



### **Cabinet Member (Children and Young People)**

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**Time and Date**

2.00 pm on Tuesday, 16th October, 2012

**Place**

Committee Room 2 - Council House

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**Public Business**

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of Interests**
3. **Minutes** (Pages 3 - 6)
  - (a) To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> September, 2012.
  - (b) Matters Arising
4. **Coventry Safeguarding Children Board (CSCB) Annual Report 2011-2012 Business Plan 2012-2015** (Pages 7 - 116)

Report of the Director of Children, Learning and Young People
5. **Adoption Service Annual Report and Statement of Purpose** (Pages 117 - 156)

Report of the Director of Children, Learning and Young People
6. **Fostering Service Annual Report including Statement of Purpose and Family and Friends Policy** (Pages 157 - 194)

Report of the Director of Children, Learning and Young People
7. **Any Other Business**

To consider any other items of business which the Cabinet Member decides to take as a matter of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.

**Private Business**

Nil

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Bev Messinger, Director of Customer and Workforce Services, Council House Coventry

Monday, 8 October 2012

Note: The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is Usha Patel  
Tel: 024 7683 3198

Membership: Councillors J O'Boyle (Cabinet Member)

By invitation Councillor Lepoidevin (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Please note: a hearing loop is available in the committee rooms

If you require a British Sign Language interpreter for this meeting  
OR if you would like this information in another format or  
language please contact us.

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# Agenda Item 3

## CABINET MEMBER (CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE)

4<sup>th</sup> September, 2012

Cabinet Member

Present: Councillor O'Boyle

Shadow Cabinet

Member Present: Councillor Lepoidevin

Employees Present:

A. Bell (Children, Learning and Young People Directorate)  
A. Clarkson (Children, Learning and Young People Directorate)  
A. Daly (Children, Learning and Young People Directorate)  
C. Green (Director of Children, Learning & Young People)  
J. McLellan (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)  
J. Newman (Finance and Legal Services Directorate)  
J. Sembi (Children, Learning and Young People Directorate)

Apologies:

Councillor Kershaw (Cabinet Member (Education))

### **Public Business**

#### **10. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **11. Minutes**

(a) The minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2012, were signed as a true record.

(b) There were no matters arising.

#### **12. Annual Family Group Conference Services Report**

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Children, Learning and Young People which indicated that the Coventry Family Group Conference facilitated family meetings where strengths and resources within a network of family and friends could be drawn upon to make a family plan which offered support, care and safety for children and young people.

The outcomes for the children and families who had been offered a Family Group Conference had been carefully monitored and evaluated and were documented in the Annual Report which was attached to the report.

The Family Group Conference Service had increasingly demonstrated its value in enhancing and assisting wider family and community networks involvement to facilitate safe decision making for children and families in Coventry where there were child welfare concerns.

The key principles for the delivery of the service included:-

- The positive involvement of family and community networks in decision-making about their children
- The voices of children being heard and contributing to decision-making
- The provision of information and resources and empowering families to make safe, effective, realistic and lasting plans for their children
- Continued prioritisation of work with families where critical decisions were being made about their children, in particular those at risk of harm, family breakdown or in need of permanent alternative carers.

The outcomes for the children and families who had been offered a Family Group Conference had been carefully monitored and evaluated, and was documented in the Annual Report which was appended to the report.

**RESOLVED that after due consideration of the report and the matters raised at the Meeting, the Cabinet Member (Children and Young People) endorsed the report and noted the continued development of Family Group Conferencing as a process to enhance and assist wider family and community networks involvement in safe decision making for children and families in Coventry where there were child welfare concerns.**

### 13. **Annual Report of the Coventry Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) 2011-2012**

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Children, Learning and Young People on the third Annual Report of the Coventry Independent Reviewing Service, which covered the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2011, to 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2012, as required by statutory guidance, the Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) Handbook 2010.

The report provided information for the Lead Member with responsibility for children, young people and corporate parenting on the work undertaken by the IRO service, and any issues that had arisen regarding how the Local Authority exercised its role as Corporate Parent for all Looked after Children during that period.

In order for the aspirations and expectations for Children in the City Council's Care and Care Leavers to be realised, it was important that the Lead Member and the Scrutiny Board responsible for achieving them received regular reports that set out progress. The annual Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) was part of that process. As a national requirement, its primary purpose was set out in the Independent Reviewing Officer's Handbook.

The report focussed on the Independent Reviewing Officer's functions. In particular the timeliness of reviews, the participation of children in their reviews and ensuring that permanency plans were in place to avoid children drifting in care. It also identified how many cases were the subject of the care plan resolution process, and whether any cases were referred to Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service.

**RESOLVED that after due consideration of the report and the matters raised at the Meeting, the Cabinet Member (Children and Young People) noted the report which provided an update on the management of children's cases by the Independent Review**

**Officers.**

**14. Comments, Compliments and Complaints 2011/12 – Children’s Social Care Services**

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Children, Learning and Young People which detailed the comments, compliments and complaints received during 2011/12, the themes that had arisen from them and the learning and service improvements that had resulted from the feedback received.

**RESOLVED that after due consideration of the report and the matters raised at the Meeting, the Cabinet Member (Children and Young People) endorsed and approved the publishing of the report.**

**15. Outstanding Issues**

The Cabinet Member noted the outstanding issues relevant to his portfolio and requested that the report be updated accordingly.

**16. Any Other Items of Public Business**

Nil

**Private Business**

Nil

(The meeting closed at 2.30 p.m.)

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**Public report**  
Cabinet Member report  
16<sup>th</sup> October 2012

**Report to**

Cabinet Member for Children & Young People

**Director approving the report:**

Director of Children, Learning and Young People Directorate

Chair Coventry Safeguarding Children Board

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

**Title:**

**Coventry Safeguarding Children Board (CSCB) Annual Report 2011-2012  
Business Plan 2012-2015**

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**Is this a key decision?**

No

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**Executive summary**

To submit the annual report of the CSCB; to report on the financial resilience of the CSCB and to raise key issues arising from recent Serious Case Reviews. This report is also being submitted to the Scrutiny Board for Children and Young People on the 11th October 2012.

**Recommendations**

Cabinet Member is asked to

- i) Note the annual report of the CSCB and the Business Plan
- ii) To consider the financial resilience of the CSCB including the updating information on the financial gap identified in the last report submitted in October 2011 as well as the funding arrangements and forecasted expenditure over the next financial year
- iii) To write to the Chairman of West Midlands Police Authority to express concern about the inadequacy of the West Midlands contribution to Coventry Safeguarding Children Board
- iv) Consider from within the report the progress of the most recent Serious Case Reviews

**List of Appendices included:**

Appendix 1  
Annual Report 2011-12 and Business Plan 2012- 15

**Other useful background papers:**

None

**Has it or will it be considered by scrutiny? **Yes****

Booked on Scrutiny Board 2 on the 11th October 2012

**Has it, or will it be considered by any other council committee, advisory panel or other body? **Yes****

Coventry Children and Young People's Commissioning on the 15<sup>th</sup> October 2012

**Will this report go to Council? **No****



## Coventry Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2011-12 and Business Plan 2012-2015

### 1. Background/ Context

#### 1.1. Governance

In December 2010, the CSCB reviewed its governance arrangements with the Children's Commissioning Board (CCB). The alignment between the Boards' priority setting and business planning processes has improved. The communication and linkage arrangements are beginning to embed and will mature over time. In line with the reporting arrangements the CSCB submits its annual report which sets out the activity and the performance of the Board. Further alignment and communication will be required in respect of the relationship with the Health and Well Being Board and the CSCB.

##### 1.1.1 The 2012/15 Business plan of the CSCB sets the following priorities:

1. To monitor and evaluate the development of Early Help Services for children, young people and their families
2. To monitor the reduction of the number of sexually exploited young people and make them safer.
3. To monitor the further development of multi-agency services to prevent domestic abuse and support children and their families
4. To further review the CSCB performance framework to enable the Board to monitor the effectiveness of current services with a view to shaping priorities for the CSCB
5. Develop an engagement policy and programme with young people

##### 1.1.2 This has been the Board's first year with an Independent Chair and ensures the Board's compliance with Working Together to Safeguard Children and Young People 2010. Amy Weir commenced her role in September 2011. This provides the CSCB with an additional independent monitoring and scrutiny capacity. Two Lay members were also appointed in September 2011. They are now beginning to contribute to the work of the CSCB and provide a different perspective from their own experiences and knowledge of the local community.

##### 1.1.3 The CSCB and CCB have reviewed the staying safe outcomes and the CSCB maintains responsibility for assuring the effectiveness of the following:

- Safe from maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual exploitation, including children subject to Common Assessment Framework
- Safe from accidental injury **arising from neglect** only
- Safe from death

The high level strategic goals for the CSCB are:

- Maintaining focus on the arrangements for children subject to child protection

- Ensuring awareness and the application of thresholds across the city are applied consistently to safeguard children.
  - \* Children subject to the Common Assessment Framework interventions
  - \* Children with complex needs and where parenting capacity is compromised
  - \* Impact on Children of Domestic Violence and Abuse
  - \* Accidental injury arising from neglect
  - \* Children Missing from Home and School
  - \* Children who are Privately Fostered
- Child Death Reviewing process
- Promoting and checking that safer recruitment is in place.
- Development of policies and procedures
- Interagency Training
- Serious Case Reviews
- Quality Assurance Framework based on key priorities

### **CCB and Community Safety partnerships retain responsibility for**

- Safe from crime and anti-social behaviour in and out of school
- Children and Young People have security and stability and are cared for.

## **2. Financial challenges**

An in-depth financial review of the CSCB budget was carried out in January 2011 and in July 2012, in the light of the new requirement of Working Together 2010 for increased independence for the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) in appointing an **Independent Chair** and any **Serious Case Reviews**. These are areas of expenditure which will create additional financial pressures. Efficiencies of £15,300 were identified and agreed by the CSCB in January 2011 and the budget for the CSCB was set on the basis that the key statutory agencies will seek to meet the deficit of £29,000. The budget for 2011-2012 balanced with an overspend of £2,066 relating to management of vacancies targets and was extremely close to the projection.

- 2.1 In addition, a review of financial contributions for sustaining the sub regional arrangements for **Child Death Reviewing** arrangements has been completed and this involved streamlining the arrangements to comply with the statutory requirements only. The grant allocation for 2011/12 was £26,300, Coventry's contribution is £24,800 and the shortfall of £1500 has been met from existing CSCB budget. Training courses are funded by the CSCB. Non-attendance continues to attract a default payment of £75 per missed place to ensure the most efficient use of the training budget.
- 2.2 Despite the efficiencies made, the CSCB faces a funding deficit in meeting its obligations for securing independence in the chairing arrangements for the CSCB and Serious Case Reviews. There are currently additional management costs to cover the CSCB Business Development Manager's maternity leave. The shortfall for 2012/13 is a projected increase relating to the cost of the Serious Case Reviews and Maternity cover.
- 2.3 The CSCB has not yet decided how budgetary pressures will be resolved and key partners have still to finalise their contributions to the budget for 2012-2013. However there are likely to be continuing financial pressures and a full report will be submitted

to the CSCB in November 2012. The contribution from the police remains considerably below what could be reasonably expected from a key partner at 7% of the total budget. Contributions from health are currently at 20% which is lower than should be expected. The local authority contributes 67%. Analysis of 10 LSCBs across England representing a variety of types of local authority provides a mean average contribution of 22.4% for Health and 8.8% for the police as key contributors to the budget. The mean average local authority contribution is 61.4%.

- 2.4 In December 2010, CSCB reported a gap of resources in the arrangements for the Domestic Violence Joint Screening Team and in particular this related to the administrative support to the screening process to enable information sharing with schools. This resource was funded by the Domestic Violence and Abuse Partnership for a 6 month period to March in 2011 to enable the pilot to commence. From April to August 2012 the administrative resource funding of £10,000 was met by the West Midlands Police and since August 2012 the cost has been met by Children Learning and Young People's Directorate to March 2013. The current proposal is to seek funding from all schools in the City to contribute resourcing the administrative support on a permanent basis to enable information to be shared with schools safely and securely.
- 2.5 This administrative resource has been critical in enabling Police and LA Children's services to share information about notifications of domestic violence with schools. The pilot commenced in September 2011, in three schools spanning secondary and primary stages and the schools participated in the pilot. These are Templers Primary School, Willenhall Primary School and Lyng Hall secondary school with Alderman's Green Primary School joining the pilot part way through the year. The pilot reported to the CSCB in July 2012.
- 2.6 The pilot has enabled key partners to test out pathways that could better support children falling below the thresholds for services from social care and police but could have their needs met by schools directly or under the Common Assessment Framework. A preliminary evaluation has indicated that a number of children and young people have been better supported in school and there have been noticeable improvements in attendance and achievement. Data gathered has identified that 93% of schools have at least one referral where a child live in a household where a domestic abuse incident has taken place.
- 2.7 The pilot also enables the Police and Children's service to address the recommendation of a SCR to share information with schools. "Police and Children's Services should agree a joint protocol for exchanging information with schools where children are known to be living in domestic violence situations."
- 2.8 However, proposed long term funding solutions have been identified through asking all schools to contribute an annual amount to fund the service.

### 3. **Serious Case Reviews (SCR)**

In 2011 - 2012 CSCB found that the deaths of 1 child met the criteria for commissioning a SCR. This case review has been undertaken using as recommended a systems approach to serious case reviews as recommended by Eileen Munro's review of child protection in England. The systems model developed by the Social Care Institute for Excellence was used and is set out in the following paragraph. The completed SCR has been shared with the Department of Education (DfE) and this will be published in due course.

- 3.1 The CSCB was involved in a regional pilot study with, Dr Sheila Fish, of (SCIE) to trial a systems approach to undertaking serious case reviews in 2010- 2011. This approach employs a different methodology to existing SCR guidance requiring greater engagement with practitioners, enabling a focus on improving practice rather than blame. The first review received a great deal of attention as a pilot of the Learning Together systems approach. As well as being thoroughly evaluated, our experiences are also of interest to the DfE at a time when the guidance for serious case reviews is being rewritten and significantly reduced.
- 3.2 There are currently two further Serious Case Reviews underway and these are being undertaken in line with the Working Together 2010 guidance. The first case is to be the subject of a criminal trial in November 2012. The Draft Overview report has been completed and is due to be the subject of an Extraordinary meeting of the CSCB on the 8<sup>th</sup> October 2012. The final presentation of the report should wait until after the criminal trial. The CSCB will need to ensure that there is no delay in learning lessons from this case. Individual agencies will need to demonstrate that they are implementing the recommendations identified in the SCR and that multi-agency learning is taken forward. The second case for review has recently been agreed in September 2012 and the process of Serious Case Review is about to commence.
- 3.3 Work is currently underway to establish a new way of monitoring and scrutinising the progress of key actions from SCRs. IT Strategy and Client Services have been commissioned to assist the CSCB to develop an SCR database that will effectively monitor and report on the implementation of key actions, RAG rating will be applied with alerts being given to partners on their progress. Analytical and numerical reports will be available to the Board that will also be able to identify trends. It is anticipated that the database will be operational at the end of this calendar year.

#### **4. Children who are privately fostered**

The audit of children who are privately fostered has been completed, involving a local primary school and with a secondary school. (A privately fostered child is a child, under the age of 16 (under 18 if disabled) who is cared for, or proposed to be cared for, and provided with accommodation by someone other than a parent/person with parental responsibility/a sibling or a defined close family member.)

The audit indicated a potential under reporting of private fostering and recommendations were made for actions which should minimise the level of under-reporting. An audit took place at a secondary school and demonstrated this issue. This audit was based on a questionnaire anonymously completed to protect the identities of the students. Results identified that 13 young people are privately fostered. A number of actions were agreed which included:

- Arrange introduction of revised school admission and transfer forms
- Agree changes in protocol for School Admissions Team
- Raise school staff awareness of private fostering and action staff should take if private fostering suspected
- Ensure that 'Protocol', the management information system for Social Care, provides information on the level of private fostering recorded
- Through Protocol monitor and report to CSCB on the level of private fostering
- To check validity of data gathered so far, increase sample size by repeating audit in one more primary and one more secondary school.

## 5. Quality assurance framework

- The CSCB is required to produce an annual report. It provides an opportunity for the CSCB inform key partners and stakeholders about its work in supporting and testing out the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements. As part of this the CSCB has developed a Quality Assurance Framework by which it seeks to measure and evaluate the strength of local safeguarding information Areas additional to local authority held information include:
  - Workforce and activity information from the full range of partners.
  - Hospital admissions caused by injuries to children
  - The effectiveness of Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)
  
- The CSCB is further reviewing its arrangements for monitoring the safeguarding arrangements in the City and is has further developed its quality assurance framework so that it can become a more effective instrument to facilitate improved scrutiny. This has proved to be a challenging piece of work, not least because the Board agreed that it should streamline data requirement reduce duplication and utilise data already collated more intelligently. The Board has already adopted a Performance Management Framework in November 2011. This was a key priority in the last Business Plan.

5.1 Professor Munro's most recent report: *'Progress Report: Moving towards a child centred system'* published in May 2012 needs to be considered in this area. In her conclusions she says; *'In a child centred system , it is vital to know how well children are being helped....The only sensible way to measure how well the system is performing is the measure of how effectively it is helping children, young people and their families.....Learning how to improve our measurement of effectiveness is an ongoing challenge but it will require using data from several sources, from individual cases, feedback from children and families, service level data on outcomes, and population data.'* The Government has also introduced *'The Children's Safeguarding Performance Information Framework'* in June 2012. There is a clear rationale behind these initiatives. These are intended to be broad measures but should be complemented with local information and from listening to the views of children, young people and families.

5.2 A separate paper went to the CSCB in July 2012 proposing a review of the current performance framework with a more thematic approach to gathering performance information based on grouping areas thematically and responding to what the information tells us both from hard data measures but also from the outcome of audit and survey activity The CSCB has agreed to the proposed framework in September 2012.

6. **Options considered and recommended proposal**  
Not Applicable

## **7. Results of consultation undertaken**

The CSCB has recruited two lay members in September 2011. Their role is to open up further public scrutiny and support stronger public engagement and understanding of children's issues. Work has also been commenced to engage children, young people and adults through providing feedback on their experiences at Child Protection Conferences.

## **8. Timetable for implementing this decision**

Not Applicable

## **9. Comments from Director of Finance and Legal Services**

### **9.1 Financial implications**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The 2012/13 funding pressure arising due to the Serious Case Reviews and the provision of Business Development Manager maternity cover will be managed within existing resources of the CSCB partners.

### **9.2 Legal implications**

The Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 introduces a requirement for LSCB's to produce and publish an annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area. It outlines the areas that the report should focus on. The LSCB must send a copy of the annual report to the Children's Trust Board who shall in turn be expected to respond to reports through the Local Children and Young Peoples Plan.

Section 15 of the Children Act 2004 sets out that statutory board partners may make payments towards expenditure incurred by, or for purposes connected with, an LSCB either directly, or by contributing to a fund out of which payments may be made and provide staff, goods, services, accommodation or other resources for purposes connected with LSCB.

## **10. Other implications**

There are no specific implications to be considered

### **10.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / LAA (or Coventry SCS)**

- Children are supported to live safe from harm with their families and communities
- Fewer children and young people go missing from home and those who do are protected
- Children who are privately fostered are known to be safe

### **10.2 How is risk being managed?**

Not Applicable

**10.3 What is the impact on the organisation?**

CSCB has a role in ensuring that the work of the Council is addressing the safeguarding children agenda and in reporting the effectiveness of the City's safeguarding arrangements to both the Children and Young People's Commissioning Board and the Local Strategic Partnership.

**10.4 Equalities / EIA**

It is an integral part of the CSCB role to ensure that vulnerable children are safeguarded and that we do this with explicit regard to their particular needs including their diversity.

**10.5 Implications for (or impact on?) the environment**

Not Applicable

**10.6 Implications for partner organisations?**

Chapter 3 of Working Together to Safeguard Children and Young People 2010 requires the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) to publish an annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area. The LSCB is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how the relevant organisations in each local authority are will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the locality, and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do.

**Report author(s)**

**Name and job title:**

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Member: Cllr O'Boyle				

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**Coventry Safeguarding Children Board**

**Annual Report 2011 - 2012**

**Business Plan 2012 – 2015**

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## 1. Chair's Introduction

### **Coventry LSCB Annual Report on the Effectiveness of Safeguarding Children in Coventry Introduction from the Independent Chair**

I am very pleased to present The **Annual Report of the Coventry Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) for 2011-2012**. Chapter 3 of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010 requires the LSCB to publish an Annual Report on the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area. The LSCB is responsible for promoting and overseeing the effectiveness of the work within and between agencies to safeguard children and promote their welfare, and this report reflects on the effectiveness of those working relationships. This is my first year of chairing the Coventry LSCB as its independent Chair. Since I took up this appointment in September 2011, I have been developing a good understanding of local safeguarding arrangements and building relationships with all the key partner agencies. The first part of this report sets out the progress we have made against our priorities for the year 2010/11 which were,

1. Review Governance arrangements, systems and capacity

*Review, agree and establish the roles and relationships with existing and emerging partnerships.*

*Review the membership of the Board and sub groups in light of changes taking place in organisations.*

2. Quality Assurance

*Clarify and finalise the Board's performance framework to enable the Board to monitor effectiveness of current services with a view of shaping priorities for the LSCB.*

3. Practice and Development

*Have a focus on disabled children vulnerable to abuse and neglect.*

There has been a great deal of activity and progress made during the year. We have appointed two Lay Members to the LSCB who are now positively involved in the Board's activities. We have completed and are implementing our new performance management framework which provides a good opportunity to challenge and scrutinise the contribution all partners are making to safeguarding children and young people. A very successful annual conference was held to raise awareness of the vulnerabilities of disabled children and to highlight examples of good practice to safeguard disabled children.

We have recently held a development day and are now reviewing and reconsidering how our collective efforts can have more impact. The report sets out the achievements and challenges in safeguarding children and young people in Coventry throughout the year and important areas for development. The following pages represent an enormous amount of committed hard work by the wide range of professionals making up the statutory multi-disciplinary partnership that makes up the LSCB.

The second part of this document is the strategic **Business Plan for the next three years 2012-15** which identifies the key priorities for the coming year. These priorities are based upon the learning from relevant audits undertaken and case reviews during the year, as well as the outcome from the LSCB's review and development day in December 2011. Much of the work that needs to be undertaken will be via the numerous LSCB sub groups and reporting groups.

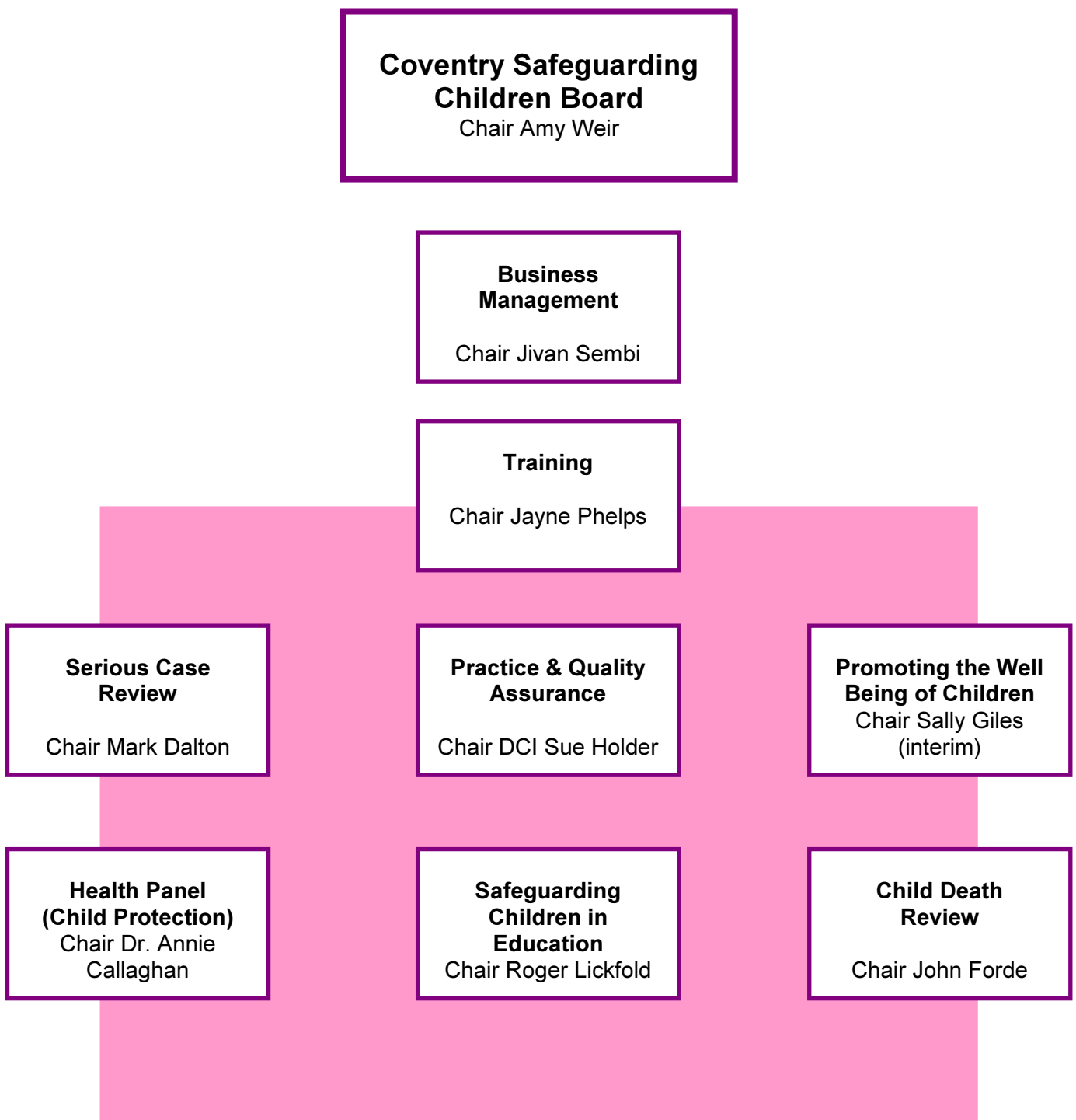
I would like to take this opportunity to thank the LSCB staff for their hard work and enthusiasm, and the numerous practitioners, managers and sub group chairs who have contributed so positively to the work of the LSCB during the past year. Without this commitment, the LSCB would not be able to fulfil its obligations and we not have such

effective safeguarding in place. The continued support of all the Board Partners in Safeguarding Children and Young People in Coventry is very much valued and appreciated.

Amy Weir  
Independent Chair  
Coventry LSCB

## 2. Structure chart

Organisational Structure



**3. Membership of Coventry Safeguarding Children Board (at June 2012)**

**Amy Weir**

**Independent Chair**

**Fay Baillie**

**Vice Chair**, Director of Nursing Quality and Engagement, NHS Coventry

**Colin Green**

Director of Children, Learning & Young People (CLYP) Directorate

**Carmel McCalmont**

Divisional Director, University Hospital Coventry & Warwickshire

**Tracey Wrench**

Director of Quality, Safety and Service User experience, Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust

**Ann Burley,**

Interim Designated Nurse, Child Protection, NHS Coventry

**Dr. Ann Callaghan**

Designated Doctor, NHS Coventry

**Jayne Phelps**

Lead Professional for Safeguarding Children, University Hospital Coventry & Warwickshire

**Chief Superintendent Andy Nicholson**

West Midlands Police

**DCI Susan Holder**

Public Protection Unit. West Midlands Police

**Sarah Chand**

Head of Probation Service, Coventry, Staffordshire & West Midlands Probation Service

**Cllr. Jim O'Boyle**

Cabinet Member, Children & Young People

**Cllr. David Kershaw**

Cabinet Member, Education

**Mark Dalton,**

Manager, NSPCC

**Julie Newman**

Children Learning & Young People and Adult Manager, Legal and Democratic Services, Coventry City Council

**Andy Pepper**

Assistant Director Children's Neighbourhood Services, CLYP Directorate

**Vacant**

Assistant Director, Head of Children's Specialist Services, CLYP Directorate

**Vacant**

Assistant Director, Strategic Services, Children Learning & Young People Directorate

**Roger Lickfold**

Strategic Lead, Inclusion Special Education Needs and Participation

**Vacant**

Strategic Lead, Common Assessment Framework CLYP Directorate

**Angie Parks**

Head of Service, Youth Offending Service

**Jivan Sembi**

Head of Safeguarding, Safeguarding Children Service, CLYP Directorate

**Julian Cunningham/Maureen Donnelly**

Interim Business Managers, Coventry Safeguarding Children Board

**Mandie Watson**

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Lay Member

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Lay Member

**4. Progress on Key Priorities for the Board in 2011/12**

*Our Business was developed by the Board with the following agreed priorities*

### **1., Review Governance arrangements, systems and capacity**

***Review, agree and establish the roles and relationships with existing and emerging partnerships***

***Review the membership of the Board and sub groups in light of changes taking place in organisations.***

### **2. Quality Assurance**

***Clarify and finalise the Board's performance framework to enable the Board to monitor effectiveness of current services with a view of shaping priorities for the LSCB***

### **3. Practise and Development**

***Have a focus on disabled children vulnerable to abuse and neglect.***

### **Objective 1 – Review Governance arrangements, systems and capacity**

***Review, agree and establish the roles and relationships with existing and emerging partnerships***

***Review the membership of the Board and sub groups in light of changes taking place in organisations.***

Since the publication of the last Board annual report there has continued to be a strong partnership arrangement with the Children's Commissioning Board (CCB). This is despite the change in Government policy around Children's Trust Board arrangements and the withdrawal of the statutory guidance in October 2010. There have been a number of changes to the Children's partnership arrangements in light of the withdrawal of the previous guidance. There continues to be a reporting arrangement and close liaison between the CSCB and the current partnership arrangements.

The CCB is now accountable to the Health and Wellbeing Board which will set the strategic priorities for both adults and children. Health and Wellbeing Boards will be a forum for local commissioners across the NHS, public health and social care, elected representatives, and representatives of HealthWatch to discuss how to work together to better the health and wellbeing outcomes of the people in their area. An additional issue that is currently under consideration is the impact of the new Clinical Commissioning Groups being formed following the passing of the Health and Social Care Act 2012. This adds a new dimension to existing partnerships as relationships will be across geographical and governance boundaries, particularly as Coventry will relate to the emerging Coventry and Rugby Clinical Commissioning Group. There will need to be continued effective communication and improved planning processes built into the commissioning and the scrutiny structures.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> June 2012 the Government published a draft of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2012. This was released as three parts including draft 'Statutory Guidance on Learning and Improvement' and 'Managing Cases: The framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families'. These documents are out for consultation until 4th September 2012. 'The Children's Safeguarding Performance Information Framework' was also published at the same time and is now to be collected.

The draft Working Together to Safeguard Children does set out the responsibilities and expectations of the LSCB. In summary these are as follows:



- That each LSCB must still develop and publish local policies and procedures about agencies working together.
- That the role of the Health and Wellbeing Boards and their Strategic Needs Assessment in terms of the children's safeguarding agenda is defined, and this body will scrutinise the LSCB annual report.
- The roles of the LSCB and the Lead Member as an observer at Board meetings are outlined and the agenda for transparency and challenge are clearly expressed and supported as are information sharing obligations.

The draft 'Managing Individual Cases; the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families' sets out the responsibilities and actions that must be taken where there are concerns that children are suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm. Although the document sets out the principles of assessment the main change is that most timescales have gone although conducting assessments in a timely manner is an expectation. Local arrangements are expected to be put in place in relation to the type of assessment required. It appears that LSCB's will be able to decide what guidance they want to retain at a local level.

The third document, 'Statutory Guidance on Learning and Improvement' relates to the importance of LSCB's ability to learn and improve its practice as a result of consideration of cases. In particular Professor Munro's systems approach is proposed to be an essential part of the process of learning from cases which have led to tragedy or serious abuse. This approach will require the participation of case practitioners to understand and analyse what has happened. Therefore this approach will be understood by both practitioners and other colleagues engaged in similar work. SCIE is pioneering this approach with their 'Learning Together' Model. However there is an expectation that LSCB's will continue to conduct active case audits to learn from those cases where things have gone right or where there have been near misses.

A review of the current Sub Committee structure of the Board was proposed at the Business Management Group in July 2011. The purpose was to review and restructure the Procedures and Quality Assurance Sub Committees. Following a review of both sub committees' workplans and discussion at the Board Development Day in May 2011 it was agreed that a combined workplan should be agreed. This resulted in the formation of the Practice and Quality Assurance Sub Committee. This recommendation was endorsed by the Board.

Following the appointment and induction of Amy Weir as the Independent Chair of the Board from May 2011 she commenced her role at the September 2011 meeting. This has enabled the Board to ensure it is compliant with the requirement set down in Working Together 2010. It also provides additional independent scrutiny and challenge. The two lay members appointed in May 2011 have enabled the Board to strengthen its relationship with the wider public. These roles are continuing to develop with participation in the work of the Board and its sub committees

## **Objective 2 - Quality Assurance**

***Clarify and finalise the Board's performance framework to enable the Board to monitor effectiveness of current services with a view of shaping priorities for the LSCB***

Considerable work has been undertaken in this area. The Board had previously agreed at the Development Day in May 2010 that the performance framework should be reviewed so that it can become a more effective instrument to facilitate scrutiny of the range of

safeguarding functions that LSCB partners are responsible for. A report went to the Board in November 2011 with an update in March 2012. This proposed that the performance framework should be reviewed so that it can become a more effective instrument to facilitate scrutiny of the range of safeguarding functions that LSCB partners are responsible for and have an interest in. This performance framework seeks to go beyond scrutinising data and looking at the quality and effectiveness of services received. There are five areas which include:

- Business Planning
- Quantitative Segment - Benchmarking and data sets / Quarterly monitoring
- Quality Segment
- Resource alignment
- Risk management

On the 8<sup>th</sup> June 2012 the Government published 'The Children's Safeguarding Performance Information Framework'. This describes the key nationally collected data that can assist those involved in child protection at a national and local level. The framework also provides recommended questions that can be asked of children, families, professionals and providers at a local level. The aim is that these together can provide a more effective overview of the effectiveness and impact of child protection including early intervention services. The framework is broken down into five themes, with national performance information items and approaches to local information for each. The themes are:

- Outcomes for children and young people and their families
- Child protection activity (including early help)
- The quality and timeliness of decision making
- The quality of child protection plans
- Workforce"

A further report is to be presented to the Board on the 12<sup>th</sup> July 2012. This will propose a revision of the current performance framework. The reasons for this are in response to several issues. At the Board Development Day in May 2012 further discussion took place about quality assurance. Comments included whether the Board was asking the right questions of agencies which are based on the outcomes that are required? The most recent report from Professor Munro argues that gathering and analysing performance information needs to inform a better understanding of the quality of the service and improved outcomes for children. Performance information solely based on output information may not tell the whole of the story about the safeguarding needs of children and young people. Future proposals include taking a more thematic approach to analysing information based around the needs of children and young people or particular areas. This approach combined with the posing of outcome focused questioning and analysis may provide a more effective window upon the actual experiences of children and their families and better inform the commissioning of services.

The CSCB have continued to receive reports on a range of issues to understand the volume of work being carried, how it is being resourced and how effective this work is in protecting children in the following areas:

1. Children safeguarded through Multi Agency Public Protection Panels (MAPPA)
2. Children safeguarded through Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) dealing with high risk cases of domestic violence
3. Joint progress report on the multi- agency screening team for domestic violence notifications
4. Missing Children from home and care

5. Bullying
6. Violent crime in Coventry
7. Allegations against professionals/ Local Authority Designated Officer Report
8. Multi agency and single agency safeguarding audits have also been undertaken and reported to the Board. These include:
  - a. An audit of privately fostered children led by the CSCB Sub Committee Safeguarding in Education
  - b. West Midland Police audit on the use of police protection powers.
  - c. CSCB audit of children who are subject to dual status i.e. subject to child protection plans and also looked after.
  - d. CSCB audit based on a primary school where children are subject of a range of interventions including child protection plans, common assessment framework and child in need plans.(This is to be reported to the Board in September 2012)

Last year the Training Strategy Sub Committee undertook a pilot study relating to **evaluating the impact of training on practice**. WT2010 (page 122: 4.45) requires that "*the focus of evaluation should be on the extent to which training is contributing to improving the knowledge and skills of the workforce with regard to working together*". This pilot is now complete and the information is being used to effectively evaluate the impact of training in practice.

### **Objective 3. Practice and Development**

***Have a focus on disabled children vulnerable to abuse and neglect.***

The Board decided to prioritise this area of practice following a detailed case review concerning a disabled child. The Board wanted to ensure that learning took place across agencies, procedures were reviewed and practice was improved to ensure disabled children were appropriately safeguarded.

Historically the CSCB Training Sub committee has commissioned training in respect of safeguarding disabled children from external providers. However from 2011 the Board decided to develop training through internal multi-agency stakeholders to enhance local ownership of learning. This was also to ensure that key actions from a particular case review are understood through targeted training.

The Board also reviewed the multi-agency procedures in respect of safeguarding disabled children through the work of the Practice and Quality Assurance sub committee. Five repeat workshops were held to launch the procedures and ensure the learning was linked to the key actions from the case review. The workshops were targeted at participants at a level in their own organisations who could disseminate and cascade learning to their colleagues.

### **Additional areas of interest and development**

#### **Annual conference**

The Board held its annual conference for practitioners on the 27<sup>th</sup> February 2012. This was entitled 'Safeguarding Disabled Children.' The conference was extremely well planned and delivered by a strong multi agency representation of the Board. The conference also focussed and applied learning and actions from a previous case review.

Dr Karen McLachlan-Named Doctor Child Protection, University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire Trust and Rachael Clawson, Lecturer in Social work at the University of Nottingham were key note speakers..

The aims of the day were as follows:

- Understanding the importance of communicating appropriately with children and hearing what they say
- Understand the importance of sharing information and agencies working together.
- Working with resistant and uncooperative families
- Being aware of the vulnerability of disabled children in the transition process and ensure that all relevant information is shared.
- Learning from our case review about how to respond appropriately to abuse or neglect
- Recognising risk factors, abuse and abusive situations for disabled children
- Recognising that disabled children are more vulnerable to abuse and the reasons for this and consider how to help to protect children and young people with disabilities more effectively

A range of workshops were included in the conference which was well attended by colleagues from a number of agencies and disciplines.

**Child Safety Week June 2011** – A range of partners worked together to promote accident prevention in the community during this week, partners were able to identify key messages to focus on during the week based on accidents and tragically deaths of children that had taken place:

- Reducing the risk of cot death in young babies
- Fire safety in the home particularly focused on kitchen safety and smoking in the home
- In car safety/ road safety

This year linked to kitchen safety the cook and eat well team joined us during the week to promote healthy eating alongside kitchen safety messages. This attracted further attention to child safety week. Once again the Fire Service were instrumental in supporting the week by utilising fire engines and offering home safety checks, we were able to attract attention in those areas where these accidents are more likely to take place; giving vital information to parents, grandparents and wider family networks to keep children safe from accidents. This was a very successful week of activity drawing on a range of partner's expertise and skills to delivery key information to the wider public.

**Safer Internet Day Feb 2012** – The CSCB once again promoted this day across all schools both primary and secondary schools asking schools to take part in promoting safer use of the internet, by delivering assemblies and lessons to students on this issue. The focus for 2012 was '**Connecting generations and educating each other**'. The aim is to invite people of all ages from very young children to parents and grandparents to discover the digital world together safely. A number of resources have been produced by the CSCB and its partners over previous years including resources for parents, this was an opportunity to remind schools of these materials and any give information about new resources being produced nationally.

**A Safeguarding Event for Faith and Voluntary Organisations** was held on the 26<sup>th</sup> May 2012. This was jointly organised by Coventry and Warwickshire's Safeguarding Children Boards. This was the third annual event and the content of the day was in response to feedback provided at previous events. The key issues at this year's event were:

- Signs and Symptoms of Child Abuse and how to respond
- Policies and procedures-what you need to know and what should be included.
- Safer Recruitment-how to recruit paid staff and volunteers safely and within national guidelines.

Feedback on the day was positive. However further work is planned between the two Boards to fully evaluate the written feedback.

### **Coventry Domestic Violence Joint Screening**

This is essentially a process which screens risk to children involved in, or present when, a Domestic Violence Incident takes place. Police, Health and Social Care exchange information around the incident and any nominal associated to it, meeting twice weekly to establish what interventions, if any, can be put in place to safeguard the child.

Joint Screening has been running since 2008 in Coventry and is well established. Since August 2011 the process has been extended, as a pilot, to include Education. Four schools within Coventry have been selected to take part in the pilot and an admin worker has been seconded to the team to assist with the smooth transfer of information. These 4 schools are notified electronically if any of their pupils have been witness to or subject of abuse as direct result of a Domestic Violence Incident. The funding for this pilot is in place until August 2012 and the hope is that it will continue to be available into next year and beyond.

### **Coventry Domestic Violence Pilot**

The Pilot to schools was introduced following actions identified from a serious case review in 2008. The purpose of the pilot was to improve communication and multi-agency working where there are identified concerns regarding children in families where there is domestic abuse.

The purpose of the pilot is to advise schools of incidents of domestic abuse from a centrally held database following joint domestic abuse screening. Initially and from December 2011 three school were involved in the pilot, 2 primary schools (Templars, Willenhall) and one secondary school ( Lyng Hall). A further primary school (Aldermans Green) has joined the pilot since May 2012. However the schools have received historical case information from September 2011.

Police and Children's Services input relevant data from referrals to the Joint DV Screening Service and then referrals are made to schools in the pilot in a consistent manner. Data on all children who attend schools in the Coventry is held in the central database but these aren't currently progressed to those schools outside of the pilot.

An administrator for the pilot has been funded for the initial 6 months via the Community Safety Partnership and for the current period via the West Midlands Police. This funding will

expire on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2012. The CSCB will further consider funding options at the Board meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> July 2012.

Training to the schools and the CAF Co-ordinators in the pilot has been provided, led by a police domestic violence officer and a worker from 'DEFUZ'. This has focussed on risk assessment and risk management.

The work of the Pilot has been subject to local recording and evaluation with a report being presented to the Board in July 2012. In summary current outcomes are as follows:

- 46 children have been identified through the pilot in respect of 59 incidents of domestic abuse during the current academic year.
- There has been an increase in awareness raising at the schools.
- There is some individual evidence of improved well-being, school attendance and academic achievement
- Schools have been able to increase and effectively target their support to individual children
- There is a potential for the reduction of risk to individual children through more effective multi-agency working
- There is the potential for the CAF process to further develop on how schools and individual families are supported more effectively

### **Ofsted Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Services**

This inspection reported in May 2011. The inspection team consisted of three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI), an assistant director seconded from a local authority children's services directorate and an inspector from the Care Quality Commission. The purpose of the inspection is to evaluate the contribution made by relevant services in the local area towards ensuring that children and young people are properly safeguarded and to determine the quality of service provision for looked after children and care leavers.

Safeguarding children received a good rating overall with good capacity for improvement. Two areas of the inspection recommendations for action had particular relevance for the Coventry Safeguarding Children Board;

1. The Children's Trust should have plans in place to improve the quality and availability of local facilities for conducting interviews and medical examinations of children and young people who are subject to child abuse investigations.

2. The NHS Coventry & Warwickshire NHS Partnership Trust (The Arden Cluster) recruitment is completed for the current vacancies. In addition plans and resources need to be agreed to recruit to the required capacity to meet the targets outlined in the 'Health Visitor Implementation Plan 2011-2015 – A Call to Action'.

