

Appendix:

Outcome of safeguarding inspection report Action Plan

Brent Children and Families Department

Action Plan in response to the Ofsted Inspection of local authority arrangements for the protection of children, October 2012

This action plan has been produced in response to the recommendations made as a result of the inspection of Brent's arrangements for the protection of children which took place 22-31 October 2012. As the plan follows the format of the Ofsted inspections, the recommendations and actions required cover all aspects of the work, from management and leadership to front-line practice.

This action plan will be implemented alongside individual service improvement plans already in place, representing the ambition of the council and its partners to make a positive difference for children in need of safeguarding or who are in the care of Brent Council. Specifically those plans are:

- The Locality and disabled children's team service plan,
- The Safeguarding service plan
- The Learning and Development Training Plan and
- The Signs of Safety Implementation plan.

Monitoring, Accountability and Scrutiny arrangements:

The monitoring arrangements for the plan are as follows:

- The Children's Social Care Management Team on a monthly basis.
- Children and Families Departmental Management team on a monthly basis.
- Corporate Management Team and Local Safeguarding Children Board a bi-monthly basis.
- Brent Children's Partnership on a quarterly basis.
- Multi- agency child protection meeting on a quarterly basis.
- Children and Families Scrutiny Committee and Corporate Parenting group.
- The Lead Member for Children and Families will have a key role in the monitoring of progress.

Evidence of impact

The Action Plan will be updated on a monthly basis and provide evidence of progress against identified actions and compliance within timescales. This will form the basis of the regular monitoring. **A quarterly data set and report (Improving Services and Outcomes)** will be prepared by the Assistant Director, Children's Social Care, which will summarise progress and evidence how the identified actions are improving services and the difference they are making to children and their families in Brent. This will be submitted to the groups identified above and form the basis of the quarterly programme of review.

A robust programme of audit will be put into place to ensure compliance, which will include managers at all levels within the organisation including the Director of Children's Service and the Director of Legal and Procurement.

Any concerns arising from the monitoring programmes will be conveyed directly to the Director of Children and Families.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN SAFEGUARDING FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

1.	IMMEDIATE Ofsted Recommendation	Review all referrals in one of the locality teams identified by the inspectors in the past six months that have resulted in no further action or a children in need plan to ensure that children are safe and that any actions or plans have been implemented.			
Required Outcome		Actions	Lead	By when/ Accountable to	Evidence of progress
All vulnerable children and young people managed in the locality social work teams in Brent are kept safe with effective plans to support them and their families.		1. Managers with support from the Principal Officer Quality Assurance will audit all relevant cases .Immediate corrective action will be taken where concerns are identified.	Head of Localities	31.12.12 Assistant Director, Children and Families	1. <i>All cases have been reviewed, and in all of those, children were judged to be safe. In one case there was a query about the original decision and remedial action has now been taken. .</i>

2.	IMMEDIATE Ofsted Recommendation	The Brent Safeguarding Children's Board should ensure that the police public protection department promptly exchanges appropriate information with partner agencies and promptly participates in child protection strategy discussions or meetings.			
Required Outcome		Actions	Lead	By when/ Accountable to	Evidence of progress
All children and young people in Brent are effectively safeguarded by prompt joint investigations and decision making where child protection concerns are referred.		1. Joint protocol to be agreed between the Police and Children's Social Care to ensure that there is a clear pathway to progress Section 47 enquiries with clear lines of responsibility for CAIT and PPD and other police departments.	Head of Safeguarding	Director of Children and Families 7.12.12	1. <i>An interim protocol has been developed and agreed between police and social care. This will be finalised at a meeting between parties on 14.1.13.</i>
		2. Brent social care to conduct audit to ensure that the Police are responding in a prompt and timely manner, to all requests to share information and attend Section 47 Strategy meetings where appropriate	Head of Localities	1.4.13	2. <i>The new arrangements will be monitored closely by Head of Service and an audit (LSCB) will take place in March 2013 to evaluate overall effectiveness.</i>
		3. To develop a joint protocol with the police for the operation of the MASH with a start date of 1 st July 2013.	Head of Localities	31.04.13	3. <i>A joint protocol for the agencies will be agreed in advance of the MASH start date. It has been built into the MASH development plan.</i>

