



Blackpool Local Safeguarding Children Board

ANNUAL REPORT 2008-2009
AND ACTION PLAN 2009-2010



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Chair's Introduction to the Annual Report

The last twelve months have been a particularly challenging period as public confidence in child protection and safeguarding systems have been thrown in doubt by the high profile and tragic case of baby Peter.



Within the current national climate there has been considerable anxiety about the capacity of agencies to deliver safe and robust professional practice. With these issues in mind, Blackpool LSCB has concentrated on ensuring that our core responsibilities in safeguarding children have been scrutinised and plans have been refocused as necessary. In this demanding context there are specific challenges for Blackpool LSCB. In particular, there are areas of high deprivation and also a transient, changing population. The very attraction of Blackpool, with its international leisure facilities, can also serve as a potential attraction to vulnerable youngsters and these issues have been fully taken into consideration in developing our plans for safeguarding children.

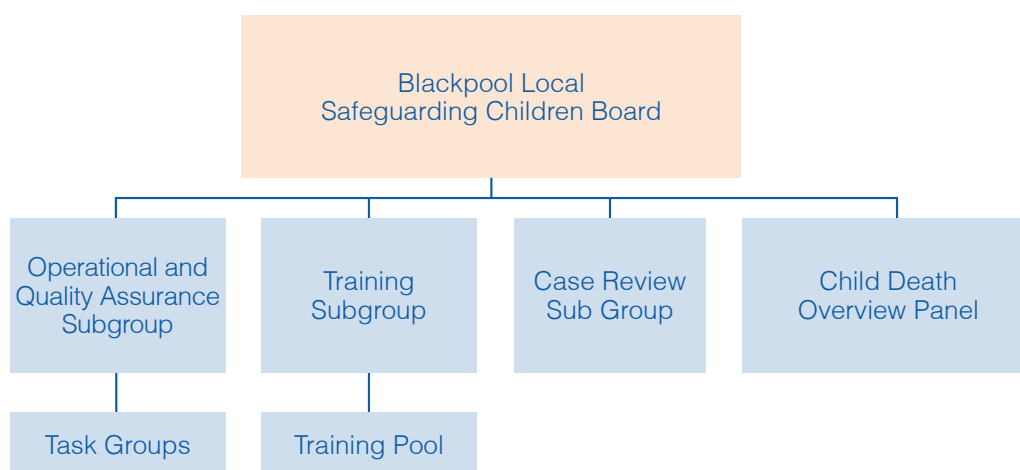
Despite the national concerns, there have been significant positive developments in Blackpool that can be held up as good and innovative work. We can point to the creative Family Nurse Partnership where young parents are supported with skilled and specialist nursing input. Similarly, the Awaken Project has won national acclaim for its proactive approach in protecting vulnerable children from sexual exploitation. There has also been some real progress in developing multi agency responses to domestic violence and its impact on children.

This LSCB Annual Report and Action Plan sets out the work that has been undertaken by the LSCB in Blackpool over the last twelve months. It also introduces some of the key plans for further development of services over the remainder of the year. We hope that we've been able to reassure the public that issues of safeguarding children are taken very seriously by Blackpool LSCB and that there is a full commitment to working in partnership to keep our children safe and free from harm.

Dennis Charlton

Independent Chair

Blackpool Local Safeguarding Children Board



Local Safeguarding Children Board Blackpool reports to Blackpool Children's Trust Board

Local Safeguarding Children Board

Dennis Charlton	Independent Chair
Janet Hambly	Assistant Director, Safeguarding and Targeted Service (Chair Operational & Quality Assurance Sub Group)
Paula Swindlehurst	QA Service Manager, Targeted Services (Chair Case Review Sub Group)
Dr Cathie Turner	Designated Nurse, Child Protection, NHS Blackpool (Chair Training Sub Group)
Dr Rob Wheatley	Designated Doctor, Child Protection, Blackpool Fylde & Wyre Hospitals Trust
Marie Thompson	Executive Director of Nursing & Quality, Clinical Governance Directorate, Blackpool Fylde & Wyre Hospitals Trust
Ian Phillips	Assistant Chief Officer & Area Director, Blackpool & Fylde Coast Area, Lancashire Probation Trust
Sue Harrison	Assistant Director, Learning & Achievement, Children & Young Peoples Department
Dawn Lang	Assistant Director, NSPCC
Dr Arif Rajpura	Director of Public Health (Chair CDOP)
DCI Justin Srivastava	Lancashire Constabulary
Peter Jefferson	Chief Executive, Blackpool Coastal Housing
Susan Morley	Service Manager, Blackpool & Lancaster CAFCASS
Lynne Worden	Headteacher, St John Vianney Catholic Primary School
Dr Colin Scott	St Paul's Medical Centre
Dr Efrem Jones	Vice Principal, Sixth Form College
Liz Holt	Associate Director Children's Provider Services, NHS Blackpool
Delyth Curtis	Assistant Director Children's Health, Children & Young Peoples Department
Andrew Lowe	Service Manager, Youth Offending Team, Blackpool
Karen Smith	Assistant Director, Assessment, Prevention & Support, Adult Social Care and Housing
Julie Smith	Pupil Welfare Manager
Dr K Vasudev	Faith Group Representative

Professional Advisors to LSCB

Alison Long	Principle Solicitor, Blackpool Council
Andrea Thorley-Baines	Domestic Abuse Policy Co-ordinator

LSCB Staff

Angela Walmsley	Business Development Manager
Sara Taylor	Business Development Manager
Peter Hebden	Business Development Manager Assistant
Tess Tackett	Training Co-ordinator
Amanda Quirke	LADO
Sarah Price	LSCB Administrator
Lisa Spencer	Team Administrator LSCB

LSCB Training Pool/Training Team Members

The LSCB is assisted in its operation by the work of the following sub-groups:

Operations and Quality Assurance

Training

Child Death Overview Panel

Case Review

Review of Activity

Blackpool LSCB 2008-2009

Key agencies must work effectively together if children are to be safeguarded; Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) are designed to help ensure that this happens.

The government set out the responsibilities and duties of LSCBs in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2006)¹. The purpose of all LSCBs is to ensure that the services that are provided for children in their local area are effective and well coordinated.

LSCBs have a particular responsibility to make sure that children are kept safe from harm at home, at school, in work or at play.

There is an LSCB in every local authority area in England.

Members of the LSCB are senior representatives of organisations and agencies which work with children or which provide services that children use. Members' names and the organisations they belong to are outlined in Section 2 of this Annual Report.

In Blackpool, the LSCB works alongside a number of other bodies such as:

1. The Children's Trust which aims to improve the overall well-being of all children in Blackpool;
2. BSafe Blackpool which is dedicated to working with residents to improve local neighbourhoods in the town;
3. Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) which aim to protect local people - particularly children - from potentially dangerous offenders who are being supervised in the community;
4. The Domestic Abuse Strategic Management Group which aims to reduce domestic abuse in the town; and
5. MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference), where agencies come together to share information to help increase the safety, health and wellbeing of high risk victims of domestic abuse and their families.

¹ Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children HM Government (2006)London



ACHIEVEMENTS

The LSCB has been working on the priorities it identified in last year's Annual Report. Some of the targets were achieved quickly; others will require consistent work over a longer period. The LSCB has also responded to new initiatives from central government and to local developments.

The LSCB has three primary areas of activity.

1. A role in safeguarding all children in the community, helping to ensure that they grow up safely.
2. Ensuring that services and organisations pay particular attention to safeguarding vulnerable children, such as children that have disabilities, or who have run away from home or who are seeking asylum.
3. Ensuring that work to protect specific children at risk of significant harm is properly coordinated and is effective.

