Wandsworth Safeguarding
Children and Young People

Issue 5 • June 2015

Safeguarding changes in Borough Police

Safeguarding is becoming even more of a focus for the Metropolitan Police in Wandsworth. Whilst there have been dedicated units and officers assigned to these areas in the past, such as the Youth Offending Team (YOT), Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and the Family Recovery Project (FRP). They have been managed separately, which had the potential to limit the regular exchange of information between teams. The use of IT databases to share information, whilst useful, is never as good as that gained by face to face contact and the knowledge exchange that it brings.

Since March 2015 the police teams involved in Safeguarding have been brought under one Detective Chief Inspector, Richard Neville. This is a first for London and is seen as a pilot for effective safeguarding work. The teams are split into three portfolios, each under an Inspector.

Inspector David Bannister manages the Safeguarding, Partnership, and Youth Team, which is subdivided into three parts. The Youth team incorporates the YOT, Volunteer Police Cadets and the Safer Schools officers assigned to the secondary schools in Wandsworth. The Partnership team looks after Licensing and other partnership work, such as the Drug Intervention programme, with the Council. Thirdly are the new Missing Persons and Mental Health Liaison Unit. The latter unit aims to ensure a more consistent approach to missing people. We hope to reduce the number of missing person reports through more home visits and multi agency interventions aimed at frequent missing persons.

Detective Inspector Richard Milton is responsible for the Community Safety Unit, dealing with Domestic Abuse, the MASH and the FRP. Detective Inspector Owain Richards oversees the Gangs & Safeguarding Task Force (GSTF), Public Protection Team (managing dangerous offenders) and Integrated Offender Management. The GSTF now investigates concerns of Child Sexual Exploitation as well as Gang related work.

All three portfolios now come together once a week for a Safeguarding conference call, where individuals and issues of concern are discussed. There is then an agreed set of actions to manage these subjects or locations, and a lead unit assigned. This has already enabled knowledge to be shared more effectively. We recently held our first monthly meeting involving other Wandsworth agencies, such as Social Services to ensure that people who need our help are provided with the most effective and targeted support possible.

If you have any questions regarding these developments please contact Inspector David Bannister, by email, on david.bannister@met.police.uk

Barnardo’s worker to support missing children and young people at risk of CSE

A Barnardo’s worker with expertise in child sexual exploitation (CSE) in Wandsworth has begun a new role supporting children and young people who go missing in the borough.

Case practitioner Bonnie Dale will carry out independent return home interviews for young people who may be at risk of being sexually exploited. Bonnie will work closely with SEMAP to identify those at risk of CSE and make any recommendations for further support.

Referrals will be through MASH and Michele Harris, lead for Missing and CSE. To contact Bonnie email BDale@wandsworth.gov.uk.

Email: wscb@wscb.org.uk • Telephone: 020 8871 7401 • www.wscb.org.uk
Section 11 Safeguarding
Self-assessment Audit

Section 11 (4) of the Children Act 2004 requires each person or body to which the duties apply to have regard to any guidance given to them by the Secretary of State and places a statutory requirement on organisations and individuals to ensure they have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 states that one of the key functions of a Local Safeguarding Children Board is “monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of what is done by the authority and their Board partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advising them on ways to improve.”

The Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) discharges this function by carrying out a Section 11 Audit on an annual basis. The audit enables WSCB to identify gaps, strengths and weaknesses in safeguarding awareness and practice as well as identifying areas for improvement.

This is the second year that we have completed this process through our S11 questionnaire, requesting frontline staff to complete it. Their safeguarding lead assessed and evaluated the results and developed an action plan to respond to any identified gaps /issues. The analysis and action plans were then returned to WSCB.

100 audits were returned from agencies, including 15 GP practices and 40 schools. 78 agencies also submitted an action plan. This is an increase of an additional 8 completed audits compared to last year and 24 more agencies submitted action plans following the completion of their audits. In total 4812 practitioners from across the workforce in Wandsworth completed the S11 questionnaire this year.

