



Bedford Borough  
Safeguarding Children Board

# Communication Strategy



## 1. Introduction

### Keeping our children and young people safe and well is the responsibility of everyone living and working in Bedford Borough

The Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board (BBSCB) is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how the organisations in Bedford Borough will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and for ensuring the effectiveness of what we do.

The core objectives of the BBSCB are:

- To co-ordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in the area of the authority by which it is established
- To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for that purpose.
- To promote greater understanding of the need to safeguard children and young people and promote their welfare.

A corner stone of the LSCB's work is the provision of information to the public, potential and actual service users, staff working in partner agencies and others interested in children and young people's welfare.

People need information at different stages, in different formats and locations depending on their requirements.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2015) does not set out any guidance for LSCBs on communicating and raising awareness. However, to fulfil its objectives and carry out its functions the LSCB needs to raise awareness in the wider community, including faith and minority communities and among statutory and independent agencies, including employers, about how everybody can contribute to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This should involve listening to and consulting children and young people and ensuring that their views and opinions are taken into account in planning and delivering safeguarding and promoting welfare services.

## 2. Communication responsibilities of the BBSCB

We want to ensure that the views of children and young people, and their parents and carers, contribute to developing best practice, and that frontline staff and managers are integral to informing learning and improvement.

We aim to achieve the following:

- Children and young people, their families and carers and members of the public have an improved understanding of the aims and role of the BBSCB.
- Staff and managers have an improved understanding of the aims and role of the BBSCB
- 2 way communication opportunities
- Communication of lessons learnt from local and national Serious Case Reviews to ensure these contribute to improving practice.
- Increased awareness of key issues to promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people within Bedford Borough.

The BBSCB will aim to provide information that is accessible, of a high quality and meets the needs of the public, service users, potential service users and staff working in partner agencies. This approach is based on the following principles:

- Information is a service in its own right
- Making services and information accessible to everyone
- Communicating clearly and openly
- Using simple language (e.g. avoiding jargon and explaining acronyms) or giving clear explanations where this is not possible
- Promoting equality and valuing diversity is central to the provision of information
- Keeping information up to date and accurate
- Information may need to be delivered in the spoken word to be effective
- Consultation is key to continuous improvement

It is recognised that producing effective information requires careful planning and the following approach should be confirmed at an early stage:

- know who your audience is and what they want to see
- identify your key messages
- assess the method of production
- identify where the information is going to be distributed or how if it will be given direct to people
- understand how it will be used
- confirm what outcome you want
- assess when materials will need to be removed and information reviewed
- actively facilitate the possibilities for involving service users and staff
- ensure any service you are publicising, or signposting to, is aware of the publicity so they can prepare to meet increased demand

### **3. BBSCB's target audience**

The main target audiences under this strategy can be broken down as follows:

- Children & Young People
- Parents & Carers
- Professionals including the Voluntary, Community and Faith
- Organisations and Board members.
- General Public

We will seek to raise the visual public profile of the BBSCB to improve accessibility to safeguarding services, and raise awareness of key issues to promote the safety and wellbeing of children within Bedford Borough.

We will develop links with organisations and agencies working with children & young people, and listen to and consult with children & young people so that their views are taken into account in the planning and delivering of safeguarding.

### **4. What will be communicated?**

## Key Messages:

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
- A focus on priorities to reduce risk of harm and improve outcomes for children & young people
- A commitment to giving every child and young person the best start, incorporating: being healthy, staying safe, enjoying & achieving, making a positive contribution, and achieving social and economic wellbeing.

Our aim is to raise awareness of safeguarding responsibilities for organisations & individuals, and to promote good multi agency working. We want to ensure that safeguarding information is in the public domain and that staying safe is very much a part of strong families at the heart of strong communities. We want to make sure that everyone knows what to do if they are worried about a child, whilst promoting the LSCB and the agencies within it.

The **key messages** that the BBSCB intends to publicise include:

### Target Group – Everyone

- What to do if you are worried about a child
- What safeguarding is
- That safeguarding is a responsibility shared across the whole community
- What the different responsibilities to safeguard are and how they should be fulfilled
- A basic understanding of the role of the LSCB and how it can be accessed
- Key changes in safeguarding nationally and locally and the implications of these
- Raising awareness of the three areas of concern in our Business Priorities for 2013-16, namely Neglect, Domestic Abuse and Child Sexual Exploitation.

