

# **Protocol**

between

## **Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board**

and

## **Rotherham Corporate Parenting Panel**

### **1 PURPOSE**

This protocol will outline and confirm the functions and responsibilities of Rotherham's key strategic partnership for Safeguarding Children and the Local Authority's Corporate Parenting Panel in relation to the services and outcomes for Rotherham's Looked After Children; and the relationship between them.

### **2 OBJECTIVE**

This protocol will provide clarity about the relationship between the Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board and the Rotherham Corporate Parenting Panel; and articulate the specific links and reporting arrangements between them.

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board (RLSCB) is a statutory partnership board and the Corporate Parenting Panel is the key multi-agency forum for monitoring services and outcomes for Looked After Children, to champion their achievements and pursue innovation and developments to improve outcomes. Both have important, but distinctive roles in ensuring that Looked After Children receive good quality services, have their welfare promoted, reach their potential and are safeguarded from harm.
- 3.2 There is no hierarchical relationship between the Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board and Corporate Parenting Panel but a joint responsibility to ensure that the needs of Looked After Children are prioritised at a strategic level and delivered effectively at an operational level.

3.3 Joint areas of interest for Looked After Children between the RLSCB and the Corporate Parenting Panel include but are not restricted to:

- **Child's Voice** - Taking account of Looked after Children's wishes and feelings (section 22 (4) Children Act 1989), including those who are provided with accommodation under section 20 of the Children Act 1989 and children taken into police protection (section 46(3) (d) of that Act);

Listening to and acting on the work of the Looked after Children's Council.

- **Assessing Need and Providing Help** - Where a child becomes looked after the assessment will be the baseline for work with the family. Any needs which have been identified should be addressed before decisions are made about the child's return home. An assessment by a social worker is required before the child returns home under the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010. This will provide evidence of whether the necessary improvements have been made to ensure the child's safety when they return home (Working Together 2013, Chapter 2).
- **Children's Homes** – Monitoring the quality of service provision and outcomes for children who are placed in the local authorities children's homes.
- **Out of Area Placements** – Monitoring the quality of service provision and outcomes for children who are placed out of the local area, including the commissioning arrangements.
- **Stability of Placements** – monitor the stability of placement for Looked After Children (former National Indicators 62 & 63).
- **Children who go missing or run away from Care** – Ensuring that Looked After Children receive appropriate support to prevent them from going missing and that they receive the appropriate service and support should they do so.
- **Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)** – Ensure that UASC receive appropriate assessments and service provision.
- **Care Planning** – Ensure Looked After Children have good quality and timely Care Plans and Pathway Plans.
- **Health and Education Needs** – Monitor local performance indicators in relation to Health Assessments and Plans and Personal Education Plans.
- **Looked after Children Reviews** – Monitor the timeliness (former National Indicator) and quality of children's Looked After Reviews, including that their participation and wishes and feelings are taken into account.
- **Comments and Complaints** – Comments and complaints by Looked After Children (and their parents or carers) should be evaluated robustly and lessons learned to improve service delivery.

## **4 ROTHERHAM LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD**

- 4.1 The RLSCB is not a service delivery body; it is the scrutiny and decision making body for multi-agency safeguarding responsibilities within Rotherham. It is a statutory partnership board; its work is directed by statutory guidance.
- 4.2 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:
- protecting children from maltreatment;
  - preventing impairment of children's health or development;
  - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
  - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- 4.3 The Chief Executive of the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility for ensuring that an effective Local Safeguarding Children Board is in place for the Local Authority area.
- 4.4 The core objectives of Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board which are set out in Section 14 of the Children Act 2004 are:
- (a) to coordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area; and
- (b) to ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes.
- 4.5 Regulation 5 of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006 and Working Together 2013 further prescribes the functions in relation to these objectives as:
- developing policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area of the authority.
  - communicating to persons and bodies in the area of the authority the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, raising their awareness of how this can best be done and encouraging them to do so;
  - monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of what is done by the authority and their Board partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advising them on

ways to improve;

- participating in the planning of services for children in the area of the authority; and
- undertaking reviews of serious cases and advising the authority and their Board partners on lessons to be learned.
- Regulation 5 (3) provides that an LSCB may also engage in any other activity that facilitates, or is conducive to, the achievement of its objectives.

