

Worcestershire County Council

Agenda

Corporate Parenting Board

Thursday, 13 June 2019, 2.00 pm
County Hall, Worcester

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Corporate Parenting Board
Thursday, 13 June 2019, 2.00 pm, County Hall, Worcester

Membership:

Andy Roberts (Chairman)	Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families
Rob Adams	Wychavon District Council
Juliet Brunner	Redditch Borough Council
Helen Dyke	Wyre Forest District Council
Patti Hill	Worcestershire County Council
Lucy Hodgson	Worcestershire County Council
Charlie Hotham	Worcestershire County Council
Mike Johnson	Worcester City Council
Fran Oborski	Worcestershire County Council
Jane Potter	Worcestershire County Council
Margaret Sherrey	Bromsgrove District Council
Tom Wells	Malvern Hills District Council

Agenda

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All the above reports and supporting information can be accessed via the Council's website

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Item No	Subject	Page No
8	Future Meeting Dates 15-19 July 2019 - Keep in Touch Visits (No Board meeting) 8 October 2019, 2pm County Hall 27 November 2019, 2pm County Hall	

Corporate Parenting Board
Thursday, 21 March 2019, Council Chamber, County Hall,
Worcester - 2.00 pm

Minutes

Present:

Mr A C Roberts (Chairman), Ms P A Hill,
Mrs L C Hodgson, Dr C Hotham, Mrs F M Oborski,
Mrs J A Potter, Cllr Margaret Sherrey and
Cllr David Watkins

Also attended:

Alison Brill Sally Branchflower Barbara Carter, Sally
Clewes, Heather Manning, Selina Rawicz, Tina Russell,
Nina Warrington and Charlie, Ollie and Rona.

179 Apologies

Apologies had been received from Rob Adams, Gareth
Prosser, and Juliet Smith. Ellen Footman had sent her
apologies but Heather Manning was attending as her
substitute.

**180 Confirmation of
the Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 February were
agreed to be a correct record of the meeting and were
signed by the Chairman.

**181 Children in Care
Council and
Youth Voice
Team**

Alison introduced representatives from Worcestershire's
Children in Care and Care Leavers Councils, which
comprised of Big Voices (0-12), Who Cares We Care
(12-18) and Speak Out (16+). The groups represented
the views of looked after children. Ollie, Rona and Charlie
explained what they had done over the last year. They
explained that various activities were organised and
numbers attending different events varied depending on
the activity.

Various events over the year included organising regional
events and attending national events and conferences.
They were involved in speaking to Ofsted Inspectors,
attending the APPG at Westminster, running the annual
fun day and helping with the first Corporate Parenting
Roadshow.

The groups were working to raise the profile of Looked
After Children and that encouraged people to ask their
opinion on various services. They represented the views
of young people and being involved with the groups
helped their own confidence and improved their

opportunities.

They explained that they would continue to do what they were doing by working with the Care Leaver's Team and using social media to keep people up to date and attract new members. It was difficult to encourage young people to join the groups but it was important that their voices were heard. They hoped to have a good working relationship with Worcestershire Children First in future.

During the discussion the followed points were made:

- The groups made use of twitter and Instagram to communicate with young people. However, it was hoped a website could be created in future
- Various groups offered support to care leavers such as Worcester Arts Workshop and the Youth Engagement Network. The Rees Foundation had opened a Community Café in Kidderminster. It was agreed that the Districts needed to be advertising these to children, young people and professionals
- The Local Children's Trust in Kidderminster would like a young person as a member and wished to encourage people to apply
- Tina Russell reinforced that listening to the Voice of the Child and Looked After Children was important to Worcestershire Children First and was part of their business plan. Barbara Carter and Sally Branchflower were developing ways to collect feedback on placements and following on from the work of Croome and the "What is Home" project and exhibition, Tina was planning a piece of work on telling positive stories of children who have left care
- Tina Russell shared regional plans for a Peer Review regarding Children in Care Councils within West Midlands authorities as part of the future social sector led improvement.

The Chairman thanked the young people for their presentation and appreciated that they were working to attract new representatives.

182 Kinship Care

Barbara Carter explained that it was estimated that there were 200,000 children living with kinship carers in the UK. They could be living with Grandparents or other relatives. In 2011 the Government's Statutory Guidance required each Local Authority to produce a Family and Friends policy and Worcestershire's was reviewed last year.

A range of arrangements were possible:

- Family fostering, when a child was looked after for a period, but the parents retained parental responsibility
- Private Fostering where a child lived with a family friend who was not a close family member and the Local Authority assessed the situation regularly
- Child Arrangements Orders when parental responsibility was shared between the parents and the carers
- Special Guardianship Orders (SGO) which meant that carers had parental responsibility. The Council offered various services when SGO were in place – funding for the initial legal consultation, set up costs, training and support, and access to 15 hours of free child care from 2 years old
- Kinship foster Care meant there was a legal requirement for the child to be placed with approved foster carers.

There had been a lot of growth for all the areas of kinship care. Worcestershire had 22% of its looked after children in kinship foster care while the national figure was 17%. The workforce had expanded and the service re-designed to better reflect demands in Kinship Care.

Barbara Carter highlighted in her report the work of the service on supporting family members as support carers as opposed to assessed foster carers. It was hoped that if services could be involved at an earlier point as part of the edge of care developments then children could be prevented from becoming looked after if it was safe to support them at home/within the family.

During the subsequent discussion the following main points were made:

- That the Kinship Carers UK charity had been set up by Enza Smith who lived in Worcestershire
- In response to a query about whether the social care team review the support kinship carers receive to see if they were struggling, it was clarified that if they were an approved Family and Friends carer (known as Kinship) they received the same support as Foster Carers

Following the compilation of the list of action points it had been proposed that the Board should concentrate on a number of priorities for 2019/20.

