

## Safeguarding, it's everyone's business

Welcome to the latest edition of The Bulletin, which is a Safeguarding special. The issue of safeguarding is paramount in the minds of all of us who work with children and young people, across a broad spectrum of services. Recent events, including the case of Baby Peter and more recently the police investigations into a Plymouth nursery, have brought even more sharply into focus the need for us to make sure we are working together in the best possible way to protect all children and young people in Devon.

Nearly every report which has looked into failures to protect children has highlighted lack of information sharing as a key concern. Our staff collectively are protecting children and young people every day. However we need to make sure this lack of information sharing doesn't happen in Devon, and it is the responsibility of all of us to share any concerns we have with our colleagues in the relevant agencies. It is only through everyone working together, whatever their responsibilities or area of service, that we can provide robust and effective safeguarding arrangements. Devon's Safeguarding



Children's Board is now well established, and I would like to thank Alan Wooderson for his work in raising awareness amongst staff, forging better relationships between colleagues across the Trust and bringing more accountability to all the agencies concerned. This work will continue, but however brilliant the structure and processes are, they are only as good as the people who use them.

For this reason, it is vital that everyone who works with children and young people, whether their job involves road safety, health, education, charity work, police work, youth justice, or any other area, familiarises themselves with the basic principles of safeguarding. Knowing how to protect children and young people, how to share concerns and who to speak

to could make a profound difference to someone's life. I hope the information contained in this bulletin will prove a useful reference guide to some of the aspects of safeguarding – please take the time to read it.

**Chair of Devon  
Children's Trust Partnership Council**

### Inspection newflash

It has just been announced that our services for safeguarding and children in care are being inspected. Inspectors will be visiting our services from Monday 29 June for 10 days. Their focus is on outcomes and our partnership working. We will use this process to continue our improvements in these priority areas. See [www.devonchildrenstrust.org.uk/inspection](http://www.devonchildrenstrust.org.uk/inspection) for further information.

**The Devon Children's Trust is a partnership between social care, education, health, community, voluntary, and justice services working together to make a difference for Devon's children and young people.**

# View from the Chair (DSCB)

**At the last Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) we decided to change the name from Local to Devon, so we are now the DSCB. You wouldn't think this would make much of a difference, but I think it emphasises the Devon-wide spread of our responsibilities.**

Part of the thinking behind making a change to the name is to mark a change in emphasis and style in how the Board undertakes its role and to promote the independent voice of the Board. I want this to be strong and to reiterate that safeguarding is not the sole responsibility of Devon County Council; it is for everybody in Devon regardless of organisation or agency, who works with children in the county.

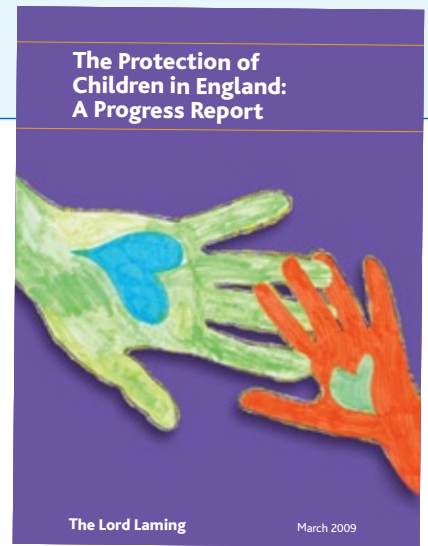


In my five minute interview in the last Bulletin I highlighted that we all have a responsibility to make sure all children are safeguarded but this would only work if we worked together.

The publication of Lord Laming's Progress Report and the very recent Government response has already had a significant impact on our work, and has in many ways concentrated our thoughts as never before on just how the DSCB can monitor effectiveness of safeguarding children and deliver improvements across such a large county and such a large number of partners.

