

# PETERBOROUGH SUMMARY SELF ASSESSMENT: CHILDREN LIVING WITH NEGLECT, INCLUDING THE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD SELF ASSESSMENT RELATING TO NEGLECT

Version 1.5

June 2017

## Introduction and Context

The full Peterborough self-assessment prepared in April 2017 is available to inspectors and is in the library. This brief addendum does not repeat information in the full self-assessment; instead it aims to provide some further information from key partners about the response to children and young people living with neglect.

## Summary: Reducing the impact of neglect on children and young people in Peterborough

Partners are committed to reducing the impact of neglect on children and young people in Peterborough. Adopting the principles of systems leadership, we have worked together under the leadership of the Safeguarding Children Board to develop a multi-agency neglect strategy, which we are in the process of ensuring is embedded.

We have worked hard to deliver training to key staff across the partnership to help them to identify neglect, and work with families to address difficulties before these become entrenched.

We have an effective early help offer in the City, based on the commissioning of a range of services as well as building capacity within universal and targeted services through the development of evidenced based parenting programmes.

Significant work has taken place within Children's Social Care services to reduce the high rates of turnover and of temporary staff that characterised the workforce at the time of the last OfSTED inspection. We have strived to ensure that the changes that are needed have taken place in a sustainable way. While there remain some areas where some inconsistencies continue in practice, as described in our self-assessment, and in relation to the complexity of updating our ICT infrastructure, we believe that we are taking the steps needed to continue to address these areas.

## Descriptors and Evidence

The following sections briefly describe actions by partners and impact in relation to children living with neglect.

### **Risks to children living with neglect are prevented and reduced. The needs of the child and their family are met at an early stage through timely access to effective help<sup>1</sup> (ESN 23)<sup>2</sup>**

Neglect is targeted by early help services in the City, with practitioners supported by a range of practice tools as well as training and workforce development approaches coordinated by the Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board in addition to the work of individual agencies.

Early help services in Peterborough are an area of strength. Peterborough's approach to Early Help is one that focuses on building capacity in the system through the commissioning of support services from, for example, children's centres and the local voluntary and independent sectors. The approach also aims to build capacity through, for example, provision of training in the delivery of evidence-based parenting courses.

There is a small Early Help service within Peterborough City Council that focusses on offering support to universal and targeted early help settings in identifying needs through use of the Early Help

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<sup>1</sup> This includes the troubled families programme.

<sup>2</sup> The evaluation schedule numbers (ESN) are a referencing system to support inspectors when they record their findings in evidence records. ESNs 01–22 are in the main JTAI framework.

Assessment and the provision of other training as well as a quality assurance role. This approach has secured the support of partners and as of the end of May 2017, there were over 2,000 open early help episodes recorded on Liquid Logic.

Over 60 practitioners in universal and targeted services have now been trained in the Webster Stratton evidence-based parenting programme, and a further 20 in the Teen Triple P. There are currently 10 schools delivering Webster Stratton and a growing number of partner agencies are delivering the Teen Triple P on an individual basis with teenagers and their parents.

This commissioning and sustainability based approach is also the basis of our approach to working with Troubled Families, known locally as the Connecting Families programme, which is driven through our early help services. We have delivered significant and sustainable progress in 240 families in 2016/17. The Department for Communities and Local Government audited our payment by results claim on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2017. They found that we had evidenced the progress required to meet the stretching eligibility criteria involved.

Where the needs of families are more complex or where issues have not been successfully resolved through use of targeted early help services as described above, Multi-Agency Support Groups [MASGs] are in place to help to coordinate and provide additional services and support.

Three MASGs operate across the City, one for each of the three localities. They are attended by senior representatives from a range of local partner organisations, able to bend and flex resources in order to meet additional needs. Families presented at the MASGs are reviewed regularly by the panel to ensure that progress is being made.

### **Children living with neglect receive the right help and protection because of application of appropriate thresholds, effective information sharing and timely intervention<sup>3</sup> (ESN 24)**

The Safeguarding Children Board launched revised threshold procedures in September 2016, following a wide ranging consultation. The revised threshold document has moved away from the inclusion of a large number of detailed descriptors that might identify the existence of needs that can be met at universal, targeted and specialist services. The approach has instead been to encourage practitioners to look more holistically at the lived lives of children, and to have confidence in engaging with families directly in order to seek to address emerging difficulties and address early help needs.

The revised thresholds were developed and launched at the same time as the Board's and the Council's Neglect Strategies. This was to ensure that there is a coherence across them all.

