# Bristol, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire and Bath and North East Somerset Partnerships

# Section 11 Audit 2019-2020

# South Gloucestershire Children's Partnership Report

# March 2020

# Introduction

The Section 11 self-assessment audit tool was circulated to all partner across the four local authority areas in January 2020 to assess, monitor and evidence progress and achievements in relation to meeting safeguarding requirements.   The Section 11 audit for 2019/20 has taken place in the year that each region has transitioned from the LSCB to the new partnership arrangements.

The aspiration for future audits is that all five of the new partnerships across the Avon & Somerset geographical footprint will produce one combined audit for the region.  In order to achieve this consistent approach, the timelines for the audit will be streamlined to ensure all five partnerships are able to work effectively together.

This audit received 37 responses in total, some organisations work across more than one local authority and completed the audit once to cover all relevant areas.  There were a total of fourteen completed audits received for South Gloucestershire.  Names of these organisations are included in Appendix One.  A number of key organisations did not submit an audit.

This report has been produced for the South Gloucestershire Children's Partnership and has drawn on the themes identified in the audit process.

Organisations were required to make a judgement as to how well each question is being achieved based on the following rating:

| 0 | - | Inadequate |
| 1 | - | Requires Improvement |
| 2 | - | Good |
| 3 | - | Outstanding |

For each question, organisations were also asked, `What's Working Well', `What are you Worried about?', and `What Needs to Happen?'.  This is following the Signs of Safety Methodology and employs strengths based principles.

| `What's Working Well?' | `What are you Worried About?' | `What Needs to Happen?' |
|---|---|---|
| Describe existing strengths and safety factors which are in place.   Provide evidence of good practice, including where any audit activity has been undertaken. | Provide evidence of any unmitigated harm, any future dangers and/or any complicating factors.  Evidence can be drawn from existing practice and/or audit activity. | Detail evidence of any progress against action plans, and in your opinion, what best practice will look like once attained. |

# Organisational Structure and Responsibility

This section asked questions about the structure surrounding each organisation and in particular the provision of someone who is a designated lead for safeguarding. The first three questions are not reported as they were demographic information questions about completion of the audit.

4. **Does your organisation have a clear line of accountability for the commissioning and/or provision of services designed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children?**

Reponses were split evenly between good and outstanding for this question. Organisations reported that they have effective structures in place.

22% of respondents included concerns about capacity, resulting from high demand, vacant posts or sickness.

5. **Does your organisation have a senior lead with the required knowledge, skills, expertise and experience who has leadership responsibility for the organisation's/agency's safeguarding arrangements?**

38% of responses indicated outstanding in response to this question. Organisations gave examples of having experienced staff in this role and deputy cover also being available.

6. **Does your organisation have a designated practitioner (or, for health commissioning and health provider organisations/agencies, designated and named practitioners) for child safeguarding, whose role is to support other practitioners in their organisations and agencies to recognise the needs of children, including protection from possible abuse or neglect.**

90% of respondents rated themselves as either good or outstanding for this question. However there are a number of organisations who expressed concern that they have vacant posts impacting on this provision.

7. Of those who have a designated practitioner, 65% have an explicit job description.



Does this role have an explicit job description?

Answered: 37    Skipped: 33
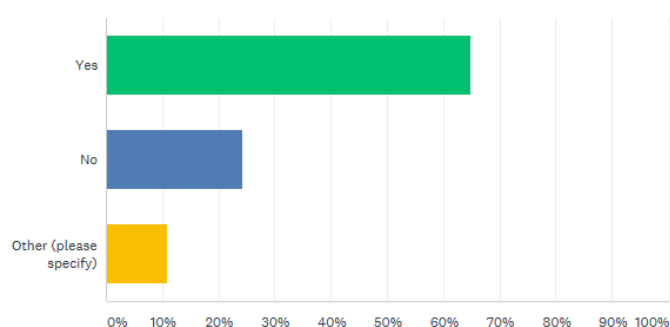
8. 67.5% of organisations responded that the designated person is given sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to fulfil their child welfare and safeguarding responsibilities effectively.

