

# Information update

## July 2010

This e-bulletin provides an update on recent developments in both government announcements and policy-making in respect of safeguarding services and working together to promote children and young people's wellbeing.

Links to websites with further information are highlighted in orange.

### Working Together 2010

A revised version of **Working Together to Safeguard Children** was issued by the DCSF (now Department for Education) at the end of March 2010. The main changes include the following:

- Changes to chapter 7 in respect of the Child Death Overview Panel and notifications of child deaths.
- Changes to chapter 8 in respect of conducting Serious Case Reviews.
- Changes to statutory and operational procedure for protecting children from actual and further risk of harm (see chapter 5).

### Serious Case Reviews (SCRs)

Within the revised version of **Working Together** is a new emphasis on the format of the executive summary for serious case reviews, as well as new timescales for completion (originally four months and now six).

It is expected that this extended timescale will lead to an improvement in the quality of SCRs and the resulting overview reports and in action planning for any lessons to be learnt.

In spite of the increased focus on SCRs, **Ofsted's latest evaluation** found that there is still significant room for improvement, with a substantial number judged as inadequate.

Emerging evidence indicates that the Individual Management Review (IMR) process also requires closer attention and the clear message is that more needs to be done to ensure the SCR process leads to improvements in the way children are protected.



The key to the above is ensuring that the lessons to be learned are well identified from the evidence presented; that evidence gathering in itself is conducted in a rigorous and scrutinising way; and that action planning is aligned to evidence-based findings and is readily implementable and able to be monitored well.

The new coalition government has stated its commitment to publishing anonymised SCRs in full and this will in itself have significant implications for both policy and practice and the consequent effectiveness of SCRs.

### Vetting and barring

There has been a halt to the registration process administered by the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). The Home Office announced that registration with the Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS) will be halted to allow the government to remodel the scheme back to proportionate levels.

Voluntary registration with the VBS for new employees and job-movers working or volunteering with children and vulnerable adults was due to start on 26 July.

Existing arrangements under the Scheme which will continue include the following:

- Since January 2009, the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) has been making independent barring decisions. It will continue to maintain two constantly updated lists, one for those barred from working with children, the other for those barred from working with vulnerable adults.
- Existing requirements concerning Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks will remain in place, and those entitled to such checks can continue to apply for them.

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## Vetting and barring continued

- Employers are still legally obliged to refer information to the ISA if they have moved or removed an individual because they have harmed or there is a risk of harm to a member of a vulnerable group identified under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#).

The scope of the remodelling process – to be coordinated by the Home Office in partnership with the Department of Health and the Department for Education (DfE) – is being finalised and will be announced in the near future.

## ContactPoint

The Government has delayed plans to ceasing the implementation of the national database ContactPoint and has written to Directors of Children's Services [announcing](#) this.

As an interim measure, the Government has decided to maintain ContactPoint pending firmer decisions on what it should contain and how it should operate. Local authorities are being asked to make judgements locally about how to allocate resources in order to meet their legal obligations in a limited way. Government has set out what it expects local authorities to maintain and what activities related to the implementation of the project should cease.

## London Child Protection Procedures

The London Board has issued a call for evidence to revise and update the region-wide [London Child Protection Procedures](#) following the publication of the new Working Together guidance.

However, some London authorities are asking for a stay to the review in order to include any recommendations which might arise from Professor Eileen Munro's review of the child protection process in England, commissioned by the DfE in June 2010 ([letter from the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Children and Families](#)).

Professor Munro has also made [a call for evidence to support her review](#).

## New LSCB Business Plan

The new [LSCB Annual Business Plan for 2010/11](#) is now in draft.

The Plan seeks to take account of the recent safeguarding policy developments and the LSCB subgroups will be responsible for implementation locally.

## News

### Question Time event

On 24 June the borough police held Your Voice, a Question Time-style event for students at the Curzon Cinema in Richmond, attended by the LSCB Chair, Tony Eccleston, representatives from the police and fire services, the Council and a local mosque and a synagogue.

About 80 students from across the borough attended and asked the panel a range of questions on safeguarding issues such as internet safety, safety from crime, stop and search and services to support young people and continue to make the borough a safe place to be.



### Contact for more information

If you have any queries about any of the above please drop a line to: [lscb@richmond.gov.uk](mailto:lscb@richmond.gov.uk) or call 020 8831 6202.