

## **Section 11 Self-Assessment Audit 2021**

**Requirement:** Section 11 of the Children Act 2004, amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017, sets out the provision for Local Children Safeguarding Partnerships to undertake a self-assessment audit for agencies and services to assure themselves and the Partnership that the standards to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people are met.

The role of the BSCP is to support this exercise in line with our duty to ‘assess whether LSCP partners are fulfilling their statutory obligations’ as set out in chapter 2 of *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018*.

**Purpose:** We collate the responses so that the Partnership may determine:

- What the self-assessments tell us about the effectiveness of arrangements and joint working for safeguarding and promotion of the welfare of children and young people in Barnsley

For Agencies the s.11 self-assessment audit:

- Provides an opportunity to all key agencies that work with children and young people to give an account of how safeguarding is prioritised in their organisations
- Provides evidence that agencies work closely with Barnsley SCP and understand it's roles and responsibilities
- Enables agencies to identify good practice and areas of development in their organisations
- Enable agencies to self-assess for evidence of learning and improvement
- Supports evidence gathering for national inspection organisations; Ofsted, CQC, HMIC

For the Barnsley SCP the results of the audit will support

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- Evidence of how all agencies, professionals and others who are involved with children, young people and their families are accountable for singly and collectively safeguarding and promotion of the welfare of children & young people in Barnsley
- The BSCP Annual Report which is a public statement as to the sufficiency of joint working arrangements to protect children and young people in Barnsley
- The development of Partnership priorities to provide leadership and support for learning and improvement, and sharing good practice

In line with services identified in *Working Together (2018) chap 2* that have a compliance duty for s.11 reporting, the following agencies have taken part in the 2021 self-assessment audit:

- NHS Barnsley CCG
- Childrens' Social Care
- Education, Early Start & Prevention services/ Early Help
- Education Welfare service
- Berneslai Homes
- 0-19 Public Health Nursing Service
- HMPrison & Probation service
- South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue
- Barnsley Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- South West Yorkshire Partnership Foundation NHS Trust
- South Yorkshire Police

## Methodology

The methodology was as follows:

1. Detailed guidance provided to all participating agencies
2. Completion of the written s.11 self-assessment audit which address 9 policy standards, each of which has a compliance checklist for safeguarding and promotion of C&YP welfare. See appendix 1
3. An evidence requirement for each policy standard and compliance
4. Agencies are asked to provide a RAG rating against each compliance requirement which determines their overall standing against each Policy Standard. The RAG rating is based on a **'Met/ Partially Met/ Not Met'** evidenced response. See appendix 3
5. A Challenge Event was held to explore the impact of each agency's learning and processes to keep children & young people safe from harm. Agencies were invited to individual meetings to discuss their audit findings. See appendix 2

## Background

This 2021 s11 self-assessment is the first to take place since 2018 in the Barnsley Partnership. The audit period is the 12 months of 2021. It spans the background of the pandemic and lockdown The impact on services was heard in the Challenge Event and in additional measures that services put in place to ensure that contact and sight with families, children and young people was maintained during those times. The impact of covid19 and lockdown continues to emerge and to be an area of safeguarding focus. Funding changes and the pandemic have pushed services to flex and adapt. Service design change and re-organisations are features for several. Legislative changes of the past 3 years have brought fresh challenge and focus to services in safeguarding and children's landscapes.

## Findings

## Strengths

Strengths identified below are shared by the majority if not all agencies taking part and are characteristic of the multiagency Partnership

- Agencies understand the shifting environments in which they work and identify trends in areas of risk for C&YP
- There is a good to high level of compliance demonstrated by agencies across the 9 Policy Standards described.
- Training is well established in agencies. Safeguarding awareness is part of inductions. Most agencies operate a training matrix for specific roles. Training is reviewed and evaluated. The Partnership training offer is highly valued for its' content, range and effectiveness
- All agencies evidenced a culture where safeguarding C&YP is a priority for them. The majority evidenced a drive for continuous improvement
- Strengths-based tools such as the Outcomes Star are employed to support C&YP and their families and to evidence positive outcomes

## Areas for Development

Single agency action plans are underway and should be progressed. All agencies with action plans will be invited to send a brief assurance report in 6 months.

