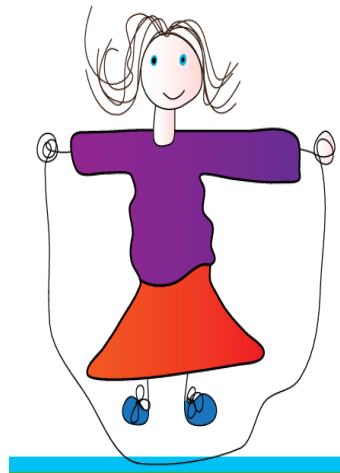
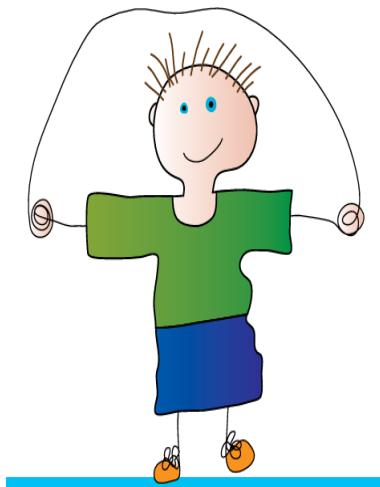


# Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board

## Annual Report 2011 – 2012



## Contents

<b>1. Independent Chair’s Introduction and Summary of Progress in 2011 – 2012 .....</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
<b>2. Living in Bedford Borough .....</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>3. Inspection findings 2011 - 2012 .....</b>	<b>Page 8</b>
<b>4. Summary of activity in 2011 – 2012 .....</b>	<b>Page 10</b>
<b>5. Individual partner agency reports .....</b>	<b>Page 28</b>
<b>6. Governance and accountability arrangements .....</b>	<b>Page 40</b>
<b>7. Monitoring and evaluation/quality assurance activity .....</b>	<b>Page 45</b>
<b>8. Auditing of Partners’ Compliance with Safeguarding Standards (s11 of the Children’s Act 2004).....</b>	<b>Page 53</b>
<b>9. Engagement of children and young people.....</b>	<b>Page 54</b>
<b>10. Priorities for 2012 – 2013 .....</b>	<b>Page 55</b>

## 1. Independent Chair's Introduction and Summary of Progress 2011-12

This is the annual report of the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board. The report looks back on safeguarding activities in the Borough between April 2011 and March 2012 and looks forward to the progress to be made and challenges anticipated in 2012 –2013. The Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board, (BBSCB), became independently chaired in 2009, following the restructuring of the local authorities in Bedfordshire. It brings together the main organisations working with children, young people and families in the area so that they can coordinate their work, evaluate the effectiveness of multi agency safeguarding activity and ensure that appropriate multi-agency training on safeguarding issues is provided within the Borough.

Multi agency safeguarding activity is externally inspected and evaluated by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission.

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the work undertaken by partner agencies across the Borough and as the Independent Chair of the LSCB to give an impartial perspective of the strengths and weaknesses of the systems that operate to keep children and young people safe. This perspective is informed by formal inspections but also by the routine experience of agencies working together at strategic and operational levels over the year and gaining insight into what works well and what needs to improve.

This summary is written in the light of the enormous commitment of agencies working with children and young people to improving the way that we work together to keep them safe and promote their wellbeing.

### Significant Strengths

#### 1. Commitment to the LSCB and its work

This report is produced at a time when the partner agencies face major upheaval. All public sector and voluntary organisations are struggling to reduce their budgets in a time of national austerity. Within this environment for the year 2011-12, the financial commitments to support the work of the Board were maintained.

#### 2. Governance

There has been significant improvement this year in the governance and accountability within agencies for safeguarding. There is much evidence of individual agencies developing their own internal management arrangements to oversee policy practice and performance in safeguarding both adults and children. There is evidence of a decreasing reliance by partners on the local authority to provide the framework for safeguarding work and an increasing understanding of the responsibility of agencies to be proactive in developing and supporting good practice.

#### 3. Partnership

There have been some good examples of partnership working such as in the development of the Sexual Assault Referral Centre, the development of the triage service for domestic abuse notifications, the joined up work across the three LSCB's, with Luton and Central Bedfordshire, on sexual abuse through exploitation and

increased capacity for working with family members experiencing and perpetrating domestic abuse.

#### **4. Sexual abuse**

The development of the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) has brought clarity to the arrangements for a medical response to children aged under 13 and older young people. There is now a single care pathway across Bedfordshire and appropriate arrangements to support and care for young people who have been victims of abuse and assault.

Implementation of the recommendations of the Child J Serious Case Review has resulted in some national guidance for use by the Crown Prosecution Service, Police and LSCBs to support information sharing where there are simultaneous criminal proceedings and a serious case review. The briefing sessions on the grooming of professionals by paedophiles was powerfully presented to nearly 300 practitioners and resulted in immediate changes to those individuals thinking and practice.

#### **4. Domestic abuse**

There is evidence of increased capacity for work with adults who are perpetrators or victims of domestic abuse across many agencies serving the Borough e.g. maternity services, Police, the triage service for notifications of abuse to children's services, the Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme, Caring Dads. However, there are still limited services for children and young people experiencing domestic abuse.

#### **5. Child Protection**

There has been a strong focus throughout the year on the core business of the Board, the child protection process. Good quality activity data has resulted in good discussion and challenge by the Board. Bedford Borough Council has reviewed the reasons for high numbers of children subject to assessments, section 47 enquires and initial child protection conferences and are working on reducing his number, which has reduced over the year.

### **Significant Challenges**

#### **1. Capacity**

Whilst financial resources for the work of Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board have been maintained, the human resources have become more pressed. This isn't just in terms of numbers of staff available to carry out their roles, but the time they have to dedicate to it. This has been demonstrated in the difficulties some representatives have had finding the time to attend meetings to take forward the work of Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board. This has included the main Board meetings themselves and also a number of the sub groups. Inevitably, this slows the momentum of Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board's business and creates a sense of diminished significance being given to the work of Board.

#### **2. Organisational Change**

Capacity is also being affected by the fact that key safeguarding partners are facing specific restructuring of their systems and governance which could have significant impacts on the safeguarding of children.

#### **NHS Restructuring**

Local health services are undergoing major changes with the development of Clinical Commissioning Groups and Local Offices of the National Commissioning Board. Clarity is starting to appear in the way in which the new health structures will ensure that children are safe, but the Board will need to find new ways of coordinating the efforts of GPs and other clinicians to continue to develop greater safeguarding

effectiveness. It is particularly important that the new leaders in health recognise that safeguarding children is a key part of their new role.

### **Health and Wellbeing Board**

In addition to these NHS changes, the relationship between the health organisations and the Council is altering with the introduction of the shadow Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) in 2012-13. The Board will lead strategies for the health of children and it will be a challenge for members to keep a balance between the needs of the young and the pressures of the more extensive provision of services to a growing elderly population. The relationships between BBSCB and the Bedford Borough Health and Wellbeing Board have yet to be agreed. Clear processes which allow the BBSCB to effectively contribute to and challenge the new strategies and their outcomes are a critical requirement for the two Boards to work well in the long term without the burden of excessive bureaucracy.

### **Election of a Police and Crime Commissioner**

Bedfordshire Police will face a new challenge in its governance with the election of a Police and Crime Commissioner in November 2012. This role will carry responsibility for the development of the community safety strategy in the Borough. Current community safety approaches make a significant contribution to safeguarding children through their focus on substance abuse and domestic abuse. Children are at risk from adults they live with who abuse alcohol or illegal drugs or where relationships are violent. In some households substance abuse and violence is aggravated by adult mental ill-health leaving children extremely vulnerable. Community Safety Strategies are particularly important in addressing these behaviours and reducing risk to the young. The election of the Commissioner brings a risk to existing services, but also an opportunity for a greater impact on such parental behaviours as a new Police and Crime Strategy for the coming years is developed.

### **The role of Schools and Children's Centres**

Changes in national legislation have required and enabled schools to work more independently from the Local Authority. Whilst these new freedoms bring opportunities they also bring increasing responsibilities for governors and management teams to ensure that schools are resilient and effective in safeguarding. Schools and for the younger ages Children's Centres, also have a key role to play in identifying children suffering from the early impact of abuse and neglect, offering appropriate support and working with partner agencies to help families. The capacity within the local authority to support schools in areas such as bullying, e safety, attendance and behaviour is reducing with the increased expectation that schools will commission these services themselves. In times of reducing budgets such early help is at risk.

It is generally recognised that during periods of change, organisations experience a reduction in their operational performance. There is therefore a risk that through restructuring and relocation of staff, organisations which have been very successful in safeguarding children may 'take their eye off the ball' to the detriment of vulnerable children in Bedford Borough.

The Safeguarding Board has a duty to ensure that this does not happen and to continually remind directors and managers of the need to monitor operational effectiveness. To date this has been achieved but the coming year will continue to test the resilience of partners.

### **3. Performance Management**

Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board need;

- better analysis of data to enable us to priorities the right groups of children.
- to be able to evidence that our involvement makes a positive difference.

This means counting the right things and moving from just auditing numbers to including quality assurance, and measuring outcomes for children. We need to bring together all sources of relevant information that has the potential to alert Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board at an early stage to concerns, patterns or trends.

The Board needs to find ways of evidencing the impact of its work more directly. The linking of outcomes for children to specific work carried out by the Board is complex but there are areas where impact is more easily measured such as the commissioning of services, improvements in practice as a result of training, reviews or audits, the effectiveness of care pathways.

#### **4. Early Help**

Following the government's Munro Report and recently published draft of the Working Together guidelines, BBSCB is likely to have an obligation to evaluate the success of early help in reducing the number of children and young people who have to access specialist care and health services or who become young offenders.

The challenge for Bedford Borough is to have in place clear pathways for access to effective evidence based services for all who need them. This includes services for adults who are parents to meet their own needs which may arise as a result of health issues, mental health, substance abuse, alcohol, disability or domestic abuse

The community and voluntary sector has been effected very significantly by the spending cuts. The change in the allocation of grants and funding to the voluntary and community sector in Bedford Borough has had a significant effect on its infrastructure for providing grassroots services. Members of the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board have been encouraged to consider how their agencies may be able to support the voluntary sector, but as this comes at a time of cuts and reforms across the whole sector, such collaborative working is under greater pressure.

The LSCB will need to be clear about its role in relation to early help and to provide a realistic but robust challenge to the co-ordination and effectiveness of such services. This has been included in the 2012-13 BBSCB business plan as a specific project which partners will need to contribute to over the coming months.

#### **5. Partnership**

The challenge of the formalising the links between the LSCB and the Health and Wellbeing Board have been outlined above. There is a need for clarity about the relationship with the refocused Children's Trust and also with the Community Safety Partnership.

#### **6. Training**

Multi agency safeguarding training provided by the LSCB continues to be popular and valued by partner agencies. The ability to fund such training is reducing across all partner agencies especially as they focus on their own agency responsibilities for delivering good quality single agency safeguarding training. In 2012-13 this issue is likely to become more acute and some rethinking about how such training is funded and delivered will be required.



**Laura Eades Independent Chair BBLSCB**

## 2. Living in Bedford Borough

2.1 Bedford Borough Council became a unitary authority in April 2009, taking over the responsibility for children, schools and families from Bedfordshire County Council. Bedford Borough Council area has approximately 35,600 children and young people up to and including 17 years of age. This equates to 22.1% of the local population.

2.2 The overall population within the Borough has grown considerably since 2001, increasing from 148,100 to 160,800 by 2010. It is expected that a total of 16,000 new homes will be constructed within the Borough (between 2001 and 2021), many of which have already been completed and occupied. This means the overall population is projected to increase further by an additional 7.6% by 2021, compared to 2010. Of the 2,119 births in 2010, over a third of children were born to mothers who were born outside the UK.

2.3 Bedford Borough has a very diverse community and this is reflected by 35.6% of children attending schools within the Borough coming from non- White British backgrounds. For 20% of children at school English is not their first language. Of children and young people aged under 18, 20% are living in poverty; this is higher than the comparator average of 17.6%. The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index shows that nine areas within Bedford Borough are amongst the 10% most deprived in England.

2.4 Since Bedford Borough became a unitary authority, the number of children subject to a child protection plan has risen by 46%. The number of looked after children has risen by 45% (from 135 to 196). As a result of these rises, Bedford Borough is now broadly in line with comparator averages. At the time of the inspection the 196 looked after children comprised 55 young children aged 0-4, 94 school age children, and 47 young people aged 16 and over. Additionally, the leaving care service currently works with 78 care leavers.

2.5 In total there are 29,785 children of statutory school age attending Bedford Borough schools, of which 5,970 (20%) have a special educational need. In 2010 a Department for Education publication showed 44.3% of children looked after in Bedford Borough for 12 months or more had a statement of special educational need, this was one of the highest figures in England. Education in Bedford Borough is delivered by a complex range of school provision across 79 establishments, of which three are nursery schools, 50 are lower schools (11 with designated nursery units), one primary school, 14 middle schools, seven upper schools, three special schools and one pupil referral unit. Ten of the above total of 79 are academies. Post-16 years education and training are provided by one university and one college of further education, and all seven upper schools provide sixth form facilities.

2.6 Commissioning and planning of children and young people's health services and primary care services are undertaken by NHS Bedfordshire, and universal services such as health visiting, school nursing, and paediatric therapies are delivered primarily by South Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust. The acute hospital providing accident and emergency services for children, as well as maternity and newborn services, is Bedford Hospital NHS Trust. Children and families access primary care services through one of 56 general practitioner (GP) practices in Bedfordshire including; Putnoe walk in centre and the out of hours service provided by Bedford Doctors on Call (BEDOC). Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) are

provided by South Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust. Children with learning disabilities and who have complex health needs are primarily provided by South Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust. There are a number of other trusts dealing with a smaller volume of cross border activity with contractual arrangements in place. These include the Luton and Dunstable Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and the Lister Hospital in Stevenage. Prior to September 2011, all community health services locally had been provided by Bedfordshire Community Health Services. These services were transferred to South Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust, under the transforming community arrangements. Commissioning arrangements are in place with South Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust for looked after children health service provision.

### 3. Inspection findings 2011 - 2012

3.1 Bedford Borough was the subject of 2 inspections in 2011-12; the first being the Ofsted unannounced inspection of contact referral and assessment within the Council's children's services in May 2011 and the second being the Ofsted/Care Quality Commission 3 yearly announced inspection of safeguarding and looked after children services across the Borough in January/February 2012.

#### 3.2. Unannounced inspection findings

3.2.1 The full findings can be found at <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/bedford>

3.2.2 This inspection of Borough Council sampled the quality and effectiveness of arrangements for contact referral and assessment and found one area of strength, a number of areas that met requirements with some areas for development. Interagency working arrangements were found to be well established and thresholds for access to children's social care were applied consistency and are agreed and well understood by partner agencies.

3.2.3 Amongst the areas for development there were concerns that the common assessment framework (CAF) was insufficiently embedded as a working tool across agencies. Other concerns more specific to the Councils children's services were about the frequency and quality of supervision arrangements for front line practitioners and unqualified staff undertaking initial and core assessments.

3.2.4 The common assessment framework (CAF) has been re-launched and a new electronic recording system introduced. However in both cases it is too early to assess the impact of these changes. The quality and consistency of supervision have improved recently in the contact, referral and assessment team. Case file reading and discussions with social workers evidenced an improvement in the quality of work being undertaken. However, considerably more work is required to consolidate these changes and ensure that processes for identifying and analysing risk are consistently rigorous.

