



City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Board

Constitution

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City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Board

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Introduction

The original Constitution was formally adopted by the City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Board in March 2007. This revised Constitution was adopted by the City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Board in January 2009.

It has been drawn up in line with Children Act 2004 (“the Act”) and the Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006. It has further been developed within the requirements of relevant Government guidance, including Chapter 3 of the Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance (DfES - 2006).

The Children’s Act 2004 places a duty on local authorities to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). **Working Together to Safeguard Children**, states the *“LSCB is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how the relevant organisations in each local area will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in that locality, and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do”* (para 3.2).

The City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (“the Board”) was set up on 19th May 2005. This replaced the City and Hackney Area Child Protection Committee. The Board has a statutory role in co-ordinating and ensuring the effectiveness of services to safeguard children and young people in the City of London & the London Borough of Hackney. To enable the Board to carry out this function effectively all agencies who are members of this Board (“Agencies”/“Partners”/“partner agencies”) hereby give a commitment that:

- there will be effective accountability within and between agencies to safeguard children; and,
- clear practice standards, policies and procedures will be implemented to ensure the effective safeguarding and promotion of welfare of children.

The City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Board - Responsibilities

The Children Act 2004 place a statutory duty on key agencies to make arrangements to:

- (a) promote co-operation between them as well as any other relevant bodies with a view to improving the wellbeing of children (section 10); and,
- (b) ensure that in discharging their functions they have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (section 11).

The City & Hackney Safeguarding Board's partner agencies are:

- City and Hackney Primary Care Foundation Trust
- City of London Community and Children's Services Department
- City of London Police Service
- Children & Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS)
- East London NHS Foundation Trust
- Hackney Youth Offending Team
- Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- London Borough of Hackney Children and Young People's Services
- London Borough of Hackney Drug Action Team
- London Probation Service
- Metropolitan Police Service - including Borough Police and the Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT)
- The Learning Trust

The statutory guidance accompanying Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 sets out key features of effective arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children which all agencies need to take account of in undertaking their functions. Board partners are expected to demonstrate that the arrangements set out below are in place in their organisations. The Board will ensure that these arrangements are adhered to, through its monitoring and evaluation function and hold agencies to account for their delivery.

Key features of effective arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children:

- senior management demonstrate a commitment to and are accountable for safeguarding;
- clear statement of the agency's responsibilities towards children is available for all staff;
- clear line of accountability within the organisation in relation to safeguarding children;
- children, young people and families are involved in planning and developing services;
- ensure services for children are safe and accessible;
- ensure training continues and professional development is available and relevant;
- safe recruitment, vetting procedures and procedures for responding to allegations against staff are in place and implemented effectively;
- effective inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and, information is shared with partner agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Core Objectives

1. develop policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the City and Hackney and to co-operate London-wide in the development of agreed all London procedures;
2. ensure all agencies working with children or in services affecting the safety and welfare of children have safe recruitment practices in place;
3. ensure that there is a competently trained and supervised workforce to work with children or in services affecting the safety and welfare of children in the City and Hackney;
4. provide the analysis and overview of agency involvement in cases which meet the criteria for serious case reviews set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006;
5. ensure that recommendations and lessons learned from the reviews of individual cases are incorporated into agency practice;
6. promote safeguarding children as a shared responsibility across all organisations and partner agencies in the City and Hackney as well as the wider community;
7. monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what is done by partner agencies in the City and Hackney individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to hold agencies to account; and,
8. influence the local planning and commissioning of children's services and other services that affect the safety and welfare of children to ensure that they take safeguarding and the promotion of the welfare of children as paramount importance.

Governance and Accountability

The Board will hold partner agencies to account for their performance in safeguarding children.

The Board will consider strategy, policy, governance and resources and make key decisions with regard to safeguarding, which should be observed by member agencies.

The Board will formulate performance measures for the Board as a whole and the sub-committees, and, where appropriate, for individual agencies.

The Board will undertake monitoring and evaluation to ensure all partner agencies meet their legal obligations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children as set out in this constitutional document Working Together.