**Recommendation: All designated safeguarding practitioners should have this made explicit in their job description and should have access to regular supervision.**

# Organisational Culture

9. **How do you know you have a culture of listening to children and young people, within your organisation?  This should incorporate taking account of their wishes and feelings, both in individual decisions and in the development of services.**

Responses gave many examples of this in practice, a selection are included below:
   a. Youth council, elected by their peers
   b. Listening Partnership
   c. Pupil Voice survey
   d. Young person's participation forum
   e. Person centred support
   f. Patient experience questionnaires
   g. Training of practitioners
   h. Family and friends feedback forms
   i. 'see it my way' events
   j. Recording audits evidences voice of the child
   k. Individually shaped support
   l. Voice of the child at the heart of all our work
   m. Statement of commitment, a list of the ways young people want their workers to support them
   n. Staff are ACE aware and trained to Think Family
   o. Children design their own holiday and after school activities
   p. Reflective practice with young people
   q. Redesign of building – several changes proposed by children

10. **Working Together 2018 requires that each organisation creates a culture of safety, quality and protection within the services provided.  Can you tell us how you have implemented this within your organisation?**

81% of organisations rated themselves as good or outstanding.  Those with concerns referred to increases in number and complexity of safeguarding cases and issues with high turnover of staff, maintenance of staff confidence with complex cases and cross boundary issues.

11. **Within your organisation, how do you ensure that your staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children?**

Almost all responses referred to mandatory safeguarding training for all staff as the main way organisations ensure competency.  Further responses included use of policies.  Only 31% of responses mentioned supervision as part of the framework to ensure staff are competent to carry out safeguarding responsibilities.

12. **How does your organisation create an environment where staff feel able to raise competency concerns?**
Responses mostly included mention of whistle blowing policies.  Only 6% of responses mentioned the Local Authority Designated officer (LADO) and 12% mentioned the Escalation Policy.

**Recommendation: Organisations to consider what more they can do in addition to ensuring staff attend training in order to assess competency.**

**Recommendation: Organisations to ensure all staff are aware of local LADO and escalation procedures.**

# Learning and Development

**13. How does your organisation ensure that learning or recommendations from reviews are embedded into practice?**

Examples of good practice included:

a. Practice briefings
b. Review of training
c. Learning included in team meetings
d. Dissemination to practitioners via briefings, presentations
e. Shared at quarterly meetings
f. Safeguarding newsletter
g. Action Plans
h. Audits to ensure learning has been adopted
i. Policy amendments
j. Discussion via peer supervision

Some organisations listed worries about being able to evidence learning, testing staff understanding of learning and staff turnover meaning messages may not be known by all staff.

**14. What are your organisation's arrangements for ensuring appropriate supervision and support for staff?**

All organisations rated themselves as good or outstanding for supervision. There were many good practice examples including having a supervision policy, training for supervisors, dedicated time set aside, flexible approaches for staff depending on their role, inclusion of peer and group supervision in addition to individual supervision.

Areas for concerns included:

a. Being able to find a suitable room
b. Providing effective supervision for staff working shifts
c. Lack of supervision for volunteers
d. Recording of supervision in case records

**Recommendation: Organisations to consider ways to ensure everyone working with children has access to equitable supervision regardless of their shift patterns or whether they are a paid member of staff or a volunteer.**

**15. How does your organisation ensure safeguarding training is offered and completed by all appropriate and relevant staff?**

All organisations reported that they were either good or outstanding for this question. Many organisations monitor compliance in staff attendance. Concerns raised in responses related to being able to measure impact of training on practice, lack of staff capacity to attend, sustaining compliance with changing staff.

**16. How does your organisation ensure that all practitioners have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they have knowledge, skills and expertise that improve over time and how this informs their continuous professional development?**

Responses included:

a. Annual Appraisal/PDPR and supervision
b. Mandatory refresher training
c. Use of induction

d.   Regular audits

e.   Competency framework for all new starters

There was a reliance by organisations of annual appraisals as the measure for this question however, when asked 'What are you worried about' the percentage of staff having completed their appraisals was low for some organisations.

This also highlights that reviews of practice may not be happening more than once a year, and while this appraisal system is important, organisations need to consider ways to ensure that this becomes a more regular, standard practice.

**Recommendation:  Organisations to consider more flexible approaches and creative ways to meet this criteria, in addition to an annual appraisal**.

17. **What content concerning the safeguarding and promotion of the welfare of children is included within your organisation's mandatory staff induction? This should include familiarisation of child protection responsibilities and procedures to be followed if anyone has any concerns about a child's safety or welfare.**

All organisations described induction plans for new starters, with reference to either e-learning or face to face safeguarding training.

The best practice examples included information about how to refer to LADO, information about policies, 1:1 meetings with safeguarding leads and graduated access to different levels of training depending on role.

## Managing Allegations and Resolving Professional Differences

18. **Do you have clear whistleblowing procedures, which reflect the principles in [Sir Robert Francis' Freedom to Speak Up Review](#) and are suitably referenced in staff training and codes of conduct, alongside a culture which enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to be addressed?**

Every organisation reported having a whistleblowing policy in place that was known about by staff and easily accessible.

Several responses expressed concerns that this policy is underused and that staff might be lacking in confidence to 'whistle blow'.

