

## What is Safeguarding and who is responsible?

The term 'safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children' is well understood within the context of the Children Act 1989 which provides the statutory framework for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in need.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in the Government Guidance document 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (April 2006) as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and undertaking that role so as to enable children to have optimum life changes such that they can enter adulthood successfully.

If we are to keep children safe in Stockton there needs to be a multi agency approach and safeguarding needs to be a priority for all agencies (statutory, voluntary and private) that provide a service to children and families.

We all have a responsibility to safeguard children and be aware of what to do if concerns arise. If you or your staff think a child is being abused or neglected, or that they may be at risk of harm, contact:

First Contact Team, Bath Lane,  
Stockton-on-Tees TS18 2DS.  
Tel: 01642 527764  
Email; [firstcontact@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:firstcontact@stockton.gov.uk)

Or

Emergency Duty Team  
(Outside of Office Hours)  
Tel: 08702 402994  
In an emergency, contact the Police.

*Children need to feel loved and valued, and be supported by a network of reliable and affectionate relationships. If they are denied the opportunity and support they need to achieve these outcomes, children are at increased risk of not only an often impoverished childhood, but of disadvantage and social exclusion in adulthood. Abuse and Neglect pose particular problems*

We're on the web  
[www.stockton.gov.uk/slscb](http://www.stockton.gov.uk/slscb)

You can also find us at:

SLSCB  
The Review Unit, Parkside  
Melrose Avenue, Billingham  
Stockton-on-Tees  
TS23 2JH

Phone: 01642 527636  
Fax: 01642 524907  
Email:  
[slscb@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:slscb@stockton.gov.uk)

## Everyone Is!

### Responsibilities of the Local Authority in respect of Safeguarding Children

The Local Authority is a lead agency and is responsible for ensuring children in need of protection receive the required services. It has also identified the need to strengthen earlier intervention to address problems occurring in children's lives, and does this through its partnership arrangements and by everyone working together. By shifting the focus from dealing with the consequences of difficulties in children's lives to earlier identification of these difficulties; Stockton aims to help more children and young people to achieve the five outcomes within the Every Child Matters agenda.

The Local Authority also has a statutory responsibility for ensuring Stockton-on-Tees Local Safeguarding Children Board (SLSCB) is in place (Children Act 2004) and that it is fulfilling its roles and responsibilities as laid down in Working Together (Chapter 3)

The objective of which is to:

- a) Co-ordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area of the authority by which it is established; and
- b) Ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each person or body for those purposes.

Board members are first or second tier officers within their organisation, thereby ensuring they have sufficient authority to act and make decision on behalf of their agency.

Safeguarding should be a theme in all service delivery and commissioning not only for the Local Authority but also its partner agencies. Staff should also consider how the work they do impacts on a child and helps them to live and grow up safely.

## Accountability

The Local Authority and specifically the Director of Children Education & Social Care and Lead Member, are accountable for the achievement of improved outcomes for Children and Young People in Stockton. Within Stockton the Director of Children, Education & Social Care is also the Chair of the LSCB. This is not the case in all LSCBs however Board members chose this as the most appropriate option based on the responsibility, accountability requirements and the recent JAR inspection report.

### **LSCB Chair**

Directors of Children's Services (DCS) have statutory responsibility for the LSCB and the LSCB Chair acts on his / her behalf. Where the DCS is not the Chair they need to meet regularly to consider the business of the LSCB, its effectiveness, direction and any other problems to be resolved. The DCS will agree the annual objectives for the Chair.

### **Relationship Between the LSCB Chair and the Children's Trust**

The LSCB Chair will need to be a member of the Children's Trust and advise the Trust of safeguarding issues arising from its activity, draw to the Trusts attention any matters of concern emerging from the LSCB and making recommendations in respect of service commissioning where appropriate.

### **Relationship Between the LSCB Chair and the Chief Executive / Senior Managers of the Section 11 Partners.**

The LSCB Chair and DCS will meet at least annually with the Chief Executive / Chief Officers of S11 partner organisations who are not members of the LSCB to brief them on safeguarding issues and the LSCB work plan. Any matter requiring them to exercise accountability for safeguarding will be brought to their attention as necessary.