3.	IMMEDIATE Ofsted Recommendation	Ensure that child protection plans in relation to children with disabilities aged over 14 years are robust and are fully implemented.			
Required Outcome		Actions	Lead	By when/ Accountable to	Evidence of progress
That all disabled children aged 14 and over with child protection plans are properly safeguarded with robust plans that protect them.		1. All CP Plans for children with disabilities in the Transition team to be reviewed to ensure that plans are robust and that agreed actions have been progressed.	Head of Support Planning & Review	Director Adult Social Care 31.12.12	1. 100% of cases have been reviewed by the Head of Transitions service and appropriate actions taken in each case to ensure children are safe and plans are progressing.
		2. Practitioners and managers within Transition team to be given training with regard to Signs of Safety risk assessment and child protection planning	Head of Support Planning & Review	February/March 2013	2. The Transitions team have been included within the roll out of Signs of Safety programme and all will have received training by March 2013. .
		3. Further Audit of CP Plans within Transitions Team within 3-6 months to test that improvements have been made and that CP Plans are more robust	Head of Support Planning & Review	31.03.13	3. A further audit to check on-going compliance will be conducted by the Head of Safeguarding. .
		4. LSCB to examine the low number of CWD cases subject to a child protection plan		June 2013	4. Built into LSCB Audit programme for 2013/14

4.	IMMEDIATE Ofsted Recommendation	Ensure that strategy discussions are clearly recorded and contain actions agreed, individual responsibilities and timescales.			
Required Outcome		Actions	Lead	By when/ Accountable to	Evidence of progress
That Children and Young People are better safeguarded through Child Protection investigations		1. Managers to undertake immediate development work with teams regarding the recording and prompt distribution of Strategy Meetings, Discussions and Actions	Head of Localities	Assistant Director, Children and Families 31.12.12	1 The Head of Service has issued advice to managers and social work staff about the expected standard of recording for strategy discussions. Further development work with teams to deliver improved practice on strategy discussions was delivered in January 2013.
		2. Named safeguarding leads for health to be identified as contacts for Section 47 enquiries and strategy meetings and discussions	Head of Localities	31.12.12	2 Named leads in health for strategy discussions have been identified and shared with social care teams
		3. An audit of Strategy Meeting and Discussion records to be undertaken in 3 months to evaluate the extent of multi agency involvement, the clarity of the recording, the prompt distribution of minutes and the use of the escalation policy in the event of disagreement	Head of Safeguarding	31.04. 13	3 Built into LSCB audit programme for March 2013.

5.	IMMEDIATE Ofsted Recommendation	Ensure that the outcome of referrals is routinely notified to referring agencies.			
Required Outcome		Actions	Lead	By when/ Accountable to	Evidence of progress
That all agencies are clear with regard to the outcome of referrals into social care and that appropriate safeguarding action has been taken.		1. Social workers and Team Managers to provide feedback to referring agencies in 100% of cases in line with Working Together (i.e. in writing and within 24 hours) and evidence this on FWi	Head of Localities	Assistant Director, Children and Families 31.12.13	1. The Head of Service has met with all front line managers and reinforced the requirement to feedback to referrers in line with procedures. This expectation has been cascaded to front line staff through team meetings.
		2. Current process to give feedback on outcomes will be reviewed for improvements.	Head of Localities	March 2013	2. Process being reviewed by Head of Service. Improvements have already been identified and implemented.
		3. Audit of feedback to referrers in 2 months to check progress.	Head of Localities	March 2013	3. An initial audit has been conducted and indicates that outcomes are being fed back to referrers. A full audit to take place by end of February 2013 to identify levels of feedback

