



Annual Report 2018-2019

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Foreword from Phil Picton

2018-19 has been a year of success against a backdrop of organisational change for many partner agencies of our Board. The County Council were awarded an outstanding rating for the performance of its Childrens Services, something which is rarely achieved by local authorities. Essex Police have continued to consolidate their improvements in safeguarding in the face of increasing challenges from gang-related violence and 'County Lines' activity. The five Clinical Commissioning Groups and their commissioned NHS trusts have coped with increasingly complex demands while engaging in further NHS reorganisation. These NHS changes are particularly challenging for partners as two of the three new Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs) include neighbouring counties.

As I write, further announcements are being made by Government about changes in other partners' structures, such as the proposed future model for the probation system. It is only with the goodwill of many professionals and managers that services have continued to improve in such changing times. The Government's new requirement for children's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) replace current approaches and puts the future responsibility for ESCB equally upon three statutory partners – Essex County Council, Essex Police and the five Essex Clinical Commissioning Groups. However, other relevant agencies including schools and the voluntary sector will remain at the heart of making safeguarding work effectively on the ground. I am optimistic that partners will strive to remain flexible and seize new opportunities for improving frontline working whatever challenges arise and new structures have the potential to improve safeguarding. However, leaders need to remain vigilant to ensure that changes do not fragment networks or distract professionals from delivering effective safeguarding.

This is the last Annual Report for ESCB published by the Independent Chair as the key partners will become responsible for reporting their joint safeguarding work in future. With the changes arriving, it is an appropriate time for me to handover to a new Chair who will be recruited across the summer. I am sure that like me, they will find themselves strongly supported by Alison Cutler and her colleagues in the ESCB business team. Their efforts make a massive difference to the impact of partnership working and I am very grateful for the support they have given me over the past three years.

Phil Picton

Phil Picton
ESCB Independent Chair

Foreword from Alison Cutler

This annual report sets out the key areas of work we have undertaken for 2018 – 19 and plans going forward. This year we have continued to focus on child exploitation as well as mental health and emotional well-being of children and young people. The revised arrangements we put in place last year to further streamline the Board have proved to be effective especially in terms of the Stay Safe Groups who continue to provide an important link between operational and strategic multi agency safeguarding practice.

We have also this year turned our attention to preparing for the new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements to be in place from September 2019 under which the strategic lead responsibility for safeguarding lead responsibility will be shared between the 3 statutory partners of Local Authority, Police and Health (Clinical Commissioning Groups) as set out in Working Together 2018. We have learned what is working well and what could be further improved in order to ensure that we are effective as possible moving forward and have involved all our partners in shaping these plans, as well as colleagues from Southend and Thurrock Boards.

As always, I would like to thank the support of the partners over the year as well as my Business Support team who continue to work hard to ensure that the Board remains effective in promoting safeguarding and bringing about improvements where needed.

Alison Cutler

Alison Cutler
Business Manager ESCB

Introduction

This annual report for the Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB) reviews the work of the Board for the period of April 2018 – March 2019. It covers some of the key strands of work identified in the Business Plan (see Appendix C), and its plans moving forward.

The report includes contributions from partner agencies and has been approved by the Board's Executive Members.

Essex Overview - Local Context

Essex is a very varied county, comprising both rural and urban areas, and a long coastline. The new towns of Basildon and Harlow contrast with rural villages and coastal towns. Essex has both areas of great affluence and great deprivation and has pockets of high social and economic need even within otherwise thriving localities.

The population of Essex currently stands at 1.46 million, with 308 thousand children and young people under the age of 18. 90.8% of Essex residents are from a White British background, while 9.2% have a Black or Minority ethnicity (lower than the overall England BME population of 19.5%). Just over half of all Essex residents are female (51.1%) while a slightly higher proportion of those aged under 18 are male (51.4%). (Essex Population and demographics (current population and gender from the 2017 ONS Mid-Year Estimate, ethnicity from the 2011 census).

The total number of schools in Essex is 552 according to Ofsted download as per 31/03/19 and the total number of Early Years provision in Essex is 2123, this is as per the latest sufficiency report and includes all funded and non-funded, childminders and breakfast clubs, after school clubs and holiday clubs.

In terms of the voluntary sector, Essex Council for Voluntary Youth Services (ECVYS) current figures show their membership reaches over 240,000 children and young people in Essex.

How safe are children in Essex?

The vast majority of the 308,000 children in Essex led healthy, safe lives in 2018-19, but a small minority faced challenges in their life and family circumstances which puts their wellbeing and safety at considerable risk. For example:

- 8872 children were referred to Children's Services during the year because someone had a concern about a risk of abuse or neglect. Police (25%) and health services (15%) were most notable in making these contacts. 88% of those cases (7,776) were felt to need a Child and Family Assessment by Children's Services.
- 324 children had new exploitation risk records opened during 2018-19, with approximately 40% being recorded as high risk. 42% of cases open to Essex County Council Children and Families service with an exploitation risk record were flagged as peer on peer exploitation, highlighting the importance of continuing to raise awareness for young people in being able to identify and be resilient to unhealthy peer relationships.
- Children are at risk of exploitation and harm when they go missing from home. Across the year 1120 children open to Essex County Council Children and Families service were reported missing, with 15% of them identified as at risk of exploitation. 197 were recorded as missing from care.
- Work with young people by the Essex County Council involvement team highlighted some of the reasons for children and young people going missing as including:
 - wanting to get out of the house or away from home; young people describe many difficult relationships and wanting to get away from arguments,
 - being unhappy at or having difficulties in school.
 - having low emotional health; these young people describe having suicidal thoughts and thoughts of self-harm.
 - feeling bored and wanting to be on their own.

National estimates show 1 in every 5 children is exposed to domestic abuse by the age of 18 within Essex, police officers recorded over 26,000 domestic abuse offences in the year, many will have involved children as witnesses or in the household at the time of violence.

These risks are considered by the ESCB during the work carried out over the year and also in cooperation with other Boards as appropriate e.g. Southend Essex and Thurrock Domestic Abuse Board.

