

NSCB Newsletter



Welcome!

Welcome to another issue of the NSCB Newsletter. I hope that you find it interesting and informative. If you would like to contribute, or have ideas about safeguarding children topics you would like to see addressed in a future issue, please contact the Business Manager. Sarah-Jane Smedmor.

Caroline Ball
Chair, NSCB

Keep up to date with new guidance and regulations!

Both lots of guidance are issued under section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970, which means that it must be complied with unless local circumstances indicate exceptional reasons which justify a variation. This brief account can only be a sign post. Both volumes are available as PDF files on the NSCB website www.nscb.norfolk.gov.uk.

Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations

Vol.2: Care Planning, Placement and Case Review – coming in to force 1 April 2011

“Looked after children deserve the best experiences in life, from excellent parenting which promotes good health and educational attainment, to a wide range of opportunities to develop their talents and skills in order to have an enjoyable childhood and successful adult life. Stable placements, good health and support during transition are all essential elements, but children will only achieve their potential through the ambition and high expectation of all those involved in their lives.” (Introduction)

Recognition of the poor life-long outcomes for many children brought up in public care and proposals for legislation, where required, to place greater responsibilities on local authorities to meet their needs were addressed in the 2007 white paper *Care Matters: Time for Change* (Cm 7137), and enacted through amendments to the Children Act 1989 in the Children and Young Persons Act 2008.

This guidance, published by the last Government in March 2010 accompanies the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 ('2010 Regulations'), which bring together in a single set of Regulations those duties and responsibilities which are at the heart of effective corporate parenting to improve the outcomes of looked after children, namely:

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- Placing the child at the centre of work;
- Effective care planning
- Ensuring that a child or young person is provided with accommodation which meets his/her needs;
- Ensuring that an effective review is conducted of the child's case within the specified timescales.

The role of the corporate parent is to act as the best possible parent for each child they look after and to advocate on his/her behalf to secure the best possible outcomes - a task which must be shared by the whole local authority and partner agencies.

Cont overleaf...

Keep up to date with new guidance and regulations cont....



The Guidance suggest that all partners in the Children's Trust should share responsibility for narrowing the outcomes gap for looked after children, and that the Children's Trust Board should regularly review services for looked after children to ensure that they are effectively safeguarded and provided with the opportunities they need.

New Adoption Guidance: Published on 21 February 2011

This guidance is issued as part of a suite of materials which, together with the 2010 Regulations, set out how local authorities and their partners should carry out their full range of responsibilities in relation to care planning, placement and review for looked after children. Annex 1 helpfully shows how the documents fit together within the overall framework. Practitioners and managers will need to be familiar with the primary legislation, the associated Regulations and the statutory guidance.

The Government, concerned about the low numbers of children being adopted from care and delays in the process has issued new guidance to replace that issued in 2005 when the Adoption and Children Act 2002 came in to force. The Guidance should be read and followed "by *everyone* involved in the adoption of children – especially children's social workers - and those who work with adopted adults and birth families." (Introduction para.13).

The aim of the guidance is to improve services for adopted children and children who would benefit from adoption. Although media attention has largely focused on removing any barriers to the adoption of ethnic minority and mixed heritage children by white couples, there are other important changes:

- A reorganisation of the guidance. Most of the information from the annexes have been incorporated into the main chapters, and the guidance on domestic and inter-country adoption has been separated into two volumes. The inter-country adoption guidance is being revised and will be issued later. In the meantime, the 2005 statutory guidance on inter-country adoption remains in force;
- A new chapter on court proceedings (chapter 8);
- New guidance relating to adoption panels with effect from 1 April 2011. Please note that these changes are subject to Parliamentary approval of the amendments to the Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005;
- Updated guidance to take account of recent case law and key messages from the *Adoption Research Initiative*.
- Incorporation of current circulars into this guidance so that all statutory adoption guidance is in one place;
- A summary of offences and penalties;
- There is no longer guidance on adoption pay and leave, social security benefits and tax credits, but instead hyperlinks to relevant websites e.g. Direct Gov.

(Introduction para.15)

The Munro Review of Child Protection Interim Report: The Child's Journey



In June 2010 Professor Eileen Munro was asked by the Government to conduct an independent review of child protection in England, the first such review not to be initiated in response to a particular tragedy. This independent review is taking place alongside and in consultation with those into: Poverty and Life Chances, early intervention, and the Early Years Foundation Stage, as well as the Family Justice Review which is due to publish an interim report with proposals for reform in March. The Child Protection Review team have also drawn on the evidence which informed the *Protection of Children in England: a Progress report* (Lord Laming, 2009) and the Social Work Task Force.