55 Safeguarding leads have been invited to meet with the S11 Audit Review Group as part of the challenge process. The interview involves discussions around their experience of completing the audit, what issues arose, how the process could be improved and what else the WSCB could do to help raise awareness of safeguarding. They are asked to give an update and evidence on implementation of their action plan. Agencies and services whose safeguarding leads were not called in to meet with the S11 Audit Review Group will be contacted to request a written update on the completion of their action plans.

The majority of staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and are confident in knowing what to do if they are worried about a child or young person.

Where gaps were identified almost all had addressed these in their action plans. Some of the early themes and areas for improvement identified are:

- Ensuring all staff and volunteers are aware who their safeguarding lead is.
- Ensuring all staff and volunteers know who to speak to if they felt concerns they have expressed have not been followed up adequately
- Ensuring new staff or locum/temporary staff receive safeguarding training as soon as they are in post

The overall response was very positive and showed a high level of commitment from agencies in carrying out their safeguarding responsibilities effectively.

Next steps
A detailed S11 Audit Analysis Report will be completed by an independent author and presented to the WSCB Executive in July 2015. The report will be published on the WSCB website following sign off by the Executive.

A strategic leads S11 questionnaire will be circulated for 2015/16 audit process. The current questionnaire will be reviewed and targeted questions will be included, relating to the WSCB’s priority areas.

Upcoming events
Safeguarding Week – 15-19th June 2015
Safeguarding Week will be 15th – 19th June 2015. An awareness campaign will take place during this week jointly with Safeguarding Adults Board. Stalls will be manned in different locations throughout the borough. Confirmed venues include:

- 15th June – ASDA Roehampton
- 16th June – The Exchange Putney
- 17th June – Sainsbury’s Wandsworth
- 18th June – Sainsbury’s Tooting

Learning from Experience Events
The Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Board is holding 2 multi-agency training events to focus on the learning and explore the key themes and recommendations from two recent Wandsworth multi-agency case reviews: one involving baby PR, who sustained serious injuries at age 4 months and child Z who suffered injuries at age 4.

Participants will explore the findings from the case reviews and give participants the opportunity to discuss how we can learn from these reviews, change practice, and processes to prevent the same thing happening again in the future. There will be opportunity for multi- agency group discussions about the case reviews, and an overview of the findings and recommendations.

The events will take place on 22nd June 12:00-16:00pm and 29th June 13:00-17:00pm. Both events will take place at Wandsworth Professional Development Centre on Burntwood Lane.

The events are open to anyone working in the borough and a place can be booked online through TPD Online.

Annual Safeguarding Conference
This year’s annual conference will take place on 8th October 2015 09:00-16:30pm at the Civic Suite. The topic is Child Sexual Exploitation. It will be open to staff from all agencies within the borough. There will be 150 placed available. There will be key note speakers from key partner agencies including Health, the Police, Social Care and workshops on specific areas of focus for staff to attend (one in morning and one in afternoon). Save this date in your diary!
Changes to Working Together 2015

The Government consulted recently on revisions to Working Together 2013 and Safeguarding Children in Education 2014. The guidance published has however had a range of other changes added, some just minor points of detail and others quite significant. Working Together 2015 is significantly longer, clearer and stronger in terms of the statutory nature of the guidance for all partner agencies. In addition it includes significant additions in relation to clarification of responsibilities and accountabilities, young carers, assessments of children with disabilities, timescales, Prevent, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). It is also updated to take account of recent legislation including the SEND reforms, and recent organisational changes to probation services and NHSE. It is helpfully clear in places about the central importance of working with and seeking children's wishes and feelings.

It retains the 2 key principles:

- Safeguarding is everybody’s responsibility
- A child-centred approach

In addition it reinforces in several places the responsibilities of LSCB’s as opposed to Local Authorities and their partners.

The major revisions to WTTSC 2015 include changes to:

1. the referral of allegations against those who work with children;
2. notifiable incidents involving the care of a child; and
3. the definition of serious harm for the purposes of serious case reviews.

