

The BSCB is a statutory partnership responsible for coordinating local arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and ensuring these arrangements are effective.



Introduction

Welcome to the 8th edition of the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) Information Update. Please share this as widely as possible across your organisation. If you have any feedback, suggestions for improvement, or want to discuss anything else relating to the BSCB contact Matilda Moss, BSCB Business Manager: mmoss@buckscc.gov.uk

BSCB Priority: Early Help, Thresholds & Neglect

Thresholds Survey

The [BSCB Thresholds document](#) outlines 4 levels of need to identify when a child may need additional support to reach their full potential. When Ofsted undertook their inspection in summer 2014, they commented on poor knowledge of thresholds across the partnership. In March and April 2015 we ran a multi-agency consultation on our Thresholds document. Across the 241 respondents, 40% had not heard of the Thresholds document.

Since then the Board has undertaken substantial work with partners on communications and awareness raising. Feedback from partners and results from auditing are now demonstrating increased knowledge and improved application of thresholds. To gather further views and evidence, we are launching a short survey. **Please complete this survey to help us understand how the Thresholds document is used and understood across partners.** It will only take a couple of minutes and your responses will be used to inform our future work.

To do

- ✓ Please complete our survey by 16th December: www.research.net/r/thresholdssurvey2016
- ✓ Contact Carol Corley (cgorley@buckscc.gov.uk) for **FREE** copies of our wallet cards, referral flowchart or laminated Thresholds document.

Further information

- ✓ All documents relating to Early Help and Thresholds can be downloaded from the BSCB website: www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/professionals/thresholds-document/

We have now distributed well over 4,000 A3, laminated copies of the Thresholds document and over 3,000 copies of each of our two designs of wallet card outlining what to do if you have a concern about a child in Buckinghamshire. **Please contact us if you need further copies.**



Basic wallet card which reminds staff that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Staff are directed to contact their safeguarding lead if they have a concern and there is space to write who this is on the back.



Detailed wallet card for safeguarding leads or those who have regular contact with vulnerable children and young people. This provides information on the course of action to take at different levels of need.

We ran a short version of the survey using voting buttons at our 3 half day safeguarding conferences in September. The results from 193 respondents were really positive and show a huge improvement on knowledge 18 months ago.

- **4%** were unaware of the Thresholds document (compared to 40% in spring 2015)
- **95%** knew where to access the Thresholds document
- **90%** said the Thresholds document was prominently displayed in their organisation
- **80%** said they regularly or sometimes used the Thresholds document as part of their day to day work, compared to 61% in spring 2015
- **83%** said they found the Thresholds document helpful to inform decisions regarding children
- **87%** said they knew the level(s) at which their service / organisation was providing support

BSCB Priority: Child's Voice & Journey

Tackling Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) - Bucks Strategy Consultation Launched



FGM is a procedure which involves partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. Whilst data suggests that Buckinghamshire currently has a lower prevalence of FGM compared to some of our near neighbours, it is important that professionals are aware of the risk factors and potential signs of FGM and know how to respond.

The BSCB has recently been working at a strategic level to support the development of a robust and proportionate partnership response to FGM in Buckinghamshire, and we will soon be launching revised multi-agency guidance and procedures for professionals.

We have also been working with the Buckinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) to develop a draft strategy for tackling FGM. The strategy will be overseen by the HWB as the strategic lead for FGM, but requires **collective support and action** across agencies in Buckinghamshire.

A consultation on the draft strategy has been launched and will run until **Friday 2nd December**. Both the strategy and a short questionnaire can be accessed using the link below. Please share this consultation across your colleagues as your comments will help us further strengthen our work in this area.

To do

- ✓ Respond to the consultation questionnaire: www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/about-the-bscb/consultations/

Further information

- ✓ Female Genital Mutilation: The Facts leaflet: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/300167/FGM_leaflet_v4.pdf
- ✓ Information and resources on FGM: www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/professionals/female-genital-mutilation/
- ✓ Free Home Office FGM E-Learning: www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/training/e-learning-courses-for-professionals/

BSCB Priority: Improving the Effectiveness of the BSCB

BSCB Annual Report

The [BSCB Annual Report for 2015/16](#) has now been published. The report describes the work that has been undertaken by the BSCB and progress against our priorities. It also sets out where we and our partners need to do more to further improve arrangements to safeguard children and young people.