The Board

Statutory Duties

The Board exists as a statutory body and has a range of roles including reviewing child deaths, undertaking Serious Case Reviews, developing policies and procedures and scrutinising and challenging local safeguarding practice.

Section 14 of the Children Act 2004 sets out the objectives for the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) as:

- 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;
- To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for these purposes.

ESCB Structure

The Board meets quarterly in the form of an Executive at which key agencies are represented. These include:

- **Health Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG)**
- **Police**
- **Local Authority**
- **Schools**
- **National Probation Service**
- **Community Rehabilitation Company**
- **District, City and Borough Councils**
- **Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service**
- **North East London Foundation Trust**
- **Office of the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner**

(The voluntary sector will also join the Executive in July 2019)

The Assembly is held once or twice a year and is attended by the Executive, other partner agencies, as well as representatives from other partnership boards and forums. This promotes effective communication and engagement with a holistic 'Think Family' approach to safeguarding. Topics covered at the January 2019 Assembly for discussion and debate included:

- **Consultation on the proposed Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) for Essex**
- **Emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people**
- **Child exploitation**

The role of the Safeguarding Children Board is to have an independent coordinating and challenge role around safeguarding practice across its partner agencies. This is in part carried out by the Sub-Committees of the ESCB, which are:

- **Child Death Overview Panel (statutory)**
- **Serious Case Review (statutory)**
- **Learning and Development (joint with Adults Board)**
- **Communications (virtual - joint with Adults Board)**
- **Performance, Audit and Quality Assurance**
- **Policy and Procedures**
- **Child Exploitation and Missing**

The structure of the Board including its Sub-Committees (NB this structure will change from 30 September 2019) can be accessed in Appendix A of this report.

ESCB Stay Safe Groups

Stay Safe Groups across each of the four quadrants in Essex are made up of a wide range of designated and named professionals or managers with safeguarding responsibilities including 0-19 services, schools, acute and primary health providers, local council representatives, voluntary sector and police.

The Stay Safe Groups focus on improving local Multi-Agency safeguarding practice, as well as highlighting any emerging risks or issues to the ESCB Executive Board.

The Board also has links with two other partner forums - the Health Executive Forum (HEF) and City, District, and Borough (CDB) Councils Group, where leaders meet to discuss safeguarding issues. Both groups are undertaking a review of their structure and effectiveness to prepare for the pending new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

Health Executive Forum (HEF)

The HEF meets six times per year bringing together the numerous health (commissioner and provider) agency executive safeguarding leads (adult & children) from across Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET). This facilitates, at a strategic level, the co-ordination of the safeguarding responsibilities of all health agencies and provides a forum to take forward initiatives to support the safeguarding agenda across SET.

City, District, and Borough (CDB) Councils Group

The main purpose of the CDB group is to share information and best practice across City, District and Borough councils in Essex. The group meets four times a year with a flexible agenda that reflects current topics/trends/safeguarding concerns and members have the opportunity to share updates from their councils, as well as from a range of other groups and meetings including Essex Safeguarding Adult Board, ESCB, Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing sub-committee, Missing and Child Exploitation groups (MACE) and Community Safety Partnerships (CSP).

Governance review

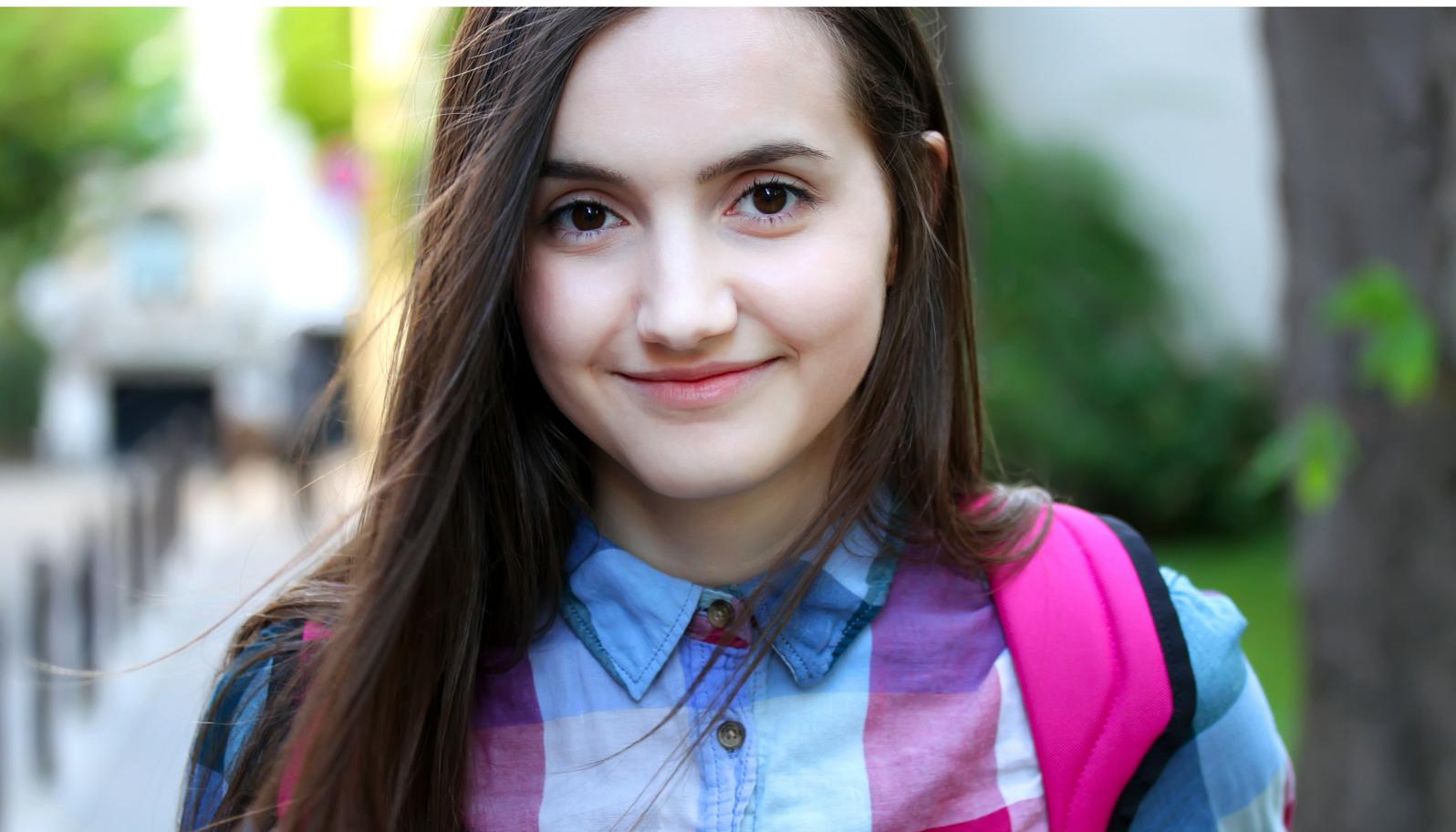
The ESCB has been reviewing its governance arrangements this year in order to comply with new requirements as a result of the Children and Social Work Act, which received Royal Assent in May 2017 (<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/childrenandsocialwork.html>).