3.2.5 Many of these issues are addressed within this annual report as improvement work progressed throughout 2011-12.



### 3.3 Announced inspection findings

3.3.1 The full report can be found at <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/bedford>

3.3.2 The overall effectiveness of safeguarding services in the Borough was found to be adequate. It was noted that services have faced considerable challenges and these led to the quality of social care services being insufficiently robust. The report acknowledged that concerted efforts were made to address these challenges and significant progress was achieved, leading to a demonstrable recent improvement in the quality of services and improving outcomes for vulnerable children. Some examples of good practice were identified and no children were found to be inadequately protected.

3.3.3 The inspection considered that Bedfordshire Police were making a strong contribution to the effectiveness of local safeguarding services and joint working with local schools had improved in recent months.

3.3.4 The contribution of health agencies to keeping children safe was assessed as adequate. Good relationships at the strategic level and examples of good partnership working, for example with the midwifery service were identified. However, the quality of joint working with health visitors and community nurses was considered variable and impaired by capacity and recruitment issues in the service.

3.3.5 The inspectors commented that the BBSCB is 'well developed, ably led and has good partner engagement'. It fulfils its statutory duties and the action plan from the recent serious case review (Child J) has been well managed and implemented.

3.3.6 Early help is provided particularly by children's centres, but preventative services were seen to be insufficiently targeted and coordinated and the re-launch of the CAF has not yet led to it being used effectively. As a result, not enough children were receiving coordinated early support which might prevent them becoming at risk of significant harm.

### 3.4 Risk of harm

3.4.1 Where risk of harm was identified, the inspectors considered that it is now being responded to swiftly and robustly, often supported by effective multi-agency strategy meetings. All child protection enquiries are undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced social workers.

3.4.2 However, child protection planning has not been effective enough at reducing risk. In a number of cases seen by inspectors, children with multi-agency child protection plans had not received a sufficiently analytical assessment or an adequately focused intervention. As a result, they had been left in situations of continuing risk of harm for too long. In all these cases Bedford Borough Council had already identified these deficits prior to the inspection and provided a more robust response which safeguarded the child.

### 3.5 Staffing and management

3.5.1 Gaps in staffing and management, staff turnover and the consequent over-reliance on agency workers have significantly impaired the functioning of social work teams. This has meant that until recently they have lacked the capacity, competence and continuity to provide a satisfactory service. Processes for the recruitment and retention of staff have become more effective and all teams are now close to having all permanent social workers and managers.

### 3.6 Partnership working

3.6.1 There is evidence of some good partnership working, particularly between children's social care and the Police, but partnership working is not consistently effective, particularly at an operational level. Child protection core groups, for example, are not being used consistently to develop and deliver multi-agency child protection plans.

### 3.7 Performance management and quality assurance

3.7.1 Performance management and quality assurance arrangements are adequate overall. Performance management information is regularly considered by senior managers and members and during the inspection some examples of good quality case auditing were seen. However, management oversight of casework has been inadequate, albeit with clear indications of recent improvements. Children and young people's views have informed some service developments and there is good young people's participation within the Children's Trust arrangements. There is less evidence of user views informing the development of child protection services.

3.7.2 **Actions arising from the inspections;** in response to the inspection findings, both NHS Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough Council produced comprehensive action plans which are being monitored within their own agencies and which are also presented to the LSCB. The effectiveness of the actions in improving safeguarding practice will be seen in 2012-13.

## 4. Summary of activity in 2011 – 2012

4.1 Bedford Borough's Safeguarding Children Board can describe a significant number of achievements over the last year, the most important of which is that it has maintained a strong focus on performance and challenge in the middle of so much change and uncertainty in the public and voluntary sectors.

The priority areas for the Board to address in 2011-12 were outlined in the last BBSCB Annual Report.as;

- Strategic Priority 1. To improve the effectiveness of Child Protection interventions, analysing carefully the reasons why increasing numbers of children have become subject to child protection plans and looking at ways to prevent this. This will involve maintaining strong relationships with health and schools during a period of transition and promoting the safeguarding of older adolescents who may be vulnerable to crime, homelessness, or sexual exploitation
- Strategic Priority 2. To incorporate the lessons from SCR Child J, namely the identification of sexual offending and liaison between adult criminal justice services and children' social care in relation to work with sex offenders. With the extension of Sarah's Law in Bedfordshire since August 2010 and the outcome of the current pilot on Domestic Violence Prevention Orders in other police areas, BBSCB should ensure that strategic links between adult and children's safeguarding are strengthened

Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board's business plan for 2011 – 2012 laid out the actions to be taken in respect of these 2 priorities and in addition to address a number of objectives.

## 4.2 Strategic Priority 1 - Objective 1 The Effectiveness of Child Protection Interventions

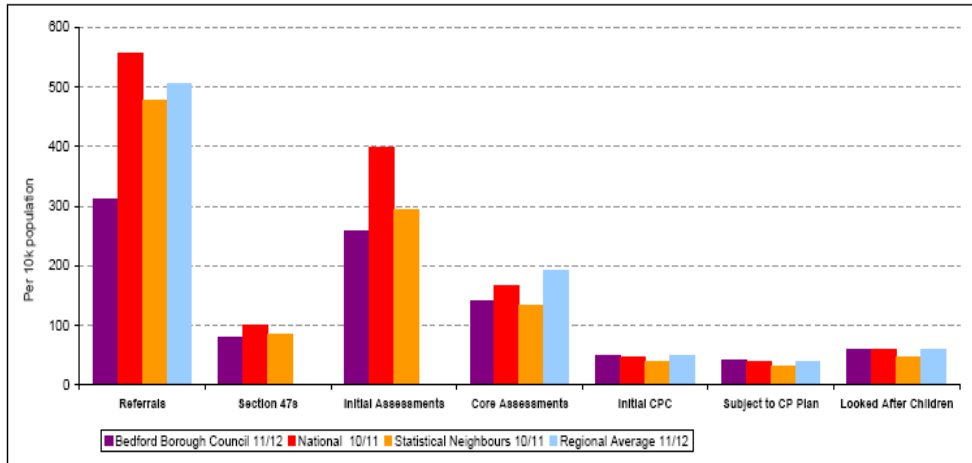
4.2.1 Throughout 2011/12, Bedford Borough Council Officers have continued to report performance data and analysis to the LSCB, the local performance clinic and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Detailed presentations were made to three of the four Strategic Board meetings of the LSCB in 2011-12 and generated some excellent discussion which assisted the Board in identifying and understanding the practice and issues around section 47 enquiries, core assessments, initial child protection conferences and children subject to Child Protection Plans.

### 4.2.2 Bedford Borough Child Protection Activity Data 2011/12

The detailed tables and graphs that show the Bedford Borough Activity for 2011/12 per 10,000 population are shown below. In addition to the narrative below, there were 151 children subject to child protection plans in 2011/12 which is 38.7 per 10,000 population of which, 8 (4.4%) were repeat plans.

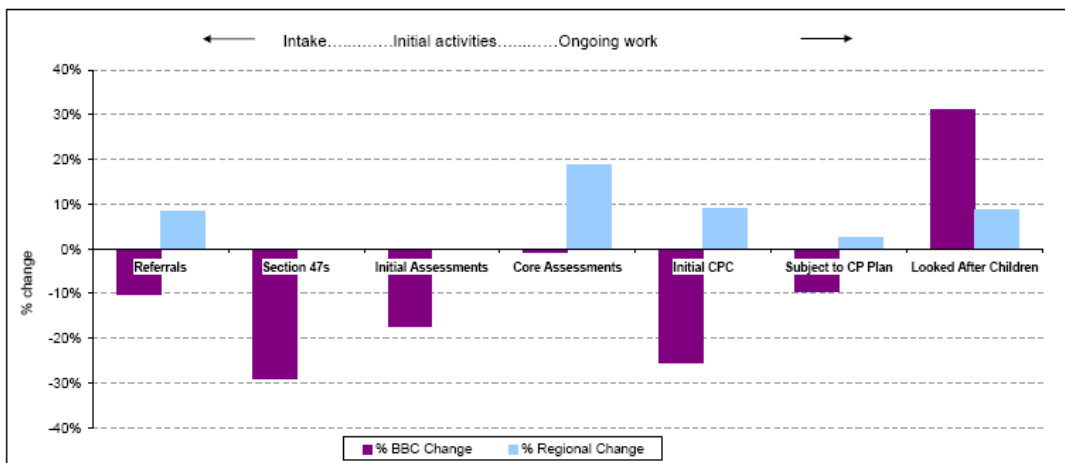
**Bedford Borough activity 2011/12 against National and Statistical Neighbour averages**

Type of Activity	Bedford Borough Council 11/12	National 10/11	Statistical Neighbours 10/11	Regional Average 11/12
Referrals	312.9	555	478	504.5
Section 47s	80.1	101.1	84.9	-
Initial Assessments	259.3	399	295	-
Core Assessments	141	167.3	132.5	190.9
Initial CPC	48.3	48	38.5	48.5
Subject to CP Plan	42.4	38.3	32.1	39.1
Looked After Children	60.7	59.3	48.1	60.2



**Bedford Borough activity 2011/12 v 2010/11 (% Change in Activity)**

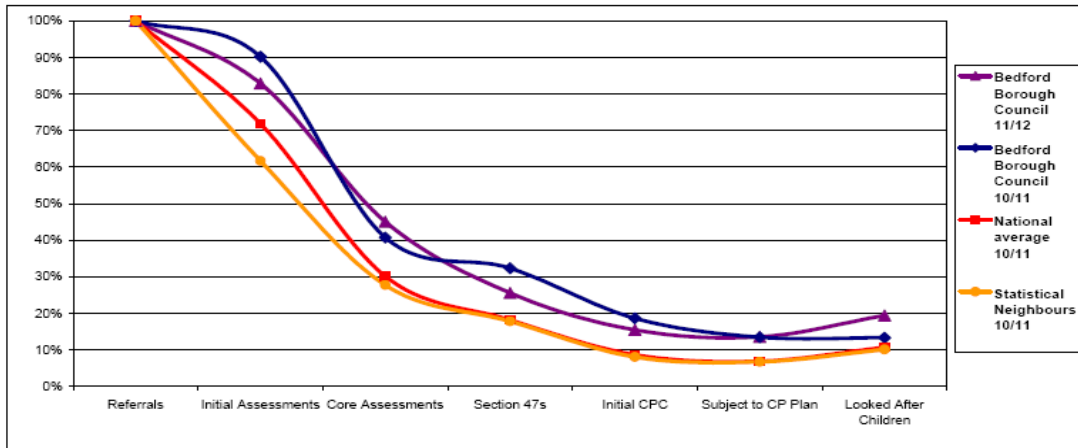
Type of Activity	Bedford Borough Council 10/11	Bedford Borough Council 11/12	% BBC Change	Regional Average 10/11	Regional Average 11/12	% Regional Change
Contacts	1533	1836	19.8%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Referrals	348	312.9	-10.1%	465.5	504.5	8.4%
Section 47s	112.5	80.1	-28.8%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Initial Assessments	313.9	259.3	-17.4%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Core Assessments	141.8	141	-0.6%	160.6	190.9	18.9%
Initial CPC	64.8	48.3	-25.5%	44.5	48.5	9.0%
Subject to CP Plan	46.9	42.4	-9.6%	38.2	39.1	2.5%
Looked After Children	46.3	60.7	31.1%	55.4	60.2	8.6%



Please note there are no Eastern Region comparisons for Contacts, Section 47s or Initial Assessments

Bedford Borough activity 2011/12 against National and Statistical Neighbour averages (as a Percentage of Referrals)

Type of Activity	Bedford Borough Council 11/12	Bedford Borough Council 10/11	National average 10/11	Statistical Neighbours 10/11
Referrals	100%	100%	100%	100%
Initial Assessments	83%	90%	72%	62%
Core Assessments	45%	41%	30%	28%
Section 47s	26%	32%	18%	18%
Initial CPC	15%	19%	9%	8%
Subject to CP Plan	14%	13%	7%	7%
Looked After Children	19%	13%	11%	10%



4.2.3 The number of children subject to child protection plans at the end of March 2012 in Bedford Borough was 151 children (42.4 per 10,000 of the population under 18). This compares with the national average for 2010/11 of 38.7 children per 10,000 and our statistical neighbour average of 32.1 per 10,000. Compared to performance last year (2010/11) there were 165 children subject to a plan (46.9 per 10,000), this represents a year on year reduction of 8.4%.

4.2.4 The figures concerning the number of referrals received by children's social care were comparatively low and yet the percentage that progressed to an initial Assessment by the service is comparatively high. This suggests that the thresholds for a response by the service may have been too high during 2011-12. An alternative explanation might be that the cases that were not accepted as a referral were signposted to effective early help service. However the council and the inspectors were concerned that the CAF as a tool for assessing the needs of children accessing universal and targeted services, was not fully embedded across all agencies.

4.2.5 Draft Child In Need and CAF procedures were presented to the Strategic Board on the 11 October 2011 for consultation. These were implemented early in 2012. This and the co-ordinated offer of early help is an area that the LSCB intend to focus on in 2012-13.

4.2.6 **Multi Agency auditing;** The Joint Performance and Audit Group (with Central Bedfordshire) undertook a number of multi agency case file audits. In addition multi agency case audits were completed as part of the recent Ofsted inspection. All the messages from the case audits have been disseminated to agencies and incorporated into Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board training.

4.2.7 The Joint Performance Management & Audit Group case file audit programme has been set out with themed case file audits such as Core Groups, Strategy meetings and the Section 47 enquiries. These audits included the development of an audit tool;

the selection of cases; dissemination to Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board partners and the analysis and evaluation of information collected.

4.2.8 Over the past year, 4 multi agency audits have been conducted including three audits specifically recommended from the Central Bedfordshire Child J Serious Case Review. The 6 reoccurring messages learned from these audits and others conducted over the last 2 years are;

- Information Sharing
- Record Keeping
- The Childs Voice
- Practitioner Responsibility & Challenge
- Assessments and Risk Assessments
- Parental co-operation/engagement

4.2.9 **Accommodation needs of children and young people;** Bedford Borough Council's Housing Services reported to the Board in respect of their role and responsibilities to young people who present as vulnerable and the objectives and outcomes for these young people. Bedford Borough Council is committed to ensuring Care leavers and 16/17 year olds who present themselves as homeless have access to quality advice and support services.

4.2.10 A joint procedure has been agreed between Bedford Borough Council Housing and Children's Services which follows the good practice guidance issued jointly by Communities and Local Government and the Department for Children, Schools & Families in relation to 16/17 year olds. Legal Services have reviewed and agreed the procedure and it is in line with statutory guidance. The procedure ensures a clear understanding of the respective roles of Children Services and Housing.

4.2.11 At any one time the Housing team has 3 or 4 young people in supported accommodation in Bedford Borough. Of the referrals made not all are accepted by accommodation providers as the young people may have too complex support needs or they may disengage during the referral process.

4.2.12 The new corporate procedure supported by both Adults and Children's Services Directorates is to ensure families are supported to stay together or to be reunited. Work to resolve any difficulties, mediate and re-unify families will take place alongside any statutory assessment for alternative accommodation. If at any point Child Protection concerns are identified S47 Children Act 1989 Child Protection Procedures will take precedence.