### **Report by Lay Member to the Board-Ruth Shirley**

My appointment to the Board as a community lay member in September 2011 began a fascinating, and at times disturbing, insight into the complexity of challenges which Coventry as a city is facing to keep its children and young people safe and well.

The Board has not previously had lay members and so, it is fair to say, that it has taken a period of time for both lay members and the Board members who represent the statutory agencies and voluntary sector to “find their feet” in establishing working relationships. Finding out who everyone is, how the Board and sub-group structure operates and where I can add the most value from a community perspective did not come instantly, but there has been tremendous support from both the central team at Broadgate House and individual Board members who have taken the time to get to know me.

As well as attending main Board meetings, I am now happily engaged in both the Business Management sub-group (where pre-discussion around some of the next Board agenda items widens my understanding of particular issues and prepares me for Board meetings) and the Education sub-group (where my position as a School Governor allows me to contribute to, and take from, discussions for mutual benefit).

I have been most impressed by the collaboration of all Board Members and their willingness to adopt a multi-agency approach to resolve issues, particularly given the changing landscape and priorities of their individual agencies and the financial pressures which are being felt by all. Their collective commitment to safeguarding all children in Coventry is evident and, as a Coventry mum, I applaud their efforts to date. The need, however, continues and I look forward to contributing to the ongoing work of the Board in the coming year.

## **5. Overview of Subcommittees**

A range of subcommittees sit under the CSCB, undertaking and overseeing work streams of the Board with members representing the breadth of agencies working with children and young people. The subcommittees include:

- Business Management Group
- Practice and Quality Assurance,
- Training Strategy,
- Serious Case Review,
- Child Death Review Overview Panel
- Promoting the Wellbeing of Children (CAF) Steering group
- Safeguarding Children in Education
- Child Protection Health Panel
- Task and Finish groups

### **Business Management**

Chaired by the Head of Safeguarding and involving chairs of subcommittees, the LSCB Business Manager and the Interagency Training Officer. Its main purpose is to ensure that the progress against the business plan is monitored and achieved, the meetings assist the Chairs of the subcommittees to identify cross cutting issues and themes across the activity, identifying the key issues for consideration by the Board as well as to making decisions and reporting these to the Board.

### **Practice and Quality Assurance**

Chaired by a Detective Chief Inspector from the West Midlands Police. This subcommittee is responsible for receiving and acting on comments or complaints from families or CSCB agency staff, arising from child protection enquires/conferences. It undertakes and commissions’ audits in respect of inter-agency child protection services, by agency request and CSCB agreement, evaluating how well agencies work together to protect children. Audits are undertaken with the aim of enhancing, and where necessary seeking to improve interagency working to safeguard children. The sub committee also advises on and agrees

local policies and procedures for interagency work to protect children within the framework provided by 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2010).

### **Training Strategy**

Chaired by the Lead Professional for Safeguarding Children in University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire. The Subcommittee is responsible for providing a comprehensive interagency training programme covering child protection and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in response to local training needs. This group is responsible for monitoring the quality of safeguarding training delivered to member agencies and ensuring that all staff requiring access to training are being reached.

### **Serious Case Review**

Chaired by the Manager of the NSPCC Service in Coventry, the subcommittee has the responsibility of recommending to the Chair of the LSCB when the criteria for a Serious Case Review is met and managing the process of conducting the review; ensuring the review is of good quality and that it is concluded within agreed deadlines. The subcommittee then monitors the action plans following a review and ensures that agencies can produce evidence that they have learned lessons and changed practice where necessary.

### **Promoting Children and Young People's Wellbeing (CAF)**

Chaired by the Assistant Director, Strategic Services although subsequently chaired by the Head of Commissioning and Strategy Service during the first half of 2012. This group is focused on the implementation of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) across Coventry. Its aim is to promote multi agency working and information sharing, in relation to identifying earlier and more effective multi agency support to families, thereby reducing the need for child protection intervention. It is responsible for training professionals to use an agreed model across agencies.

### **Safeguarding in Education**

Chaired by the Head of the Special Education Needs Service, it is responsible for the safeguarding issues impacting on schools and educational establishments within the City ensuring that there is the widest possible dissemination of information and communication. This group ensures that education services in the widest sense are aware of their responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and child protection. This group ensures that open and clear communication is maintained between the Safeguarding Children Board and the whole of the Education Service.

### **Child Protection Health Panel**

Co - chaired by the Designated Doctor and Designated Nurse for Child Protection. This Subcommittee was introduced following government guidance 1995, 'Clarification of Working Arrangements between NHS and other agencies' (DOH). It recognised the complexity of communication within and across health. Specifically it aims to ensure communication and resolution of issues across the health economy in Coventry. The Panel facilitates NHS Trusts in ensuring that effective arrangements are in place.

### **Child Death Review Panel**

This Panel is chaired by the Acting Director of Public Health; members are responsible for ensuring effective communication and coordination in the event of an unexpected child death in Coventry in line with the agreed Rapid Response procedure. Members are also required to analyse and review all Coventry resident child deaths (0 to 18 years) to identify learning and disseminate findings.

## **6. Progress made by Subcommittee**



**Practice and Quality Assurance Subcommittee**  
**Chair DCI Sue Holder, Public Protection Unit, West Midlands Police**

In 2011 the LSCB merged the Procedures Subcommittee with the Quality Assurance Subcommittee and formed the Practice and Quality Assurance Sub-committee.

**Procedures**

Interagency procedure and guidance for safeguarding children are continually being updated. This year's activity includes:-

- Unborn children's procedure
- Child Sexual Exploitation Procedures
- Children Missing from Education
- Violent Extremism Safeguarding Procedures
- Gang Activity Procedure
- PPRC-Re referral guidelines

**Audits**

The sub-committee has commissioned a number of audits on behalf of the LSCB:-

- An audit to examine the use of police protection powers and to consider whether these powers are used appropriately and consistently. The audit found that in the majority of cases front-line officers did apply the powers appropriately and liaised with social care in a timely manner.
- An audit into Private Fostering arrangements at both primary and secondary schools. This was led and reported on by the Education Sub-committee.
- Thematic audit which involved a field visit by multi-agency practitioners who dip-sampled Child Protection, CAF and Child In Need Plans. The outcome of this audit will be presented to Board in September 2012.

**Forthcoming Audits**

- Audit into cases of neglect. This will focus on those cases where children who are subject to Child Protection plans under the category of neglect to have a greater understanding of the nature and extent of the neglect suffered. This will inform services who work with cases of neglect and an enhance practice. The LSCB has agreed that this audit will be funded from the 'Munro' fund allocation.
- Thematic audit is planned to look at the effectiveness of CAF Audit
- Evaluate CAF processes as the vehicle for the provision of early help services.
- Thematic audit to review whether S47 Cases were appropriate, managed correctly and whether procedures were followed.

**Serious Case Review Subcommittee**  
**Chair Mark Dalton NSPCC**

**Objective 3 – Effective management of Serious Case Reviews (SCR's).**

During the last year the Serious Case Review Sub Committee has considered the circumstances surrounding the deaths of 8 children who for a variety of reasons were considered possible cases requiring a formal serious case review. The criterion for when a

serious case review should be undertaken is laid out in Chapter 8 of Working Together 2010; the main thrust of this guidance is that a serious case review should be undertaken where abuse is considered to be a significant factor in the death or serious injury of a child.

We have found that 2 cases have met this threshold and have commissioned serious case reviews in order to understand the circumstances surrounding the child's death, the focus of these reviews is always on the practice of the agencies involved with the aim of learning lessons and improving practice to reduce the risk of a similar tragedy in the future.

Following on from our previous positive experience of the Learning Together model of case reviews, Coventry LSCB was granted special dispensation to use this method of review in one of the cases. Our use of this method for reviewing a case which met the threshold for a serious case review attracted national interest and our experience of using the method, as well as the findings of the review itself have been evaluated and reported to senior officials at the Department for Education.

We believe this method for reviewing cases has much to recommend; in terms of practitioner involvement, a greater understanding of how agencies work together and as a forum for exploring interagency relationships. The method is also time consuming and intellectually challenging and further work needs to be undertaken in order to use the understanding gained during the process to help the LSCB use the findings to improve practice.

The second case recommended by the subcommittee as meeting the threshold for a serious case review following the death of a 5 year old boy whilst in the care of his mother and her partner. This case is being reviewed following the current serious case review guidance contained in Chapter 8 of Working Together. An Independent Chair and Overview Report Author have been appointed with the aim of concluding the review in the autumn of 2012. The review is still in its early days and it is too soon at the present time to comment of the eventual findings.

#### **Progress made by Subcommittee.**

The last year has been an exceptionally busy one for the serious case review subcommittee. In addition to the 7 regular serious case review subcommittee meetings held throughout the year, the majority of the subcommittee are also involved in the panel meetings held to undertake the serious case reviews. During this year 2 such reviews have been commissioned which have involved members of the subcommittee in 8 additional meetings and numerous other activities from interviewing key staff involved in the case to producing integrated agency reports and reading and critically reviewing the management reviews from other agencies. All of the subcommittee members are senior representatives of their own organisations who endeavour to fit their existing work commitments alongside the demands of the subcommittee. They invariably do this with a great deal of tolerance, flexibility and understanding of the important nature of this work.

In the case of the 2 serious case reviews undertaken during the last year, one was commenced in the first quarter of the year and effectively completed at the end of February 2012. The second case review was commissioned at the very end of the year in March 2012 and a formal review process has only just started.

As mentioned above the first review received a great deal of attention as a pilot of the Learning Together systems approach. As well as being thoroughly evaluated, our experiences are also of interest to the Department for Education at a time when the guidance for serious case reviews is being rewritten and significantly reduced.

Cause of death in this case was asphyxiation of a baby as a result of bed sharing with her parents. In Coventry all new mothers are warned of the risk about bed sharing and given written information about safe sleeping. In this case the mother confirmed that she was aware of this guidance but on this occasion chose to ignore it. Every year there are a small number of deaths of very young children that are attributed to bed sharing. This case prompts us to think again about how the advice is delivered, who it is given to and what further steps can be taken to reinforce the message and advise parents of the risk.

In addition to undertaking serious case reviews the subcommittee also bear the responsibility of monitoring action plans from the case reviews held in previous years. This is an important activity which reminds us that case reviews do not end when the Overview report has been completed but rather the work continues as we remind and challenge agencies to put into practice actions to keep children safe.

### **Training Strategy Subcommittee**

**Chair Jayne Phelps, Lead Professional for Safeguarding Children, University Hospital Coventry & Warwickshire NHS Trust**

The training strategy sub committee has reviewed its focus and membership over the 2011-2012 year and functions effectively in achieving its aims and objectives. The team has met on six occasions throughout the year and completed a significant number of key tasks.

All partner agencies are represented within the current membership as are other key agencies e.g. voluntary sector, faith sector, and early year's provision. This continues to ensure that the training needs of all safeguarding practitioners are represented. A bi-monthly report to the Board from Subcommittee is provided and significant issues identified.

The Training Strategy Subcommittee's key priorities for 2011-2012 are addressed below and are reflected in the sub committee's business plan.

- The sub committee started the year's activities with thorough reflection on the role, responsibility and function of the sub committee and the relation to the safeguarding board to ensure that all of the members understood the relevance and value of their contribution and were prepared to undertake tasks to fulfil the function of the group.
- Positive feedback was received from the facilitator of "effective supervision for child protection" training. His comments that for the last 3 years were that he has been struck how each cohort were conscientious, receptive, and engaged and that they should be commended for this. He was particularly impressed with their ability to think expansively about their supervisory role. He felt that Munro's quote that "child protection work makes heavy demands on reasoning skills, with an issue as important as children's welfare it is vital to have the best standard of thinking that is humanly possible" was fully appreciated by each participant in his recent cohort. This positive reflection on the workforce in Coventry is valued.
- Ongoing review of LSCB training provision is undertaken and this has included review of domestic violence training, substance misuse, spirit possession and witchcraft training and female genital mutilation training.
- Level 1 and Level 2 training have also been reviewed to ensure that they reflects the local and national issues and include learning from serious case reviews. An action tracker is maintained by the interagency training officer and reviewed at each sub committee as a standing agenda item.
- Training around "attachment and neglect" is being delivered in response to the evidence around the vital importance around early attachment. This evaluates well and adds to the portfolio of training delivered by the LSCB. Further wide dissemination of issues relating to attachment and neglect were enhanced through 2011 LSCB conference.
- Workshops are undertaken to disseminate new developments and procedures. Workshops to launch the updated disability procedures took place in November 2011

and there are workshops planned around launching the unborn procedures once the changes identified from the CLYP review have been made.

- Review of single agency training provision is ongoing and the recent single agency training delivered within UHCW and the diocese has been reviewed. Interim training to meet Ofsted requirements for new head teachers has also been reviewed and will provide a framework for further learning for this group of staff. As this is a requirement of Working Together (2010) and is an ongoing item for the training committee. Reviews look at the quality and scope of the training and will in future include the impact of training.
- Partnership working with Voluntary Action Coventry has enabled safeguarding and safer recruitment training to be delivered to both Voluntary Action forum and Coventry Muslim forum. Engaging harder to reach groups has been a high priority.
- A Coventry Compact Award has been granted in recognition that this partnership work enabled the training to be delivered to these groups.
- A new process for evaluating the effectiveness of training on practice is ongoing. This requires managers and practitioners to complete an evaluation proforma which measures whether there has been any demonstrable change in practice. Recommendation 6 of the Munro Review Final Report (2011) reinforces the need for LSCB's to ensure provision of robust multi-agency training to support the role and function that all local agencies have in safeguarding and protecting children and young people. Working Together (2010) also requires LSCBs to ensure that a process exists for evaluating the effectiveness of training. It is intended that this process although in its infancy will, with the support of agencies to ensure the evaluation takes place, meet this requirement.
- Regular meetings for those involved in delivering training take place led by the interagency training officer to address any issues and ensure a high quality training provision.
- The annual conference 2012 'Safeguarding Disabled Children was planned with the support of the Training Sub Committee and this is referred to elsewhere in the annual report.

#### **Challenges and priorities ahead:**

- Sexual exploitation is a key issue within Coventry, and there is a sub group of training sub committee who are developing half day sessions to ensure staff have the skills to recognise and manage sexual exploitation.
- Trafficking is also an issue and there are embedded links with the "COMBAT" project to provide training for practitioners in Coventry. "COMBAT" are providing train the trainer for when their contract ends to ensure that this can still be delivered effectively.
- The interagency training programme for 2011-2012 has been streamlined to ensure it is good value for money and this will be an ongoing challenge for the Board.
- It remains a priority to provide high quality training. The group intend to explore the use of technology to assist in training staff in alternate ways; this may require additional members being co-opted to the sub committee to enable scoping of how technology can assist. Increasing the availability of video clips, pod casts, DVD's to

provide visual demonstrations of concerning behaviours for example would be beneficial.

- It remains a priority to ensure that in relation to training the LSCB remain *"appropriately staffed and have sufficient capacity to take forward any training and development work they carry out. This includes having the necessary administrative support and having adequate resources both to contribute to the planning and delivery or commissioning of training and its evaluation (Working together 2010 p116-: 4.22)* , The interagency training officer role and training administrator role play a key part in the effective functioning of training development and organisation and the functioning of the sub committee. This once again is a further challenge to the Board given the finance pressures the Board is experiencing.
- Continuous review of interagency training to ensure that it continues to meet the changing and diverse needs of Coventry safeguarding practitioners.
- Ensure that learning from local and national serious case reviews and SCIE reviews are embedded within the framework of training.
- It remains a challenge to ensure that the pool of trainers remains sufficient to deliver the inter-agency training programme. Board members are requested to ensure that their staff are still able to engage as a trainer to facilitate delivery of the training programme particularly when faced with budgetary and staffing challenges.

#### **Health Subcommittee**

**Chair Annie Callaghan Designated Doctor for Child Protection Coventry**

**Vice Chair- Jayne Phelps, Lead Professional for Safeguarding Children, University Hospital Coventry & Warwickshire NHS Trust**

The CSCB Health Panel chaired by the designated professionals continues to meet bi-monthly with representation across the Coventry Health economy by the Named Child Protection Leads.

Membership includes the named professionals from across Coventry including UHCW, Coventry and Warwickshire partnership trust, GP representation, Recovery Partnership and the West Midlands Ambulance service.

The Health Panel ensures that information from the CSCB & its sub committees are shared across the health economy and into all Health Trusts.

The Executive Lead for Safeguarding Children in the Arden Cluster (NHS Coventry & NHS Warwickshire) is a member of the CSCB and is also Vice Chair. There is also health representation from University Hospitals Coventry & Warwickshire (UHCW) and Coventry & Warwickshire Partnership Trust (CWPT). The Designated Doctor and Designated Nurse also attend the CSCB in an advisory capacity.

There is appropriate health representation across all the relevant CSCB sub committees including serious case review sub committee, practice and quality sub committee, training sub committee and child death review sub committee.

Minutes of CSCB are received at the West Midlands Strategic Health Authority and by the Arden Cluster Governance Board

All the Health Trusts Boards, across the health economy receive as a minimum an annual safeguarding children report

- Health Panel has continued to implement all health recommendations and actions required from Serious Case Reviews, Serious Incidents, Case Reviews, Inspections etc. as required
- Regular audits are carried out in the Health Provider Trusts to ensure good safeguarding children practice is maintained and are monitored by the operational safeguarding meetings held in each Provider Trust.
- Ongoing work with GP's to support them with safeguarding children compliance is ongoing to ensure that they are compliant with CQC requirements – this is being monitored through the clinical quality performance meetings.
- Safeguarding Children Training Strategy has been updated to reflect the Intercollegiate Document (2010)
- A variety of health professionals have attended various safeguarding training both led by health, CSCB and nationally.
- Policy and Guidance is circulated/developed/localised as required with appropriate ratification processes in place within each Health Trust
- Relevant health actions as identified by the Integrated Inspection and CQC Inspection have been completed as part of Health panel's action plan.
- Health Provider Trusts link safeguarding children training to their annual appraisal and personal development plans.
- The health trusts and health panel have contributed to the development of the quantitative and qualitative performance framework which has been agreed by the CSCB

#### **Priorities and Challenges ahead:**

- To provide a response to the consultation around the draft Working Together 2012 and the children's safeguarding performance information framework. This should represent the views of all partners.
- There are reported issues around attendance at core groups from health agencies, further work to be done by the health panel to identify the degree of compliance and to ensure that core group attendance is robust and that staff understands their roles and responsibilities.
- The development of clinical commissioning groups and changes to health organisational structures is a significant challenge and the health panel must ensure that the impact is evaluated and shared with the LSCB
- To review membership to ensure that all key stakeholders represented within the new health economy
- The Health Panel will maintain links between CSCB, CSCB Sub committees and the health operational safeguarding children meetings within the Provider Trusts.
- The Health Panel will continue to support Multi-Agency work as required by the CSCB and its sub committees.
- To ensure that the issues raised through serious case reviews appropriate change practice and to ensure that all staff are aware of these recommendations.

#### **Safeguarding in Education Subcommittee**

**Chair Roger Lickfold Strategic Leader for Inclusion, SEN & Participation, Services for Schools**

#### **Key priorities for 2011/12**

The key priorities for 2011/12 were:

- To consider any new national or local guidance or information in relation to education and safeguarding children and update Local Authority guidance and disseminate to schools as appropriate.

- To ensure that all Headteachers and chairs of governors have undergone safer recruitment training, either face to face or online
- To ensure that all link teachers of schools and services undergo training on safeguarding children in education (on at least a two yearly basis).
- To consider all SCRs undertaken by the CSCB, to learn from these cases and strengthen safeguarding processes.
- To further develop safeguarding policy and guidance for schools/education services and the associated training programme
- To complete the audit of private fostering (by end of September 2011)
- To provide safeguarding audits for all schools where safeguarding issues have been raised or where section 5 Ofsted inspection is due.
- To disseminate to Headteachers and education services the recently updated Children Missing from Education protocol.

### **Key areas of progress**

- A draft education training strategy has been developed and consulted on. The final training strategy will be completed and circulated for the start of the autumn term 2012.
- Learning from SCRs has been incorporated into safeguarding training programmes
- Due to the numbers of teaching staff requiring an update in safeguarding training single agency safeguarding training has been developed.
- Emergency training has been designed to deliver link teachers in occasional cases where a newly appointed link teacher has an Ofsted notification before he/she can access scheduled training.
- Governing body training as been developed and a pilot of 4 training sessions delivered (full roll out from autumn term 2012 onwards).
- 68 schools have received safeguarding training
- Safeguarding audits have been completed for approximately 30 primary schools and 4 PRUs, but no secondary schools as yet. A secondary school audit is due for the autumn term.
- The safeguarding Audit Tool has been circulated to all schools.
- The audit of private fostering was completed, with a secondary school audit being completed. This indicated a significant under-recording of private fostering and recommendations were made for actions which should minimise the level of under-reporting.
- A domestic violence pilot, involving the City Council working in partnership with the Police and 4 schools, has been established with the aim of providing earlier intervention.

### **Membership and attendance**

Attendance at the sub committee has generally been very good, but a small number of members have either not attended in the last the year or have attended infrequently. These members have been contacted to check whether they continue to be the representative of their particular stakeholder group and the situation is being monitored.

### **Priorities for 2012/13**

Priorities for 2012/13 have been identified as:

- To consider any new national or local guidance or information in relation to education and safeguarding children and update Local Authority guidance and disseminate to schools as appropriate..
- To ensure that all Headteachers and chairs of governors have undergone safer recruitment training, either face to face or online
- To ensure that all link teachers of schools and services undergo training on safeguarding children in education (on at least a two yearly basis).
- To consider all SCRs undertaken by the CSCB, to learn from these cases and strengthen safeguarding processes.
- To further develop safeguarding policy and guidance for schools/education services and the associated training programme
- To provide safeguarding audits for all schools where safeguarding issues have been raised or where section 5 Ofsted inspection is due.
- To disseminate to Headteachers and education services the recently updated Children Missing from Education protocol.
- To follow-up on proposed actions for improving the level of recording of private fostering arrangements.

**Promoting the Well-being of Children and Young People  
Interim Chair: Sally Giles, Head of Strategy and Commissioning (December 2011 – June 2012)**

Work has continued to focus on the implementation of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) within CLYP and with partner agencies to support the safeguarding agenda.

Emphasis continues to be on the development of CAF within Health, Schools, Early Years and Domestic Violence and Abuse agencies. Where new services have been commissioned (such as the early intervention service Aspire), they have been supported to incorporate CAF into their procedures.

The CLYP Fundamental Service Review (FSR) has carried out a review of CAF procedures and processes and has re-confirmed CAF as the key foundation for early intervention and prevention work moving forward. Plans are underway to re-launch CAF in autumn 2012 with sessions will be held to brief partners at the end of the summer. The FSR is also working to strengthen 'step up' and 'step down' procedures between social care and early intervention and prevention services. The governance arrangements for CAF will need to link closely to the governance arrangements for early intervention and prevention work moving forwards.

**National eCAF / Data**

- National eCAF was decommissioned by the Department for Education on 25th May 2012;
- During its lifespan (April 2011 – May 2012) **1,405** CAF episodes were entered onto the system;
- During its lifespan a total of **1,396** user accounts were set up on the system, with **798** of these having an active account at the point of decommissioning. Many of the accounts originally set up were not actively used, due to these being for viewing purposes only.

**Interim arrangements**

- CAFs are currently being recorded on paper forms, with a database being managed by the CAF Co-ordinators for the purpose of logging episodes and avoiding duplication;
- Since moving to the interim data system on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2012 there have been **106** CAF episodes logged on this database.

**New Early Intervention and Prevention Data System**



- Coventry has commissioned Liquid Logic's additional eCAF module, which will enable users to log CAF episodes onto a separate part of the existing ICS. This solution is planned to go live in September 2012.
- Agreements are being put in place to purchase 100 licenses for the Protocol eCAF solution e-training module from Me Learning (the same company who supplied the NeCAF training).

### **Common Assessment Framework Training and Awareness-Raising**

- Training sessions have been well attended. 2,465 professional staff have been trained up to June 2012.
- Awareness raising and refresher sessions have been delivered across services and agencies citywide.

### **Interface with Social Care / Children's Disability Team**

- **Referral and Assessment Service:** The three CAF Leads in RAS are working effectively to re-direct referrals to the CAF arena. 340 Contacts into RAS have been redirected. The CAF Coordinators and CAF Leads continue to progress 'step-downs' to MDTs. More focus is needed in this area to ensure that families receive help from the most appropriate source.
- **Children's Disability Team:** There have been approximately 120 step-down cases into the CAF arena.

### **Work with Health**

- Primary Mental Health is now represented in all 3 Multi Disciplinary Teams, providing support and advice to the teams on casework and on new referrals;

### **Overcoming Barriers to Learning**

- The 9 OB2L Cross-phase multi-disciplinary area groups have all received information, training on the processes and procedures for early identification of children, young people and families;
- CAF co-ordinators attend the cross-phase multi-disciplinary area group half-termly meetings and successful strategies have been shared as appropriate.

### **Early Years**

- The CAF Team has supported the development of a Safeguarding DVD aimed at the PVI Sector due to be launched in autumn 2012.

### **DVA Services**

- Procedures are in place to ensure all adults using DVA services with children are offered support through CAF.
- The DV pilot providing information to schools on incidents of domestic violence has been well received. The options for taking the project forward need to be clarified.

### **Audit and Evaluation work**

- Further focus required on audit and evaluation and tools and processes need to be developed for implementation with wider partners and agencies delivering CAF in order to give an overview of quality;
- An audit is planned of CAFs in the North East Multi-disciplinary Team under the auspices of the Practice and Quality Assurance Sub-group.

### **Local Authority Research Consortium (LARC)**

1. Coventry has been part of Local Authority Research Consortium (LARC) research around the use of CAF and improving outcomes and cost effectiveness. The final report from LARC 4: Supporting Families with Complex Needs is now available;
2. Overall the LARC 4 research shows that using the common assessment processes with children and families with complex needs can help improve outcomes and be very cost effective for local services in the longer term.

#### **Priorities and challenges ahead:**

- Re-launch CAF in autumn 2012 and re-confirm it as the foundation for early intervention and prevention work moving forwards;
- Contribute to the provision of the means to more effectively monitor the effectiveness and capacity of all early help services as required by Monro Review and in the light of a recent Serious Case Review;
- Review the governance arrangements for CAF implementation;
- Focus on quality assurance
- Provide training for Common Assessment Framework
- Ensure effective interface between CAF and Social Care
- Consider all SCIE and SCR recommendations
- Implement the Overcoming Barriers 2 Learning project
- Audit and evaluate CAF process.

#### **Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) Chair John Forde Public Health NHS Coventry**

The focus for 2011-2012 continued very much on the same theme as the previous year by aiming to review cases in a timely manner, finalise outstanding areas of work, progressing actions arising from reviews and continually reviewing and improving the process as a whole.

Coventry Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) conducts in depth reviews of all deaths irrespective of circumstances.

The panel met on 6 occasions in 2011/12 and reviewed 38 cases (5 cases more than 2010/11).

In addition, University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire in Coventry, holds a monthly Perinatal and Neonatal Mortality Review (PNMR) meeting to review neonatal deaths. The CDOP Manager attends this meeting and the majority of neonatal deaths are reviewed at this panel.

During 2011/2012 the following work was completed:

- A sub-regional CDOP Conference was held in June 2011. This was well attended and some key actions points were identified which have been progressed throughout the year. (Please see CDOP Manager's Report for more detail).
- A Fast Track panel was introduced, as it was recognised that not all deaths require an in-depth review. Coventry held one 'Fast Track' Panel during the year which has enabled deaths to be reviewed in a timelier manner and will continue to utilise as and when required.

#### **Summary**

The actions/recommendations described below are a result of the key learning from the deaths reviewed during 2011-2012 by Coventry CDOP:

### *Consanguinity*

Due to the number of deaths reviewed where Consanguinity was a contributory factor, a paper was presented to Coventry LSCB on the findings. The LSCB recommended that the Equality and Diversity Theme Group of the Local Strategic Partnership was the appropriate forum to discuss appropriate community involvement to raise awareness of this issue.

### *Identification of the seriously ill infant*

A theme in some of the deaths related to early symptoms not being identified and acted upon. The learning from the deaths regarding the recognition of seriously ill infants has been disseminated to GPs, Health Visitors and hospital staff through existing forums.

### *Infant Examinations*

A recommendation was made for (i) a review of current training given to GPs on conducting 6-8 week new born check-ups to (ii) ascertain the provision of training for GPs in order to (iii) get all GPs on-going training/education in conducting new-born checks.

### *SIDS Awareness*

A recommendation was made to continue with the 'Sleep Safe' SIDS preventative campaign. Funding was acquired for a further year to purchase thermometers with sleep safe advice to give to new parents at point of discharge from hospital. Postcard size information leaflets were also produced for professionals and for parents of infants, distributed through Children Centres. Additional posters with safe sleep advice were also printed and disseminated to community venues and messages also highlighted by a further press release.

### *The importance of Vitamin supplements in the newborn infant and child.*

Following the review of a child who died of Ricketts due to Vitamin D deficiency, CDOP wrote to the Heads of Midwifery and the Health Visiting Service to seek assurance that Midwives were offering the required supplements at 14 weeks gestation and that Health Visitors were advising breast feeding mums to take Vitamin A, D and C supplements.

### Generic actions:

1. Where it is indicated that an internal investigation has been conducted, CDOP will routinely requested a copy of the findings, to include any learning points, recommendations and actions identified. Good co-operation is received in obtaining these reports.
2. Where deaths from chromosomal, genetic and congenital anomalies are reviewed, CDOP will routinely ascertain if families have been referred for genetic counselling or other relevant tests.
3. When reviewing deaths from life limiting conditions, CDOP routinely considers the timeline from initial presentation(s) to specialist referral. Any learning points identified are fed back to the GP practice concerned and also put on the agenda for GP Protected Learning Time sessions.
4. Where domestic abuse is identified in the family environment, CDOP will seek assurance that appropriate referrals/action were taken, if not clear from the information provided.

5. CDOP will ascertain on-going support to families and/or identify additional support required following the review.
6. Letters of acknowledgment are routinely sent to acknowledge good practice or support provided to the child and family, or any other action worthy of acknowledgement.

A separate annual report has been completed for the child death review process which outlines further detail on the activity of Coventry CDOP and outcomes and will be published in September 2012.

### **Licensing and Safeguarding Children**

The Licensing Officer has been on maternity leaving during this year, and subsequently left this post, which has greatly reduced capacity in this area and despite hoping to cover this period it has not been possible, (recruitment is currently in progress). This has meant the LSCB Business Manager has taken responsibility for this area during the year. While this has been difficult to manage alongside the Business Managers own responsibility, some key progress and developments have been made during the year.

A number of new and varied applications have been made more robust in relation to licensed venues, both public houses and off licenses' responsibility to protect children from harm. In addition this year has seen some key partnership working mainly with West Midlands Police in undertaking joint meetings with licensees who are planning to or have held events aimed at underage children. This has been a very useful approach to ensuring licensees have clear and robust risk assessments in place when carrying out these types of events.

An agreement is now in place for this work to be routinely undertaken together to ensure a consistent and thorough approach to the difficult and risky area of promoting events to under 18 years olds.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation Task and Finish Group (CSE)**

In February 2012 the LSCB set up a Child Sexual Exploitation Focus group chaired by DCI Sue Holder. This was in response to the CEOP report 'Out of Sight Out of Mind' which was critical of lack of engagement and awareness of LSCBs nationally in identifying and dealing with child sexual exploitation. There now have been some high profile criminal investigations nationally, resulting in significant prison sentences for the perpetrators. E.g. OP Chalice, West Mercia and OP Retriever, Derbyshire for 'on street grooming' of young females.

The multi-agency focus group has designed a work plan to scope out and gain an understanding of the scale of the problem in Coventry. This group meets monthly and is developing a scoping exercise for professionals to identify those children who may at risk of CSE. If they are at risk, what is that risk level and what interventions can be put in place to address that risk and make the child safer. The group will assess whether there is sufficient professional resources available in the city for children and young people to help manage the risk.

The Coventry Assessment of Sexual Exploitation (CASE) risk assessment tool is currently being developed. All statutory partners and 3rd sector partners will be asked to take part in the scoping exercise. This will be a considerable piece of work and will impact upon agencies. The workforce will need to be trained and briefed as to what indicators to look for when making the assessments of children they are working with.

The work plan also focuses on:

- Developing Procedures and Protocols for CSE
- Setting up an effective robust operational multi-agency group to manage those children and young people at risk of CSE
- A city wide hotel campaign to raise awareness of hoteliers and their staff to the indicators of CSE
- Training of workforce and parents and carers
- Raising Awareness within schools and pupil referral units
- Raise awareness of Foster placements and children’s homes where Looked After Children at risk maybe placed. Ensuring these placements are subject of ongoing risk assessment
- The Chair of the group represents Coventry LSCB on the West Midlands Metropolitan Area CSE Strategic Group in developing best practice across the region.
- Develop robust Communications Strategy.

## 7. CSCB Budget, Contributions and Expenditure 2011 -12

### LSCB Budget and Contributions 2012 – 2013

Agency	Amount	Amount	Percentage of Budget
<i>Core Budget Coventry City Council</i>			%
<b>CLYP Directorate contributions:</b>			
<i>Schools</i>			%

Early Years and Child Care	%
Youth Offending Service	%
<hr/>	
<b>Total Local Authority Contribution</b>	
Coventry Primary Care Trust	%
Police	%
Probation	%
CAFCASS	%
Connexions	%
<b>Total Partner Agency Contributions</b>	
Training Income 20011/12	%
<b>Total funding</b>	100%

**\*This Budget was subject to 'top slicing' during the financial year by the Local Authority, at the start of the financial year the Children Services core budget was £ however the 'top slicing' that took place during the year amounted to a reduction of £ in the core budget provided by children's services.**

CSCB Budget, Contributions and Expenditure 2011-12

Agency		Budget	%	Costs	Amount
<b>Coventry City Council</b>		<b>£ 139,201</b>	<b>67.6%</b>	<b>Salaries</b>	<b>£ 121,904</b>
Core budget	£ 101,331			<b>Travel expenses</b>	<b>£ 2,478</b>
CDOP funding	£ 23,000			<b>Staff Support Costs</b>	<b>£ 2,407</b>
Schools	£ 10,563			<b>Management of Vacancies</b>	<b>- £ 4,702</b>
Early Years	£ 3,230			<b>Independent Chair Costs</b>	<b>£ 12,735</b>
Youth Offending Service	£ 1,077			<b>Serious Case Review</b>	<b>£ 10,800</b>
<b>Coventry NHS Primary Care Trust</b>		<b>£ 40,881</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>CDOP</b>	<b>£ 26,300</b>
<b>West Midlands Police</b>		<b>£ 15,000</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>GP Costs</b>	<b>£ 503</b>
<b>Probation</b>		<b>£ 3,000</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>Procedures and Website</b>	<b>£ 4,000</b>
<b>CAFCASS</b>		<b>£ 550</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>Hospitality</b>	<b>£ 538</b>
<b>Connexions</b>		<b>£ 1,007</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>Photocopying + stationary</b>	<b>£ 3,166</b>
<b>Training Income</b>		<b>£ 6,340</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>Training and Board Development Costs</b>	
<b>Total Budget</b>		<b>£ 206,049</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>Equipment hire</b>	<b>£ 571</b>
				<b>Consultancy</b>	<b>£ 9,510</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>£ 208,215</b>	<b>£ 2,066</b>	<b>Room hire</b>	<b>£ 5,578</b>
<b>Comment</b>				<b>Catering</b>	<b>£ 3,065</b>
The management of vacancies target of £4,702 contributes to the over spend of £2K and is applied to the core LA budget only. There has been no staff turnover in the last year.				<b>Training for trainers</b>	<b>£ 475</b>
				<b>CSCB Board Development Day</b>	<b>£ 2,335</b>
				<b>CSCB Annual Conference</b>	<b>£ 1,850</b>
				<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>208,215</b>

## 8. Interagency Training Statistics from April 2011-March 2012

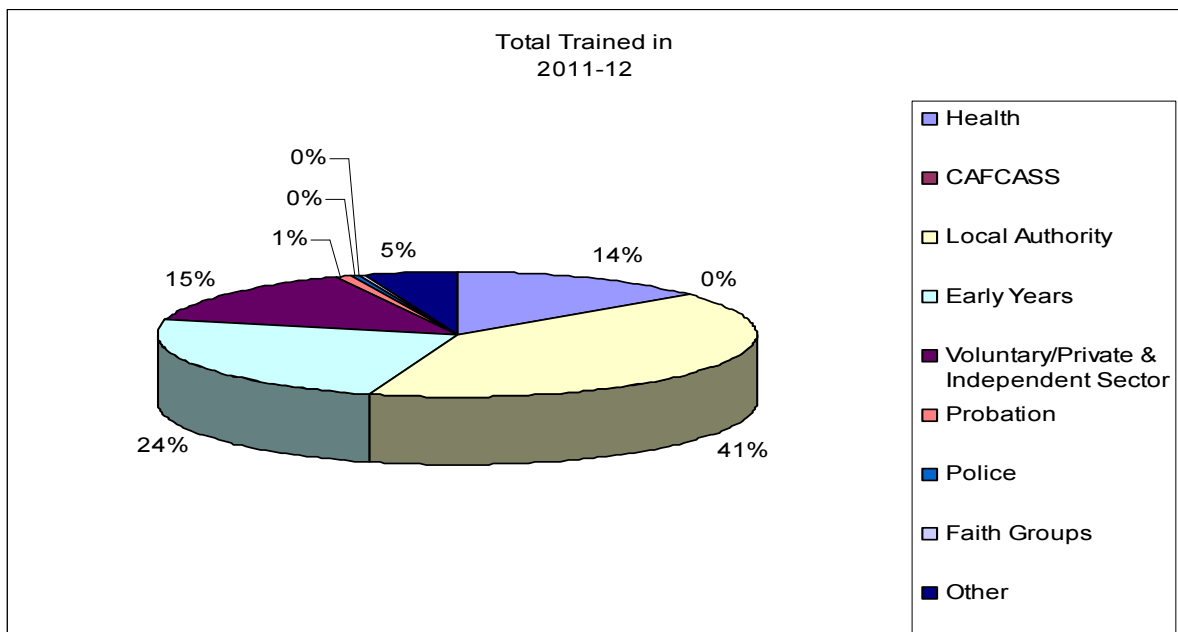
### 2011-12 Programme Year- Total number of attendees per sector

Category	Total Trained in 2011-12	%
Health	167	14.0%
CAFCASS	2	0.2%
Local Authority	481	40.4%
Early Years	285	23.9%
Voluntary/Private & Independent Sector	175	14.7%
Probation	12	1.0%
Police	4	0.3%
Faith Groups	5	0.4%
Other	59	5.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1190</b>

These figures are for multi-agency training, most of these organisations also provide single agency training and advise staff, depending on job role, on which training they should attend.

In 2010–11, 1168 professionals attended interagency training courses, in 2011-12, 1190 professional attended training courses.

\* Some Early Years organisations come within the Local Authority but for these figures they are included in the separate category so that the whole range of Early Years organisations can be counted together. Those which are separate to the Local Authority include private and voluntary nurseries, childminders and crèches.

