



# **PSCB Business Plan 2017-2019**

**DRAFT v10**

## Introduction

Our vision is that **all children and families in Portsmouth have access to the right support at the right time**. To achieve this, we want to be able to identify children who have additional needs as soon as possible so that appropriate support is offered at the earliest opportunity. Our aim is to work **with** children, young people and families to help them sustain safe and healthy lives and create the foundations of future success - their stronger futures.

Our principle is that **safeguarding is everyone's responsibility**. We support agencies and organisations that work across Portsmouth to foster a child-centred culture, which focusses all of the work on the safeguarding needs of vulnerable children and young people and improving their outcomes.

At the core of our safeguarding and child protection work is the commitment to ensuring that children and young people are seen, heard and helped

- **Seen in the context** of their lives at home, in friendship circles, health, education and public spaces (including social media).
- **Heard** through professionals taking the time to listen to what children and young people are saying, putting themselves in the child or young person's shoes and thinking deeply about what their life might truly be like.
- **Helped** by remaining professionally curious and by implementing creative and effective solutions that make children and young people safer.

The Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board (PSCB) Business Plan sets out the strategic intent of the PSCB in making this vision a reality. It underlines the statutory objectives of the PSCB to coordinate and ensure the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in partner organisations across Portsmouth, in line with priorities set for 2017/19. This plan sets out the future focus and planned ambitions of multi-agency safeguarding activity in Portsmouth.

The plan seeks to ensure that while the PSCB continues to oversee and drive improvements in its "core business" through which significant numbers of children are safeguarded, it also seeks to ensure that we maintain an overview of safeguarding issues which affect particular groups of vulnerable children and young people. We continue to learn more about the nature and scale of problems such as child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; the impact of living with domestic abuse etc., and the PSCB needs to ensure that multi-agency responses to these and other issues are child focused, informed by national and learning, and are proportionate and effective.

At the same time, we will continue to review and where necessary improve our governance arrangements at a time of ongoing change. We want to ensure we find the optimum ways to disseminate learning from best practice and case reviews across a wide multi-agency workforce, in some situations engaging those in agencies which may not be traditionally engaged in safeguarding children. We want to continue to develop a culture where challenge between agencies leads to better outcomes for children and also wish to continue to strengthen relationships with key partnerships where we share agendas.

## Maintaining high quality oversight and scrutiny of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements

### In order to continue to deliver the core business of the Board at high quality the PSCB will:

- Ensure the governance arrangements of the Board are fit for purpose. That there is a constitution signed by all members, terms of reference for all committees, accurate and timely notes from meetings and an annual report that summarises the work of the Board
- Undertake reviews of serious cases and ensure the lessons learnt from these are shared with Board partners. The Board will also undertake reviews of other cases which don't meet the criteria for a Serious Case Review, but can provide useful insights into the way organisations are working together to safeguard children
- Ensure that a review of each death of a child normally resident in Portsmouth is undertaken by their Child Death Overview Panel. It will ensure that any modifiable factors identified within these reviews are shared with relevant agencies, and will consider what action could be taken locally or nationally to prevent future deaths.
- Deliver an annual audit programme that meets the requirements of the section 11 audit process and include schools section 157/175 requirements.
- (in cooperation with Hampshire, Southampton and Isle of Wight's LSCBs) the PSCB will ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures are reviewed, up to date and communicated to each agency
- Provide effective communication with a multi-agency workforce - including producing an annual report, termly newsletters and a regularly updated website
- Seek increased opportunities to share learning from analysing our dataset; case reviews; research; audit and scrutiny of reports brought to the Board from partner agencies. Placing this learning in a context of organisational change and national legislation changes to partnership safeguarding arrangements
- Undertake a quarterly programme of themed multi agency audits of key priority areas as set by the PSCB Chair, and use these audits to gain assurance that policies and procedures concerning thresholds are understood and implemented, to ensure children receive the right service at the right time.
- Provide challenge across the Partnership, holding each other to account with challenge that improves outcomes
- Deliver a robust programme of multi-agency safeguarding training
- Support the development, delivery and monitoring of detailed action plans for each of the PSCB Committees
- Maximise our wider partnerships to better influence impact on the ground. This will include working with other boards, such as the Children's Trust; Portsmouth Safeguarding Adults Board; Corporate Parenting Board; Safer Portsmouth Partnership; and Health & Wellbeing Board to encourage wider organisations to recognise their responsibilities to safeguard children and ensure safeguarding is 'everybody's business'.

