

# Devon Safeguarding Children Board

Annual Report 2008/2009





# Contents

- 1 Foreword
  - 2 Introduction
  - 3 Devon Safeguarding Children Board Executive Group and Subgroup Structure
  - 4 Key achievements from the year
  - 7 Devon Safeguarding Children Board partner updates
  - 21 Executive and subgroups
  - 23 Devon Safeguarding Children Board Subgroups
  - 31 Devon safeguarding facts and figures
  - 33 New challenges and objectives for the Devon Safeguarding Children Board
  - 35 Devon Safeguarding Children Board Members
- Glossary

We feel passionately that all children and young people should be: happy, healthy, secure, and have the confidence to achieve at school and enjoy their childhood. All children and young people will feel safe and protected. Safeguarding children is everybody's responsibility.

# Foreword



The publication of an annual report outlining the work of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) was suggested in Working Together 2006. In his most recent report reviewing

progress in the protection of children in England, Lord Laming strengthens his advice to Government with Recommendation 53 **'Local Safeguarding Children Boards should report to the Children Trust Board and publish an annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area LSCBs should provide robust challenge to the work of the Children's Trust and its partners in order to ensure that the right systems and quality of services and practice are in place so that children are properly safeguarded'**.

New Government guidance on the content of LSCB annual reports will be published in December 2009.

**Alan Wooderson**  
Independent Chair



As Cabinet Member for children and young people's health and wellbeing, I am a member of both the Children's Trust Board and the Devon Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB), having taken

over this role from Councillor John Smith in June 2009.

As a lead member for children's services, I am politically accountable for ensuring the local authority fulfils its legal responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and providing the political leadership needed for the effective co-ordination of work with other relevant agencies with safeguarding responsibilities, such as the police and health authorities.

We all have a duty to ensure that robust safeguarding arrangements are implemented and delivered, and that effective quality assurance systems for safeguarding are in place and form part of our everyday practice across all of the agencies, settings and organisations working with children and young people.

**Cllr Andrea Davis**  
Cabinet Member for CYPS



As Executive Director of Children and Young People's Services I have direct responsibility for the services for Children and Young People delivered by the County Council. As a member of the

County Council Corporate Management Board I ensure that all council services take into account the safeguarding of children and young people.

My role also involves bringing together partner agencies across the Children's Trust – some of which are not directly managed by me – in a joint effort to improve safeguarding.

I work very closely with our two lead members: Councillor Christine Channon (Schools and Skills) and Councillor Andrea Davis (Health and Wellbeing).

Working with colleague Directors across the South West region, with Government Office and related agencies, safeguarding is our number one priority. We have a joint programme of action to ensure we maximise opportunities for learning and development in the improvement of all our practice.

**Anne Whiteley**  
Executive Director  
Children and Young People's Services (CYPS)  
Devon County Council



# Introduction

This annual report covers a period of immense challenge for children's safeguarding nationally and locally. The horrific death of Baby Peter in Haringey focussed attention on systemic and individual failings and has led to a major review on behalf of the Government by Lord Laming of progress made in protecting children since his enquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié.

The Government have accepted all the recommendations made and the year ahead will see a major revision to national Working Together guidance, new national and regional leadership and accountability arrangements for safeguarding children, a more rigorous inspection framework for all services, greater support and resourcing for front line workers and

clear expectations placed on Children's Trusts, LSCBs, Lead Members for Children's Services, Directors of Children's Services, Local Authority Chief Executives and Council Leaders.

It is sobering to reflect that in Devon, four of the Serious Case Reviews following the deaths or serious injuries of children that were completed and submitted for evaluation to Ofsted during the year were judged to be inadequate and have needed to be reviewed again.

As Lord Laming says 'It would be unreasonable to expect the sudden and unpredictable outburst of an adult towards a child can be prevented. But that is entirely different from the failure to protect a child or young person already identified as being in danger of deliberate harm.'

The challenge for all involved in any way with services for children and young people is to learn the lessons from research into tragedies, and provide the safest possible life chances and development opportunities for all Devon's children.

**Alan Wooderson**

Devon Safeguarding  
Children Board

# Executive Group and Subgroup Structure

## DSCB Executive

**Chair:** Rory McCallum, Director of Early Years and Families

## Policy, Procedures and Service Development subgroup

**Chair:** Detective Inspector Andy Berry, Public Protection Unit, Devon & Cornwall Constabulary

## Domestic Violence and Abuse subgroup

**Chair:** Roy Tomlinson, Devon County Council, Communities & Strategy Officer

## Private Fostering subgroup

**Chair:** Andrea Morris, Service Improvement Manager, Devon CYPS

## E-Safety subgroup

**Chair:** Nick Pearce, CYPS Lead Officer: ICT Systems and Infrastructure

## Substance Misuse subgroup

**Chair:** Maureen Muckersie, Young Persons' Substance Misuse Lead

## The Quality Assurance, Audit and Complaints subgroup

**Chair:** Maria Kasprzyk, Service Improvement Manager, Devon CYPS

## Training and Workforce Development subgroup

**Chair:** Michele Thornberry, Named Nurse for Child Protection and Looked After Children

## Publication, Communications and Communities subgroup

**Chair:** to be confirmed

## Health subgroup

**Chair:** Dr Charles Holme, Consultant Paediatrician

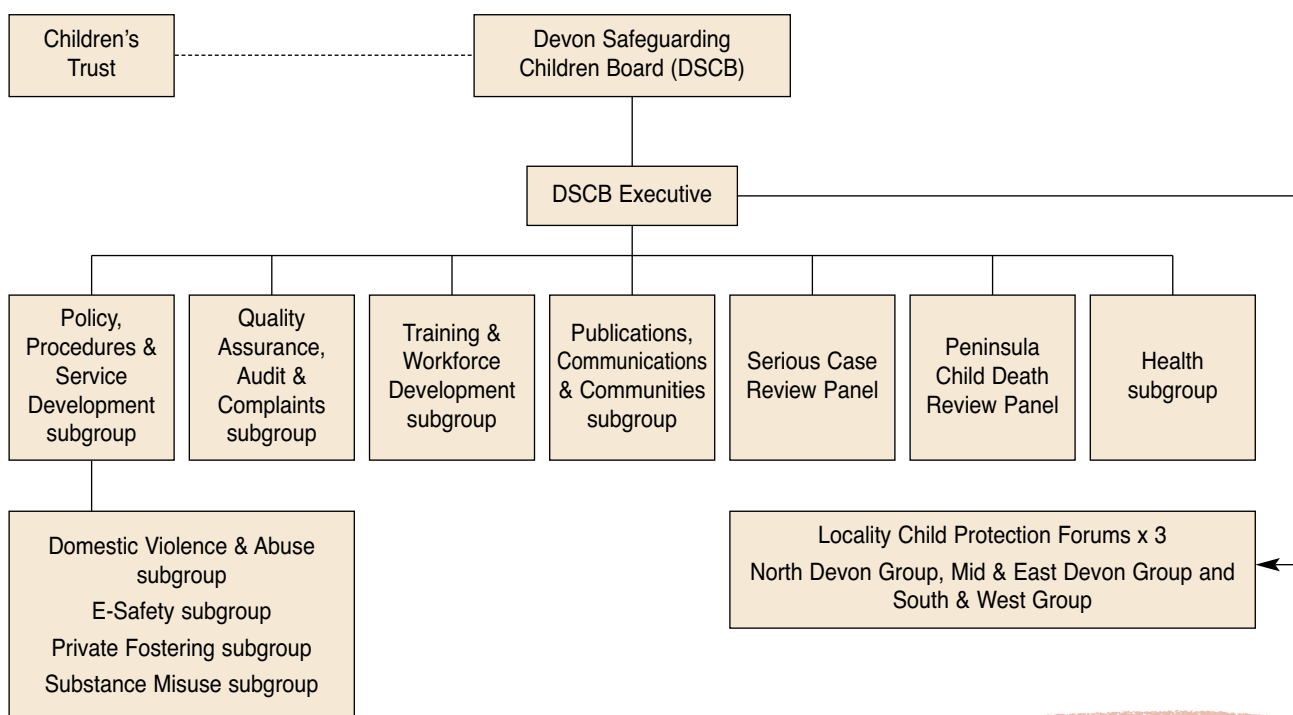
## Serious Case Review Panel

**Independent Chair:** Mike Craddock

## Child Death Review Panel (Peninsula Wide)

**Chair:** LSCB Chair or Director of Public Health or nominated deputy member from 4 x LSCBs, rotating on annual basis

## Locality Child Protection Forums x 3



# Key achievements from the year

The Devon Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB) has over the past year had a very busy agenda influenced by both national and local issues. The main areas of activity undertaken by the Board were as follows:



## Structure and Governance

The Board has continued to build on the Review undertaken of its structure and governance arrangements in the latter part of 2007. In response to one of the specific recommendations in the Government's review of Safeguarding Children's Boards (SCB), the DSCB has appointed an independent Chair. Alan Wooderson took up the role in September 2008. The Board has worked hard to establish its new structure and now has in place an Executive which will focus upon the operational and procedural responsibilities of the Board, thus enabling the full Board to focus more sharply on its strategic and performance monitoring function.

