



CITY & HACKNEY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD
Report to City of London and Executive Groups

Section 1 - General

Date of Meeting

September 2016

Title of Report/Agenda Item

Section 11 Peer Review – 4th July 2016

Presenter

Angela Bent

Section 2 – Report Detail

Report is for: Information

Protective Marking: Restrict (Information is only available to LSCB members).

Are there any communication and/or media implications? No

Should the report be disseminated further? No

Introduction

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places a statutory duty on key persons and bodies to make arrangements to ensure that in discharging its functions, they have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and that the services they contract out to others also have regard to that need.

Improving the way key people and bodies safeguard and promote the welfare of children is crucial to improving their outcomes.

As part of its statutory objective of ensuring the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements, the City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (CHSCB) facilitates a Section 11 audit process that requires organisations to self-assess their performance against the Section 11 duties.

These audits are subject to scrutiny and oversight by the CHSCB. To further strengthen this oversight and provide additional support to partner agencies, the CHSCB introduced a Peer Challenge process for Section 11 audit returns. This Peer Challenge process will help partner agencies reflect on and improve safeguarding services for children and young people.

Leaside Trust agreed to participate in this process and this report sets out the findings of the team undertaking this work.

Format

The peer review was conducted in the manner of a critical friend to challenge partners on their own self-assessment of strengths and areas for improvement (as detailed in audit submissions).

The review was conducted in an interactive manner and were flexible enough to allow document reviews and traditional 'interviews' with identified staff members.

The on-site work was undertaken on 4th July 2016.

This report is not intended to be an in-depth analysis of the safeguarding arrangements in existence at Leaside, but provides a focused examination of a number of areas.

Peer Review Team

The Peer Review Team comprised:

- Angela Bent - Board Manager, CHSCB
- Pauline Adams, Head of Service Young Hackney, LBH
- Marcia Lennon , Service Manager, Cafcass

Process

The Peer Review Process included the following:

Review Preparation

The Peer Review Team undertook a detailed analysis of the Leaside Section 11 audit return. At the time of the self-assessment no actions had been identified.

As a result of this analysis, Leaside Trust were asked to supply the following documentation for further scrutiny by the team (the relevant S11 audit standard is set out in brackets):

- Child protection policy (standard 2.1)
- Complaints procedure (standard 2.2)
- Whistleblowing policy (6.6)

The Peer Review Team used these documents as evidence supporting Leaside Trusts' self-assessment and to develop any key lines of enquiry to take forward as part of the on-site fieldwork.

On-Site Session

The Peer review team met with the following staff member at the outset of the on-site visit:

- Terry Kinsella – Chief Executive

This was followed by a "walkabout" and direct engagement with a front-line staff member and observations of a session.

Background to Leaside

Leaside has been providing outdoor educational pursuits for young people in East London for over 30 years. Based on the River Lea in Hackney, Leaside delivers outdoor activities to young people. They provide a variety of activities within an educational framework, including canoeing, mountain biking, orienteering and expeditions. 7000 young people use Leaside each year. They work with 39 schools and youth groups in the local area. 8 of these schools

are for children with Special Needs and we also work with Pupil Referral Units, providing activities for children who have been excluded from the main schools system.

The following narrative provides a brief summary of the key areas covered through the walkabout session.

- Chief Executive has been in post since 2015 and is the designated safeguarding lead
- There has been a significant reduction in staff (volunteers and core) since new CEX. A reduction from 40 volunteers to 10 and there are now 2 core staff members
- They provide services to the council 3 days a week and are used by other services including children from the local charedi community.
- There is good access to training from the national canoe organisation and all volunteers/members are listed on a matrix which highlights which training they have had.
- All core staff have DBS checks returned
- Volunteers initially do not have DBS checks whilst on their 3-4 week trial. The DBS is applied for after this initial trial period. The CEX is sent a copy which is held on file.
- There is a meeting with staff on a weekly basis and safeguarding is spoken about. The staff member confirmed a meeting is held
- The staff matrix lists who has had safeguarding training and who has had a DBS check
- Staff member spoke about feeling supported from CEX and that there had been a positive change in organisational culture.
- Discussed scenarios where a staff member is out on the lake with a child alone. Informed this is rare and would normally be with an older child and the staff member would not be a volunteer.
- ChildLine posters on public notice boards
- Allegations against a staff member referred to Children Social Care
- Confidence from staff members on who to escalate to within the Trust
- There are a board of trustees – who would be expected to respond to safeguarding issues if they involved the senior officer.
- Inductions are offered to core and volunteers and there is a mechanism in place (signing document) to affirm staff understand and adhere to the policies in place.
- No evidence to suggest complaints procedure has been used. Whistle blowing policy due to go to board of trustees.

Analysis

- The Section 11 audit return was were considered by the Peer Review Team to require slight adjustment to accurately and proportionately reflect on Leasides safeguarding arrangements.
- The governance arrangements for safeguarding children and young people are appropriate. There appears to be strong and open leadership on safeguarding children and young people at Leaside – reflected through arrangements, staff comments and willingness to participate in the peer review.
- Child protection policy was seen and has content that would be expected – the team considered the document could be strengthened (see recommendations).
- Details of local children services are known to the safeguarding lead – the team considered the whole staff group would benefit from have visible information detailing local contacts (see recommendations).

- There is safeguarding training provided from national canoe bodies – this does not contain the local context or local responses. (see recommendations)
- The staff matrix is a good mechanism to monitor staffs training and DBS. Currently the length of time their safeguarding certificate lasts for is 3 years – the team considered this should be brought into line with CHSCB standards and should be every 2 years.
- Reassurance was given that volunteers during their trial period are supervised by staff and do not do 1-1 activities such as canoeing.
- There was a clear sense of pride from staff on how they have engaged a group of Charedi children. Over 30 were observed during the peer review visit.
- There is a small staff group who are responsible for the safety and welfare of children in and out of Leaside. Personal phones are used by 2 member of staff – the team considered these arrangements should be revisited, as it is not advisable for staff to keep images of children on their personal phones (see recommendations).
- There were advice posters available for young people to read in the public areas - the team considered this could be strengthened by adding posters on CSE (see recommendations).

Issues raised by Leaside

- They would like specific designated safeguarding training and CSE

Recommendations

The Peer Review Team make the following recommendations for Leaside Trust to consider:

1. For Leaside to update their child protection policy to include details of FAST service, LADO, definition of a child.
2. For Leaside to ensure the local details for Hackney FAST are displayed/available in the staff office
3. For Leaside staff to access relevant free CHSCB safeguarding training. Also for the designated lead to attend specific designated lead training hosted by the CHSCB
4. For Leaside to consider the safeguarding needs of the trustees such as training
5. For Leaside to introduce safer practices around mobile phones. Invest in a work only phone that staff can take out and use in case of emergencies and where appropriate and with consent take photos to advertise their services.
6. For Young Hackney to provide copies of Young Hackney Service Booklet.
7. CHSCB should send Say Something if You See something leaflet/posters to Leaside to display in public areas.

Author(s):

Angela Bent - Board Manager, CHSCB

Pauline Adams, Head of Service Young Hackney, LBH

Marcia Lennon, Service Manager, Cafcass