The Act removes the Local Safeguarding Children Board statutory framework, replacing it with new requirements for specific partners to establish Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) from 29 September 2019.

Plans are in progress to ensure a smooth transition following extensive discussions over the past year with statutory partners i.e. the Local Authority, Clinical Commissioning Groups and Police, as well as with wider Board members to agree our local Multi-Agency Safeguarding Plan which was published in June 2019. A revised and streamlined structure will focus on making a real difference to the lives of children, young people and their families in Essex.

It has also been agreed to continue to work closely with Southend and Thurrock Boards as well as other Boards across the Eastern region and nationally. The new arrangements will remain under the name of the Essex Safeguarding Children Board given that this is a trusted and well-known 'brand' across agencies in Essex.

The new Essex Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements can be found in Appendix B of this report.



ESCB Strategic Priorities – what we did 2018/19

The ESCB Business Plan continued to focus on four key strategic priorities over 2018 – 19:

- **The Local Safeguarding Context - The ESCB and partner agencies prioritise improvement in areas and on issues of greatest risk and concern to safeguarding**
- **Early Help and Early Intervention**
- **Emotional Health and Wellbeing**
- **Strong Leadership and Strong Partnership**

The business plans for 2017-20 can be found in Appendix C of this report and the issues discussed at the Executive over the year can be found in Appendix D.

These priorities were agreed by the Board based on key areas of work arising from feedback regarding local practice, learning from case reviews, and national priorities. Subsequently a lot of hard work has been done over the year at all levels by partner agencies, the local Stay Safe Groups and the ESCB Sub-Committees and achieved within standstill budget. The details of the budget can be found in Appendix E.

The following section outlines the progress that has been made across these strategic priorities over the year.

Strategic Priority 1 : The Local Safeguarding Context

Strategic Priority 2 : Early Help and Early Intervention

Strategic Priority 3 : Emotional Health and Wellbeing

Strategic Priority 4 : Strong Leadership and Strong Partnership

Strategic Priority 1:

The Local Safeguarding Context

The ESCB worked on a number of areas under this priority in 2018 -19

These included:

- **Updating the Southend Essex and Thurrock (SET) Child Protection Procedures**
- **Working with other Boards on issues affecting families that had arisen from reviews carried out by the ESCB, Essex Safeguarding Adult Board (ESAB) and Southend Essex & Thurrock Domestic Abuse Board (SET DAB).**
- **Child exploitation**
- **Assessing the responsibilities of schools and other agencies to carry out their safeguarding duties via Section 11 and Section 175 audits**
- **Working with District, Borough and City Councils to support local safeguarding initiatives**

SET Procedures

The ESCB works in collaboration with Southend and Thurrock Safeguarding Children Boards to produce and update the SET Child Protection procedures to comply with legislative and statutory guidance, as well as key learning from local and national case reviews as required.

The SET Procedures Working Group has continued to work effectively to ensure the SET Child Protection Procedures are kept up to date, for example this year we have included a new chapter on child exploitation and trafficking. The Group is now working towards another update for the Autumn 2019 to ensure the procedures meet the requirements of the new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements.

Working with other Boards to identify cross-cutting issues

ESCB, supported by the Essex Social Care Academy (ESCA), worked with Essex Safeguarding Adult Board and the Southend, Essex and Thurrock Domestic Abuse Board to deliver 5 very successful 'Putting the learning from multi-agency reviews into practice' events with 294 delegates attending from a range of agencies across the children and adult workforce.

The events considered the learning from the various children and adult case reviews that are undertaken across Essex, including Domestic Homicide Reviews, Safeguarding Adult Reviews, Serious Case Reviews, Multi Agency Case Audits and Partnership Learning Reviews. With the overarching theme being around professional curiosity, the learning outcomes for the events were to:

- **Influence practice especially in improving risk assessment**
- **Share where a positive difference has been made and what best practice looks like**
- **Have an opportunity to share and discuss ideas**
- **Offer practical tips**
- **Encourage a holistic 'Think Family' approach.**

