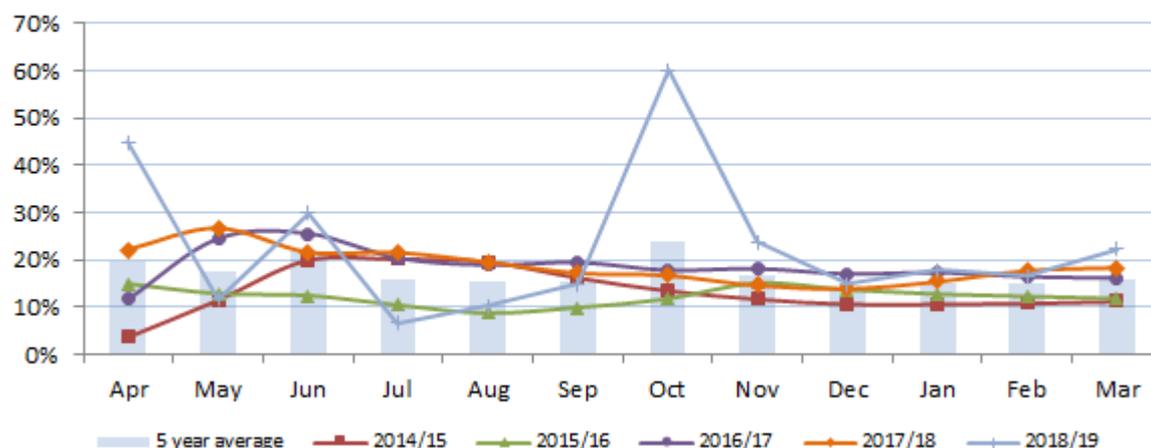


Child Protection Category at month end



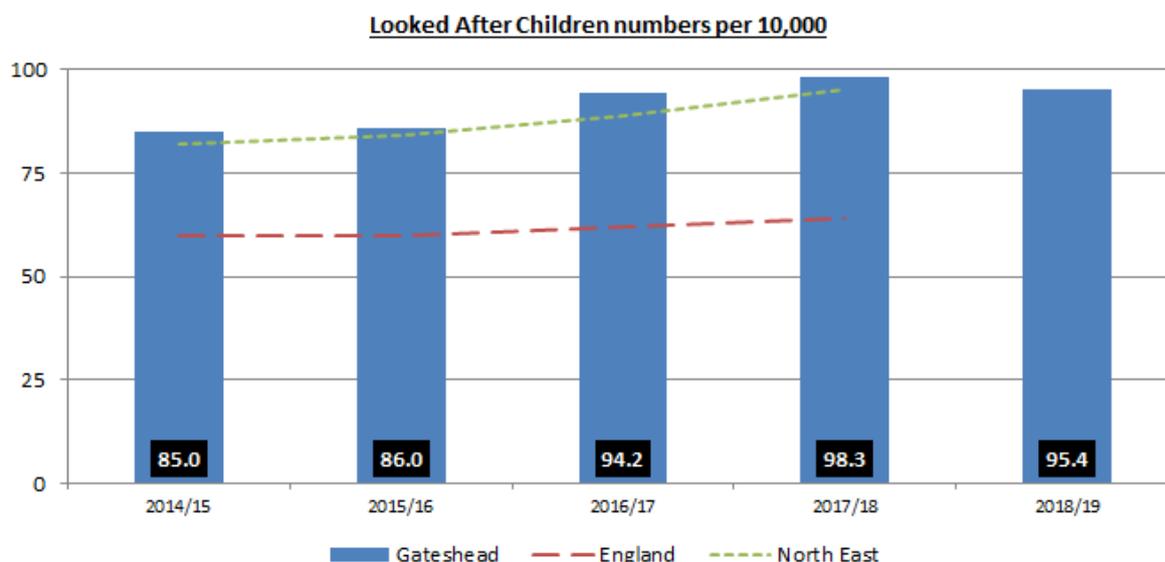
The category of neglect remains the highest at 46.2% of all plans; however, this is a significant drop from the figure reported at the end of March 2018, when the proportion of plans on neglect stood at 60.3%. Emotional abuse now accounts for 44.7% of plans, which is an increase on the 28.5% of plans listed under emotional abuse in March 2018.

Performance Indicator: Percentage of children becoming the subject of Child Protection Plan for a 2nd or subsequent time



There was a small increase noted in the numbers of children who became subject to a plan for a second or subsequent time (69 of 307 plans that started in 2018-2019 or 22.5%) and work is underway to understand this. October 2018 saw 15 out of 25 children being made subject to a plan for a second or subsequent time although this did include one family group of 4 siblings and 4 family groups of 2 siblings.

This reporting period also saw a small decrease in the number of children who are Looked After by Gateshead Council. At year end the rate showed a 3% decrease from the previous year end and the rate is still higher than the England rate of 64, but is in line with the North East rate of 95. The Looked After Children performance information indicates good placement stability and timely performance planning. This data and information on outcomes is monitored regularly by Gateshead Council Children’s Social Care Performance Clinic, the Corporate Parenting Partnership, the Looked After Children Overview and Scrutiny Committee and a number of other partner agency forums. The LSCB established a task & finish group to examine ways of safely reducing this figure.



Other data to note included:

- Child Concern Notifications and contacts to Children's Social Care decreased from previous years by 38%; the number of referrals also decreased by around 10.4%.
- A high number of assessments undertaken by Children's Social Care identified mental health (33.2%) and domestic abuse (34.2%) as a factor. Other common factors included alcohol or drug misuse, socially unacceptable behaviour, neglect and emotional abuse. Whilst the numbers of cases where domestic abuse is a factor is high, it is much lower than the England average of 2017-2018 (51.1%) whereas the socially unacceptable behaviour rate (14.4%) is higher (8.4%).
- There was a 4.6% decrease in Child In Need (CIN) Assessments being completed in 2018-2019 compared to 2017-2018, and there was also an increase in CIN assessments being authorised within timescales. The % of CIN assessments completed in timescales (89.4%) is higher than the latest reported national average (82.7%) and regional average (81.9%). There was a 4.2% decrease in Section 47 investigations but a similar percentage of these progressed to Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC). Of those cases going to ICPC, 83.7% went on to require a Child Protection Plan, which indicates multi-agency agreement on the way to progress these cases
- 96.5% of ICPCs were held within the 15 day timescale (well above the regional average of 82.9% and national average of 76.9%). Attendance and contribution to CP conferences is monitored and remains strong overall, particularly for some partners e.g. Police. Work is ongoing to improve the contribution of some agencies to the process e.g. GPs. and also ensure sustained improvement against timescales for distribution of minutes
- In the 2018-19 period **54** children and young people have been supported to share their views for child protection conferences. This has been facilitated using Mind of My Own or paper-based tools. 32 were for initial CPC and 22 were for review CPCs.

3.2 Summary of thematic information

3.2.1 Missing children

The LSCB Missing, Slavery, Exploitation and Trafficking Sub Group (MSET) monitors and coordinates multi-agency activity for children who are reported missing from home or care.

In total, there were **917 episodes** in 2018-2019 where a young person from Gateshead was reported missing or absent to police. **610 (66.5%) of these episodes were children/young people looked after by Gateshead Council.** There were 841 missing/absent episodes in 2017-2018 (of which 493 or 58.6% related to Looked After Children) therefore this represents a **9% increase year on year** on the total episodes and an **23.7% increase in missing from care episodes.**

During 2018-2019 All children who went missing or absent on two or more occasions in a six month period or for a single episode lasting more than 24 hours were offered an Independent Return Home Interview. This differs from a police Safe and Well Check (which all missing people receive on return) and is carried out by skilled and experienced youth workers to determine underlying reasons for the missing episode and wider risks and vulnerability factors. The interviews are also used to identify broader trends, including "CSE hotspots" and there are clear links into MSET meetings and intelligence sharing with police.

In total there were **407** requests for a return interview in 2018-2019 (as the 917 missing episodes relate to a smaller number of individuals as a small cohort of young people were reported missing more than once). All children who met the criteria were offered a RHI, however not all chose to accept the offer. 218 interviews were carried out (54%), 176 young people refused (43%) and 13 interviews were no longer required or not appropriate (3%). This equates to 54% completion rate.

The procedure has been reviewed and updated and now all children who go missing will be offered a return home interview.

3.2.1 Child Exploitation

The MSET sub group of the LSCB also has oversight of cases where there are concerns about child exploitation. There were **46 cases** discussed at MSET due to concerns about them in 2018-2019, **8** of which were discussed on more than one occasion

This is a **42% decrease** from 2017-2018 when there were 79 cases discussed (20 of those were discussed more than once).

It is not possible to separate how many of those cases were discussed due to missing episodes and how many due to sexual exploitation or criminal exploitation due to the overlap between the concerns, but an MSET risk assessment was carried out for each case that was discussed and disruption plans put in place.

It is thought that this decrease represents improved screening and assessment of risk, rather than decreased incidence of exploitation. Police Child Concern Notifications (CCNs) are now picked up as part of the Police Triage and Integrated Referral Team Process. The Police MASH officers advise of concerns regarding exploitation and missing, during triage, and invite the worker to consider MSET referrals and risk assessment. This has led to more appropriate referrals to MSET, focussing on high

risk cases. It has also meant that lower risk cases that do not meet criteria for MSET can be managed appropriately to manage risks and work done to disrupt exploitation and try to prevent concerns escalating. More detail on the work of the MSET is set out in Appendix 4.

The LSCB Business Manager has reviewed how child exploitation is recorded on the Social Care System and is continually working with the management information team to improve recording to ensure data is accurate and up-to-date. This review has also looked at the way risk assessments are recorded, how we can improve the quality of risk assessments and how they inform care planning. This work was carried out alongside the wider review of the whole social care system, and will inform the specification for the new system, which is currently going through procurement process.

3.2.2 Child Deaths

The Gateshead LSCB Child Death Review Sub Group reviews the death of every child in the borough and reports into the sub regional Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) which is shared with Sunderland and South Tyneside LSCBs. More information on the work of the sub group and CDOP is set out in Appendix 4.

In 2018-2019 the LSCB was notified of the deaths of 5 children from Gateshead. There were no significant safeguarding issues in any of the deaths. Detailed information is not presented in this report so that the children cannot be identified but it should be noted that the majority of deaths were premature babies or babies born with life limiting conditions who died within a short period of their birth.

3.2.3 Pupil Exclusions

The increasing numbers of pupils being excluded from schools; primary and secondary is a national issue. However, within Gateshead the rates of secondary exclusions would appear to be even greater than both regional and national averages over recent years.

This issue was identified by the LSCB and officers were asked to carry out research to identify why exclusions were increasing at such a rate and more importantly how this could be addressed. This work was led by Service Manager for Education Support Service and a report presented to LSCB in the spring 2017. The report identified a number of factors were likely to be driving up secondary exclusions. A key outcome was that a range of children's services, Early Help, health and school professionals would need to try to address the issue by working more closely together.

A conference in the summer of 2017 resulted in a number of actions being implemented, monitored and evaluated in relation to the reduction of secondary permanent exclusions across the borough.

The following academic year 2017/18 showed a significant decline of 32% in secondary permanent exclusions. The autumn and spring terms of the academic year 2018/19 has again shown a slight increase in secondary permanent exclusions but not to the extent of previous years.

Subsequently, a further conference 'Gateshead's Response to Timpson' is planned for the autumn term 2019 to build on the actions from 2017. The conference seeks to highlight good practice in the areas of leadership, building resilience and alternative provision.

The LSCB and The Council's Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee will continue to receive regular updates on exclusions.

4. SUMMARY OF LEARNING FROM INSPECTIONS AND REVIEWS

4.1 Inspections of partner agencies in 2018-2019

A number of Board partner agencies were inspected or had recent inspections published in 2018-2019:

Northumbria Police: PEEL (police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy) Assessment.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) visited Northumbria Police in January 2019 for a post inspection review, following the original inspection in January 2018. The inspection, part of a national programme of thematic inspections of all forces in England and Wales, sought to examine all aspects of response of all the organisation, including leadership, governance, partnerships, initial contact, investigations, decision making, management of those who pose a risk to children and the detention of children and young persons.

HMICFRS inspection found a clear commitment to protecting children and recognised examples of good work across the organisation, with good engagement with partner agencies across the six local authorities. This continues to be the case in 2019, showing the force's commitment to reviewing and improving its approach to child protection.

Gateshead Council – Ofsted inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS)

An Ofsted inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) across children's social care services took place in April 2019 which looked at early help, social work, commissioning of services and education. The LA was rated **Good**. Ofsted reported that children and families in Gateshead are benefiting from a good-quality service from skilled and passionate staff who care deeply about them, there are well-established and developed strategic partnerships which are supporting effective multi-agency working and Children's services have been effective in helping partners to understand the threshold to services – [link to full report](#)

Gateshead LSCB was not subject to a Joint Targeted Inspection in 2018-2019 by Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary (HMIC) and Her Majesty's Inspector of Prisons (HMIP).

Newcastle Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group

NHS England has a statutory duty to undertake an annual assessment of CCGs. This is done under the auspices of the Improvement and Assessment Framework (IAF), with the overall assessment derived from CCGs' performance against the IAF indicators, including an assessment of CCG leadership and financial management. Newcastle Gateshead CCG received a rating of **Outstanding** for 2018/2019.

Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust

In 2018, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) conducted an inspection of Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust (NTW) services and once again rated them as **Outstanding**. NTW are one of only four Mental Health and Disability Trusts in the country to be rated as such, as at 1 April 2019. The CQC reported the leadership, governance structures and culture within the trust were used to effectively drive and improve the delivery of high quality person-centred care and the trust worked collaboratively with other organisations to ensure the highest provision of care for patients – [link to full report](#)

Schools

A number of our **schools** were inspected by Ofsted in 2018-2019 and, once again, no safeguarding concerns were identified. Overall 33% of our schools are outstanding, which is higher than the national average of 21.6%.

Of 70 primary, junior, infant and nursery schools (including primary special schools), 34% are outstanding, 60% are good and 6% require improvement. Of 10 secondary schools and academies 3 are outstanding, 3 are good, 2 require improvement and 1 is rated inadequate. 100% of Gateshead's maintained secondary schools are good. One re-brokered academy has not yet been inspected. 50% of the total number of special schools are outstanding and the others are good. The Pupil Referral Unit has recently academized and has not yet been inspected - [link to access Ofsted ratings and reports for all schools and colleges in Gateshead](#)

4.2 Learning from reviews in 2018-2019

The LSCB Learning and Improvement Sub Group manages learning from Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) and other reviews on behalf of the Board. There have been no SCRs initiated or published by Gateshead LSCB in the past 12 months.

One SCR commenced during 2018-19 (initiated March 2018), but a decision was made, following advice from the police, to put the SCR on hold due to ongoing criminal proceedings. The National Panel and Ofsted were informed and agreed with our decision.

In 2018-2019, five Serious Incident Notifications were submitted to Ofsted/Department for Education. Two cases were subject to Rapid Review. None of these cases met the criteria for a SCR; however, it was agreed that further learning could be gained from carrying out a learning review for one of the cases, using systems methodology. The National Panel agreed with our recommendations.

Durham LSCB have carried out a SCR of a case that was previously open to Gateshead. The report has now been published – [link to report](#)

Despite the fact that no formal reviews were required in 2018-2019 the sub group worked within the Board's Learning & Improvement Framework to drive forward multi-agency learning and changes to practice.

The sub group carried out detailed reviews of the cases of 7 children and young people where potential lessons were identified.

The sub group also considered a diverse range of SCRs from other areas to ensure that any relevant learning is disseminated and applied to practice in Gateshead. More detail on the work of the Learning and Improvement Sub Group is set out in Appendix 4.

Newcastle Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group held 2 workshops in July and September 2018 to consider the recommendations and findings from the [Newcastle Joint Serious Case Review](#). A wide range of health agencies and services were invited across Newcastle and Gateshead as were key partners from the LSCB; the session was led by the Named GP for Newcastle and Clinical Director for Children, Young People and Families. An action plan was formulated from these sessions some of which included the use of an existing sexual exploitation risk assessment tool to be more widely introduced and utilized by GPs, North East Ambulance Service, Pharmacists and maternity services to include this

in their ante natal assessments. This work is progressing and the impact will be evaluated in the next reporting period.

Safeguarding Board Business Managers across the region have developed a regional learning resource – [link to regional learning resource](#)

5. NEW MULTI-AGENCY SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS - PLANS TO DATE AND GOING FORWARD

Local – it is anticipated that the key focus of the revised safeguarding arrangements will be based on a dual 'Back to Practice'/ 'Think Family' basis where there will be a stronger connection between strategic and operational safeguarding functions that better aligns with safeguarding practice within the Partnership, demonstrating compliance, overview and evidencing impact for children and families.

There is the potential to strengthen the current MSET arrangements both at a local and regional level with greater alignment with Operation Sanctuary.

In addition, further collaborative working will be progressed with the Adult Safeguarding Board and the Community Safety Board. The more we progress towards a joint collaborative model the more we can add more substance and evidence to the 'Think Family' approach. In addition, we will be evidencing maximising the use of partner's time, commitment and wider understanding of safeguarding across the life course.

It is important to consider the current and/or future arrangements within the organisations of the three statutory partners which may influence any local plans and /or arrangements.

[Link to Safeguarding Plan 2019-2020](#)

Regional – the Business Managers across the region have made considerable progress on securing robust integrated and collaborative arrangements. These have included:

Safeguarding Policies and Procedures – an agreed shared regional set of safeguarding policies and procedures. This will ensure greater levels of consistency across the region in terms of practice and provide some level of efficiency in relation to costs, maintenance and review.

Next Steps: Following the success of this piece of work the next steps are to explore the development of a regional joint multi-agency threshold / effective help document and referral form.

Performance dataset and score card – Led by the Sunderland LSCB Business Manager on behalf of the region a draft dataset and procedure has been developed and shared for consultation, it is anticipated this dataset and report will be introduced during 2019. This will provide more substantial opportunities for comparative analysis, trends, themes, gaps and strengths in provision from which a regional approach can be taken.

Next Steps: improve the quality of the narrative and analysis and explore what elements of the performance dataset could be undertaken regionally and within which areas. Develop the role and actions of the local quality assurance process to align with the potential of a regional thematic approach to areas of data / performance.

Learning from Serious Case reviews and learning reviews – successful regional collaboration has resulted in the production of a regional electronic learning resource based on the theme of vulnerabilities in babies. The resource allows access to all materials produced across the region on this theme. This is both a cost and time effective resource in terms of increasing the level of shared learning across all areas.

Next steps: Develop additional regional learning resources across both children and adults.

Section 11 Safeguarding Audit – a shared S11 audit tool has been agreed across the region. It is anticipated that this will take place at the same time in each area. This will be a great saving of time for those partners who work across the region. Having one audit tool will allow for both a local and regional comparison and analysis of findings. The regional themes can then support the development of future regional priorities.

Next steps: consider building the S11 audit into wider multi-agency audit process and develop a similar model for a regional Section 175 audit for schools and GPs.

Missing, Slavery, Exploitation and Trafficking – there has been an agreed regional approach to the running of MSET groups, incorporating adult exploitation. The areas of transitions and involvement of adult cases of concern needs to be strengthened in order to be a robust regional approach.

Next Steps: explore the possibility of developing one regional strategic MSET group. This group would have oversight of the trend, hotspots and data analysis across the region from which agreed collaborative actions could be implemented and monitored.

Local Safeguarding Practice Review Guidance - work is in progress on developing an agreed shared procedure. There is already a joint commissioning platform for securing independent chairs and authors where required.

Next steps: consideration to be given to a shared regional approach to the approval and learning from reviews. The regional resource is a good starting point that has the potential to be developed.

Domestic Abuse Prevention - mapping work has already been completed to explore the potential for a shared prevention regional strategy. Proposals for a joint public awareness campaign are expected September 2019.

Next Steps: explore the opportunities for the shared commissioning of domestic abuse programmes and sharing of resources.

Domestic Abuse is just one of the issues common across the region. Additional issues that could be tackled include neglect, early help and children in custody.

