



Welcome

Gary Hetherington
Independent Chair
Gateshead LSCB



Welcome to another Safeguarding news. I am pleased to report that our annual report is now available on our website.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank our Business Manager, Louise Gill, on producing another comprehensive and open review of achievements over the last 12 months.

Our partners have successfully faced the scrutiny of individual inspections over the year and I am delighted to acknowledge the fantastic result achieved by Gateshead College in securing a judgement of "outstanding" across all areas when they were inspected recently by Ofsted.

I was privileged to be invited to a Gateshead Youth Assembly breakfast to discuss the impact of poverty on families across Gateshead. It is with some sadness that we will soon say farewell to Lucy Adams, the chair of the assembly, and we wish her well for the future.

I was also able to meet staff involved in the work of EducationGateshead and discussed the LSCB and our principles of **Leadership, Challenge and Learning**. I am keen to meet similar groups of practitioners who we rely on to deliver services to children on a day-to-day basis.

We are building towards our joint sub-regional conference on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in October and I hope to see some of you there. I am sure that this will enhance the learning of our second LSCB Inquiry, which focuses on CSE, and help tackle this devastating risk to children.

The full annual report and a summary version can be found on our website www.gateshead.gov.uk/LSCB

Any comments should be forwarded to louise.gill@gateshead.gov.uk

Female Genital Mutilation

You may have heard the term Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in the news recently.

Also known as female circumcision, cutting, sunna, gudniin, halalays, tahur, megrez, khitan and other terms, FGM is illegal in the UK. Anyone caught arranging for a child to be taken abroad for FGM can be sent to prison for up to 14 years.

The summer months are known amongst anti-FGM campaigners as "the cutting season". This horrific name marks a time of year when many young girls are taken abroad to have FGM performed so that they can heal over the summer holiday period - to avoid detection when they return to school.

It is estimated that 20,000 girls in the country under the age of 15 are at risk of FGM every year but the true extent is

unknown. The procedure is traditionally carried out by a woman with no medical training and without anaesthetic or properly sterilised medical tools.

FGM can cause immediate problems such as bleeding, pain, infection, difficulty passing urine and even death. In the long term girls can experience chronic and persistent urine infections, infertility and issues with pregnancy and of course, long term psychological and mental health problems.

FGM is prevalent in some areas of Africa, the Middle East and Asia. In the UK, FGM tends to occur in areas with large populations of communities who practice FGM, such as first-generation immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers, but it can occur with communities in any part of the UK and potentially involve children from Gateshead.

What should you look out for?

- Families from communities where FGM is practised arranging for the child to take a holiday. The girl may also talk about a special procedure that is going to take place.
- Prolonged absence from school with a noticeable behaviour change on return
- Girls who suddenly find it difficult to sit still and complain about pain between their legs.
- Girls who talk about somebody doing something to them that they're not allowed to talk about.

WHERE CAN YOU GO FOR ADVICE?

If you're worried, talk to the young person using sensitive and straightforward language. If you think they are at imminent risk of FGM, contact Children's Social Care and/or the police.

A new app designed to educate young people about FGM has been launched. "Petals" presents facts, information and details of support and can be accessed at <http://petals.coventry.ac.uk/>

You can also contact the NSPCC FGM 24 hour helpline: 0800 028 3550.

The LSCB has a free one hour e-learning module on FGM. All frontline practitioners should access this via the training page on our website www.gateshead.gov.uk/LSCB



Independent Return Interviews

It's vital that everyone is clear about what happens and what to do when a young person returns home after going missing for any period of time, as there are clear links between this and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).

When a young person returns home the police undertake a "safe and well check" to ensure that they have not suffered any harm and to try and find out where they have been.

There is also a statutory requirement for an independent return interview to be carried out – usually within 72 hours of their return at a place to suit the young person. In Gateshead these are carried out by a combination of youth workers and a specialist CSE worker from the Children's Society's SCARPA project when a young person:

- goes missing two or more times in a six month period;
- is missing for 24 hours or more in a single episode; or
- there are concerns about CSE.

The interviews are arranged automatically when the missing episode is logged by Social Care. This interview will:

- explore any issues that occurred while the young person was missing and try to prevent the young person from going missing again.
- Be recorded on the young person's social care record and shared with the police.
- Further support can then be put in place where necessary.