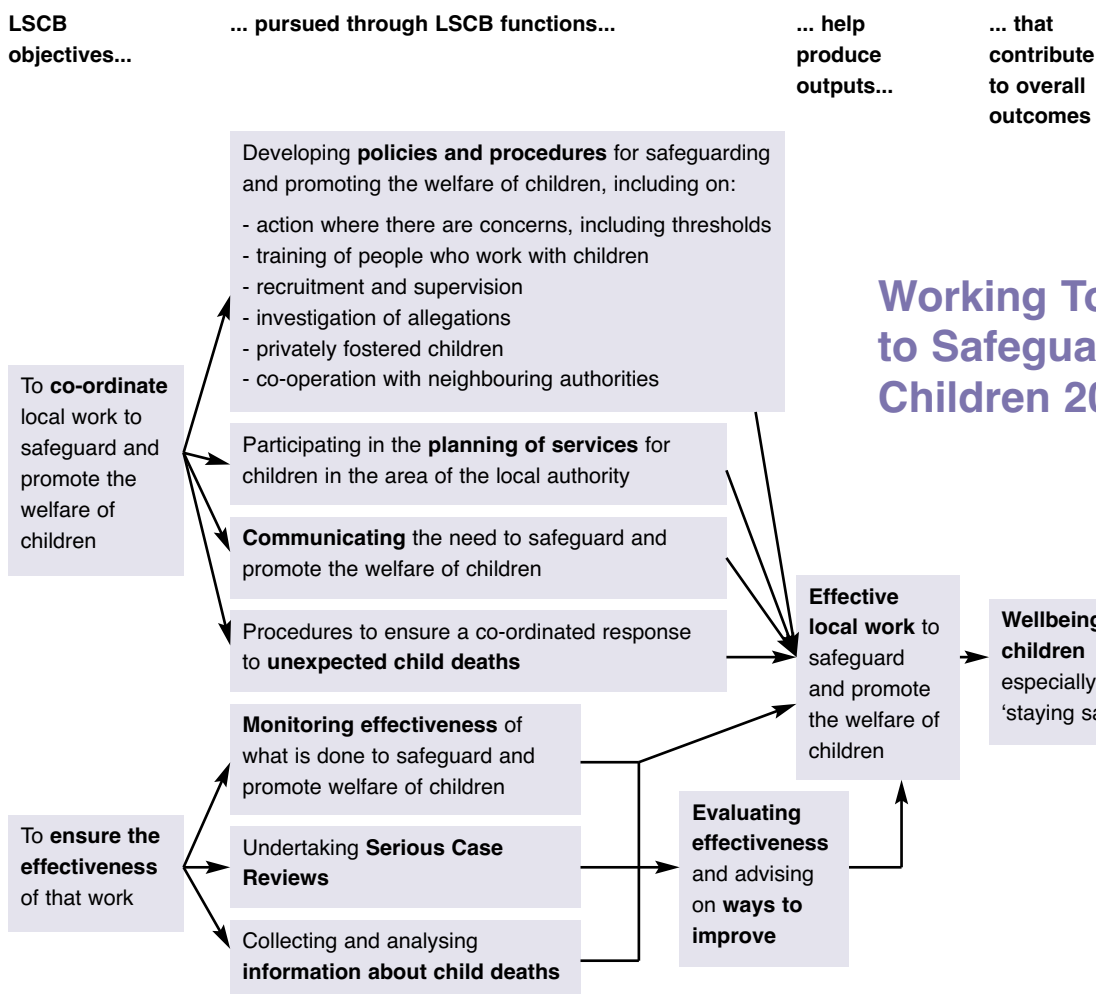
The Executive will be supported by a revised range of specific subgroups, most of which have been established. Further work is being undertaken to see if this structure can be streamlined to make it more effective in tackling the ever increasing agenda.

During the year, significant work was undertaken with regard to revising the Board's Business Plan and a Plan for the period 2008 – 2011 has now been published. This Plan responds to the safeguarding requirements contained within Devon's Children and Young People's Plan and also takes account of the various requirements of the national Children and Young People's (CYP's) Plan and the national Stay Safe Action Plan.

## Establishment of the Peninsula Child Death Review Panel

All SCBs were required to establish a Child Death Review Panel by 1st April 2008. The DSCB has been working with its partner Boards on the south west peninsula to establish a single Panel covering all four SCBs (Devon, Cornwall, Plymouth and Torbay). This arrangement was considered to provide a

## LSCB Objectives and Functions



more effective response in recognising the number of agencies and organisations that are structured on a peninsula wide, rather than Local Authority basis, and also enable the four Boards to benefit from economies of scale. The Peninsula Child Death Review Panel came into operation on 1st April 2008. The Panel “office” is hosted by the Plymouth Primary Care Trust but jointly funded by all four of the peninsula SCBs. In its first year the Panel has been chaired by Deborah Laphorne, the Director of Public Health for Plymouth.

### Phasing out of the Child Protection Register

All Local Authorities were required to cease compiling a formal Child Protection Register as from 1st April 2008. This decision was based

upon research undertaken by the Department for Children Schools and Families which indicated that Child Protection Registers were not making an effective contribution to the protection of children, but did have a stigmatising effect upon those children and families who were listed. Children about whom there are child protection concerns will now be made the subject of a child protection plan but will not be separately listed on a register. The DSCB in accordance with this requirement, phased out its Child Protection Register as from 1st of April 2008. During the past year it has been considering alternative ways in which critical information about children can be exchanged between key agencies without breaching confidentiality or causing children and their families to feel stigmatised.

## Section 11 Audits

Under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 the DSCB is required to regularly audit the arrangements within partner agencies that ensure that children are appropriately safeguarded. The DSCB has continued to refine its existing process for undertaking such audits and entered into discussion with partner Boards on the south west peninsula to achieve a single harmonised process which recognises that many of the agencies concerned have to report separately to more than one Safeguarding Children's Board. The DSCB has also entered into discussions to assess whether this audit process can be extended to cover those organisations which contract to provide children's services to the statutory sector. This would ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place within all agencies and organisations that provide services to children and families.

## Allegations of abuse against professionals who work with children

Government guidance concerning child safeguarding published in 2006 placed additional duties and responsibilities upon SCBs to ensure that appropriate procedures were in place to respond to any allegation of abuse against a professional who works with children.

In 2008, the DSCB completely revised the procedures and working arrangements with regard to the response to such allegations. This was to ensure that there was a timely and rigorous response to such allegations and that the required investigations were carried out in a sensitive and appropriate fashion.

## Case Audit

The tragic events concerning the death of Baby Peter in Haringey has emphasised the need for DSCB to have a clear understanding of the effectiveness of the multi agency response to individual cases of concern. In this respect, the DSCB undertook a Review of a number of cases of children who were subject to a child protection plan in order to assess the quality of work being undertaken by all of the agencies that were involved with the case. This audit has revealed some significant variations in the quality of work provided on individual cases and in particular has highlighted that considerable progress still needs to be made with regard to the integration of child protection services, particularly in relation to information exchange and corporate decision making. The outcome of this audit, together with the recommendations of Lord Laming's progress report following the death of Baby Peter, and the Government's response to that report, will dominate the agenda for the DSCB over the forthcoming year. In particular improving integrated working around child protection and better ensuring the quality of performance of individual agencies and the total safeguarding system across Devon.



# DSCB partner updates

## Social Care

**Rory McCallum**

Director of Early Years and Families  
Children and Young People's Services  
Devon County Council



Children's Social Care sits within the Early Years and Families branch of Devon's Children and Young People's Services.

Employing over 120 qualified social workers and a significant number of skilled support staff in a variety of settings, our work primarily involves child protection, children and families with complex needs, supporting families where their children are on the edge of care and improving the long term life chances of children permanently looked after.

Our number one priority is to provide safe services for the children and families we work with, whatever the context. Whilst we want to give a clear message that we are in the business of support, child protection takes priority, every time.

Further to the tragic events of Baby Peter and Lord Laming's report, "The Protection of Children in England: A Progress Report", Children's Social Care is faced with a number of significant challenges to which it must respond.

Lord Laming stated that his report and recommendations were "aimed at making sure good practice becomes standard practice." We want our practice to be excellent.

We have set high expectations of ourselves to support good social work practice and expect staff to perform at a consistently high standard. We have invested heavily in developing a stronger focus on the quality of our work, as well as develop the necessary training to achieve this standard. Building confidence across the workforce and helping staff at all levels, we have introduced a Quality Improvement and Development Team to drive a number of initiatives.

The County Council has invested almost £1 million extra to support the recruitment and retention of children's social workers in Devon. We have increased the number of trainees we sponsor to gain social work qualifications and our most recent recruitment rounds have been highly successful in strengthening our capacity.

A dedicated Head of Safeguarding, Policy and Quality Assurance role has been created to ensure that Devon's Children's Trust and all its public and voluntary partners continue to deliver and also improve on their safeguarding responsibilities.

Operationally, we are focussed on reducing the unnecessary bureaucracy that is preventing front line staff spending more time working directly with children and families. Streamlining paperwork, recording and complicated filing systems, our overall aim is for staff to be busy, but busy doing the right things.

In 2008 / 2009, Children's Social Care was engaged in 1244 child protection enquiries. 397 children were made the subject of new child protection plans and the number of children becoming looked after averaged about 20 per month.

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The challenge for social work is to effect positive change in children's lives. This is no easy task. We recognise that safeguarding children can only be effective through a more joined up approach by all agencies involved in working with children. In the coming months, Children's Social Care will be examining with its partners how it utilises its resources to create a "better fit" and more integrated model to respond to the safeguarding agenda.

We are actively exploring options for social workers engaging with families sooner, helping identify child protection concerns and prevent problems escalating by intervening with other professionals at an earlier stage. We are also progressing plans for co-locating with other agencies to help improve our joint working arrangements.