2015/16 Key Messages

- **The BSCB** has made progress around a number of key areas including improved challenge, strengthened governance arrangements, stronger joint working at a strategic level and more robust performance and quality assurance processes. However, there are areas where we need to improve further and this means we need to maintain the momentum of our work.
- **Operationally** a number of developments have demonstrated strong partnership working to improve outcomes for children. This includes the development of the Swan Unit (a multi-agency team focusing on Child Sexual Exploitation), the Early Help Panel and the continued development of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). The Board recognises the hard work and commitment that has been required across the partnership to implement these processes and we are starting to see the evidence of how they are making a difference to children and young people.
- There have been improvements across the **child's journey** through Children's Social Care, including improved knowledge of thresholds, an upward trend in the conversion rate between contacts and referrals and faster decision making in the front door. However, the annual report outlines a number of areas where further work is required including the consistency of service provided for children, the high rate of re-referrals and ensuring Child Protection Plans are owned, driven forward and challenged by all partners involved. The Board will continue to review progress against those areas identified for improvement.



To do

- ✓ Please read and distribute the report within your organisation: www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/about-the-bscb/

BSCB Priority: Workforce

What have we learned from Lampard?

In February 2015 Kate Lampard and Ed Marsden published their [report](#) into the themes and lessons learnt from the NHS investigations into matters relating to Jimmy Savile. Although the recommendations focused on the NHS and Department of Health, the learning is relevant across all agencies working with children, young people or adults who are vulnerable to abuse or neglect.

In July, our Employment Sub Group hosted a [Challenge Event](#) to look at how effectively the learning from this inquiry is embedded across partners. The event focused on:

- The arrangements partners have in place for volunteers working with children or adults vulnerable to abuse or neglect. This includes training, supervision arrangements and the need for a robust register of volunteers and records of who requires a DBS check.
- Visitor policies and arrangements to ensure that adequate identity checks are carried out, records are kept and standards are set around access and supervision - including for celebrities/people of importance and fundraisers.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures are in place for reporting concerns, handling complaints, whistle blowing and developing a safer culture.

The session was an opportunity for agencies to share good practice and evidence of positive outcomes in relation to these areas. It showed that there was some variation in practice between agencies, but there was positive evidence of agencies developing robust practice in response to context and organisational need.

The session also helped identify some areas of challenge, including some areas where there would be scope for a partnership approach to support good practice and continued improvement. The Employment Sub Group has incorporated these areas into their forward work plan.

Examples of good practice

- Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust have a 'speak out safely' campaign that encourages staff to raise any concerns about the health or wellbeing of a patient
- Thames Valley Police described their strong arrangements to control access to buildings
- Wycombe District Council have more closely aligned their policies for volunteers to those for staff
- Buckinghamshire County Council Early Years provided good evidence that they are using lessons from serious case reviews to inform expected standards
- Action 4 Children demonstrated the software they use to recruit and manage their volunteers. They provided evidence of strong supervision and face to face training requirements for volunteers.
- Chesham Bois CE School talked about modifications they had made to the school building to create a more secure entry point to the school.

To do

- ✓ Please read and **share the learning** from this challenge session within your agency: www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/about-the-bscb/audits-other-learning/
- ✓ Please consider how well your agency is meeting the recommendations in the Lampard report. You can use our short **self-assessment tool** to assist with this: www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/about-the-bscb/audits-other-learning/

Managing Allegations and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Buckinghamshire County Council will be running a session on **8th December** to explore the role of the LADO. The session, which starts at 10am at the Hub in High Wycombe, is aimed at managers with responsibility for reporting concerns or managing allegations. It will cover a number of areas including understanding the LADO process, how to keep children safe and support members of staff following an allegation and transference of risk.

Further information

- ✓ Visit www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/professionals/conferencesandevents/ for further information on this session
- ✓ Contact doheny@buckscc.gov.uk to book a place
- ✓ BSCB procedure 'Managing Allegations against Staff and Volunteers Working with Children and Young People': www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/bscb-procedures/

Feedback from BSCB Safeguarding Conferences

During September, the BSCB ran 3 half day safeguarding conferences which were attended by 235 professionals from across a wide range of organisations.

Each half day session provided an opportunity for delegates to attend two workshops of their choice, with sessions available on a variety of different topics. This was a new format for the BSCB, and one which was designed to take on board feedback we had received, including that shorter learning opportunities can be more accessible for many professionals than full day sessions.

