



Luton Safeguarding Children Board

In this issue:

Welcome from Michael Preston-Shoot, Independent Chair	2
Strategic priorities	3
Ofsted report	3
Private fostering	3/4
Urban street gangs	5
LSCB training	6
Child Death Overview Panel - CDOP	7
Serious Case Review - SCR	7
LSCB projects – child abuse through sexual exploitation	8
For your interest	11



**Professor
Michael
Preston-Shoot
Independent
chair, Luton
Safeguarding
Children
Board**

The time between the first newsletter and this edition has seen some notable outcomes of quality inspections into services for children and young people in Luton. The Youth Offending Service has been inspected and found to be performing strongly across its provision and above national averages. Nonetheless, the report outlines some areas where further improvement from this strong foundation would strengthen the provision still further and the Local Safeguarding Children Board will monitor progress here.

Ofsted has completed an inspection of safeguarding children in Luton and of services for looked after children. The majority of the criteria used for the inspection were judged to be good, the remainder being evaluated as performing adequately. The inspection also concluded that there were good prospect for further improvement. Further detail is contained in the newsletter and the full report is available online as a public document. Particularly welcome were the positive assessments of the commitment of agencies and practitioners to safeguarding children, and of the functioning of the Luton Safeguarding Children Board. More remains to be done, especially regarding the thoroughness of assessments and embedding supervision, and the Board will have an action plan to monitor progress in those areas where Ofsted advised that further improvements were desirable.

Health visiting services have also come under the spotlight. In a helpful report, the very high workloads carried by health visitors currently were reported. Whilst good practice was found, the need for investment in the health visiting workforce was clear, coupled with work on identifying the specific role of the health visitor in a multi-agency context where other professionals are also working with families to assist children to have the best start in life. I am pleased to report that funding has been found for adding to the health visiting workforce in Luton and commissioning training for health care staff who wish to become health visitors. Work is also ongoing to configure the interface between health visiting and other professionals in the children's workforce.

The police service has been working closely with all other agencies with responsibility for safeguarding children in respect of gangs, radicalisation and extremism. The service has also helped to facilitate work between the Luton Safeguarding Children Board and London Luton Airport, the outcome of which has been a protocol for how children and young people at risk will be safeguarded when using that port of entry and exit.

All this activity, and more, has informed the strategic priorities for the Board for 2012/13, details of which are contained in the newsletter. There will be an open business day later in the year, when the Board will continue its planned work of engaging with managers and practitioners about their lived experience of safeguarding children and young people in Luton. As Independent Chair, I will also continue with focus group meetings to give frontline staff the opportunity to advise on how services can be further strengthened.

**Professor Michael Preston-Shoot
Independent Chair**

The LSCB has identified the following seven strategic priorities in its business plan 2012 – 2013

1. To maintain robust governance arrangements ensuring the independent authority of the LSCB as a statutory body is recognised.
2. To continue to promote participation, communication and consultation with children and young people, parents and carers.
3. To continue to ensure effective safeguarding policies and procedures are in place to support the work of professionals and review existing policies and procedures (in line with Munro) to enable professional judgement.
4. To further improve the quality and effectiveness of safeguarding practice through effective oversight, challenge and measuring of impact.
5. To ensure the children's workforce is supported by the provision of relevant and high quality single agency and multi agency safeguarding training.
6. To continue to learn from child deaths and other serious incidents.
7. To co-ordinate safeguarding arrangement in three specific areas:
 - faith communities
 - children at risk of/involved in sexual exploitation
 - managing cases of neglect through effective use of the Graded Care Profile (GCP) tool.

Ofsted Report

The Ofsted report following the Inspection of safeguarding and looked after children services in Luton is available on the LSCB website, [please click here to view the report](#)

Somebody Else's Child – The lowdown on Private Fostering arrangements

Luton Borough Council is supporting the campaign being run by the British Association for Adoption and Fostering, appealing to people to let the Council know if they think a child in their community is being cared for by someone who is not a direct relative. The initiative, called Somebody Else's Child, aims to reduce the number of children in un-notified private fostering arrangements in England.

