

Minutes

Meeting Name:	Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership Board (Children's)
Meeting Date & Time:	Monday 11 March 2024 13.00-15.00
Meeting Venue:	MS Teams Meeting

Attendees

Role	Organisation
Independent Chair	Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership
Partnership Manager	Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership
Professional Advisor (Children's)	Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership
Interim Director for Childrens Services	Children & Young Peoples Services, Suffolk County Council
Head of Safeguarding	Children & Young Peoples Services, Suffolk County Council
Assistant Director for Childrens Social Care and 0-19 Community Health	Children & Young Peoples Services, Suffolk County Council
Assistant Director for Childrens Social Care and Youth Justice	Children & Young Peoples Services, Suffolk County Council
Education Officer	Education, Children & Young Peoples Services, Suffolk County Council
Cabinet Member for Children & Young Peoples Services	Suffolk County Council
Deputy Cabinet Member for SEND	Suffolk County Council
Advanced Customer Support and Senior Leader	Department for Work and Pensions
Detective Chief Superintendent, Head of Crime	Suffolk Constabulary
Detective Superintendent	Suffolk Constabulary
Detective Chief Inspector Safeguarding Investigations	Suffolk Constabulary
Detective Chief Inspector Safeguarding Investigations	Suffolk Constabulary
Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children	Suffolk & Northeast Essex Integrated Care Board

Role	Organisation
Designate Nurse for Children in Care	Suffolk & Northeast Essex Integrated Care Board
Director for Children, Young People, Maternity, and safeguarding	Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board
Interim Designate Lead for Safeguarding Children	Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board
Head of Safeguarding	West Suffolk Hospital
Head of Safeguarding Families	Ipswich Hospital
Interim Deputy Director for Patient Safety	Norfolk & Suffolk Foundation Trust
Head of Service	Suffolk Probation
Safeguarding Manager	Suffolk Fire & Rescue Service
Safeguarding Manager	Suffolk Fire & Rescue Service
Service Manager (Suffolk & Norfolk)	Cafcass
Training, Safeguarding and Quality Standards Development Officer	Community Action Suffolk
Assistant Director	Border Force
Deputy Chief Executive	Babergh & Mid Suffolk Councils, (representing all district and boroughs today)
Assistant Director	Public Health
Head of Welfare	Eastern Education Group

In Attendance

Role	Organisation
Team and Business Change Lead	Customer First, Suffolk County Council

Apologies

Role	Organisation
Partnership Co-Ordinator	Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership
Cabinet Member for SEND and Education	Suffolk County Council
Chief Executive	Community Action Suffolk

Role	Organisation
CEO	Healthwatch Suffolk
Designated Doctor	ICB
Deputy Designated Nurse	Suffolk & Northeast Essex Integrated Care Board
Deputy Designated Nurse	Suffolk & Northeast Essex Integrated Care Board
Named GP for Safeguarding	Norfolk and Waveney integrated Care Board
Legal Services Manager	Suffolk County Council
Head of Service, Data and Intelligence	Children & Young Peoples Services, Suffolk County Council
Director of Nursing	Suffolk & Northeast Essex and Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Boards
Strategic Director	Borough and District Councils rep
Interim Chief Nurse	Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust
Learning and Development Manager	Ipswich Borough Council
Education Officer	Education, Children & Young Peoples Services, Suffolk County Council

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1.	<p>Minutes and actions from the last meeting held on 13 December 2023.</p> <p>The minutes from the last meeting were agreed and the actions were updated as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Filming on Wards- Following on from Lucy Letby, people have been filming consultants in hospitals across the UK which sparked concerns among local health professionals. National document circulated to Health senior leaders which explains when patients and families can and cannot record. No further action on this is needed in Suffolk at present as it hasn't become an issue locally. The guidance will be disseminated as/when required. • Border force – Border Force now have a Safeguarding Officer who follows a screening process covering medical and other concerns that, when identified, are passed on to social care for minors. All processes are continually reviewed with different inspections taking place, not just with facilities and processes, but with other agencies involvement. Improvements to the short-term facility at Felixstowe are progressing in the right direction, this has been a well-documented issue for some time, so Board were pleased to note this progress. • Gender and safeguarding – Confirmed Police will always investigate any inflammatory and potentially harmful comments by politicians/local councillors. The Board were satisfied with Police's response to these incidents, and this is now a closed matter.

