



**Memorandum of Understanding  
Danielle Swaintson**

**HARTLEPOOL LOCAL SAFEGUARDING  
CHILDREN BOARD**

**Memorandum of  
Understanding**

**June 2016**

**The signing of this Memorandum of Understanding is formal agreement  
between the LSCB and all partner agencies.**

**June 2016**

## **Purpose of this Memorandum**

Both the first Joint Chief Inspectors' Report on Safeguarding (Chief Inspector of Social Services et al, 2002) and the statutory inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié (DH and Home Office, 2003) emphasised the importance of joint working between agencies and professionals to safeguard children from harm and to promote their welfare. Subsequent reports and policy developments, underpinned by the Children Act 2004, have all intended to ensure an integrated approach to service provision and that children achieve their potential in terms of being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children – and in particular protecting them from significant harm – is dependent on the effective collaboration between agencies and between professionals who have different roles and expertise. (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2010). Within Hartlepool, there is a history of collaborative working throughout children's services which is being consolidated through the continuous development of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

**This Memorandum of Understanding is intended to articulate a commitment on the part of the signatories (the Parties) to embedding and exploiting the full potential of interagency working to improve children's outcomes and to ensuring the effective translation of policy, legislation and guidance into day-to-day practice.**

## **Scope of the Memorandum**

The Children Act 2004 (Sections 10, 11, 12, 13) sets out very clearly that a wide range of agencies are required to work together to promote wellbeing and safeguard children and young people. The Every Child Matters: Change for Children (DfES 2004) programme sets out in some detail what is expected of agencies in local areas, with lead responsibility resting with the local authority. Working Together to Safeguard Children (DH 2010) sets out which agencies should work together and how agencies should work together through the provision of statutory (Part one) and non statutory (Part two) guidance.

This Memorandum concerns all LSCB member organisations, both statutory, as set out in s13(3) of the Children Act (2004), and non statutory.

## **Role of Local Safeguarding Children Boards**

*Section 14 of the Children Act 2004* sets out the objectives of LSCBs, which are:

- To co-ordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area; and
- (b) To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes

The roles of LSCBs are further set out in *Local Safeguarding Children Boards*

*Regulations 2006* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015*.

## **Principles underpinning the Memorandum**

All Parties agree that the following key principles will guide any activities they may undertake pursuant to this Memorandum of Understanding:

- Safeguarding children and promoting children's welfare is a shared responsibility
- There is a mutual recognition and respect for the contributions of all partners to the safeguarding agenda
- Awareness and appreciation of the role and responsibilities of others is essential for effective collaboration between organisations and between practitioners

## **Aims of the Memorandum**

The overarching aims of this Memorandum are to ensure that children and young people in Hartlepool are safeguarded from harm that their welfare is promoted and their outcomes improved.

Robust collaborative working is fundamental to achieving such aims and, in entering into this Memorandum of Understanding the Parties acknowledge their commitment to:

- Ensuring that all LSCB member organisations are effectively and continuously engaged in the children's safeguarding agenda
- Embracing the notion, at both strategic and operational levels, that safeguarding children is dependent on effective interagency working

- Ensuring that all members of the LSCB understand their roles and responsibilities and act upon them
- Ensuring that attendance and participation in the Board and all of the Board's subgroups are stable and active
- Ensuring that all frontline professionals have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children
- Boosting the skills and performance of all staff working in children's services
- Ensuring the dissemination of information from the Board within the member agencies/organisations

## **Governance**

HSCB is accountable for its work to its constituent agencies whose agreement is required for all work that has implications for policy, planning and the allocation of resources. The planned programme of work and reporting on progress in the previous year will be set out in the Annual Report and Action plan agreed by the Board annually in August each year.

Whilst the HSCB has a role in co-ordinating and ensuring the effectiveness of work undertaken by local individuals and organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, it is not accountable for their operational work. Each Board partner retains their own existing lines of accountability for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children by their services. The LSCB does not have a power to direct other organisations but has the power to require a person or body to comply with a request for information where the information is essential to carrying out HSCB statutory functions.

Each member of the Board has a responsibility to ensure their own organisation is informed of the work of Hartlepool Safeguarding Children Board and particularly to highlight through their organisation's governance arrangements, any risks associated with that organisation not meeting its statutory responsibility in relation to safeguarding children.

A key role of the HSCB is to monitor the effectiveness of each organisation both individually and whilst working in partnership to deliver the desired outcomes for children and young people. The Board will hold organisations individually, and in partnership, to account for their performance in delivering the identified shared strategic outcomes.