The two revised guidance documents on ‘information sharing’ and ‘what to do’ are both welcome additions to the basic material that organisations should ensure are available to all staff in their organisation, and part of their induction information for new staff.

The revised guidance on ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ is helpful, as it is much clearer than the previous version, and is unequivocal about the central responsibilities of ALL education settings to keep children safe and promote their welfare. This is reinforced by the new version of WTTSC 2015, which sets out beyond any reasonable doubt exactly what the responsibilities of schools and colleges of all types are.

A summary of the key changes to Working Together 2015 can be read on the www.wscb.org.uk.
What is the Signposting Plus Service?

Signposting Plus is a brand new development from Wandsworth MASH whereby families that are referred into our service and do not meet the level of need for statutory social work are directly contacted and offered advice and information about how they can get support for their child. Signposting Plus has been developed from existing resources so our workers are being asked to really go that extra mile to make sure families get all the help they need.

What happens?

- Concerns about a child/family are brought to attention of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) by a professional. This might be a teacher, GP or health visitor.
- Does not meet the threshold for social work intervention so is passed onto Signposting Plus Service.
- Signposting Plus Service identifies appropriate universal or targeted services to support family.
- Signposting Plus Service contacts the professional to explain why the referral does not meet the threshold.
- Signposting Plus Service discusses Early Help service options with professional and family.

Case example

The NSPCC made a referral to the MASH about a mum who was struggling to cope with her young child’s challenging behaviour. The concerns did not warrant a statutory social work response so the referral was passed onto the Signposting Plus Service. Signposting Plus Service telephoned the mother and listened to her worried and they agreed she could benefit from professional support. Signposting plus arranged for this mum to meet the family support worker at her local Children’s Centre. The Children’s Centre worker completed an Early Help Assessment with the mum and she and her child are now getting the help they need from the Children’s Centre.

How will it benefit families?

Our MASH manager is very busy and can often respond to more than 40 contacts and referrals in one day – this is in addition to chairing strategy discussions, directing social workers who are responding to urgent referrals and to people who come to the Town Hall for advice. Because we are so busy we recognised that when we decide a referral does not evidence the level of need for a social work response that referrers and parents can sometimes feel dissatisfied.

We want referrers to have the benefit of hearing from us direct that we will not be offering a social worker to the family so Signposting Plus will make every effort to speak to the referrer by phone to explain our decision and that we will be directing the family to other sources of help. If the referrer still feels this is not enough we may ask them to set up a Team Around the Child (TAC) meeting and a social worker will attend. This way the social worker gets a really good picture of the need, can influence the Early Help Plan and still not get directly involved and in some cases the social worker might agree that a statutory assessment is the best way forward.

We want families to know that the referrer cared enough about their child to contact us and that we care enough about them to identify some other sources of help that may resolve the worries about the child. So families get the benefit of a conversation with someone who can navigate our Family Information Service website and put them in touch with just the right people.

Where to get more information?

Referrals to Wandsworth MASH – 020 8871 6622
MASH@wandsworth.gov.uk
Visit the Early Help Hub for information on services, policies and processes when working with families in Wandsworth. fis.wandsworth.gov.uk/earlyhelphub

Who to call for further help and advice?

Professionals can contact the Family Information Service direct for advice on Early Help services available to support families in Wandsworth.

Telephone: 020 8871 7899 (Monday to Friday 9:30am-4:30pm)
Email: fis@wandsworth.gov.uk
National Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Awareness Day

On 18 March 2015, to coincide with National CSE Awareness Day, Wandsworth rolled out a Borough wide bus shelter publicity campaign to highlight the issues surrounding CSE; encouraging everyone to think, spot and speak out against abuse and adopt a zero tolerance to adults developing inappropriate relationships with children or children developing inappropriate relationships with other children.