Munro uses a systems approach. In her first report (*The Munro Review of Child Protection, Part one: A Systems Analysis*, December 2010), seeking the views of professionals across the agencies involved in child protection and children and families, she set out her perception of the current problems in the child protection system, and offered an analysis of why these had arisen. She found that:

“A dominant theme in the criticisms of current practice is the skew in priorities that has developed between the demands of the management and inspection processes and professionals’ ability to exercise their professional judgment and act in the best interests of the child. This has led to an over-standardised system that cannot respond adequately to the varied range of children’s needs.” (Page 5)

In her interim report, published in early February, the title of which refers to the child’s journey from ‘needing to receiving effective help for problems arising from family and social circumstances’ (para. 1.5), Munro suggests, the characteristics of an effective child protection system and outlines the reforms that might improve the current system. Feedback will be sought before she makes detailed recommendations to Government in her final report at the end of April.

The recommended reforms include:

Process and guidance

- Giving unannounced Ofsted inspections a broader remit and, because of the bureaucratic burden they impose, ending announced inspections.
- Separating statutory guidance from professional advice to allow *Working Together to Safeguard Children* to become ‘a shorter manual in which the core principles and rules are clearer to all professionals’

LSCBs and Serious Case Reviews (SCRs)

- Strengthening the role of LSCBs in ‘monitoring the impact of practice, training and learning on the child’s journey, as well as identifying and addressing emerging problems in the system.’
- Adoption of a systems approach to SCRs, allowing exploration of the factors which have contributed to poor practice and eventually ending Ofsted evaluation.

The Munro Review of Child Protection

Interim Report: The Child's Journey cont...



Governance and process

- Ensuring that the role of the Director of Children's Service continues as the key point of professional accountability for child protection services within the local authority.
- Creating a minimum performance data set for child protection made up of nationally collected data and recommended standardised local data.

Multi-agency working

- Endorsement of efforts to improve family support services such as Sure Start Children's Services and the Health Visitor Service.
- Endorsement of the CAF.
- The location of multi-agency teams, including social workers alongside universal services.

Practice and professional issues

- Reviewing the extent to which timescales which dominate current practice detract from the quality of assessments, to balance timelines with the quality of assessment. In order to explore this issue further, it is likely that the Secretary of State will respond favourably to requests from five local authorities to be freed from current assessment timescales for a trial period.
- Working with practitioners on how the design of Integrated Children's System software can be made more user-friendly and efficient, and how user-centred design of assessment and decision-making tools can provide better aids to professional reasoning.
- Identifying the critical place good supervision in helping professionals to 'make more accurate assessments and to differentiate those aspects of poor parenting that tend to be correlated with adverse outcomes for the child from the less damaging ones'.
- Alteration of the career structure to enable a long-term professional social work career without becoming a manager.

The public face of social work

- Exploring ways of helping the public to gain a better understanding of the complexity, uncertainty and emotional challenge inherent in child protection, and improving the responses of the social work profession to public debate about its work.

Munro recognises that the review is taking place at a time of major reform of all the relevant public services, that serious financial constraints are being applied with consequential major workforce issues particularly within the field of social work and that the protection of children should be a priority within the reforms.

This article can only highlight key findings and suggested changes. Both the reports published so far are well worth reading in detail. They are available in PDF format on the NSCB website.



Serious Case Reviews: Updates

Practitioners can find information regarding national and local Serious Case Reviews at www.nscb.norfolk.gov.uk

The most recent SCR involving Norfolk agencies was published in January 2011. The SCR concerns the very serious sexual abuse of the two eldest children in the 'Newton' family.

The SCR looks at services offered to this family. During the 11 year period covered by the SCR, members of the family and the children lived or went to school in London, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire, Norfolk and Essex.

Please share recommendations from Serious Case Reviews during team meetings and agency learning events. The NSCB also provides leaflets regarding the SCR process and recommendations from Norfolk Serious Case Reviews. These can be accessed on the NSCB website or are available from Lynsey Eagle, NSCB Administrator, 01603 223409.

Sarah – Jane Smedmor
NSCB Business Manager

Implications of the Vetting & Barring Scheme Remodeling Review & the review of the Criminal Records Regime

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION FOR ALL EMPLOYERS — BUSINESS AS USUAL IN REGARDS TO CRB'S UNTIL LEGISLATION CHANGES - PLEASE READ ON!

