

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 7th 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: moss@buckscc.gov.uk

BSCB Priority: Voice & Journey of the Child

Summer Water Safety



Young children can be fascinated by water and splashing about is great fun. However, water can also be dangerous. In 2014, 38 children in the UK died from drowning and this included a child from Buckinghamshire. **With summer approaching, please help us to spread the message about how to keep children safe near water by displaying resources and engaging with parents and carers on this important safety issue.**

Did you know?

- Babies and toddlers drown silently in as little as 5cm of water; even rainwater collecting in a bucket can be a danger for a small child.
- In the last six years, 30 UK children under 10 have drowned in a hotel or villa pool abroad. This usually happens when they wander away from their parents and fall into the pool.
- Most drownings involving 2-3 year olds happen in the home or garden. The pool, pond and bath are the main risks for young children, and natural waters (rivers, sea, harbours etc) as they get older.

UK National Drowning Prevention Strategy

Drowning is a leading cause of accidental death causing 400 deaths a year across all age groups and 3 child deaths in Buckinghamshire over the last 6 years. In February 2016 the Government launched its first [National Drowning Prevention Strategy](#) which aims to reduce accidental drowning fatalities in the UK by 50% by 2026 and reduce risk amongst the highest risk populations, groups and communities.

Top tips for a safe and splashy summer

- Children need to be supervised around water. They might understand instructions but are likely to forget if they are having fun or are excited.
- It's safest to empty a paddling pool after use and securely cover water tanks and drains.
- On beaches, check when the tide will be high and make sure that you won't be cut off by the rising tide.
- Inflatable dinghies or lilos are a well-known hazard – it's easy for them to be blown out to sea.
- Teach children how to swim, but keep in mind that lessons don't make your child 'drown-proof.' A recent straw poll of 90 Year 6 children in a local school showed that 10% were unable to swim.
- Teach children water safety habits. Children should not run, push others under water, jump on others, dive or jump in shallow water or swim during lightning storms or other bad weather.

Further information:

- ✓ Royal Life Saving Society: www.rlss.org.uk/water-safety/
- ✓ Child Accident Prevention Trust: www.capt.org.uk/safety-advice/keeping-your-child-safe-drowning
- ✓ Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents: www.rospa.com/leisure-safety/water/advice/children-young-people/
- ✓ Water safety poster for public settings: www.watersafetykids.co.uk/pdfs/Water-Safety-Poster-A4.pdf
- ✓ Downloadable activities for children:
 - ◆ RNLI: <http://rnli.org/safetyandeducation/teachersandyouthleaders/resources/downloadresources/Pages/respect-the-water.aspx>
 - ◆ Canal and Rivers Trust: <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers/water-safety>

(Thanks to Watersplash Swim School for providing the photos for this page)

Help tackle Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Those campaigning against FGM often refer to the next few weeks as the 'cutting season'. This marks a time of year when many young girls are taken abroad to have FGM performed so that they can 'heal' over the long summer holiday period to try and avoid detection when they return to school.

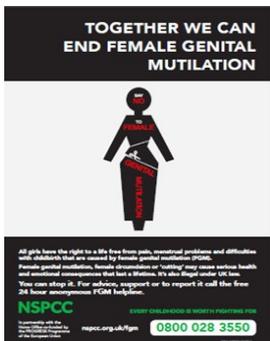
There is low reporting of FGM by victims or those at risk. **Frontline staff are therefore crucial in identifying those who are at risk of FGM.** Some particular signs to look out for ahead of the summer holidays include:

- Young girls attending for inoculations to travel to countries with high FGM prevalence
- Young girls talking about travelling home for 'special' ceremonies or rituals
- Families planning absence from school that would extend the summer holiday period.

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is any procedure that involves partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. FGM is considered child abuse in the UK and has been illegal for over 30 years.

Raising awareness of FGM – Resources

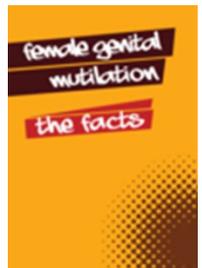
Help us raise awareness of FGM by displaying these resources in public facing settings such as GP surgeries, Children's Centres, nurseries and schools. All the resources can be downloaded using the links provided, or please contact cgorley@buckscc.gov.uk and we will provide you with copies free of charge.



