



**Medway
Safeguarding
Children Board**
Safeguarding Medway's
children together



Medway Safeguarding Children Board

Strategic Plan
2017-2020

FINAL VERSION – JUNE 2017

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Vision

The welfare and safety of children and young people are at the heart of what the MSCB does – we want Medway to be a place where children are safe from harm in their homes, families and communities. Our strategy is to make safeguarding services as good as they can be.

The longer-term strategy of the MSCB is to reduce the number of children in need of responsive safeguarding through the provision of effective, appropriate help and support at an earlier stage in their lives, at the earliest opportunity and with the best possible professional response. We also want to ensure that our partner's responses are focused on supporting children and their families to overcome challenges by working together to address all identified needs and preventing further escalation of concern.

The MSCB is a learning organisation where "Learning is a habit not a goal" and supports the development of Medway professionals.

Values and Principles

The work of the MSCB is underpinned by the following principles:

- There is a culture of continuous learning and improvement across the organisations that work together to support staff to be effective in their role, and safeguard and promote the welfare of children, identifying *opportunities to draw on what works and promote good practice*. *This includes the MSCB and its partner role in scrutiny and challenge*.
- Children, young people and their families that are in need of support have their needs addressed as early as possible, following appropriate assessments.
- Services support timely service provision to ensure children, young people and their families have a positive journey through services and this prevents the escalation in needs that may require specialist intervention in the future.
- Services are accessible to all children, young people and families equally and organisations work to prevent and overcome barriers.
- Children, young people and families have opportunity to express their views, wishes and feelings about their individual plans and the work of the MSCB and its partners. They are confident that their views are taken into account and influence service planning and development as well as individual practice
- Partner agencies engage with the MSCB and are clear about their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children; and this is effectively communicated by the MSCB.

- Frontline practitioners are well informed of, and involved in, the work of the board, including specific learning from MSCB review activity.
- Qualitative and quantitative information is available and used to influence planning, exercise challenge and improve performance
- Link with key strategic partners where appropriate, including the Adult Safeguarding Board and the Health and Well being Board.

Core Objectives of the MSCB

The ongoing work of the MSCB that runs concurrently with, and underpins, the priorities identified below includes:

- Ongoing compliance with the functions of the LSCB detailed in Working Together 2015.
- Ensuring effective strategic arrangements are in place to safeguard children.
- Ensuring multi and single agency learning and development opportunities exist and that these are monitored and evaluated for effectiveness.
- Holding agencies to account for their safeguarding activities and exercising appropriate challenge through section 11 audit activity, quality assurance activity in relation to practice and service provision, multi agency case audits, provision and scrutiny of performance information and reviews to identify learning.

Strategic Priorities

The MSCB has set the following six priorities which support the core objectives for the period 2017-20. There will be a specific focus on two of the priorities during each year of the three year plan which will be identified in the MSCB Annual Business Plan.

EFFECTIVENESS OF PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

Priority One: Develop the effectiveness of the Medway Safeguarding Children Board. The MSCB will do this by:

- a. Developing links between educational establishments (to include primary, secondary, pupil referral units, independent and colleges) and the MSCB**
 - Ensure safeguarding issues are communicated effectively to all educational establishments

- Ensure that educational establishments are engaged with the work of the MSCB
- Develop assurance arrangements on the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in educational establishments

b. Championing new and evidence based initiatives which will help achieve positive outcomes for children and young people in Medway

- Review evidence based initiatives that support the emotional health and wellbeing of children in Medway
- Agree an annual programme of activities and initiatives to champion

Priority Two: Ensure that the principles of Early Help, the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and thresholds are understood and embedded across partners

- Support the implementation of the Medway Early Help Strategy and use of Early Help assessments
- Ensure that the Medway Threshold document is understood and implemented by partners
- Support and monitor the implementation of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Priority Three: Support a local recruitment strategy to help ensure there is an effective workforce for safeguarding children in Medway

RESPONSES TO SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

Priority Four: Raise awareness of the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people to ensure they are appropriately identified and safeguarded

- Ensure there are effective governance arrangements in place for the oversight of domestic abuse and to oversee the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Strategy
- Continue to develop learning opportunities to ensure Medway professionals are aware of services for children and young people affected by domestic abuse
- Ensure the effectiveness of the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) process in Medway
- Ensure that there are effective arrangements in place to safeguard against honour based abuse including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Priority Five: Enhance the understanding of neglect amongst professionals and ensure children experiencing neglect receive timely and effective support

- Implement the NSPCC Graded Care Profile (GCP) to provide professionals with an objective measure of the care of children
- Ensure high quality training opportunities are available to support the identification of neglect

Priority Six: Address the challenges to children and young people at risk of specific vulnerabilities including exploitation (including online exploitation), sexually harmful behaviour and mental health

- Be assured that safeguarding services are responsive to the needs and risks experienced by children and young people in Medway
- Evaluate partners approach to online safety
- Ensure that children and young people are educated about potential safeguarding risks
- Ensure that services effectively address child mental and emotional health and that the transition into adulthood is seamless
- Implement an effective strategy to ensure children are protected from Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Delivery of the Strategic Plan

The Business Plan will be delivered through the detailed work of each of the MSCB subgroups, and in some circumstances by specified organisations themselves taking the work forward. This three year strategic plan will be reviewed annually.