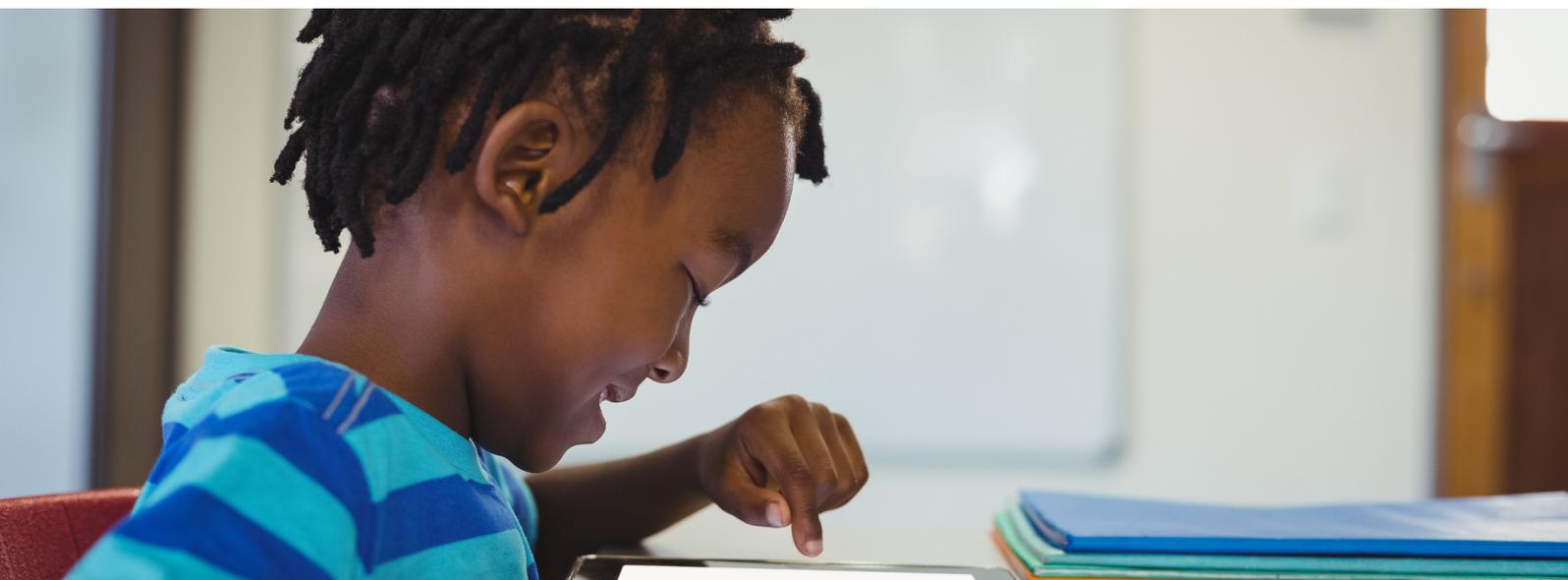
The feedback from the events was very positive. Those attending developed a greater awareness of the importance of having a 'Think Family' approach in their work. They also were able to make contact with other agencies and understand what support was available locally for families. As a result, further events will be developed in 2019.

In addition, 20 delegates requested the training pack that was shared at the workshops to use further within their own organisations, including a request from one agency to adapt it to use nationally as part of their training programme for health personnel.

Child Exploitation

Missing and Child Exploitation Meetings Impact Report

Missing and Child Exploitation (MACE) meetings provide a mechanism in Essex to review multi-agency plans implemented for exploited children or those identified as being at high risk of exploitation, as well as supporting the local understanding of patterns/trends and hotspots. The ESCB Child Exploitation Project Manager undertook a review of Missing and Child Exploitation meetings over a 16-month period, from April 2017 until July 2018, to identify the impact from the meetings and any future recommendations.



Key Performance Indicators (KPI) framework

There are no nationally set key performance indicators in relation to child exploitation and the building of such remains a complex process. ESCB has worked with Southend, Thurrock and Surrey to develop an agreed outcome framework including associated performance indicators to better support our combined understanding of the journey we are taking to tackle exploitation. A template has been created which will begin to collate multi-agency data through 2019 – 2020.

Parents, Did You Know? Campaign

This campaign follows on from the success of the last 3 years 'I Didn't Know' campaign, which raised awareness of child sexual exploitation across the wider Essex area during National Child Sexual Exploitation Awareness Day.

Pupils across Essex state that parents are their best source of information and advice when it comes to child sexual exploitation so the 'Parents, Did You Know?' campaign aimed to support parents and carers by providing them with information not only on sexual exploitation, but also wider forms of child exploitation. The campaign therefore covered the themes of: sexual and criminal exploitation; children going missing; trafficking; gangs and youth violence; and, online sexual abuse. The campaign also acknowledged that traumatic circumstances experienced through exploitation can also be felt by the parent or carer and wider family not just the child themselves.



To support this campaign, a child exploitation 'hub page' was created on the ESCB website with a 'Parents, Did You Know?' main page to share all relevant campaign and event information and resources. A media pack of pre-prepared social media posts were shared with partners to circulate on their own social media platforms in support of the ESCB campaign with the following hashtags – #KnowAboutCE #CSEDay19. A range of partners supported the campaign including; Essex Police, Essex County Council, Uttlesford District Council, North East Essex CCG, Braintree District Council, Essex Police Fire and Crime Commissioner and Harlow Council and it was featured on Heart news.

The campaign had a reach of just under 100,000 on the ESCB Facebook page alone with just under 700 people visiting the 'Parents, Did You Know?' web page during March 2019.

The top Tweet reported by Essex Police with over 8,000 impressions was promoting their parent child exploitation hotline number, this post also reached over 7000 people through Essex County Council Twitter and Facebook posts. According to Essex Police the subjects most engaged with on Facebook were; Gangs (reaching over 21,500 people), Grooming (reaching over 21,000 people), and County Lines (reaching over 18,000 people).

PARENTS, DID YOU KNOW?

If you are worried your child is being exploited, contact the Essex Police parent hotline on 01245 452058.

The next phase of this workstream will be throughout 2019 – 2020 in which the ESCB will be working in partnership with The Children’s Society and Barnardo’s to deliver a number of parent and carer engagement events across Essex, which will include the launch of a new child exploitation parent peer support programme.

The ESCB Child Exploitation Project Manager continues to provide regular updates to the Executive and delivered an annual update on child exploitation in Essex to the ESCB Assembly in January 2019. These updates include key issues for partners to address and have included discussions in relation to transitions for vulnerable young people into adulthood; education status for children exploited and those most vulnerable to exploitation through alternative education provision, part-time schooling and home education; and, ensuring consistent attendance of partners within Missing and Child Exploitation (MACE) meetings.