### Priority Areas

The PSCB Business Plan 2017-2019 is intentionally brief and focused on **strategic priorities** that form the basis of the work of the Board over the next two years. These priorities support the statutory functions of the PSCB and the partnership response to protecting vulnerable children and young people, preventing harm and promoting their welfare.

There are a number of factors that have impacted on the new priorities. In developing our plan we have taken into account various strategies and the priorities of our partners to ensure that we have a holistic

approach that adds value to safeguarding Portsmouth's children and young people. This plan is set in the context of other multi-agency plans held by [Portsmouth's Childrens Trust](#), [Portsmouth Safeguarding Adults Board](#) and [Safer Portsmouth Partnership](#).

The priorities have been agreed based on the issues identified as having a significant impact on the safety and wellbeing of children in Portsmouth. These priorities are driven and informed by:

- Consultation with members of the PSCB about progress with existing priorities and developing areas of concern
- The statutory functions of the PSCB
- A review of the Business Plan for 2014/17
- Learning from the PSCB dataset, local and national case reviews, audits of practice reports to the PSCB and scrutiny of issues by the Board
- Discussion with groups of children and young people

It recognises the ambition of each partner to improve how we understand these issues and identify children at risk of them; how they can work to prevent and reduce further harm; and how they can effectively intervene and support the family to reduce the impact on the child.

### Children Experiencing Neglect

The number of contacts to Portsmouth's Multi-Agency and Safeguarding Hub (MASH), referrals to Children's Social Care and the percentage of Child Protection Plans under the category of 'neglect' has remained a concern. The PSCB has therefore focused a significant amount of attention on this matter during 2014-17 and will continue to do so.

2017 will see the launch of the new Portsmouth Neglect Strategy. The draft strategy will go out for consultation and will be endorsed and finalised later in 2017. The Board will then face the challenge of testing the understanding of practitioners in terms of assessing and addressing neglect and of measuring outcomes. PSCB will stage a Neglect Safeguarding Week in November 2017 in order to raise awareness of neglect as a concern and to look at ways in which practitioners can address this.

Portsmouth's Neglect Strategy will underpin the shared commitment of all partner agencies to work collectively to effectively tackle neglect and improve the quality of children and young people's lives. This strategy and work plan will identify key principles under which work around neglect should be undertaken and identifies key priority areas in order to improve response to neglect from all the agencies working with children and families in Portsmouth. The Strategy will be overseen and monitored by Stronger Futures.

#### **To support the work to improve identification and response to children affected by neglect, the PSCB will:**

- Develop a multi-agency strategy for Portsmouth to coordinate and focus the work of partner agencies with families where neglect is an issue
- Revise neglect tools used by the workforce and the practice guidance that supports the identification and response to neglect
- The PSCB will undertake an audit of the quality of Early Help Assessments to consider how well emerging indicators of neglect are being identified and responded to
- In order to understand the numbers of children for whom neglect is a feature, the prevalence of parental factors and the effectiveness of the safeguarding system in reducing neglect; indicators will be developed for the dataset to measure the scale of the issue and monitor the impact of interventions
- Through multi-agency audit and reports by agencies to the Board, we will seek to understand, and challenge, the effectiveness of interventions in reducing the impact of neglect.
- PSCB will coordinate activities and workshops during Safeguarding Week in November 2017 focused on the theme of Neglect

## Missing, exploited and trafficked children

PSCB continues to work with partners on ensuring that the processes for identifying and protecting children who are at risk of being exploited, who go missing from home and care, or are being trafficked are improved. PSCB is aware of new research and guidance on vulnerable children who are at risk of criminal exploitation; being internally trafficked within Britain as well as being brought into the country from abroad; and of being radicalised into extremist ways of thinking and behaving. Thus PSCB will continue to request information on agencies identification and response to these children so that the effectiveness of agencies work can be scrutinise and held to account.