6.	IMMEDIATE Ofsted Recommendation	Ensure that assessments contain sufficient analysis of information to inform risk and to understand the impact of the situation from the child's perspective, and that the outcome of assessments, plans and key documents are explained and given to parents.			
Required Outcome		Actions	Lead	By when/ Accountable to	Evidence of progress
Children are safeguarded by high quality assessments which contain good analysis of risk		1. Training to all managers and practitioners in Children's Social Care on the Signs of Safety (SOS) approach, to assist analysis skills of risk has continued and is being refreshed and delivered to all staff.	Head of Safeguarding	Assistant Director, Children and Families Dec 2012 – March 2013	1. 70 front line staff already trained. Further training sessions booked February to July 2013 for all (80) remaining staff
		2. Practitioners will use SOS tools to work directly with children to obtain their wishes and feelings to incorporate these into assessments.	Head of Localities and Head of Care Planning	Nov 2012 and continuing	2. Tools for working with young people have been distributed to teams and are being utilised.
		3. New supervision tool and process introduced which includes reflective supervision of cases and this is a key role of the Advanced Practitioner in social work teams	Head of Localities	December 2012	3. Completed. Further training session took place in January 2013 with managers to improve risk assessment skills.
		4. Direct observation of supervision by senior manager to ensure that improved analysis is built into assessments	Head of Safeguarding	December 2012	4. Senior Managers are observing two supervision session per year to ensure that good analysis and robust risk assessment are keeping children safe.
		5. Training to be provided to Case Conference Chairs to improve their use of the Signs of Safety approach in the Conference setting. Accommodation needs to be addressed to allow all participants clear sight of the recording board.	Head of safeguarding & Quality Assurance Principal Officer	Delivered 14.12.12	5. Training provided to conference chairs in Dec 12. Accommodation will be addressed in the new conference facilities following the move to the new Civic Centre.

	6. Audit to take place to check quality of assessments, in particular analysis of risk across safeguarding and locality work	Head of Safeguarding	May 2013	6. Planned into QA programme and to be reported in quarterly "Improving Service and Outcomes" document.
Parents are fully engaged in the work of the department and understand professional assessments and concerns.	7. Child protection case conference chairs to check and record that parents have received social work (and other) reports prior to Conference (within timescales) and that these have been discussed by the social worker with the parents or carers.	Head of Safeguarding	31.01.13	7. The Chairs Checklist has been revised to take account of this. Child protection chairs now raise Safeguarding alerts with the relevant manager when CP reports have not been shared with parents/carers in advance of Conferences.
	8. Feedback from parents and carers is obtained both during and following Case Conferences, to assess whether they feel fully informed about the process and understand how to complain.	Head of Safeguarding	28.2.13	8. Information routinely collected by Safeguarding team indicates that parents do feel included in the CP conference and the risk assessment process but a full report on this data will be provided to the Social Care Management Team by end of January 2013 and will inform the next Improving Services and Outcomes report.
	9. Themed multi agency audit by LCSB to examine parents/carers engagement with assessment processes and to ensure that reports from all agencies are shared with them in a timely manner.	Head of Safeguarding	31.4.13	9. Is built into LCSB audit programme by the audit and outcomes sub-group.

7	IMMEDIATE Ofsted Recommendation	Ensure that all decisions to remove children from child protection plans are robustly risk assessed.			
Required Outcome		Actions	Lead	By when/ Accountable to	Evidence of progress
To ensure that all children are properly safeguarded when formal CP Plans are ending and that a robust step down process to Child in Need or transfer out is implemented and evidenced		1. Audit work to be carried out to check recent larger sample of de-registered cases to ensure that step down to Child In Need was safe and appropriate decision.	Head of Safeguarding	Assistant Director, Children and Families Nov 2012	<p>1. <i>Independent Review conducted of de-registrations of CP Plans in October 2012, did not reveal concerns. A further audit was undertaken in October 12 of a separate sample and highlighted no concerns</i></p> <p><i>Principal Officer, Quality Assurance, has reviewed all cases where children were removed from CP plans within the last 12 months . Report on this to social care management team in January 2013 and reported in quarterly Improving Services and Outcome report.</i></p>
		2. All cases where there is a recommendation to de-register the child at the First Review Conference to be reviewed in advance by the Head of Service	Head of Localities	01.12.12	2. <i>This agreement is now in place.</i>

