

Stockton-on-Tees Local Safeguarding Children Board

Annual Report 2015 - 2016



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Chairs Introduction

It gives me great pleasure to provide you with the Foreword to the Stockton Local Children Safeguarding Board (SLSCB) Annual Report for 2015/16.

Safeguarding Boards are required by Statute, and have the specific responsibility to ensure that safeguarding partners work together and are effective in providing robust safeguarding services. The Partnership is constituted from a range of both statutory and non-statutory bodies including active representation from the Third sector.

Recent high profile incidents that have emerged in Oxfordshire, Rochdale, and Rotherham along with a number of high profile “celebrity” scandals has certainly raised public interest, awareness and expectation in safeguarding matters placing the work of LSCBs very much in a “goldfish bowl” environment. Never before has the general public had so much knowledge and shown so much interest in the performance of their local safeguarding system, quite rightly calling them to account when the system fails those who we consider to be the most vulnerable in our communities.

It is therefore crucial that our LSCB fully understands how well the Partnership is working together, what the specific pressure and performance points are, and explores and puts in place remedies in respect of any deficiencies. During the period covered by this report four specific developments and indeed improvements have taken place.

The first relates to the manner in which the LSCB has managed to improve its engagement with its schools across Stockton. This is clearly vital taking into account the amount of actual time children and young people spend in a schools setting. Local Authority colleagues have cemented strong safeguarding relationships with schools ensuring that there is robust representation from primary, secondary, and independent sectors ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place right across the sector.

The second relates to the intelligence hub that allows the LSCB understand how well partners are working together, where there are any potential shortcomings, and identify any specific areas for improvement. Over the past 12 months work has been consolidated further improving the quality of data that enables the important forensic scrutiny of the workings of the Partnership to take place. Over the next 12 months this will be further enhanced as exciting work bringing together a joined up Tees performance scorecard across all four LSCB's is put in place.

Ensuring that health visitors, police officers, teachers, social workers and a plethora of other professionals are provided with appropriate skills and tools to fully fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities is crucial. Multi agency training in Stockton has traditionally been of a high standard. However work during the last 12 months focussing upon developing a new relationship twinned with colleagues working in Hartlepool will allow this to be taken onto a new level, whilst at the same time bringing further consistency of practice across the two Local Authority areas.

And finally over the last twelve months there has been a great deal of time invested exploring ways of developing service interventions that bring about change and deliver help at the earliest possible opportunity. An innovative initiative known as the Graded Care Profile encourages intervention and help at the earliest opportunity and focussed upon high level short term help reducing the need for long term engagement.

Prior to Christmas government announced its intention to review the workings and effectiveness of LSCB's across England. The outcome of this review is due to report at the end of March 2016. We shall have to see whether that will bring about any changes to the format, statutory footing, and authority provided to LSCB's to fulfil their important duties and responsibilities in respect of ensuring strong and effective safeguarding arrangements are in place locally.

This will be the last occasion that I will be involved in Stockton's Annual Report as after 6 years in the role of Independent Chair I have decided it is time to pass on the baton to allow a fresh set of eyes to oversee the important work of the Board. It has been a privilege to serve the LSCB, I would like to thank every colleague who has worked tirelessly to ensure that the system operates as safely and effectively as it can do, and I wish the LSCB every success in the future.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Colin Morris'.

Colin Morris

Independent Chair (October 2010 – March 2016)
Stockton-on-Tees Local Safeguarding Children Board

Incoming Chair's Welcome

Thank you for taking the time to read this report which is about ensuring the best possible safeguarding outcomes for our children and young people in the Stockton on Tees Borough. I am honoured to have been appointed to succeed Colin as the new Independent Chair and wish to pay tribute to both Colin and the Board for their achievements under his leadership. My role is now to build on this foundation, and working together as a Board, to strive for excellence in how we deliver our functions, our children and young people deserve no less.

Changes proposed as a result of the Wood Review to improve safeguarding outcomes will take some time to be implemented and I am determined, whatever the future of the SLSCB, we will work tirelessly to achieve our objectives in the meantime.

It is important that we focus on the role of the Board and the value it adds hence I am delighted to endorse the structure that we have adopted in our work:

- Ensuring co-operation and co-ordination between agencies
- Effective challenge and scrutiny of policies, practice and performance
- Enabling change to improve outcomes

Following our well attended and productive development day we agreed three priorities detailed in the report at 'Priorities for 2016 /2017'. I look forward to reporting our progress against these on the next annual report but more importantly on the positive difference the Board, practitioners, partners and families will have made.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D.Pickard', with a horizontal line underneath.

Dave Pickard

Independent Chair (from April 2016)

Stockton-on-Tees Local Safeguarding Children Board

Annual Report & SLSCB Contact Details

The Stockton-on-Tees LSCB Annual Report 2015 – 2016, produced by the SLSCB Business Manager was approved by the Board in October 2016. In writing the Annual Report, information from a variety of sources and analysis of information presented to the Board and its Sub Groups has been brought together. Board Members who have contributed are thanked for their submissions.

Organisations working with Children and Young People can use this Report to develop their understanding of safeguarding in Stockton-on-Tees and the work the SLSCB is doing to support them and to be aware of the critical safeguarding issues relevant to their organisation.

The wider public can also use this document to develop their understanding and determine how there can be wider community engagement in safeguarding issues.

The Annual Report is published in relation to the preceding financial year and as required in legislation is submitted to the Chief Executive of the Local Authority, Leader of the Council, the Local Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board. It is also published on the SLSCB website: www.stockton.gov.uk/slscb

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Children and Young People in Stockton-on-Tees

Children and young people under 19 make up about 24.3% of the total population, slightly higher than the national average.



Only 29% of mums are still breast-feeding 6-8 weeks after birth, compared to the national average of 47%

29%

18% of pregnant Mums smoke, compared to the national average of 11%

18%

21.8% of children live in poverty (compared to 18.6% nationally)

18.6%

21.8%

Around 5,000 children receive free school meals

5,000

There are 30,000 pupils in schools

30,000

52% of secondary aged children attend schools judged to be good or better by Ofsted

52%

92% of primary aged children attend schools judged to be good or better by Ofsted

92%

There are around 558 children and young people with a statement of special educational needs and 480 with an education, health and care plan

558
480

There are around 47,200 children and young people under the age of 19 in Stockton-On-Tees.

This is projected to rise to 50,900 by 2025

47,200 under 19 in 2016

50,900 under 19 by 2025

10.4% of children aged 4-5 are classified as obese

19.8% of those aged 10-11 are classified as obese

There are 380 children in care in Stockton

There are a further 277 subject to a child protection plan, where there are serious concerns about welfare

There are a further 1,484 children in need, whose needs have been assessed and are receiving support to enable them to meet their potential. There are currently 1,950 live Early Help Assessments, where multi-agency teams of professionals are working with families to tackle issues

What is the LSCB?

The Children Act 2004 required every local authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board, more commonly referred to as LSCB. In Stockton-on-Tees, SLSCB is the key statutory mechanism for ensuring co-operation across all agencies working with children and young people in the locality and works closely with other partnerships such as the Health & Wellbeing Board, Children & Young People's Partnership.

Chapter 3 of Working Together 2015 sets out in detail the arrangements for the work of each Local Safeguarding Children Board.

It is a multi-agency partnership that holds its partners to account about the extent to which children and young people are kept safe. Its duties are to:

- Ensure Co-ordination of work takes place, effectively challenge and enable change to take place.
- Produce and disseminate safeguarding policies and procedures
- Raise safeguarding awareness
- Monitor and evaluate safeguarding work
- Make sense of safeguarding data
- Conduct serious case and learning reviews

SLSCB aims to operate transparently and believes it is good practice to make as much information as possible available to the public and its partners. Information and minutes from meetings are therefore available on request unless it would not be in the public interest to do so or would breach confidentiality. Information is also available at <http://www.stockton.gov.uk/slscb>

Some of the Board partner organisations work coterminous with other areas and the difficulties this presents for some such as Health, Probation and Police is recognised. It is for this reason that wherever possible collaborate work with neighbouring LSCBs takes place. Examples of collaborative work are referred to in this report such as the **Tees LSCBs Joint Procedures**, Hartlepool & Stockton LSCBs Joint Training Programme and development of the North of Tees Children's HUB and LSCBs Performance Framework.

Attendance at Meetings

Attendance at SLSCB Board and Sub Group meetings during 2015 / 2016 continued to be good and consistent.

The Board is comprised of senior managers who are able to speak confidently on behalf of their organisation, change and influence work and challenge both within their organisation and partners on the Board. Sub Groups are chaired by a Board Member. Minutes from Board meetings also include reference to which other Boards and Groups the Board Members sit on as a means of helping to identify and strengthen effective links. This also provides a good opportunity for safeguarding issues to be raised with other partnerships thus developing a two way approach of influence and shaping of services to improve opportunities for children and young people in the borough.

Sub Groups are comprised of operational staff usually third tier or below who have direct involvement with safeguarding children and young people. All but two of the members of the Learning Improvement & Practice Sub Group (LIPSG) are Board Members however due to the high level of expertise and knowledge required to review, understand and make recommendations to the SLSCB Chair in respect of the complexities of the cases reviewed. It should be noted however that the non-Board Members are both senior officers with a high level of knowledge and experience in safeguarding children work.

The Sub Group Chairs are required to provide attendance reports to the SLSCB Chair who routinely monitors attendance and challenges absence. There is input from a broad range of partner agencies with high levels of attendance from them.

In addition to the SLSCB Groups, Safeguarding Forums are also held within; the Education Sector on a termly basis, in Health Trusts and the Community / Voluntary Sector Safeguarding Forum. These forums which have SLSCB representatives involved with them helps to reinforce the collective voice that safeguarding children and young people is everyone's business. Formal arrangements are not in place with meetings with, or held by children and young people however, close links are maintained with them e.g. Youth Direction, Young Carers, Let's Take Action Group, Schools, Children and young people Leaving Care. This is an area that the Board recognises needs improving and is working towards.

Details regarding attendance can be found on the SLSCB web pages and from this link - **Attendance Record 2015/2016**.

SLSCB Income & Expenditure 2015 / 2016

Board partners are expected to contribute to the resource requirements of LSCBs and the following information shows the income and expenditure for the SLSCB budgets. Due to the financial pressures faced by all agencies, expenditure is kept to a minimum. Room Hire for training (printing & copying) in some SBC Buildings is covered as an 'in kind' cost and therefore does not show on any of the budget accounts. In-kind contributions are not calculated however they are acknowledged.