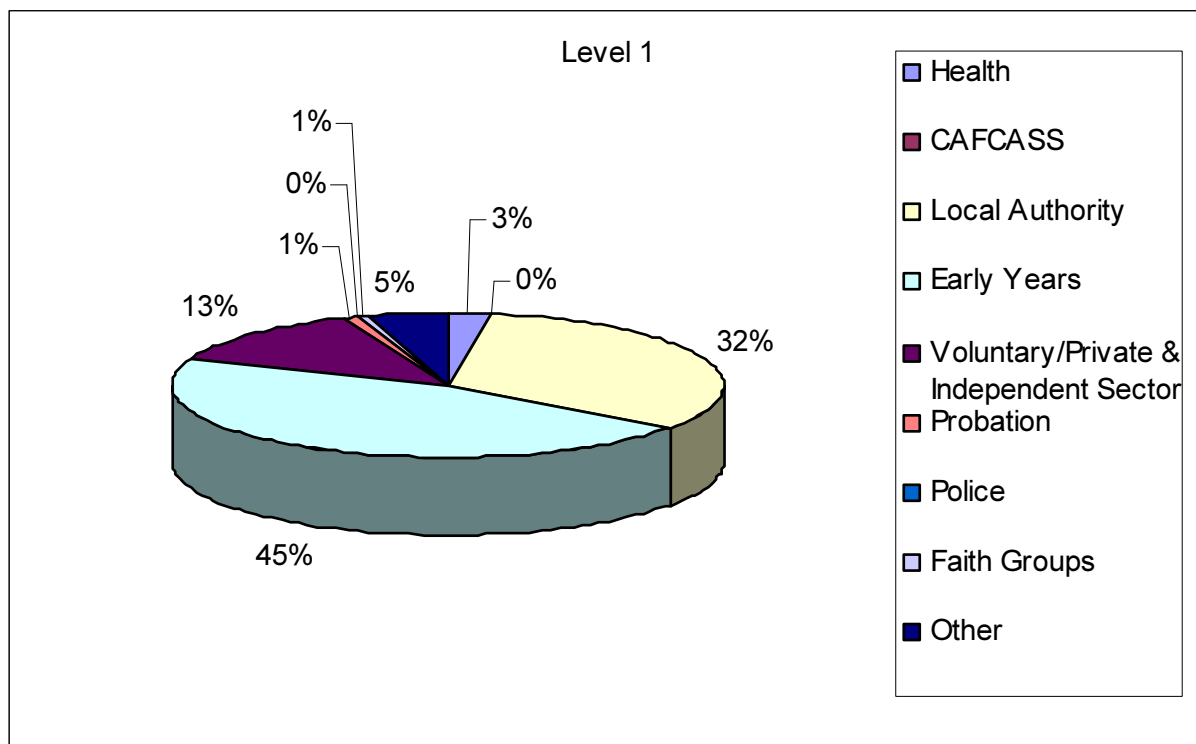


### 2011-12 Programme Year- Number of attendees per level and sector



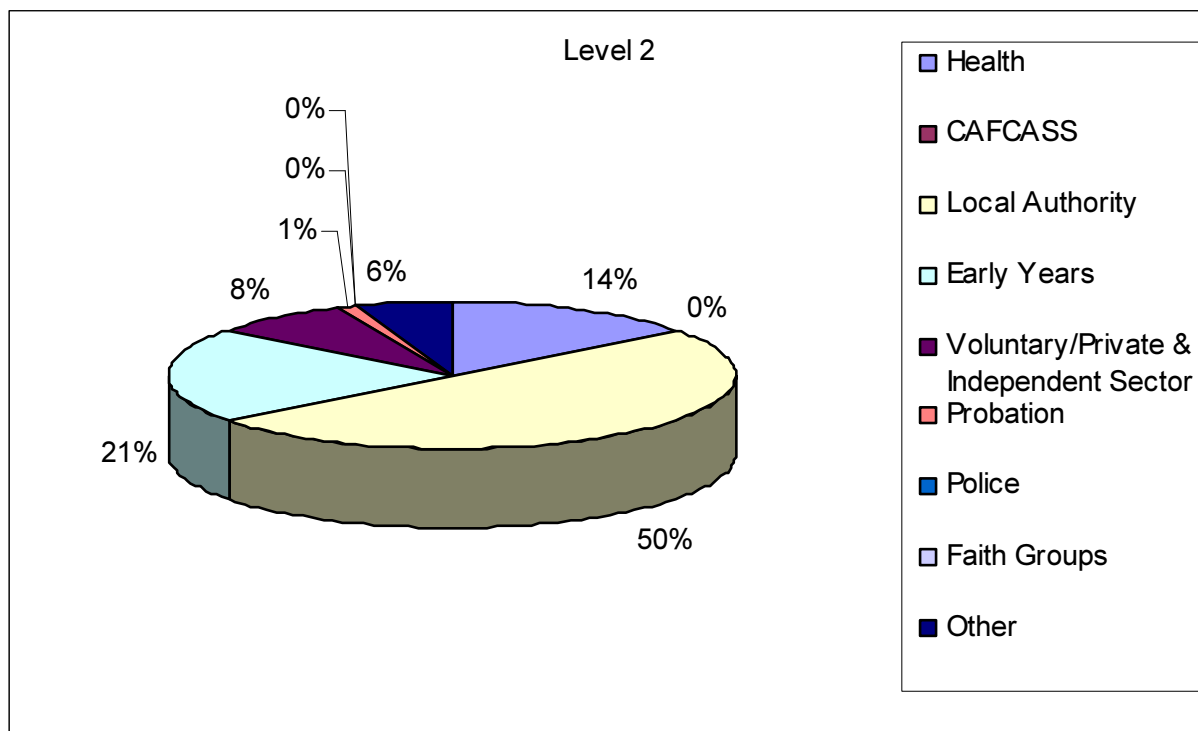
## LEVEL 1

Category	Level 1	%
Health	11	2.6%
CAFCASS	0	0.0%
Local Authority	140	32.6%
Early Years	197	45.8%
Voluntary/Private & Independent Sector	56	13.0%
Probation	3	0.7%
Police	0	0.0%
Faith Groups	3	0.7%
Other	20	4.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>430</b>



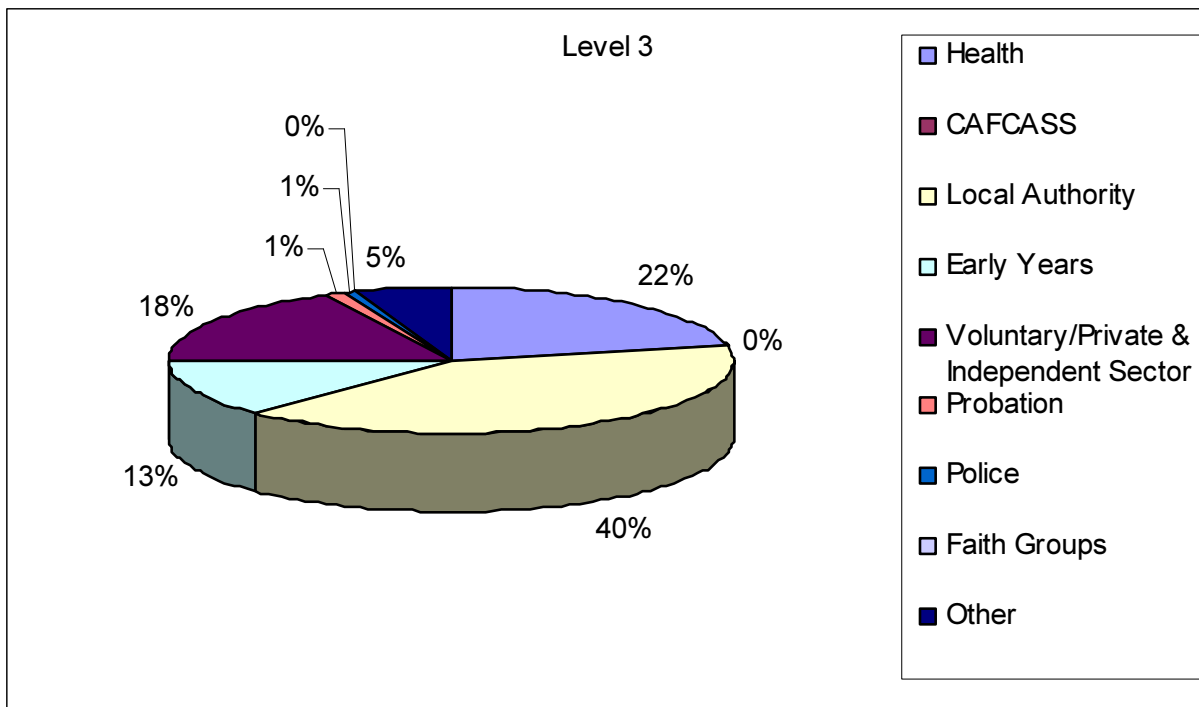
**LEVEL 2**

Category	Level 2	%
Health	13	14.4%
CAFCASS	0	0.0%
Local Authority	45	50.0%
Early Years	19	21.1%
Voluntary/Private & Independent Sector	7	7.8%
Probation	1	1.1%
Police	0	0.0%
Faith Groups	0	0.0%
Other	5	5.6%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>90</b>



**LEVEL 3**

Category	Level 3	%
Health	117	22.0%
CAFCASS	0	0.0%
Local Authority	214	40.2%
Early Years	67	12.6%
Voluntary/Private & Independent Sector	97	18.2%
Probation	6	1.1%
Police	3	0.6%
Faith Groups	0	0.0%
Other	29	5.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>533</b>



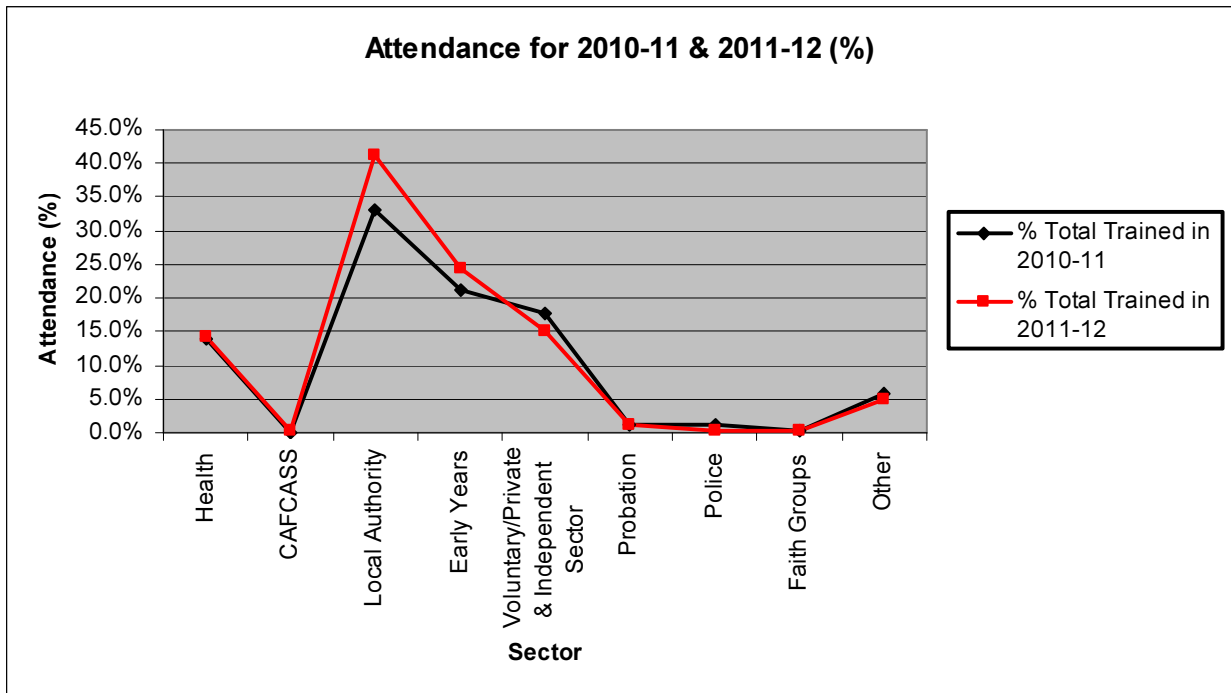
In addition to this the COMBAT project which raises awareness around child trafficking has delivered training to 312 professionals in Coventry.

Safer recruitment training has been delivered to 90 Education establishments.

Safeguarding and safer recruitment training has been delivered to 65 voluntary and faith groups.

**2010-11 Attendances compared to 2011-12 Attendances (%)**

<b>Category</b>	<b>% Total Trained in 2010-11</b>	<b>% Total Trained in 2011-12</b>
<i>Health</i>	14.9%	14.0%
<i>CAFCASS</i>	0.0%	0.2%
<i>Local Authority</i>	35.0%	40.4%
<i>Early Years</i>	22.4%	23.9%
<i>Voluntary/Private &amp; Independent Sector</i>	18.8%	14.7%
<i>Probation</i>	1.1%	1.0%
<i>Police</i>	1.4%	0.3%
<i>Faith Groups</i>	0.2%	0.4%
<i>Other</i>	6.2%	5.0%



## **9. Performance Reporting**

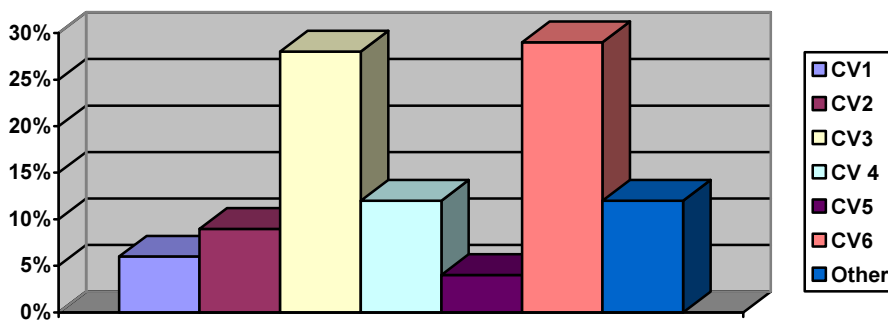
**2011-2012**

## Introduction

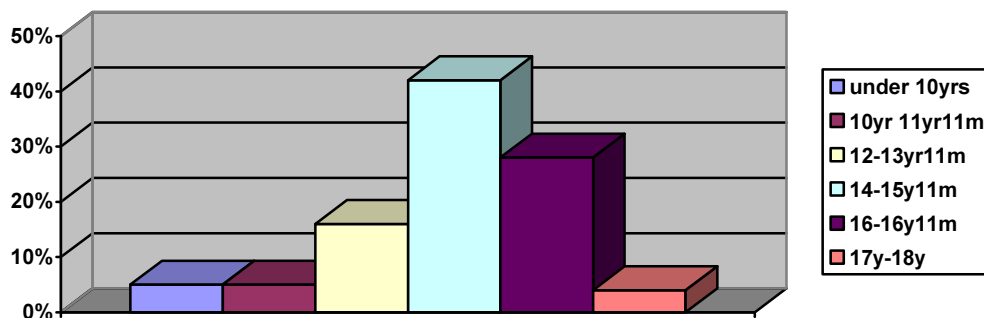
- The following report shows child protection information and other quality assurance indicators for the 2011/12 reporting year. The majority of data is for the reporting year 1<sup>st</sup> April until 31<sup>st</sup> March. However some information is outside that timeframe to provide more current data and also wider comparisons with previous years.
- Information from previous reporting years is included in this report for comparison.
- Any national data quoted is from national reports from the Department for Education.

## Children Missing from Care/Home & Education

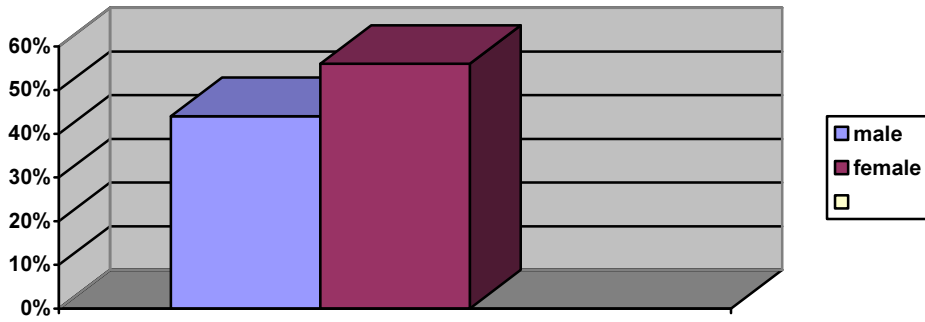
- The only available data for this shows that there are approximately 72000 children/young people living in Coventry of which some 270 are reported missing over a 12 month period
- Children and young people reported as missing mainly from the following post code areas:



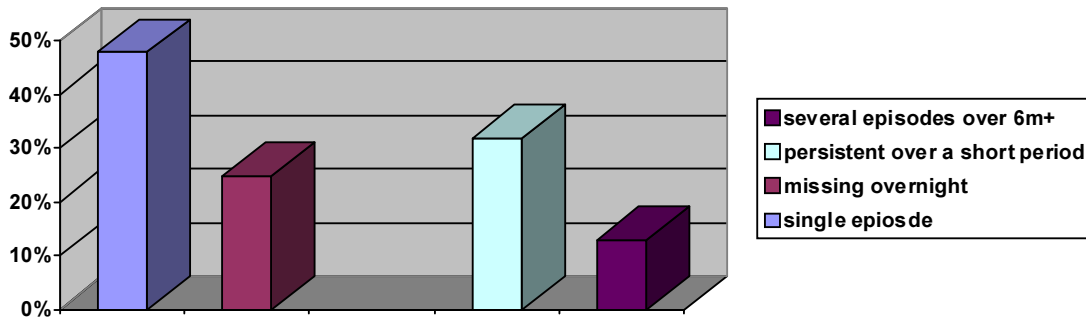
- The age range of Children and young people reported as missing:



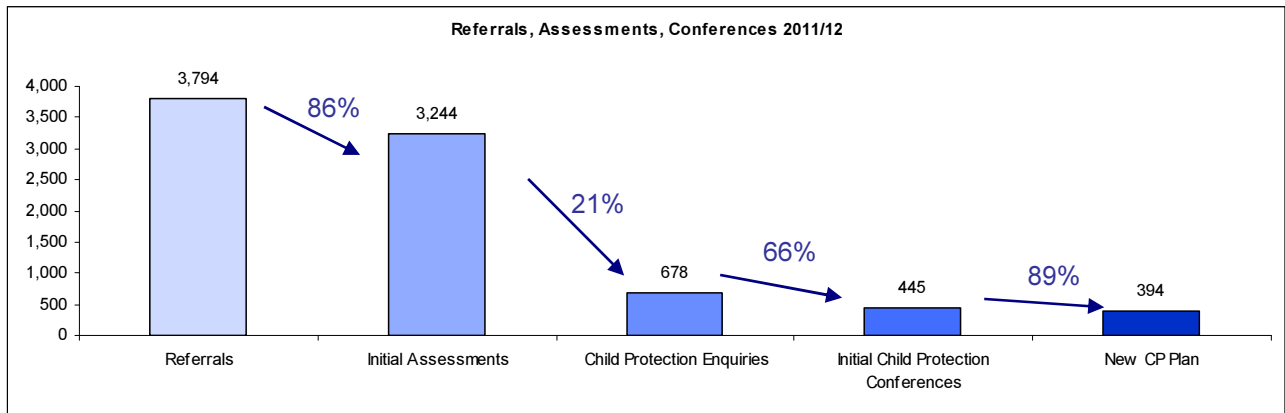
- The gender of Children and young people reported as missing:



- Children/young people missing from home or care are usually categorised into:
  - Single episode over a short period of time (less than 3 hours)
  - missing overnight
  - missing for more than a 24 hr period
  - missing persistently in a short period (more than 3 times in a month)
  - missing persistently over a longer period of time



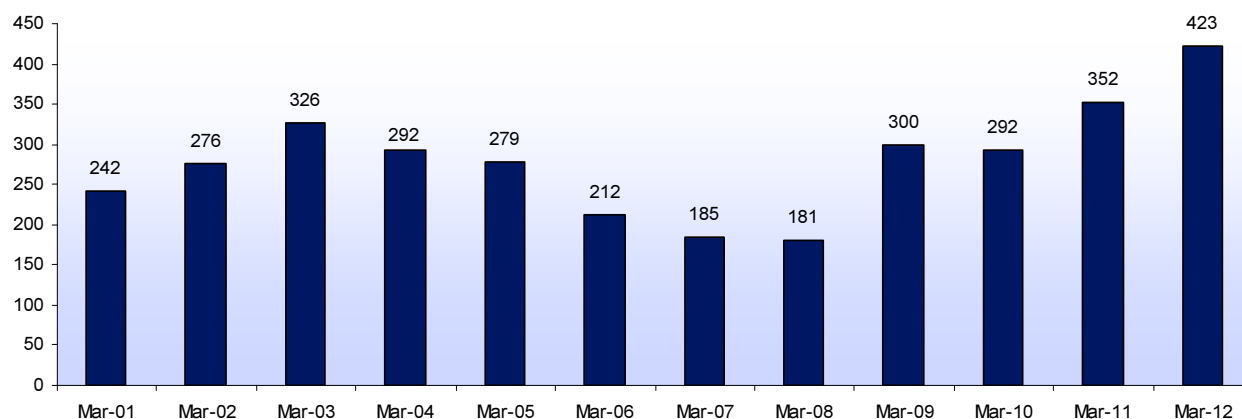
## Child Protection Activity



- In the 2011/12 reporting year, there were 3,794 referrals to Coventry's social care teams.
- 3,244 referrals (86%) proceeded to the initial assessment stage.
- 678 initial assessments (21%) led to the commencement of Section 47 child protection enquiries.
- 445 child protection enquiries (66%) resulted in a child protection conference.
- 394 initial child protection conferences (89%) led to new child protection plans (formerly known as registrations).

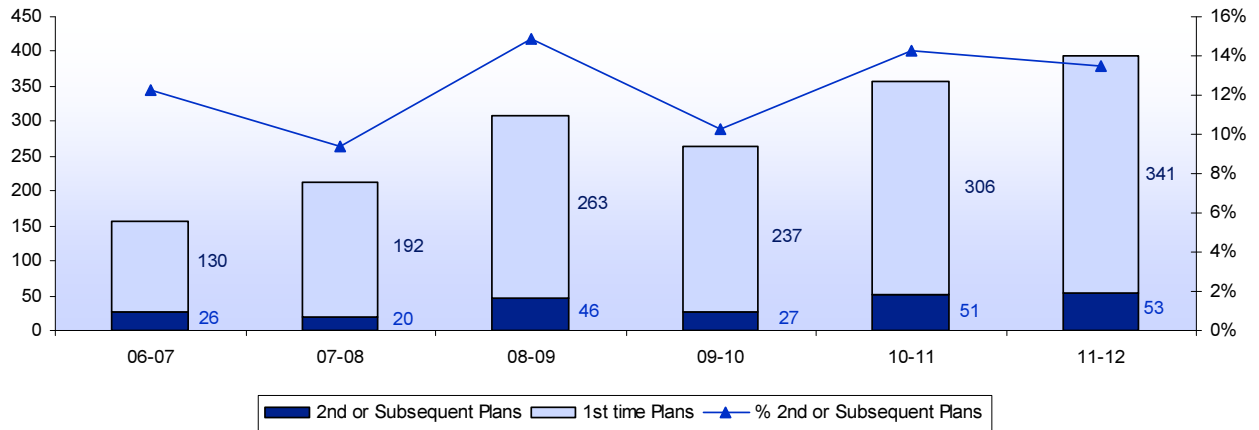


## Children with a current child protection plan



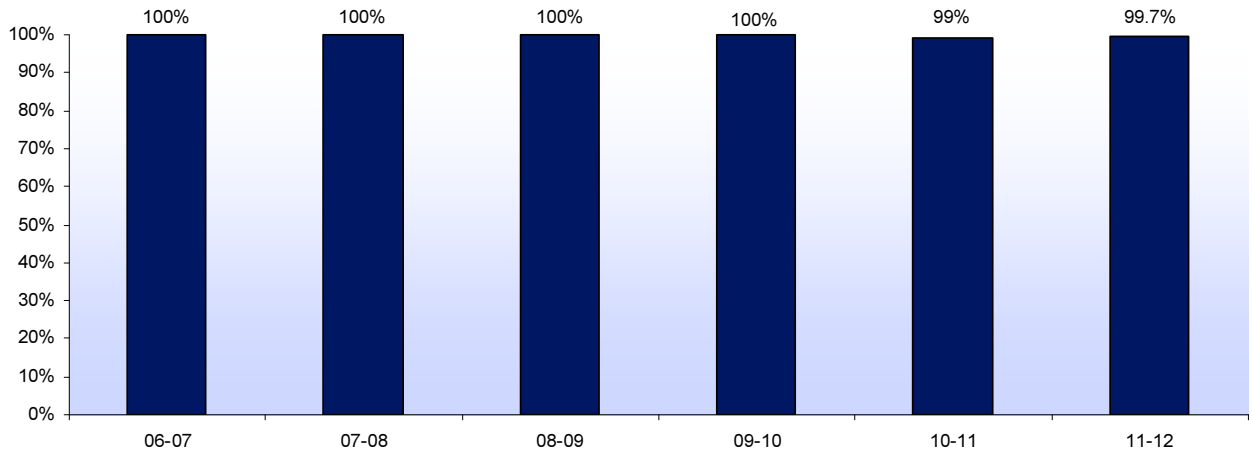
- The number of children with child protection plans decreased significantly between March 2003 and March 2008.
- During 2008/09 there was a large (66%) increase in the number of children with child protection plans. There were further increases (21%) in 2010/11 and (20%) in 2011/12.
- At the end of March 2012, Coventry had 423 children with a child protection plan, an increase of 71 from the previous year end.
- There were 62.0 children with a plan per 10,000 of the population at the end of March 2012. This is higher than the All-England average (38.6) as at 31/03/2011.

## New Child Protection Plans: Second or Subsequent Plans (Formerly Re-Registrations)



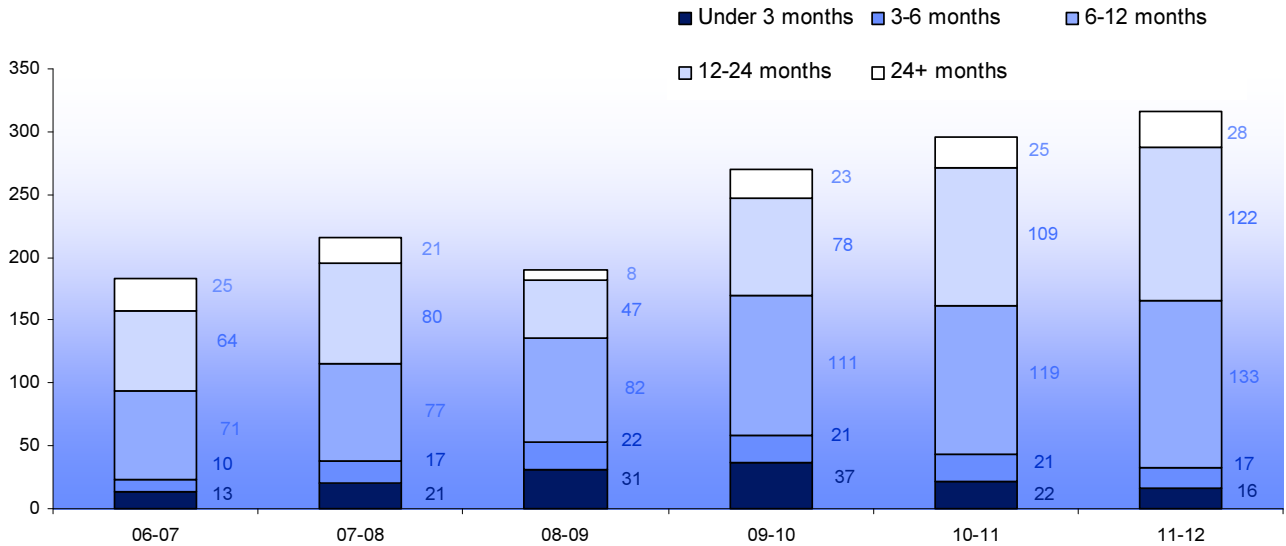
- Children with a child protection plan should expect to see lasting improvements in their safety and wellbeing before their plan is ended. Ideally this leads to a child never needing another plan, unless there are drastic changes in a child's circumstances.
- A low percentage of children needing a second plan is therefore desirable, ideally between 10% and 15%.
- The percentage of children with a second plan decreased significantly between March 2003 and March 2006 but has been increasing again, reaching 13.4% in March 2012.
- The national rate was 13.3% in 2010/11.

## Child Protection Conferences – Reviews held on time



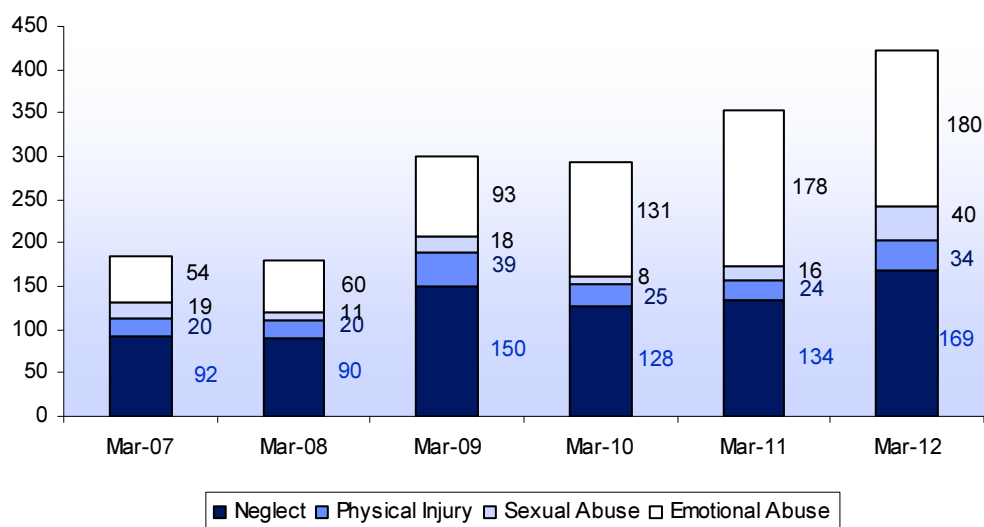
- National guidance states that every child must have a review:
  - Within 3 months of the commencement of a new plan.
  - At six-monthly intervals thereafter.
- At the end of March 2012, there was one child subject to a child protection plan who did not have all their reviews according to the above timescales. The second review was three weeks late. All other reviews have been within timescales.

## Ended Child Protection Plans – Plan Duration



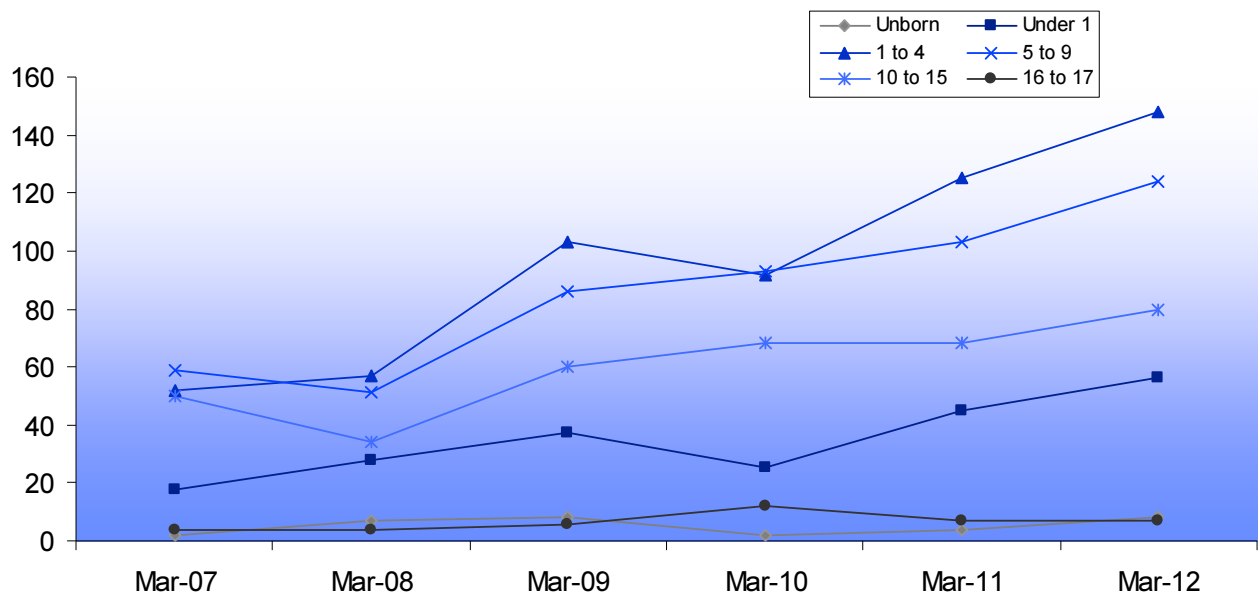
- A Child Protection Plan should ensure that children receive the services necessary to bring about any required changes in the family situation. This should lead to the plan being discontinued within two years.
- 28 Child Protection Plans were discontinued after more than 2 years in 2011/12, compared with 25 in the previous year. This made up 8.9% of all discontinued plans.
- Nationally, 6.0% of plans were discontinued after more than 2 years in 2010/11.
- 89.6% of all Child Protection Plans were discontinued after more than 6 months, compared to 85.5% in 2010/11.
- Nationally 30% (2009/10) of child protection plans are discontinued within 6 months. In Coventry this figure is 10.4%.

## Children with a child protection plan – Category of Abuse



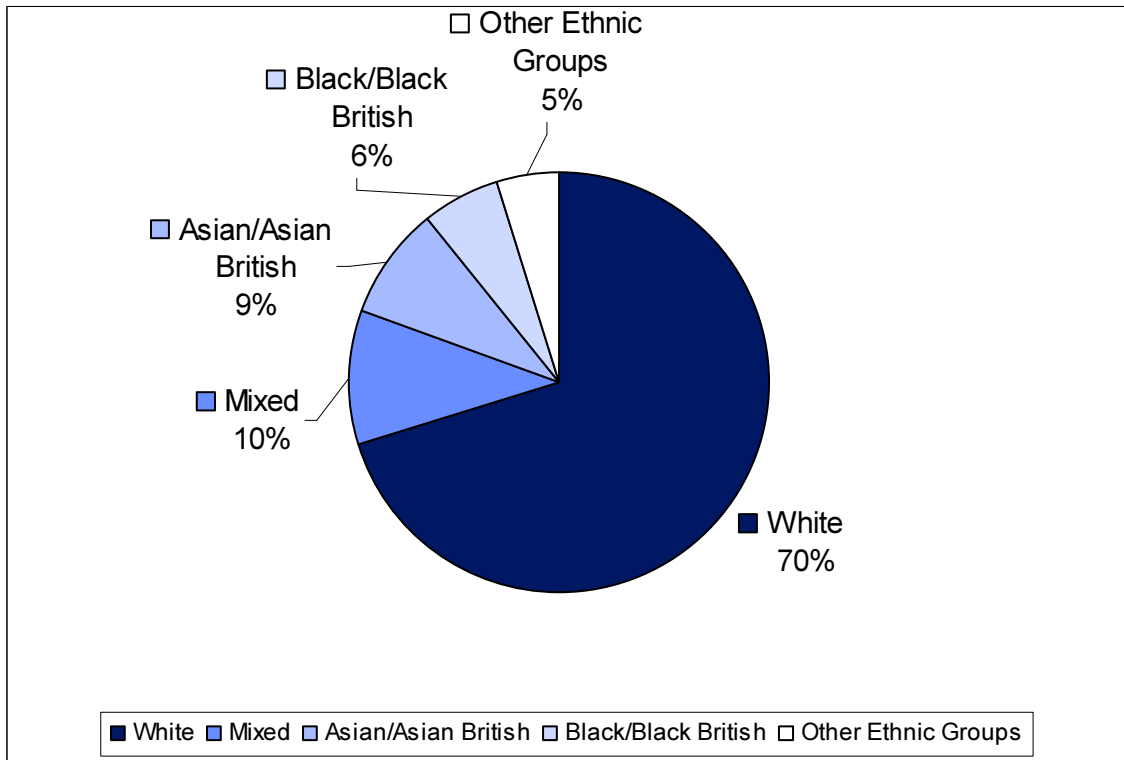
- The number of children with a child protection plan under the category of Sexual Abuse has more than doubled from 16 children (4.5%) in March 2011 to 40 children (9.5%) in March 2012.
- There was a decrease in the percentage of children with a child protection plan under the category of Emotional Abuse from 51% in March 2011 to 43% in March 2012.
- 40% of all the children with a plan at the end of March 2012 came under the category of neglect, compared to 38% in 2010/11.
- There was a small increase in the number of children with a child protection plan under the category of Neglect from 134 children (38%) in March 2011 to 169 children (40%) in March 2012.
- Neglect was the most frequent category of abuse nationally, accounting for 44% of all children with a child protection plan as at 31/03/2011.

## Children with a child protection plan - Age Profile



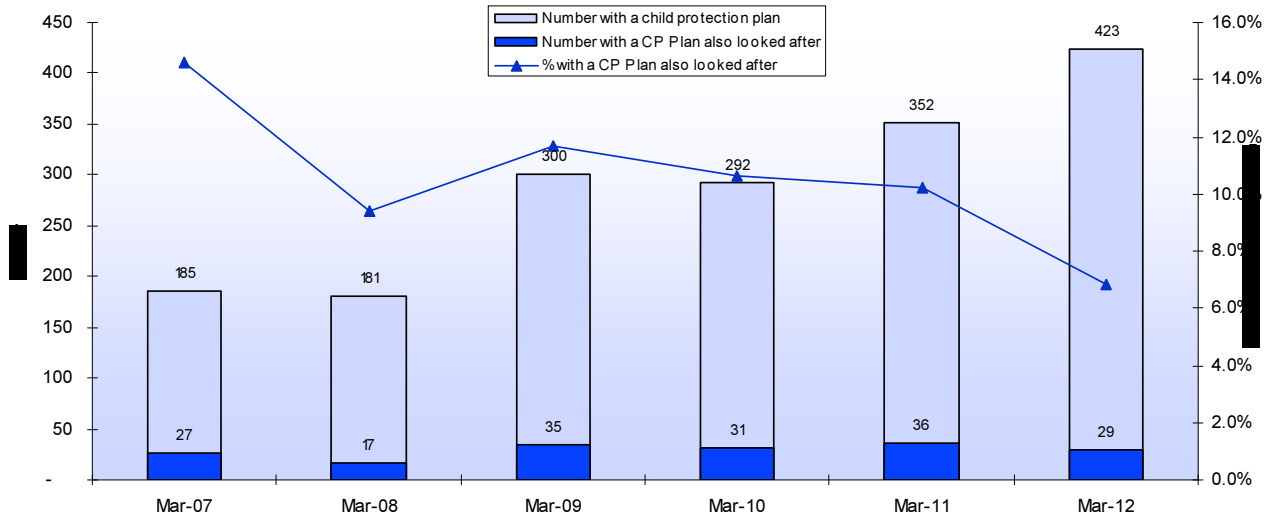
- The highest percentages of children with a plan at the end of March 2012 were from the 1 – 4 (35%) and the 5 – 9 (29%) age groups.
- The number of children aged 1 – 4 has increased by 18% during 2011/12 (from 125 children in 2011 to 148 in 2012).

## Children with a child protection plan – Ethnic Origin



- The percentage of children with child protection plans from Black or Minority Ethnic Groups was 29.8% at the end of March 2012. This was in line with the percentage of the 0-17 population of Coventry from BME groups (30.4%).
- This suggests that children from minority ethnic communities were being appropriately identified and provided with services in a comparable manner to white children.

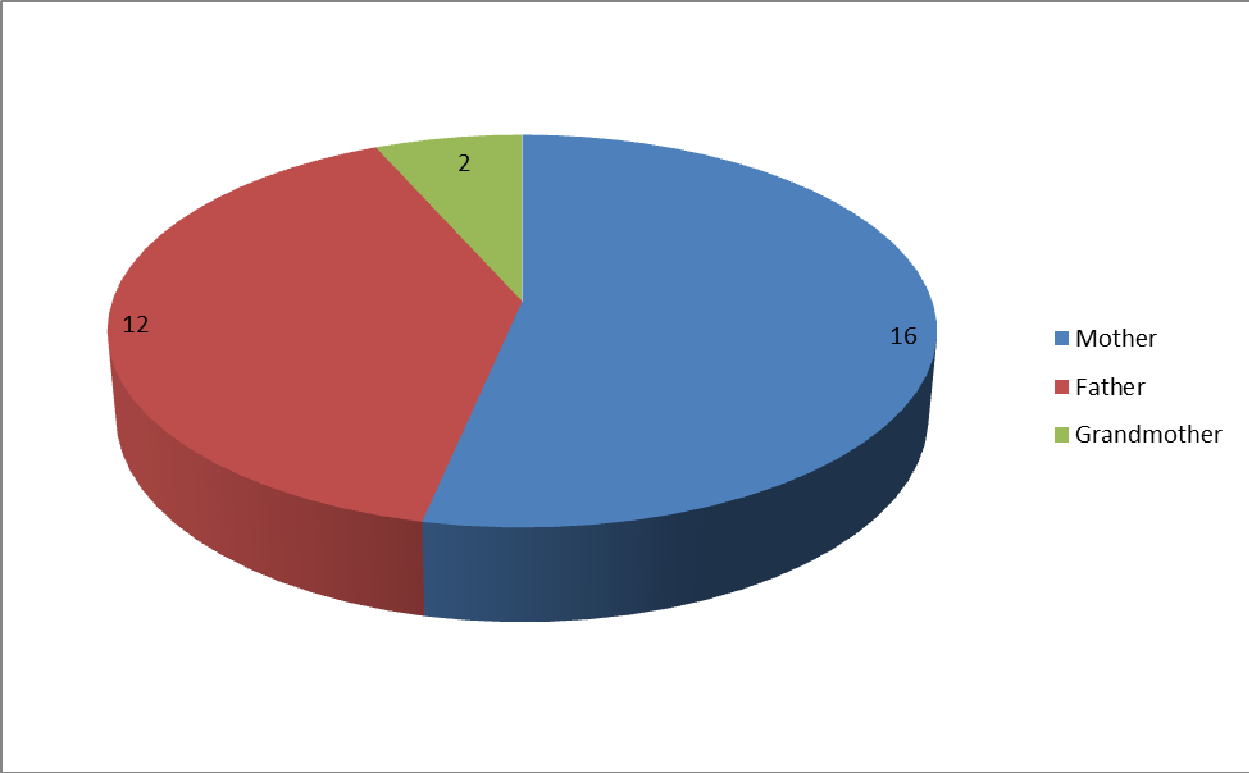
## Children with a CP plan who are also looked after



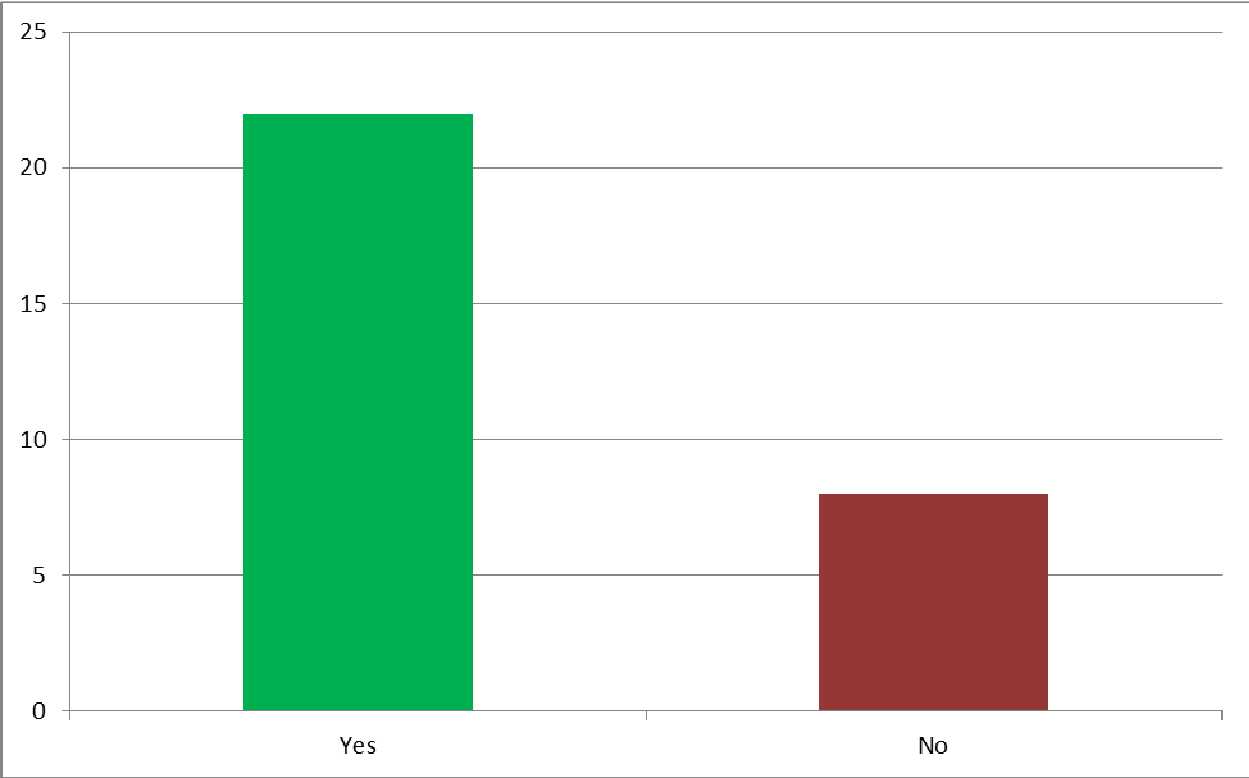
- The percentage of children with a Child Protection Plan who were also looked after decreased from 10.2% at the end of March 2011 to 6.9% in March 2012.
- 29 children had a Child Protection Plan and were looked after at the end of March 2012, compared with 36 at the end of March 2011.