We have expanded our family support section, creating services for the under 11 and over 11 age group. We are integrating this service with the school based parenting support advisors and Children's Centres across the county. We are also developing a rapid response service for children and young

people on the cusp of care to ensure we do what we can to keep families together whenever this is safe to do so.

The ability to accurately assess risk is crucial to the role of those working in Children's Social Care and the ability to act immediately is vital. Protective factors and the strengths of families need to be emphasised in every instance but in high risk scenarios, a child's welfare and safety is always paramount.

Parental mental ill health, domestic violence, learning difficulties and drug and alcohol misuse are common behaviours that can lead to the neglect of children's needs. Such issues reinforce the need to work more robustly with our colleagues in adult services and we remain committed to ensuring we improve our response to the safeguarding agenda on a multi-agency front.



## Education

### Judith Johnson

Director of Learning and Schools  
Children and Young People's Services  
Devon County Council



With the creation of the Devon Learning & Development Partnership (LDP), education has taken a significant step in ensuring that safeguarding vulnerable children is at the heart of school improvement in Devon. A number of services within LDP are working to commissioned specifications which explicitly relate to safeguarding. For example:

- Headship appointments address whether candidates are aware of safeguarding and how it should be managed in their schools.
- Schools and Further Education Colleges are now represented on the DSCB.
- All Outdoor Education Centres are receiving management reviews of their health & safety systems and all are aiming to achieve the quality badge scheme for Learning Outside the Classroom.
- The Education Welfare Service/Education Other than at School Service (EWS/EOTAS) have additional resources and strengthened arrangements to ensure that children missing education are identified, tracked and monitored and there is now closer working with the police and social care colleagues to reduce the numbers of children going missing from home or care.

- As a Corporate Parent we aim to safeguard through the role of specialist EWOs/ Educational Psychologists who support schools in promoting the attendance and reduction in exclusions of children in care.

All maintained schools in Devon inspected by Ofsted during the past year meet current safeguarding requirements with 92% of designated safeguarding staff having up to date training. A review of child protection designated teacher training and support is being undertaken and is likely to lead to more multi-agency training for school-based staff.

New safeguarding advice has been circulated to schools and a new pool of trained Individual Management Review writers with a range of specialist knowledge has been established to ensure that in future good quality reports are produced as part of the Serious Case Review process when children die or are seriously injured.

The Youth Offending Service has a key role to play in identifying safeguarding concerns among some of our most vulnerable young people. The identification of a new Lead Manager is spearheading improved practice.

A protocol is now in place between the Local Authority, all Colleges of Further Education and the South West Careers Service (Connexions) to support care leavers to succeed at college.

A management group monitors and arranges follow up work with care leavers who are not in suitable accommodation and those who are risk of becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training).

## Devon Primary Care Trust

**Dr Virginia Pearson**

Director of Public Health



During the year 2008-09 Devon Primary Care Trust has consolidated its governance arrangements and procedures, building on the review undertaken in 2007 as a consequence of

bringing together six former primary care organisations and forming the single Devon Primary Care Trust. The Primary Care Trust has a Child Protection Committee which reports issues through to the Patient Safety and Quality Committee and thus through to the Trust Board. The Executive Board Lead for Safeguarding is Dr Virginia Pearson, the Joint Director of Public Health, who chairs the Child Protection Committee and sits on the Devon Safeguarding Children Board. The Child Protection Committee has an annual work programme and this is monitored by the Committee and reported to the Trust Board each year. Dr Pearson is the line manager of the Designated Doctor for Child Protection, Dr Charles Holme, and the Designated Nurse for Child Protection, Mrs Helen Hyland. Dr Holme chairs the Health Sub-Group of the Devon Safeguarding Children Board.

Devon Primary Care Trust has strengthened its capacity on the wider safeguarding agenda (over and above child protection matters) by the appointment of a Consultant in Public Health with the lead for children, Ms Sara Gibbs, who has a sessional commitment to safeguarding children. Ms Gibbs leads Devon's teenage

pregnancy work and has, with colleagues, developed a strategy for the Devon Safeguarding Children Board for the prevention of unintended injuries in childhood. Dr Pearson, Dr Holme, Mrs Hyland and Ms Gibbs submitted a detailed Annual Report on child protection arrangements and activity to the Trust Board in November 2008 (for details see [www.devonpct.nhs.uk/default.asp?pg=172](http://www.devonpct.nhs.uk/default.asp?pg=172))

Devon Primary Care Trust is responsible for the commissioning of all NHS services and the direct provision of NHS community health services for the population of Devon. During 2008-09 significant steps have been taken to improve the level of assurance around commissioned services, including those commissioned from independent contractors such as General Practitioners.

For Devon PCT Provider Services, the Child Protection Committee has enabled the strengthening of internal processes. This work has been led by Miles Hapgood, Assistant Director for Integrated Children's Services, and the Named Nurse and two Lead Nurses for Child Protection, with the support of the Primary Care Trust's four Named Doctors.

As well as significant consolidation and strengthening of child protection policies and procedures, Devon Provider Services has a training strategy and training programme to ensure that all staff receive the training necessary to safeguard children. Devon Primary Care Trust has participated in several large scale audits, both internal and external, during the year, in order to provide assurance that the highest quality systems are in place within the NHS. As a result, work for 2009-10 will include in-depth assurance regarding staff training and enhancing education and training within primary care.

## North Devon Healthcare Trust

**Carolyn Mills**

Director of Nursing



North Devon Healthcare Trust (NDHT) is an integrated acute/community/social care Trust which provides services for the population of North Devon. During the last year, the organisation has undertaken a number of developments to ensure that the Trust's systems, practices and procedures for safeguarding children satisfy new regulations and guidance. Specific areas of focus for 08/09 have been:

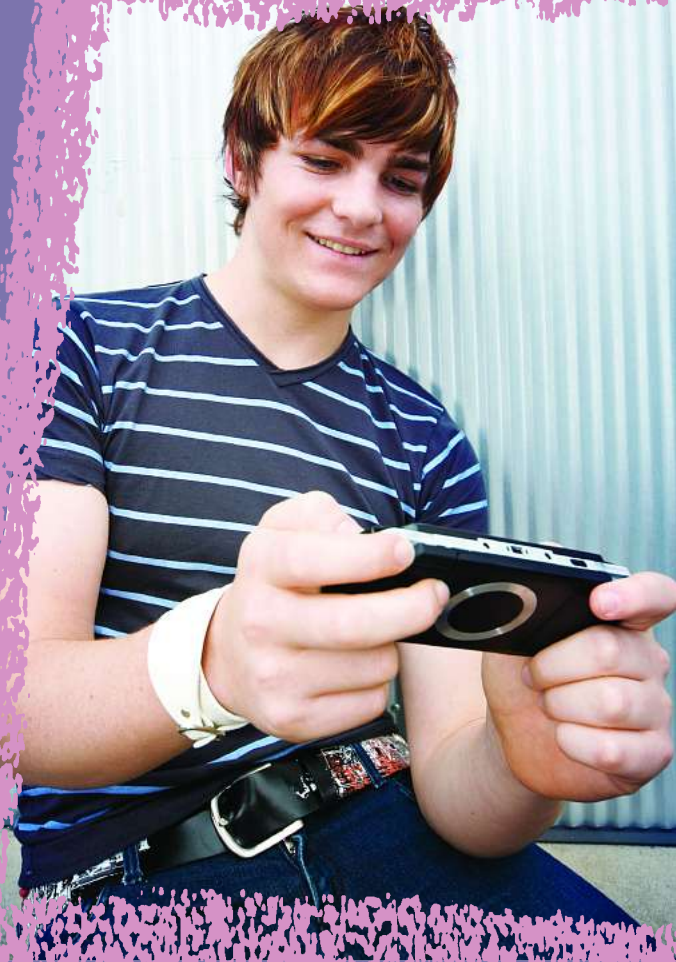
- reviewing and developing safeguarding children training to reflect revised national requirements and to ensure that the Trust has robust training assurance processes in place;
- strengthening child protection supervision arrangements;
- building on multi-agency working via various forums;
- developing further the type and amount of audit/assurance activity undertaken.

The Trust has a named Doctor, a named Nurse, a Child Protection Lead and a named Midwife who are supported externally by named Professionals. The Named and Lead Nurse roles for NDHT are provided via a Service Level Agreement with Devon PCT, this ensures that staff work in close collaboration with the Primary Care Trust.

NDHT has a Joint Safeguarding Children's Board that meets quarterly with representatives

from NDHT and Devon PCT, providing assurance that the Trust is meeting its Child Protection responsibilities. There is an operational sub group which meets monthly to discuss and take any relevant action regarding operational issues for safeguarding children.

North Devon has the second highest rate of children subject to a child protection plan in the county, when measured as the rate per 10,000 of the under eighteen population. Numbers have increased slightly from last year. There have been no serious case reviews in North Devon in the last year.



## Royal Devon & Exeter NHS Foundation Trust

**Marie-Noelle Orzel OBE**

Director of Nursing and Patient Care



At the Royal Devon & Exeter NHS Foundation Trust, the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people, as patients and visitors, is a priority. The Trust is developing this safeguarding children

commitment at a strategic, operational and cultural level.

At Trust Board level, the executive lead is the Director of Nursing and Patient Care. The Board has taken part in two safeguarding children training development days and at management level, regular audits of process and systems are done to ensure reporting is pro-active and appropriate. For example in our Emergency Department any concern about a child or young person is referred to partner agencies.

