

GSCB

Annual Report 2013/14 &
Business Plan 2014/15

Summary *For young people*



Working together to empower and protect children



Gloucestershire
Safeguarding Children
Board



What is the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board (GSCB) here to do?

The Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board (GSCB) is in charge of joining up work of all organisations on the Board, for the purposes of protecting children in Gloucestershire from harm.

It is made up of senior managers from many organisations, including the County Council, Police, 2gether Trust, Care Services and education settings.

What are the GSCB Sub Groups?

Workforce Development (training)
Multi-Agency Quality Assurance (MAQuA) (checking standards)
Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) (learning from deaths)
Communications (telling people about child protection)
Serious Case Review (SCR) (learning from practice)
Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing Children (helping children at risk)
Policy and Procedures (guidance for staff)
Education and Learning (keeping children safe in schools and colleges)

Participation Champions meet four times a year to discuss how the views and experiences of children and young people can be heard and acted upon by the GSCB.

There have been three additional 'Task and Finish' Groups this year:

- 1. Substance Misuse** (drugs and alcohol)
- 2. The Child Suicide Prevention** (supporting children to prevent suicide)
- 3. The Levels of Intervention** (guidance for staff)

Who does the GSCB work with?

GSCB works with the Gloucestershire Children's Partnership (GCP) and the Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board (GHWB). This year, the GSCB has developed a protocol which explains the role of the Boards and groups that support children and young people.

Progress of Priorities for 2013/14

PRIORITY 1

To have communicated the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

To tell people about child protection, the GSCB:

- Ran seven multi-agency roadshow events in 2013, which about 500 professionals went to.
- Did direct work with the Ambassadors to get a true picture of help that children and young people living in Gloucestershire want from us. One Ambassador spoke at the GSCB roadshows, which was very powerful and really highlighted the importance of listening to children and young people.

“Professionals need to learn about how to communicate with vulnerable kids and she can show us the way!”

Practitioner at GSCB Roadshow

PRIORITY 2

Holding each other to account: evaluating how well partners are working together to safeguard children and young people, building on good practice and challenging poor.

To do this, the GSCB:

- Checked that professionals know about the ‘Escalation Protocol’ and it is being used when people have disagreements.
- Checked work through the MAQuA Sub Group to make sure safeguarding practice is keeping children safe.
- Responded to concerns that young people’s mental health needs are not always being addressed properly by raising the issue with the Joint Commissioning Board and NHS England.
- Trained professionals to make sure they know the importance of challenging each other when the standard of work is not good enough.
- Made sure that professionals are working as well as they can to safeguard children, with a focus on the following areas:

Child Protection Conference Team

Admissions into Care

Stability of Placements for Children in Care

Children Subject of a Child Protection Plan

PRIORITY 3

Ensure the safeguarding needs of particularly vulnerable children and young people are being addressed.

The GSCB knows that some children and young people are especially at risk of harm. The GSCB has:

Delivered NEW training, including:

- For Designated Child Protection officers in schools and colleges.
- GSCB Roadshows to share learning from Child Death and Near-Miss Reviews. This included raising awareness of the action that should be taken if there are concerns that a child has either attempted suicide or is likely to attempt suicide.

“As a result of taking part in the workshop, I knew the action that I needed to take when I became aware that a young person had attempted suicide and was able to take them straight to A&E for an assessment”.

Headteacher, following GSCB Roadshow

PRIORITY 4

Ensure that multi-agency learning, as informed by the Systems Approach to Serious Case Reviews, is used to improve working practice and monitored through Multi Agency Quality Assurance.

To keep learning and improving, the GSCB has:

- Introduced a ‘GSCB Learning and Improvement Framework’ so that all agencies have a shared understanding of how learning leads to improvement of services for children and young people.
- Held a ‘Serious Case Review’ and held three training sessions on learning from national Serious Case Reviews and how these link to local case reviews. Key messages from these sessions included:

“See parent, think child”

“Always remember to put the child at the centre of the practice... really listen”

“Keep accurate, up to date chronologies”

“Take historical information into account, don’t just focus on the here and now”

“Healthy challenge is essential - be persistent and keep asking questions”

“Remember the importance of reflective supervision, especially when dealing with complex neglect cases”

About the GSCB...

How it fits together - The GSCB has a clear structure for its Board, Executive Committee and Sub Groups. Each has clear terms of reference to support roles and responsibilities. The structure reflects the range of partnerships across the county, including the voluntary and community sector.

Planning - The Board continues to strengthen the way performance is monitored and reported, to make sure agencies are holding each other to account. GSCB has published its Learning and Improvement Framework.

Roadshows - People who took part in the seven events heard about the development of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), listening to the views and experiences of children and young people and the Early Help Offer. Workshops to share the learning from multi-agency audits, systems reviews and child deaths took place and got really good feedback.

