

Barking & Dagenham Safeguarding Children Board (BDSCB)

Learning & Improvement Framework 2013-15

| Date | Version | Lead |
|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| August 2013 | Draft v1 | L&I Committee |
| December 2013 | Draft v2 | L&I Committee |
| February 2014 | Draft v3 | L&I Committee |
| April 2014 | Final | L&I Committee |

Background:

Within the revised statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013) it sets out a new approach to learning and improvement for LSCBs and places a duty on them to develop their own local frameworks:

Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) should maintain a local learning and framework which is shared across local organisations who work with children and families. This framework should enable organisations to be clear about their responsibilities, to learn from experience and improve services as a result.

HM Government, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013)

Statutory guidance also sets out the principles for LSCB learning and improvement which can be summarised as follows:

- A culture of continuous learning and improvement;
- A practice of transparency - Serious Case reviews (SCRs) must be published in full and displayed on the LSCB website for a minimum of 12 months;
- Issues identified in all reviews should be published for public accountability purposes;
- Reviews should be proportionate to the scale and complexity of the issues being examined;
- SCRs should be led by someone independent;
- Professionals should be fully involved in reviews without fear of blame;
- The views of families and siblings should be sought;
- Subsequent improvements should be detailed in the annual report and inform inspection; and
- Improvements must be monitored and reviewed.

Purpose of this framework:

The aim of this framework is to enable BDSCB to provide improved children safeguarding services by learning from experience and particularly through the provision of insights into the way organisations work together to safeguard and protect the welfare of children.

The framework should enable the LSCBs, their partner organisations and local partnership bodies to be clear about what needs to be learnt, where services and practice require improvement, and how any programme of action will lead to sustainable improvements.

This framework is intended to cover the full range of single and multi-agency reviews, audits, and briefings, which aim to drive improvements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and families.

The different types of learning include:

1. Serious Case Reviews

2. Child death review (see Chapter 5: Child death reviews of Working Together 2013: a review of all child deaths under the age of 18)
3. Reviews of Child incidents which fall below the threshold for a full serious case review;
4. Review or audit of practice in one or more agencies.
5. Section 11 assessments
6. Performance data
7. BDSCB Annual Conferences, Training courses and briefing sessions
8. National Learning via guidance, training and policy briefings.
9. Performance and learning outcomes from BDSCB members

Methodology

BDSCB will seek to achieve continuous learning and improvement by:

- Initiating Serious Case Reviews (SCR) in accordance with Regulation 5 of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006, in order to learn Multi and Single Agency lessons, along with risk information. The SCR methodology is included within **Appendix A**.
- Conduct Child Death reviews in accordance with chapter 5, child death reviews of Working Together 2013: a review of all child deaths under the age of 18, in order to identify Themes, Trends and Modifiable factors.
- Identify cases that fall below the threshold for a serious case review and conduct a review by the serious case review committee; in line with agreed Local protocol **Appendix B**.
- Conduct Multi Agency reviews, analysis and identification of lessons learnt
- Hold Annual Conferences and briefing sessions in order to share local learning and disseminate practice, policy including National themes.
- Where possible, continue delivering a Multi Agency Training Programme for the wider partnership.
- Seek performance and learning outcomes from BDSCB members in order to ensure continued learning across the partnership.
- Review LSCB Commissioned learning activities to ensure learning aims and objectives are fit for purpose and providers meet the quality standards expected by the Learning and Improvement Committee

This will ensure that the BDSCB will:

- Identify good and problematic practice and recognise the strengths and weaknesses of organisations involved.

- Produce a report that outlines what happened in a case, why it happened and what action will be taken to learn from the findings and by whom. These actions will be presented to the BDSCB for approval.
- BDSCB Training and Development will ensure dissemination of learning improvements that affect the multi-agency partnership.
- BDSCB will ensure sustainable improvement through regular monitoring and follow-up so that the findings from these reviews make a real impact on improving outcomes for children.

The Learning and Improvement Process

BDSCB Learning and Improvement Framework is a cyclical process, as detailed below:



Information is gathered by conducting reviews, audits of single and multi-agency organisations, including relevant data and trends.

Following the review and/or audit, a report and action plan will be produced and presented to BDSCB Board, or specific committee (as deemed appropriate) for approval.

A programme of implementation will be produced with clear identification of actions and organisations responsible for implementation will be identified.

This will be monitored by the Learning and Improvement Committee and Performance & Quality Assurance Committee, on behalf of the BDSCB. This information will also be fed through to the Practitioner Forum, for dissemination and discussion with front line practitioners.

Impact of the actions and implementation will be evidenced when information is gathered by conducting reviews, audits of single and multi-agency organisations, relevant data and trends.

Actions with a wider multi-agency requirement will be implemented by BDSCB Training and Development, as appropriate, and presented to the Learning and Improvement Committee.