Posters were distributed across council departments, Health partners and Police as part of the campaign; and Police officers and council staff held a CSE stall at Southside shopping centre on the day itself, talking to members of the public about the campaign and resources in Wandsworth to support children, young people and their parents/carers who may be at risk of CSE.

On the day we talked to a large number of Wandsworth residents. Including parents, foster carers, young people from local schools and colleges, members of local church and faith groups, school staff.

Briefing event WSCB Members re. CSE 3 June 2015

On 3rd June 2015 a briefing session was held for WSCB members to ensure that they are familiar with the local and national CSE agenda, and the local procedures in place to safeguard children and young people from this form of sexual abuse and what action we are locally collectively taking to tackle the issue of child sexual exploitation in the borough.

Briefing for Elected Members re. Child Sexual Exploitation

All elected members were invited to attend a briefing on 3rd March 2015 in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). Those present were briefed on the local and national CSE agenda, and the local procedures in place to safeguard children and young people from this form of sexual abuse, to ensure that they are familiar with the issues affecting children and young people in relation to CSE.

WSCB Priority Areas 2015-16

The WSCB Executive agreed in May 2015 the revised priority areas for the Safeguarding Children Board for 2015-16. The priority areas are:

**Involving Children and Young People** Develop ways to capture the views and service experiences of young people and use these to inform service planning, delivery and review to ensure children are safer

**Early help** Ensure services provide appropriate early help and intervention, consistent application of thresholds between preventative, targeted and specialist services and monitor the effectiveness of the Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

**Vulnerable Children and Young People** Address the challenges and risks of children missing from care, education and home; child sexual exploitation, radicalisation, self-harm, involvement in gangs and children with disabilities and special educational needs.

**Neglect** Ensure that the issue of neglect receives due prominence in assessment, prevention and intervention work alongside issues of adult mental health and substance misuse.

**Domestic Abuse** Improving the identification, assessment and response to domestic abuse and raising awareness to reduce the prevalence of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and other areas identified within the Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy (VAWGS).

**Looked After Children** Ensure ‘Looked After Children’ are safer, receive high quality support to achieve better outcomes, especially those placed at a distance from the borough (more than 20 miles).

Wandsworth Council’s Early Help Hub

The Early Help Hub has been developed by the Family Information Service to support practitioners working with families in Wandsworth.

The Hub offers enhanced signposting to early help services. This is helping professionals to identify the right mix of health, local authority and community-based support for children and families.

Early Help lists of support services are available in the areas of behavioural problems, domestic violence and FGM, mental health, parenting support, special education needs and disabilities, weight management and much more.

Trained advisors, based in the Family Information Service, use the comprehensive directory of local services to provide good quality information, advice and guidance to professionals. This ensures that children, young people and families get the right level of help and support in a timely way.

For more information visit fis.wandsworth.gov.uk/earlyhelphub or call 020 8871 7899.

“It is estimated that over two million children in the UK today are living in difficult family circumstances. These include children whose family lives are affected by parental drug and alcohol dependency, domestic abuse and poor mental health. It is crucial that these children and their families benefit from the best quality professional help at the earliest opportunity.

For some families, without early help difficulties escalate, family circumstances deteriorate and children are more at risk of suffering significant harm.”

Ofsted, Early help: whose responsibility?, March 2015
Celebrating Community Champions for Change!

Leading female genital mutilation (FGM) organisation, FORWARD, held an event Celebrating Community Champions for Change! on Wednesday the 3 June to showcase the work of Community Champions and celebrate their impact advocating for an end to FGM. FORWARD is an African diaspora women’s organisation that works to end the practice of FGM and provide support to women and girls affected by it in the UK and Africa. This event marked the organisation’s 30th anniversary and brought together members of communities affected by FGM that have become champions against the practice in their communities. Speakers on the day included: Faith Leaders- Sheikh Abu Khakeel, a representative of the Department of Communities and Local Government, Wandsworth’s Director for Public Health and Hekate Papadaki of the Rosa Fund.