The PSCB has a well-established sub-committee to oversee and monitor the implementation of Portsmouth's Missing, Exploited and Trafficked Children Strategy. This committee reports annually to the Board on the progress made by partners to deliver the objectives of the strategy. The MET strategy is based on 5 pillars for effective safeguarding for this vulnerable group of children. These are: 1. Scrutiny and Oversight; 2. Understand and Identify; 3. Prevention; 4. Intervention and Support; and 5. Disruption and Justice.

### **To support the work to improve identification and response to missing, exploited and trafficked children, the PSCB will:**

- To continue to embed and further develop an effective and coordinated response to exploited, missing and trafficked children, both on an operational and strategic level
- PSCB to know the numbers of children who are victims of exploitation and trafficking, and the numbers of those who go missing; and to understand the effectiveness of its strategy to reduce these risks.
- Effectiveness of disruption activities scrutinised to inform effectiveness of impact.
- PSCB to make sure that strategic and operational responses to exploitation, missing and trafficked children are informed by voices of children and young people, who have experienced these events.
- Procedures for identifying children missing from home, education or care are reviewed regularly and audited. The reasons why children go missing are routinely reviewed and inform the work of agencies to address these issues and prevent future episodes of missing.
- PSCB to review the safeguarding of children who are unaccompanied asylum seekers or trafficked, and have no recourse to public funds.

## Children Affected by Domestic Abuse

Whilst a significant amount is now known about the numbers of children witnessing domestic abuse and the percentage of children who are present at reported incidents of domestic abuse, the Board is keen to ensure that the experience of, and impact on children witnessing domestic abuse remains a key priority for strategic leaders in Portsmouth, and in the Safer Portsmouth Partnership.

The Local Authority has ownership of Portsmouth's multi-agency Domestic Abuse Strategy, the priorities and progress towards these are annually reported to the Board. The PSCB Business Manager is a member of the strategy's review group to enable a clear line of communication so that questions and challenges for identified the this strategic group can be responded to in a timely manner and is able to lobby for ensuring that there are sufficient and effective services that support for children and families affected by domestic abuse.

**To support the work to improve identification and response to children affected by domestic abuse, the PSCB will:**

- The PSCB will be supporting the current work set out in the Portsmouth Domestic Abuse Strategy and Action Plan
- The PSCB to be provided with assurance by the Safer Portsmouth Partnership of the effective delivery of the objectives within the Domestic Abuse Strategy in driving improvement to practice and outcomes.
- Raising professional awareness regarding the impact of domestic abuse on children to ensure they are appropriately identified, protected and supported
- PSCB to understand the impact of Operation Encompass and be assured that early help and support is offered to children following an incident of domestic violence

### **The Role of the Board**

For each of these areas the Board and its committees will have responsibility for:

- the scrutiny and oversight of effectiveness of the current ways of working to ensure that this plan is making a positive difference to the safety and wellbeing of children in Portsmouth; and
- championing a learning and improvement culture amongst all who work with children and families in Portsmouth.

The Board's partner agencies are asked to explicitly state their contribution to this shared plan, considering what they currently deliver and what they can commit to delivering during April 2017 to March 2019 relating to each of the 3 priority areas to:

- better understand the experience for children and the risks they face, so that they are better able to identify them early on;
- consider what prevention measures they can put in place to reduce the risk of harm posed to children; and
- what they can do to intervene and support families to improve children's wellbeing

Annually, the PSCB will identify the specific actions required against each of these priorities with the detail being set out in the specific work plans of the Board's Committees. Delivery of the priorities will be monitored through relevant committees and/or lead members providing updates on progress against the action plans quarterly to the PSCB Executive Committee. A full review of progress will be produced at the end of each year (March 2018 and 2019) at the Board's Development Day.