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2.	<p>Live Updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Together – Working Together (WT) proposes changes to local partnerships which must be implemented by December 2024. As we are an all-age partnership, it will have an impact on how the Partnership carries out its statutory responsibilities to vulnerable adults. This is an information only item for this meeting and a fuller update will be provided at the June Board following Executive Board discussions and decisions. It was requested that the slot in June covers the wider updates to arrangements signalled in WT such as those for children in need, are also covered in June. • Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) – Was hoping to be able to share more concrete feedback with the Board now the inspection has finished, but final findings haven’t been shared with Probation at this stage (anticipated to be published April/May). Probation thanked colleagues who supported with the inspection and noted that a lot of positives came out around safeguarding such as strong system working and relationships, particularly in MASH and MAPPA. Case work and other internal gaps within Probation came out as requiring improvement. To schedule for June Board for a fuller update <p>Actions/Decisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Together – Schedule 30 minutes to this item at the June Board, with input from statutory partners covering the wider changes to Working Together. • Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) – Probation to bring the findings of the inspection to the June Board.
Agenda Items for Discussion	
3.	<p>Early Help - changes to ways of working and new project group This item has been re-scheduled to June due to absence.</p> <p>Actions/Decisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put on the forward plan and invite Early Help Project Group rep to the June Board.
4.	<p>CYPS SEND Inspection Headlines from the recent SEND inspection were shared with Board on behalf of the Local Area Partnership (LAP) for Suffolk which consists of the two ICBs and SCC.</p> <p>The inspection found widespread systemic failings. The LAP was unable to demonstrate sufficient improvements despite a significant amount of activity that is underway building the foundations we need to achieve positive outcomes. The inspection recognised the work already underway, but Suffolk has yet to deliver on this.</p> <p>The key areas identified for improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many children and young people with SEND become NEET. • Transitions between settings and services is not consistently good. • Academic outcomes for those with SEND limit opportunities. • Families are not aware of what to do outside of school. • Families need more access to some services, such as early intervention for mental health. • Communication is poor and co-production is not embedded. • Waiting times are too long. <p>The positives identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEND training that schools receive is helpful. • Helpful early intervention to support schools.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High needs funding to schools to support children and young people with SEND without the need for an EHC plan. • Several health teams support families sensitively and successfully meaning families receive strong support at a very difficult time. • Dynamic Support Register transitions. • Many providers, i.e. schools and colleges, praise their relationship with the LAP. • Social care teams are effective. <p>What needs to improve rapidly before the re-inspection due in approx. 15 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work effectively with parent and carers groups who voice concerns. • Create more specialist provision to prevent out of authority placements. • Ensure sufficient educational psychology resource. • Improve the quality and timeliness of EHCPs. • Improve the quality and timeliness of annual reviews. <p>Two areas for priority action were given which is standard practice by the inspectorates for local systems given the lowest ranking:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The LAP must work more collaboratively and effectively to improve strategic planning. This needs to deliver systems with measurable impact which will create better experiences and outcomes for children and young people with SEND. In particular, they should urgently improve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The robustness and impact of governance. • The rigor of quality assurance approaches so that these give the information leaders require to address weaknesses effectively. • The frequency and quality of multi-agency working. • The management of transitions and planning for adulthood for children and young people, starting in the earliest years, and across services in education, health and care, including putting steps in place to reduce NEET, so that they are better supported to lead fulfilling lives. 2. Local area partnership leaders should cooperate to take urgent action to improve the timeliness and quality of the statutory EHC plan processes, EHC plan needs assessments, and EHC plans and annual reviews, particularly using annual reviews to amend the quality of existing EHC plans where required. This should ensure that plans meaningfully capture the views and aspirations of children and young people with SEND and their families, so that they get the right support at the right time. <p>Discussion at the Board centered around how partners can support the improvements needed across the Suffolk system. Moving into adulthood was highlighted by many Board members as a key area that requires more work on multi-agency pathways, particularly in health. It was felt there would be benefit in coming together to understand what is already in existence as we are not, as a system, joined up as well as we can be. An audit to identify gaps was suggested as a necessary step towards bridging gaps.</p> <p>We know that families and children are not getting what they need. Cabinet Members are moving as fast as they can. Suffolk submitted a Priority Action Plan last week and the Strategic Improvement Board has met recently to progress this.</p> <p>It was suggested a gap analysis would be helpful so we can clearly see where we need extra resources, and this also helps with applying for additional funding in the right areas.</p> <p>We must also be considering what more we can do to support children much earlier to keep them safely within their existing placements in main stream education, preventing a breakdown in placements. This requires closer working with schools and education settings, and strengthening</p>