RECOMMENDATIONS IN SAFEGUARDING FOR ACTION WITHIN THREE MONTHS

1. Within 3 months Ofsted Recommendation	Ensure that child protection conferences are consistently well managed and chaired.			
Required Outcome	Actions	Lead	By when/ Accountable to	Evidence of progress
To ensure that each child and family subject to the CP Conference process receives a fair, transparent and consistently high quality service from the Conference team.	1. Direct observations of Child Protection Case Conferences by new HOS with audit feedback of each conference chair..	Head of Safeguarding	Assistant Director, Children and Families Nov/December 2012 and continuing monthly.	1. <i>A programme of direct observation is in place and is an on-going component of the QA process.</i>
	2. Review of service user and professional feedback of Conferences to identify areas for improvement and create improvement plan.	Head of Safeguarding	31.01.13	2. <i>Planned for end Jan 2013.Report provided to Departmental Management Team in February 2013</i>
	3. Arrange training for Case Conference Chairs (consistent with Signs of Safety approach) to enhance chairing and assessment skills.	Head of Safeguarding	01.12.12	3. <i>Training delivered to case conference chairs on 14.12.12. Learning will feed into Signs of Safety Action Plan and training for managers and practitioners to improve child protection process across the service.</i>
	4. Audit of de-registrations of CP Plans (as in item 7.2 above) to feed into learning and improvement of service delivery	Head of Safeguarding	31.01.13	4. <i>Work reviewing de-registered plans has been completed.</i>

	5. Joint work with Locality Service to train managers and practitioners in Sign of Safety assessment skills and analysis of risk in child protection work.	Head of Safeguarding	Training being delivered Dec 2012 – March 2013	5. <i>An Action Plan for Signs of Safety Implementation is being revised for sign off in early January 2013</i>
	6. Observations and audit of child protection conferences to be repeated following training and improvement programme	Head of Safeguarding	31.03.13	6. <i>Built into the LSCB audit programme (2013/14)</i>
	7. A report to be provided to the LSCB on the quality of child protection conferences following the above actions.	Head of Safeguarding	31.6.12	7. <i>A report provided to LSCB to update on progress and identify further required improvements.</i>

2.	Within 3 months Ofsted Recommendation	Ensure that children in need and child protection plans are of a consistently high quality, that they contain specific targeted outcomes and contain a case specific statement of risk and contingency plans.			
Required Outcome		Actions	Lead	By when/ Accountable to	Evidence of progress
That all children who have Child Protection or Child in Need plans are properly safeguarded with robust plans that are SMART, outcome focussed with a contingency plan.		1. Training to be delivered to all staff regarding the Signs of Safety approach to risk assessment to improve the quality and consistency of plan	Head of Safeguarding	Assistant Director, Children and Families Dec 2012 – March 2013	1. Two day training and one day refresher have been delivered to staff. All staff will have completed some SOS training by end of March 2013.
		2. Audit of a sample of CP and CIN Plans across each locality team to be commissioned to assess for SMART plans, clear statement of risk and contingency plans.	Head of Safeguarding	28.02.13	2. Built into departmental themed audit programme for 2013/14.
		3. A further multi agency audit will check for outcomes focus and effective partnership safeguarding work as part of the LSCB Quality Assurance Framework. A further development programme will develop from this audit.	Head of Safeguarding /LSCB QA group	31.03.13	3. Built into LSCB audit and outcomes sub group programme for 2013/14
		4. All CP plans are reviewed through supervision with team managers every 2 months.		28.2.13	4. New Supervision Policy was implemented December 2012 which requires all team Managers to review all CP plans in supervision every 2 months and this is recorded on the supervision template on FWi.
		5. Children In Need processes to be reviewed and improved in order to develop SMARTER and more robust processes.	Head of Safeguarding /LSCB QA group	Sept 2013	5. New CIN process have been introduced and embedded in practice. Advanced Practitioners audit 40 cases per month. Advanced Practitioners undertake 1:1 meetings with every social worker to discuss and advise upon CIN Plans to ensure they are robust with specific outcomes.