Audits of decision making within the MASH consistently identify this to be an area of strength. However, the current arrangement where the Peterborough MASH hub is located separately from the main MASH at Chord Park in Cambridgeshire means that for many partner agencies, servicing both locations has been a challenge.

The decision has therefore been taken to co-locate the Peterborough MASH hub with the main MASH site at Chord Park in Cambridgeshire. We will also be contributing an Early Help presence in the newly created Early Help Hub at Chord Park. We are taking this step as we believe that co-locating our services will improve the availability of partner information in decision making, with all agencies operating in the same location.

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<sup>3</sup> This includes thresholds for early help, children in need, child protection processes, children becoming looked after

Consultations with affected members of staff within Peterborough City Council concluded at the time of the announcement of the JTAI. The plan is to co-locate staff from July 2017.

Where children and young people are supported by Children's Social Care, assessments are completed by qualified social workers and all direct work with children and families is undertaken by or overseen by a qualified social worker or supervisor. Some direct work with children in need is undertaken by alternatively qualified workers.

The decision to expand the role of alternatively qualified staff was made in the face of historical difficulties in recruiting qualified social workers in sufficient numbers to Peterborough, together with a belief that expanding the skills set of the overall staff group would be likely to better meet the diverse needs of children and young people. Originally begun as a pilot, the alternatively qualified workforce now plays an important role in work with children and families.

They have also contributed to reducing vacancy rates among qualified social workers, with the vacancy rate reducing from 38% of staff in 2015 to an estimated 15% by July 2017, including leavers and starters. We expect to reduce our vacancy rate further as we are able to publicise our success in securing funding to develop the Family Safeguarding approach in Peterborough, and embed the step up programme for continued recruitment of newly qualified social workers into children's social care.

This is significant for the quality of service offered to children in need; in 2015, social workers carried mixed caseloads of children in need, child protection and court work in Family Support. High turnovers of staff combined with a then average caseload of 25 meant that it was children and young people needing longer term support as children in need – a high proportion of whom would have been likely to be children affected by neglect – who experienced the most changes of social workers. By comparison, the average caseload in Family Support was 18 as of 9<sup>th</sup> June 2017.

Children and young people subject to child protection plans are closely scrutinised to ensure that any drift is minimised, and only 3 children had a plan of between 18 and 23 months as of the end of May 2017; none had been subject to a plan for longer than this.

The Head of Service for Family Support reviews all children who are subject to a child protection plan for 9 months, and legal planning meetings are convened whenever a child is subject to a plan for 12 months to test legal thresholds for intervention and ensure that children are escalated into pre-proceedings where criteria is met.

The threshold for accessing the care system is either through the Peterborough Access to Support Panel or, in more urgent situations, through the Assistant Director.

There are good arrangements for information sharing in place across all partner agencies. Information sharing agreements are in place and on a day to day basis, relationships between partner agencies are generally good.

The Early Help module of Liquid Logic is widely used by all partner agencies, and this ensures that information about children and young people at early help level is shared in accordance with the consent provided by the family.

Some issues affecting the sharing of information between key agencies where children are subject to child in need plans have been identified, which is an area of focus for managers within the Family Support teams for the current year, with the move towards adopting the strengthening families model in child in need work to support improving the sharing of information including of minutes.

**Agencies work together to identify children who are neglected, intervene to reduce risk and monitor effectively the impact of interventions so that risk is reduced (ESN 25)**

Both the Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board and the local authority have launched Neglect Strategies. These were developed following widespread participation by partner agencies as well as parents.

Safeguarding children board partners have agreed to promote the use of the Quality of Care tool where neglect is identified as a key factor impacting on children within a family. The tool helps practitioners at all levels to identify which areas of parenting are most significant in terms of impact on the child, thereby helping the development of targeted interventions to provide support in those areas.

Use of this tool forms significant elements of both neglect strategies. Although the use of the tool is not yet embedded it is beginning to enable practitioners to evaluate the extent to which families where neglect is a feature have been able to maintain progress sustained as a result of earlier interventions, or where subsequent difficulties are the result of other changed circumstances within the life cycle of the family concerned. As the tool becomes used more widely, it will enable practitioners to better identify families where improvements are not sustained following an intervention at, for example, an early help level, and where early referral to more specialist services is therefore indicated.

