

January/February
2015

If you would like to contribute to a future newsletter, or tell us about an achievement in safeguarding by your team or service, please let us know. Send items to:

LSCB@reading.gov.uk

We look forward to hearing from you.

Please cascade this newsletter to your team members



Message from Fran Gosling-Thomas, new Chair of Reading Safeguarding Children Board

Welcome to this newsletter from all the partners who serve as members of the Reading LSCB and from myself as the Board's Independent Chair.



A key element of the Board is to ensure that we communicate effectively with everyone involved in safeguarding children and young people in Reading, including young people themselves, and ensure that all Board publications are publicised and made widely available. The objective is to share learning and good practice as well as issues which the Board is currently working on.

To start with, a few words about me. My background for the last 40 years has been in children's social work and children's services in a multi-agency context. This includes four years as a Director of Children's Services, taking an authority judged as 'failing' to a 'good' rating, and also spells as an HMI Inspector and Joint Reviewer. In recent years I served as Chair of the North West of England Safeguarding Children's Board and for the past four years I have been the Independent Chair of Durham LSCB which was rated as 'outstanding' at its last inspection in late 2012.

I am committed to further improving the performance and effectiveness of Reading LSCB and to take it on its journey to 'good' and 'outstanding'. I look forward to working collaboratively with you on this journey. I have undertaken a programme of introductory meetings with key partners on the Board and, if I haven't met with you already, I look forward to doing so in the near future. I am always happy to be contacted directly with views or concerns about safeguarding and the work of the Board so please do feel free to contact me at:

f.goslingthomas@btconnect.com

www.reading.gov.uk/lscb

Berkshire Local Safeguarding Children Boards Child Protection Procedures available on line
<http://berks.proceduresonline.com/index.htm>

LSCB Priorities 2014-2015

Reading LSCB recently revised the priorities originally identified in the Business Plan 2013-2016. This is due to changing priorities for the LSCB partner agencies as well as clear emerging themes of work both locally and nationally. The new priorities are:

1. **Domestic Abuse**—Reading has a high level of Domestic Abuse and this is also one of the key areas resulting in children being subject to a Child Protection Plan
2. **Strengthening the Child's Voice and Journey**—To evaluate the effectiveness of different aspects of the child's journey into help and services, the quality of decisions made and the quality of multi agency processes
3. **CSE and other Particularly Vulnerable Groups**—To ensure that those children and young people who are particularly vulnerable or likely to be exploited can be identified and supported appropriately.
4. **Neglect**—Neglect is the highest category for children and young people in Reading on a Child Protection Plan.
5. **Effectiveness and Impact of Reading LSCB**—To ensure the Board has a stronger focus on scrutiny and challenge of partner agencies services and its own effectiveness.

An action plan has been written, you can access the LSCB Action Plan by going to: www.reading.gov.uk/lscb

New CSE Strategy and the story so far....

The LSCB agreed a new strategy for Reading at the December Board Meeting. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of sexual abuse that requires effective multi-agency working to safeguard those who at risk of being exploited. In Reading we are working towards developing a clearer picture of the extent to which CSE affects children locally.

This 3-year strategy builds on the progress that has already been made in Reading to ensure that we are effective in Preventing CSE from happening, Protecting those who may be at risk, to Pursue and Disrupt those who may be posing a risk to children and to ensure victims of CSE are supported in their Recovery.

Whilst we recognise there is still more to do to ensure we are effective in tackling all aspects of CSE across the Reading LSCB partnership, progress has been made in a number of areas that gives a strong foundation for moving forward.

- The LSCB now has a CSE and Missing steering group chaired by the Director of Children and Education Services.
- The CSE and Missing Children Operational Mapping Group is fully established.
- CSE champions have been identified across Reading Borough Council.
- Completed and ongoing investigations pursuing those who have harmed or present a CSE risk to children.

DID YOU
KNOW.....

A launch event for
the Child Sexual
Exploitation
Strategy is taking
place on

Monday 16th
March 2015

09:30 16:30

Heads of Service,
Managers and
Team Leaders
have already been
invited and will
cascade the
information to
their teams.



The CSE story so far.....(cont.)

- There has been significant investment in training of professionals through single and multi-agency training at universal, targeted and specialist levels and bespoke training has been delivered on sharing intelligence with the police and guidance issued to frontline practitioners.
- An educational/preventative programme has been delivered in nine schools which included the use of 'Chelsea's choice' reaching approximately 2000 young people.
- We have a number of established services to support victims of CSE including: Counselling Services, CSE Champions, Source Team, Health drop ins, Youth Outreach Nurse and Targeted Youth Support.

Domestic Abuse Consultation carried out by the Reading Youth Cabinet

The Reading Youth Cabinet undertook a survey on behalf of the Reading LSCB on the topic of Domestic Abuse. The survey was completed by 161 pupils from Reading Secondary Schools and found that:

- Over 70% of Young People had never received any education in relation to Domestic Abuse.
- 60% of Young People didn't know that Domestic Abuse was an issue in Reading.
- Over half the Young People who responded did not know where to go to get support in relation to Domestic Abuse.

Recommendations from the findings of the survey were:

- Young People are not aware of the services available. A directory of support surrounding Domestic Abuse should be created.
- Education is absolute key, not only for students but for teachers too. An overwhelming amount of Young People indicated they would speak with their School if they had an issue.
- Investigate further why the Police would not be a top contact of support. The Police have the expertise in such a topic, as well as the knowledge of the proper way to handle situations. So why is it Young People would not seek to be in contact with the Police?
- Consultations with Young People need to be made a priority. The results of the survey show that Young People would like to see more consultations .