The Blackpool LSCB has been successful in all three areas during the last year.

1. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children in Blackpool

The LSCB considered how parents could be supported in their vital task of raising and nurturing children.



As a consequence, NHS Blackpool funded the publication of two **Parenting Handbooks** which offer a comprehensive guide to parents and carers regarding a range of issues and concerns relating to 4-11yr olds and 11-18yr olds.

A wide variety of topics are covered including: safe babysitting arrangements, internet safety, substance misuse and handling stress and anxiety. They also include information on safeguarding and protecting children in a variety of circumstances.

The Parenting Handbooks highlight warning signs for parents, the actions they should take if they have a particular concern and contact details of both local and national organisations offering information, advice and support.

The Handbooks have been circulated to the Reception Class in every Primary School and Year 7 within Blackpool's High Schools. To ensure wide availability, they will also be distributed to local Children's Centres, Sure Start, health visitors, school nurses, social care teams, family centres and Housing offices, ensuring wide availability.

A further area of development is the **'Give Me Room to Breathe'** campaign; jointly funded by Blackpool NHS and the LSCB. This is a Lancashire wide campaign that builds on the learning from a similar successful campaign in East Lancashire.

The principal aim of the campaign is to raise awareness of the dangers of co-sleeping and the associated risk factors and to promote safer sleeping practices. These risk factors include carers who engage in unsafe sleeping practices, have recently drunk alcohol, have taken medication or drugs which make them sleep more heavily, who smoke or are very tired. Awareness-raising is supported by advice on how to reduce the risks and Phase 2 of the campaign will include training staff in specific agencies to ensure that the advice is shared with parents and carers in our community.

Another initiative is the **Child Accident Prevention Scheme**. This is aimed specifically at families with children under 5 years, and the initiative provides carers with free safety equipment and information about accident prevention in the home. This scheme was developed in partnership between Blackpool Coastal Housing and NHS Blackpool and was endorsed by the LSCB.

The LSCB has also been working with the NSPCC to improve child safety in local sports and leisure facilities. The **Blackpool Safeguarding Project** raises awareness about ways in which vulnerable children can be targeted in the community and provides training for staff who work in our Local Authority leisure centres. As part of this work, local children and young people were asked how safe they felt using leisure facilities and if improvements could be made to help them feel safer. Feedback from the groups will inform a 'Model of Best Practice' and influence policy development, recruitment and training of staff and a code of conduct within the organisations.

2. Safeguarding vulnerable children

LSCBs must concern themselves with the particular needs of children who are the most vulnerable in the population. One such group are those who are privately fostered; **Private Foster Care** is an arrangement made between the child's parent and another person, without recourse to the Local Authority.

In March 2009, Blackpool Council updated its procedures in relation to private fostering and published a 'Statement of Purpose' for its Private Fostering Service.

The named lead person for Private Fostering will report annually to the LSCB about how the welfare of privately fostered children is promoted and how agencies have worked together to this end. The Blackpool LSCB worked with other LSCBs in the North West in producing three booklets about private fostering aimed at children and young people, parents and private foster carers.

The LSCB also welcomed developments such as:

Family Nurse Partnership (FNP): FNP nurses visit young parents from early pregnancy until the child is two years old, building a close, supportive relationship with the whole family and guiding mothers to adopt healthier lifestyles, improve their parenting skills and to become self sufficient. FNP are linked to Sure Start Children's Centres and encourage families to make use of local community resources, including parenting groups and educational activities.

Young People Missing from Care: The Government is committed to working with Local Authorities, the police and voluntary sector to ensure that all young people who run away are monitored and receive both immediate and ongoing support to keep them safe from harm. Locally, this work is supported by a recently revised joint protocol with Lancashire Constabulary, Lancashire County Council, Blackburn with Darwen Council and Blackpool Council. The protocol, which refers to 'Children missing from care', is now being amended to include procedures for 'Children who are missing from home'. This will set out how agencies must work together to meet the needs of all young people and ensure that there is a consistent approach in the planning and support offered to young people and their families.

3. Protecting children at risk of significant harm

A key responsibility of the LSCB is to ensure that services protect children from abuse and neglect and to help them have the best possible chances in life. Children can be abused and neglected in their own families, by an adult that's known to them, by a professional carer, by another young person or through sexual exploitation. Services also need to be provided for young perpetrators of abuse.

Children at risk of sexual exploitation

As a holiday town, Blackpool has a colourful array of nightlife and entertainment venues that are not always appropriate or safe for children and young people. There are various factors in the town which contribute to some young people being sexually exploited and Blackpool has been recognised as a being at the forefront of protecting children in these circumstances.

The Awaken Team is a multi-agency team, incorporating Police, Health, Social Care and Education. It is dedicated to tackling the sexual exploitation of young people in Blackpool. The team has five main areas of activity. These are:

- Identifying and engaging with vulnerable young people at risk of sexual exploitation;
- Disrupting, arresting and prosecuting offenders identified as sexually exploiting children and young people;
- Reducing the number of times that children and young people who are known to the Awaken Team go missing from home;
- Raising awareness of the problem of sexual exploitation among teachers, health workers and other people working with children and young people; and,
- Providing health advice and treatment for affected children and young people.

During the last year, the Awaken Team has worked therapeutically with more than 100 children and young people. There have been 43 arrests for various sexual exploitation offences and 13 individuals have been convicted of serious sexual offences, with around 30 who are still the subject of Police enquiries or whose criminal prosecutions are current. The conviction rate for Awaken prosecutions is currently 96%.

Children at risk of harm in licensed premises

Blackpool has fulfilled its responsibilities in relation to licensing applications under the Licensing Act 2003, ensuring that licensees put measures in place to protect children and young people from harm. A designated Child Protection Licensing Officer has been in post since 2005.

During the last year, the Child Protection Licensing officer vetted 152 licensing applications for new premises licences or for variations to existing licences. He also attended a number of Licensing Review Hearings where concerns had been raised about children being employed on the premises or where licensees were found to have provided alcohol to young people under 18. Each review hearing resulted in either a period of suspension with additional conditions attached to the licence or a full revocation of the licence itself.

This year, the Child Protection Licensing Officer participated in what is understood to be the first 'Test Purchase Operation' in the North West. This involved supervised young people trying to access adult only gaming machines in amusement arcades. In 98% of the premises visited, the young person was permitted to gamble on the machines. All owners were written to as a consequence of this operation and it is intended that safeguarding awareness training will be developed in the near future.

In addition, safeguarding guidance has been developed with the Licensing Authority and distributed to all staff working in off-license premises.

The Child Protection Licensing Officer is a member of the Responsible Authorities Planning Group and represents the LSCB in Lancashire Safeguarding Children in Sport Group. He also maintains professional links with the Sheffield Licensing Project, one of the few other LSCB areas to have a dedicated Child Protection Licensing Officer.

Children at risk of harm through domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can have devastating consequences for the victim, their families and the wider community. Children frequently witness incidents of domestic violence and obviously find it very upsetting to see one parent or member of their family, abusing or attacking another. Significantly, the presence of domestic abuse is also strongly associated with abuse or neglect of the children themselves.

Within Blackpool, domestic abuse remains high on the LSCB agenda. There is a **Multi-Agency Domestic Abuse Strategy** in place and a business plan for the five years between 2009 and 2014. The aim is for high quality, coordinated services across Blackpool with a focus on improving services to the survivors of domestic abuse, educating children and young people and holding perpetrators to account for their actions and supporting them to change their behaviour.