Multi-Agency Training – as safeguarding training is common to all Safeguarding Partnerships there is a real opportunity to take a regional approach. This could be a ‘hub and spoke’ model whereby one area co-ordinates the training offer with the potential for the other local areas, the spokes, delivering bespoke local training dependent upon local needs.

6. HOW SAFE ARE CHILDREN IN GATESHEAD?

It is never possible to say categorically that all children are safe. However, external scrutiny of our services within Gateshead suggests that our services are at least as good as most other areas, and in most cases better. If we add this to the learning from our audits, from our consultations with young people, and from the performance data, we can feel optimistic of the safety of our children. This is a significant achievement, since the authority scores highly on most deprivation indices, and all the public services have faced very severe reductions in funding.

We know that Gateshead schools are more likely than most to be rated outstanding, and that no schools in the area have been identified by Ofsted as having weaknesses relating to safeguarding. However, one school has been rated inadequate and some have been rated as requiring improvement during the course of this year. Good schools are normally safe schools, and schools play a vital role in helping children learn how to keep themselves safe, as well as providing us with a great opportunity to check on how children are doing.

External inspections paint a positive picture of the quality of services operating across Gateshead. The Council's inspection of Children's Social Care was rated as "good" in April 2019. The most current inspection reports for the hospital trusts, the CCG, the mental health trust and the police have all been positive. Where issues have been presented, partners have responded vigorously to the challenges presented to them, and the partnership itself has been strengthened through the process.

We know too that many of the child health indicators in Gateshead are worrying; our rates of child poverty, smoking in children, under 16 conceptions, smoking amongst expectant mothers, obesity, and hospital admissions for injuries and for self-harm, all remain high.

The safeguarding data presents an improving picture. We had a reduction in the number of contacts and notifications, to bring us closer to the averages. The improvements that have been introduced to the front door have been bearing fruit – numbers of children on child protection plans have decreased, as have the numbers of children in care, though both these figures remain higher than the average. The timeliness of assessments and conferences remains high.

We remain concerned about the numbers of children with mental health issues, and the time it can take for them to access effective services. The rates of domestic abuse remain high within Gateshead, though there have been important improvements made to the services available. We know that nationally there is concern about increases in Child Criminal Exploitation – whilst we have not seen firm evidence of this within Gateshead as yet, we need to ramp up our preparation. The numbers of children reported missing has increased, though we believe this is more down to improvements in our recording practices.

At a time when all public agencies face great uncertainty and continued significant reductions in funding, it remains crucial that we keep a collective eye on the safety of our children. Partners in Gateshead remain committed to this.

APPENDIX 1 – SUMMARY OF STATUTORY ARRANGEMENTS

Legal duties and general summary

Chapter 3 of *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2015) and *Regulation 4 of the Local Safeguarding Children Board Regulations* (2006) set out the statutory objectives and functions of LSCBs. Gateshead LSCB was judged to meet statutory requirements in the 2015-2016 Ofsted inspection and compliance is monitored by both the Board and LSCB Executive as well as the Independent Chair and Business Manager.

Policies and Procedures – the LSCB has web-based multi-agency child protection procedures which set out actions to take where there are concerns about a child, thresholds for intervention, guidance on recruitment and supervision, investigation of allegations, management of private fostering arrangements and cross border working (in line with 1(a) of Regulation 5). This is managed by the LSCB business manager on behalf of the Board and joint work is carried out with Sunderland and South Tyneside LSCBs.

Communicating the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children – A number of methods are used in Gateshead to communicate the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children depending on the audience and subject matter. For example, the LSCB has a website which contains detailed information for professionals on the work of the Board, Serious Case Reviews, Child Death Reviews, child exploitation and missing children and links to key documents such as *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, the LSCB Annual Report and the referral form for safeguarding concerns. There are also links to the online LSCB Inter-agency Child Protection Procedures for professionals to access.

For the last few years a summary version of the LSCB's annual report has been produced with the assistance of Gateshead Council's Communications Team and this has been shared with groups of young people including all school councils. This sets out what key issues have been noted in the past year and also how to raise concerns about a young person at risk.

The LSCB has a full training programme of face-to-face and e-learning modules to raise awareness of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Professionals are encouraged to attend the sessions and some sessions are mandatory for some practitioners.

All LSCB members are aware of their roles and responsibilities as Board members and partner agency representatives. This includes a requirement to promote the role of the Board and promote safeguarding in their own organisation/service. The LSCB's lay member is also aware of his responsibilities and his unique role in linking the Board to the community which it serves.

Training – A full LSCB, Safeguarding Adults Board and Community Safety Board Training Programme is in place. This is managed by the workforce development team and business manager on behalf of the Board, and informed by LSCB priorities and learning from local, regional and national case reviews. See Appendix 3.

Monitoring and evaluating effectiveness – Gateshead LSCB operates under the principles of high support and high challenge with and between partners. The theme of challenge is a key business priority for the Board and this is monitored at each meeting. Effectiveness is also monitored via single agency audit reports, and areas of the Learning & Improvement Framework.

APPENDIX 2 – BUDGET

Section 15 of the Children Act 2004 sets out that statutory Board partners may:

- Make payments towards expenditure incurred by, or for the purposes conducted with, a LSCB directly, or by contributing towards a fund out of which payments may be made
- Provide staff, goods, services, accommodation or other resources for purposes connected with a LSCB.

Cafcass, Gateshead Council, National Probation Service, Newcastle Gateshead CCG, Northumbria Police and Northumbria CRC all made contributions to the LSCB in 2018-2019.

| Income 2017-2018 (£) | |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Gateshead Council | 58,440 |
| Newcastle Gateshead CCG | 44,023 |
| Northumbria Police | 5,000 |
| National Probation Service | 932 |
| Cafcass | 550 |
| Northumbria CRC | 250 |
| TOTAL | 109,195 |

In 2018-2019:

- **£74,131** was spent by the LSCB in salaries and on-costs for the LSCB Business Manager and business support post.
- **£16,053** was spent by the LSCB on fees which included £3,600 on the maintenance of the online LSCB Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures, £500 to the National Working Group (for CSE) and the remainder was payment to the LSCB Independent Chair
- **£8,500** was spent on the multi-agency training programme
- **£6,191** was spent on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) conference – costs were shared with SAB and Public Health

The budget for Child Death Reviews is shared with Sunderland and South Tyneside LSCBs and is not reported here.

Funding new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements

Safeguarding partners will be required to provide equitable and proportionate funding to the new Gateshead Safeguarding Partnership. The funding needs to be sufficient to cover all elements of the arrangements, including the cost of local child safeguarding practice reviews.

In order to support the transitional plans the budget for 2019-2020 will remain the same as previous year. Future funding will be reviewed in January 2020.

APPENDIX 3 – TRAINING REPORT

The 2018-2019 LSCB training programme saw the delivery of 39 training events with 918 professionals and volunteers attending classroom-based training. The table below provides a comparison.

| | Number of learning events | Face-to-face attendees |
|-----------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2016-2017 | 59 | 1109 |
| 2017-2018 | 60 | 1166 |
| 2019-2019 | 39 | 918 |

The following sessions were delivered in the reporting period:

| Title:Course | Number of sessions delivered | Number of People |
|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| ACEs Conference | 1 | 200 |
| Child Protection Awareness (LSCB) | 7 | 150 |
| Common Assessment Framework (LSCB) | 1 | 22 |
| Effective Child Protection Conferences and Core Groups (LSCB) | 2 | 37 |
| Female Genital Mutilation (LSCB) | 1 | 19 |
| Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (LSCB) | 2 | 39 |
| Introduction to Child and Adolescent Mental Health (iCAMH) (LSCB) | 2 | 36 |
| Neglect (LSCB) | 3 | 64 |
| Responding to Allegations of Abuse Against Professionals/Volunteers who work with Children (LSCB) | 2 | 29 |
| Safeguarding Babies from Abuse & Neglect (LSCB) | 1 | 23 |
| Safeguarding Children and Young People in the Digital Age (LSCB) | 2 | 46 |
| Safeguarding Children for Health and Social Care Professionals (LSCB) | 3 | 59 |
| Sandstories (LSCB) | 2 | 37 |
| The Challenges faced by Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (LSCB) | 1 | 21 |
| Trustees Safeguarding Training | 2 | 20 |
| Working with Disguised Compliance (LSCB) | 1 | 23 |
| Working with Hostile or Uncooperative Families (LSCB) | 1 | 21 |
| Young people at risk of sexual exploitation | 1 | 21 |
| Young People who Self Harm (LSCB) | 4 | 51 |
| | 39 | 918 |

The total actual attendance at LSBC courses during 2018/19 was 86%, this represents an improvement in attendance from 80% in 2017/18 and 78% in 2016/17

This year has seen the phenomenally successful Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) conference with 200+ multi-agency partners benefitting from experts in the field of Adverse Childhood experience. Encouraging agencies to develop a universal and proportionate approach to identifying and responding to ACEs as part of understanding a person or family situation.

Trustee safeguarding workshops - Workforce Development across Newcastle and Gateshead arranged this training alongside the Newcastle and Gateshead Safeguarding Adult and Children's Boards and CVS. The sessions were for anyone who has a trustee role within a voluntary or community sector organisation. Two sessions were held, with good attendance and positive feedback; some have asked for additional workshops re writing policies, which we are exploring.

Training has been introduced on 'Young People at Risk of Sexual Exploitation'. This has raised awareness of how perpetrators target and groom young people to exploit them. This training has also provided information on how referrals can be made into the various services available to support the young people at risk of exploitation.

Responses from impact evaluation questionnaires highlighted the positive impact that the training had on learners' thinking and practice.

"This will influence my practice through understanding what ACE's our service users experienced as a child and how this can impact on decision making, relationship building etc in adult life." (ACEs Conference)

"I have learned so much from today, reflective working, diffusing or thinking about difficult situations and self-nurture" (Working with Hostile Families)

"I will be more mindful when working with children and young people that their behaviours may be the result of ACE's. Also it was good to learn that there can be recovery from them. (ACEs Conference)

"Better understanding of the challenges faced and their reluctance to trust and engage due to fear" (Challenges Faced by Asylum Seeking Children)

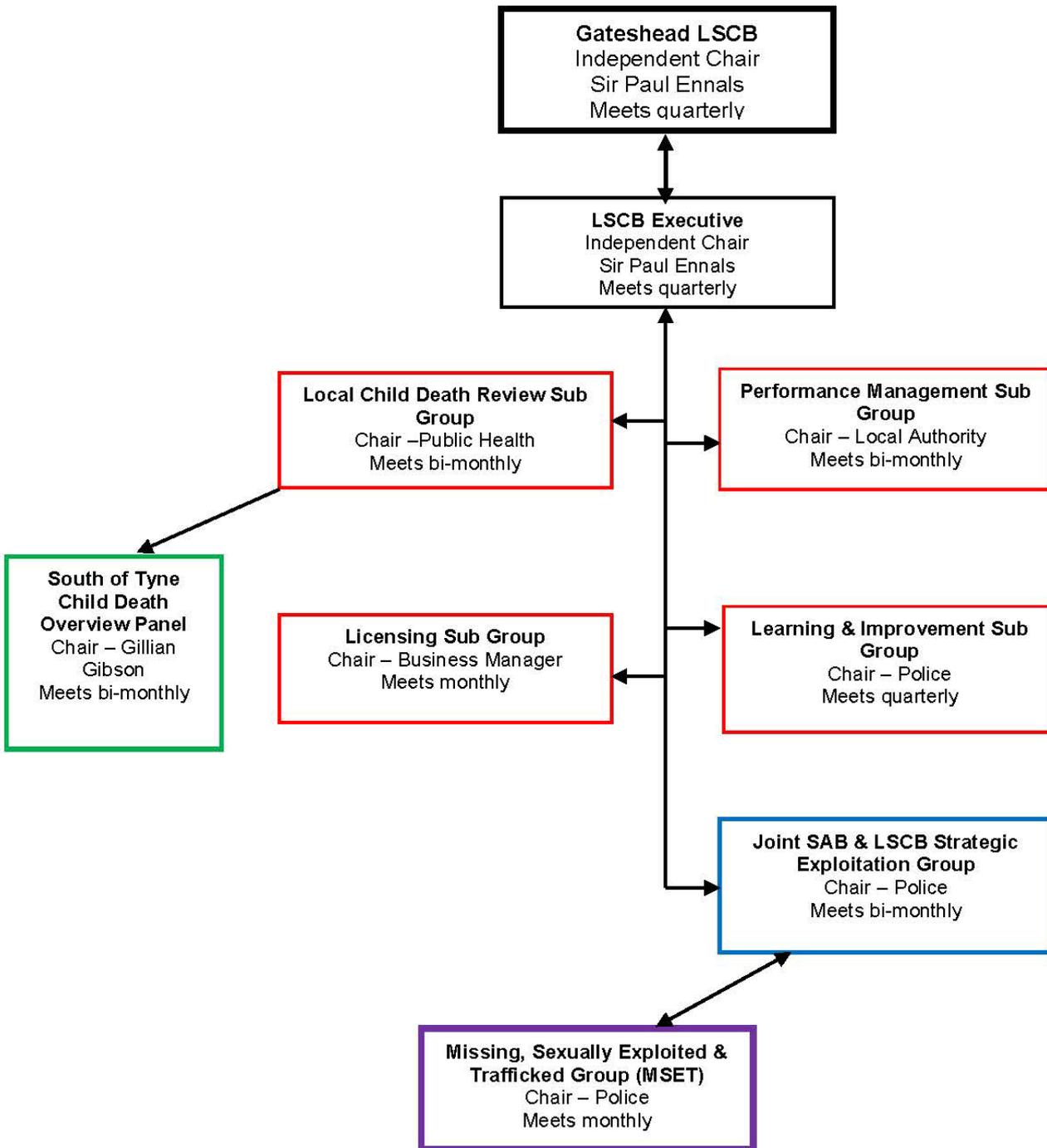
"This event was fantastic. The range of knowledge of the speakers was mind blowing and really got the point across." (ACEs Conference)

The LSCB Training Sub-Group worked throughout the year to develop and implement ad-hoc bespoke training courses. It was decided to disband this group from January 2019, with training and learning integrated within the remainder of the Sub-Groups to ensure the programme is receptive to and supports the LSCB priorities for 2019-2020.

Multi Agency trainers continue to deliver a number of LSCB courses sharing their knowledge and experience to support effective working together to safeguard children and young people.

APPENDIX 4 – SUB GROUP ACTIVITY

At 31 March 2019 Gateshead LSCB had five sub groups, one of which was shared with the Safeguarding Adults Board and operated the following structure.



All sub group chairs provide an update at each meeting of the LSCB Executive Group, reporting on progress and plans for the future.

Joint SAB & LSCB Strategic Exploitation Group (SEG)

The Strategic Exploitation Group is a sub-group of both the Safeguarding Adults Board and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. The group is responsible for overseeing all work with respect to sexual exploitation, modern slavery, trafficking and female genital mutilation in Gateshead.

The **Missing, Slavery, Exploitation and Trafficking Group (MSET)** is a sub group of the SEG. In 2018-2019 there were **46** cases discussed at MSET, 8 of them more than once. MSET members are also clear that after each meeting they must share current intelligence (e.g. hot spots, new social media apps of concern etc.) with all members of frontline staff in their team/service/agency.

Regional Review of MSET / Risk Management Group (RMG) – North & South of Tyne Strategic Safeguarding Forum asked for a review of current arrangements in each area, with a view to aligning the process across the region. A development session was held, with the aim to agree on the single name of this meeting, what a successful risk assessment toolkit should look like, the terms of reference in relation to who should be discussed and why, the escalation process, the governance and reporting mechanism to the safeguarding boards and the chairing arrangements. A regional framework was agreed, in principle, based on the model currently used South of Tyne.

The framework will be used by all LSCBs in the region to ensure a more consistent approach and improve referrals into Team Sanctuary.

The Gateshead embedded social worker attends MSET to ensure that there is early effective sharing of information and an efficient referral and allocation into the team and partners.

It is not possible to share specific case studies to demonstrate how the work of the MSET has helped reduce risks to young people and improve outcomes as this may lead to young people being identified in this report. Disruption plans have included specific actions to reduce missing episodes, disrupt relationships with inappropriate adults and work to promote self-esteem and improve individual young people's awareness of risk.

The LSCB Business Manager and Social Worker for Sanctuary South have visited schools and attended team meetings to provide training and support use of the screening tool. This included sessions to GPs and other health staff. A number of workshops and roadshows are planned for 2019-2020.

Work will also continue with regard to intelligence sharing between agencies to ensure that as many preventative and disruption tactics can be introduced and considered. This will ensure that all agencies are working together (coordinated by Team Sanctuary Intelligence) to keep children and young people safe from child exploitation, modern slavery and human trafficking. Through robust challenge by MSET panel members appropriate and effective individual safeguarding plans will be devised to reduce the risk presented in relation to child exploitation and missing and trafficked children.

Learning & Improvement Sub Group

The Learning & Improvement Sub Group has been developed to further promote the role of the Board in providing scrutiny of safeguarding practices and ensuring that multi-agency learning from practice is effectively disseminated and drives improvement in safeguarding and the promotion of children's welfare in Gateshead. The Learning & Improvement Framework approved by the Board sets out the

approach and time frame for activity. The framework is consistent with the requirements in *Working Together* (2015) and includes learning from:

- Local and regional Serious Case Reviews (SCRs)
- Child Death Reviews
- Reviews of child protection/child in need cases that fall below the threshold for a SCR
- Review or audit of practice in one or more agencies

The sub group reviewed 7 cases over the last year (and continued the work from some reviews initiated in the previous year). Two cases were subject to Rapid Review, none of these cases met the criteria for a SCR; however, it was agreed that further learning could be gained from carrying out a learning review for one of the cases, using systems methodology.

The sub group considered a range of SCR's from other LSCBs and cases across partner agencies. Some cases have been subject to deep dive management reviews where all relevant agencies across the LSCB have actively taken part to consider the learning for their agency. Learning from these cases has been identified across multi-agency services to improve practice in Gateshead.

Partners within the sub group have worked effectively to scrutinise and challenge practice, systems and frameworks taking actions back to their own agencies in order to continuously improve service delivery.

Licensing Sub Group

The purpose of the Licensing Sub Group is to ensure that the LSCB fulfils its responsibilities as the "Responsible Authority" with regard to the "protection of children from harm", which is one of the licensing objectives of the Licensing Act 2003.

The workload of the group is largely dependent on licensing applications. The group meets on a monthly basis and considers all applications submitted to Gateshead Council under the Licensing Act 2003 for premises licences, club premises certificates) and also review applications on existing licenses submitted by other parties.

The group considers each application individually and determines whether there are any implications from a child protection or safeguarding point of view. Other aspects of the licensing process, such as anti-social behaviour, are considered by other responsible authorities. If there are any concerns then the applicant may be asked to provide further information and this could lead to a representation being made to Gateshead Council's Licensing Committee. This could then lead to a licence not being granted, or being granted with conditions in the case of a new application, or a licence being revoked in the case of a review application.

The sub group reviewed 46 applications in 2018-2019, an increase from 2017-2018 when there were 37 applications. There were no safeguarding issues identified in the majority of applications – most of these were from individuals or businesses for premises licences, for example new restaurants/pubs/supermarkets opening and due regard had been given to protecting children e.g. "Challenge 25" procedures for the sale of alcohol.

The LSCB had cause to submit representations against 3 premises who had applied for review of their licence due to concerns regarding the sale of alcohol to children under 18.

A Responsible Authority Group was set up during 2018-2019 – [list of Responsible Authorities](#)

This group brings together all of the responsible authorities in Gateshead, in order to share information and consider applications against all four of the licensing objectives:

- the protection of children from harm.
- the prevention of crime and disorder.
- public safety.
- the prevention of public nuisance.

This group may supersede the Licensing Sub Group in 2019-20. This group will continue to respond to applications for new licences or reviews of existing licenses and challenge any issues that impact on the protection of children.

The LSCB Business Manager will continue to act as a link between this group and other related groups such as MSET and the Strategic Exploitation Sub Group to ensure robust links between safeguarding and licensing.