Feedback: LSCB Board Meetings

At our May meeting, we discussed:

- The PREVENT agenda – how we need to keep children safe from violent extremism
- Our budget
- The role of Police Missing From Home Coordinators
- Updating our Child Protection Procedures
- An update on numbers of missing children over the past few months
- The Child Death Review Sub Group
- Our child protection training
- Child Sexual Exploitation – an update on Operation Sanctuary and other work

At our July meeting, we discussed:

- The Dark Web - part of the internet used for criminal activity such as drugs, weapons and child abuse images
- Our annual report 2014-2015

- A new process for escalating significant cases of concern from our Missing, Sexually Exploited and Trafficked Sub Group (MSET)
- A new referral/risk assessment form for MSET
- Our performance data
- Our Learning and Improvement Framework
- Recent issues in relation to licenced premises in Gateshead
- The national Child Protection-Information System which will share information between local authorities and some NHS establishments
- Child Sexual Exploitation – including an update on Operation Sanctuary and other work in the area
- A number of other annual reports including the LADO, the Safeguarding Children Unit, Gateshead Children's Trust Board, FamiliesGateshead, the Safeguarding Adults Board and Community Safety

Training and events

CSE conference

We still have some places remaining for our sub-regional CSE conference on 20 October. We've extended the closing date for a further week, so please complete the form on our website (www.gateshead.gov.uk/LSCB) if you want to attend – the event is free and lunch is provided and we'll be sharing local and national learning and also a presentation from some of our young people.

E-learning

We offer free e-learning for practitioners working in our partner agencies and have modules on areas such as CSE, FGM, domestic abuse, the impact of parental substance misuse, safeguarding and leadership and also child abuse and neglect. For more information and to register please visit the training page of our website.

Future training courses

We've got a number of free courses happening in the next few months including sessions on domestic abuse, neglect, protecting disabled children, the Common Assessment Framework, safeguarding babies, CSE, FGM and child protection awareness.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

For more information and to register for courses visit the training section of our website: www.gateshead.gov.uk/LSCB

Child Trafficking

Many people confuse trafficking with smuggling, and think it involves people moving across international borders, however there's more to it than this.

People can be trafficked within the UK, within the north east or even within Gateshead. Child Trafficking is the movement of a child under

the age of 18 for the purposes of exploitation – sometimes this is involves sexual exploitation or other forms of exploitation such as domestic servitude.

Anyone under 18 can't consent to being trafficked or exploited, so if you suspect a child has been trafficked, you

should inform the police and Children's Social Care straight away.

At our CSE conference in October, we will have a presentation on this issue – details will be available on our website afterwards for those who can't attend.

News in brief

Training for Taxi drivers

CSE remains a priority area for the LSCB and our partners. Work is underway to raise awareness of the issue with around 700 taxi drivers licenced by Gateshead Council so that they can help to keep vulnerable passengers safe in their vehicles.

Sessions from the police and LSCB are being held over the summer so that taxi drivers can feel confident in knowing what to look out for and know what to do if they're worried.

For more information please contact Louise Gill on 0191 433 3546 or email louisegill@gateshead.gov.uk

Police Restructure

Northumbria Police has restructured and moved from six area commands to three.

Gateshead has now merged with Newcastle to form Central Area Command.

The Protecting Vulnerable People Unit (PVP) has moved from a North/South model to three units.

The Central PVP Unit covers Gateshead and Newcastle and is now based at Gateshead Police Station. They cover child abuse, vulnerable adults, rape, domestic abuse and can be contacted via 101.

Youth Offending Team

Gateshead Youth Offending Team has become the latest service to attain the Restorative Justice Quality Mark.

This award demonstrates that Gateshead YOT is delivering good quality, safe and sustainable restorative services that meet six set standards.

Only 20 organisations nationally have achieved this standard and Gateshead YOT is proud to be the first in the North East to receive this prestigious award.

Fill the Holiday Gap

This scheme (formerly called 'Holiday Hunger'), aims to tackle the problems faced by some families who normally receive free school meals and struggle with the extra meals they need to provide during the school holidays.

There are a number of locations across the borough offering a "Fill the Holiday Gap" project during the school summer holidays with a number of family events and free healthy lunches planned including: Barley Mow, Bensham, Birtley, Blydon, Carr Hill, Kibblesworth Leam Lane, Springwell and central Gateshead.

For more information please contact briankielty@gateshead.gov.uk

Gateshead College



Gateshead College has been judged as 'Outstanding' in all areas by Ofsted. The report published in July states that: "the college's approach to safeguarding all learners and staff is outstanding". The report describes the college as "exceptionally proactive in assessing risks for all learners and staff" and that the links with both the local authority designated officer and the Gateshead Local Safeguarding Children Board are "excellent and provide a good source of support and access to training".

Judith Doyle, principal and chief executive, said: "I am very proud of this outstanding achievement. This is a fantastic result, not only for us and our students, but also for parents in the region who are looking for a college performing at the very highest level."

Contact us

We would really appreciate your feedback about the newsletter or any comments you have in relation to any of the issues raised

Please let us know if there's any news that you'd like us to include in this newsletter – Has your service moved premises? Has your agency started with a new project that you want to tell us about? Has your service won any awards? This newsletter will be shared across Gateshead, so please let us know if there's anything you want to say! October issue deadline Friday 18 September 2015.

Please contact Louise Gill LSCB Business Manager by:

Email louisegill@gateshead.gov.uk

Phone 0191 433 3546