**S11 Partners** who have a duty to co-operate in promoting and securing the welfare of children and young people are referred to within the act as the following:

- (a) a children's services authority in England;
- (b) a district council which is not such an authority;
- (c) a Strategic Health Authority;
- (d) a Special Health Authority, so far as exercising functions in relation to England, designated by order made by the Secretary of State for the purposes of this section;
- (e) a Primary Care Trust;
- (f) an NHS trust all or most of whose hospitals, establishments and facilities are situated in England;
- (g) an NHS foundation trust;

- (h) the police authority and chief officer of police for a police area in England;
- (i) the British Transport Police Authority, so far as exercising functions in relation to England;
- (j) a local probation board for an area in England;
- (k) a youth offending team for an area in England;
- (l) the governor of a prison or secure training centre in England (or, in the case of a contracted out prison or secure training centre, its director);
- (m) any person to the extent that he is providing services under section 114 of the Learning and Skills Act [2000 \(c. 21\)](#).

Each person and body to whom this section applies must make arrangements for ensuring that—

- (a) their functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and
- (b) any services provided by another person pursuant to arrangements made by the person or body in the discharge of their functions are provided having regard to that need

### **Performance**

If the performance of a single agency is causing concern/preventing the achievement of good outcomes for children and young people the matter will be considered by the Local Safeguarding Children Board who will make recommendations to the Director about the most effective likely action.

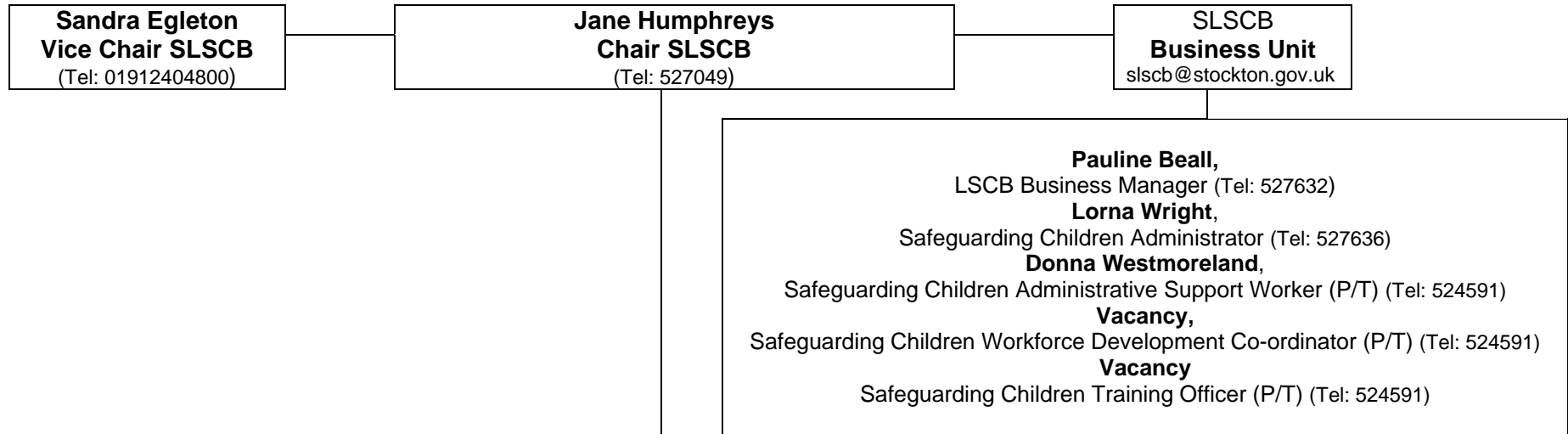
With the development of Integrated Service Areas and staff working more effectively together to provide targeted and specialist services this will assist further in improving outcomes for children within the borough.

As the new structure of Integrated Services evolves in Stockton, systems are also being established to realign resources and commission new services.

Extract from Stockton-on-Tees joint area review of children's services

**The arrangements for safeguarding children and young people are good. The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) provides an effective strategic lead. Multi-agency working is well established and strong collaboration between partners is ensuring good sharing of information. Most children and young people report feeling safe in their school and in the community**

**STOCKTON LSCB STRUCTURE AS AT SEPTEMBER 2008**



Board Member	Representing
Pauline Foggo	CAFCASS
Alastair Simpson	Cleveland Police (Crime / Child Protection)
Ted Allen	Cleveland Police (Stockton District - Prevention)
Sujinder Sangha	FE Colleges
Ian Harrington	Fire Service
Cath Siddle	North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Trust
Bernice Gallagher	NSPCC
Linda Watson	Primary Care Trust
Hazel Ducker	Primary Schools

Board Member	Representing
Julie Allen	Probation
David Youldon	Secondary Schools
Julie Nixon	Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Vacancy	PCT-SBC Assistant Director/Head of Service Children and Young People's Operational Services
Julia Morrison	PCT-SBC Assistant Director/Head of Service Children, Schools and Complex Needs
Peter Seller	PCT-SBC Assistant Director/Head of Service Children and Young People's Strategy
To be confirmed	Voluntary & Community Sector
Debbie Edwards	NHS North East Strategic Health Authority
Ray Graham	Tees, Esk & Wear Valleys NHS Trust

## Prevention As Well As Protection

An LSCB must carry out its role in such a manner that it will enable children and young people to have optimum life chances across all 5 Every Child Matters outcomes. It achieves this by influencing the planning and commissioning of services within the local Children's Trust arrangements and contributing to the Children and Young Peoples Plan. Whilst the work of LSCBs contributes to the wider goals of improving the well-being of all children, it has a particular focus on aspects of the 'stay safe' outcomes.