1. Housing – Accommodation for Care

Leavers

- 2. Promoting the Health and Well-being of Looked After Children and Care Leavers**
- 3. Quality and Timeliness of Care and Pathway Planning for Looked After Children and Care Leavers**
- 4. Looked After Children and Care Leavers not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)**
- 5. Bringing Corporate Parenting Priorities to District Councils**
- 6. Voice of the Child**

Various comments were made by Board Members:

- More information was required regarding young people who were not in Education, Employment or Training
- It was important to encourage secondary schools to fulfil their obligations to school leavers
- It was queried why Worcestershire Children First could not rent suitable accommodation and rent it back to care leavers. It was explained the WCF would not be picking up the housing remit as that sat with District Councils
- It was felt that some District Councillors did not appreciate that they had a responsibility for Looked After Children – it was not just an issue for Children’s Social Care.
- It was suggested that the Leaders Board needed to discuss Looked After children – it was pointed out that it had been discussed and work was on-going to try to get flats built
- The District Housing Representative stated that Corporate Parenting was on the agenda and mentioned in all relevant reports. Training was also booked for all new Councillors
- Members agreed with priorities 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 but felt priority 3 should be business as usual and should by now have improved. This was also covered in performance data received by the Board.

ACTIONS

1) The priorities and associated activities supported by the work programme would be developed into the business plan for 2019/20 and shared with all members – This would then be reviewed within the work programme.
Tina Russell

2) All district members to ensure mechanisms for raising the priorities/data and any locality offer to Looked After Children and Care Leavers is formally raised at district council meetings.
NB: District Officers can attend CPB meetings as public observers if this helps District representatives to take issues back to their districts.

184 Quarter 3 Data

It was explained that higher numbers of young people left care in 2017/18 as work to address drift and delay in permanency planning took effect. For new entrants it was confirmed more children were achieving permanency faster than previously.

Work on the sufficiency strategy was underway and would re-focus the way residential care was used and look at how the use of internal fostering could be increased.

In general, social care now had more stable management. The falling percentage of looked after children with personal education plans had been due to staff sickness and a vacancy but that problem was being resolved.

ACTION – The sufficiency Strategy to be presented to a future Board – Tina Russell.

185 Work Plan

Noted

186 Future Meeting Dates

Dates 2019

13 June 2019 - 2.00pm
15-19 July 2019 - Keep in Touch Visits
8 October 2019 - 2.00pm
27 November 2019 – 2.00pm

Chairman

**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD
13 JUNE 2019**

**INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER (IRO) ANNUAL
REPORT 2018/19**

Recommendation

1. The Corporate Parenting Board is asked to:
 - a) note the contents of the report and consider if there are any issues that the IRO service should take into account in the forthcoming year; and
 - b) share the contents of the IRO annual report with the persons/services they represent on the board.

Background

2. The Children Act 1989 [amended 2004] and the Care Planning Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010 specify the duties of the local authority to appoint an IRO when a child first becomes looked after.
3. This report captures the performance, service user feedback and staff feedback regarding the IRO Service in Worcestershire for the year 2018/2019.

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

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Supporting Information

- IRO Annual Report

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Worcestershire Children's Social Care



Independent Reviewing Officer Annual Report 2018/2019

Written by: Sally Branchflower (Practice Manager – IRO)
Dated: 23rd April 2019

Introduction:

This report captures the performance, feedback and next steps of the IRO Service in Worcestershire for the year 2018/2019. In Worcestershire we want our services to be embedded in a vision and values of Worcestershire being a wonderful place for all children and young people, we listen to them and respond to their needs, we promote their education, we respect and empower family life and act to protect them from harm – our vision is key to the IRO Service and our Improvement Journey as this structures our work and focus.



Contents:

1. Context of the IRO Service
2. The IRO Service in Worcestershire
3. Staff Supervision & Training
4. Health Check Findings 2019
5. Value of the IRO Service by Partners
6. Looked after Review Meetings
7. Consultation with Children & Young People
8. Children's Participation and Attendance
9. Quality Assurance
10. Analysis of the IRO Service
11. Action Plan 2019/2020

1. Context of the IRO Service

The responsibility of local authorities is to provide Looked after Children and care leavers the best possible experiences in life and support their hopes wishes and aspirations as any good parent should, this is our privileged role as corporate parents. The Children Act 1989 [amended 2004] and the Care Planning Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010 specify the duties of the local authority to appoint an IRO when a child first becomes looked after. The IRO should ensure that the local authority gives due consideration to any views expressed by the child and the IRO has a responsibility to monitor the local authority's performance of its functions in relation to the child's case.

The regulations clearly specify circumstances when the local authority should consult with the IRO, for example, proposed change of placement, change of education plan, or serious incident. They also specify the actions that the IRO must take if it is felt that the local authority is failing to comply with the Regulations or is in breach of its duties to the child. The statutory duties of the IRO are to (section 25b (1), 1989 Act

- Monitor the performance by the local authority of their functions in relation to the child's care journey.
- Participate in any review of the child
- Ensure that any ascertained wishes and feelings of the child are given due consideration
- Perform any other function which is prescribed in regulations

The primary task of the IRO is to ensure that the care plan for the child fully reflects the child's current needs and those actions in the care plan are consistent with the LA legal responsibilities towards the child. There are now two clear and separate aspects of the function of the IRO;

- Chairing the child's review meeting and monitoring the child's care journey on an ongoing basis.
- The monitoring function should include identifying any areas of poor practice or drift and delay in care planning that impacts directly on the child and should be appropriately escalated. Equally the IRO should also recognise and celebrate good practice that has positively impacted on the child's care experience.

2. The IRO Service in Worcestershire

The IRO service is situated with in the Safeguarding Quality Assurance Service alongside the Independent Chairs for Child Protection Conference and Position of Trust Meeting; the service is supported by a Business Support Team. Each Team has a dedicated Practice Manager and a Senior Admin. The Service is under overall direct management of the Group Manager for SQA, Dan Adams.

We have a diverse team of IRO in terms of gender and ethnicity and age and all bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the team. All have been Team Managers and/or Service Managers – this enables us to have a robust service embedded in practice wealth.

The IRO Service is at full establishment and we have achieved a fully staffed and permeant workforce; this is a strength of the Team and brings consistency and stability for children who are looked after; we have a new IRO joining the service on the 1st June 2019 – this is an increase of 22.2 hours per week capacity. The Team is supported by a Senior Administrator and Administration Assistant. The IRO handbook suggests caseloads for IROs should be between 50-70 to undertake all core functions, caseloads are on average around 75 per full time equivalent IRO, the addition of IRO capacity will bring IRO

caseloads in line with Statutory Guidance and further support the development of the service.