4.2.13 The ongoing development of the Supported Lodgings Scheme in partnership with YMCA in Bedford will provide further choice with respect to accommodation options for both care leavers and 16 and 17 year old homeless young people. Young people who become Looked After are now re housed through Pathway Planning, which has been a goal of both Housing and Children's Services in Bedford Borough since the first joint Leaving Care protocol was implemented in 2006. Regular reviews of the protocol have taken place by all parties to ensure that appropriate housing options are identified and that there is on-going support available to young people to prevent tenancy breakdown and to maximise tenancy sustainability.

4.2.14 For a minority of young people it continues to be difficult to find appropriate accommodation particularly if the following factors apply in their circumstances:

- criminal history/leaving custody
- arson
- sexual convictions/behavioural concerns of a sexual nature
- mental health needs
- drug/alcohol issues
- learning disabilities

4.2.15 Young people who lose accommodation through behavioural issues and who subsequently become homeless as a result are at risk of being determined as intentionally homeless. Consequently the Council has no duty to assist with re housing. Supported Housing Providers in Bedford have adopted an Evictions Protocol which seeks to give maximum opportunity for addressing behavioural issues with eviction being seen as a last resort.

4.2.16 An increasing concern is that affordable private rented accommodation is becoming more difficult to source for care leavers due to the shortage of landlords who will accept young people on benefits or low incomes.

4.2.17 **Looked After Children;** Bedford Borough Council comprising of 40 councillors and 5000+ staff have the responsibilities of a corporate parent. Their second annual report setting out what has been done in that regard by the panel established to monitor that duty, and the reports of activity that it considered was presented to the Board on the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2012.

4.2.18 Bedford Borough Council's Corporate Parenting Panel was established in January 2010 following Executive and Mayoral approval of its terms of reference in December 2009 in order to meet the Council's Corporate Parenting responsibilities within the spirit of the Children Act 1989.

4.2.19 The Children in Care Council was established in April 2010 its purpose is that children in the care of the Local Authority have a voice and are consulted on policy developments and proposals that may impact on them. The Children in Care Council consists of up to 10 representatives drawn from various groups of Looked after Children and Care Leavers, meets every half-term, and is supported by the Engagement and Development Manager. The Group regularly meets with Elected Members who sit on the Partnership Group.

4.2.20 The group has developed, in conjunction with Bedford Borough Council officers, a Pledge containing statements and expectations of the service and support that will be provided by the Council as Corporate Parent to all our Looked after Children and Care Leavers. This will be reviewed and updated in 2012/13.

### 4.3 Strategic Priority 1 Objective 2; Improving engagement between BBSCB and Education services

4.3.1 The Independent Chair of the BBSCB wrote to all schools in Bedford Borough to ask them to identify the main issues for them in relation to safeguarding children and young people in their school. The responses were discussed at a Strategic Board meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2012 and the decision then made to invite all schools to join the Strategic Board members on the 17<sup>th</sup> July 2012 to discuss the issues further.



4.3.2 An all day safeguarding conference aimed at all school leaders and senior staff with responsibilities for reducing harm to pupils, e.g. Governors, Anti-bullying, Behaviour and Attendance Leads was held on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2011. 3. A report from Bedford Borough Council was presented to the Board about how schools were meeting their statutory duty under S175 of the Education Act 2002 in September 2011. The report identified that there was a need to maintain a robust tracking system of training requirements and that this could be addressed by establishing a school database to monitor specific issues, including Safeguarding Designated Person (SDP) and whole school training via the LSCB or Bedford Borough website. It is important that schools become and remain statutory compliant with national and local safeguarding requirements including guidelines from the new Ofsted framework (Education Act 2005, Section 5) through targeted support.

4.3.3 Bedford Hospital NHS Trust have worked with a local school with an example of extensive and effective interagency work including regular joint complex strategy meetings which took place involving local authority input across boundaries. The process has impacted on outcomes for the children involved by informing appropriate and timely interventions

4.3.4 **Bullying and e-safety**; A report from Bedford Borough Council was presented to the Board which identified that most schools have or are adopting a new electronic recording using the SIMS system for reporting data in respect of bullying; racist incidents and children missing education. There was a reduction in capacity for the development of a strategic response to bullying across the Borough as the responsibilities of the Anti Bullying coordinator were integrated into PSHE Strand Leader Role within School Improvement Services. The revised anti bullying survey was made available to all Middle and Lower schools and a Health and Wellbeing survey was made available to all Upper school which included anti bullying questions also available from September 2011. This replaced the TELUS and SHEU surveys both of which are no longer available to schools. Data from these surveys will be used by schools to promote positive anti bullying messages (Social Norms approach) within media and school campaigns.

4.3.5 The Bedford Borough schools website was updated to incorporate anti bullying into PSHE section with related links. The Council fully recognised that anti bullying work should continue and remains high profile work within schools especially around cyber bullying. There are plans in place to use the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment to capture data on a regular basis to ensure that the incidence of bullying continues to be monitored and prioritised. Capacity and opportunity to support individual schools in the same way as before will be significantly reduced due to the changes in the role of all local authorities and the development of greater autonomy across school provision.

4.3.6 Starting in September 2011 Bedfordshire Police began an education programme the aim of which to educate Bedfordshire's school children, parents and professionals about the dangers of the Internet focussing particularly on Social Networking and Sexting (the sending of Indecent Images from student to student), and E bullying online.

4.3.7 Bedfordshire Police saw a significant rise in the amount of referrals received from CEOP (Child Exploitation On Line Protection) in the last 12 months that relate to Serious Sexual Offences against children committed via Social Networking sites. On reviewing some of these cases it was clear that many of these incidents were due to a lack of supervision/understanding by parents of their child's Internet use. Presentations were delivered to many Bedford Borough school children which have been very well received and it is clear from the feedback that the students have no



idea of the potential offences they commit when they start to send Indecent Images between themselves via mobile phones. As part of the presentation we also educate the children in not providing personal data and show them some hard hitting video's from CEOP about the reality and dangers of unsafe Internet use.

In addition the Police have begun to deliver an adapted presentation to Professionals working with children including Teachers, Social Workers and Foster carers to educate them on the security that should be in place for children's Internet use and how to deal with disclosures from children reference Internet based sexual offences.

In order to reach a wider audience arrangements have been made for presentations to take place at parent's evenings when all parents are required to attend in order to communicate with as many parents as possible.

4.3.8 Bedfordshire Police also supports schools through Local Policing teams as opposed to dedicated Schools liaison officers. The changes have allowed Police officers to participate in the school curriculum as well as deal more effectively with spontaneous issues that may occur.

4.3.9 The Police issued a guidance document to all schools giving additional information around when a police intervention may be appropriate, this document includes advice on a range of topics and encourages schools to liaise with their local policing team if they feel a police intervention may be required.

#### 4.4 Strategic Priority 1 - Objective 3

##### The effectiveness of health services in safeguarding children and young people

4.4.1 Organisational changes in NHS Bedfordshire were reported back to the Board in relation to the monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of safeguarding children by health services during transition to GP commissioning and Health Well Being Boards. The report included proposals for the delivery, monitoring and evaluation of GP practice training in safeguarding and the findings of an audit undertaken in May 2011. Each GP Practice in Bedfordshire now has safeguarding children Lead GP. NHS Bedfordshire continues to monitor GP training via their training department. An audit led by the Named GP is being undertaken to look at levels of compliance for GPs and their Practice staff and that they are in line with recommendations of *Intercollegiate Document 2010* and the findings are to be shared with the Board.

4.4.2 **Child protection medicals;** NHS Bedfordshire regularly updated the Board during 2011/2012 in relation to the planning and provision of Child Protection Medicals. NHS Bedfordshire (project management lead), NHS Luton, Bedfordshire Police, Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council, Luton Borough Council, Crown Prosecution Service and the voluntary sector have made significant progress over last 9 months in development of sexual assault services. On 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2011, the Bedfordshire and Luton Sexual Assault Referral Centre – The Emerald Centre – opened and dealt with its first case on the same day.

4.4.3 The Emerald Centre sees all victims aged 14 and over. Victims from north of the county aged under 14 are also seen at the Emerald Centre during office hours with a Bedfordshire community paediatrician attending with the forensic medical examiner for a joint examination. Negotiations are currently underway with Luton community paediatric service to ensure that victims under 14 from the south of the county are also able to be jointly examined at the Emerald Centre in hours.

4.4.4 For child sexual assault cases that are not forensically acute, negotiations are underway with Bedford Hospital to move these services, which currently take place in the community, into the hospital which will provide an more integrated service to be provided.

4.4.5 NHS Bedfordshire and Luton and Bedfordshire Police have now put in place an agreement with Peterborough Sexual Assault Referral Centre and Cambridge & Peterborough Foundation Trust community paediatricians to provide Sexual Assault Referral Centre paediatric services i.e. examination of children under the age of 13 (and those aged 13 and over with additional needs as determined by the forensic medical examiner) by a community paediatrician alongside a forensic medical examiner in a forensically secure environment. The out of hours rota provided by Peterborough Sexual Assault Referral Centre allows cases to be seen in a timely manner.

4.4.6 There is now therefore one pathway across the county, both in and out of hours for acute sexual assault. Children aged under 13 are seen at Peterborough Sexual Assault Referral Centre (and transported by Bedfordshire Police) and those aged 13 or over are seen at the Emerald Centre for examination by a forensic medical examiner (this is in line with practice around the country and the law regarding statutory rape).

4.4.7 **Child and adolescent mental health;** South Essex Partnership Trust presented a review of multi agency responses to young people who are self harming and attempting suicide to the Board. It demonstrated a robust multi-agency response. The current processes have been in place since December 2008 and are scheduled for review in 2012.

4.4.8 Clear guidance is available in the form of the South Essex Partnership Trust Child and Adolescent Mental Health “Care Pathway for Under 18s in Mental Health Crisis”. This document is supported by Clinical Guideline “Management of Children who have Mental Health Illness Including Self-Harm Behaviour”, which was developed by a multi-agency group from Bedfordshire and Luton, including senior clinicians from Bedford Hospital and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. Both of these documents detail a stepped response to mental health crises for children and young people and establish pathways to enable specialist assessment and intervention from mental health practitioners and ensure that the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in mental health crisis is prioritised.

4.4.9 The Care Pathway for Under 18s in Mental Health Crisis establishes clear and accessible guidance for practitioners to ensure that a timely and effective response is available for children and young people in need of urgent psychiatric intervention; including those who have attended hospital as a result of self-harming or para-suicide behaviour.

4.4.10 Strong links have been established between the Accident and Emergency Department and the paediatric ward at Bedford Hospital and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services core teams and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services home treatment team; supported by the Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment Team for young people aged 16/17 and the Early Intervention (Psychosis) Team for young people experiencing first episode of psychotic illness.

4.4.11 Contracts with out of county mental health adolescent in-patient units are regularly reviewed to ensure they work with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services home treatment model and that there is rapid access when required.

#### **4.5 Strategic Priority 2.**

**To incorporate the lessons from SCR Child J, namely the identification of sexual offending and liaison between adult criminal justice services and children's social care in relation to work with sex offenders. With the extension of Sarah's Law in Bedfordshire since August 2010 and the outcome of the current pilot on Domestic Violence Prevention Orders in other police areas. BBSCB should ensure that strategic links between adult and children's safeguarding are strengthened**

#### **4.5.1 Particular actions in relation to the lessons from this SCR are;**

- A guide for the Police, Crown Prosecution Service, and LSCB's to assist with the liaison and the exchange of information when there are simultaneous Chapter 8 Serious Case Reviews and criminal proceedings were developed and implemented in July 2011 and nationally recognised as good practice.
- A piece of work from this year will be taken forward to next year's business plan to develop and implement an Understanding Risk Assessment Multi-agency Practice Guidance for practitioners.
- The Domestic Abuse Coordinator presented a report to the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board in respect of Domestic Violence Protection Orders and Domestic Violence Protection Notices. An update report is presented to the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board at the earliest opportunity following evaluation of the pilot areas.
- Multi agency training to raise awareness of the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people amongst professionals has been delivered by the Safeguarding Children Boards Training Officer. A robust training programme relating to domestic abuse has been established and delivered by the Bedfordshire Domestic Abuse Partnership which has also involved a 'Training for the Trainers' component to ensure continuation of training.
- Briefings were held on the 20<sup>th</sup> June 2011 to provide good practice guidance and advice in respect of the risk assessment of sex offenders. The facilitators presented practitioners with knowledge and guidance to help them identify the grooming behaviours of sex offenders towards themselves. This Briefing event was attended by 274 frontline professionals and volunteers and was very positively evaluated.
- A Bedford Borough Council protocol for joint working at an operational level between the Adult Safeguarding Team and Children's Duty Team is in place under the auspices of the Service Level Agreement which is subject to ongoing review and the next review due January 2012
- Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board has reviewed the Child J Serious Case Review action plan and this has been signed off as completed and will be reviewed during 2012 by the Joint Executive Serious Case Review Panel.

#### **4.5.2 Domestic abuse**

A Domestic Homicide Review began in 2011/12 with the LSCB contributing to the terms of reference by producing those relevant to the children of the parent who had been killed. This was the first such review in Bedford Borough and one of the first to

be undertaken nationally. The process of the review largely followed the Serious Case Review process. Lessons learnt will be incorporated into improvement work for autumn 2012. Some immediate consequences of the work that was submitted to the review has been that Bedford Hospital increased its capacity for safeguarding work with parents through the appointment of a Specialist Midwife for Domestic Abuse. SEPT has reviewed its current participation in domestic abuse processes and reinforces the use of the Domestic Abuse Stalking & Harassment (DASH) risk assessment.

4.5.3 Probation implemented the IDAP (Integrated Domestic abuse programme) which now includes non statutory community perpetrators as part of a joint working initiative with local parenting commissioners and local authorities in addressing the impact of domestic abuse on the family. Probation also strengthened working relations with faith groups in the Luton area to support a more functional and community based approach to the delivery of domestic abuse interventions.

4.5.4 Bedford Borough Council and Bedfordshire Police began work towards a Multi Agency Triage assessment approach by co-locating a social worker with the police referral unit to jointly assess domestic abuse referrals. This has led to the development of a triage process with a plan to co-locate police officers with the Intake and Assessment team.

4.5.5 Children's social care services have also championed the development implementation, continued training and embedding of the risk and resilience tool to ensure those professionals working with victims of domestic abuse and their families are informed and able to identify risks and recognise what is safe practice. During this past year, the Freedom Project was reviewed and the role of Children's Centres in supporting and signposting victims of domestic abuse to additional services has been enhanced.

Multi agency training in working with domestic abuse particularly the impact on children has been a priority for delivery.

4.5.6 **Sexually harmful behaviour;** In 2011-12 there were 79 young people who were responsible for 773 criminal offences; of which 12 young people received a substantive outcome for 16 sexual offences. This represents 3.17% of young people and all were male.

4.5.7 **Child sexual abuse;** The year end (March 2012) figures for children on child protection plans show that 4 out of 151 children (2.6% of total plans) were on plans because they were subject to sexual abuse.

4.7.8 This is believed to be an under reporting due to the information system reporting being based on first recorded reason. The new Objective Electronic Document Record Management System was introduced in 2011. This will enable a search facility to identify cases where sexual abuse is a factor in a case even though it may not be the primary reason for child protection services involvement. This will enable a better understanding of the prevalence of the issue in future years.