### Target group – Children and Young People

- What to do if you are worried about yourself or a child you know
- How to keep safe
- What to do if you / someone you know is being harmed / harming themselves
- What safeguarding is and what it means to you
- How to let us know about issues that affect your safety
- All young people to have a basic understanding of the child protection system and what it means to them
- All young people to know about the process of a child protection investigation

### Target Group – Parents and Carers

- What to do if you are worried about a child
- How to provide safe parenting and sources of parenting advice
- How to protect your children and others you are responsible for
- The role and aims of BBSCB
- Local and national action being taken to ensure that children are kept safe
- The process of a child protection investigation
- A basic understanding of the child protection system and what it means to them
- How to view child protection procedures

### Target Group – Professionals including the Voluntary and Community Sector, Board

## Partners and Statutory Agencies

- What to do if you are worried about a child
- What is a referral
- The role and aims of the LSCB and how to contact the board
- Your responsibilities with safeguarding;
- The LSCB multi-agency training programme, and any events or conferences
- What good safeguarding practice is and how this can be improved
- Child protection procedures, and updates to policies & procedures
- Recommendations and learning from national Serious Case Reviews
- Local issues that affect the safety and well-being of all children in the area
- How to recruit staff and volunteers safely and deal with an allegation made against them
- Encourage strengthened partnership working across agencies

## Target Group – Other Partnerships

- The BBSCB will update key forums about its work; this will include the Health and Wellbeing Board and the local Strategic Partnership. The Independent Chair and Business Manager will be available to attend other forums and meetings to discuss their role and the role of the BBSCB.

The BBSCB and partner agencies will identify & coordinate a programme of child safety campaigns throughout the year to tie in with national and local events. See Appendix A.

## 5. How and where will the BBSCB communicate – methods/material/locations

It is recognised that producing effective information requires careful planning and the following approach will be adopted with all campaigns at an early stage:

- Identify and understand the wants and needs of the audience
- Outline the key messages we need to communicate
- Assess the most suitable format for this information
- Plan how this information will be distributed
- Identify where partner agencies will need to provide support to get the message far & wide
- Provide information to partners Communications office to help them to secure positive media coverage highlighting the work being done to protect the public from known offenders
- The Pan-Bedfordshire Child Sexual Exploitation Communications Strategy 2015/16 – help support this strategy in practice
- Decide how success will be evaluated

The general methods of communication used by the BBSCB are:

- BBSCB webpages
- BBSCB Twitter
- BBSCB Newsletter
- Multi-agency Training Programme
- Annual conference
- Annual Report
- Consultations – professionals, carers, families, children and young people
- Leaflets
- Posters

- Advertising / press releases in local papers and newsletters
- Emails and Email briefings
- Briefings, meetings, seminars and workshops
- Banners / stalls

Key points of contacts include:

- Community events
- Further Education
- Libraries
- Community and faith centres
- Youth forums
- GP Surgeries/other health clinics
- Social media
- Schools
- Sports centres

Alternative formats may need to be used where people have specific communication needs. This may include audio and visual methods or translation or interpreting services. In recognition that use of social media is a beneficial way to quickly disseminate information to the public we have developed our Twitter [@BedfordLscb](#)

#### **Website: [www.bedford.gov.uk/lscb](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/lscb)**

- Principle method of accessing information about the board
- Tells you what to do if you are concerned about a child
- Contains all board published information
- Provides information about all BBSCB multi-agency training courses
- Have information & advice sections for Professionals, Parents & Carers, and Children & Young People.
- We need to promote the website as a place for the public to go to for information as analytics suggest that it is mainly used by professionals.

#### **BBSCB Newsletter**

- Available on website and emailed to staff throughout BBSCB partner agencies.
- Printed copies to also be made available at events, i.e. staff road shows, events for teachers.
- Advertised on the member agencies intranet,
- The monthly newsletter provides up to date information about board activities; new publications and any external information concerning the broader aspects of safeguarding children.
- Newsletters seek to keep frontline professionals up to date with best practice using information from local and national Serious Case Reviews.
- We create briefing papers on high profile cases to highlight the learning that should be used to improve practice.