Where the Board considers that a Partner is failing to meet its safeguarding commitments the Independent Chair will inform the DCS and will liaise it with the agency in question in order to remedy such failings.

If the above does not remedy the performance issue the Chair/DCS may then if appropriate, explain the concerns of the Board to the relevant inspectorate and if necessary, Government department.

The Independent Chair of the City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Board

An Independent Chair acts as Chair for the Board and will chair the Serious Case Review Sub Committee.

The Independent Chair will undertake this role on behalf of both the City and Hackney. The Chair of the Board is accountable to the Director of Children's Services for the London Borough of Hackney and any performance issues are to be raised with the DCS. The DCS will set up annual performance targets for the Independent Chair.

Arrangements regarding recruitment, payroll and other employment related matters including terms and conditions of contract, will be agreed in writing separately by the DCS for the London Borough of Hackney on behalf of the City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Board.

The Independent Chair is appointed to oversee the functioning of the Board. He/she will chair the quarterly Board meetings and the Serious Case Review sub committee, as detailed below. In addition, the Independent Chair will be a "champion" in the City and Hackney on safeguarding issues and will be a member of Hackney's Children's Trust Board.

In the absence of the Independent Chair, the Board will be chaired by the Deputy Director of Children's Services for the London Borough of Hackney.

In the absence of the Deputy Director of Children's Services, the Safeguarding Children Board will be chaired by the Director of Community and Children's Services (City of London).

The Director of Children's Services

The Director of Children's Services (DCS) plays a key role in promoting the safeguarding and welfare of children across all agencies.

The CHSCB is ultimately accountable to the DCS of the London Borough of Hackney and holds the Independent Chair of the CHSCB accountable for the effective operation.

The DCS will provide a performance management framework for the Independent Chair Board, which will be amended annually.

The DCS will not be a formal member of the Board. However she/he will receive all papers and agendas and reserves the right to attend the Board and its Sub-committees.

The DCS will be consulted on the Terms of Reference for the conducting of a Serious Case Review and will receive a draft of the final Overview Report prior to its conclusion.

The City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Board - Structure and Operation

The Safeguarding Board is the main decision making forum and an opportunity for all those involved with the Board to discuss and agree issues ensuring input from strategic and operational managers across partner agencies.

The Board will consist of representatives from all relevant partner agencies across Hackney and the City of London who have a direct working relationship with children and families as well as vulnerable adults who may be parents or carers. This will include both statutory and non-statutory bodies as well as those from the private and voluntary sector. Where an agency is not represented directly on the Board, a link will be established with an existing Board member. The key partner agencies are set out on page 4.

Membership of statutory agencies is expected to be at Chief Executive/AD level or equivalent with authority delegated to less senior representatives when required to deputise. However, substitution should be by exception.

The Quorum for a meeting of the Board will be a minimum of six statutory partners present and each member will be expected to have full authority to act and commit on their agencies behalf.

The Board may also, after consultation with all existing partners on the Board, invite other relevant persons or bodies to be represented on the Board (section 13(5) of the Act).

In addition, the Independent Chair of the Board will be a member of the Children's Trust.

The Safeguarding Board will meet quarterly.

The Sub-committees

The Board oversees the effective operation and the performance management of the following Sub-committees.

- City of London
- Child Death Overview Panel
- Finance
- Quality Assurance
- Serious Case Review
- Training & Development

Each Sub-Committee's membership will consist of representatives from the agencies represented on the Safeguarding Board relevant to each theme of the Sub-Committee. The Chairs of the sub committees will be members of the Board.

The work of the Safeguarding Board including the performance of the Independent Chair and of the Sub-committees will be annually evaluated by the Board. The Board is accountable to the Director of Children Services (DCS).

The Chairs of Sub-committees will be members of the Board. They will provide exception reporting feedback to the Board meeting about the activities of the Sub-committee. The Sub-committee's frequency of meetings will depend on the nature of the work it is

undertaking but it is generally expected that they will meet between 6 – 8 times per year and no less than 4 times per year.