But this is exactly what the Devon public expect we can achieve and report on, and it is how Ofsted will judge all of our individual and organisational contributions. This challenge and how to solve it, requires 'sign up' from the leaders of all the key safeguarding partners. A meeting is being organised to do that and to make sure that accountability for children's safeguarding is clear from the top of each organisation to the frontline.

It has been interesting to note that the media and ministers have started to refer to Baby P as Baby Peter after his name was released in early May. This brings home the personal tragedy of such a death much more than an anonymous letter of the alphabet. It is sobering to reflect that recently in Devon there have been similar Serious Case Reviews following tragic and harrowing deaths of vulnerable children. The same organisational, systemic and individual omissions appear to repeat themselves time and again. This is also the picture that emerges from research the NSPCC has carried out on children in the South West Region since 2006 who have



died or been very seriously injured.

Most recently I have been involved in leading three workshops for frontline managers and staff, and have been reflecting with them on just how slowly we seem to learn from such events and repeating patterns. I do hope that the launch of Devon's Golden Rules for Safeguarding will go just a little way to making the lives of children and the jobs of everyone involved with children that bit SAFER.



Alan Wooderson,  
**Independent Chair of  
the DSCB**





# What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone who works with children and young people. From child protection social workers, school crossing patrol officers and housing officers to health visitors, teachers, youth workers and police officers, we all have a role to play in protecting children and young people.

The Government has defined the term **safeguarding children** as:

**'The process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables**

**children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.'**

Safeguarding young people is about much more than statutory child protection. It means taking a comprehensive approach that supports young people against any potential source of harm, such as accidents at home or on the road, crime and bullying, and actively promoting their welfare in a healthy and safe environment.

This is not just about preventing and acting on the worst case scenarios, such as abuse happening to a young person, it is also about:

- educating parents as well as those working with young

people to deal with them in the most appropriate ways

- making sure that the right people are recruited as employees and volunteers to work with young people in all settings
- creating a culture of openness and honesty
- protecting young people from harm and danger without smothering their potential and need for challenge and excitement.

It's also about helping young people to grow and thrive; young people need to be challenged as well as kept safe, by offering opportunities for them to develop.



## Safeguarding the next steps

**Since the Baby Peter tragedy all Devon Safeguarding Children's Board (DSCB) members have been involved in reviewing aspects of their safeguarding accountabilities. An immediate stock-take of all child protection plans has already been done by Children and Young People's Services. There has also been a multi-agency case audit and considerable investment by Devon County Council into the children's workforce and supporting the work of the DSCB.**

Lord Laming was asked to look into how effective children's safeguarding has become, following on from his original enquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié. His report, coupled with work across all aspects of child protection in

the next few months, will have a significant impact on our work.

The structure of the DSCB is being strengthened to make sure the sub-committees deliver their accountabilities, so that our Business Plan makes real changes to the lives of children and young people across Devon.

A new strategic post of head of safeguarding policy and quality assurance will be advertised in July to support the work of the DSCB.

We are also making sure that all our safeguarding work reaches the standards laid down by Ofsted.

We will be producing an

annual report which details our achievements and the barriers to improvement which need to be overcome.

Work to improve the DSCB website is underway. Currently it is not as useful and easy to navigate as it should be and needs a comprehensive redesign so that it is a source of information as well as professional guidance.

[www.devon.gov.uk/devoniscboard](http://www.devon.gov.uk/devoniscboard) has all the minutes to the meetings and the business plan is updated regularly. There are big changes ahead for safeguarding as well as DSCB so watch this space.

“ If the parent knows that the child is safe and who the child is with they should let that child become independent and grow up with a little help from them.”

Young person at Kongomana 2008

## Safeguarding Progress in Delivering ContactPoint



**ContactPoint** is a new national tool to enable professionals delivering services to children to identify and contact one another easily and quickly.

Access to ContactPoint will be restricted to professionals who have undergone enhanced Criminal Records Bureau checks.

All children and young people in England up to 18 (and between the ages of 18 and 25 with the young person's permission) will be registered on the database. Its regulations and guidance fall under Section 12 of *The Children Act 2004*.