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	<p>our relationships as part of our SEND improvement work is vital. In Suffolk we benchmark lower across measures for children with additional needs.</p> <p>It was raised that we should consider how we effectively communicate our actions and priorities across partners so we can collectively achieve good outcomes for children.</p> <p>Actions/Decisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LAP to inform SSP of any actions from this inspection can be carried over into the SSP Business Plan to support multi-agency buy in and progress against delivery.
5.	<p>A focus on children’s data in Suffolk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer Service data and throughput – A presentation delivered by Customer First (CF) giving an overview of the front door for social care in Suffolk, and the associated teams that are first, second, and third line in responding to contacts. CF are the first point of social care for Suffolk and handle around 10,000 contacts monthly through calls, webchats, and via the online portals. CF aim to resolve as much as possible at initial call by offering information, advice, guidance, signposting, and helping people to remain independent: this is achievable for around 50% of contacts. Demand is increasing. The webchat only accounts for 4% of contacts coming in. The webchat opening hours been extended to 8am-5pm (previously 9am-4pm). The webchat is always responded to by a person rather than robotics due to the level of risk associated with incoming queries. Wait times are starting to reduce, this has been an ongoing issue for some time, however CF are now almost fully staffed (3 team members down from a total of 26). Majority of referrals through portal do go through to MASH (usually professionals) more often than not, whereas calls tend to not as much as often volunteers or public. An average of 265 of calls coming in to CF are passed through to MASH as safeguarding concerns, 38% are signposting to other services (often pointing to legal advice), 20% are already open to an allocated team. <p>It was noted that there is also webchat available in the MASH which can be useful for people like teaching staff who need to use it whilst they are in lessons. We see a difference in customer experience in terms of the portal and telephone line; the majority of people are more satisfied with a telephone conversation compared to portal experience and at a future date, feel that this should be revisited collectively about how we open up channels to receive concerns.</p> <p>Board felt this was a useful and informative update. It was suggested CF attends Board 6 monthly due to the important key themes and updates which was welcomed by all.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CYPS Social Care Data Update – The data lead was unable to attend the meeting, so this item was deferred. <p>Actions/Decisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer Service data and throughput - CF to attend SAB 6 monthly to share key updates from the front door. CYPS Social Care Data Update – Data lead to give an update on the Latest CYPS Social Care Data at the June Board.
6.	<p>Update on Case Reviews Updated on the recent children’s cases within the SSP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-accidental injury in under 1’s has been a common abuse type arising in a number of cases in the past 6 months.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two high-profile cases with reviews open currently ██████████ which is due for publication this Spring, and ██████████ case which is being led by central Bedfordshire with Suffolk input, and unlikely to be published until after the trial in October 2024). <p>Top themes emerging from recent cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic abuse in the home. Inadequate management of risk. Lack of engagement with men/fathers in the home. Barriers to sharing information. The need for better holistic working. <p>The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel has recently published its Annual Report and several learning themes highlighted in this corresponded with the Suffolk picture such as whole family approach, focusing on risks outside the family home (e.g., exploitation / gangs), and critical thinking / professional challenge. The full Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panels Annual Report can be viewed here.</p>
7.	<p>Update on Right Care, Right Person</p> <p>Suffolk Constabulary attended the meeting and shared an update on how the RCRP model is working in Suffolk. Phase 1 'Concern for Welfare' began in October 2023. The Constabulary have reviewed 3828 calls under the new RCRP policy. In 34% of incidents a police unit was dispatched, 208 were assessed as emergency police response required. Callers requested 47 appeals in the first 4 weeks, but this has declined significantly over time.</p> <p>Two thirds of calls come from the public. There is not a noticeable difference in calls, how they are graded, and how they are responded to (1%). The data from March will be able to tell us more about agencies requesting and the response/impact around that. The Ambulance Trust are the greatest referrer to the Constabulary, to a lesser extent NHS 111, and then social care – numbers from agencies are very small.</p> <p>Most calls are adult related opposed to child focused. AM provided some examples of calls in a day.</p> <p>Phase 2 'Walkout from Healthcare' will begin this month (delayed from January). It will follow the same evaluation process as phase 1. From examination of 2022 data, it is anticipated that police will not attend 126 incidents over 12 months.</p> <p>It was queried that, following the devastating incident in Norfolk and the pausing of RCRP in their area, is there any learning that has been shared with Suffolk? The Constabulary advised they are in contact with Norfolk's RCRP Board and the ACC. Norfolk is the only county in the region which has not gone live with at least one phase of RCRP because of that incident. Norfolk wanted to invite some additional external scrutiny prior to going live, but there is no learning that has been shared currently around this, although anticipating there will be in time.</p> <p>While police may not be required to attend some incidents, they will attend with another lead agency if there is a heightened risk in order to help deal with something in a safe way.</p> <p>It was noted that Suffolk has had sensible and cautious implementation and the Chair commented that it has benefitted from a consistent person in role overseeing this across the piece.</p> <p>Board queried if the scripted questions in the control room ask if the caller has children for whom they have parental responsibility or if there are children in the home when considering if police attendance is required. Additionally, how do Police pass on information to other partners if the call didn't require police attendance but there is intelligence which may add to a developing picture of risk in the home for other agencies such as health or social care. The Constabulary advised that the voice of the child is a big focus in the force and is central to gathering information. This is audited to ensure it is part of regular practice. The SSP added that having audited some cases where issues have potentially</p>