It is important that all Sub-committee members have sufficient time available to fulfil their obligations to the sub-committee. All sub committee minutes will be taken and circulated by the CHSCB Co-ordinator except for the Child Death Overview Panel that will be completed by the CDOP Co-ordinator.

All minutes of a Sub-committee meeting will be in the agreed format and will be sent to all members of that Sub-committee, and to the Independent Chair of the Board. All Board and sub committee minutes will be available on the CHSCB website www.hackney.gov.uk/chscb.htm.

The membership of each Sub-committee will be agreed by the Chair of the Sub-committees.

As a minimum, each Sub-committee (except the City of London Safeguarding Children Sub-Committee) should have a representative from:

- The Learning Trust;
- London Borough of Hackney's Children and Young People's Services (Social Care);
- Health Partners
- East London NHS Foundation Trust

It is important that the work of the Sub-committees is co-ordinated and some areas of work will require the involvement of more than one sub-committee. The Board is responsible for the co-ordination of the work of the sub committees and for ensuring that issues identified in one sub committee are, where appropriate, taken up by others.

Terms of Reference

City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Board

- Ensure safeguarding and well-being of children is promoted
- performance manage the sub-committees;
- ensure sufficient resources are allocated to Safeguarding;
- ensure high level of partnership engagement and accountability in the responsibility towards safeguarding children;
- develop the Board's Annual Business Plan; and,
- any other matters the Board agrees should be undertaken by it.

The Board will be supported by the following Sub-committees whose responsibilities and Terms of Reference will be:

City of London Sub-Committee

- bring together City partners to examine and take action on City-specific safeguarding children issues;
- pursue and develop a preventative approach to safeguarding in the City;
- assure the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements for children in the City; and,

- any other matters which the City of London considers to be necessary to meet its obligations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children living, visiting or studying in the City or in respect of whom the City otherwise has these responsibilities.

The City of London Sub-committee will have wider terms of reference than other sub-committees as it will be responsible for considering those issues specific to the City of London. The City of London Safeguarding Children sub-committee will have the following agencies, as a minimum, as members:

- City of London Children's Services Authority
- City and Hackney Primary Care Trust
- City of London Police
- Connexions, through the City of London Children's Services Authority
- Education
- Health Trusts for the area, through the City and Hackney Primary Care Trust
- Mental Health Trust

Child Death Overview Panel

- collecting and analysing information about the deaths of all children from birth up to the age of 18, who are generally resident in their area with a view to identifying:
 - any matters of concern affecting the safety and welfare of children in the area of the authority, including any case giving rise to the need for a serious case review;
 - any (wider) general public health or safety concerns arising from a particular death or from a pattern of deaths of children;
- ensure that there is a co-ordinated response process by the authority, their Board partners and other relevant people to an unexpected death of a child.

Finance Sub-Committee

- oversee the financing of the Safeguarding Board;
- ensure the finances are used effectively and efficiently to meet the identified needs of the Board; and,
- ensure the level of funding is sufficient to meet the needs of the Board.

Quality & Assurance Sub-Committee

- monitor and evaluate partner agencies performance and effectiveness in safeguarding children;
- develop policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in City and Hackney and to co-operate London-wide in the development of agreed all London procedures; and,
- ensure all agencies working with children or in services affecting the safety and welfare of children have safe recruitment practices in place.

Serious Case Review Sub-Committee

- monitor all child deaths that become the subject of a Rapid Response meeting; decide if the circumstances meet the threshold as per the Working Together for a Serious

Case Review; and ensure Serious Case Reviews are commissioned in a timely manner;

- provide the analysis and overview of agency involvement in cases which meet the criteria for Serious Case Reviews set out in Working Together 2006;
- monitor action plans arising from Serious Case Reviews and to inform the Board/Chair of any concerns re: any individual agencies ability to carry out recommended actions;
- ensure that recommendations from Serious Case Reviews are incorporated into agency practice; and,
- arrange and monitor the dissemination of the lessons learned from all completed Serious Case Reviews.