The HSCB expect partner agencies to meet the standards detailed in the HSCB Performance Framework. Where it is considered that a Board partner is failing to meet its commitments and performance measures or is failing to work in partnership with other agencies, it can require the agency in question

to produce an action plan to be submitted to the LSCB Board in order to remedy any such failings.

The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act introduced the requirement for the HSCB to produce and publish an annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area. This will report on the effectiveness of arrangements in Hartlepool to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; providing a comprehensive analysis of the safeguarding context, recognising achievements made and providing a realistic assessment of the challenges to be overcome and setting out the financial contribution

## **Relationship with Children and Families Partnership**

The LSCB's role is to ensure the effectiveness of the arrangements made by the partnership and individual agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Whilst the work of the LSCB contributes to the wider goals of improving the wellbeing of children, it has a narrower focus on safeguarding and protecting children. This fits with the vision of the CFP to ensure that 'All children, young people and families believe, achieve and succeed'

### **Our Commitment**

As an HSCB, we will:

- Ensure that children and young people are given ongoing and regular opportunities to express their opinions on matters that affect their lives and that these views are taken into account when developing and reviewing the HSCB Business Plan.
- Undertake consultation with all stakeholders as part of the development and monitoring of the HSCB Business Plan.
- Work with neighbouring HSCB's on shared areas of priority and statutory function
- Work with other Boards to ensure that the needs of children and young people and their families are at the forefront of strategy and planning.

The links between the HSCB and HWB are:

- HSCB is represented on the HWB by the Director of Children's Services Reports and minutes of the meeting to go to the HSCB and vice versa
- LSCB Annual Report is presented to HWB
- HWB submits JSNA to HSCB

## **Membership**

HSCB membership includes those agencies with a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004. It also includes other key bodies such as schools and the community and voluntary sector. The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 introduced a requirement for each LSCB to have 2 Lay Members who

are to provide a community perspective and strengthen links between the Board and the local community.

The Board may appoint additional partners at any time.

HSCB shall be composed of senior managers nominated by each partner organisation. Members representing individual organisations must have sufficient delegated authority to effectively represent their organisation and to make decisions on their organisation's behalf. The role and responsibilities of members are set out in the HSCB Induction Handbook.

The Independent Chair will be of sufficient standing and expertise to command the respect and support of partner agencies. The chair will act objectively and distinguish their role on HSCB from any day to day role.

The Council's Lead Member for Children will attend meetings of HSCB as a participant observer

Members should be people with a strategic role in relation to safeguarding and must be able to:

- Speak for their organisation with authority
- Commit their organisation on policy and practice matters
- Hold their organisation to account

## **Responsibilities of all Parties**

To achieve the aims, all Parties are committed to ensuring within the LSCB member agencies/organisations that:

- Staff understand when to discuss concerns about a child's welfare with their manager or the designated person for safeguarding
- Staff have an awareness of the roles of other professionals
- Staff accept and understand thresholds of risk and need
- Staff understand the criteria for accessing children's social care services and are aware of the referral route endorsed by the HSCB
- Staff have easy access to interagency procedures and guidance
- Staff understand when to undertake an Early Help Assessment
- Staff ensure that multi agency meetings about individual children, including conferences, core groups and reviews, involve all relevant professionals

- Attendance at multi agency meetings to consider individual children, including child protection conferences, core groups and review meetings, is accorded priority
- Staff actively participate in multi agency meetings to consider individual children
- Staff contribute to whatever actions are jointly agreed as needed, including the provision of appropriate services and interventions, to safeguard and promote a child's welfare

### **Duration and review**

This Memorandum of Understanding will be effective on the date it is signed by the Parties and, subject to any other agreement made between the Parties, will continue in effect for an initial period expiring on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2106.

The Parties will review this Memorandum of Understanding in January 2017 and an annual review will take place thereafter in the light of emerging legislation, guidance and directions and the developing needs of children, young people and their families.



## **References**

Children Act (2004), London: The Stationery Office

Department of Children, Schools and Families (2010) Working Together to Safeguard Children, London: The Stationery Office

Department for Education and Skills (2004) Every Child Matters: Change for Children, London: The Stationery Office

Department of Health (2002) Safeguarding Children – A Joint Chief Inspectors' Report On Arrangements to Safeguard Children, London: The Stationery Office

Department of Health and The Home Office (2003) The Victoria Climbié Inquiry, Report of an Inquiry by Lord Laming, London: The Stationery Office

**I confirm acceptance of this Memorandum of Understanding**

**Signed**

**On behalf of (agency/organisation name)**

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