In February, the Government published two reviews which make proposals that, *if* implemented, will mean some significant changes to the vetting and barring system for staff and volunteers.

There are no immediate changes to legislation and it is important that *current* practices and the requirements of Criminal Records Bureau checks and the Independent Safeguarding Authority are maintained as the proposals progress through parliament in the forthcoming months. Vetting and barring arrangements should only form part robust safer employment practices; organisations must also have robust monitoring policies in place.

Full details of the proposals and proposed legislation are outlined in the following documents:

'Vetting & Barring Scheme Remodelling Review - Report and Recommendations', February 2011

(<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/crime/vbs-report>)

'A Common Sense Approach: A Review of the criminal records regime in England and Wales', Sunita Mason, Independent Advisor for Criminality Information Management, February 2011

(<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/crime/criminal-records-review-phase1/>)

The Protection of Freedoms Bill

(<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/legislation/protection-freedoms-bill/>)

The Norfolk Rapid Response Team



Its 10.20am and Sue, the Child Death Overview Panel Coordinator answers the phone. A consultant from the hospital wants to talk to the person on call for Rapid Response. A baby has been brought into Accident and Emergency but couldn't be resuscitated.

Sue passes the phone to Sonia the team member on call that day, who at the same time is being called by Dave from the specially trained police team with the same news.

Sonia and Dave meet up at the A&E at 11.15. The family is with their baby and their relatives are arriving. Everyone is very distressed.

The consultant has called the child's paediatrician who has come to the A&E too. He wants to know what has happened. He and the consultant tell the family that everyone will work hard together to find out why their baby has died.

Eventually the family is ready to let their baby go to the mortuary. They have taken tiny handprints and a lock of their child's hair. The hospital team has taken all of the medical samples. Dave and Sonia explain that they need to come to the family home to find out as much as they can about the baby and what had happened that morning. They make a plan with the family to visit later in the afternoon when the baby's grandmothers are there.

By 5pm Sonia and Dave have been to the family home. They have taken a very thorough account of what has happened. They have looked at the where the baby was found and talked about the child's care and the family circumstances. They explain again about post mortem examination, the role of the coroner, how to make funeral arrangements and what bereavement services are available. They explain that they will be in touch with the family to feedback the results of all of the investigations and the post mortem results and they have left their contact details with the baby's mum and dad.

In the meantime Sue, the Co-ordinator, has informed Children's Services and checked if they know the family. Children's Services have taken details of the family, especially the other children in the home, so that they and their schools get the support and counselling that need. The health visitor and the GP are informed and baby's name is removed from the child health database so that the family won't get messages about baby clinics or immunisations.

The Norfolk Rapid Response Team cont...



Finally approx. 4 weeks later all of the test results are back. The baby died of pneumonia and the police have no concerns. Sonia and the baby's consultant meet the parents to tell them the post mortem results. They are able to explain what happened to the baby and how the family will be supported if they have another child and they make sure that everyone in the family is getting the support that they need at the moment.

For further information on Norfolk Rapid Response Team, contact

sue.buffin@norfolk.nhs.uk

01603 257164

The Army Welfare Service

The Army Welfare Service (AWS) is the provider of specialist welfare support services to soldiers, their families and the Chain of Command. It provides the services described below but is happy to visit professionals and their teams to deliver presentations and to further discuss the role of the AWS.

Advice

The AWS provides advice to the military Chain of Command on specific welfare matters and makes enquiries on a range of issues in order to support decision making. It also provides support to education and management of soldiers and officers.

Personal Support

Personal Support (PS) is the provision of advice and guidance to serving soldiers and their families who are experiencing personal or family difficulties. It covers a wide range of situations including difficulties arising from personal relationships, separation, loss and bereavement, childcare, social issues arising from mental and physical health and debt problems. When the assistance of outside agencies is required, AWS can provide coordination and liaison between agencies. The AWS represents the Army in all statutory safeguarding matters.

Personal Support Teams consist of Army Welfare Workers who may be military or civilian. The PS teams are led by a military Senior Army Welfare Worker.

Community & Youth Support

AWS Youth and Community staff are responsible for organising, developing and supervising social, educational and recreational programmes and coordinating them with local institutions and organisations; these responsibilities will vary according to local needs. They are also responsible for maintaining liaison with local schools attended by Army children. The recruitment, training and supervision of volunteers is a further responsibility. Close liaison is also maintained with service housing staffs and other agencies in order to identify problems early and to maintain good relations in families' accommodation areas.