Local Child Death Review Sub Group (CDRG)

The purpose of the CDRG is to undertake multi-disciplinary reviews of the deaths of all children who were resident in Gateshead at the time of their death to better understand how and why children die. These findings are used to take action to prevent other deaths, where relevant/appropriate and improve the health and safety of Gateshead's children. The sub group's remit is determined by the statutory functions of the LSCB as set out in Regulation 6 of the LSCB Regulations 2006, made under section 14(2) of the Children Act 2004 and Chapter 5 of *Working Together* (2015).

The work of the CDRG feeds in to the South of Tyne Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP). The group collects and collates an agreed minimum data set of information on all child deaths in Gateshead, Sunderland and South Tyneside. This data set reflects the national requirements. CDOP produces a separate annual report and this is published on the LSCB website.

Sub group members continued to deliver training to clinicians and other professionals involved in child deaths as outlined in the LSCB training programme and specific to individual cases.

The LSCB was notified of the deaths of 5 children who were resident in Gateshead in 2018-2019. The majority of these deaths were neonatal cases, particularly premature babies or babies born with life limiting conditions. There were also a small number of Sudden Unexpected Deaths in Infancy (SUDI) (numbers not listed to ensure anonymity). There were no significant safeguarding issues identified with any of the cases.

Due to the timescales involved in the Child Death Review process, the group also reviewed the cases of some children who died in previous years. Again, the majority of cases were neonatal deaths.

It has been agreed that Gateshead CDRG will be part of a wider piece of work in 2019-2020 as the CDOP South of Tyne links with CDOP North of Tyne to hold a regional event and explore current child death themes. There is also consideration being given to future arrangements and how learning is shared, both regionally and nationally.

The workload of the group is determined by regional and national events and the group will continue to respond as appropriate in 2019-2020. Changes to legislation and statutory guidance may impact on the work and governance of the sub group but arrangements will continue as they are until this is clearer.

Performance Management Sub Group

The purpose of the Performance Management Sub Group is to support the LSCB in fulfilling its statutory duty to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what is done by the local authority and Board partners, individually and collectively, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and advise them on ways to improve.

Continuous performance management is at the core of ensuring the effectiveness and impact of inter-agency safeguarding activity. The sub group supports the LSCB in the monitoring, promotion and planning of high-quality practice in line with the inter-agency Performance Management Framework. The framework is used to monitor and analyse a range of quantitative and qualitative information, both via ongoing and set pieces of work. The sub group reports regularly to the Board highlighting any areas of practice that need to be addressed and identifying areas of good practice.

During 2018-19, work was carried out to refine and develop the set of performance indicators and produce a dashboard.

The LSCB continued to receive performance and data reports on the agreed set of indicators (this was coordinated by Gateshead Council on behalf of the Board). A summary of this is provided in Section 3 of this report.

Regionally, the Business Managers and Local Authority Performance Leads for all areas have developed a proposal for a shared regional dataset, scorecard and reporting templates.

The dataset has been developed to support the new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (MASA) to have a clear, robust understanding of how children and young people are safeguarded across the individual areas but also on a wider regional footprint.

This regional approach will support analysis and comparison across the 6 areas and will facilitate sharing learning and undertaking work on a wider footprint where relevant and making it easier for agencies covering more than 1 area

The full dataset proposal will be shared with each LSCB/MASA by July 2019 for all Boards to agree the draft. Once it is agreed the next stage will be consultation with relevant partners including the police, health trusts, CCGs and any other relevant service. This will be done on a regional basis wherever possible.

Policy & Procedures Sub Group

The LSCB commissions Tri.X, an external provider, to host the online LSCB Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures Manual as part of a sub-regional agreement with Sunderland and South Tyneside LSCBs.

In 2018-2019 the sub group was able to manage the online LSCB Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures on behalf of the Board.

Task and finish groups were set up in order to review and update procedures including FGM and bruising in non-mobile children protocol.

LSCB Business Managers across 6 Northumbria Police area LSCBs have reviewed procedures as part of the regional work. New shared regional procedures will go live in September 2019.

APPENDIX 5 - VOICE OF THE CHILD

LSCB Event

Gateshead Youth Assembly, Gateshead Youth Council, One Voice Youth Network and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board worked together to deliver a priority setting event for young people and LSCB members. This event integrated members of the board with a range of children and young people. Discussions took place in round table discussion, themed around the Boards priorities and safety in the community.

Early Help – summary

From the Early Help table, there was some confusion about what 'early help' is as they didn't recognise the term. However once it was explained, all young people could give examples. Young people want to get help before it gets 'too bad' especially around emotional wellbeing. There was a bit of discussion about the use of social media to promote Early Help. The feeling was that most young people use Instagram, Snapchat and YouTube, but a specific advert wouldn't work because people tend to skip those. The young people also mentioned attending PSHE lessons or in assemblies. The PSHE would be better because there are set topics, so any information or key messages could fit in with those. Also, it was felt that teachers would be best at delivering the message rather than a council worker or, even better, an older young person would probably make the young people listen.

Mental health emotional wellbeing – summary

Young people said they have access to counselling facilities in school. They said there is usually a named person they can speak to in school, however they would like to have the option to choose someone they are comfortable with to speak to.

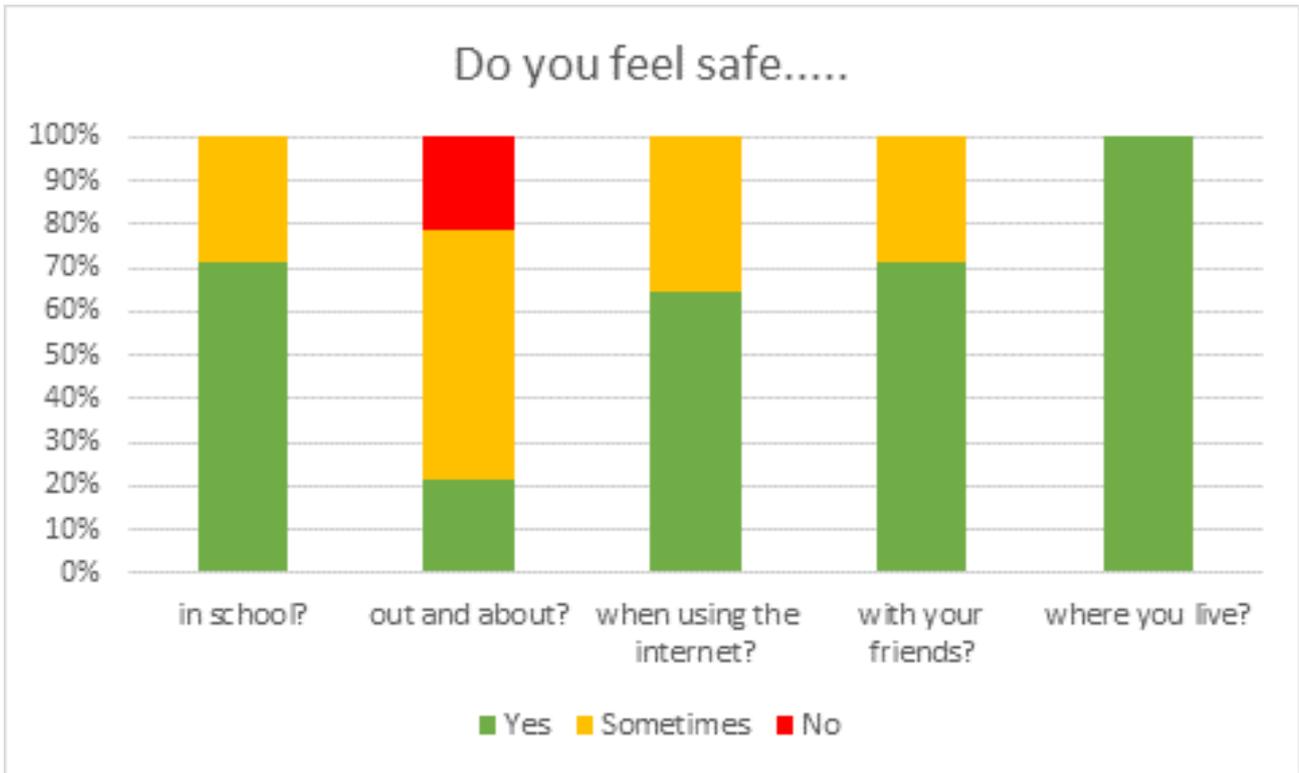
All young people could recall an assembly or presentation on the Kooth app/website. When asked how they would find out information, although some would search online, they said it is wrong to assume that young people always want web-based info, should use different ways to get information out. More needs to be done to encourage young males to talk about problems and services should remove stigma, perhaps sessions could be offered in private settings. No young people had heard of the 'single point of access'.

Safety in the Community – summary

The discussion on the 'safety in the community' table was mainly about anti-social behaviour and alcohol. There were certain areas that young people avoided (parks and metro stations in the main). We found the discussion about alcohol and how most 15 or 16 year olds get alcohol bought by their parents quite interesting, it seems some parents felt it would be safer for young people to drink indoors, rather than on the street. They also think it is easier to source cigarettes than alcohol ("everyone knows someone dodgy who can get them tabs").

We asked young people at the event to identify if they felt safe:

- In school
- Out and about
- When using the internet
- With their friends
- Where they live

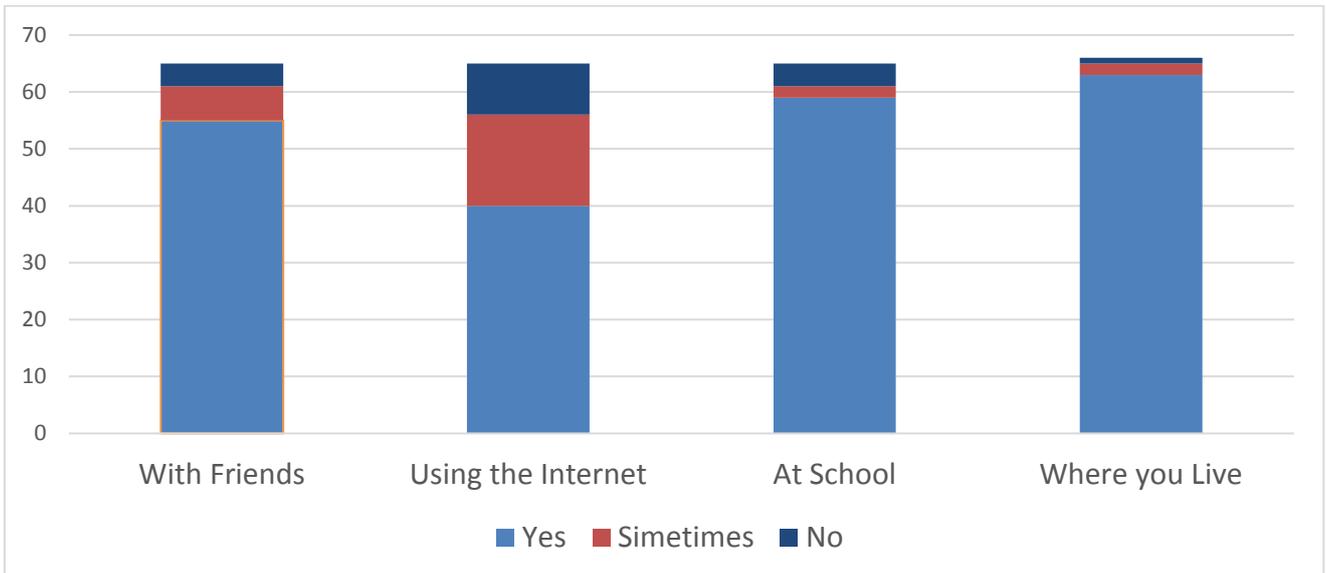


Further events will be held during 2019-2020 (as well as attendance at CYP events being held by partner agencies, where appropriate). Voice of the child is a priority in the new arrangements.

Fostering Fun Day

Gateshead foster families were invited to attend the annual fostering fun day. Various activities and workshops were available. Members of One Voice Youth Network (Gateshead’s Children in Care Council) planned and delivered a consultation activity for younger children, with support from the Children’s Rights Officer, and agreed to include a question about safety. **65** children took part and were asked their views about safety - See chart below.

[Do you feel safe...](#)



Internet Safety was the biggest concern for children at the event. Whilst many children were aware of how to keep themselves safe online, many children commented that they felt that the internet was dangerous. Some talked about not being allowed to use the internet as they might get into trouble. We are exploring further training for foster carers about safe internet use and will be refreshing guidance around internet safety.

Gateshead Youth Assembly (GYA)

GYA had another busy year in 2018/19. A copy of the GYA annual review is available via this link and the edited highlights (relating to safeguarding) are below:

- GYA continued to deliver a drop-in session for Refugee and Asylum seekers to engage with parents in order to engage with young people. GYA held a Christmas Party to over 200 people and distributed over 100 gifts to refugee and asylum seekers, with help from charity '[peace of mind](#)'. Families also went home with a big bag of culturally appropriate groceries to help over the school holidays.
- GYA are working with Gateshead Young Women's Outreach Project to develop signposting information for LGBTQ+ young people.
- GYA are delivering a range of courses around confidence and self esteem with the support of engagement officers.
- GYA wrote to CEOP to try and engage with them about the information given to young people in schools around online safety, they received a fairly bland email back not really answering their questions, so they are doing it themselves. GYA are working on a package for schools, probably in the form of a PowerPoint for assemblies – it is hoped that this will be developed and taken forward with help from the Education Reference Group (as this links to recommendations from the Durham SCR)
- One of GYA members is a St John Cadet trainer and is designing a session for young people around what to do if their friends are in danger through alcohol and drugs when they are out and about.
- GYA have worked with QE Gateshead on their 15 steps initiative, looking at the way things work for children and young people when they are admitted to hospital and how improvements can be made.

Action Plan

Thematic Priorities

| Action | Lead Officer | Target Date | Comments | Outcome |
|--|---|---------------|---|---------|
| Voice of the child | | | | |
| Receive reports throughout the year regarding partner engagement with young people including case studies and examples of good practice. | Business Manager (all Board members to contribute) | ongoing | This will continue in 2019-2020 | |
| Through new or existing arrangements seek the views of children on safeguarding issues and represent these to the LSCB. | Business Manager (all Board members to contribute) | March 2019 | Views of children and young people sought and fed back via partner agency engagement and surveys. | |
| Host an engagement event with Board members and young people and seek the views of young people on LSCB priorities. | Business Manager | November 2018 | Event held in January 2019. Further events will be held during 2019-2020 (as well as attendance at CYP events being held by partner agencies, where appropriate). | |
| Ensure that consideration is given to capturing the Voice of the Child when establishing the new arrangements in Gateshead | Independent Chair and Business Manager | March 2019 | Voice of the child is overarching priority in the new arrangements. | |
| Communication & engagement with the frontline (including schools) | | | | |
| Review and develop LSCB's communication & engagement Strategy | Business Manager | October 2018 | Communication and engagement for the new safeguarding partnership to be developed in 2019-2020 | |

| Action | Lead Officer | Target Date | Comments | Outcome |
|--|--|----------------|--|---------|
| Review LSCB Communications to ensure the right information is being disseminated to the right people. | Business Manager | September 2018 | Distribution lists have been reviewed and updated, meaning that information can be targeted to the right people. LSCB members are also proactive in ensuring information is shared within their own agencies. | |
| Develop and maintain LSCB website and information updates to ensure appropriate information is being disseminated correctly. | Business Manager | Ongoing | New website shared with SAB – child protection referrals are submitted online via the website. Information is kept updated. | |
| Raise awareness of the LSCB across the children's workforce and local communities. | Business Manager (all board members to contribute) | ongoing | As well as new website, we are able to communicate via social media. Active twitter account which is used daily. Excellent way to engage with other safeguarding partnerships and local community. | |
| Audit the LSCBs effectiveness in providing key safeguarding messages to frontline staff. | PQA Chair | March 2019 | Communication with frontline staff has improved. Schools staff, social workers and early help workers have all reported they feel more involved and aware of the work of the LSCB. | |
| Early Help & Early Intervention | | | | |
| Monitor the impact of the new Early Help Strategy and re-model of services and receive assurances on the impact on safeguarding children (including new domestic abuse service) | Service Director Early Help | March 2019 | Early Help Strategy has been updated, with input from LSCB. Ofsted commented positively about the EH strategy and the EH service, and the impact on children and their families. | |
| Evaluate the effectiveness of different aspects of the child's journey into help and services, the quality of the decisions made by individual agencies and the quality of multi-agency processes. | PQA Chair & L&I Chair | March 2019 | During the last year Early Help has developed a robust performance management framework and workbook, modelled on that of social care. It has also developed a comprehensive data dashboard which details performance. | |

| Action | Lead Officer | Target Date | Comments | Outcome |
|---|--|-------------|--|---------|
| | | | Scrutiny for the performance and effectiveness of Early Help is provided through Early Help performance clinics, LSCB, Children's Services Portfolio meetings, Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Health and Wellbeing Board. | |
| Mental health & Emotional Wellbeing | | | | |
| Receive assurances that mental health services commissioned for children in Gateshead are adequate in terms of safeguarding, including waiting times. | Executive Director, Patient Safety and Designated Nurse, CCG | Ongoing | Regular reports to LSCB – this continues to be priority for safeguarding partnership in 2019-2020 | |
| Through good links with the Health & Wellbeing Board (HWBB), continue the LSCB oversight of CAMHS and the "whole system" approach to Emotional Wellbeing, specifically with regard to emotional resilience for CYP. | Independent Chair & Business Manager | March 2019 | Good links with HWBB, through membership and sharing of information. This will continue in 2019-2020. | |
| Child Sexual Exploitation & Missing Children | | | | |
| The Strategic Sexual Exploitation Group and MSET group will raise awareness of and develop best practice guidance relating to Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing Children (regional collaboration) | Strategic SEG Chair & Business Manager | March 2019 | MSET process and Exploitation Framework updated and now shared regionally. This will mean consistent approach to risk assessment and disruption across the region. AMSET established and being piloted, with progress and learning shared. | |
| The Strategic Sexual Exploitation Group will oversee multi-agency support for children and their families through MSET and Return Home Interview arrangements. | Strategic SEG Chair | March 2019 | Missing protocol updated, all children who go missing will be offered RHI, regardless of how long they have been missing. | |
| Develop regional C/SE strategy (regional collaboration) | Business Manager (via BM Network) | March 2019 | This is being included with the regional work that is ongoing. | |

| Action | Lead Officer | Target Date | Comments | Outcome |
|--|---------------------|-------------|---|---------|
| Ensure that missing children interviews are being undertaken in a timely manner and that information is being used to help disrupt and prevent further exploitation. | Strategic SEG Chair | Ongoing | RHI form reviewed and updated, to ensure push and pull factors are considered and allows for more narrative (including any previous missing episodes). Guidance notes for completion are now available. RHIs are now recorded on carefirst. | |
| Complete an audit of the effectiveness of multi-agency working in improving outcomes for children identified as at risk of CSE | PQA Chair | March 2019 | This will be completed during 2019-2020 but will focus on child exploitation (including sexual and criminal). | |

Strategic Priorities

Page 46

| Action | Lead Officer | Target Date | Comments | Outcome |
|--|---|-------------|---|---------|
| Leadership | | | | |
| Work to ensure that future arrangements are fit for purpose and enable the Gateshead Safeguarding Children Board to build on the work of the LSCB and strengthen the position further. | LSCB Independent Chair and Business Manager | March 2019 | <p>Current safeguarding arrangements within Gateshead are robust and well respected. The new arrangements are designed to offer us the opportunity to work more effectively and with joint purpose to protect children and young people at both a local and regional level.</p> <p>Real progress has been made in strengthening regional collaboration across Northumbria, in 2018-19. During 2019-20, further work will be completed on integrating functions across the Northumbria footprint, and a wider structure review will be undertaken in the spring of 2020.</p> | |

| Action | Lead Officer | Target Date | Comments | Outcome |
|---|--|-------------|---|---------|
| | | | It is envisaged that in September 2020 new arrangements will be introduced. | |
| Challenge | | | | |
| Further strengthen joint working between boards (e.g. the SAB, HWB and CSB) in particular re those areas of work that cross over, such as domestic abuse, mental health and PREVENT | LSCB Independent Chair and Business Manager | March 2019 | <p>The proposals for implementation in September 2019 represent a transitional process. Some streamlining is proposed to the current arrangements, with greater integration between the children and adult boards.</p> <p>During 2019-20 we will be progressing and developing our collaborative work with the Safeguarding Adults Board as well as across other key partnerships (including the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Community Safety Partnership). This is reflected in the new plan.</p> | |
| Receive assurances that services operate with a "think family" approach where there is adult mental health, substance / alcohol use and domestic abuse and this is impacting on children's safety | Executive Director, Patient Safety and Designated Nurse, CCG | March 2019 | The commitment to maximising the 'think family' approach is reflected in the new safeguarding plan. Business Manager is a member of the Substance Misuse Strategy and Drug-related Deaths Oversight Group | |
| Learning | | | | |
| Review cases where there are lessons to be learned and ensure lessons are disseminated and actioned as appropriate | Chair of Learning & Improvement Sub Group and Business Manager | Ongoing | A number of cases have been reviewed by L&I sub group, with procedures and training being updated, and lessons disseminated across agencies. There is SCR which is currently on hold due to criminal proceedings. | |

Gateshead LSCB Annual Report 2018-2019

| Action | Lead Officer | Target Date | Comments | Outcome |
|---|--|-------------|--|---------|
| Implement and embed the findings of any Board or partner agency inspections and cascade the learning as appropriate | Relevant LSCB Executive members and Business Manager | Ongoing | Reports re inspections have been presented at LSCB, and learning/actions cascaded. This has resulted in some changes to processes, which LSCB has supported. | |



GATESHEAD
**safeguarding
children**
partnership

Gateshead's Safeguarding Plan

2019-2020



Gateshead's Safeguarding Plan 2019

Summary:

Current safeguarding arrangements within Gateshead are robust and well respected. Outline plans for a more streamlined structure and system were agreed in principle by statutory partners during 2018-19, subject to final approval. Since then, real progress has been made in strengthening regional collaboration across Northumbria, with the support of DfE Early Adopter funding. This programme is exploring which key safeguarding functions can be more effectively undertaken across a wider footprint, and which functions need to retain a place-based focus at local authority level.