We have harnessed the experience and professional insight from RD&E leads in nursing, children and young people's services, human resources, education and child protection so that a strategic approach is taken to ensure this important issue is at the heart of what we do. For example we have child protection link professionals across the Trust championing and driving the agenda.

The RD&E has actively contributed to the multi-agency review in Devon, as members of the Devon Safeguarding Children Board, where partner organisations share their experience and good practice so that safeguarding is as robust and effective as possible. We also took part

in the national Care Quality Commission survey of NHS trusts in the UK to measure safeguarding children arrangements.

In-house, a Child Protection Week at the RD&E raised staff awareness that everyone has a responsibility to look out for the safety and wellbeing of children and young people they may come in contact with. This is a responsibility which all colleagues have, not just in the course of their working life, but also as members of a wider community. An information leaflet has been produced for parents and carers explaining the RD&E duty of care towards children and what happens when there is a concern about the safety or wellbeing of a child.

Staff have received extensive training and support so they know what to keep an eye out for and what appropriate and effective steps to take if they are concerned. Procedures on how employees should manage and respond to serious untoward incidents have been developed. This can range from an allegation of abuse made against a member of staff to support and debriefing for staff who nursed a suspected abuse victim. A significant number of our managers have completed training so they know how to support their staff through the process if a concern is reported.

In the community, the RD&E has created a new specialist midwifery role with an emphasis on effective early intervention working specifically with ante natal mothers who have mental health issues or alcohol and drug dependency.

## South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

**Liz Childs**

Director of Nursing and Governance /  
Deputy Chief Executive



Along with all NHS organisations, South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (SDHCT) reviewed its children's safeguarding procedures to give further assurance to the DSCB and

identify areas for further improvement work. The Safeguarding lead at Trust Board level is held by the Director of Nursing.

The Trust Board received an annual report from the Safeguarding Team detailing achievements throughout the year, work in progress and assessment against risks. In addition, the Named Doctor and Named Nurse for the Trust level one basic awareness training to all Trust Board members.

This year, following a review of the Devon Safeguarding Children's Board, the Trust is now represented by the Director of Nursing on the DSCB, supporting the requirement to raise the profile and accountability of this important statutory committee.

In addition, the Trust has as a result of its internal review established an Executive Safeguarding Group, chaired by the Trust's lead and involving the Named Professionals and other senior professionals from each of the service division. The terms of reference of this group is:

- To support the named doctor and named nurse in their Child Protection role within South Devon Healthcare Foundation Trust.
- To enable the Trust to meet and discharge it's responsibilities in terms of actions required from key

- publications, guidance and Local Safeguarding Children's Boards.
- To ensure the Trust has systems in place and is generating the evidence and effectiveness to meet the requirements of national performance monitoring and standards including Section 11 requirements.
- To monitor the provision and effectiveness of Child Protection training by South Devon Healthcare Foundation Trust.
- To monitor statutory employment procedures used to screen employees whose work brings them into contact with children as laid out in the South Devon Healthcare Foundation Trust Criminal Records checking policy.
- To ensure that actions required as a result of Serious Case Reviews are implemented, monitored and reviewed within agreed timescales.

The delivery of education and training, whilst making good progress, remains a challenge. Multi agency training at level three supports improved partnership working and improved competencies in an increasingly difficult area of clinical practice.

A robust audit programme has given assurance that knowledge across the organisation around child protection is improving, although further work is required to develop a sustainable model of clinical supervision.

A new challenge this year has been the increased involvement in Serious Case Reviews, in terms of the individual management review and the wider cross agency learning.

The training facilitated by the Devon Local Safeguard Board has been exceptionally well received, by those staff who attended, and given them the confidence to competently undertake these demanding reviews.

The local process, requiring the membership of the Devon Safeguarding Board to agree and sign off the completed review further strengthens inter cross agency working and again assists with the building of stronger partnerships.

## Devon Partnership NHS Trust

**Liz Davenport**

Director of Operations and Workforce



Consistent with the national picture and given the tragic circumstances of

Baby Peter's death, Devon Partnership Trust (DPT) has in the last year undertaken an internal review of its child safeguarding procedures. This included holding a safeguarding workshop in February 2009 with multi agency representation. This workshop posed the following key questions: • What works well with the current arrangements? • Where could we make improvements? • How can we prepare staff for their safeguarding role? • How could we improve our working with others?

Having identified a number of organisational risks, DPT has striven to raise the profile of the child safeguarding agenda at all levels of the organisation and following the recommendations put to the Trusts Quality and Safety Committee has now put into effect a number of actions which will raise awareness, improve partnership working and equip its staff with the necessary skills to contribute effectively to keeping children safer. These include:

- The identification of a Trust Board Lead – Liz Davenport, Director of Operations and Workforce
- Regular reporting to the Trust Board
- Management lead identified for safeguarding children – Amir Qureshy
- Representation at DSCB and Health Sub Group
- Ratification of Child Protection Policy – November 2008
- Training Strategy in place for child protection – The Trust has now identified the number of staff requiring this training and at what levels. It has also set a target for all staff to have undertaken Level 1 Basic Awareness training by 1st September 2009. The Trust has also made a financial contribution towards the funding of the DSCB trainer.

In March 2009 the Trust participated in a Devon wide multi agency case audit commissioned by the DSCB. Of the ten cases reviewed all had involvement with either DPT Adult Mental Health Services or Drug and Alcohol Services and the findings across all agencies were consistent with the themes identified within Lord Laming's recent review. An internal action plan is being put in place and The Trust's management lead will be one of the members of the recently formed DSCB Quality Assurance Sub Group.

On a more local level with regard to developing innovative services and practice DPT piloted in partnership with the 'The Centre of Women's Health' mental health screening for pregnant women delivering at the centre. This has been highly valued to the extent that the Royal Devon & Exeter NHS Foundation Trust will now be commissioning this service. This service will have access to links within the wider community and the Well Being and Access functions of the Mental Health network and will adhere to child safeguarding requirements.

The Trust has also been involved in a national pilot focusing upon 'routine enquiry' which ended Autumn 2008. Workers across the Trust have been provided with training and support to ensure that as part of their standard practice when undertaking assessments that they will ensure that they have asked whether an individual has ever been or is experiencing abuse. If any abuse has been identified individuals will be signposted to suitable treatment services should they require it, advised of their rights and provided support should they wish to report current or historic abuse. If they do not and risks have been identified where access to children still remains safeguarding procedures are adhered to and the individual advised of this.

Significant progress has been made within DPT over the last year but at the same time we acknowledge that significant improvements remain to be made. We envisage the next year being one of strengthening our safeguarding arrangements and working together more jointly with our partners to ensure Devon's children are kept safer.

## Devon and Cornwall Constabulary

Jo Tennant

Chief Superintendent



This year has highlighted the need for necessary change in the environment of safeguarding children, and Devon Basic Command Unit (BCU) are committed to working with our key partner agencies through the DSCB to achieve this. The Constabulary has introduced a new management structure and governance arrangements which are headed by Assistant Chief Constable Debbie Simpson acting on behalf of the Chief Constable to ensure we continue to develop our working practices in this critical area of our business.

A Police Public Protection Manager was a key member of the partner agency team tasked with carrying out a thorough audit of joint child protection investigations in Devon. As a result the learning which emanated from the audit is at the forefront of our continual aim to ensure the delivery of an excellent service jointly with partners.

Devon & Cornwall Constabulary now regularly updates staff on identified areas of good practice and 'lessons learnt' through a structured series of internal bulletins. Additionally, the constabulary is committed to implementing a new robust and comprehensive risk assessment process in the field of domestic abuse where children are often affected, either directly by being abused or indirectly by witnessing the abuse on a parent or carer.

Devon BCU has led the way in relation to the implementation of effective joint partner agency working in risk assessing children / young persons who go missing from home or places of safety. As a result we have continued to introduce effective interventions to prevent or reduce those missing episodes. Reports of missing person incidents of children and young people have reduced by 22% in the last six months.

The Public Protection Unit has a desire to constantly improve service delivery and continues to be proactive in providing appropriate training in child protection work, both internally to our staff and externally to a variety of partner agencies.

We continue to strive to deliver excellence in all areas of policing operations to positively impact on safeguarding children.

## District Councils

**Peter Jeffs**

Director of Communities  
East Devon District Council



District Councils are represented on the DSCB and play an active part in this and in Local Children's Trusts. Our role is somewhat different to that of other key partners in that very few of our services are directly solely and specifically to children and young people. Our activities nonetheless can often also impact on this section of our local population. Thus safeguarding is an important consideration, and we come into contact with families in a number of roles.

Through National Lottery monies, "Play" has been a growth area this year for District Councils. This is of course one of the few District Council Services aimed directly at children and young people, and a healthy balance between 'safety' and 'adventure' is one we are trying to promote. Another main area where we sometimes cater directly for young people is in Housing Services. Effective provision requires good partnership working.

In addition to ensuring that all District Council safeguarding children policies are consistent and effective we have acted to test and challenge the processes, procedures, and communication channels of other agencies.

There is still more we can do, especially to help with the safety of physical environments where children and young people live and visit.



## Devon and Cornwall Probation Service

Anne Proctor

Assistant Chief Officer



Devon and Cornwall Probation Area has striven to make an effective contribution to safeguarding children arrangements at both Board and operational level. Our organisation is committed to working with our partners in DSCB to safeguard children by ensuring that offenders who present a risk to children are effectively assessed and managed.