3. Staff Supervision & Training

The Practice Manager supervises all the IROs and the senior administrator and provides professional supervision to the Participation and Engagement Officer; supervision is undertaken on a bi-monthly basis through one to one session'.

Supervision:

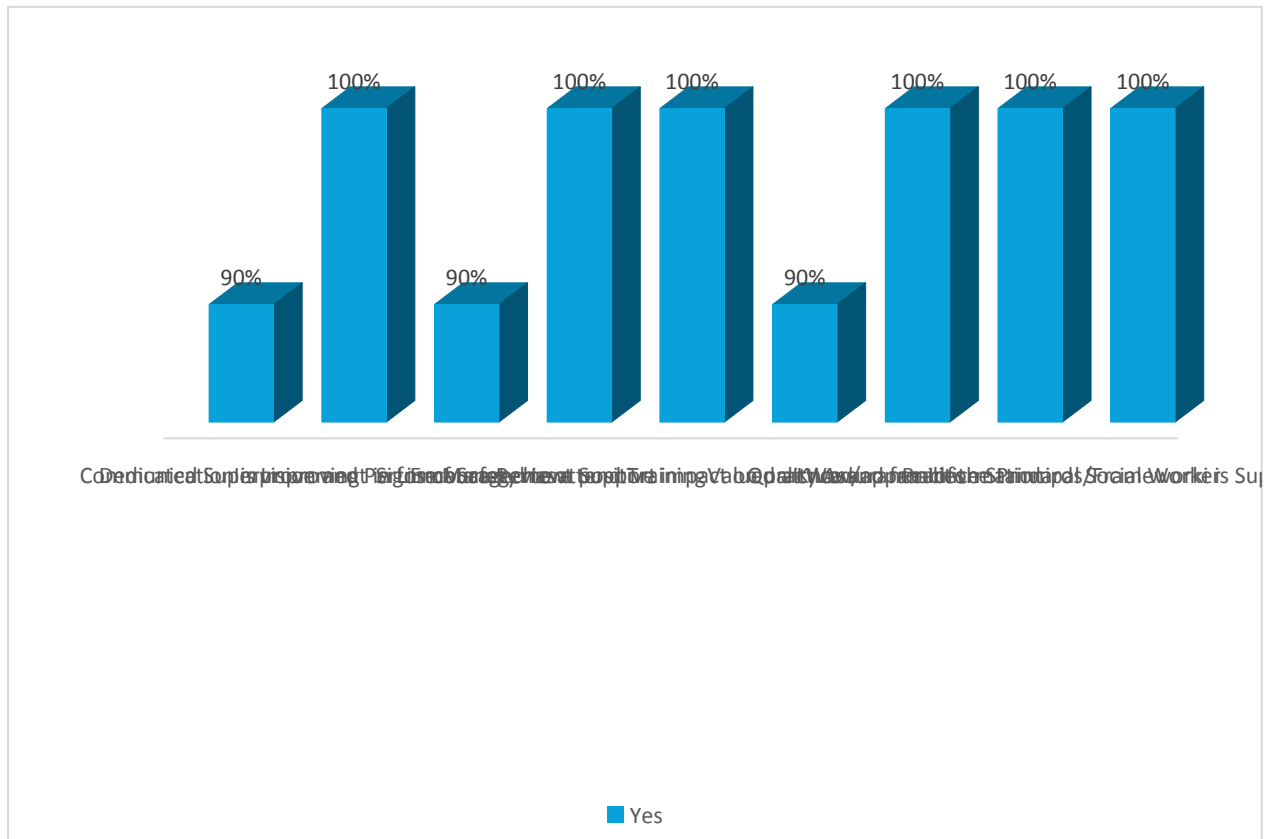
All IROs have participated in monthly supervision, either through group sessions, development sessions or individual sessions. 100% of staff have received this, over the last year, the only exceptions' have been for those IROs who have been off work that month due to sickness.

In addition to receiving monthly supervision the service has several forms and mechanisms to ensure that we are sharing information and promoting practice development:

- **Monthly Meetings:** Monthly team meetings/whole service meetings where information is shared from across the service, ideas are brought to the table, and we invite speakers in and track agreed team actions.
- **SQA Service Meetings:** these meetings are held approximately every 12 weeks for the whole of the SQA service where as a service we look at feedback from young people and partners new government legislation/initiatives. We reflect on what is going well and what we need to do differently, it is a forum for sharing ideas and learning.
- **Signs of Safety:** The whole team have completed the two-day Signs of Safety training and five members of the team have completed the five-day training; they are Practice Champions for the IRO Service.
- IROs use a strength and relationship-based approach to Children's Reviews and this is applied through the Signs of Safety Model of Practice.
- **Social Work Forum:** The Social Work Forum is a monthly meeting for any Social Work Qualified Staff member to attend; this is open to Independent Reviewing Officers and is an opportunity to share views of working in Worcestershire.
- **Ask & Tell Sessions:** The Group Manager for SQA holds bi-monthly Ask & Tell Sessions for all staff in SQA to ensure senior manager visibility.
- **End to End Leadership Meeting:** End to End Leadership Meetings are bi-monthly meetings for all Senior Managers, Front Line Managers, Advanced Practitioners and IROs/CP Chairs from across the service. This is a forum to share and celebrate good practice, disseminate key information and build relationships with wider staff.

4. Health Check Findings 2019

The health-check is an important tool in supporting and delivering effective social work. It is a key element and covers the requirement to have a 'clear social work accountability framework'. In Worcestershire this is one way we want to hear the views of Social Workers and the experiences they have in this role. Worcestershire Children's Social Care now undertakes quarterly Health Check's with Social Workers from across the service to act as a barometer for service improvement from the voice of Social Workers. The SQA Service is included within the Health Check and this was most recently undertaken in March 2019, the specific key findings for SQA Reported:



The findings of the Health Check evidenced strength within the SQA Service regarding how staff feel in their role and team.