These are some of the specific developments in the provision of services to tackle domestic abuse in Blackpool over the last year.

- Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

The Blackpool MARAC is mature and well developed, providing the best framework to identify and support high risk families affected by domestic abuse. Blackpool MARAC piloted the new national 'Risk Indicator Checklist' and gave feedback to the Association of Police Officers who have subsequently adopted the checklist; Blackpool will feature in the national guidance as an example of innovative good practice. In the last 12 months, Blackpool MARAC has reviewed 408 very high risk families; this has included 536 children. A review of data over a 6 month period revealed that 70% of referrals into MARAC are for families who have been in the Blackpool area for less than 6 months; the level of reporting in Blackpool is about twice the national average. The Blackpool MARAC has reduced the number of teenage parents referred by 300%, a significant achievement as the town has one of the highest teenage pregnancy rates in England.

- Children's Independent Domestic Abuse Advisors (CIDVAs)

There are now 3 full time staff to support children and their non-abusing parent who are affected by domestic abuse; work has been undertaken linking local schools and the Children's Advisors who are working with specific children. There is a national focus on the service, which is considered a trailblazer by the government and professionals working in the field of domestic abuse.

- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual (LGBT) Domestic Abuse Champion

The Domestic Abuse Team has been working with Blackpool, Wyre and Fylde LGBT Forum to identify a domestic abuse champion.

Historically, there have been low reporting rates for people in same sex relationships and a lack of support for prosecutions. Further work will be undertaken to raise awareness about domestic abuse within the LGBT community in Blackpool.

Further developments in the domestic abuse strategy include the recently established **Catalyst Team** that works on a tri-angulated model supporting the non-abusing parent to safeguard their children, supporting the victim child/ren and holding the perpetrator of violence to account. A **Perpetrator Programme** will also be developed to work with those individuals who are not within the criminal justice system. The NSPCC and Blackpool Domestic Abuse Team will also work together on a **Schools Campaign** in local primary schools to support children who are living with domestic abuse.

Children who abuse other children

Children and young people are also vulnerable to harm from their peers; this may include bullying, physical or sexual abuse. A significant proportion of sex offences are committed by teenagers and, on occasion, by younger children. In 2008, a Serious Case Review was undertaken in Blackpool regarding a looked after child who sexually assaulted another young person. Responding to the lessons learned from the review, assessment practice has been strengthened in Blackpool and, in particular, joint working arrangements between Targeted Services and the Youth Offending Team have been improved. The Safeguarding Children Procedures have been revised and incorporate specific guidance for the assessment of children and young people who display sexually harmful behaviour. There is a now greater focus on quality assurance, management oversight and rigorous auditing from the Youth Offending Team.

Children at risk of harm from professionals

Children can be subjected to abuse by those who work with them in any and every setting and Working Together 2006 sets out arrangements that LSCBs must make to ensure that allegations against people who work with children are responded to appropriately.

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) has a key role in the management and oversight of complaints and allegations concerning staff who work with children and provides advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations.

The newly appointed LADO has been employed in Blackpool since October 2008. In the period 1st October 2008 and 30th September 2009 the number of reported new allegations made against adults who work with children and young people was 47 in total. 17 related to concerns regarding allegations about emotional, social and physical harm whilst the majority (30) related to behaviour that was considered to be unsuitable. A number of the referrals made did not meet the specified criteria for allegations but did result in other action being taken e.g. training, procedures being updated. There have been unfounded allegations, both false and malicious, and a number of unsubstantiated allegations. In relation to those allegations that were substantiated, some adults have been dismissed from their work and some have resigned. There have been a number of police prosecutions and also joint Child Protection investigations under section 47 of the Children Act.

During this reporting year, 5 employees/volunteers working in Blackpool have been referred to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) for possible inclusion on the 'barring lists', and a further 4 employees were referred from the previous year. The ISA has been created to help prevent unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable adults. They do this by working in partnership with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and other partners.

The LADO has also undertaken developmental work in the last 10 months, promoting links with a wide variety of statutory and voluntary organisations, raising awareness and sharing information about the appropriate management of allegations in addition to delivering a number of half day training and awareness raising events.

In the forthcoming 12 months, the LADO will continue to promote the role and raise awareness across agencies within Blackpool.



Safer Recruitment

Safer recruitment helps to protect children from harm by professionals and adults who work with children; part of this means that agencies must ensure that they have robust recruitment and vetting procedures in place to prevent unsuitable people working with children and young people. LSCBs have an overall responsibility to ensure that safer recruitment practices are in place and in November 2008, the Board asked the LADO to undertake some initial work in this area evaluating the arrangements its member organisations have put in place for the safer recruitment of staff. Further work will be undertaken in 2009/10 using an assessment tool provided by the Government to help LSCBs gauge arrangements across partner agencies.



DEVELOPING THE LSCB

Blackpool LSCB was established in October 2005 and has developed considerably over the last four years. The work of the Board is supported by the endeavours of staff from partner agencies and organisations who work together to ensure that child protection processes are working well, that policies and procedures are reviewed and updated in the light of new laws and government guidance and that the recommendations of Serious Case Reviews are implemented across agencies.

The Chair and LSCB officers have maintained links with the North West Regional Forum for LSCB Chair's and Business Managers and have developed specific links between the LSCBs of Blackpool, Lancashire and Blackburn with Darwen. Such relationships and forums promote consistency of work, reduce unnecessary duplication and help to identify common concerns and responses in the region. Increased involvement and contact with Government Office North West has also strengthened the work of Blackpool LSCB.

In March 2008, the LSCB undertook a formal review to evaluate progress against objectives.

Whilst it is evident that the LSCB faces many challenges, members felt that considerable progress had been made. Overall, the board's performance was deemed satisfactory in many aspects and excellent in a number of specific areas. In 2009 -10, the Board will focus on performance to ensure that consistent, high standards are achieved for all aspects of LSCB business.

The Board recognises that, if it is to be in an effective position to champion safeguarding and promote the welfare of children, it must be adequately resourced. In 2008, the LSCB agreed to recruit a Business Development Manager (BDM) to support the work of the LSCB. Following initial recruitment difficulties the post was filled on a job share basis and managers began work in summer 2009. To strengthen the work of the LSCB in relation to auditing and business processes, an Assistant to the Business Development Manager has also been appointed for a period of 12months and started work in September 2009.

Responsibilities in relation to Child Deaths

In conjunction with the Boards of Lancashire and Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool LSCB has agreed a shared arrangement for a multi-

agency rapid response to a family when a child dies unexpectedly. The service, delivered by the Rapid Response Team, is coordinated by the Public Protection Unit at Lancashire Constabulary and includes two Sudden and Unexpected Death in Childhood (SUDC) nurses. The SUDC nurses provide a strong health input into the investigation as to why a child has died and work alongside police and Children's Integrated Services. Insight gained from a multi-agency response will influence service design; improve practice, knowledge and expertise about caring for the child in death and care of the family following the loss of their loved one. It will help to identify themes that can be translated into prevention strategies and contribute directly to reducing the incidence of child death across Blackpool and neighbouring councils.

The purpose of the Child Death Overview Panel is to collect and analyse information about the death of each child to identify any case that may require a Serious Case Review, any matters of concern affecting the safety and welfare of children in Blackpool and any wider health and safety concerns arising from a particular death or pattern of deaths. In the last year, processes and procedures have been developed to support the work of the panel and include arrangements for the coordination of data about the deaths of Blackpool children by the CDOP Coordinator; a post jointly funded by the Boards of Blackpool, Lancashire and Blackburn with Darwen.

