

Bexley Safeguarding Children Board



Annual Report 2013/14



Chair's Introduction

Purpose of the Report

Safeguarding in context: Information about Bexley

Governance and accountability arrangements

Partnership Pressures

Business Plan 2013/14: Priorities, Progress and Challenge

Routine Activity of the Board: Progress and Challenge

OFSTED Review of the LSCB March – April 2014

Business Plan for 2014/15

Child Protection Data for 2013/14

Appendix A: Structure of the BSCB in 2013/14

Appendix B: Membership of the BSCB in 2013/14

Appendix C: BSCB Budget 2013/14

Appendix D: BSCB Business Plan for 2014/15

I. Chair's Introduction

The year 2013/14 was challenging for the Bexley Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) and, when I took on the role as Independent Chair in June 2013, it was against a backdrop of significant change for LSCBs nationally.

In March 2013 a revised version of the statutory guidance **Working Together to Safeguard Children** was published with additional requirements in respect of assessments, early help, learning and improvement and the importance of LSCBs exercising their responsibilities through work with other partnerships. Additionally, there were raised government expectations about the role of LSCBs in relation to publishing Serious Case Reviews and developing a local understanding of sexual exploitation and missing children.

The increased responsibility on LSCBs was particularly difficult in Bexley where the business support available to the Board was limited and, for the most part, interim. I am grateful to those members of the Board who worked hard to maintain the statutory activity of the Board during this period.

During the summer of 2013 the Board carried out a self-assessment of its effectiveness against criteria derived from Working Together and from the Ofsted description of what a 'Good' BSCB would look like. The findings were translated into an ambitious two-year Business Plan agreed at the November Board and actions were initiated from that point.

When Ofsted reviewed the BSCB in March 2014 it found the BSCB to be inadequate but recognised that there



was a sense of direction and a determination to improve. The actions required by the Ofsted Review were, for the most part, in line with the Board's own self-assessment and the Business Plan identified at the end of 2013 addressed many of the issues. This means that the BSCB Improvement journey had already started. The Ofsted Review provided a sharp critique and assisted focus.

This Annual Report sets out to explain the work of the Board in the context of Bexley's

profile and partnership pressures. Progress is assessed against the priorities of the Business Plan 2013/14 and the routine activities of the Board. The final sections detail the Ofsted findings and provide basic Child Protection data. The Business Plan for 2014/15 is attached as Appendix D and demonstrates progress over this year

The report provides a summary of a demanding year. I anticipate the report for 2015/16 will demonstrate significant improvement achieved by a maturing partnership.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Trevanion". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Barbara Trevanion
Independent Chair,
Bexley Safeguarding Children Board

2. Purpose of this report

This report describes and assesses the effectiveness of the work of partner agencies to safeguard children in Bexley and promote their welfare. It identifies the key issues and constructive challenges for organisations that have safeguarding responsibilities. It describes the ways in which the Board has performed its functions and assesses how effective this has been.

The report is intended for professionals in partner agencies and voluntary organisations as well as others who have an interest in the welfare of children and young people. The Board will work with young people to develop a version of the report that will be relevant and interesting to them.

The report will be presented to the Leader of Bexley Council, the Chief Executive of Bexley Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner as well as the Health and Well-Being Board, Children and Young People's Partnership and the Community Safety Partnership - all of which have a wider remit to promote better outcomes for children. The BSCB leads and influences the safeguarding agenda in these wider political and partnership arenas and is held to account for its impact.

2.1 What is the Bexley Safeguarding Children Board?

LSCBs were set up under the Children Act 2004 to strengthen the ability of local authorities to effectively safeguard and protect children and young people by promoting shared accountability, generating learning from practice, and monitoring the effectiveness of work with children and their families.

The Bexley Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB)¹ is the lead partnership body responsible for coordinating and ensuring the effectiveness of Bexley services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. The Board is made up of senior representatives from all the main agencies and organisations in Bexley concerned with child welfare. The BSCB provides a vital link between various organisational efforts, both statutory and voluntary, to safeguard children and young people in Bexley.

The BSCB aspires to be an effective safeguarding board, providing strong leadership, robust partnership arrangements and co-operative relationships. BSCB partners believe that children and young people in Bexley should be able to grow up free from fear of harm or neglect and is committed to improving the safety of all children and young people in the borough, enabling them to be happy, healthy and reach their full potential. The

BSCB accepts and promotes the view that safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. Board partners aim to coordinate a multi-agency approach that ensures effective working together.

The BSCB is also responsible for scrutinising the work of its partners to make certain that the services provided for children and young people in Bexley actually make a difference. The effectiveness of BSCB relies upon its ability to champion the safeguarding agenda through exercising its independent voice.

2.2 Statutory remit of a Local Safeguarding Children Board

The remit for all LSCBs is set out in section 13 of the Children Act 2004 as well as in the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2013).

The objectives of a LSCB as set out in the *Children Act 2004* are:

- a) To co-ordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the authority by which it is established; and
- b) To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each person or body for these purposes

(*Children Act 2004 s14*)

¹ The Bexley Safeguarding Children Board is known as the BSCB to distinguish it from other boards. It is technically a Local Safeguarding Children Board or LSCB. The terms are often used interchangeably.

2.3 Functions for a Local Safeguarding Children Board

- The LSCB Regulations (2006) set out the organisation and functions of LSCBs. Working Together 2013 provides further guidance. In summary the key functions of an LSCB can be defined as follows:
- Developing policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of what is done by agencies in Bexley both collectively and individually
- Communicating the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, raising awareness of how this can best be done and encouraging people and organisations to do so
- Participating in the planning of services for children in the area of the authority – recommending priorities
- Cooperating with neighbouring children's services authorities and their Board partners
- Undertaking reviews of serious cases and identifying lessons to be learned
- Collecting and analysing information about child deaths
- Assessing the effectiveness of the help being provided to children and families, including early help
- Assessing whether LSCB partners are fulfilling their statutory obligations
- Quality assuring practice, including through joint audits of case files involving practitioners and identifying lessons to be learned
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of training, including multi-agency training, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

LSCBs do not commission or deliver direct frontline services though they may provide training. While LSCBs do not have the power to direct other organisations they do have a role in making clear where improvement is needed. Each Board partner retains their own existing line of accountability for safeguarding.

LSCBs have statutory authority to seek information from partner agencies to fulfil statutory functions.

3. Safeguarding in context



Bexley is the seventh largest London borough by area, covering 23 square miles.

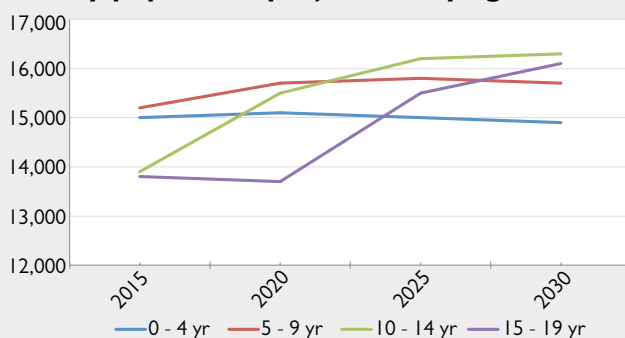
Situated in the south east of London, it has common borders with the London Borough of Bromley to the south, the Royal Borough of Greenwich to the west, across the River Thames to the north it borders the London Borough of Havering, the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham and a small boundary with the unitary authority Thurrock in Essex the north east, to the east it borders the Dartford borough in Kent. The borough is within the Thames Gateway, an area designated as a national priority for urban regeneration.

Thamesmead East has the highest numbers of residents aged less than 15 years. The ward with the lowest number of under 15's is Brampton.

During the ten year period between the 2001 and 2011 census, Bexley has experienced a number of notable changes:

Population: The Bexley population continues to increase and this is predicted to continue over the next 20 years. Bexley's children and young people's population is expected to see a 17.4% increase by 2021. This is greater than national projections. The most significant increase will be seen in the 10-19 year age bands.²

Bexley population projections by age bands

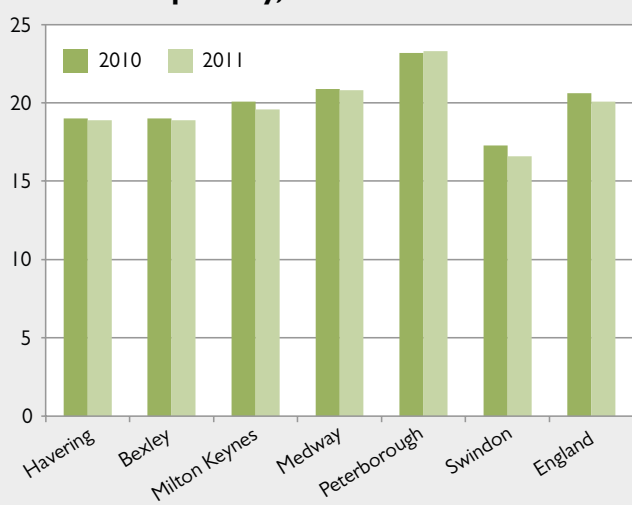


Deprivation: The 2010 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) indicate that Bexley is ranked 166 out of 326 local authorities in England (1 = most deprived). The IMD places Bexley in decile (10% band) 4 (1 being least deprived and 10 being most deprived). However this overall average position masks important areas of deprivation and higher need within the borough most notably in the wards situated in the north and the south east of the borough.

19.7% of children in Bexley are classified as living in poverty and this level has been increasing since 2006. There are very considerable differences between wards in respect of child poverty ranging from 34.2% in North End ward down to 7.2% in St Mary's.

The achievement gap between children eligible for free school meals and their peers at the end of key stage 2 is reducing (15%) and is smaller than the national gap (19%).

Children in poverty, 2010 to 2011



² Source: Bexley Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). Available at: www.bexley.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=17986. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) reports on the health and wellbeing needs of the people of Bexley. It is a statutory document which brings together detailed information on local health and wellbeing, and looks ahead at emerging challenges and projected future needs. Partners use this information to prioritise, plan and design services for the future.

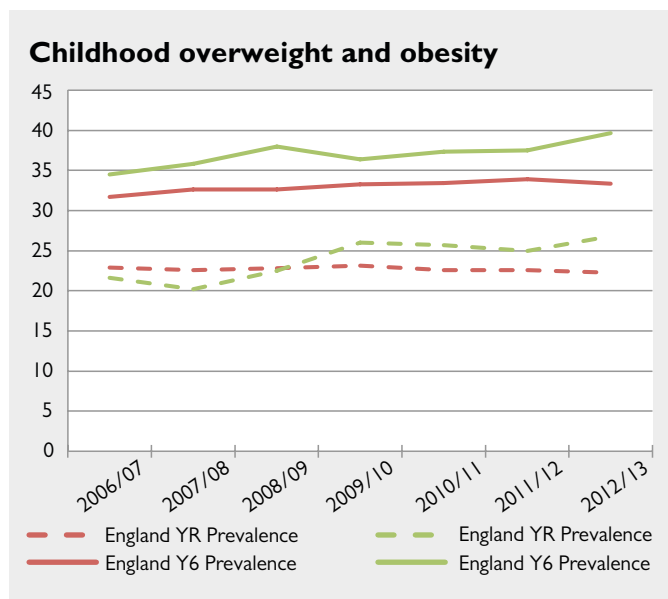
Ethnicity: Bexley continues to be a predominantly 'White British' borough (77.3%) with an overall white population of 81.9% however, the White British population has decreased by 7% (9,500 people) since the last census. Similarly, the number of Bexley residents stating their country of birth as the UK on the 2011 Census has also decreased. This is reflective of changes across London, whilst across England and Wales there was an increase in UK born residents. The fastest growing ethnic group in Bexley is Black/African/Caribbean/Black British, now making up 8.4% of the total population.