The proposals for implementation in September 2019 represent a transitional process. Some streamlining is proposed to the current arrangements, with greater integration between the children and adult boards; however, much of the current structure will be retained for at least 12 months.

During the course of 2019-20, further work will be completed on integrating functions across the Northumbria footprint, and a wider structure review will be undertaken in the spring of 2020. It is envisaged that in September 2020 new arrangements will be introduced.

We are committed to the aspirations and content set out in this plan and will engage widely to ensure its success. We are also committed to the need to respond flexibly and creatively to new challenges as they arise.

Our new arrangements are designed to offer us the chance to work more effectively and with joint purpose to protect children and young people and support those who most need our help into adulthood. We agree and state our intention to ensure these plans help us continue to promote and improve the safety, welfare and health of children and families in Gateshead.



Caroline O'Neill

Caroline O'Neill
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Scott Hall

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Introduction

The Children and Social Work Act (2017) set out provisions which replaces Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB) with new flexible working arrangements led by 3 safeguarding partners (local authorities, chief officers of police and clinical commissioning groups), and places a duty on those partners to make arrangements to work together with any relevant agencies for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children within the area.

Under the new legislation, the responsibility for Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) has also changed. Responsibility for SCRs will move to a National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (the Panel).

The Panel will commission and publish reviews of serious child safeguarding cases which it thinks raise issues that are complex or of national importance. Local safeguarding partners will still be required to complete local reviews where the partners believe there are lessons to be learned.

The Government published new guidance in 2018 that set out how local areas should work to replace Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB) with new partnership arrangements.

This plan sets out the transitional arrangements for Gateshead from September 2019.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 requires that as local safeguarding partners we set out arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children including identifying and responding to their needs.

A safeguarding partner in relation to our local authority area is defined under the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act, 2017) as:

- Gateshead Council
- Newcastle Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group
- Northumbria Police

Our Safeguarding Plan sets out our intention to work together and with wider partners to safeguard and promote positive outcomes for children and young people.

Over the last two years safeguarding partners have been strengthening the levels of joint working across the Northumbria region via a Safeguarding Forum supported by Early Adopter Funding from the Department of Education. The region covers the 6 local authority areas of Northumberland, North Tyneside, Newcastle, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland; 5 CCGs of Northumbria, North Tyneside, Newcastle & Gateshead, South Tyneside, and Sunderland; and 1 Police region.

In February 2019 members of the Forum agreed on a hybrid model as the preferred option for future safeguarding developments. This reflected a wider framework with a local focus but one that creates the opportunity to adopt a wider regional footprint in partnership with

other safeguarding partnership arrangements. Often described as more of an 'evolutionary' model rather than 'revolutionary'.

The plan is based on a proven track record of working in partnership to improve outcomes.

An Ofsted inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) across children's social care services took place in April/May which looked at early help, social work, commissioning of services and education. The LA was rated **Good**. Ofsted reported that children and families in Gateshead are benefiting from a good-quality service from skilled and passionate staff who care deeply about them, and there are well-established and developed strategic partnerships which are supporting effective multi-agency working.

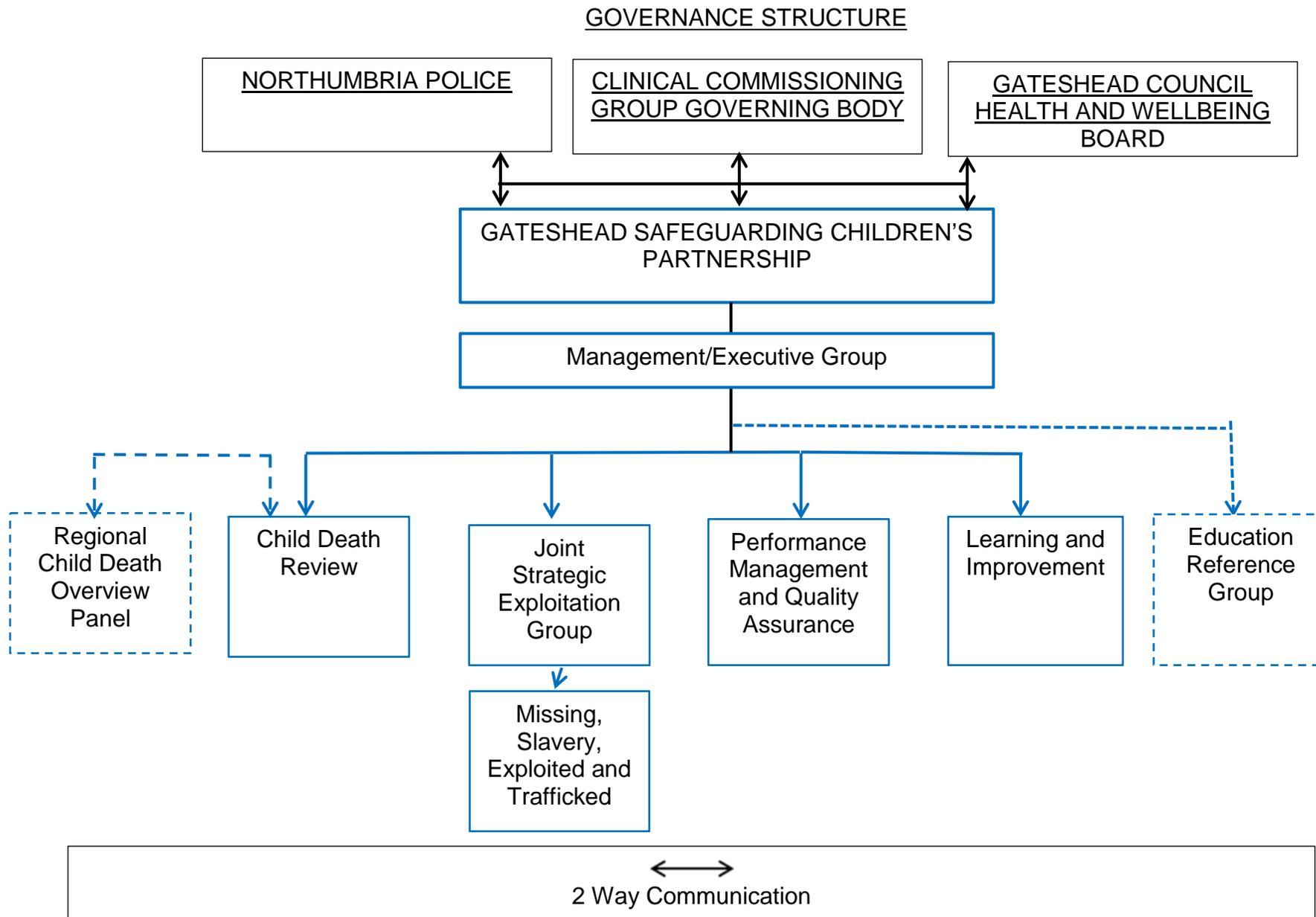
In the revisit to Northumbria Police in January 2019, HMICFRS identified that the Force is making sustainable improvements in child protection and safeguarding outcomes.

In 2018, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) conducted an inspection of Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust (NTW) services and once again rated them as **Outstanding**. NTW are one of only four Mental Health and Disability Trusts in the country to be rated as such, as at 1 April 2019. The CQC reported the leadership, governance structures and culture within the trust were used to effectively drive and improve the delivery of high quality person-centred care and the trust worked collaboratively with other organisations to ensure the highest provision of care for patients.

Queen Elizabeth Hospital (Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust) was rated **Good** in 2015; currently awaiting inspection report for 2019.

Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust (0-19 service) was rated **Good** in 2019.

Structure: The diagram below is illustrative of the potential structure going forward.



We are committed to maximising the 'Think Family' approach by progressing and developing our collaborative work with the Safeguarding Adults Board as well as across other key partnerships. These include those relevant Boards within the three of the statutory partners, the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Community Safety Board. We believe this will better reflect the wider safeguarding context. We are committed to the aspirations and content set out in this plan and will engage widely to ensure its success. We are also committed to the need to respond flexibly and creatively to new challenges as they arise. The new arrangements are designed to offer us the opportunity to work more effectively and with joint purpose to protect children and young people at both a local and regional level.

At the heart of our work is one simple concept: ***that every child should grow up feeling safe and in a loving, secure environment, free from abuse, neglect and crime, enabling them to enjoy a happy and healthy childhood in which they can fulfil their social and economic potential***

Priorities going forward

The current priorities of the Safeguarding Board were agreed over a one year period 2018-19, having previously been over three years. Due to breadth of these priorities it is suggested to keep them the same for the next 12 months but to include the transitional arrangements with the actions for 2019-2020.

The current priorities that could be adapted are:

- Voice of the child
- Early Help & Early Intervention
- Mental health & Emotional Wellbeing
- Child Exploitation & Missing

Transitional Arrangements

The Gateshead Safeguarding children Partnership Plan will come into effect for 12 months from September 2019. The document sets out areas that will be a key part of the transitional arrangements and ones that will be subject to review and assessment of impact in Spring 2020.

Safeguarding Partners and Relevant Agencies

Leadership, Governance & Accountability

Strong leadership is critical for the Gateshead Multi-agency safeguarding arrangements to be effective in bringing together various organisations and agencies.

All three safeguarding partners have equal and joint responsibility for local safeguarding arrangements underpinned by equitable and proportionate funding.

Locally, the lead representatives have delegated their functions to the:

- Strategic Director (DCS) of Care, Wellbeing and Learning – Gateshead Council
- Director of Nursing and Quality Newcastle Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group*

- Designated Chief Superintendent – Northumbria Police

These safeguarding partners have the responsibility and authority for ensuring full participation with the children and young people's multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, though the lead representative remains accountable for any actions or decisions taken on behalf of their agency.

****The CCG will continue to represent NEAS/ NHS England / NTW / GHFT and STFT as part of their formal role***

The lead representatives, or those they have delegated their authority to, are able to:

- Speak with authority for the safeguarding partner they represent
- Take decisions on behalf of their organisation or agency and commit them on policy, resourcing and practice matters
- Hold their own organisation or agency to account on how effectively they participate and implement the local arrangements

Membership of the Safeguarding Children Partnership

The core membership of the Partnership:

- Independent Chair (during transitional period)
- Gateshead Council Chief Executive or nominated deputy
- Chief Constable or nominated deputy
- CCG Chief Executive or nominated deputy
- (all deputies will be part of the senior management team in their organisation)
- Chair of the Safeguarding Adults Board
- Director of Public Health

Relevant Agencies

The strength of local partnership working is predicated on the safeguarding partners working collaboratively together with relevant agencies, whose involvement the safeguarding partners consider is required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership will engage local organisations and agencies to collaborate and provide targeted support to children and families. The local approach also enables joint identification of, and response to existing and emerging needs, and to agreeing priorities to improve outcomes for children and young people.

The Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency (England) Regulations 2018 sets out the list of relevant agencies that are required to work under the auspices of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

It is important to note that:

- although safeguarding partner organisations are not referred to in the regulations, their staff are subject to the Children's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA)

- that certain key agencies are not listed in the regulations, as their functions are commissioned or otherwise overseen by one or more of the safeguarding partners – for example, GPs, dentists and mental health service providers are already represented variously through the inclusion of CCG’s NHS England and Foundation Trust.
- the list of relevant agencies is intentionally focussed at a strategic, agency-based level – it is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all bodies and individuals which come into contact with children

There are relevant agencies in Gateshead who can actively contribute to helping and protecting children. The list of local agencies (appendix) may change overtime to reflect the journey of travel.

Other organisations and agencies not identified in the relevant agency regulations will be included in the local safeguarding arrangements. Examples of these include the Fire and Rescue Service, Gateshead Housing Company and the voluntary and faith sector.

Where a relevant agency has a national remit such as the British Transport Police and CAFCASS the safeguarding partners will collaborate and take account of that agency’s individual responsibilities and potential contributions towards a number of local safeguarding children arrangements.

It is envisaged that subgroups will include representation from the three statutory partners with the added value of the partners who are currently involved. During the transitional year each agency will have the opportunity to be included on the sub groups.

Early year’s settings, schools, colleges and other education providers

Early years providers play a crucial role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, as defined by their duties under Section 40 of the Childcare Act 2006. There are robust arrangements in place at a strategic and operational level to engage with early years providers to ensure they are fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities, for example through section 11 Safeguarding audits and statutory Ofsted Inspection reports.

Safeguarding partners also acknowledge the pivotal role that schools, colleges and other educational providers play in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, as detailed in the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018.

There are well established, collaborative relationships with schools and colleges, which are built on a variety of open and transparent partnership arrangements across Gateshead. These include the primary and secondary Head Teacher Forums. There is an Education Reference Group which we hope will continue to provide a key safeguarding reference point for the Partnership as well as having a standing agenda item for feeding back any relevant information to and from the Partnership Board.

Geographical Area

The boundaries for the Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership will be those of Gateshead Council. However, work will continue with the regional collaboration via the Business Managers network and the North and South Regional Safeguarding Forum as outlined on pages 14-16.

Strategic Partnership Arrangements in Gateshead

All three Strategic Partners will sign up to an updated Memorandum of Understanding that will help to clarify key issues and outline the process for escalation of concerns to other key Boards. This clarity and understanding will ensure that the partners are aligning their work and resources and supporting each other by delivering on a 'Think Family' approach to secure better outcomes.

The Partnership will deliver against an agreed work plan related to agreed strategic priorities and will report accordingly to the other aligned partnerships as well as their own, e.g. Health and Wellbeing Board, Community Safety Board, CCG Governing Body, Police and the regional Safeguarding Forum.

The long-term Independent scrutiny of the Gateshead Partnership is yet to be determined. It has been agreed to maintain the role of the Independent Chair for the 12 month transitional period.

The Safeguarding Partnership will be made up of:

Safeguarding Children Partnership Board – led by the three safeguarding partners and additional key multi-agency partners.

- Independent Chair
- Director of Children's Service or nominated deputy
- Chief Constable or nominated deputy
- CCG Chief Executive or nominated deputy
- (all deputies will be part of the senior management team in their organisation)
- Chair of the Safeguarding Adults Board
- Representation from Community Safety Board
- Director of Public Health
- (Community & Voluntary Sector)
- Education representation Nominated Headteacher / rep from Education Reference Group
- Gateshead Housing Company
- National Probation Service
- Community Rehabilitation Community
- Youth Justice Service

The purpose of the Board is to be the decision making body to oversee the agreed multi-agency plan to protect children and young people. The Board will review progress and assess strengths and areas for developments. This will include the oversight of the regional performance score card as well as other regional developments.

The Board will have a fixed core membership drawn from organisations across the safeguarding partnership in Gateshead, the list of relevant agencies as set out in Working Together 2018, and with the additional flexibility to co-opt other relevant professionals to discuss certain agenda items as and when appropriate.

Management / Executive Group – made up of representation of the three statutory partners and Chairs of the sub groups. The key aim of the group will be to keep the business of the Partnership on track and monitor the progress and impact measures against each priority. They will meet on a quarterly basis.

Sub Groups will include:

Learning and Improvement Group – focus on co-ordinating the outcome of any scrutiny and assurance activity, oversight and learning from Child Safeguarding Practice Review / Safeguarding Adult Reviews and to potentially contribute to the regional Learning and Improvement Framework

Learning and Improvement Group Cases that require a practice review will be referred on to the Learning and Improvement Group that will have responsibility for commissioning an Independent Reviewer. The Learning and Improvement Group will be responsible for maintaining oversight of the practice review and reporting progress to the Children’s Safeguarding Partnership.

Other cases that are not notifiable incidents but present opportunities for learning will be referred directly to the Learning and Improvement Group for them to consider whether a single agency review or local learning review would be appropriate.

A copy of all published reports will be sent to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and the What Works Centre for Children’s Social Care within seven days of being published.

The purpose of the Learning and Improvement Group is to promote a culture of continuous multi-agency learning and improvement through coordination of the review of serious cases and the development and communication of training, guidance, resources and tools. The group will ensure a process exists for evaluating the effectiveness and impact of the findings and recommendations from practice reviews, performance management activity and multi-agency learning, including any areas for development from single and multi-agency inspections by regulatory bodies.

The commissioning and delivery of interagency training and learning events will be overseen by the Learning & Improvement Group and will be informed from a variety of sources. These will include, learning from local and national serious safeguarding practice reviews; other local quality assurance functions such as multi-agency case audits; and changes in national guidance or legislation.

The content of all courses will be evaluated to measure the extent of acquired learning. The Learning and Improvement Group will dip sample and audit single and multi-agency training in order to assure that the content is valid, up to date and delivered by persons with appropriate knowledge and skills – this will be achieved using task & finish group.

Joint Strategic Exploitation Group (JSEG) – The Joint Strategic Exploitation Sub Group is a sub group of both the Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership (GSCP) and Gateshead Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB).

The remit of the group is to lead on the development of strategic work in relation to exploitation, including Child Sexual Exploitation and Adult Sexual Exploitation, modern slavery, trafficking, and criminal exploitation.

The group will contribute to the safeguarding of children, young people and adults vulnerable to exploitation and improve outcomes by:

- Considering the implications of new policy, legislation, research and guidance.
- Exploring best practice on a regional basis and, where possible, aligning procedures
- Developing practice guidance for responding to incidents
- Developing a preventative approach
- Developing learning and improvement opportunities
- Establishing the current provision of support for victims

The group will have oversight of the Missing, Slavery, Exploitation and Trafficked Group (MSET) and the Adult Missing, Sexually Exploited and Trafficked Group (AMSET).

The group will develop and maintain links with other relevant partnerships.

Missing, Slavery, Exploited and Trafficked (MSET) – the local group will continue but strengthen the link with adults at risk of exploitation in order to give the same level of scrutiny to adult cases. This in turn will help to develop a local exploitation profile that can be fed into the regional work around exploitation.

Performance Management & Quality Assurance Group – this sub group is the key to keeping the partnership focused on safeguarding issues of a local, regional and national interest. It will lead on the multi-agency audits, quality assurance of all partners, scrutiny of external inspection reports, and input from children and young people. In addition, it will also assess the effectiveness of the help (including early help) being provided to children and families.