Monitoring effectiveness

The LSCB has a key role in achieving high standards in safeguarding and promoting welfare. Evaluating practice and monitoring the effectiveness of multi-agency working are essential if the support and intervention offered to children and their families are to improve continuously.

To support the Board in this role, a Child Protection Multi-Agency Audit Group has been established in Blackpool. During 2008/09, the group undertook joint audits of randomly selected child protection cases. The objective of the audit is to consider the involvement of a range of agencies, examine practice and identify any learning to enhance future working. Findings are shared with the LSCB at regular intervals and will identify any additional training needs and procedural changes.

THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BLACKPOOL LSCB TRAINING SUB GROUP

Blackpool LSCB has a responsibility to provide training and awareness raising activities for multi-agency staff; the LSCB Training Sub Group is the forum where these responsibilities are addressed. The Group meets bi monthly and has an Annual Action Planning Day in October to review progress and identify priorities for the forthcoming year. The Training Sub Group has an annual training budget of £30,000. The **LSCB training co-ordinator** is an active member of the North West Inter- Agency Trainers NWIAT and attends the annual symposium delivered by Promoting Inter- Agency Training which assists in developing useful training contacts and remaining up-to-date with current policies, legislation and practice.

Training Report

During this year the LSCB training programme has been developed and expanded to include a variety of new courses. The two day Level 2 'Working Together' training for all front line staff who routinely work within the Child Protection system continues to provide an in depth introduction to the roles, responsibilities, and the processes involved in Safeguarding children. In addition, a short 'Working Together Refresher' has now been developed to meet the needs of those required to update their training.

A number of Level 3 courses have been developed this year to enhance the skills and knowledge of professionals who regularly work with families, children and young people who have complex needs. These include Culture and Diversity, Parental mental ill health, Sexual Exploitation, Substance misuse and Domestic abuse and adolescent issues. Level 5 training is targeted at Safeguarding Board members and this year training has been provided on Serious Case Reviews and Board development days have also been arranged.

The annual training brochure is available electronically and was published in hard copy for the first time this year. In addition, calendars and course flyers for the period were circulated in July, October and February.

Training Delivery

The LSCB supports a dedicated training pool of professionals from across the agencies; all members are encouraged to attend the Annual Review and Development Day for LSCB trainers in April. Five members of the training pool have completed a two-day 'Train the Trainers' course run by NWIAT this year. Specialist teams from Awaken,

NW Save the Children and CAMHS provided respectively training on Sexual Exploitation, Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and Parental Mental Ill-Health: the impact on children. Training has also been commissioned from a variety of experts in the field of safeguarding children.

Current Developments and Future Planning

- A 'back to basics' approach for the two day 'Working Together' programme, is being adopted, strengthening training on conference and core group working. This is in response to the findings of the Baby P reviews and a recognition that we need to ensure that front line staff have the skills and tools to 'do the simple things well'.
- The establishment of a new LSCB Training Team to deliver training around 'Children on the move' to include children who are 'Looked After', unaccompanied asylum seeking children and issues associated with transience and homelessness
- A new two day training course is being commissioned on Communicating with Children & Young People in recognition of the importance of developing skills in this area
- Systems for disseminating training information are being strengthened, with particular attention on how to reach appropriate adult workers
- The LSCB Training Subgroup is considering options for training on Forced Marriage and Honour Based Violence and Female Genital Mutilation

This year has been one of consolidation and revision of existing courses and the development of new training opportunities.



The Training Sub-Group continues to respond to identified training needs and child protection developments in a timely manner, taking every opportunity to explore new and innovative methods of delivering key training messages.

Report written by Tess Tackett LSCB Training Coordinator

LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD ACCOUNTS 08/09

Income and Expenditure

BALANCE BOUGHT FORWARD FROM 07/08 £37,048.93

CONTRIBUTIONS

Blackpool Council Children & Young People Department £89,312.65

Lancashire Area Probation Service £6,294.00

Lancashire Police Authority £21,697.00

Blackpool PCT £50,862.00

Blackpool PCT- 'Local Delivery Plan' Funding £4,000.00

Blackpool Council General Housing Department £2,724.75

Blackpool Coastal Housing £2,724.75

CAFCASS £239.52

Total Contributions £177,854.67

EXPENDITURE

Staffing (including advertising costs) £123,627.11

Training Programme Expenses £24,124.30

Serious Case Review £3,212.00

Board Running Costs 19,294.25

Total Expenditure 170,257.66

BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD TO 09/10 £44,645.94

CHILD PROTECTION ACTIVITY 2008-2009

Referrals, Contacts and Initial Assessments

During the year 2008/09 there were 2,528 referrals to Targeted Services, Children and Young People's department, this is a rate of 845 referrals per 10,000 child population (based on a child population of 30,000 in Blackpool). Whilst this is a decrease in the number of referrals made in the previous two years, as is evidenced in Figure 1, it is still high compared with other local authorities across the country*.

Analysis of referrals has shown that the reduction in the number of referrals does not indicate a decrease in the overall volume of work rather that figures have been affected by changes to reporting mechanisms in terms of how Targeted Service gathers data. In addition, audits of referral practice have shown that agencies have an improved understanding of thresholds and referrals from agencies are subsequently more appropriate; this is evidenced by all relevant referrals progressing to initial assessments.

*Data for year ending 2008/09 is not yet available and so analysis is based on the previous year's comparative data.



