

CITY & HACKNEY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD
Report to QA & Hackney / City of London Executive Group

Date of Meeting	September 2018
Title of Report/Agenda Item	2017-18 Peer Review: Activity and overarching themes
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Background

The QA Sub-Group agreed for Peer Review activity in 2017-18 to focus on Private and Voluntary Early Years settings. This decision was based on local intelligence raising concerns that some providers were not compliant with the requirements set out under Section 11 Children Act 2004.

The Peer Review framework was used which focuses on a review of submitted Section 11 audits, receipt of requested documentary evidence (e.g. safeguarding policies) and an onsite visit.

In the 2016 Section 11 audit programme, 80+ Private and Voluntary Early Years settings returned an audit tool. A working group was held in March 2017 to review these returns and select organisations for Peer Review. The settings were selected to maximise variety: a mix of quality (according to Ofsted), both private and community providers and nurseries of different sizes.

A total of 9 settings in Hackney and 2 in City of London took part in Peer Review activity.

Overarching Findings

Individual reports were produced for each setting and a copy provided to the local Early Years teams to provide ongoing support with recommendations.

This report sets out overarching findings and recommendations for CHSCB.

- Overall Early Years settings provided an accurate reflection of their safeguarding arrangements. Where amendments were needed, specific recommendations were provided.
- Governance arrangements were deemed appropriate overall although one setting needed to appoint (and train) a Safeguarding Lead on the Executive Committee.
- Each setting provided the Review Panel with a number of policies to review in advance of the on-site visit. Themes following review and onsite discussion included:
 - Complex and non-user-friendly child protection policies being used. Policies were growing in size due to the amount of information e.g. Prevent and British Values which have been included by national mandate.
 - It is suggested that the Policy should include: a statement of intent, contacts for leads, what to do (child then allegation against staff), information sharing, escalation and then an appendix with a link to the London Child Protection Procedures. This will ensure settings have access to up to date policies and maintains a searchable/ useable document.
 - Complaints policies are in place although there was not always reference and knowledge of the Ofsted Complaints Policy and Poster.
 - General awareness of safeguarding implications following the Little Teds Nursery SCR. As a result most settings had a social media policy and could demonstrate how this was used in practice. Most settings however, were not aware of, or had cross-referenced their own policy with, the CHSCB Social Media Policy available on the CHSCB website.
 - Most settings would leave updated policies in the lunch areas for staff to read.



Good practice was seen in a few settings who had asked staff to sign to say it had been read and would be implemented.

- Not all settings had policies on their website. Hard copies were often given to parents on induction but it is unclear whether these are read or retained. Placing the latest copy of the policies on the website and actively communicating this will help ensure they are widely available.
- Designated Safeguarding Leads were in place and safeguarding training undertaken. Settings provided examples of regular conversations and quizzes with staff members to test their safeguarding knowledge. This was undertaken in both formal and informal settings.

As an example of good practice, one Nursery Manager ensures that safeguarding is weaved into daily conversations and demonstrated this with an example of a staff member wanting to close the door for intimate care. The Nursery Manager was able to discuss with them the impact in terms of safeguarding. These conversations allow staff to understand decisions rather than follow mandates.

- Although the frequency varied, team meetings and supervision sessions were in place which provided opportunity for discussions around safeguarding practice. Copies of supervision minutes/templates were reviewed.

A nursery demonstrated good practice with a supervision template containing specific prompts for discussion e.g. information to be relayed to the LADO, any change in personal circumstances or any conduct issues since the last supervision.

- Nurseries were able to demonstrate involving families in service development by using a variety of methods for feedback. These included annual parental questionnaires, suggestion boxes and requesting specific feedback on local initiatives e.g. healthy eating. Children are also consulted in day to day sessions and employees in supervision / team meetings.
- Most nurseries had undertaken safeguarding training via HLT or within their corporate training programme.
- Whilst national themes was disseminated and learning implemented, many nurseries were not aware of the CHSCB training programme or the CHSCB 'Things You Should Know' briefings which provide local updates and learning from local reviews.
- Induction packs were in place and reviewed by the Peer Review Team.

As an example of good practice, one setting in City of London, provided examples of files for new starters and those who had been in role for a period of time. The files showed a rigorous system of induction, a transparent schedule of training updates and safer recruitment processes. Reviewing the file of a new starter file, a full induction and an in-house safeguarding document with basic safeguarding information was provided. The information was clear and concise and staff sign to state they have reviewed the safeguarding pack.

- Where asked, settings were unaware of the CHSCB minimum standards for recruitment.
- Some of the settings noted, difficulties in obtaining two written references. One setting noted this difficulty especially from colleges or training providers.
- Nurseries were using DBS checks on appointment and only a few settings were yet to sign up to the annual update service.

As an example of good practice, one Nursery Manager detailed how DBS certificates are non-transferrable unless using the update service. Most recruitment agencies will not review the DBS for those on its 'books' so these are routinely checked by the Nursery. DBS documents are also checked to ensure they are 'live' and suitable for work in England. An example was a member of staff who had a Scottish DBS and was asked to apply for a DBS covering England.

- On review of material displayed around the nurseries, this was sometimes out of date or included historic information. Some were not clear on who to contact if you were worried about a child.



- Entry and exit procedures varied across nurseries, some parents allowed the Peer Review Team to enter after them whereas in some settings, a prominent sign on the electronically operated internal door warned entrants not to allow anyone else to enter after them. ID was not always requested and visitor books not always legible or clear on who had entered/exited.
- The Peer Review team detailed findings from CHSCB Local Review Chadrack. Most nurseries had a non-collection or attendance policy and ask for a number of contacts.

One nursery manager asked families who come from abroad (and who are not able to provide local emergency contacts) to provide contact details for their work or neighbours. Another nursery collects up to five emergency contacts and also work contacts should a parent/carer live outside of London.

Recommendations:

To support all local settings with learning from the Peer Review process:

- CHSCB to encourage private and voluntary settings to use the HLT template child protection policy (could be adapted for use in City of London). This policy:
 - balances accessibility with inclusion of nationally mandated themes
 - includes a safeguarding ethos and key local contacts if worried about a child / allegations against a professional.
- CHSCB to also raise awareness of:
 - [CHSCB Social Media Policy](#)
 - [Ofsted Complaints Policy](#) and [Poster](#)
 - [CHSCB training programme](#)
 - [CHSCB 'Things You Should Know' briefing](#)
 - [CHSCB minimum standards for recruitment](#)
 - Best practice for safe exit/entry of visitors
 - Local safeguarding training offers e.g. training for Designated Safeguarding Leads.
- CHSCB to write to schools and colleges in City of London and Hackney noting importance of providing reference requests for students.