In Bexley, 28% of the resident population aged 5 to 15 years is from Black and Minority Ethnicities (2011 Census). In comparison, 34% of pupils in Bexley schools are from Black and Minority communities (school census 2013). The difference in these figures is due to the proportion of pupils who attend schools in a different local authority to where they live.

Religion: The borough continues to have a majority Christian population, but this decreased between 2001 and 2011 from 73% to 62%. This was a change also seen across London and nationally across England and Wales.

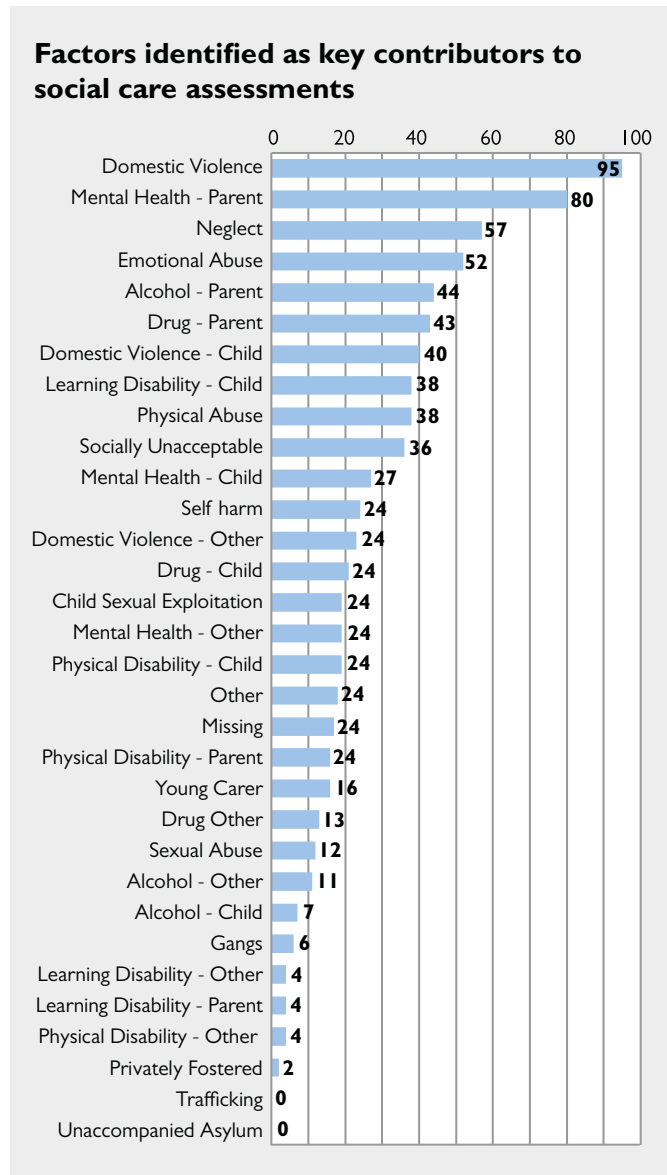
Employment: Employment rates are higher than the London region but not significantly different to the national average. Bexley has a lower percentage of 16-18 year olds classified as Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) than the England or London comparators.

Health: Bexley obesity data for reception year and year 6 are significantly worse than the national and London averages and is under consideration by the BSCB.



Children who may be/are in need of protection:

Children's Social Care has a statutory responsibility to assess risks to children and the chart below details factors associated with risk, based on these assessments. The significance of domestic violence, parental mental health and parental alcohol usage is notable.



In 2014/15 the BSCB will:

- Work with the Health & Wellbeing Board to incorporate child protection priorities and data into the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.
- Carry out a domestic abuse audit as this is the most prevalent contributor to social care assessment
- Consider the impact of obesity on children's lives.

4. Governance and accountability

The BSCB governance arrangements and structure are described in detail in the Governance Handbook which can be found on the BSCB website:

www.bexleyscb.org.uk

The Board Structure is attached at Appendix A.

4.1 Main Board

The BSCB has an Independent Chair. The current Chair was appointed by the London Borough of Bexley Chief Executive in conjunction with the BSCB partners.

Members of the BSCB are senior officers from within their own organisations with a strategic role in relation to safeguarding and promoting welfare of children and young people within their organisation. They are able to:

- Speak for their organisation with authority
- Commit their organisation on safeguarding and promoting welfare policy and practice matters
- Hold their own organisation to account and hold others to account and
- Collate management information to demonstrate effectiveness.

Members are jointly responsible for the work and effectiveness of the BSCB.

Membership

The statutory Board members are:

- Bexley Council
- Bexley Borough Police
- MPS Child Abuse Investigation Team
- National Probation Service
- Youth Offending Service
- Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
- NHS Trusts who provide a service to Bexley's children:
 - Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust
 - Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust
 - Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust
 - Kings College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

The BSCB membership also includes the Voluntary and Community Sector and a small number of professional advisors.

A full list of BSCB's membership for 2013-14 is available at Appendix B.

The BSCB met quarterly until the appointment of the new Chair who took the view that the volume of improvement work required a meeting every two months.

4.2 Business Committee

The Business Committee is made up of the Chairs of the BSCB subgroups and other senior representatives from agencies not represented as Chairs. The Business Committee has executive oversight of all Board activity and takes the lead on developing and driving the implementation of the Board's statutory activities and the annual Business Plan. It is also the body responsible for coordinating the work of the sub groups, ensuring effectiveness, identifying barriers to progress and taking action to address these.

4.3 BSCB subgroups

The BSCB subgroups address the key statutory responsibilities of the Board. In 2013-2014 these were:

- Quality and Effectiveness Group.
- Training and Development Group
- Serious Cases Review Standing Committee
- Child Death Overview Panel
- Child Sexual Exploitation/Missing Children Group
- Safeguarding in Education Group

4.4 Working Groups and Task & Finish Groups

Working Groups are set up to focus on specific issues for the BSCB. These are groups which continue to meet to address specific issues. Task and Finish Group are set up to carry out a short team piece of research for the Board.

4.5 Key Roles

Independent Chair: All LSCBs appoint an Independent Chair who can hold all agencies to account for the effectiveness of their safeguarding practice, both as a single agency and as a contributor to the multi-agency partnership. An Independent Chair brings expertise and an impartial and clear guiding hand to the Board, providing oversight, accountability and challenge. There was a

change of chair in June 2013 from Brian Boxall, who had been Chair since 2010, to Barbara Trevanion. The Chief Executive holds the Chair to account for the effective working of BSCB.

Chief Executive of the local authority: The Chief Executive is responsible for appointing or removing the Independent Chair and holds that person to account for the effective working of the LSCB. This post was held by Will Tuckley during 2013/14.

Director of Children's Services: The Director of Education and Social Care sits on the main Board of BSCB and has a statutory responsibility for improving outcomes for children, local authority Children's Social Care (CSC) functions and local cooperation arrangements for children's services. This post was held by Mark Charters in 2013/14.

Lead Member for Children: The Lead Member for Children is the name given to the Councillor elected locally with delegated responsibility from the Council for making sure that the local authority fulfils its legal responsibilities to safeguard children and young people. The Lead Member contributes to the BSCB as a 'participating observer'. This means that they take part in the discussion, ask questions and seek clarity, but are not part of the decision-making process, where this may be needed. Councillor Katie Perrior held this position in 2013-14.

4.6 Partnership Relationships

Safeguarding Improvement Board: The Safeguarding Improvement Board (SIB) is a temporary body required by the Department of Education following the Ofsted Review of Children's Services in 2012. The SIB role during 2013/14 was to oversee improvements to Children's Social Care. The BSCB worked closely with the SIB to ensure that, at an appropriate point, it would be able to take over the quality assurance responsibility³.

The Health and Wellbeing Board: The Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) came into being in April 2013, following the formal approval of new legislation by Government. This Board is concerned with services for both adults and children and is responsible for co-ordinating the efforts of the local authority and the NHS for the whole population.

The relationship between the BSCB and the HWB has been strengthened by including the Independent Chair, initially as an attendee from January 2014 and as a full member from May 2014. This has contributed to the

HWB strengthening its child focus.

Closer working relationships strengthen the opportunity for the BSCB to ensure that safeguarding children is considered through the work of the HWB and within the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the opportunity to the BSCB to take into account the key health priorities of the HWB.

Children and Young People's Partnership: The Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPP) receives the BSCB annual report and BSCB holds the CYPP to account to ensure they develop the services that are needed based on the recommendations the BSCB makes. The Chair represents the BSCB on the CYPP and BSCB Business Manager as required.

4.7 Business Support for the BSCB

There was limited business support for the BSCB during the year. The Board did not have a Training Manager from December 2012 to February 2014 when a part-time appointment was agreed. There were two interim Business Managers within the year prior to the appointment of the current Business Manager in February 2014. Administrative support to the Board was provided by a part time training administrator and an interim administrator until December 2013 when a permanent Business Support Officer was appointed.

Dealing with recruitment issues was an additional pressure on the Business Managers from September 2013 until the team reached full complement in June 2014. The vacancies and changes in personnel impacted on continuity and organisational memory. Understanding what had been done and by whom are essential when working across a complex interagency system.

4.8 Financial arrangements and contributions

Working Together 2013 places an obligation on LSCB member organisations to provide LSCBs with reliable resources (including finance) that enable the LSCB to be strong and effective. Members should share the financial responsibility for the LSCB in such a way that a disproportionate burden does not fall on a small number of partner agencies.

³ The Ofsted finding that the BSCB effectiveness is currently inadequate raises additional questions about the timing of the transfer of responsibilities.

The 2013/14 budget was challenging to produce and only agreed very late in the year. Staff who had been offered 'in kind' by the Council were transferred directly in to the BSCB and efforts were made to present the full cost of the BSCB for the first time. Complications surrounding interim costs and how these were presented led to a draft budget only being submitted and approved in November 2013. That budget had to allow for the high cost of this interim management for virtually the entire year, and as such many budgets had to be reduced to fund the additional expenditure.

2014/15 will see the BSCB on a far firmer footing than was the case in 2013/14. The local authority has agreed significant additional funding for staffing capacity in 2014-15 and Oxleas Foundation Trust has also agreed to contribute to the work of the Board. The Police contribution is agreed with the London LSCB and not by local negotiation. The Acute Trusts do not contribute to the BSCB budget at this time and have been asked to do so for 2014/15.

A full report on the BSCB's budget for the financial year 2013-14 is available at Appendix C.