Private Fostering is when a child under 16 years of age (or 18 if they're disabled) lives with someone who is not a direct relative, parent or person with parental responsibility for 28 consecutive days





or more. Private foster carers can be from the extended family such as a cousin, great aunt/ uncle or a friend of the family, the parent of a friend of the child or someone previously unknown to the child's family and is willing to privately foster a child. If the child is with a sibling, grandparent, aunt/uncle (whether full or half blood by marriage) or a step parent this is not classed as private fostering.

Although this is done by private arrangement between the parent and the private foster carer (that is to say without the involvement of the Council), legally the parent and the private foster carer must notify the local authority where the child is going to live so that the local authority can ensure that the child is being properly cared for.

Children become privately fostered for all sorts of reasons. They can be teenagers living elsewhere because of family breakdown, cultural exchange students, a child from overseas living with a host family while attending school, or overseas students at boarding school who stay with host families during the holidays or any child whose parents have made a private arrangement for them to be cared for by somebody else

In the year to March 2011 there were 2,332 notifications of private fostering arrangements

in England. However there could be many more, including many un-notified arrangements in Luton.

Luton Borough Council is particularly asking people who work with children to be aware of private fostering and to notify the Council if they believe such an arrangement is in place. The general public also has a part to play.

Hilary Griffiths, Head of Service for social work in Luton said: "The Council is keen to assess and support all private fostering arrangements as part of our responsibility to promote the welfare of children. Anyone who is involved in a private fostering arrangement or thinks they know someone who is needs to tell us about it. This will enable us to make sure the child is safe, healthy and happy and to offer support to private foster carers and parents if they need it."

To register a private fostering arrangement, or something that you believe could be a private fostering placement, please contact:

Luton Borough Council's Children's Services Referral and Assessment Team
on **01582 546000** fax: **01582 547813**
or by email: referral&assessment@luton.gov.uk.

For further information please click [Private Fostering FAQs](#)



A spotlight on Urban Street Gangs, the story so far.....

Article written by Detective Inspector Martin Peters (Bedfordshire Police Serious and Organised Crime Unit)

In September 2010 Bedfordshire Police provided a focus in respect of Urban Street Gangs and their impact on our local communities. This involved intelligence research to scope the nature and extent of this issue from a countywide perspective, and as part of a strategic response to identify action to be taken to prevent any further potential escalation.

This was reviewed and groups identified were classified either as an Organised Crime Group or Urban Street Gangs and the definitions used were:

• *Urban Street Gangs - definition*

A relatively durable predominately street based group of young people who:

1. see themselves and are seen by others as a discernable group
2. engage in criminal activity and violence
3. lay claim over territory (this is not necessarily geographical territory but can include illegal economic territory)
4. have some form of identifying structural features; and
5. are in conflict with other, similar gangs.

• *Organised Crime Group - definition*

Individuals, normally working with others, with the intent and capability to commit serious crime on a continuing basis, which includes elements of: planning / control / coordination / structure / group decision-making. **Serious crime** is defined by Section 93(4) Police Act 1997 as crime that involves the use of violence, results in substantial financial gain or is conducted by a large number of persons in pursuit of a common purpose, or crime for which a person aged 21 or over on first conviction could reasonably expect to be imprisoned for three or more years.

This research revealed the majority of potential **Urban Street Gangs** actually fell into the definition of an **Organised Crime Group** and existing systems and processes were already in place to focus on Organised Crime Groups and their criminality.

One **Urban Street Gang** was identified, called 'the Red Bandana Gang' in Bedford. A tailored partnership approach including enforcement activity was undertaken and the gang was disrupted and dismantled, resulting in a number of prison sentences and the recovery of drugs, weapons and firearms.

Bedfordshire Police continue to monitor **Urban Street Gangs** within the County and to date no other gangs have been identified. However, we cannot be naive to think that the current dedicated work within the Metropolitan Police

area will not have the potential to displace Urban Street Gangs to other areas, which may include Bedfordshire and therefore we continue to review the intelligence picture.

So how can other professionals support our focus on Urban Street Gangs?

Professionals should pass on any information they come across within their day to day work to Bedfordshire Police as timely and accurate information will allow us to focus our efforts and prevent escalation.

*If you have information to pass on to Bedfordshire Police please contact the Criminal Investigation Bureau on **01582 842751** or e-mail CIBintel@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk*

LSCB training update:

This year is an exciting year for LSCB Training with new developments and initiatives being developed within the 2012 training programme.