The responsibilities of an LSCB are driven more so now than before towards a strategic approach of identifying the need for change, prevention as well as protection, monitoring, auditing and linking to wider multi agency working including the production of multi agency procedures to safeguard children. This is a cultural shift from the function of LSCBs predecessors - Area Child Protection Committees, and one which senior staff in all agencies are now engaging with.

The work of the Board must be outcome focussed and LSCBs need to evidence improvement over time with particular focus on the Stay Safe outcomes. The SLSCB Business and Progress Plan 2008 – 11 and information on the web [www.stockton.gov.uk/slscb](http://www.stockton.gov.uk/slscb) outlines how and what we have done to support this. The Board also undertakes regular audits of multi agency work to ensure requirements are being met both in respect of the statutory functions of the Board and its partner agencies.

### News & Items of Interest

#### Child Death Review Functions

From 1st April 2008 all Local Safeguarding Children Boards' (LSCB) in England and Wales have a new duty to collect and analyse information about the deaths of all children and young people (up to the age of 18 years) in their area. This information will identify any patterns and trends, enabling specific action to be taken that may prevent some deaths in the future.

A Tees Child Death Review Service, managed by South Tees LSCB on behalf of the LSCBs covering Redcar and Cleveland, Middlesbrough, Hartlepool, and Stockton has therefore been established. It will provide a dedicated service to ensure the statutory requirements relating to child death review functions are implemented

Briefing sessions will be established to raise awareness amongst staff in all agencies.

The Project Manager is Jess Barclay,  
Tees Child Death Review Project Manager  
Tel: (01642) 304525

#### Private Fostering

##### *What is Private Fostering?*

Private Fostering is very different from the care of children provided by local councils through approved foster carers. It occurs when a child under 16 (if disabled, under 18) is looked after for more than 28 days by an adult that is not a relative and is a private arrangement between parent and carer.

This arrangement could be due to factors such as children living with a friend's family after separation, divorce or arguments at home, children coming from abroad to access education and health systems or teenagers living with the family of a boyfriend or girlfriend. It does not refer to children on weekend or holiday visits

Notification of or enquires regarding Private Fostering should be made in the first instance to:

##### **First Contact Team**

Bath Lane, Stockton-on-Tees. TS18 2DS

Tel: 01642 527764

Minicom: (01642) 527769

Email: [firstcontact@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:firstcontact@stockton.gov.uk)



## Child Protection

As of 31st March 2008, Local Authorities no longer maintain a Child Protection Register. Instead, they keep a list of children who have a Child Protection Plan. This is line with changes in statutory guidance and relates to all Local Authorities in England

The majority of people probably won't even notice the change over as the process to make an enquiry of whether a child's name is on the Child Protection Register or using the new terminology, is the subject of a Child Protection Plan will be the same. The process is still be restricted to staff who have approval to make enquiries.

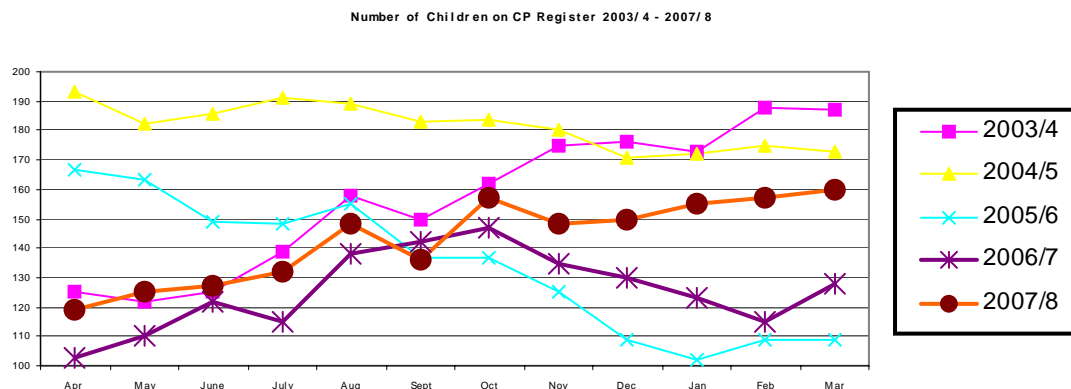
2007/8 was a very busy year for the Child Protection system with the final plan list total being 32 more children than the previous year. A total of 653 children were the subjects of Child Protection Conferences, which created a very busy workload for all agencies. This was also well up on last year and the previous year.