SLSCB Core Budget Account

INCOME	
CAFCASS	550
Catalyst	2,500
Local Authority	64,110 ¹
National Probation Service	744
Police	16,683
SBC Schools	25,000
Stockton & Hartlepool CCG	53,055
Sub Total	16,2642
Brought Forward from 2014 / 2015	39,712
Total Receipts	202,354

EXPENDITURE	
Staffing (Direct & Indirect costs) Business Manager(FT), Training & Development Officer (FTJS) ² Administrator (FT) ³	90,422
Training & Conferences	210
Travel and Transport	310
AILC Fee	1,500
Multi Agency Training Account	10,000
Serious Case Review Account	3,000
Early Help Awareness Raising	1,851
Supplies and Support Services	
a) Independent Chair ⁴	16,057
b) Web Based Procedures	1,661
c) General Running Costs	2,637
e) Safeguarding Events / Campaigns	2,467 ⁵
Total Payments	155,203
Income – Expenditure to c/fwd.	46,430

Serious Case Review Budget 2015 / 2016

INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
B/fwd. 2014 / 2015	29,460	Reviewers	6,554
SLSCB	3,000	SBC Workforce Development	4,074
SBC	4,306		
Total Receipts	37,766	Total Payments	10,628
		Income – Expenditure to be c/fwd.	26,138

SLSCB Multi Agency Training

INCOME	
B/fwd. from SLSCB MA Training Account 2014/2015	19,683
Fees	-210
SLSCB	10,000
Total Receipts	29,473

EXPENDITURE	
Hartlepool LSCB	4,000
E-learning Membership	6,000
Professional, Consultancy & Hired Services	600
Signs of Safety Fee	3,000
Total Payments	13,600
Income – Expenditure to be c/fwd.	15,873

²Costs for Trainers and Training Administration are contained within the SLSCB Core Budget under the heading Training & Development Officer. This post is seconded to the SBC Training Unit.

³This allocation is included in internal transfers to Democratic Services. The service is commissioned for SBC.

⁴Includes a payment from March 2015

⁵2014/2015 Staff Engagement & Dev Day Facilitator

SLSCB Business Plan 2014 - 2017

The SLSCB Business Plan included six key objectives which SLSCB considered would have the greatest level of impact on outcomes for children and provide assurance of what was happening in order to make a difference. The objectives weren't in order of priority and will continue in part in the next Business Plan as a means of continual improvement working with other partnership Boards to improve services for children and their families. SLSCB recognises that although it has the statutory responsibility to co-ordinate activity, to make improvements it cannot do this alone and therefore dovetails its work with other Children's Partnership Plans.

The Business Plan can be accessed on the SLSCB Web pages www.stockton.gov.uk/slscb and is referenced throughout this report.



WHAT HAVE WE DONE IN 2015 / 2016

The LSCB performs three main functions:

1. Ensuring cooperation and coordination between agencies
2. Effective challenge and scrutiny of policies, practice and performance
3. Enabling change to improve outcomes

The role of the LSCB is to promote cooperation between agencies, and the effective coordination of the work of all agencies to promote the wellbeing and safety of children. It does this by providing leadership and clarity, and a clear focus on partnership, learning and exchange between agencies. To perform, this role there are specific requirements about membership, role and attendance, and the LSCB also ensures there is a specific focus on key priority areas, such as child sexual exploitation, where there is a clear emphasis on multi-agency working and action, and where the LSCB's focus can add value, accelerate working or bring agencies together.



ENSURING CO-ORDINATION

Governance

Key points to note in respect of the governance arrangements for the Board are:

- The LSCB both scrutinises and can be scrutinised by agencies (e.g. the Council's Children and Young People Select Committee is currently reviewing the LSCB)
- During the year we have worked jointly with Hartlepool on some issues and will continue to do so, and across Tees on others, where this makes sense.
- We have protocols in place for how we work with other Partnerships
- The Board meets monthly and has good attendance, from its Board Membership which is at Senior Level in Organisations
- A new Independent Chair was appointed in February to start April 2016
- There are currently 3 lay members (independent community representatives)
- Quarterly formal meetings of SBC Chief Exec, DCS & SLSCB Chair take place in addition to informal or issue based discussions
- The Constitution & other governance documents will be reviewed in 2016 to ensure they are still fit for purpose.
- Business Plan Reviewed and monitored. (References are made to the Business Plan throughout this report in the relevant main function sections)

The Board is comprised of representatives from Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, CAFCASS , Cleveland Police, Education Establishments , Hartlepool & Stockton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), NHS England (Cumbria & North East), North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust , Tees, Esk & Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust , Probation Services (National and Local), Thirteen-Housing Group, Voluntary Sector and Lay Members.

Contacts for members are available on the SLSCB web pages at **SLSCB contacts**.

Work takes place on a Stockton locality basis and with colleagues in Hartlepool and across the Tees area when collaborative work would be of benefit to children and families in Stockton. SLSCB retains responsibility and accountability however for work that takes place within Stockton and therefore oversees its co-ordination.

SLSCB Business Plan 2014 - 2017

Priority Objective ↓	Success Criteria we wanted ↓	What we did...	Next Steps 2016 >
2. Improve the response to children at risk of harm as a result of domestic abuse	There will be a more effective early response to the needs of children affected by domestic abuse.	Operation Encompass was launched which was welcomed by education establishments.	Ensure effective co-ordinated approach to Domestic Abuse work follows a child centric approach.
3. Ensure proactive responses to children identified as being at risk of child sexual exploitation	SLSCB will be assured that VEMT strategies are being implemented effectively across all agencies.	Improvement in information sharing. Pathways developed.	Improve missing from home interviews.
4. Improve early identification of, and response to, neglect	A more structured framework for the management of neglect cases will be in place.	Targeted introduction of Signs of Safety and Graded Care Profile were implemented.	Full rollout across the borough.

CIN 2015-16 Child Protection Plan Key Indicators Report for Stockton-on-Tees

Ensuring co-operation between agencies working together to protect children is a fundamental responsibility of SLSCB and it therefore closely monitors data as detailed to identify where intervention by SLSCB may be necessary.

Timeliness of Single Assessments	Provisional 2015-16	Final Outturn 2014-15	Final Outturn 2013-14
Numerator Number of Single Assessments completed within 45 working days	2524	2755	188
Denominator Total number of Single Assessments completed in the year	2559	2773	188
% Ratio (Please note the Single Assessment process was introduced on the 3rd February 2014.)	98.6%	99.4%	100.0%

Timeliness of Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC)	Provisional 2015-16	Final Outturn 2014-15	Final Outturn 2013-14
Numerator Number of ICPCs held within 15 working days of a S47	329	337	208
Denominator Total number of ICPCs held during the year (excl Transfer In Conferences)	350	377	376
% Ratio	94.0%	89.4%	55.3%

Child Protection Plans lasting 2 years or more	Provisional 2015-16	Final Outturn 2014-15	Final Outturn 2013-14
Numerator Number of CPPs ceasing after 2 or more years	35	19	4
Denominator Total number of CPPs ceasing in the year	380	297	412
% Ratio			1.0%

Children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time	Provisional 2015-16	Final Outturn 2014-15	Final Outturn 2013-14
Numerator Number of children becoming subject of a plan for a second or subsequent time	63	62	51
Denominator Total number of children becoming subject of a plan in the year	309	356	339
% Ratio	20.4%	17.4%	15.0%

Child protection cases which were reviewed within required timescales	Provisional 2015-16	Final Outturn 2014-15	Final Outturn 2013-14
Numerator Number of CPPs open > 3 months reviewed within timescales	181	269	226
Denominator Total number of CPPs continuously open for at least 3 months in the year	182	282	226
% Ratio	99.5%	95.4%	100.0%

No.	Indicator	Stockton-on-Tees (S)	North East (NE)	England (E)	Reporting Period	Source
Ensure children and young people are safe⁶						
1	Number of Early Help Assessments by Agency and Reason.	Details can be made available on request. Due to the size of the data it was not possible to include it in this table.			31 March 2016	Q4 EHA Board Report
2	Proportion of referrals to Social Care with an active CAF.	12.9%	N/A	N/A	31 March 2016	Children's Performance Report March 2016
3	Rate of Children in Need (per 10,000 population aged 0-17).	531.5	441.5	337.7	31 March 2016	SFR 52-2016 (Provisional)
4	Rate of children who were the subject of a Child Protection Plan (per 10,000 population aged 0-17).	66.4	59.5	42.9	31 March 2016	SFR 52-2016 (Provisional)
5	Rate of Looked After Children (per 10,000 population aged 0-17).	88.2	83.9	60.3	31 March 2016	SFR 41-2016 (Provisional)
6	The number of children / incidences reported as missing.	331 children 1051 incidences	N/A	N/A	31 March 2016	Children's Performance

⁶Source SBC Children & Young People's Partnership Dataset - Year End 2015/16

At 531.5, the rate of children in need (per 10,000 child population) has shown a significant increase from the previous year (447.9). We continue to retain higher rates of children in need than the averages in the North East region and nationally.

The rate of children subject to a Child Protection Plan at 66.4 (per 10,000 child population) has reduced significantly from the rate of 83.6 for 2014-15, although still higher than regional and national average rates.

Our rate of children looked-after for 2015/16 at 88.2 per 10,000 remains slightly higher than the regional rate of 83.8 and significantly above the national rate of 60

To try and address these differences SLSCB has supported the introduction of Signs of Safety and the Graded Care Profile 2 Assessment Tools.

Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing and / or Trafficked (VEMT)

VEMT is one such structure where collaborative work on a Tees and locality basis has been agreed to be the most appropriate option. The co-ordinated aim of which is to ensure a degree of consistency to how each LSCB:

- Identifies children, young people and others perceived to be at risk.
- Identifies, investigates prosecutes and disrupts perpetrators.
- Provides appropriate support to children, young people and families.
- Raises awareness in both the public and professional conscience.
- Coordinates interventions that are designed to reduce risk.
- Develops demonstrable impact/outcome measures.