Contact

If you have any questions about the AWS, or wish to know how we might be of assistance then please do not hesitate to contact the AWS Welfare Support Officer; Mark Rutterford on 01223 204431.

Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board Safer Programme



The Safer Programme has undergone many developments in the past year, culminating in a change of name and updating of all our training and support materials. This is an exciting time for our programme.

Our Relaunch, 7th October 2010, Hethel Engineering Centre

Our relaunch was a fantastic event, and well attended. Many thanks to our special guest, ITV Anglia's Newsreader Becky Jago for making the effort to attend our relaunch and supporting our programme.

We had thrilling displays of beat boxing, free running, dancing and singing by young people. We had several excellent speakers, including Ros Czarnowska from Momentum, and Caroline Ball, Chair of the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board. We also heard from a young person himself about his life, and how being involved in a voluntary organisation saved him from a path of crime.

A big thank you from the Safer Programme team for those that attended and helped make the relaunch a great event.



Safer Pack

The fantastic new Safer Pack is now ready for collection. This contains everything a group needs in respect of updated policy and procedures with regards to safeguarding and child protection. We at Safer would like to thank the team of people that helped us create this fantastic support pack. The pack replaces the old spiral bound SAFE material. The help and guidance has been thoroughly reviewed and our members will receive regular updates.

Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board Safer Programme cont...



If you are members with us, we have emailed out invitations to collect the packs if you are able. We completely understand that many of you may be situated all over Norfolk, and that this may not be possible. We thought that we would offer the opportunity in order not only to help postage costs but also so that we get to meet you.

If in the meantime you happen to be travelling to Norwich, please do let us know and we can prepare your pack ready for you to collect.

If you are unable to collect your pack in person in Norwich rest assured that you will receive your new pack over the next two months or so. It is a huge task to get these packs out over Norfolk so we appreciate your patience.

Safer Training is expanding

Safer Training is expanding its courses. We are pleased to announce new courses set for release from May. Firstly this will be the Safer Designated Officer Training, for those who have specific responsibility for Child Protection in their organisation.

We are also developing for release in June, courses around particular themes and subject areas concerning safeguarding, such as substance misuse, domestic abuse, lone working, parental mental health problems and e-safety.

If you would like to register your interest in Designated Officer Training, or any of the other expanded training, please email us at safer@norfolk.gov.uk specifying which training you are interested in. We will of course keep you updated about the release of this exciting new training.

The Summer Term 2011 dates for our regular Saturday morning and Wednesday evening sessions (introduction level) are now available on our website.

For full details of the Safer Programme, please go to the Safer section of the fantastic new NSCB website www.nscb.norfolk.gov.uk

NSCB Multi Agency Training



In June 2010, Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board made the decision to review its multi agency training content and delivery. A very focussed and committed multi agency group of training officers, managers and safeguarding agency leads undertook the revision of the NSCB training strategy, in line with Chapter 4 Working Together 2010.

The Board have decided to have a mix of internal and commissioned training to be rolled out from May 2011.

Dates will be available from April 2011 for the following internally run courses:-

Working Together to Safeguard Children
Effective Participation at Child Protection Conferences
Substance Misuse within the Family
MAPPA

From September 2011, courses will be commissioned with the following themes ;-

Domestic Violence
Physical Harm
Neglect
Emotional Harm
Sexual Abuse
Supervision Skills

Please go to the training pages on our website www.nscb.norfolk.gov.uk to keep updated.

Sarah – Jane Smedmor
NSCB Business Manager

Safeguarding Week

The 2011 Safeguarding Week will be taking place between the 27th June to the 1st July.

Please keep an eye on our website www.nscb.norfolk.gov.uk for further details on what will be taking place during the week.

NSCB Training Validation



Guidance in Chapter 4 of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010 requires the NSCB to "review and evaluate the quality, scope and effectiveness of single and inter-agency training to ensure that it is meeting local needs" (para. 4.20). In order to fulfil this responsibility in relation to single agency training, the NSCB Workforce Development Group has tasked an expert multi-agency panel with validating all level 1 and 2 safeguarding training provided by partner agencies, to ensure quality and consistency.

All documents for NSCB training validation submissions are available for downloading on NSCB website. Agencies are requested to submit their validation application by **30th of April 2011**. The next validation panel meeting dates are **May 25th and June 16th 2011**.

