

# BARKING & DAGENHAM SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

## BUSINESS PLAN 2015 – 2018



Barking & Dagenham  
Safeguarding  
Children Board

The Barking & Dagenham LSCB (BDSCB) Business Plan sets the strategic direction for the LSCB and reinforces the specific role of the LSCB to lead, challenge and support learning. The Business Plan sets out the strategic priorities for BDSCB for 2016-17 and how they will be achieved.

The BDSCB structure provides a robust mechanism for monitoring the priorities and statutory functions through implementation of the business plan.

- The BDSCB Leadership Group (Chairs) oversees the priorities and Business Plan for BDSCB and submits regular outcome based progress reports against their agreed activity within the Business Plan.
- The BDSCB have implemented an integrated quality assurance model that is integral to the Board's focus on improving and developing the quality in practice. The Performance & QA committee monitors data and quality assurance processes across partnership services.

This plan will link to a number of key areas:

- Requirements from Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2015
- Barking & Dagenham Health & Well-being Board Priorities
- Links to the work of the Safeguarding Adult Board
- Links to the work of the Safer Community Partnership
- Links to the work of the Children's Trust Partnership
- Links to the work of the Corporate Parenting Board

The BDSCB is comprised of executive members who are able to carry out the following responsibilities:

- To act as a representative of their agency and to be able to speak for that agency
- To be able to hold their agency to account and challenge its practice
- To be able to make decisions about safeguarding as required by BDSCB and allocate resources
- To ensure that safeguarding is given the strategic priority within their own agency
- To share corporate responsibility for the quality, sensitivity and timeliness of safeguarding interventions
- Each executive member is accountable for delivering objectives agreed by BDSCB and for ensuring that their agency delivers the agreed strategic and business plan priorities and objectives.
- Executive members are those agencies identified in Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2015.

- An Advisory member is accountable for delivering objectives agreed by BDSCB and for ensuring that their agency delivers the agreed strategic and business plan priorities and objectives. Advisory members are predominantly provider services or links to other key partnerships.

This year our Business Plan will be more focused on the specific role and remit of the LSCB as set out in Working Together (2015) and the Children Act 2004. This is; leading the safeguarding agenda in challenging the work of partner organisations, and having an approach which learns lessons, embeds good practice and which is continually influenced by the views of children and young people. We will continue to work with the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Adult Safeguarding Board and the Community Safety Partnership on areas of shared concern such as domestic violence, drugs, alcohol and mental health that can affect children's safety and wellbeing.

The Business plan is based upon the following values that are shared across the partnership:

1. All children and young people in Barking & Dagenham have a right to:
  - a. Be treated with dignity and respect and have their voice heard
  - b. the best possible outcomes regardless of their age, gender, ability, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation and circumstance.
2. Safeguarding the wellbeing of children and young people is a priority for us all
3. Active involvement of children, young people and their families will be incorporated in our work
4. We will listen to front line practitioners and take their views into account
5. The Board will act in an open, transparent way and will encourage a culture of challenge, scrutiny and support across the partnership
6. Sharing learning to safeguard children and young people will be integral to the Board business
7. Celebrate strengths and positive achievement, and a commitment to continuously improve
8. Board partners and their respective agencies have a shared responsibility to work together to safeguard children and young people and promote their welfare
9. We will work with other strategic partnerships across Barking & Dagenham - Children's Trust, Community Safety Partnership, Safeguarding Adult Board, Health and Wellbeing Board to ensure that our plans are aligned to maximise the opportunities for our children and young people.

## OUR BUSINESS PLAN IN CONTEXT

Barking & Dagenham is located in the East of London and has a population of 207,292 of which 61,793 are under 18.

The Borough has a very large non-White population \* with 49% of residents coming from a non White ethnic group. Black Africans are the largest minority ethnic group at 17% of the overall population.

[\* The GLA provide the most up to date figures but they merge the figures for the White British and White Other (predominantly Eastern European) groups.]

26% of school aged children are White British and another 13% are White Other. The remaining 61% are from other minority ethnic groups with Black African making up the biggest group at over 23%

We have 1 pupil referral unit, 2 special schools, 10 secondary phase schools 2 all through schools, i.e. both primary and secondary phase, and 44 primary phase schools.

5.7% of 16 to 18 year olds are not in education, employment or training compared to the London (3.4%) and England averages (4.7%)

2015 IMD results shows Barking & Dagenham as ranked 3rd most deprived in England measuring Rank of average rank and 12th most deprived in England measuring Rank of average score.

