

Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board Business Plan 2016-19



What is Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board?

Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board [NSCB] is a statutory partnership that agrees how its member organisations co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Newcastle. It is committed to improving the safety of all children and young people and is proactive in driving forward improvements to minimise the risk of abuse and neglect.

Vision

Partners in Newcastle, led by the Wellbeing for Life Board, have a shared ambition for people who live, work or learn in Newcastle to equally enjoy positive wellbeing and good health.

To support this ambition NSCB's vision for children is to ensure that Newcastle is a safer city for vulnerable children at risk of abuse and neglect.

How do we identify our local needs?

Our approach to understanding our local needs is drawn from a number of sources, which includes what children and young people tell us; Newcastle Future Needs Assessment/[Know Newcastle](#); internal and external reviews; inspection; audit; performance information; national drivers and research.

We know that there are approximately 67, 000 children and young people under the age of 18 in Newcastle; with 59% of 0-4 year olds; 61% of primary school pupils and 58% of secondary school pupils living in the 30% most deprived Areas. 29% of children under 16 years live in poverty, compared to the England and Wales National average of 21%.

Some families are complex and multiple factors are present which impact upon parenting capacity and family function. We know that domestic violence was an issue in 33% of all initial assessments by Children's Social Care, which also included concerns relating to parental mental health, parental alcohol misuse and physical abuse and neglect (*Children's Trust Board 2015*).

Research shows that children who grow up in poverty can be more vulnerable to some forms of maltreatment, particularly neglect and physical abuse. They also have an increased risk of adverse experiences and negative outcomes, both in the short and long term. These outcomes include poor health (physical and mental), death from illness or accident, educational disadvantage, unemployment, poverty during adulthood, criminalisation for anti-social behaviour or offending, as well as becoming victims of crime. Children who experience both poverty and maltreatment are doubly disadvantaged because the experience of maltreatment may in

turn further undermine life chances in the long term (*NSPCC 2008*).

Together, the learning and findings from a wide range of data sources informs the Business Plan priorities.

The Business Plan

Sets out the strategic direction and priorities for the work of NSCB. It reinforces its role in leading the safeguarding agenda, challenging the work of partner organisations and reinforcing a learning culture, which is influenced by the views of children and young people. The Business Plan is supported by a costed **annual delivery plan**, which sets out NSCB actions for the year ahead.

Priorities

NSCB has reviewed its strategic priorities and agreed for 2016-2019 they are:

- ✚ Protecting vulnerable children and young people
- ✚ Leadership
- ✚ Learning and improving

Protecting vulnerable children and young people

Protection refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer significant harm. For those children who are vulnerable this means ensuring that services are targeted, responsive and efficient and everything that can be done is being done to achieve the best outcomes and

reducing the risks and challenges they face.

The Munro review of child protection in 2011 strengthened the view that early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from foundation years through to the teenage years.

In order to ensure the effectiveness of early help arrangements in Newcastle and the targeting of resources, NSCB will monitor the quality of the early help assessment [CAF] and planning and management oversight, through audits; incorporating key 'early help' indicators within its performance scorecard and consideration of training needs to support professional development and effective practice (Ofsted 2015).

NSCB will continue to take a particular interest in those groups of particularly vulnerable children and young people at risk of harm from: child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse; children with a disability; neglect; female genital mutilation; domestic abuse; radicalisation; self-harm and suicide; babies and young children; parental substance misuse and mental health issues, to ensure that safeguarding arrangements are robust and effective.

This will be achieved through audit and evaluation activity; ensuring key strategies and actions plans are in place and progressed; update reports into the Board; joint working with the Safeguarding Adults Board and

partners; facilitating task and finish groups and ensuring there is sufficient, quality training to support professional and practitioner development and effective practice.

Leadership

Working Together (2015) states that everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe. It is vital that organisations and individuals understand the role they have to play and that these arrangements are strongly led and promoted by the chief officers in all organisations.

Organisations protecting children need to reflect on the quality of services and learn from their own practice and that of others. Good practice should be shared so that there is a growing understanding of what works well.

Effective safeguarding arrangements should be underpinned by the key principle that for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.

To achieve this NSCB will:

- ✚ Provide collective leadership across its members
- ✚ Have effective governance arrangements and operating structure
- ✚ Have an informed understanding of safeguarding arrangements and performance in single agencies
- ✚ Have clear lines of accountability with other

strategic partnerships and be able to demonstrate its influence on the work of those partnerships

- ✚ Operate a robust business planning and outcomes focused approach to its work, routinely using feedback from children, young people and their families to evaluate impact
- ✚ Promote a child centred approach to strategic planning, service provision and practice
- ✚ Provide evidence through data, reviews, self-assessments and audits, to assist the understanding of how safe children are in Newcastle so that the Board can influence and improve outcomes for children and young people
- ✚ Strengthen participation, ensuring partners have robust and effective systems, processes and policies in place, which they adhere to
- ✚ Promote a strong culture of mutual challenge
- ✚ Ensure that all agencies provide evidence of the work they are undertaking to safeguard children and young people
- ✚ Challenge partners and each other and maintain a challenge log
- ✚ Continue to monitor performance and outcomes to identify key issues to ensure children are safe
- ✚ Facilitate joint partnership events and development sessions

Learning and improving

NSCB [Learning and Improvement Framework](#) provides the foundation for how the Board drives improvements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Newcastle. The framework covers a range of case review methods, practice audits and self-assessments, which support NSCB organisations to be clear about their roles and responsibilities, learn from experience and improve services.

To support this NSCB will:

- ✚ Monitoring its performance scorecard on a quarterly basis
- ✚ Undertake multi-agency audits to understand how effectively the whole system is working
- ✚ Ensure practitioners have the skills and knowledge to be effective in practice
- ✚ Ensure learning from audits, serious case reviews, child death reviews and other practice related reviews reaches frontline practitioners, is used to develop practice and service provision and test the desired change has taken place
- ✚ Continue to build upon and strengthen how the voice of children and young people shapes and influences the work of the Board
- ✚ Support work to reduce the number of child protection plans and Looked After children in Newcastle based upon detailed assessment of trends
- ✚ Undertake reviews and evaluations of the effectiveness of training and procedures
- ✚ Listen to those practitioners on the frontline through the facilitation of practitioner learning events

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