



# **Annual Report 2007/8**



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## **Chair's Foreword**

I am very pleased to present the second annual report of Telford & Wrekin's Safeguarding Children Board. I trust that you will find it interesting and informative and I welcome your comments. Central to the work of the Safeguarding Board is a belief that being safe is fundamental to children's well being. We understand that in many ways children and young people in Telford are safer than previous generations, though today there are new challenges and risks. We need to find a balance between protecting children and allowing them the freedom to develop and enjoy their childhoods. I believe this report demonstrates the strong commitment that exists within local agencies to working with children and families to achieve that balance.

I am also pleased to acknowledge the enthusiasm, energy and very hard work of colleagues over the past year. We are clear that safeguarding children and young people is the responsibility of everyone in our community. It is a challenge which can only be met through working together.

Colin Watt

NSPCC

Chair of Telford & Wrekin's Safeguarding Children Board.

April 2008



# Introduction

## What is Safeguarding?

“Making sure that children grow up in safety and in a way that they are cared for; protecting them from harm or ill-treatment; making sure that their health or development is not damaged in any way and doing this in a way that means that children have the best possible chances in life.”

(adapted from Government Guidance)

## Why do we need a Safeguarding Children Board (SCB)?

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children requires effective co-ordination. For this reason the Children Act 2004 requires each Local Authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). In Telford & Wrekin this responsibility is delegated to the Head of Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting.

Section 10 of this Act places a duty to co-operate to improve the well being of children on the Local Authority and its Board Partners. The organisations which are partners are laid out in S 13(3) of the Act and include representatives of the Chief Police Officer; Area Probation Board; Youth Offending Service; Strategic Health Authority; Primary Care Trust; NHS Acute Trust; Connexions; and CAFCASS;

The associated guidance also states that the Local Authority should secure the involvement of other relevant local organisations and specifies the duty of individual members to contribute to the effective work of the LSCB.

The LSCB is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how the relevant organisations in Telford & Wrekin will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in that locality and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do.

The work of the LSCB fits within the wider context of all children's services' aims to improve the well being of children in Telford & Wrekin in respect of all the Every Child Matters Outcomes: Being Healthy, Staying Safe, Enjoying and Achieving, Making a Positive Contribution and Achieving Economic Well-being. Its particular focus however is that of the 'staying safe' outcome.

## Role and organisational arrangements

### What is the board for?

(as set out in the Government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' )

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 Telford & Wrekin

To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each person or body for that purpose.

**NB:** Safeguarding and promoting welfare includes **protecting from harm**. The guidance is clear that ensuring that work to protect children is properly co-ordinated and effective remains a key goal of the LSCB.

The guidance divides the scope of the board into 3 broad categories:

- Activity that affects all children
- Pro-active work that aims to target particular groups of children
- Responsive work to protect children who are suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm.

T&W SCB works across all three categories, having due regard to the central need to protect as outlined above.

The LSCB is **not** accountable for the work of individual organisation's work and each Board partner retains its own lines of accountability. The LSCB **does not** have a power to direct other organisations.

### Who is on the board?

As noted in the introduction, certain organisations are required by law to be partners of the SCB: The Local Authority, the Police; the Probation Service; Youth Offending Service; Strategic Health Authority; Primary Care Trust; NHS Acute Trust; The Learning & Skills Council; and CAF/CASS (child and family court advice and support service).

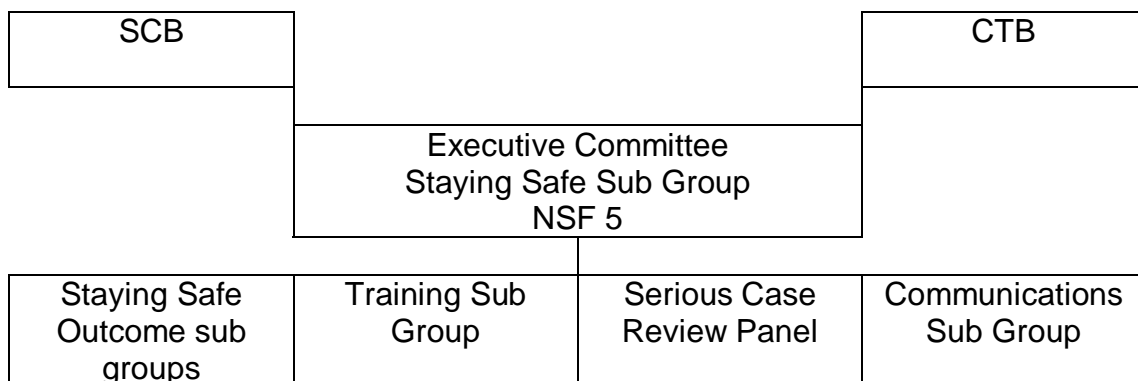
Most of these partners also support the Board by jointly funding some of its work.