Figure 1: Referral Rate per 10,000 population

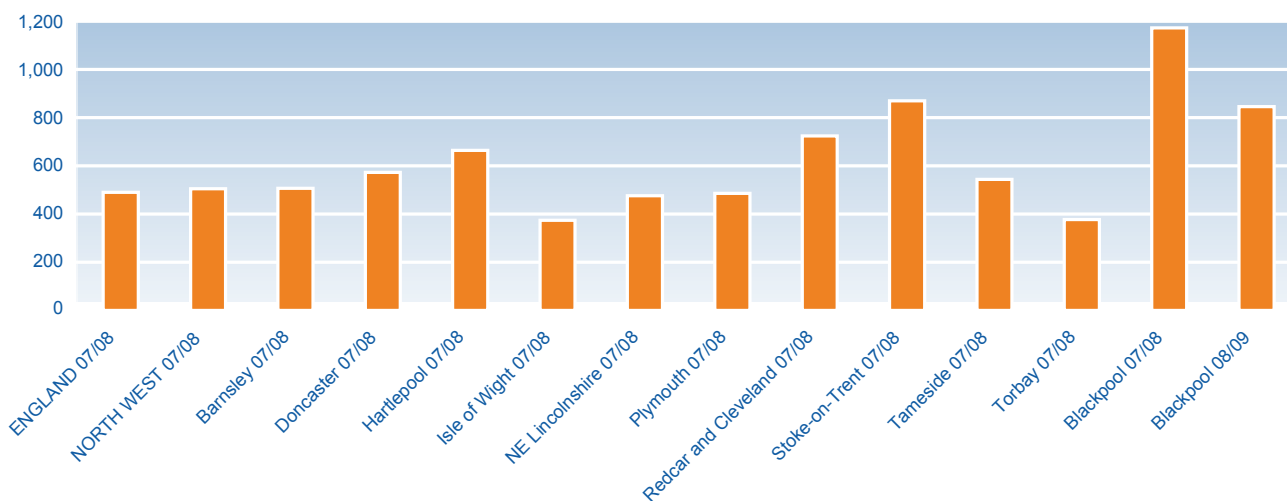


Figure 2: Initial Assessments completed per 10,000 population

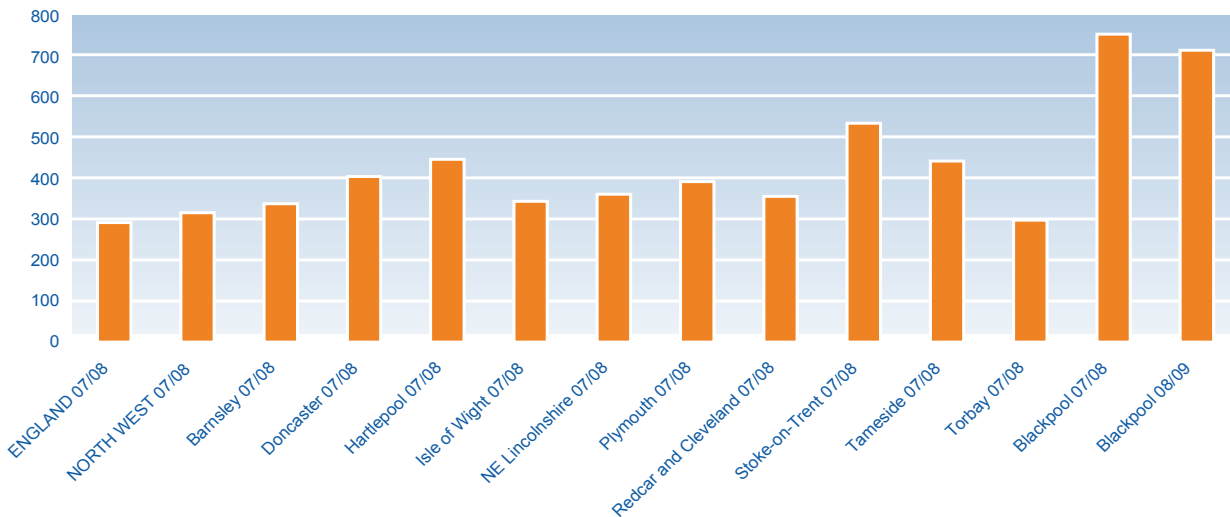


Figure 2 shows relatively little variation (a difference of 110) in the overall number of initial assessments completed for the year when compared to 2007/08. However, when comparing referral numbers it indicates a higher volume of referrals progressing to an initial assessment. As was noted last year, the police domestic violence unit continues to be the primary referring agency. In response, Catalyst, a specialist multi-agency domestic abuse team has been established to ensure that children and families receive targeted support and intervention and that capacity issues created by the volume of work area are better managed. At this stage of implementation is it too early to comment on the benefits of this newly created resource.

During 2008/09, 509 Section 47 (child protection) investigations were undertaken; this equates to 53 more than last year, revealing an increase in safeguarding activity.

Blackpool's child protection activity continues to be higher than both its statistical neighbours and national comparators (Figure 3).

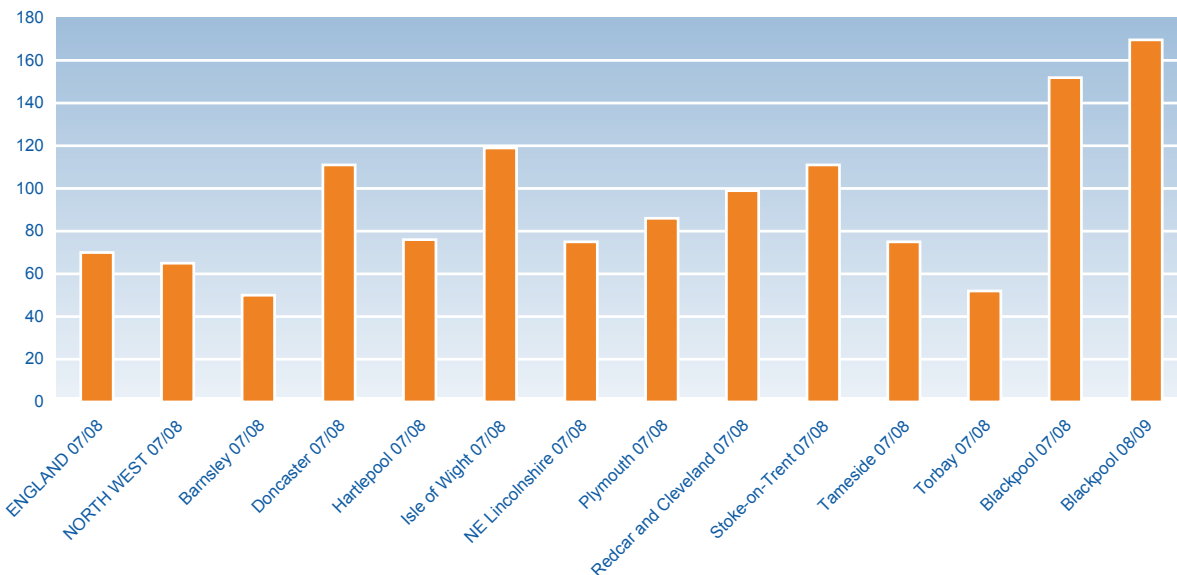
There are a number of factors that influence these figures:

- Early intervention has led to involvement with families whose problems may have gone undetected prior to the provision of support services within the community. For example, the 'Common Assessment Framework' (CAF) and numerous local and national initiatives such as the Family Nurse Partnership, Sure Start and Springboard. Referrals to Targeted Services

Core Assessments, Section 47 Enquires* and Child Protection Conferences

**Section 47 enquires relate to Section 47 of the Children and Young Person's Act 1989 which states that when a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm it must make enquires to enable them to decide whether any action should be taken to safeguard or promote a child's welfare. A core assessment is the means by which these enquiries are carried out.*

Figure 3: S47 enquiries per 10,000 population



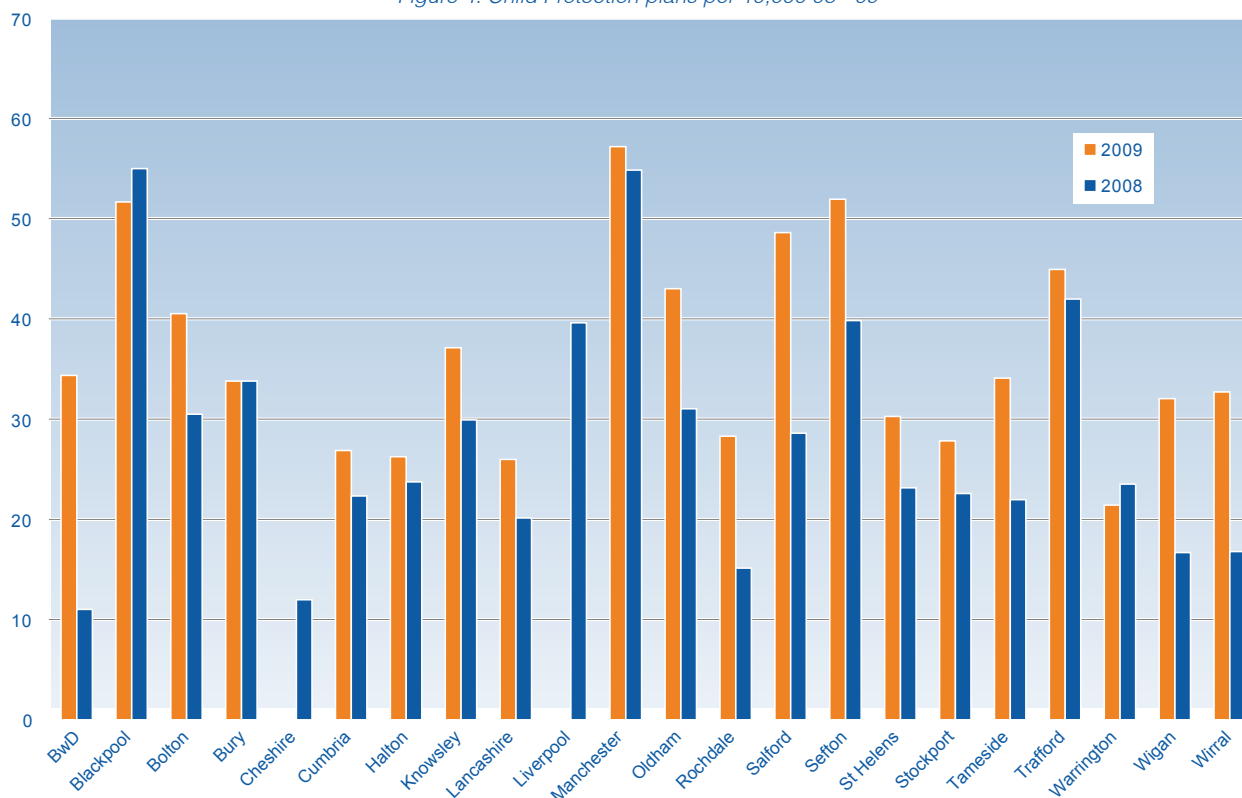
are appropriate with agencies referring when concerns about children have escalated.

