

SUMMARY OF THE SAFEGUARDING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

This is a summary of the more detailed Safeguarding Improvement Plan. The detailed plan also includes tables outlining actions, timescales, leads, success criteria and evidence sources. At this stage we are still seeking comments on the plan so your views and ideas are welcomed.

1. Purpose

The Safeguarding Improvement Plan identifies plans and actions being taken to ensure that all children and young people in Wiltshire are safe and achieve the best possible outcomes.

2 Context

The Safeguarding Improvement Plan has been developed in response to the April 2012 Ofsted Report on the inspection of safeguarding and looked after children. All areas of development identified in the Ofsted report are noted in the Improvement Plan. Action in response to the Adoption Scorecard 2012 is also included.

A Safeguarding Improvement Board (SIB) has been established. The Board will have an independent chair. The Safeguarding Improvement Board is responsible for driving forward progress on the actions outlined in the Improvement Plan.

3. Involvement of front-line staff and children, young people and parents

Children's Services Voice and Influence Team has been asked to advise on the best way of involving children, young people, parents and carers.

Social Care staff and managers have already influenced the content of the plan through 2 workshops held in late March and will continue to do so through briefing sessions and "Reference Groups" which will be used to test ideas and get feedback.

5 Vision and Values

The vision for children and young people is set out in the Children and Young People's Plan as follows:

"To improve outcomes for children and young people in Wiltshire; ensure good safeguarding practice; reduce, prevent and mitigate the effects of child poverty; and enable resilient individuals, families and communities."

Further work is taking place to identify a specific vision for social care.

Following the Ofsted Inspection over 180 social care staff took part in workshops. Participants identified the principles which should underpin all improvements. Following this feedback it has been agreed that the following principles will underpin social care practice:

- The experience and outcomes for the child informs everything we do
- Good open and honest communication
- Working well, respectfully and collaboratively with others
- Having shared ownership and responsibility
- Listening, reflecting and learning
- Promoting professional debate and challenge

This is consistent with the overall Wiltshire Council values which are noted below:

We embrace change, treat everyone fairly, value diversity and we:

- Place our customers first
- Want to strengthen our communities
- Adopt a can-do approach in everything we do
- Value our colleagues

6. Strategic Goals

Key strategic goals are set out below in the column on the left. The remaining 3 columns identify where we aim to be in 3 months, 6 months and 1 year to end March 2013.

Goal	3 months by end July 2012	6 months by end October 2012	For 1 year to end March 2013
Children and young people are safe	The case work and plans for all children who are at significant risk and/or subject to a child protection plan have been reviewed and any necessary action taken.	There is evidence safeguarding is improving from regular management information reports and “off-line/independent” single and multi-agency audits.	Audits consistently demonstrate that assessments assess risk and plans outline how risk will be managed and what will change as a result of the plan. Audits identify good child centred case work practice. This is supported by performance on a number of key performance indicators.
The skills and quality of front line workers has improved.	All social workers have attended a half day training event which covered statutory guidance, risk management, core assessments and case work planning. A draft set of Wiltshire Social Work standards has been developed. The training and use of new standards has been reinforced through new guidance and discussion in supervision sessions. All relevant staff in other parts of the Council and in partner agencies have also attended half day training events to reinforce guidance and policies.	All social workers are clear about the Wiltshire approach to social work and are using the Wiltshire Social Work standards as a guide for their practice. All social workers have received training and briefing sessions on the approach and standards and this is being reinforced in supervision sessions. Social workers are aware of the management information reports and quality audits being used to monitor and improve practice. Some social workers can evidence how feedback from case file audits has influenced practice.	All social workers can evidence how their approach to case work has changed in the last year. Quarterly reports are produced on compliance with the social work standards. There is consistent evidence from case file audits of good practice including analytical assessments, good risk analysis, outcome focused care planning. There is also evidence of research influencing practice.
The skills and quality of managers have improved.	All managers in all agencies are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and the policies and procedures which must be followed. Specialist safeguarding managers including social care managers are aware of the management “must do’s” and are being supported in improving and developing their management skills. There is evidence of improved case oversight and decision	All social care managers are clear about the social care leadership and management approach and the management standards required. All managers have received training on the approach and standards. This is being reinforced in supervision sessions. Managers use a variety of performance reports and evidence from case file audits to assess the quality and impact of practice. There is evidence from case file audits of good management oversight and decision making.	All managers can evidence how their approach to leadership and management approach has changed in the last year. Quarterly reports are produced on compliance with management standards. An independent evaluation has confirmed that there is good leadership and management within social care. There is consistent evidence from case file audits of good management oversight and decision making.