Here in Telford & Wrekin, we recognise that there are many other people involved in safeguarding and our Board also has representatives from the Voluntary Sector; the Race Equality and Diversity Partnership; Schools (Primary and Secondary); Further Education Colleges; Armed Forces; the Safer & Stronger Communities Partnership; and Fire and Ambulance Services;

We have an independent Chairperson who is from NSPCC

**How does the board work?**

The SCB makes use of existing arrangements to facilitate the close working with the Children’s Trust Board (CTB) [formerly the Children & Young People’s Strategic Partnership], maximising resources and reducing duplication. The executive committee of the SCB, therefore, also act as the Staying Safe Sub Group and reports both to the Board and the CTB as necessary. The executive committee consists of nominated representatives of the main statutory agencies and funding partners, namely, Local Authority (including Connexions4Youth); Primary Care Trust; Police; Probation; and Safer & Stronger Communities Partnership and is responsible for the development and implementation of the Staying Safe Outcome Sub Group Action Plan, and for the National Service Framework (NSF) Standard 5 action plan as well as acting as the Executive of the SCB.



# Report on Progress 2007/8

## What has the board done?

Through the work of its various working groups, both 'standing' groups such as the outcome sub groups, the training group etc and a number of 'task and finish' groups, the board has made progress in a wide number of areas and can report some significant achievements:

Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board now has a **website** [www.telfordsafeguardingboard.org.uk](http://www.telfordsafeguardingboard.org.uk) which includes the revised **policies and procedures**. These have been designed to be easily accessible and to link to other local and national sites. The procedures have been expanded from the earlier 'child protection' ones to include the wider scope of the SCB and to take account of new responsibilities such as the management of allegations against staff and the review of unexpected child deaths.

**Child death review** processes have been established including a West Mercia wide 'rapid response' protocol; arrangements for the child death overview panel and a multi agency agreement on administrative support.

The management of the **child protection process** has been effective and efficient with all cases of children on the child protection register having been reviewed within timescales and the number of children being re-registered falling by more than the target. Policy and practice has been revised following a **survey of parents** who had been involved in the child protection process and additional information leaflets explaining the processes have been developed.

Following a presentation to the Board by the CATE group (Children abused through exploitation) , designated staff time (within Connexions4Youth) has been identified to work with young people who are being or are at risk of **sexual exploitation**, to support individuals and to raise awareness more generally about the dangers involved

A multi agency **E-safety** working group has been established to progress work in this area with strong support from WM Constabulary. The group are working with the Child Exploitation Online Protection Centre (CEOP) to develop local initiatives, and have produced guidance to staff in all schools on the safe use of ICT.

All Telford & Wrekin schools have measures to combat **bullying**, either as a 'stand alone' policy or within their behavioural policies. In addition, a survey undertaken of a sample of schools suggests that 69% of schools now have a designated member of staff to respond to concerns. Young people confirmed at the 'Big 5' conference (2006) that things were 'generally better' as far as

schools were concerned but there were still issues elsewhere. As a result, the Safeguarding Children Board, through its bullying and discrimination sub group are developing a strategy to tackling bullying in all settings and will be encouraging settings to 'sign up' and display the anti-bullying 'kite mark'.

Considerable progress has been made in establishing a consistent and co-ordinated response to **domestic abuse** led by the Safer & Stronger Communities Partnership but with multi agency support and close collaboration with the board to ensure that children's needs are addressed within the strategy.

A designated worker has been appointed for **Private Fostering** which has led to an increasing number of private fostering arrangements being notified and supported. From a baseline of 5 in April 2006 there are now 21 such children identified.

The Board has developed a **communication** strategy which has been refined over the year to ensure that it is streamlined with other such strategies and makes best use of technology.

A single distribution list covering the SCB and the CTB ensures wide dissemination of information and in addition the Board has included articles in the Council's newsletter 'Insight'.

As part of developing its **scrutiny** role, the board has undertaken an audit of all the partners against a set of standards (Section 11 Audit) and against the Joint Area Review standards. It has also regularly used part of its quarterly meeting to consider a range of topics, receiving reports from the accident prevention forum on its work with children and young people; the safer and stronger communities partnership on work being undertaken in respect of domestic abuse to ensure that all agencies are taking the needs of children into account; and updates from the various sub groups to ensure that work is progressing against the identified targets. In addition, the SCB decided to follow up the Section 11 audit with a more formal scrutiny approach to 'listening to children and young people'. A small working group has been established and an elected member who is involved in corporate parenting scrutiny has been co-opted onto this group. Discussions have also taken place with NSPCC and with the Local Authority's 'Active Involvement Service' to consider the best way of involving young people in the task.