4.5.9 Allegations of abuse of any kind by those who work with children either on a paid or voluntary basis must be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) In the Borough there were 7 such allegations (19% of the total allegations)

4.5.10 It is important to note that that the threshold and definition of sexual abuse for the LADO process is significantly broader than the definition used within Child Protection Conferences. Incidence could include inappropriate conversations and

language, which would not meet the threshold of significant harm, to the most serious concerns regarding adults who have been identified through police operations as having downloaded indecent images of children or have been arrested and/or convicted of sexual offences against children. The reduction in the number of allegations recorded as sexual abuse can be explained by a change in recording practices with the introduction of a conduct/suitability category. This allows for allegations of, for example, inappropriate or sexualised conversations. To be more appropriately recorded as a suitability or conduct issue which would previously have been recorded as a sexual abuse allegation.

4.5.11 Of the 7 allegations in this period, 5 related to historical allegations of abuse and there have been no criminal convictions in these cases. One case remains under investigation. In 3 cases where there had been concerns regarding the downloading of indecent images on investigation the police found either no evidence of offences relating to children or no evidence to link the adult working with children to the computer.

4.5.12 The breakdown in outcomes is in line with data regionally and nationally in that there are very few, if any, allegations concluded as malicious; and there are generally more cases concluded as unsubstantiated rather than substantiated.

**4.5.13 The sexual abuse of children and young people through sexual exploitation** - BBSCB has in conjunction with Central Bedfordshire and Luton Safeguarding Children Board's began to raise awareness and map the incidence of sexual abuse of children and young people through exploitation. The 3 Boards worked collaboratively in response to the Department of Education action plan by establishing a Pan Bedfordshire Sexual Abuse of children and young people through exploitation task and finish group to ;

- Map the needs of their own area to identify levels of sexual abuse of children and young people through exploitation and locations or circumstances where children are particularly at risk (and repeat the exercise periodically).
- Put in place systems to monitor ongoing prevalence and responses to sexual abuse of children and young people through exploitation within their area, making use of existing monitoring tools like the one developed by the University of Bedfordshire if they find it helpful to do so.
- Develop an effective local strategy ensuring there is a co-ordinated multi-agency response to sexual abuse of children and young people through exploitation, based on a robust, thorough risk assessment of the extent and nature of sexual abuse of children and young people through exploitation locally.
- Increase understanding of sexual abuse of children and young people through exploitation, in the professional and wider community (for example, contributing to public campaigns in the local area, talking and listening to children's views on welfare services, locally-led engagement with faith and minority communities and wider public).
- Safeguard and promote the welfare of groups of children who are potentially more vulnerable than others and are at increased risk of sexual abuse of children and young people through exploitation

- Consider whether it is appropriate to set up a working group or subgroup on sexual abuse of children and young people through exploitation, either on a short-term or standing basis, and appoint a lead officer who provides a co-ordinated response across statutory authorities and the voluntary sector.
- Develop links with neighbouring authorities and meet them on a formal basis and as required where there are cross border concerns. Bedford Borough, Central Bedford & Luton Safeguarding Children Boards are to work together to address this action plan.

#### **4.6 Additional key objectives to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the BBSCB**

##### **To implement any relevant recommendations arising from the Munro review;**

4.6.1 This work is awaiting the outcomes of the work with pilot authorities in Autumn/Winter 2012, the final response from the Government and proposed revised Working Together guidance.

##### **Ensure that a comprehensive, set of multi-agency policies, practice and guidance is available to all staff working with children across Bedford Borough in line with Working together 2010;**

4.6.2 The Joint Policy and Procedures Group during the last year continued to meet in order to develop and revise the web based Pan Bedfordshire Child Protection Procedures that are compliant with national and local changes.

4.6.3 Where possible and to assist cross border agencies local policies, protocols and practice guidance's have been developed with Luton and Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board's and then uploaded in the web based interagency Child Protection Procedures developed by Tri X Childcare.

4.6.4 In January 2012 a decision was made that the Joint Policy and Procedures group would be disbanded as of April 2012. All developments and revisions of documents will be undertaken via a Lead Officer and the creation of task and finish groups as deemed appropriate.

##### **To further develop the agreed performance framework to measure and report on safeguarding performance;**

4.6.5 The Joint Performance Management & Audit Group is responsible for monitoring and scrutiny of inter-agency safeguarding data and activity. Exceptions, trends and anomalies are followed up and reported to the Joint Steering Group.

4.6.6 The Joint Performance Management & Audit Group case file audit programme has been set out with themed case file audits such as Core Groups and the Section

47 process. These audits included the development of an audit tool; the selection of cases; dissemination to Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board partners and the analysis and evaluation of information collected. The multi agency audit tool has used to undertake the case audits during the Ofsted Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked after Children in January 2012. Inspectors found that the audits undertaken by the local authority and partner agencies as part of the inspection process were of a good standard and demonstrated a sound understanding of the required standards for safeguarding work.

4.6.7 Responsibility for producing a comprehensive quarterly Performance Monitoring Summary of Child Protection activity, with trend and contextual benchmarking information with our statistical neighbours has been the responsibility of Bedford Borough Council and reported to 3 of the 4 Strategic Boards in the last year.

4.6.8 The Joint Performance Management & Audit Group has struggled to collate and analysis the activity data from partner agencies for the reports and therefore ensuring data quality.

4.6.9 The Joint Performance Management & Audit Group has received single agency audits from the following;

- Bedfordshire Community Health Services (Aug 2011) – Growth monitoring following a SCR in Hertfordshire
- SEPT Supervision Audit
- SEPT – DNA

**Ensure the effectiveness and quality of the multi agency safeguarding training improves outcomes for children;**

4.6.10 BBSCB Training function is the sole provider of multi agency safeguarding training in Bedford Borough.

4.6.11 During the financial year 2011-2012 BBSCB have delivered 43 courses involving 56 days of face to face training to 1001 delegates a 6% increase on the previous year. Free Online E learning has continued to be provided and the E learning training menu has been extended to 8 courses including one specifically designed for Young people aged 13-18 years. 1177 workers and volunteers have successfully completed an E learning course and 88 are in progress. E learning completion runs at 93%. E learning and face to face training has been provided at a charge to private and independent organisations and this has resulted in significant income generation.

4.6.12 Given the needs of partner organisations to assess the impact of all activity including training on positive outcomes for children then some of this income was used to fund a part time training evaluation administrator from December 2011 on a fixed term contract going forward until end April 2013. The key activity of this post is Course Evaluation and particularly how BBSCB courses impact on worker's practice. All partner organisations have been advised of feedback and Reports will be continuously generated and refined to reflect job role and setting analysis going forward into 2012-2013.



4.6.13 All BBSCB courses are regularly over subscribed and extra 2 day courses have been arranged to accommodate delegates from across the extended children's workforce.

4.6.14 Remaining challenges and issues include ;

- Further improving links with schools and their Governing Bodies as more local schools convert to Academy status
- Risk Assessment and the Management of Risk has been identified as a learning priority across partner organisations in both areas and a specific course has been commissioned to run three times in 2012-2013 to address this.
- The Working in Core Groups training activity has identified a 'Leading Core Groups' learning need for Social Workers from both areas and planning to meet this is in hand.

**Ensure that Serious Case Reviews are initiated appropriately and are timely, of good quality and deliver maximum learning for all agencies;**

4.6.15 The Joint Executive Serious Case Review Panel is a standing sub-group of the BBSCB and the CBSCB. Its role is to consider any referrals of cases for SCR and make recommendations to the Independent chair of either LSCB, to commission SCRs or other types of review when appropriate, to monitor the outcomes of the reviews and to ensure their quality, to ensure that the learning from reviews is disseminated. No Serious Case Reviews were instigated in 2011- 2012. In one case referred to the Panel there were lessons to be learnt and the relevant agencies were asked to report back to the Panel on their response to the actions required. This was completed and the lessons learnt disseminated to agencies to disseminate to their staff and also presented to the Child Death Overview Panel. Another case referred at the end of March 2012 is in the process of being reviewed via a Multi Agency Case Review. The BBSCB contributed to a Domestic Homicide Review which was led by the Community Safety Partnership. This will be concluded later in 2012.

4.6.16 Key messages are incorporated into all LSCB training courses and single agency courses validated by the LSCB. This is a standing agenda item for the Training Commissioning Group and Training Development & Implementation Group. Courses reviewed annually/bi-annually and as required by national developments. Training has been adapted to incorporate learning from local and national serious case reviews. New courses have been developed or commissioned in response to these findings e.g; Impact of Substance Misuse Awareness.

4.6.17 The last two serious case reviews which both took place in 2005 Child DL and 2010 Child J – both have comprehensive action plans where all the actions have been completed, evidenced and reviewed.

**Ensure safer recruitment practices across all agencies working with children in Bedford Borough;**

4.6.18 As agreed by the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board on the 10<sup>th</sup> January safer recruitment practices will be addressed by each agency in their individual sections below.



4.6.19 Bedford Borough Council's annual report from the Local Authority Designated Officer re the management of allegations was presented to the Joint Steering Group on 27 September 2011.

**Confirm the funding for the operation of the BBSCB for 2012 - 2013;**

4.6.20 Proposed funding arrangements presented to the Strategic Board on the 11.10.11 and agreed as follow;

	Bedford Borough Council	Central Bedfordshire Council	Police	NHS Beds	Probation	CAFCASS
Funding Formula	25.09%	25.09%	12.15%	33.55%	3.82%	0.30%
Budget 2012/13	£51,927.77	£51,927.77	£25146.37	£69,437.10	£7906.10	£620.89

**To develop models of Multi Agency Safeguarding Practice/Delivery;**

4.6.21 Bedford Borough led a project to investigate the potential for developing and implementing a Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub. The aim was to develop elements of the model by connecting internal functions and align as far as possible with the new Police arrangements for delivering public protection in Bedford Borough.

4.6.22 A single pan Bedfordshire Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub was not achievable. Bedford Borough will now explore alternative proposals for integrating council services with the police, in the first instance, with a view to co-location of some staff.

**To identify those children & young people affected by honour based violence, trafficked children, risk and parental drug and alcohol use, and the radicalisation of young people;**

4.6.23 A collaborative approach to identifying these groups of vulnerable children was used to scope the extent of local need and to determine if current practice is able to respond effectively to these needs. The Police presented a report in respect of the "Channel Project" Radicalisation of young people in March 2012.

4.6 24 **Honour Based Violence and Forced marriage;** Over recent years a number of high profile cases along with increased awareness nationally have meant that Honour Based Abuse is now a mainstream issue within the Police service. Bedfordshire Police have been at the forefront in shaping the police response to such incidents and have worked hard both locally and nationally to improve the service to victims.

4.6.26 In 2009 Bedfordshire Police dealt with 94 referrals of Honour Based Abuse. Since then the referrals have steadily increased with 354 being recorded in this last year (2011). In response to this increase additional staff have been recruited.

4.6.27 Honour Based Abuse is now fully engrained into safeguarding work within the Public Protection Unit. There is close work with the local authority in cases where children are involved and all key agencies are now treating these referrals as safeguarding concerns where the relevant protocols and legislation can be applied.

Bedfordshire Probation Trust is working alongside the National Equality and Diversity group for the Ministry of Justice to support the development of an intervention focusing on stalking and honour based violence.

4.6.28 The following 3 issues were not completed and will be taken forward to the Business Plan for 2012 – 2013

- The issue of trafficked children and young people will be picked up by the Joint Steering Group into Child Sexual Abuse through Exploitation.
- Bedford Borough Council will provide a report regarding risk and impact on children and young people by parental drug and alcohol use.
- Bedfordshire Police will provide a report regarding Honour Based Abuse.

### To appoint Lay members to the BBSCB

4.6.29 Due to the Munro Review and pending revision of Working Together 2012 this has been placed on hold and will be taken forward into the 2012 – 2013 Business Plan

## 4.7 Bedfordshire and Luton Child Death Overview Panel

### 4.7.1 The purpose of the Child Death Overview Panel is;

- i) To collect and analyse information about the deaths of all children (0-18yrs) in Bedfordshire and Luton with a view to identifying:
  - Any matters of concern affecting the safety and welfare of children in the area of the authority, including any case giving rise to the need for a Serious Case Review (SCR)
  - Any general public health or safety concerns arising from deaths of children
- ii) To put in place procedures for ensuring that there is a co-ordinated response by the authority, their Board partners and other relevant persons to an unexpected death of a child (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010)

4.7.2 Due to population size there is one CDOP across Bedfordshire and Luton. There is a CDOP Manager in post who is currently employed 4 days a week. The post is hosted by NHS Bedfordshire & Luton. The post holder line is managed by Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children in Bedfordshire. The manager provides day to day operational management in support to the Chair of CDOP and Lead Paediatricians with the aim of ensuring that the CDOP and the arrangements for unexpected and unexplained deaths are implemented in a timely manner.

4.7.3 The CDOP Manager is the single point of contact for all child deaths and for unexpected deaths takes the lead in arranging & coordinating the rapid

response/information sharing meeting which must be held as soon as practicably possible following the child's death. The manager ensures that support mechanisms are in place for bereaved families. She is responsible for gathering information on all deaths unexpected as well as expected & liaising with key agencies to ensure this information is received in a timely manner and ready for presentation at panel meetings. This ensures that panel members have a rounded view of the circumstances around the death to ensure a robust evaluation of the death has taken place.

4.7.4 The Child Death Overview panel is accountable to 3 Local safeguarding Children Boards, Luton, Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire. The CDOP annual report is presented to the boards by the Chair of the Panel.

**4.7.5 Number of deaths in Bedfordshire & Luton 2011-2012** - During the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012 a total of 58 child deaths were reported to the Bedfordshire and Luton Child Death Overview Panel. This is a reduction of just over 6% on the previous year 19 of the child deaths were of children residing in Bedford Borough, 17 of the deaths were of children living in Central Bedfordshire and 22 of the child deaths were of children living in Luton.

4.7.6 During the year 2011-2012 eight CDOP panel meetings were held plus 1 extra meeting with neonatologists, senior paediatric nurses and midwives to review a cohort of neonatal deaths.

4.7.7 The panel are required to determine if there are any modifiable factors during the review of the death.

**4.7.8 Modifiable factors**-The panel have identified one or more factors which may have contributed to the death of the child and which, by means of locally or nationally achievable interventions could be modified to reduce the risk of future child deaths. In total 55 deaths were reviewed and closed during 2011-2012 with 43% of these having modifiable factors.

**4.7.9 Bedford Borough Child Deaths** - 19 Bedford Borough child deaths were reported during 2011-2012. This is a slight increase of 3 deaths from the previous reporting year. 7 of the deaths were unexpected but only 1 Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy was reported compared with 2 in the previous year. There was no common theme identified in the deaths. One of the cases was reported to the Serious Case Review Executive Group for consideration as a SCR but did not meet the thresholds therefore was not taken forward. Learning for the establishment where the child died has taken place and a robust action plan developed and the CDOP panel have been kept informed of progress with this.

4.7.10 21 deaths were reviewed; some of the children had died during the 3 previous reporting periods. Of these 7 of the cases were noted to have modifiable factors. 2 were SUDI's; these babies had died during 2010 and modifiable factors were associated with unsafe sleeping practices and maternal smoking. There was a significant delay in the review of 2 deaths due to on going legal cases and therefore a long interval between the deaths and the inquest. In both cases clinical care was cited as modifiable factor.

**4.7.11 Achievements:** Although a lay representative had been previously identified this person was only able to attend 1 meeting and then stood down from the role. Another lay representative has now come forward and has attended CDOP meetings.

She is able to provide a perspective on the review of child deaths from an independent viewpoint.