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Goal	3 months by end July 2012	6 months by end October 2012	For 1 year to end March 2013
Quality assurance of safeguarding has improved	A new quality assurance process has been developed. New audit formats and processes have been used to undertake a multi-agency Section 47 audit and follow up action has been taken.	Managers within social care are undertaking regular case file audits. The programme of independent/off-line audits of social care cases has been established. A new programme of LSCB multi-agency audits has been established. There is some evidence that follow up action taken in response to audit findings is impacting on practice.	The revised audit formats and processes have been reviewed. Audits happen routinely. There is strong evidence that follow up action taken in response to audit findings has impacted on practice.
	Revised guidance for child protection chairs has been produced. Protocols between child protection chairs and social care teams have been revised. Standards for child protection chairing have been agreed.	Role and functions of child protection chairs has been reviewed and job descriptions and person specifications revised. Monthly reports on performance of child protection chairs are being produced. There is some positive feedback from families and professionals attending conferences. There is some evidence from case file audits that the quality of chairing is good.	Monthly reports on performance of child protection chairs demonstrate consistent good quality performance. Quarterly feedback from families and professionals attending conference and reviews is positive about the skills and quality of chairs. Case file audits consistently comment on good quality chairing.
	Processes have been put in place to improve the quality of LAC case work provided by the Safeguarding Teams so that this is consistent with the standard of service provided by Through Care teams.	All looked after children are receiving a similar standard of service. An options appraisal has taken place to assess when LAC cases should best transfer to longer term teams.	There is a good standard of service provided to all looked after children regardless of which team holds the case.
The child protection system is working effectively	All immediate and 3 months actions noted in the Ofsted report have been completed. The 3 months self assessment workshop has taken place.	The Safeguarding Improvement Plan is on track. The safeguarding peer review has taken place and the improvement plan been revised and updated.	It is anticipated that the follow-up Ofsted inspection will have taken place.
	The LSCB Executive has met to address the issues raised in the Ofsted report and the improvement plan. The LSCB Business Plan has been revised so it is consistent with the improvement plan. (see above for reference to multi-agency audit).	The role of the LSCB, the Executive and all sub-groups have been reviewed and terms of reference have been updated as necessary. The LSCB performance monitoring report has been reviewed and revised. (see above for reference to multi-agency audit).	A new Section 11 audit process has been developed and the 2013/14 Section 11 audit taken place. Action following analysis of the audit has informed the Annual Report and 2013/14 LSCB business plan.
	The new Scrutiny Task Group has met.	The Scrutiny Task Group has developed methods for scrutinising all aspects of the child protection system.	There is evidence that Scrutiny has been effective.
	The Improvement Board has defined the "child protection whole system" including outlining the functions which individuals, services and groups are responsible for in order for the system to work effectively.	All services and groups are clear about their contribution to an effective child protection system.	There is a date for the final meeting of the Improvement Board.

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7. Monitoring Progress

- Some key performance indicators will be monitored weekly at least initially. There will also be some regular weekly and monthly performance reports.
- Revising multi-agency and single agency quality audit processes is a priority. Findings from audits will assist with monitoring progress and with further development of the improvement plan.
- In mid July we anticipate holding a workshop which will involve social care managers and staff from key partner agencies to review and assess progress. This will be informed by feedback from a survey sent to all social care staff, a survey for staff partner agencies and a survey which will be sent to all children, young people and parents who have had contact with social care from April to end June 2012.
- In October 2012 we anticipate there will be a rigorous review by skilled external reviewers. This will be a "peer review". We will select the peer review team and ensure that the terms of reference for the review will focus on actions highlighted in the Improvement Plan.
- The scrutiny function is well developed in Wiltshire and a LAC Scrutiny Task Group has been meeting for some time. This group has had a positive impact on monitoring and driving through improvements. A Safeguarding Scrutiny Task Group is being established to feed into the Improvement Board.
- There will be a follow up Ofsted inspection. We are not sure of the timing for this but anticipate this will be early 2013.