Communication - A new communication strategy for the GSCB and GSAB has been put together this year. The strategy has been developed by talking to lots of professionals through a number of different meetings and the GSCB roadshows.

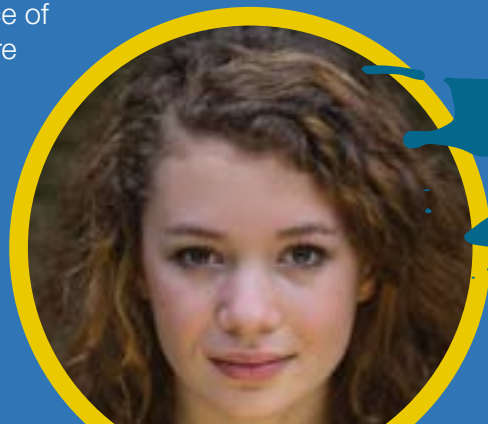


Involvement of children and young people - There are strong links with the Gloucestershire County Council Participation Team and the Ambassadors for Vulnerable Children and Young People, which will be developed further during 2014/15. Work included:

- One of the Ambassadors attending five out of the seven roadshows and multi-agency training courses to share her top tips for listening to and involving children and young people.
- Hearing from a young survivor of domestic abuse at all of the roadshows.
- Board members visiting schools to talk about safeguarding issues. A DVD has also been produced so GSCB are able to reach out to every school in Gloucestershire.
- Getting the views of about 100 primary school aged children to inform their Business Plan for 2014/15.

GSCB Training - Safeguarding training in the county continues to support all those who work with children, young people and families; to have the skills, knowledge and confidence to carry out their safeguarding responsibilities. It talks about the importance of providing early help and support at every stage. As part of the role of the Training Coordinator and Workforce Development (WFD) sub group all multi-agency training is regularly reviewed, to make sure that it is up to date, of a high quality and meets the needs in the county.

The total number of people who were trained by the GSCB over the year was more than 3,300. This year Megan, an Ambassador, has assisted GSCB in delivering messages to an audience of frontline people who were helped/worked with the GSCB professionals and managers.



“I just want to feedback how brilliant and useful it was to hear from that brave 19 year old, today. She was to the point and so honest. It is refreshing to hear about how the service we give at grass roots level can be improved”.

Practitioner, GSCB Roadshow

Early Help

Good early help means local agencies working together to:

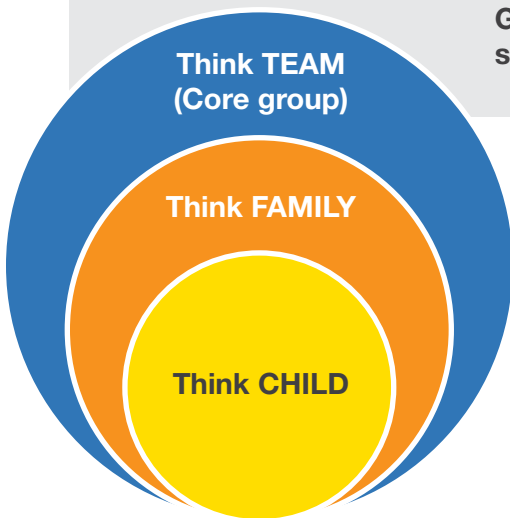
- Identify children and families who would benefit from early help
- Assess the need for early help; and
- Provide targeted early help support to address the assessed needs of a child and their family focussing on things that will make things better for the child.



Multi-Agency Case Review Panel

Professionals are invited to attend the GSCB Multi-Agency Case Review Panel to discuss the effectiveness of the Core Groups (a meeting for everyone involved in keeping a child safe from harm. During the past 12 months, the panel has met with over 60 practitioners to talk about their experiences of working with over 50 children.

GSCB Multi Agency Case Review Panel Common Themes share by Child Protection Core Groups 2013/14



“That was so interesting. I felt nervous to begin with but it felt like group supervision”

Core Group member after discussion with the Panel

Children in Care

The GSCB has taken an active role in getting a better understanding of some of the problems experienced by children in care, through two ‘performance spotlights’; one about going into care and another in relation to placement stability (staying in one place and being happy with your carers).

Domestic Abuse

The GSCB carried out a review of the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) process, which involves discussion of high risk cases of domestic abuse in Gloucestershire, to ensure that the victims and their children are safeguarded from serious harm. The review led to improvements and also information sharing with schools, which had been a weakness before in the process. Schools are now being sent information about relevant cases so that they can offer better support to the children involved.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

The GSCB have launched an e-learning package to add to the half-day multi-agency training course that was started in 2012/13.