**4.7.12 Challenges:** During recent Ofsted/CQC Inspections across the three local authorities in Bedfordshire concerns were expressed by the inspectors that frontline staff was not aware of the messages arising from the review of Child Deaths locally. Efforts had been made within training sessions and by publication of the annual report and a newsletter to disseminate these messages widely but since the feedback has been received feedback an action plan has been developed to include regular training sessions identified for all frontline staff. The CDOP annual report and a short commentary on the emerging themes has been placed on the independent contractors section of NHS Bedfordshire and Luton intranet

**4.7.13 Commentary:** In the period 2010-2011 a total of 7 Sudden Unexpected Deaths in Infancy were reported across the county but this year 2011-2012 there has been more than a 50% decrease with the number reported being only 3. However there were modifiable factors identified in relation to unsafe sleeping practices and maternal smoking.

4.7.14 A meeting was held in March 2012 with providers across the county to discuss how this message is currently delivered and how it can be re enforced. This will be the subject of ongoing discussion but the group felt the key issue was about educating the professionals to enable them to deliver the safe sleeping messages effectively.

4.7.15 There is a stable cohort of panel members as recommended in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010 and effective interagency working can be demonstrated with each member contributing to the review of child deaths.

4.7.16 The CDOP annual report for 2011-2012 will provide further analysis of the data and emerging themes and will be published on the LSCB websites later in the year.

## 5. Individual Partner Agency Reports

### 5.1 Bedford Borough Council

5.1.1 For 2011/12, the keys areas of progress and achievement are:

Analysis of the underlying and contributory factors in relation to the high number of children undergoing initial assessments, core assessments and initial child protection conferences. These lead to high numbers of children subject to a child protection plan. The objectives of the review undertaken were:

- ✓ Activity levels coming into line with national averages and comparator councils; leading to
- ✓ A more productive, efficient and proportionate use of statutory social work and multi-agency safeguarding interventions, resulting in a better quality of service to children and families.
- ✓ Three distinct phases of the review were agreed – reviewing cases undertaken by Bedford Borough Council; benchmarking activity against other councils in the Eastern region through data comparisons and a

workshop looking a case work practice; and finally, an improvement planning workshop with staff

- ✓ The improvement workshop – ten members of staff from across the directorate attended two improvement workshops (the staff included social workers, managers, administrators, performance and commissioning staff)
- ✓ The two workshops identified a number of potential areas of improvement;

5.1.2 **Domestic Violence** as outlined later in the report.

### 5.1.3 **Bullying including e-safety**

All professionals who work with children, young people or services that support them (for example schools, groups in the community) have a role in looking at strategies and practice for tackling and preventing bullying behaviour. The approach taken is important to ensure that children and young people can see and hear consistent messages about the no tolerance approach in Bedford Borough and how important it is for inclusivity and positive role models;

It is important that we ensure we are capturing information about the prevalence and impact of bullying in order to inform the delivery and commissioning of services; the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment will, in the future, do this and be part of the data gathered on a regular basis.

Training delivered to the children's workforce in 2011/12 continued to include reference and resources to support professionals in identifying and dealing with bullying, including cyber bullying.

### 5.1.4 **Sexual Abuse**

A case audit was conducted to identify children at risk of sexual harm. The audit was conducted across December 2011 and January 2012, and was the first audit completed in Bedford to specifically evaluate the risk of sexual harm to children. The conclusions and findings of the same have been distributed through the Local Safeguarding Children Board and managers in the Directorate;

Current commissioning processes continues to seek contractors with high professional standards and proven skills when responding to the need for an external assessor in child abuse cases;

Bedford Borough Council is working in partnership with Cambridgeshire, Central Bedfordshire and Luton Council's in the development of a project looking to deliver Multi-Systemic Therapy for Problem Sexualised Behaviour.

5.1.5 **Creation of an effective Local Safeguarding Children Board** - In April 2010, Bedford Borough Council with partner agencies established its own BBSCB Strategic Board with an independent chair.

5.1.6 As the Bedford Borough Children's Trust continues to develop and respond to the changes in national policy as implemented by the Government, partnership working remains a priority on the safeguarding agenda. The Children and Young People's Plan was reviewed, refreshed and *The Story so far.....* published; Through this work, it was agreed that there was still work to be done on clarifying and agreeing the roles and responsibilities of the BBSCB and the Children's Trust Board to ensure they complement; with clear lines of communication and reporting – with particular reference to responding to the Munro Review of child protection;

The Executive Director for Children's Services, Schools and Families and both the Assistant Director's for Vulnerable Children and Social Care and Chief Education Officer are substantive members of the BBSCB to ensure that key messages and good practice continue to be collated and shared.

## 5.2 Bedfordshire Police

**5.2.1 Key areas of achievement 2011-2012;** during the last 12 months the Police along with other organisations have had to significantly cut costs. Bedfordshire Police have restructured with the focus being on maintaining the ability to fight crime and protect the public. For uniform policing this has meant that the old Luton and County Divisions have merged and are now headed by one Chief Superintendent.

5.2.2 Uniform policing has been restructured to form three main teams, the Response Team, the Local Policing Team and Criminal Justice each led by a Superintendent. The 3 Crime Departments (CID, Intelligence and Public Protection) are each headed by a Detective Superintendent and led by a Detective Chief Superintendent.

5.2.3 The main team dealing with safeguarding issues on a daily basis is the Public Protection Unit (PPU) led by Detective Superintendent Nigel Stone. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2011 the PPU delivered the agreed savings and implemented a new structure. The result being 25 Police posts were replaced with 20 civilian staff.

The areas of responsibility remained the same except that the Domestic Abuse processes were changed to place the responsibility for initial safety planning with the first attending officers. By making this change the PPU were able to invest in other areas of business namely, a new MARAC team to support the Domestic Abuse Processes, extra resources in the PPU Support Team (PPUST) and the On Line Investigation Team (OLIT - Sexual Abuse using the Internet).

At the same time the PPU have combined the Child Abuse Investigation Unit (CAIU) with the Vulnerable Adult Investigation Unit (VAIU) and formed a Safeguarding Investigation Unit (SIU). The advantage has been that VAIU staff who were Uniform Constables have received enhanced training through the Detective Training Programme therefore whether a vulnerable person is a child or adult they will now receive a service from a Detective.

**5.2.4 MARAC** – From the 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2011 Bedfordshire Police formed a MARAC team, the team comprises of 5 people, there are two Police Constables who act as the Co-ordinators and 3 Police Support Staff members, these 3 staff members are allocated one to each Local Authority in order to support the Police Chair of each MARAC.

**5.2.5 Missing children** – The missing person unit was established in September 2010 consisting of a Sergeant and 6 Constables. The team sergeant chairs and administers the bi monthly Multi Agency Missing Children's Operational Group (MAMCOG). This is a multi agency forum that discusses all areas of missing involving children and young people under the age of 18. It also considers the issue of Unescorted Asylum Seeking Children. The Police provide the group a comprehensive rolling report that provides a wealth of information on the true picture of missing children and young people within the County.

5.2.6 Notable successes during the year include that of a young person from Central Bedfordshire reported missing a total of 19 times. The young person was vulnerable to sexual exploitation and misuse of alcohol and drugs and was in local authority care. The Missing Person Unit was able to bring considerable resources to bear and located the young person following a morning of intense police activity. The Unit managed to locate the young person several times more after absconding from different locations across the country. Building up good information and liaising

effectively with other agencies and forces enabled the risks to be significantly reduced and an eventual positive outcome.

5.2.7 The existence of the team ensures that there is a single point of contact for all partner agencies dealing with missing children and young people. There is much greater emphasis by the Police on multi agency working an improvement in both quantity and quality of safeguarding work undertaken.

**5.2.8 Commentary** - In order to ensure any decline in performance in domestic abuse work, a weekly Domestic Improvement Group (DIG) was formed. There were minor teething problems identified however they were fixed in a timely fashion. The new process is working well.

5.2.9 Central Bedfordshire Community Safety Partnership (CSP) did challenge the Police in relation to a perceived dip in the Police Referral numbers around December/January. The referral rate is in line with the other 2 CSP's. When the MARAC's across Bedfordshire were formed the Police made 95% of the referrals. The CAADA recommendations are that the referral rates should be approximately 60% from the Police and 40% from other agencies. All 3 Local MARAC's are now in line with this recommendation.

5.2.10 The PPU have produced financial savings through a process of Civilianisation however several PPU teams have seen a growth in numbers and the service that Bedfordshire Police provides to vulnerable people has been maintained and in some areas improved.

5.2.11 The Police still need to find further financial savings over the next few years and all areas of work will remain under constant review including the PPU. No guarantees can be made that further police budget cuts will not affect the PPU.

### 5.3 South Essex Partnership Trust (SEPT)

5.3.1 The past year has seen a number of changes to the safeguarding service within SEPT. In September 2011 the Mental Health and Community Health Services integrated into one organisation and this has provided exciting opportunities for the Trust Safeguarding Service in developing integrated care pathways for clients and having direct access to a variety of expertise from all areas of nursing, social care and other disciplines.

5.3.2 Between January and March 2012 the Trust has participated in three Ofsted/CQC inspections in and two Intensive Support Visits from the Strategic Health Authority. The formal reports for Bedford have been received and an action plan is currently being developed by SEPT which will also contribute to the LSCB Business plan for 2012/13. The SEPT action plan includes improving health assessments for Looked after Children, recruitment of health visitors and embedding 'hidden harm' into Adult Mental Health service areas.



## 5.4 Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service

5.4.1 Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service (BFRS) has a unique role in connection with the work that it carries out with children, young people and vulnerable adults in so much that it is a trusted and respected public service with trusted and highly skilled adults working for it. Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service personnel may, on occasion come into contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults during the course of their work and when they do they are perceived as trusted role models and are required to behave as such. It is not expected that BFRS staff and representatives will act as child protection workers or that they will be trained to intervene in cases of suspected abuse. It is expected however that our staff and representatives will report to the relevant organisations and/or authorities any suspected or potential case of abuse, maltreatment or neglect in an appropriate manner within timescales dictated within relevant Service Orders (as identified below).

5.4.2 **Key areas of achievement 2011-2012;** The following represent some of the key approaches Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service has implemented in 2011-12 to ensure that the safety of the child is paramount:-

- Enhanced Criminal Record Bureau checks for all operational staff, Community Safety staff and other identified 'priority' staff who work with children and young people
- A Criminal Record Bureau Check review programme ensuring that all staff are 're-checked' every three years and monitored by the personnel department;
- A clear and pro-active audit process exists with communication channels to feed into strategic decision making groups.

5.4.3 **Areas of planned improvement include:-**

- Firebreak policy and youth engagement risk assessments review – Although fit for purpose when originally developed these documents are currently being reviewed to better encompass changes to Service structure (e.g. recruitment of volunteers) and accurately reflect current relevant policy (e.g. Safeguarding Service Order); and,
- Develop training programme to encompass higher level safeguarding training for identified priority roles (e.g. instructors, referral officers, Community Safety staff)

## 5.5 Bedfordshire Probation

### **Key areas of achievement 2011-2012**

5.5.1 All staff have attended child safeguarding training within the last 24 months, with MAPPA employed staff attended enhanced safeguarding children and vulnerable adults in house training, and risk assessment training/coaching has been implemented throughout the trust with a safeguarding children focus which highlights referral pathways and processes.

5.5.2 Women offenders in Luton will all be supervised from the Stepping Stones, female only, third sector organization, the benefits of this financed arrangement is that female offenders can access registered childcare facilities for children from 0-11 years, the childcare facilities include hot lunches for all children free of charge. The organization also runs mellow bumps and mellow parenting classes, run for women to



reflect on their parenting skills, discuss issues and problem solve in a women only environment. The above project has been funded for three years and 2012-2013 the project will be expanded to Bedford and Central Bedfordshire women offenders.

5.5.3 The Caring Dads programme, which started in November 2011, is on its second delivery currently only in Luton, in association with Bedfordshire University, although takes participants from across Bedfordshire and funds transport for participants travelling from outside the Luton area. The 17-session group work programme is a child centered fathering programme for men who have perpetrated domestic abuse, to address and reflect on their behavior and the impact domestic abuse in all its forms has on the family, intimate partners ability to parent and on child development. The programme is funded for a further year and Bedfordshire University Psychology department is researching effectiveness and findings will be reported to Luton Safeguarding Board later in the financial year. The Caring Dads programme has given Bedfordshire Probation Trust closer links to social services, neighbourhood teams and family court welfare teams. The Trust and Dunstable neighborhood teams have worked together to provide Bangladeshi whispering translation services for men attending the group, which has opened the group up to the none English speaking community

5.5.4 A serious further offence where the perpetrator was a low risk, statutory offender currently known to the Probation trust and the victim was a child under the age of 16 was committed in October 2011. The outcome of the Probation review report identified the offender to have been managed appropriately relating to risk banding and public protection assessment, but recommendations have been included in serious further offending action planning.

5.5.5 Improvement of links with local mental health assessment and agencies has supported MAPPA and Offender Management

## 5.6 NHS Bedfordshire

### **Key areas of achievement 2011-2012**

5.6.1 The NHS in Bedfordshire and Luton has experienced significant change within the last year and this will continue in to 2012/13. The Health and Social Care Bill was given royal assent on 01 April, and the PCT has now become a shadow commissioning group and will become a legal body from April 2013. It has already started to take responsibility for the majority of the commissioning budget.

5.6.2 Safeguarding children & young people remain a high priority for the PCT and transitional arrangements continue to be carefully planned.

5.6.3 It is anticipated that there will be a CCG in both Bedfordshire and Luton and the clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) will have statutory obligations under sections 11 and 13 of the Children Act 2004, and will need to ensure that they are commissioning a safe pathway for children within the pluralist provider landscape.

5.6.4 NHS bodies are statutory members of LSCBs under section 13 of that Act and the statutory responsibilities of NHS providers for safeguarding children will not change.

5.6.5 As CCGs will be the major commissioners of local services and key partners with other local agencies, they will have the key accountability for ensuring that the

local health service is effectively commissioned to ensure that a safe system is in place and that professional leadership and expertise is retained in the NHS system – including the continuing key role of designated and named professionals including the lead paediatrician for unexpected deaths in childhood.

5.6.6 Between January and March 2012 the PCT has participated in two Ofsted/CQC Inspections and one Intensive Support Team (IST) visit from the Strategic Health Authority. Formal reports for Bedfordshire have been received and action plans developed which will contribute to the LSCBs business plans

5.6.7 One of the key areas of progress/achievements in 2011 in relation to an LSCB priority has been the joint work across partner agencies to review child sexual abuse

**5.6.8 The Bedfordshire and Luton Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)** - aims to promote the recovery and health of victims following a rape or sexual assault. Bedfordshire and Luton's SARC, the Emerald Centre, provides a forensically secure environment for medical examinations following suspected sexual assault, plus a non-forensic 'soft room' where victims can recover and meet with professionals. By providing a forensically secure environment, the quality of the forensic evidence can be maintained, improving the chances of prosecution. The Emerald Centre is located away from police premises and provides a private, safe environment for victims including children and young people.

5.6.9 Following the medical examination, one of two ISVAs (independent sexual violence advisers) attached to the SARC provide ongoing care and support, plus coordination of support from other agencies for the victim. The ISVAs act as 'care coordinators' and provide support for the victim across a wide range of issues such as benefits, housing, sexual health, criminal justice and emotional health and wellbeing. The Emerald Centre is currently developing a crisis worker function, whereby crisis workers will be available to support the victim during the medical examination, with the ISVAs continuing to provide ongoing support.

5.6.10 In addition to developing this service, partner agencies have commissioned a specialist service for victims of sexual assault aged under 13 with the examination undertaken jointly by a forensic medical examiner and paediatric consultant.