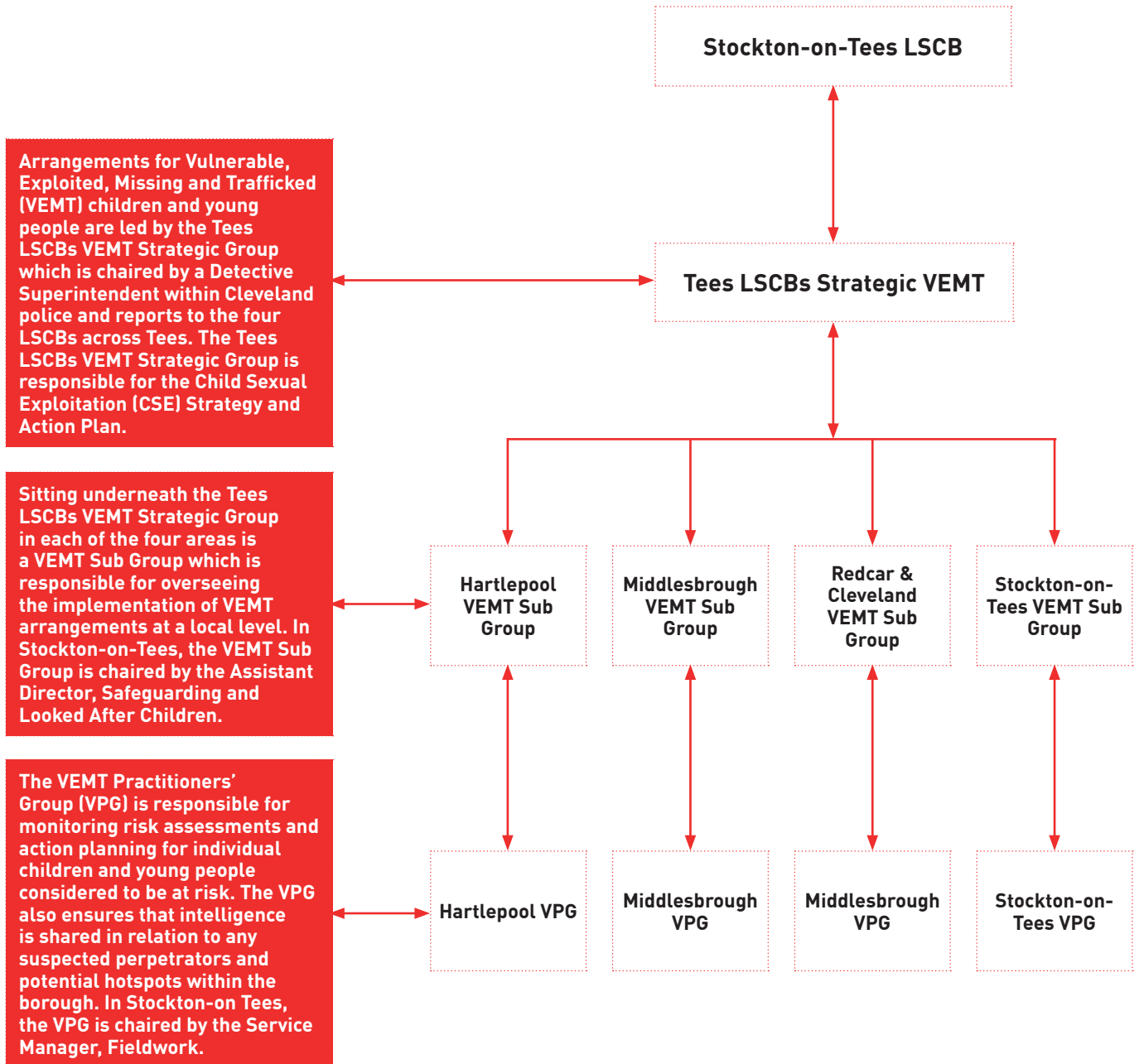
What did we do in 2015 / 2016?

Stockton LSCB VEMT Group contributed to review of Tees LSCBs CSE Strategy and Action Plan.

Contributed to review of Tees Quality Assurance Framework.

- Considered children's homes location risk assessments.
- Review of VEMT Sub Group and VPG terms of reference.
- Review of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Taxi licensing in light of the Rotherham report.
- CSE Task and Finish Review – consideration of recommendations and update to CYP Select Committee.
- Review of Police input to VPG.
- Review of National Probation Service (NPS)/Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) role in VEMT process.
- Consideration of Families and Communities against CSE (FCASE) evaluation report.
- Review of Missing/Return Interview arrangements.
- Police intelligence 'roadshow'.
- Contribution to National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) Regional Problem Profile.

VEMT Structure



The numbers of children subject to VEMT during 2015/16. Please note the figures are based on the number of active cases at the end of the quarter.

Table 1: Children subject to VEMT 2015/16				
Indicator	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Number of children	23	23	29	20

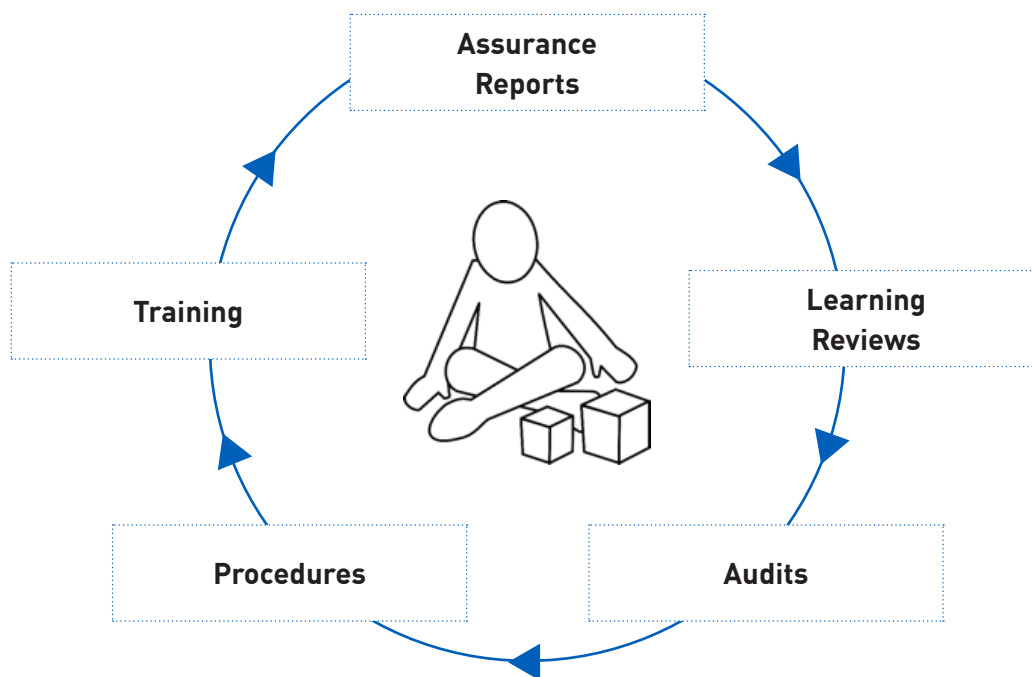
Whilst it can be seen there has been some fluctuation throughout the year, the numbers of children have remained broadly stable and in line with the previous year. As of Quarter 4 i.e. 31 March 2016, there were 20 children subject to VEMT arrangements. The breakdown was as follows:

Gender: 16 female, 4 male	Age: 4 x 17 year olds, 6 x 16 year olds, 4 x 15 year olds, 4 x 14 year olds, 1 x 13 year olds, 1 x 11 year old
Ethnicity: 19 x White (16 female, 3 male), 1 x BME (male)	Category: 2 x Vulnerable, 16 x CSE (9 high risk, 7 medium risk), 1 x Missing, 1 x Trafficked
Status: 11 x LAC, 3 x CP, 5 x Child in Need, 1 x Family Support (below children's social care threshold)	

Positive work is taking place to safeguard children who may be vulnerable however we have identified that we need to further improve the work we do once young people have returned 'home'. A Tees-wide Task & Finish Group (Missing and Return Interviews) will be established to agree a set of return interview questions and how the interviews should best take place. Once in place the group will convene every six months to share good practice.

EFFECTIVE CHALLENGE

The Board has a key role in challenging agencies: are we doing the right things; are things going quickly enough; is our work child and family centric. Throughout the year and in different formats the Board looked at the child's journey through the safeguarding system, what was the data we held telling us, were partner organisations working with families at the earliest opportunity, were processes being operated effectively, did professionals understand the thresholds for making a referral, how could we work better with families for them to understand what professional expected of them.



Our challenge role is based on:

- The visibility of partner agencies at the Board, and the benefits of open dialogue, questioning and assurance
- Section 11
- Learning reviews and deep dives
- Specific reviews of practice based on an analysis of cases
- Performance data and analysis

Decision making on child protection – Cases were submitted by partners where they felt there was inconsistency in decision making, or there was no consensus on outcomes. This led to a discussion session focussing seven cases which was fed back to the Board. There was broad agreement that the right decisions had been taken, but there were a number of areas of challenge, including the quality of the documentation and plans.

This session also resulted in a Board briefing on the PLO process and its relationship to the child protection process. Additional training is to be provided for staff in all agencies in respect of the PLO process arising from this work.

Review of child protection and LAC assessments and plans. An external consultant Margaret Whellans was brought in to lead on this work to ensure an independent approach was taken. This work sought to answer a number of key issues as identified by the LSCB's Performance Framework: NFA at the end of Single Assessment; challenge from IROs; appropriate and effective care plans; reasons for reducing numbers of CP plans and recommendations for further improvement. The work concluded that there is good practice in the impact for families; that the voice of the child was sought and heard and there is effective multi agency working being undertaken. It also noted areas for improvement: decision making at core group and review conferences; the increased use of research in assessment and planning.

Review of CP and S47 decision making. Similar to the above an external consultant Linda McAlmont was commissioned to look at his area of concern. Her findings concluded that thresholds and decision making for Section 47 Investigations were appropriate, and therefore addressed the issue about Stockton undertaking too many based on a lower threshold. It also made a number of recommendations for the more effective management of the child protection conference system.

Challenge by LSCB Chair on decision making in relation to incidents: The LSCB Chair frequently requested more information and assurance prior to making a final decision regarding the instigation of Serious Case or Learning Reviews.

CESC Workloads: Challenge was made regarding the impact of workload pressures within Children's Social Care. Detailed updates provided including any safeguarding issues that Board needed to be aware of. Board assured of no current risks.

Joint Thresholds: The understanding and application of the Continuum of Need was always considered when analysing the performance data, audits and reviews which led, coupled with the early development of the Stockton & Hartlepool Children's Hub to the threshold document being replaced with **Providing the right support to meet a child's needs in Hartlepool and Stockton.**

We aim to have a workforce that is highly skilled, well informed and can provide the right service at the right time. To do this they need to have access to up to date and relevant procedures and training. SLSCB continued to Chair the Tees LSCBs Procedures Group during 2015 / 6 and the following procedures were introduced or reviewed.