- ✓ Female Genital Mutilation: The facts (leaflet on FGM): www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-genital-mutilation-leaflet
- ✓ Together we can end FGM poster and wallet card: www.gov.uk/government/publications/be-the-mother-who-ends-fgm-poster
- ✓ A statement opposing FGM (often known as the health passport) is available in 11 languages and can be taken abroad to explain the criminal status of FGM in the UK. It outlines what FGM is, the legislation and penalties involved and the help and support available. www.gov.uk/government/publications/statement-opposing-female-genital-mutilation

Further information:

- ✓ Government Statutory Guidance on FGM: www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation.
- ✓ Please encourage staff to complete the free on-line Home Office course available on the BSCB website: www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/training/e-learning/courses/



What to do if you think a child is at risk of FGM

If you think a child is currently **at risk of FGM** you should make a referral to Children's Social Care. A strategy meeting will be held to agree an appropriate course of action. If you are worried the risk is immediate, for example, a girl is about to be taken out of the country for FGM, please also call the Police on 999.

What to do if a child has undergone FGM

On the 31st October 2015 a new duty was introduced that requires health and social care professionals and teachers to report 'known' cases of FGM in girls aged under 18 to the police. For example, if a doctor sees that a girl aged under 18 has had FGM they will need to make a report to the police. Similarly if a girl tells her teacher that she has had FGM, the teacher will need to report this to the police. A referral should also be made to Children's Social Care.

Since the introduction of the duty no cases of FGM have been reported to the Police in Buckinghamshire. **Please ensure relevant frontline staff are aware of this duty.**

Further information:

- ✓ Information for professionals subject to the duty, including how to report: www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information
- ✓ Additional information for health care professionals: www.gov.uk/government/publications/fgm-mandatory-reporting-in-healthcare
- ✓ Mandatory reporting poster for healthcare professionals: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/472690/FGM_poster.pdf
- ✓ Making a referral to Children's Social Care: www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/professionals-report-a-concern/

BSCB Priority: Early Help, Thresholds & Neglect

Learning from Multi-Agency Audits: Children subject to a Child Protection Plan for Neglect

The BSCB has a role in quality assuring safeguarding practice within Buckinghamshire. As part of this, our Performance and Quality Assurance Sub Group (P&QA) commissioned an external audit of children subject to a Child Protection Plan for neglect. The audit took place in April 2016 and looked at a random sample of 25 children from 12 families who were subject to a Child Protection Plan for neglect. The key areas of focus for the audit included:

- Whether any Early Help interventions had been provided and the impact this had.
- Whether the Graded Care Profile or any other neglect tool was used, and if so the difference this made for the child.
- How effectively the voice of the child was taken into account.
- Whether the child protection plan was regularly reviewed.
- The quality of multi-agency information sharing and working.
- Whether clear SMART plans were in place and whether they were shared with parents.
- Whether threshold decisions were appropriate.
- The effectiveness of management oversight and supervision.

The audit was mainly conducted by accessing the records held by Children's Social Care, with the views of professionals across other agencies collected via a questionnaire.

Strengths

- Child protection plans were reviewed very regularly via conferences and core groups.
- There was generally a good perception of professional working together via the core group.
- The threshold for child protection planning was generally sound.
- There was a good level of attendance by parents at conferences and core groups.

Areas for development

- The recording of children's views by all professionals needed to be clearer.
- Child protection plans were not adequately describing the detail of the work being undertaken.
- Clearer roles should be set out for partner professionals in the child protection plan.
- Partner professionals should be prepared to challenge drift in planning more frequently.

A number of recommendations were made to address the areas for development, and these will now be monitored through the P&QA Sub Group. However, relevant professionals are encouraged to think about the strengths and areas for development in relation to their own practice.

The BSCB is currently embarking on a programme of work around neglect, and the findings from this audit will provide helpful evidence for this work. Following a multi-agency workshop on neglect at the end of June, we will be focusing over the next couple of months on writing a neglect strategy and action plan alongside planning a programme of Graded Care Profile training. **Look out for more detailed information in the next edition of our newsletter.**

Further information:

- ✓ Audit Learning Log: www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/about-the-bscb/audits-other-learning/

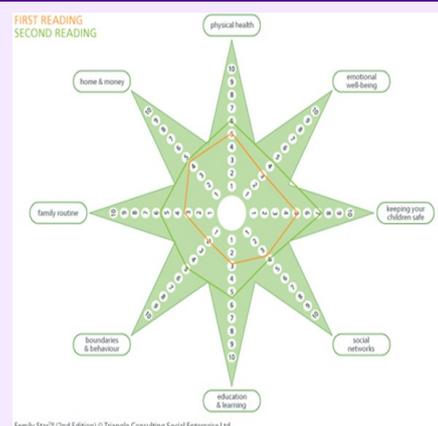
Have you booked a place on Outcomes Star™ training?

The Outcomes Star™ is a tried and tested tool for supporting and measuring change when working with young people and families. The BSCB has agreed it will be the Early Help assessment tool for Buckinghamshire and it forms a key part of our Early Help Strategy.

