

Walsall Safeguarding Partnership Children's Annual report 2021-2022

Report to the Scrutiny Panel

Tuesday 18th April 2023



Plan for Children, Families and Adults



Microsoft Word
Document

Introduction

The reports provide assurance around the effectiveness of our local safeguarding arrangements and evidences the impact of these arrangements in ensuring the welfare and safety of the children young people of Walsall.



Walsall Safeguarding Partnership (WSP)

Legacy of the pandemic

In December 2020 Penny Thompson undertook a **review of the effectiveness of the partnership** which required us to focus on

- creating a system with a clearer line of sight and increased connectivity through practice reviews and workforce development
- identify priorities for the WSP and streamline partnership governance structure to provide a more focused approach to joint Children and Adult arrangements.

Three key priorities identified were:

Neglect, Self-Neglect and All-Age Exploitation

The Arthur & Star National Review was a significantly challenging for the partnership and local services, however Partners continued to work closely together to ensure that children in Walsall were safeguarded.

Wood Review of Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements published in May 2021



How effective are our arrangements?

Activities undertaken that have provided the partnership some confidence in our arrangements;

1. In May 2021 the CQC published its findings on key areas of practice inspected within the Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust.

2. In October 2021 Ofsted undertook an Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services. Their overall effectiveness was graded 'Good'.

3. Children - Section 11 Assurance and Adult - Care Act Compliance Assurance event which included

- ✓ '4th Partner'- service user quality assurance with partners
- ✓ Findings from the 2021 practitioner survey,

Both provided the opportunity for partner agencies to demonstrate assurance of their statutory duties)

NB. The WSP is supporting the SAB with its preparation for CQC Inspection of its social care arrangements and its provider services



How effective have our arrangements?

Governance

- As a Safeguarding Partnership there is now a clearer line of sight and increased connectivity between the work streams of the partner's activity such as practice reviews and workforce development. Forward plans, standing agenda items and report templates across the meeting and subgroup structure have ensured issues and assurance are shared and understood from frontline practice through to senior leadership.
- There are improved links with the Community Safety Partnership The All Age Exploitation Strategy was finalised and agreed by partners, as was set out in last years' Annual Report as a priority.
- The multi-agency audit programme continued to obtain learning in order to improve practice and saw improvements in the practice which was reflected in improved case ratings.
- A new framework for evaluating the impact of learning from case reviews and audits has been agreed and commenced.
- Positive feedback was received via the Practitioner Survey.



How effective are our arrangements?

What our data tells us

- Early Help demand has increased in 2021 compared to 2019 and there remains a positive impact of Early Help services for children and families.
- There has been a slight increase in referrals to MASH for period 1st April 21-31st March 2022 compared to the same period in 2020/21 and remains appropriately lower than the previous year.
- There remains a positive reduction in children subject to child protection plans 2021/222 when compared to 2019.
- There remains a positive increase of the number of families supported through the Family Safeguarding Model.
- The pre-birth assessment guidance is being used effectively and is monitored through regular audit activity (impact of SCR 7 recommendation).

Staff who responded to satisfaction survey felt their organisation ensured they were competent and supported to carry out their safeguarding responsibilities.



How effective are our arrangements?

Partnership Priorities

Neglect

- There has been a revision to the revised strategy and action plan and development of an outcomes framework. More children are being supported through Early Help and less children (11% compared to 16% last year) are having a social care Child and Family Assessment due to Neglect.

All Aged Exploitation

- Development of an all aged Exploitation Strategy and related training to 190 delegates
- Progress continues to be made with the All-Age Exploitation pathway and included the development of an Exploitation Hub.
- We have identified, screened and worked with more young people at risk of Exploitation.

○ Impending development of a performance framework.

We continue to work with partners to develop the multiagency dataset and score card to assess identification and response to exploitation



How effective are our arrangements?

Measuring impact Case Reviews and Multiagency Audits - Childrens

- During 2021-2022, 4 cases were referred for consideration of a Child Safeguarding Practice Review, 1 progressed to a LCSPPR. No children's reviews were completed or published. 8 action plans relating to previous Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) or Rapid Reviews were completed within the year
- The multi-agency audit programme continues to obtain learning in order to improve practice and saw improvements in the case ratings. During the year there were three multi-agency audits carried out, one was linked to the safeguarding priorities, child sexual abuse and injuries in non-mobile babies (as a direct result of case review learning). During Q2 the audit process was reviewed to include a revised MAA audit template and process to enhance the learning system.
- During 2021 a new process for measuring the impact from case reviews was agreed and commenced. This was something which the partners had identified as an important focus in the 2021-22 Annual Report.
- The WSP learning offer includes specific training resulting from child reviews i.e. bruising in non-mobile babies (W12 & RRs) / working with fathers (W5, W7, W10, Practice Reflection Workshop on Connected Carers W11). Also launching the ICON programme across the partnership as we set out to do in the 2021-22 annual report (linked to SCR's W5, W7).
- Links strengthened between the Multi-Agency Audit Group and Practice Development Group (PDG) as the Practice Improvement Lead attends the audits and there is a standing agenda item on PDG for feedback from audits.

The Partnership receive learning in real time from audits and reviews by way of feedback to practitioners and managers, Key Messages newsletters, website updates, 7 min briefings, webinar's and new training courses being developed.



Areas for focus and improvement in 2022- 2023

- Review and restructure of the Safeguarding Partnership Arrangements
- Full Section 11 to be completed utilising the West Midlands Audit Tool. - challenge the
- To deliver the proposed forward plan for practice development activity, informed by partnership learning
- Continue to progress the All Age Exploitation Strategy and Child Neglect Strategy as key priorities and measure their impact through the outcome framework.
- Strengthen the Think Family approach
- Additional scrutiny work to be commissioned in 2022-23 to explore if it is possible to identify any changes or improvement in practice as a result of a previous SCR recommendations and actions.
- Additional scrutiny work to be undertaken in relation to robustness of the functioning of the MASH, application of Right Help Right Time Guidance and use of single agency Early Help to meet need at the earliest opportunity.
- Re-establish capacity within the Business Unit and further the children and young people's engagement agenda