ContactPoint will hold the contact details of:

- the GP practice where the child receives primary health care
- the school they attend
- other practitioners working with the child.

It will **not** hold assessment

details, case information or any subjective observations about a child.

### Shielding

The contact details of a child can be **shielded**, or partially hidden, on ContactPoint, so that only their name, date of birth and unique identifying number will be visible to most users.

**Shielding** is only applied when there is a strong reason for doing so; for example where a practitioner has reason to believe that not doing so is likely to:

- place a child at increased risk of significant harm
- put an adopted child's placement at risk
- place an adult at risk of significant harm
- prejudice the prevention or detection of a serious crime.

Devon's Safeguarding Children's Board (DSCB) has contacted all partners and provided guidance for them to make shielding requests on a case-by-case basis. Devon has shielded all records requested by services so far and shielding is now an ongoing process. All services have added steps to incorporate

shielding requests into their existing safeguarding procedures. A shielding panel has been set up to assess requests directly from the public.

### Roll-out of ContactPoint

Local implementation of ContactPoint is being led by Assistant Director of Integrated Children's Services, Miles Hapgood, through the AXS Programme Board which reports to the Devon Children's Trust.

For more information visit [www.devonchildrenstrust.org.uk/toolkit/contactpoint](http://www.devonchildrenstrust.org.uk/toolkit/contactpoint) if you have any queries email [ContactPoint@devon.gov.uk](mailto:ContactPoint@devon.gov.uk) or call **01392 382770**

Please don't include any child-identifying information in email correspondence.

**ContactPoint**  
because every child matters



# Thinking about outcomes



**Outcomes are at the core of all the work we do as part of Devon Children's Trust. Historically, services have been judged by counting the number of people using a service instead of looking at outcomes. But what is an outcome and how can we describe it?**

An outcome:

- describes a benefit or change for people using a service or group - this could be for a parent, child or member of staff
- often relates to a change in knowledge, skills, attitude or behaviour
- can be short, medium or long term.

Examples of outcomes could be:

- parents report an increased awareness of child development
- parents have an increased involvement in their children's learning
- parents report an improvement in their child's speech and language skills.

## **When should I use outcomes?**

Thinking about outcomes at the start of a new service can give a clear focus and, crucially, a measure by which you can judge the success of a service. For an established service, revisiting the outcomes the service is working towards can refocus energies and direction.

## **But the outcomes of our service will not be seen for many years. How can I measure the effect of our work?**

When thinking about outcomes it is easy to think about long-term outcomes which might take many years to achieve. We need to think about the changes for parents and children during the time that we work with them. Outcomes can be short, medium or long-term. If you only measure long-term outcomes then you may find it difficult to show the changes that your service may bring. To overcome this:

- measure outcomes which you can assess over the course of your involvement with a parent or child
- measure outcomes which

show meaningful change for participants

- think about the changes in awareness, knowledge and behaviour that you would hope to see as a result of your work with the parent or child
- do not have outcomes which are so long-term that you can't reasonably influence them - ask yourself which outcomes your service might influence during a parent or child's time with you.

For more information about using outcomes in your work email

**Lynette Chapman** at [lynette.chapman@devon.gov.uk](mailto:lynette.chapman@devon.gov.uk)

**We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and ensure all our employees and volunteers share this commitment**

**John Davey**

Director of Service Delivery, Connexions

**From the age of eight Jason has been in and out of care, and about 6 months ago was in a remand placement for offending, mainly car offences. Jason said that he didn't like being in care because he didn't feel like people were being up front and honest with him.**

Jason is now 17 and lives with his girlfriend's family. He says that since living with them things have really changed for him. In June last year Jason became a dad, and was keen to do any work to help pay for and support his girlfriend and baby. Jason said that he was really scared when he found out that his girlfriend, Shan, was pregnant as he was unsure how the family

would react, however they have given Jason a chance and loads of support which he felt he never had from his mum in the past. Jason said that when he used to get into trouble his granddad wouldn't acknowledge him but since things have changed he gets on really well with his grandparents - who also have a lot of respect for Shan's family.