4.6 The Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board is responsible for challenging each relevant partner, as defined by the Children Act (2006)<sup>1</sup> on their effectiveness in safeguarding children and ensuring their welfare.

4.7 LSCB's do not commission or deliver direct frontline services though they may provide training. While LSCB's do not have the power to direct other organisations they do have a role in making clear where improvement is needed. Each Board partner retains their own existing line of accountability for safeguarding children.

4.8 Rotherham LSCB will publish an Annual Report and Business Plan

- RLSCB is chaired by an independent chairperson appointed by the Council Chief Executive in conjunction with Board partners.
- The Cabinet Member for Children Young People and Families Services is a participating observer on the RLSCB.

## **5 ROTHERHAM CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL**

5.1 The Corporate Parenting Panel established in 2010 is a Sub Group of the Children and Young Peoples and Families Strategic Partnership and is chaired by the Cabinet member for Children and Young People's Services.

5.2 The objectives of the Corporate Parenting Panel within its Terms of Reference include:

- Support Members and Officers to discharge their corporate parenting responsibilities and empower Members to challenge the arrangements for Looked After Children.
- Improve the outcomes and life chances of Looked After Children and care leavers, particularly in relation to the Every Child Matters outcomes framework.

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<sup>1</sup> 'The Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006 (Statutory Instrument 2006 No.90)

- Listen to, consult with and involve Looked After Children and care leavers.
- Support the development of projects and activities which enhance and add value to the lives of Looked After Children and care leavers.
- Champion and celebrate the achievements of Looked After Children and care leavers.
- Develop knowledge and be aware of the experiences and concerns of Looked After Children and care leavers.
- Be aware of any significant issues or problems with regard to the provision of services to Looked After Children and to identify ways to address them.
- Keep abreast of and learn from corporate parenting good practice.
- Review and monitor progress on the actions identified in the Corporate Parenting Strategy. Reassess priority areas and update it annually.
- Monitor progress on outcomes and performance indicators for Looked After Children.
- Report on progress on corporate parenting to Council, Cabinet Advisory Teams; The Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel and The Children's Board.
- Oversee the effectiveness of joint working between Council Departments; and between Council Departments and partner organisations.
- Be the governing body for the Get Real Virtual School.
- Undertake its work with regard to its safeguarding children duties.
- To receive and approve the Statements of Purpose for all regulated services.
- To receive the six monthly reports of the Adoption Service.

## **7. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE RLSCB AND CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL**

- 7.1 The Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel is a participating observer on RSLCB.

- 7.2 The RLSCB Independent Chair is a member of the Children and Young People and Families Strategic Partnership of which the Corporate Parenting Panel is a Sub Group.
- 7.3 The Corporate Parenting Panel produces an annual report for Cabinet and this will be submitted to the RLSCB on an annual basis. Where possible the timing of this should enable the findings to be incorporated into the RLSCB Annual Report.
- 7.4 The RLSCB produces an Annual Report which is presented to the Council's Improving Lives Select Commission (ILSC) and will contain a section on Looked After Children. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services and Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel is a member of the ILSC.
- 7.5 Quality Assurance audits undertaken or commissioned by the RLSCB in relation to any aspect of Looked After Children issues in 3.3 will have the findings reported to the Corporate Parenting Panel in timely manner where this cannot be delayed for the purposes of the Annual Report.
- 7.6 Any reports presented to the Corporate Parenting Board which cover issues in 3.3 that cannot be delayed until its Annual Report and are relevant to the work of the RLSCB will be reported to the RLSCB or one of its Sub groups in timely manner.
- 7.7 Local and National Performance Indicators for Looked After Children are reported to both the Corporate Parenting Panel and the RLSCB.

## **8. SIGNATURES**

Name.....

Date.....

**Independent Chair Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board**

Name.....

Date.....

**Chair Rotherham Corporate Parenting Panel**