NSCB Multi Agency Audits

NSCB Multi-Agency Audits are conducted in the spirit of open learning in the intention of continuous improvements in agencies operations in delivery of services and better outcomes for children in Norfolk. Recently, the Monitoring and Evaluation Group (MEG) has launched a number of multi-agency audits to be undertaken across agencies from March 2011. These includes safer recruitments practice in agencies, management and outcome of children in need (Neglect cases), and the impact of safeguarding training. Thematic sub-groups are been formed comprising multi-disciplinary professionals from different partner agencies to undertake these audits. NSCB multi-agency audits are not one off events rather a continuous effort to pursuit excellence in services for children, young people and their families in Norfolk. The results will be available to all agencies in due course.

If you have further questions about the upcoming assessments and audits please contact Priti Biswas on priti.biswas@norfolk.gov.uk

New Look NSCB Website

The new NSCB website went live on 14th of February, 2011. Thanks to all of our colleagues who offered suggestions and advice to improve our website. We will continue to keep it up to date with latest documents and publications, both national and regional.

Are we getting it right? Tell us what you think, is there anything else you wish to find on NSCB website.

Please email Priti Biswas on priti.biswas@norfolk.gov.uk with your thoughts and suggestions. Thank you.

Local Safeguarding Groups News

East

The Eastern LSCG workshop took place on 4th February in Great Yarmouth. The event was over subscribed and was attended by a range of professionals from the area. The first speaker was Amanda Murr from Norfolk Police. Amanda did an informative presentation on honour based crime, forced marriage and female genital mutilation. This presentation looked at both national data and research as well as highlighting the more local impact and the fact that Norfolk has developed a good reputation for supporting those fleeing honour based violence from other areas. Despite the subject matter being hard hitting the talk was well received by the audience and feedback was that most people felt it would give them more confidence to ask difficult questions and to know where to go for more information and advice. Amanda also provided a range of literature from the home office on honour based violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

After a short tea break which people used for networking with colleagues the second presentation was from the Yarmouth YOT who spoke about knife crime. This was an interactive session that led to lively debate and gave information about initiatives to tackle knife crime and some background into why young people become involved in such activity.

The next workshop in the East will take place later in the year.

Central

The Central Area LSCG recently devised and delivered two training workshops around multi-agency working in cases of neglect.

The project started from a lengthy case audit carried out by members of the group who had been involved in a case where multi-agency working had been less effective than it might have been. We felt that there were valuable lessons to be shared from this, which had resonance in other cases with which members had been involved.

A sub-group was formed, and a workshop devised that consisted in groups following the narrative of the case whilst 'thinking themselves into' the role of someone from an agency other than their own. We ran two sessions in February; the feedback was very positive, and we intend to run another session, as the two original workshops were over-subscribed.

Key learning points were:

- Agencies such as Housing need to have more training to raise awareness of the important role that they can play in safeguarding by identifying neglect through their daily work.
- Agencies can have a limited understanding of the roles, expectations and working practices of colleagues in other agencies, and need opportunities to network with other agencies in order to develop common understandings.
- It is very important for one agency to take the lead in multi-agency working if social workers are not involved, in order to:
 - Prevent duplication of tasks;
 - Develop a coherent plan;
 - Prevent a family from feeling overwhelmed.

Neglect Road Shows



Focusing on the impact of neglect on children

There is a seminar planned for your area, please see the dates below:

Northern Area: 8th April - 9.30am to 12.30pm – Anglian Windows Social Club, Holt Rd, Norwich, NR10 3AQ

Southern Area: 7th April - 2.00pm to 5.00pm – Parkwood Leisure Centre, Croxton Road, Thetford, IP24 1JD

Central Area: 6th April - 2.00pm to 5.00pm – Lionwood Infant School, Telegraph Lane East, Norwich, NR1 4AN - **FULL**

Eastern Area: 5th April - 9.30am to 12.30pm – Masonic Lodge, Great Yarmouth, Albert Square, Great Yarmouth, NR30 3JH

Western Area: 1st April - 9.30am to 12.30pm – West Norfolk PDC

Speakers:

Sarah - Jane Smedmor – NSCB Business Manager
Jane Black – Designated Nurse – Safeguarding
Jackie Cole - Specialist Advisor - CP - Children's Services

There is no cost for attending the seminars but places are limited to 75 at each session. Please ensure you email lynsey.eagle@norfolk.gov.uk to guarantee your place. Confirmation of places will be given by return email.

Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board – 01603 223409



Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board

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