Themes and areas for development:

- Generally, all agencies demonstrate compliance with Policy Standards. Several test safeguarding compliance and improvements through single and multiagency audits. There are examples of feedback and surveys being used effectively with staff and services. Support tools are used to evidence good outcomes. A key question is how interventions and outcomes demonstrate safer lives of C&YP and their families in Barnsley, enabling them to thrive. There are some good examples of positive outcomes voiced by C&YP in this s11. It would be great to be consistent as a Partnership in this area

**Action: All agencies**

**Action: Future s11 audits to give greater direction for impact and outcomes. Consider use of an online s11 audit for agencies, as currently used by many Safeguarding Children Partnerships**

- Most agencies gather large amounts of data. Sharper use of data would enable greater insights for gaps/priorities and evidence of improved outcomes for children and young people.

**Action:** The current PAQA data intelligence task & finish group to liaise with partner agencies to identify effective areas of data sharing from all agencies

- As there is high take up of Partnership training, data analysis of attendance and reported practice change would be meaningful in demonstrating agency compliance and outcomes

**Action:** PPWPD subgroup to lead, with a Task & Finish group, on the scope for interrogation of the POD system and analysis of multiagency training results

- The Graded Care Profile 2 is a tool for assessing and working with child neglect. Whilst it is a current BSCP multiagency training offer, the GCP2 is utilised

primarily by CSC and Early Help services. Are there barriers to its' use by all agencies or is it a question of access to training?

**Action:** Refer to the Child Neglect subgroup once in place, for further consideration of the benefits of GCP2 by partner agencies

- Feedback for progress and outcomes from the MASH to referring agencies to happen consistently. Review of the MASH referral form

**Action:** Items for the Strategic MASH group to take forward

- Contextual Safeguarding. The self- assessment audit had a note to include Contextual Safeguarding and County Lines. From Partnership work groups we know that much good work is done in Contextual Safeguarding but there was little reference in the audits overall. Contextual Safeguarding training has had an excellent take up since its' introduction in autumn 2021. Is it seen in practice change and can the impact be seen in safeguarding work with C&YP in the community and online?

**Action:** Impact and outcomes of Contextual Safeguarding training to be reviewed by the Child Exploitation subgroup

- In comparison to statistical neighbours, Barnsley has a higher percentage of babies under one year affected by SUDI and traumatic brain injury, therefore a BSCP priority has been to extend the delivery of advice and guidance of Safer Sleep and ICON, traditionally delivered by health practitioners, to all professionals supporting families, children and young people. Whilst there are signs of the roll out in some agencies there is room for greater awareness and delivery

**Action:** BSCP to share links to Safer Sleep and ICON briefings and web page links

- Private Fostering. Awareness of issues around Private Fostering and reporting requirement were demonstrated by several agencies but not all

**Action:** BSCP to share links to Private Fostering information and guidance and BSCP webpages

- Information-Sharing. Clarity of current information-sharing agreements would support some agencies

**Action:** Links to Information-Sharing agreements to be shared and added to BSCP web page

- Awareness of the Escalation policy is acknowledged by most agencies. It could be used to greater effect as a route to address professional disagreements/ communication breakdowns

- **Action:** BSCP to share links to the Escalation Policy and forms. Monitor for take-up and results

### **Next Steps:**

- S11 Audit results to be shared with the Partnership
- Agencies to amend and implement single agency action plans
- Shared actions for areas for development to implemented through relevant Partnership groups
- Opportunities for continuous improvement identified by the s11 audit and emerging themes will be explored through relevant Partnership groups, including areas for audit

- The s11 audit identified many areas of good practice by agencies and it is a recommendation that future BSCP meetings have a standing agenda item for agencies to share their work through single agency presentations
- BSCP to prepare a briefing with guidance and links for themes identified in areas for development