Through its **Training** Sub Group the Board has delivered a wide ranging training programme the demand for which has put significant pressure on capacity. We have provided basic awareness training to over 800 people from a wide range of agencies including the public, private and voluntary sectors. The group has also developed and delivered more advanced training in respect of neglect, physical, sexual and emotional abuse; children abused through exploitation and specific training in respect of the families of prisoners in support of a regional project.

In addition to its ongoing programme of 'whole school' training, a major training initiative has been undertaken to ensure that schools are taking every precaution in the appointments they make with 75 Heads & Chairs of Governors trained on **Safer Recruitment** (including staff from Private Schools)

Governor training has also been given on the roles and responsibilities of Governors in the Child Protection process

The Board has also hosted a successful **Conference** on 'working with families to encourage inter agency working' as part of its development programme and to disseminate lessons learnt from previous serious case reviews and has co-ordinated a number of informal **workshops** for members including How scrutiny works; MAPPA and an introduction to child death reviews.

In addition to the management of the child protection conference processes and the administration thereof, several tasks are undertaken by the Safeguarding Advisory Service on behalf of the Board.

During 2007/8 these have included representation at **MAPPA**; the **Vulnerable Adults** Committee; the Responsible Authorities Group (licensing); the processing of **licensing** applications and the development and implementation of the process for **managing allegations** against staff from any of the partner agencies.

## Looking forward

### What is the board going to do next?

As noted elsewhere, the Safeguarding Children Board, through its executive committee has close links with the work undertaken by the Staying Safe outcome sub group of the Children's Trust Board and in previous years the work programmes of the two have been largely indistinguishable.

This year the SCB has decided to concentrate of 4 key priorities;

- **Domestic abuse and its impact on children  
(links to SSCP and CTB)**
- **Internet safety  
(links across several outcome sub groups – bullying, crime, exploitation)**
- **Listening to children and young people  
(links to Scrutiny)**
- **Parents with problems  
(links to NSF)**

The action plans for these, together with the Training Plan, the Communication Strategy action plan and the Scrutiny Programme will, therefore, form the work programme for the board for 2008/9.

Mechanisms for progressing the work have been identified in all areas and the groups responsible are currently finalising their action plans. These will be formally agreed within the next month and progress reports provided to the board.

Progress reports on other areas of work will be provided for information during the year as will reports on performance.

In particular the Board will be monitoring progress against the Department for Children Schools and Families 'strategic objectives within Public Service Agreement (PSA) 13 which, under 'improving children's safety' include:

- The percentage of children who have experienced bullying
- The percentage of children referred to children's social services who receive an initial assessment within 7 days;
- Hospital admissions caused by unintentional or deliberate injury
- Preventable child deaths as recorded by the child death overview panel.

## Performance and statistics 2007/08

### How much, how many, how well?

#### General statistics:

- There are 40700 under 18s in Telford & Wrekin (estimate from population projections), this is the sum of cluster figures below.

Clusters 4600 Newport  
7600 Wellington  
12000 North  
11100 Central  
5400 South

(However National Statistics give a figure of 38,900 ).

- Approximately 3000 children and young people are from a black or minority ethnic (BME) background - 8% of all children under 18.

#### Child protection work

- There have been 165 registrations during the year (30 of which were re-registrations.)
- There have been 137 de-registrations during the year.
- Re-registrations (children whose names have been on the register more than once) as at 31 March 2008 was 18.18%, an improvement upon last year of 22.26% and exceeding our target of 19%. It is in the acceptable banding. 16 children have been re-registered within 1 year of last de-registration. (This is made up of 7 families).
- The proportion of children who remained on the register for two years or more before being de-registered 5.11%, an increase from last year's outturn at 4.7%, but remaining in the best band. (in fact this relates to 7 and 6 children respectively)
- There were 161 children on the Child Protection Register at the end of March 2008. This is more than there have been since November 2004 when there were 163.
- The 1-4 year age group has most children on the Register and neglect is the category where there are most children.
- 5% of children on the Register are from a BME background  
The number of children who were subject of an Initial Child Protection Conference during the year was 174, of which 165 children's names were added to the CPR.

- 100% of Child Protection Conferences during the year were held within the prescribed timescale.
- The total number of children subject to CP Conferences during the year (both initial and review) was 588.
- 100% of children on the Child Protection Register at 31 March 2008 were allocated to a Social Worker.