The PMQA will report up to the Children’s Safeguarding Partnership on what is working well and what is not so that there is a clear line of sight on the quality and effectiveness of practice.

PMQA is to be attended by Senior Managers (or Assistant Directors) across the statutory safeguarding partners, and relevant agencies and chair/ deputy chair across various partnership forums.

There are two main functions of PMQA;

- 1) to seek assurances from agencies operating in Gateshead that they are safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and
- 2) to act as a critical friend to agencies working with children.

To achieve this the PMQA will oversee a multi-agency key performance indicator set, single & multi-agencies audits and will work with Youth Council, Children in Care Council and other youth groups to ensure children are part of the quality assurance processes.

All groups will meet on a quarterly basis and the current effective arrangements for the distribution of papers etc. remain.

Rapid Review Group – A local Rapid Review Group will be established to receive and consider whether notifiable incidents meet the criteria for a local or national child safeguarding practice review. The aim of this rapid review is to enable safeguarding partners to:

- gather the facts about the case, as far as they can be readily established at the time. discuss whether there is any immediate action needed to ensure children’s safety and share any learning appropriately
- consider the potential for identifying improvements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- decide what steps Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership should take next, including whether or not to undertake a child safeguarding practice review.

The Rapid Review Process (see Appendix x) shows how cases should be referred to the Rapid Review Group and how that group will respond within 15 working days of becoming aware of the incident. All recommendations will be shared with the Panel, Department for Education and OFSTED.

During the transition process, the Independent Chair will be the decision point regarding child safeguarding practice reviews and any recommendations for serious case reviews.

Plans to Date and Going Forward

Local – it is anticipated that the key focus of the revised safeguarding arrangements will be based on a dual ‘Back to Practice’/ ‘Think Family’ basis where there will be a stronger connection between strategic and operational safeguarding functions that better aligns with safeguarding practice within the Partnership, demonstrating compliance, overview and evidencing impact for children and families.

There is the potential to strengthen the current MSET arrangements both at a local and regional level with greater alignment with Operation Sanctuary.

In addition, further collaborative working will be progressed with the Adult Safeguarding Board and the Community Safety Board. The more we progress towards a joint collaborative model the more we can add more substance and evidence to the ‘Think Family’ approach. In addition, we will be evidencing maximising the use of partner’s time, commitment and wider understanding of safeguarding across the life course.

It is important to consider the current and/or future arrangements within the organisations of the three statutory partners which may influence any local plans and /or arrangements.

Regional – the Business Managers across the region have made considerable progress on securing robust integrated and collaborative arrangements. These have included:

Safeguarding Policies and Procedures – agreed shared regional set of safeguarding policies and procedures. This will ensure greater levels of consistency across the region in terms of practice and provide some level of efficiency in relation to costs, maintenance and review.

Next Steps: Following the success of this piece of work the next steps are to explore the development of a regional joint multi-agency threshold / effective help document and referral form.

Performance dataset and score card – this has been agreed and will be introduced during 2019. This will provide more substance opportunities for comparative analysis, trends, themes, gaps and strengths in provision from which a regional approach can be taken to address.

Next Steps: improve the quality of the narrative and analysis and explore what elements of the performance dataset could be undertaken regionally and within what areas. Develop the role and actions of the local quality assurance process to align with the potential of a regional thematic approach to areas of data / performance.

Learning from Serious Case reviews and learning reviews – successful regional collaboration has resulted in the production of a regional electronic learning resource based on the theme of vulnerabilities in babies. The resource allows access to all materials produced across the region on this theme. This is both a cost and time effective resource in terms of increasing the level of shared learning across all areas.

Next steps: Develop additional regional learning resources across both children and adults.

Section 11 Safeguarding Audit – a shared S11 audit tool has been agreed across the region. It is anticipated that this will take place at the same time in each area. This will be a great saving of time for those partners who work across the region. Having one audit tool will allow for both a local and regional comparison and analysis of findings. The regional themes can then support the development of future regional priorities.

Next steps: consider building in the S11 audit into wider multi-agency audit process and develop a similar model for a regional Section 175 audit for schools and GPs.

Missing, Slavery, Exploitation and Trafficked – there has been an agreed regional approach to the running of MSET groups, incorporating adult sexual exploitation. The areas of transitions and involvement of adult cases of concern needs to be strengthened in order to be a robust regional approach.

Next Steps: explore the possibility of developing one regional strategic MSET group. This group would have oversight on the trend, hotspots and data analysis across the region from which agreed collaborative actions could be implemented and monitored.

Local Safeguarding Practice Review Guidance - work in progress on developing an agreed shared procedure (flow chart at appendix 1 being used to help develop regional framework). There is

already a joint commissioning platform for securing independent chairs and authors where required.

Next steps: consideration to be given to a shared regional approach to the approval and learning from reviews. The regional resource is a good starting point that has the potential to be developed.

Domestic Abuse Prevention - mapping work has already been completed to explore the potential for a shared prevention regional strategy. Proposals for a joint public awareness campaign expected June 2019.

Next Steps: explore the opportunities for the shared commissioning of domestic abuse programmes and sharing of resources.

Domestic Abuse is just one of the issues common across the region. Additional issues that could be tackled include neglect, early help and children in custody.

Multi-Agency Training – as safeguarding training is common to all Safeguarding Partnerships there is a real opportunity to take a regional approach. This could be a ‘hub and spoke’ model whereby one area co-ordinates the training offer with the potential for the other local areas, the spokes, delivering bespoke local training dependent upon local needs.

An option paper has gone to the Forum but no discussion / decision has taken place as yet.

National and Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews - The Learning and Improvement sub group will have responsibility for the local process for identifying and making decisions on whether to undertake reviews, how lessons are learnt and embedded in the online safeguarding policies and procedures. The sub group will manage the arrangements for commissioning and publishing national and local child safeguarding practice reviews. During the transition process, the Independent Chair will be the decision point regarding child safeguarding practice reviews and any recommendations for SCR.

The National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (the Panel) is responsible for identifying and overseeing the review of serious child safeguarding cases which, in its view, raise issues that are complex or of national importance. The Panel will also maintain oversight of the system of national and local reviews and how effectively it is operating.

Scrutiny and Assurance

The new safeguarding arrangements will continue to reflect the current commitment and healthy culture of challenge and scrutiny already evident within the current local safeguarding arrangements. The current Board has evolved into an environment that is conducive to robust scrutiny and constructive challenge.

Locally, there is a culture of challenge and holding partners to account. There are embedded systems and processes for professional challenge and there is evidence of scrutiny and assurance arrangements in place at all levels across our safeguarding partner organisations.

There is an ongoing drive and commitment to ensure continuous improvement leading to better outcomes and experiences for our children, young people and families. The North East-Northumbria early adopter status has provided opportunities to further test and develop innovative approaches to scrutiny and assurance. These are outlined on pages 5-6.

Independent Scrutiny

The independent scrutiny function as set out in Working Together 2018, which will provide the critical challenge and appraisal of Gateshead's safeguarding partnership arrangements in relation to children and young people. The three safeguarding partners are responsible for determining local arrangements including involving other agencies. The role of independent scrutiny will form part of these arrangements and do the following:

- Provide assurance in judging the effectiveness of services to protect children and young people
- Assist when there is disagreement between the leaders responsible for protecting children in the agencies involved in multi-agency arrangements
- Support a culture and environment conducive to robust scrutiny and constructive challenge

The three key partners will develop a range of key questions in terms of the scrutiny function.

Whilst the decision on how best to implement a robust system of independent scrutiny is to be made locally, safeguarding partners should ensure that the scrutiny is objective, acts as a constructive critical friend and promotes reflection to drive continuous improvement.

Funding Arrangements

Safeguarding partners will be required to provide equitable and proportionate funding to the Gateshead Safeguarding Partnership. The funding needs to be sufficient to cover all elements of the arrangements, including the cost of local child safeguarding practice reviews.

In order to support the transitional plans the budget for 2019-2020 will remain the same as previous year. Future funding will be reviewed in January 2020.

Business Support – The Safeguarding Partners will provide joint funding for business support to the Partnership to ensure its effective functioning, including training.

The Local Authority will provide legal and communications advice to the Safeguarding Partners and the Partnership, however, individual organisations reserve the right to seek advice provided by their organisation.

Voice and Engagement

The ambition within the new safeguarding arrangements is to continue to engage with the ‘experts by experience’, all those children and young people who experience services, particularly the harder to engage. This remains one of our priorities.

Partners remain committed to continue and improve engaging with children, young people and families at an individual, service and strategic level. We will make use of the various systems, groups and forums in place to gather the views of children, young people and families.

We will work with established groups and forums to encourage children and young people to have their say, share their views and experiences, challenge and support local decision makers and shape and influence strategic planning, commissioning and service provision. Emerging issues, themes, and outcomes of engagement will be shared with the Safeguarding Partnership.

Multi-Agency Thresholds

The multi-agency threshold guidance outlines Gateshead’s processes involved in decision-making when determining the level of support a child and family may require.

This document has the potential to evolve as part of the transitional arrangements in terms of the way partners work collectively to support families.

Annual Report and Review

In order to bring transparency for children, families and all practitioners about the activity undertaken, the Safeguarding Partnership will publish an annual report. The report will include what the Partnership has done as a result of the new arrangements, including child safeguarding practice reviews, and how effective these arrangements have been in practice. The report will also include:

- Evidence of the impact of the work undertaken by the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies, including training, and an analysis of the difference it has made for children and families from early help to looked after children and care leavers
- An analysis of any areas where there has been little or no evidence of progress on agreed priorities
- A record of decisions and actions taken by the partners in the report’s period (or planned to be taken) to implement the recommendations of any local and national safeguarding practice reviews, including any resulting improvements
- Ways in which the partners have sought and utilised feedback from children and families to inform their work and influence service provision

The report will be submitted to the relevant agencies and Boards for additional scrutiny and will be available on the Safeguarding Partnership website

Dispute Resolution

All agencies working with children and young people in Gateshead remain subject to the pan regional Safeguarding Procedures and its Escalation Policy – *‘Resolution of professional disagreements between workers relating to the safety of children’*.

The Safeguarding Partnership all relevant agencies will be expected to adhere to the policy.

Where necessary, the statutory safeguarding partners may escalate to the Leader of the Council, the Chair of the CCG and the Chief Constable of GM Police. The Independent Chair should escalate to the relevant Secretary of State only as a final resort.

Whistleblowing Procedures provide an additional important route for staff to raise concerns in a safe process that protects their position, if this is a concern. The Children’s Safeguarding Partnership will each adhere to their own whistleblowing procedures.

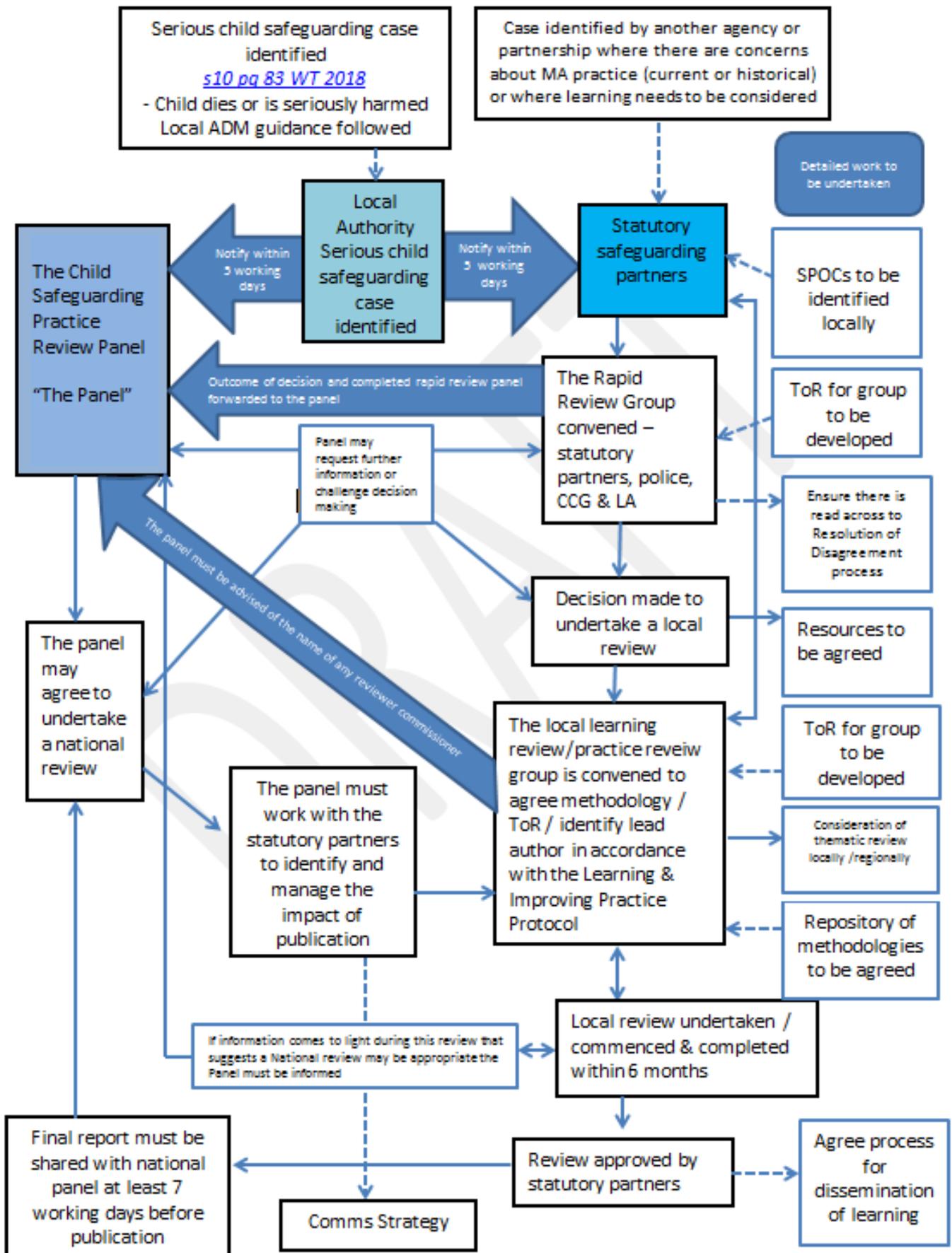
Information Sharing

The Partnership members shall keep confidential any information obtained because of inter-agency co-operation unless disclosure of the information is necessary to discharge the functions of the Safeguarding Partners as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and the local safeguarding arrangements.

Safeguarding partners may require any person, organisation or agency to provide them, any relevant agency, reviewer or another person or organisation or agency, with specified information. This must be information which enables and assists the Safeguarding Partners to perform their functions to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Gateshead, including local and national child safeguarding practice reviews.

The person or organisation to whom a request is made must comply with such a request and if they do not do so, the Safeguarding Partners may take legal action against them. As public authorities, Safeguarding Partners must be aware of their own responsibilities under the relevant information law and have regard to guidance provided by the Information Commissioner’s Office when issuing and responding to requests for information.

Appendix 1: Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews



Appendix 2: Serious Incident Notifications and the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Rapid Review Process

1. SERIOUS INCIDENT NOTIFICATIONS¹

Where Gateshead Council knows or suspects that a child has been abused or neglected they must notify the national Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (the Panel) if –

- (a) the child dies or is seriously harmed in the local authority's area, or
- (b) while normally resident in the local authority's area, the child dies or is seriously harmed outside England

Serious harm includes (but is not limited to) serious and/or long-term impairment of a child's mental health or intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development. It also includes impairment of physical health.

Gateshead Council will notify any event that meets the above criteria to the Panel and the Safeguarding Partners **within five working days** of becoming aware that the incident has occurred and will also notify the Secretary of State and Ofsted where a looked after child has died, whether abuse or not neglect is known or suspected.

Others who have functions relating to children should inform the Safeguarding Partners of any incident which they think should be considered for a child safeguarding practice review. Contact details and notification forms to notify incidents to the Panel are available from <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-a-serious-child-safeguarding-incident>

2. REFERRAL

Agencies should inform the Chairperson of the Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership, Learning & Improvement Group, of any serious incident which they think should be considered for either a national or local Child Safeguarding Practice Review, using the *Referral Form*.

3. RAPID REVIEW

When notified about an incident the Safeguarding Partners will ensure that a Rapid Review of the case is promptly undertaken.

The Rapid Review will be completed within 15 working days of notification.

4. INITIAL SCOPING, INFORMATION SHARING AND THE SECURING OF RECORDS

All relevant agencies who have (or had) involvement with the subject child or family will be required to contribute to a Rapid Review. An initial scoping of agencies' intervention will, therefore, need to be completed and other relevant information rapidly gathered using the *Initial Scoping and Information Sharing* form.

¹ 16C (1) of the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017)

The purpose of the initial scoping and information sharing is to gather the basic facts about the case, including determining the extent of agency involvement with the child and family. More detailed information will be sought if the Rapid Review concludes the case has the potential to identify national or local learning and a decision is made to recommend a national Child Safeguarding Practice Review, a local Safeguarding Practice Review or an alternative learning review.

The *Initial Scoping and Information Sharing* form will be sent out to all relevant agencies **within 2 working days** of receiving the referral, along with an accompanying letter that briefly outlines the referral and explains the purpose of this initial scoping document.

Agencies should prioritise completion of the form and return it **within 5 working days** of receiving it to the Safeguarding Partners' business support officer.

All agencies must secure all records/files in relation to the case, so they are not accessible to agency personnel other than through a nominated representative. Where access to the records is required for ongoing case work this must be agreed and monitored by a relevant manager.

5. SETTING THE DATE OF THE RAPID REVIEW MEETING

The Safeguarding Partners business support officer will convene a Rapid Review Meeting and invite key partners who have operational knowledge to attend.

The date of the Rapid Review Meeting will be set as soon as the *Initial Scoping and Information Sharing* form has been sent out. The Rapid Review Meeting will be scheduled **between 7 and 13 working days** of receiving the referral. This will allow for analysis of the initial information to establish the key events in the child's life and inform the Rapid Review Meeting whilst also allowing enough time to prepare the necessary documents for the Panel.

6. DOCUMENTATION

The following documents will be shared with all those attending the Rapid Review Meeting:

- Gateshead Council *Serious Incident Notification* form to the Panel
- Completed *Referral Form* that initiated the process;
- Copies of the completed *Initial Scoping and Information Sharing* templates from relevant agencies
- Where relevant Child Death Review Rapid Response Meeting minutes

Wherever possible the documentation will be shared with participants in advance of the meeting. However, it is recognised that it may on occasion be necessary to share documentation at the meeting.

7. THE RAPID REVIEW MEETING

The Rapid Review Meeting will:

- Review the facts about the case as presented in the documentation;
- Discuss whether there is any immediate action needed to ensure children's safety and share any learning appropriately;
- Consider the potential for identifying improvements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;

- Decide whether to recommend a National or Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review. If the decision is not to proceed with a formal Child Safeguarding Practice Review, the meeting will also consider whether an alternative form of learning review is appropriate. In some cases, the Rapid Review process may identify key local learning that can be quickly acted upon, removing the need for further review

The *Rapid Review Meeting* record will be completed and agreed at this meeting.

8. CHAIRING THE RAPID REVIEW MEETING

The Rapid Review Meeting will be chaired by a member of the Learning & Improvement Group as and when required.

9. SHARING THE OUTCOME OF THE RAPID REVIEW

Within 2 working days of the Rapid Review Meeting, the completed *Rapid Review Meeting* record will be sent to the Panel and the attendees, by the business support officer, together with a covering letter to the Panel.

Other agencies (including the agency who made the referral) will be informed of the outcome of the Rapid Review.

The recommendation of the Rapid Review Meeting will be shared with the Case Review Group chairperson, so if required they can oversee the commission and progress of the review.