Training & Development Sub-Committee

- ensure the provision of quality training opportunities to all those within the local area who work with children or in services affecting the safety and welfare of children;
- ensure synergy between the above and local children's workforce development strategy and the national common core of skills and knowledge;
- ensure that all trainers have the necessary skills-set to deliver effective training and that the content is informed by research evidence on what works best and lessons learnt from serious case reviews;
- ensure training programmes are commissioned through robust procurement arrangements and evaluated through systematic and intelligent mechanisms which are shown to inform future commissioning;
- ensure that inter-agency training programmes compliment those provided within single agencies and that single agency's programmes properly address child protection and general safeguarding awareness; and,
- all training provision should create an ethos that values working collaboratively with others; respects diversity, promotes equality, is child centred and promotes the participation of children and families in safeguarding processes.

Conduct of Meetings

The conduct of all meetings of the Board, and Sub-Committees shall be undertaken, in addition to any matters otherwise set out in this constitution or otherwise agreed by two-thirds of Board members, in accordance with the following provisions:

1. 'agreement' by the Board or a Sub-Committee shall be construed in this document as agreement by majority of those members of that Board, or Sub-Committee in attendance at the meeting;
2. notice of any meetings of the Board and Sub-Committees shall be provided in writing (whether by post, facsimile or email) to all members of that Board, or Sub-Committee within a reasonable time prior to the meeting, and in any event normally no later than five working days prior to the meeting;
3. all members of the Board and Sub-Committee shall be provided with an agenda of the matters proposed to be discussed at a meeting of that Board, Executive Committee or Sub-Committee at least five working days prior to the meeting;
4. where, after two hours after the time appointed for the start of a meeting, of the Board, or a Sub-Committee, the business on the agenda has not been completed, all unfinished business shall be adjourned to the next meeting unless otherwise agreed by the members in attendance at that meeting; and,
5. all Sub-committees' minutes will be taken and circulated by the CHSCB Co-ordinator except for the Child Death Overview Panel that will be completed by the CDOP Co-ordinator.

City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Board Structure Diagram

City of London

Chair: Gillian Humble - Family & Young People's Director, City of London

Quarterly meetings

City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Board

Independent Chair: Fran Pearson

Quarterly meetings

Training and Development

Chair: Isabelle Trowler - Assistant Director of Children's Social Care, Hackney Council

Bi-monthly meetings

Finance

Chair: Steve Belk - Executive Director of Learning & Standards, The Learning Trust

Bi-annual meetings

Quality Assurance

Includes Policy & Procedures

Chair: Steve Goodman - Deputy Director of Children & Young People's Services, Hackney Council

Bi-monthly meetings

Child Death Overview Panel

Chair: Dr Jose Figueroa - Consultant in Public Health

Quarterly meetings

Serious Case Review

Chair: Fran Pearson - CHSCB Independent Chair

Monthly meetings

List of Abbreviations

CAFCASS	Children & Family Court Advisory and Support Service
CAIT	Child Abuse Investigation Team
CDOP	Child Death Overview Panel
CHSCB	City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Board
CoL	City of London
CSC	Children's Social Care – Hackney Council
DCFS	Department for Children, Schools and Families
DCS	Director of Children's Services
ELFT	East London Foundation Trust
GOL	Government Office for London
HUH	Homerton University Hospital
IMR	Individual Management Review Report
LCPP	London Child Protection Procedures
LGBT	Lesbian Gay Bisexual & Transgender Youth Forum
LSCB	London Safeguarding Children Board
MPS	Metropolitan Police Service
PCT	Primary Care Trust
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
RR	Rapid Response
SCR	Serious Case Review
SUDI	Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy
SUI	Serious Untoward Incident Review
ToR	Terms of Reference
TLT	The Learning Trust

References and useful documents

Children Act, UK Parliament, 2004.

Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers, HM Government, October 2008.

London Child Protection Procedures (3rd Edition), London Safeguarding Children Board, October 2007.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act, UK Parliament, November 2006.

Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004, HM Government, March 2007.

Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, HM Government, April 2006.