- Allegations against Staff, Carers or Volunteers
- Child Protection - Role of the Chair of ICPC/RCPC (IRO)
- Child Protection Review Conferences (Dual Process/Protection)
- Complaints by Service Users
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Orders - Residence/Child Arrangements/Special Guardianship
- Prevent/Radicalisation
- Private Fostering

- Request for Information from Police
- Safeguarding the Unborn Baby
- Tees LSCBs Information Sharing Protocol

In addition, the following guidance was agreed:

- Case Recording Principles
- Core Groups
- Health & Care Establishment Incident – Referral Process

Annual Assurance, Challenge and Change

Reports from partners were received by the Board enabling Board members to assure themselves that things were being done effectively for children and families in the Borough, what the impact had been and whether improvements could be made. The reports, such as those listed below are made available on the SLSCB website. A summary is also included in the annexe of the Annual Report 2015 / 2016.

- Allegations against Staff Carers or Volunteers (LADO) Report 2015 / 2016
- Children Missing Education Report 2015 / 2016
- Disabled Children Report 2015 / 2016
- Elective Home Education Report 2015 / 2016
- Independent Reviewing Officers Annual Report 2015 2016
- Looked After Children Placed Out of the Area Report 2015 / 2016
- Missing or Running Away from Home or Care Report 2016
- Private Fostering Report 2015 / 2016
- Youth Offending Team Report 2015 / 2016

Learning Reviews, Serious Case Reviews and Child Death Reviews

Challenge as to how and why some actions took place or issue arose from cases are looked at none more so than during the deep dive that takes place when Learning Reviews or Serious Case Reviews take place. During 2015 / 2016 seven cases were subject to consideration and review by the Learning & Improving Practice Sub Group (LIPSG), four of which were initially referred to in 2014 / 2015. None of the new cases met the criteria for a Serious Case Review. Learning is also provided from multi agency case file audits that take place and review of practice areas some of which is undertaken by independent consultants who have been commissioned by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council with the support and endorsement of SLSCB.

Learning from cases subject to review / audit is shared, briefings are sent to staff, learning events are held and multi-agency training courses are reviewed to incorporate required changes.

Practice is checked to monitor improvements in addition to checks made during single and multi-agency case file audits.

Reoccurring themes found were; Professional Challenge, Risk Assessments, Decision Making, Lack of professional's effective response to indicators of chronic neglect, Pathway & Protocols for 'Did not attend and missed appointments', No multi-agency (TAF) meetings held to obtain a full picture of the child and Over reliance on parental reporting. Improvements in these areas will be checked for during 2016 / 2017.

The Tees Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) reviews the deaths of children from the Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Stockton-On-Tees and Redcar & Cleveland Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) areas. The CDOP is a sub group of the 4 Tees LSCBs. It is chaired by the Clinical Director of Public Health, Tees Valley Public Health Shared Service (Toks Sangowawa), Designated Paediatrician for Child Deaths (Kailash Agrawal) reports to the Board re the work of CDOP and the business management functions are undertaken by the RCSCB business support team.

Cases Reviewed 2015 / 2016

During 2015-16 Tees CDOP reviewed 41 child deaths making a total of 300 reviewed over the 8 years of operation. The Tees Panel met 5 times during the year and reviewed an average of 8 cases per meeting.

LSCB	Neonatal	Older Children	Total
Hartlepool	5	6	11
Stockton	6	7	13
Middlesbrough	4	5	9
Redcar & Cleveland	2	6	8
Total	17	24	41

CHILD DEATHS CONSIDERED BY CDOP 1 APRIL 2015 – 31 MARCH 2016

The table below shows the respective ages of the children when they died. In total 41 child deaths were reviewed during 2015/16.

LSCB	Neonatal < 4 Weeks	4- 52 Weeks	1 - 4 Years	5 - 9 Years	10 - 14 Years	15 up to 18 Years	Total
Hartlepool	5	1	2	-	1	2	11
Stockton	6	2	1	1	1	2	13
Middlesbrough	3	3	1	1		1	9
Redcar & Cleveland	3	2	1	1		1	8
TOTAL	17	8	5	3	2	6	41

Performance

The Board continually reviews and challenges performance issues, not only from individual organisation perspectives but also as a collective through the Board itself, its sub groups and specifically by the Performance Sub Group which presented a quarterly detailed report on performance to the Board, as well as any exception reporting.

The report included 38 specific pieces of information, based on inputs, processes and outcomes.

Inputs	Processes	Outcomes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Early help assessments started by agency 2. Contacts with an EHA 3. Contacts and referrals 4. Referral reasons 5. Referrals leading to assessments 6. Housing and homelessness 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Cases awaiting allocation in Assessment Teams 8. Cases awaiting allocation in Fieldwork teams 9. Referrals progressing to Assessment 10. Strategy meetings attended by Police 11. Referrals progressing to S47 12. % S47 per population 13. S47 not progressing to ICPC 14. Rate of ICPC 15. Days from strategy meetings to ICPC 16. ICPCs not progressing to CP Plan 17. Agency representation at ICPC 18. Timeliness of CP review conferences 19. Attendance of children and young people at CP 20. Vacancy rates 21. Turnover 22. Sickness 23. Agency workers 24. Caseloads 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 25. A&E attendance for injuries 26. A&E attendance for 0-4s 27. Child deaths 28. Missing children 29. Missing per 10,000 30. Re-referrals to social care 31. Children in Need 32. Ceasing to be CIN 33. CP for abuse or neglect 34. Becoming subject to CP Plan 35. Total numbers 36. Ceasing CP plan 37. Children in care 38. Safeguarding incidents in secure accommodation

Key areas of work as identified through this framework have included:

- Increasing the number of Early Help Assessments from a wider range of agencies
- Examining the high rate of NFA following assessment through a specific piece of casework review
- Examining S47 decision making
- Challenge on the increasing pressures on assessment teams
- A continued focus on children who go missing and therefore who may become more vulnerable to being exploited.

Changes to the operational process for Early Help work, assessment tools such as Signs of Safety and the Graded Care Profile are also being developed to address some of the issues that have arisen leading to Members questioning the:

- High rates of referrals
- High rates of NFA
- Higher rates of children on CP plans or in care as a proportion of our total CIN
- Stepping down from CP to CIN?
- Stepping down from CIN to CAF?
- Rates of Section 47

The Children's Hub as the first point of contact for anyone with a safeguarding concern in Stockton-on-Tees or Hartlepool was developed during 2015 / 2016 and opened in June 2016 which should also help address some of these issues.

SLSCB Business Plan 2014 - 2017

Priority Objective ↓	Success Criteria we wanted ↓	What we did...	Next Steps 2016 >
<p>Strengthen the Quality Assurance and Performance Management framework</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be a better understanding of the impact of practice on children and families. • There will be a greater level of assurance for Board regarding the quality of practice across agencies. 	<p>Performance Sub Group refocused and timings of meetings were changed to enable analysis of data to be reviewed jointly by the group which has representation from all partners, prior to the Board receiving performance data reports.</p> <p>A new methodology for S11 reports was introduced which included one to one peer evaluation.</p> <p>External consultants were engaged to review certain areas of practice (Review of Casework, Review of Attendance at ICPCs and Review of S47s).</p> <p>Review of the effectiveness of the new Child Protection Plan, audits and assurance reports were presented and scrutinised by the Board.</p> <p>All of which aided the Board in assessing the effectiveness and areas for development both collectively and individually by partner agencies.</p>	<p>Strengthen quality assurance and performance management via the development and introduction of the Tees LSCBs Performance Management Framework.</p>

ENABLING CHANGE

→ What we did

→ Did it make a difference?

→ What's next

The LSCB enables change. It supports learning from research, responding to feedback and responding to the outcome of practice end thematic review.

The SLSCB Chair in his introduction has referred to four specific developments that took place during 2015 / 2016 which give an example of the approach to improving the quality and effectiveness of partnership working in Stockton:

- Improving engagement with schools across Stockton;
- Supporting and working towards a Tees LSCBs Performance Data Framework;
- Introduction of a Joint Multi Agency Training Programme for Hartlepool & Stockton LSCBs and
- SLSCB leading on a bid for Hartlepool & Stockton LSCBs to be a pilot Area for Graded Care Profile 2 assessment process.

Other examples of the difference made by the LSCB, and the impact this has had on the wellbeing and protection of children and especially the added value of the partners working together, rather than working as separate agencies are:

- **A Safer Place:** Production and adoption by many organisations of the Safer Place guidance which was led by the LSCB and focused on the two issues of unaccompanied children in public buildings*, as well as the issues around disclosure. Challenge was made by Tees Active regarding the guidance that children under the age of 10 years should be accompanied when in public settings which we considered, This led to a national review endorsing SLSCB's work as good practice.
- **Fairer Start:** the implementation of an ambitious and long term project to transform services for 0-5s in central Stockton. Key elements include the recruitment of volunteers and the implementation of joint skills development with professionals.
- **Early help strategy and implementation:** The LSCB has had a consistent focus on early help, adopting a new strategy and challenging partners in the take up of CAF / early help Assessments.
- **Section 11:** The LSCB has developed an increasing focus on the evaluation of practice in partner organisations – the implementation of the recent Section 11 audit process marked a change in approach with more openness from partners, challenge from Board members and peer reviews taking place.