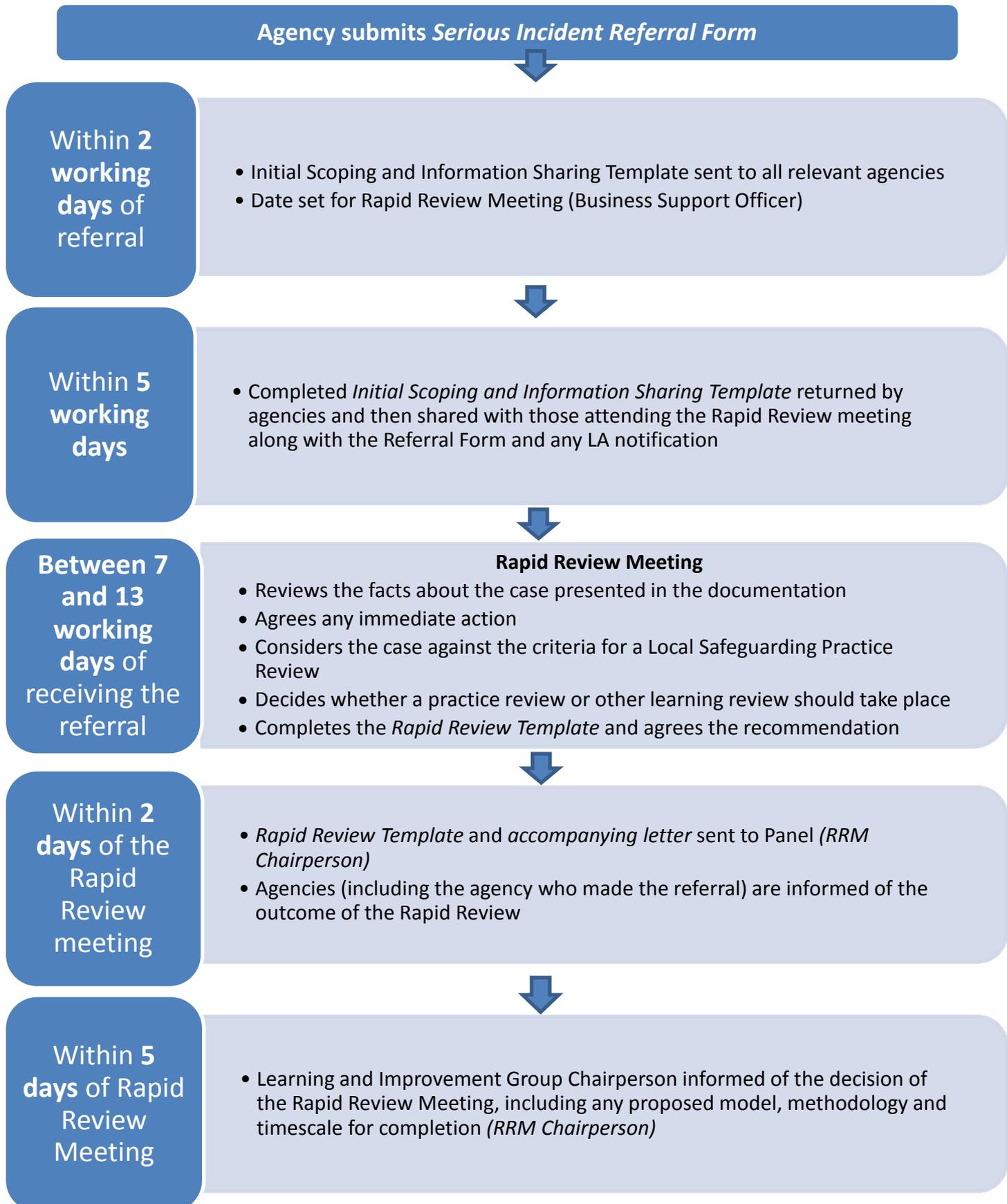
10. KEY CONTACTS

Saira Park, Business Manager, 0191 433 8010, sairapark@gateshead.gov.uk

Joe Lowrey, business support officer, 0191 433 joelowrey@gateshead.gov.uk

National Panel Mailbox.NationalReviewPanel@education.gov.uk

Overview of the process to decide whether to convene a Local Safeguarding Practice Review or alternative learning review and the associated timescales



Appendices – to be added

- Appendix 3 – Safeguarding Children Partnership terms of reference – to follow (draft ready for consideration)
- Appendix 4 – Partners’ Memorandums of Understanding – to follow
- Appendix 5 – Learning & Improvement Group terms of reference – to follow (draft ready for consideration)
- Appendix 6 – Performance Management & Quality Assurance terms of reference – to follow (draft ready for consideration)
- Appendix 7 – implementation plan
- Relevant agencies

Add links to:

- Strategic Priorities 2019-2022 – to follow
- Tyne, Wear & Northumberland Safeguarding Plan – to follow (once agreed)
- Learning and Improvement Framework – to follow (workstream BMs)
- Training Programme – to follow
- Child Death Overview Panel Guidance – to follow (workstream of forum)
- Information Sharing Agreement 2019 – to follow
- Media Protocol 2019 – to follow

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Working together to keep children safe in Gateshead



Multi-agency safeguarding arrangements now published!

 [Read our NEW Safeguarding Children Partnership Plan \[422.57KB\]](#)

Background

Every Local Authority area has an independent Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). LSCBs are responsible for ensuring agencies work together to safeguard children and for ensuring how effectively this happens.

The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) has fulfilled this role for Gateshead and has supported professionals, and all who work with children, to improve safeguarding practice and services by delivering training, auditing practice, developing and publishing safeguarding procedures, undertaking reviews into serious cases and publishing learning. However, LSCB's will soon be replaced.

Changes

[Children and Social Work Act 2017](#) replaces LSCBs with new local safeguarding arrangements led by the three named statutory safeguarding partners; local authorities, chief officers of police, and clinical commissioning groups (health).

The three safeguarding partners will assume the responsibilities for safeguarding arrangements that currently sit with LSCBs and will have a shared and equal duty for new safeguarding arrangements and for working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Gateshead.

The Safeguarding partners in Gateshead are:

- **Gateshead Council**
- **Newcastle Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group**
- **Northumbria Police**

[Working together to safeguard children](#) requires that as local safeguarding partners the Council, the Police and the CCG publish arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children – our new arrangements and plan are available on our website

www.gatesheadsafeguarding.org.uk

Transitional Arrangements

The [Gateshead Safeguarding children Partnership Plan](#) sets out the transitional arrangements for Gateshead from September 2019 and will come into effect for 12 months from September 2019.

During the course of 2019-20, further work will be completed on integrating functions across the Northumbria footprint, and a wider structure review will be undertaken in the spring of 2020.

Please email SairaPark@gateshead.gov.uk or telephone 0191 433 8010 if you have any queries

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TITLE OF REPORT: Children and Families Service - Annual Report on Services
Complaints, Compliments and Representations - April 2018 to March
2019

REPORT OF: Caroline O'Neill, Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing & Learning

Summary

Cabinet considered the attached report on 25 June 2019.

Cabinet approved the referral of the report to a meeting of the Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee in line with procedure.

It is a statutory requirement that the report is considered by a formal committee to ensure the Council has an effective complaints procedure that follows the legislation set out in The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006.

Background

1. The Health & Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003 requires that Councils with Social Services responsibilities produce an Annual Report of their Statutory Children's Services Complaints Procedure. This annual report sets out details of the complaints and representations made during the period April 2018 – March 2019.
2. Information contained in the report provides a summary of the statistical information together with a review of the effectiveness of the procedure. Some examples of service improvement are also included together with details of future objectives.

Annual Report Complaints and Representations

3. The report is consistent with the Sustainable Community Strategy – Vision 2030 and the Council's Corporate Plan. The report supports the Corporate Priority for serving our customers by continuously improving services and targeting areas of under achievement.
4. The Annual Report is specifically about Children Act 1989 Statutory Complaints for Children's Social Care Services, with information on complaint related queries and compliments that are received about staff or services. The report covers the period from 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019.

Operation of the Procedure

5. The procedure has three stages:
 - **Stage 1 Local Resolution** – response within 10 working days. The timescale can be extended to 20 working days if the complainant agrees to this extension.
 - **Stage 2 Investigation** – formal response within 25 calendar days. Extensions to this must be negotiated with the complainant. Maximum is 65 working days.
 - **Stage 3 Independent Review** – Panel consisting of Independent Chair and Independent Panel members who consider the complaint. Full response by Director of Social Services within 20 working days.

Statistical Analysis

6. In 2018/19 the number of complaints and representations dealt with was as follows:
 - 40 statutory complaints were dealt with at Stage 1;
 - This is a 18% decrease on complaints received during 2017/18, (49);
 - The number of statutory complaints, (40), represents 43% of all dissatisfaction received about Children's Services during 2018/19, (92);
 - 60% (24) of complaints were about quality of services provided;
 - From this, 54% (13) were regarding the quality of social work support received;
 - 20% (8) complaints were in respect of the actions or conduct of individual workers of which 21% (5) were partly upheld after investigation;
 - 3 complaints progressed to Stage 2 of the complaint's procedure;
 - This is a 50% increase on the number of Stage 2 complaints received during 2017/18, (2);
 - 1 Stage 3 Independent Review Panel was held during 2018/19;
 - The number of complaint related queries (low level issues not requiring a written response), received increased by 9% (38) compared to the number received during 2017/18 (35).

Points of Interest

7. The following key points may be of interest:
 - 50% (20) of all complaints received were regarding services provided by the Looked After Children Service;
 - 25% (10) of all complaints received were in respect of services provided by the Safeguarding and Care Planning Teams;
 - The majority of children receiving a service are allocated a social worker from the Safeguarding and Care Planning Teams and as such, dissatisfaction is common;
 - However, complaints about the Safeguarding & Care Planning Teams reduced by almost 57% compared with the number received during 2017/18, (23);
 - 12% (5) of complaints were regarding the services provided by the Referral and Assessment Team. This is a 58% decrease on the number of complaints received during 2017/18, (12);
 - During 2018/19 there were 262 children on a Child Protection Plan and 1555 children receiving a statutory service. This means that from the number of families involved with Children's Services, only 2% of contacts resulted in a formal complaint;
 - 6 complaints were received direct from young people and 5 complaints were from advocates acting on the child / young person's behalf;
 - Therefore, 28% (11) of complaints were referred by either Looked after Children, or by an advocate acting on the child / young person's instructions;
 - In 2018/19, 45% (18) of complaints were not upheld after investigation;

- The number of complaints found to be unjustified evidences that the workers involved had acted appropriately and in line with guidance and procedures;
- Between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019, Children's Services received 73 compliments about either individual workers or teams;
- This means that during 2018/19, 44% of all representations about Children Services were compliments.

Learning from complaints and representations:

8. Learning from complaints is critical to prevent recurrence of the cause(s) of the original complaint. It is important that we make sure that people's experiences help us to improve services where we can. Changes can include policy, procedure or employee development.

Examples of Service Improvements identified during 2018/19:

- Business Support Officers have been reminded that they should always check with the social work teams before advising callers on the availability of staff and promising immediate call backs. This will ensure that callers can then be aware of when they may expect the service to contact them.
- All Social Workers responsible for carrying out assessments have been reminded that they should always confirm the child / young person's registered details with partner agencies such as education and health. This will ensure that children / young people whose care transfers to another family member, will continue to have their health and educational needs met.
- In the event an allocated social worker is on annual leave, any significant information that is raised during this time is now shared as soon as the allocated worker returns to work. If the information is felt to urgent, it is passed to a manager within the service, who will consider whether any further action is necessary.
- When changes to children's records are identified, individual workers have been instructed to complete the updates at their earliest opportunity. This will then ensure that the case records reflect the current information in respect of the child / young person's care management.
- Due to a lack of communication in relation to contact sessions, workers have been instructed to ensure contact is made with family members as soon as they are aware that the contact session is to be postponed. Workers should, where possible, ensure that they share this information with family members by either text or in writing.
- Where no or very late contact has been made, the Service will reimburse any travel expenses incurred by the family along with arranging an additional contact session at a mutually convenient time.
- When social workers are concerned that family disputes may be impacting on the child / young person's stability and emotional wellbeing, they must always explore independent mediation to support the family in resolving their issues.
- As there has recently been a lack of clarity about the parameters of Pathway Plans and Staying Put Agreements, the Looked after Children Team have attended a briefing session in respect of the legislation and policy that guide these processes. This will ensure that all workers understand that Pathway Plans and Staying Put Agreements cease when a young person reaches 21.

Future Objectives

9. Objectives for 2019/20 are to:
 - a. Continue to meet regularly with Senior Managers from Children's Services to consider what further action needs to be taken to;
 - i. Resolve complaints at the earliest opportunity;
 - ii. Improve the number of complaints being investigated and resolved within statutory timescales;
 - iii. Ensure that the number of complaints progressing to Stage 2 and 3 remain low;
 - b. To assist the Children's Rights Officer in contacting all children who are currently being looked after by Gateshead Council, to gain their views and comments on the services they receive. All responses will be evaluated and appropriate action will be taken to resolve any concerns or queries. These views will also contribute to future service planning and delivery within Care, Wellbeing & Learning;
 - c. Ensure that staff members who receive compliments continue to pass the details on to Social Care Customer Services so that they or their team receive the recognition they deserve.

Recommendation

10. Committee is requested to:
 - I. Consider and comment on the annual report;
 - II. Indicate whether it is satisfied with the performance of Care, Wellbeing and Learning in responding to complaints and ensuring that this results in continuous service improvement.

- TITLE:** **Children and Families Service** - Annual Report on Services Complaints, Compliments and Representations - April 2018 to March 2019
- REPORT OF:** Alison Routledge, Complaints Manager
- SERVICE:** Health & Social Care Commissioning and Quality Assurance. Care, Wellbeing and Learning
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SUMMARY

The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006 sets out the procedure that Local Authorities have a responsibility to follow when a complaint is made about Children's Social Services. Regulation 13 (3) of this Act states that all local authorities must publish an Annual Report each financial year to identify the number, detail and outcomes to all complaints received. The information within this Annual Report fulfils Gateshead Council's obligations under this regulation and covers the period from 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019.

1.0 The Statutory Complaints Procedure

- 1.1 This procedure is for all representations received from children and young people, their parents, foster carers or other qualifying adults about Gateshead Council's Children's Services.
- 1.2 There are three stages to the procedure:

Stage 1 - Local Resolution

Stage 1 complaints are investigated by operational managers. Complaints at this level are expected to be concluded within ten working days, with an extension of further ten working days, (with the agreement of the complainant), if necessary. The maximum time for a Stage 1 investigation is twenty working days.

Stage 2 – Investigation

Investigations at Stage 2 are conducted at arm's length to the operational service complained about, with full and formal reporting to the complainant by an Adjudicating Officer, (usually at Service Director level), within twenty-five working days, with extension up to sixty five working days if necessary.

Stage 3 – Review Panel

If there is any residual dissatisfaction with the outcome at Stage 2, the complainant can request that the issues are taken to a Review Panel, (Stage 3). A Stage 3 Review Panel must be requested within twenty working days of receipt of the Stage 2 investigation findings. A Stage 3 Review Panel is the final stage of the statutory complaint's procedure.

2.0 Publicity and Information

- 2.1 Information about the complaint's procedure can be made available in key languages and formats. Requests for information in these formats or from customers with sight or hearing impairment are provided via the Council's Communication Team.
- 2.2 There is also a leaflet for children and young people receiving a service. This leaflet was designed with help from the children and young people from One Voice, the Children and the Young People's Forum. The leaflet includes a pre-paid slip that can be completed and posted back free of charge.
[click here to access complaints website](#)
- 2.3 When young people are admitted into Local Authority care, part of the 20-day review requirements state that they are to be visited by the Council's Children's Rights Officer. The young person also receives a 'Welcome' pack', which includes information, leaflets and other guidance on how to make a complaint.
- 2.4 Children and young people are now able to use their smartphones or tablet computers to contact the services via Mind of My Own. Mind Of My Own is an app which allows the child or young person to comment positively on the service they receive but if necessary, to raise dissatisfaction.
- 2.5 The Children's Rights Officer, Independent Visitors and Independent Reviewing Officers are important links between the child and the Complaints Manager and ensure that any issues of dissatisfaction are resolved at the earliest opportunity.

3.0 Advocacy and Special Needs

- 3.1 The purpose of advocacy in complaints procedures is to ensure that children and young people are given assistance when making or intending to make a complaint. Advocacy is about empowering children and young people to make sure that their rights are respected and that their views and wishes are fully considered and reflected in decision-making about their own lives. It is a legal requirement that any child or young person wishing to make a complaint must always be offered the services of an advocate.

4.0 The Independent Element

- 4.1 Under the complaint's procedure, there is a requirement to provide Independent Persons for all Stage 2 complaints. There is currently a consortium arrangement with South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council and Sunderland City Council, which provides Independent People for Children Act 1989 complaints. There is also a requirement to ensure that Stage 3 Review Panels consist of three members who are fully independent of the Council.

5.0 Training and Employee Development

- 5.1 Training for Investigating Officers is undertaken on an annual basis. All investigating skills training courses are commissioned from the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman, (LGO). This ensures that investigating officers are trained to the Ombudsman's investigation standard with the focus being on swift resolution, proportionate investigations and appropriate redress.

5.2 A LGO Investigating Skills Training Course took place in November 2018. Although this training was primarily for Adult Social Care, Managers from the Safeguarding Children Unit (SCU) and Commissioning also attended the course. As there are a number of new managers within Children’s Services, it is anticipated that the LGO Investigating Skills training course, focussing on Children’s Services complaints, will take place in November 2019.

6.0 Complaint Recording & Resolution in Children’s Residential Facilities

6.1 All children’s residential homes have their own “in-house” complaints process to resolve low level concerns. Residential staff work with the young person and allow them to identify themselves how their issues can be resolved to their satisfaction. Information about low level concerns is retained within the facility and is available in the event of OFSTED inspections.

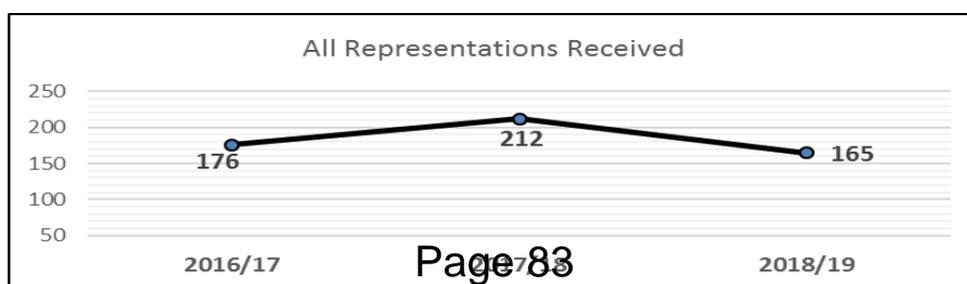
7.0 Equalities Monitoring

7.1 Gateshead Council recognises that equality monitoring of service delivery is crucial for effective planning and scrutiny of the services that it provides. This monitoring can identify which groups are using services and gauge their level of satisfaction. The information can then be used to highlight possible inequalities, investigate their underlying causes and address any unfairness or disadvantage.

7.2 Information about the complaint’s procedure can be made available in key languages and formats. Information for customers with sight or hearing impairment can also be provided.