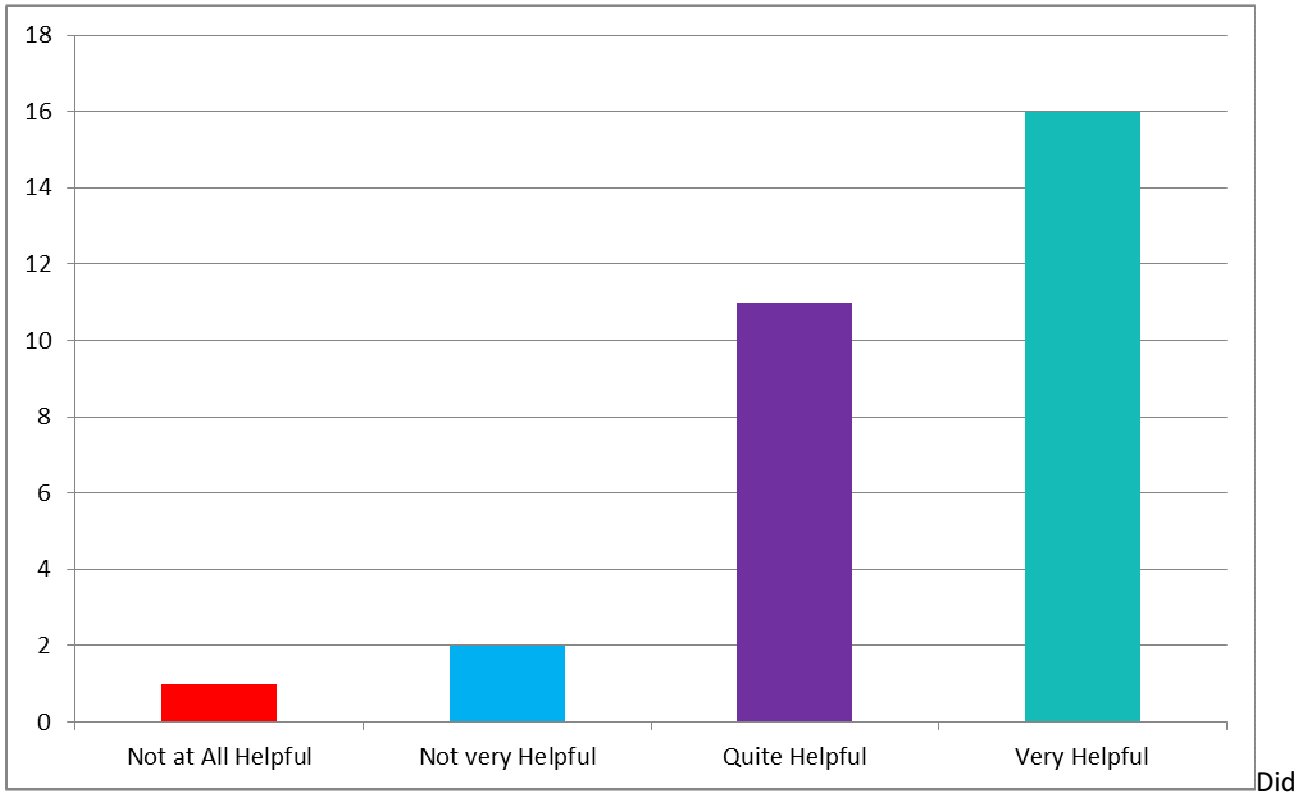
## Sample report on child protection conference feedback forms from January to July 2012



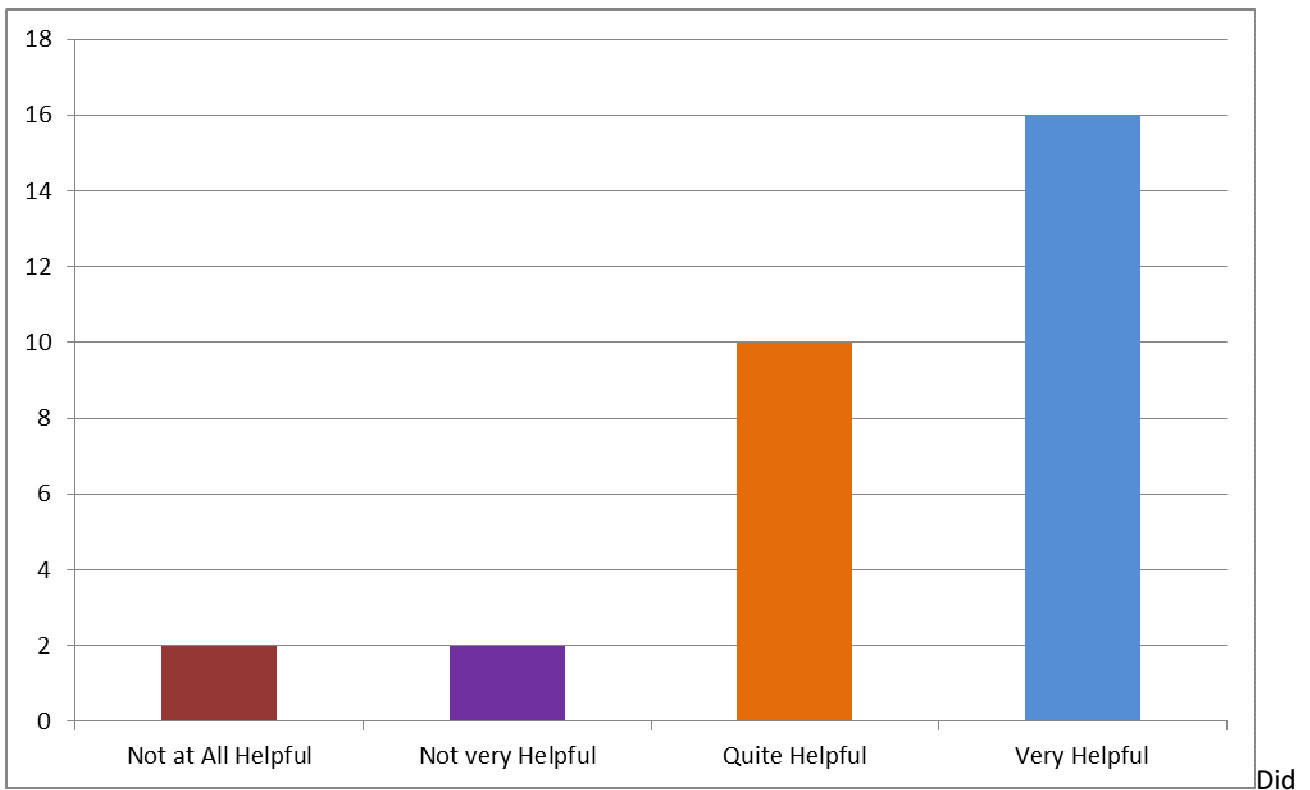
What is the Relationship to the Child?



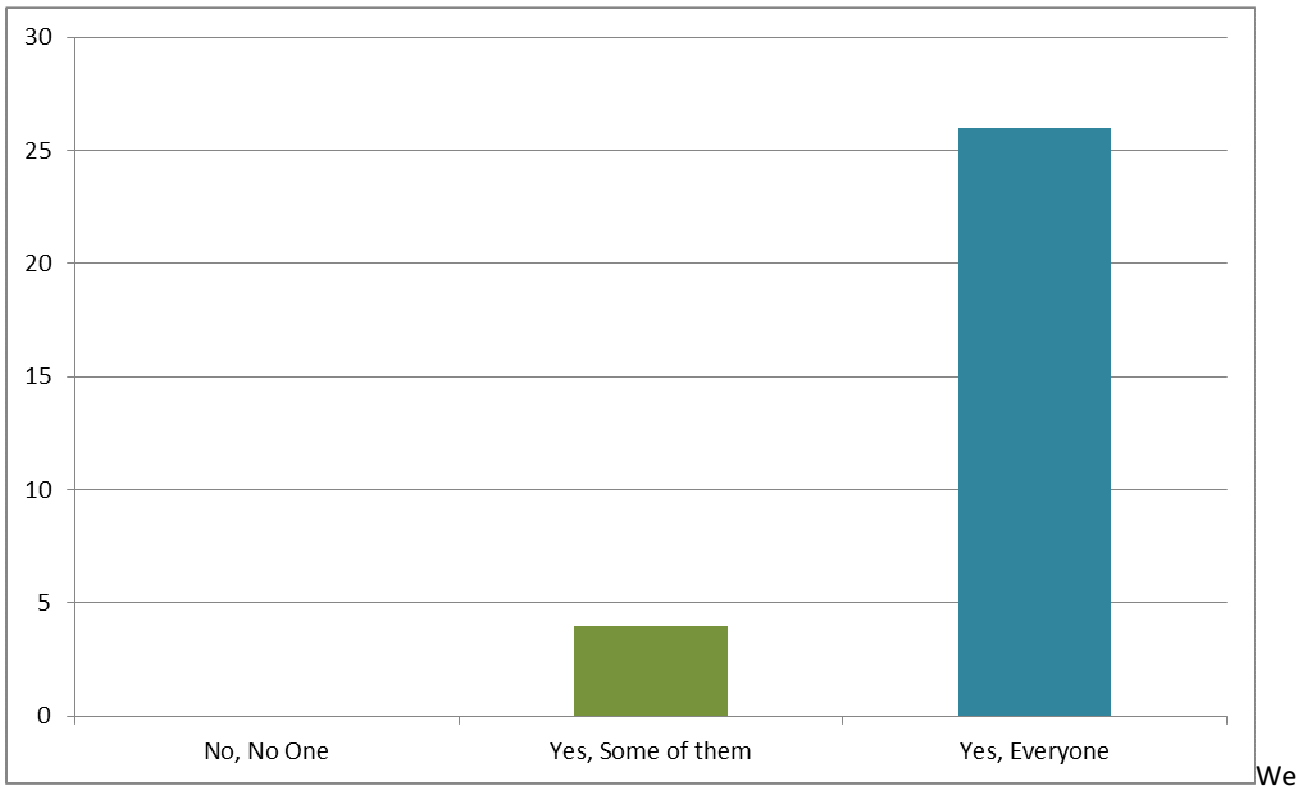
Did any other professional talk to you about the information they would share in the meeting?



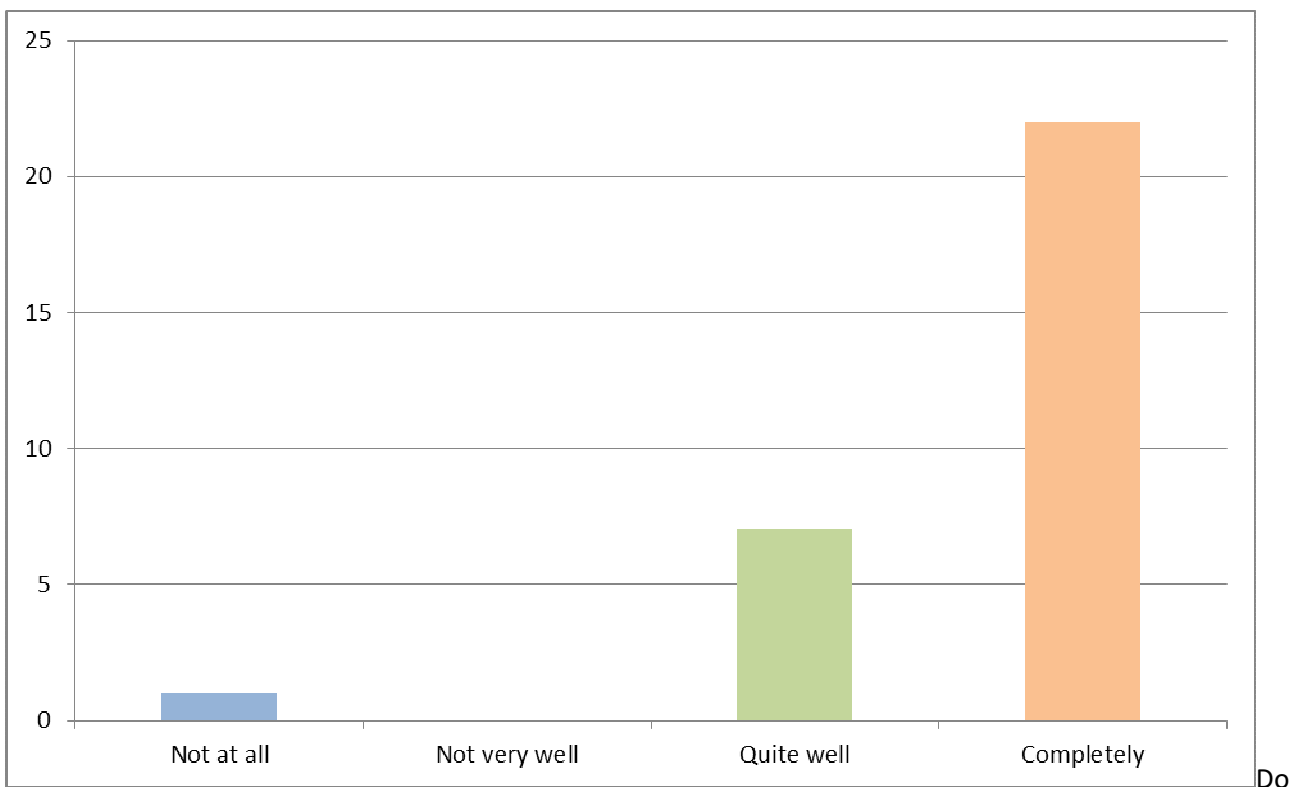
it help to talk to the Chair before the meeting?



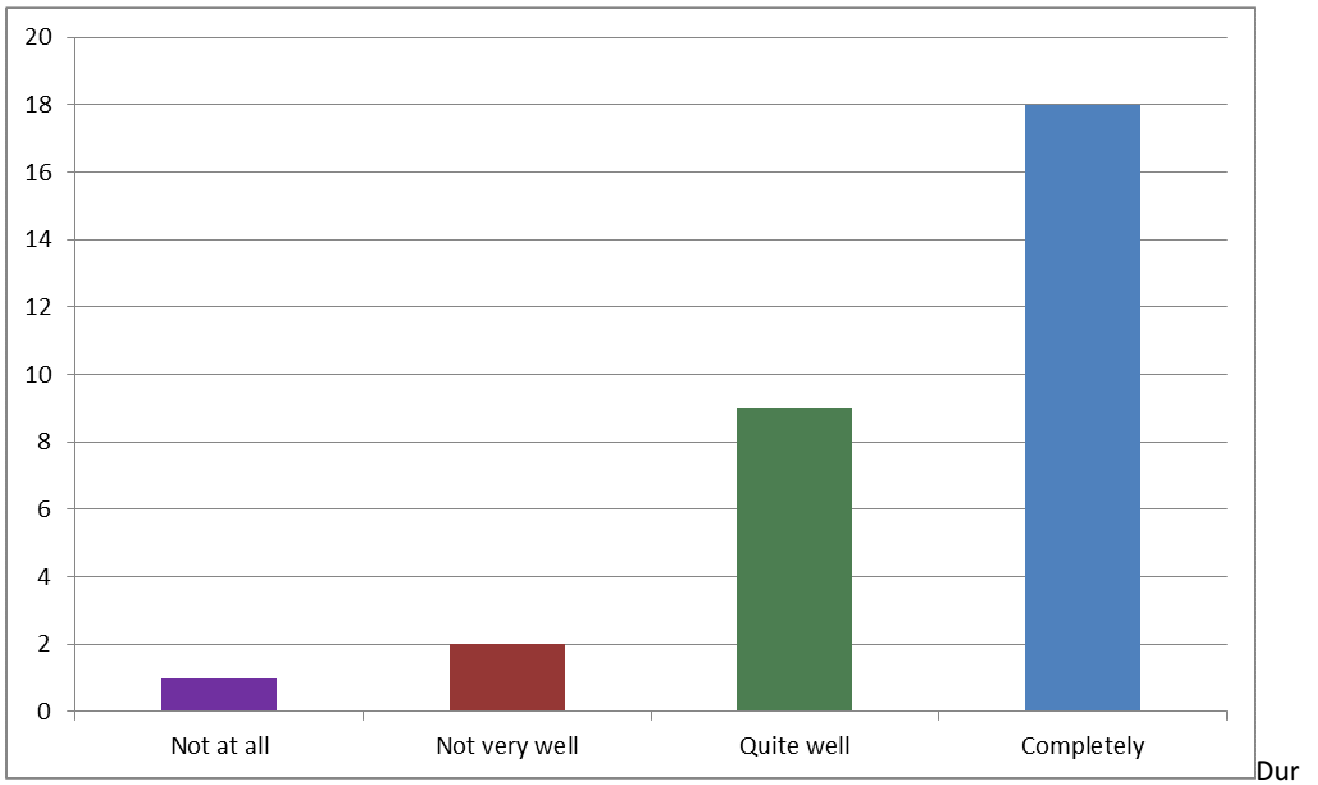
it help to be in the meeting room before everyone else?



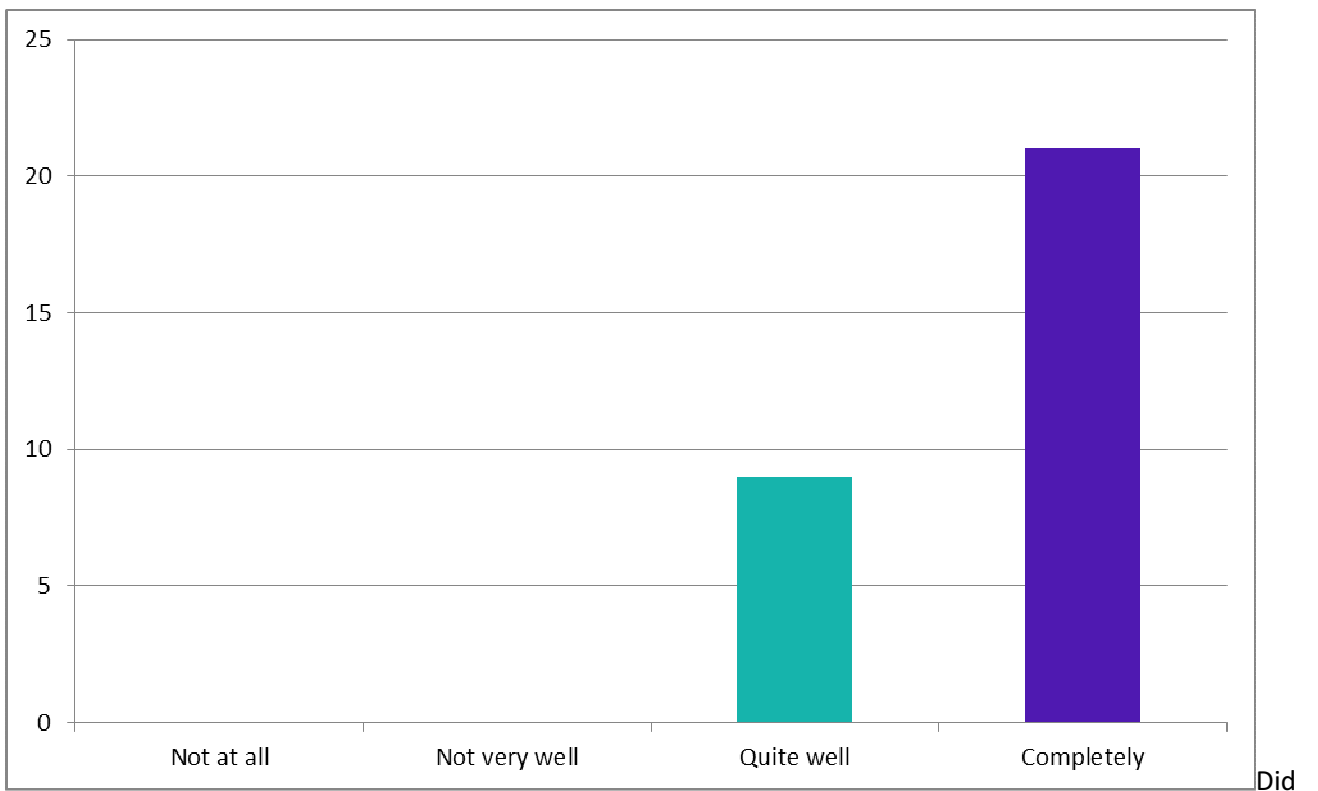
How many people told you who everyone was at the meeting?



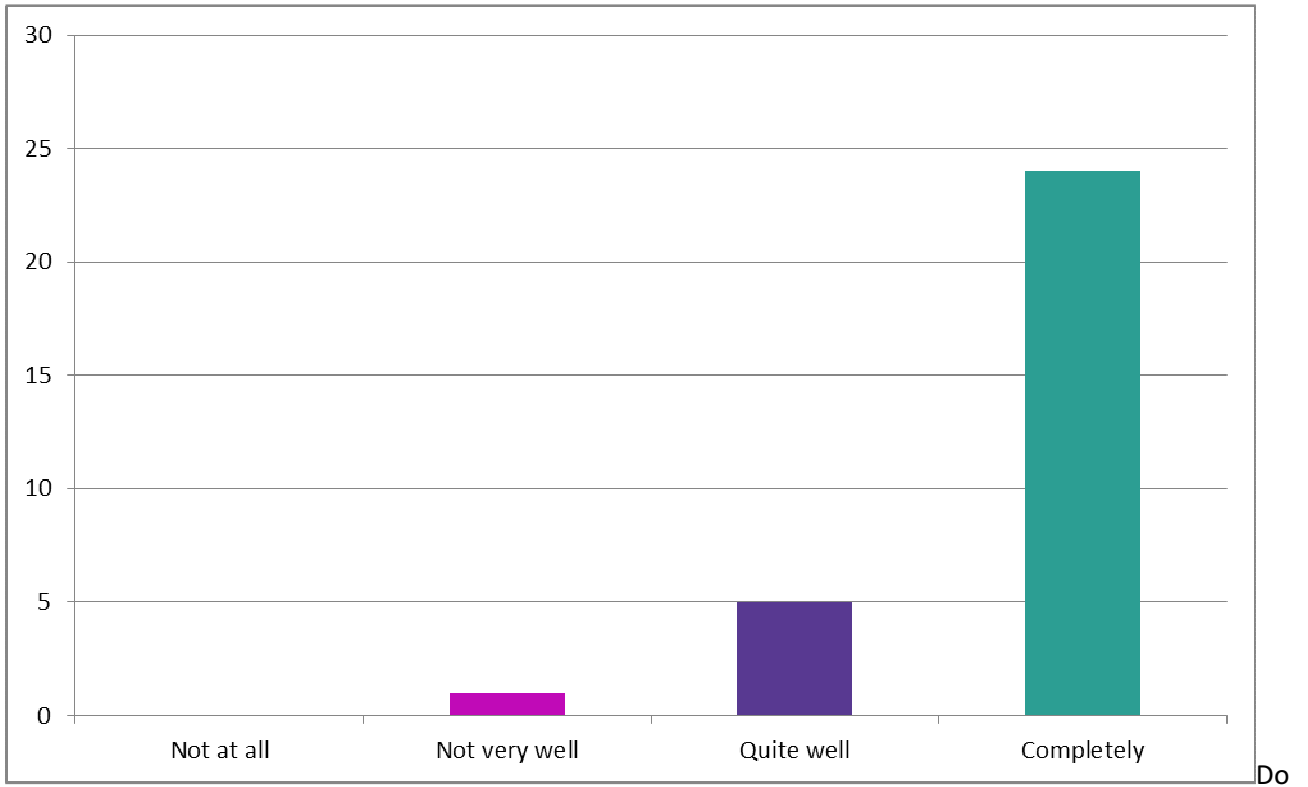
How well do you understand why they were there?



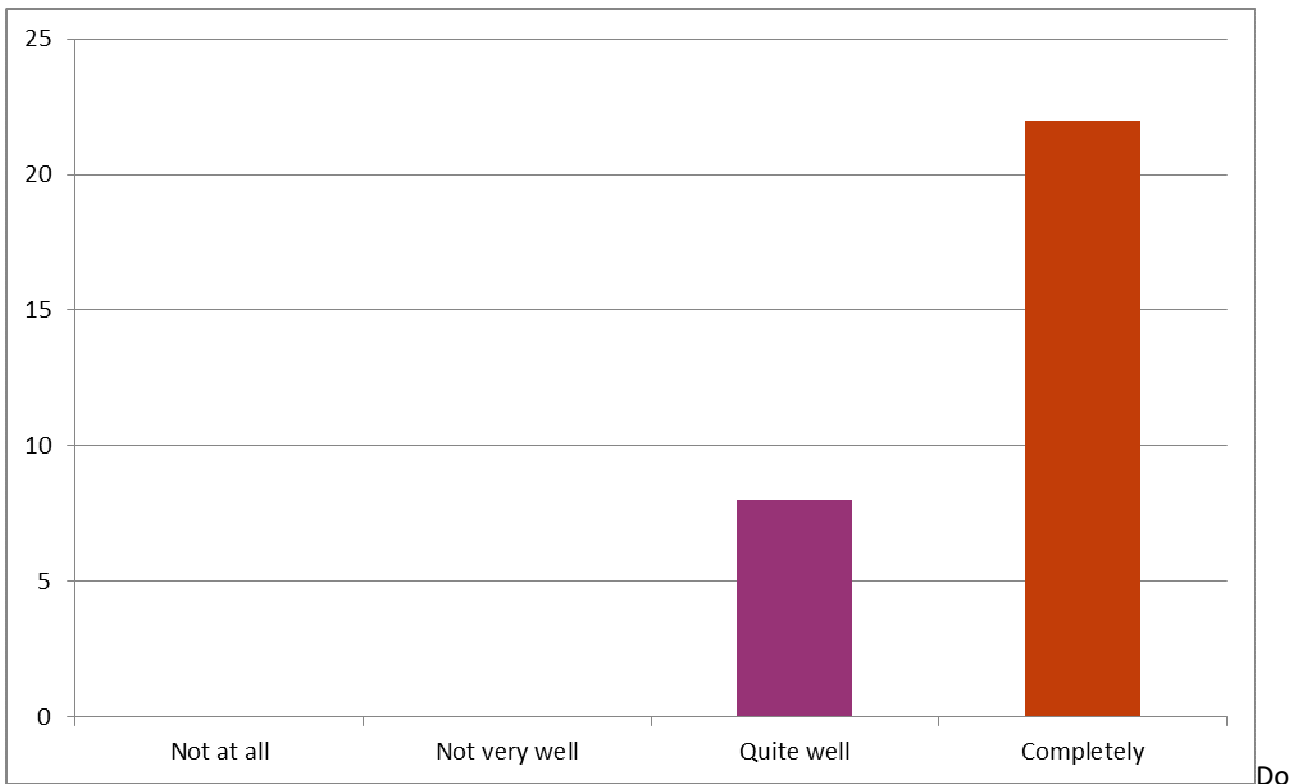
ing the meeting did say all that you wanted to say?



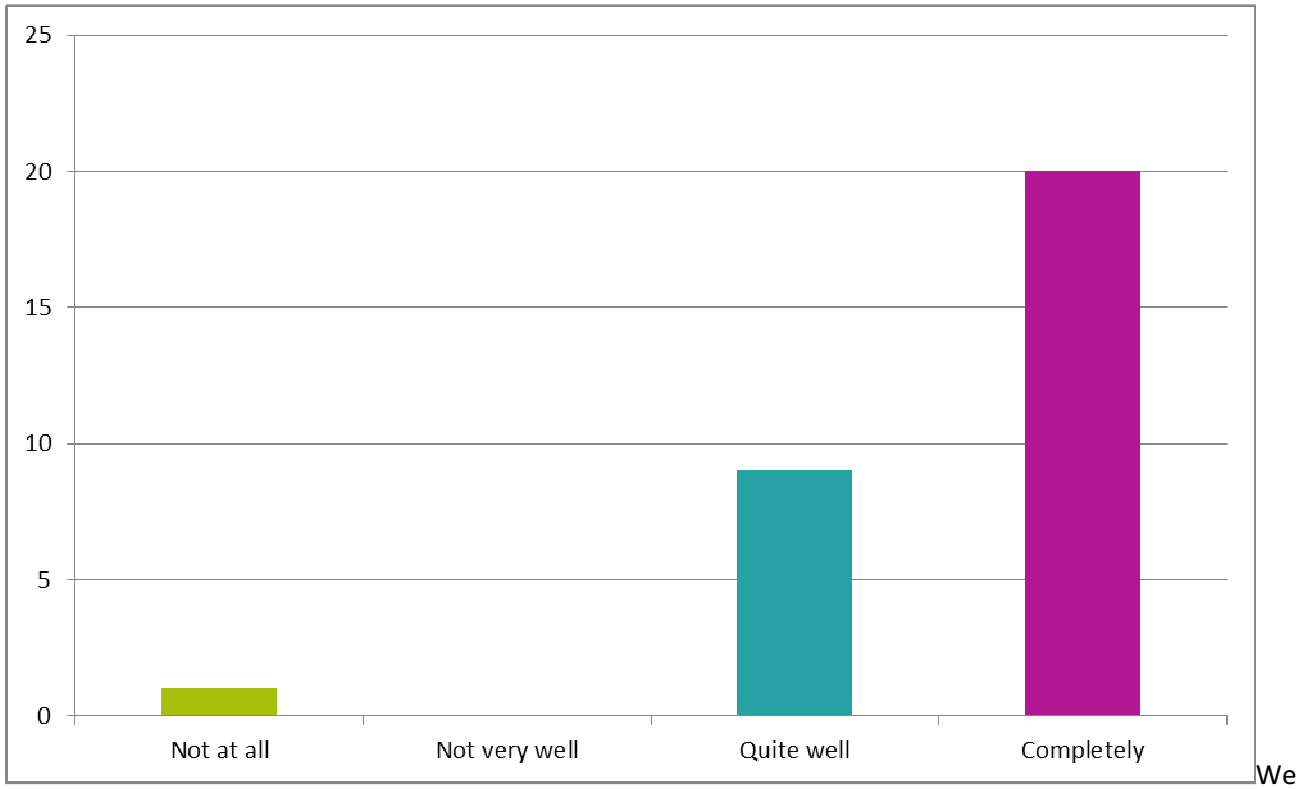
you understand the different parts of the meeting?



Do you understand what needs to change to make things better for your child in the future?

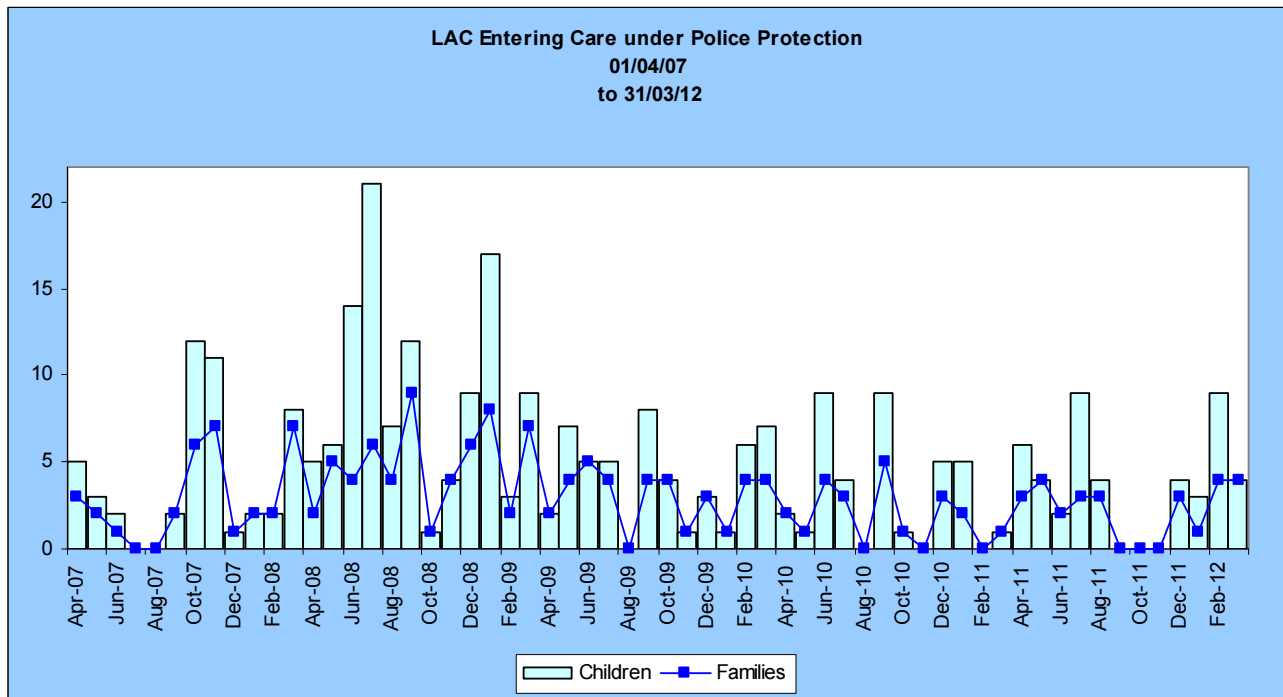


Do you think that the plan was discussed in the meeting will help you to make these changes?



Were you given the opportunity to have your say about the plan?

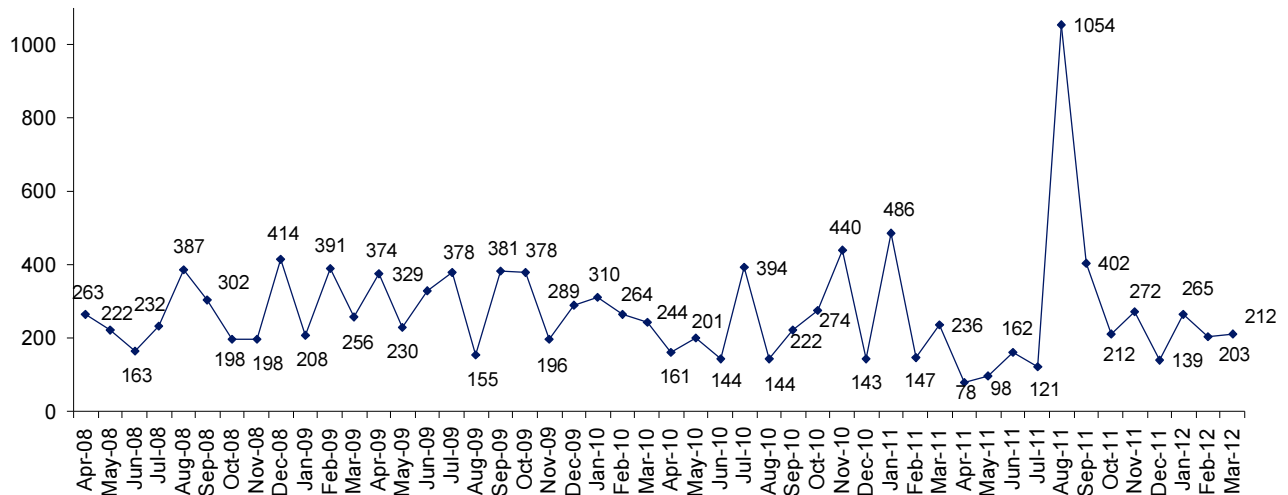
## Police Protection Powers



- Each year there are a number of children and families entering care via police protection.
- The latest trend shows about 2 families per month entering care via Police Protection.
- Between April 2005 and March 2006, 24 families became looked after under Police Protection (38 children).
- Between April 2006 and March 2007, 33 families became looked after under Police Protection (55 children).
- Between April 2007 and March 2008, 33 families became looked after under Police Protection (48 children).
- Between April 2008 and March 2009, 58 families became looked after under Police Protection (108 children).
- Between April 2009 and March 2010, 36 families became looked after under Police Protection (49 children).
- Between April 2010 and March 2011, 22 families became looked after under Police Protection (37 children).
- Between April 2011 and March 2012, 27 families became looked after under Police Protection (45 children).

## Domestic Violence Screenings

Domestic Violence Screenings per Month



- Between April 2008 and March 2009, there were 3234 Domestic Violence Screenings.
  - 24.5% of screenings in 2008/09 required further investigation by Social Care
- Between April 2009 and March 2010, there were 3528 Domestic Violence Screenings.
  - 22.6% of screenings in 2009/10 required further investigation by Social Care
- Between April 2010 and March 2011, there were 2992 Domestic Violence Screenings.
  - 21.0% of screenings in 2010/11 required further investigation by Social Care.
- Between April 2011 and March 2012, there were 3218 Domestic Violence Screenings.
  - 18.2% of screenings in 2011/12 required further investigation by Social Care.
- **Note: the large number of screenings during August 2011 were due to a backlog in recording caused by the summer riots of 2011**

## Managing allegations of harm to children against staff and volunteers

- Total number of allegations received. **53**
- Number of allegations against staff referred to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) **Not Available**
- Allegations against staff/volunteers by organisation they work in.



## Private Fostering Arrangements

- Number of privately fostered children registered with children's social services. **2**
- % of privately fostered children who have received an initial assessment. **1 additional child assesses in 7 working days (100%)**

## Offences of Child Abuse

- Recorded child abuse offences by category Physical/Sexual/Neglect.

<b>Serious Sexual Offences</b>	
Recorded	99
Detection/Resolution Rate	32.32%
<b>Violence with Injury (covers s47-murder)</b>	
Recorded	22
Detection/Resolution Rate	63.64%
<b>Child neglect/cruelty</b>	
Recorded	1121
Detection/Resolution Rate	54.15%

- % West Midlands Police recorded child abuse offences resulting in charges or cautions by category Physical/Sexual/Neglect **Not provide**

## Community Safety

- Alcohol harm related admissions by categories **Not provided**
  1. under 18 years old /
  2. under 15 years old
- Substance misuse related admissions to hospital by categories **Not provided**
  1. under 18 years old
  2. under 15 years old
- Under 18 year olds seeking treatment for substance and alcohol misuse. **Not provided**
- Serious knife crime rate by categories
  1. Children and young people accused of knife crime

**400 offences involved using a knife, the breakdown is as follows.**

Physical Violence	172 Offences
Robbery	154 Offences
Possession of a Knife	74 offences.

2. Victims of knife crime.

**958 of victims were aged 15 or under, with those aged 12 - 15 inc making up 68.4% of all victims aged 15 and under.**

■ Drug related offending

1. children and young people accused of drug related offences Class A
2. Class B

*CHILDREN ARE NOT SUBJECT TO TEST ON ARREST ONLY ADULTS (18+)*

■ Children and young people who were victims of drug related crime

1. Class A
2. Class B

*CHILDREN ARE NOT SUBJECT TO TEST ON ARREST ONLY ADULTS (18+)*

Overall/whole population

	Blank	Both (Cocaine & Opiates)	Cocaine	Negative	Opiates	Grand Total
<b>Fraud</b>	0.91%	0.91%	10.91%	85.45%	1.82%	100.00%
<b>Handling</b>	0.00%	3.33%	10.00%	80.00%	6.67%	100.00%
<b>Burglary</b>	0.65%	8.12%	17.21%	69.16%	4.87%	100.00%
<b>Robbery</b>	0.44%	5.33%	21.78%	67.11%	5.33%	100.00%
<b>Theft</b>	0.40%	15.12%	14.49%	62.47%	7.52%	100.00%
<b>Non Trigger (Mostly Violence)</b>	0.37%	7.72%	25.00%	61.03%	5.88%	100.00%
<b>Possession / Supply of drugs</b>	0.00%	14.29%	38.96%	41.56%	5.19%	100.00%
<b>Begging</b>	0.00%	25.00%	25.00%	0.00%	50.00%	100.00%

## Teenage Pregnancy

■ Number of teenage parents. **Not available**

■ Teenage pregnancy rate (conception rate per 1,000 females aged 15 -17). **Not available**  
 Teenage pregnancy rate (conception rate per 1,000 females under age 18 273 which is 50.2 per 1,000 conceptions (2010)

■ Number of Children subject to Child Protection where a teenage parent. **Not available**

## Hospital admissions caused by injuries to children

- Hospital admissions caused by intentional and unintentional injuries to children and young people by category:
  - Intentional
  - Unintentional

**2011/12 Emergency HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries to children and young people, 0-18 years normally resident in Coventry by Coventry Postcode and injury type.** \*Under 5 counts are specified as <5 (Throughout)

Area Codes	Transport Accidents	Falls	Exposure to inanimate mechanical forces	Exposure to animate mechanical forces	Intentional Self Harm	Assault	Miscellaneous	Total
CV1	< 5	31	15	< 5	12	< 5	32	99
CV2	21	52	29	10	36	< 5	84	235
CV3	21	55	31	< 5	28	8	12	217
CV4	7	22	12	< 5	16	< 5	86	67
CV5	8	23	22	< 5	7	< 5	13	97
CV6	19	70	43	15	27	8	125	307
CV7	5	6	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	7	22
Other	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	39	46
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>1090</b>

**2010/11 Emergency HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries to children and young people, 0-18 years normally resident in Coventry by Coventry Postcode and injury type**

Area Codes	Transport Accidents	Falls	Exposure to inanimate mechanical forces	Exposure to animate mechanical forces	Intentional Self Harm	Assault	Miscellaneous	Total
CV1	8	13	8	< 5	10	< 5	21	67
CV2	13	53	36	9	25	6	81	223
CV3	14	55	37	6	22	8	75	217
CV4	< 5	11	8	< 5	5	5	31	67
CV5	6	30	12	< 5	12	< 5	32	97
CV6	27	60	32	6	31	4	105	265
CV7	< 5	7	5	< 5	< 5	< 5	9	26
Other	<5	7	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	17	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>990</b>

2011/2012 Emergency HOSPITAL ATTENDANCES caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries to children and young people 0-17 years normally resident in Coventry by Coventry Postcode Area

Injury Type	CV1	CV2	CV3	CV4	CV5	CV6	CV7	Total
Laceration	99	342	282	109	141	424	45	1442
Contusion/abrasion	56	251	181	86	106	295	8	983
Head Injury	101	358	320	115	145	479	55	1573
Dislocation/fracture etc	132	481	440	205	264	629	56	2207
Sprain/ligament injury	97	401	347	146	177	513	29	1710
Muscle Tendon/Injury	8	41	22	15	19	48	< 5	157
Nerve Injury	< 5	6	5	< 5	< 5	8	< 5	25
Vascular Injury	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5
Burns and scalds	24	59	50	24	24	101	5	287
Electric Shock	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5
Foreign Body	37	99	72	34	39	140	8	429
Bites/Stings	< 5	29	16	6	13	26	< 5	96
Poisoning/Overdose	28	84	46	33	26	87	7	311
Near Drowning	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5
Total	591	2154	1786	774	955	2751	216	9227

2010/2011 Emergency HOSPITAL ATTENDANCES caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries to children and young people 0-17 years normally resident in Coventry by Coventry Postcode Area

Injury Type	CV1	CV2	CV3	CV4	CV5	CV6	CV7	Total
Laceration	107	362	331	129	127	462	40	1558
Contusion/abrasion	46	236	206	89	102	255	12	946
Head Injury	19	360	296	111	143	454	43	1426
Dislocation/fracture etc	109	449	382	168	227	542	50	1927
Sprain/ligament injury	111	409	352	162	189	465	31	1719
Muscle Tendon/Injury	15	59	46	13	19	58	< 5	214
Nerve Injury	< 5	< 5	8	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	15
Vascular Injury	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5
Burns and scalds	17	61	50	17	19	78	5	247
Electric Shock	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5
Foreign Body	32	83	67	27	35	109	13	366
Bites/Stings	< 5	32	20	9	< 5	36	< 5	105
Poisoning/Overdose	16	59	61	16	17	74	6	249
Near Drowning	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5
Total	476	2114	1819	743	882	2536	206	8776

A Burley Acting Designated Nurse Child Protection Arden Cluster ( July 2012).