Before meeting his girlfriend, Jason said he felt like he had nothing to lose but now, with the arrival of their baby and the support of Shan's family he feels he has a lot to lose and wants to do whatever he can to support his new family. He has found it difficult to get

work; however Connexions have been really good and have helped him to get on to a CSCS course, a safety course for working on a construction site, they paid for him to take his MO1 tractor driving certificate and he will soon be starting a brush cutting course. Life is improving for this young man.



Jason with baby Reece

**When is a Serious Case Review (SCR) undertaken?**

SCRs are undertaken when a child dies (including suicide), and abuse or neglect is known or suspected to be a factor in the death. Additionally they can be carried out where:

- a child sustains a potentially life-threatening injury or serious and permanent impairment of health and development through abuse or neglect
- a child has been subjected to particularly serious sexual abuse
- a parent has been murdered and a homicide review is being initiated
- the case gives rise to concerns about inter-agency working to protect children from harm.

**What is the purpose of a SCR?**

Serious Case Reviews are carried out to:

- establish whether there are lessons to be learned from the case about the way in which local professionals and agencies work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- identify clearly what those lessons are, how they will be acted on, and what is expected to change as a result
- as a consequence, improve inter-agency working and better safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

**How is the review carried out?**

The **Devon Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB)** decides whether or not a case should be the subject of a Serious Case Review through the DSCB's Serious Case Review Panel, involving children's social care, health, education and the police.

The decision to conduct a SCR (or not) must be made within one month of the DSCB Chair being made aware of the incident, and SCR's should usually be completed within four months.

Each relevant service will do a separate management review of its involvement with the child and family. This will begin as soon as a decision is taken to proceed with a review, or even sooner if case gives rise to concerns the individual organisations.

The aim is to look openly and critically at individual organisations' practices to see whether the case indicates that changes could, and should be made and how those changes will be brought about.

**What happens next?**

The DSCB will commission an overview report which brings together and analyses the findings of the various reports from organisations and others, and makes recommendations for the future.

On receiving the overview report, the DSCB will:

- make sure that contributing organisations and individuals are satisfied that their information is fully and fairly represented in the overview report
- translate recommendations into an action plan signed up to at senior level by each of the organisations which need to be involved
- clarify who the report, or any part of it, should be made available to
- provide feedback to staff, family members and media as appropriate
- send anonymised copies of the overview report, multi-agency action plan, individual management reports and executive summary to Ofsted, the relevant Government Office Children and Learner Team and DCSF.



# Inviting challenge Anne Whiteley Devon's peer review of safeguarding

Many colleagues in the Children's Trust will know that we recently participated in the national pilot of a 'peer review' of our safeguarding arrangements. This review was led by the Improvement and Development Agency for Local Government (IDeA). They showed us what we are doing well and helped us improve and develop priority areas.

The strength of the peer review was that the team were literally our peers with professional colleagues from health, local authorities and others from all over the country - they know the jobs and the challenges! They also had good practice they were willing to share, and found it a good learning experience enabling them to

take some fresh ideas back with them.

The review team looked at five areas of our safeguarding, covering:

- legislation and practice
- resources and accountability
- leadership and learning
- effective practice
- performance, evaluation and monitoring

as well as how we are working in partnership.

IDeA have now given us their feedback from this review. It says that Devon is well placed to take safeguarding forward. It says leadership and vision is strong across the system, and they have encouraged us to find ways to make sure that safeguarding becomes a reality 'on the ground'.

The DSCB is ensuring that the key findings, together with all our improvement work, will drive the safeguarding agenda for the refresh of the Children and Young People's Plan.

One practical example is updating all policies so that they assist practitioners and front line workers.