19. **Does your organisation/agency have clear Resolving Professional Differences/Escalation policies for staff to follow when their child safeguarding concerns are not being addressed within their organisation or by other agencies?**

20. **Are staff aware of the regional safeguarding arrangements Resolution of Professional Differences/Escalation Policies?**

Responses:
Inadequate 11%
Requires Improvement 7.5%
Good 52%
Outstanding 29.5%

This has been a repeated finding in Section 11 audits and inter agency walkabouts that staff are not clear about the Resolution of Professional Differences Policy.  This policy is about to be refreshed in

South Gloucestershire by a multi-agency working group.  Following this refresh, there should be a relaunch and communication campaign to inform organisations of the policy and how they can use it.

**Recommendation: South Gloucestershire Children's Partnership to relaunch the Resolution of Professional Differences Policy to all partners with a communications campaign**

## Safe Recruitment

21. **Does your organisation follow safe recruitment practices and ongoing safe working practices for individuals whom the organisation or agency permit to work regularly with children, including policies on when to obtain a Disclosure Barring Service or criminal record check?**

All organisations reported that they follow safe recruitment processes and that they obtain DBS checks for relevant posts.  The only issues reported through this audit was the length of time it can take to complete the disclosure and barring check.

## Information Sharing

22. **Does your organisation have arrangements which set out clearly the processes for sharing information with other practitioners and with safeguarding partners?**

Responses include having policies, clear guidelines and training in place to ensure effective information sharing.  There were concerns raised about practitioner confidence to share information, and getting information back from organisations following sharing.

## Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Reviewing the self-audits submitted to the Section 11 audit, there are a number of learning points identified and some recommendations to consider.

1. **All designated safeguarding practitioners should have this made explicit in their job description and should have access to regular supervision.**

2. **Organisations to consider what more they can do in addition to ensuring staff attend training in order to assess competency.**

3. **Organisations to ensure all staff are aware of local LADO and escalation procedures.**

4. **Organisations to consider ways to ensure everyone working with children has access to equitable supervision regardless of their shift patterns or whether they are a paid member of staff or a volunteer.**

5. **Organisations to consider more flexible approaches and creative ways to ensure regular reviews of practice, in addition to an annual appraisal**.

6. **South Gloucestershire Children's Partnership to relaunch the Resolution of Professional Differences Policy to all partners with a communications campaign**

## Additional Considerations for future Section 11 Audits

- The process for submitting and collating the self-audits was not entirely a smooth one, organisations were required to submit only one audit centrally even when providing service across multiple local authority areas which was positive, but there were glitches and some organisations submitted several times or had difficulty with the tool.
- It is not possible to export survey monkey data into a more useable format and it is difficult to isolate a single local authority data set for analysis
- The collation of the submissions for analysis was a lengthy and difficult process that will need to be reviewed before any future self-audits are commenced.  A smarter approach needs to be found so that the analysis is a simpler process that makes best use of time.


Sarah Taylor

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March 2020

# Appendix One: Organisations who responded to the self-audit and scores for questions

Colour code for self-audit scores:

Inadequate (0) Red  - Requires improvement (1) Orange - Good (2) Green - Outstanding (3) Blue

**Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership (AWP)**

| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 Yes | 8 Yes | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 - | 13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 Yes | 21 | 22 | |

**Bristol, North Somerset & South Gloucestershire CCG (BNSSG)**

| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 Yes | 8 Yes | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 - | 13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 Yes | 21 | 22 | |

**Public Health**

| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 Yes | 8 Yes | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 - | 13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 - | 21 | 22 | |

**Avon Fire & Rescue**

| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 No | 8 Yes | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 - | 13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 No | 21 | 22 | |

**16-25 Independent People**

| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 No | 8 Yes | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 - | 13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 Yes | 21 | 22 | |

**Avon & Somerset Police**

| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 - | 8 - | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 - | 13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 - | 21 | 22 | |

**Next Link**

| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 No | 8 Yes | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 - | 13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | |

**Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC)**

| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 No | 8 Yes | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 - | 13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 No | 21 | 22 | |

### North Bristol Trust (NBT)

| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 Yes | 8 Yes | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 - | 13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 Yes | 21 | 22 | |

### University Hospitals Bristol (UHB)

| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 Yes | 8 Yes | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 - | 13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 Yes* | 21 | 22 | |

*safeguarding team only

### Barnardo's

| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 Yes | 8 Yes | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 - | 13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 Yes | 21 | 22 | |

### National Probation Service (NPS)

| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 No | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 - | 13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 Yes | 21 | 22 | |

### Sirona Care & Health

| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 Yes | 8 - | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 - | 13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 Yes | 21 | 22 | |

### Youth Offending Service

| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 No | 8 Yes | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 - | 13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 Yes | 21 | 22 | |