The consistency of management supervision and oversight within Children's Social Care services has been identified as an area where there is a continuing need for support. Team managers have some of the most difficult roles in front line practice, and we made the decision in February 2017 to invest in training and development for managers and advanced practitioners by commissioning a bespoke mentoring and development programme that will run until July 2017. We have also increased management capacity in this part of the service through the development of two Group Manager roles; these report to the head of service and supervise four team managers each. We expect that the combination of continued investment and increased management capacity will help to address any continuing issues.

The Clinical Commissioning Group offers support to GPs to assist them in identifying neglect. This has included providing guidance on neglect and raising the profile of the experience of the child, as well as training from the consultant paediatrician to GPs.

Safeguarding supervision is undertaken of staff in the City Hospital, community paediatrics and 0-19 services, adult and paediatric mental health and sexual health services. This allows the opportunity to review practice as well as providing practitioners to seek guidance and support in a timely way.

Procedures describing actions when children do not attend appointments have also been tightened and apply across the health community, including the hospital.

The Safeguarding Children Board has worked closely with the Muslim Council of Peterborough (MCP) to develop a safeguarding project that is owned by the community. The Board supported the MCP in developing safeguarding procedures that include information about neglect. The Head of Service for the Safeguarding Boards has worked in partnership with the Education Safeguarding lead to develop a "train the trainer" programme for the MCP. The training included information around the importance of recognising and responding to cases of neglect. To date the following people have been trained on safeguarding and neglect:

- 138 Mosque Madrasa Teachers and volunteers
- 19 Non-Mosque Madrasa teachers and volunteers
- 16 teachers from 5 EU Communities running Supplementary Schools

**The impact of neglect on children is reduced because they and their families can access a sufficient range of local services, including therapeutic help that improves children’s emotional well-being and safety. This may include help provided by community and voluntary services (ESN 26)**

There are a wide range of services available to children and young people that improves children’s emotional wellbeing and safety. There is commissioned family support available from a number of partner agencies including Family Action, which provides in the home support to families struggling to meet needs for a variety of reasons, including neglect. Children’s centres also work directly in a targeted way with families where there is a need for additional support and where children are up to 11 years of age.

The local authority has also provided training to practitioners working for local housing providers with families where environmental conditions are having a negative impact on family life. The local authority also commissions workers in early help services to support children who have been affected by domestic abuse, which is often associated with neglect.

The NSPCC is active in Peterborough and offers a range of targeted interventions to support children, young people and families, including those where neglect is identified as a primary need.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health services offer a range of interventions across the iThrive pathway to promote children’s emotional health and well-being. The Keep Your Head website is a resource for professionals and parents alike to improve understanding of issues that may impact on children and young people as well as providing information on how to access support services. This site can be found at: <http://keep-your-head.com/CP-MHS>

Kooth is an online counselling service that has been widely accessed by young people locally to help them with their emotional health and well-being and can be accessed at <https://kooth.com/>

In addition, there are a range of services that are directly provided by the Council. These include the Youth Offending Service, which has developed a strong preventative offer to young people as well as a number of specialist interventions that are of relevance to young people who may be engaged in challenging and risky behaviours as a result of the impact of difficult childhood experiences within and outside of their family, including exposure to neglect.

Examples include work with young people displaying or at risk of displaying sexually harmful behaviours. The YOS also offers therapeutic support to young people available through psychologists located within the service.

We have identified that young people who are at significant risk of various forms of exploitation, often as a result of earlier and sometimes current experiences of neglect and other trauma, would benefit from a multi-disciplinary response. Peterborough City Council is currently consulting with staff and wider partners about the proposed development of a Targeted Youth Support Service.

We envisage this service drawing together some resources from Children’s Social Care, the YOS and targeted services including our youth service and services to young people at risk of being Not in Education, Employment or training.

The aims of the proposed new service include providing a much more child-centred response to the needs of young people who are at risk as result of difficult home relationships, regular missing

episodes, involvement with substance and alcohol misuse and possible offending behaviour than is often provided through more traditional child protection responses. The mixture of skills within the proposed new service will enable a more effective relationship-led response to engaging with and working with young people with complex needs and their families.

**Professionals<sup>4</sup> and support staff are well trained, confident and knowledgeable. They understand the impact of neglect on children's daily lives as well as the long-term and cumulative impact on their health and well-being. This enables them to identify how to help and protect children and to take action to do so (ESN 27)**

Full details of the training provided by the Local Safeguarding Children Board is available under the relevant section below.

In addition, individual agencies provide a range of training to practitioners in a number of areas including in relation to the impact of neglect on the lives of children. For example, the Consultant Paediatrician and Designated Doctor for Safeguarding in the CCG offers regular training and support to GPs.