There has been ongoing work to strengthen the relationship between the Local Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements and the DSCB, although this will remain a priority over the coming year.

Our organisation has undertaken a programme of improvements at Board, strategic and operational level to ensure that we fulfil our responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of children. A priority has been to establish robust governance at Board level along with leadership and accountability within the Strategic Management Team.

At local level, managers have prioritised the development of practitioners to ensure that risk assessments, and risk management plans take account of the potential risks to children presented by offenders who are managed by Probation.

### Developments in 08/09:

- Development and implementation of a Serious Case Review process including governance and audit by a sub group of the Devon and Cornwall Probation Board
- Safeguarding Children leads identified at Board, strategic and operational level
- Briefing for all senior managers
- Single agency training commissioned and delivered for practitioners in associations with the NSPCC
- Provision of training for managers of Offender Management staff
- Revision of the DCPA Safeguarding Children Policy
- Development of Practice Standards for Offender Management staff
- Implementation of a peer review scheme to assess and benchmark quality in relation to risk assessment and management of offenders
- Training for Chairs of the Local Multi Agency Protection Panels
- Audit and review of compliance with the requirements of the Service as specified in S.11 of the Children's Act 2004.

### Priorities 09/10:

Our priorities over the next year will be:

- 1.** To continue to develop our staff in relation to safeguarding children – all of whom will have a performance objective relating to improved safeguarding practice.
- 2.** Run a series of workshops in all offices to reinforce responsibilities to safeguard children and promote the well-being of children of offenders who are parents or carers.
- 3.** Work to continue to strengthen the relationship between Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements and the DSCB.
- 4.** Ensure learning is disseminated from Serious Case Reviews.
- 5.** Evidence continuous improvement in the quality and effectiveness of services we provide and to ensure we can demonstrate the needs of children and victims are at the forefront of our work.

## NSPCC

**Alison Kearnes**

Assistant Director Devon & Cornwall



The NSPCC has provided safeguarding services to children in Devon through three locally based teams, in addition to our national services of information, advice, and helpline for adults. We remain very active Board members of the DSCB and other boards in the peninsula:

1. **NSPCC Devon & Cornwall Young Witness Service** supported 50 children and young people in Devon, to give their evidence in criminal trials, in 2008/9. The NSPCC increased staffing in the Exeter team, in recognition of the continuing volume of work arising in Devon. In most cases, the children and young people had suffered serious sexual abuse. We also supported children giving evidence in murder and homicide trials. Referred children were aged 5 - 17 years, six were Looked After children, with a significant number aged 10 years and under. The NSPCC's remote video link to Exeter Crown Court is fully used by young witnesses - our partners in the criminal justice system report that this leads to an increase in successful prosecutions. Devon Safeguarding Children's Board, together with the three other peninsula Safeguarding Boards, make a financial contribution towards the costs of providing this NSPCC service. The NSPCC is grateful for this practical support and continued commitment to the protection of children from abuse.

Further information and a full annual report is available by contacting **SAllum@nspcc.org.uk**

2. **NSPCC Devon Child Protection Team** has delivered a range of safeguarding services in Devon, working directly with adults and young people, in partnership with statutory agencies, the Faith sector and Football Association:

- Home Office accredited Assessment and treatment groups for convicted sex offenders in partnership with Probation.
- Risk Assessments, safeguarding recommendations and treatment interventions where appropriate, on unconvicted men, believed to pose a risk of sexual harm to children, and on convicted sex offenders not subject to statutory supervision.
- Groupwork programmes - partners of sex offenders, ensuring capacity to protect, future protective parenting and prevention of further abuse in new relationships.
- Designed and delivered single agency safeguarding training for Devon & Cornwall Probation area.
- Assessments of children presenting sexually harmful behaviour, and adults with learning difficulties in collaboration with YOT and Health.
- NSPCC membership of the Board's subgroup on learning and workforce development.
- Management representation on MAPPA.

Further information is available by contacting **GGunby@nspcc.org.uk**

## Careers South West Limited

[formerly Connexions Cornwall & Devon Ltd]

**John Davey**

Director of Service Delivery

3. **NSPCC ChildLine service** operates from Keble House, Exeter, as part of a national helpline for children and young people, offering a locally based service to children in Devon. With additional investment in 2008/9, we have significantly increased the numbers of children and young people receiving an immediate response.

### **Exeter Online Service**

The South West element of our Child's Voice Appeal will provide a 'one stop shop' for children in Devon and elsewhere, bringing together ChildLine, online counselling and text services at Keble House Exeter. Staff and volunteers are receiving training for our new services of 'live chat' and emailing, ready for being operational on 9th June 2009.

Further information can be obtained by contacting **CMarshall@nspcc.org.uk**



Within Careers South West Ltd. safeguarding is a high priority. The work of the Education Business Partnership ensures that young people going on work experience are going to be safe in the workplace through our checking service.

Through the work of Connexions we support and advise young people and employers on their rights and responsibilities to help ensure safety in the workplace.

The Company is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all employees and volunteers to share this commitment.

We will ensure that our employees who work with children, young people, and vulnerable adults who are victims of, or vulnerable to, various forms of abuse and neglect, are competent to deal with disclosures as these occur, and are able to safeguard and promote the welfare of individuals, working jointly with agencies in cases where there are safeguarding issues.

## Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (CAFCASS)

**Vicki Heywood**  
Service Manager



CAFCASS supports children and families who become involved in the family courts system either in private law proceedings such as divorce or in public law proceedings such as adoption or applications for children and young people to be made subject of Care Orders. Cafcass is organized regionally, with local offices in large centres of population such as Exeter.

CAFCASS continues to evolve its safeguarding role following the change in its statutory responsibilities with the implementation of the Children and Adoption Act 2006.

This is particularly apparent in private law work where the early identification of situations of risk for children and referral to local authorities has increased. The majority of cases referred to CAFCASS are private law applications, where CAFCASS is often the sole and key agency advising on the best interests of children.

Many of the difficulties experienced within families in such situations are the same as those found in public law cases, such as drug and alcohol problems, mental health difficulties and domestic violence, with the consequent risk to children. 70% of all private law cases referred to CAFCASS involve domestic violence.

All applications to the court involving children are forwarded to the local CAFCASS Office by the courts. These are scrutinised within twenty-four hours of receipt. They are assessed for risk by a family court advisor and statutory checks with the police and the local authorities are requested. They are then re-assessed on receipt of the statutory checks, with courts and local authorities informed, as appropriate, of any safeguarding children issues. Good liaison with all the agencies such as health and education is an important safeguarding role for CAFCASS.

The establishment, throughout the region, of Safeguarding and Assessment Teams is underway; with the Exeter Office having the first such dedicated team and service manager. The unprecedented increase in workload experienced throughout the region has resulted in there being a need of a waiting list for allocation of cases. However through establishing a duty process and safeguarding team ensures that the situations for those families awaiting allocation are being managed safely with ongoing scrutiny, monitoring and input. Advice and assistance is available through the duty team and it is hoped in the near future that all areas in the region will operate a similar model to that of Devon.

# Executive and subgroups

The DSCB Executive is responsible for co-ordinating the business plan and the work of the subgroups that drive the safeguarding agenda on behalf of the Board. The group brings together the chairs of the subgroups and other key agencies to ensure multi-agency safeguarding communication at an operational and strategic level is maintained.

Ensuring that all the subgroups work effectively and achieve their objectives is a crucial function of the Executive. A number of key priorities exist:

- Ensuring that the work of the DSCB and cross-agency responsibility and accountability for safeguarding children & young people, is clearly understood and actions are consistently implemented.
- Being responsive to local and national change, evidencing improvement to safeguarding systems, structures, policies, practice and outcomes for children and young people through an agreed performance management framework.
- Ensuring that the lessons learned from Serious Case Reviews and Child Death Reviews are consistently embedded and evidenced in changes to practice, policies and safeguarding systems across all involved agencies.

A number of subgroups are overseen by the DSCB Executive group. There are seven main subgroups and a number of “themed” subgroups focussing on specific issues relating to safeguarding.

To promote consistent and effective practice across organisations working with children, the **Policy, Procedures and Service Development subgroup** develops policies and procedures regarding the safeguarding and promotion of welfare of children on behalf of the DSCB. This subgroup also oversees a number of key themed subgroups including the **Domestic Violence and Abuse subgroup**, the **Private Fostering subgroup**, the **E-Safety subgroup** and the **Substance Misuse subgroup**.

**The Quality Assurance, Audit and Complaints subgroup** monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of what is done by the DSCB partner agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advise them on ways to improve.



This group is tasked with undertaking multi-agency audits of practice, quality assuring the Section 11 audits of partner agencies, overseeing the implementation of Serious Case Review recommendations and considering ContactPoint shielding requests appeals from members of the public.

The **Training and Workforce Development subgroup** is responsible for managing the identification of multi-agency training needs in relation to the safeguarding of children and promotion of their welfare, feeding those into the planning and commissioning of training; and evaluating multi-agency training to ensure it is meeting local needs. In addition to taking a strategic overview of training, the subgroup (and its members) is directly involved in the operational work of developing and delivering training.

The **Publication, Communications and Communities subgroup** is responsible for developing and implementing the communications strategy for the DSCB, including improving inter-agency communication, listening to the views of children, young people and their families, raising public awareness and working with the local media. This subgroup is also tasked with developing links with different communities and faith groups across Devon in respect of the safeguarding agenda.