Wandsworth Council kindly hosted the event at the Wandsworth Civic Suite, which took place following weeks of FORWARD working with members of the Wandsworth community in partnership with the Katherine Low Settlement, to deliver our Women’s Health and Leadership Training. Through a series of workshops, 12 women were given the space to reflect on and discuss their social, cultural and religious beliefs and values. They were given training to improve their communication and leadership skills and build their confidence to speak out against FGM in their communities.

On the day, the Community Champions from Wandsworth were joined by trained Community Champions, both men and women, who are working with FORWARD’s partners in Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol and others from London. They spoke about the value of the training and the impact they’ve been having in their communities. Overall, the event highlighted the value of working with women and men from affected communities to abandon the practice of FGM and the importance of empowering them to be voices and activists within their communities.

More information about the programme can be found at www.forwarduk.org.uk/what-we-do

Safeguarding changes in the Fire Brigade

The London Fire Brigade (LFB) are undergoing big changes in relation to Safeguarding throughout 2015. As well as reviewing our policies alongside other partners in line with the new Care Act, the internal role of the referrer now sits with the local borough commander who represents the LFB on both the Local Safeguarding Children Board and Adult Safeguarding Board. In addition, work is underway on a new web-based referral form, coupled with a new database for referrals. Last but not least, a new safeguarding training package will be put in place for all staff by December.
St George’s Youth Violence Prevention Project

April 2015

Through the Youth Violence Prevention Project, Redthread works alongside Emergency Department staff at St George’s Hospital to provide support and holistic care for young people who are the victims of violence and trauma. Teams of Redthread’s specialist youth workers support vulnerable young people during the ‘teachable moment’, capitalising on young people’s realisation that a risky lifestyle can lead to serious harm and hospitalisation. Working in partnership with healthcare professionals, the teams provide direct intervention to support these young people in disengaging from violence, sexual exploitation and crime. The project is an expansion of Redthread’s longstanding provision at King’s College Hospital and is now enabled to offer service in all four of London’s Major Trauma Centres.

How the programme works

Every day across London numerous young people are involved in, and are the victims of, violence. For some, this pattern of behaviour leads to hospitalisation at the capital’s Major Trauma Centres. In this unfamiliar and daunting environment many young people feel vulnerable and alone and contemplate the consequences of their actions. This period of time, the ‘teachable moment’, is when Redthread’s specialist youth workers first make contact. Whilst other services focus on the immediate crisis, Redthread gives young people the invaluable opportunity to discuss why they have ended up in hospital and what they can do to break away from the volatile and chaotic cycle they have found themselves in. Redthread recognises that every young person is different and each requires varying levels and types of support. The interactions that follow therefore differ for every service user, but all encourage and assist young people to make healthy choices and positive long-term plans through a relational approach. Partnership is key to the success and Redthread’s youth workers work closely with statutory agencies and other voluntary sector organisations to help young people engage effectively with other services available to them.

The medical staff and the central services teams do a fantastic job in the coordination and care of the many individuals and families who attend the Emergency Department around the clock. The presence of the Youth Worker is intended to both support the department and to advocate for and engage the young person – who may experience a whole host of fears and emotions as a result of violence and trauma - in their treatment in hospital and progression in the community. It is recognised that young people who present to hospital are often misunderstood by healthcare professionals. Therefore, by enabling Redthread to join St George’s Hospital, the Trust has demonstrated its commitment to provide the most effective and accessible care to the communities that it serves.

Revised government guidance documents

During March 2015 the government published a suite of documents that had been newly revised relating to the safeguarding of children and promotion of their welfare. These are:

- **Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2015** - Following consultation the government has updated and replaced the current statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children revised and published in 2013. (Response to WT consultation)

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015** (Section 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015)

- **What to do if you are worried – revised guidance for all professionals to use if they are worried a child may be being abused**

- **Information Sharing Guidance 2015 – revised guidance on information sharing for all professionals, and**

- **Working Together guides for young people and younger children**

All are available on the WSCB website – www.wscb.org.uk