5. Partnership pressures

The effectiveness of an LSCB is dependent in part on the commitment and support of all partners. There needs to be joint ownership of direction and an acceptance that safeguarding is not an 'add on' to the core business of an organisation but an intrinsic part of it. During the year 2013/14 the Board began to move from a relatively low level of understanding and ownership in some instances to a developing recognition of roles and responsibilities. The Board is maturing gradually but, in the context of significant change, or the prospect of significant change for some organisations, this is encouraging.

5.1 Health Economy

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 brought about considerable change in the arrangements for the local commissioning of health (NHS) services. From 1 April 2013 Bexley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) became responsible for the commissioning of many local health services. During 2013/14 the CCG worked hard to coordinate safeguarding arrangements across a complex and fragmented health economy.

Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust provides a wide range of health and social care services in southeast London, specialising in community health, mental health and learning disability services. The Trust has continually extended its services over the last 10 years and works across several local boroughs and is responsible to several LSCBs.

None of the acute hospitals Darent Valley, Queen Elizabeth and Kings, are sited in Bexley and, like Oxleas, provide services to other boroughs. All of these providers are responsible to several LSCBs, including Kent, Greenwich and Bromley.

In 2014/15 the BSCB will

- Seek assurance that safeguarding arrangements are robust across the changing health economy
- Develop effective relationships with the acute Trusts.

5.2 Police

The Metropolitan Police engage with the BSCB on a number of levels:

- Borough Police
- Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT) operating across Greenwich and Bexley.
- The Sexual Exploitation Team.

The Police service in London is highly centralised and this potentially limits their local involvement, particularly the involvement of CAIT. Additionally, Operation Yewtree has increased demand on CAIT although they have been reinforced from other commands in the MPS. There is a perceived reduction in capacity which has been an issue for LSCBs across London and raised at the London Safeguarding Children Board.

During the year the Police have worked with the Board to address the following issues:

Merlins: These are the reports sent by the Borough Police to Children's Social Care regarding children and young people who have come to their attention. It is a fine balance to ensure that the Police meet their duties to refer concerns to CSC without making inappropriate referrals. A joint audit of 50 cases received between November 2013 and March 2014 was carried by the Borough Police and CSC in April/May 2014. It found that all cases were appropriate and suitable for referral. The launch of the MASH in April 2014 is expected to increase and improve working relationships between CSC and the police, including information sharing.

Face to face strategy discussions and joint investigations:

The BSCB has been concerned about the CAIT's ability to engage in face-to-face Strategy Meetings and uncertain whether or not this impacts on joint investigations. CAIT officers believe that they attend strategy meeting and conferences appropriately but this does not meet the expectations of CSC. The Board has requested that there is an audit of Strategy Meetings against the child protection procedures to clarify the matter.

In 2014/15 the BSCB will:

- Review the appropriateness of Merlin referrals and CSC response to them.
- Review Strategy Meeting arrangements and the impact of Police attendance/non-attendance on joint investigations.

5.3 Children's Social Care

Children's Social Care (CSC) in 2013/14 was still graded as inadequate by Ofsted, subject to an Improvement Notice and therefore scrutinised by the Safeguarding Improvement Board which includes the Chair of the BSCB.

Practice improved during 2013/14 and this was recognised by the Ofsted inspection in March/April 2014⁴.

⁴ The report was published on 23 May – this is available at: www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/bexley.

The overall judgement was that CSC 'requires improvement'. This means that 'there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. However the authority is not yet delivering good protection and help and/or care for children, young people and families'.

During 2013/14 the main challenges for CSC related to:

The recruitment and retention of staff: This is a London wide problem and it takes considerable effort to find and retain good quality staff in a competitive market. The high churn of interim staff made it very difficult to raise and embed Bexley's practice standards.

Timeliness and Quality of Assessments: There was concern during the year that the timeliness of assessments was unacceptably low. This improved over the year but CSC managers remain committed to improving quality

Understanding Thresholds: It is important that partners understand the threshold for social care assessment and where cases can be considered and taken on. As the Early Help service comes into play it will be essential that partners are confident about referral arrangements and the relationship between the early help service and the social work service. The BSCB will work with the Thriving Families service and CSC to ensure understanding across partners. The BSCB audited thresholds in February 2013 and March 2014 and will continue to do so on an annual basis.

In 2014/15 the BSCB will:

- Continue to raise awareness and understanding of thresholds amongst partners
- Work with the Safeguarding Improvement Board to support CSC improvements.

5.4 Education and Schools

The relationship between schools and the BSCB was adversely affected when a post which supported schools with their safeguarding training and policy work was removed by the local authority. Schools took the view that the post had been removed by the BSCB. The BSCB Chair has attended both the Primary and Secondary Head's Conferences to discuss the issue. Over the year there has been a slight improvement in the situation as senior managers in CSC took opportunities to engage with schools, a small number of Heads engaged with the work of the BSCB and the establishment of the Safeguarding in Education Group began to work on mutually important issues.

Children Missing from Education: This remains a key challenge for Education and schools. Gathering information on this cohort of potentially vulnerable children is now a statutory requirement.

In 2014/15 the BSCB will:

- Support and advise schools in identifying a way forward to meet their safeguarding needs
- Incorporate consideration of children missing school into the Missing Children Strategy.

5.5 Probation

During the year the Probation service was preparing for a fundamental restructure whereby two new organisations would be created for the delivery of Probation Services. There was significant concern about the implications of the new arrangements for safeguarding and the ability of the new organisations to attend LSCBs. The new organisations – the National Probation Service (NPS) and Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs), dealing with high end and lower level offenders respectively – will be operational from May 2014. At the end of the year the BSCB Chair wrote to the London Probation safeguarding lead seeking assurance that the new service arrangements would not affect commitment to the BSCB. The response was clear that child protection would remain a high priority as would attendance at, and contribution to, the BSCB. The predicted issues are:

Maintaining service levels: Given the great changes in the delivery models there are significant challenges for Probation to maintain service levels and recruitment has been an issue. There is only a small team operating in Bexley.

Engagement with the Youth Offending Team (YOT) and Thriving Families /Early Help: This is an area for joint working, as the NPS and the CRCs may be dealing with the same families as these services.

In 2014/15 the BSCB will:

- Keep a watchful eye on the new developments – seeking assurance of good safeguarding practice.

5.6 Voluntary and Community Sector

The Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) is well developed in Bexley with the Bexley Voluntary Services Council (BVSC) acting as a strong umbrella organisation for a number of well-regarded local service providers for children and young people. Good practice is recognised by the awarding of a Safer Bexley Mark by

the BSCB to those agencies providing evidence of a high level of safeguarding children practice. The sector has an established Safeguarding Focus Group that aims to provide a consistent safeguarding message across the sector.

Capacity: Reducing funding and loss of posts means development work is an increasing challenge. However, this has not affected the priority given to safeguarding children.

Thriving Families service and Early Help: Establishing effective links with the Thriving Families service is important to the VCS and links to the capacity issue above.

In 2014/15 the BSCB will:

- Ensure the VCS is involved in the Task and Finish Group looking at early help/threshold arrangements.

6. Business Plan 2013/14: Priorities, Progress and Challenge

From June 2013 the new Chair worked with BSCB partners to assess the performance of the Board against the statutory functions of an LSCB and against the Ofsted criteria for a 'good' LSCB. A two year Business Plan based on this assessment was considered at the October Business Committee and agreed at the November Board.

The assessment identified that there was a considerable amount of work to be done to bring the BSCB up to the standard set out in legislation and described in Ofsted guidance. Six priorities were identified based on identified gaps in provision. With hindsight this was an overly ambitious plan, particularly given the limited capacity of the Board.

6.1 Priorities: Progress and Challenge

Priority 1. BSCB fulfils its statutory functions in accordance with Working Together 2013.

During the year the BSCB began to review its Governance arrangements. The Chair of the BSCB became an invitee to the Health and Wellbeing Board and a full member in April 2014. The inter-agency protocol for assessment was reviewed and a Learning and Improvement Framework was agreed. A Child Protection Conference audit was commissioned to assess the effectiveness of these important arrangements. A Safeguarding in Education Group was established in line with Working Together 2013 requirements and to improve the understanding between the BSCB and schools. At the end of March 2014 the BSCB appointed its first lay member.

The BSCB was slow in addressing the issues identified in the Threshold audit undertaken in February 2013 and in establishing a clear understanding of the early help arrangements in Bexley. A paper on early help came to the Board in January 2014 and a Task and Finish group was established to ensure that partner's views were incorporated into developments. Increasing awareness of private fostering across the partnership proved more difficult than anticipated despite significant effort by Children's Social Care. The Task and Finish Group established to focus on allegations management across all partners was replaced by a LADO review as a more effective way of developing initial understanding.

The BSCB's ability to monitor and evaluate multi-agency training was inhibited by the Training Manager vacancy.

Priority 2. BSCB strengthens its quality assurance processes to ensure identification of problems and practice improvement.

In October 2013 the BSCB agreed a Quality Assurance Framework, bringing together the assurance activities for the remainder of the year. This included finalising and populating a dataset and agreeing an audit programme. Two BSCB audits were commissioned and carried out, firstly an audit of Child Protection Conference arrangements (January 2014) and secondly, the annual Threshold audit in March 2014. A timetable was agreed whereby agencies would share the findings of their internal safeguarding audits, in addition the action plans for the two most recent SCRs were finalised and implemented.

However, agreement on the dataset proved difficult to manage across the partnership and was not finally signed off by the Quality & Effectiveness Subgroup until March and the main Board in May 2014. Initial confusion within the partnership about what aspects of safeguarding were being monitored through the Safeguarding Improvement Board and what was the business of the BSCB was resolved through Chairs' discussions.

In 2013-14 the group focused on the development of a multi-agency dataset for the BSCB and development of an audit programme reflecting priorities and themes identified from Serious Case Reviews, the emerging data set, and other Board activity.

It also initiated the first stage of the Section 11 audit, due to be completed in September 2014.

It took longer than anticipated for the QEG to agree an appropriate dataset and it also proved difficult for all agencies to provide relevant data. This was partly a capacity issue (addressed through appointment to the BSCB Evaluation & Analysis Officer post in July 2014) but also reflected the complexity of the task, because agencies gather data in different ways to meet their own specific needs, and have different reporting time frames. However, without data and, crucially, without analysis of the data, the BSCB is unable to identify trends and themes which need to be explored further. Understanding data from multiple different agencies has involved a steep learning curve for the group, but its analysis has started to identify issues requiring further investigation, and to feed into the QEG audit programme.

Two multiagency audits were undertaken towards the end of the year: a second annual threshold audit and an

audit into the effectiveness of Bexley's child protection arrangements. The audits provided useful information to be followed up in 2014/15 and additionally provided useful learning for the practitioners taking part.

Priority 3. BSCB establishes effective means of communication and engagement with practitioners, children and families.

The BSCB initially focussed internally on communication and engagement. In September 2014 all Board partners attended a briefing on their roles and responsibilities as members of the BSCB and outlined their quality assurance arrangements to assist partner understanding, and therefore ability to question and challenge. The BSCB was keen to develop a clear line of sight between the work of the Board and the work of practitioners and, to this end, a question was added to agenda for each BSCB and Business Committee meeting 'are there any inter-agency issues which need to come to the attention of the Board?' A more direct approach was taken through the establishment of the Practitioner's Forum, initial meeting taking place in April 2014 and well attended by professionals from Health services, Police, Probation, Voluntary sector, local authority.