From April, changes were made to the Safeguarding Children Training Brochure with domestic abuse training being embedded within the programme.

Our new 2012 programme also includes the introduction of our 'Lite Bites' sessions which will give you the opportunity to come along, update your knowledge on specific topics, whilst being able to eat your lunch and network with your colleagues. These sessions will be held from 12pm to 2pm and are being held throughout the year, so ensure you don't miss out by checking the website and your emails!

Behind the scenes the LSCB training team has been busy making changes to the LSCB training pages, which will bring potential for online booking, information on courses, research pages, and a post course delegates' area, which will allow delegates to be able to download copies of course material, online evaluations both post course and impact evaluations by delegate and their line manager.

We have also been busy exploring e-learning packages which we hope to launch later in the year, so watch this space!.....

Don't forget to look at the website training page to book your training early to avoid disappointment!

The LSCB Training Brochure 2012/13 can be found on the website using the following link: [Safeguarding Children & Domestic Abuse Learning & Development Brochure](#)

Useful contact numbers:

*LSCB Training Manager
[Chris Langely on 01582 547712](#)*

*LSCB Training Officer
[Lynn Taylor on 01582 547621](#)*

*Training Administration
[01582 547555](#)*

The LSCB has developed a number of local protocols on specific safeguarding issues. To see these protocols please go to the following link: [LSCB Local Protocols](#)

An overview of the Child Death Overview Panel Process - CDOP

What does the CDOP do?

The panel meets every six weeks and all child deaths are reviewed. The CDOP panel has to determine if, when reviewing the deaths, there were any modifiable factors which may have contributed to the death of the child and which by means of locally or nationally achievable interventions could be modified to reduce the risk of future deaths. Modifiable factors may include unsafe sleeping practice, parental smoking, maternal obesity and consanguineous relationships (usually first cousins).

How does the CDOP define child death categories?

Neonatal Death

Death of a baby within the first 28 days of life.

Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI).

Sudden death of an infant under the age of one year which was not anticipated by any professional in the 24 hours prior to the event which lead to the death.

Unexpected death

A death which was not anticipated as a significant possibility for example 24 hours before the death.

Or

Where there was a similarly unexpected collapse or incident leading or precipitating the events which led to the death.

Expected death

Death of a child with a known life limiting condition.

Luton child deaths reported 2011-2012

In total 22 deaths were reported to the Bedfordshire and Luton Child Death Overview Panel in 2011-2012. This compares to 32 reported in 2010-2011 and 44 reported in 2009-2010.

During the period April 2011 to March 2012 59 per cent of the reported deaths were of children under the age of one year with 85 per cent of these being neonatal deaths (deaths occurring within the 28 days of life).

Modifiable factors noted in child deaths

The CDOP panel has identified some modifiable factors particularly in relation to babies born with congenital anomalies or metabolic disorders. A common feature in these deaths is that the parents are consanguineous usually first cousins. Other modifiable factors identified are in relation to unsafe sleeping practices for babies and parental smoking.

How can I find out more about the CDOP?

Multi-agency CDOP information awareness sessions are available for Luton health care professionals and social workers commencing July 2012. These will be two- hour sessions facilitated by the lead paediatrician for CDOP in Luton, the Child Death Review nurse and the CDOP manager. Please contact Shirley Whiterod on 01234 2922955 for further information.

Serious Case Review – SCR

The LSCB SCR Panel is independently chaired; it meets quarterly and conducts additional meetings to manage the panel's activities. Currently there is no SCR being conducted in Luton. The SCR panel receives notifications of serious incidents which although do not meet the threshold of a SCR warrant further review because of identified safeguarding issues involved. One such review is currently underway by the SCR panel and all learning will be highlighted in the Autumn newsletter.

Do you know which cases should be referred to the LSCB SCR panel?

For more information click on [Serious Incident Reporting](#).

LSCB Projects

Spotlight on sexual abuse through exploitation

Definition

The definition used by the government in the DCSF Guidance 2009; Safeguarding children and young people from sexual exploitation: supplementary guidance to working together to safeguard children, defines child sexual exploitation as follows:

“Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive ‘something’ (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child’s immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the

internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person’s limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.”