## THE REMIT OF THE LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

The BDSCB is responsible for ensuring that children and young people living in the borough are effectively safeguarded by local agencies. The BDSCB seeks assurance that those agencies are working well together and co-operating to promote the welfare of children and young people living in Barking & Dagenham. We do this by fulfilling our core objectives which include:

1. Developing policies and procedures in relation to:

- Safeguarding Children
- Thresholds for intervention
- Training of people who work with children
- Recruitment of people who work with children
- Allegations against people who work with children
- Children who are privately fostered.
- Working with neighbouring children's services

2. Monitoring, quality assuring, evaluating and challenging the effectiveness of what is done by partners individually, and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advise them on ways to improve

3. Planning, co-ordinating and evaluating safeguarding training.

4. Undertaking reviews of serious cases and child deaths, and informing our stakeholders, including the public of the learning identified.

5. Communicating effectively to our stakeholders, including the public, the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and how best to do this.

## OUR PRIORITIES:

Our Business Plan outlines the five strategic objectives that will inform the work of the Board over the next three years.

1. Board members are assured that arrangements are in place to identify and safeguard groups of children who are particularly vulnerable
2. Board partners will own and share accurate information which informs understanding of safeguarding practice and improvement as a result
3. The Board will see children and young people as valued partners and consult with them so their views are heard and included in the work of the LSCB
4. Arrangements for Early Help will be embedded across agencies in Barking & Dagenham who work with children, young people and their families.
5. Board partners will challenge practice through focused inquiries or reviews based on performance indicators, practitioner experience and views from children and young people. Collectively we will learn from and improve from these reviews.

### Priority 1:

**Board members are assured that arrangements are in place to identify and safeguard groups of children who are particularly vulnerable**

#### Why is it important?

Children can become vulnerable and at increased risk of harm for a variety of reasons. We have identified children who go missing from school, home and care as at increased risk of harm, particularly in relation to child sexual exploitation. In order to take action to reduce risk and vulnerability the partnership will understand more about young people who offend or are at risk of offending; young people who self-harm; missing children, and children who are at risk of radicalisation.

## What we will do

- We will check that services are targeted, responsive and efficient for those children and young people who are vulnerable, and identify where we need to reduce the additional risks and challenges they face. This includes
  - Children on Child Protection (CP) plans with a focus on Neglect
  - Looked After Children
  - Children living in households where there is DV
  - Children at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
  - Children with disabilities and special educational needs
  - Children who go missing from home or care
  - Children with mental health needs
- Identify emerging themes and key issues relating to youth offending and work with our partners to address them.
- Promote awareness amongst children and young people of child sexual exploitation and healthy relationships by supporting schools to embed this in the curriculum.
- Use management data to identify patterns, trends and children 'at risk' of child sexual exploitations, and respond to minimise these risks and communicate learning to practitioners.
- Include training in the BDSCB training plan to increase practitioner awareness of vulnerable groups e.g. Child Sexual Exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation, PREVENT (radicalisation) & Neglect.
- Develop our understanding of why children go missing from care and take action to address those issues.
- Work with the Safeguarding Adult Board so that practitioners working with children are supported to identify parents with a learning difficulty, mental health or substance misuse which could affect their parenting capacity.
- Seek assurance that early help is offered to those families experiencing domestic abuse, and that the voice of the child has informed the response.
- Seek assurance that there is adequate provision available to children experiencing mental health problems.
- Work closely with education and health partners to ensure our children in care are supported to achieve their full potential.

## Priority 2:

### Board partners will own and share accurate information which informs understanding of safeguarding practice and improvement as a result

#### Why is it important?

The BDSCB as a partnership Board is committed to providing strong and effective leadership in relation to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. We recognise that strong and effective strategic partnerships are vital to ensuring that there is ownership and influence within all our partner organisations that will drive the safeguarding priorities of the Board and translate this into effective practice at the frontline. As part of this Business Plan period we will continue to strengthen strategic partnerships whilst developing our relationship with other key strategic bodies, including the Community Safety Partnership, the Multi-Agency Public Protection Panel (MAPPA) Management Board and the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Committee (MARAC).