3.	Within 3 months Ofsted Recommendation	Ensure that all core groups rigorously monitor, review and develop the child protection plan and that the meetings are recorded.			
Required Outcome		Actions	Lead	By when/ Accountable to	Evidence of progress
That Core Groups function effectively as part of multi agency work to safeguard children and young people.		1. Review of current process of Core Group recording and process for reviewing CP Plans	Head of Localities	Assistant Director, Children and Families 01.03.13	1. Head of Service has reinforced expectations around expected standards of practice in relation to the management of the core groups. . Principal Officers are leading the implementation of improvements through team meetings.
		2. A review of the core group template will take place to ascertain whether it is fit for purpose.		31.1.13	2. The template has been reviewed and is fit for purpose.
		3. Multi agency themed audit of CP Plans in recommendation 2 above will also address effectiveness of Core Groups and attendance by multi- agency partners.	Q & A PO	31,3,13	3. To incorporate into audit as per recommendation 2.

4.	Within 3 months Ofsted Recommendation	Ensure that risk management plans are developed as part of domestic violence risk assessments.			
Required Outcome		Actions	Lead	By when/ Accountable to	Evidence of progress
To ensure that all children and young people living in situations where Domestic Violence is a risk are properly safeguarded through a robust risk assessment process and safety plan.		1. Review of current DV risk assessments undertaken including the template utilised.	Head of Localities	Assistant Director, Children and Families 31.03.12	1. Head of Service has reinforced expectations with locality safeguarding teams that a risk management plan is in place in all cases where it is deemed necessary. New IDVA posts have been recruited and are reviewing risk assessment processes currently used. .
		2. New IDVA posts in children social care to develop good practice models for DV assessment for social care staff. IDVA's to hold surgeries in social work teams to improve quality of risk assessments.	Head of Localities	28.2.13	2. IDVAs are working on good practice model for DV assessment to share with all social care staff. IDVAs will hold regular surgeries for social workers to discuss DV cases 1:1 for advice
		3. Joint work with police to ensure that risk assessments thresholds are shared and benchmarked for consistency	Head of Safeguarding	9.2.13	3. Discussions with Police to progress issue via regular forum with social care managers
		4. To develop a clear protocol and process for DV risk assessment and risk management plans in readiness for MASH implementation date.	Head of Localities	30.4.13	4. Head of localities to action through the MASH implementation group
		5. LSCB is to commission a multi-agency audit of cases to identify progress in improving outcomes for children. .	Head of Safeguarding	30.6.13	5. This is built into the LSCB audit programme

5.	Within 3 months Ofsted Recommendation	Ensure that social work managers confirm that social workers have undertaken actions assigned to them within child protection plans and record this in case supervision.			
Required Outcome		Actions	Lead	By when/ Accountable to	Evidence of progress
That managers are effectively checking the work of social workers, particularly in relation to the progress of CP Plans through regular supervision and recording this routinely.		1. New Supervision policy with improved processes to be introduced to the social work service to ensure that CP plans are monitored and recorded through the supervision process.	Head of Localities	Assistant Director, Children and Families 28.2.13	1. New Supervision process implemented December 2012 all staff are now required to adhere to this.
		2. Briefings to all staff to confirm any changes in procedures or process required to ensure clear understanding, through team meetings.	Head of Localities	28.2.12	2. The new Supervision Policy has been discussed in Social care Managers meetings and will be cascaded to all team meetings by end of January 2013
		3. Auditing of supervision records to check compliance with any new requirements	Head of Localities	30.6.13	3. Built into themed audit programme