Remember: The terminology may change but the issue remains the same; children and young people are sexually abused, sometimes for the commercial gain of others.

Child sexual exploitation tends to be a hidden activity and much more likely to take place in private residences than visibly, on the streets¹.

Barnardo’s has identified three different models of activity; they are not exhaustive, but show a spectrum of exploitation, as follows:

¹Barnardo’s, Puppet on a String: The urgent need to cut children free from sexual exploitation. 2011

1	Inappropriate relationships	Usually involving one perpetrator who has inappropriate power or control over a young person (physical, emotional or financial). One indicator may be a significant age gap. The young person may believe they are in a loving relationship.
2	“Boyfriend” model of exploitation and peer exploitation	The perpetrator befriends and grooms a young person into a ‘relationship’ and then coerces or forces them to have sex with friends or associates. Barnardos have reported a rise in peer exploitation where young people are forced or coerced into sexual activity by peers and associates. Sometimes this can be associated with gang activity but not always.
3	Organised/networked sexual exploitation or trafficking	Young people (often connected) are passed through networks, possibly over geographical distances, between towns and cities where they may be forced / coerced into sexual activity with multiple men. Often this occurs at ‘sex parties’, and young people who are involved may be used as agents to recruit others into the network. Some of this activity is described as serious organised crime and can involve the organised ‘buying and selling’ of young people by perpetrators.

Who is at risk?

Any child or young person, from any social or ethnic background, can be exploited. Boys and young men can be at risk as well as girls and young women. Research has shown that a number of factors can increase a young person's vulnerability to sexual exploitation. These include disrupted family life and domestic violence, a history of physical or sexual abuse, disadvantage, poor mental health, problematic parenting, parental drug or alcohol misuse and parental mental health problems. We also know that some groups of young people are more vulnerable to targeting by the perpetrators of sexual exploitation. These include children living in care, particularly residential care, those who are excluded from mainstream school and those who misuse drugs and alcohol. There is concern that these children are increasingly being targeted by abusers who are developing more sophisticated grooming techniques.

Barnardos has conducted a survey of 21 of their services which shows:

- a caseload increase of 30 per cent
- the majority of grooming is private and not 'street'
- one in ten victims were boys
- 44 per cent were missing from home
- one in six had been trafficked in the UK
- one in three services noted a marked rise in peer to peer sexual exploitation.

What is the scale of the problem?

Due to the hidden nature of the issue it is very difficult to say how many children and young people are being sexually exploited in the UK. Child sexual exploitation is difficult to identify and there is no central system for recording cases.

Practitioners often do not identify it and young people themselves frequently do not recognise themselves as abused. Given that both professionals and victims can fail to recognise exploitation and that there is no national referral

or reporting system, any approximate figure is likely to be massively underestimated.

Criminal prosecutions

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 introduced a range of new offences that recognised the grooming, coercion and control of children.

- S.14 Arranging or facilitating a child sex offence (child under 16).
- S.15 Meeting a child following sexual grooming (child under 16).
- S.47 Paying for the sexual services of a child.
- S.48 Causing or inciting child prostitution or pornography.
- S.49 Controlling a child prostitute or a child involved in pornography.
- S.50 Arranging or facilitating child prostitution or pornography.
- S.57, 58, 59 Trafficking into, within or out of the UK for sexual exploitation.



Despite the introduction of these offences, there have been very few successful prosecutions, so they do not reflect the true scale of the issue and the number of children who are affected.

In 2009, only 55 people were found guilty of offences relating to child sexual exploitation.



There have however been a number of recent high-profile prosecutions. For example, in November 2010, 9 out of a group of 13 men were convicted following a groundbreaking operation by Derbyshire Police that uncovered horrendous abuse of 26 girls as young as 12. They were moved from town to town, where they were taken to 'parties' and used for sex, often by multiple perpetrators. Much of the abuse was recorded as trophies on mobile phones. The men were convicted for a range of offences, including rape and false imprisonment. In the same month, a three-year police investigation in Cornwall into the abuse and exploitation of 30 girls came to an end. The investigation resulted in the conviction of four men for a range of sexual offences.