#### **Publications**

- BBSCB publications are available on the website and promoted in the newsletter
- Information leaflets for parents will be made available on the website, for example the methadone advice leaflet.
- Executive summaries of Serious Case Reviews are published on the board website. This is subject to the conclusion of any court proceedings.
- Newsletters and briefing sheets seek to keep frontline professionals up to date

with best practice using information from local and national Serious Case Reviews

- BBSCB Training materials to be made available online

### Multi-agency training

- Full details about training are accessible via agency websites or [www.bedfordshirelscb.org.uk/lscb-website/training/training](http://www.bedfordshirelscb.org.uk/lscb-website/training/training) or contacting the BBSCB training team.
- Training flyers are distributed to the agency contact lists by the BBSCB Business Team Officer.
- Training events provide opportunities to promote basic safeguarding awareness and to communicate about the work of the safeguarding agencies and to promote good safeguarding practice, policy and procedure and any other relevant issues.
- A substantial programme of multi-agency training is run by the BBSCB. This is promoted on the website, in the newsletter, and by Bedford Borough Council's Workforce Development Team and partner agencies.
- Training provides the opportunity to meet with other professionals to discuss ways of multi-agency working. This is an effective opportunity for us to get feedback from frontline staff.
- Additions to the training programme are circulated by flyer and website.

### Disseminating key messages

- Minutes are taken of all board and group meetings
- Board members understand that they have a responsibility to cascade all relevant safeguarding information to staff within their agencies, and are encouraged to promote any BBSCB training and events to staff using their respective websites, publications, newsletters, meeting agendas etc. board members understand they have a responsibility to raise any concerns from their teams at the BBSCB.
- Information that requires broad dissemination will be published in the BBSCB newsletter.
- Any information (non high profile) that needs to be disseminated swiftly across partner agencies will be done so through staff briefing emails.
- Seminars, staff briefings and workshops can be implemented to ensure widespread learning and dissemination of key messages.
- All significant communication activities will be detailed in the BBSCB Annual Report.

### Media releases

- Media releases in response to safeguarding issues will be conducted by Bedford Borough Council's Communications team, in conjunction with other partner agencies where necessary. This may include serious safeguarding incidents which have generated press interest.
- Planned media releases will be issued to raise awareness of safeguarding within the community.

## 6. Resourcing

The BBSCB is funded through the partner agencies. The BBSCB has an annual budget that includes ring-fenced sums for information and publicity. Additional funding may be sought from partner agencies for specific projects not identified in the BBSCB Business Plan.

We will endeavour to use the most cost effective methods of communication wherever possible, and will utilise existing communication streams of BBSCB partner agencies wherever possible.

## 7. Responsibility for implementing, monitoring and reviewing this Strategy

All BBSCB Groups and task and finish groups will develop targeted information and publicity in relation to specific work plans (e.g. missing, FGM). Those groups should refer to this strategy.

Each year BBSCB will agree a Communications Plan which will include a rolling programme of events and projects so the public and staff can be informed and consulted on child protection and selected safeguarding children issues. **See Appendix A for Communications Plan 2015 - 2016.**

Each specific communication campaign should seek to identify how its success can be evaluated.

The BBSCB Chairs Group will be responsible for monitoring and reviewing this strategy and communications will be an agenda item for each meeting.

The Communication strategy and plan will be evaluated through a number of means, and feedback will be provided by the Business Manager, Training and Development Commissioning Manager, the Chairs Group to the Strategic Board:

- Conference and Training Evaluation forms
- Attendance database for Conference and Training – including numbers and breakdown of agency attendance
- Annual training needs analysis
- Monitoring of BBSCB website
- Monitoring of social media contacts
- Audit inspections and Peer Reviews
- Consultations with focus groups

## 8. Branding



Bedford Borough  
Safeguarding Children Board

The agreed objective for Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board is;

**Keeping our children and young people safe and well is the responsibility of everyone living and working in Bedford Borough**