Promoting Child Sexual Exploitation Champions Role

A key element of the ESCB and Southend Essex and Thurrock approach to child sexual exploitation is to develop a network of Child Sexual Exploitation Champions across Essex. Details about the Champion’s role can be found on the ESCB website:

<http://www.escb.co.uk/learning-development/child-sexual-exploitation-champions/>

Since April 2017 there has been an agreed Southend, Essex and Thurrock approach to the standards that people need to achieve to become a Child Sexual Exploitation Champion.

There are currently 366 Child Sexual Exploitation Champions in Essex across a range of organisations, 61% work in the education sector.

One of the requirements after achieving Champion status is that the Champions attend at least one annual forum per year. Following feedback from Champions on the content of the forums, ESCB changed the format this year to include a range of specialist topics, this meant that people could choose a forum with a specialist topic that interested them.

Specialist topics that were covered included;

- National Referral Mechanism (NRM) & Trafficking
- Child sexual exploitation and children with disabilities and special needs
- Gang associated criminal exploitation
- County lines
- Working with primary age children
- Online abuse
- Working with parents/carers
- Peer on peer abuse

A total of 285 people attended the 10 forums and found them to be useful and helpful in increasing their knowledge

Delegates took away some of the following actions from the forums:

- **Share with the wider team - in particular the language used in reports/direct with children and young people not being "blaming"**
- **Discuss with schools how the Personal, Social Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum supports ALL pupils with awareness of child sexual exploitation**

As part of the feedback, people suggested topics for future sessions, these will be summarised and considered in the planning of future forums.

Working with District Borough and City Councils (building knowledge and capacity across local councils)

During 2018/2019 the group focussed its work on the following key topics:

Out of area placements:

The transfer of families from London Boroughs and other councils in to Essex has been of significant interest to the City District and Borough group not just in terms of safeguarding children and families being moved in to Essex but also in view of the additional strain this puts on local services such as councils, police, social care, education and health. It appears that Harlow has been most affected by out of area placements; particularly in relation to moves into accommodation that has been created as a result of office space being converted to residential dwellings under Permitted Development Rights. Good practice in this respect has been shared amongst the group and the group will remain sighted on this issue in the coming year.

Teenage Suicide:

The City District and Borough leads supported work to highlight the issue of teenage suicide by contributing to the delivery of the Stay Safe Suicide Prevention Conference in Harlow. The aim of this work is to further develop understanding, highlight issues around teenage suicide, build confidence in knowing where to direct young people for help and support and ultimately help to reduce teenage suicide in Essex to nil.

Child Exploitation:

City District and Borough group members have continued to support multi-agency case meetings by identifying and referring young people at high risk of exploitation and by sharing local intelligence to support the work to help identify local hotspots and locations of interest. Child Sexual Exploitation Champions are in place and work with partner agencies to identify and tackle child exploitation issues – this includes the delivery of child sexual exploitation awareness training for taxi and mini cab drivers.

Training and development opportunities:

City District and Borough group members remain committed to sharing safeguarding training and development opportunities in order to ensure well-trained, professional and effective workforces across a range of agencies. Safeguarding leads support the ESCB training team by cascading information in relation to training opportunities and providing feedback on local trends, issues and concerns that may inform planning and development of the ESCB training programme.

The leads also worked with the ESCB Learning and Practice Development Manager to develop an enhanced training programme and this is now being implemented in some areas after being adapted to suit the training needs of individual Essex councils.

Sharing of Policies and Procedures:

City District and Borough safeguarding leads continue to cascade learning from annual safeguarding audits and policies and procedures within their local networks.

Group members have supported the work of the ESCB to map the range of local meetings to understand communication pathways and links, ensure effective join up and avoid duplication of work. In order to keep abreast of policy, procedure, good practice, referral pathways and thresholds, the group has received presentations on the Essex County Council Children and Families Hub and the ESCB Effective Support (thresholds) document, as well as mental health.



Assessing the responsibilities of schools and other agencies to carry out their safeguarding duties via Section 11 and Section 175 audits

Section 11 and Schools 175 audit outcomes

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places duties on a range of organisations and individuals to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires governing bodies of schools and colleges to meet similar standards. In order to assess the extent to which local partner agencies and schools are fulfilling their safeguarding obligations, the ESCB sends out a 'Section 11' audit and a 'Section 175' audit tool every 2 years. These audits are self-assessments with agencies grading themselves against specific questions. The grading categories are Fully Met, Partially Met or Not Met. The audit also requires the agency to provide reasons and evidence for its grading.

The audit timeline for completion initially ran from 30 October 2017 to 31 May 2018, however, extensions were given to a few agencies who requested it.

There was a good compliance with 35 out of 38 partner agencies completing the S11 audit and an NHS England audit was also submitted.

570 out of 659 schools, colleges, alternative providers and independent schools completed the s175 safeguarding audit (86%). Primary, secondary schools and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) had the highest return rates.

Headlines S175 Audit

In the school's audit, 93% of responses were graded as Fully Met, and had high compliance (over 90%) in many areas. The audit results suggest no significant areas of concern across the education sector.

The weakest areas were:

- having a named lead who meets the required standards for CSE champion status (69% Fully Met and 9% Not Met). However, the majority of these schools already had an action plan in place and we understand that in 2019 this has significantly improved.
- staff being equipped to understand risk and protective factors in relation to mental health, how to intervene early and strengthen resilience for all pupils, particularly those with emerging problems (74% Fully Met).