## Children's Trust bi-annual report

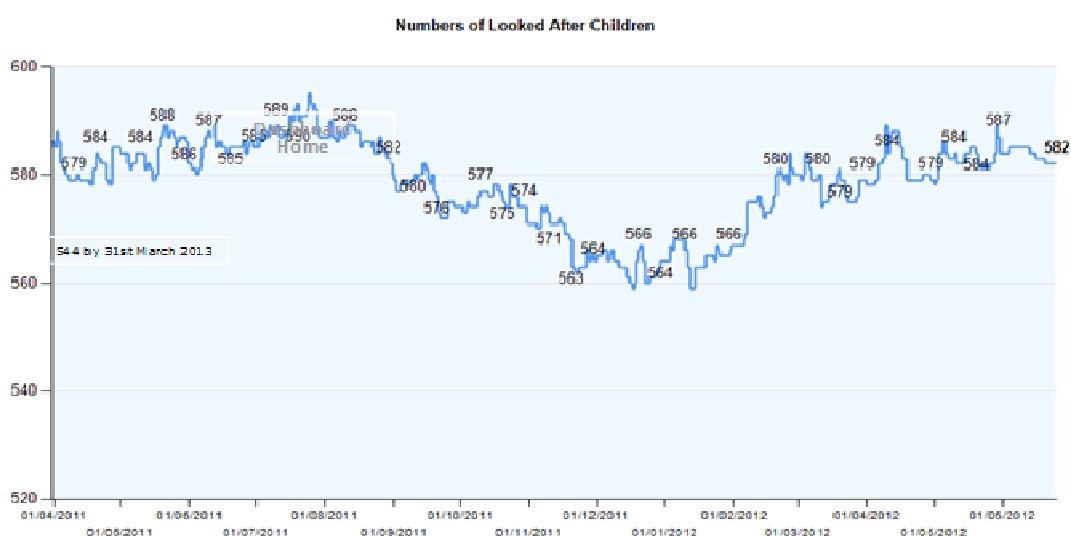
- Proportion of children in poverty. 27.5% (16,680)
- Disabled children. **Not available**
- Looked after children. **582** (as at 30th June 2012)

[www.coventry.gov.uk](http://www.coventry.gov.uk)

### Looked After Children Per Day – 26.06.12



Target is 544  
by 31<sup>st</sup> March  
2013



## The Effectiveness of MARAC

- Number of cases discussed. **43 between 01/04-30/06/2012 (7 were repeat victims)**

- Timeliness of referral /incidents coming to MARAC.

**MARAC takes place on the first Tuesday of each month so timeliness is incidents within the last 4 weeks - however involved agencies don't wait for MARAC to deal with the cases if work needs doing it is usually done prior to MARAC.**

- Comment on the quality of interagency work to manage risk.

**MARAC is extremely well attended by statutory and voluntary sector agencies. Working together is assessed as good.**

## The Effectiveness of Multi-Agency Protection Arrangements

- Number of cases where there is a risk to children

***The total MAPPA level 2 and 3 cases during the year (to 31.3.12) where risk to children was identified as being medium, high or very high was 10. This was made up of 7 sex offenders and 3 violent offenders. The risk was identified as medium in 2 cases, high in 6 cases and very high in 2 cases. There were also 2 cases not known to Probation and therefore not assessed using 'Oasys' (Probation's assessment tool).***

***The 2 sex offenders who were registered last year as Critical Public Protection Cases, one posing a medium risk and one posing a very high risk to children, have both been deregistered as CPPCs since they are both currently in prison. Consideration will be given by the panel to applying for re-registration when they are approaching possible release. A third sex offender is being considered for possible CPPC registration currently.***

- Comment on the quality of interagency work to manage risk

***The quality of interagency work at panel is excellent. Despite the reduction in resources across all agencies, attendance at and participation in MAPPA has continued to be prioritised by all local agencies, which is crucial to the effectiveness of MAPPA. Although participation by prisons is not always as consistent as preferred, when they do attend they bring enormous benefit and this has ensured a much smoother transition between custodial and community services.***

- Number of cases where there was re-offending

***2 MAPPA cases have reoffended during the year, one in custody and one in the community. Although the community case was a sexual offence against a child, it was at the lower end of the scale and an in depth review of the case concluded that the multi-agency approach had done everything possible to manage the risk posed by the offender.***

## Child Death Review Processes Annual Report

- Number of child deaths in Coventry
- Age range , ethnicity, gender
- Number of cases where modifiable and non –modifiable factors identified
- Themes and patterns identified

***Not yet available but to be provided in a separate report to a future Board meeting***

## Social Care

- Establishment of Social Workers in social work services
- Number of full time equivalent social workers in Referral and Assessment Service
- Number of full time equivalent social workers carrying CP/CIN cases
- Number of full time equivalent social workers carrying LAC cases
- Number of full time equivalent First Line Managers / supervisors of SW
- % of posts vacant.
- % filled by staff with more than three years post-qualifying experience
- Number of Social Workers able to carry CP cases and the % of CP on their caseloads
- % of CP/CIN plans in which there was 3 or more change/s of SW
- % of staff time spent in face to-face contact with families/ children.
- No of cases awaiting transfer / waiting service
- No of cases allocated to managers
- Average number of caseloads per FTE Social Worker
- Turnover of social workers in a year
- Number of posts which are filled but where staff are absent - sick leave / maternity leave
- Number of unallocated cases

### Update on workloads and staffing within children's Neighbourhood Social Care

Team	Open cases as of 4 <sup>th</sup> July 2012	Outstanding transfers from RAS to Neighbourhoods	Current SW Establishment	agency	NQSW	Sn Practitioners	Average caseload Taking into consideration protected case loads of NQSW	Revised Establishment in process of recruitment	
RAS	861		25	0	3	5	30	0	
North East	360	93	17	2	7	3	19	20.4 SW	4 snr Pracs
South	281	41	15	2	2	2	18	17.6SW	3 snr pracs
North West	206	11	12	2	2	2	18	14 SW	
LAC		1							
15+									

Additional resources have been allocated to help achieve automatic transfer (additional social workers and 2 senior practitioners). Service is in the process of recruiting to these posts which will negate the need for agency workers.



**LAC Service including 15+ Team as at 14.06.12**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Funded establishment</b>	<b>Actual staff available</b>	<b>Cases held</b>	<b>Average case load</b>
Senior Practitioners	4	4	43	10.75
Social workers	24.3	20.3	329* + 51 twin track cases = 380*	16.2  18.7
NQSWs	4	2	26	13

Total cases held in the Service = 398 + 51 twin track cases = 449.

\* These figures include 15 cases currently on management review.

Actual staffing is reduced by 2 NQSWs on maternity leave, 2 social workers on long-term sick leave, 2 social workers currently on reduced hours and a 0.5 social worker post unfilled.

**UASC**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Funded establishment</b>	<b>Actual staff available</b>	<b>Cases held</b>	<b>Average case load</b>
Senior Practitioner	1	0.8	10	10
Social worker	1	0	14	14

Social worker is currently on long-term sick leave and Senior Practitioner on reduced hours permanently. Impact on LAC duty service.

**Health Visiting & Nursing**

- Number of Health Visitor's in post WTE and actual no of WTE posts.
- Number of Health Visitor WTE vacancies
- Number of School Nurse's in post WTE and actual no of WTE posts.
- Number of School Nurse WTE vacancies
- Number of Student Health Visitors / school nurses in training
- % of posts vacant
- % filled by staff with more than three years post-qualifying experience
- Number of caseloads per HV
- Number of caseload per team

- Number / % of Children / families on Care pathway 1, 2 and 3 for each geographical area
- Number of children / families where HV / SN is part of CAF process
- Number of children subject to CP plans for HV's and SN's
- Number of primary / secondary schools / children per school nurse team
- % of CP/CIN plans in which there was 3 or more change/s of Health Visit
- % of HV and SN posts carrying CP/CIN caseloads which have been agreed as being at a level that enables effective practice to take place.
- Turnover of Health Visitors in a year
- Turnover of School Nurses in a year
- Number of posts which are filled but where staff are absent – sick leave / maternity leave
- Number of unallocated cases

**SEE APPENDIX 2**

## GPs

- Number of GP practices in the area. **64 Practices within the city**
- % of practices with a nominated safeguarding lead.

**Information is not collated around the safeguarding lead within GP practices. There is no requirement on practices to have a safeguarding lead within the national GP contract, only to have a CP policy/protocol. All Practices undergo review based on the Quality Outcomes Framework. The Arden Cluster ensures practices provide a copy of their CP policy/protocol with evidence that this has been reviewed within the last year.**

- Number of children identified in the year as not being permanently registered with a GP.
- % of these children who became permanently registered during the year.

***Registration with a GP is a patient choice. Where patients choose not to register, their data is unknown to GP registrations therefore it is not possible to provide the above information.***

***Within Coventry, there are systems in place to ensure information is forwarded to the Health Visiting or School Nursing service, of any attendance by a child not registered with a GP (or an adult where there are safeguarding concerns for their***

*children) at a local Accident and Emergency Department or Out of Hours Services. The Health Visiting or School Nursing would then support and advise the family to encourage GP registration.*

## UHCW

- Number of full time equivalent Paediatric A&E nurses
- Number of full time equivalent Midwifery posts / Managers
- Number of midwives as a ratio to new births
- Average caseloads for midwives working child protection cases
- % of posts vacant
- Turnover of midwives in a year
- Number of posts which are filled but where staff are absent – sick leave / maternity leave

Staff Group	WTE	Birth MW Ratio	Maternity leave	Sick leave LT	CP caseload
Paediatric ED	22.86 2 Non RSCN	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Midwife posts	179.5	1:34	8.60WTE	3.59WTE	Not applicable
Community Midwives	Included above	As above	Included above	Included above	Per community midwife between 0-3 cases variable - 29WTE Coventry community midwives
Managers					
Head of Midwifery	Named Nurse/Midwife	Matrons	Clinical Director	Group Managers	Risk Manager
1.0	1.0	3.0	1.0	2.0	1.0
Turnover	Investment	Leavers	<b>Starters</b>	<b>Awaiting start date</b>	<b>Awaiting Registration</b>
	Investment of 18.5 WTE midwives in Jan 2012 All recruited to either in post awaiting start date or Registration date.	8.28	19.8	11.52	3

\* NB : Maternity department has a waiting list of 19 band 5 midwives who have been successful at interview awaiting for appointment to posts as midwives leave.

## Probation

- Number of full time equivalent Offender Managers. **29.08**
- Number of full time equivalent SPO Managers and PO supervisors of Offender Managers. **5 SPOs & 8 POs**
- % of Offender Manager posts vacant. **3.7%**
- % filled of Offender Managers with more than three years post-qualifying experience. **89.5%**
- Turnover of Offender Managers in a year. **3%**
- Number of posts which are filled but where Offender Managers are absent - sick leave / maternity leave. **2.2**
- Number of Offender Managers over their workload points and % of their cases with safeguarding concerns in the community and in custody. **6 Pos 8% in Community & 9% in Custody**
- Number of Offender Managers over their workload points and % of their cases with a high risk to children in the community and in custody. **6 Pos 1% in Community & 7% in Custody**

## Police Public Protection Unit

- Average caseloads for detective's dealing with CP cases in CIAU
- % of detectives carrying caseloads (or numbers of vulnerable/high risk cases) which have been agreed as being at a level that enables effective practice to take place
- % of posts vacant
- Turnover of staff in a year
- Number of posts which are filled but where staff are absent – sick leave / maternity leave
- Number of unallocated cases

***In June 2012 the department saw some organisational changes. There are 24 full time Detective Constable posts within the department split equitably between 4 teams. 3 of these teams are based in Coventry and the other team based in Chelmsley Wood with responsibility for the Solihull Area. The department is carrying one full time vacancy which has been recruited into but the officer is waiting for***

*release from another department. One officer is on maternity leave which equates to 4% of the workforce. Five officers have left the Department in the last 12 months.*

*The department has a dedicated Detective Chief Inspector which is Sue Holder, 2 Detective Inspectors and 4 Detective Sergeants. There are two different Murder investigations and also an Attempt Murder currently being managed by the department. In addition each officer carries on average 9 other investigations which include physical assaults, sexual offences, neglect offences and often a combination of all three.*

## CAFCASS

- Average caseloads for CAFCASS guardians. **Not provided**
- % of CAFCASS guardians carrying caseloads (or numbers of vulnerable/high risk cases) which have been agreed as being at a level that enables effective practice to take place. **Not provided**
- % of posts vacant. **Not provided**
- Turnover of staff in a year. **Not provided**
- Number of posts which are filled but where staff are absent – sick leave / maternity leave. **Not provided**
- Number of unallocated cases. **Not provided**

## Schools & Colleges

- Number of fulltime staff working on safeguarding in schools to include LAC, CP, Children in Need and CAF
- Number of children in each of these categories.
- Percentage of all students, establishment is working with on safeguarding issues.
- Number of staff acting as Lead Professionals
- Percentage of full time equivalent staff where safeguarding is a substantial part of the staff members role

***Data is currently being collected and will not be available until the end of the academic year 2011-2012. It will be reported at future Board meeting.***

## 10. CSCB Business Plan 2012- 15

### Priorities

In establishing its priorities for the coming year, the Board has considered the developing national agenda, the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements, progress with its Annual Report and Business Plan for 2011 -12, the recommendations of the Review of Child Protection by Professor Eileen Munro, the outcome and recommendations made by the Ofsted Inspection of Safeguarding Services and the Annual Development Day attended by all member agencies.

The Board has therefore compiled a business plan for 2012/15 detailing the actions it will take primary responsibility for on the following pages.

In summary these are focused around the following high level strategic goals:

- Monitor the development of Early Help Services for children, young people and their families
- Getting out of and combating child sexual exploitation
- To monitor the further development of multi-agency services to prevent domestic abuse and support children and their families
- Develop an engagement policy and programme with young people
- Review the Coventry Safeguarding Children Board's performance framework to enable the Board to monitor the effectiveness of current services with a view to shaping priorities for the future.

The Board will continue to address other areas off work started in previous years and these will be progressed through sub committees which are held to account by the Board. The workplans for individual sub committees are included with the Business Plan.

**Coventry Safeguarding Children Board – Draft Business Plan 2012 - 2015**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Key Tasks</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Completion</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Review LSCB governance arrangements	Review membership and representation at the Board and subcommittee level	All Strategic safeguarding leads and Chairs of Subcommittees	March 2013	
Continue to establish and maintain strong links with existing and emerging partnerships	Review, agree and establish the roles and relationships with existing and emerging partnerships to ensure that it fulfils its responsibilities in ensuring that there are effective safeguarding arrangements in the city <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint Commissioning Board (Children's Trust)</li> <li>• Health &amp; Wellbeing Board</li> <li>• Clinical Commissioning Group</li> <li>• Adult Safeguarding Board</li> <li>• Domestic Violence and Abuse Partnership</li> <li>• Community safety Partnership</li> </ul>	Chair of CSCB Head of Safeguarding Business Manager	March 2013	
	Continue to develop a strategic protocol for safeguarding children across the key partnerships and governance bodies in the city.	Business Management Group to monitor effectiveness	Review in March 2013 and then annually	
Continue to agree a clear financial plan for the LSCB.	Calculate and review the costs of implementing the LSCB business plan for 2012-15	Chair of CSCB, Strategic Director CLYP,	March 2013 Review annually	

	Specify from where the required resources/additional funding will be obtained and identify any shortfalls.	Superintendent WM Police, Vice Chair CSCB		
Cooperate and collaborate with other LSCBs as and when appropriate	Continue to Identify opportunities for partnership with other LSCBs so that benefits from the economies of scale resulting from shared activity with other LSCBs	Chair of the CSCB via Regional networks	Ongoing	
Monitor the implementation of actions identified in the Ofsted Inspection Report	<p>The Children, Learning and Young People Service should ensure that the human resources systems have a single central record of criminal record bureau checks and professional registration status of all relevant staff.</p> <p>NHS Coventry (The Arden Cluster) and Coventry &amp; Warwickshire NHS Partnership Trust should ensure that recruitment is completed for the current vacancies. In addition plans and resources need to be agreed to recruit to the required capacity to meet the targets outlined in the 'Health Visitor Implementation Plan 2011-2015 – A Call to Action'.</p> <p>The Children, Learning and Young People Service should reduce the number of looked after children who are persistently absent from school.</p>	<p>Strategic Director of Children, Learning and Young People</p> <p>Director of Nursing Quality and Engagement-Arden Cluster</p> <p>Director of Quality, Safety and Training-Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Community Trust</p> <p>Chair-Safeguarding in Education Subcommittee</p>	<p>November 2012</p> <p>November 2012</p> <p>November 2012</p>	



Ensure actions identified at the Board Development Day in May 2012 are implemented	Identify and implement actions in respect of Governance, Partnership working and measuring impact of LSCB activity on outcomes for Children and Young People.	Business Management Group	Review by March 2013	
Consider and continue to review the implications and actions for LSCBs arising from the Government's response to Professor Munro's review of Child Protection.	Annually review plan to implement changes required of the LSCB	Business Management Group/ CSCB	March 2013	
Monitor the development of Early Help Services for children, young people and their families	To work with key partners to ensure there are multi-agency early intervention and support services. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To understand, monitor and review the implementation of the fundamental service review by Children, Learning and Young Peoples'</li> </ul>	All sub groups chairs	Review March 2013 and annually	

	<p>Directorate in the reconfiguration of early help services To ensure review of the CAF in Coventry is achieved and supports the identification of multi-agency early help and support services including 'step up' and 'step down' procedures that are easily understood and seamless at the point of service delivery.</p>			
<p>Getting out of and combating child sexual exploitation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Map the needs of CSCB area to identify levels of child sexual exploitation and locations or circumstances where children are particularly at risk (and repeat the exercise periodically);</li> <li>• put in place systems to monitor ongoing prevalence and responses to child sexual exploitation within their area, making use of existing monitoring tools like the one developed by the University of Bedfordshire if they find it helpful to do so;</li> <li>• develop an effective local strategy ensuring there is</li> </ul>	<p>Practice and Quality Subcommittee Task and Finish group regarding Child Sexual Exploitation</p>	<p>Reporting six monthly from January 2013</p>	

a co-ordinated multi-agency response to child sexual exploitation, based on a robust, thorough risk assessment of the extent and nature of child sexual exploitation locally

- increase understanding of child sexual exploitation, in the professional and wider community (for example, contributing to public campaigns in the local area, talking and listening to children's views on welfare services, locally-led engagement with faith and minority communities and wider public). Where appropriate, they might seek to raise awareness through race and faith networks, based on agreed messages and materials;
- safeguard and promote the welfare of groups of children who are potentially more vulnerable than others and

	<p>are at increased risk of child sexual exploitation, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• establishing effective communication channels between the LSCB and partner agencies, including specialist services which have an important role to play;</li> <li>• attending voluntary and community sector conferences to increase personal knowledge;</li> <li>• providing briefing to social care teams; and</li> <li>• arranging multi-agency training days/courses;</li> <li>• consider whether it is appropriate to set up a working group or sub group on child sexual exploitation either on a short term or standing basis, and appoint a lead officer who provides a co-ordinated response across statutory authorities and the voluntary sector;</li> <li>• Develop links with neighbouring authorities</li> </ul>	<p>Training Sub Committee</p> <p>West Midlands Metropolitan Area CSE Strategic Group</p> <p>Regional Safeguarding Network</p>	<p>Bi-monthly</p>	
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	and meet them on a formal basis and as required where there are cross border concerns.			
To monitor the further development of multi-agency services to prevent domestic abuse and support children and their families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor and review the development of multi-agency plans and service development.</li> <li>• To receive reports on the development and impact of the multi-agency model</li> <li>• To consider the impact on improved safeguarding for children and young people</li> </ul>	Business Management Group to monitor progress.	Review progress annually by March 2013 and then annually.	
<b>Quality Assurance</b>				
Review the CSCB performance framework to enable the Board to monitor the effectiveness of current services with a view to shaping priorities for the LSCB	<p>Agencies to agree the appropriate information required to focus on evidence based reporting and scrutinising mechanisms.</p> <p>Agree and embed relevant national Safeguarding Performance Indicators in CSCB Dataset.</p>	All agencies/ Working Group / CSCB	<p>September 2012 Review relevance annually</p> <p>July 2012</p> <p>July 2012</p>	

	<p>CSCB to consider further developing the performance framework on a thematic basis in order to provide a range of information and understanding to inform and drive priorities.</p> <p>Reporting of dataset to be, populated by relevant agencies, to CSCB</p>		<p>Review Annually</p> <p>Annually or at frequency required by the Board</p>	
Develop engagement policy and programme with young people	<p>Scope existing forums and existing successful ways of engaging with young people</p> <p>Identify key ways of engaging with young people and develop a CSCB plan</p>	<p>Practice and Quality Assurance Sub Committee via a dedicated task group</p> <p>CSCB Lay members to advise and support.</p>	<p>Report to Board with initial report by March 2014</p> <p>Progress report to Board in November 2013</p>	
<b>Procedures</b>				
To review the CSCB Interagency Procedures to ensure these reflect current legislative / WT2010	Continue to develop guidance on handling cases of sexual exploitation	Small working group led by Chair of Task and Finish Group on CSE	Review in November 2012	

guidance				
	Update procedure for working with resistant families	Quality Assurance and Practice Group	November 2012	
	Further revision of the guidance for children Missing from Education to be completed.	Marion Simpson Quality Assurance and Practice Group/ Safeguarding in Education Group	November 2012	
Contribute to Strategic reviews on a regional basis	Review West Midlands Joint Protocol for Child Protection Enquiries and Related Criminal Investigations	WM Strategic Joint Working Body  Chair of Practice and Quality Assurance Sub Committee	March 2013	
<b>Serious Case Reviews</b>				
Ensure compliance with WT2010, the draft WT 2012 report on Learning and Improvement and the Government Response to Munro Review	Review and update guidance	SCR Chair and subcommittee	Contribute to Government consultation August 2012  Review by March 2013	
Implement the findings from the SCIE Case Review	Set up working groups focused on the key themes that have arisen to consider implementing the findings	SCR Subcommittee	Report annually from March 2013	

<p>Effective management of serious case reviews is robust, fully understood and compliant with Working Together 2010 and WT 2012 once published.</p>	<p>Ensure that SCR panel chairs and overview authors are independent of the LSCB.</p> <p>Arrangements for the SCR offer sufficient scrutiny and challenge</p>	<p>SCR Chair Subcommittee</p>	<p>As and when required</p>	
<p>Review cases of special interest</p>	<p>There is a process in place for ensuring that cases of special interest are examined on a regular basis throughout the year</p> <p>Draft and submit reports for the CSCB on cases of special interest.</p> <p>Convene a task-and-finish group to consider cases of special interest identified by members of partner Agencies.</p>	<p>SCR Chair/Sub Committee</p>	<p>As and when required</p>	
<p>Monitor the implementation of recommendations of reviews or serious case reviews</p>	<p>Ensure that is a clear action plan in place following every review or serious case review.</p> <p>Monitor the implementation of recommendations to include all recommendations, together with the response required, the responsibility for each action, and the timescale within which action is required</p> <p>Develop a more effective monitoring and reporting tool which holds</p>	<p>SCR Chair Subcommittee SCR Subcommittee</p>	<p>Annual report to the Board</p> <p>November 2012</p>	



	<p>individual agencies to account.</p> <p>Monitor the action plan created following each review or serious case review,</p>		<p>Minimum 6 monthly reporting on progress.</p>	
<b>Child Deaths Overview Panel</b>				
<p>All child deaths are monitored, trends are identified and prevention planning is enhanced to prevent untimely deaths</p>	<p>Child Death Overview Panel reports to CSCB on an annual basis, with a 6 monthly update.</p>	<p>CDOP Chair and Panel Manager</p>	<p>2012/2013 2013/2014 2014/2015</p>	

<b>Training Workplan 2012-2013</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Key Tasks</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Completion</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Review the CSCB Training Strategy in line with WT2010 and draft WT 2012 suggested training for different target groups	Update CSCB strategy In line with this.	Training Subcommittee	March 2013	
<p>The training programme is continuously reviewed to ensure it is up to date with national and local policy, legislation, research, SCR's, audit findings etc.</p> <p>Training programme review to include financial review and charging policy to ensure best possible value for money</p> <p>To scope, plan and review the use of effective and cost efficient methods of delivering training through the use of new technologies.</p>	The content of all training programmes are to be reviewed and updated in the light of changing policy; legislation; research; SCR's Child Deaths and daily life experience	Training Subcommittee Interagency Training Officer	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>March 2013 and then annually</p>	
Plan and Review a safeguarding children and young people who suffer sexual exploitation package to ensure it meets the	Develop package of training and implement.	Training Subcommittee Interagency Training Officer	March 2013	

needs of practitioners				
Continue to embed an evaluation process for practitioners who have attended Interagency training to evaluate impact of training on practice	Evaluation programme has already commenced will need further embedding and commitment by agencies to input into the process	Interagency Training Officer/ Training Subcommittee	Annual review from March 2013	
Frontline staff have an understanding of SCR findings and practice improvement	Disseminate findings of Serious Care Reviews	SCR Subcommittee and Interagency Training Officer	Annual review from March 2013	
Safeguarding activity is given a high profile and agencies are kept up-to-date with national developments on safeguarding.	Organise an annual themed conference on Early Intervention.	Training Sub Committee/Interagency Training Officer/ Business Management Group	By March 2013	
Where appropriate, efficient and economical training to be open to Solihull LSCB partner agencies and vice versa.	Training courses have been identified where this can be utilised. Up take to be evaluated by respective LSCB's	Interagency Training Officer	Review annually from March 2013 M.	

<b>Practice and Quality Assurance Workplan 2012-2013</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Key Tasks</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Completion</b>	<b>Progress</b>
To reduce the number of sexually exploited young people and make them safer.	To complete the scoping of the draft action plan by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing Procedures and Protocols for Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)</li> <li>Ensure that the work being</li> </ul>	Practice and Quality Assurance Subcommittee	6 monthly review January 2013 July 2013	

	<p>developed ins compliant with the Government Action Plan '<i>Tackling Sexual Exploitation</i>',</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting up an effective robust operational multi-agency group to manage those children and young people at risk of CSE</li> <li>• A city wide hotel campaign to raise awareness of hoteliers and their staff to the indicators of CSE</li> <li>• Training of workforce and parents and carers</li> <li>• Raising Awareness within schools and pupil referral units</li> <li>• Raise awareness of Foster placements and children's homes where Looked After Children at risk maybe placed. Ensuring these placements are subject of ongoing risk assessment</li> <li>• The Chair of the group represents Coventry LSCB on the West Midlands Metropolitan Area CSE Strategic Group in developing best practice across the region.</li> <li>• Develop robust Communications Strategy</li> </ul>			
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Undertake a thematic audit of Children subject to CP plans under the category of neglect to gain an overview as to the nature and extent of neglect suffered with a view to informing future work in this area.	Form a working group to scope the parameters of this audit  Undertake randomly selected multi-agency audit of 30 children across pre-birth, pre-school and school age cohorts.	Practice and Quality Assurance Sub Committee  Business Management Group	Report by November 2012	
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<b>Safeguarding in Education Workplan 2012-2013</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Key Tasks</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Completion</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Consider any new national or local guidance or information in relation education and safeguarding children and update Local Authority guidance and disseminate to school as appropriate		Education Sub Group	Ongoing	
To continue to embed safer recruitment practice	Ensure all head teachers and chairs of governors undergo safer recruitment training either face to face or online	Chair of Education group	Termly until July 2013	
Link teacher training is up to date and in compliance with agreed training	Training is reviewed and up dated accordingly. Training is received by link teachers every 2 years.	Chair of Education group	Ongoing Annual review from	

requirements			March 2013	
Consider all SCR's and Case Reviews undertaken by CSCB	To learn from these cases and strengthen safeguarding processes		Ongoing and reviewed annually	
To provide safeguarding audits for all schools where safeguarding issues have been raised or where section 5 Ofsted inspection is due.	Support schools to have a good standard of safeguarding practice.	Chair of Education group	As and when appropriate	
To disseminate the Missing from Education protocol to headteachers and education services	Have in place an up to date clear process for children Missing from Education and ensure this fits with interagency procedures for children missing from home and education	Liz Eggington, LADO	Report on progress annually from March 2013	
To follow up on proposed actions for improving the level of recording of ,private fostering arrangements		Liz Eggington LADO	Report on progress annually from March 2013	
To further develop work with schools on the notification of children subject to domestic abuse and assist them with training and developing links with relevant agencies.		Liz Eggington LADO  Jayne Ross West Midlands Police	Annual Review from March 2013	

<b>Health Panel Workplan 2012-2013</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Key Tasks</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Completion</b>	<b>Progress</b>
To review membership of the Health Panel to ensure that all key stakeholders' are represented within the new health economy.	Review membership	Health Panel	Report by November 2012 and then review annually from March 2013 March 2014 March 2015	
To review and evaluate the impact of clinical commissioning groups and changes to the health organisational structures and share with the CSCB.	Conduct a review and evaluation	Health Panel	Report by March 2013	
Health Panel to maintain links with CSCB Sub Committees, health operational children's safeguarding meetings within the provider trusts	Maintain links and report to the Board on any significant changes.	Health Panel	March 2013 Report annually	
To provide a response to the consultation in respect of the draft WT 2012 and the Children's Safeguarding Performance information framework	Review guidance draft document and national guidance.	Health Panel	August 2012	

Implementation of health recommendations from reviews or serious case reviews	Ensure that there is a clear action plan for health trusts following all types of reviews  Monitor the implementation of action plans	Health Panel	Ongoing	
Health Economy compliance with WT 2010 draft WT 2012 and Section 11	Review and update health economy compliance as required	Health Panel	Ongoing	
Improve health compliance with attendance at Core Groups	Establish degree of compliance and ensure core group attendance is robust and staff understand their roles and responsibilities	Health Panel	March 2013 Ongoing Annual review	
Review and Update health Economy Safeguarding Children Training Strategy	Review and update strategy as required	Health Panel	Ongoing	
Continue to engage with GP practices to support their contribution to safeguarding children	Work to start with GP Practices to support their Safeguarding Children practice and processes	Designated Nurse Child Protection	Ongoing	Commenced in July 2011.Report on progress annually



<b>Promoting Children and Young People's Well-being Board Workplan 2012-2013</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Key Tasks</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Completion</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Contribute to the provision of the means to more effectively monitor the effectiveness and capacity of all early help services as required by the Munro Review and in light of a recent serious case review.	Work with agencies and services, particularly with reference to the Fundamental Service Review but ensure the development of multi-agency support services where CAF is the vehicle with appropriate step up and step down processes.	PCW Board members	March 2013 Report annually	
Review membership of the subcommittee and its relationship to other CSCB Subcommittees to ensure there is a balance between strategic and operational representation to inform the challenges of developing early help services to children and their families.	Scope current membership and partner agencies and propose changes that reflect the developing agenda in the development of early help services and the resources available.	PCW members supported by other CSCB partners	November 2012	
Continue to review, develop and implement the Common Assessment Framework	Work with Agencies and Services to increase CAF usage with a focus on Health, education and third sector partners.	PCW Board members	March 2013	
Provide training for Common Assessment Framework and local eCAF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Accredit and provide system access for all partner agencies for local eCAF.</li> <li>▪ Update CAF Training package.</li> </ul>	CAF Team	March 2013	
Continue to support and monitor the increase CAF	Work with Children's Centres and Early Years Safeguarding task	Children's Centre Managers,	Review	

usage in Early Years & Childcare Services	group to continue to develop systems for early identification, CAF use and PVI provision.	Safeguarding task group, PCW Board members	annually from March 2013 onwards	
Ensure effective interface between CAF arena and Social Care and key partners to ensure early help service developments are multi-agency.	Work with Referral & Assessment Service, Multi-Disciplinary Teams and key partners to develop a first response model and improved 'step up' and 'step-down' process.	RAS, MDTs, CAF, Health, Schools and third sector partners.	March 2013	
Consider all SCIE and SCR recommendations and how they impact on the development of early help services	Disseminate learning in relation to CAF and early help services across agencies and services	PCW Board members	March 2013	
Audit and evaluate CAF processes and consider quality assurance issues with close liaison with the Practice and Quality Assurance sub committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Work towards partners being responsible for Audit and evaluation.</li> <li>▪ Compile a dataset for ongoing analysis.</li> </ul>	CAF Lead PCW members Practice and Q/A Subcommittee	March 2013	
Implement the Overcoming Barriers 2 Learning project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue to Link with School cluster groups and outline the processes and procedures for early identification of those children, young people and families who would benefit from multi-agency intervention using the Common Assessment Framework.</li> <li>▪ Identify and share successful approaches to support schools.</li> </ul>	CAF Lead, PCW Board members	March 2013	



## 11. Acronyms

<b>CAF</b>	<b>Common Assessment Framework</b>
<b>CAIU</b>	<b>Child Abuse Investigation Unit</b>
<b>CDOP</b>	<b>Child Death Overview Panel</b>
<b>CLYP</b>	<b>Children Learning and Young People's Directorate</b>
<b>CME</b>	<b>Children Missing Education</b>
<b>CPC</b>	<b>Child Protection Conference</b>
<b>CSCB</b>	<b>Coventry Safeguarding Children Board</b>
<b>CSP</b>	<b>Community Safety Partnership</b>
<b>DVA</b>	<b>Domestic Violence and Abuse</b>
<b>FNP</b>	<b>Family Nurse Partnership</b>
<b>LARC</b>	<b>Local Authority Research Consortium</b>
<b>MDT</b>	<b>Multi Disciplinary Team</b>
<b>PCYW</b>	<b>Promoting Children and Young People's Wellbeing</b>
<b>PNMR</b>	<b>Perinatal Mortality Rate</b>
<b>PPU</b>	<b>Public Protection Unit</b>
<b>PRU</b>	<b>Pupil Referral Unit</b>
<b>PVI</b>	<b>Private Voluntary and Independent Sector</b>
<b>RAS</b>	<b>Referral and Assessment Service</b>
<b>SCIE</b>	<b>Social Care Institute for Excellence</b>
<b>SCR</b>	<b>Serious Case Review</b>
<b>SIDs</b>	<b>Sudden Infant Death syndrome</b>
<b>UHCW</b>	<b>University Hospital Coventry &amp; Warwickshire</b>

## APPENDIX 1

# ALLEGATIONS AGAINST PEOPLE WHO WORK WITH CHILDREN

Summary of allegations received 01/04/2011 to 31/03/2012

**Total number of allegations received: 53**

### Referral Details

#### Referrer

Social Care	24	45%
Education	5	9%
Police	8	15%
Probation	1	2%
NSPCC	1	2%
Voluntary Organisation	1	2%
Day Care Provider	1	2%
Other	9	17%
Not stated	3	6%

#### Alleged Abuse Types

Emotional	8	15%
Neglect	1	2%
Other	2	4%
Physical	6	11%
physical and emotional	22	42%
Professional	1	2%
Sexual	1	2%
	12	23%

### Perpetrator Details

#### Ethnic Origin && Gender

	<u>Femal</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Not Stated</u>	<u>Total</u>	
White British	1			1	2%
Indian		1		1	2%
Pakistani		1		1	2%
African	1			1	2%
Not stated	16	28	5	49	92%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>53</b>	
	34%	57%	9%		

#### Occupation

Teacher/Lecturer	9	17%
Other Education	6	11%
Foster Carer	8	15%
Residential Care Worker	2	4%
Other Social Care Worker	2	4%
Nurse	1	2%
Other Health Worker	1	2%
Priest / Minister	1	2%
Volunteer	1	2%
Other	15	28%
Not stated	7	13%

### Victim Details

Number of allegations where victim(s) identified: 43 81%

#### Ethnic Origin && Gender

	<u>Femal</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Not Stated</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Any other White background	1			1	2%
White and Black Caribbean		1		1	2%
Pakistani	1			1	2%
African	2			2	3%
Not stated	25	24	4	53	91%
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>58</b>	
	50%	43%	7%		

Number of allegations where victim(s) NOT identified: 10 19%

## Outcomes

### Conclusion Timescales

Currently not concluded	33	62%
0 - 1 months	12	23%
1 - 3 months	7	13%
3 - 12 months	1	2%

### Outcomes

NFA - Unfounded:	3	6%	Suspension:	4	8%	Strategy Discussion / Meeting:	14	26%
NFA - Unsubstantiated:	6	11%	Dismissal:	1	2%	NFA - After Strategy Discussion:	2	4%
NFA - Malicious:	0	0%	Cessation of Use:	0	0%	Caution:	0	0%
Section 47 Investigation:	1	2%	Disciplinary:	4	8%	Conviction:	0	0%
Criminal Investigation:	2	4%	Performance Management:	3	6%	Acquittal:	0	0%
NFA - After	1	2%	Criminal Prosecution:	0	0%	Referral to Regulatory		
Referral to Barring Board:	0	0%	Inclusion on Barring List:	0	0%			
Body:	1	2%						

APPENDIX 2

CWPT Health Visiting and School Nursing April 2011 - March 2012

Focus of Report	Specific area to be included	Findings	CWPT report findings completed by
Health Visiting and Nursing	Number of Health Visitor's in post WTE and actual no of WTE posts.	WTE 27 (Mar 2012) Actual wte Funded for : 31.2 (Mar 2012)	Jarina Rashid-Porter Head of Health Visiting Services Integrated Children's services & Ann Smith Manager Child & Family Services
Health Visiting and Nursing	Number of Health Visitor WTE vacancies  Number of SpN School Nurse WTE vacancies	6.4 leavers in year.  0	Jarina Rashid-Porter Head of Health Visiting Services Integrated Children's services & Ann Smith Manager Child & Family Services
Health Visiting and Nursing	Number of SpN School Nurse's in post WTE and actual no of WTE posts. Adjusted figures to take out Team Lead if purely for active safeguarding & CP activity.  Number of School Nurse's in post WTE and actual no of WTE posts.	10 staff WTE = 5.44 9 H/C = 4.63 wte  1.93 WTE -- Band 7 team leader 2 headcount 5.77 WTE ---- Band 6 9 headcount 6.17WTE ----- band 5 10 headcount Band 6 & 7 only carry child protection caseloads	Jarina Rashid-Porter Head of Health Visiting Services Integrated Children's services & Ann Smith Manager Child & Family Services

Focus of Report	Specific area to be included	Findings	CWPT report findings completed by
Health Visiting and Nursing	Number of SpN School Nurse WTE vacancies.  Number of School Nurse WTE vacancies	1.25 WTE.  Presently Band 5 1.25WTE	Ann Smith Manager Child & Family Services
Health Visiting and Nursing	Number of Student Health Visitors / school nurses in training  Number of school nurses in training	7 Sept '11. 2 Jan '12 Total 9 1.0 WTE	Jarina Rashid-Porter Head of Health Visiting Services Integrated Children's services & Ann Smith Manager Child & Family Services
Health Visiting and Nursing	% of posts vacant = Special School Nurse (SpN).  Number of school nurses	0  1.25	Jarina Rashid-Porter Health Visiting Services & Ann Smith Manager Child & Family Services
Health Visiting and Nursing	HV % filled by staff with more than three years post-qualifying experience.  Number of SpN School Nurse's % filled by staff with more than three years post-qualifying experience.  School Nurse's %	Approx 23  100%  100%	Jarina Rashid-Porter Head of Health Visiting Services & Ann Smith Manager Child & Family Services
Health Visiting and Nursing	Number of caseloads per HV  Number of SpN School Nurse's	Teams work with Corporate Caseloads. CP /CIN are allocated to specific HV.  366	Jarina Rashid-Porter Head of Health Visiting Services Integrated Children's services & Ann Smith Manager Child & Family Services



Focus of Report	Specific area to be included	Findings	CWPT report findings completed by
Health Visiting and Nursing	Number of caseload per team	Teams work with Corporate Caseloads. CP /CIN are allocated to specific HV.	Jarina Rashid-Porter Head of Health Visiting Services Integrated Children's services & Ann Smith Manager Child & Family Services
Health Visiting and Nursing	HV Number / % of Children / families on Care pathway 1, 2 and 3 for each geographical area.	Unable to provide information	Jarina Rashid-Porter Head of Health Visiting Services Integrated Children's services
Health Visiting and Nursing	Number of children / families where HV / SN is part of CAF process.  Number of SpN School Nurse's  School Nurses.	Unable to provide information.  26  For the last academic year school nurses were part of CAF with 101 families. At 2 July 2012 we are involved with 39 families (SN are only involved in CAFs where there are unresolved health issues with the children. We are invited to at least 2 times as many as this but we send apologies if there are not health issues)	Jarina Rashid-Porter Head of Health Visiting Services Integrated Children's services & Ann Smith Manager Child & Family Services
Health Visiting and Nursing	Number of children subject to CP plans for HV's and SN's.	As of 29/06/12  We have <b>481</b> children with child protection plans in place over all for Coventry	Carol Collins

Focus of Report	Specific area to be included	Findings	CWPT report findings completed by
	Number of SpN School Nurse's.  School Nurses	220 = are pre-school age (health visiting)  261 = are of school age.  5  267 on 2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2012.	Ann Smith Manager Child & Family Services
Health Visiting and Nursing	Number of primary / secondary schools / children per school nurse team	The whole team has 86 Primary Schools, 19 Secondary Schools, 6 Special Schools/ELCs	
Health Visiting and Nursing	% of CP/CIN plans in which there was 3 or more change/s of Health Visit.	Unable to provide information fro HV.	Jarina Rashid-Porter Head of Health Visiting Services Integrated Children's services
Health Visiting and Nursing	% of HV and SN posts carrying CP/CIN caseloads which have been agreed as being at a level that enables effective practice to take place.  SpNSN team work together across all 4 schools to support the CYP as required. Therefore caseloads are not easy to specify.  School Nurse	It is well acknowledged that the service is under resourced , however CP/CIN is always a priority.  208 across 2 x primary 158 across 2 x Secondary  All Band 6 and 7 carry heavy CP caseloads All caseloads are too heavy	Jarina Rashid-Porter Head of Health Visiting Services Integrated Children's services & Ann Smith Manager Child & Family Services
Health Visiting and Nursing	Turnover of Health Visitors in a year	24% in year	Jarina Rashid-Porter Head of Health Visiting Services Integrated Children's services & Ann Smith Manager Child &

<b>Focus of Report</b>	<b>Specific area to be included</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>CWPT report findings completed by</b>
			Family Services
Health Visiting and Nursing	Turnover of SpN School Nurses in a year  School Nurse	0  2 headcount turnover this academic year	Ann Smith Manager Child & Family Services
Health Visiting and Nursing	Number of posts which are filled but where staff are absent – sick leave / maternity leave.  Number of SpN School Nurse's  School Nurse	One HV on maternity leave from Aug 2011.  0  1 headcount 0.65 WTE	Jarina Rashid-Porter Head of Health Visiting Services Integrated Children's services & Ann Smith Manager Child & Family Services
Health Visiting and Nursing	Number of unallocated cases  School Nursing	Nil  All cases are allocated	Jarina Rashid-Porter Head of Health Visiting Services Integrated Children's services & Ann Smith Manager Child & Family Services

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## Public report Cabinet Member Report

16th October 2012

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**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member (Children, Learning and Young People) - Councillor J. O'Boyle

**Director Approving Submission of the report**

Director of Children, Learning and Young People - Colin Green

**Ward(s) affected:**

None

**Title:**

Adoption Service Annual Report and Statement of Purpose

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**Is this a key decision?**

No

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**Executive Summary:**

This report considers the work completed by Coventry Children, Learning & Young People's Directorate in respect of adoption during the year 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012.

Coventry's Adoption Service aims to provide a comprehensive adoption and post-adoption service, including the provision of Adoption Support Services to all parties affected by the adoption process consistent with best practice and national standards and requirements.

The council is committed to achieving the greatest number of adoptions with the best outcomes for the children concerned. In 2011-12, **25** children were adopted with **32** Adopters approved over this period.

The Adoption Service regulations require the Statement of Purpose to be reviewed, updated and modified where necessary at least annually. In the case of Local Authority Adoption Services it requires that the Statement of Purpose is formally approved by the elected members.

**Recommendations:**

- 2.1 That the Report 2011/2012 is accepted.
- 2.2 That the Statement of Purpose is approved.

**List of Appendices included:**

Appendix 1 – Coventry Adoption Service Annual Report

Appendix 2 – Adoption Statement of Purpose

Appendix 3 – Adoption Scorecard

**Other useful background papers:**

**Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?**

*No*

**Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?**

*No*

**Will this report go to Council?**

*No*

**Report title:**

**1. Context (or background)**

**The Adoption Service** involves the work of different teams. The Looked After Service Team recommend adoption plans and prepare and support children and families through the process of adoption.