Within the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation Trust [CPFT], supervision of staff includes the collation of themes relating to neglect and specific guidance on the use of the Quality of Care tool. CPFT has also produced a 'Day in the life of a school aged child suffering neglect tool' which is to help practitioners to ensure that the lived experience of and voice of the child informs their assessments particularly where neglect is indicated.

Within Children's Social Care, there has been a continuing emphasis in training and practice forums on the use of assessment tools including the Quality of Care tool, the need for clear chronologies of significant events, the inclusion of the voice of the child in assessments and planning, and the appropriate consideration of family history in assessments of need.

**Children who are neglected experience a child-centred approach from all professionals. The risks to them and their needs are assessed effectively and responded to appropriately. Assessments consider family history and the cumulative impact of neglect, and show that there is a clear understanding of the ways in which different forms of neglect affect children. The views of the child are clearly recorded and central to the work with the family (ESN 28)**

It is acknowledged that the quality of assessments remains variable within Peterborough Children's Social Care. What is clear however, is that in most cases, children's social care staff know the children well. They can articulate the history of the family's circumstances, the current risk and protective factors, and describe in detail the actions that they and others are taking as part of the plan to address the risks facing the child.

Similarly, in most cases, children's social care staff can also clearly articulate the voice of the child, and describe the child's lived experience within their family, although this is not always recorded in detail and work with families where neglect is the primary feature is not always labelled as such. This has led to the recent direct work label for recording specific direct work that has usually been embedded within case recordings of home visits.

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<sup>4</sup> This means but is not limited to early help workers, social workers, family/social work support workers, police officers and support staff, health professionals and support staff, personnel in the National Probation Service and community rehabilitation company, youth offending team staff, teachers and school staff.

Equally there are also areas where practice is much more consistently improved than at the time of the last OfSTED inspection. This includes the multi-agency response to children and young people who go missing from home, care or education, and the embedded use of risk assessments for young people vulnerable to exploitation and other risks as a result.

There are also a number of examples of good examples of multi-agency working. These include the Unborn Baby Panel, which is chaired by senior managers within children's social care and includes representatives from, for example, the midwifery service. The panel discusses plans and actions needed where unborn babies have been identified who are likely to face significant risks including those related to neglect.

Peterborough City Council has also invested in the Mind of My Own application [MOMO], which supports participation by children and young people, and which is becoming steadily more established.

Support has been offered to practitioners working across universal and Early Help services in the form of training on undertaking good quality assessments of need. All Early Help assessments are checked for quality by the Early Help Service within Peterborough City Council. Support is offered directly where the quality of assessment may have an adverse impact on the likelihood of achieving positive outcomes.

**Professionals have a clear understanding of how the behaviour of parents and carers affects children. They assess any strengths and risks in parenting and the extended family. Where changes in parents' and/or carers' behaviour are required, clear timescales for change are agreed. These timescales are based on the child's needs, and improvements in parenting are closely monitored (ESN 29)**

The recent mock 'JTAI' multi-agency audit of children living with neglect identified that in almost all those children considered, engagement with the family had been in place for a considerable period of time. The audit identified that assessments included information from partner agencies and at least some consideration of the history of the family.

The audit also identified that monitoring and overview by Children's Social Care was more robust where children were subject to child protection plans than was the case where children were subject to child in need plans, although it also found that practice in this area had improved over the last 6 months.

The mock JTAI also identified, unsurprisingly, that parental difficulties including substance and alcohol misuse, mental health difficulties and/or domestic abuse featured prominently. This is of course one of the primary reasons why we as a partnership have been so committed to securing the funding to support the development of the Family Safeguarding model in the City.

**Children living with neglect benefit from evidence-based approaches, tools and services that reduce risks and meet their needs (ESN 31)**

Use of the Quality of Care tool is currently in the process of being embedded, as noted above. Use of the Outcomes Star is embedded within a number of targeted and early help services, with practitioners and families alike finding the tool to be intuitive and helpful.

Individual agencies offer support and resources to practitioners that are specific to working with children and young people experiencing neglect. Practitioners within the Cambridgeshire and



Peterborough Foundation Trust have a 'safeguarding satchel' that includes policies, national and local guidance and tools that practitioners can use.

Within Children's Social Care, the use of Strengthening Families is in the process of extending beyond child protection to include the multi-agency response to working with children in need. This will help to improve the consistency of approach to this group of children and young people, many of whom are vulnerable as a result of neglectful parenting. The Strengthening Families approach is being complimented by Motivational Interviewing: all social workers and alternatively qualified workers are currently receiving training in this approach, a fundamental feature of Family Safeguarding, which is due to launch in September 2017.