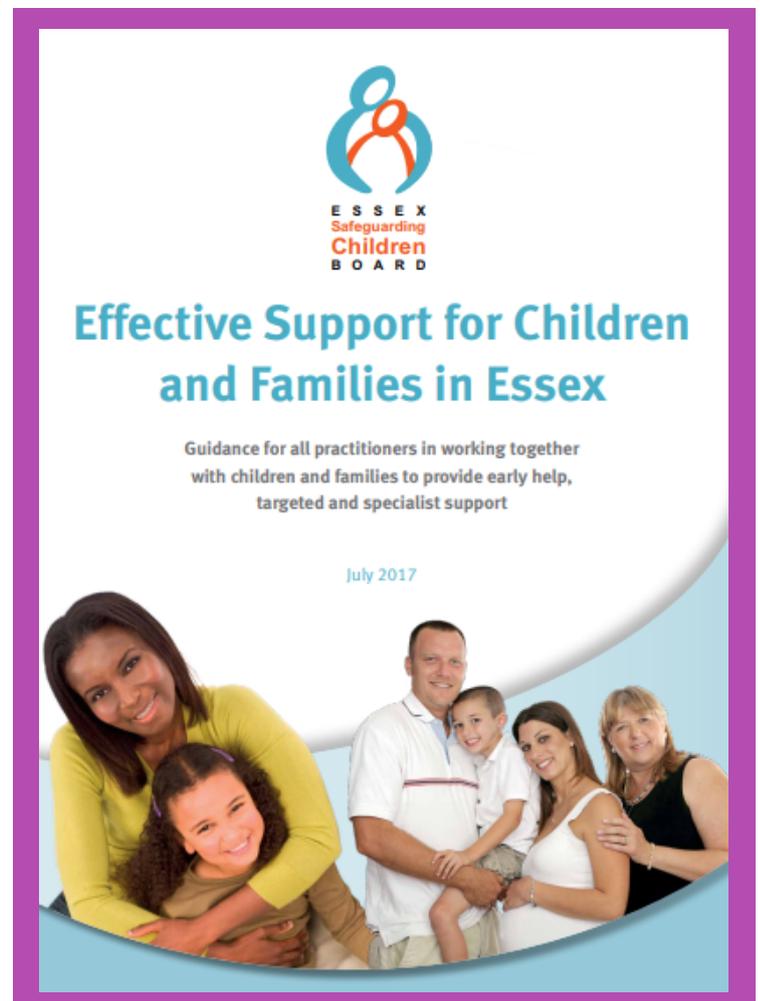
Headlines S11 Audit

- Overall, 84% of responses were graded as Fully Met across all standards and the S11 audit results suggest no significant areas of concern.
- The highest level of compliance was for “Safe Recruitment, Vetting & Allegations Management” (93%). This is a significant improvement since the last S11 audit in 2015 where for example 41% of the submissions highlighted further improvements were required around whistle blowing procedures for staff to raise safeguarding concerns against colleagues or managers. This demonstrates that our partners have really used the learning from the previous S11 audit findings to strengthen practice.
- A weaker area for some agencies is around providing one-to-one supervision for all staff involved in safeguarding matters, although overall 79% scored this as Fully Met. This remains a challenge for some agencies who unlike children’s social care and health for example, do not have a statutory requirement to provide professional/clinical supervision to practitioners. Similarly, the term ‘one-to-one supervision’ is interpreted differently across agencies.

Strategic Priority 2: Early Help and Early Intervention

The ESCB continues to highlight the importance of early intervention and early help across agencies, including raising awareness of the Effective Support for Children & Families document. This offers guidance for all those working with children and families to provide early help, targeted and specialist support.

Under this priority the focus in 2018 - 19 has been on supporting staff with their learning and development needs and the ongoing work of the Stay Safe Groups to support early intervention.



ESCB Learning and Development Offer

ESCB Learning and Development Opportunities are mainly aimed at those working at level 1,2 or 3 of the Effective Support windscreen of need (for more details please access the following website: <https://www.essexeffectivesupport.org.uk/>), which focusses on early help and early intervention.

ESCB offered a total of 57 face to face learning and development opportunities in 2018-19 to 1738 people, this is a 5% increase in the number of courses offered and attendees from the previous year (for details of the courses please see Appendix F).

ESCB continues to find ways to evidence the impact of the Learning and Development opportunities offered. ESCB currently provides evaluation forms on the day of the activity and for most events, a post-course evaluation is sent electronically to delegates four weeks later.

The overall average response rate to the four-week post-course evaluations across ESCB courses is 72% which is slightly higher than last year. This is a very high response rate.

ESCB training continues to receive positive feedback with confidence against the learning outcomes increasing across all courses on the day and remains at a similar level at four weeks post-course, indicating that learning from the course was not forgotten and proved useful to delegates in their work.

As part of the evaluation process, ESCB asks delegates to state the actions that they took away from the course, whether they have implemented them and any barriers to them completing these actions. Generally, the actions are related to sharing the learning with colleagues, staff training and reviewing policies and procedures and delegates rarely identify any barriers to completing their actions.

Stay Safe Groups

The work of the Stay Safe Groups remains critical in supporting the cascade of information to and from the ESCB to ensure that local practice issues are addressed but also raised at a strategic level where appropriate. Some key areas of work for 2018 – 19 included the following:



Communication Network

The Stay Safe Groups bring together the Safeguarding Leads within a quadrant area thereby creating a communication network that spans across the partnership providing an ideal forum to disseminate and promote information and training opportunities. Examples over 2018/2019 include: sharing and promoting information on the new Essex Domestic Abuse Service, Reducing Parental Conflict programme and Parent Events around Child Exploitation.

Promotion of Team Around the Family Support Officer (TAFSO)

The Team Around the Family model underpins early intervention level 2 support and facilitates an integrated multi agency approach. Stay Safe Groups have supported and worked with Team Around the Family support officers to promote and encourage agencies to adopt the model. Recent evaluation of the team's work is showing significant success with quadrant based Team Around the Family support officers in high demand. It is expected that evidence of sustained impact will be measured through 2019/2020.