8.0 Complaints & Representations Received

| Representations | 2016/2017 | 2017/2018 | 2018/2019 |
|-------------------------------------|------------|---------------|----------------|
| Stage 1 Complaints | 32 | 49 | 40 |
| Stage 2 Complaints | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Stage 3 - Review Panels | 4 | 0 | 1 |
| Corporate Complaints | 5 | 7 | 2 |
| Complaint related queries | 38 | 35 | 38 |
| Comments | Na | 2 | 0 |
| Data Issues / Breach | 1 | 10 | 3 |
| Insurance Claims | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Inter-Agency Concerns | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| LGO Investigation | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| LSCB CP Unit | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| MP / Councillor Referral | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 88 | 110 | 92 |
| Compliments | 88 | 102 | 73 |
| All Representations Received | 176 | 212 | 165 |
| Trend | | 20.45% | -22.17% |



| Stage 1 | 2007 2008 | 2008 2009 | 2009 2010 | 2010 2011 | 2011 2012 | 2012 2013 | 2013 2014 | 2014 2015 | 2015 2016 | 2016 2017 | 2017 2018 | 2018 2019 |
|---------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | 32 | 18 | 10 | 19 | 29 | 36 | 34 | 45 | 37 | 32 | 49 | 40 |
| % | | -44% | -44% | 90% | 53% | 24% | -6% | 32% | 18% | 14% | 53% | 18% |

8.1 Key Points of Interest

- The number of formal contacts received, including compliments, about Children's Services decreased by 22.17% (165) compared with the number of contacts received during 2017/18, (212).
- During 2018/19, 44% of all Children's Services contacts were compliments.
- 40 Stage 1 complaints were received regarding Children's Services. This is a 18% decrease on complaints received during 2017/18, (49).
- The number of statutory complaints, (40), represents 43% of all dissatisfaction received about Children's Services during 2018/19, (92).
- 60% (24) of complaints related to the quality of services provided. From this, 54% (13) were regarding the quality of social work support received.
- 20% (8) complaints were in respect of the actions or conduct of individual workers of which 21% (5) were partly upheld after investigation.
- The number of complaint related queries (low level issues not requiring a written response), received increased by 9% (38) compared to the number received during 2017/18 (35).
- 18% (7) of the complaint related queries received were regarding the standard of communication provided by individual workers. Concerns highlighted were about the timeliness of sharing key information with family members.
- 29% (11) of complaint related queries were about the quality of support offered by either the social worker or the overall service provided.
- All complaint related queries received were dealt with directly by either the team manager of the service complained about or by the Complaints Section after prior discussion with the worker concerned.
- Three complaints progressed to Stage 2 of the complaint's procedure. This is a slight increase on the number of Stage 2 complaints received during 2017/18, (2).
- One corporate complaint progressed to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman. The Ombudsman investigated the complaint and found that no injustice had been caused to the complainant.

8.2 Key Themes of Complaint

8.2.1 After full consideration of all Stage 1 complaints received during 2018/19, two key themes of dissatisfaction have been identified.

1. Quality of Service - Quality of Worker Support / Involvement

Quality of services provided continues to attract the largest number of complaints. Complaints about quality cover a number of areas and can range from low level disputes to significant concerns about the actions or decisions of the services involved.

During 2018/19, 60% (24) complaints received were regarding quality issues, with 54% (13) of the complaints about quality citing the support provided by the social worker or service as their main concern.

After investigation, 69% (9) of the complaints about worker support were partially upheld, 15% (2) were not upheld and 15% (2) were fully upheld.

Following consideration of these concerns, it continues to be an issue that families of children receiving a service may misinterpret the parameters of social work involvement and, on occasion, request support or services for themselves that are outside a social workers remit. Managers should reiterate to social workers during their individual supervision sessions that they should be clear with families what support can be provided and what assistance is outside a social worker's responsibility. However, as almost 85% (11) of complaints about support were either partially or fully upheld, it may be that worker / team capacity is impacting on the support that could be provided to families.

2. Attitude of Staff

In line with the statutory guidance set out within Working Together 2018, Children's Services have a legal duty to assess all concerns raised about the wellbeing or safety of a child or young person. It is understandable that Children's Services involvement may not always be welcomed by the parents of the child or young person concerned. Therefore, relationships between social workers and families can often be challenging or problematic. It can also be evidenced that there are occasions where parents of children receiving a service will seek to access the complaints procedure to delay or hinder any action that is being considered by the Local Authority. Because of this, any increase in complaints about staff, whether about conduct or practice, should always be carefully considered alongside the situation that had prompted the dissatisfaction.

In 2018/19, eight complaints were received which included issues around staff conduct or practice. This is a 60% increase on the number of complaints received during 2017/18, (5). After investigation, 21% (5) complaints were found to be partially upheld and 12% (3) were not upheld.

Three of the complaints received had also included issues regarding either the quality of foster carer placement or the professional behaviour of the foster carer. All three complaints were investigated and responded to. Two complaints were found to be partially upheld and one complaint was felt to be unjustified.

8.3 Specific Areas of Complaint

| Service Area | 2016 2017 | | 2017 2018 | | 2018 2019 | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Children with Disabilities | 0.00% | 0 | 10.20% | 5 | 5.00% | 2 |
| Referral & Assessment | 18.75% | 6 | 24.49% | 12 | 12.50% | 5 |
| Looked After Children Team | 18.75% | 6 | 8.16% | 4 | 42.50% | 17 |
| Family Group Conference | 3.13% | 1 | 0% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 |
| Fostering & Adoption | 6.25% | 2 | 8.16% | 4 | 7.50% | 3 |
| Out of Hours Duty Team | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 |
| Safeguarding, Care Planning | 53.13% | 17 | 46.94% | 23 | 25.00% | 10 |
| Safeguarding Children Unit | 0.00% | 0 | 2.04% | 1 | 7.50% | 3 |
| Total | | 32 | | 49 | | 40 |

- 25% (10) of all complaints received were in respect of services provided by the Safeguarding and Care Planning Teams.
- The majority of children receiving a service are allocated a social worker from the Safeguarding and Care Planning Teams. However, complaints about the

Safeguarding & Care Planning Teams reduced by almost 57% compared with the number received during 2017/18, (23).

- After investigation, no complaints about the Safeguarding & Care Planning Teams were found to be justified. 50% (5) of complaints were not upheld and 50% (5) were partially upheld.
- 12% (5) of complaints were regarding the services provided by the Referral and Assessment Team. This is a 58% decrease on the number of complaints received during 2017/18, (12).
- The key theme identified from complaints about the Referral and Assessment Team were disputes to information included within social work reports, which accounted for three of the complaints received.
- Where it is found that the information within reports is factually incorrect, this can be amended on production of reliable evidence. However, disputes to social work opinion can only be recorded on the child / children's case file.
- During 2018/19 there were 262 children on a Child Protection Plan and 1555 children receiving a statutory service. This means that from the number of families involved with Children's Services, only 2% of contacts resulted in a formal complaint.
- 50% (20) of all complaints received were regarding services provided by the Looked After Children Service. From this, 85% (17) were in respect of the support provided by individual workers within the Looked After Children Team.
- After investigation almost 44% (7) of complaints about the Looked After Children Team were found to be unjustified, 37% (6) were partially upheld and 19% (3) were fully upheld.
- Only 7% (3) of complaints received during 2018/19 were regarding the Safeguarding Children Unit with two of the complaints citing issues about the conduct of the Conference Chairs. After investigation, one complaint was found to be completely unjustified as it was found that the Conference Chair had acted appropriately.
- One complaint about a Conference Chair had also included issues about the young person's foster placement. After investigation, although the issue regarding the Conference Chair was found to be unjustified, the issue regarding the placement was partially upheld with recommendations for improvement identified.

| Main Complaint Issues | 2016 2017 | | 2017 2018 | | 2018 2019 | |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | | | | | | |
| Delay | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 |
| Lack of Service | 0.00% | 0 | 16.33% | 8 | 10.00% | 4 |
| Quality of Service | 59.38% | 19 | 73.47% | 36 | 60.00% | 24 |
| Refusal of Service | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 10.00% | 4 |
| Staff Issues | 40.63% | 13 | 10.20% | 5 | 20.00% | 8 |
| Total | | 32 | | 49 | | 40 |

- 20% (8) complaints received during 2018/19 were regarding allegations of inappropriate staff conduct. This is an increase of 60% on the number received during 2017/18, (8).
- After investigation, 21% (5) of the eight complaints received were partially upheld and 12% (3) were not upheld. None of the complaints received during 2018/19 were found to be fully justified.
- Where there is evidence that workers have acted inappropriately or failed to follow processes or procedures, the matter is always addressed directly with the member of staff concerned and appropriate measures are then taken to reduce the risk of any similar situations occurring.

- Quality of Service remained the key theme of all complaints received. 60% (24) of complaints received were regarding the quality of the services provided.
- Quality of service includes:
 - Missed or late contact visits;
 - Contact visits that are cancelled at very short notice;
 - Conflicting or incorrect information by workers;
 - Allegations of poor support from the services involved in individual cases;
 - Poor communication between the workers and family members.
- After investigation, only 15% (2) of complaints regarding quality of service were found to be fully justified. However, almost 85% (11) were partially upheld.
- 54% (13) of the complaints received were regarding the quality of social work support provided to individual children or families.
- After investigation, 85% (11) of the complaints regarding social worker support were either fully or partially upheld. 15% (2) of complaints were unjustified.

8.4 Methods of Complaint

| Method of Complaint | 2016 2017 | | 2017 2018 | | 2018 2019 | |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Complaint Form | 6.25% | 2 | 12.24% | 6 | 7.50% | 3 |
| E - mail | 21.88% | 7 | 26.53% | 13 | 30.00% | 12 |
| Children's Leaflet / MoMo | 3.13% | 1 | 4.08% | 2 | 7.50% | 3 |
| In Person | 9.38% | 3 | 8.16% | 4 | 10.00% | 4 |
| Letter | 25.00% | 8 | 26.53% | 13 | 15.00% | 6 |
| Telephone | 34.38% | 11 | 22.45% | 11 | 30.00% | 12 |
| Total | | 32 | | 49 | | 40 |

- Email and letters continue to be the main method of complaint referral accounting for 45% (18) of complaints.
- Emails and letters tend to raise multiple areas of complaint. Therefore, it is important that an Investigating Officer meets with the complainant at the earliest opportunity to identify the key issues of concern and to highlight areas that are not able to be responded to.
- Complaints brought by relatives of children receiving a service accounted for 65% (26) of complaint referrals.
- During 2019/20 the service will be exploring opportunities for members of public to submit and track their complaints and compliments through our website, to make the process more efficient.

8.5 Complaints and Concerns direct from Looked after Children

- Six complaints were received direct from young people and five complaints were from advocates acting on the child / young person's behalf.
- Therefore, 28% (11) of complaints were referred by either Looked after Children, or by an advocate acting on the child / young person's instructions.
- This is a 120% increase from the five complaints received during 2017/18
- Two complaints from Looked after Children were referred via the MoMo (Mind of My Own) app.
- After investigation, only one complaint from a Looked after Child was found to be justified and as such, appropriate resolution was offered to the young person concerned.
- 45% (5) of complaints from children / young people were found to be unjustified and 45% (5) were partially justified.

8.6 Timescales and Outcomes

| Complaints Resolved within 20 Working Days | 2016 2017 | 2017 2018 | 2018 2019 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Resolved | 15 | 20 | 25 |
| Not Resolved | 17 | 29 | 15 |

- The statutory timescales for resolution are ten working days. This can be extended to twenty working days with the complainant's agreement.
- Ten complaints were completed within ten working days.
- This means that only 25% of complaints responded to had met the statutory timescale of ten working days.
- Twenty five complaints were completed within twenty working days.
- This evidences that 62% of complaints met the extended timescale of twenty working days.
- Fifteen complaints had not been completed within twenty working days.
- Where a complaint is not responded to within ten or twenty working days, the complainant has the legal right to request that their complaint is considered at Stage 2 of the complaint's procedure.
- It is a statutory duty to respond to complaints within the prescribed timescales. Therefore, the service should consider how response timescales can be improved.

| Outcomes of complaints | 2016 2017 | | 2017 2018 | | 2018 2019 | |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Outstanding | 2 | | 2 | | 0 | |
| Not upheld | 43.75% | 14 | 55.32% | 26 | 45.00% | 18 |
| Partially upheld | 50.00% | 16 | 31.91% | 15 | 47.50% | 19 |
| Upheld | 3.13% | 1 | 10.64% | 5 | 7.50% | 3 |
| Closed or withdrawn | 3.13% | 1 | 2.13% | 1 | 0.00% | 0 |
| Total | | 32 | | 49 | | 40 |

- In 2018/19, 45% (18) of complaints were not upheld after investigation.
- The number of complaints found to be unjustified evidences that the workers involved had acted appropriately and in line with guidance and procedures.
- 47% (19) were found to be partially justified. This evidences that the main issue of complaint was found to be unjustified, but there were areas where the service could have performed better, for example communication, delays in returning calls or late/missed visits.
- After investigation, almost 8% of complaints were found to be fully justified.
- In each case where it is found that there had been some fault by the service, the complainant will always receive a written apology within their response letter.

9.0 Stage 2 and 3 Complaints

| | 2016 2017 | 2017 2018 | 2018 2019 |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Stage 2 Complaints | 1 | 2 | 3 |

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Stage 3 Review Panels Held | 4 | 0 | 1 |
|-----------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|

- Three complaints were registered at Stage 2 of the Complaints Procedure during 2018/19.
- This is a 50% increase from the number of Stage 2's received during 2017/18, (1).
- There was one Stage 3 Review Panel Held during 2018/19.

Stage 2 Complaint & Stage 3 Review Panels Held

During 2018/19, Children's Services received three requests for Stage 2 complaint Investigations.

- One Stage 2 complaint was around the respite provision within the Children with Disabilities Team.

The complainant's child had previously had access to a respite facility based in a neighbouring authority. However, once the child had reached eight years old, the respite provision was moved to a Council facility within Gateshead. The complainant felt that the resource was not equal and disputed the decision that had been made by the Service. The complaint was investigated and was found to be partially upheld.

As the complainant remained dissatisfied with the investigation response, the issues progressed to a Stage 3 Review Panel.

- The Review Panel considered the findings from the Stage 2 complaint investigation report and invited comments from the complainant.
- The Panel Chair made a number of recommendations which were accepted by the Strategic Director of Care, Wellbeing & Learning. All recommendations have been being implemented by the Services concerned.
- A Stage 2 complaint was received from the parent of a looked after child and was in respect of the quality of the foster placement. The complainant also raised allegations about the conduct of the foster carer. After discussion with the Service Director for Children and Families, it was agreed that due to the issues raised, the investigation should be carried out fully independent of the Council.

After a full and through investigation, the main areas of complaint were found to be unjustified. Although there were areas where the actions of the Local Authority could have been improved upon, this did not alter the outcome of the complaint.

- The third Stage 2 complaint was regarding the quality of a Children in Need Assessment which had been carried out by the Referral & Assessment Service. The complainants had felt that a significant amount of information within the report was factually incorrect. They had also alleged that the social worker had had not included key points about the family's background which could impact on the assessment's outcome and as such, they felt that the assessment was fundamentally flawed. As an outcome to this complaint, the Service agreed to meet with the complainants and to discuss any factual changes requested by them.
- All improvements from Stage 2 investigations and the Review Panel are included within this report.

10.0 Equalities Monitoring

- 10.1 Gateshead Council recognises that equality monitoring of service delivery is crucial for effective planning and scrutiny of the services that it provides. This monitoring can identify which groups are using services and gauge their level of satisfaction. This information can then be used to highlight possible inequalities, investigate their underlying causes and address any unfairness or disadvantage.

- During 2018/19, four Stage 1 complaints were received from members of the BAME community.
- All complaints were about the standard of service provided by Children's Services. There were no issues raised about direct discrimination.
- All complaints were investigated and responded to in line with the statutory complaint's procedure.
- After investigation, two complaints were found to be unjustified, one complaint was partially justified, and one complaint was found to be fully justified. As a result of this complaint, changes to practice were implemented across the service to minimise the risk of any similar situations happening again.
- 70% (28) of all complainants were female and 27% (11) were male.
- 65% (26) of complaints were received from relatives of children / young people receiving a service.

11.0 Learning from Complaints

- 11.1 At the end of every investigation the investigating officer is responsible for identifying any improvements or recommendations resulting from the complaint. Changes can include policy, procedure or staff development.
- 11.2 Complaints about individual practice or failure to follow procedures are dealt with by reinforcement of processes and reiterating customer care standards through service / team meetings or individual supervision sessions. In addition to this, if it is felt that additional or refresher training is required for either workers or teams, this will be progressed by the relevant team manager.
- 11.3 In respect of complaints about staff attitude or conduct, if it is found that an employee has deliberately acted inappropriately or maliciously, the issue will be dealt with in line with internal employment procedures.

11.4 Improvements to service identified as a result of a complaint:

Integrated Referral & Assessment Team

- Business Support Officers have been reminded that they should always check with the social work teams before advising callers on the availability of staff and promising immediate call backs. This will ensure that callers can then be aware of when they may expect the service to contact them.
- All Social Workers responsible for carrying out assessments have been reminded that they should always confirm the child / young person's registered details with partner agencies such as education and health. This will ensure that children / young people whose care transfers to another family member, will continue to have their health and educational needs met.
- In the event an allocated social worker is on annual leave, any significant information that is raised during this time is now shared as soon as the allocated worker returns to work. If the information is felt to be urgent, it is passed to a manager within the service, who will consider whether any further action is necessary.
- When changes to children's records are identified, individual workers have been instructed to complete the updates at their earliest opportunity. This will then ensure that the case records reflect the current information in respect of the child / young person's care management.

- Due to a lack of communication in relation to contact sessions, workers have been instructed to ensure contact is made with family members as soon as they are aware that the contact session is to be postponed. Workers should, where possible, ensure that they share this information with family members by either text or in writing.
- Where no or very late contact has been made, the Service will reimburse any travel expenses incurred by the family along with arranging an additional contact session at a mutually convenient time.

Integrated Referral and Assessment Team / Safeguarding & Care Planning Teams

- All workers have been reminded that they must always share the Child Protection Conference Report with those who have parental responsibility within the timescales set out in Gateshead Local Safeguarding Children Board Procedures. This will ensure that parents of children receiving a service are better prepared and are aware of the concerns that have been raised by professionals involved in their children's care.
- When social workers are concerned that family disputes may be impacting on the child / young person's stability and emotional wellbeing, they must always explore independent mediation to support the family in resolving their issues.

Looked after Children's Services

- The Looked after Children Service have developed a clear procedure in respect of appropriate respite placements for children / young people whilst their foster carers are on holiday. This will ensure that foster carers are aware of the Local Authority's obligations to provide alternative respite placements for all children / young people who are in their care.

Looked After Children Team

- The Looked after Children Team have developed a clear process in respect of housing applications for young people who are to move to their own accommodation.
- In future, the allocated worker must always complete the Housing Assessment on behalf of the young person.
- When a young person is due to attend a Housing Panel in respect of future accommodation, that they will always be accompanied by their key worker.
- When a worker calls in sick, it is important that their electronic diary is checked to identify any meetings which may need to be rearranged. Where necessary, an email and a telephone call should be made to any family members who may be due to attend a meeting with the worker that day.
- The Looked after Children Service have developed a process for accepting significant documents shared by parents and families of children receiving a service.

This process will ensure that –

- * Family members are provided with a written receipt when submitting documents to Children's Services;
- * The information required is scanned into the child / children's file as soon as possible;
- * The documents are then returned to the family member via signed for post;
- * Should there any delays be anticipated in returning the documents, then they must be held in a secure place until this can take place.

- When a social worker is on a period of extended leave, family members will now be provided with contact details of the social worker who has taken over temporary responsibility for their child's case.
- The importance of passing on telephone enquiries has been reiterated with the Looked after Children Business Support Team. This requirement will be reinforced on a regular basis during team meetings and individual supervision sessions.
- As there has recently been a lack of clarity about the parameters of Pathway Plans and Staying Put Agreements, the Looked after Children Team have attended a briefing session in respect of the legislation and policy that guide these processes. This will ensure that all workers understand that Pathway Plans and Staying Put Agreements cease when a young person reaches 21.
- In response to issues around cancelled contact sessions, it has been agreed that if a social worker is not able to cover a contact, they must make their line manager aware of the reasons for this. The team will then ensure that every effort is made to cover the session. Where this is not possible, an alternative date and time will be offered to the family as soon as possible.
- It is recommended that Placement Planning meetings for Mother and Baby placements must identify very clearly the financial responsibilities of both the young person and the foster carer. This will then prevent misunderstandings on who should pay for specific items or services whilst the young person is in placement.

Safeguarding & Care Planning Teams

- All family members undergoing parenting assessments will now receive, (and sign for), short written guidance regarding the expected timescale for the completion of the assessment. The guidance will also clarify that, depending on the circumstances, parenting assessments may take longer than anticipated.

Children with Disabilities Team

- Following a restructure of services, the Children with Disabilities Service are now based within the Safeguarding & Care Planning Service. Previously, any disputes made by parents of a disabled child, particularly those in respect of resource allocation, were considered via an "appeals panel". However, it has been agreed that parents of children receiving a service should be considered through the statutory complaints procedure and parents are given the option to progress the complaint to the next stage of the procedure should they remain dissatisfied.