In another major case in August 2010, a man from Blackburn was found guilty of grooming and sexually exploiting five girls aged 13 to 15. During the same month, nine men were convicted for crimes relating to sexual exploitation of a girl aged 14 from Rochdale. The offenders were found guilty of a range of sexual offences and not just those that specify the grooming, coercion and control of children.

So what is happening locally?

The Luton Safeguarding Children Board has identified sexual abuse through exploitation as a strategic priority in its 2012/2013 Business Plan. The LSCB, working with the Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Boards have implemented a task and finish group to scope the scale and nature of children at risk of or experiencing sexual exploitation across Bedfordshire and Luton and have identified the following overarching objectives for the working group:

- the identification of the children at risk and those who pose the risk
- to act decisively to protect and disrupt
- wherever possible secure convictions.

For further information please contact Catherine Barrett, LSCB Business Manager on 01582 547590 or click on [LSCB sexual exploitation](#)

Access the LSCB Child Sexual Abuse through Sexual Exploitation Professionals leaflet [here](#)

Other links to useful sites:

[Just Whistle](#)

[Barnardos](#)

[Stop it now](#)

For your interest

The Department for Education is consulting on new statutory guidance for safeguarding children. There are three documents setting out what is expected of organisations, guidance on undertaking assessments of children in need, and proposed new arrangements for Serious Case Reviews (SCRs). Proposals include: scrapping national timescales for assessing children in need; and the publication of serious case reviews in full. The consultation closes on 4 September 2012.

Source: Department for Education 12 June 2012

CASPAR (Current Awareness Service for Practice, Policy and Research) from the NSPCC

Department for Education

The Department for Education has published a commissioning toolkit to help parents or commissioners looking for effective **parenting programmes** and interventions.

Source:
Department for Education find a parenting programme

NSPCC

The NSPCC has released new data about the number of child sexual abuse offences reported to the police in England and Wales. Findings from a freedom of information request sent to all 43 police forces include: police recorded over 23,000 sex offences against children aged under 18 years in England and Wales between April 2010 and March 2011; 14,819 of which were reported against 11-17 year olds.

Source:
NSPCC Inform

NSPCC

The NSPCC has published a report on child neglect. The charity handled 12,000 contacts about neglect between April 2011 and March 2012, the biggest number since the helpline was launched and double that received in 2009/10. 71 per cent of these calls were referred to the police or children's services.

Source:
NSPCC calls about neglect

NSPCC

The NSPCC has published an updated version of a factsheet on child protection legislation in the UK. The factsheet provides a chronological list of the Acts, Orders, Measures and statutory guidance that set the legal foundations of child protection and safeguarding in the United Kingdom.

Source:
NSPCC factsheet 20 May 2012

Department for Education

The Department for Education has published an updated version of guidance on preventing and tackling bullying. The advice, which is aimed at headteachers, staff and governing bodies, includes: a guide to the law on bullying, a definition of bullying, and suggested means of prevention and intervention. The document replaces "Safe To Learn: embedding anti-bullying work in schools".

Source:
*Department for Education
24 May 2012*

Further information: *Preventing and tackling bullying: advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies. (PDF)*

NSPCC

The NSPCC has published a research report on adults who sexually abused children or young people while working in positions of trust. It aimed to identify: organisational risk factors; how adults were able to obtain these positions; and propose good practice. Findings include: in addition to vetting and screening, there must be an organisational culture where the welfare of the child is paramount, there is an awareness of what constitutes inappropriate or abusive behaviour, and clear and accessible routes to express concerns.

Source:
NSPCC Inform 19 May 2012

Further information: *Towards safer organisations II: using the perspectives of convicted sex offenders to inform organisational safeguarding of children*

NSPCC

The NSPCC has published research on children, young people and sexting. Findings include: the primary threat is from peers, not strangers; it is often coercive; girls are most affected; and sexting practices are culturally specific.

Source:
NSPCC Inform 15 May 2012

Further information: *A qualitative study of children, young people and 'sexting'*

New Articles

The BBC report on NSPCC research which found that children who witness domestic violence are more likely to carry a weapon, be excluded from school, seriously harm another person, or run away from home.

Source:
BBC Online 31 May 2012

Further information: *Children & Young People Now*

May 2012 NSPCC Inform: Physical abuse in high risk families: an NSPCC priority

NSPCC: putting a stop to physical abuse