**The police work in partnership with other agencies to appropriately identify and address the needs of children who have been or are neglected. They investigate effectively cases of neglect in families with children (ESN 33)**

The Police are a core component within the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) with dedicated and trained staff assessing, triaging and sharing child concern referral with partner agencies to deliver the best multi-agency safeguarding response.

The Child Abuse Investigation Safeguarding Unit (CAISU) investigates all neglect cases where a crime is believed to have occurred. This team is comprised of trained detectives who specialise in child abuse investigations and undergo bespoke training specific to this role.

There are also strong relationships between the MASH and MARAC arrangements. A review of the Partnership's Domestic Abuse arrangements in 2016 led to the creation of the Countywide Domestic Abuse service, in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council, and operational from April 2017. This includes specific IDVAs for young people and health; programmes and outreach support are all accessed through the MARAC.

In addition, two dedicated partnership managers work across the partnership to raise awareness of domestic abuse, and to address the linked concerns that this type of abuse creates or exacerbates neglect. In order to ensure that there is a timely response to all concerns, 'mini' MARACS are held daily, with a larger meeting once per week. There is a dedicated MARAC Advanced Practitioner in the Peterborough MASH hub at present; this post will combine with the wider Vulnerable Persons' and MARAC service when the Peterborough MASH is co-located with the MASH at Chord Park.

**Schools have effective systems to identify children at risk of or subject to neglect. They make timely referrals to early help or children's social care where appropriate and children receive support within the school and/or from external agencies where required (ESN 34)**

Most schools recognise the impact that neglect can have on pupils' progress and attainment although they often find it difficult to identify early signs. Most schools invest in family support to engage with families of children causing concern. They escalate concerns through early help referrals and engage well with Connecting Families/Troubled Families provision.

Schools play a significant role in the coordination and frequently, in the delivery of Early Help services. Schools collectively are one of the largest completers off early help assessments. A number of schools provide support services to families as part of their broader support functions. Ten schools are now offering evidenced-based parenting programmes [Webster-Stratton] and more school staff are to be trained in delivering the programme in due course. While not specifically targeting neglect, supporting parents to develop parenting skills through programmes such as Webster-Stratton reduces the likelihood of children experiencing neglectful parenting.

**Schools contribute effectively to inter-agency working to improve outcomes for children who are being or have been neglected. This includes contributing to a coordinated offer of early help or inter-agency plans for children in need of help and protection (ESN 35)**

Schools collectively are one of the largest sources of referrals into Children’s Social Care. They often have a considerable amount of information of relevance to decision making, assessment and case planning.

One of the benefits to moving towards the co-located MASH at Chord Park is expected to be the greater involvement of schools in decision making, using the existing dedicated resource of an ‘education navigator’ within the MASH.

Head Teacher representatives are members of the safeguarding children board and play an active role in the strategic safeguarding responsibilities of the partnership. The Regional College is also represented on the Safeguarding Board and similarly plays an active role in the strategic safeguarding responsibilities of the board, particularly as these apply to older young people. Schools contribute well to child protection conferences and core groups.

**Leaders and managers understand the experiences of children living with neglect that live locally.<sup>5</sup> This leads to effective action to meet children’s needs and improve the help and support provided to children and their families (ESN 36)**

Neglect is a priority area for the Local Safeguarding Children Board, and Members are jointly committed to working in partnership at a strategic level to understand the impact of neglect locally and take action to meet needs and improve the support provided to children and their families.

The bid for innovation funding to develop the Family Safeguarding approach in Peterborough was one that was supported by leaders of all partner agencies in the City. It was this clear and committed support that helped to secure success. This multi-agency approach illustrates the understanding of the way in which children and young people living in families where parents have very complex needs require a different approach for support to be effective.

The development of the Family Safeguarding approach will have a significant role in reducing the impact of neglect on some of the most vulnerable children and young people in the City. As the pilot develops, we will seek to ensure that an increasing number of children and their families are able to benefit from support that draws on the best features of Family Safeguarding.

Leaders within children’s and community services within Peterborough City Council have recognised the need to develop multi-disciplinary responses to young people with complex needs. The proposals to develop the Targeted Youth Support Service outlined above have been developed as a result.

Senior Police leaders are engaged with the issue of neglect as evidenced by the constabulary safeguarding lead, the Assistant Chief Constable, being the executive representative at the LSCB and the head of Public Protection Department (PPD) also attending the LSCB board and business committee meetings. Furthermore the head of PPD represents the constabulary at the MASH governance board.