#### What we will do

- Through the S11 audit we will check that all agencies fulfil the requirement to have effective systems, processes and policies
- We will challenge all agencies to provide evidence of the work that they are undertaking to improve outcomes overall and also in relation to specific areas of business
- We will undertake audits and specific case mapping exercises to understand how effectively the whole system is working and make sure that the child's journey is always the focus.
- Ensure there are strong governance arrangements in place with Children's Trust, Health & Wellbeing Board, Corporate Parenting Panel, Multi-Agency Protection Panel and Community Safety Partnership; and that there is evidence of two-way communication and challenge.
- CDOP Annual Report to capture end of year data and CDOP Committee will share learning & performance data, escalating concerns to the Board



- Performance, Learning & Quality Assurance subgroup will scrutinise performance data and escalate areas of concern/improvement to the Board.
- Increase visibility of the LSCB through regular newsletters, updates on the website and use of social media – Facebook & Twitter
- Develop a Risk Register that is reviewed on a quarterly basis by the LSCB Strategic Partner group.
- Develop a practitioner's leaflet to inform the frontline of the Board's priorities
- Ensure action plans are in place from Section 11 and Section 175 audits and that the progress against these plans is monitored.

### Priority 3

**The Board will see children and young people as valued partners and consult with them so their views are heard and included in the work of the LSCB**

#### **Why is it important?**

Learning from National Serious Case Reviews indicates that in too many cases the child was not seen enough by professionals involved, or was not asked about their views and feelings; that agencies did not listen to adults who tried to speak on behalf of the child; that parents and carers prevented professionals from seeing and listening to the child and that practitioners often focused on the needs of the parents, overlooking implications for the child. We recognise that involving children, their families and the frontline practitioners with whom they work offers the greatest opportunity to understand the lived experience of vulnerable children and young people and we must integrate this into every element of our work.

#### **How we will do it.**

- We will listen to the views of children and young people and use these to inform best practice
- We will work to embed a 'rights respecting' culture across the partnership and continuously challenge partners to demonstrate the centrality of the child's voice in what they do

- The views of children, young people and their families are at the centre of service design and will influence development and strategic thinking.
- Ensure that the Quality Assurance & Audit work reflects the views of children, young people, families and practitioners and there is learning from their experiences.
- Develop a Communication Strategy that shares key messages from the Board/Sub-Groups to children, young people, practitioners and members of the public.
- Create more opportunities to communicate with children and young people, and develop existing relationships with the Children in Care Council and Youth Parliament.

## Priority 4

### Arrangements for Early Help will be embedded across agencies in Barking & Dagenham who work with children, young people and their families.

#### Why is it important?

We are aspirational for all children in Barking & Dagenham. There are a wide range of services providing early help to families on the Continuum of Need, including case management by the Early Intervention Partnership. We will ensure that families are offered co-ordinated support packages to prevent their needs escalating and that there is an effective interface with Children's Social Care when children are in need of protection.

#### How we will do it.

- The effectiveness of early help provided to children and families is monitored using relevant data
- The impact and delivery of the Early Help strategy will be subject to BDSCB scrutiny and challenge.
- Increase practitioner knowledge and consistent application of the 'continuum of need' through training and multi agency audit as well as access to the LSCB website

- Continue with Practitioner Forums' to enable practitioners to discuss complex cases
- Monitor the step-up/down cases through multi-agency audit.

## Priority 5

**Board partners will challenge practice through focused inquiries or reviews based on performance indicators, practitioner experience and views from children and young people. Collectively we will learn from and improve from these reviews.**

### Why is it important?

There is a wealth of learning available from national and local case reviews, audits of practice and performance information that can enable the workforce to refine their approach to safeguarding and to improve outcomes for the children and young people. We will seek to identify and disseminate good practice as well as understanding and embedding lessons. We will aim to foster a learning culture within our partnership work so that best practice and working together is the essence of everything we do.

### How we will do it.

- Undertake a programme of themed audits
- We will implement a new multi agency audit process
- Embed a revised Performance Management Framework
- Learn from national and local SCR's or inquiries.
- Learn from Serious Incidents and thematic reviews undertaken via CDOP
- Ensure there is greater emphasis on evaluating the impact of "lessons learned" on frontline practice through auditing, performance information and feedback from children and young people.
- Increased challenge to partners when impact of "lessons learned" cannot be evidenced.

- Hold workshops with practitioners after SCR's to communicate key messages and learning from the Board
- Ensure that the training needs assessment (TNA) influences our 12month training plan.
- Ensure that learning from National and Local Serious Case Reviews is communicated to the workforce and that there is evidence of changing practice as a result.

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