However, it was a significant challenge to find meaningful ways for the BSCB to make effective links with young people and it was clear that this would be best achieved through existing forums. In February 2014 the Chair met with the Youth Strategy Partnership and, from that meeting, the Engaging Young People's Group has developed to inform Board activity.

Priority 4. BSCB ensures that practice developments identified in SCRs and Working Together 2013 are progressed in line with best practice

The BSCB works with the pan-London Child Protection procedures which appear on its website. These procedures were reviewed in 2013.

During the year the BSCB agreed a Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) strategy. A CSE Group was established in October 2013 and in February 2014 it adopted the pan-London CSE Operating Protocol. This is a high profile area of work and, although work was taking place within the agencies, developing an interagency understanding and perspective will be challenging.

A Missing Children strategy was also agreed this year. It will need to be reviewed in 2014 to incorporate a revised national definition and consideration of children missing from Education.

The BSCB established a Task and Finish group to consider the arrangements for children who are placed away from home by Health and/or Education. Arguably, there being fewer safeguards in place for this group than for looked after children and the recent Winterbourne enquiry focussed attention on this potentially vulnerable cohort. The task and finish group made an initial report to the BSCB in May 2014.

The BSCB was not able to progress work in respect of children with disability, staying safe online and domestic abuse and these work streams have rolled over into 2014/15.

Priority 5. BSCB works collaboratively with the Safeguarding Improvement Board to monitor and evaluate the Bexley Children Social Care Improvement Journey.

The current BSCB Chair became a member of the Safeguarding Improvement Board (SIB) in June 2013. Other members of the SIB were also members of the BSCB and there was some confusion about the role of the two partnerships. This has now been resolved.

Matters of concern raised at the SIB which were relevant to the BSCB were taken forward. These included meeting with school Heads to discuss the BSCB training offer and addressing concerns regarding the Police Merlin referrals to Children's Social Care.

The SIB has remained the primary monitor of CSC performance however key concerns have been built into the BSCB dataset, for example the timeliness and quality of social care assessments.

Priority 6. BSCB understands contextual risks to the work of the Board and seeks to minimise the impact of these.

The BSCB struggles to make progress with this priority and identified activity has been re-evaluated in light of the demands for 2014/15. The issues of risks to children in the community involving drugs and alcohol, gangs, CSE have been rolled forward as has domestic abuse and parents who misuse drugs and/or alcohol. A closer working relationship with the Adult Safeguarding Board will allow the BSCB to focus on parental behaviours which pose a risk to children.

7. Routine activity of the BSCB: Progress and Challenge

Like all LSCBs, the Bexley Safeguarding Children Board meets its statutory responsibilities through a number of sub groups. The work carried out during 2013/14 is described below.

7.1 BSCB Main Board

The new Chair's initial assessment of the Board, reflected in a paper to the September Board identified the need to:

- Clarify and strengthen the role of the Board itself and the roles and responsibilities of its partners so there would be an equality of understanding from which to constructively question, comment and challenge.
- Develop a clear sense of direction and momentum, agreeing what needs to be done to be an effective Board

A workshop was held prior to the Board in September 2013 which included a presentation from the Chair on LSCBs, their functions and accountabilities. Partners shared information about their organisational safeguarding responsibilities.

Over the summer the Business Committee began a process of evaluating the Board's performance against the revised version of Working Together published in March 2013 and the recently published Ofsted criteria describing what a 'Good' LSCB would look like. This led to the publishing of the BSCB Business Plan for 2013/15 in November 2013.

During the year the BSCB received statutory reports on private fostering, allegations management and MAPPA as well as the Annual Report. The protocol to deal with professional differences was reviewed and disseminated. Protocols on Missing Children, Child Sexual Exploitation were agreed. A draft Governance handbook was approved as was a draft Learning and Improvement Framework. A number of reports were received dealing with the evolving early help arrangements.

The Board dealt with two Serious Case Reviews. The publication of both reports was delayed, in one instance because of criminal proceedings and in the other because of a Coroner's Inquest. Agreeing the final SCR Report was compromised in one instance by changes in government requirements regarding the publication of reports. There was unacceptable delay in finalising the inter-agency action plans in both instances although the Board was assured by individual agencies that their single agency action plans had been implemented. The difficulties experienced during this process provided considerable learning for the BSCB and a determination

that future SCRs would be more tightly commissioned and that recommendations would be focussed, sharper and smarter.

It became apparent during the year that, although there was activity in individual agencies regarding Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing Children, the inter-agency arrangements were at an early stage. The CSE Group was established in October 2013 and is chaired by a Chief Inspector from the Borough Police.

In 2014/15 the BSCB will:

- Establish processes to monitor the impact of the Board's activities on agencies, partnerships and practitioners.
- Carry out an annual self-assessment against the Ofsted criteria for a "Good" LSCB.
- Take steps to ensure CSE/Missing Children arrangements are robust.

7.2 Business Committee

The Business Committee acts as the executive group for the main BSCB and meets at the mid-point between Board meetings to assess the work of the previous Board and plan for the next. Membership includes all the subgroup chairs, a senior representative from Children's Social Care and a Headteacher. The group did not meet before July 2013 during the timeframe of this report and is chaired by the Independent Chair of the BSCB. The role of the Business Committee is to:

- Monitor the Business Plan of the BSCB.
- Maintain and monitor the Learning and Improvement Framework and performance dataset.
- Receive feedback from the individual sub groups, addressing difficulties where possible and bringing to the attention of the BSCB any matters which need the Board's attention.
- Establish and monitor Task and Finish and Working Groups.
- Receive non-statutory Annual Reports from Agencies.
- Receive feedback from the escalation policy.
- Report exceptions, identify barriers to progress and make recommendations to the BSCB regarding the above.

In summer and autumn of 2013 the Business Committee worked on the analysis of the Board's effectiveness, developed a Business Plan for 2013/15

and subsequently monitored this. The Business Committee has been an effective and challenging forum, committed to identifying priorities and driving the BSCB business.

In 2014/15 the Business Committee will:

- Simplify and prioritise the complex business of the BSCB.to
- Agree, maintain and action a Learning and Improvement Plan to provide an overarching understanding of lessons and themes emerging from review and audit activity.
- Ensure tighter monitoring of Task and Finish Groups the BSCB regarding

7.3 Quality & Effectiveness Group (QEG)

The purpose of the QEG is to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what is being done by BSCB partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and share lessons from individual agency audits, multi-agency audits and performance data.

In 2013 the Chair of this group is the Deputy Director (Corporate Policy & Communications) of Bexley Council.

In 2013-14 the group focused on the development of a multi-agency dataset for the BSCB and an audit programme reflecting priorities and themes identified from Serious Case Reviews and other Board activity. It also initiated the first stage of the Section 11 audit, due to be completed in September 2014⁶.

The QEG had difficulty in agreeing an appropriate dataset and it also proved difficult for all agencies to provide relevant data. This is a complex area because agencies gather data in different ways. However, without data and, crucially, without analysis of the data the BSCB is unable to identify trends and themes which need to be explored further. Two multiagency audits were undertaken towards the end of the year – a second annual threshold audit and an audit into the effectiveness of Bexley's child protection arrangements. The audits provided useful information to be followed up in 2014/15 and additionally provided useful learning for the practitioners taking part.

In 2014/15 the QEG will:

- Complete the BSCB dataset and move to effective performance management of Board partners.

⁵ This was revised following Ofsted findings in April 2014

⁶ This audit assesses the compliance of public sector agencies against eight safeguarding criteria.

- Agree and implement an audit programme for 2014-2015.
- Undertake a robust Section 11 review and a review of schools safeguarding arrangements.
- Seek and evaluate evidence of impact of audit/review recommendations.
- Review single agency audit findings, identifying themes across agencies and any multi-agency actions to be progressed.

7.4 Standing Serious Case Review Group (SSCRG)

The purpose of the SSCRG is to evaluate learning from serious safeguarding incidents and make recommendations on whether or not the criteria for conducting a Serious Case Review are met.

In 2013-14 the SSCRG was chaired by the Deputy Director for Children's Social Care, who stood down in November 2013. The Director of Governance and Quality for Bexley NHS Clinical Commissioning Group took over the Chair at this point.

During the reporting period the BSCB completed two serious case reviews, but could only publish one as the full legal process was not yet complete. The report for Baby F was published on 28 February 2014 following a legal trial, and the report for Child E was published on 4 August 2014 following a Coroner's Inquest. Action Plans arising from the recommendations in the reports were completed in 2014.

Two particular issues arose from these SCRs. One relating to the difficulties arising from the initial commissioning process and the other related to publication - an extraordinary meeting of the BSCB was held in October 2013 to address the latter. The Board is determined to learn from this process and has developed a toolkit and guidance during 2014 to ensure any future SCRs are robust, effective and that learning is properly identified and properly acted upon.

Implementation of the SCR action plans has been monitored by the SSCRG throughout 2013-14.

The overview reports are published in full on the BSCB website: www.bexleylscb.org.uk

Synopsis SCR Baby F: Baby F died unexpectedly aged five months in June 2012. The cause of his death was determined at the post mortem to be due to Florid Rickets caused by severe vitamin D deficiency and this

deficiency was also identified as the causation for severe growth failure. Rickets is an unusual and rare preventable illness in 21st century Britain.

The parents were charged by the police with manslaughter and neglect on 7th March 2013. They both pleaded guilty to manslaughter in January 2014 and were sentenced on 28 February 2014.

Synopsis SCR Child E: Child E died unexpectedly in June 2012, aged 14 years, 7 months. The initial post mortem showed no organic cause of death and there were no signs of trauma or assault. Toxicology tests have proved inconclusive and the cause of death is unexplained.

At the time of her death, Child E was a Looked After Child in a residential placement registered to provide 'care and accommodation for young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties'⁷. At the time of her death Child E had been missing for seven days.

In 2014/15 the SSCRG will:

- Ensure tighter commissioning of inter-agency reviews, including Serious Case Reviews, and closer monitoring of timetables and progress.
- Agree and implement a Serious Case Review toolkit and protocol.
- Seek evidence that the action plans have been implemented.
- Research and agree an effective way of disseminating lessons.

7.5 Training and Development Group (TDG)

The purpose of the TDG is to identify multi-agency training needs and use this information to inform the planning, commissioning and delivery of multi-agency training; to monitor, evaluate and quality assure multi-agency training and to evaluate the effectiveness of single agency training.

In 2013/4 the group was chaired by the Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children.

During the year the group struggled to maintain the BSCB Training Programme without a Training Manager in post. A limited core programme was maintained and key areas of specialist training were covered effectively. This was a considerable achievement given the capacity issues.

Training is provided to develop multi agency safeguarding practice and networking and the BSCB will make it as accessible to as wide a range of agencies as possible. Larger agencies are expected to provide their own basic safeguarding training.