Multi Agency Case Audits (MACA) – joint working with Stay Safe

It was felt that the Stay Safe Groups could provide a greater role in promoting how to fully utilise the Multi Agency Case Audit process in submitting case studies for audit, as well as disseminating the learning. The key actions agreed included:

- Inviting a Partnership Lead to a Multi Agency Case Audit to bring a wider system perspective to discussions, complementing established attendance from Essex Social Care Academy and ESCB.
- Provide a mechanism for disseminating learning, through members taking the learning from the case audits back to their organisations, circulating newsletters/bulletins, and assisting with thematic workshops within quadrant areas. Stay Safe Group members have a wide network e.g. Think Family Forums, Community Safety Partnerships, local Health Wellbeing Boards etc. and therefore are in a good position to share information.
- Through the established 'Key Messages' format used at Stay Safe meetings to set out actions for members linked to the ESCB business plan, progress can be monitored, and impact measured.

Strategic Priority 3:

Emotional Health and Wellbeing

This has been an important area of work for the Board in 2018 –19 building on the work that was done the previous year reviewing teenage suicides in Essex. The focus has been on broadening awareness of how to support positive mental health and well-being amongst those working with children, young people and their families. This was carried out primarily via the Stay Safe conferences across the quadrants in Essex.

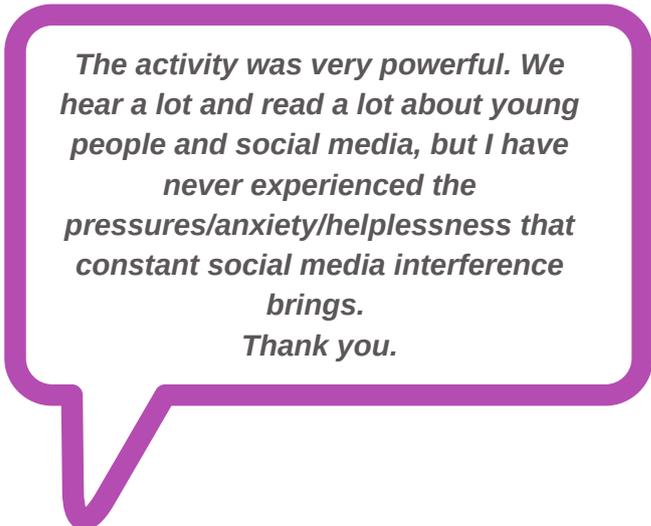
Stay Safe conferences – emotional health and well being

A fundamental part of the review into the tragic suicides of young people in Essex (completed in early 2018) has been sharing key findings and establishing how the learning can be implemented and embedded. This included raising awareness around risk factors, possible triggers for suicide and how to better talk with young people about mental health.

Stay Safe Groups worked with ESCB colleagues to develop and deliver quadrant-based conferences that provided time and space for colleagues across the partnership to hear, digest and discuss key issues that came out of the review.

The conferences also provided an opportunity for national organisations such as Papyrus and Hectors House to share their experiences and strategies for supporting young people and families including those bereaved by a young family member taking their own life. All attendees found the experience thought provoking and with examples from cases which were at times difficult to hear, but also felt that the conferences provided the opportunity to start meaningful discussions on how to work collaboratively to address the issues raised.

An important part of this work was to involve young people in the conferences to hear their perspectives. Colchester sixth form college asked a group of students if they would be interested in developing a workshop for the North East Essex conference, they had an overwhelming response from young people and 19 young people from the college who were involved in designing and delivering an excellent workshop on the impact of social media on young people. Some feedback given to the young people included:



*The activity was very powerful. We hear a lot and read a lot about young people and social media, but I have never experienced the pressures/anxiety/helplessness that constant social media interference brings.
Thank you.*

The other conferences used three different case studies based on real life scenarios. These also worked well and gave people the opportunity to network and share information on the organisations and support that was available locally. Further training around will be provided in 2019 following on from feedback from these events.

Impact of the conferences

One of the results of this work was an upsurge in young people accessing online counselling services. The post for Kooth, the online counselling service for young people, reached over 222,000 people on Facebook.

One of the main aims of the conferences was to support people to feel more confident to talk about suicide, and to try and dispel the myth that talking about it (if it is done in a supportive and sensitive way) does not encourage people to consider taking their own life. On average 8 out of 10 people who answered this question said they were confident to talk to a young person about suicide and 92% of those who answered this question said that felt more confident as a result of the conference.

Comments from attendees included:

“*Really glad we are all talking about this issue!*

(Voluntary/Community organisation)

”

I have come away with a different outlook which will be a great help

(ECC Youth Service)

“

It has helped to lessen my worry of potentially doing harm by discussing suicide with a young person.

(Private/Independent provider)

”

Much more confidence in phrases to avoid and that it's ok to talk about it.

(Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service)

“

I have recently had a young person who was suicidal and felt I was better equipped to have a conversation following the conference.

(Voluntary organisation)

”

Moving forward it was identified that there also needs to be a clear and coordinated strategic view of the work around young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing. A strategic group will be set up in 2019 and involve certain members of the ESCB Executive.

Strategic Priority 4: Strong Leadership and Strong Partnership

In addition to preparing for the new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (mentioned previously in this report), other key activities focussed on the Board's statutory duties around Serious Case Reviews and reviewing child deaths, as well as continuing to promote key messages around safeguarding and supporting other Boards.

Serious Case Reviews (SCR)

This year the ESCB published new guidance around the SCR process to ensure that it meets the requirements of the new National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel to review any serious incidents within 15 days. This was implemented in June 2018 and the ESCB has been able to achieve the new timeframes due to excellent cooperation from all partners. Details about these processes can be found on the ESCB website at the following link:

<http://www.escb.co.uk/working-with-children/serious-case-reviews/>

While no Serious Case Reviews were published in 2018, we continue to carry out reviews as required and learning is disseminated via briefings as well as multi agency learning events and newsletters.