“The PCT values the professional reflection on safeguarding that this process provided”

**Kevin Snee**

Chief Executive Devon PCT

“The peer review has given us a mirror to help our understanding of our individual and collective roles and responsibilities for safeguarding”

**Phil Norrey**

Chief Executive DCC

## Building one children's workforce in Devon



We are currently involved in a self-assessment to benchmark the progress we have made in developing a workforce which makes the best contribution possible to Every Child Matters and Devon's **Children and Young People's Plan**.

You may have already been involved in helping gather evidence for the assessment, through focus groups, events in team meetings or completing the online questionnaire. Thanks to everyone who has given their views. This will enable us to identify where we need to make improvements and prioritise activity to have the greatest positive impact on children, young people, their families and the people who work with them.

The final report and accompanying action plan will be completed by the end of June and will be available to view on the Children's Trust website.

If you have any enquiries about this project email Verity Sutcliffe at [verity.sutcliffe@devon.gov.uk](mailto:verity.sutcliffe@devon.gov.uk)

This is part of a national project supported by the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) visit <http://onechildrensworkforce.cwdcouncil.org.uk> for more information.

“Every child and young person deserves the very best of us, an unrelenting focus on safeguarding them and improving all our efforts. We must not let them down.”

**Anne Whiteley**

Executive Director for CYPs



# 5 minute staff interview

**Name:** Alison Allen

**Job title:** Named Nurse, Safeguarding, Devon Primary Care Trust

**Your job title is Named Nurse. What does this mean?**

Each health trust has to have a named nurse. It basically means I am the strategic lead on safeguarding for Devon PCT. I also lead on child protection for the Northern Devon area and manage two other nurse leads who look after Southern and Eastern areas. As a team we advise, support and give supervision to staff as well as provide training.

**How does your work relate to other agencies?**

We work closely with lots of agencies, mainly with CYPs, the police and education but also those involved with domestic violence, mental health and substance misuse. We also look at the other aspects of why children may need safeguarding, such as missing children and homelessness.

**The PCT's work is massive. How can you make sure that everybody on the front line is aware to look out for potential safeguarding issues?**

As well as the child protection leads we have a network of child protection supervisors who offer supervision to all staff who work with children. We are also looking to develop safeguarding leads or champions in each department, for example Minor Injury Units, who will also be able to support

frontline staff. We are working hard to raise awareness of safeguarding but there is some way to go. We need to strengthen child protection awareness with independent contractors, such as pharmacists, dentists and GPs.

**What is your biggest challenge at the moment?**

I think at the moment it must be to ensure there is constant quality in our safeguarding provision across the county. We want to make sure that

Devon Safeguarding Children's Board (DSCB) is really working now. Having an independent chair has made the board more focused and I really feel DCSB members are able to contribute to make a real change for the better.

**Since Baby Peter, has anything changed for your work?**

We were already used to being audited, but there has been a rash of audits recently. Fortunately they have dovetailed neatly and highlighted things that maybe weren't our immediate priority and now with that knowledge we will review our policies and procedures.

**How did you become a named nurse?**

Well I was midwife for many years and I do miss that in some ways, although I'm a bit out of touch with the modern technology they use now! When I had my own family I trained to be a health visitor and worked with many vulnerable families. This led to being a health visitor in a woman's refuge and the rest as they say is history.



wherever a safeguarding issue might crop up there is the same level of awareness, training and service.

**Is the multi-agency approach working?**

Yes it is. It has made a huge difference and being able to work with so many different agencies is one of the reasons this job is so enjoyable. Also the

**The most important part of a parent's job is accepting you for who you are, giving you the confidence to be who you are without trying to change you.**

Young person at Kongomana 2008

# Meet our Quality Improvement and Development Team

**A new team has been formed to support and challenge the Children's Trust, and provide immediate leadership and expertise in helping us improve some of our key service areas and the quality of our work with families.**

**The team is four consultants with specific expertise and experience in children's social care. They will focus on practice and policy, by questioning our existing methods and contributing to new ways of thinking and doing to improve outcomes.**



**Maureen Daley**  
**Devon Children's Safeguarding Board**

- Review of policies.