- Named GP and Designated Doctor for Safeguarding Children are members of both LSCB
- Lead for Safeguarding in each GP Practice across Bedfordshire has been identified
- Regular information and briefings to GPs via a dedicated website has been established
- Audit of GP training in 2011
- Level 3 training for GPs delivered by LSCB with input into the delivery of programmes by the Designated Doctor & Nurse
- Dentists registered with Care Quality Commission 2011/GPs expected to register by April 2013
- Recruitment of a Designated Nurse for Looked After Children.

## 5.7 East of England Ambulance NHS Trust

### **Key areas of achievement 2011-2012**

5.7.1 The East of England Ambulance NHS Trust continues to be committed to engagement with all LSCB partners in the Eastern region.

5.7.2 Within Bedfordshire and Luton the Trust is a member of Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire Joint Steering Group and Luton LSCB to ensure that the Trust remains up to date with changes in children's services arrangements and government legislation and to support effective local engagement.

5.7.3 The Trust has been active in the IST, CQC and Ofsted visits over the past 2 years and has been an active partner in this process in support of the Local Authorities.

5.7.4 The Trust maintains a high standard of Serious Case Review and Domestic Homicide Review responses response for this region, gaining Good and Good with outstanding features feedback from Ofsted (under previous SCR procedures).

5.7.5 The Trust has had no issues regarding allegations made towards members of staff within the Bedfordshire and Luton area.

5.7.6 Staff training is mandatory within the Trust and all staff working with the Public either by phone or in person have received training in Safeguarding children and young people. The Trust also has a senior manager within the Bedford and Luton area who supports staff with all Safeguarding issues, this manager is the Safeguarding Assistant General Manager. They are further supported by the Safeguarding Clinical General Manager and the Named Professional.

5.7.7 The Named Professional provides supervision for the SAGM to support them in their role.

## 5.8 The Voluntary Organisations for Children, young people & families (VOCyfp)

### **Key areas of achievement 2011-2012**

5.8.1 The Voluntary Organisations for Children, young people & families has been active in the Bedford Borough / Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Boards with representatives on the strategic boards, Joint Steering Group and various operational groups. The quality of LSCB training has been excellent with a wide range of new subject matter plus additional e-learning packages. These are particularly useful to the voluntary sector giving a more flexible approach where formal face to face training may be difficult to access due to timings and venues. The sector benefits from free of charge training which has continued again in 2011 – 2012. The VOCyfp would like to formally thank all our LSCB partners for their continued support.

5.8.2 Next to education providers the voluntary sector has the greatest amount of engagement with children, young people and their families. The VOCyfp considers Safeguarding as a high priority although voluntary agencies are often working in

isolation, particularly those who are not associated with a national body. The fast changing safeguarding agenda which includes detailed legislation and government reports such as the Munro Report may mean the impact that these changes have on working practices may not always be clear due to the way the material is presented. The LSCB provide that vital link. Recently a voluntary sector organisation has been involved in a case causing concern and through the support of the LSCB had the confidence to take this to the board.

5.8.3 VOCyfp values the commitment of Bedford Borough / Central Bedfordshire and their statutory partners in supporting the sector to fully engage in the safeguarding agenda thereby sustaining the high level of expertise that is needed. The voluntary sector has benefited from the safer recruitment, safer workforce training, often an area that does not get the recognition it should in the safeguarding agenda. For the voluntary sector the LSCB provides the framework and impartial guidance in an environment that does not have a statutory section 11 requirement but must meet a high level of professionalism through self challenge.

**5.8.4 Ofsted Inspections** - The VOCyfp took an active part in the Bedford Borough and the Central Bedfordshire OFSTED Inspections.

**5.8.5 Home-start Bedford Borough (HSBB)** - This voluntary organisation supports the most vulnerable families in the community within their own home environment.

**5.8.6 This is a quote from a Mum who has had support from HSBB:** *“Before Home-Start came into my life I was drinking 24/7 and self harming. My daughter got taken into foster care which was very traumatic. I got my daughter back with a Child in Need (CiN) plan. With the help of Home-Start I no longer misuse alcohol, no longer self harm. Home-Start came to every CIN meeting with me. When my daughter first came back she was afraid to leave my side. With a lot of dedication and patience from my Home-Start volunteer my daughter is an active, happy confident little girl”*

5.8.7 The VOCyfp are involved with the Sexual Exploitation Task and Finish group this is an opportunity for the voluntary sector to develop the skills necessary to identify the early signs of sexual grooming and exploitation and help to uncover this hidden abuse.

5.8.8 The VOCyfp look forward to another productive and active year as a valued partner of the Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Boards.

## 5.9 Bedford Hospital NHS Trust

### **Key areas of achievement 2011-2012**

5.9.1 Bedford Hospital has made considerable progress with raising the profile of Safeguarding Children across the Trust, supported by training of staff at all levels. There has been a notable trend of increased internal referrals to the Safeguarding Team through information sharing forms. This increase is particularly notable from predominantly ‘adult’ services across the Trust with domestic violence, drug and alcohol misuse and parental mental health triggering referrals. Overall referrals have risen from 197 in 209-10 to 561 in 2011-12.

5.9.2 In line with recommendations from the East of England Children's Surgical Network, consultant surgeons and anaesthetists across the Trust are now accessing level 3 training and annual updates.

5.9.3 Whilst from all staff groups (clinical and non-clinical), 73% of staff are trained at Level 1 we continue to work to improve this. The remaining 27% are mainly across the non-clinical workforce and a plan is in place to target this group of staff linking with key managers.

5.9.4 The recent IST visit raised one issue, which was the occasional use of children as translators for adult patients in the Emergency Department. This is being addressed through an action plan.

## 5.10 Bedfordshire Youth Offending Service

### **Key areas of achievement 2011-2012**

5.10.1 Bedfordshire Youth Offending Service continues to operate as a shared service across Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire; there are no plans to disaggregate the service.

5.10.2 The service works on a statutory basis with young people aged 10 – 17 years, who have come to the notice of the criminal justice system. Young people range from those who have received a Final Warning, through to young people who are serious and persistent offenders serving custodial sentences, and those released from custody. Intervention with young people who have appeared before the Youth Court is determined by an assessment of risk and vulnerability; the risk level is identified and the type and frequency of contact is decided accordingly. This is known as the Scaled Approach, and designates young people at Standard, Enhanced or Intensive level of risk.

5.10.3 In addition to statutory activity, Youth Offending Services nationally have been responsible for providing early intervention and prevention services, in conjunction with partners, for children and young people from the age of 8 years, who have been identified as at risk of involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour. As a result of financial restraints, prevention/early intervention activity is now concentrated in developing a Triage Service, and strengthening restorative disposals, in conjunction with Bedfordshire Police. Triage provides an opportunity for Bedfordshire police to refer a child or young person who has come to attention to BYOS for an assessment. The assessment identifies children and young people at risk or in need and enables staff to signpost, deliver short term intervention, or refer on to other agencies as appropriate.

5.10.4 Restorative disposals provide an alternative to a young person entering the criminal justice system. The aim is to repair the harm done by the commission of an offence. The young person can be challenged to understand the effect of their behaviour on victims and the restorative process may provide a greater degree of satisfaction to victims.

**5.10.5 Caseload Data** - There were 650 active interventions in Bedfordshire in 2011/12 relating to 333 young people. In Bedford Borough there were 348 active interventions which relates to 167 young people.

**5.10.6 Performance Targets** - YOS are expected to make a difference in three areas:

- Reduce number of first time entrants to the criminal justice system
- Reduce the rate of proven re-offending
- Reduce the number of young people receiving a custodial sentence

**5.10.7 First Time Entrants (FTE)** - First Time Entrants refer to children and young people who receive a Police Reprimand, Final Warning or substantive outcome (sentence), from Court. FTE are measured by comparing corresponding quarters in each year. Local data records that Bedford Borough has sustained an overall reduction

NI	Local YOS data	Local Target	BYOS 07/08	BYOS 08/09	BYOS 09/10	BYOS 10/11	Bedford Borough 10/11	BYOS 11/12	Bedford Borough 11/12
111	First Time Entrants	<-5%	28.6% reduction	15.6% reduction	14.89% reduction	26.55% reduction per 100,000 population	12.97% reduction per 100,000 population	31.44% reduction per 100,000 population	48.13% reduction per 100,000 population

**5.10.8 Proven Re-offending** - This area of work has previously been measured by establishing a cohort of young people between January – March each year. The cohort included all young people who received a pre-court disposal, a substantive outcome (sentence) or who were released from custody in the period. They were tracked for 12 months to determine the number of offences they committed. The average re-offending rate can then be calculated.

5.10.9 However, in 2011, the responsibility for tracking re-offending transferred from the Youth Justice Board (YJB) to the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). The method of tracking changed. A rolling cohort of young people is now tracked throughout the year and to date the MoJ has not published validated data to compare with previous years.

5.10.10 Bedfordshire was previously on track to meet the target. As an indication of the current position, the recent inspection of BYOS by Her Majesty’s Inspector of Probation (HMIP) highlighted that of 38 cases scrutinised, 59% of young people reduced the frequency of their offending, and this exceeds the average for other YOS during the period of the inspection regime.

**5.10.11 Reduce custodial sentences** - The number of custodial sentences nationally has been falling and this has enabled the de-commissioning of a number of young offender institutions. Traditionally, Bedfordshire has had a punitive Bench, with high levels of custodial sentences and remands. BYOS has worked with magistrates, court staff and the Howard League to analyse this position and highlight alternatives. The overall number of young people receiving a custodial sentence in 2011/12 in Bedfordshire has risen; the number within Bedford Borough has risen by 1, equating to 0.96%

**5.10.12 Secure Remands** - However, the position in relation to secure remands is concerning. The Youth Justice Board and Ministry of Justice are concerned about the national picture, which has seen increasing numbers of young people remanded, often for short periods of time. Significantly, not all young people remanded go on to receive a custodial sentence, suggesting that the remand was unnecessary in order to protect the public. Although the numbers of young people remanded in custody remains too high, the numbers have reduced for BYOS overall

	BBC 2009/10	BYOS 2009/10	BBC 2010/11	BYOS 2010/11	BBC 2011/12	BYOS 2011/12
<b>Number of Young People Remanded in Custody</b>	10	20	16	22	10	14
<b>NI % Outturn</b>	9.56%	12.25%	19%	14.07%	16.21%	13.19%

5.10.13 New legislation will transfer responsibility for funding of all secure remands from the YJB/MOJ to Local Authorities from April 2013. This will be followed by devolution of financial responsibility for children and young people receiving a custodial sentence. The indicative funding to be devolved to local authorities to off-set the changes does not cover the cost of young people placed in secure children homes or secure training centres due to their additional vulnerability. Some young people will also acquire looked after status and eligibility for leaving care services. Whilst this will provide further safeguards it will place addition hidden burdens on caseloads and staff time in the local authority

**5.10.14 Risk and Vulnerability** - Assessment using the ASSET assessment tool is critical to all BYOS activity. The tool uses static and dynamic factors to produce a score that may highlight the need for further assessment in relation to risk and vulnerability.

5.10.15 In 2011/12 235 start ASSETs were completed for children and young people resident in Bedford Borough. The relevant scores for risk and vulnerability are as follows:

<b>Vulnerability</b>	<b>Very High</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>No of assessments</b>	4	23	66	142	235

<b>Risk of harm to others</b>	<b>Very High</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>No of assessments</b>	0	14	93	128	235

5.10.16 As a result of the above assessments, indicating concerning levels of risk and vulnerability, 47 young people were subsequently subject to Risk and Vulnerability Management Plans.

#### **5.10.17 Referrals to MAPPA**

9 young people living in Bedford Borough were referred into MAPPA; one was the responsibility of another Local Authority.

#### **5.10.18 Sexual Offences**

5 young people were convicted of sexual offences in 2010/11  
5 young people were convicted of sexual offences in 2011/12

**5.10.19 Serious Incidents** - There have been two serious incidents under the definition used by the Youth Justice Board. The definition in relation to these young people is that whilst under the supervision of BYOS they were charged with an offence falling under the category of public protection, which led to their remand in custody having been charged with Attempted Murder.



5.10.20 Whilst these two cases are unique in their circumstances, there is some correlation between them. The YJB have analysed the Local Management reports and indicate that:

- More could have been done to reduce the level of variation between the assessment and separate risk and vulnerability documents
- Historic information was not carried over to inform subsequent assessment
- The process of transferring cases between staff needs to be more effective

5.10.21 BYOS have accepted this conclusion and have used the findings with specific practitioners and within the wider team as a learning tool.

## 6. Governance & accountability arrangements

6.1.1 The Children Act 2004 places a duty on all relevant authorities to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; this primarily deals with how organisations in working with, or coming into contact with, children ensure that they have a regard to the safety and welfare of children in carrying out their normal functions.

6.1.2 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010 (HM Government) provides statutory guidance regarding the governance of LSCBs.

6.1.3 The Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board is made up of representatives from the senior levels of all organisations in the area involved in protecting or promoting the welfare of children. Its purpose is to work co-operatively together to safeguard children within Bedford Borough. This requires proactive intervention where children are abused, targeted work with children at risk of harm and preventive work within the community to develop a safe environment for children.

6.1.4 There have continued to be discussions within the Board with partner agencies which deliver services across Bedford Borough Central Bedfordshire and Luton about the capacity of these agencies both financially and in personnel in the current climate to support three LSCBs. Representation has been made by the Police, Probation services and NHS commissioners for the consideration of amalgamating the Boards and the business and administrative support to result in a single Board structure across the county. This proposal has been considered by the Directors of Children's Services in the three local authorities who have decided in consultation with elected members, and the three LSCB independent chairs that their statutory responsibilities for safeguarding children in their localities would dilute accountability and ownership of local issues. Bedfordshire Police have stated that while they understand this view and will work positively with all our partner agencies they believe that this subject will have to be revisited again in the light of further savings that all agencies have to make and the impact that the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) may have after the elections in November 2012.

6.1.5 Further proposals about increased joint working with the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults Board (SOVA) have been made and are likely to be pursued in 2012-13.



## 6.2 Bedford Borough Council

6.2.1 The Executive Director for Children's Services, Schools and Families, the Lead Member for Children's Services and Portfolio Holder for Social Care are members of the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Strategic Board and fully engaged with the work the Board does.

6.2.2 Officers from across the Directorate continue to attend and contribute to the sub groups that make up the structure of the BBSCB.

6.2.3 The Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board in the relatively short period of time since its creation has become established and well functioning. It fulfils its statutory duties and provides good independent professional leadership – nearly all key agencies are engaged with the board.

6.2.4 It has a clear business plan with appropriate priorities which recognise the need the need to have more impact on the quality of front line service and partnership working;

- There is good involvement of agencies in the BBSCB sub-groups which are effectively monitored by the Joint Steering Group.
- The BBSCB works well with neighbouring LSCBs in areas of common interest or shared services and coordinates its work effectively for agencies serving more than one LSCB.

## 6.3 Bedfordshire Police

6.3.1 Currently the links between the LSCB, CSP's and Domestic Abuse Structures in the County are not as strong as they could be. This results in some duplication of effort.

6.3.2 The PCC will potentially have control of the 3 CSP Budgets, we do not know how the PCC will respond to this but it is possible some form of rationalisation will take place. It is possible to combine some aspects of the CSP (Domestic Abuse), LSCB's and the SOVA's work and potentially have one Governing Body to oversee all aspects of this work.

6.3.3 The Police believe that the 3 Independent Chairs and their support teams are effective and will continue to support the LSCB's in all future work and development.