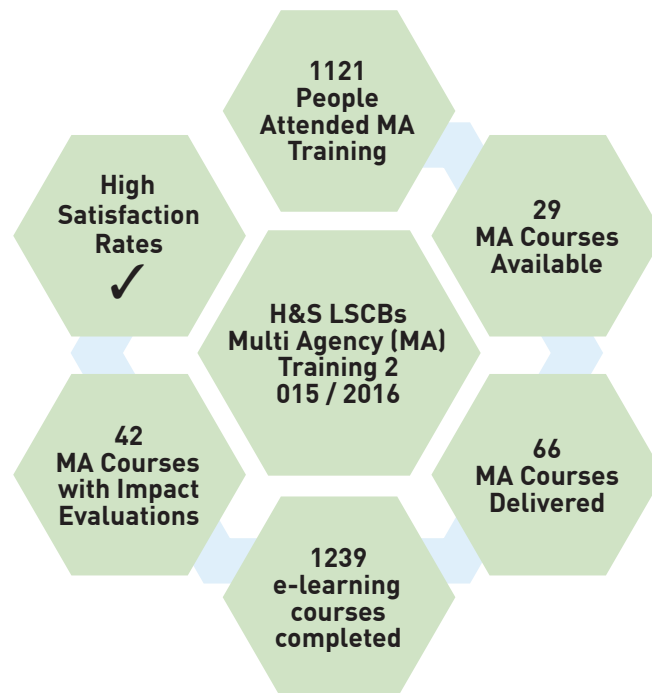
- **Challenge:** partners consistently challenge each other at the Board, using performance data and themed discussions. Examples include around case file audits and external inspections such as CQC and HMIC
- **Graded Care Profile:** Successful bid as GCP2 Pilot site. Jointly with Hartlepool, the LSCB has steered the roll out of the NSPCC led Graded care profile 2 tool which assists professionals working with families to identify the capacity of families to care, and therefore identify early signs of neglect. This is being rolled out in Stockton in the Fairer Start area initially, and will be rollout out further in 2016/17. Initial feedback has been very positive.
- **Signs of Safety:** The introduction of a new tool to support professionals in working with families has been successfully implemented. It is leading to sharper, clearer plans and more engagement by families
- **Emotional wellbeing:** Health Related behaviour Questionnaire / self-harm / Future in Mind activity is well underway as part of CAMHS transformation plans. We have looked in depth at self-harm, are currently implementing a range of projects to redesign CAMHS services, and undertaking a detailed survey in schools
- **Voice of the Child:** a project led by partners to audit the quality of our approaches, identify good practice and come up with a better way of collecting, using and sharing information.
- **Independent Audit:** independent analysis of over 200 pieces of casework by independent authors to assess
- **Chelsea's Choice:** awareness raising around child sexual exploitation through the hosting of this powerful drama. All secondary schools in the Borough have seen this.
- **Procedures:** The child protection procedures are regularly reviewed to ensure they are up to date and relevant for staff. Changes are made and new procedures introduced to help embed changes made resulting from issues identified during performance practice reviews, learning reviews and changes to local and national policy. They are available on the web at: <http://www.teescpp.org.uk/>
- **Training:** We entered into a joint training collaboration with Hartlepool LSCB to drive forward standards and to ascertain whether any efficiency savings could be made whilst not lowering the high training standards we had developed. A separate Annual Report is available in respect of the joint training however the following information provides a snapshot.

Quotes from Learners - Delivered Training

The training has enabled me to identify the main categories of abuse and estimate risk of harm, using Stockton's continuum of needs and services. I have used this to offer support to families at an early stage through CAF assessment before it has become a safeguarding concern.

Ensure have all up to date policies available and be more aware of things I hear, observe and am told and to remember to question things.

I have been able to confidently discuss safeguarding procedures with the families I support where issues are identified.



Quotes from e-learners

I will be more vigilant on a day to day basis of symptomatic changes in the children.

I needed to have information on current hot topics such as FGM and CSE - this was extremely useful. The updates on SCR's were also crucial.

To better support colleagues and to consider all of the issues in relation to children I am working with.

SLSCB Business Plan 2014 – 2017

The SLSCB Business Plan included six key objectives which it considered would have the greatest level of impact on outcomes for children and provide assurance to the Board of what was happening in order to make a difference. The objectives weren't in order of priority and will continue in part in the next Business Plan as a means of continual improvement working with other partnership Boards to improve services for children and their families. SLSCB recognises that although it has the statutory responsibility to co-ordinate activity, to make improvements it cannot do this alone and therefore dovetails its work with other Children's Partnership Plans.

Priority Objective ↓	Success Criteria we wanted ↓	What we did...	Next Steps 2016 >
Ensure effective implementation of the revised Early Help Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective coordination and targeting of early help services. • Full engagement of agencies in the CAF process. • Increase in the completion of CAFs, in line with agreed targets / expectations of agencies. • Reduction in the rate of children in need, including those with a child protection plan and children becoming looked after. 	<p>Reviewed and endorsed an improved Early Help Strategy.</p> <p>Refocused CAF work to that of Early Help Assessments.</p> <p>Greater number of CAFs submitted than in the previous year and from more agencies.</p> <p>Challenge to Children's Centres re engagement in the CAF process resulted in increased numbers being received from them.</p>	<p>We will work with the Local Authority and other partners to help them significantly increase the focus on early intervention and targeted prevention, as a way of trying to improve outcomes and reduce pressure on specialist services.</p> <p>We will focus on early help as part of a fundamental rethink of the way partners work, especially around how we tackle the signs of neglect, and the impact of issues such as parental mental health, drugs and alcohol use and domestic abuse.</p> <p>We also want to support skilled and effective practice, ensure an approach based on intelligence and targeting; implement clear pathways; improve the quality of assessment and planning and work more collaboratively with partners.</p>

Priority Objective ↓	Success Criteria we wanted ↓	What we did...	Next Steps 2016 >
<p>Improve the engagement of children and young people so that their voice is heard more routinely in the review and development of safeguarding practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic developments in safeguarding practice will better reflect the needs of children and young people. • There will be a clearer framework in place for the Board to hear the voice of the child. 	<p>Agreed the development of a multi-agency toolkit and portal</p> <p>Supported the greater use of ICT in engagement</p> <p>Endorsed an annual review process for Voice of the Child (VOC)</p>	<p>Embed a more systematic approach to voice of the child – taking all the information and feedback from children and using this to change what we do, improve services and to feed this back</p>

PRIORITIES FOR 2016 / 2017

In terms of the priorities of the Board, these will be based on the following two **outcome priorities**:

- a. Preventing harm:** tackling the root causes of neglect, with a focus on domestic abuse, drugs and alcohol and parental mental health
- b. Protecting vulnerable children:** reducing the risks of children and young people who are VEMT or at risk of being VEMT

For each of these priorities the Board's role will be based on one of oversight and assurance, based around its key roles:

- **Ensuring coordination:** that agencies are working together; sharing intelligence and information; have effective policies and procedures in place
- **Effective challenge:** assurance that practice is effective; that agencies have safeguarding audits are being undertaken and feedback is being sought from those who are receiving services or who are impacted by the issues
- **Enabling change:** being assured that lessons are being learnt from audits and reviews and that practice and outcomes are improving as a result.

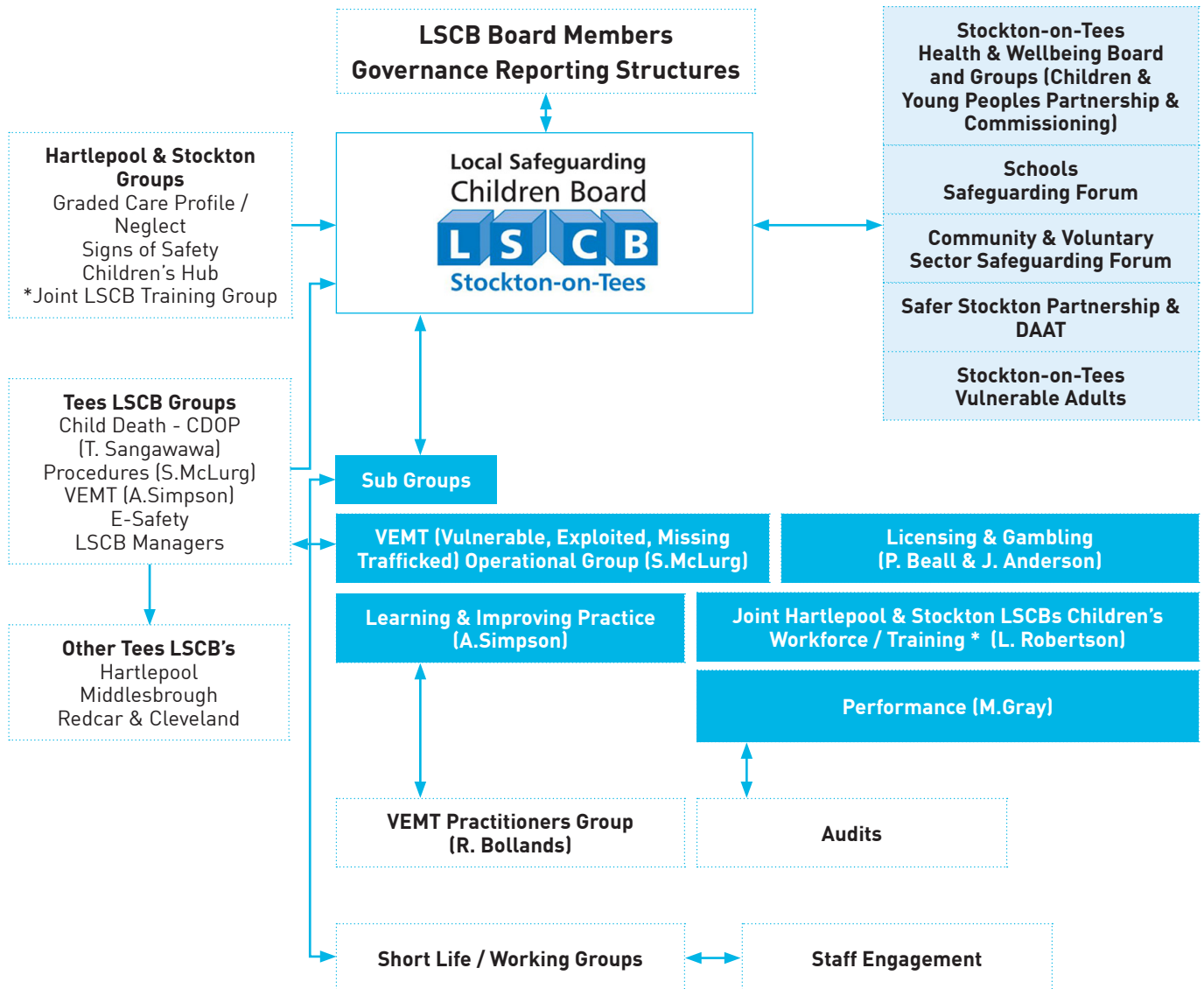
The Board has adopted a third **business improvement priority**, which is about how it undertakes these roles across its activities. The key elements in this approach will be:

- Ensuring the voice of the child continues to be embedded across all activity and agencies;
- Reviewing approaches to information sharing;
- Learning and improvement framework to strengthen the links between practice reviews, the use of performance data and training
- A governance review to address the national review, structures of sub groups and the options for introducing an executive structure.

SLSCB Annual Report 2015 / 2016 Annex

The information in this section of the report provides additional background information and next steps to support the content of the main report. Community & Voluntary

SLSCB STRUCTURE DIAGRAM



PARTNERS ORGANISATIONAL SAFEGUARDING

The following provides an insight into what some of the SLSCB Partner organisations have been doing during 2015/2016 related to their safeguarding responsibilities. Particular reference is made to single agency audits.