At the request of the VCS sector the TDG reviewed the charging policy introduced in 2012. It was agreed that charges are applied for organisations and individuals who are either operating outside Bexley or are essentially profit making.

Following the appointment of a part-time Training Manager in February 2014 there has been a rapid development of the training offer.

In 2014/15 the TDG will:

- Evaluate and assess training needs.
- Seek and evaluate evidence of the impact of training on improving practice.
- Create a core child protection and safeguarding awareness programme for the use of all partners.
- Monitor and evaluate single agency basic safeguarding training programmes.

BSCB Training courses offered 2013-14

Course title

Working with difficult to engage, hostile & evasive families

Identifying and working with neglect

Female genital mutilation training day

Safeguarding children group C - multi agency

Working with sexual abuse

Domestic abuse

Parental substance misuse

The assessment of risk for children in family life

Safeguarding supervision skills for managers and supervisors

Parental learning difficulty

Childhood neglect - improving outcomes for children

⁷ The Residential Placement, Inspection Report for Children's Home, Ofsted, July 2012.

7.6 Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)

The BSCB has a statutory responsibility to review all deaths of children and young people normally resident in Bexley. The CDOP undertakes this responsibility on behalf of the BSCB Chair and reports to the BSCB on an annual basis. The CDOP considers information about any local child death and uses this to identify cases requiring a serious case review, any matters of concern affecting the safety and welfare of children in Bexley and/or any wider public health concerns.

In the most recent annual period (April 2013 – March 2014) only 11 child deaths occurred.

Of the 11 deaths, 55% were due to a perinatal/neonatal event, 18% were due to malignancy and 18% due to chromosomal, genetic or congenital anomalies. One death is being reviewed by another CDOP and information is currently incomplete.

Only two of the cases were unexpected deaths. One of which is being reviewed by another LSCB as the infant was resident in their borough. The second case has prompted a notification to the National Screening Programme because the child died of an extremely rare condition which could have been identified if a national screening programme for the condition was in place. The Panel have also requested that the 111 service review their arrangements for informing callers regarding estimated time of arrival of an ambulance.

Aggregate analysis of data: An aggregate analysis of data relating to child deaths for the entire period of the CDOP's existence (January 2008 – March 2014) was carried out this year to complement the year-on-year analyses undertaken for successive annual reports. The annual numbers of child deaths notified to Bexley CDOP have varied noticeably over the period 2008/9 – 2013/14 falling between 11 and 20 cases.

The numbers of annual child deaths in a single Borough like Bexley are low. Consequently it is difficult to undertake powerful analysis of potential common characteristics, causes or trends. Annual variation in the total number of deaths appears explained by chance 'excesses' of unexpected deaths in association with a stable number of expected deaths. The analysis showed that infant deaths linked to prematurity remain the main cause of death.

Statistical analysis of deaths among sub-groups (e.g. age, gender, cause) did not reveal statistically significant differences, except in the case of ethnicity. Here

comparison of the percentages of deaths made-up by different ethnic groups, in both total and unexpected deaths, suggests a potential excess of deaths in black/black British children.

Also, though not found to be statistically significant, analysis of the proportions of total and unexpected deaths by deprivation groups, showed a clear gradient and threshold, with proportionately more deaths in the more deprived.

Bexley Public Health considers overall rates of death in infants, children and young adults using routine standardised Public Health England data sources to complement CDOP analyses of individual cases.

The CDOP annual report 2013/14 is available on BSCB website.

7.7 CSE/MASE Group (CSEG)

The purpose of the CSEG is to engage all relevant agencies to deliver an effective, coordinated service to ensure children and young people who may be sexually exploited or at risk of exploitation are identified, safeguarded and supported.

The BSCB produced a Child Sexual Exploitation strategy and action plan in May 2013 and the Board commissioned a CSE Group that first met on 17 October 2013. The Group is chaired by a Chief Inspector from the Borough Police. The establishment of this group is late compared to many other LSCBs and reflects the limited capacity of the BSCB to move into new areas of work.

The CSEG is at the very early stages of establishing a true picture of the occurrence and prevalence of CSE in Bexley. The current belief among all agencies is that incidence in the borough is low, but the information is always going to be hard to find and more work needs to be done to get real intelligence⁸.

In 2014/15 the CSEG will:

- Fully establish the Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation process in response to the Pan London CSE Protocol.
- Review the CSE Strategy and the Missing Children Strategy.

⁸ This perception has been strongly challenged within the BSCB following publication of the Rotherham report in September 2014 and the current BSCB position is that we do not know the situation in Bexley and will ask the question 'why should we believe this child/young person is not being sexually exploited' when assessing or working with a young person from a vulnerable group (missing from home or education, associated with gangs, subject of serious assault, trafficked etc.).

7.8 Safeguarding in Education (SEG)

The Safeguarding in Education Group (SEG) first met on 14 November 2013. Its Chair is the Deputy Director, Education & Special Educational Needs, LBB.

The purpose of the SEG is to act as an education network within the expectations of the LSCB Regulations amendment (2010) and supports education settings in meeting their duty to safeguard children and acts as a conduit between the BSCB and those settings.

The SEG has a wide-ranging agenda including, managing sex offenders on school premises, the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance and schools' completion of their safeguarding self-assessment⁹. The SEG has agreed a Business Plan for 2014/15 which focuses on key priorities including CSE, children missing from education, training matters and developing a safeguarding in education data dashboard to demonstrate performance.

The group has also hosted a meeting for school Safeguarding Designated Teachers and has committed to regularly working with this group in order to ensure that key safeguarding actions are appropriately implemented by schools.

In 2014/15 the SEG will:

- Develop a self-financed support package for schools to pick up on some of the missing capacity.
- Encourage wider cooperation with and between designated teachers for child protection, statutory for all schools.

7.9 Working Groups

FGM Working Group: Established in 2011 the purpose of the Female Genital Mutilation Working Group is to develop awareness and a standardised approach to safeguarding Bexley children at risk of FGM.

Identifying FGM risk in Bexley currently comes only from maternity services. Women are asked routinely about FGM when booking for maternity care at Princess Royal Hospital, Bromley and Queen Elizabeth Hospital Woolwich (QEH). Fifty six women delivering at QEH between June 2013-January 2014 had experienced FGM. Six of these women were Bexley residents and were referred to Bexley social care. These cases are unlikely to pose a risk of significant harm and will not require a child protection response.

The BSCB receives an annual report from the FGM Working Group to satisfy itself that referrals are being made to children's social care to ensure children and babies at potential risk in the future are safeguarded.

7.10 Task & Finish Groups (TFG)

Task and Finish Groups are set up and monitored by the Business Committee in response to concerns raised by the Board. Each TFG has terms of reference and involves a multi-agency group meeting with a designated senior lead to move the project forward.

In 2013/14 the following TFGs were established.

Disabled Children Placed Out of Borough: This work was commissioned by the Business Committee in July 2013 as a response to a stocktake of activities following the Winterbourne Inquiry. The work is led by the Assistant Director for Integrated Commissioning and will report to the BSCB in May 2014.

The TFG was asked to evaluate the safeguarding arrangements for children placed in residential placements out of Bexley by Education Services and by Health Services and make any necessary recommendations to strengthen these arrangements.

Early Help: This TFG was established in February 2014 and is led by the Deputy Director, Family, and Youth & Employment LBB. It is due to report to the BSCB in May 2014.

The TFG was asked to review and refresh Bexley's Common Assessment Framework; agree steps that will support partner agencies to undertake good quality common assessments, and act as lead professionals for Teams Around the Family when this is appropriate; develop and agree clear referral pathways for children and young people into Children's Services; agree a new multi-agency single referral form to be used for referrals into Children's Services for both safeguarding/high threshold and early help services; agree clear 'step down' processes from higher threshold services into early help provision.

This work complements and is aligned with the work relating to understanding of thresholds carried out by the Quality & Effectiveness Group.

Engaging Young People: This group was established following discussion by the BSCB Chair with the Youth Strategy Partnership in early 2014. The group is chaired by the Deputy Director, Family Youth & Employment LBB.

⁹ Self assessment required under s175 of the Education Act 2002.

The TFG was asked to identify ways in which the BSCB can engage with children and young people, both through formal groups including the Youth Council and Children in Care Committee, and organisations working with harder to reach young people.

This will support the BSCB in achieving its aims of:

- Understanding the views of young people about safeguarding in Bexley.
- Consulting with young people on the business of the BSCB.
- Bringing to the attention of the BSCB young people's ideas about safeguarding priorities.
- Feeding this understanding into other partnerships, eg the Youth Strategy Partnership, Community Safety Partnership, Children and Young People's Partnership and the Health and Well Being Board.

The group will report to the BSCB in November 2014.

8. Ofsted Review of the LSCB March-April 2014

From 11 March to 2 April 2014 Ofsted inspected the local authority safeguarding arrangements and undertook a simultaneous review of the LSCB. The review covered the period of this report.

Ofsted concluded that **'The effectiveness of the LSCB is inadequate'** and that there is a considerable amount of work to be done to ensure that the LSCB fulfils all its statutory functions.

Ofsted recognised the ambition of the Board, the experience and leadership of the Chair, the initiatives in place to improve the effectiveness of the Board and that the LSCB has begun to challenge partners. However, the Inspectors set against this their findings that many of the LSCB's developments were in their early stages and their impact could not be evidenced.

8.1 Review Findings:

1. Ensure that the lead role of the LSCB in safeguarding is clearly established across Bexley and that governance arrangements within the board and with other key strategic bodies are clearly described and understood.
2. Ensure that the extensive LSCB work programme is rationalised and is robustly implemented and monitored.
3. Ensure that the LSCB effectively undertakes monitoring and quality assurance of multi-agency safeguarding practice.
4. Ensure that multi-agency audits are systematically undertaken in relation to key local safeguarding issues identified by partners and agreed by the board and that learning from these is actioned and carried forward into subsequent audits.
5. Ensure that safeguarding data and information from all partner agencies are robustly analysed and that trends, issues and the implications for multi-agency safeguarding practice are fully assessed.
6. Ensure that all operational groups of the LSCB have clear terms of reference and work programmes that are manageable and are co-ordinated with the LSCB work programme.
7. Ensure that audits to establish whether partner agencies are appropriately engaged in safeguarding are promptly undertaken and that the findings from these are acted upon.
8. Ensure that multi-agency safeguarding training is fully reviewed to meet current needs and that methods to evaluate the impact of this training on improving safeguarding practice are developed and implemented.
9. Ensure that work to capture the voice of children, young people and service users is carefully considered and is sensitively and systematically introduced.
10. Ensure that the annual report analyses the activity and the impact that the Board and its partners have on outcomes for safeguarding children.