We are running a programme of Outcomes Star™ training which is free to all agencies. Visit our website for further information and to book a place: www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/blog/courses/family-outcome-star-assessment-training/

Could you become an Outcomes Star™ Trainer?

We are looking for more trainers so we can continue a robust programme of training next year. If you think you could help us deliver Outcomes Star™ training to a multi-agency audience please contact anmckenzie@buckscc.gov.uk to discuss further.



BSCB Priority: Child Exploitation

Learning from Multi-Agency Audits: Child Sexual Exploitation and the Swan Unit

The BSCB has a statutory duty, set out in Working Together 2015, to undertake an annual assessment of the effectiveness of the local response to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). As part of this, the BSCB commissioned an external audit of the Swan Unit, which took place in April 2016.

The audit reviewed the journeys of 17 children who had been referred for CSE concerns between August 2015 and March 2016. The key areas explored during the audit were:

- The timeliness of response.
- Whether strategy meetings and discussions were effective and had good multi-agency attendance.
- The transfer of cases from the Swan Unit to Social Care.
- Whether the voice of the child was evident, and the outcomes achieved for these children.
- Whether the file was opened as a result of intelligence.
- The appropriateness of threshold decisions.

The **Swan Unit** is a multi-agency team including professionals from Thames Valley Police, Children's Social Care, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust, R U Safe? and virtual representation from CAMHS. The unit works around CSE in order to assess risk for new cases, run strategy meetings, provide advice to professionals, undertake direct work with young people and coordinate information and intelligence in relation to CSE.

Findings:

The audit found the practice of the Swan Unit, and its work with children who have CSE concerns, was broadly very positive. It found that the Swan Unit provides a professional, dedicated, effective and balanced service.

Strengths

- Strategy discussions are producing good decisions and outcomes
- Partnership working is generally excellent at all levels of involvement
- The voice of the young person is being sought, recorded and taken into account in decision making
- Management decision making and rationales for next steps are effective and visible
- The outcomes achieved for young people were well judged, and the advice and information provided was clear and comprehensive

Recommendations for improvement

1. Consideration should be given to holding all strategy discussions within one working day of the receipt of the information of concern, whether or not there is an obvious immediate risk to the young person.
2. All strategy discussions should be chaired by a Social Care manager.
3. Health representation at all strategy discussions should be achieved as soon as possible.

Action taken

- 1 & 2. The Swan Unit now has an agreement with the MASH Manager to facilitate urgent strategy meetings with members of the SWAN team (social care, health and TVP) to ensure that they take place in a timely manner but still have the input from specialist services.
3. A new Swan Unit health representative has been recruited and will soon be in post.

Further information:

- ✓ Audit Learning Log: www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/about-the-bscb/audits-other-learning/



Community Information Sessions on CSE

Thanks to Thames Valley Police, Barnardo's R U Safe?, Children's Social Care, Buckinghamshire County Council Youth Services and the Buckinghamshire County Council Communications Team for supporting the 5 community awareness raising events we ran during June. Although attendance was lower than the last time we ran these sessions, we reached almost 80 parents and carers with vital information about how to spot the signs of CSE and what to do about it. Those who attended gave positive feedback on the events and our CSE Sub Group will now start planning our next wave of community awareness raising activity.

BSCB Priority: Improving the Effectiveness of the BSCB

Learning from Serious Case Reviews: Effective Challenge and Escalation

The BSCB conducts Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) where abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected; and either the child has died, or has been seriously harmed and there is cause for concern as to the way partners worked together to safeguard the child. The review process ensures we can learn lessons from what happened and where necessary make changes to improve outcomes for children.

At the end of May the BSCB met to sign off the SCR for Baby M. We are unable to publish this SCR at the moment due to an ongoing criminal inquiry. However, one of the findings from this review related to the use of challenge and escalation within and between agencies.

Baby M was a young baby who was admitted to A&E with injuries following an incident where one of his parents was alleged to have fallen whilst holding him. The explanation provided by the parent was accepted and Baby M was discharged home. Baby M was readmitted to hospital a few days later and was discovered to have numerous injuries of different ages. The overview author identified that during the period when agencies were working with this child and family, there were a number of occasions when the use of escalation could have been appropriately used to challenge the decisions that were being made.

This is not the first SCR in Buckinghamshire where escalation has been an area of concern. The SCR for Child F, published in January 2014, related to a teenage girl who took her own life. Amongst a number of other findings, the overview author identified a lack of awareness of, or a reluctance to use the escalation policy. This meant the poor responses of Children's Social Care were not challenged. When Ofsted inspected the BSCB in 2014, they also recommended that more work needed to be done to ensure that professionals working in all agencies are aware of and know how to use the escalation procedure.