- Demographic factors in Blackpool and high levels of deprivation lead to higher incidence of child abuse when compared to the national child population.
- The highly publicised death of Baby Peter in Haringey and the Government's response to Lord Laming's Progress Report has led to heightened awareness of child abuse and placed an increased emphasis on agencies to ensure vulnerable children are protected.

Child Protection Plans and Child Protection Activity

On the 31st March 2009 the number of children who were subject to a child protection plan was 155. This figure provides a number as a 'snapshot' in time; earlier in the year, the figure was considerably higher. Overall, child protection activity increased when compared to 2007/08 as illustrated by the number of initial child protection conferences held within the year, which rose from 245 in 2007/08 to 277 this year. It is notable that there have been an increased number of initial child protection conferences over the past three years, which will undoubtedly have impacted on all agencies involved. Across the region, Blackpool has one of the highest numbers of children who are subject to child protection plans (per 10,000 child population), (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Child Protection plans per 10,000 08 - 09



The high incidence of child abuse in Blackpool should also be understood in the context of complexity. Issues facing children in our community include parental mental ill health, substance misuse, domestic abuse and criminality. These factors often co-exist in families which not only compound the risk of harm to the child but require a high level of commitment and proactive involvement from a wide range of agencies.

Figure 5: Children subject to a Child Protection plan at 31 March 09, by age group

	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009
Unborn	0	0	0	0	4
Under 1	20	19	10	22	21
1-4	36	45	27	48	54
5-9	27	47	38	43	37
10-15	31	36	33	46	37
16 and over	2	0	0	6	2

Age

Figure 5 demonstrates children who were subject to Child Protection Plans on 31st March 2009 by age group and number. Data relating to unborn infants differs to the previous 4 years; this reflects a change in practice whereby unborn infants who are considered at risk of harm at pre-birth conferences are now made the subject of a plan prior to birth. Children under the age of 4 represent over 50% (Figure 6) of the children subject to Child Protection plans and are particularly vulnerable because of their immature physiology and dependency on adult carers to meet their needs.

Gender

The number of boys' and girls' names on the child protection register was the same on 31st March 2009 and this reflects a very similar pattern to last year (Figure 7).

Figure 6: Children subject to a Child Protection plan at 31st March 2009, by age band

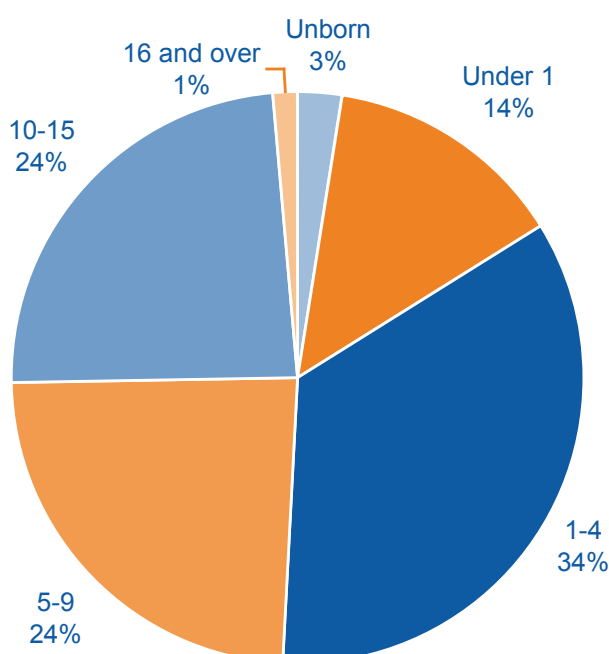


Figure 7: Number of children on the child protection register at 31st March, by gender.

	2003/04	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009
Boys	72	55	73	53	88	75
Girls	41	61	74	55	77	76
Boys (%)	64%	47%	50%	49%	53%	50%
Girls (%)	36%	53%	50%	51%	47%	50%

Category

Figure 8 shows the number of children within each category of abuse. Just under half of the children subject to Child Protection plans (Figure 9) relate to the category of neglect (45%) and whilst this is an increase in comparison to last year it is consistent with the trend of previous years. Concern for children suffering emotional abuse accounts for 38% of the children subject to plans; this is consistent with previous years and, in part, relates to the harm to children living in a home where there is domestic abuse. The category of physical abuse is low; accounting for only 3% of the children identified at risk of harm. Consultation with several North West Authorities confirmed that Blackpool use the same criteria when identifying physical abuse i.e. an actual injury occurred to a child/ evidence of a child being at risk of physical harm.

Figure 9: Children subject to a Child Protection plan at 31st March 2009, by category.

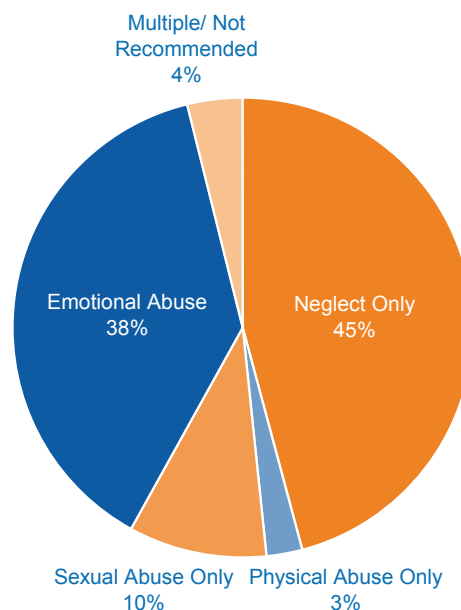


Figure 8.1: Children subject to a Child Protection Plan at 31 March 09, by category of abuse.

	2006/07			2007/08			2008/09			
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Unborn	Total
Neglect Only	26	33	59	35	21	56	36	31	4	71
Physical Abuse Only	5	3	8	4	7	11	3	1	0	4
Sexual Abuse Only	4	5	9	10	16	26	8	7	0	15
Emotional Abuse	18	12	30	30	26	56	25	34	0	59
Multiple/Not Recommended	0	2	2	9	7	16	3	3	0	6
Total	53	55	108	88	77	165	75	76	4	155

Figure 8.2: Percentage of children subject to a Child Protection Plan at 31 March 09, by category of abuse.