**Coventry Adoption Service** is responsible for the recruitment, training, assessment and support of adopters and in home-finding for children with an adoption plan.

**Social workers** from the Looked After Service, Recruitment and Adoption Team are involved in linking children to specific adoptive families.

**Adoption Panel** is responsible for recommending and reviewing adoption plans for children, approving and terminating the approval of adopters and linking children to adopters. It also considers learning points from any disruptions in adoption placements.

## 2. Options considered and recommended proposal

That the Council is committed to achieving the greatest number of adoption placements compatible with achieving the best outcomes for the children concerned.

## 3. Results of consultation undertaken

### **Panel Feedback**

- 3.1 Feedback was received from **21 adopter couples** in relation to their experience of attending panel and being advised of the decision. The majority commented positively on their experience of attending panel and receiving the decision.

Comments included:

*"Questions were appropriate and non-threatening"*

*"Our experience was welcoming and supportive"*

*"It was a friendly and open experience and the questions were relevant and useful"*

*"The whole process has been extremely well managed. Thank you for a very professional experience"*

*"Very smooth and less scary when we were there"*

*"We were made to feel at ease and the process was explained"*

*"We felt all members of the panel put us at ease by laughing and thus relaxing any tension there might have been"*

- 3.2 Feedback was also received in relation to their experience of the timeliness of the appointment at panel. These were:

*"The waiting time from when we went into panel at 11.45 a.m. when we had a 10.30 appointment"*

*"We appreciate it is difficult to stick to exact appointment times, but waiting is the most difficult part of the experience so if you could improve this it would be beneficial for prospective adopters"*

Two comments were received about the time waiting for the final decision:

*"Decision maker took 3/4 weeks"*

*"I appreciate that our panel was near to Christmas but it is very frustrating to have to wait three weeks to receive confirmation and match from Head of Social Services"*

However other positive comments were received.

*"We were given the decision immediately on the same day"*

*"Informed of decision shortly after panel"*

This feedback will be considered by panel members and the Decision Maker to ensure there is a policy of continuous improvement.

## 4. Timetable for implementing this decision

The yearly review of the Statement of Purpose by the elected members of a Local Authority is a regulatory requirement under the Adoption Service Regulations.

## 5. Comments from Director of Finance and Legal Services

### 5.1 Financial Support (previously Adoption Allowance)

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Adoption Support Actual Spends	£683,109	£690,858	£821,418	£806,400	£757,119	£722,313
Number of children	124	123	124	123	113	118

- The Adoption Allowance Budget for April 2011 – March 2012 was **£707,688** and expenditure was **£722,313 - an overspend of £14,625**.
- This compares with an expenditure of **£757,119** in the previous year.
- **118** adopted children received ongoing financial support from Coventry in 2011/12 (compared with **113** 2010/11).

5.1.1 This budget is overspent because of historical financial packages to foster carers adopting. The Adoption Support Regulations 2003 and 2005 allow for flexibility, and following adjustments to new financial packages to adopters, on average, the cost per client reduced overall in 2011/12.

5.1.2 Proposals from the Fundamental Service Review (FSR) included further cost reductions in this area. In summary, for 2012/13, it is expected that the overall percentage of adopters receiving allowances will reduce from 44% of the cohort to 30%, and that better value post adoption support packages will be procured. The total part year saving for 2012/13 is £6,823. This budget is forecast to overspend by £38k at period 3 (July 2012). Further work is needed to review the current cohort and consider how this saving will be delivered.

5.1.3 Coventry is a member of the West Midlands Adoption consortium through which local authorities exchange resources when there is no suitable match for a child. The inter-agency budget for April 2011 – March 2012 was **£213,077**. The expenditure was **£257,330** but **£104,373** was received from other agencies who purchased our adopters, hence an underspend for 2011/12 of £60,120.

5.1.4 FSR proposals included an additional budget of **£111,202** for 2012/13, enabling the purchase of 7 new adoption placements from other Local authorities. Clearly, the plan was that this would reduce the number of looked after children more swiftly, enabling cost reductions in the placements budget. Spend at period 5 for this budget was only **£34,097**, indicating a significant shortfall on expectations. Further work is needed to ensure the purchase of adoption places is maximised by year end.

5.1.5 **5** other agency children were placed with **5** Coventry adopters. **11** Coventry children were placed with inter-agency adopters (4 single children, 2 sets of 2 and 1 set of 3 children). Of the **25** children adopted **4** were with inter-agency adopters. It is necessary to retain the existing level of inter-agency budget given the large increase in children with a plan for adoption.



## Financial Assistance for Adopters

- 5.1.6 Financial assistance for adopters is available through the Pathways to Care funding – for building alterations/extensions, the purchase of a more suitable property or vehicle. Pathways funding has successfully enabled a number of children to be adopted who would otherwise not have been placed.
- 5.1.7 In this reporting period there was a spend of **£5,000** towards the cost of a vehicle for foster carers adopting **2** children with extensive health needs.

## 5.2 Legal implications

- 5.2.1 The 2011 Statutory Adoption Guidance and the 2011 Adoption Minimum Standards place a requirement on local authority adoption services to ensure that the executive side of the Council receives a written report on the management, outcomes and financial state of the adoption agency every 6 months to satisfy themselves that the agency is effective and is achieving good outcomes for children and/or service users.
- 5.2.2 They must also satisfy themselves that the agency is complying with the conditions of registration (Minimum Standard 25.6; Statutory Adoption Guidance 3.3, and 5.39).
- 5.2.3 The Statement of Purpose should fulfil the requirement of Standard 18 of the Adoption National Minimum Standards 2011, Regulation 2 of the Local Authority Adoption Services (England) Regulations 2003, Adoption support agencies (England) and adoption agencies regulations 2005 and the Adoption & Children Act 2002.

## 6. Other implications

None

### 6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?

- 6.1.1 The work of the Adoption Service supports the key priority outcome in the Council Plan for "*Coventry, proud to be a city that works... to support and celebrate our young people*" in particular in the objective "*Children are supported to live safe from harm*".
- 6.1.2 The Adoption Service contributes to the wellbeing of children through arranging for a permanent placement for a child whose own family is unable to provide care. It supports a key role that the Local Authority plays as a Corporate Parent, of securing appropriate family placements for Looked After Children, as an effective means of giving them the best life chances possible.

### 6.2 How is risk being managed?

- 6.2.1 Failure to provide an effective Adoption Service would lead to Coventry's Looked After Children staying in care longer, and potentially being placed further away from the city.
- 6.2.2 This risk is being managed through the delivery of the Fundamental Service Review of Fostering and Adoption, which is examining how to increase the number of children adopted each year effectively.

### **6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?**

The Adoption Service contributes to Children's Social Care Services performance (within the Directorate of Children, Learning and Young People) against key Indicators that are closely scrutinised both internally and externally on an ongoing basis.

An OFSTED Inspection provides a robust critical analysis of the performance of the Adoption Service, and in setting requirements and recommendations for improvement assists the Service to focus on continuous improvement.

### **6.4 Equalities / EIA**

An Equality Impact Needs Assessment has been undertaken by the service.

### **6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment**

None

### **6.6 Implications for partner organisations?**

None

**Report author(s):**

**Nicky Hale, Interim Head of Service, Looked After Children, CLYP, 024 7683 3063**

**James Lawrence, Programmes and Projects Manager, CLYP, 024 7683 4337**

Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

<b>Contributor/approver name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Directorate or organisation</b>	<b>Date doc sent out</b>	<b>Date response received or approved</b>
<b>Contributors:</b>				
Nicky Hale	Interim Head of Service, Looked After Children	CLYP	24.09.12	1.10.12
James Lawrence	Programmes and Projects Manager	CLYP	24.09.12	1.10.12
<b>Names of approvers: (officers and members)</b>				
Colin Green	Director of Children, Learning & Young People	CLYP	25.09.12	1.10.12
Andy Pepper	Assistant Director of Children, Learning & Young People – Children's Social Care	CLYP	25.09.12	1.10.12
Eileen West	Lead Accountant	CLYP, Finance & Legal Services Directorate	25.09.12	2.10.12
Julie Newman	Solicitor	CLYP, Finance & Legal Services Directorate	25.09.12	2.10.12
Neelesh Sutaria	Human Resources Manager	CLYP	25.09.12	25.09.12

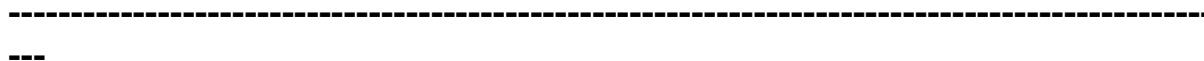
This report is published on the council's website:

[www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings)

## Appendix 1



## Public report



### Adoption Service Annual Report 2011-2012

October 2012

#### Authors:

Nicky Hale, Interim Head of Service, Looked After Children  
James Lawrence, Programmes and Projects Manager

#### 3. Introduction

- 3.1 This report considers the work completed by Coventry Children, Learning & Young People's Directorate in respect of Adoption during the year 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012.
- 3.2 The Coventry Adoption Service is responsible for the recruitment, training, assessment and support of adopters and in home-finding for children with an adoption plan.
- 3.3 The Adoption Panel is responsible for recommending and reviewing adoption plans for children, approving and terminating the approval of adopters and linking children to adopters. It also considers learning points from any disruptions in adoption placements.
- 3.4 During 2011/12, there were **22** applications received from perspective adopters and **25** children were adopted during the year. Furthermore, **48** children were placed for adoption during the year.

#### 4. Annexes

**Annex 1 – Adoption Case study**

**Annex 2 – Coventry Adoption Panel**

## 5. Overall Performance

The following table sets out the performance of the Adoption Service

Key performance indicators	2011-2012
<b>ADOPTION APPLICATIONS</b>	
General Adoption enquiries received by Recruitment Team	<b>221</b> (224 in 2010/11)
From telephone discussions, number of enquirers sent information packs	<b>88</b>
Initial visits made	<b>31</b> (41 in 2010/11)
Applications received	<b>22</b> (25 in 2010/11)
<b>ADOPTERS</b>	
Number of Adopters approved over the period	<b>32</b> (26 in 2010/11)
Number of Adopters awaiting matching with children	<b>22</b> by March 2012 (21 in 2010/11)
<b>CHILDREN'S PROGRESS</b>	
Children's plans taken to panel	<b>50</b> (61 in 2010/11)
Children confirmed with adoption need	<b>48</b> (56 in 2010/11)
Children placed for adoption in year	<b>48</b> (27 in 2010/11)
Children adopted during year	<b>25</b> (23 in 2010/11)
Disruptions of placement	1

## 6. Referrals/enquiries to the agency

**6.1** **221** general adoption enquiries were received by the Recruitment Team, Coventry Fostering & Adoption Service. After initial telephone discussions, **88** requested and received an information pack.

**6.2** **46** prospective adopters wished to take their interest further, but **7** of these were counselled out before the initial visit and a further 8 after the initial visit. **31** initial visits were made.

- 6.3** There were a number of reasons for counselling out prospective adopters with some choosing to withdraw, others circumstances changing and others choosing to pursue other options. Reasons include:

Before initial visit	After initial visit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns regarding mental health</li> <li>• Pursuing adoption in Warwickshire</li> <li>• Going to university, couple withdrew</li> <li>• Not living together for 2 years</li> <li>• Couple withdrew – made redundant</li> <li>• Moved out of area</li> <li>• Counselling out – concerns regarding the needs of their own children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Couple withdrew</li> <li>• Decided not to proceed for specific child</li> <li>• Withdrew</li> <li>• Counselling out – work and other commitments, lack of support network</li> <li>• Language difficulties</li> <li>• Lack of accommodation</li> <li>• More fertility treatment</li> <li>• Mental health issues</li> </ul>

## 7. Recruitment

### Targeting

- 7.1** Key target areas for adoption recruitment this year continued to be sibling groups, older children, black children and those of mixed heritage. These target groups are also the hardest to place children throughout the UK.
- 7.2** Recruitment activity for adoptive parents continued to be targeted outside the immediate Coventry City area, as there is an ongoing request from social workers for out of area placements to maintain the safety and anonymity of children.
- 7.3** During 2011-12, Adoption Information Evenings were held in May 2011, November 2011, and February 2012. **45** prospective adopters were invited and **35** attended.

### Marketing

- 7.4** The Governance Board approved a Marcoms budget for adoption of **£16,599** of the £30,000 in 2010-2011. The spend was **£16,395**. It had been hoped to expand out of City advertising following the success of, for example, advertising on buses across Warwickshire in 2009 – 2010. The focus would have been to expand on attracting prospective adopters who had already raised a birth family in order to place sibling groups and older children.
- 7.5** All Marcoms activity currently takes place in areas outside Coventry but within an hour's drive. This includes Leamington, Warwick, Stratford, Rugby, Solihull, Hinckley and surrounding areas. The number of towns within the catchment area provides a wider choice of media – particularly local newspapers and magazines – but also means that the budget has to stretch further to reach prospective adopters.
- 7.6** By advertising in these areas Coventry Adoption Service is in direct competition with neighbouring local authorities/voluntary agencies. Media relations are also more challenging because local newspapers see Coventry stories as less relevant to their readership than adoption stories from their own council. Adoption enquiries increased in November as is usual with the increased publicity of National Adoption Week.

**7.7** The website continued to generate the largest number of responses however many of these are generated by adverts which promote the adoption web address and drive visitors to the site.

## **8. Preparation Groups**

**8.1** Preparation Groups, run by the Recruitment and Adoption Support Teams, are offered to prospective adopters and 4 sets were run in May, June, October 2011 and January 2012. The groups take place over 4 days, and include presentations and exercises for applicants on issues to consider in adoption, including anxieties for adopters about contact with birth relatives.

**8.2** A total of **29** sets of applicants attended these groups. Of these

Ethnicity	<b>26</b> sets of applicants were White British 1 WB / Irish 1 WB / African Caribbean 1 WB / Pakistani
Sexuality	<b>27</b> were heterosexual couples (of whom <b>4</b> sets were foster carers wishing to adopt children already in placement with them), <b>1</b> single heterosexual woman <b>1</b> female same sex couple
Location	All live outside the city
Parental status	<b>22</b> sets of applicants were childless couples <b>7</b> sets of applicants were already parents / step-parents

Of the **29** who went to groups **2** couples withdrew (leaving a pool of 27 couples)

## **9. Adopters**

**9.1** The Service seeks to recruit a pool of adopters to meet the needs of a wide range of children. However, throughout the country there is an over supply of potential adopters who are childless seeking younger children. Often there is a mismatch between the aspirations of adopters, their capacity to care for children with complex needs and the needs of children awaiting a family. Annex 1 has a case study of adopters of two boys with complex needs.

**9.2** Other factors that mitigate against matching include:

- Children often needing to be placed out of City for their welfare.
- A number of adopters not able to take older children, sibling groups.
- The ethnic mix of children and adopters being diverse.
- Adopters being able to refer themselves to the National Adoption Register as soon as approved.
- Adopters not necessarily being available at the exact time we wish to place a child for adoption, as recruitment is constant and we cannot delay plans for children.

**9.3** Adoption Panel approved **32** Adopters during the reporting period of which **25** were general adopters and **7** were approvals with specific children in mind. This is **6** more than 2010/11. Annex 2 includes details about the Coventry Adoption Panel.

**9.4** **22** Adopters were awaiting matching at the end of March 2012, **1** less than 2010/11.

## **10. Children**

### **Children placed for Adoption**

**10.1** **48** children were placed for adoption in the year, compared to **27** in 2010/11.

**10.2** **50** children had their adoption plans recommended by Panel. Of these:

- **5** plans changed to long-term fostering (some in the next reporting period)
- **5** returned to grandparents
- **3** were rehabilitated to their mother
- **3** remained with the foster carer on Special Guardianship Orders
- **2** moved abroad with their grandmother
- **2** returned home and **1** is possibly being placed with a grandparent

**10.3** This left **29** children with an adoption plan for family finding.

### **Children Adopted during the year**

**10.4** **25** children were adopted during 2011/12 including 21 White British children, 1 White Asian and 1 White Caribbean child.

**10.5** Of the **25** children, **4** were placed with interagency adopters and **21** with Coventry adopters.

<b>Type of adoption</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>
<b>4</b> with Interagency adopters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 White British children placed with 3 White British couples</li> <li>• 1 White/Caribbean child placed with a White British couple</li> </ul>
<b>21</b> with Coventry adopters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 White/Asian child placed with a W/B couple</li> <li>• 17 WB children placed with W/B couples</li> <li>• 1 White British child placed with a WB/Irish/Spanish couple</li> <li>• 2 White/Caribbean children placed with a WB couple</li> </ul>

**10.6** There was 1 disruption of a placement for adoption 8 weeks after placement in the reporting period, and child matched with adopters who withdrew just prior to linking.

**10.7** The Disrupted case was of a child of nearly 2 years old, placed with Coventry adopters. There was good preparation for this placement, adopters were managed well but one of the adopters was not able to make the adjustment to adoption. There were also difficulties in reconciling the needs of the adopted child compared to their



birth children.

**10.8** In the other case the female adopter did not attach to the child despite full preparation and large amounts of support. The Adopters were fully briefed but changed their minds.

**10.9** There were no particular learning experiences for Adoption Panel with regard to this placement which disrupted or the one that did not go ahead. Factors such as the age of child upon placement for adoption and capacity to attach as a result of early life experiences are risk factors in making placements for adoption. However the Adoption Service is committed to careful matching, avoidance of drift and has excellent adoption support services for all placements for adoption. Coventry has a good record of minimal disruptions and higher risk placements are identified and well supported

## **11. Financial Issues**

See Cabinet Report 16 October 2012 for details.

## **12. Complaints, compliments and comments**

- No complaints were received during the reporting period April 2011 – March 2012.
- 12 compliments were received during the reporting period April 2011 – March 2012. 10 were in relation to the work of individual staff in the Adoption Team and 2 were general compliments for the Adoption Team and Post Adoption Team.

### 13. Statutory guidance timescales

There are prescribed timescales for progressing plans for adoption for children, approving prospective adopters and placing children for adoption. The table below indicates how Coventry is meeting these timescales:

#### Statutory Guidance Targets

<b>PROGRESSING PLANS FOR ADOPTION FOR CHILDREN</b>			
<b>Statutory Guidance</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Performance</b>
"Children's adoption plans are presented to Adoption Panel within <b>2 months</b> of the review recommending adoption"	2 months	<b>48</b> children  50 children brought to Panel, 2 children recommended for long term fostering	<b>24</b> children out of <b>48</b> within 2 months (50%)  <b>Note</b> <b>35</b> out of <b>48</b> within 3 months <b>46</b> out of <b>48</b> within 6 months <b>All</b> within 10 months
"National Minimum Standards (Standard 13) Timescale between agency decision for the plan for adoption to the date of placement – Standard is <b>12 months</b> "	12 months	<b>48</b> children placed with adopters	<b>27</b> children placed within 12 months of the decision for adoption (56%)
"Notification to Birth Parents of a Plan for Adoption, Linking with Adopters – orally within 48 hours of Decision and in writing within a further 5 days ( <b>7 days</b> )"	-	-	LAC Social workers have responsibility for informing Birth Parents orally following the Panel meeting
Decision maker – Adoption decisions	Notification 7 days from decision	Adoption decisions  <b>50</b> plans for adoption	<b>56%</b> adoptions decisions communicated within 7 working days
Decision maker – Matching decisions	Notification 7 days from decision	Matching decisions  <b>50</b> plans for adoption	<b>61%</b> of matching decisions communicated within 7 working days
<b>RECRUITMENT</b>			
<b>Statutory Guidance</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Performance</b>

<p>"Written information about the adoption process should be sent within 5 working days to the prospective adopter in response to their enquiry"</p>	<p><b>5 working days</b></p>	<p><b>221</b> general adoption enquiries</p> <p>After telephone discussion, <b>88</b> families requested an information pack</p>	<p><b>88</b> packs sent out same day as the enquiry</p>
<p>"The prospective adopter should be invited to an adoption information evening meeting within 2 months of their enquiry".</p> <p>&gt; Information evening held every 3 months &gt; Prospective adopters offered initial visit within 10 days (internal timescale)</p>	<p><b>2 months</b> from initial enquiry</p>	<p><b>33</b> families who requested a visit (initially <b>46</b> families were interested in pursuing their interest)</p>	<p><b>33</b> families who requested a visit were visited within 10 days</p>
<p>"From receipt of an initial enquiry form being received (after receiving an information pack) – to be allocated within 5 days".</p>	<p><b>5 days</b></p>	<p>none</p>	<p>Target was met</p>

<b>APPROVAL OF ADOPTERS</b>			
<b>Statutory Guidance</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Performance</b>
Adopters must be approved, 8 months from application to recommendation by Adoption Panel	<b>8 months</b>	<b>32</b> adopters approved to adopt	<b>15</b> completed within 8 months (47%)  <b>9</b> completed between 9-11 months  <b>8</b> took over 12 months
6 weeks from completion of Adopters Report to Adoption Panel	<b>6 weeks</b>	<b>none</b>	Timescale was achieved
Notifying Adopters of Decision for Approval, within 24 hours of the Panel recommendation (National standards)  Statutory Guidance = <b>48 hours</b> Coventry – all adopters notified of the Panel's recommendations within <b>24 hours</b> of attending panel by Social Worker & Panel Chair, and receive letter	<b>24 hours</b>	<b>32</b> letters of notification	<b>17</b> sent out letters same day or within 1 day  <b>15</b> within 2-7 days  All adopters notified verbally.

### **Progressing Plans for Adoption for Children**

**13.1** **50** children were brought to Panel with a plan for adoption, **2** of which were recommended as long-term fostering. Approximately half (**24**) of children's adoption plans were presented to Adoption Panel within **2** months of the review recommending adoption. Over three-quarters of children's plans (81%) for adoption were presented to Adoption Panel within 4 months. This is a better outcome than 2010 – 2011 when **68%** of children's plans were presented to Adoption Panel within 4 months of the review.

**13.2** Adoption Panel monitor the reasons for delay and the most common are delays in receiving background medical information, time taken to transfer cases to the Looked After Service Teams (this has been substantially helped by the co-working between the Neighbourhood and Looked After Children Teams) and the complex needs of children and sibling groups. The latter often require further work to establish whether adoption is the right plan and whether siblings should be separated or not. Sometimes family and friends come forward for assessment late in the process. All of these reasons pertain to this group of children.

**13.3** Of the **48** children placed with adopters, **27** (56%) were placed within 12 months of the decision for adoption. The **21** that took longer were for a variety of reasons including the complex needs of the child, children requiring therapy prior to placement, breakdowns and financial issues. The specific challenges are included below:

<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
12 – 20 months	3 lots of 2 siblings 1 placed with sibling's adopters in Wales, delay in finalising the plans and linking 1 complex needs 1 initial identified adopter requested further information, said no to child and was ruled out
20 – 30 months	1 sibling group of 2 required therapy prior to placement Single child disrupted 3 weeks into adoptive placement and second adopter withdrew Single child 1 year delay to achieve Placement Order
30 – 40 months	Sibling group of 3 breakdown in introductions at the point of placement when this group was being placed as part of a group of 5 children Sibling group of 2 children with considerable health needs. Problems with funding and arrangements for extension/house move
40 + months	1 child placed for adoption later went on to be made the subject of a Special Guardianship Order. 1 sibling group of 2, older children harder to identify adopters

### **Statutory Guidelines - Recruitment**

**13.4** Recruitment operates a duty system and an information pack is usually sent out the same day as the enquiry. Of the **221** initial enquiries, following telephone discussion **88** information packs were sent out within the statutory guidelines of 5 working days. Of the **46** families who, on being contacted, wished to pursue their interest, **33** requested a visit and were visited within 10 days of receipt of Local Authority checks.

### **Statutory Guidelines - Approval of Adopters**

**13.5** In 2011-12, **32** adopters were approved to adopt, **15** within the 8 month statutory timescale, **9** within 9-11 months and **9** over 12 months. There were a variety of reasons for delay including Social worker absence (due to personal circumstances, sickness or annual leave), delays in accessing medical information, and Police checks.

**13.6** Once an application has been accepted an adopter now has the opportunity to access either the Council's Representative Procedure (if they are not recommended) – or the Independent Reviewing Mechanism. One set of adopters requested a review of this Agency's "Qualifying Determination" by the Independent Review Panel. This Panel made the same recommendation as this Agency.

## **14. Future direction of the Adoption Service**

**14.1** In July 2012 the Adoption teams amalgamated with the Fostering teams in line with the recommendations made by the full service review completed earlier this year. The 'Adoption Service now forms part of the larger 'Family Placement service'. This service has been divided in to functional groups:

- Recruitment and Assessment
- Family Finding
- Placement Support

These three teams will carry out all the functions of the previously split service.

**14.2** In bringing the service together it is anticipated that there is greater scope for processing assessments more quickly, 6 months for adoption assessments from enquiry to approval.

**14.3** The development of a Family Finding team will mean that the information about children needing adoptive placements will be available to the service at a much earlier point in a child's journey this will influence recruitment strategies and lead to greater number of specific assessments.

**14.4** The service as a whole has revised all its twin track and parallel planning processes following Coventry's apparent low adoption score card in order to ensure that children who can be placed as soon as possible are.

**14.5** All prospective adopters are now being approached to consider dual approval as adopters and foster carers for very young children, so that in a small number of cases children will be placed before their placement order is made, under foster care regulations, and while their permanence plan remains unresolved.

**14.6** Over the past two years there have been several children adopted by their foster carers in Coventry, the service has therefore reviewed the decision not to recruit adopters from Coventry and decided to once again offer adoption assessments to those who live locally. The service anticipates that this should assist with recruitment.

**14.7** In line with national figures the number of children needing adoption placements has continue to rise. The service will continue to focus recruitment activity on sibling groups and older children.

**14.8** The service has identified a number of immediate recruitment issues including the need to review and update the web site and to improve the standard of information that is sent to initial enquirers. Response times and other practices have been reviewed to stream line the service and bring applicants through in a more timely manner.

**Annex 1 – Adoption Case Study of two boys under 5, with an application from their Foster Carers**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>White British</b>
<b>Legal status</b>	<b>Made subject of Placement orders Dec 2008</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>Both boys have complex needs</b>
<b>History</b>	<p>The boys have been placed with their current Foster Carers a White British couple in their 40's, since discharge from hospital following their birth.</p> <p>Both boys have complex needs with significant disabilities for which they receive co-ordinated care packages and the dedicated care of their Foster Carers.</p> <p>The Panel were asked to decide whether the boys should be linked to their current Foster Carers who had looked after the boys for around 3 years, with a view to Adoption.</p>
<b>Panel decision</b>	<p><b>Medical issues</b></p> <p>The Panel considered the medical prognosis for the boys who had a range of complex medical issues that require constant attention. They also have mobility issues. The Board heard of the support package that the boys are receiving from the NHS and Social Care.</p> <p><b>The Foster Carers</b></p> <p>The Board considered the Fosters Carer's suitability as Adopters. The Panel noted that there was a strong relationship between the boys, they interacted naturally with the foster care's own children and were very much part of the family.</p> <p>The Foster carers were meeting medical needs of the children well and were aware of potential future medical challenges. They had been supported well by their family and others organisations.</p> <p>The Panel asked the Foster Carers what they found most rewarding and challenging about caring for the boys and were told that it was seeing them grow and progress.</p> <p>After the foster carers left the Panel, Panel Members noted what a pleasure it was to meet the foster carers – they clearly had a very strong relationship, knew the boys well and their dedication, skills and care of the them was exceptional. They were committed to supporting contact with boy's siblings, had a remarkable amount of resilience which had helped them with the medical challenges.</p> <p><b>Other options</b></p> <p>Viability assessments had been undertaken on the birth parents and members of the paternal family and these people were ruled out as potential carers.</p>

	<p><b>Decision</b></p> <p>The Foster carers were recommended by the Panel for approval as adopters on the basis that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- they were experienced parents and can cope with complex needs as required</li><li>- they were resilient and realistic about what may lie ahead</li><li>- they had a long standing supportive relationship</li><li>- the children were already an integral part of the family</li><li>- they were very committed to these specific children</li></ul>
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## **Annex 2 – Coventry Adoption Panel**

### **Frequency**

Adoption Panel meets every two weeks throughout the year with occasional additional panels due to the volume of work.

### **Chair and Vice chair**

Julian Cunningham was appointed as Independent Chair in May 2011. Julian has brought a wealth of experience from his Senior Manager experience with other NHS and Children's Social Care agencies and as Chair of a wide range of children's meetings.

Andrew Bell, currently Coventry's Children's Complaints Officer, continues as Vice Chair of Adoption Panel. He has significant experience of adoption work as a panel member, former manager of children's social work teams and through chairing the panel when required.

### **Composition of Panel**

The composition of Adoption Panel is a mix of professional, independent, medical and legal persons. This is a requirement by regulation and enables Panel business to be conducted with the benefit of a range of perspectives. This includes the views of a former foster carer, social workers with a very wide variety of experience and a City Councillor in addition to a Medical, Legal and Panel Adviser.

The Elected Member on Adoption Panel provides a link between the council and the needs of adopted children in Coventry.

Adoption Panel has implemented plans to put into practice the changed Regulations regarding Panel Membership. This includes affording Adoption Panels greater flexibility in the way they operate to avoid delay, for example, the introduction of a Central List of Panel Members.

### **Adopters**

Adopters are invited to attend Adoption Panel for approval and matching with a child. This has really helped in forming recommendations.

### **Feedback from Adopters**

All adopters are invited to feedback their comments and about half the feedback forms sent out were received in this reporting period. These are consistently complimentary about the experience of Panel and the adoption process. Sometimes adopters acknowledge how daunting attending Panel is but they are appreciative of meeting the Chair beforehand and generally do not feel anymore can be done to prepare them.

### **Communication**

A leaflet about the Panel is given to adopters prior to the meeting by their social worker and great efforts are made to avoid keeping prospective adopters waiting. Inevitably on occasions an item will take longer than expected and Panel Adviser / Chair will keep prospective adopters updated during the Panel about this.



## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE OF COVENTRY CITY ADOPTION SERVICE

### 1.00 Background:

Pursuant to the Local Authority Adoption Service (England) Regulations 2003, as amended by the Local Authority Adoption Service (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2005 every adoption agency has to produce a Statement of Purpose and is required to review the Statement of Purpose. It is against these key documents that the Adoption Service is inspected by Ofsted. The Statement of Purpose of the Agency is considered and formally approved by the Cabinet Member responsible for Children, Learning and Young People.

The Statement of Purpose accurately reflects the policies, procedures and guidance of the Adoption Agency and is available to anyone seeking a copy. Staff working in the Agency each receive a copy of the Statement of Purpose.

### 2.00 The Statement of Purpose covers the following matters

- The aims, values and principles of Coventry Adoption Service
- The functions of the Adoption Service, including the service users, and activities of the agency.
- The name, qualification and experience of the manager of the service.
- Information about the organisation and staffing of the service.
- Systems to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and quality of the services provided.
- Procedures for recruiting, preparing, assessing, approving and supporting adopters.
- Information about the complaints procedure.
- The address and telephone number of Ofsted.

### 3.00 The Aim of Coventry's Adoption Service

Coventry's Adoption Service aims to provide a comprehensive adoption and post-adoption service, including the provision of Adoption Support Services to all parties affected by the adoption process consistent with best practice and national standards and requirements.

The Adoption Service aims to provide services that are appropriate and tailored to the particular needs of service users and people affected by adoption. In particular potential service users are welcomed without prejudice and given clear information on the services provided by the agency.

The aim of the Adoption Service is consistent with Coventry City Council's duty towards children who are looked after, where adoption is the plan, by ensuring that they are placed with families who can offer them safe and effective care for the duration of their childhood. In particular, the Adoption Service seeks to safeguard and promote the physical, mental and emotional welfare of people affected by adoption who wish to use its services

Coventry Adoption Service aims to find adoptive homes for all children looked after in Coventry who require a permanent family through adoption.

To achieve this aim Coventry Adoption Service aims to recruit at least 25 adopters each year. Where children cannot be placed within the agencies own resources the Service will seek to make arrangements with other Adoption Agencies to secure placements for children.

#### **4.00 Values of the Adoption Service**

- The Service believes that children are entitled to grow up as part of a loving family which can meet their needs during childhood and beyond.
- The Service affirms that where possible it is best that children are brought up by their own birth family
- The Service will consider the child's welfare, safety and needs as the paramount considerations and at the centre of the adoption process.
- The Service considers the child's wishes and feelings and takes them into account at all stages.
- The Service seeks to avoid delays in adoption to minimise impact on the health and development of children.
- The Service aims to respond promptly to the requests of and work with people affected by adoption, being respectful of their ethnic origin, religion, culture, language, sexuality, gender and disability, and their experience and understanding of adoption.
- The Service takes account of and values children's ethnic origin, cultural background, religion, and language when decisions are made.
- The Service aims to ensure the particular needs of disabled children are fully recognised and taken into account when decisions are made.
- The Service values and respects the role of adoptive parents in offering a permanent family to a child who cannot live with their birth family.
- The Service understands that adoption has lifelong implications for all involved and requires lifelong commitment from many different organisations, professions and individuals. The Service works with others to meet the needs for services of those affected by adoption. Where the service provision involves an adopted adult and their birth relatives it is the wishes and feelings of the adopted adult that take precedence.
- The Service works in partnership with local government, other statutory agencies and voluntary adoption agencies to ensure that these standards are delivered and that the needs of service users are met effectively.

#### **5.00 Principles of the Adoption Service**

- Respect for the confidentiality of all those involved.
- Children's needs are placed first in all decision-making and actions.
- Services will not discriminate against groups or individuals.
- Services will be delivered effectively, efficiently and with the avoidance of delay.
- There is a commitment to monitor and review services.
  
- There is a commitment to involve users in the ongoing review and development of the service. The service consults service users on decisions in relation to their service provision and both seeks and welcomes feedback, and considers this feedback in its management and development of the service.
- The Agency, as a function of Coventry City Council, has written policies and procedures in place for working with service users with physical, sensory and learning impairments, for whom English is not the first language. There is a commitment to ensure that

communications take due account of physical, sensory and learning impairments, communication difficulties and language of children, birth parents/guardians, prospective/adoptive parents and staff. Arrangements are made through appropriate interpreters for those who are unable to understand a document to have it read, translated or explained to them.

## **6.00 Who Receives Adoption Services**

Adoption Services are provided to: -

- Children who are to be adopted.
- Birth parents or guardians.
- Prospective and approved adopters and adoptive siblings including those who are seeking to adopt from overseas.
- Children and their adoptive parents who require Adoption Support Services.
- Adopted adults and members of their birth families.
- Step-parents wishing to adopt.
- Private adoption applicants.

## **7.00 Overview of the Work of the Adoption Service.**

- To provide a child/children/young person with a permanent family by adoption, which will meet the child's need for stability, security, love and a resource into their adulthood and beyond.
- Recruitment, assessment, training, preparation and support of a range of prospective adoptive parents to meet the placement needs of Coventry children.
- Assistance to locality social workers in counselling pregnant women who wish to place their baby for adoption.
- Making available counselling and support either within the service or by external referral for all birth families with an adoption plan for their children.
- Ensuring children are supported throughout the adoption process, appropriately engaged, involved, prepared and offered counselling commensurate with their age and understanding.
- Schedule 2 counselling for adopted adults and access to Section 98 Intermediary Services.
- Assessment, preparation, training and support for people who wish to adopt a child from abroad whether in-house or via referral to other agencies.
- Providing advice and consultation to locality workers working with a child and family where adoption is the plan.
- Preparing reports for Adoption Panel and courts on aspects of adoption work.
- Preparing reports and attending other Local Authority Adoption Panels and courts regarding aspects of adoption work.
- Preparing reports and attending other Local Authority Adoption Panels where a match has been recommended for a Coventry approved family.
- Offering of an Adoption Support Service after placement and after an order has been made in accordance with Adoption Support Regulations 2005.
- Participation in the West Midlands Regional Family Placement Consortium including the exchange of approved applicants to facilitate the placement of children.
- Joint working and partnership arrangements with other local authorities/agencies to maximise the aims of Coventry Adoption Service.

## **8.00 The Name, Qualifications and Experience of the Manager**

**Manager:** Sue Goy  
Responsible Manager of the Adoption Service

Coventry Children Learning and Young People Directorate  
Adoption Service  
Stoke House  
Lloyd Crescent  
Coventry  
CV2 5NY

Tel no: 024 76785636/38

**Qualifications:** B.A.(Hons) Social Science 1975  
PGCE 1977  
Awarded CQSW in 1980.  
MA 1981  
NVQ4 Completion date December 2008

**Experience:** Sue Goy has worked in various authorities in England in the field of social work since 1974. Her posts include those of Social Worker, Education Social Worker, Senior Caseworker, Practice Teacher, Guardian–ad-Litem and Manager in Coventry Fostering and Adoption Service from January 2000. Sue also has experience as a Lecturer and Tutor in social work courses for 8 years.

**Most recent Experience in Fostering and Adoption - Coventry City Council Family Placement Service 1992-2000**

1. Senior Caseworker Fostering and Adoption Service including specific responsibility for respite projects.
2. Manager – Special Projects Coordinator – 2000-2003
3. Adoption Team Manager – 2003-01.04.2008
4. Responsible Manager from 01.04.2008

### **9.00 Structure of the Adoption Service.**

- Looked After Service Teams are responsible for the arrangements for children and undertake all case management including discussion with birth family members where adoption is the plan for the child. Independent counselling and support of birth parents is available through a commissioned service offered by St Francis' Children's Society in line with the Adoption Regulations. Children's Case management is initiated within the Neighbourhood Teams with the practice of joint working with the Looked After Service to progress adoption plans once rehabilitation is ruled out.
- The Adoption Service has 3 teams, Recruitment, Adoption and Adoption Support. The Recruitment Team is responsible for recruiting foster carers and adopters. This team works with adoption enquirers to determine initial eligibility, delivers pre application training, and helps those who confirm their interest in adoption to complete their application. The Adoption Team arranges for the assessment, any additional training and support of adopters, arranges Adoption Panel activity, makes arrangements for adoptive placements, supports new families through to adoption.
- Currently the Adoption Teams are led by 2 Team Managers responsible to the named Manager of the Adoption Service who has overall responsibility for the Recruitment, Adoption and Adoption Support Teams. Managers are responsible for supervising the work of the teams' social workers, all of whom are qualified. The majority of social workers are Senior Caseworkers who satisfy the requirements within the Preparation of Adoption Reports Regulations 2005 (which includes 3 years post qualification experience in child care social work, including direct experience of adoption work). Staff who have not yet achieved that level of qualification are supervised by a staff member who has met the requirement.

- The staff involved in the service have a wide range of experience of working in the field of child-care and family placement, including international experience.
- Staff come from diverse backgrounds, including White British and Asian heritage.

### **10.00 Staffing of the Adoption Service**

The Adoption Service consists of the following staff:

**Responsible Manager** who is the overall Manager of the Adoption Service.

**Recruitment Team** (who also cover Fostering Recruitment) consisting of a

0.5 Team Manager

1 x Senior Practitioner (p/t)

3 x FTE Social Worker posts

1 x p/t Publicity/Assistant Communications Officer (access to)

**Adoption Team** consisting of

1 x Team Manager

4 x FTE Social Worker posts

1 x P/t Social Work post

1 Senior Practitioner (p/t)

**Adoption Support Team**

1 0.5 Team Manager

1 0.4 Senior Practitioner

3 x FTE Social Work posts

1 x p/t Social Worker post

1 x p/t (10 hrs) – Birth Records Counselling

**Adoption Admin Support section**

1 x Adoption Panel Administrator	} <u>Access to but part of joint hub with the Fostering Service</u>
3 x f/t Clerical Officers	
<u>2</u> x p/t (18.5 hrs) Clerical Officers	

One Team Manager acts as Professional Adviser to the Adoption Panel when the Manager of the Adoption Service is unable to.

### **11.00 Monitoring Arrangements to ensure effectiveness and quality**

- Arrangements are in place to ensure that the service provided by the Adoption Service is effective and that the quality of the service is of an appropriate standard.
- The Statement of Purpose and Annual Report are considered by the Cabinet Member for Social Care each year and subject to Cabinet Scrutiny process.
- A summary of progress against adoption targets is contained within the quarterly report of the Directorate and considered by Cabinet each quarter.
- Managers provide monthly performance information in respect of their team.
- Adoption Service targets are reported on within the Quality Improvement Framework for the Directorate.

- All staff have regular supervision provided within the framework of a supervision agreement. There is an annual performance appraisal system in place.
- Information about children and prospective adoptive families is contained within the CHARMS database and the Teams Adoption Tracking Database and on Protocol.
- The annual report covering the activity and performance of the Adoption Team is presented each year to the Adoption Panel.
- Prospective adopters are interviewed at the end of the preparation groups to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the training and provide information for the home study assessment..
- Prospective adoptive parents are invited to give written feedback after the training sessions to enable the trainers to evaluate the effectiveness of the course.
- Prospective and approved adopters are asked for written feedback at all stages of service provision.
- Managers from the Placement Service meet with relevant managers in the Neighbourhood and Looked After Service to progress children's plans for adoption.
- A fortnightly review meeting is held following every Adoption Panel to track the progress of approved adopters, children waiting adoption, proposed matches and children linked with new adopters. The database is updated regularly and a copy is made available to relevant staff including the Service Manager for monitoring purposes.
- Prospective adopters who do not have placements are identified through this process and made available where appropriate to other agencies seeking adoptive parents.
- The policy and procedures of the Adoption Agency are in line with the local Safeguarding Board (formerly ACPC) procedures, "Working together to Safeguard children" and "What to do if you're worried a child is being abused". These procedures include a written child protection policy that includes the management and reporting of child protection issues. All staff and service users have access to the agencies child protection policy, upon request.
- Service Level Agreements with other Agencies are reviewed at a minimum annually.

## **12.00 Procedures for recruiting, preparing, assessing, approving and supporting adopters.**

### **12.01 Recruitment**

- The main consideration of the Adoption Service is to provide adoptive families for children that will allow them to grow up in a secure and positive environment and reach their potential in all aspects of their lives.
- The needs of children requiring adoptive placements are complex and diverse. In order to meet these needs the Adoption Service will work flexibly and be willing to consider options that offer the potential to provide a suitable adoptive home for a child.
- The Adoption Service accepts applications to become adopters from people of all backgrounds, cultures, sexuality, marital status and religion.
- Accordingly promotional material for recruitment states clearly that people who are interested in becoming adoptive parents will be welcomed without prejudice, will be given clear written information about the preparation, assessment and approval procedure and that they will be treated fairly, openly and with respect throughout the adoption process.
- The agency does not discriminate against people on the grounds of weight, smoking, health or other lifestyle issues but adopts a common sense approach that considers the specific needs of children and applicants likely ability to meet those needs through a child's developing years. All prospective applicants have a medical and on occasion medical opinion may advise an applicant is not fit to proceed.
- The agency has a clear system in place to prioritise prospective adopters who are most likely to meet the needs of children waiting for adoptive parents, publishes the priority statement with its information pack and reviews it regularly in the light of changing patterns of need.



Where those enquiring are unlikely to meet the needs of local children needing adoption are referred to other agencies.