The **Health subgroup** co-ordinates an effective safeguarding children response by all Health agencies within the DSCB, scrutinising strategic and operational safeguarding functions in relation to universal and specialist health services.

The **Serious Case Review Panel** is independently chaired and must be convened if a child dies and abuse or neglect are known or suspected to be a factor in the death, regardless of whether Children's Social Care has been involved with the family.

In addition a panel may be convened if:

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

The purpose of the panel is to establish whether there are any lessons to be learned about the way the organisations have worked together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, in order to improve inter – agency working in future. The role of the panel is not to decide how the child died or whom, if anyone is culpable.

The **Child Death Review Panel** is operated on a peninsula level and is responsible for reviewing all deaths of children aged 0-18 years who were resident in Devon at the time of their death. The main purpose of this panel is to identify patterns or trends and consider how such deaths might be prevented in the future.

The Executive also oversees three **locality based forums** bringing together operational staff with an aim of improving working together arrangements. These forums review locality performance and co-ordinate bi-annual workshop for local agencies to learn lessons and review performance unique to the locality itself.

# DSCB Subgroups

## Training and Workforce Development subgroup

The Training and Workforce Development subgroup has continued to arrange high quality training for all DSCB partner agencies.

There has been a continued significant demand for places on the Level 3 multi agency safeguarding / child protection training courses in 2008/09.

In response to demand additional training was provided and we can report a 17% increase in trained delegates over the previous year.

All other course attendance remained constant apart from Serious Case Review (SCR) training which showed a huge increase in attendance of 47%. Delegates from across all the DSCB attended, showing a significant increase in the awareness of their responsibilities and understanding of their role with regard to safeguarding.

We can report that all the safeguarding courses have protected numbers of places for each agency and that they were utilised appropriately. The uptake from the DSCB partners has definitely improved on the previous year and we can report that all training has a good multi agency mix.

### Additional training arranged during 2008/09

Three new courses were added to the DSCB's training schedule:

### Assessing Risk in Safeguarding Children

In response to research showing that across agencies practitioners struggle with assessing the weighting of risk and resilience.

### Safer Recruitment and Managing Allegations

Legislation states that all schools must have a minimum of one person per interview panel who has passed the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) training programme. As part of the DSCB's duties to ensure that face to face training (as well as the online version) is made available, three conference workshops were undertaken. Each day included information giving on managing allegations to ensure that correct procedure is followed.

### Independent Management Review (IMR) Workshops

Two one-day workshops were organised to promote understanding of what is required of the authors of their respective agencies IMR. Information was collated from the authors on how the DSCB Serious Case Review subgroup can aid them in future work.

The figures below show the total number of delegates that attended the 2008/09 Safeguarding Training Courses:

Safeguarding Level 3 (multiagency)	787
Safeguarding Level 4 (specialist)	82
Emotional Abuse & Neglect Level 4 (specialist)	40
Child Sexual Abuse Level 4 (specialist)	46
Serious Case Reviews Level 4 (specialist)	101

Total number of delegates attending new courses for 2008/09:

Assessing Risk in Safeguarding Children Level 4 (specialist)	59
Safer Recruitment	267
IMR Workshop	50

### Michelle Thornberry

Child Protection Lead,  
Devon Primary Care Trust

## Health subgroup

1. The DSCB Health subgroup was reconstituted following commissioning by the DSCB Board in 2008. It was recommended that Terms of Reference (TOR) and membership should be agreed, with representation from operational managers within Health, PCT Public Health, PCT commissioners and named and designated Health Professionals. Links would be established with the Hidden Harm (substance misuse) and domestic abuse agendas.
2. The first DSCB Health subgroup meeting was held on 11 February 2009 and the TOR and membership were agreed. Consideration was given to the work programme for the subgroup in the light of the health related tasks in the DSCB Business Plan for 2008/11. Subsequent meetings took place on 22 April, 3 June and 15 July 2009. The subgroup reported back to the DSCB Executive Group.
3. Discussion during and between meetings established that there was a need to review and amend the health related tasks in the DSCB Business Plan. There was lack of clarity on the health subgroup's function in relation to the Staying Healthy and Keeping Safe functions of the Devon Children's Trust. Many of the health promotion tasks detailed in the DSCB Business Plan were seen as Children's Trust responsibilities.
4. The following priorities have been set for the health subgroup:
  - Monitoring Health agency action plans arising from local Serious Case Reviews
  - Reviewing the quality of the initial assessment of the child or young person, especially when there are concerns about domestic abuse, mental health, substance misuse or child sexual abuse
  - Addressing the needs of vulnerable children especially those in transition to adult services
  - The Hidden Harm agenda
  - The effects on the child of domestic abuse
  - Governance and quality assurance with regard to vetting and barring, training and information sharing
5. It is planned to hold a series of meetings throughout 2009/10 to define and implement the Health related tasks agreed in the subgroup.

**Dr Charles Holme**  
Consultant Paediatrician  
Devon Primary Care Trust

## Domestic Violence and Abuse subgroup

The group is in the process of clarifying its role within the developing DCSB so that the vital issue of domestic violence and abuse (dva) is adequately covered in the safeguarding agenda.

**The group has focused its activity on two main aspects of work:**

1. Coordinating the development of a DCSB policy on safeguarding children abused through dva. This work is behind schedule

because of other demands that have been placed on Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) over the last 12/18 months. A first draft has been prepared based on the good practice model developed by the London Safeguarding Children Board. It is intended to have the final draft for approval by DCSB in September 2009. Once this has been achieved, the most significant development in responding to the impact of the dva on children will have been secured. This will be accompanied by an implementation plan to make all practitioners aware and trained to implement the policy.

2. The monitoring and refinement of an action plan on priority issues for DCSB to address the impact of dva on children. There have been some successes in the action plan for example:

- Better links between MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) and CYPS.
- Improving the response to young people aged 16-18 who are victims of dva by getting their cases brought within the MARAC process
- Establishment of a named responsible dva lead within each school

The action plan is being revised to fit into the DCSB Business Plan for 2008-11. The critical action will be the full adoption of the DCSB dva policy and the adoption of a clear target linked to grading of risk for all children and young people that live with dva.

**Roy Tomlinson**

Communities and Strategy Officer  
Devon County Council

## Child Death Review subgroup

NHS Plymouth hosts the Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) and Rapid Response Team (RRT) on behalf of Devon and Cornwall. This is a good example of Collegiate Commissioning across the Peninsula, with four Local Safeguarding Children Boards, four PCTs and five Acute Trusts working together to develop this highly specialised service provision.

The Children's Act 2004 established arrangements to review all child deaths starting from April 2008. Following the recommendations of a working party the Peninsula Boards agreed to establish a single process with one Overview Panel in order to maximise the potential for learning lessons and to realise efficiencies. The Peninsula Child Death Review process and Panel became fully operational in October 2008.

Since 1st October 2008 the team have received 81 notifications, 12 of which have been seen by the RRT. The Peninsula Child Death Overview Executive has reviewed 11 child deaths. The Full Peninsula Child Death Overview Panel has received 10 cases and 8 are now completed.

The CDOP office has already accumulated a significant database of factors/events that were present at the time of each child's death, and is working with Public Health colleagues on analysis and early lessons on trends data.

We have achieved an excellent example of Collegiate Commissioning across eight commissioning organisations.

The Manager for the Peninsula RRT continues to work closely with Warwick University in setting national policy, training and guidance as it emerges and the Peninsula team has been acknowledged as national leaders by Department for Children and Families (DCSF) in this highly specialised area of service provision.

### Helen Thurston

Child Death Overview Panel Manager  
Child Death Review Team



## Serious Case Review subgroup

Although the DSCB has had no current Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) during the past year, national events and requirements have had a significant impact on its works programme throughout the year.

The tragic events concerning the death of Baby Peter in Haringey and the publication of the Ofsted Report *Learning Lessons, Taking Action*; Ofsted's evaluations of SCRs between 1st April 2007 and 31 March 2008 both had a major impact upon the responsibilities of the DSCB and in particular their SCR Subgroups.

The report considered that the process of conducting SCRs affected the quality of the outcome and the lessons learned. In this respect it made the following recommendations to Boards with regard to how the process of conducting SCRs could be improved;

1. Ensure that all SCRs start from the experience and views of the child, and address how these were sought and taken into account by all the professionals involved,
2. Introduce a greater element of independence into the membership of panels by including a wider range of professionals from agencies not involved in the SCR.
3. Ensure that staff working in universal services are included in multi agency training programmes, and that these services are well represented on the DSCB.
4. Ensure that all multi agency training programmes include the teaching of basic skills in communicating with children.
5. Include diversity and equality issues in multi agency training programmes and ensure that, as far as possible, membership of the DSCB reflects the profile of the local community.
6. Tackle the issues effecting timescales for completion of SCRs and adopt a more robust approach in negotiating with Coroners Courts and the Crown Prosecution Service to enable information to be used for SCRs.
7. Provide local guidance and templates for the completion of IMRs which support the process in line with "Working Together" and include explicit quality standards.
8. Ensure action is taken, especially where failings are serious.

The report and its recommendations have direct relevance to the DSCB. Three of the DSCB's previously submitted SCRs which were included in the review, were judged to be inadequate by Ofsted. All three of these Reviews were commissioned, prepared and submitted to Ofsted before the publication of the new *Ofsted Descriptors and Standards* against which these reports were evaluated, but were then assessed retrospectively.