Overall, feedback was positive and it was clear people valued the opportunity to come together in a multi-agency setting and hear about a variety of topics. Many delegates mentioned that it was helpful to build in some networking time and to have a marketplace of services to visit. The half day conference format seemed popular so we will look to repeat this again in the future. There were a few suggestions about how we could make events like this even better and we will work on these for next time.



To do

- ✓ If there are topics you would like us to consider for a future learning event, please contact Matilda Moss (mmoss@buckscc.gov.uk)
- ✓ Remember to check the BSCB website or twitter feed for information on future events: www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/ or follow us on Twitter @Bucks_LSCB

Save the Date! Anti-Bullying and E-Safety Conference 2017



The BSCB will be hosting **two FREE conferences** in 2017 focusing on bullying, including racist and disability bullying, and cyber bullying. The events will also promote effective ways to respond to sexting, and provide attendees with advice and strategies to support both professionals and young people.

The first event, running on 22nd February, will be aimed at teachers and other professionals working with children and young people in Buckinghamshire. The second event, on 9th March, will be aimed at members of secondary school student councils. The sessions will equip young people with tools which can be shared and used within their schools to help tackle bullying.

Further information

- ✓ Bookings will open later in the year, please save the date keep an eye on our website / twitter feed for updates: www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/professionals/conferencesandevents/ or @Bucks_LSCB

BSCB Training Programme

The BSCB currently has spaces on the following specialist training courses:

- Working with Challenging Families, 16th November 2016 (Clare Foundation, Saunderton)
- Child Sexual Exploitation, 17th January 2017 (Booker Park School, Aylesbury) (limited spaces)
- Understanding Child Sexual Abuse, 26th January 2017 (YMCA, High Wycombe)

Further information

- ✓ For further details including an application form visit: www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/training/courses/



Did you know?

The BSCB website signposts to multi-agency safeguarding training provided by other agencies. This includes Domestic Abuse training provided by the County Council and courses within the WISH training programme delivered by Terrence Higgins Trust which focus on sexual health and relationships. Visit www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/training/external-training/ for further details.

If your agency delivers multi-agency training on a topic relating to safeguarding, please contact us and we would be pleased to add your details.

BSCB Priority: Child Exploitation

Managing and Responding to Sexting

Sexting [seks-ting] noun, digital technology. The sending of sexual photos, images, text messages, videos, or e-mails using any device that is able to share media or messages including mobiles, smart phones, tablets or laptops.

What the law says: Creating and sharing explicit images of a child under the age of 18 is illegal, even if those images are shared by the child themselves. If a young person is under 18 years old, they are breaking the law if they:

- Take an explicit photo or video of themselves or a friend
- Share an explicit image or video (even if it is shared with young people of a similar age)
- Possess, download or store an explicit image or video of a child, even if they have permission from the child to do so

Have you seen the Zipit app? This provides young people with alternative images to send in response to sexting requests.

However, if a young person has been found to be creating or sharing explicit images, the police can take the decision to record that crime without taking formal action against the child. This record wouldn't appear on future checks, unless the child is involved in other incidents which may indicate that they are a risk.

Have you seen the new **government guidance** *Sexting in Schools and Colleges*?

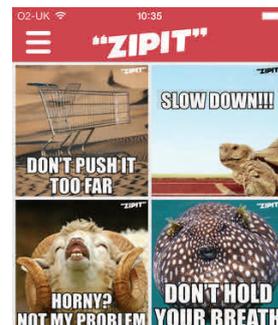
What are the risks: Many young people do not consider that once an image is shared, they lose all control over what happens to it. It can be passed on by the recipient to friends, shared on social media or downloaded. This puts the young person involved at risk of bullying, unwanted online attention, blackmail or more serious harm. The emotional distress or humiliation caused can also leave them at higher risk of self-harm or, in extreme cases, suicide.

Thames Valley Police survey results: A recent survey of 200 13 and 14 year olds, undertaken by Thames Valley Police indicated:

- One quarter of respondents have been sent a naked or sexual image
- Almost half said they started sexting in Year 7 – that's as young as 11 or 12 years old
- The most common reasons given for sexting was to 'take their relationship to the next level' (47%), pressure from a boyfriend/girlfriend (45%) or because they thought it would stop their boyfriend/girlfriend from 'dumping' them.