- A copy of the written eligibility criteria, information on becoming an adoptive parent and what is expected of adopters is provided on request.
- Information is given about children who need families locally at the initial visit and preparation groups to help prospective adopters decide whether to proceed further.
- Those wishing to adopt from another country are also given information about adopting from other countries. They are informed of the processes that they must follow, the countries they may adopt from, and the eligibility criteria of those countries whether this is directly or through referral to other agencies.
- The Adoption Service continually seeks to improve its service and actively seeks user experience feedback from enquirers at different stages through the recruitment and assessment process.
- The Adoption Service will provide training, preparation and support to its adopters. Applicants are given information about the preparation and support services available to adopters, and given the opportunity to talk to others who have adopted children.
- The Adoption Service will provide information about its services as an adoption agency and will work in an open and fair way with all users of the service.
- In line with the Adoption and Children Act 2002, and associated regulations and guidance, the Service regularly reviews and updates its policies and procedures, its Statement of Purpose and its Children's Guide. The Statement of Purpose is considered and approved each year by the Cabinet member for Children, Learning and Young People.
- The Statement of Purpose and the Children's Guide of Coventry City Adoption Service are made available, upon request, to service users, other organisations, the general public, social workers working with children and families concerned with adoption. In addition, every service user, or adult representing the interests of a child, is given a copy of the Children's Guide.
- The Recruitment Team do not advertise in Coventry as most children require adoptive placements outside Coventry. Enquiries are accepted or not according to the needs of children waiting for an adoptive placement and the availability of suitable adopters as some children can be placed in City. In addition the needs of specific children are advertised in the adoption press whenever it is known that there may be difficulty in finding a local placement. There is an out of hours answering service to facilitate enquiries.
- Enquirers are sent an Adoption Information Pack within 5 days of their enquiry, giving comprehensive information on the adoption process, criteria for acceptance, prioritisation, and information on the range of children seeking adoption placements. Enquirers are invited to confirm their interest in adoption by returning a form to the Recruitment Team who will then undertake a local authority check. Those who fail to reply are followed up by letter.
- Home Visits are made to all who confirm their interest to give enquirers additional information and to offer preliminary advice as to the eligibility of applicants to adopt. Enquirers who seem likely to be able to offer an adoption placement are invited to submit an application form and attend training. When this is received Agency checks and references are taken up.
- Pre Adoption Training Courses are held 4 times per year, ensuring that potential applicants do not have to wait too long for a place on the course. The course is designed to offer applicants an opportunity to explore adoption and its implications in a non-threatening way and to decide whether or not adoption is for them from an informed perspective.
- Adoption Training Courses include the experience of adopters as well as inputs from a range of professionals. Potential applicants are invited to reflect on their own learning and a brief interview is held at the end of the course to summarise the key learning points.

## **12.02 Assessment and preparation**

- Assessments are completed using the BAAF Adopter's Report. Applicants are considered in terms of their capacity to look after children in a safe and responsible way that meets their development needs. Assessors seek evidence throughout the assessment process to focus

on the issues they are likely to encounter and identify the competencies and strengths they have or will need to develop.

- Where the prospective adopters are already foster carers of the child they wish to adopt, they are invited to participate in the same preparation groups as other prospective adopters or are provided with alternative training.
- Status, health and enhanced Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks, personal references and enquiries are undertaken about prospective adopters. Enhanced CRB checks are undertaken on members of their household aged 18 or over and an explanation is given to prospective adopters as to why the checks are undertaken.
- In addition, where applicants have worked with children or are employed in the caring professions references are taken up from those employers. A current employer reference is required for all applicants. Where applicants have been in a previous relationship where children have been born efforts are made to contact the previous partner, except where this is contra-indicated on safety grounds, to establish their view of the applicant. Birth children of the applicants are also contacted where practical to establish their view of the applicants desire to extend their family through adoption. The assessor interviews at least two personal referees and one family member. Written accounts of the referee's views of the applicant are obtained and presented to Adoption Panel. The agency has a checklist of issues to be addressed by assessors interviewing referees.
- Prospective adopters are kept informed of progress throughout.

### **12.03 Approval of Applicants**

- Following completion of the Adopter's Report, including a brief account of training undertaken, reports of referee visits (confidential unless referee wishes the reference to be shared with adopters), and all other relevant reports these are sent to members of the Adoption Panel in the week preceding the Panel. The application also includes a questionnaire to advise Panel if adoptive parents are prepared to agree to notify the adoption agency if their adopted child dies during childhood or soon afterwards, the applicants views on contact and their willingness to pass on information to the birth parents if they wish to have it.
- Applicants are invited to attend if they wish to present their views to Panel. There is an explanatory leaflet available to applicants explaining the Panel process and another leaflet introduces Panel members.
- Panel meets on every second Wednesday. There is a comfortable room available for applicants waiting to speak with Panel.
- Panel Members will have had the opportunity to consider the written reports in advance of Panel and identified any salient issues. (The Adoption Decision Maker is also sent a copy of the papers to enable these to be read prior to the minute from Panel being sent.) Prior to considering an application the Assessing Social Worker is invited to join the Panel. The Chair of Panel will briefly introduce the application and identify key strengths in the application. The Medical Advisor is invited to comment on the applicants' health background and any necessary points affecting the application are clarified. Any relevant legal issues are raised with the Legal Adviser. Panel members are then invited to comment on the application and the Chair formulates these comments into issues to address either to the assessor or to the couple. A short discussion follows with the assessor. The applicants are then invited to join the Panel. Applicants are welcomed and then any agreed questions are put to them. Applicants are invited to ask any questions of Panel and then to leave after Panel discussion.

The recommendation of Panel is communicated to them following Panel discussion and confirmed in writing once the Agency Decision Maker has considered the matter.

- Prospective Adopters are invited to wait whilst Adoption Panel are forming their recommendation so that the Chair and Adoption Social Worker can communicate this immediately. Where necessary the assessor will arrange to visit the applicant to explain a Panel recommendation.
- Following Panel the minute of the meeting is completed by the Adoption Administrator and given to the Chair or Panel Advisor for interim approval, (in advance of formal approval at a subsequent Panel). The minute is then given to the Agency Decision Maker. The Agency Decision Maker reflects on the papers and Panel recommendation and then returns his decision to the named Manager of the Adoption Service for transmission to applicants within 7 working days of Adoption Panel recommendation. If the Decision Maker is minded not to accept the Panels' recommendations s/he discusses this with another senior person in the agency who is not a member of the Panel, before indicating s/he is minded not to accept the recommendation. It is likely that the decision and informing prospective adopters will exceed 7 working days.
- On the day following Panel the agency holds a Resource Meeting to update the Adoption Resource database, begin to consider potential links, and initiate referral to the Consortium and National Adoption Register.
- The progress of adopters during their waiting period is tracked each fortnight through the Resource Meeting.
- Approved adopters who are waiting for a placement match are reviewed each year by the Adoption Service. If the review suggests a change is required in their approval a report is presented to Panel. Adopters are invited to comment on any report and have a right to be heard by Panel, as with their initial report. Any subsequent change recommended by Panel is subject to the same process of confirmation by the Agency Decision Maker as their original recommendation.

#### **12.04 Matching**

- The Recruitment Team prepares an annual plan containing the agency's strategies to recruit sufficient adopters to meet the needs of the range of children waiting for adoption locally.
- The Recruitment Team has a member whose principle task is overseeing home-finding for children. She receives information on all children with adoption plans, advises the Recruitment Team of emerging trends and needs, seeks authority for specific child advertising, maintains the links with the National and Local Consortium Adoption Registers and takes a principle role in arranging for possible links between adopters and children waiting.
- Children are matched with adopters who best meet their assessed needs. Wherever possible this will be with a family which a) reflects their ethnic origin, cultural background, religion and language; and b) allows them to live with brothers and sisters unless this will not meet their individually assessed needs.
- Where the child cannot be matched with a family which reflects their ethnic origin, cultural background, religion and language, every effort is made to find an alternative suitable family within a realistic timescale to ensure the child is not left waiting indefinitely in the care system. Where children cannot live with a family as set out in (a) and (b) above, the children's social worker will explain and record this, having regard to their age and understanding.
- In matching children with approved adopters, the agency seeks to ensure that it takes into account the views and feelings of the child as far as these can be ascertained based on age and understanding, the child's care plan and recent written assessments of the child and the birth family, potential adoptive parents and their children.
- There is a clear procedure for matching children with potential adopters. Children's social workers complete BAAF Children's Permanence Report along with a Checklist of Needs and a profile of the child. This is used to inform the Home-finding process. Suitable matches are identified and passed to the social worker to consider. A Team Manager then convenes a

formal matching meeting and the most promising are identified and then visited by the children's worker and the adopters' link worker. Where possible a further meeting is then held to agree the most suitable match to be put forward to the Panel. Only one meeting is held if one family is being considered or more than one meeting would cause undue delay. If the prospective adopters express interest then an Adoption Placement Report is prepared and considered by Adoption Panel along with the relevant Child's Placement Report, the Adopter's Report and the relevant minutes of any Adoption Panel that has considered the child or applicant. The Panel recommendations are conveyed to the Agency Decision Maker for a formal decision.

## **12.05 Introductions**

- Adopters are invited to prepare a folder of information for the child about themselves and their home and when applicable, their children, family and pets.
- A planning meeting is held, chaired by an Adoption Team Manager, to consider in detail the transition of the child from the foster placement to the new adoptive home.
- Planning meetings are attended by the appropriate representatives from the Children's Neighbourhood or Looked After Service, the Adoption Team, the prospective adopters and the foster carers. There is an agreed format for the Adoption Planning meeting which is completed and signed by all parties (Adoption Placement Plan).

## **13.00 Adoptive parents - support**

- All successful applicants are allocated an adoption link worker whose task it is to support the adopters through the waiting period, consider any potential matches and discuss appropriate matches with applicants prior to formal matching meetings.
- Opportunities are taken to use the waiting period to assist adopters continue to prepare for the placement of a child. Where necessary the adopters will be helped to increase their childcare experience. Additional training is offered as necessary. There is an Adopters' Support Group that applicants are invited to attend.
- All waiting and approved adopters receive a regular newsletter from the Adoption Team.
- Support in the form of paid travel expenses, a settling in allowance and additional financial help is agreed subject to criteria to assist adopters in the introductions period.
- The Agency operates a means tested Financial Support Adoption Scheme to assist adopters of limited means and those where the children are likely to cause greater than normal expense. Where the adopters are foster carers there is a transitional period during which adopters may receive an enhanced financial support adoption allowance.
- The adoption link worker will continue to support the adopters before and during the placement of a child to ensure they are well prepared in advance of the child coming to live with them. Adopters are fully involved in planning meetings around the introductions of the child and care is taken over the timing of the introductions and a number of review meetings built in to ensure that the placement is progressing in a satisfactory way and to give all parties, including the adopters an opportunity to withdraw if they are not confident about the success of the placement. Adopters confirm in writing their acceptance of the placement before the child is placed.
- The Adoption Agency has arrangements in place to offer information, support and advice to prospective adopters who receive a proposed match with a child from an overseas authority.
- Throughout the assessment, training and support stages of adoption the agency emphasises to parents the importance of keeping safe any information provided by birth families and encourages them to provide this to the adopted child at appropriate stages of their development.

- The initial screening, pre approval training, assessment home study and support strategies of the agency aim to assist adopters to understand and combat the effects of racism and any other form of discrimination.
- At all stages in the adoption process the agency seeks to ensure that the adoptive parents are assisted to understand the need for the child to develop and maintain a positive self-identity and their role in assisting the child to reflect on and understand her/his history, in an age appropriate way, and to keep appropriate memorabilia.
- Where there are difficulties in the placement or the adoption disrupts the adopters' link worker and the child's social worker will provide information and support to the adopters and to the child. Where there is an adoption breakdown a disruption meeting is held involving all parties to assist in identifying what went wrong. The purpose of this meeting is not to apportion blame but to understand the relevant factors and assist all parties to come to terms with the facts and to move on, and most importantly to inform the process of finding a new more appropriate placement for the child. Where the disruption occurs during introduction then the meeting is chaired by a Team Manager from the Adoption Service. Where the adoption disrupts post placement an independent consultant is employed to chair the meeting. A short report from the Disruption Meeting is presented to the Adoption Panel to assist the Panel in its own learning.
- In line with the Adoption Support Regulations and Guidance the Adoption Service revises and updates its procedures and practices to take account of new regulations. In particular adopters and others affected by regulations who are entitled to a review of their support needs, including a review of their financial support, may access the Adoption Support section of the Adoption Team to initiate a review. There is a designated Adoption Support Services Advisor within the Adoption Support Section of the Adoption Team.
- The range of Adoption Support Services to be offered includes access to the full range of statutory and non statutory services offered by the local authority and partner agencies to children and families in Coventry, within the same framework of eligibility as other children and families. In addition the agency will provide, following assessment, and in line with the criteria in the Regulations and Guidance the following services:
  - Financial support (ASR 3.1.a)
  - Support groups / Activity Days for adoptive parents and adoptive children (ASR 3.1.6)
  - Support for contact arrangements between adoptive children and their birth relatives or with other people with whom they share significant relationships (ASR 3.1.c)
  - Therapeutic services (ASR 3.1.d)
  - Services to ensure the success of the adoptive placement or adoption, including respite care (ASR 3.1.e)
  - Counselling, advice and information (S2(6) (a) of the 2002 Act)
  - Assistance where disruption of an adoptive placement or threatened disruption is in danger of occurring. Organising and running meetings to discuss disruptions (ASR 3.1.f)

#### **14.00 Birth Parents and Birth Families**

The agency recognises that birth parents are entitled to services that recognise the lifelong implications of adoption. The Agency seeks to ensure they are treated fairly, openly and with respect throughout the adoption process.

- Children's social workers are committed to a partnership approach towards planning with birth parents over children's futures. Wherever possible birth parents are fully involved in planning for the child's future placement. Parents are consulted over the plan for adoption, the type of family to be considered, issues around contact, religious preferences, and any other matters of importance to the birth parent.
- The views of the birth parents on adoption and contact are obtained by the social worker for the child and included in the BAAF Child's Permanence Report presented to Panel.

- The child's social worker is required to seek to obtain clear and appropriate information from the birth parents and birth families about themselves and life before the child's adoption to assist the child to maintain his heritage. This will include information about the child's birth and early life, the birth family's view about adoption and contact and provide up-to-date information about themselves and their situation. This information is contained within the BAAF Child's Permanence Report and in a "later life" letter prepared by the worker for the adopters. A copy is also included in the child's adoption file.
- Children's social workers are expected to share information about the content of reports for Adoption Panel with birth parents prior to this being presented to Panel.
- When adoption is considered as the plan for a child, or where the agency considers that "twin tracking" is required because of doubt over a parents ability to achieve the changes required to parent a child safely, Regulations require that an opportunity for independent counselling and support is to be offered to birth parents. The agency has made arrangements for the appointment of a worker independent of the child's social worker to support birth parents where adoption has been identified as the plan. This service is provided under contract from another agency who seek to offer a proactive service to all birth parents, including an element to ensure that the birth parent's views are sought on what has been written about them and their circumstances in the Child's Permanence Report for Adoption Panel. This information is then made available to Adoption Panel when considering a plan for adoption or a match with prospective adopters.
- Birth parents and birth families (including siblings) are entitled to support both before and after adoption. In addition to the independent support to be offered to birth parents Coventry maintains a contract with Adoption Support (based in Birmingham) to offer an intermediary service of information, tracing and support, including group work to children and families affected by adoption.
- Additional information on local and national support groups is made available in a leaflet provided through the Adoption Team.
- Post adoption contact arrangements, including letterbox contact between birth families, adopted children and their new families, are facilitated by the Adoption Support Team.

## 15.00 Adoption Panels

The function of Coventry's Adoption Panel is to make quality and appropriate recommendations about children suitable for adoption, the suitability of prospective adopters, and their continuing suitability, and the matching of children and approved adopters. The Panel seeks to promote the welfare of children at all times. Where disruptions of occur, the Panel receive a report and discuss this to see what lessons may need to be learned.

- The Policies, procedures and functions of the Panel are contained within the Department's Procedures Manual. Copies of these are given to every Panel member.
- Membership of the Adoption Panel is in line with the National Minimum Standard, Regulations and Guidance.
- Panel meets every two weeks.
- There is an annual training day organised for Panel members and including members of the Adoption Team.
- Prospective adopters and those being linked with a child are given an opportunity to be heard by means of invitation to attend Panel.
- There is a leaflet introducing the work of the Panel, and the role of its members, and this is given to all service users attending Panel. A display board in the waiting room contains pictures of each Panel Member.
- Panel members are able to attend individual courses when felt to be beneficial to their role on Panel.
- New Panel members receive a full induction and all Panel members are appraised annually.

## **16.00 Agency decisions**

- The Adoption Agency's decision will be made without delay after taking into account the recommendation of the Adoption Panel and promotes and safeguards the welfare of the child.
- The Decision Maker will take into account all the information surrounding the case and the Panel's recommendation before making a considered and professional decision. The papers available to Panel are sent to the Decision Maker at the same time as to members of Panel to minimise delay. The draft minute and a brief note outlining the situation will be available to the Decision Maker as soon as practicable after each Panel.
- The agency decision will be made within 7 days of the Adoption Panel and given to the Service Manager who arranges for formal notification to be given to the relevant parties.
- Immediately following the Adoption Panel the recommendations of the Panel are passed on orally to the parents or guardian of the child and prospective/approved adopters, as appropriate by the relevant social worker or adoption link worker. The formal decisions of the Panel are conveyed orally to the child by the child's social worker in an age appropriate way and in writing by the Decision Maker to the parents and to the adopters if birth parents do not wish to be informed a case note explanation is placed on file.

## **17.00 Work with Children**

- There is a Children's Guide to adoption that is suitable for all children for whom adoption is the plan. This is given to the child as soon as that decision has been taken. It includes a summary of what happens at each stage (including at court), and how long each stage is likely to take. The children's guide contains information on how a child can secure access to an independent advocate, how to make a complaint and how to contact the Children's Rights Director or Ofsted, along with a shortened version of the Statement of Purpose.
- Where necessary, arrangements can be made for the Guide to be reproduced in a variety of formats suitable for the needs of specific children.
- Children's social workers prepare children for adoption by direct counselling, life story work and work around their wishes and feelings.
- Clear and appropriate information is obtained for the child from the prospective adopters about themselves and their home and when applicable, their children, family and pets.
- At all stages in the adoption process the wishes and feelings of the child are considered by the child's social worker, properly represented at planning meetings, and taken fully into account during all stages of the adoption process.

## **18.00 Information about the Complaints Procedure, and Independent Review Mechanism.**

- Prospective adopters are advised of the Department's complaints procedure and given information on how to make a complaint. They are also given information about the Council's representations procedure and the Independent Review Mechanism.
- There is a leaflet available explaining the Independent Review Mechanism and this is made available to all applicants whose application is recommended for refusal.
- The Department operates a system known as the 3 "C's", - "Comments Compliments, Complaints"
- There is a Children's Complaints Officer who oversees the operation of the Complaints system and either personally investigates serious complaints or arranges for them to be independently investigated.

The name and address of the Children's Complaints Officer is

**Andrew Bell, Children's Complaints Officer**  
**Directorate of Children, Learning and Young People,**  
**Civic Centre 1, Little Park Street, Coventry CV1 5RS**  
**Telephone: 024 7683 3462; fax: 024 7683 2451**

### **18.01 What happens following a Complaint?**

- The complaint is registered and action taken to investigate any concerns. The Children's Complaints Officer will monitor the outcome.
- In most instances, complaints will be followed up by the manager with direct responsibility for the service. This is because local managers are usually best placed to sort things out quickly, and in most cases a speedy resolution is the most appropriate response.
- If the complaint is very complicated, involves a number of service areas or has not been resolved at a local level, the Children's Complaints Officer or a Service Manager may investigate it.
- If the complaint is about a registered service, an Inspector from Ofsted may investigate it.

### **18.03 Timescales and outcomes**

- Complainants should be contacted by letter or phone, within 3 working days of the complaint being received to let the complainant know what is happening, who is dealing with the complaint and how to contact them.
- Complaint will be dealt with as quickly as possible, ideally within 14 days.
- Occasionally it is not possible to resolve complaints within the period. This may be due to the complexity of the complaint and the number of people who need to be interviewed. If this is the case, then the person dealing with the complaint will keep the complainant informed.
- When work on the complaint is complete, the complainant will be informed of the outcome. If the complaint has required a formal investigation, the outcome will be reported fully and in writing. This will include the action taken to investigate the complaint, how any conclusions have been drawn and details of any action that has been or will be taken to rectify problems or make improvements.
- However, if the investigation has involved the use of Human Resources procedures, there will be details that cannot be shared as they must remain confidential. Similarly, if the complaint has been on behalf of someone else, their personal information is protected by the Data Protection Act and so the level of detailed information provided will be limited. Anyone not satisfied with the way Coventry Adoption Service has investigated a complaint can contact the Children's Complaints Officer to ask for further investigation.

### **18.04 Further Complaints**

If a complaint was subject to a formal investigation and the complainant is not satisfied with the process, there is an option of writing to the Director of Children, Learning and Young People to request an independent review of the process. The complaint will be reviewed by a Panel chaired by an independent person. Details of how to do this will be included in the complaint outcome letter.

### **18.05 Independent Review Mechanism**

Adopters are given a leaflet in respect of the Independent Review Mechanism in their initial information pack. They are made aware of their capacity to make representations to the agency, or apply to the Independent Review Mechanism for a review of the adoption agency's qualifying



determination (which is that it considers a prospective adopter not suitable to adopt a child). Adopters are also given information about the Complaints Procedure.

#### **19.00 The address and telephone number of OFSTED**

**The address of Office of Children's Rights Director and OFSTED is**

<b>Office of Roger Morgan, Children's Rights Director)</b>	<b>OFSTED</b>
Office of the Children's Rights Director OFSTED Aviation House 125 Kingsway London WC2B 6SE  Freephone: 0800 528 0731	Adoption Inspectorate Piccadilly Gate Store Street Manchester M1 2WD  08456 404040

September 2011



## Appendix 3 – Coventry Adoption Scorecard

Coventry							
Children							
	Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted (days)	Average time between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family (days)	Children who wait less than 21 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family (number and %)	<p><b>Average Time Threshold</b></p> <p>The chart displays the average time in days for three periods: 2010-13 Threshold (835 days), 2011-14 Threshold (639 days), and 2012-15 Threshold (213 days). A green dashed line indicates a target of 210 days. The 2010-13 value is significantly above the target, while the 2011-14 and 2012-15 values are closer to or below the target.</p>			
LA 3 year average (2008-11)	835	210	45 (30%)				
Trend - Improvement from previous year (2010)	↓	↓	n/a				
England 3 year average (2008-11)	625	171	9440 (58%)				
Distance from 2010-13 performance threshold	196 days	Threshold met	n/a				
Prospective Adopters			Related Information				
	The time taken from registration of interest to decision of suitability to adopt (days)	The time taken from receipt of application form to decision of suitability to adopt (days)	The time taken from decision of suitability to adopt to matching with child (days)	Adoptions from care (number adopted and % leaving care who are adopted)	Number and % of children for whom the permanence decision has changed away from adoption	Adoptions of children from ethnic minority backgrounds (number adopted and % of BME children leaving care who are adopted)	Adoptions of children over (number adopted and % of children aged 5 and over who are adopted)
LA 3 year average (2008-11)	Data not available until 2014			80 (11%)	x (x%)	10 (5%)	25 (5%)
England 3 year average (2008-11)				9570 (12%)	1030 (7%)	1590 (7%)	2560 (7%)

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16th October 2012

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member (Children, Learning and Young People) - Councillor J. O'Boyle

**Director Approving Submission of the report**

Director of Children, Learning and Young People - Colin Green

**Ward(s) affected:**

None

**Title:**

Fostering Service Annual Report including Statement of Purpose and Family and Friends Policy

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**Is this a key decision?**

No

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**Executive Summary:**

This report considers the work completed by Coventry Children, Learning & Young People's Directorate in respect of fostering during the year 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012.

Coventry's Fostering Service has supported 117 internal foster care households providing placements for 213 of Coventry's looked after children (at March 2012) during a period of high demand for foster placements, with a significant number of looked children in the city (580 by March 2012).

**Statement of Purpose**

Under the Fostering regulations every Fostering Agency has to produce a Statement of Purpose which is considered by the executive of the authority on an annual basis.

- The Statement of Purpose documents the activities of the Service and the way services are delivered.
- The Statement of Purpose together with the National Minimum Standards, are the key documents against which OFSTED inspects the Fostering Service.
- The Statement of Purpose has to accurately reflect the policies, procedures and guidance of the Fostering Agency and is available to anyone seeking a copy.

The Statement of Purpose covers the following matters:

- The aims, values and principles of Coventry Fostering Service.

- The functions of the Fostering Service, including the service users, and activities of the agencies.
- Information about the organisation and staffing of the service.
- Systems to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and quality of services provided
- Procedures for recruiting, preparing, assessing, approving and supporting foster carers
- Information about the complaints procedure, including the Independent Review Mechanism.
- The address and telephone number of OFSTED.

### **Family and Friends Policy**

Children may be brought up by members of their extended families, friends or other people who are connected with them for a variety of reasons and in a variety of different arrangements.

The Local Authority has a statutory obligation to ensure that family and friends carers are aware of relevant support services, and that these can be readily accessed by those caring for children whether or not these are looked after by the local authority.

The Family and Friends Care Policy sets out the local authority's approach towards promoting and supporting the needs of such children and covers the assessments which will be carried out to determine the services required and how such services will then be provided.

### **Recommendations:**

- 2.1 That the Fostering Annual Report 2011/2012 is accepted
- 2.2 That the Statement of Purpose is approved
- 2.3 That the Family and Friends policy is endorsed

### **List of Appendices included:**

**Appendix 1 - Fostering Annual Report**

**Appendix 2 - Statement of Purpose**

**Appendix 3 - Family and Friends Policy**

**Appendix 4 - Financial summary**

**Other useful background papers: none**

**Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?**

*No*

**Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?**

*No*

**Will this report go to Council?**

*No*

## **Report title: Fostering Service Annual Report and Statement of Purpose**

### **1. Context (or background)**

This report considers the work completed by Fostering Service in respect of fostering during the year 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012.

Coventry Fostering Service has been responsible for the recruitment, training, assessment and support of a full range of carers and the placement of children in in-house foster care provision for more details.

In March 2012, the Coventry Fostering Service provided 47% of looked after children's placements in the city, compared to external placements (excluding friend and family placements). These placements are provided by a wide and diverse range of carers:

- Most carers offer one or two placements, others are able to look after three or (exceptionally) more.
- Some carers offer emergency care for the critical period when a child enters care; others offer short term care for up to 18 – 24 months.
- Some are matched to long term placements of children and provide good permanent families.

The development of Residence Order and Special Guardianship policies, with associated financial support, has assisted the department to offer an alternative to children being placed in long term care through being placed with 'friends and family' carers. This can reduce the length of time such carers continue to be registered as foster carers.

### **2. Options considered and recommended proposal**

That the Council is committed to achieving the greatest number of foster placements compatible with achieving the best outcomes for the children concerned.

### **3. Results of consultation undertaken**

#### **Feedback from children in placement**

- 3.1** Feedback from children in placement, the foster carers, foster carers own children and the child's social worker are sought at every foster home review. There is a high rate of return from foster carers, a reasonable return from children from the household but a variable rate of the child's social workers' response. These concerns will continue to be raised at the Fostering Panel.
- 3.2** Children in foster care are regularly involved in the recruitment and selection of staff and commissioning of services. This involvement includes face to face contact with interviewees and perspective service providers. The young people feed their views to the Fostering Panel.
- 3.3** Feedback from children in placement was sought by Ofsted Inspectors during their Fostering Inspection in Coventry in November 2011, and acted upon by the Local Authority. Feedback included concerns raised by Inspectors about how their belongings were moved from placements and how their voice was heard during their

annual review with Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO's). The Local Authority has changed practise as a result of this feedback.

### Feedback from foster carers

**3.4** Prospective and approved foster carers all receive an invitation to attend Fostering Panel. Feedback from carers was not obtained for 2011/12 due to an administrative oversight. This is unfortunate, as carer feedback is considered very important. This situation has now been rectified and will not be repeated in future.

### **3.5 The following feedback has been received from foster carers during 2011-2012**

Feedback from foster carers regarding support from Supervising Social Workers:

Positive	Negative	Neutral
17		5

Feedback from foster carers own children concerning foster children in the home:

Positive	Negative	Neutral
9	1	6

This feedback will be considered by panel members and the Panel Decision Maker to ensure there is a policy of continuous improvement.

### **4. Timetable for implementing this decision**

n/a

### **5. Comments from Director of Finance and Legal Services**

#### **5.1 Financial implications**

##### **Foster Carers Budget and Expenditure**

5.1.1 The budget for internal foster carer fees for the last year was £4.4m with £3.3m spend, due to a diminishing number of foster carers. This was supporting around 193 foster carers (at March 2012).

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
	£000	£000	£000
Budget	4,419	4,476	4,410
Expenditure	4,194	3,763	3,355
Overspend	225	713	1,055

##### **Foster carer allowances**

5.1.2 Foster carer allowances for 2011/12 were frozen at 2010/11 levels, due to the financial climate and reductions in government funding. There was a reduction in spend from previous years due to a reduction in the number of foster carers.



- 5.1.3 In summary, the Internal Fostering budget was underspent by £1,055k in 2011/12 (2010/11 underspend was £713k). LAC numbers for Internal Fostering, including Family & Friends reduced from offering 283 placements in 2010/11 to 244 in 2011/12.
- 5.1.4 This performance should be put into context by reviewing the full placements budget variation for 2011/12 – a £5,413k overspend – largely due to a significant increase in more expensive external fostering placements.
- 5.1.5 The placements budget was realigned for 2012/13, acknowledging actual levels of spend in individual areas. However, significant Fundamental Service Review (FSR) financial savings of £8.5m are expected over the next 3 years, largely through reprofiling and reducing the overall placement numbers. For 2012/13, a £1.4m target saving is expected for all placements, and a much increased internal fostering LAC target of 274 has been set as part of this model.
- 5.1.6 The 2012/13 Internal Fostering LAC numbers (at period 5) show that numbers are well below target – actual is 216, while the target for the year is 274, a shortfall of 58. In financial terms, this is significantly contributing to the expected £1.3m overspend in 2012/13 for all placements.
- 5.1.7 Internal Fostering places are not likely to increase significantly this year beyond the current levels, therefore further work is needed to establish a revised and realistic model for 2013/14 and beyond, where savings are achievable.

### **Family and Friends policy**

- 5.1.6 There is a possibility that publication of the Families and Friends policy could result in carers who do not currently receive financial support coming forward to claim such payments. The Local Authority has a statutory obligation to ensure that family and friends carers are aware of relevant support services, and that these can be readily accessed by those caring for children whether or not these are looked after by the local authority.

### **A full financial summary is included in Appendix 4**

## **5.2 Legal implications**

### **Statement of Purpose**

- 5.2.1 It is a regulatory requirement that the Executive receives, reviews and approves the Statement of Purpose on an annual basis.
- 5.2.2 The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 state that the fostering service provider must compile a written statement in relation to the fostering service (“the statement of purpose”) which consists of:
- (a) a statement of the aims and objectives of the fostering service, and
  - (b) a statement as to the services and facilities (including any parent and child arrangements) provided by the fostering service.
- 5.2.3 The fostering service provider must provide a copy of the statement of purpose to the Chief Inspector, place a copy on their website (if they have one), and make copies available, upon request, to :
- (a) any person working for the purposes of the fostering service,

- (b) any foster parent or prospective foster parent of the fostering service,
- (c) any child placed with a foster parent by the fostering service, and
- (d) the parent of any such child.

5.2.4 Under Statutory Guidance the Fostering Service must compile a Statement of Purpose, which sets out the aims and objectives of the service as a whole, and the services, and facilities which are provided (including the provision of any “parent and child arrangements”). The statement must be reviewed and updated as necessary, but at least annually and published on the provider’s website (if they have one), with a copy provided to Ofsted.

### **Family and Friends Policy**

5.2.5 In March 2011 the government published the Family and Friends Care Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities. This required every local authority to publish and publicise a policy on its approach to promoting and supporting the needs of children living with families, friends and carers.

## **6. Other implications**

### **How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?**

- 6.1 The work of the Fostering Service supports the key priority outcome in the Council Plan for "Coventry, proud to be a city that works... to support and celebrate our young people" in particular in the objective "Children are supported to live safe from harm".
- 6.2 It contributes to the wellbeing of children to live 'safe from harm' through arranging for placement for a child whose own family is unable to provide care. It supports a key element of the Local Authority's Corporate Parenting role – that of securing appropriate family placements for Looked After Children, as an effective means of giving them the best life chances possible.

### **6.2 How is risk being managed?**

#### **Panel Risks**

- 6.2.1 A continuing area of concern has been the quality and availability of medical assessment reports submitted to the Panel Medical Advisor. There is currently no requirement on new applicants to be the subject of a full and current medical assessment. The assessment is based on reports received from the applicants’ medical practitioner, sometimes based on less than timely historical information.
- 6.2.2 The Panel Medical Advisor then has to make an assessment and recommendation to Panel on this information. Panel believes that an assessment based on a thorough and recent medical examination is required. This is in line with current practice of the Adoption Panel. This will require a change in the current agreements with the NHS Commissioners and this has been formally raised with the Decision-Maker. The Decision-Maker is continuing to try and address this requirement with the NHS Commissioners.

### **6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?**

- 6.3.1 The Fostering Service contributes to Children's Social Care Services performance (within the Directorate of Children, Learning and Young People) against key indicators that are closely scrutinised both internally and externally on an ongoing basis.
- 6.3.2 An OFSTED Inspection provides a robust critical analysis of the performance of the Fostering Service, and in setting requirements and recommendations for improvement assists the Service to focus on continuous improvement.
- 6.3.3 In November 2011, an Ofsted team undertook an Inspection of the Fostering Service, indicating that it was 'Good'. See Appendix 3 for the full report.

### **6.4 Equalities / EIA**

An Equality Impact Needs Assessment has been undertaken by the service.

### **6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment**

None

### **6.6 Implications for partner organisations?**

None

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### Fostering Service Annual Report 2011-2012

September 2012

#### Authors:

Nicky Hale, Interim Head of Service, Looked After Children  
James Lawrence, Programmes and Projects Manager

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report considers the work completed by Coventry Children, Learning & Young People's Directorate in respect of fostering during the year 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012.
- 1.2 The Coventry Fostering Service is responsible for the recruitment, training, assessment and support of a full range of carers and the placement of children in in-house foster care provision. Where children could not be satisfactorily matched with city council carers, external foster caring provision is organised for looked after children.
- 1.3 Fostering Panel is responsible for the recommending the approval and termination of foster carers, reviewing the first Foster Home Reviews of carers, and linking children to long term foster carers. Serious complaints and resignations/terminations are also presented to Panel.
- 1.4 Coventry's Fostering Service has supported **117** internal foster care households (**193** foster carers). At the end of March 2012, **217** children were placed in internal foster placements. This is against a backdrop of a period of high demand for foster placements, because of the significant number of looked children in the city (**580** by March 2012).
- 1.5 During 2012/12 **11** mainstream foster households were approved; and **11** friends and family/connected person applications approved. **30** foster carer households left the service during this time.

## 2. Performance

### 2.1 Overall performance

The following table sets out the performance of the Fostering Service:

Key performance indicators	2011-2012
<b>MAINSTREAM FOSTER CARER APPLICATIONS</b>	
Initial enquiries from people interested in Fostering	241
Number of people sent an information pack	142
Numbers of applications received and taken through Panel	16
Numbers of applications approved in the period	11
Number of Foster Carers leaving the service during the period	30
<b>FAMILY AND FRIENDS/CONNECTED PERSONS APPLICATIONS</b>	
Numbers of applications received	16
Numbers of applications approved in the period	13
<b>FOSTER CARERS</b>	
Number of Approved Foster carer places for children at 31 March 2012	244
Number of Foster Carer Households at 31 March 2012 (193 foster carers)	117 households
Number of Foster Carer vacancies at March 2012 (approved foster care households without children placed)	1 vacancy
<b>FOSTER CARE CHILDREN</b>	
Number of requests for foster placement from the service (can be for more than 1 child)	354
Total number of children placed in internal foster care placements at 31 March 2012 (including family and friends)	217
Number of children disrupted (i.e. were in a foster placement and it ended prematurely)	15 (19 placements)

*\*Please note that the figures above are drawn from a variety of sources including FSR figures, the Ofsted return for 2012, Enquiry and Approval Databases and Panel figures. All the recording*

systems in the service are under review to improve ease and accuracy of maintaining performance figures.

### 3. Applications to Foster

- 3.1 241 general fostering enquiries were received by the Recruitment Team, Coventry Fostering Service. 142 prospective foster carers were sent information packs.
- 3.2 32 applications to foster were received during the year. Of these, 16 applications were to become mainstream foster carers with 11 applications approved. 16 applications from family and friends/connected persons were received with 13 approved.

### 4. The Fostering Panel

#### Role and Frequency of the Panel

- 4.1 The Fostering Panel has various functions, a responsibility for approving foster carers, linking children to foster carers, reviewing foster home reviews when required, and offering advice to social workers. It also deals with the first annual review of foster carers.
- 4.2 The Fostering Panel has met every two weeks throughout 2011-2012 with 25 meetings in all.
- 4.3 Julian Cunningham has remained as the Independent Chairperson since December 2010. There have been changes to the Panel membership in terms of social worker representatives and temporary maternity leave cover for the Education member.
- 4.4 The Panel have dealt with a range of issues during the year including:
- Form F applications to become mainstream foster carers;
  - Family and Friends/Connected Persons Full approvals;
  - Long-term linking's<sup>1</sup>
  - Change of Category; updates;
  - foster home reviews
  - foster carers retired and resignations
  - causes for concern and carer deregistration.

The business of the Panel can be broken down into the following:

<b>Applications – mainstream foster carers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11 Form F approvals (applications to become mainstream foster carers)</li> <li>• 4 Form F applicants not approved (applications to become mainstream foster carers)</li> <li>• 1 Form F applicant pulled from being considered by the Panel due to concerns about the applicant</li> </ul>
<b>Applications – Family and Friends/ Connected Persons applications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13 Family and Friends/Connected Persons applications approved</li> <li>• 3 Family and Friends/Connected Persons applications not approved.</li> </ul>
<b>Linkings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 long-term linking's approved</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> these became the responsibility of the Permanency Panel from April 2012

<b>Foster home reviews</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 19 foster home reviews</li> </ul>
<b>Changes of category &amp; Causes for concern</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 Changes of category in respect of numbers of children and age range</li> <li>• 2 causes for concern</li> </ul>
<b>Carer issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 26 resignations from Foster Carer Households</li> <li>• 4 retirements from Foster Carer Households</li> <li>• 1 carer returned from dormancy</li> </ul>

## Quality Assurance

**4.5** The Fostering Panel has a clear remit to raise and drive a quality assurance agenda. To this end a clear quality assurance agenda has continued to be maintained by the Panel. These include the consistent use of a quality assurance framework for panel members to focus on each report that comes before the panel and enable accurate feedback to the managers of the service and the Decision Maker. This includes positive and negative feedback to individual social workers and their managers.

## Panel Training

**4.6** Panel training in 2011-2012 focussed on briefings about the change in regulations and practice developments led by the Decision-Maker. A training session on Connected Persons regulations and assessment was organised and well attended. A training session was also held in regards to Sibling contact and attachment. Training being prepared for 2012-13 includes work on the new regulations, the role of the supervising social worker and lessons from serious case reviews. Members of the Fostering Panel are also able to access individual courses made available to foster carers and departmental staff.

## Annual Appraisal

**4.7** It is a requirement that individual panel members should be subject to annual appraisal. This needs to focus on a range of issues including attendance, performance, training and development needs. The Panel Chair and Decision-Maker have continued to meet with each panel member since January 2012. The purpose of the appraisal meeting is to discuss these areas.

## 5. Foster carer recruitment

**5.1** The Service seeks to recruit a pool of foster carers to meet the needs of a wide range of children, and to provide a choice of resources for workers seeking placements. Throughout the country there is a shortage of carers for teenagers, sibling groups and from ethnic minorities.

**5.2** During the year the Service supported **193** Foster Carers during the year (117 households), with **24** new approvals (**11** friends and family and **13** mainstream carers).

**5.3** Of the **193** Foster Carers, **179** (93%) were White, **6** Mixed race<sup>2</sup> (3%), **5** were Asian (2.5%) and **3** were Black (1.5%). This reflects the shortage of carers from ethnic minorities that is experienced nationally.

**5.4** A range of activity took place during the year as part of recruitment including Foster Carer Fortnight, advertisements on buses, a radio advertisement on Mercia and a regular weekly stall

<sup>2</sup> Of the Mixed Foster Carers **two** were White and Black Caribbean and **four** White and Black African



at Friday lunchtime in the Lower Precinct.

## 6. Foster Carers leaving the service

6.1 During the period **26** foster carer households left the service and there were also **4** retirements from the service. The reasons for these resignations are set out in the following table. This compares to **20** foster carer households leaving in the previous year.

Of the 26 households who left the following reasons were given:

8	Because of Special Guardianship orders, Adoption or Residence Orders
3	Connected Person's Carers the children moved to other family members
1	Moved to independent Fostering Agency
6	Family Issues ( Marriage breakdown, Health)
1	Matching difficulties
1	Due to cause of concern but was placed over number in first year of fostering
2	Connected Person, Child moved to Mainstream Foster Placement
1	Resigned due to unfounded allegation by child about Foster Carers partner
1	Resigned prior to de-registration
1	Unable to work with department, concern about domestic violence from partner

6.2 The number of foster carer leaving the service is of concern. Some of these are acceptable due to specifically approved placements for identified children coming to an end or the carers no longer having appropriate accommodation to meet the required regulations. However the scale and cause of carers leaving the service needs to continue to be investigated and monitored.

## 7. Support for Foster Carers

7.1 Initial supervision visits by qualified social workers take place with all carers. These visits are essential in providing direct support to foster carers.

7.2 Foster carers assessments and the 'skills to foster' preparation training thoroughly explores the ability of potential applicants to achieve positive outcomes for children and young people. Training for carers is focused on promoting positive outcomes and supporting carers to achieve this.

7.3 Support groups provided jointly by the Fostering and LAC CAMHS service provides carers with the opportunity to develop their ability to support children and young people in placement, and the recent development of the 'KEEP' programme is further designed to support placements positively. The fostering service recognises the importance of placement stability for children in order to promote good outcomes. There is a close working relationship between the fostering service and the Looked After Children's social work service to ensure that good outcomes are achieved for Looked After Children

- 7.4 Coventry has an independent Foster Carers Association. The Association supports Coventry City Council in identifying views of Coventry foster carers, recruitment and selection of staff (i.e. team managers, section heads). The Association is also actively involved in the development of social events for foster carers and their families including visits to the seaside.
- 7.5 The Foster Carer Association have also been involved in the development of policy and practise including improving the travel claim procedure for foster carers.
- 7.6 The Local Authority has run a number of support events for Foster Carers throughout the year including a BBQ and consultation event in summer 2011, the Looked After Children's Conference (October 2011) and a Christmas Party for Looked After Children who are under 12 (December 2011). All events were well attended by Foster Carers.

## 8. Children

### Children placed for internal fostering

- 8.1 At March 2012, **217** children were placed in internal foster carer places. This was around **47%** of total placements in the city (excluding family and friends), compared to external placements. This is considered a low percentage.
- 8.2 There were **19** unplanned placement finishes during the year with **15** children having their foster placement disrupted i.e. were in a foster placement and it ended prematurely).
- 8.3 Of the children placed with foster carers in the year, **5** went missing during the year. In terms of the time that children were missing, **4** went missing for less than 24 hours and **1** child for between 1 and 6 days.
- 8.4 Children and young people felt that during their annual review with Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO's) that professionals attending the meeting were "talking at them" or "to each other" rather than actively engaging them. Subsequently, the authority acknowledged this challenge and organised training for professionals to improve children and young people's involvement within the sessions, and ensure their voice is heard.