4. Improvement Priorities

There are 5 improvement priority themes.

- IP1 Improving the quality of front line practice within and across agencies
- IP2 Ensuring we have the right people, with the right skills and the right support
- IP3 Knowing how well we are doing including how risk is being managed and quality audits
- IP4 Improving leadership and management
- IP5 Ensuring good governance

In addition the Improvement Plan includes a list of priority actions. The Ofsted Report April 2012 identified some immediate priorities and some action items which needed to be completed within 3 months of the report being published. The voice of children and young people and equalities and diversity issues will be taken into account in all the priority areas.

The priority themes and specific objectives are summarised below. The improvement plan objectives

PA Priority actions	
PA1 Ofsted	To ensure the improvement plan is prioritised and fully resourced to reduce any adverse impact upon the capacity of the front line service
PA2 Ofsted	To undertake a comprehensive audit of all children who are on the threshold of risk and/or subject to child protection plans to ensure that these children are being protected from serious harm
PA3 Ofsted	To address shortcomings in quality assurance arrangements by improving the effectiveness of child protection chairs. This will include ensuring child protection plans and written agreements with parents clearly identify what needs to change with clear timescales and what action is taken to address drift
PA4 Ofsted	To address shortcomings in quality assurance arrangements by strengthening management oversight and challenge in case work
PA5 Ofsted	To improve the quality of case work by developing the knowledge and skills of front line workers. This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring core assessments are regularly used and updated to reflect and evaluate the impact of changing family circumstances • Ensuring child protection plans and written agreements with parents clearly identify what needs to change with clear timescales and what action is taken to address drift
PA6 Ofsted	To review procedures for conducting joint Section 47 interviews and ensure practice is compliant with statutory guidance
PA7 Ofsted	To ensure that (health) staff fully understand the escalation policy and that there is effective monitoring of when the policy is invoked
PA8 Ofsted	To review risk assessment processes and practice to ensure that all children and young people who need to be in care in Wiltshire are appropriately accommodated
PA9 Ofsted	To ensure placement plans for looked after children and young people placed with foster carers contain relevant, up to date information to assist carers to provide good quality safe care personal to the child or young person's needs
PA10 Ofsted	To ensure the looked after children's health team receive prompt notification of a child or young person's admission to care or change of placement
PA11	To ensure the Referral and Assessment Service is operating safely
PA12	To provide good leadership and immediate and ongoing support to managers and staff
PA13	To ensure strategic risks are being managed
PA14	To have a communication plan in place for publication of the report
PA15	To ensure safeguarding is scrutinised effectively by Council members
PA16	To ensure a quality and timely adoption process

1P1 Improving the quality of front line practice within and across agencies	
IP1.1 Ofsted	To ensure children in need plans are consistently drawn up following assessment and are regularly reviewed
IP1.2 Ofsted	To review practice to ensure that children and young people under 18 years of age are not inappropriately detained under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983 and if they are detained there is access to appropriate facilities
IP1.3 Ofsted	To ensure all looked after children receive a consistent high quality social work service measured through a robust tracking and monitoring system
IP1.4 Ofsted	To appoint a designated doctor and designated nurse for looked after children
IP1.5 Ofsted	To ensure that the needs of young mothers and fathers within the looked after children service, including those who are placed outside the area, are identified and addressed
IP1.6 Ofsted	To ensure that health support to looked after children and care leavers is fully developed in partnership with the children in care council
IP1.7 Ofsted	To ensure that care leavers receive copies of their health histories
IP1.8	To develop a Wiltshire approach to social work practice and ensure procedures and guidance provide a robust and useful framework
IP1.9	To ensure working arrangements within the Referral and Assessment Service are effective
IP1.10	To ensure working arrangements within the Safeguarding Teams are effective
IP1.11	To ensure smooth and effective transfer of cases between teams
IP1.12	To ensure child and family friendly conferences and reviews
IP1.13	To improve adoption timescales
IP1.14	To ensure an effective and safe Emergency Duty Service
IP1.15	To improve long-term placement stability

