

Children and Families Service

One Minute Guide

January 2014

Safeguarding Children Peer Review

As part of Cheshire East's improvement journey, we have organised a Safeguarding Children Peer Review to take place in the week commencing 10th March 2014.

What is a peer review?

Co-ordinated by the Local Government Association (LGA), the peer review is part of a sector-led approach in which local government takes responsibility for its own improvement. An external and independent view from our peers (professionals from other local authority areas) will help us to celebrate our strengths and identify areas for improvement. The peer review is not an inspection; though many local authorities report that the process has helped them to prepare for inspection, rather it is a supportive but challenging 'critical friend' approach.

Why are we doing it?

The key purpose of the review is to stimulate local discussion about how the council and its partners can become more effective in delivering improved safe outcomes for children and young people. Fundamentally this is about moving to a child centred and outcome focussed system, focussed on the 'child's journey'.

When is it happening?

Cheshire East's Peer Review will take place between 10th and 14th March 2014.

What areas will the review look at?

The review will be structured around the following key safeguarding themes:

- effective practice, service delivery and the voice of the child;
- outcomes, impact and performance management;
- working together;
- capacity and managing resources; and
- vision, strategy and leadership

What will happen as part of the review?

Some work will be undertaken prior to the team's visit, including **studying documents**, policies and performance information. A **questionnaire** completed by frontline staff in the council and from partner agencies will also be analysed.

A **case mapping exercise** will be undertaken to look at the success and challenges of inter-agency collaborative work in safeguarding cases.



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A **case records review** will take place before the on-site week in order to provide a more in-depth look at effective practice.

The review team will then come to Cheshire East for a week to meet with a range of multi-agency staff.

Who is the peer review team?

The team consists of the following:

- Team Leader – Linda Clegg (Director of Children's Services, Blackburn with Darwen);
- Elected Member peer – Gareth Barnard;
- Operational Manager – Jill Forrest
- Health peer – Jane Appleby
- Review Analyst – Kathy Bundred
- CAFCAS representative – Anna Popovici
- Associate Peer – Viv Murray

Council and partner agency staff

The review is a real opportunity for candid feedback on how we work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It is important that staff are able to speak freely about their experience of their own agency areas of strength and those in need of development as well as to comment on the effectiveness of interagency working. Operational and senior staff will be invited to take part and it is vital that they are enabled to do so.

What will happen after the review?

The team will feed back their observations and recommendations/findings from all the elements of the peer review at the end of the site visit and facilitate a workshop around its findings. This will be followed a few weeks later by written feedback that the council will have the opportunity to consider.

Key roles within the Council

The Review Sponsor is the senior manager within the Council who commissions and commits to the Review.

Tony Crane, Director of Children's Services

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The Review Organiser is the single point of contact who coordinates arrangements for the Review, eg, timetable and documents required.

Gill Betton, Policy & Strategy Manager

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Support Team

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