This survey was discussed at the December LSCB Meeting and it was agreed that the Education Task Group to undertake further work in relation to the Education of Young People on Domestic Abuse. We do already have a central online Directory of services — the Reading Services Guide. See overleaf for details.

School Nurses operate a texting service so that Young People can contact them if they have a problem, and a Facebook page for Young People is currently under construction.

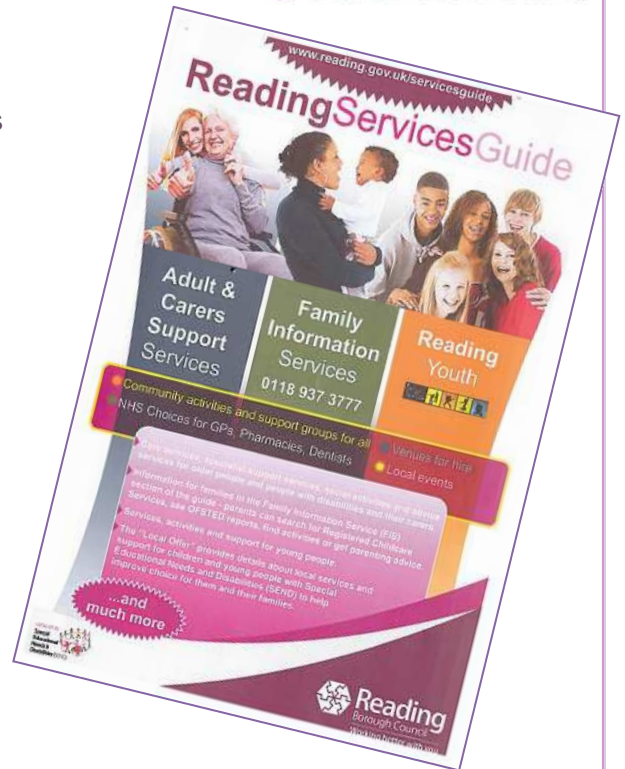
DID YOU KNOW..... In a survey undertaken by Reading Youth Cabinet over half the young people who responded did not know where to go to get support in relation to Domestic Abuse.



Reading Services Guide

From the 1st September 2014 the SEND Reforms (part of the Children's Act 2014) required all Local Authorities to publish information all in one place about services and provision likely to be available in their Borough for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). It also required us to provide information about services and provision likely to be accessed by children from Reading in other neighbouring Local Authorities. This is called the "Local Offer".

The Reading Services Guide www.reading.gov.uk/servicesguide is an online website that sets out all this information and provides other information about Adult / Carers Support Services, Family Information Service, Community & Venues and Reading Youth.

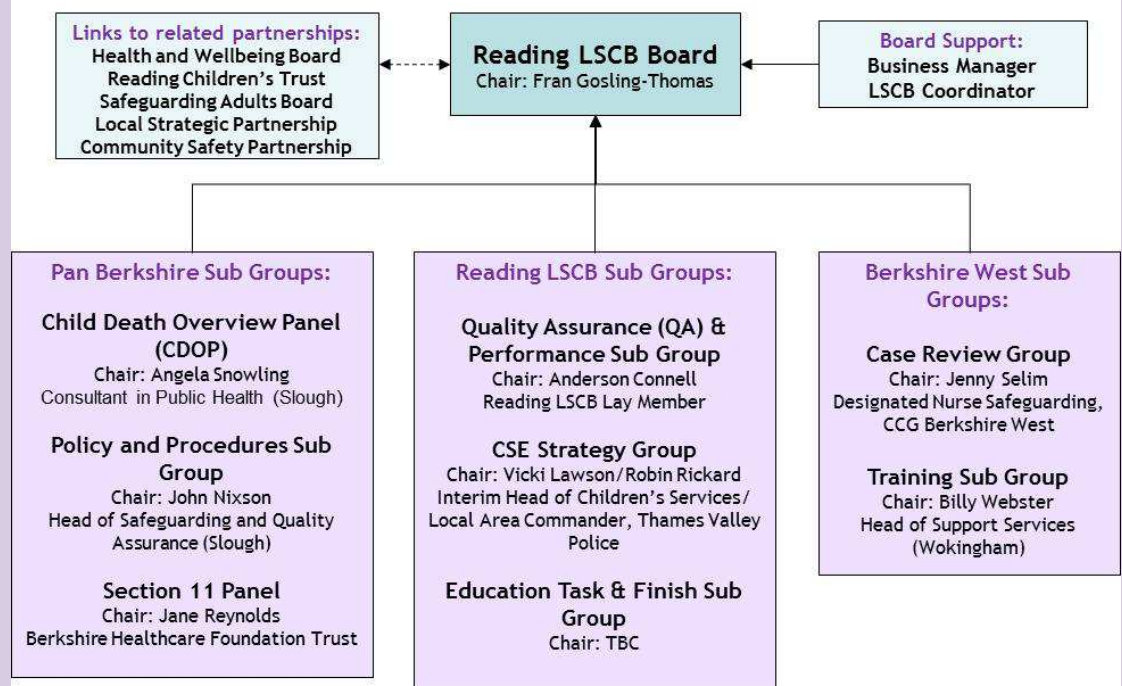


If you would like more information about the SEND reforms and how this may affect you and your family or if you are an organisation that can support Children with Special Educational Needs / Disabilities (SEND) then please go on to the Reading Services Guide

DID YOU KNOW.....
You can access the Reading Services Guide by going to:
www.reading.gov.uk/servicesguide



Structure Chart (Jan 2015)



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