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	<p>emerged from RCRP, what was identified was that in an instance where police did not attend but felt there was risk information that needed to be handed on, Police were calling partners to share this. For example, this was evident in a case where someone had mental health concerns and potential suicide ideation and were advised by the call handler to dial 111 option 2. Police also passed this information on to other agencies in case the caller didn't reach out to 111.</p> <p>Actions/Decisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Constabulary to provide SAB with an update on Phase 2 in June.
8.	<p>Partnership Task & Finish Groups</p> <p>The Children's Learning and Improvement Group (LIG) generates a number of Task & Finish Groups (T&F) each quarter which focus on specific areas of work in the partnership space that are seen as high priority or aligned to case review learning.</p> <p>The SSP provided an update on what has happened in the T&F Groups this quarter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Men in the home - A group of 16 multi-agency professionals met to discuss their views / where we go with this work. Identified there is a significant amount of work taking place, particularly in CYPS, as working with men/father is an ongoing issue in social work cases. The SSP is currently collating this information across partners and pulling it together into an action plan, alongside developing guidance / training recommendations (such as the Fatherhood Institute). The group is due to reconvene to discuss and agree how this action plan will be implemented and the guidance/training cascaded appropriately. Professional curiosity – the purpose of this T&F Group was to find a shared definition of what we mean by professional curiosity as it comes up repeatedly in case learning to show that professionals are not being curious enough, or they don't have the capacity to be. Version 6 is available and was approved by the Adults and Children's LIGs in January. Board agreed to sign this off today and this will now be published on the SSP website. Learning & Development subgroup – A permanent subgroup under the LIG where training leads from the statutory partners come together to identify potential gaps in training, and to promote better multi-agency join up/attendance on safeguarding training.
Standing and Information Items	
	<p>Lived experience / Sharing good practice</p> <p>A standing item for partners to share lived experiences of children and young people they are working with, or invite them along personally, and to share good practice.</p> <p>CYPS shared a success story of a recently produced short video which features a father sharing his story of reunification with his child. It is an excellent example of reunification work, partnership working, and co-production with the father and his family. It showcases how reunification can be successful, safe, and in a child's best interest when done at the right time with the right support. The father is happy for the video to be used by professionals. CYPS will make contact to request its use in this forum for sharing at the June Board.</p> <p>The Chair updated Board on a case of a 10-year-old boy who contracted chicken pox and tragically died through complications due to being immune suppressed and over period of 3 days of increasing risk, his needs were not understood by health professionals. His death was wholly avoidable and has been through an inquest and other investigations. The Chair is visiting the family jointly with their Child Death Review Nurse before Easter for them to share their story and inform future learning.</p> <p>The SSP encouraged Board members to come forward with any children, young people, or families who they are in contact with who might like to share their story with the Board to inform learning, or who may wish to co-produce with us on our priority areas of work in the Business Plan. The way we run the Board can adapt to suit the needs of the person attending, such as changing to in-person in</p>

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	<p>a more friendly and less professional environment, enabling them to pre-record their story, or changing the timings to accommodate as required.</p> <p>Actions/Decisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CYPS to share fathers' video with the SSP for sharing at June's Board. • All partners to share contacts with the SSP of any children/families/young people who may wish to share their story or co-produce on work with the Board.
	<p>Suffolk's multi-agency Issues Log</p> <p>This is a 6 monthly agenda item and is an opportunity for partners to raise new issues for the partnership's engagement / response. The Issues Log is a focused log which pulls out the key, top level multi-agency safeguarding issues in Suffolk that need to be collectively worked on to achieve a positive result for the people of Suffolk and is not intended as a duplicate place for risks and issues within each single agencies risk logs. It also captures single agency issues which the wider system is concerned about and are not reaching a solution within existing partnership escalation mechanisms. No new issues were raised today, nor any concerns for the current open issues on the log.</p> <p>Actions/Decisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners to email the SSP with any issues they would like to log.
9.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>There was no further business to report.</p>