From 2017/2018 we have seen our Staff Health Check KPIs remain consistent and sustained, but improvements have been seen in the following areas:

- Supervision was at 93% and is now at 100%
- Improvement in supervision/line management support was at 64% and is now at 90%
- Practice Standards was at 93% and is now at 100%

5. Value of the IRO Service by Partners

As part of our improvement journey we have now introduced quarterly feedback from professionals on the IRO Service, this was launched in March 2019. It is a measure of how others are impacted by the Team, what we do well and how we can improve.

We undertook a survey with Social Workers on the role of the IRO Service and this was run for two weeks, we had 21 responses during this time. Key findings were:

- 78% the child attended the review

Social Workers reported that IROs regularly undertook the following to promote attendance and participation:

- Promoted Mind of My Own
- Met with child prior to the review meeting
- Went to visit the child in placement
- Ensured the child was at the centre of the review

Social Worker reported that IROs supported parents/carers in reviews:

- Parents are included within the meeting
- If parents haven't attended they have been contacted by the IRO outside of the meeting
- Asked parents to share their views in the review
- Ensured translators were present for parents who needed them

Social Workers reported that IROs responded well in difficult meetings:

- IRO remained calm throughout
- Ensured children and young people understood what was happening and what discussions were happening
- Being clear with parents about what the care plan is
- Short breaks for children when the meetings were difficult
- Met with parents prior to the meeting to prepare them

Social Workers said IROs did the following to celebrate children's achievements

- Use of What is Going Well questions
- Praise throughout meetings
- Asking children what they are good at and celebrating this
- Asking all of those attending to present achievements for the children

Social Workers reported that IROs closed meetings well and said:

- Clear on recommendations
- Clear on timescales
- Ensuring next review meeting dates were set
- Ensured everyone was clear on the outcomes of the meeting

We asked Social Workers a scaling question:

On a scale of 0-10, where 0 being the recommendations being made at the end of the meeting were confusing and unclear and 10 being the recommendations were clear, smart and measurable. Where would you scale them?

The Average rating was 8.43 – evidencing positive outcomes from Reviews

Ofsted said;

"The timeliness and quality of children looked after reviews have improved. Independent reviewing officers involve children and ensure that their voices are heard when children's care plans are being reviewed. Reviews progress children's plans by setting increasingly detailed actions with timescales for completion. In some cases, it is heartening to see emerging good practice in the way that independent reviewing officers are recording review meetings. These records address the child directly in a way that the child will understand either now or in the future, depending on their age. This enables children to understand their care experience and the decisions made that affect their lives" (October 2018)

What do others say about the IRO Service?

Foster Carer: *"This is the first time in 9 years of fostering I have received a record of a meeting written in such a child centred way. I think it's brilliant and I could imagine children reading them, now and in the future. I read it out loud to baby O, a first for me; usually the reports are not written for the children despite it being their review"*

From a Young Person: *"I want to talk about me in my meeting because I am fantastic!"*

Children's Home Manager: *"The IRO ensured that the attendees remained focussed on the child and the child remained the centre of the review. The IRO kept the group focussed on ensuring that the outcomes identified at the review are in the best interests of the young person to enhance his life"*

From a Young Person: *"I love what you all do for me"*

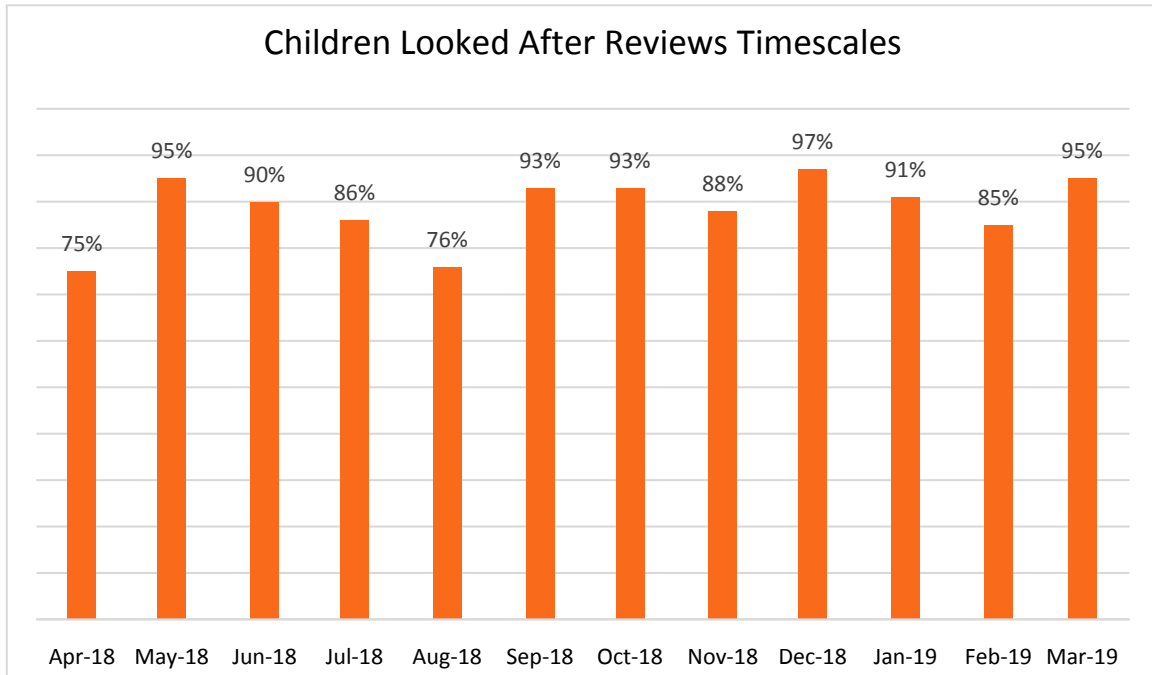
From a Social Worker *"The IRO began the meeting with 'What's going well' question and offered lots of praise that the young person, who dislikes his college course but continues to attend stayed throughout their meeting"*

From a Young Person: *"Happy afterwards that everyone listened"*



6. Looked after Review Meetings

Timely looked after reviews are essential to effective and timely care planning for children and young people who are looked after. A key priority of SQA was to improve the timeliness of review meetings held in Worcestershire for our children. The below graph demonstrates the improving trend of review meeting timeliness, the year 2018/2019 started with 75% of reviews in timescales and concluded with 95% in timescale, this was an improvement of 20%.