Since then the BSCB has undertaken significant work in this area. For example we have relaunched our [Escalation Procedure](#) with clearer steps on the actions professionals should take if they want to challenge the actions or decisions of another professional. We undertook an audit around the use of the escalation procedure last summer and are continuing to gather information on the use of escalation through both single and multi-agency audit activity. When we undertake our Section 11 safeguarding audit with our Board partners later this year, we will also look more closely at how challenge and escalation is supported.

We have had good feedback from some Board partners that professionals are now more confident in escalating concerns, in particular that informal discussions between professionals are being used to effectively resolve differences in opinion before the formal escalation procedure needs to be instigated. However, the findings from Baby M are a reminder of how important it is that all those working with children and families feel able to air their views and constructively challenge the action of others. This includes cases where the difference of opinion is with professionals who are more senior or experienced.

Please make sure that all staff in your organisation are:

- ✓ aware of the Escalation Procedure and able to access it easily
- ✓ supported to manage intra and inter-agency disagreements in line with this procedure

Further Information:

- ✓ BSCB Escalation, Challenge & Conflict Resolution Procedure: www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/bscb-procedures/
- ✓ SCRs are published on the BSCB website. It is important that agencies share and discuss relevant findings with staff: www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/serious-case-review/
- ✓ Hear learning from other recent SCRs at our 3 safeguarding conferences in September (see p6) and keep an eye on our website for further learning sessions coming in the autumn: www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/training/short-awareness-raising-sessions/

Deprivation of Liberty Briefing Session

Don't forget we are currently running a series of short awareness raising sessions on Deprivation of Liberty. We still have a few spaces left on the Aylesbury session:

- Monday 25th July, 12-1.30pm – Mezzanine Room 3, County Offices, Aylesbury, HP20 1UA

For further information visit our website: www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/training/short-awareness-raising-sessions/. To book a place email cgorley@buckscc.gov.uk.

Together...Keeping Children Safe Safeguarding Conferences: September 2016

Join us at one of our 3 half-day conferences to find out more about how partners are working together in Buckinghamshire to keep children safe. These **free events** are open to all professionals working with children and young people in Buckinghamshire.

- **Tuesday 13th September, 2pm-5pm: Green Park, Aston Clinton**
- **Friday 23rd September, 10am-1pm: Wycombe Wanderers Football Club, High Wycombe**
- **Monday 26th September, 2pm-5pm: Kings Church, Amersham***

Delegates will have the opportunity to attend two workshop sessions, network with colleagues and visit our market place showcasing local services.

Conference Programme

1. Welcome and Introduction: Rachael Shimmin OBE, New Chief Executive, Buckinghamshire County Council (15 minutes)
2. Workshop session (60 minutes)
3. Networking coffee break and market place (30 minutes)
4. Workshop session (60 minutes)
5. Closing remarks (15 minutes)

Workshops

Delegates will be able to choose from a selection of interactive workshops that will be offered on the day on a first come, first served basis. Workshops topics will include:

- **E-Safety and cyber-enabled crime:** A session run by the BSCB E-Safety Sub Group in collaboration with the Safer Stronger Bucks Partnership Board on the nature of cyber-enabled crime and how we can keep our children safe online.
- **The Early Help Panel-1 year on:** A session to explore the impact and effectiveness of the Early Help Panel during its first year in operation, and to look ahead to the next 12 months.
- **Safeguarding unborn children and babies:** Hear learning from recent Buckinghamshire Serious Case Reviews, with a focus on effectively safeguarding unborn children and young babies. There will also be some time to think about implications and areas for improvement across agencies working in Buckinghamshire.
- **Why do children become Looked After?** Hear about research undertaken by Children's Social Care around the tipping point for children in Buckinghamshire to become looked after, and think about what this means for the way we work together to safeguard children.
- **Stopping the revolving door:** Hear research from Children's Social Care on the reasons behind repeat contacts and referrals to First Response and explore strategies to address this.
- **Promoting gender equality:** We hope to bring you a presentation from students at Aylesbury High School who are supporting the UN HeForShe campaign as part of their Citizenship GCSE. Work with them and pledge your support for embedding their message within your school or organisation.

*A confirmation of the workshops available at each venue will be on the BSCB website by the end of July. Please note a reduced number of workshops will be available at the Amersham event due to the constraints of the venue.

Further information and booking

- ✓ Further information: www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/professionals/conferencesandevents/
- ✓ To book a place contact cgorley@buckscc.gov.uk

Tell us what you think about Core Groups

The BSCB would like to hear the views of professionals who take part in Core Groups. **How effective do you think they are? How could they be improved?** Please take a couple of minutes to answer our very short survey. Your feedback will help us understand and address any identified issues. **The survey will remain open until the end of July** and can be accessed at: www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/FSV25KH