- Developing a multi-agency safeguarding outcome, performance and quality dataset and framework.
- Governance structures and business planning.



**John Nixon**  
**Independent Review Unit line-management**

- Child protection core group planning and co-ordination.
- Case management and pathways.
- Coaching core groups and developing Independent Reviewing Officers.

**Ron Metcalfe**  
**Practice and case management in the Assessment and Intervention Service**



- Modelling good practice and coaching for practice managers and social workers.
- Feedback on the Assessment and Intervention Service.
- Developing practice-based approaches to advanced supervision skills and complex cases.
- Contributing to development opportunities for practice managers and social workers.

**Geoff Evans**  
**Developing a fit-for-purpose quality system for children's social care**



- Quality measurement.
- Monitoring and improvement tools and processes.
- Inspection readiness.

Maria Kasprzyk will be working in an advisory and support capacity across all four areas.

For more information contact Geoff Evans on **01392 383122**

## Domestic violence and abuse The impact on children and families

Roy Tomlinson, Against Domestic Violence and Abuse partnership (ADVA)

**Witnessing incidents of domestic violence and abuse (DVA) can have a devastating effect on children and young people.**

### Key facts

- Nationally 35-55% of child protection case conferences record a history of DVA (DoH).
- Devon police attended 9,500 DVA incidents in 2008/09, children were present in the household in 50% of these.
- An average of 240 children stay in the three Devon DVA refuges each year.
- Nationally 55% of children in care are likely to have come from DVA households (DoH).
- DVA is a contributory factor in 26% of children in need cases.

The main effects of DVA on children and young people are:

- Adjustment difficulties
- increased levels of anxiety
- psychosomatic illnesses -headaches, abdominal complaints, stuttering, enuresis, sadness, withdrawal and fear. Lower rating in social competence, especially for boys.

Behavioural effects

- disobedience and destructiveness in younger boys
- nervous, withdrawn and anxious demeanour in younger girls
- erratic temperaments and aggression
- poor academic attainment.

### Adva

Adva is the multi-agency partnership which leads work on DVA across Devon. It has representatives from across all the main public and community agencies and a pooled budget of £1.2m in 2009/10 administered by DCC which provides specialist community services to victims, children and young people and perpetrators.

Adva provides services to the children and young people who live in the three women's refuges in Devon each year. It also funds three community-based workers who work in the REPAIR family intervention DVA programme which works with perpetrators and their partners and children.

For more information about the work of Adva and to read the *Adva Vision and Strategy 2009-2011* visit [www.adva.org.uk](http://www.adva.org.uk)

# The Golden Rules

## do you work by them?

### Devon safeguarding golden rules for multi-agency working to safeguard children and young people from harm.

#### Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility

If you work with children, young people and their families or carers you have a responsibility to safeguard. These rules will make everyone safer.

#### Share information

- Communicate concerns across agencies involved with the child and family.
- Attend and participate in conferences, core groups, reviews and meetings.
- Do not use data protection as a barrier.
- Seek advice if in doubt.
- Record your decision why you share or do not share information.

#### Assess risk

- Always be child-centred in assessments.
- Use evidence to analyse risk and protective factors.
- Maintain a multi-agency focus, include all children, read the history and identify recurring patterns.

#### Focus on the child

- Use multi-agency guidance policy and procedures.
- Record the child's wishes feelings and behaviour.
- Listen to what the child is saying.
- Do not take adult explanation of injuries at face value; have the confidence to challenge.
- Plans for children must be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound).

#### Evidence all decision making

- All professions must know who to go to with safeguarding concerns.
- Supervision must be regular and robust.
- Managers must have regular oversight of case files.

#### Recording is paramount

- Records must be legible, accurate, dated, and signed.
- Records must contain up to date information about the child.
- Share records as appropriate.