Over 9000 young people saw the production of 'Chelsea's Choice' (a play telling us about the dangers of child sexual exploitation) with 46 showings in 40 secondary schools. The impact is significant in terms of increased understanding of CSE.

997 young people were surveyed with results as followed:

- 99.8% of young people said they now have a better understanding of the issues surrounding CSE and the different forms it can take.
- 99.9% said they now have a better understanding of safe internet use.
- 97.6% said they have a better understanding of what a healthy relationship should be.



Children who go Missing from Home or Care

A new system of monthly risk assessment reviews for all children who go missing from home or from care and are of most concern to the Police, Social Care and Youth Support has been introduced. There have been some improvements in making sure that children are seen by their Social Worker after they have been missing.

Disabled Children and Young People (DCYP)

As well as training professionals about protecting disabled children, regular checks are carried out to test the quality of work. Recent checks have shown improvements, including:

- Better assessment and active management of children with disability cases
- Good safeguarding overview in the Children and Families Teams
- The family and child have been involved and informed of the process and plan.

Children and Young People's Mental Health

Sadly, there has been an increase in the number of children and young people who are self-harming or attempting suicide. GSCB have started using the Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) when a young person has attempted suicide. Although it is still early days, GSCB hope to get a better understanding of the reasons why young people are attempting suicide, so that support can be put into place at an earlier stage before the young person reaches crisis point.

Learning from Serious Case Reviews

(A serious case review is when we learn about whether we could have helped a child or group of children better).

During this year there has been one serious case review undertaken by the GSCB. Key lessons from the review include:

- The child's experiences should be at the heart of all plans.
- The need for clarity about sharing information on children and their siblings and parents.
- All professionals working with children and families need to be trained and supported, to challenge parents who use manipulation and disguised compliance (pretending to follow advice), to make sure the needs of the child remain the most important thing.
- All agencies need to have the confidence to challenge or question decisions taken by other professionals in other agencies.
- All staff must have a shared understanding of neglect and its impact on the safety, wellbeing and development of children.

Allegations Management

(Allegations Management is where we deal with concerns that somebody may not be safe to work with children).

The Allegations Management process within Gloucestershire is managed through the GSCB Business Unit. The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for Gloucestershire is also the Safeguarding Children Development Officer (education). The LADO gives advice and guidance in relation to allegations as well as monitoring the progress of cases to ensure they are managed consistently across agencies and private employers and are brought to a close as quickly as possible.



What will happen next?

GSCB Business Plan 2014/15

OBJECTIVE 1

What:

Communicate the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Why:

One of the key roles of the GSCB is to ensure that there are clear policies and procedures in place for how agencies will work together to safeguard children and promote their welfare and that these have been effectively communicated across the workforce.

How:

Monitor Effectiveness of GSCB safeguarding communications.

Engage practitioners, partners and young people in accessible information.

Review the content and quality of safeguarding communication.

Develop policies where there are gaps in outward facing communications.

OBJECTIVE 2

What:

Hold each other to account: Evaluate how well partners are working together to safeguard children and young people, build on good practice and challenge poor.

Why:

In order to drive up standards, partner agencies need to challenge areas of weakness so that there is a culture of continuous improvement across the GSCB. It is equally important to share good practice so that this can be built upon.

How:

Monitor Effectiveness of partner agencies working together.

Engage partners in healthy challenge of each others practice.

Review multi-agency challenge.

Develop areas where gaps or weaknesses have been identified.





OBJECTIVE 3

What:

Ensure the safeguarding needs of particularly vulnerable children and young people are being addressed.

Why:

All children and young people are vulnerable but particular groups are more so. It is important that these groups are identified and their specific safeguarding needs are addressed using a targeted approach as part of our 3 year plan.

How:

Monitor Effectiveness of how needs are being addressed.

Engage with practitioners, young people and the wider community.

Review how well needs are being met.

Develop mechanisms to ensure that the voice of the child is heard across all GSCB activity.

OBJECTIVE 4

What:

Ensure that multi-agency learning is used to improve working practice and is monitored through multi-agency quality assurance.

Why:

It is important to learn from serious incidents. Lessons from case reviews and serious case reviews can help prevent further incidents from occurring. Further development of the systems approach will enable lessons about process to be addressed, further strengthening safeguarding policy and procedure.

How:

Monitor Effectiveness of the Serious Case Review Response Plan to drive improvements across the safeguarding system.

Engage so practitioners will understand what has changed on a strategic level as a result of a case review/child death.

Review cases through CDOP, Near-Miss Panel and Serious Case Reviews to ensure that trends are highlighted and learning is both shared and acted upon.

Develop an understanding of different systems based approaches.

For all the details within the GSCB Annual Report,
please click [here](#) to read the full version.