Neglect remains the highest stand-alone category, but many more children are meeting the criteria for Emotional Abuse as a combined category and this is directly from the number of children living in households where Domestic Violence is occurring and they are witnessing or hearing the impact on their family.

The number of children who needed a Plan for less than 6 months has increased because more children have quickly become the subjects of Legal Orders or have been accommodated.

Total number subject to a Child Protection Plan as at 31.03.07 = 128  
 Total number subject to a Child Protection Plan as at 31.03.08 = 160  
 The under 18 population in Stockton-on-Tees is 42,846.

This shows children and young people on the Child Protection Register in Stockton as 37 per 10,000 children



The number of children who were the subject of a child protection plan at 31 August was 192. The 192 children came from 89 families.

### Who's Looking After Your Child?

Stockton LSCB considers the applications that come into Stockton Trading Standards Unit from people and businesses applying for a Premises License. We need to make sure they understand the responsibility they have in safeguarding children. This is particularly relevant on licensed premises as safeguarding children is more than not serving them alcohol. A Guidance document is also provided to every one applying for a Premises or Gambling license.

To support them and other organisations that may have children coming into their premises a poster has been produced raising awareness that it is a parents / carers responsibility to ensure their child is safe whilst on the premises.



Copies can be obtained from the LSCB Business Unit, Parkside, Billingham.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Joint Chief Inspectors Report - Safeguarding

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Joint Chief Inspectors' Report on Safeguarding was published on 8 July 2008. It highlights what has improved over the last three years and assesses to what extent the considerable activity that has taken place at both national and local levels has affected outcomes for children and young people. It also identifies areas that still need improvement. The report can be found on the OFSTED website at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).



**Training**  
For information regarding multi agency safeguarding children training provided by SLSCB and Stockton Children's Workforce Development Unit, please contact: [slsch@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:slsch@stockton.gov.uk) Tel: (01642) 524591

### The Disclosure of Information on Sex Offenders

In June 2007 the Government published the Review of the Protection of Children from Sex Offenders. As a result the Disclosure Pilot is to be introduced in four forces to pilot a new approach to developing the disclosure process when dealing with child sex offenders. The disclosure Pilot aims to fulfil action 4 of the review, which states that the Government will:

'Pilot a process where members of the public can register their child protection interest in a named individual. Where this individual has convictions for child sex offences and is considered a risk, there will be a presumption that this information will be disclosed to the relevant member of the public'.

Cleveland Police, (Stockton on Tees only) is one of the pilot schemes, which started in September 2008. It will allow parents, carers or guardians of children under 18 to be told if a named individual has previous convictions for child sex offences.

If during the pilot it is identified that urgent action is required due to immediate/imminent risk to a child then action will be taken immediately and safeguarding procedures will be initiated without delay. Media cover has been initiated through Cleveland Police media communications for this initiative however the pilot is only accessible for those living within the boundary of Stockton on Tees.

Further information regarding the pilot can be obtained from Liz Abbott (01642) 527832 [liz.abbott@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:liz.abbott@stockton.gov.uk)

### Allegations Against Staff, Carers or Volunteers

If anyone has a concern about a professional or volunteer where they may have:

- \* Behaved inappropriately in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child or
- \* Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or
- \* Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children

#### It must be reported!

The process for dealing with these types of concerns is now known as Allegations Management and all organisations should have clear guidelines how to deal with them. In Stockton they can be found in Section 10 of the Multi Agency Procedures

**IMPORTANT** - All allegations and concerns must be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within the same working day where there is cause for concern or if advice is required. The LADO will then decide what action should be taken.

Stockton LADO

**Susan Jackson**

Can be contacted on

01642 527413 [susan.jackson@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:susan.jackson@stockton.gov.uk)

If Susan is unavailable please telephone 01642 527764 or email [firstcontact@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:firstcontact@stockton.gov.uk)

*Please send any articles, information, good news notices you would like including in our next Safeguarding Children Briefing to the SLSCB Business Unit at the address overleaf.*

*Help us to celebrate the good work we do, how we are working to do things better and the impact we are making*