Apr 2018	May 2018	Jun 2018	Jul 2018	Aug 2018	Sep 2018	Oct 2018	Nov 2018	Dec 2018	Jan 2019	Feb 2019	Mar 2019
75%	95%	90%	86%	76%	93%	93%	88%	97%	91%	85%	95%

It is an on-going service priority to promote and achieve timely review meetings and that this success is sustained, as a team we have introduced an individual IRO Diagnostic Tool. This promotes IRO independence but also their accountability to ensure that they are working towards holding meetings in a timely manner.

In the last quarter we have launched a new SQA Dashboard that provides us with up to date and accurate performance information, this strengthens both micro and macro review of performance, holding individual workers to account but also Managers.

7. Consultation with Children & Young People

We have now embedded a revised feedback form for children and young people following their Looked after Child Review. On average we get between 13-20 feedback forms a month, this is just one way of our children sharing their views.

From April last year to the end of March 2019 we have had a total of 113 feedback forms completed by children and young people about the IRO service.

- The feedback forms are given to children after reviews with a SAE and are asked to complete and return. We have approximately 60% completed and returned by boys and 40% completed by girls.
- Ages vary but 8+ is the biggest cohort that respond, the feedback forms are simple and visual, and children like them and consist of seven short questions having evaluated all-of the feedback forms most children have said they do get chance to talk to the IRO on their own IRO, most said they understand why they are looked after.
- Most understand what plans are made at the meeting.
- Mixed response to the question did everyone do what they agreed to do at your last meeting? Most children cannot remember as timescales between reviews is a long time for children.
- We have had some useful suggestions on how meetings can be better, and children list preferred venue, refreshments being available, to play, to say who they want there and what they want to talk about.
- Very few children responded to the question do you have anything else to say most said "No", but occasionally we had children saying they wanted a new bike or a dog or to go home.
- Most responded no or left blank to the question about wanting to know more about advocacy.
- There was a significant drop in feedback forms being received in Sept Oct Nov 2018 7 in total in 3 months, this coincided with the introduction of Mind Of My Own an App children can use to give feedback but from January this year this has picked up, the number returned is largely reliant on IROs giving them to children, this is one way to obtain Childrens feedback the form has been revised and has emoji's on the form which children like.
- We have a consultation event at the end of May this year where we will be seeking more targeted qualitative feedback.



Feedback form.pdf

Consultation Event:

We also held a consultation event with looked after children in May 2018 where the older teenagers and their carers attended and gave us their views on how the meetings could be better, young people told us:

- Let me decide who comes
- I want to say what is discussed
- Let me have my say in the meeting
- Make things better
- Can we play games before the meeting?
- Can the notes sent to us be shorter and easier to understand?

What did we do in response?

We have embedded this valuable learning and have now changed the way meetings are held, ensuring they are more child focussed by using a strengths-based approach by asking them;

- Who they want at their review?
- Where they want their meeting to take place?
- What do they want to talk about?
- Minutes of meetings have changed, and the language is clearer, and child centred, and the review record is written to the child
- Our new approach has been shared at Corporate Parenting Board, Social Work Forum (June 2018), and fostering forums (May 2018)

We have arranged another consultation event in May this year to ask the children if they feel their meetings are better and if so why?

IRO Introduction Cards:

We have developed and introduced IRO Introduction Cards, these are small cards given to all children and young people, so they know clearly who their IRO is and how to contact them.

Feedback from the young people is that they like the cards and it helps them to understand who the IRO is and what they look like and a little bit of information about them, the cards are the size of credit cards and Young people keep them in their wallets or the back of their phone cases.



KERRY WILLIAMS

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* This will be whoever is on duty when you ring

Mind of My Own:

As a team we are using the Mind of My Own app and have been since June 2018 to seek more qualitative information regarding consulting our looked after children; IROs promote the use of Mind of My Own through reviews and visits to children.

8. Children's Participation and Attendance

Promoting children's participation and attendance within Looked after Reviews is essential to ensure their voice is captured, listened to and that our outcomes are based on their wishes and feelings.

Participation:

Apr 2018	May 2018	Jun 2018	Jul 2018	Aug 2018	Sep 2018	Oct 2018	Nov 2018	Dec 2018	Jan 2019	Feb 2019	Mar 2019
97%	93%	89%	92%	94%	97%	95%	93%	92%	96%	92%	94%

In the year 2018/2019 we had an average of 94% of children and young people participating in reviews with a high of 97%

Attendance:

Apr 2018	May 2018	Jun 2018	Jul 2018	Aug 2018	Sep 2018	Oct 2018	Nov 2018	Dec 2018	Jan 2019	Feb 2019	Mar 2019
70%	64%	58%	68%	72%	72%	72%	73%	62%	73%	77%	76%

In the year 2018/2019 we had an average attendance of children at reviews of 70% with a high of 77%

In the year 2017/2018 attendance was at an average in the 60% and we have seen an improvement across the year 2018/2019

Venues:

In the year 2018/2019 we have strived hard to ensure reviews are held in venues that work best for children, we achieved the following:

- 43% in Placement
- 27% in School
- 30% in Offices or another venue

In the year 2018/2019 70% of all reviews were held in the child's Placement or School, promoting meetings away from Offices and where children and young people want their review to be held

9. Quality Assurance

The IRO Service has worked hard to promote their role in Quality Assurance and Footprint, to achieve this we have introduced:

IRO Direct Contact Summary Episodes: these are episodes to capture IRO Visits and phone calls to children and young people between Review meetings, to strengthen their footprint, evidence their work and to capture children and young people’s views. This was introduced in August 2018, over this period we have seen the following number of direct contacts between IROs and children and young people:

Aug 2018	Sep 2018	Oct 2018	Nov 2018	Dec 2018	Jan 2019	Feb 2019	Mar 2019
7	23	24	39	16	29	57	38

In total we undertook 233 Visits and Phone calls to children and young people to hear and promote their wishes and feelings

DRPs/Practice Acknowledgements: A crucial role of the IRO is to quality assure the work of the Local Authority; if a concern arises then the Dispute Resolution Process is initiated, this is a process where the IRO can raise a concern for a child or young person and the Social Work Manager will respond.