## 9. Financial Issues

See Cabinet Report 16 October 2012 for details

## 10. Improving outcomes for Foster Children

- 10.1 All foster carers receive training in promoting the health, educational and social needs of children. Foster carers are involved in the health assessments and reviews of Looked After Children, the development and review of personal education plans. Progress of children is monitored through LAC reviews.
- 10.2 The fostering service has excellent partnership with Health and the Looked After Children's Education Service (LACES), and both of these agencies are represented on the fostering panel. Children are supported by Education Mentors and LAC nurses as well as other resources depending on their own individual needs. Progress is monitored through statutory visits, LAC Reviews and Foster Home Reviews.
- 10.3 The inspection of the Fostering Service in November 2011 rated the educational support as 'outstanding' in helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do.

## 11. Complaints and compliments

11.1 8 complaints were received during the reporting period April 2011 – March 2012, compared to 16 in the previous year. Of the 8 complaints:

- 2 were from foster carers about the standard of service they received - **1 upheld, 1 partially upheld**
- 1 was from the parent of a service user about the attitude of the worker involved - **not upheld.**
- 2 were made on behalf of carers regarding problems with allowances - **both upheld**
- 1 was from a foster carer regarding a decision not to fund a loft conversion - **not upheld**
- 1 was from a parent of a service user regarding poor communication - **not upheld**

11.2 8 compliments were received during the reporting period April 2011 – March 2012, compared to 20 the previous year. 5 were made by professionals, 1 by the grandfather of the service user, 1 by a set of adopters and 1 by a former service user.

11.3 All the 8 compliments received regarding foster carers praised the quality of the care and support they gave to the children they were looking after.

11.4 The 2 compliments about the Fostering Service were both from foster carers praising the support they received from their Supervising Social Workers.

## 12. Family and Friends Care Policy

12.1 Children may be brought up by members of their extended families, friends or other people who are connected with them for a variety of reasons and in a variety of different arrangements.

12.2 The Family and Friends Care Policy sets out the local authority's approach towards promoting and supporting the needs of such children and covers the assessments which will be carried out to determine the services required and how such services will then be provided.

12.3 In drawing up this policy, the local authority have consulted a diverse range of foster carers, parents, grand-parents and other people who could be looking after a child, whether in an official capacity or not.

12.4 Consultation on the draft policy was led by Sheila Bates, in her capacity as Children's Champion and also as a Director of the Community Empowerment Network.

The policy is hosted on internet by TriX at

[http://coventrychildcare.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p\\_fam\\_friends.html](http://coventrychildcare.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_fam_friends.html)

## 13. Future direction of the Fostering Service

### Family Placement Service

13.1 In July 2012 the Fostering teams amalgamated with the Adoption teams in line with the recommendations made by the full service review completed earlier this year. The Fostering service now forms part of the larger 'Family Placement service'. This service has been divided in to functional groups:

- Recruitment and Assessment
- Family Finding
- Placement Support

These three teams will carry out all the functions of the previously split service.

- 13.2** In bringing the service together it is anticipated that there is greater scope for processing assessments more quickly, 4 months for time limited fostering assessments from enquiry to approval and 6 months for all permanent carers (Adoption/Permanent Fostering).

### **Permanency Panel**

- 13.3** Matching decisions for long term foster placements/special guardianship are now made by the Permanency Panel usually chaired by the Head of Service for Looked After Children.

### **Parallel Planning & Dual Approval**

- 13.4** The service as a whole has revised all its twin track and parallel planning processes following Coventry's apparent low adoption score card in order to ensure that children who need to be placed for adoption can be placed as soon as possible.
- 13.5** All prospective adopters are now being approached to consider dual approval as foster carers and adopters and for very young children, so that in a small number of cases children will be placed before their placement order is made, under foster care regulations, and while their permanence plan remains unresolved.

### **Recruitment**

- 13.6** Following the full service review it has been recognised that Recruitment Activity is needed with much greater scope.
- 13.7** There is now a Recruitment and Retention Steering Group which meets fortnightly to plan and review recruitment activity. This is being further developed to include expert advice of adopters, foster carers and looked after children.
- 13.8** The recruitment activity for 2012-2014 will address a slow drip method which includes a continuous profile of Coventry's family placement service (leaflets, posters, banners, beer mats). Activities will deliver all year round awareness of Fostering in all city buildings and as many public places as possible.
- 13.9** The recruitment strategy also allows for a number of high profile events; two of which will take advantage of national events including Adoption week (5-9 November 2012) and Fostering Fortnight. To support the above activity information materials including an ambitious new website and prospectus are being developed, which will assist in reducing the assessment and approval timescales.
- 13.10** New support practise and development of existing foster carers is hoped to encourage some more able to move through scales to become 'specialist carers' and to retain those who offer and exemplary service for our children. It is anticipated that next year's annual report will reflect the outcome of these significant improvements.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE OF COVENTRY CITY FOSTERING SERVICE**

(Revised August 2011)

#### **1. Background:**

The Fostering Services Regulations 2011 requires every Fostering Service to produce a statement of purpose. The Statement of Purpose has to cover the following matters

- a statement of the aims and objectives of the fostering service; and
- a statement as to the services and facilities to be provided by the fostering service.

The Statement of Purpose accurately reflects the policies procedures and guidance of the Fostering Service and is available to anyone seeking a copy. Staff working in the Service each receives a copy of the Statement of Purpose.

- 1.1 Coventry City Fostering Service is part of a group of services operated by the City Council, through its Directorate of Children, Learning and Young People; to meet the needs of looked after children. The Fostering Service is managerially located within the Specialist Services Division. On a day to day level the Service is managed by a Integrated Service Manager accountable to a Head of Service for Looked After Children. The Head of Service for Looked After Children reports to the Assistant Director, Specialist Services
- 1.2 One of the key objectives of the organisation is to bring about improved outcomes for looked after children through facilitating improved partnership working between social workers and provider services. The Coventry City Fostering Service works in partnership with social workers, carers, service users and other professional agencies to provide a range of placements which will offer alternative family care to meet the individual needs of children who are unable to live with their own families, either temporarily or permanently.
- 1.3 The service arranges foster placements with council carers for children between the age of 0 and 18, who are looked after by Coventry Children Learning and Young People's Directorate, and facilitates arrangements for older care leavers to stay on with their former carers via a supportive lodgings arrangement where appropriate.
- 1.4 The Fostering Service through the joint Recruitment Team located in the Adoption Service also provides information to people interested in fostering; training and assessment to applicants; and support, including training and development, to approved carers. The Fostering Service is now involved in assessing potential carers for their suitability to be granted Special Guardianship in court proceedings, together with arrangements around support to those granted such orders. The Service is jointly responsible with the Referral and Assessment and Neighbourhood Services for the assessment of Private Fostering arrangements in the City.

## **2. Values and Principles**

2.01 Coventry City Fostering Service subscribes to the statement of values adopted by the British Association for Adoption and Fostering in November 2002.

2.02 In addition Coventry City Fostering Service aims to be

- Community based, accessible, approachable, informal, non-threatening and friendly.
- Accepting and respectful towards service users and service providers.
- Working in partnership with service users and user focused.
- Respecting of confidentiality and privacy.
- Flexible and open to new ideas and initiatives.
- Consistent in providing quality services which are flexible, offer choice and are responsive to different needs, cultures and religions etc.
- Constantly seeking to reflect good practice.
- Anti-oppressive in practices with foster carers and service users.

### **2.03 Equal Opportunities Statement**

Each child referred for fostering will be valued as an individual with his/her own identifiable needs and will be respected regardless of age, gender, race, religion, disability or sexual orientation.

## **3. Vision**

- Coventry City Fostering Service aspires to enable children in need of accommodation to be valued and to experience a positive family life.
- The service aims to attract, develop and support quality carers.
- The service is committed to learning from experience and seeking continuous improvement through evaluation, assessment and keeping in touch with new developments in research.
- The service is committed to developing the skills of all team members.
- The service aspires to provide choice in order to identify suitable placements.
- The service aims to be open, accountable and anti-oppressive.

## **4. Performance Targets**

The Fostering Service has an important part in assisting the directorate to achieve its performance objectives for all looked after children. These include:

- A reduction in the numbers of children experiencing more than 3 moves a year
- For children looked after in foster care to have stability of placement
- The Service is also committed to assisting children to improve their life chances through good health, achieving success in education, and developing social skills necessary for good citizenship. To this end it works with children's social workers, and others, to support its foster carers and ensure children enjoy and maintain good health, achieve educationally to their ability, and develop socially. These objectives are

monitored with an overarching framework of Performance Objectives for all looked after children and reported on monthly through the Quality Improvement Framework within CLYP.

## **5. Fostering Services Provided**

### **5.01 Services offered directly by the fostering service:**

- Recruitment, training, assessment and approval of foster carers.
- Training and development opportunities for approved carers.
- Individual and group support for approved foster carers.
- Targeted support for foster placements under stress
- Appropriate equipment.
- Financial assistance for the maintenance and care of children in foster placements.
- Skills based rewards system that recognizes the valuable contribution foster carers make towards the care and development of children looked after by them.
- A range of placements for children looked after including:-
  - Emergency Placements
  - Time-limited placements
  - Long-term / permanent placements
  - Some placements with family and friends
  - Some respite placements
  - Placements preparing children for adoption
  - Specialist placements for children with particular difficulties
  - Placement of children with significant disabilities
  
- Cultural link for children trans-racially placed
- Day care on a respite or planned basis for some children whose main carer is prevented from offering 24 hour care for agreed reasons as part of a plan
- Assessment of carers for Special Guardianship Orders
- Support Services to Special Guardianship Carers
- Assessment with Referral and Assessment Service and Neighbourhood Services of Private Fostering arrangements
- On occasion, support with vehicle purchase and house adaptations to support carers in their care of children

### **5.02 Independent Agency Placements**

5.03.1 In exercising its functions Coventry Fostering Service strives to match children needing family placements with the best possible available foster carer. On occasion there are no suitable local authority foster carers. In such an event placements with independent agencies are considered. The Fostering Service works closely with the Placement Service who ensure information is circulated to Fostering Agencies who are part of the Fostering Framework.

5.03.2 Team managers or supervising social workers scrutinize any proposed placement for suitability and matching purposes. Where the placement is suitable advice to this effect is offered to the Placement Team.

## **6. Working in Partnership**

6.01 Coventry City Fostering Service recognizes that the provision of effective care for children placed with its carers requires the service to work in partnership with a variety of staff and agencies. The provision of good health care, sound education, and emotional well being all require input from a variety of agencies and people concerned for the child.

6.02 Coventry Fostering Service is therefore committed to developing partnerships with colleagues in Child Health, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Education Service, Connexions, the voluntary sector, and any other organization that works to secure the best interests of children placed with its carers.

6.03 The Education Service for Looked After Children works closely with the Fostering Service, it's foster carers, supervising social workers, CAMHS staff, children's social workers, and directly with children to support educational attainment and placement stability. The Manager is also a key member of the Fostering Panel.

6.04 To meet its obligations under Regulations and as part of Corporate Parenting, the Statement of Purpose of Coventry Fostering Service is reviewed as required and presented to the Cabinet Member for Children Learning and Young People for approval on an annual basis.

## **7. Management Structure and Staff**

7.01 The Fostering Service presently consists of 1 Integrated Service Manager, 3 Team Managers, senior practitioners and a range of qualified and unqualified staff, (including admin support staff). All social workers working within the Fostering Service are professionally qualified and most have a minimum of 2 years childcare experience prior to joining the service. Additionally there are three unqualified support workers in post., see point 15 for current posts.

7.02 Each Team Manager is responsible for managing a group of staff within the service and in addition takes lead responsibility for different elements of service delivery and development.

7.03 One of the Team Managers is responsible for an assessment team which locates and matches internal placements for fostering and works closely with the Placements Team.

7.04 The Recruitment Team which acts on behalf of the Fostering and Adoption Services, is managed by the Adoption Service, but will continue to be



responsible for the recruitment of foster carers and adopters. The Team has a complement of a Team Manager, Senior Practitioner (p/t), and 4.66 FTE Senior Caseworkers, as well as an Assistant Communications Officer and admin support. The Fostering Recruitment element of this team transferred to the Fostering Service from June 2011, and was amalgamated within the Assessment Team.

- 7.05 There are two other Fostering Teams, providing supervision and support to foster carers, including the specialist foster carers, mainstream carers, "Friends and Family" carers, and assessment and support in connection with Special Guardianship and Private Fostering. Each team has a complement of Team Manager, with an appropriate allocation of Senior Caseworkers, Senior Practitioners, and Support Staff, along with admin support.
- 7.06 Professional staff are supported by an admin group led by an Admin Manager, who reports to the Integrated Service Manager. The fostering service admin staff comprise of 1 Manager, 1 Assistant Admin Manager and 5 admin staff. This structure has significantly changed since the ABSS review.

## **8. The number of Foster Carers**

As of 31 March 2012 the number of foster carer's households in Coventry City Fostering Service is 117. A full list of the number of foster carers is maintained on an in-house database.

## **9 The number of children placed**

The number of children placed with Coventry City foster carers (internal) at 31 March 2012 was 217.

A full up to date list of children placed is available on the department's database.

## **10. Complaints, compliments and outcomes**

Complaints concerning foster carers, including complaints by carers, by children placed in foster care and by others about carers are collated and overseen by the Children's Complaints Officer, who reports to the Cabinet Member for Children Learning and Young People. Of the complaints received, most were from prospective or existing foster carers and some were from looked after children and their birth families. Compliments were also received, some of these were complimenting members of staff from the Fostering Service; and some were from foster carers about the care and support from Supervising Social Workers. Compliments were received about foster carers too. All were about the standard of service they provided to the children they were looking after. A register of all complaints, compliments and outcomes is maintained and reported on at each Inspection.

(The Annual Report provides numbers of complaints received by the Fostering Service on an annual basis)

## **11. Procedure and processes for recruiting, approving, training and supporting carers.**

### **11.01 Recruitment**

The service has an active recruitment strategy and annual plan that is adjusted through the year in response to opportunities and changing circumstances. The marketing strategy involves regular advertising in the local press, seeking opportunities features and community involvement at local events. The strategy is reviewed regularly to ensure it is as effective as possible. Public information meetings take place throughout the financial year.

There is an emphasis on responding quickly to carers, providing them with realistic information about the challenges and rewards of fostering, with an offer of a home visit to discuss their interest prior to inviting them to complete a formal application.

The detailed process of responding to enquiries is outlined in the guidance and procedures from Coventry's Procedures manual.

### **11.02 Pre Approval training**

Applicants for fostering are invited to attend pre approval training, consisting of up to 7 sessions, contributing to the assessment of their suitability as foster carers.

There is a rolling programme of preparation meetings held during the year, however we are currently reviewing this area in order to maximise the opportunities for recruitment of Foster Carers. Meetings provide an opportunity for the Fostering Service to find out more about the applicants and have a clearer idea of their strengths, areas for further work and any concerns that need to be clarified as part of the assessment process. The meetings are also aimed at self-assessment in that they enable applicants to find out more about fostering and help them discover their own strengths and weaknesses. Applicants attending the meetings will be asked to complete evaluation forms. A report by the facilitators of the meetings is included in the assessment report presented to the Fostering Panel. Family and friends carers are invited to attend this training.

### **11.03 Assessment**

A fostering service worker, located within the fostering assessment team is allocated to carry out a home study/assessment of the applicant. The time scale taken to complete the assessment after the applicant has completed a formal application should generally be no more than six months unless there are issues with checks or the need for additional work with the prospective foster carers is identified.

Where the applicant is a relative or friend of the specific child requiring a placement, and the placement of the child with the applicant has already taken place, the requirements relating to the foster carer's attendance at preparation groups are waived. However, the requirement for ongoing training

after the assessment period may be considered as a condition of any approval.

All assessments of potential foster carers will follow the format of the BAAF Form F Assessment. The Service has adopted the latest version of the Form F which requires an evidence based/competence approach to the fostering task. The suitability of the accommodation must also be assessed and a health and safety checklist completed including an assessment of risk posed by any pets in the household. Any issues that arise from the check should be recorded on the Form F with an agreed plan of action established.

The completed Form F, which should contain the outcome of the assessment and recommendations of the fostering worker carrying out the assessment, is shared with and signed by the applicant. This will be supplemented by the assessment summary of the applicant in the preparation groups. This assessment summary is also shared with the applicant prior to presentation to the Fostering Panel. This gives the applicant the opportunity to make any comments for example by expressing disagreement or support for the recommendations. A number of references are taken up to verify the applicants account. In light of the Wakefield report, a number of further checks are proposed for inclusion in the future to enhance the evidence based approach e.g. routine employment check instead of solely checking those only employed in childcare.

#### **11.04 Presentation to the Fostering Panel**

The worker responsible for the assessment or a substitute with adequate knowledge of the applicant and the assessment presents all the relevant information to the Fostering Panel.

The applicants are always invited to attend if they so wish and usually do so. In any event, their views and wishes must be presented fairly and accurately within the documentation before the Panel and verbally. The Panel was until December 2010 chaired by an experienced ex Children and Families Manager as an Independent Chair. In January 2011 a new independent chair was appointed with significant experience

The Panel will consider the written report together with all the supporting documentation and any additional information presented verbally, and makes a recommendation to the Agency Decision Maker (Head of Service for Looked After Children) regarding the outcome of the assessment. The recommendation will be recorded in writing and, where approval is recommended, any limitations of the approval to named children (for example where the foster carer is a relative or family friend) or conditions as to the age range or number of children to be placed in the foster home will also be specified.

#### **11.05 Post Approval**

Where an application is approved, the foster carer will be allocated a fostering service supervising social worker. The allocated worker will request the foster carer to sign a Foster Care Agreement between CLYP and the foster carer, which contains the information the foster carer needs to carry out his or her functions as a foster carer effectively. The foster carer will be given two copies for signature, and will retain one signed copy. The other will be kept on

the foster carer's case record, together with the report and supporting documents presented to the Fostering Panel, a copy of the Panel's recommendation and a copy of the approval decision. The foster carer receives an induction and access to a copy of the induction handbook, either online or a hard copy.

#### **11.06 Post Approval training**

The Service offers a training programme each year to foster carers. This includes elements that are mandatory for all new mainstream carers to attend, called "Core Training", additional courses open to all carers, and some specialised training open only to more experienced carers who look after children presenting the greatest challenge. Carers are expected to attend refresher training at regular intervals (no greater than 3 years). All carers are notified of the training courses on offer and a record of the training attended is kept.

In addition the department offers NVQ training in fostering to selected candidates each year. The training programme is published at regular intervals throughout the year and is amended to reflect assessed needs, requests from carers and availability of trainers.

The Children's Workforce Development Council Induction Standards were implemented on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008. Considerable planning and preparation has taken place by the Fostering Service, NVQ Centre and Employee Services including information for all foster carers and staff. A number of workshops have taken place to support foster carers and staff to complete the award.

#### **11.07 Supporting carers**

- Adoption of National UK Standards.
- Financial payments in line with Fostering Network recommended rates.
- Payment for Skills Scheme, allied to a personal portfolio.
- Induction Manual/ Handbook.
- Supervision and support for the whole family
- Targeted support when placements under strain
- Annual Foster Home Reviews.
- Health and Safety Assessment.
- Annual (or more often if required) review of Family Safer Caring Plan.
- Clear procedures covering overnight stays away from the placement.
- Support groups, led by trained foster carers and supported by a designated worker
- 24/7 out of hours telephone support line/on call
- Respite care where required to meet the needs of the child
- Supervising social worker to support and supervise the placement
- Experienced Managers
- Insurance cover.
- Fostering Network membership.
- Fostering Network Mediation and Advice Worker.
- Clear procedures dealing with complaints and allegations, ongoing payments in certain cases pending investigation of an allegation as received by Fostering Network.
- Loan of equipment.

- Core training programme and additional training opportunities
- CWDC Induction Standards
- NVQ Level 3
- Exit questionnaire.
- Regular newsletters
- Support to Coventry Fostering Care Association
- Pathways to Care assistance with home conversions and purchase of people carriers.
- Access to the Council's counselling service

## **12. Review of quality of care**

- 12.01 Supervising social workers meet regularly with their Foster Carers to offer support and supervision, compliance in relation to each child placed with foster parents, with the foster placement agreement and the responsible authority's plan for the care of the child.
- 12.02 There is a formal agenda for supervision sessions and these are recorded and notes maintained on the foster carers file. Any breach of policies or standards is discussed with managers and appropriate action taken. Foster Carers are expected to maintain records of any medication, medical treatment and first aid administered to any child placed with them and this is checked by the supervising social worker.
- 12.03 Managers review the file regularly and are informed of any issues as they arise. Case file audits are undertaken by managers in the service.
- 12.04 Cause for Concern meetings take place if carers breach Fostering Standards. Three such meetings in one year would lead to a report being presented to the Fostering Panel and all Cause for Concerns meetings are recorded within a Foster Carers annual review.
- 12.05 The service collates the views of looked after children, which are attached to annual reviews of foster carers and included within the Annual Report on the Fostering Service. All first year reviews of probationary foster carers and the outcomes of all annual reviews are reported to Fostering Panel and any salient issues identified.
- 12.06 The Integrated Service Manager maintains a register of notifiable events matters listed in Schedule 7 and 8 of the Fostering Regulations including:
- All accidents, injuries and illnesses of children placed with foster parents.
  - Any allegations or suspicions of abuse in respect of children placed with foster parents and the outcome of any investigation.
  - Any incident requiring the police to be called
  - Any unauthorized absence from the foster home of a child accommodated there.
- 12.07 In addition a record of any complaint is kept and any serious complaints about the conduct of a foster carer are reported to the Fostering Panel.
- 12.08 The Integrated Service Manager meets with representatives of the Foster Carers on a regular basis to review services and resolve any issues that arise.
- 12.09 The Integrated Service Manager or a delegated manager and Team

Managers meet on a regular basis to review the quality of care offered and these meetings are minuted. Any issues requiring additional consideration are discussed with the Head of Service.

- 12.10 A system of duplicate files is in place to record recruitment records and conduct of required checks of new workers.
- 12.11 Records of fostering panel meetings are carefully recorded and available on the foster carers file and centrally within the service and are available for future reference. Wherever possible a copy of the formal assessment of the carers' suitability to foster is maintained on the most recent file in use. A record of all assessments presented to panel is maintained alongside the foster panel minutes.
- 12.12 Each staff member within the service maintains a daily log of their working hours, including records of time taken in lieu of additional hours, annual or special leave, and sickness.

### **13. Children's Guide to the Fostering Service**

A children's guide is available and was last updated in January 2008. A recent review was completed and we are currently updating this guide with assistance and input from the Children's Champion

### **14.00 Policies, Procedures and Written Guidance**

- 14.01 Coventry's procedures and policies are now accessible to staff on the Intranet.
- 14.02 In addition the Foster Carers handbook contains the procedures and guidance applicable to foster carers revised in 2000, but is currently being revised in line with the introduction of Minimum Standards and regulations, and also to make it more user friendly for the Foster Carers.
- 14.03 This Statement of Purpose accurately reflects the policies and procedures of the Coventry Fostering Service, as part of Coventry's Directorate of Children, Learning and Young People as of the date this report was written.

**15. Current Posts**

List of current posts within the service:

**1 x Integrated Service Manager**

**Recruitment & Assessment Team**

- 1 x Team Manager – f/t
- 1 x Senior Practitioner – f/t
- 3 x Social Workers – f/t
- 2 x Social Workers – p/t

All the above are qualified posts

**Mainstream**

- 1 x Team Manager - f/t
- 8 x Social Workers - f/t
- 2 x Social Workers - p/t

All the above are qualified, to include to Newly Qualified

**Connected Persons**

- 1 x Team Manager – f/t
- 1 x Senior Practitioner – f/t
- 4 x Social Workers – f/t
- 1 x Social Worker – p/t
- 2 x Children's Support Worker's – f/t
- 1 x Children's Support Worker – f/t

Team Manager, Senior Practitioner, and social Workers all qualified

**Administration Team**

- 1 x Manager – f/t
- 1 x Assist. Manager - f/t
- 3 x Administrators – f/t
- 3 x Administrators – p/t

The new structure for Administration support will now come under the Business Service Section





## APPENDIX 3

## Family and Friends Care Policy

## Contents

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1. [Introduction](#)
2. [Values and Principles](#)
3. [Legal Framework](#)
4. [Different Situations Whereby Children May Be Living with Family and Friends Carers](#)
5. [Provision of Financial Support - General Principles](#)
6. [Accommodation](#)
7. [Supporting Contact with Parents](#)
8. [Family Group Conferences](#)
9. [Complaints Procedure](#)

[Appendix A: Caring For Somebody Else's Child - Options](#)

[Appendix B: Summary of Consultation Findings](#)

### 1. Introduction

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Children may be brought up by members of their extended families, friends or other people who are connected with them for a variety of reasons and in a variety of different arrangements.

This policy sets out the local authority's approach towards promoting and supporting the needs of such children and covers the assessments which will be carried out to determine the services required and how such services will then be provided.

In drawing up this policy, we have consulted a diverse range of foster carers, parents, grand-parents and other people who could be looking after a child, whether in an official capacity or not. Consultation on the draft policy was led by Sheila Bates, in her capacity as Children's Champion and also as a Director of the Community Empowerment Network. A summary of findings from these consultations is at [Appendix B: Summary of Consultation Findings](#).

The manager with overall responsibility for this policy is Shanti Eaves, Head of Looked After Children's Service.

This policy will be regularly reviewed, and made freely and widely available.

### 2. Values and Principles

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Consideration of children's welfare and best interests will always be at the centre of the work we do.

It is an underlying principle that children should be enabled to live within their families unless this is not consistent with their welfare. We will therefore work to maintain children within their own families, and facilitate services to support any such arrangements, wherever this is consistent with the child's safety and well-being. This principle applies to all children in need, including those who are looked after by the local authority. Where a child cannot live within his or her immediate family and the local authority is considering the need to look after the child, we will make strenuous efforts to identify potential carers within the child's network of family or friends who are able and willing to care for the child.

We will provide support for any such arrangements based on the assessed needs of the child, not simply on his or her legal status, and will seek to ensure that family and friends carers are provided with support to ensure that children do not become looked after by the local authority, or do not have to remain looked after longer than is needed.

### 3. Legal Framework

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All local authorities have a general duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of Children in Need\* living within their area and to promote the upbringing of such children by their families. The way in which they fulfil this duty is by providing a range and level of services appropriate to those children's assessed needs (Section 17, Children Act 1989). This can include financial, practical or other support.

It is important to note that local authorities do not have a general duty to assess all arrangements where children are living with their wider family or friends network rather than their parents but it does have a duty where it appears that services may be necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a Child in Need.

\*A Child in Need is defined in Section 17(10) of the Children Act 1989 as a child who is disabled or who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision of services by the local authority.

To clarify the children who may come within the definition of Children in Need, the local authority has drawn up a '**Children's Social Care Thresholds and Practice Standards**' document, which is available through the Procedures Manual.

Children in Need may live with members of their family or friends in a variety of different legal arrangements, some formal and some informal. Different court orders are available to formalise these arrangements.

Looked after children will always come within the definition of Children in Need, whether they are accommodated under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 (with parental consent) or in care subject to a Court Order whereby the local authority shares parental responsibility for the child. The local authority has a responsibility wherever possible to make arrangements for a looked after child to live with a member of the family (Section 22 of the Children Act 1989).

For a detailed summary of the meaning and implications of different legal situations, the rights of carers and parents, and the nature of decisions which family and friends carers will be able to make in relation to the child, please see **Appendix A: Caring For Somebody Else's Child - Options. Section 4, Different Situations Whereby Children May Be Living with Family and Friends Carers** below sets out the local authority powers and duties in relation to the various options.

In relation to financial support, local authorities may provide carers of children in need with such support on a regular or one-off basis, under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989. This may include discretionary funding based upon a financial means test. However, the status of the placement will determine the nature and amount of the financial support and who can authorise its payment. The legal status of the child may have a bearing on the levels of financial support which may be available to carers, however. There are different legislative provisions which apply to financial support for children living with family or friends in looked after/adoption/special guardianship/residence order arrangements. The following sections of this policy set out the financial support that we may provide to family and friends who are caring for children in these different contexts.

## 4. Different Situations Whereby Children May Be Living with Family and Friends Carers

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### 4.1 Informal Family and Friends Care Arrangements

(Section 4.1 applies to those children living in informal family and family care arrangements which do not meet the criteria for Private Fostering, as in **Section 4.2, Private Fostering Arrangements** below).

Where a child cannot be cared for within his or her immediate family, the family may make their own arrangements to care for the child within the family and friends network.

The local authority does not have a duty to assess any such informal family and friends care arrangements, unless it appears to the authority that services may be necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a Child in Need. In such cases, the local authority has a responsibility under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 to assess the child's needs and provide services to meet any assessed needs of the child. Following assessment, a Child in Need Plan will be drawn up and a package of support will be identified. This can comprise a variety of different types of services and support, including financial support.

See **Section 17 Payments Procedure** in Coventry's Manual of Procedures, which provides as follows:

Section 17 can also be used to support extended family members and family friends to assist in the care of children at a time of crisis.

Whenever the need for alternative arrangements to care for children is assessed as being required, social workers are required to assist parents to consider the scope for a child's care needs to be met by extended family members and friends. Such arrangements must always be explored in partnership with parents as an alternative to a child becoming **Looked After**.

In such circumstances the arrangements for placement are made between the parents and the carers and the role of Children's Social Care is limited to assisting the parties to make the arrangements and to advise regarding benefit claims etc.

While most "kinship care" arrangements are established without Children's Social Care involvement, there are occasions when financial assistance is required to support such placements. As children placed through such arrangements are not looked after, any such support is provided under Section 17.

Generally family or friend carers will obtain the finance necessary to support the child from the parents or by claiming welfare benefits and, in these circumstances Section 17 assistance will be limited to occasional payments designed to overcome a cash crisis, which would otherwise have an unacceptable impact on the care of children. Exceptionally occasional payments may also be made to meet a special need on the part of a child, which would not otherwise be met.

Consistent with the wording of section 17, such payments will be "exceptional" and will consist of the minimum amount required to reasonably meet the assessed need.

Consideration of such payments must be at team manager level and the basis of the decision (including any amounts) must be clearly noted on the relevant case file.

Normally section 17 assistance is limited to occasional payments as outlined above.

In very exceptional circumstances however, regular payments may be made as follows:

- Regular payments cannot be made to persons with parental responsibility;
- Regular payments can only be made to family/friends carers whose income is below the specified "needs allowance" for the family and child and who are not entitled to claim welfare benefits to supplement this;
- The maximum amount for a regular payment is that which will increase family income to the specified "needs allowance".

Consideration of the need for regular payments must be at Integrated Services Manager level and any payment arrangement must be reviewed at three monthly intervals. The basis of the decision (including the amounts) must be clearly noted on the relevant case file.

## 4.2 Private Fostering Arrangements

A privately fostered child is a child under 16 (or 18 if disabled) who is cared for by an adult who is not a parent or close relative, where the child is to be cared for in that home for 28 days or more. Close relative is defined as 'a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of the full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership) or step-parent.' It does not include a child who is Looked After by a local authority. In a private fostering arrangement, the parent still holds parental responsibility and agrees the arrangement with the private foster carer.

The local authority has a duty to assess and monitor the welfare of all privately fostered children and the way in which they carry out these duties is set out in the Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations 2005. However, the local authority may also become involved with a child in a private fostering arrangement where the child comes within the definition of a Child in Need. In such cases, the local authority has a responsibility to provide services to meet the assessed needs of the child under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Following assessment, a Child in Need Plan will be drawn up and a package of support will be identified. As in **Section 4.1, Informal Family and Friends Care Arrangements** above, this can comprise a variety of different types of services and support, including financial support.

### 4.3 Family and Friends Foster Carers - “Connected Persons”

Where a child is looked after by the local authority, we have a responsibility wherever possible to make arrangements for the child to live with a member of the family who is approved as a foster carer (Section 22 of the Children Act 1989). The child can be placed with the family members prior to such approval, subject to an assessment of the placement, for up to 16 weeks. This temporary approval can only be extended in exceptional circumstances. In this context the carer is referred to as a Connected Person and the process of obtaining approval for the placement is set out in the Placement with Connected Persons Procedure. Where temporary approval is given to such a placement under the procedure, the carers will receive financial support on a regular basis.

In addition the child will have a placement plan which sets out the specific arrangements surrounding the child and the carers including the expectations of the foster carers and the support they can expect to receive to enable to fulfil their responsibilities for the child.

**The assessment and approval process** for family and friends who apply to be foster carers for a specific Looked After child will be the same as for any other foster carer except that the timescales for the assessment are different where a child is already in the placement as indicated above. In all other respects the process is the same as for any other potential foster carers and is set out in the Assessment and Approval of Foster Carer Procedure. An information pack will be available to potential foster carers about the process and they will be given the name and contact details of the social worker from the Fostering Service allocated to carry out the assessment.

Once approved as foster carers, they will be allocated a supervising social worker from the fostering service to provide them with support and supervision; and they will receive fostering allowances for as long as they care for the child as a foster carer.

While the child remains a looked after child, as a foster carer, they will be expected to cooperate with all the processes that are in place to ensure that the child receives appropriate care and support, for example, contributing to reviews of the child's Care Plan, cooperating with the child's social worker and promoting the child's education and health needs.

### 4.4 Residence Order

A Residence Order is a Court Order which gives parental responsibility to the person in whose favour it is made, usually lasting until the child is 18. Parental responsibility is shared with the parents.

Relatives may apply for a Residence Order after caring for the child for one year.

Residence Orders may be made in private family proceedings in which the local authority is not a party nor involved in any way in the arrangements. However, a Residence Order in favour of a relative or foster carer (who was a 'Connected Person') with whom a child is placed may be an appropriate outcome as part of a permanence plan for a Child in Need or a 'Looked After' child.

The local authority may pay Residence Order Allowances to relatives or friends, unless they are a spouse or civil partner of a parent, with whom a child is living under a Residence Order. This is set out in paragraph 15 of Schedule 1 of the Children Act 1989 however this is discretionary.

### 4.5 Special Guardianship Order

Special Guardianship offers a further option for children needing permanent care outside their birth family. It can offer greater security without absolute severance from the birth family as in adoption.

Relatives or friends (Connected Persons) who have been approved as foster carers (see [Section 4.3, Family and Friends Foster Carers - “Connected Persons”](#) above) may apply for a Special Guardianship Order after caring for the child for one year. Otherwise, they have to have cared for the child for 3 out of the last 5 years before they can make an application.

As Special Guardians, they will have parental responsibility for the child which, while it is still shared with the parents, can be exercised with greater autonomy on day-to-day matters than where there is a Residence Order.

Special Guardianship Orders may be made in private family proceedings and the local authority may not be a party to any such arrangements. However, a Special Guardianship Order in favour of a relative or foster carer (who was a 'Connected

Person') with whom a child is living may be an appropriate outcome as part of a permanence plan for a Child in Need or a 'Looked After' child.

Where the child was Looked After immediately prior to the making of the Special Guardianship Order, the local authority has a responsibility to assess the support needs of the child, parents and Special Guardians, including the need for financial support.

#### 4.6 Adoption Order

Adoption is the process by which all parental rights and responsibilities for a child are permanently transferred to an adoptive parent by a court. As a result the child legally becomes part of the adoptive family.

An Adoption Order in favour of a relative or foster carer (who was a 'Connected Person') with whom a child is living may be an appropriate outcome as part of a permanence plan for a Child in Need or a 'Looked After' child.

Local authorities must make arrangements, as part of their adoption service, for the provision of a range of adoption support services. They then have to undertake assessments of the need for adoption support services at the request of the adopted child, adoptive parents and their families, as well as birth relatives. The support required is then set out in an Adoption Support Plan and this may include financial support.

### 5. Provision of Financial Support - General Principles

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There are three categories of payment, which may be considered. One or more of these may be applicable, depending on the particular circumstances of the case:

#### 1. Subsistence Crisis (One-off) Payments

These should be used to overcome a crisis, following the best assessment that can be achieved in the circumstances.

#### 2. Setting-up

These are for such items as clothing, furniture, or bedding. The social worker must be satisfied that the carers' financial position justifies the payment through a financial assessment. Assistance may be given subject to conditions, including repayment in certain situations. However, in most situations, it will be inappropriate for the Department to seek to recover money provided under these circumstances.

#### 3. Weekly Living Contribution

It is possible for the local authority to make regular payments where family members or friends care for a child whether or not the child is not Looked After. Where regular payments are to be made, relative carers should be assisted to maximise their Income/Benefit as regular payments may adversely affect an individual's claim to income support.

In all cases where regular financial support is agreed, a written agreement will be drawn up detailing the level and duration of the financial support that is to be provided, and the mechanism for review. The written agreement should reflect the legal basis on which the placement is made.

The following criteria will be applied to all such payments:

- The purpose of the payments must be to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child;
- As part of the assessment, a view should be taken as to whether the carers need financial support based on their reasonable requirements in taking on the care of the child;
- There are no other legitimate sources of finance;
- Payments will be paid to the carer, not the parents;
- The payment would not place any person in a fraudulent position.

## 6. Accommodation

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The authority works with landlords to ensure that, whenever possible, family and friends carers living in social housing are given appropriate priority to move to more suitable accommodation if this will prevent the need for a child to become looked after.

## 7. Supporting Contact with Parents

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The authority is under a duty to promote contact for all Children in Need, although this differs depending on whether or not the child is Looked After.

Where the child is not Looked After, we are required to promote contact between the child and his/her family 'where it is necessary to do so in order to safeguard and promote his or her welfare'. As part of the support arrangements, it may be identified that specific assistance is required to ensure that any such contact can be managed safely. If necessary, information will be made available to family and friends carers about local contact centres and family mediation services, and how to make use of their services.

Contact for a child who lives with parents who have separated remains a paramount issue in that child's long term welfare.

For children where a social worker is involved, work will be undertaken with the family to identify positive contact opportunities and routines. Much of this can be agreed between parents and connected people in negotiation facilitated between themselves, Children's Social Care or an agency such as Relate. Social Care can seek advice from the in-house contact service for suggestions on venues. There is also the Contact Centre, Queens Road Baptist Church, Grosvenor Road, Coventry, CV1 3EJ. Telephone: 024 76231100

For more complex family situations Family Group Conferences (see [Section 8, Family Group Conferences](#) below) are useful in bringing into focus the needs of the child and utilising family resources to ensure contact arrangements are met.

For many families, private law proceedings are an option to sustaining stable placements and contact arrangements for children. The outcome of these hearings will often include orders and directions for family members to engage with mediation and contact routines.

Within the Coventry area there are a number of private / charity organisations that provide contact venues and varying degrees of contact support / supervision. These can be accessed or sign posted via Relate, Social Care or the court mediation service. A number of agencies have recently identified opportunities to support families with contact arrangements, these services are in the early stage of development and do carry spot purchase cost for families.

Where a child is Looked After, we are required to endeavour to promote contact between the child and his or her family 'unless it is not practicable or consistent with the child's welfare'. The overall objective of the contact arrangements will be included in the child's Care Plan and the specific arrangements will be set out in the child's Placement Plan.

## 8. Family Group Conferences

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Family Group Conferences are meetings held between professionals and family members, which aim to achieve the best outcomes for children. They promote the involvement of the wider family to achieve a resolution of difficulties for Children in Need, and may help to identify short-term and/or permanent solutions for children within the family network.

We will offer a Family Group Conference or other form of family meeting at an early stage. If a child becomes Looked After, perhaps following an emergency, without a Family Group Conference having been held, then (where appropriate) we will arrange one as soon as possible.

The process is set out in [Part 2.5, Family Group Conference Service](#) of the Procedures Manual which covers the Family Group Conference Service.

## 9. Complaints Procedure

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Where a family or friends carer is not satisfied with the level of support provided to enable them to care for the child, then they have access to the local authority's complaints process. Our aim would be to resolve any such dissatisfaction without the need for a formal investigation but where an informal resolution is not possible, then a formal investigation will be arranged.

The timescales and process are set out in the [Complaints Procedure](#).

### Appendix A: Caring For Somebody Else's Child - Options

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[Click here to view Appendix A: Caring For Somebody Else's Child - Options](#)

### Appendix B: Summary of Consultation Findings

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This policy, whilst in draft form, was shared with a diverse range of foster carers, parents, grand-parents and other people who could be looking after a child, whether in an official capacity or not.

Consultation on the draft policy was led by Sheila Bates, in her capacity as Children's Champion and also as a Director of the Community Empowerment Network.

The Community Empowerment network is an umbrella body for community groups across the city of Coventry that has over 300 members. On 3rd September 2011, the Community Empowerment Network forum was held with over 150 representatives attending representing 70 groups. This event was held at the Community space in the Ricoh Arena and this draft policy was consulted on at this forum. The policy was generally welcomed and some specific feedback points which are noted below. Similar feedback points were also raised when consultation was undertaken with the Coventry Foster Carers Association although the draft policy was generally welcomed.

The specific feedback points raised from the Consultations are summarised as follows:

- Request for the detail around the assessment for subsistence (one-off) payments. There was concern about how much information the local authority would require that wasn't purely financial, who would have access to this information and how this information would be used and stored following payment;
- Issue was raised about how awareness of this provision would be raised and the ease of the process to access payments;
- Request for more family friendly documents that give more detail about entitlements, assessment and the complaints procedure;
- Concern that if a family member was looking after a child relative but relations with the parents were not good, that involvement with the local authority and meeting their criteria may make the problem worse;
- Sometimes the support needed is not financial and there should be a one stop shop approach for such families to access signposting and support.

End





## APPENDIX 4

### Full Fostering Financial summary

Placement Spend Summary	2009/10			2010/11			2011/12		
	Budget	Actual	Variation (under)/Overspend	Budget	Actual	Variation (under)/Over spend	Budget	Actual	Variation (under)/Overspend
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Internal Fostering	4419	4194	(225)	4476	3763	(713)	4410	3355	(1,055)
Internal Residential	1884	1977	93	1851	1981	130	1843	1823	(20)
External Placements									
-External Fostering	2542	3834	1,292	2542	6184	3,642	2542	6944	4,402
-External Residential (other)	3208	3973	765	3208	4481	1,273	3208	4618	1,410
-Northern Care	3869	4148	279	3870	4783	913	4886	5562	676
Total External Placements	9619	11955	2336	9620	15448	5828	10636	17124	6488
<b>Total Placements</b>	<b>15,922</b>	<b>18,126</b>	<b>2,204</b>	<b>15,947</b>	<b>21,192</b>	<b>5,245</b>	<b>16,889</b>	<b>22,302</b>	<b>5,413</b>

LAC Numbers *	2012/13		
	2010/11	2011/12	Target Forecast
Family and Friends	58	46	46 42
Internal Fostering	225	197	227 174
External Fostering	147	173	128 203
Internal Residential	9	8	7 9
External Residential (Northern Care)	38	42	38 36
External Residential (Other)	41	49	39 47
Placed For Adoption	26	27	25 36
Placed with Parents	35	29	29 26
Other (incl B&B/some aftercare)	17	7	5 10
<b>Total</b>	596	578	544 583

\* Based on actual bed nights  
 # Bed nights up to August 2012