12.0 Compliments

12.1 Between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019, Children's Services received seventy-three compliments about either individual workers or teams. During 2018/19, 44% of all representations about Children Services were compliments.

- Almost 18% (13) of all compliments received were regarding the Children with Disabilities Service and were all in respect of the quality of the respite provided by Grove House;
- 45% (33) of compliments were about the Safeguarding & Care Planning Teams;
- 5% (4) of compliments were about support offered by the Fostering Team;
- 10% (7) of compliments were regarding the Looked After Children Team;

- 8% (6) of compliments were regarding the Referral and Assessment Team;
- Almost 7% (5) of compliments were regarding the Complex Children in Need & Rapid Referral Team;

Examples of compliments received

Complex Children in Need & Rapid Referral Team

'Thank you for everything, I cannot thank you enough. You have restored my faith in social workers - you are the best one yet. I feel this is a fresh start for us.'

Children with Disabilities Respite - Grove House

'Thanks for all of your support and hard work over the year. You're all stars! Love B... and family xx.'

'To everyone at Grove House, thank you for all you do for us, we love you all, Love J..... and family'.

'To everyone at Grove House thank you so much for my lovely presents and card and the fabulous book of photos and comments (Mam cried at every one). I am really going to miss you all so much. I loved my visits with you and had some really special times.'

Safeguarding & Care Planning Teams

'K..... has helped me through so much recently and takes all of my thoughts into consideration. She tries her best all the time and is been like a rock to me. She is lovely and the best social worker I could ask for. We have grown a very strong bond and I know she wants what's best for me. She also keeps me updated. Yours sincerely C..... x0x0x0x.'

Safeguarding & Care Planning Teams

'Thank you so much. I feel more cared about. I liked everything. Nothing would have made it better, it made me feel better. Thank you.'

LAC Team

"My social worker is lovely, very friendly and funny.'

Integrated Referral & Assessment Team

'Thank you so much for all the help and support you have given me to rebuild my life. Its been hard but I couldn't have done it without you. You believed in me from the start even when I didn't believe in myself. I appreciate everything you've done for me even all the McDonalds and sing-a-longs in your car, (which is still my dream car). Thank you again I am going to miss you and don't worry, I am going to make a beautiful life for myself, no matter what'.

13.0 Conclusions

- 13.1 Complaints about Children's Services decreased by 18% (40) in comparison with the number received during 2017/18, (49).
- 13.2 During 2018/19, there were 1,817 children receiving a service. This means that 98% (1,777) of those who have social work involvement have been satisfied with the support offered by either the individual workers or teams within Children's Services.

- 13.3 Only three complaints moved to Stage 2 of the procedure. However, one of the complaints received had been investigated at Stage 1 during 2017/2018. Therefore, only two complaints, received during 2018/19 progressed to Stage 2 of the procedure. This means that 95% (38) of complaints had been satisfactorily resolved at Stage 1.
- 13.4 Quality of services provided continues to attract the most complaints for Children's Services. The majority of the issues raised within complaints about quality were around the support offered by the service or the worker concerned.
- 13.5 To facilitate easy feedback, Children's Services always ensure that publicity about complaints and compliments is available in public areas. Information about the complaint's procedure is also made available during Child Protection Conferences and during the assessment processes.
- 13.6 Due to the nature of Children's Service, it is anticipated that dissatisfaction may be received. However, it is also evident that the services are generally well received as during 2017/18, 44% of formal representations about Children's Services were compliments.

Contact Officer: Alison Routledge, X2408

TITLE OF REPORT: Update on Permanent Exclusions

REPORT OF: Caroline O'Neill Strategic Director-Care, Wellbeing and Learning

SUMMARY

Following a substantial reduction in permanent exclusions during the 2017/18 academic year, the current 2018/19 academic year has seen an 11% rise in the number of permanent exclusions across secondary schools.

Purpose of Report

1. To update the Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the current situation in relation to permanent exclusions in the 2018/19 academic year,

Background

2. Evidence shows that the proportion of children and young people being excluded in primary and secondary schools is increasing nationally. Since 2013 permanent exclusions have been on the rise, with a 40% increase over the past 3 years, having previously been on the decrease since 2006/7. (Forgotten children: alternative provision and the scandal of ever-increasing exclusions July 2018).
3. In spite of the recent decrease in numbers, Gateshead's secondary permanent exclusions continue to be higher than national average, our statistical neighbours and other schools in the Northeast. (Local Authority Interactive Toolkit-LAIT and DfE Statistical Release Permanent and Fixed Term Exclusions 2017 to 2018 July 2019)
4. Several pieces of work have been undertaken over the past few years to understand the reasons for the high levels of permanent exclusions in Gateshead and ways to address these issues, including:
 - a. A comprehensive report into the potential factors leading to the increase in permanent exclusions-Report to the LSCB March 2017- which considered the impact of the following:
 - i. Financial Context (schools)
 - ii. Funding for permanently excluded pupils (LA)
 - iii. Curriculum
 - iv. Regulatory Framework (Ofsted)
 - v. Use of alternative provision
 - vi. School support systems
 - b. Headteachers Conference-July 2017

- c. Action Plan and Task and Finish Group-Sept 17
- d. Team around the Schools (Early Help)
- e. Primary Behaviour Support Service (Early Intervention)

Current Situation (2018/19 Academic Year)

5. Although permanent exclusions reduced during the 2017/18 academic year by a substantial amount, they rose again during the 2018/19 academic year.
6. Provisional data shows that during the 2018/19 academic year we had 70 permanent exclusions of which 1 was primary (Y6) and 69 were secondary (64 have been upheld and 5 are pending).
7. Although permanent exclusions have increased by 11% since 2017/18 they haven't increased to the high of 85 in 2016/17. **Table 1** provides a comparison of permanent exclusions term by term for the past 5 years.

| Academic Year | Permanent Exclusions (Total) | Permanent Exclusion (Secondary Primary) | Autumn Term | Spring Term | Summer Term |
|---------------|------------------------------|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 2014/15 | 56 | 54/2 | 21 | 19 | 16 |
| 2015/16 | 72 | 71/1 | 28 | 21 | 22 |
| 2016/17 | 85 | 80/5 | 34 | 19 | 32 |
| 2017/18 | 58 | 57/1 | 29 | 15 | 14 |
| 2018/19 | 70 | 69/1 | 36 | 21 | 13 |

Table 1-Comparison term by term

8. **Table 2** shows a breakdown of permanent exclusions by school, by term, including permanent exclusions as a % of the pupil population.

| | Autumn Term | Spring Term | Summer Term | Total | % of school population |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|------------------------|
| PRU | 1 | 1 | | 2 | 1.94% |
| Cardinal Hume | 2 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 0.41% |
| Emmanuel | 4 | | 1 | 5 | 0.45% |
| Heworth Grange | 3 | 4 | 3 | 10 | 0.97% |
| Joseph Swan | 7 | 4 | 1 | 12 | 1.18% |
| Kingsmeadow | 2 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 0.67% |
| Lord Lawson | 6 | 2 | 3 | 11 | 0.88% |
| STM | 3 | 1 | | 4 | 0.33% |
| Thorp | 1 | | 1 | 2 | 0.24% |
| Whickham | 4 | | 2 | 6 | 0.46% |
| THCA | 2 | 1 | | 3 | 3.0% |
| OOA | 1 | 3 | | 4 | |
| Harlow Green | | 1 | | 1 | |
| Total | 36 | 21 | 13 | 70 | |

Table 2-Permanenet Exclusions by School

9. Comparative data shows that:

- a. the rate of total permanent exclusions (primary, secondary and special schools) nationally is 0.10%, with the rate of permanent exclusions in secondary schools is 0.20% and in primary schools it is 0.03%
- b. the rate of total permanent exclusions in the north east (primary, secondary, special) is 0.11%
- c. the rate of total permanent exclusions (primary, secondary, special) in Gateshead is 0.26%
- d. the rate of secondary permanent exclusions nationally is 0.20%
- e. the rate of secondary permanent exclusions in the northeast is 0.25%
- f. the rate of secondary permanent exclusions in Gateshead is 0.63% in 2016/17
- g. the rate of primary permanent exclusions nationally is 0.03%
- h. the rate of primary permanent exclusions in the northeast is 0.01%
- i. the rate of primary permanent exclusions in Gateshead is < 0.01% in 2016/17

10. **Table 3** sets out the reasons for permanent exclusions with 52% (36) of all permanent exclusions for persistent disruptive behaviour. The national figure is 34.0% of permanent exclusions being for persistent disruptive behaviour.

| Reason | Number |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Physical assault (pupil) | 5 |
| Physical assault (adult) | |
| Verbal abuse (pupil) | 3 |
| Verbal abuse (adult) | 6 |
| Bullying | |
| Racist incident | |
| Sexual misconduct | |
| Drug/alcohol | 3 |
| Damage | |
| Theft | |
| Persistent disruptive behaviour | 36 |
| Other | 13 (6 knives/1 fire alarm) |
| TBA | 4 |

Table 3-Reasons for Permanent exclusions in secondary schools-2018/2019 academic year

11. **Table 4** shows a breakdown of permanent exclusions by year group over the 3 academic terms

| Year Group | Autumn | Spring | Summer | Total |
|------------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| Y6 | | 1 | | 1 |
| Y7 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 9 |
| Y8 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 14 |
| Y9 | 11 | 8 | 4 | 23 |
| Y10 | 12 | 6 | 1 | 19 |
| Y11 | 4 | | | 4 |

Table 4-Permanent Exclusions by Year Group

12. Of the 70 permanent exclusions 4 were female and 66 were male.
13. Year on year data suggests that most Y11 pupils are permanently excluded during the autumn term and more KS 3 pupils (Y7,8 and 9) are permanently excluded in the summer term.
14. In May 2019, The Timpson Report was published which reviewed the use of permanent exclusions in schools to ascertain how Headteachers use exclusion in practice and why some groups of children are more likely to be excluded than others.
15. Recommendations from the report fall into several categories:
- a. The DfE should**
 - i. Update statutory guidance on exclusions
 - ii. make schools accountable for the pupils they exclude including their educational outcomes
 - iii. Publish data on the number and rate of previously LAC who have left LA care (this is currently done for LAC children)
 - iv. Set expectations that schools and LA work together
 - v. Consult on options to address children with multiple exclusions
 - vi. Review the range of reasons that schools provide for exclusions
 - vii. Mitigate the risks that schools seek to remove children from their rolls
 - viii. Develop training;
 - 1. Ensuring that there is training and support for schools' leaders including
 - a. Attachment
 - b. Trauma
 - 2. Ensuring that behaviour training is a mandatory part of initial teacher training
 - 3. That provides support for SENCo
 - ix. Funding
 - 1. Extend funding to equality and diversity hubs
 - 2. Establish a Practice Improvement Fund to support LA and schools to identify and provide support/interventions
 - 3. Ensure that funding is of a sufficient level and flexible enough so that schools are able to put in alternative provision to avoid exclusions
 - 4. Ensure that adjustments following a permanent exclusion should neither act as an incentive to permanently exclude

or act as deterrent for a school accepting a pupil who has been permanently excluded

5. The Youth Endowment Fund should be open to schools
- x. Issue clear guidance on managed moves
- xi. Alternative provision (AP)
 1. Promote the use of AP
 2. Ensure that AP is a positive career choice
 3. Develop high quality leaders to drive improvement across the school network
 4. PRUs should be renamed to reflect their role in supporting children to overcome barriers to learning
 5. Invest in improving and expanding buildings and facilities for AP provision
- xii. Ensure there is sufficient oversight and monitoring of schools;
 1. Use of in-house units
 2. Use of AP
- b. **The government should** continue to invest in approaches that build multi-disciplinary teams around schools; including health and social care
- c. **Ofsted should**
 - i. recognise those schools who use exclusion appropriately
 - ii. consider whether there are patterns to exclusions, off rolling, absence from schools or direction to an AP
- d. **Governing bodies/trustees should**
 - i. Work with others to build the capacity of school governors and trustees to offer effective support and challenge to schools
 - ii. Should review information on children who leave their school
- e. **Local authorities should** ensure that
 - i. information is provided to parents of children who have been permanently excluded
 - ii. guidance is changed so that social workers must be notified alongside parents when a CiN is moved out of their school
 - iii. regular data and information on exclusions is shared with the LSCB
 - iv. they systematically track and monitor pupils moves to ensure that pupils receive suitable education at their destination

16. The Headteachers Conference planned for October 2019 will ensure that we

- a. work with schools and partner agencies to implement these recommendations

- b. provide examples of good practice in the areas of leadership and resilience building in young people to schools

17. There will also be the annual report on permanent exclusions provided to schools, which will include information on the Education Inclusion Panel, destinations of permanently excluded pupils, outcomes and post 16 destinations.

Recommendations

- 1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to
 - a. receive this report for information and discussion

Contact: Jeanne Pratt

Ext 8644

TITLE OF REPORT: Analysis of School Inspections Spring and Summer Terms 2019

REPORT OF: Caroline O'Neil, Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing and Learning

Summary

This report details the position of Gateshead schools in relation to Ofsted Inspection findings for the spring and summer terms 2019.

Background

In this version of the school inspection framework each school is given an overall **effectiveness grade** based upon the following areas;

- effectiveness of leadership and management
- quality of teaching, learning and assessment
- personal development, behaviour and welfare
- outcomes for pupils.

The quality of Early Years and 6th Forms are also assessed.

September 2015 saw the introduction of a significantly different approach to school inspection. Essentially, “outstanding” schools are largely exempt.

Ofsted use the following grading system

- 1 = Outstanding
- 2 = Good
- 3 = Requires Improvement
- 4 = Inadequate

Schools identified as “requires improvement” will usually be re-inspected within two years, and often before. Schools that are judged as requires improvement with a leadership management grade of requires improvement will receive regular monitoring visits from HMI.

Full copies of all inspection reports can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Outcomes

| Primary/Nursery School | School Type | Previous Inspection | Present Inspection |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Birtley East Primary | Maintained | good | good |
| Fell Dyke Primary | Maintained | outstanding | requires improvement |
| St Agnes Catholic Primary | Catholic | outstanding | good |
| Lobley Hill Primary | Maintained | good | good |
| St Joseph's Infants, Birtley | Catholic | good | good |
| St Joseph's Primary, Blaydon | Catholic | good | good |
| Larkspur Primary | Maintained | requires improvement | good |
| Bede Primary | Maintained | outstanding | good |
| Swalwell Primary | Maintained | requires improvement | requires improvement |
| Falla Park Primary | Maintained | requires improvement | good |

| Secondary School | School Type | Previous Inspection | Present Inspection |
|---------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Lord Lawson Academy | Academy | requires improvement | requires improvement |
| Kingsmeadow Comprehensive | Maintained | requires improvement | good |

In the spring and summer terms 12 schools were inspected:

10 Primary/Nurse Schools

- 8 schools were judged to be good
- 2 schools were judged to require improvement

- 3 schools received a more negative grade.
- 5 schools received the same grade as in the previous inspection
- 2 schools received a more positive grade

2 Secondary Schools

- 1 school judged to require improvement
- 1 school judged to be good

- 1 school improved on the previous grade.
- 1 school received the same grade as in the previous inspection.

Overall Summary

68 Primary Schools – 64 Good or Outstanding, 4 Require Improvement

6 Specials – 6 Good or Outstanding

10 Secondary Schools – 6 Good or Outstanding

Outstanding Schools

By law, schools judged to be outstanding are exempt from the normal ofsted inspection cycle unless ofsted identifies specific issues with a school that gives cause for an inspection. This approach by ofsted has led to some outstanding schools not being inspected for over 10 years and having judgements based on ofsted inspection frameworks that may have been superseded 2 or 3 times. Ofsted has made it clear that it is no longer comfortable with this situation and as a consequence inspected twice the number of outstanding schools this year as compared with the previous year. In Gateshead we have approximately 40% of primary/special schools judged as outstanding – approximately double the national average.

Ofsted has increased their focus on outstanding schools in Gateshead. Essentially, ofsted has inspected those outstanding schools where published test results have fallen. Nationally, the vast majority of outstanding schools that have been inspected have been downgraded.

In Gateshead; Bede, St. Agnes, Highfield and Fell Dyke have all lost their outstanding status in the 18/19 academic year. While this is a disappointment it

does not necessarily shown that the children in these schools are receiving a poorer education but it is does show that these schools are not achieving the criteria needed to be outstanding on the latest ofsted framework. The Council's school improvement service continues to intervene where it identifies the need for support, irrespective of the ofsted judgement.

The Education Inspection Framework – a new inspection framework for schools to be introduced from September 2019

Ofsted will implement a new inspection framework from September 2019. While there are similarities with the previous framework there also significant differences. Most significant, potentially for the primary schools, will be the focus on the quality of the curriculum across all subjects. While reading, writing and mathematics will still have a high profile, Ofsted has made it clear that all elements of the national curriculum will be assessed in much greater detail. Most Headteachers and Teacher would welcome a more broad and balanced education beyond the core subjects but primary schools have been “pushed” along a highly reading, writing and mathematics dominated curriculum for a for a number of years and, consequently, they will need time to adjust to Ofsted's new demands.

Ofsted will continue to give schools an overall effectiveness grade but now based on the following 4 sub- judgements.

- Quality of Education
- Behaviour and Attitudes
- Personal Development
- Leadership and Management

Recommendations

OSC is asked to consider the position of schools in relation to ofsted inspections.

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| Contact: Steve Horne | Extension: 8612 |
|----------------------|-----------------|

TITLE OF REPORT: Annual Work Programme

REPORT OF: Sheena Ramsey, Chief Executive
Mike Barker, Strategic Director, Corporate Services and
Governance

Summary

The report sets out the provisional work programme for Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2019/20.

1. The Committee's provisional work programme was endorsed at the meeting held on 4 April 2019 and Councillors have agreed that further reports will be brought to future meetings to highlight current issues / identify any changes / additions to this programme.
2. Appendix 1 sets out the work programme as it currently stands. Any changes proposed to the programme will be set out in bold and italics for ease of identification.

Recommendations

3. The Committee is asked to
 - a) Note the provisional programme;
 - b) Note that further reports on the work programme will be brought to the Committee to identify any additional policy issues, which the Committee may be asked to consider.

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APPENDIX 1

| Draft Families OSC 2019 - 20 | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 20 June 19 1.30pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution (to note) • Role and remit (to note) • The Council Plan – Year End Assessment and Performance Delivery 2019-20 • Foetal Alcohol Update • Youth Justice Service Priorities and Performance • Work Programme |
| 12 Sept 19 1.30pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ofsted Inspections/School Data – Progress Update • School Exclusions – Performance Update • Safeguarding Children - LSCB Annual Report and Plans • Annual Report on Complaints and Representations – Children • OSC Review of Children on Edge of Care – Monitoring • Work Programme |
| 31 Oct 19 1.30pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAMHS Progress Update • Impact of Early Help – Progress Update and Case Studies eg Team Around the School • Integrated Referral and Assessment Team • Performance Update on Children’s Centre, IAG and Early Years Childcare Service • Work Programme |
| 28 Nov 19 1.30pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council Plan – Six Monthly Assessment and Performance Delivery 2018-19 (including update on implementation of Ofsted recommendations) • Monitoring – OSC Review of Obesity • Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy Refresh • Social Work Recruitment & Retention – Performance Update • Quality of Social Work Practice • Youth Justice Service Priorities and Performance • Work Programme |
| 30 Jan 20 4.30pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ofsted – Annual Report • Secondary Academies Performance – Progress Update • Support for Young Carers • Smoking in Expectant Mothers • Liaison with Gateshead Youth Assembly • Work Programme |
| 5 March 20 1.30pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Conversation with Head Teachers of Special Schools • Child In Need Offer - Update • SEND Update – (to focus on quality of inclusion in Gateshead/ outcomes for SEND children / impact of budget reductions) • 0-19 Services • Work Programme |
| 23 April 20 1.30pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSC Review of Obesity – Monitoring • CAMHS Progress Update • Foetal Alcohol Update • Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements Update • Work Programme |

Issues to slot in:

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