As a consequence of these evaluations, the SCR Subgroup was required to undertake a revision of these SCRs in accordance with guidance issued by the Secretary of State. The revised reports were submitted to the Secretary of State and Ofsted in February 2009 and all three have now been re-evaluated and judged to be at the required standard.

*cont. over...*

A fourth SCR has recently been evaluated as inadequate by Ofsted and will be reported in the 2009-10 DSCB Annual Report.

In responding to the specific evaluations made by Ofsted in relation to the three Devon SCRs and also the general recommendations contained within the Ofsted Annual Report, the SCR subgroup has taken the following action:

- In conjunction with the three other peninsula Boards the local guidance and templates for the completion of SCRs has been completely revised to support the SCR process in line with the Ofsted Descriptors and its required explicit Quality Standards.
  - Established a clear protocol with partner agencies to ensure that IMRs are undertaken by appropriate senior managers within their agencies in accordance with the revised guidance and within the required timescales.
  - Working with advisers from the Government Office South West the DSCB has developed a training programme for senior managers within partner agencies on the completion of IMRs to the required standard. To date this course has been delivered to over one hundred participants.
  - Reviewed the commissioning of the Independent Overview Reports to ensure that they are provided in accordance with the *Ofsted Standards*.
  - Provided a programme of multi agency training, including staff from universal services and the independent sector to promote the lessons to be learned from both the Devon SCRs and other SCRs and national research.
- Invested in an online training programme to provide a similar training package to the widest possible multi agency audience.
  - Appointed a completely Independent Chair for the SCR subgroup who oversaw the revision of the inadequately judged SCRs and who will independently oversee any future SCRs.

#### Chris Dimmelow

Safeguarding Manager

Children and Young People's Services

Devon County Council



## Quality Assurance, Audit and Complaints subgroup (QAAC)

This group of professionals came together in December 2008 and formed as a sub group in April 2009. The subgroup meets for half a day each month, and for a full day when necessary. Twice a year, it undertakes a multi-agency quality file audit of 10 cases over a one week period.

The group is chaired by the Service Improvement Manager for Early Years and Families (CYPS), and the membership has representatives from the duty to cooperate partners. When needed, the group calls upon the knowledge and expertise of other practitioners from various agencies and organisations. Terms of reference for the sub group was agreed by the DSCB Executive Board. Membership of the group will be reviewed in October 2009.

The following work has been completed:

### **Multiagency quality practice audit**

The QAAC sub group undertook a multi-agency quality file audit of 10 randomly selected cases of children subject to a child protection plan. The findings and recommendations have been shared with all agencies: • Presentation to Chief Executive's group in February 2009 • 4 multi-agency workshops delivered to 130 front line managers • Development of actions plans/work programme within each agency being coordinated, monitored and linked to Serious Case Review recommendations through the subgroup

### **Section 11 Audit Analysis**

The sub group has analysed the Section 11 audits and responded to the relevant agencies with comments. The subgroup will follow up the Section 11 audits with 'mystery shopping' activities. LSCBs across the peninsula are working together to develop one audit tool. This will assist those agencies who cover more than one local authority. The tool will allow for the agency to record information relevant to the different local authorities.

**ContactPoint shielding requests Appeals** (from the public) The subgroup has heard one Appeal which they did not uphold.

During 2009 the subgroup will focus on the following areas:

### **Multiagency quality practice audit**

Multiagency quality practice audit tool and accompanying documents to be reviewed and improved to reflect multi-agency audit. Programme of work for audits proposed for 2009/2010: **October 2009** – Children in Need; **March 2010** – Children managed by the Joint Agency Services; **October 2010** – Children subject to a needs assessment using the common assessment framework (CAF).

### **Serious Case Review recommendations**

Implementation a monitoring tool which ensures actions from serious case reviews have been completed. This will be reviewed at each subgroup meeting.

### **Comprehensive Performance framework**

To ensure quality assurance and performance improvement across the whole safeguarding system in Devon.

### **Maria Kasprzyk**

Service Improvement Manager  
Children and Young People's Services  
Devon County Council

## E-Safety subgroup

The group meets three times a year with a remit to ensure all children and young people should benefit from current and emerging online and mobile digital technologies which provide new opportunities for learning, creativity and socialising. Children, young people, their parents and professional adults need to be made aware of all the risks, how to manage them and where to obtain support. Information and support for children, young people, parents and professionals is provided by the staff in schools, the Police, the Education Welfare Service, Learning and Development Advisers and South West Grid for Learning (SWGfL). Sessions on e-Safety are held in schools for children, parents and staff. For more information go to [www.swgfl.org.uk/staying-safe](http://www.swgfl.org.uk/staying-safe).

### Nick Pearce

Lead Officer, ICT Systems and Infrastructure  
Devon County Council

## Private Fostering subgroup

Private fostering is the private arrangement by a parent for someone who is not a close relative to care for their child who is under 16 for more than 27 days. Victoria Climbié was a privately fostered child. It is the responsibility of those people involved in making such private arrangements to inform the local authority so that there are appropriate checks made as to the suitability of the arrangement including the safety and well being of the child. The local authority must be satisfied that the private arrangement meets the child's needs. Private fostering also includes arrangements such as children attending for extended periods in language schools where the children are boarded with a private family for more than 27 days. There has been a significant increase in private fostering activity in Devon with a rise in new referrals of children in private fostering arrangements from 26 as at March 08 to 76 March 09.

Significant progress has been made in the service over the last year including: • Increasing private fostering assessments presented for approval • Creating a protocol and shared process for assessment of host families with Sidmouth Language School to be used with other language schools in the future • An increase in staffing hours to respond to workload increases • A monitoring system of arrangements is established.

Raising public awareness of the requirements of notifying the local authority of private arrangements remains an on going challenge.

### Andrea Morris

Policy and Performance Improvement Manager  
Devon County Council

## Substance Misuse subgroup

The Substance Misuse subgroup was originally set up after serious case reviews highlighted the need for a specialist group to consider issues around safeguarding and substance misuse and multi-agency working. The main priority for the subgroup has always been around parental substance misuse and the need to safeguard children within these families.

The work of the subgroup ranges from the needs of pregnant women requiring specialist support because of their own substance misuse to those up to the age of 18 who may have their own substance misuse issue or be affected by parents or carers.

The subgroup has been involved in practical pieces of work including making available lockable medication boxes for substance misusers and reducing the possibility of accidental drugs overdose by children within the home, to producing a booklet on Drugs and Alcohol in Pregnancy which has been widely circulated within Devon and Torbay.

### Maureen Muckersie

Young People's Substance Misuse Lead  
Devon County Council

# Devon safeguarding facts and figures

## Children with a Child Protection Plan

The number of children subject to a child protection plan within Devon has varied during this year. The end of year figure of 303 children, however, remains almost exactly the same as the number at the end of the previous statistical year and equates to a rate of 20.8 per 10,000 of the under 18 population.

This figure is below the national rate, which in the statistical year 2007 to 2008 stood at 26.5 per 10,000 of the under 18 population. It is also below the rate for Devon's statistical neighbours which in the year 2007 to 2008 stood at 23.1 per 10,000 of the under 18 population.

Given the normal variations that can occur with regards to the numbers of children subject to a child protection plan in any one year, together with the recognised predisposing factors that influence the need to make children subject to a child protection plan, Devon figures appear within the normal range.

The more detailed breakdown of children subject to a child protection plan with regard to the categories of abuse, the age range of children concerned and the split between males and females also compare similarly with both the national picture and the position with similar authorities.

## Number, gender and age of children & Young People with CP plans

### BOYS

Age at 31 March 2009

Under 1		19
1-4		53
5-9		42
10-15		36
16 and over		2

### GIRLS

Age at 31 March 2009

Under 1		20
1-4		42
5-9		44
10-15		35
16 and over		3

### UNBORN



7

## Categories of abuse

### BOYS

Neglect		75
Physical abuse		43
Sexual abuse		4
Emotional abuse		30

### GIRLS

Neglect		72
Physical abuse		27
Sexual abuse		6
Emotional abuse		39

### UNBORN

Neglect		5
Physical abuse		2
Sexual abuse		0
Emotional abuse		0

## Child Protection Plan Starting and Ending 2008/2009

The increase in both the number of child protection plans, both starting and ending in the statistical year 2008 / 2009, indicates an increased level of child protection activity throughout the year. Analysis of these figures over the four quarters of the statistical year indicate that this level of activity appears to have been evenly spread rather than indicating any sudden upsurge toward the end of the year, as a consequence of the tragic events concerning Baby Peter.

Some variation in these figures is normal, and it remains to be seen whether there is going to be a significant increase in child protection activity in the longer term as a consequence of high profile cases within other local authorities.

### CHILD PROTECTION PLAN STARTS

397 CP Plans started in the year to 31 March 2009, an increase from 389 in 2007/08. 354 were first-time CP Plans and 43 were repeat CP Plans.

### CHILD PROTECTION PLAN ENDINGS

396 CP Plans ended in the year to 31 March 2009, an increase from 365 in 2007/08. 21 out of the total of 396 CP Plans ending in the year ended after 2 or more years - 5.3% of the total, a slight increase on 4.9% in 2007/08. This is national performance indicator where good performance is below 10%.