6.3.4 The Police have in place a Children and Young Person Strategic Group chaired by the ACC (Crime and Local Policing) which sits every 3 months. All issues affecting service delivery for Children and Young People are dealt with by this Group. The Police have employed a Youth Coordination and Development Officer who sits on this group and assists the ACC to deliver the Strategic intent through the PPU Detective Superintendent.

## 6.4 South Essex Partnership Trust (SEPT)

6.4.1 The Trust has been represented at each LSCB Board and has active participation on the majority of sub groups.

6.4.2 The Trust has a Safeguarding Group which meets monthly and all LSCB minutes are tabled and reviewed. Any recommendations or reports from LSCB are placed onto the Trust Safeguarding Action plan and monitored monthly for compliance.

6.4.3 The Trust has developed a Safeguarding operational Group where Community and Mental Health safeguarding teams can meet and review all action plans and develop services further.

6.4.4 There have been no financial concerns regarding the Trust Safeguarding Service. The Trust has recently invested in the Safeguarding Team across the Trust area.

## 6.5 Bedfordshire Fire Service

6.5.1 The role of the LSCB within Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service is predominantly one of advice, support and guidance. The LSCB provides a huge amount of expertise in areas where Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service's understanding is relatively new, and as such have provided the foundation for Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service commitment and knowledge to reach the level it has.

6.5.2 The LSCB meetings represent an opportunity for Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service to improve its understanding of its own role within the wider context of children and young person's safety - although due to the nature of the Service's work we are limited in involvement with specific safeguarding cases.

6.5.3 To ensure organisational understanding and improve communications between Community Safety departments, delivery staff, operations staff and Senior Management the LSCB meetings are attended by the Community Safety Support Manager at the request of the Area Support Manager (ASM). The ASM encompasses the Lead Safeguarding Role and therefore can maintain consistency and drive irrespective of large scale organisational changes e.g. organisational restructure. *Due to the nature of our involvement in youth development work the Community Safety Support Manager only attends where agendas directly impact or influence BFRS or the Service can provide relevant input. Previous agendas, and (where applicable) minutes are held on the secure SharePoint Safeguarding page.*

6.5.4 Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service offers resources and facilities where possible to support LSCB actions and activities. This includes regular provision of training facilities at its Dunstable Community Fire Station free of charge and is extended to cover Board meetings and training at other Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service Community Meeting facilities across Bedford, Luton and Stopsley.

6.5.5 In return the LSCB identifies relevant training courses available to our key staff, and Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service has taken advantage of several free places on relevant courses.

## 6.6 Bedfordshire Probation

6.6.1 Bedfordshire Probation Trust (ACO for Public Protection) sits on all three Bedfordshire LSCBs and with regard to BBLSCB, is represented on both the Safeguarding Strategic Board and the Joint Steering Group as a Criminal Justice statutory responsibility. Probation services are represented on sub committees when necessary.

6.6.2 The Trust has excellent and joined up relationships the independent chair and business support team.

6.6.3 Issues raised in both the Board and executive meetings across Bedfordshire are disseminated via the Assistant Chief for Public Protection to allocated single points of contact at middle management level and via the safeguarding page on the local Intranet and via monthly local delivery unit meetings as a standing agenda item.

## 6.7 NHS Bedfordshire

6.7.1 The NHS in Bedfordshire and Luton has a strategic framework with clear governance and accountability arrangements for safeguarding in place.

6.7.2 There is a safeguarding children champion, who is the Director of Quality/Nursing and she works in partnership with the Designated Professionals to ensure that the health contribution to child protection and promoting the welfare of children is discharged effectively across the health economy. This is achieved through contractual and monitoring arrangements with health provider services. Section 11s are included in these monitoring arrangements as safeguarding is a key component within Quality Reporting Schedules.

6.7.3 The PCT has mechanisms in place to monitor provider effectiveness and if gaps are identified these are addressed, by both contractual and performance monitoring mechanisms.

6.7.4 Other domains of the strategic framework include; Partnership working, Learning and Development, Equality and Diversity and Human Resources expertise.

6.7.5 The NHS in Bedfordshire and Luton contribute financially to support the function of the LSCBs in Bedfordshire.

6.7.6 This is 33.55% of the total cost and supports staff, training and other LSCB activity as identified in the Business Plans.

6.7.7 In addition to the financial contribution, the PCT offers expertise and advice via the Director of Quality/Nursing and the Designated Professionals which include a named GP.

## 6.8 East of England Ambulance NHS Trust

6.8.1 The Trust has robust governance arrangements for Safeguarding. The Trust's lead and Board Champion is the Director of Clinical Quality, in support of the lead the Trust has a Named Doctor and two Named Professionals.

6.8.2 The Trust has further senior managers accountable locally for safeguarding across the region who further support the Safeguarding agenda, and are responsible for ensuring that Safeguarding is integral to all aspect of the Trust work streams.

6.8.3 The Safeguarding Team meet regularly to discuss key issues, government changes, LSCB actions or requirements, SCRs and any other relevant issues as appropriate, the minutes are published on the Trust web page and are reported into the Clinical Quality & Safety Group which is a key part of the clinical governance structure.

6.8.4 The Board receive assurance through regular Dashboard information, progress reports against the safeguarding action plan and an annual safeguarding report is presented to the Board by the Safeguarding Champion. The Trust has documentation available to all staff and volunteers via the public web page and intranet. The Trust also has these documents available to staff and volunteers via a Safeguarding folder. These folders have been provided to all volunteer Ambulance Services, Private Ambulance services, included in commissioning contracts and for staff in all Trust offices, stations and depots. Trust Staff (and any other staff working on behalf of the Trust) have access to local managers, Safeguarding Assistant Area Managers and the Safeguarding Team to discuss any issues regarding Safeguarding.

6.8.5 The Trust has clear policies and procedures in place for reporting incidents or complaints and these are managed by the PALs team. A specific process has been agreed for receiving, logging and managing Safeguarding concerns / complaints. This process is reviewed by the Named Professionals and the PALs manager.

6.8.6 The Trust has contracts in place to ensure that all commissioned services are compliant with the Children's Act and Section 11 audit. All commissioned services have received a copy of Trust policy as part of their contractual agreements and are expected to comply with Trust policy when working on behalf of the Trust.

6.8.7 The Trust has a referral procedure available to all staff. The referral phone line is available 24/7; monthly updates are published indicating the number of referrals made each month. A paper is submitted to the Trust Board communicating this information. The Referral data base is monitored by the Safeguarding Team. Feedback on any referral is directly relayed via the Safeguarding Team back to the referring clinician.

6.8.8 All LSCB issues are raised within the Safeguarding Team meetings within the Trust, these issues will be discussed with this forum and place on the Safeguarding Action Plan for further work as appropriate. The Action plan is monitored by the Board Safeguarding Champion.

## 6.9 Bedford Hospital NHS Trust

6.9.1 Bedford Hospital has a robust governance structure for Safeguarding Children and Young People. There is a local Operational group which meets fortnightly and includes the Named Professionals and a Senior Manager from the Women and Children's Clinical Business Unit.

6.9.2 In addition to this there is a Trust wide joint Children and Adult Safeguarding Committee chaired by the Director of Nursing and Patient Services who is also the Trust executive lead for safeguarding. This committee feeds upwards to The Quality Board and Trust Board. The Director of Nursing and Patient Services is the Trust Board's Children's Champion and has a seat on the Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough LSCBs.

## 7. Monitoring and evaluation/quality assurance activity

### 7.1 Bedford Borough Council

7.1.1 The Directorate has a quality assurance function; this unit monitors the quality of case work, chairs child protection conferences in order to ensure the child protection plans in place are progressing and chairs statutory reviews of looked after children.

7.1.2 The Directorate has completed a number of single and multi agency audits in 2011/12; the findings and recommendations from which have been shared with the partners, management and other stakeholders as appropriate.

7.1.3 Audits completed include :- Identification of Children and Risk of Sexual Harm, Homelessness 16-17 year olds; Measurement of Health Plans for Looked After Children and a review of Evidence Based Practice in Assessment and Care Plans.

7.1.4 Officers from across the Directorate continue to attend and contribute to the work of the Joint Performance Management and Audit Group.

### 7.2 Bedfordshire Police

7.2.1 The Police have a Children and Young Persons Strategic Group that meet every 3 months. The PPU Detective Superintendent is a standing member of this group and therefore the links are made between the LSCB and all areas of Bedfordshire Police. This group carries influence hence the current round of cost cutting has not affected the services to Vulnerable People as may be the case in other areas of Policing.

7.2.2. The Police have found savings within the PPU but have been able to maintain or even improve service delivery through a programme of Civilianisation. One of the areas that has seen growth is the PPUST. This team oversees all Child and

Vulnerable Adult (both internal and external) referrals. The team now rarely see a backlog in referrals to Social Services and the increase in capacity has seen the police ability to support multi-agency meetings such as ICPC's Reviews and Core Groups increase.

7.2.2 Bedfordshire Police have their own internal audit regime. Over and above this the SIU use their own dedicated software package known as CATS (Case Administration Tracking System). All supervisors use this system to record, review, supervise and finalise all investigations. During 2011/12 Bedfordshire Police have been party to multi-agency audit preparation work for 3 Local Authority Ofsted Inspections. The PPU have reflected on this process and see it as good practice therefore from March 2012 a Detective Inspector is reviewing 2 Safeguarding and 2 Looked after Children case files every month. A learning the lessons report will be drafted and disseminated to the whole PPU.

7.2.3 The PPU Detective Superintendent sits on both the Luton Serious Case Review (SCR) and the Borough and Central Joint SCR Group. The learning from both Child B and Child J has both been subject of an action plan that has been overseen by the LSCB's. Bedfordshire Police took part in the multi agency briefing sessions linked to the learning in the Child J case. In addition because of the issues involving Child Sexual Exploitation Bedfordshire Police commissioned the charity "Just Whistle" to carry out training at Bedfordshire Police HQ. The sessions were opened up to our Partner Agencies. Just Whistle is the charity whom was involved in the Child Exploitation case involving numerous young girls in Derbyshire.

7.2.4 Bedfordshire Police have also implemented the learning of the Adult A case in which a young man was murdered in Luton. This review was commissioned and overseen by the Luton SOVA.

7.2.5 Bedfordshire Police has a Professional Standards Department that deal with all complaints from both the General Public and staff alike. A recent case involving a person who was murdered in Hertfordshire whilst being the victim of Stalking was investigated by the Independent Police Complaints Commission. Bedfordshire Police have reviewed the recommendations and will be introducing and extending the current Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment Model to cover Stalking and Harassment which will help better protection by Children and Adults who find themselves in this position.

7.2.6 The LSCB Escalation Policy has been cascaded to all staff. Evidence of the Police using this policy can be demonstrated when the lack of support from Health when a Forensic Medical Examination was required and a Paediatrician was not available was challenged. Another example was the lack of support for the MARAC process from GP's. Our partners also challenge the Police an example being when the Assistant Director (AD) at Central Beds was not happy with the police response to an ongoing case of a concern regarding the welfare of 3 children. The AD rang the PPU D/Superintendent and explained the situation. The net result being the police revisited the children's home address and the Police took out a Police Protection Order in order to safeguard children.

7.2.7 During the last 18 months the Police have run a series of Consultation events regarding Financial Savings with all staff. As a result the PPU were able to provide evidence regarding workloads, increased work/referrals (after Baby Peter Connelly). As a result of these consultation events the Organisation was able to balance Threat, Risk and Harm against the crimes committed against vulnerable people. This resulted in costs being cut within the PPU (Civilianisation) but services being maintained or enhanced.

7.2.8 In order to ensure that Equality and Diversity (E & D) issues had been addressed regarding the new Policing Model that was launched on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2011 an E & D Advisor was appointed to oversee the whole process. In addition Bedfordshire Police held a series of open consultation events for both our Partner Agencies and the General Public. The Police also have an Independent Advisory Group (IAG) and all potential and actual process changes were sent to the IAG for review and comment in order to ensure equality of service.

### 7.3 South Essex Partnership Trust (SEPT)

7.3.1 The Trust Strategic Framework for Safeguarding - This contains a number of domains including

- Structure and reporting arrangements
- Governance arrangements
- Partnership Working
- Serious Case reviews
- Learning & Development
- Equality & Diversity
- Human Resources

7.3.2 The Framework reflects the requirements of the Sec 11 duties and as such forms part of the Trust Safeguarding audit programme which is monitored monthly via the Safeguarding Group.

**7.3.3 Audit** - An audit plan for 2012/13 has been developed which integrates Community and Mental Health services. The plan includes training, supervision, record keeping, DNA's SCR action plans etc.

7.3.4 The Trust has developed a Learning Lessons Group where issues from Serious Incidents, Serious Case and Domestic Homicide Reviews are discussed and the learning distributes to teams.

#### **Single Agency Audit Outcomes:**

**7.3.5 Safeguarding Supervision** - Audit on safeguarding supervision model concluded that 89% of respondents said that the action plan that resulted from their supervision session was supportive of their practice. Alongside this SEPT CHSB Safeguarding Supervision acknowledgement of best practice in EOE HV Practice Directory Nov 2011

**7.3.6 Looked After Children statutory assessment audit** - Audit findings that assessments variable and resulted in multi-agency training event commissioned from British Association for Adoption and Fostering to improve staff competencies with respect to undertaking these statutory assessment.

**7.3.7 0-19 team case file audit** - Main action - 0-19 Teams to review the current practice of health assessments and the tool currently being used to inform this process.

**7.3.8 Learning from Serious Case Reviews and multi-agency case file audits** have been incorporated into single agency core level 3 training programme and staff



briefings. In addition to SEPT's core safeguarding training programme, SEPT Community Health Service has provided training to staff to support daily practice. These have included training with respect to recording and analysis using a significant events chronology, respectful enquiry to support staff confidence and competence to make appropriate professional challenges and be open to be challenge and the impact of parental mental health on children/young people. Direct application of agreed action following supervision/training can be demonstrated in a number of individual cases, where professional challenge has been seen to alter the direction of the case and resulted in SMART child protection plans with a focus on the outcome for the child.

7.3.9 SEPT have action plan in place with respect to Call to Action implementation plan to recruit Health Visitor's into in 0-19 Team Service to ensure delivery of Healthy Child Programme by September 2013. SEPT currently acknowledges that the increase of safeguarding activity across the board with respect to increases in the number of children subject to a child protection plan and children/young people entering care are presenting a number of significant challenges, resulting in prioritisation which is impacted on delivery of the full Healthy Child Programme.

## 7.4 Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service

7.4.1 As highlighted above Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service is predominantly a referral agency and our staff do not act as child protection workers. They do have clearly stipulated responsibilities within Service Order Safeguarding VOL 24 8/01 to ensure that any suspicion of abuse, maltreatment or neglect is appropriately referred to the most relevant agency and that our actions do not negatively impact on any existing or future support offered by partner agencies.

7.4.2 There are common themes and a degree of cross-over between Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service target groups and those already potentially involved in safeguarding programmes. For this reason the involvement of partners who also utilise and participate in the LSCB is vital.