CAFCASS

Cafcass (the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service) is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Ministry of Justice. The role of Cafcass within the family courts is: to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; provide advice to the court; make provision for children to be represented; and provide information and support to children and their families. It employs over 1,500 frontline staff.

The demand upon Cafcass services grew substantially in 2015/16 with a 13% increase in care applications and an 11% increase in private law applications. The grant-in-aid provided by the Ministry of Justice was smaller than the previous year. Notwithstanding this, Cafcass has met all of its Key Performance Indicators.

The following are examples of work undertaken by Cafcass in 2014/15 to promote the continuous improvement of our work and support reform of the Family Justice:

Revision of both the **Quality Assurance and Impact Framework** and **Supervision Policy** which together set out the organisation's commitment to delivering outstanding services, and the ways in which staff are supported to achieve this and the quality of work is to be monitored. The Framework integrates the impact of the work on the child into the grade descriptors so that evidence of positive impact is to be present, alongside compliance with the expectations of Cafcass and the Court, for an outstanding grade to be achieved.

Implementation of the **Equality and Diversity Strategy**. This entails: a network of Diversity Ambassadors who support the development of staff understanding and skill; the holding of workshops; a themed audit on the impact of diversity training on practice.

Extending the **Child Exploitation Strategy** introduced in 2014/15 to include trafficking and radicalisation as well as sexual exploitation. Key elements of the strategy include: Ambassadors (at a service area level) and Champions at a team level to have a 'finger on the pulse' of local issues and to support learning; training and research (including a study of 54 cases known to Cafcass in which radicalisation was identified as a feature).

Working with a **range of partners** across family justice, children's services and the voluntary sector. Examples include Local Family Justice Boards (Cafcass chairs 12 of the 46 of these), the judiciary, the Adoption Leadership Board and the Association for Directors of Children's Services with whom Cafcass has developed the social work evidence template for use in care cases, and with whom we are developing good practice guidance for children who are accommodated by the local authority

The development of **innovations** that are aimed at improving our practice and supporting family justice reform. These include: piloting the provision to our Family Court Advisers of consultations with a clinical psychologist; the extension of Family Drug and Alcohol Courts; the supporting separated parents in dispute helpline (a pilot across five service areas aimed at promoting out-of-court settlements of disputes where safe to do so).

Contributing to the government **review of Special Guardianship Orders**, including a small piece of research that was included in the government’s response to the consultation.

A **Service User Feedback Survey**, which looked at the interim outcomes of children six to nine months after private law proceedings concluded. Specifically the survey looked into whether arrangements ordered by the court had sustained; how effective communication was between parents before and after court proceedings; and whether participants believed that the court order was in their child’s best interests.

Children’s Social Care (SBC)

SBC Children’s Social Care presented the findings from audits they had undertaken throughout 2015 / 2016. The following provides an overview of the types of cases that are subject to audit.

	Themed case file audit focusing on children at risk of sexual exploitation	Themed case file audit focusing on children with a disability or sensory loss	Randomly selected case file audits	Themed case file audits focusing on either children active to the Leaving Care Team or children who have a Child Protection Plan
Date carried out:	April 2015	May 2015	June 2015, July 2015, August 2015, November 2015, January 2016, March 2016	September 2015, October 2015
Further information	Rhona Bollands Service Manager Fieldwork and Assessment	Jon Doyle Implementation Manager – The Children’s Hub	Jon Doyle Implementation Manager – The Children’s Hub	Jon Doyle Implementation Manager – The Children’s Hub
contact (Name, Title & Email):	Rhona.bollands@stockton.gov.uk	Jon.doyle@stockton.gov.uk	Jon.doyle@stockton.gov.uk	Jon.doyle@stockton.gov.uk

	Themed case file audit focusing on children at risk of sexual exploitation	Themed case file audit focusing on children with a disability or sensory loss	Randomly selected case file audits	Themed case file audits focusing on either children active to the Leaving Care Team or children who have a Child Protection Plan
Outcome & Impact	<p>8 case files were audited. The findings were collated and analysed to compare with a previous CSE themed audit in 2014/15. The findings have been presented to the LSCB and various Children's Social Care Management Team Meetings. The findings have helped to focus specific training and the development of procedures.</p>	<p>7 case files were audited. Four of these case files were judged to be of an overall 'Good' standard with two deemed to 'Require Improvement' and one deemed to be 'Inadequate'. The Inadequate case had immediate follow-up to ensure that the child was being safeguarded. Specific recommendations were given for the improvement to practice and 'Pathway Planning' for care leavers is now being targeted for improvement.</p>	<p>9 case files audited in June</p> <p>9 case files audited in July</p> <p>9 case files audited in August</p> <p>11 case files audited in November</p> <p>10 case files selected for audit in January</p> <p>10 case files selected for audit in March</p> <p>The findings from the case file audits are compiled into quarterly reports presented to various CSC management team meetings, the LSCB and the CYP Select Committee.</p> <p>These case file audits have highlighted that basic tasks are generally taking place but that there needs to be more focus on the use of reflection in both supervision and case recording.</p>	<p>5 Leaving Care Team cases audited in September</p> <p>5 Leaving Care Team cases audited in October</p> <p>4 Child Protection Cases audited in September</p> <p>4 Child Protection Cases audited in October</p> <p>The findings from the case file audits are compiled into quarterly reports presented to various CSC management team meetings, the LSCB and the CYP Select Committee.</p>

Cleveland Police

Protecting vulnerable people is a key priority for Cleveland Police, with the Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) committed to improving policing services to victims and witnesses.

The Cleveland Police 'Towards 20/20' plan describes our approach to policing as:

- **Prevention** – This means preventing harm wherever possible. It is always better to prevent something from happening than responding to it after the event.
- **Intervention.** This means if we cannot prevent something from happening we need to intervene to stop it from escalating. We use an assessment of threat, risk and harm to determine the right thing to do.
- **Protection.** We need to protect the most vulnerable in our communities and ensure they are safeguarded

The force has progressed a range of initiative in the past year to improve the safeguarding of vulnerable people.

Cleveland Police is a key contributor to the Children's Hub, Stockton and Hartlepool. This multi-agency safeguarding model was developed with safeguarding board partners throughout 2015 and launched in June 2016. The Children's Hub sees improved and timelier information sharing between all partners through co-location of staff.

In the last year, the force has launched 'Victim's First' – a new approach cutting across all aspects of policing with the aim of identifying vulnerability and providing the support that victims of crime and anti-social behaviour need. This initiative has included additional training for our call takers to help them identify and respond appropriately to vulnerable people, a risk-based model to ensure we identify and provide the highest levels of support to those at most risk of harm, and a problem solving approach, with early intervention where possible to resolve issues before they escalate.

Tackling domestic abuse, and supporting children living in families where domestic abuse takes place is a key priority for the force. In the past year, the force has extended its Operation Encompass initiative to the Stockton area, supported by the Police and Crime Commissioner. This scheme ensures that schools are aware of when a child has witnessed domestic abuse the previous night so they can offer appropriate support.

The Force is also dealing with emerging types of crime. Modern day slavery is a hidden crime, with many barriers preventing vulnerable victims coming forward to police.

We have worked with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to deliver training to over 400 staff from different agencies, to help them recognise victims of this exploitative crime and created a new investigative and problem solving unit to tackle child sexual exploitation, children who go missing and those who may be trafficked.

E-safety is a key priority for the force alongside other safeguarding partners. In the past year, the force has promoted a number of campaigns aimed at raising awareness of e-safety amongst young people and their parents.

The force is currently developing regular audit models in relation to vulnerability, 'victim's first' and domestic abuse, overseen by force governance structures. The force received some positive commentary with an overall judgement for vulnerability of 'Requires Improvement' during an inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) during 2015. The force has an action plan in place to meet the identified 'areas for improvement' and has made significant progress towards discharging this in full.

Advice and guidance on all of the above can be found at www.cleveland.police.uk

Housing Benefits (SBC)

SBC Housing Officers carrying out audits of their work and Officers complete a specific safeguarding form for each visited customer. Records are saved within the electronic document management system.

Officers follow the safeguarding procedure and report any causes for concern via a referral.

Work is monitored by Team Leaders to ensure all visits have a safeguarding form completed appropriately.

Training is a key component of the safeguarding work and in addition to the multi-agency training attended two specific single agency courses were provided for staff.

- Bite-size Serious Case Review training for Claim Support Officers and Claims Manager to raise their awareness of what a serious case review is and how as practitioners they might better contribute to the process.
- Common Assessment Framework (Early Help) for Benefit Service Staff to raise confidence of staff not operating in the safeguarding domain so that they to know what to do if they are concerned and need to instigate early intervention.

Public Health

Stockton Borough Council Public Health Team leads strategic and operational approaches to protect and promote good health, improve health & wellbeing, prevent ill-health and tackle health inequalities with and for the population of Stockton on Tees.

In order to deliver this, we analyse available research and data to:

- Influence, commission and develop needs-led services through a continuous cycle of improvement
- Assess the wider impact on health and the social and economic return on investments
- Identify and proactively influence structural, social and environmental factors which shape the health of our communities.

In addition to this, we influence and collaborate with partner agencies and communities to build capacity and infrastructure for public health.

During 2015/16, SBC Public Health became the responsible commissioner of 0-5 Healthy Child Programme Services comprising Health Visiting and Family Nurse Partnership. Health Visitors and Family Nurses play a pivotal role in safeguarding children through early identification of need and risk within families, assessment of development delays and concerns, and provision of evidence based interventions that promote and strengthen parent/carer and child relationship. Work continues with the service to strengthen this role and the contribution made to Early Help work across the borough.

In partnership with Catalyst, Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees Clinical Commissioning Group and SBC Children's Service, SBC Public Health has supported the continued development of A Fairer Start (a programme to increase the life chances of children aged 0-3 years in the Stockton Town Centre ward through asset based community development) throughout 2015-16. The programme's overarching objective is to increase school readiness in the ward through a focus on improving speech and language skills, cognitive, emotional and social development and nutrition. The development of a team of community champions to work with local families has been one exciting progression for the A Fairer Start work, with Big Life Families providing training, support and on-going supervision to the volunteers. The volunteers aim to provide support to families in their own community, particularly with those who may have become disengaged from mainstream services, and ensure they are accessing information, advice, guidance and support at the right time and in the right place whilst building capacity and resources within families.