Local leaders in the National Probation Service and the BeNCH Community Rehabilitation Company work to address neglect at a strategic level through active participation within the Local

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<sup>5</sup> This includes leaders and managers from the police, health, probation and the local authority.

Safeguarding Children Board and sub groups. The head of the National Probation Service Local Delivery Unit is also a member of the MASH governance board. Operational managers brief offender managers on relevant guidance such as the threshold document and the guidance on neglect and provide oversight on the assessment and management of risk. Training is provided on key areas of practice for offender managers including in ensuring that children of adults they are working with are visible, and the impact of adult behaviour and difficulties on children in the household or in close contact are considered.

**Leaders and managers recognise the challenges involved in responding to neglect and provide effective support, training and challenge to practitioners (ESN 37)**

Leaders in Peterborough are signed up to the principles of 'System Leadership'. This means that we work together to identify difficulties and agree solutions; we work together openly and honestly and see success as collective.

We have a range of processes in place to support the training of practitioners; the safeguarding board offers a range of training including training specific to neglect, as do individual agencies. The constabulary, for example, recognises the ongoing need to support practitioners and has invited officers and staff to attend child neglect workshops that focus on helping professionals understand what neglect is as well highlighting the signs and how to identify where children may be impacted by neglect.

The partnership works hard to ensure that there are good relationships in place and there are regular meetings between key leaders at all levels that offer the opportunity to discuss general and specific issues and develop improved ways of working proactively. The Safeguarding Children Board has a clear escalation policy in place that is available for partners to use where necessary.

Within Peterborough children's services, there is a well-established and respected quality assurance service. The head of service reports directly to the Service Director. This is deliberate as it means that there is some distance from the operational Assistant Director in terms of line management. The quality assurance service undertakes a range of audits, themes from which inform service plans within children's social care services.

Independent chairs play an important role in ensuring that any issues affecting individual children and young people subject to child protection plans are raised using the case alert system.

The Head of Service for Quality Assurance is also the Principal Social Worker. In this role, she facilitates the social care forum, which is now operated jointly with adult social care services. This provides an opportunity for social workers to share good practice as well as raising any concerns that they may have.

**The LSCB actively monitors, promotes, coordinates and evaluates the work of the statutory partners that help and protect children at risk of neglect, including working effectively with other multi-agency groups that have responsibility for responding to neglect. (ESN 38)**

**Monitoring and scrutiny**

The PSCB has a strong quality assurance function and regularly undertakes quality assurance activity. This includes a range of activity including audits, focus groups and surveys. The scrutiny and monitoring function of the Board is conducted via the multi-agency Quality and Effectiveness Sub group.

Over the last 12 months the PSCB has undertaken 11 multi-agency audits and dip samples focusing on various areas of practice including neglect, the application of thresholds, domestic abuse and the response to young people at risk of child sexual exploitation. All audits result in action plans and learning for practice.

### **Thresholds**

The revised threshold document was developed in the spring/ summer of 2016. A multi-agency task and finish group was set up to develop the document and three multi-agency consultation events were held across the City in April 2016. This provided front line practitioners with an opportunity to give their views on the proposed document and raise any concerns. The document was launched in September 2016.

To assure the PSCB that the threshold document had been embedded into practice and was working appropriately a multi-agency audit of thresholds was scheduled to take place six months after the launch. In the interim period the PSCB monitored the thresholds through its performance dataset and escalations from partner agencies. These were reviewed at both the PSCB meetings and the Quality and Effectiveness sub groups. The PSCB also undertook two multi-agency audits within the six month period, one that focussed on domestic abuse and the other focussing on CSE contacts. Whilst neither of these audits were specifically relating to referrals, both audits had questions that required the auditors to assess the quality of the referrals and the front door. In both instances the audits found the quality of referrals to be improved, were appropriate and progressed in a timely manner. The front door was seen to be a strength in the safeguarding process.

A threshold audit was undertaken in March 2017, six months after the launch of the threshold criteria, and this is also available to inspectors. The audit found that considerable improvements had been made over the twelve month period since the MASH audit had been undertaken in March 2016.

### **Neglect**

The Board developed and launched a neglect strategy in September 2016 to coincide with the launch of the threshold document. To assure the Board that the strategy had been appropriately embedded into practice a multi-agency audit was scheduled to take place in May 2017.