9. Business Plan for 2014/15

The BSCB Business Plan for 2014/15 is based on the Board's self-assessment carried out in 2013/14 and incorporates the findings of the Ofsted review. In particular the Plan takes note of the Ofsted finding:

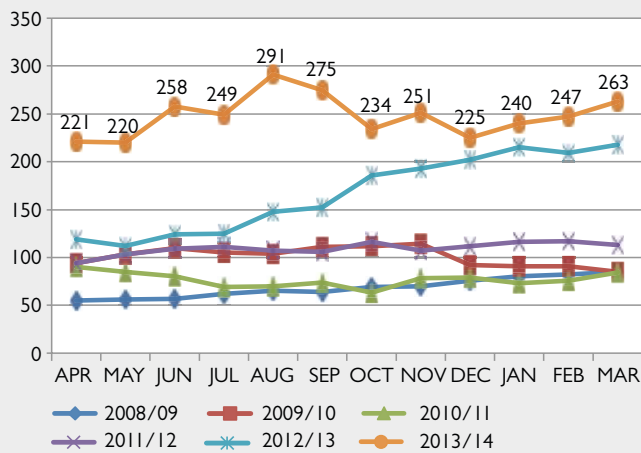
Ensure that the extensive LSCB work programme is rationalised and is robustly rationalised and implemented.

The work within the Business Plan is driven by the Business Committee and actioned by BSCB sub groups. The BSCB Chair, Vice Chair and the Police representative on the Board attend the Safeguarding Improvement Board to give account of progress and identify any barriers to this.

The Business Plan is attached to this report as Appendix D and identifies progress as at September 2014.

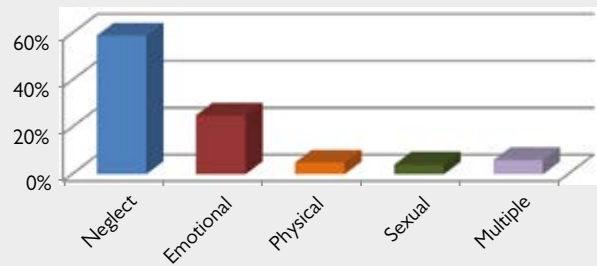
10 Child Protection Data for 2013/14

Snapshot Number of Children Subject to a Child Protection Plan



Source of data: Children's Social Care, CF21 / Liquid Logic

In 2013/14 children were subject to plans for the reasons shown below.



Source of data: Children's Social Care, CF21 / Liquid Logic

The ethnicity of children subject to plans has remained similar for the last couple of years and remains in line with the populations of children in Bexley. During 2013/14 55% were female, 43% male and 2% were unborn.

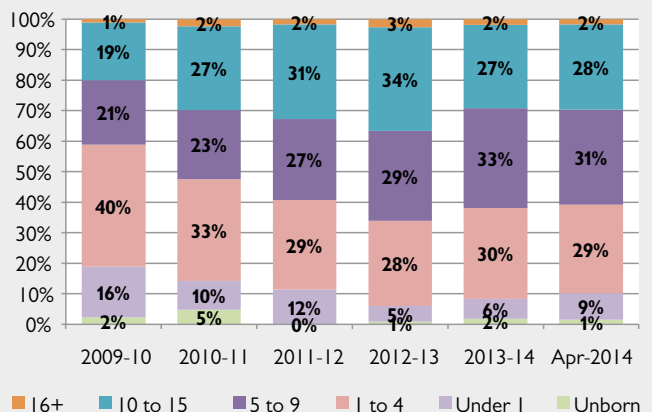
Since July 2012 there had been a steady increase in children being subject to child protection plans, which took Bexley slightly above average, when benchmarked against statistical neighbours and other local authorities in England. During 2013/14 a national increase in children subject to plans was seen and this was also mirrored in Bexley. (See table below).

Children subject to CP plan per 10,000 population.	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
England	38	38	42
Bexley	20	40	46

Source of data: National CIN census DfE.

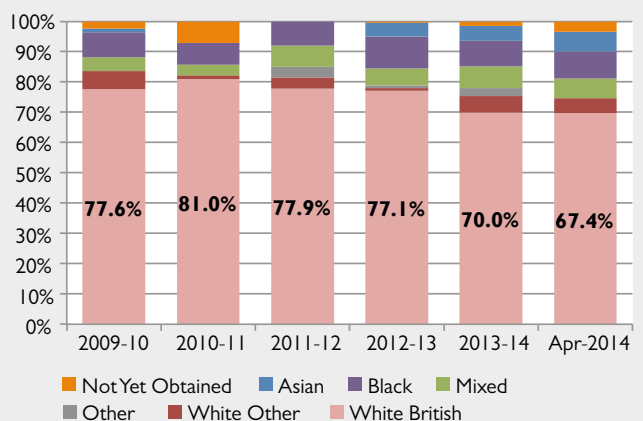
The total number of children subject to plans started to stabilise after May 2013, to an average of 253. During 2013/14, 332 Initial Child Protection Conferences were held, which is an average of 28 per month. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013, requires that CPCs are held within 15 days of the Child protection (Section 47 Children Act 1989) strategy meeting, to ensure that enquires are not subject to drift and delay. Bexley performs well in relation to this, the England average for 2013/14 was 69%, in Bexley it was 82%.

Age of Children Subject to a Child Protection Plan



Source of data: Children's Social Care, CF21 / Liquid Logic

Ethnicity of Children Subject to a Child Protection Plan



Source of data: Children's Social Care, CF21 / Liquid Logic

The length of time a child may be subject to a plan will vary dependent on the presenting risk and the rate of progress, but it is not expected that children remain on plans for long periods. The table shows the length of time children were subject to plans in Bexley (during 2013/14), Bexley compares well against the national average for children subject to plans for over 2 years, which is 5%. There are some differences to 2012/13, this year 15% more children were subject to a plan between 6 – 12 months and fewer for up to 3 months or over 18 months.

Length of time on CP plan	% of children
Up to 3 months	16%
3 to 6 months	11%
6 to 12 months	48%
12 to 18 months	19%
18 to 24 months	5%
Over 2 years	1%

One indication of whether a child may have been removed from a child protection plans prematurely is those that have been subject to a plan a second or subsequent time. In 2012/13 in Bexley this 17 children (6%), in 2013/14 it was 24 (8%), this is well below the national figure of 16% (2013/14).

In January 2014, BSCB commissioned an independent reviewer to undertake a 'deep dive' audit of the quality of Child Protection Conferences (CPCs) and Core Group Meetings, the audit was reported to the QEG in March 2014. The auditor randomly selected 10 'live' cases, reviewed case files, observed CPCs and interviewed service users and professionals. A summary of findings are as follows:

Strengths:

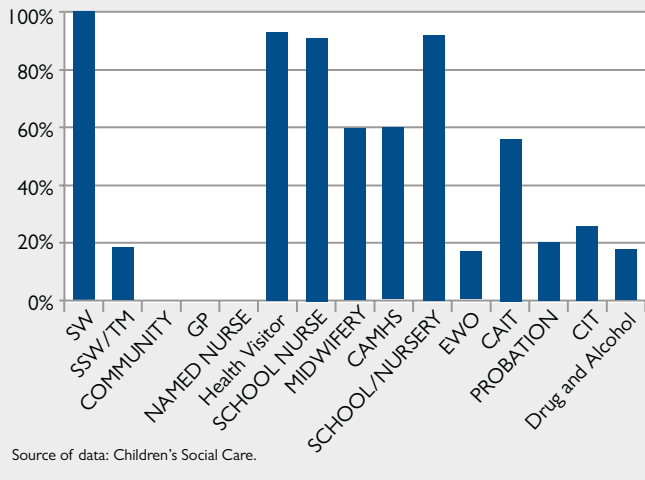
- Very effective multi agency attendance and practice seen in CPCs and core groups
- Good family attendance and contribution to CPCs & core groups
- Some decisive and authoritative chairing of CPCs
- Progress has been made on developing SMART outcome focused CP plans

Areas for improvement:

- More engagement from adult services required.
- Partner agencies infrequently submit written reports prior to CPC and few attend with one.
- The quality of Children's Social Care reports needs to be more consistent.
- Agencies to have a clearer and have a wider view about risk, considering decisions about risk beyond their own agency involvement.
- Children's Social Care managers need to attend CPC and chair more core groups.
- Core groups to focus more on progression of the plan.
- Young People need to be more encouraged to attend, participate and the child's voice and perspective to be stronger in the meeting.
- Chairs to be clearer about the purpose of the CPC & be more consistent in their summaries.
- CPC discussion to have greater focus on outcomes & developing the plan.
- Chairs need to ensure progress in RCPCs is measured by reviewing previous decisions and subsequent actions. (consider introduction of strengthening families approach).

In addition to the above audit, a sample of 50 CPCs that took place between Dec '13 - Mar '14 were audited by Children's Social Care to measure multi-agency attendance. The sample included a mixture of Initial and Review CPCs. For some agencies i.e. Crisis Intervention Team (CIT), Probation, CAMHS, Drug & Alcohol and Women's Aid services were invited on less than six occasions, therefore the figures were representative. For all other agencies they were invited on 20 occasions or more. The findings can be seen below. There was no significant difference to attendance at Initial CPC compared to Review CPC, except for police CAIT, whose attendance at Initial CPCs was 82%, whereas Review CPCs attendance dropped to 19%.

Multi-agency attendance at CPC



A number of recommendations were made following this examination of practice, which will be actioned and monitored by the BSCB during 2014/15.



Bexley Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB)

Annual Report 2013/14

Appendices

- Appendix A: Structure of the BSCB
- Appendix B: Membership of the BSCB in 2013/2014
- Appendix C: BSCB Budget 2013/2014
- Appendix D: BSCB Business Plan for 2014/15

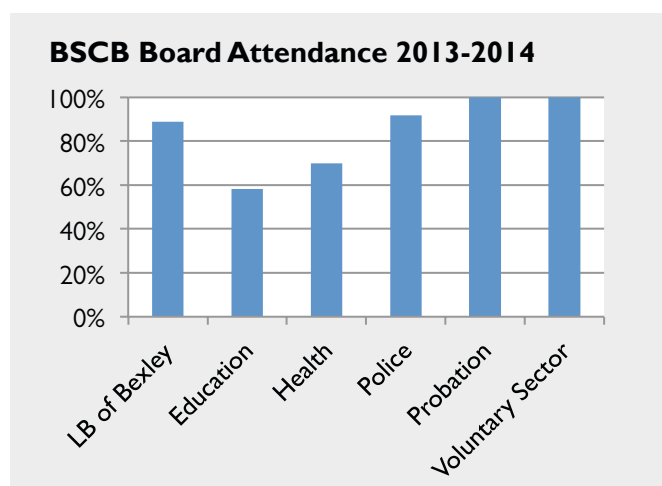
Appendix A: Structure of the BSCB 2013/2014