Appendix A – Serious Case Review Methodology:

This is a live document and will be amended in line with SCR Panel agreement.

| | | Process Step | Timescale | Supporting Commentary |
|---|--------|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| QUALITY ASSURANCE WITH OTHER LSCBs | | Serious Case Review initiated | One month from initial notification | |
| | ↓ | Notification to DfE and National SCR Panel | | Notifications to be sent to Mailbox.SCRPANEL@education.gsi.gov.uk and cie@ofsted.gov.uk |
| | ↓ | Integrated Chronology | | Agencies to ensure the chronologies are robust, agency owned and not anonymised, in order that reviewer is able to get a full picture |
| | ↓ | Hypothesis | | Required to inform the requirement for IMRs. Independent reviewer to provide this information to Panel. |
| | ↓ | 1:1 Discussions Or Group Discussions | | These will be undertaken by the Independent Reviewer along with Panel members. Panel members will not interview their own agency. This may lead to additional IMR reports being requested. Ensure interviewees are briefed as to what is required to alleviate worries to focus on positives. |
| | ↓ ↓ | Learning Events | | To incorporate learning throughout case, so we can learn all along, feeding back to agencies part way through process. These events also provide the opportunity to test findings/ analysis to support the development of the report associated recommendations and actions |
| | ↓ | Way forward <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action Plans • Changes | | Agencies will begin to change develop practice in light of learning events |
| | | SCR Report | Six months from initiation | In line with WT 2013 SCR reports should be written in such a way that publication will not be likely to harm the welfare of any children or vulnerable adults involved in the case. |
| | ⇄ | Criminal Trial | | There should be a “dotted line” from the SCR report to the Criminal Trail The outcome of the trail may inform the SCR. |
| | | Publication | | SCR Reports should be published on the LSCB website for a minimum period of 12 months, and also available on request. |
| | ↓ | Multi Agency Briefing Sessions | | Following publication a series of briefing sessions will be arranged, in order to disseminate learning wider across the borough. |

Appendix B – Protocol when a full SCR threshold has not been met:



Protocol for Individual Management Reviews (IMR) *- Where a full SCR has not been initiated*

Background:

In order to initiate a full Serious Case review, the following criteria needs to be met, as directed by Working Together (2013):

Regulation 5 of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006 includes the requirement for LSCBs to undertake reviews of serious cases in specified circumstances. Regulation 5(1) (e) and (2) set out an LSCB's function in relation to serious case reviews, namely:

- 5 (1) (e) undertaking reviews of serious cases and advising the authority and their Board partners on lessons to be learned.
- (2) For the purposes of paragraph (1) (e) a serious case is one where:
 - (a) abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected; and
 - (b) either — (i) the child has died; or (ii) the child has been seriously harmed and there is cause for concern as to the way in which the authority, their Board partners or other relevant persons have worked together to safeguard the child.

If an SCR is not required because the criteria in regulation 5(2) are not met, the LSCB may still decide to commission an SCR or they may choose to commission an alternative form of case review.

The final decision to conduct an SCR sits with the Chair. Should the Panel decide not to initiate a full SCR, their decision may be subject to scrutiny by the national panel. The LSCB should provide information to the panel on request to inform its deliberations and the LSCB Chair should be prepared to attend in person to give evidence to the panel

This protocol will focus on the alternative Internal Management Review (IMR) Process.

Stages for all serious case reviews:

| Stage | Activity | |
|---|---|--|
| Notification of an incident | <p>Notification received within one month of incident.</p> <p>All agencies are contacted to identify if Child or Family are known to them. If known, files are secured.</p> <p>Draft Chronologies are prepared.</p> | |
| Initial Serious Case Review Meeting convened. | <p>Review Committee meets with identified agencies involved with child. Additional agencies are also considered.</p> <p>Any parallel or overlapping review processes by other partnerships (e.g. Adult Safeguarding, MAPPA SCRs, Youth Justice Serious Incidents or Health Serious Incidents) should be carefully considered, including any impact on criminal investigations processes.</p> <p>All agencies involved prepare chronologies identifying risk; response; partnership; and learning issues underpinning each episode.</p> <p>Decision sought as to whether this meets the criteria for a full serious case review.</p> | |
| Decision Point – Criteria for Full SCR met? | YES | <p>Commence agreed Serious Case Review (SCR) Methodology.</p> <p>Each agency to ensure their mandatory communication and reporting processes are followed re decision around SCRs/ learning reviews.</p> |
| | NO | <p>Commence Internal Management Reviews (IMR)</p> <p>Each agency to ensure their mandatory communication and reporting processes are followed re decision around SCRs/ learning reviews.</p> <p>No Further Action required</p> |
| Engagement with National Panel of Independent Experts/ Peer challenge | <p>LSCB Chair seeks peer challenge where appropriate.</p> <p>LSCB Chair consults with National Panel regarding application of SCR criteria.</p> | |

Internal Management Review (IMR) process:

The following steps will be undertaken, when a full serious case review is not required.

| Stage | Activity |
|------------------------|--|
| Wider Communication | <p>BDSCB Chair will formally write to all LSCB areas involved and Chief Executives of Agencies, advising them that an IMR has been commenced.</p> <p>The BDSCB Chair will also write to the families concerned to advise that an IMR has been commenced and requesting consent to share records.</p> |
| IMR Lead(s) Identified | <p>All IMR leads will be identified and agreed at the initial review meeting.</p> <p>IMR Authors should be independent. It is the responsibility of the IMR Author to ensure that the IMR report and Recommendations are produced.</p> <p>The IMR Author will also ensure that the IMR report has been sufficiently quality assured by a senior officer within the respective organisation.</p> <p>Where more than one service is involved, a collective Overview report will be produced.</p> |
| Terms of Reference | <p>This will be drafted and circulated to all members for agreement, by the BDSCB Chair.</p> |
| Meetings | <p>Regular update meetings will be arranged by BDSCB Business Manager, as directed by the Chair.</p> <p>All meetings will have an Agenda and minuted by the Board support. Minutes will be circulated within 7 days of each meeting.</p> |
| Timescale | <p>To be agreed at initial review meeting and dependent on the complexity of the case.</p> <p>It is envisaged that the process will be completed within six months, from initial meeting in line with full SCR process.</p> |