Further information

- ✓ **NSPCC** (including Zipit app): www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/sexting/
- ✓ **BSCB information** on staying safe online including new government sexting guidance: www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/professionals/e-learning/



Pokémon Go - Helping Children keep Safe

Pokémon Go is fast becoming the latest craze in the UK (and across the world). However the game has raised a number of safety concerns. The game is played on a mobile phone using 'augmented' reality, which is a cross between real life and the online world. Players need to find and 'catch' as many Pokémon (an animated character) as they can. The main risks for children playing are:

- In searching for Pokémon, players may be led into areas they are unfamiliar with or where they wouldn't normally go
- Players may be brought into contact with other players and could have little control over who they meet or where
- As the Pokémon can only be viewed on the phone screen, players are at increased risk of injury due to a lack of awareness of their surroundings (e.g. crossing a road without looking)

Further information

- ✓ **NSPCC** has developed guidance for parents, including how to support children to play the game safely: www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/pokemon-go-parents-guide/ This page includes a link to their NetAware app - a guide for parents on the most popular social networks, apps and games, including age restrictions, reviews and online safety.

Could you spot the signs of Modern Slavery?

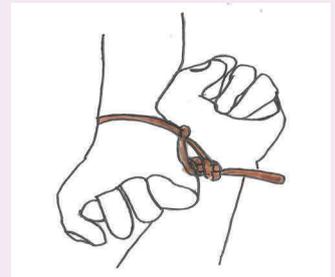
There are many forms of modern slavery including forced labour, human trafficking, forced marriage and forced prostitution. The Home Office suggests there are up to **13,000 people in the UK in modern slavery**.

Signs of slavery are often hidden which can make it hard to recognise victims around us.

- **Physical appearance:** Victims may show signs of physical or psychological abuse, look malnourished or unkempt, or appear withdrawn
- **Isolation:** Victims may rarely be allowed to travel on their own, seem under the control, influence of others, rarely interact or appear unfamiliar with their neighbourhood or where they work
- **Poor living conditions:** Victims may be living in dirty, cramped or overcrowded accommodation, and / or living and working at the same address
- **Few or no personal effects:** Victims may have no identification documents, have few personal possessions and always wear the same clothes. What clothes they do wear may not be suitable for their work
- **Restricted freedom of movement:** Victims have little opportunity to move freely and may have had their travel documents retained, e.g. passports
- **Unusual travel times:** They may be dropped off / collected for work either very early or late at night.
- **Reluctant to seek help:** Victims may avoid eye contact, appear frightened or hesitant to talk to strangers and fear law enforcers for many reasons, such as not knowing who to trust or where to get help, fear of deportation, fear of violence to them or their family.

Responding to Modern Slavery

- ✓ If you are worried someone may be the victim of modern slavery, or if you have information on modern slavery, call the Police on 101.
- ✓ If you are concerned about a child, please follow the usual procedures www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/concerned-about-child/professionals-report-a-concern/.
- ✓ **Call the Police on 999 if you think someone is at immediate risk of harm**



Further information:

- <https://modernslavery.co.uk/index.html>

Messages from the Improvement Board

Ofsted's 2 day Monitoring Visit

Following on from the Ofsted inspection in 2014, Buckinghamshire County Council recently underwent a two day monitoring visit to review progress. Feedback from the inspectors acknowledged that there has been **improvement** since the inspection, with progress noticeably accelerating in the last 6 months.

A number of themes were identified:

- All social workers knew their children and families well
- Partnership working has improved significantly and is having a positive impact on outcomes for children
- Thresholds in First Response and Swan are effective and there is evidence of staff using the threshold document to inform decision making
- The quality of recent assessments has improved but there is still some variability
- Recording and quality of practice has improved but still remains variable
- Management oversight and supervision is evident and impacting on outcomes for children, however it remains too task orientated in its recording in some areas
- Children are being seen and seen alone and there was evidence of good practice for some children with the use of creative tools to hear their voice
- All children have a plan but we need to improve their quality so they are effective in driving progress
- Managers are now using comprehensive performance information to drive improvements
- Audits are analysed and used to inform practice improvement
- More work is needed to ensure improvements are made in private fostering and LADO arrangements

Those areas identified for further improvement are being addressed through the Council's ongoing improvement plan. A further two day monitoring visit will take place at the end of November.

Further information

- ✓ Ofsted letter: https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/local_authority_reports/buckinghamshire/052_Monitoring%20visit%20of%20LA%20children%27s%20services%20as%20pdf.pdf