### Domestic abuse

Performance indicator	Borough 07/08	Newport	Telford N	Telford S	Telford C	Wellington
Domestic abuse incidents where a child has been identified as being at risk	3.0 per 1,000  (122/40,700)	0.3per 1,000  (1.3/4600)	2.7 per 1,000  (32/12000)	5.9 per 1,000  (32/5400)	3.9 per 1,000  (43/11100)	1.7 per 1,000  (13/7600)

### Multi Agency Public Protection arrangements (MAPPA)

Of **21** cases at MAPPA Level 2 from 30.10.07 - 18.02.08 **14** have a direct child protection theme, and a further 5 have an indirect (usually domestic abuse related) aspect.

Of **7** cases at MAPPA Level 3 from 01.04.07 - 18.02.08 **3** have a direct child protection theme and 2 indirect (as above).

(NB this data only commences in November 2007 when central arrangements to co-ordinate level two were established.)

### Management of Allegations

A total of 76 allegations against people working with children were recorded during the year. These mainly related to social care (3), Education (44) and foster carers (17) and the majority were in respect of physical abuse (43) and sexual abuse (23)

In 56 cases no further action was taken; but 19 resulted in criminal investigations; 13 in disciplinary procedures and 26 in child protection enquiries. 17 were referred to a regulatory body or DCSF; 5 were dismissed; 2 convicted and 3 cautioned.

(NB: Several actions can relate to one incident)

# Resources

## Where does the money come from and how is it spent?

### Introduction

Although it is a legal requirement to have a safeguarding children board, there is no central government funding for this and each board relies on its partners to resource it. (but see note below with regard to child death reviews)

The resources for the Telford & Wrekin Board are, therefore, far more complicated than the following statements suggest since many people give their time and expertise in addition to the financial resources outlined.

Worthy of particular note is the fact that the expenses of the independent Chair of the Board are met by the **NSPCC** which is a significant contribution not enjoyed by SCBs elsewhere.

### 2007/8

The main source of funding for the board, relates to a service level agreement drawn up prior to the board's existence to provide multi agency training and to provide for administration and accommodation. The income from this arrangement for 2007/8 was **£91,930** as described below:

	<b>Children's Services*</b>	<b>PCT</b>	<b>Police</b>	<b>Probation</b>	<b>Adult &amp; Consumer Care</b>
<b>Training Officer</b>	£20,680	£6,890	£3,450	£2,220	-
<b>Training Budget</b>	£4,240	£2,120	£2,120	£1,060	£2,190
<b>General 'running' costs</b>	£6,360	£2,120	£1,060	£1,060	-
<b>West Rd accommodation</b>	£7,450	£3,740	£3,740	-	-
<b>Administration</b>	£14,230	£3,600	£3,600	-	-
<b>Total</b>	£52,960.00	£18,470.00.00	£13,970.00	£4,340.00	£2,190.00

\*Includes original SLA partners: children's social services, education and connexions

In addition:

32 schools agreed to contribute £250 pa in return for 'free' whole school training and access to other training events;

The Community Services Portfolio contributed £5,000 in recognition of the large numbers of staff they needed to be trained;  
CAFCASS contributed £ 550;

## **2008 onwards**

During 2007 the Board approached both existing partners and other agencies with a view to securing additional funding for future years and to agree a three year funding package.

As well as allowing us to develop the training aspect of the board, where the demand is greater than we can meet; establishing designated administrative support and enabling the implementation of the communication strategy, additional funding would assist in meeting the broader responsibilities – notably the management of allegations and child death reviews.

Unfortunately most partners were not in a position to increase their financial commitments. They were however prepared to make a three year commitment which is very welcome as it provides stability for the staff concerned.

The PCT have been able to increase their funding and have agreed a further £11,000 to cover the expanding tasks of the Board. This is a very welcome addition.

We were also successful in attracting an additional funding partner – the NHS Hospital Trust, and securing a contribution from the Youth Offending Service together with a further year's funding from Community Services.

This, together with 'slippage' from previous years will allow us to expand the staffing and the service provision of the board.

In addition the board has received a grant of £26,000 to assist with the establishment and running of child death reviews which will be used to support training and administration in respect of this new duty.

# Feedback Form

If you think that there is anything which would make Telford & Wrekin a safer place for children, the Board would love to hear from you to see if they can help to achieve this.

Please complete this form and send it to:

Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board,  
30 West Road,  
Wellington Telford. TF1 2BB

My name is.....

My address is.....  
.....

My suggestion is.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Remember: safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility**

If you are concerned about a child and want to talk to someone about it please contact Children's Services on 01952 385700

Or you can contact West Mercia Police on 08457 444888 or the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 500