	2006/07			2007/08			2008/09			
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Unborn	Total
Neglect Only	40%	60%	55%	40%	27%	34%	48%	41%	100%	45%
Physical Abuse Only	9%	5%	7%	5%	9%	7%	4%	1	0%	3%
Sexual Abuse Only	8%	9%	8%	11%	21%	16%	11%	9%	0%	10%
Emotional Abuse	34%	22%	28%	34%	34%	34%	33%	45%	0	38%
Multiple/Not Recommended	0	4%	2%	10%	9%	10%	4%	4%	0	4%
Total	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Summary

As highlighted in the Chair's introduction to this report, there are a variety of factors in Blackpool which combine to make safeguarding children and young people in our town particularly challenging.

The LSCB will continue to scrutinise the performance of local organisations to ensure that agencies work together effectively to keep children safe from harm.

In order to achieve this, the Board has identified its priorities for 2009/2010 and the Action Plan that follows set out the means by which these will be achieved.



Blackpool Local Safeguarding Children Board Action Plan 2009-2010



BLACKPOOL LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

Action Plan 2008-2010

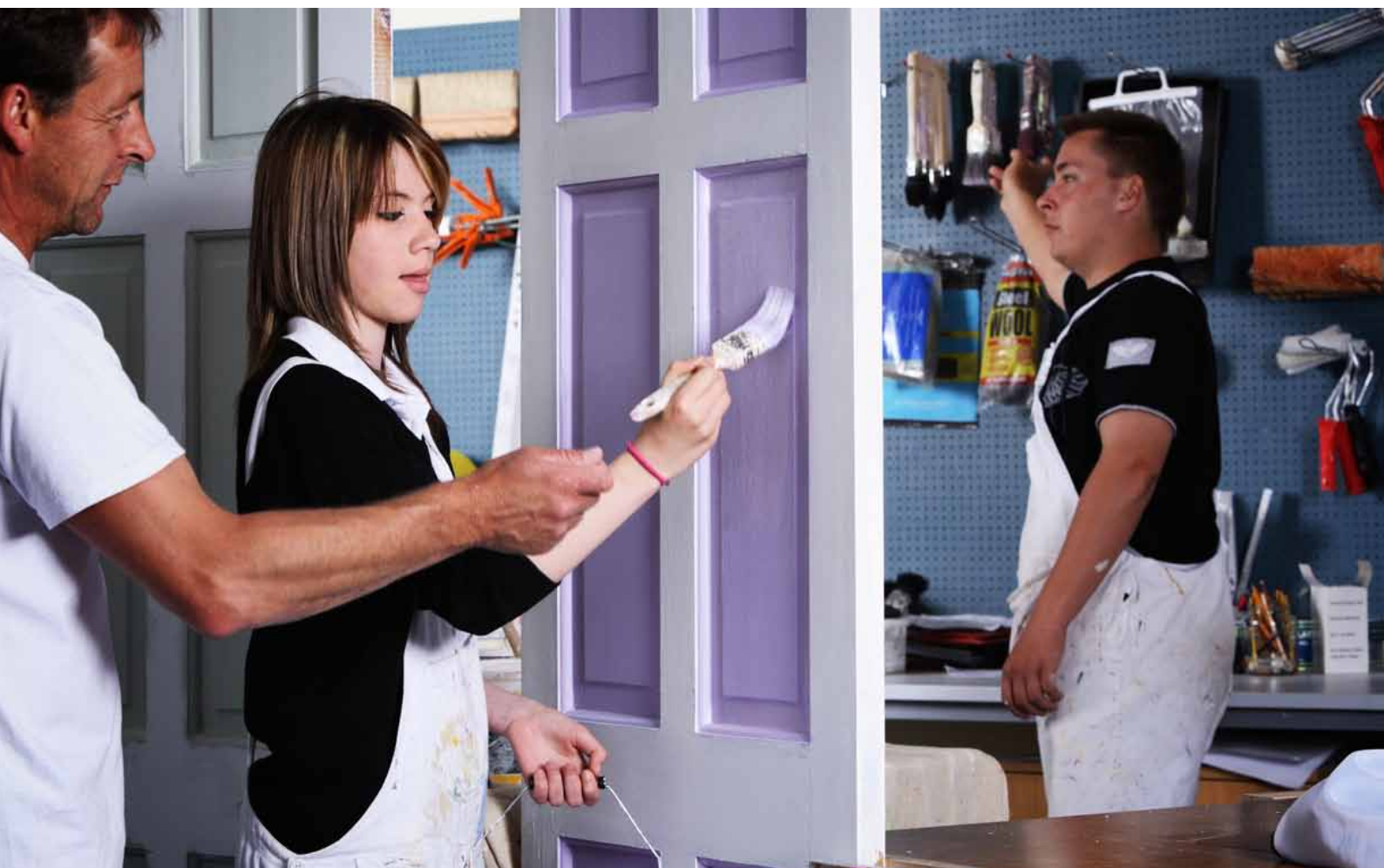
The LSCB aims to promote high standards of safeguarding work and to foster a culture of continuous improvement. This will be achieved from self evaluation, analysis of performance data and auditing processes.

To avoid unnecessary duplication of work the LSCB will ensure that its monitoring role complements and contributes to the work of both the Children's Trust and the Inspectorates.

WORK PROGRAMME 2009-2010

The Action Plan sets out the actions that need to be taken within the next year to develop the LSCB further, to ensure systems are subject to continuous review and processes in place to support the Board.

The Action Plan is intended to be a live document so that any necessary additions/amendments can be included.



Local Safeguarding Children Board		Objective 1: Develop the board further so that it is in an effective position to champion safeguarding and promote the welfare of children		
Action	Anticipated Outcomes	Lead	Timescales	
1.1	Review the organisation of the Board; develop an executive model, a compact and job descriptions for Board members.	Business Development Manager	February 2010	
1.2	Agree Induction Programme for board members.	Business Development Manager/Training Co-ordinator	September 2009	
1.3	Explore options for Board member review/appraisal process.	Business Development Manager	February 2010	
1.4	Review Sub-groups; structure and organisation including terms of reference; chairs; membership; work plans.	Chairs of sub-groups/ Business Development Manager	April 2010	
1.5	Identify a mechanism to ensure that young people are consulted and included in the work of the board.	Business Development Manager	March 2010	
1.6	Board membership to include two lay people from the local community.	Chair	March 2010	
1.7	Membership of the Board to include key representatives from Adult Services.	Chair/Business Development Manager	January 2010	

Local Safeguarding Children Board		Objective 2: Ensure that the Safeguarding Agenda is taken to other multi-agency forums		
	Action	Anticipated Outcomes	Lead	Timescales
2.1	Maintain effective communication with the Children's Trust to ensure there is no duplication of work, divergence or gap.	LSCB chair attends Children's Trust board meetings; communication is strengthened and duplication, divergence and gaps are reduced. Lead member for Children and Families and Director of Children and Young People Department to attend LSCB Board meetings.	Chair Chair	December 2009 April 2010
2.2	Develop joint policy with Adult Services in relation to Adult Mental Health and Adult substance misuse.	Joint policy developed and in place; strengthening fluent and safer working practice across adult and children's services.	Chair – Operational and Quality Assurance subgroup	February 2010