## Appendix A - Communications Plan 2015 – 2016

| <b>To raise awareness among key stakeholders, professionals and the wider community about the importance of safeguarding children, and promoting their welfare and to engage children and young people wherever possible:</b>   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Actions</b>  | <b>Key channels</b>   | <b>Key audiences</b>  | <b>Timescales and lead</b>  | <b>What success looks like</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produce quarterly electronic newsletter</li> <li>Revise the What is the LSCB leaflet?</li> <li>Take Over Day – children and young people to work on the BBSCB website content</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LSCB website</li> <li>Newsletters</li> <li>briefings, seminars, workshops and conferences</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>partners agencies</li> <li>the local workforce working with children, young people, families and trainers</li> <li>community leaders</li> <li>parents and carers</li> <li>children and young people</li> </ul> | <p>BBSCB Business Unit - Ongoing</p> <p>BBSCB Business Unit - October 2015</p> <p>BBSCB Business Unit - November 2016</p> | <p>Increasing numbers of visitors to the BBSCB website.</p> <p>Newsletter widely read with good response to articles.</p> <p>Engagement, participation and feedback from children and young people.</p> |

| <b>To raise awareness about the key business priorities of the Board: child sexual exploitation, early help, FGM and the toxic trio (domestic abuse, mental health and substance misuse).</b>   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Actions</b>  | <b>Key channels</b>   | <b>Key audiences</b>  | <b>Timescales and lead</b>  | <b>What success looks like</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver Chelsea's Choice to children and young people across all channels</li> <li>Hold briefing events to launch the MASH, Early Help Offer/Strategy and Thresholds to the workforce</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LSCB website</li> <li>Newsletters</li> <li>briefings, seminars, workshops and conferences</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>partners agencies</li> <li>the local workforce working with children and families and trainers</li> <li>community</li> </ul> | <p>BBSCB Business Unit Oct/Nov/Dec 2015</p> <p>BBSCB Business Unit – Jan 2016</p> | <p>Case audits and reviews show awareness of the practice issues.</p> <p>Partners feel informed about the local approach to these issues.</p> |

|  |   |  |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate national research and local policy via website and newsletters</li> <li>Deliver briefings re raising awareness of FGM and new FGM Toolkit</li> <li>Disseminate the training offer re Domestic Abuse/Violence</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Posters, leaflets</li> <li>Social media</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>leaders</li> <li>children and young people</li> </ul> | <p>BBSCB Business Unit - ongoing</p> <p>BBSCB Business Unit – February 2016</p> <p>BBSCB Business Unit - ongoing</p> |  |
|--|---|--|--|--|

| <b>To communicate the key safeguarding lessons learned from national and local case reviews, audits and research.</b>   |  |   |  |  |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| <b>Actions</b>  | <b>Key channels</b>  | <b>Key audiences</b>  | <b>Timescales and lead</b>                               | <b>What success looks like</b>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disseminate relevant lessons and reports when available via the BBSCB SPOCs</li> <li>Include the relevant lessons/learning in quarterly newsletter</li> <li>Manage the publication of information relating to serious case reviews as required</li> <li>Prepare a Learning briefing document and/or power point presentations for practitioners to use as key tools for sharing learning.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LSCB website</li> <li>Newsletters</li> <li>briefings, seminars, workshops and conferences</li> <li>Media relations</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>partner agencies</li> <li>the local workforce working with children and families and trainers</li> </ul> | <p>BBSCB Business Unit – ongoing</p> <p>All partners</p> | <p>Practitioners are aware of the latest learning and this informs their practice.</p> |

**To ensure that the voices of children and young people inform the learning, service improvement and practice of all Board partners.**

| Actions   | Key channels  | Key audiences   | Timescales and lead   | What success looks like  |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that key themes around the child's voice are extracted through audits</li> <li>• Engage with Council's Engagement and Participation Service to ensure messages to children are appropriate.</li> <li>• To hold a Strategic Board in school annually.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case audits and reviews</li> <li>• Surveys</li> <li>• Youth Parliament and Children in Care Council and Link Vice Versa</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partners agencies</li> <li>• Local workforce working with children and families and trainers</li> <li>• Community leaders</li> <li>• Schools</li> <li>• Children and young people</li> </ul> | <p>BBSCB Business Unit and Board partners.</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>Board reports, audits, reviews and training reflect the voice of the child.</p> |