As well as raising concerns where this is required, the IRO Service also looks to identify and celebrate good practice, this is achieved through a Practice Acknowledgement. This is a specific episode where the IRO can formally record and recognise practice of the Social Work Teams.



DRP Summary
 Report 2018-2019.do

Mid-Point Audit and Service User Feedback Section: To strengthen the footprint and QA role of the IRO Service, IROs undertake mid-point audits each month for children who are looked after, this includes seeking feedback from them. Findings of these can be read here:



1 IRO Mid-Point Audits (April to August)



2 IRO Mid-Point Audits (September to October)

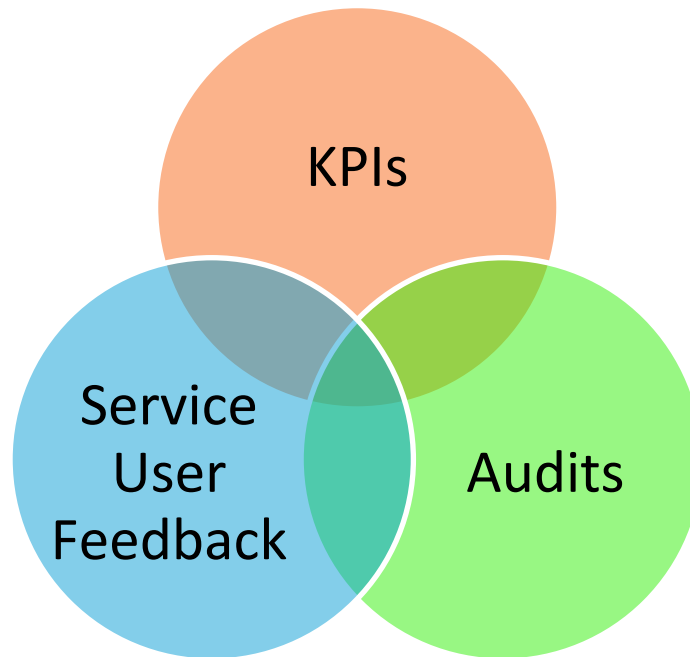


IRO Mid-Point Audits (January to March)

Overall, the IRO Service has completed a 194 of mid-point audits in the previous year. 87 had service user feedback with is a 45% of the total audits completed.

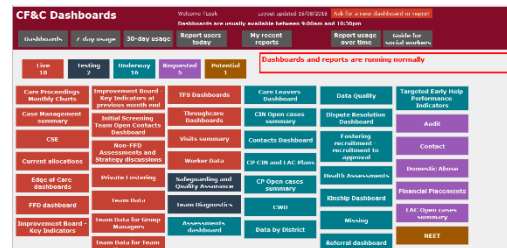
How do we Quality Assure Safeguarding Quality Assurance:

In SQA we have a few systems to Quality Assure our work, this is through Performance Information, Service User Feedback and Audits.



KPIs:

KPIs are one focus of quality but this gives us an indication of our work and that this is timely for children, we have developed a robust Dashboard that is accessible to all IROs and the Managers to review performance that is accurate and up to date.



Audits:

In SQA we have introduced quarterly targeted audits to review the work of the SQA Service and to evidence our work and improvement, these are reported into the Quality Assurance Reports for Children’s Social Care.

Practice Observations:

The IRO Practice Manager also undertakes an annual Practice Observation of each IRO to observe them in direct practice.

Service User Feedback:

We seek service user feedback within our mid-point audits and are now obtaining quarterly feedback through targeted survey’s.

10. Analysis of the IRO Service

What are we worried about?	What's working well?	What do we need to do?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that we continue to strive to achieve timely review meetings for children and that this is consistent • We have a relentless focus on children's attendance and participation in reviews • DRPs application is improving but needs to be consistently applied and responded to by managers • Ensure our IRO Footprint is consistent and evidences both challenge and support • Ensure our minutes are provided to families and professionals in a timely manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have recruited to a fully-staffed IRO Team and we have a stable workforce who are reporting a positive working environment through the Social Work Health Check • We have developed a Dashboard that is providing accurate and timely KPIs that provides rigour to our work • We have introduced an individual Diagnostic Tool for IROs to evidence their work and to focus on improvement • We are undertaking regular Quality Assurance activity through Audits and Service User Feedback – we are building a business as usual approach to our work • An improving and stabilising picture of timely reviews, participation and attendance • Evidencing our work through Direct Work Visits to children • Children's Reviews are written to children rather than using professional jargon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The individual diagnostic tool to continue to promote individual accountability for performance • Continue to promote a business as usual approach to Quality Assurance • Ensure we provide families and professionals with timely records of children's reviews • Continue to focus on a consistent IRO Footprint • Focus on the DRP Application and responses

11. Action Plan for 2019/2020

	Priority	Action	Outcome/Value for Children
1.	Dispute Resolution Process (DRP)	<p>Ensure that the Dispute Resolution Process is consistently applied by IROs and responded to by Team Managers in a timely way.</p> <p>To be able to provide a quarterly analysis of the use of DRPs and the key learning for the service to close the loop and continuously learn.</p>	Effective use of DRPs will ensure children's plans are being effectively managed by the Local Authority.
2.	Quality Assurance	Continue to promote a business as usual approach to Quality Assurance, ensuring we undertake regular mid-point audits, seek service user feedback and have oversight of the Service.	Ensure the IRO Footprint is evident for children and that we Quality Assure the SQA Service.
3.	Review Meeting Timescales	A relentless focus on ensuring meetings are held in a timely manner for children and they receive a timely record of their meeting.	Children's plans are reviewed and progressed and that they have a record of their meeting in a manner that is understandable for them.