The PSCB has worked with public health to strengthen the PSCB dataset to include information about low birth weight, immunisations, obesity, repeat accidental injuries. Whilst this data is in place work is taking place to further refine the data and make it more meaningful. In addition the PSCB has struggled to gain accurate information regarding the picture of neglect in the City and the number of neglect tools that have been completed.

In May 2017 the Board undertook a mock JTAI neglect audit. The audit considered six cases, of which 3 were subject to child protection plans, while the remaining three were children in need. This audit report is also available to inspectors.

In addition to the neglect audit the PSCB is using the S11 audit as a further opportunity to monitor and scrutinise practice around neglect.

### **Section 11**

The PSCB undertakes a Section 11 audit every two years and is a crucial part of the Boards evaluation of agencies practice. The Section 11 process follows a “stepped” procedure, agencies are

required to complete a Section 11 self-assessment audit. This audit comprises of the following eight standards against which agencies are asked to assess themselves against:

- Agency is clear about its responsibility to safeguard children
- Senior management are committed to the importance of safeguarding promoting children's welfare
- There is a clear line of accountability within the organisation for work on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and staff know how to respond to safeguarding concerns
- Service development take account for the need to safeguard and promote welfare and is informed by the views of children and families
- There is staff training on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children for all staff working with or in contact with children and families
- Appropriate recruitment vetting procedures and allegations against staff procedures and processes are in place
- Information is shared appropriately

To assist the Board in monitoring and scrutinising agencies response to neglect an additional standard has been included in the 2017 Section 11 self-assessment. This standard is:

- That Neglect is appropriately identified and addressed.

Agencies submit their self-assessment together with any supporting evidence to the PSCB. The Chair of the PSCB hosts a challenge day where agencies challenge the content of the Section 11 returns. This has proved to be a useful part of the scrutiny process.

The current Section 11 audit commenced on the 19<sup>th</sup> May 2017 and responses are required by the 19<sup>th</sup> July 2017. This year we have also included a front line practitioner survey as part of the process. To ensure that respondents are honest in their responses they are only required to detail the agency for which they work. The questions in the survey mirror the 8 standards and will give the Board an insight into the views of front line practitioner across the City.

### **Capturing the voice of the Child**

The PSCB has worked hard to capture the views and opinions of young people across the City and ensure that they are used to improve agencies practice. Over the last twelve months the Board has undertaken three surveys with young people across the City and had an overwhelming response. Whilst none of the surveys were explicitly around the subject of neglect they all involved subject areas that research indicates are intrinsically linked to those children who are the subject of neglect.

In February 2016 the Board ran a survey on Domestic abuse and sexual violence (healthy relationships). We produced two surveys, one aimed at school years 4-7 and one aimed at school 8-11. Questions included what makes a health relationship, what things are ok/ not ok in a relationship, who they would talk to if they had a concern in a relationship. There were also specific questions around whether they had seen/heard violence at home, the frequency with which it occurred and who they would talk to about it. We received a total of 1946 responses from across the City which provided the Board with a good insight into the lives of young people across the City. The findings from the survey have been used to inform the work of the DA/SV strategic Board. The findings have also been used by the Safer Peterborough Partnership (CSP) to their work around DA and were also used to inform the Countywide Joint Strategic Needs Assessment on Violence Against Women and Girls.

In February/ March 2017 the PSCB undertook a survey around “gangs” with secondary school students across the City. The questions included their perception of gangs, had they been a member of a gang, names of local gangs. We received 669 responses to the survey and the results were used to inform the PSCB Gang workshops that are currently being delivered across the County. The work has also been shared with the Safer Peterborough Partnership (CSP) to help inform their work around Gang related activity.

The Board undertook a further survey in March 2017. This survey examined the issues of e safety, sexting and on line bullying. The Board produced two surveys, one aimed at school years 3-5 and one aimed at school years 6 and above. 2011 children and young people from across the City responded to the Survey. Research tells us that children who are neglected are more vulnerable to online abuse and it is of particular interest that the results showed a high percentage of primary school children are spending in excess of four hours a day online, they are accessing the net in the privacy of their bedroom and not using privacy settings. The learning from the survey has been used to shape the work plan of the E safety sub group. The findings have also been shared with schools across the City, governors, and parents. The Internet Watch Foundation have also used the findings as part of their research information.

### **Capturing the views of front line practitioners**

The PSCB has started to develop a process of capturing the views of front line practitioners to ensure that it is fully aware of issues that are facing staff across the City. When the threshold document and neglect strategy was developed consultation events were held to allow practitioners from partner agencies to give their views and raise any concerns.