### 7.4.3 The service operates under the following principles;

- **Ensuring appropriateness-** To ensure the relevance of our planned interventions and of the child or young person's appropriateness to a scheme run by the service, the decision to include or exclude applicants is determined by a referral, screening and selection process undertaken with the partner. This in-turn ensures Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service is informed in advance of potential and relevant background issues with the child or young person and can make alterations to the course content or delivery if required (for example it may not be deemed appropriate to involve a child whose parents have suffered death or injury through an accidental dwelling fire without careful consideration with the partner of the impact of some of the re-enactments and fire scenario DVDs used).
- **The safety of the child/young person is paramount** - our actions and activities with children and young people must not jeopardise the safety of that person and pro-actively places the safety of the child as paramount. To support this process the following is in place:-
- Safeguarding Service Order including 'dos and don'ts' when working with children and young people;



- Quick reference 'Pocket books' encompassing key referral process and do and don'ts from the Safeguarding Service Order;
- Risk assessments of locations and activities;
- Intranet safeguarding portal (SharePoint page) with relevant informing links, Acts, previous audits and action plans;
- Safeguarding Training to all key and operational staff; and,
- Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks to all key and operational staff.

7.4.5 The quality of the referrals made by Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service is ensured firstly through consistently utilising templates agreed by both the LSCB (and where applicable Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults (SOVA)) across the whole county.

7.4.6 Referrals are held within a secure area and are audited by the Central Community Safety Support Manager for accuracy of information and relevance of referral by the referral agency themselves. Where incorrect referral processes have been identified these are addressed through policy, discussion, training and where applicable Discipline Procedure.

**7.4.7 Performance monitoring** - Since the introduction of the section 11 audits and the inclusion of the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) into the LSCB board meetings regular performance monitoring has been undertaken on our work with children and young people. For example our performance monitoring process identified a lack of formal process in the service provided to vulnerable adults. The best practices that had been implemented and audited through the children and young person's Section 11 Audit informed a new safeguarding approach encompassing children, young persons and vulnerable adults and drawing together the expertise of both the LSCB and SOVA.

7.4.8 Internal audit outcomes are reported into the Corporate Equality Group. This includes Functional Heads, Equality and Diversity Officer, Principal Officers, and members of the Combined Fire Authority and helps to communicate learning points and best practice across the organisation as well provide and highlight quantitative data (e.g. the number of referrals made by Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service)

7.4.9 Where the performance management process identifies learning points this is fed into the organisations decision making teams and cascaded through delivery level meetings and publications on the intranet. .

**7.4.10 Complaints and allegations** - The Service has not received any complaints over its actions or encountered any allegations against its staff. However, there are a number of Service Orders in place such as the Complaints Procedure; Grievance Procedure; Disciplinary Procedure and the Safeguarding Policy.

**7.4.11 Referrals** - In the last 12 months the Service has made 12 safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adult referrals where staff have identified concerns. These have all followed the process laid out in Service Order Safeguarding VOL 24 08/01 and have undergone the audit process stated above.

**7.4.12 Training** - Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service has delivered a training package entitled 'Effective Working with Children and Young People' to all new recruit operational staff and identified key staff including Community Safety Teams, instructors and Duty Officers over the last 4 years. This has been delivered through face to face training supported through the use of an e-learning program designed and built by FPM Training with the input of the Fire Service College and the

Independent Safeguarding Authority. It incorporates 5 end of module exams to evidence learning.

#### **7.4.13 Evidence of activity outcomes - Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service**

Community Safety has a clear Planning and Evaluation process governed by Service Order Planning and Evaluation VOL 24 01/02. This ensures outcomes associated with the work completed by Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service are reviewed for success and continuing relevance.

7.4.14 Additionally the Service has undertaken several internal reports following incidents to identify if the actions of the Service have a) contributed or exacerbated the incident and b) can any internal process be improved.

7.4.15 The Safe At Home Report for example was commissioned by the Lead Safeguarding Officer following an accident involving a child at a property Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service had visited and completed a safety check in.

7.4.16 The report concluded that:- *'The evidence supports that Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service could be clearly seen to be keeping its safeguarding responsibilities under constant consideration. Further to this, it is arguable that in its approach to supporting the PSLA through pro-active testing of equipment at Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service facilities, and making recommendations on improving the scheme and/or safety to the occupiers, Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service is conducting itself in a way that is far and above its legislative requirements for preventative work.'*

**7.4.17 Equality and diversity** - An Equality Analysis is undertaken on all new Service Orders and a process is in place to consistently review both new and existing Service Orders for compliance. Additionally all community safety activities undergo a rigorous planning and evaluation process and the planning template incorporates an area of analysis of not just who Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service work targets, but who it additionally impacts upon. This utilises Customer Insight (Express mapping and Mosaic profiles) and allows Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service to consider altering delivery techniques to ensure consistent learning. Examples of this in use include:-

- Identifying suitable diet for different groups during Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service community safety inputs;
- Utilising interpreters; and,
- Conducting the Firebreak 'Pass Out' parade on a Friday prior to prayer time to encourage Islamic community participation and family attendance.

## **7.5 Bedfordshire Probation**

7.5.1 Risk assessments and pre sentence reports address and highlight safeguarding issues; both assessments and reports are subject to quality assurance processes and internal audit, MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements) via business planning objectives audit ten percent of all annual cases and cases are chosen to be representative of the safeguarding children and vulnerable adult's agenda.

7.5.2 Bedfordshire Probation trust works closely with the 16+ teams across the county and the Youth offending services to manage dangerous and prolific young offenders who are entering adult service provision, looking at these cases in terms of both safeguarding the child/young adult and also protecting the public. At present Bedfordshire Probation trust has three 16+ cases subject to MAPPA arrangements,

one of which was subject to external Ministry of Justice thematic Inspection and was found to have been managed satisfactorily throughout the transfer for youth services.

7.5.3 Bedfordshire Probation Trust, twice a year provides statistics to safeguarding boards regarding MAPPA statistics, both of young and youth offending and information regarding children of adult MAPPA offenders.

7.5.4 Learning from serious case reviews (adult offenders, with no identified safeguarding issues raised) identified a greater need for middle management oversight of cases where domestic abuse or safeguarding issues were identified, this is now being done via recording oversight on ICMS the Probation Trusts IT system and also via live observation of staff delivering offender supervision sessions.

7.5.5 Operational staff employed by Bedfordshire Probations Trust are aware of the need to highlight safeguarding issues to middle management and are aware that if required, they need to refer cases to safeguarding and child protection teams, attend or deliver reporting for CP conferences, reviews and core group meetings and support decision making via core group meetings.

7.5.6 Trust staff are aware of the free e-learning training offered by local LSCB's and attend relevant training courses necessary for their grade and role accessing training delivered on an annual calendar basis by LSCB. Internal Diversity link panel have also attended safeguarding training and board members have been offered new financial year in-house training dates.

7.5.7 Diversity Objectives for 2012/2013 identify the need to know if the Trusts Interventions match our constantly changing and diverse communities, statistical analysis for this coming year will include looking at offenders with children and if we are meeting both the criminogenic and none criminogenic needs of the offenders regarding our children and families pathway. Equality / diversity and safeguarding children training is available to all staff, with revisions for staff who are identified as needing extra support and development.

## 7.6 NHS Bedfordshire

**7.6.1 Multi agency audit work** -The Joint Performance Management and Audit group meets on a bi monthly basis. The group is responsible for co-ordinating the quality assurance and evaluating the effectiveness of what is done by Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board partner agencies individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. It has an oversight of all single and multi agency audits, Section 11 audits and analysis of performance data about safeguarding within relevant agencies. NHS in Bedfordshire & Luton is represented at this forum by the Designated Office

7.6.2 Audit findings are shared with independent contractors which the PCT has contractual arrangements with, including GP's and dentists.

7.6.3 Local health providers disseminate audit findings within their organisation and actions arising are monitored through contractual arrangements with the PCT.

## 7.7 East of England Ambulance NHS Trust

7.7.1 The Trust has actively been involved in external audits and LSCB auditing. The Trust participated in the IST, CQC and Ofsted visits as requested by the LSCB. The Trust has a Director responsible for Safeguarding at Board level, a named Doctor and two Named professionals. The Trust has clear lines of accountability regarding all Safeguarding issues and carries out regular internal audits of activity for Safeguarding.

7.7.2 The Trust audits review the Safeguarding referrals made by practitioners within the Trust, the quality of the information shared and if the initial concerns are highlighted in the patient care records completed at the time of the incident.

7.7.3 The Trust monitors the number of referrals made per area and actively seeks feedback from the Local Authority and General Practitioners as to actions taken following a referral made by Trust practitioners.

7.7.4 Once feedback has been received from the Local Authority or the General Practitioner for the child or family, the Safeguarding team will feed back to the Trust staff member to ensure they are aware of the outcomes/actions taken.

7.7.5 Contact details of the Named Professionals and the Safeguarding Office are available to all staff. This information is freely available via Trust contact systems and is stated on all Safeguarding updates and posters. The Safeguarding Team encourage Trust staff to contact us for support and guidance with any Safeguarding issue.

7.7.6 The Trust has robust systems in place to ensure that the service provided to all children families and callers is appropriate to the indicated concerns at the time of the 999 call.

7.7.7 All staff are trained in Equality and Diversity as part of their mandatory training prior to attending operational duties.

7.7.8 The Trust has worked with Bedfordshire and Luton LSCBs to ensure they have contributed to the escalation policy and that all agencies the Trust works in partnership with in the Safeguarding arena can feel comfortable in challenging practitioners Safeguarding work and decision making. The Trust's Named Professional has good partnership working with local practitioners to fully support Trust staff and external partners in working effectively.

7.7.9 All Trust staff and commissioned services work for or on behalf of the Trust are informed of their Safeguarding duties, these duties are written into contracts and a copy of all Safeguarding policies and procedures for the Trust are issued to all agencies working in partnership.

7.7.10 Records relating to trust patients are maintained with high standards of security and within NHS and CQC required regulations.

7.7.11 The Trust currently has no actions outstanding for Bedfordshire or Luton regarding recommendations or actions from SCRs or DHRs.

7.7.12 All actions and recommendations from these cases are placed on the Safeguarding Action plan and are managed by the Named Professional, this action plan is then monitored via the Safeguarding Team meetings and accountability and outcomes is reported to the Safeguarding Champion and Trust Board.

## **7.8 Bedford Hospital NHS Trust**

7.8.1 Bedford Hospital gives high priority to appropriate attendance at Safeguarding meetings. Strategy meetings and Case Conferences are attended by the Named Nurse or her Deputy. Where possible a doctor will attend but if this is not possible, a report will be provided. Strategy meetings are often convened at the hospital to facilitate attendance. Data regarding meeting attendance is shared in the contract report and quarterly and annual report to the Trust Board.

7.8.2 The hospital has been involved in multi agency audit through the recent OFSTED CQC inspection of Safeguarding and Looked after Children for both Local Authorities. Whilst only one issue was identified that impacted on the Trust, an action plan has been developed to address this.

7.8.4 The Safeguarding Team has carried out a 17 point documentation audit to assess the quality and outcomes of training. Findings have been disseminated and an action plan developed to further strengthen the effectiveness of training.

7.8.5 The named professionals provide daily safeguarding practice supervision across all disciplines on an ad. hoc basis. Supervision supports Trust wide as well as individual learning. A principle outcome of supervision is improvements in documentation and a reduction in risk associated with poor information sharing or delayed referral. There have been considerable improvements in the ability of senior clinicians to complete documentation and formulate a professional opinion in relation to safeguarding matters within the required timeframes to support multi- professional decision making.

7.8.6 The Safeguarding Team maintain a Database of referrals which can be used to identify trends in areas such as race, gender, domestic abuse, mental health problems.

7.8.7 The Safeguarding Team are currently involved in a piece of work linking failure to attend appointments with children about whom concerns have been expressed.

## **8. Auditing of Partners' Compliance with Safeguarding Standards (s11 of the Children's Act 2004)**

8.1 Section 11 of the Children's Act 2004, requires partners to work together to improve the safeguarding of children. Most Boards oversee a process in which partners self-assess their compliance with 8 safeguarding standards every two or three years. In keeping with the Boards desire to reduce the bureaucracy of this self assessment process, it was agreed that partners would submit a summary of their compliance with six of the standards within their 2011–2012 annual returns for this

report. The remaining two standards will be the subject of in-depth self-assessment in 2012-13. These remaining standards are:

- Senior management commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare;
- Effective inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

8.2 The initial summary of compliance on the six Section 11 standards from individual partners will be discussed within the Board during its meetings in the autumn 2012 and if necessary, further assurance will be required from individual partners to satisfy the Board that they are either compliant with the standards or taking appropriate action to achieve compliance.

## 9. Engagement with children and young people

9.1.1 Bedford Borough Council Children Social Care led on a survey of the views of children involved in the child protection process and made recommendations to the BBSCB regarding necessary changes. The findings of this and other engagement and consultations activities were reported to management groups in November 2011 and then to the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Board. Further work will be taken forward to the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board business plan 2012 - 2013.

9.1.2 Engagement with children and young people is a daily event for Bedfordshire Police and the force is building an ethos that this should be run throughout all work, rather than being seen as something done occasionally. Staff are advised that good contacts with young people can build trust and legitimacy in the police, and greater compliance with the law. The force is developing a youth-focused approach to policing to involve young people in shaping the way that policing is done and to be included in decisions that affect them. The diversity of young people in communities is addressed through ensuring that Local Policing Teams use any available demographic or equality data when planning engagement and participation. Bedfordshire Police initially developed a children and young people action plan which fed into the force's strategic children and young people's group.

9.1.3 Discussions were also held with the lead workers from each Local Authority youth cabinets and regular meetings now take place with these groups of peer elected young people. A mapping exercise also took place to determine which youth forums are already in existence across the force area and regular contact is made with these groups.

9.1.4 All Local Policing Teams are actively encouraged to seek support from the force Children and Young people Development Officer when running events for young people. We ensure that all Local Policing Teams are emailed details of each LA's Youth Service summer activities programme and actively encouraged to promote and attend. Recently specific consultation took place with young People from across Bedfordshire asking how Bedfordshire Police can engage more with Young People - The main suggestions received from this consultation are now Contained in the Bedfordshire Police Children and Young People Plan This Plan is over seen by the Assistant Chief Constable and is driven by a strategic group and a tactical group. Results from all consultations are always fed back to young people through a 'You Said – We did' method.

9.1.5 The BFRS provide a 10 week course (Multi Agency Youth Development) for young people between 14 and 15 years who are identified as at risk of not continuing education, or entering employment or training (NEET). The course works with schools and young people preventing them from becoming NEET when they are due to move into higher education. Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service work with these young people to allow them to build on skills such as 'team working', 'communication skills', 'social skills', and 'taking responsibility' outside of a school setting.

9.1.6 Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service aim to maximise the safety of our communities by what ever means possible and this scheme provides a number of partners the opportunity to influence young people's attitudes and behaviours about *their* community and support them in working towards personal aspirations.

9.1.7 The course adopts a multi agency approach incorporating Road Safety specialists, First Aid Training, Fire Safety awareness, gang and knife crime as well as sessions on anti-social behaviour, bullying and improving health and well being. The structured syllabus also means that the young people work towards attaining an ASDAN Award at the end of the course.

## 10. Priorities for 2012 – 2013

### 10.1 Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board

10.1.1 Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board puts children at the forefront of safeguarding services delivered by all agencies, with the aim of improving the outcomes for all children in Bedford Borough. This will be achieved by under-taking the following tasks during the year 2012 to 2013 –

- Priority 1 - Early Signs and intervention in respect of physical, emotional**
- Priority 2 - Domestic Abuse**
- Priority 3 - Child Sexual Abuse and Child Sexual Abuse through Exploitation**
- Priority 4 - Develop the Board**
- Priority 5 - Implementing the recommendations from the Munro Review, Ofsted, CQC/IST & HMIP Inspections**