Appendix B: Membership of the BSCB in 2013/2014

Name	Role
Barbara Trevanion	Independent Chair
Mark Charters	Director, Education & Social Care
Sheila Murphy	Deputy Director, Children's Social Care
Linda Tottman	Deputy Director, Family, Youth and Employment
Moyra Pickering	Deputy Director, Deputy Director Education & Special Educational Needs
David Bryce-Smith	Deputy Director, Environment & Wellbeing
Simon Evans-Evans	Director of Governance & Quality, Bexley CCG
Jill May	Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children, Bexley CCG
Dr Mohammed Rahman	GP Lead for Children, Bexley CCG
Dr Sarah Ismail	Designated Doctor for Safeguarding Children, NHS South East London
Pam Creaven	Executive Lead for Child Safeguarding, NHS South East London
Helen Smith	Deputy Chief Executive , Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust
Carolyn Pilkington	Lead for Safeguarding Children, Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust
Jennie Hall	Deputy CEO / Chief Nurse, South London Healthcare Trust (Until October 2013)
Claire O'Brien	Associate Director of Patient Experience, South London Healthcare Trust (Until October 2013)
Chris Smart	Detective Chief Inspector, Child Abuse Investigation Team
Justin Armstrong	Detective Inspector Child Abuse Investigation Team
Peter Ayling	Superintendent, Borough Police
Rob Clarke	Assistant Chief Probation Officer, London Probation Service
Beverley Evans	Headteacher, Oakwood School
Fiona Dear	Headteacher, Longlands Primary School
Diana Dryland	Headteacher Burstled Wood Primary School
Julie Bristow	Partnerships Officer, Bexley Voluntary Service Council
Cllr Katie Perrior	Lead Member for Children Services
Penny Davies	Interim LSCB Manager (to August 2013)
Sharon Healey	Interim LSCB Manager (from Sept 2013)
Simon Deakin	LSCB Business Manager (from February 2014)

LB of Bexley	88.75%
Education	58.30%
Health	70%
Police	91.65%
Probation	100%
Voluntary Sector	100%



Appendix C: BSCB Budget 2013/2014

Bexley Safeguarding Children's Board Budget Outturn Statement 2013-14			
	13-14 Revised Budget	13-14 Out-turn	Variance
	£	£	£
Income			
Contributions			
London Borough of Bexley	(126,000)		
Bexley CCG	(31,000)		
Metropolitan Police	(5,000)		
Probation Service	(2,000)		
CAFFCASS	(550)		
Total Contributions	(164,550)	(164,550)	
Other income	(3,500)	(8,150)	(4,650)
Total income	(168,050)		(4,650)

	£	£	£
Expenditure			
Staffing	136,000	150,540	14,540
Training	5,000	6,220	1,220
Conferences, Seminars and Events	5,000	1,252	(3,748)
Advertising & Publicity	1,000	1,128	128
Serious Case Review	5,000	10,483	5,483
Professional Services & Advice	5,000	100	(4,900)
Independent Chair of LSCB	29,250	33,052	3,802
Other	500	0	(500)
Total Expenditure	186,750	202,774	16,024
Net deficit/ (surplus)	18,700	30,074	11,374
Opening Balances	2013/14		
	<i>Actual</i>		
LSCB General Surplus	(19,420)		
Guaranteed Surplus	(20,000)		
Munro funding	(17,610)		
Opening Balance Totals	(57,030)		
Closing Balances	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Out Turn</i>	
LSCB General Surplus	(720)	0	
Guaranteed Surplus	(20,000)	(9,346)	
Munro funding	(17,610)	(17,610)	
Closing Balance Totals	(38,330)		
<i>(credit) = surplus; debit= deficit</i>			

Progress report on the BSCB Business Plan as at November 2014

PURPOSE OF BEXLEY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

The BSCB aspires to be an effective Safeguarding Board, providing strong leadership, robust partnership arrangements and co-operative relationships.

The BSCB takes the view that an effective Board demonstrates good practice by:

- Identifying and agreeing a small number of priorities and concentrating on doing those well
- Undertaking regular reviews and updates of the Business Plan

BSCB partner agencies believe that children and young people in Bexley should be able to grow up free from fear of harm or neglect. We are committed to improving the safety of all children and young people in the borough, enabling them to be happy, healthy and reach their full potential.

The BSCB accepts and promotes the view that safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility.

The Business Plan has been revised following the Ofsted Review of the BSCB in March/April 2014. We will build on the findings of that review to strengthen the Board and ensure its activities are focussed and have positive impact.

This plan should be read in conjunction with the Learning and Improvement Plan which incorporates actions identified through BSCB review and audit activity.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES OF THE BSCB

We provide the strategic direction and operational framework that is needed to ensure all organisations and strategic partnerships that work with children fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.

The Strategic Objectives of an LSCB are set out in s13 of the Children Act 2004 as follows:

a) to **coordinate** what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area; and

b) to **ensure the effectiveness** of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes.

CORE BUSINESS

The core business of an LSCB is also laid out in statute and includes the following:

- Developing local procedures and policies
- Communicating the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, raising awareness of how this can best be done
- Participating in local planning of services for children
- Undertaking reviews of serious cases and advising board partners on lessons to be learnt
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of what is done by partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, advising them on ways to improve
- Assessing whether board partners are fulfilling their statutory obligations under s.11 of the Children Act 2004
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of training
- Producing and publishing an Annual Report on the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area.

HOW WE CONDUCT OUR BUSINESS

The BSCB will ensure that in order to benefit the children and young people of Bexley our recommendations, actions and outcomes will be **SAFER**:

Sustainable – we aim to develop a system for safeguarding and protection that is durable for the long term.

Accountable – we hold ourselves and our partners to account for the decisions we make and the services they provide.

Feasible – we aspire for excellence but will only promise what is achievable.

Evidenced – we will seek evidence of the effectiveness of our work and our partners' work.

Respect – we will respect the voice of the child as central to our work and ensure a child focus in our activity.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES for 2014/15:

1 Governance and Leadership

- The lead role of the LSCB in safeguarding is clearly established across Bexley and the governance arrangements within the Board and with other key strategic bodies are clearly described in order that we can properly hold ourselves and our partners to account.

2 Assurance and Challenge

- BSCB effectively undertakes monitoring and quality assurance of multi-agency safeguarding practice. We challenge each other and we seek evidence of the effectiveness of our work and our partners' work.

3 Effective Partnership

- The Ofsted Review of the BSCB found a number of areas for development. The BSCB is determined to establish a system of safeguarding and protection that is suitable for the long term, demonstrating that it is an effective Board that meets its statutory functions.

3 Vulnerable Groups

- BSCB ensures that practice developments in respect of vulnerable groups of children are progressed in line with best practice and statutory requirements. We seek to ensure a child focus in our work.

4 Communication and Engagement

- BSCB establishes the means of engaging and communicating with children, young people, families and the community to
 - Enhance community understanding about child abuse and neglect
 - Enable the views of children, young people, families and the community to influence the work of the Board and its partners.

MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

This Business Plan will be monitored by the BSCB Business Committee at its two-monthly meetings. The BSCB will be informed of progress and will take any necessary action to address any identified barriers.

Progress on the Areas for Improvement identified by Ofsted in will be reported to the Safeguarding Improvement Board.

RAG RATING KEY:

Overdue, significant concern. Escalate to Business Committee or Board	RED
Overdue, but work in progress and limited concern.	AMBER
Complete. Evidence of completion available	GREEN
Work in progress, but item not due for competition.	CLEAR

Short term activity (by September 14)	
Medium term activity (by December 14)	
Longer term activity (by March 15)	

AI = Area for Improvement followed by paragraph number in Ofsted Review 2014 Report

AW = Area of Weakness followed by paragraph number in Ofsted Review 2014 Report

WT = Working Together 2013

BP = BSCB Business Plan – identified from audit, review and best practice

PRIORITY 1: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

The lead role of the LSCB in safeguarding is clearly established across Bexley. The governance arrangements within the Board and with other key strategic bodies are clearly described in order that we can properly hold ourselves and our partners to account.

No	Outcome	Activity and Progress RAG	Success Criteria	Owner	Target dates	Evidence of Impact	Cross Ref
1.1	Formal governance arrangements are reviewed, decision making is clearly defined and partners are aware of individual and corporate responsibility	Governance Handbook Reviewed Terms of Reference reviewed Sub group work plans reflect priorities Reporting arrangements clarified	Governance Handbook in place and agreed by all partners.	Simon Deakin, BSCB Business Manager	Agreed by BSCB Sept 2014		AI.169 BSCB Report to SIB
1.2	The BSCB is recognised as the lead partnership for safeguarding children and BSCB safeguarding priorities are integrated into the work of the key partnerships as appropriate.	SIB/LSCB arrangements agreed at SIB 18.06.14. HWBB/LSCB protocol to HWBB 09.07.14 and BSCB 28.07.14 LSCB/CYPP Protocol agreed BSCB 22.09.14 and at CYPP 29.09.14	Protocols between BSCB and key strategic partnerships are agreed and inform the work of those partnerships ie: Health and Wellbeing Board Children's Partnership Adult Safeguarding Board Community Safety Partnership. Safeguarding Improvement Board	Barbara Trevanion, Independent Chair Simon Deakin, BSCB Business Manager	All protocols agreed by BSCB September 2014 and by all partnerships by November 2014		AI.169 BSCB Report to SIB

PRIORITY 2: ASSURANCE AND CHALLENGE

BSCB effectively undertakes monitoring and quality assurance of multi-agency safeguarding practice (Ofsted AI.171). We challenge each other and we seek evidence of the effectiveness of our work and our partners' work.

No/ RAG	Outcome	Activity and Progress	Success Criteria	Owner	Target dates	Evidence of Impact	Cross Ref
2.1	The dataset contributes to the Board's understanding of key safeguarding challenges and informs the priorities of the Board	The data set has been agreed and is being populated. Agencies have committed to providing the agreed data.	The BSCB dataset is a minimum of 50% populated by July 2014. The BSCB dataset is a minimum of 90% populated by November 2014	Maureen Holkham, Chair Quality and Effectiveness Group	Dataset agreed May 2014 50% populated BSCB July 2014 90% pop BSCB November 2014	From July 2014 Minutes of BSCB and QEG will demonstrate impact, challenge and any necessary action.	AI.173 BSCB Report to SIB
2.2	The BSCB has a clear audit programme which is informed by previous reviews and the dataset. The audit programme adds to the Board's understanding of key areas of concern and audits make recommendations for action leading to improvement.	The audit programme has been agreed to include: - Merlins - Early Help - Domestic Abuse - Thresholds To BSCB with indicative timetable. Evidence of Impact for threshold audit 2014 to be sought November 2014. Evidence of Impact for Child Protection Conference audit 2014 to be sought November 2014	Audit programme actioned and findings turned into SMART recommendations and actions which improve inter-agency practice. Evidence of impact available for 2014 audits.	Maureen Holkham, Chair Quality and Effectiveness Group	Audit programme to BSCB July 2014 Evidence of Impact for thresholds and CP conferences to BSCB January 2015.		AI.175 BSCB Report to SIB
2.3	Each partner agency of the BSCB can demonstrate the effectiveness of their safeguarding arrangements. The BSCB understands the impact of the work of each statutory member of the BSCB to improve the safety of children.	S11 audit commenced June 2014. Challenge meetings to be held July 2014. S175 self-audit reports to BSCB July 2014. BSCB Board to receive report on progress Nov 14 Action plans to be reviewed in May 15. Single agency audit review programme in place.	S11 self-assessment reports demonstrate agencies have undertaken thorough review of their organisation and have identified areas for improvement and actions. Schools in Bexley have carried out s175 self audits and submitted reports to BSCB. Single agency safeguarding audit identify improved practice as well as areas for improvement.	Maureen Holkham, Chair Quality and Effectiveness Group	Initial s11 Report September 2014. Final s11 Report November 2014. S175 report to BSCB November 2014 Single agency audits reviewed by QEG from September 2014		AI.175 BSCB Report to SIB

2.4	The BSCB is able to respond quickly and effectively in all cases where a serious incident occurs. Lessons are identified and speedy and sustainable action taken.	SCR protocol agreed at BSCB 22.9.14 Commissioning impact to be sought for SCR Baby F and Child E October 14 Evidence of impact returns still incomplete	Case Reviews are undertaken in a focussed, timely and efficient manner. Evidence of Impact available for Child E and Baby F SCR.	Simon Evans-Evans, Chair Serious Case Review Group	September BSCB Evidence of Impact Report for Child E and Baby F to BSCB September 2014		AW.172
2.5	Thresholds are understood across partner agencies leading to appropriate and timely referrals which ensure children access the right services.	Following Audit findings in 2013 and 2014 the BSCB will undertake an annual review of thresholds. Evidence of Impact sought November 20 2014 Referral Form reviewed and revised by inter-agency group. BSCB threshold document circulated widely through agencies and training. BSCB Summer Conference 2014 addressed thresholds	Annual threshold audits demonstrate improved understanding. Dataset shows increased level of appropriate and timely referrals. Revised referral form review demonstrates improved understanding of thresholds and issues of consent and improved provision of information.		Report to BSCB by March 2015		BSCB Threshold Audit 2014

PRIORITY 3 EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP

The Ofsted Review of the BSCB found a number of areas for development. The BSCB is determined to establish a system of safeguarding and protection that is suitable for the long term, demonstrating that it is an effective Board which meets its statutory functions.