## Ethnic breakdown of children subject to CP plans

The breakdown of children with CP Plans at 31 March 2009 by ethnic origin is as follows:

White	95.7%
Mixed	1.0%
Asian or Asian British	0.3%
Black or Black British	0.3%
Other ethnic groups	0.3%
Unborn	2.3%

## General Picture

Devon's Performance Indicators relating to child protection continue to be in the top banding of performance, although it must be recognised that these performance indicators can only provide a snapshot of compliance with specific procedural issues. They do not give a comprehensive picture of the total quality of the work involved in relation to outcomes for children and young people.

Lord Laming's recent review judged the current safeguarding performance indicators as inadequate in impacting on improvements and better outcomes. It recommended that:

"The Government should introduce new statutory targets for safeguarding and child protection alongside the existing statutory attainment and early year's targets as quickly as possible. The national indicators set should be revised with new national indicators safeguarding and child protection developed for inclusion in local area agreements for the next comprehensive spending review."

DSCB will, therefore, be responding to both national developments and also refining its own local dataset inline with this particular recommendation.

# New challenges and objectives for the DSCB

Having undertaken a major governance review during 2008, and established a new Board and Executive function, and clarified accountabilities with the Children's Trust Statutory Board, the main activities for 2009/10 will be achieving the requirements of national policy changes, the improvement activities following any Ofsted inspections, and improvements identified as a result of local analysis and quality audit of safeguarding services.

**The following points are not an exhaustive list, but highlight priority areas of activity:**

- Ensure all areas of safeguarding responsibilities subject to Ofsted, and service specific Inspectorate evaluation, are judged adequate or better.
- Embed in frontline workforce practice and multi agency policies, the lessons learnt from the four Serious Case Reviews in Devon and the national overview reports into Serious Case Reviews, the peninsula Child Death Review Panel process, and the DSCB Multi Agency Case Audit report 2009.
- Recruit a new strategic leadership post to implement safeguarding quality improvements across the Devon safeguarding children system.



- Revise and implement via the Executive and subgroups, a new Business Plan that reflects the expectations from the Laming and Singleton reports, the Government's 'Action Plan' and the revised 'Working Together' guidance and any new directives from the National Safeguarding Delivery Unit.
- On behalf of the Children's Trust undertake a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment of children's safeguarding to establish the current resources and pattern of safeguarding services, and agree the safeguarding needs profile for Devon based on national best practice including the most common 'causal factors' found in Serious Case Reviews. Agree joint investment, service co location and integrated service delivery and consequent infrastructure requirements.
- Implement a comprehensive quality assurance and quality improvement framework for the DSCB that assures communities in Devon that all DSCB partners prioritise safeguarding Devon's children and young people.
- Regularly report on the experience of children and young people involved in safeguarding, and deliver key proactive safeguarding messages using varied media systems, to Devon's diverse communities, particularly vulnerable groups of children and young people, parents and carers.
- Close any known gaps in service delivery which jeopardise the safety of children and young people particularly improving working arrangements with services provided to adults where it is known to have impact on the safety and wellbeing of children and young people e.g mental health, substance misuse, domestic violence and abuse, known sexual and violent offenders.
- Ensure that the children's workforce across all sectors in Devon are safely recruited according to national standards, trained to the levels of knowledge and competence to ensure they carry out their responsibilities prioritising safeguarding children, are managed and supported appropriately and are held to account for their professional judgements and behaviour.

# Devon Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB)

## Members April 2008 – March 2009

This list represents membership as at March 2009

<b>Alan Wooderson</b>	Independent Chair of the DSCB	
<b>Vicki Heywood</b>	Service Manager	Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS)
<b>John Davey</b>	Director of Service Delivery	Connexions Cornwall & Devon Ltd
<b>Helen Nicholls</b>	Head Teacher, South Brent Primary School	Representing DAPH (Devon Association Primary Head Teachers)
<b>Mark Juby</b>	Principal of Pilton College, Barnstaple	Representing DASH (Devon Association of Secondary Head Teachers)
<b>Sarah O'Shea</b>	Head of Student Services-Exeter College	Representing Colleges of Further Education
<b>Jo Tennant</b>	Chief Superintendent	Devon and Cornwall Constabulary
<b>Chris Boarland</b>	Detective Chief Superintendent	Devon and Cornwall Constabulary
<b>Anne Proctor</b>	Assistant Chief Officer	Devon and Cornwall Probation Area
<b>Jim Wood</b>	Area Manager for Exeter, East & Mid Devon YOT Adult and Community Services	Devon County Council Youth Offending Team
<b>Judith Johnson</b>	Director for Learning and Schools	Devon County Council Children and Young People's Service
<b>Anne Whiteley</b>	Executive Director of Children and Young People's Services	Devon County Council Children and Young People's Service
<b>Chris Dimmelow</b>	Head of Safeguarding	Devon County Council Children and Young People's Service
<b>Rory McCallum</b>	Director of Early Years and Families	Devon County Council Children and Young People's Service
<b>Virginia Pearson</b>	Director of Public Health	Devon Primary Care Trust
<b>Miles Hapgood</b>	Assistant Director for Integrated Children's Services (Joint PCT/DCC)	Devon Primary Care Trust
<b>Alison Allen</b>	Named Nurse Safeguarding	Devon Primary Care Trust
<b>Charles Holme</b>	Designated Doctor Child Protection Devon	Devon Primary Care Trust
<b>Helen Hyland</b>	Designated Nurse Child Protection	Devon Primary Care Trust
<b>Kate Gurney</b>	General Practitioner	Local Medical Committee
<b>Liz Davenport</b>	Director Operations and Workforce	Devon Partnership NHS Trust
<b>Carolyn Mills</b>	Director of Nursing	North Devon Healthcare NHS Trust
<b>Marie-Noelle Orzel</b>	Director of Nursing and Patient Care	Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital Foundation Trust
<b>Claire Mitchell</b>	Nurse Consultant Safeguarding Children	Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital Foundation Trust
<b>Liz Childs</b>	Director of Nursing	South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
<b>Peter Jeffs</b>	Director of Communities	East Devon District Council Representing all Devon District Councils
<b>Kevin Finan</b>	Director of Community Services	Mid Devon District Council Representing all Devon District Councils
<b>Alison Kearnes</b>	Assistant Director MW NSPCC	NSPCC
<b>Barbara Scales</b>	Team Manager	CHAT (Churches Housing Action Team) Representing Voluntary Organisations in Devon
<b>In Attendance</b>		
<b>Georgie Mackintosh</b>	Safeguarding Adviser	Government Office South West
<b>Mandy Cox</b>	Policy Lead CYP maternity	NHS South West Strategic Health Authority
<b>Christina Ashforth</b>	Secretariat to the Independent Chair and DSCB	Devon County Council Children and Young People's Service
<b>Michaila Hancock</b>	Media & Public Relations Officer	Devon County Council

# DSBC Executive Membership

**Rory McCallum**

Director of Early Years and Families  
Devon County Council

**John Clements**

Detective Superintendent  
Devon and Cornwall Constabulary

**Anne Proctor**

Assistant Chief Officer  
Devon and Cornwall Probation Area

**Claire Rockcliffe**

Head of Early Years & Childcare  
Devon County Council

**Roy Tomlinson**

Community Strategy Officer  
Devon County Council

**Andrea Morris**

Service Improvement Manager for Children in  
Care and Care Leavers  
Devon County Council Children

**Chris Dimmelow**

Head of Safeguarding  
Devon County Council

**Maria Kasprzyk**

Service Improvement Manager  
Devon County Council

**Beverley Dubash**

Principal Education Welfare Officer  
Devon County Council

**Ray Charran**

Child Protection Officer  
Devon County Council

**Nick Pearce**

Strategic Lead Officer ICT Systems and  
Infrastructure  
Devon County Council

**Sue McGrath**

Head of Youth Offending Service  
Devon County Council

**Maureen Muckersie**

Young Persons Substance Misuse Lead  
Devon County Council

**Sara Gibbs**

Consultant for Public Health  
Devon Primary Care Trust

**Michele Thornberry**

Child Protection Lead Eastern.  
Devon Primary Care Trust

**Charles Holme**

Designated Doctor Child Protection Devon  
Devon Primary Care Trust

**Mark Goodman**


Manager  
Voluntary Youth Services

**Mike Craddock**

Independent Chair  
Serious Case Review subgroup

# Glossary

<b>BCU</b>	Basic Command Unit
<b>CAFCASS</b>	Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service
<b>CDOP</b>	Child Death Overview Panel
<b>CYPS</b>	Children and Young People's Services
<b>DCPA</b>	Devon and Cornwall Probation Area
<b>DPT</b>	Devon Partnership Trust
<b>DSCB</b>	Devon Safeguarding Children's Board
<b>EOTAS</b>	Education other than at school
<b>EWS</b>	Education Welfare Service
<b>ICT</b>	Information Communication Technology
<b>IMR</b>	Individual Management Review
<b>LDP</b>	Learning and Development Partnership
<b>LSCB</b>	Local Safeguarding Children's Boards
<b>MARAC</b>	Multi agency Risk Assessment Conferences
<b>NEET</b>	Not in education or training
<b>NSCL</b>	National College for School Leadership
<b>PCT</b>	Primary Care Trust
<b>QACC</b>	Quality Assurance Audit and Complaints subgroup
<b>RRT</b>	Rapid Response Team
<b>SCB</b>	Safeguarding Children's Boards
<b>SCR</b>	Serious Case Reviews
<b>SWGfL</b>	South west Grid for Learning
<b>TOR</b>	Terms of reference
<b>YOT</b>	Youth Offending Team



For further copies of this report contact Devon  
Safeguarding Children's Board on **01392 386067**

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