In the last eight months the Board has run three staff surveys with practitioners across the City. One was aimed at designated safeguarding leads to check compliance with their role (September 2016). We are currently running two surveys both of which were launched in May 2017, one is looking at the threshold criteria and peoples understanding of its application the other is the S11 survey. This survey has specific questions around the neglect strategy, understanding of the threshold and neglect cases, attendance at neglect training and use of tools to assess neglect. The survey closes on the 19<sup>th</sup> July 2017, to date we have received 549 responses from staff across the City.

In addition to the above frontline practitioners from health and CSC have been asked to attend recent PSCB meetings (March & May 2017) to give their views on the current challenges facing front line practitioners. This programme of inviting front line practitioners to the Board will continue in future meetings.

### **Training on Neglect**

The PSCB runs a very successful multi-agency training programme. During the period 1 April 2016- 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 the PSCB offered over 40 different safeguarding courses with 90 individual training sessions being offered. A total of 867 delegates attended training during this period (this does not include attendance at conferences or threshold/neglect launch).

The Board has developed a suite of multi-agency neglect training that practitioners can access. The training is regularly evaluated and the impact of training is assessed. Further details can be found in the annual training report, where there is also information on the full LSCB training programme.

## **Conferences**

In February 2016 the Peterborough and Cambridge Boards jointly hosted a multi-agency conference entitled “neglect – not just a grubby child”. 194 delegates attended the conference from a range of agencies across the County. The purpose of the conference was to highlight the impact of neglect and provide an opportunity to learn from leaders in the field on identifying understanding and responding to Neglect. Delegates were given the opportunity to hear from both national speakers (Patrick Ayre, Jan Horwath) and local speakers on a range of issues involving neglect.

In March 2017 the Board hosted a conference (Adolescent perception of risk: Understanding and preventing high risk behaviour). 110 people attended the conference from a range of agencies. A key note speaker gave a presentation about mental health and neglect and there was a specific workshop “Thrive to survive” that explored the impact of neglect for adolescents.

## **Raising Awareness**

The board publishes a wide range of resources on the website, and provides briefings to particular groups on findings from research including, for example a briefing to the Child Sexual Exploitation strategic group on the report: *‘Exploring the relationship between neglect and child sexual exploitation’* 2016 E Hanson.

## **Relationships with other Boards**

There are clear links between PSCB, Safeguarding Adult Board (SAB), Safer Peterborough Partnership (SPP), Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) with the Independent Chair being a representative on these. An Inter board protocol setting out the reporting and governance between the four statutory Boards was implemented in March 2017. The PSCB business priorities for 2016/17 have been aligned with those of the SPP and the HWB. The priorities and work plans of the various boards are co-ordinated to ensure that there is no duplication of activities by other multi-agency partnerships such as the Safer Peterborough Partnership.

The PSCB has developed enhanced links with other strategic groups such as Domestic Abuse and MAPP.

The Independent chair of the PSCB is a member of the MAPPA strategic Management Board, and there is an agreed and signed protocol between the two boards. The PSCB Business Manager is a member of the DA/ SV Strategic Board and contributes to the development and monitoring of the DA action plan.

In addition to the above the PSCB have established links with the local judiciary and an annual meeting between the Chair of the PSCB and a local District Judge who sits within the Family Division. There is also an agreement that either party can arrange additional meetings if required.

The Chair of the Board also meets with the Chief Executive of Peterborough City Council on a regular basis. The Lead Member is a member of the Board as a participating observer. In addition the Chair of the PSCB and the Business Manager ensures that the Lead Member is kept up to date.

The PSCB has developed priorities through consultation with both stake holders and children and young people. The business plan is structured under these priorities and this is further supported by alignment of the data set and audit programme.

### **Areas for Development**

The PSCB have engaged effectively with young people across the city. The next step for the Board is to strengthen our engagement with parents and carers. As a Board we have distributed newsletters to parents, developed leaflets in 8 languages and have dedicated information on our website for parent's and carers. We also held a Chelsea's Choice performance aimed at Parents.

The Board has launched the neglect strategy but the quality assurance activity that has taken place around neglect has evidenced that practitioners are not yet using the tools available in their work with families. The next step for the Board is to ensure that the tools are being utilised and monitor both the numbers completed and the quality of the assessments.

The Board has a good quality assurance audit programme in place. We are working with colleagues in public health to strengthen the data that is available for scrutiny to assist us further in measuring impact and focusing activities on areas of greatest need.