Work to prevent Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) has continued to be a Public Health priority with workforce training continuing throughout the year in partnership with the FASD network. On FASD awareness day SBC Public Health team, the FASD Network and Teesside University launched a 2 minutes FASD animation to share key messages about FASD and alcohol in pregnancy, promoting the SBC Public Health message and international message of 0-4-9 – zero alcohol for 9 months of pregnancy. The FASD animation is currently being used by children and young people's services, schools and local substance misuse services to raise awareness about the dangers of drinking alcohol in pregnancy, to enable young people to make informed choices later in life.

Training and education is a key element of our work to build capacity within the workforce. SBC Public Health contributed to the SLSCB multi-agency training programme throughout 2015-16 through the commissioning or direct delivery of a number of training courses including Teenage Relationship Abuse, Sex and the Law, FASD Awareness and Substance Misuse. SBC Public Health ensures that the services it influences and commissions are aware of the multi-agency training programme.

Thirteen Housing Group

Introduction

Everyone who comes into contact with children, young people and families has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is all staffs responsibility in Thirteen, although our individual roles in the process may be different. Thirteen staff have a duty to report any concerns regarding the wellbeing of a child, cooperate with statutory agencies, and this report and our achievements during the last twelve months supports this position.

We recognise that one child dies at the hands of another person every week, in many areas levels of child neglect are on the increase. As many as one child in six exposed to violence in the home. The significant increase in the use of social media means children face new threats of on line grooming and cyber bullying. More children than ever before are expressing their own anguish and distress by self-harming.

Against this background is a reduction in the funding of public services for the last five years, child protection systems are under increasing pressure and many of the poorest families have been affected by austerity measures.

We continue to regularly review our approach to meet these challenges and are committed to working with Stockton's Local Safeguarding Children's Board (SLSCB) and the requirements of any Commissioning Body. We will continue to report safeguarding concerns in line with SLSCB procedures and timescales.

Dave Pickard Group Director Operations.

Implementation of Safeguarding E- Learning

When working with children and young people, special consideration must be given to ensure their safety from possible abuse and harm. It is therefore vital that staff are aware of what constitutes abuse and harm.

Three web-based learning management systems were initially chosen to be evaluated by a wide range of practitioners across the organisation. Cylix software was chosen as the best product to improve staffs knowledge and awareness and delivering a consistent approach to safeguarding children across Thirteen. The software enabled staff to be organised into learner groups, with supporting training and system administrators identified.

Trades staff, who do not have access to ICT consistently, have been trained using the product content in groups. The trades represent a vital part of identifying safeguarding concerns in Thirteen.

To date 68% of those employees identified to complete the training have successfully passed the module. 403 trade's staff have also received the training. For further information, please contact Paul Noddings Policy and Contracts Manager paul.noddings@thirteengroup.co.uk

Policy development

Although individual landlords had their own policies, it was recognised that the approach to safeguarding children had inconsistencies and it was recognised that the development of a Thirteen policy was vital to promote consistency of decision making and support the implementation of Safeguarding E-Learning. The policy applies to all Thirteen Group staff, volunteers, students, contractors and community groups.

The importance of working in partnership is reflected in the policy content. 'Responsibility for safeguarding children and young people is shared amongst a number of agencies. Thirteen recognises the role it has to play in taking all reports of abuse and neglect seriously and that many organisations share in our desire to tackle and eradicate abuse. To this end we have a duty to and will work with other organisations to achieve our aims and recognise our legal requirements. For further information, please contact Paul Noddings Policy and Contracts Manager paul.noddings@thirteengroup.co.uk

Children's Hub

Thirteen has participated in the development of the new Children's Hub (CH) as an integrated single point of access across North Tees (Hartlepool and Stockton Borough Councils). The CH will provide multi professional triage and assessment to improve intelligence sharing, risk assessment and decision making for vulnerable children and their families and ensuring they get access to the right early help and specialist support. The key objective of the CH is to bring together expertise across organisations to strengthen information sharing and joint decision making, to ensure children and their families receive the right services at the right time.

The project was developed based on findings in serious case reviews, inspections and research that agencies need to improve information sharing and the way they work together to share risk assessments, make decision and improve children's lives.

The key partners in the CH will be Hartlepool and Stockton Borough Council Children's Services, Cleveland Police, North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust, Hartlepool and Stockton Clinical Commissioning Group, Tees Esk and Wear Valley NHS Trust. Thirteen Group is a virtual partner, with a dedicated resource set aside to co-ordinate information requests from and into the CH.

For further information, please contact Paul Noddings, Policy and Contracts Manager at:

paul.noddings@thirteengroup.co.uk

Shared tenancies:

Thirteen has worked closely with Stockton Social Care and have provided a property for the Social Care team to manage with the purpose of supporting young people into independence. This is being utilised as a shared tenancy for young people that have previously been accommodated in residential care and are ready to move into a more independent setting. This arrangement has proven to be successful and we are hoping to extend this with additional properties in the near future.

Tees Esk & Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV)

This hospital trust regularly carries out audits to gauge safeguarding levels. The following were some undertaken during 2015 / 2016.

- Safeguarding Case file Audit & Supervision (C&YPS) - Stockton CAMHS:
Overall, this clinical audit has been assigned amber compliance. Significant improvements were noted in practice standards achieved which the team are to be commended for.
- Safeguarding Audit on referrals made to Social Care:
Overall, green compliance was achieved for this clinical audit with significant improvement in practice standards achieved when benchmarked with the 2014 audit findings. To further enhance practice, relevant action is identified within the agreed action plan: Senior Nurse Safeguarding Children will produce a brief for e-bulletin highlighting the improvement and good practice by staff. This will also include a reminder for staff to attach the CAF assessments to the SAFER referral form and ask for parental consent. This will also continue to be included in all levels of Safeguarding children training.
- Looked After Children (LAC):
During the clinical audit it was found that there is no central database to record all cases of LAC within the teams audited. 43% (43/37) of LAC within CAMHS North Durham Tier 3 had not been discussed in supervision. 100% (8/8) of LAC within CAMHS South Durham Tier 3 had not been discussed in supervision. LAC are currently managed on an individual basis by the Lead Professional who attends Local Authority reviews if requested. There is involvement in caseload management for 100% (8/8) of patients.

OPERATIONAL ANNUAL ASSURANCE, CHALLENGE and CHANGE SUMMARIES

Children Missing Education

Reports relating to schools are based on an academic year rather than a fiscal year. During 2015 / 2016 1st September to 2015 to 20th July 2016 there were 162 Children Missing Education (CME) referrals to the Attendance and Exclusion Team. This is a decrease of 71 referrals compared to the same period in 2014-15. The majority of referrals were received from our maintained schools and academies however referrals were also received from the School

Admissions Team, the 0-25 SEN Team, First Contact, Housing and other Local Authority CME Officers.

Inter-Agency liaison has been strengthened in Stockton over the past year and a range of agencies share information relating to these children and their families. The Children Missing Education data is shared at VEMT operational meetings on a termly basis to further promoting inter-agency working and communication. A fact sheet has been provided to schools to ensure they are aware of their responsibility in the initial investigations and the subsequent recording and reporting of information to the Local Authority in cases where the initial investigation results in the children continuing to be missing from education.

Improved information sharing was agreed with the Independent School sector meaning that the information and destination of all children who live in Stockton will be fed into the Capita ONE System. Through working collaboratively with BUSI (SBC Information Unit) and School Admissions this information will be reported on and scrutinised at regular intervals. Any children without a destination and whom have not already been referred to the Attendance and Exclusion Team as Children Missing Education will be followed up as such and contact made with the school which they last attended. This will assist with identifying missing children at an early stage.

Children with Disabilities

In Stockton-On-Tees children with disabilities are supported in a range of ways that. Universal services are available to all children and families and this includes children with disabilities and children with sensory loss. Children with disabilities and children with sensory loss may need additional services to assist their health and development and also to help them access universal services such as those described above. These could include:

- Provision of equipment to assist with mobility (e.g. wheelchairs, specialist pushchairs.)
- Occupational therapy support.
- Additional support to access community activities e.g. through the short breaks grant.
- Support from the specialist teaching service for hearing and visually impaired children within school.
- Support from the Portage Home Visiting Service.

During 2015 / 2016 the Disabled Children's Team was moved within which the Safeguarding and Looked After Children Service this in part provided additional support to the team as identified within some learning reviews that took place during the year. It provides specialist and statutory social care services for children and young people with critical and substantial needs. The team work with Children in Need, Children Looked After and children subject to Child Protection plans as well as offering Early Help support. The following is the activity data for the Disabled Childrens team during the year 2015/16:

The voice of the child as with other service areas is seen as important area of work and effective and meaningful methods of ensuring involvement and engagement is regarded as a high priority. A range of approaches to ensure that the views and wishes of children and young people with disabilities can be captured. For children and young people who are non-verbal, have profound and multiple disabilities or communication difficulties the most appropriate method of communication may be used with the child or young person. This may include:

- The use of signing.
- The use of symbols or pictures.
- The use of PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System).
- Liaison with professionals skilled in understanding the child or young person's communication (e.g. school staff, care staff for short breaks).
- The use of specialist communication systems (e.g. dynavox).

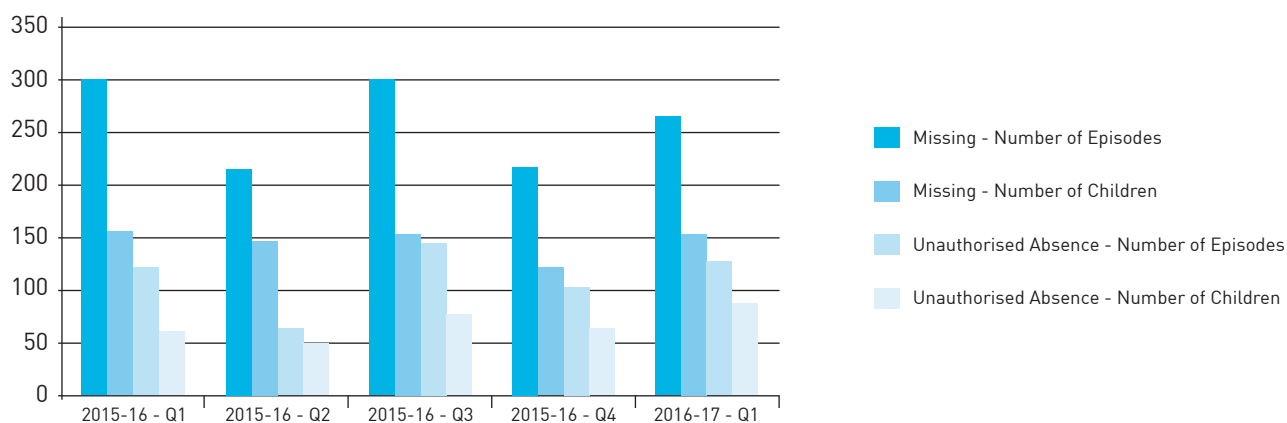
Children Running or Missing from Home or Care

Too many children continue to go missing or absent and services need to continue working to understand and respond to this issue. We know from the data/information that the majority of those children who go missing or absent, particularly those who go missing or absent frequently are known to appropriate services. Whether they are known because they do go missing / absent or whether the missing/absent episodes are a symptom of wider issues impacting on them or whether these children are simply more likely to be reported missing due to our involvement is not always clear. A more thorough examination and analysis of missing from home episodes would need to take place in order to answer this.