Local Safeguarding Children Board		Objective 3: Continue to promote effective links with other LSCBs in the region		
	Action	Anticipated Outcomes	Lead	Timescales
3.1	LSCB Chair to attend and contribute to the North West LSCB Independent Chair's Forum.	Chair attends and contributes to the regional developments in joint working practice. Information sharing, joint initiatives and shared protocols are developed across the region.	Chair	Ongoing
3.2	Business Development Manager to attend and contribute to North West LSCB Business Manager's Forum.	Business Development Manager attends and contributes to the regional developments. Information sharing, joint initiatives and shared protocols are developed across the region.	Business Development Manager	Ongoing
3.3	LSCB Chair and Business Development Manager to develop the Pan Lancashire LSCB Chairs and Managers Forum.	Joint initiatives, shared protocols and initiatives are developed across Blackpool, Blackburn with Darwen and Lancashire.	Chair/Business Development Manager	Ongoing

Local Safeguarding Children Board		Objective 4: Develop a wider preventative role in safeguarding all children in the community		
Action	Anticipated Outcomes	Lead	Timescales	
4.1	Establish/identify a mechanism to bring together agencies that undertake work re Child Accident Prevention.	Business Development Manager	April 2010	
Local Safeguarding Children Board		Objective 5: Ensure there is a timely response to the recommendations of Lord Laming's report and Government's Response: 'The Protection of Children in England: Action Plan'		
Action	Anticipated Outcomes	Lead	Timescales	
5.1	Undertake further work on refining the Serious Case Review Process. (rec. 44)	Case Review Sub-group	February 2010	
5.2	Ensure that all Serious Case Review panel chairs and Serious Case Review overview authors are independent of LSCB and services related to the case. (rec. 44)	Case Review Sub-group	February 2010	
5.3	Board membership will include senior decision makers from all safeguarding partners, who will attend regularly and be fully involved as equal partners in LSCB decision making. (rec. 52)	Chair	March 2010	
5.4	The LSCB will report to the Children's Trust Board and publish an annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area. (rec. 53)	Chair/Business Development Manager	May 2010	
5.5	Develop systems so that there is robust challenge to the work of the Children's Trust and its partners. (rec. 53)	Chair/Board members	March 2010	

Local Safeguarding Children Board		Objective 6: Respond to the recommendations of inspections where issues arise regarding safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children		
	Action	Anticipated Outcomes	Lead	Timescales
6.1	The Board will be satisfied that Blackpool Children and Young People's Department has responded to the actions identified in the recent unannounced inspection by Ofsted.	Child and Young People's Department provide a formal response detailing what action will be undertaken to address areas of concern.	Janet Hambly/ Paula Swindlehurst	November 2009

Local Safeguarding Children Board		Objective 7: Raise Public Awareness about the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.		
	Action	Anticipated Outcomes	Lead	Timescales
7.1	Create a Communications sub-group, which is responsible for developing a Communications Strategy.	Communications sub-group is established; a mechanism is in place to ensure that a Communications Strategy is developed.	Business Development Manager/Board members	Group to be formed by December 2009
7.2	The content of the LSCB website is reviewed and updated and options for a separate website explored.	Review undertaken; alternatives identified and considered by the Board; the LSCB web presence is improved.	Assistant Business Development Manager	January 2010

Local Safeguarding Children Board		Objective 8: Continue to monitor the effectiveness of Section 11 duties: this is a primary responsibility of the LSCB and the board will challenge any agencies that are not fully contributing to the safeguarding agenda.		
	Action	Anticipated Outcomes	Lead	Timescales
8.1	Develop and undertake a Section 11 audit of constituent member agencies.	The audit will inform the LSCB about the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in individual agencies.	Business Development Manager	March 2010
8.2	Action is taken to address in gaps identified in 8.1 (above).	Agencies demonstrate what arrangements they have in place to fulfil their statutory duties under section 11 Children Act 2004.	Chair	

Local Safeguarding Children Board		Objective 9: Develop co-ordinated quality assurance systems to monitor the effectiveness of work being undertaken to safeguard and promote the welfare of children		
	Action	Anticipated Outcomes	Lead	Timescales
9.1	Develop audit model/tools to collect data regarding attendance at Child Protection conferences and core group meetings.	The Board has access to data about attendance at child protection conferences/reviews and core group meetings.	Quality Assurance and Operations Group/Assistant Business Development Manager	December 2009
9.2	Undertake further work on thresholds for intervention.	Referral practice is consistent and appropriate.	Targeted Services QA Service Manager to the Quality Assurance and Operations Group.	March 2010
9.3	Ensure that all new procedures introduced in 2007-2008 are working effectively.	New procedures are reviewed and the effectiveness of these is clear and understood.	Quality Assurance and Operations Group	March 2010

Local Safeguarding Children Board		Objective 10: Promote awareness of the processes for the safe recruitment of staff		
	Action	Anticipated Outcomes	Lead	Timescales
10.1	Board members complete the Safer Recruitment self assessment tool.	The Board is able to evaluate the arrangements agencies have in place to promote safe recruitment of staff.	Business Development Manager/Local Authority Designated Officer/Assistant (LADO)	January 2010
10.2	Board members complete the Management of Allegations self assessment tool	The Board is able to evaluate the arrangements agencies have in place to promote safe recruitment of staff.	Local Authority Designated Officer/Business Development Manager/Assistant	January 2010
10.3	Children and Young People Safer Recruitment Cross Directorate Group is opened to all agencies.	Share good practice and promote consistency of practice across agencies	Strategic HR Manager - Children and Young People's Department.	November 2009

Local Safeguarding Children Board		Objective 10: Promote awareness of the processes for the safe recruitment of staff		
	Action	Anticipated Outcomes	Lead	Timescales
10.4	Organise awareness raising events and half-day training sessions regarding the appropriate management of allegations.	There is increased awareness and clarity about the appropriate management of allegations.	Local Authority Designated Officer	January 2010
Local Safeguarding Children Board		Objective 11 : Identify Blackpool specific work in relation to the Lancashire wide campaign, 'Give Me Room To Breathe', regarding the dangers of co-sleeping		
	Action	Anticipated Outcomes	Lead	Timescales
11.1	Implement phase 2 of the campaign. (Publicity events, training for staff, produce leaflets)	Raised awareness of the risk factors associated with co-sleeping and a consistent approach and consistent messages regarding safer sleeping arrangements.	Lead Nurse for Safeguarding Children; NHS Blackpool	From September 2009 - ongoing
Local Safeguarding Children Board		Objective 12: Review and measure the effectiveness of the rapid response service to all unexpected child deaths		
	Action	Anticipated Outcomes	Lead	Timescales
12.1	Undertake a review of the rapid response service jointly commissioned with Lancashire and Blackburn with Darwen LSCBs.	Service is reviewed and the board is clear about the effectiveness of the service and any gaps in service provision are identified.	Child Death Overview Panel/Business Development Manager	March 2010
Local Safeguarding Children Board		Objective 13: Ensure that all Serious Case Reviews are delivered in a timely fashion and receive at least an adequate rating from external inspectors		
	Action	Anticipated Outcomes	Lead	Timescales
13.1	All Serious Care Reviews are undertaken within defined timescales and the quality of the work undertaken receives at least an adequate rating.	Blackpool Serious Case reviews are completed to a good standard and contribute to better working practices in Blackpool.	Case review sub-group	Linked to specific SCRs

Local Safeguarding Children Board		Objective 14: Respond to the Fourth Joint Chief Inspectors biennial publication: Safeguarding Children and the priorities Identified		
	Action	Anticipated Outcomes	Lead	Timescales
14.1	Key messages from the publication are summarised for the Board and necessary improvements are identified for remedial action.	The Board is aware of the key messages from the publication and is clear about what improvements are required.	LSCB Training Co-ordinator.	December 2009