No/ RAG	Outcome	Activity and Progress	Success Criteria	Owner	Target dates	Evidence of Impact	Cross Ref
3.1	Multi agency training is having an impact on the understanding of professionals that will lead to improved safeguarding arrangement for our children	<p>The 2014/15 Training Programme has taken into account lessons from SCRs.</p> <p>Training effectiveness is measured at course level.</p> <p>Evidence of Impact is sought after three months</p> <p>Multi-agency training is fully reviewed to meet current needs</p> <p>Three times a year the BSCB holds Conference on local safeguarding issues</p>	The effectiveness of multi-agency training is tested at point of delivery and within 3 months of training being delivered	Jill May, Chair Training and Development Group	<p>Report to BSCB July 2014 on evaluation process</p> <p>Proposal re needs assessment to September BSCB.</p>		<p>Al.176 AW. 186</p> <p>BSCB Report to SIB</p>
3.2	The BSCB has a comprehensive understanding of key findings and lessons arising from audit and review and monitors agreed actions - their - implementation - progress and - impact.	<p>Learning and Improvement Framework (LIF) agreed at the BSCB Board 22 Sept 2014.</p> <p>Development of a Learning and Improvement Plan (LIP).</p>	The BSCB Learning and Improvement Framework supports an overarching analysis of key findings and lessons from BSCB activity	Simon Deakin, Business Manager	<p>LIF to BSCB July 2014</p> <p>LIP to Business Committee September 2014</p>		WT p65
3.3	<p>All partners and partnerships are informed of the LSCB's activities during the previous year.</p> <p>Identified safeguarding priorities are incorporated appropriately into other partnership and single agency action plans</p>	<p>The BSCB Annual Report will be presented in draft to the November BSCB.</p> <p>Annual report to relevant strategic partnerships by Nov 14</p>	<p>The Annual Report is informative to partners and partnerships – assisting their understanding of safeguarding issues and priorities.</p> <p>BSCB priorities are taken into account in the business plans of partners and partnerships.</p>	<p>Simon Deakin, BSCB Business Manager</p> <p>Barbara Trevanion, Independent Chair</p>	<p>BSCB September 2014</p> <p>Other partnerships by November 2014</p>		<p>Al.178</p> <p>BSCB Report to SIB</p>

3.4	BSCB can demonstrate to key stakeholders that it routinely and rigorously analyses the activity and impact that the Board and its partners have on outcomes for safeguarding children and sets priorities for the next year.	<p>The BSCB will routinely hold an Annual Review of its effectiveness during the previous year and identify priorities for the next year. The Ofsted Review 2014 will be the baseline for this year. April 15</p> <p>Six months following a review and/or audit evidence of impact will be requested and evaluated.</p> <p>A bi-annual update of progress on s11 action plans will be requested and evaluated.</p>	<p>The LSCB Annual Review and self-assessment demonstrates that partners understand the role of the BSCB and their role in achieving its priorities.</p> <p>The LSCB can evidence the impact of its activity.</p> <p>Partners account for their progress in respect of s11 arrangements.</p>	Simon Deakin, BSCB Business Manager	BSCB Annual self- assessment May 2015		<p>AI.179</p> <p>Identified by Ofsted as a weakness</p>
-----	--	--	--	---	---	--	---

PRIORITY 4: VULNERABLE GROUPS

BSCB ensures that practice developments in respect of vulnerable groups of children are progressed in line with best practice and statutory requirements we will respect the voice of the child above all others. We seek to ensure a child focus in our work

No/ RAG	Outcome	Activity and Progress	Success Criteria SAFER and SMART	Owner	Target dates	Evidence of Impact	Cross Ref
4.1	An early help strategy is agreed by the BSCB. BSCB is satisfied that effective arrangements are in place to ensure that help is provided to children and families as early as possible to avoid future safeguarding issues	Thriving Families Steering Group working on Early Help Strategy. Early help presentation to BSCB Summer conference June 14 and briefings Aug/ Sept. Evaluation of early help on the BSCB Audit programme for 2014/5.	BSC partners understand thresholds for early help and intervention experience them operating effectively. BSCB evaluation of the sufficiency, range and impact of the early help offer is shared with Board partners to agree any required improvements.	Linda Tottman, Chair Thriving Families Steering Group Maureen Holkham, Chair Quality and Effectiveness Group	BSCB September 2014		AW 184 Identified by Ofsted as a weakness WT p60
4.2	Children who are vulnerable to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) are identified and protected.	Review of the current arrangements to separate out Strategic overview Consideration of referred cases Dealing with particularly complex cases Consideration to be given to incorporating CSE, Missing Children and Serious Violent Crime involving young people into a single CSE Vulnerable Children Group.	Separate CSE Vulnerable Children and MASE Groups established. Multi agency Strategy in place. Key performance indicators agreed. CSE Annual Report on to BSCB reports effective arrangements in place which ensure consideration of cases at appropriate level and with sufficient time.	Sheila Murphy, CSE Vulnerable Children Group Nicola Duffy, Chair, MASE Group	Current arrangements reviewed October 2014. Strategy to BSCB January 15. Delayed from September 15 following Rotherham Report and decision to review current structure.		AW.188 Identified by Ofsted as a weakness
4.3	The safety of children who are privately fostered is considered as well as those in the care of the local authority	CSC report on private fostering to BSCB details ways of publicising the issue. Letter from LSCB Chair to Police, Health, Education and voluntary sector drawing attention to agency responsibilities and seeking return from them relating to PF children in their school.	Dataset show increasing number of private fostering placements identified. CSC data shows increased number of private fostering assessments.	Sheila Murphy, Deputy Director Children's Social Care	Report to BSCB May 14 Review Report to BSCB in November 2014		AW.183 Identified by Ofsted as a weakness WT,p59

4.4	Children who go missing are identified and protected. To include: Children missing from care Children missing from home Children missing education	Review of current arrangements to separate out Strategic overview Consideration of referred cases Dealing with particularly complex cases Consideration to be given to incorporating CSE, Missing Children and Serious Violent Crime involving young people into a single CSE Vulnerable Children Group.	Separate CSE Vulnerable Children established to include missing children. Multi agency Strategy in place. Key performance indicators agreed. Missing Children Annual Report to BSCB reports effective arrangements in place which ensure consideration of cases at appropriate level and with sufficient time.	Sheila Murphy, CSE Vulnerable Children Group Nicola Duffy, Chair, MASE Group	Current arrangements reviewed October 2014. Strategy to BSCB January 15. Delayed from September 15 following Rotherham Report and decision to review current structure.		AW.188 Identified by Ofsted as a weakness
4.5	The BSCB understands the scale of self harm amongst children in Bexley and works together to minimise the number and the impact on children's lives	BSCB to establish a Task and Finish group to scope the issue and make recommendations to the BSCB. Link to JSNA	Full report to the BSCB and appropriate priority given to the issue.	Simon Deakin, Business Manager	TBA.		The allegedly high numbers of self harming children in Bexley has been raised via the SSCRS and the Practitioner Forum as an urgent matter of concern.
4.6	Children, young people and their parents are safe online, using social media and technology	Information for children, young people and parents is available on the BSCB website.	Multi agency Strategy in place. Key performance indicators agreed.	Simon Deakin, Business Manager	January 2015		Best practice vulnerable group

PRIORITY 5: COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT

BSCB establishes the means of engaging and communicating with children, young people, families and the community to

Enhance community understanding about child abuse and neglect

Enable the views of children, young people, families and the community to influence the work of the Board and its partners.

No/ RAG	Outcome	Activity and Progress	Success Criteria SAFER and SMART	Responsibility	Target date	Evidence of Impact	Cross Ref and Priority
5.1	Children and Young People directly influence the activities and priorities of the BSCB.	Engaging Young People Group established. Children in Care Committee working with BSCB to develop information for young people.	The BSCB can evidence specific matters influenced by children and young people.	Linda Tottman, Chair Engaging Young People Group. Simon Deakin, Business Manager	Report to Board November 2014		AI.177 BSCB Report to SIB
5.2	LSCB website is informative and useful to practitioners and members of the public and provides a clear account of the BSCB and its responsibilities.	Website redesign to take place summer/autumn 2014. BSCB Board agreed design outline Sept 14 BSCB annual questionnaire incorporates question on usefulness of website	Practitioners report the BSCB website is useful and easy to negotiate. BSCB annual questionnaire responses indicate the website is informative, useful and easy to access.	Simon Deakin, Business Manager	Progress Report to BSCB September 2014 Redesign completed by November 2014		BSCB Business Plan 2013/14 Best practice. Website is access point to BSCB
5.3	The BSCB has a community perspective to contribute to its activities and decisions and is able to influence community partnerships.	Protocol between LSCB and Community Safety Partnership in process of development. One lay member appointed to BSCB with strong community links. Lay member involved in s11 Challenge meetings.	Second lay member appointed. Protocol between LSCB and CSP in place. BSCB advised of relevant community issues, evaluates and takes appropriate action. BSCB advises community partnerships and forums of its priorities.	Simon Deakin, Business Manager	LSCP/CSP to BSCB November 2014		WT p61
5.4	The profile of the BSCB as lead agency for safeguarding is raised and messages from BSCB are disseminated effectively through all agencies.	LSCB virtual communications group established by Dec 14. BSCB communications strategy agreed. Dissemination arrangements agreed following review and audit activity.	BSCB communications are effectively circulated. Practitioners aware of BSCB's role and key messages. Agencies feedback to BSCB on dissemination activity.	Simon Deakin, Business Manager	Report to BSCB January 2015		Building block for effective practice.

Bexley



**Local Safeguarding
Children Board**