Missing from home return interviews are an important tool to help those working with children who have been missing understand why they were missing. Unfortunately children will not always engage in a return interview so a meaningful assessment cannot be completed. We can see that when they are completed, they can help to inform appropriate interventions which can, in some cases, address the underlying issues and stop the child feeling the need to go missing in the future.

It is apparent that more work needs to be done to analyse missing from home assessments so that intelligence can be shared more widely where it is uncovered in individual interviews. Children's Social Care are in the process of recruiting a Children and Families Data Analyst. Part of the job description for this post will be to monitor, report and analysis the data in relation to children who go missing.

Graph to show number and frequency of children either missing or absent without authorisation per Quarter during 01/04/2015 and 30/06/2016



Elective Home Education

As of the end of July 2016 the local authority had notification of 101 children being home educated. These 101 children were from 73 families. This figure has more than doubled since 2009-10, when 39 children were on the register. Last year the figure stood at 79 pupils. However throughout the academic year numbers have fluctuated as families have moved in and out of the area or children have been admitted to school. There has therefore been an increase of 7 secondary pupils and 15 primary pupils registered as electively home educated on the previous year's figures. Forty seven new notifications were received by the LA during this academic year, up from 37 new referrals the previous year.

Over the last year we have developed our links with School Health further, working cooperatively to support children and families and sharing information on children whom are home educated on a routine basis. Within the Schools and SEN Team we have developed an information sharing document that alerts all professionals when we have received a notification of elective home education. In return professionals complete the document with any current or previous involvement ensuring that very quickly a full picture of the child and family can be obtained.

Links have been forged with Operation Encompass so that the Local Authority Attendance Officer receives relevant information from them regarding any home educated child.

Independent Reviewing Officers (LAC & CP)

The Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) Service had a very busy and productive year. The number of children who entered or left the care system remained relatively stable during 2015 /2016 but comparative to national data Stockton continues to have significantly higher numbers of LAC, CP and children remaining on a plan for 2 years or more. Whilst there is no comparative data for LAC review timescales Stockton does well in this area, likewise timeliness of CP reviews is really good and above both the regional and national figures. Resources have been increased and IRO caseloads have been reduced. However, there needs to be an air of caution around this as the introduction of the foster care reviews has resulted in additional workload for the IRO's and the number of cases held by each IRO remains high.

The programme of work completed throughout the year included the development and implementation of a number of new systems and processes. Likewise a number of new performance reports were created to support the function of the unit and ensure reliable and effective management performance reporting. However, whilst considerable work has been achieved there is still a lot to do and this is to be developed further in the coming year.

As a result of the work undertaken a number of changes were implemented to improve service delivery and practice, particularly in relation to more timely intervention and planning for children and young people. Plans are now more focussed on outcomes, and hold agencies to account for their contribution towards these.

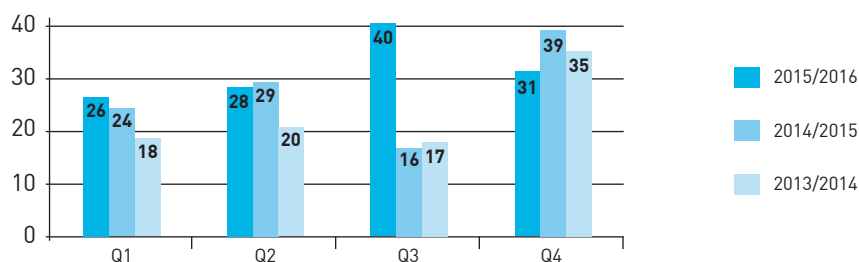
Implementation of Signs of Safety has enabled parents/carers and extended family members to begin to have a better understanding of what they need to do in order to effect change in their everyday lives to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children. It also allows the child/ young person to be part of the process and ensures that they are listened to and know why they are involved.

The IRO service has strengthened the challenge function of the role over the last year and has raised a number of issues that have needed intervention at senior management level, resulting in positive outcomes and timelier change for a young person. The service will seek to further embed the Dispute Resolution Process in the coming year to ensure delays and drift for children in care are proactively addressed.

IRO's have provided critical analysis of service provision and practice and highlighted specific issues and service challenges that require improvement. This has included gathering views from children and young people. Information collated has been fed into the performance sub group and other relevant meetings and helped to change and develop practice.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) provides management and overview of cases where there are allegations against staff, carers or volunteers who work with children from all sectors. Ensuring that advice and guidance is given to Designated Officers and Senior Managers within organisations; this includes the monitoring of progress and timescales of these cases. SLSCB scrutinises information presented to them and challenges areas that raises concern. Low referrals from Health was one such area however when investigated this was found to be a national trend. Work has taken place to improve awareness and liaison with colleagues around this role with particular work taking place with Health colleagues. The number of referrals to the LADO in the period was **125** (2014-2015 - **108**), an increase of 16%.



Looked After Children Out of Borough Placements

The number of looked after children has remained fairly constant during this reporting period and as at 31st March 2016 there were 377 children looked after. This compares to 374 in 2015.

From the 1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016, the numbers of new placements made out of the Borough were 115. The total number of children in an out of area placement during the period was 205 children; this is fewer in comparison to the previous year in which there were 215 children. It should be noted however that there is a significant increase in this reporting period of children placed in an out of area placement who are aged 15 and over from 44 last year to 62 this year.

The opening of the 3rd Spark of Genius Home NE increased capacity further within the Borough with additional planned 4 placements and with the 5 bed that will be available during 2016 / 2017.

Although the number of placements out of area has remained relatively consistent, there has been a significant increase in referrals for placements. This has not shown any signs of easing and it is anticipated that referrals for older young people who present with complex and challenging behaviour will further increase moving forward.

There were an unusually high number of young people placed in YOI and secure this period. This can be attributed to a singular criminal case that involved 6 young people from the local area.

Monitoring of residential placements continues to provide assurances that are young people are in placements that meet their needs, safe and continue to make progress.

A detailed Marketing Strategy has been developed that includes recruiting more internal foster carers and supported lodgings providers. Any success from this campaign will increase in house capacity and reduce the reliance on IFA placements out of Borough. Work is on-going in regards the re-branding of the fostering and adoption marketing materials in an effort to appeal to a wider audience. The development of a Regional Adoption Agency is on-going and will radically change the way the local authority provides adoption services. This development is a Government driven initiative and is an opportunity to re-shape and modernise not only the adoption service but additionally the fostering service that will remain with the Local Authority.

The development of a collaborative solution for the commissioning of residential, educational and short break services is an exciting opportunity for Local Authorities to develop and control the market. Stockton will be working closely with our neighbouring authorities to create a unique solution as part of the second phase of a 2 year project to develop what is known as the NE12.

Edge of care services are very much on the agenda for Local Authorities and moving forward over the next year this is an area for further development work. Any edge of care services that are developed will be done so with the aim of reducing the numbers of children and young people becoming looked after

Private Fostering

The table above provides summary figures for Stockton-On-Tees there were nine new notifications of Private Fostering arrangements received during 2015 / 2016. In the nine arrangements 9 cases had action taken within 7 working days of receipt of notification of the arrangement. Of these, action was taken in 7 cases in accordance with the requirements of Regulations 4(1) of the Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations 2005 for carrying out 6 weekly visits.

	Stockton-on-Tees		
	2014	2015	2016
Number of children under Private Fostering arrangements in the borough at 31st March 2016	0	1	3
Number of new notifications during the year	4	2	9
Number of new arrangements that began during the year	3	2	9
Number of arrangements that ended during the year	7	1	7
Number of cases where action was taken in accordance with requirements for carrying out visits.	2	2	7
Number of cases where this action was taken within 7 working days of receipt of notification of the Private Fostering arrangement	2	2	9

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Of these, action was taken in 7 cases in accordance with the requirements of Regulations 4(1) of the Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations 2005 for carrying out 6 weekly visits.

In 2015/16 activity was higher than the 2 preceding years:

- 9 new notifications were received, which is 7 higher than 2014/15
- 9 new arrangements for 8 young people as 1 young person had 2 private fostering placements with different carers this required 2 private fostering assessments.
- 7 arrangements ended which is significantly higher than the 1 in 2014/15.
- At the 31st March 2016 3 young people were in Private Fostering arrangements slightly higher than 31st March 2015.

Of the 7 private fostering arrangements that ceased:

- 2 returned to live at home with their parents.
- 3 achieved their 16th birthday and as per requirements were no longer deemed to be privately fostered but remained living with their carers.
- 1 moved into a legal situation and the carer gained a Special Guardianship Order.
- 1 arrangement ended and the young person moved to a new Private Fostering arrangement.

There has been a slight increase in the turnover of arrangements for 2015/2016 however this does not push Stockton's Private Fostering arrangements out of line with the regional or local statistics.

Child Death Overview Panel

The table below shows comparative numbers of total child deaths for the current and previous 3 years.

LCSB	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Total	*Numbers in brackets denote unexpected deaths The Tees Rapid Response procedure was successfully implemented during 2015/16 which sets in place procedures for ensuring that unexpected child deaths are responded to appropriately and in a timely manner. This process is essential to ensure that safeguarding of any siblings and support to families is considered as a priority.
Hartlepool	3(0)*	5(2)	9(4)	7(3)	24	
Stockton	14(5)*	17(7)	12(0)	12(3)	55	
Middlesbrough	12(4)*	9(4)	13(5)	16(4)	50	
Redcar & Cleveland	8(4)*	5(2)	7(3)	8(2)	28	
Total	37	36	41	43	157	

Tees LSCB's Child Protection Procedures

Please keep up to date with changes by accessing the procedures on a regular basis

www.teescpp.org.uk



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SLSCB

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Stockton-on-Tees

TS18 1LD

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