Southend Essex and Thurrock Child Death Overview Panel (SET CDOP)

The purpose of the Child Death Overview Panel is to review all child deaths across Southend Essex and Thurrock – this is a statutory requirement of the Board. In addition to this work, the panel also continues to raise awareness of child safety issues across Essex in order to try and prevent child deaths. An example of this in 2018 was the production of a leaflet, 'Worsening Signs of a Sick Child' which has been distributed to GP practices across Southend, Essex & Thurrock. The leaflet is intended to be used by GPs to hand to parents/carers following a consultation to assist in recognition of a deteriorating child and when to seek further help. The leaflet has been well received. An example of a safety campaign was the Safer Sleep campaign to try and reduce the occurrence of sudden unexpected infant deaths (SUDI), This took place Monday 11 March – Friday 15th March 2019. The Safer Sleep campaign saw a peak in engagement through ESCB social media channels during the week of activity. There was a reach of 4741 people through ESCB Facebook and Twitter posts which were guiding people to visit the Safer Sleep webpage.



Future plans for Child Death Overview Process

The new arrangements for the Southend, Essex & Thurrock Child Death Review process will be in place by 1st October 2019 to meet the changes outlined in the Child Death Review Statutory Guidance published in October 2018. At this point the Child Death Overview Process function will move over from the ESCB across to Health (CCGs) and the Local Authorities (Public Health) across Southend Essex and Thurrock and will continue to share emerging safeguarding themes and any issues of concern to the Board.

Changes to the SET Local Child Death Review Panel structure have already been put in place to enable a more streamlined case management process, reducing the number of meetings from 20 to 12 per year whilst ensuring independent scrutiny of cases. This will ensure that child deaths are reviewed more effectively whilst maximising use of resources and enabling targeted preventative campaigns.

Communication activities to raise awareness of safeguarding

Regular communications activities continue to raise awareness of safeguarding and the work of the Board, including having a presence at various events such as the SET Domestic Abuse Conference in November 2018 and the Stay Safe events in February and March 2019.

The ESCB website average number of hits varies but roughly has over 14,000 total hits each month, with 150 new Twitter followers, totalling 1,845 at the end of April 2019. The ESCB now has almost 1,200 Facebook followers, largely due to the success of recent public campaigns especially during March 2019 period when the 'Safer Sleep' and the 'Parents Did You Know' Child Exploitation campaigns followed on from each other. ESCB Bulletins have been published throughout the year covering general safeguarding news, training and Child Exploitation updates. 2033 people have now signed up to receive the bulletins.



Regional and national work

The ESCB also assists in supporting other safeguarding boards for example the ESCB Business Manager is the chair of the Eastern Region Business Managers Group, enabling Local Safeguarding Children Boards to strengthen multi-agency working to develop regional solutions to issues of concern, such as the emotional and mental health of young people. The ESCB Child Exploitation Project Manager acted as an Advisory Board Member to the National Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse/Exploitation, representing the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS).

Future issues

The main challenge for the ESCB moving forward will be ensuring that we fully implement the new safeguarding arrangements (MASA) from September 2019, and in doing so maintain a particular focus on ensuring that:

- **the voice of the child is at the heart of everything we do**
- **there is effective independent scrutiny of our new safeguarding arrangements**
- **safeguarding partners are committed to equitable and proportionate funding of the work of the ESCB**

Appendices

Appendix A – ESCB structure

Appendix B – Essex Multi-Agency Safeguarding Plan

Appendix C – ESCB Business plans 2017/19 and 2019/20

All the above can be found on the Essex Safeguarding Children Board website:

<http://www.escb.co.uk/about/>

Appendix D - ESCB Executive 2018 - 2019

The ESCB Executive met on 4 occasions in the reporting year for 2018-2019. Meetings were held on the following dates:

28th June 2018

26th September 2018

12th December 2018

7th March 2019



Key Statutory Partners

The three key partner agencies – Police, Health, ECC Children & Families – have maintained their attendance at these meetings at 100% over the year.

Key issues discussed at the ESCB Executive

The themes of the Executive meetings have been as follows: (for further details about each of these topics please see key messages on the ESCB website:

<http://www.escb.co.uk/about/key-messages-from-board/>

March 2019

- S11 & Schools Safeguarding (S175) audits
- Implementing Essex's new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA)

December 2018

Child abuse and exploitation

September 2018

- Planning for new governance arrangements
- Child Death Overview Panel
- Violence and Vulnerability Framework

June 2018

- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Working Together statutory guidance 2018
- Thematic Review of Teenage Suicides

Appendix E - Finance

How much did ESCB's work cost in 2018-19?

The Board's work is funded by partner contributions and a small training income. In 2018-19 contributions totalled £401,585 The work was achieved within that budget.

The contributing agencies were:

CAFCASS	550
City, District and Borough Councils (1,210 each)	14,520
Community Rehabilitation Company	5,082
Essex County Council	246,166
Essex Police and Crime Commissioner	66,426
National Probation Service	2,415
NHS Basildon & Brentwood CCG	12,555
NHS Castle Point & Rochford CCG	7,705
NHS Mid Essex CCG	16,142
NHS North East Essex CCG	17,337
NHS West Essex CCG	12,687

(In addition, Thurrock and Southend Councils contribute £5,551 each towards the cost of the Child Death Review process which involves all three areas).

Appendix F – ESCB training course attendance

Course	Attendance April 18- March 19	Number of courses March 18- April 19	Attendance April 17- March 18	Number of courses March 17- April 18
Child in Need	90	5	119	6
Child Protection Conferences and Core Groups: A Strengths Based Approach	67	4	78	5
Children with Disabilities, Child Protection Conference and Core Groups	7	1	44	2
CSE Champions Annual Forums	285	10	262	6
CSE Advanced Level Training	156	8	N/A	N/A
Designated Person or Lead for Safeguarding	158	6	187	7
Level 2 Multi-Agency Safeguarding Children Training	223	9	350	14
Putting the learning from multi-agency reviews into practice	294	5	N/A	N/A
Safeguarding Children with Disabilities	40	3	N/A	N/A
Stay Safe Conferences	378	4	339	7
Working with Resistant Families and Disguised Compliance	40	2	89	4
Total	1738	57	1626	55