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**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD
13 JUNE 2019**

GET SAFE – EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Recommendation

1. **The Corporate Parenting Board is asked to:**
 - a) **Note the content of the Get Safe report; and**
 - b) **Take responsibility for cascading the information within the report to the parties they represent on the board.**

Background

2. Get Safe is a formal sub group of the Worcestershire Children's Safeguarding Board.
3. As a partnership we have identified that Contextual Safeguarding and the exploitation of children and young people as being a key priority area of safeguarding for us all.
4. 'GET SAFE' is the Worcestershire partnership title for the identification and management of multi-agency support and protection for children and young people at risk of **G**ang-related activity, sexual **E**xploitation, **T**rafficking, modern day **S**lavery, **A**bsent and missing, **F**orced marriage, honour based violence and female genital mutilation, and criminal **E**xploitation.
5. This sub group will develop and co-ordinate the strategic and tactical action plan to support and protect children and young people at risk of or who are experiencing exploitation. Our action plan sets out a range of activities under the headings of: Prepare, Prevent, Protect and Pursue

Key Priority 1 – Prepare

Overarching priority: To ensure that there are robust and effective mechanisms to understand the profile of different forms of exploitation in Worcestershire and to "prepare" strategically and Tactically to tackle them, as well as to evaluate the impact of our collective efforts.

Key Priority 2 – Prevent

Overarching priority: To increase the awareness and understanding for children, young people, professionals and the public in the problems, risk and threats that exist in our communities and enable them to take "preventative" action to reduce risk of harm to children and young people by providing information and tools to support the identification of indicators of different forms of exploitation; providing and publishing agreed models of assessment; and agreed protocols for the effective sharing of information across the multi-agency partnership

Key Priority 3 – Protect

Overarching priority: To recognise and respond to children and young people who are vulnerable to and victims of exploitation in any of its forms. The primary goal is to ensure that partner agencies work together to provide support to exploited children so they are helped, protected and listened to and that perpetrators are held to account for their actions.

Key Priority 4 - Pursue

Overarching priority: To ensure we maintain focus on the targeting and pursuit of offenders to bring them to justice. Our primary goal is to manage the threat and risk posed by perpetrators and to secure justice for, and on behalf of, exploited children.

6. This group will be chaired by the Independent Chair of the WSCP and will include representation from across the statutory and voluntary sectors of the partnership.

7. Get Safe will liaise closely with other key strategic multi-agency forums including SOCJAC and the Community Safety Partnership as well as undertaking a programme of meetings with the other LA's within the West Mercia Police footprint to ensure our work on this agenda is well co-ordinated and that information sharing and cross border partnership working enables us to meet the challenges and vision set out by Government in The Serious Violence Strategy.

Impact on Health and Well-being of Looked After Children or Care Leavers

8. Children in care of the local authority are a particularly vulnerable group of children and young people. They often have a history of abuse and neglect in past family life that makes them a target for many forms of exploitation. The multi-agency Get Safe, strategic and operations teams share information with regard to individual children as well as profiling offenders, community area of concern and high-risk victims in our Get Safe profiling in order to identify and reduce risk to children and young people who are looked after.

9. Missing Children Officers, responsible for undertaking welfare Return Interviews for Looked After Children missing from care form part to the Get Safe services.

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

County Council: 01905 763763

Worcestershire Hub: 01905 765765

Specific Contact Points for this report

Tina Russell – Director of Social Work and Safeguarding WCF

Emma Brittain – Assistant Director – FFD and Partnership's

Supporting Information

- A) Get Safe campaign poster (available on-line)
- B) Get Safe Pathway
- C) Get Safe Strategic Group Terms of Reference

Background Papers

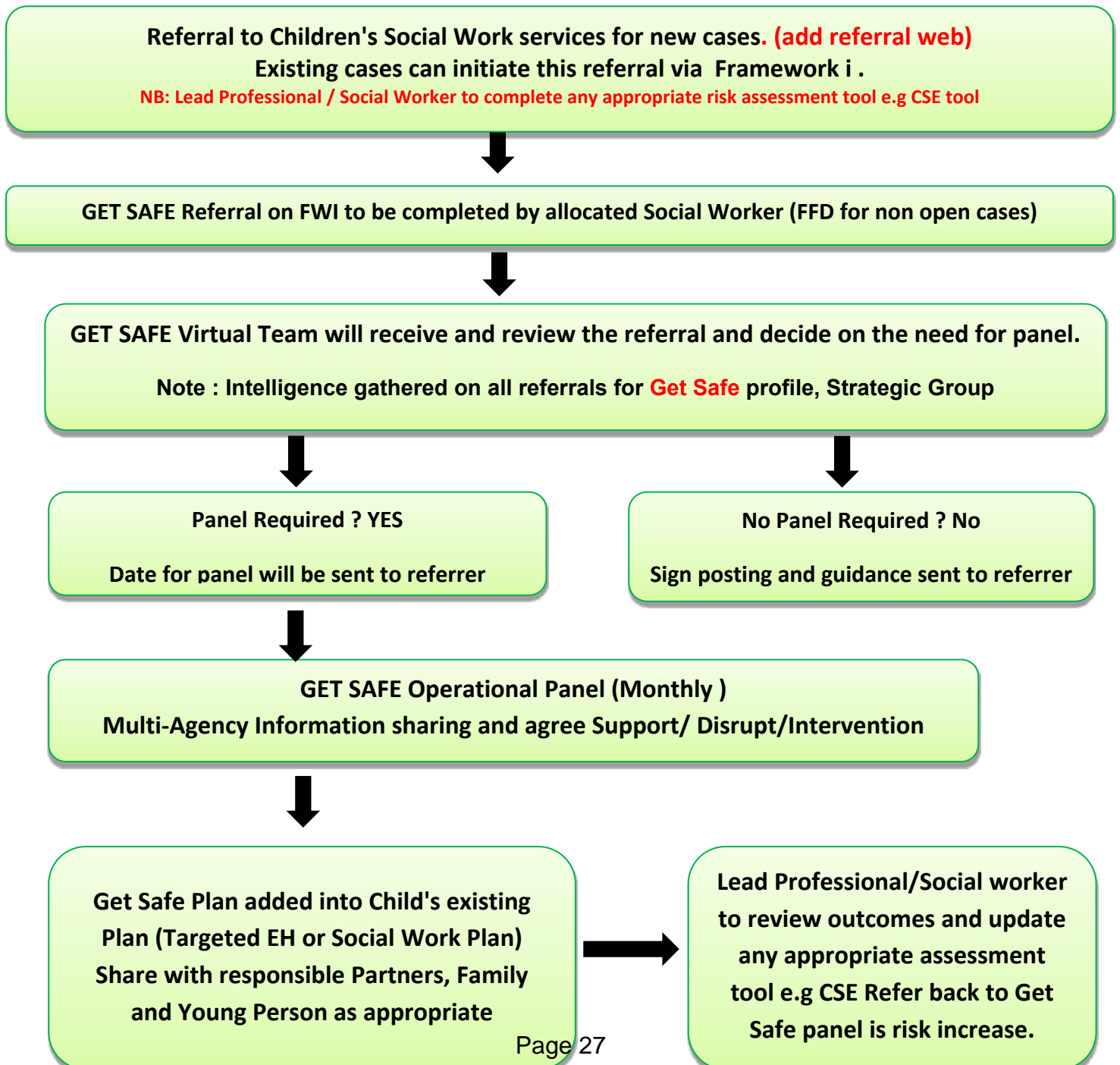
Worcestershire Children's Safeguarding Board New Arrangements Executive Summary (available on-line)