1P2 Ensuring we have the right people, in the right place with the right support	
IP2.1 Ofsted	To ensure that the serious shortfalls in the identification of risk within assessments, contingencies and care planning are addressed and improved through appropriate staff development and training
IP2.2 Ofsted	To ensure that (health) staff have access to regular safeguarding supervision as set out within statutory guidance to senior managers
IP2.3 Ofsted	To ensure that (health) staff are well supported to undertake their safeguarding responsibilities through training at levels appropriate to their role and documentation which includes triggers to facilitate comprehensive risk identification
IP2.4 Ofsted	To ensure that staff in adult services receive children's safeguarding training at levels appropriate to their role, receive safeguarding supervision as set out in statutory guidance and are fully engaged in children's safeguarding and governance arrangements
IP2.5	To get a clear understanding of training and skills of all social care staff and managers
IP2.6	To provide a framework for assessing staff performance and training and development requirements
IP2.7	To ensure there is a programme of high quality multi-agency safeguarding training
IP2.8	To ensure there are high quality training and development opportunities for social care staff
IP2.9	To improve safer recruitment processes
IP2.10	To ensure learning from serious case reviews from other local authorities is disseminated

IP3 Knowing how well we are doing	
IP3.1 Ofsted	The Wiltshire Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) to ensure a comprehensive Section 47 multi-agency audit is carried out that identifies robustly current practice to ensure it is compliant with statutory guidance
IP3.2 Ofsted	To ensure that activity and outcomes from the review of children's cases presented in the accident and emergency department are reported regularly through hospital and safeguarding governance arrangements
IP3.3 Ofsted	To ensure that there is effective quality assurance of health assessments and reviews for all looked after children, and that the looked after children nurses are well equipped to undertake this role
IP3.4 Ofsted	To ensure that looked after children's health service delivery is subject to a work plan with measurable objectives and a rigorous performance management framework
IP3.5	To improve the LSCB multi-agency quality audit process
IP3.6	To ensure LSCB receives management information which can be used to assess the effectiveness of the child protection system
IP3.7	To improve the S11 audit process
IP3.8	To improve the social care quality audit framework including ensuring actions identified in audits and from other work have a positive impact on practice
IP3.9	To ensure all managers have the information they require to assess performance
IP3.10	To ensure feedback from children, young people and families informs service development
IP3.11	To ensure effective Child Protection Co-ordination and IRO functions
IP3.12	To improve Child Protection and IRO admin support processes
IP3.13	To improve the social care complaints process

IP4 Improving leadership and management	
IP4.1	To improve the quality of leadership and management
IP4.2	To ensure good top down/bottom up communication
IP4.3	To encourage staff to be open, identify problems and ideas for improvement
IP4.4	To ensure managers and staff are updated on progress on the improvement plan
IP4.5	To ensure staff supervision is effective
IP4.6	To ensure workload management systems are effective
IP4.7	To ensure compliance with guidance on all statutory leadership roles within the Council and the LSCB including members and officers

IP5 Ensuring good governance	
IP5.1	To ensure the LSCB is effective and there is compliance with statutory guidance
IP5.2	Ensuring there is an LSCB risk assessment
IP5.3	To ensure the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Wiltshire Strategic Partnership receive reports on safeguarding targets and progress in meeting these
IP5.4	To ensure the Children's Trust role in regard to safeguarding is clear
IP5.5	To ensure safeguarding is scrutinised effectively by Council members
IP5.6	To ensure all members are clear about their role in relation to safeguarding children and young people