Worcestershire's children's GET SAFE Pathway

This is the pathway for multi-agency targeted **Support, Disruption and Intervention** for children and young people who are identified as experiencing or at risk from: CSE, Missing, County Lines, Honour Based Violence, Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage, Gangs, Trafficking and Modern Day Slavery.

This pathway to advice and services does NOT replace the need to follow child protection, assessment or intervention plans for children and young people.

Get Safe is designed to coordinate Multi Agency Specialist Services and responses to this high risk group, with a further remit of gathering intelligence to protect individuals and wider community.



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Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board

GET SAFE (Exploitation) Strategic Group

Terms of Reference

Purpose of the Group

The GET SAFE Strategic Group is a sub group of the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB). Its primary purpose is to co-ordinate and drive the work of the child sexual exploitation strategy, and to hold agencies to account for promoting effective local arrangements for working together to safeguard children from different forms of exploitation. The sub group will provide assurance to WSCB that there is a robust and effective multi-agency response to children and young people at risk, including young people who transition from children's services to services for adults. Exploitation of children takes many forms including child sexual exploitation, missing children, criminal exploitation (County Lines), children who are trafficked, modern day slavery, children affected by gangs, female genital mutilation, forced marriage and honour based violence.

Functions of the Group

The specific aims of the group are:-

- To reduce the exploitation of children and young people in Worcestershire;
- To develop, share and promote good practice across Worcestershire for those working with/coming into contact with children at risk of exploitation;
- To identify patterns of activity that might reflect the organised exploitation of children and young people in Worcestershire;
- To provide assurance to the WSCB that different forms of exploitation are being actively addressed across Worcestershire and to advise on any gaps or problem areas;
- To seek assurance that practitioners have access to appropriate policies and procedures and training to enable them to respond robustly to risks of exploitation;
- To undertake a scope with local partner agencies to identify existing forums and works streams relating to child sexual exploitation, missing children, criminal exploitation, children who are trafficked, female genital mutilation, forced marriage and gangs, with the aim of reducing duplication and improving local coordination;
- To inform commissioning intentions and provide local challenge in respect of services provided to children and families;
- To co-ordinate delivery of the GET SAFE Action Plan, holding partner agencies to account where necessary, and to keep the WSCB informed of progress;

- To provide support and oversight for the CSE, Missing and Trafficking Operational Group to enable delivery of the key components of the Action Plan;
- To take account of any national or regional guidance to ensure that the local response is consistent with current learning;
- To utilise data to identify emerging patterns and trends, and to monitor performance and identify any areas for improvement.

Membership

Membership will consist of senior representatives from those stakeholder organisations who have a part to play in the strategic oversight of exploitation in Worcestershire. The meeting should include, but not be exclusive to, the following agencies:-

- West Mercia Police (Chair)
- Children's Social Care
- Clinical Commissioning Groups (Vice Chair)
- Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust Probation
- Schools/FE Colleges representation
- Youth Justice Service (YJS)
- Chair of the GET SAFE (Exploitation) Operational Group
- Safer Communities Board/Public Health
- District Councils
- Voluntary Sector
- Housing Providers
- Adult Social Care (to attend meetings when specifically required)
- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)
- Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC)

Members are expected to attend all scheduled meetings, or to arrange for a deputy to attend on their behalf when this is not possible. Members represent their own organisation/agency or sector and, as such, are required to ensure an effective flow of information (as agreed by the sub group) between the WSCB and their colleagues/frontline practitioners/sector peers. Other relevant professionals will be invited to assist with group activity as appropriate.

Meetings

The frequency of meetings will be bi-monthly to ensure the group achieves the objectives detailed above in a timely manner. In exceptional circumstances the Chair of the meeting may arrange additional meetings if it is felt necessary to do so.

Sub-Groups

The GET SAFE Strategic Group will have formal governance responsibility for the GET SAFE (Exploitation) Operational Group. If any additional Task and Finish Groups are

convened to carry out specific pieces of work, they will also report into and be accountable to the GET SAFE Strategic Group.

Reporting

The Chair will present a highlight report to each meeting of the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board reporting by exception any barriers to the timely implementation of the GET SAFE Action Plan, trend analysis from the data, issues identified by the problem profile and examples of good practice.

The GET SAFE Strategic Group will receive regular reports from the GET SAFE (Exploitation) Operational Group.

Reviewed September 2018

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**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD
13 JUNE 2019**

WORK PROGRAMME

	Agenda Item	Lead
	15-19 July 2019	
	Keep in Touch Visits	Selina Rawitz
	8 October 2019	
	Inspection update	Tina Russell
	Quarter 4 Data - To be noted – matters raised by exception	Tina Russell
	27 November 2019	
	Serious Case Reviews	Tina Russell
	Placements and Sufficiency	Group Manager
	<u>Standing Items</u>	
	Annual Report – Carers, including placements and Foster Care Recruitment	
	IRO Annual Report - November	
	Care Leavers updates	
	Transition between children’s and adult’s services	
	Quarterly reports	
	Virtual School Annual Report	
	Serious Case Reviews	
	Young Voices Annual Report - March	
	Housing	
	Corporate Parenting Annual Report	

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