

Introduction

The purpose of this summary is to highlight the changes made to Working Together March 2015 in relation to Working Together March 2013. To review the whole guidance please follow the link: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf

In Working Together 2015 document the following changes have been made:

- Referral of allegations against those who work with Children
- Incidents 'notifiable' that involve care of a child or young person.
- Whistleblowing guidance
- Child Death Reviews
- Serious Case Review definition of Serious Harm.
- CSE reporting by LSCB
- Information sharing
- Other changes.

1. Changes to the Referral of allegations against those who work with children.

- The role of LADO has been changed – the 2015 Working Together document does not refer to LADO as a role but clarifies the position as '**Local Authorities should have designated a particular officer, or team of officers (either as part of multi-agency arrangements or otherwise)**'.
- Future appointments to the role of designated officer or team of officers should be qualified - social workers, unless an existing LADO is moving jobs between authorities.
- Allegations against those who work with children should be managed through children's social care. The purpose of this is to provide synergy between work with children and those against whom allegations have been made.

2. Notifiable incidents involving the case of a child. Notifiable incidents have now been added to the document).

- A child died (including cases of suspended suicide), and abuse or neglect is known or suspected;
- A child has been seriously harmed and abuse or neglect is known or suspected;
- A looked after child has died (including cases where abuse or neglect is now known or suspected;) or
- A child in a regulated setting or service has died (including cases where abuse or neglect is not known or suspected.)
- The local should report any incident that meets the above criteria to Ofsted and relevant LSCB within 5 days of becoming aware about the incident.

3. Whistleblowing

WT15 sets out a new expectation that all organisations that have safeguarding responsibilities must have internal whistleblowing policies in place. These should be:

- Integrated into training and codes of conduct.
- Training and the culture of the organisation should mirror the promotion of the welfare of children and safeguarding.
- The Whistle blowing policies and procedures should reflect Sir Robert Francis's Freedom to speak up review.
- The 'Freedom to speak' should be referenced in staff training, codes of conduct and the culture of the organisation should reflect the safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child as a priority.

4. Child Death Reviews

WT15 defines preventable child deaths as those in which ***modifiable factors may have contributed to the death.***

- The specific these factors are defined as: those, where, if actions could be taken through national or local interventions, the risk of future child deaths could be reduced.
- This replaces: These factors are defined as those which, by means of national or locally achievable interventions, could be modified to reduce the risk of future child deaths.

5. Seriously harmed

WT15 provides a definition of '*seriously harmed*'. LSCBs are expected to decide to carry out a SCR.

Paragraph (1) (e) a serious case is one where:

- (a) abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected;
- (b) and (b) either—
 - (i) the child has died; or
 - (ii) the child has been seriously harmed and there is cause for concern as to the way in which the authority, their Board partners or other relevant persons have worked.
 - (iii) "Seriously harmed" in the context of paragraph 18 below and regulation 5(2) (b) (ii), but is not limited to, cases where the child has sustained, as a result of abuse or neglect, any or all of the following:
 - a. a potentially life-threatening injury;
 - b. serious and/or likely long-term impairment of physical or mental health or physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.
- (c) This definition is not exhaustive. In addition, even if a child recovers, this does not mean that serious harm cannot have occurred. LSCBs should ensure that their considerations on whether serious harm has occurred are informed by available research evidence.

6. CSE specific reporting by LSCB

The high profile of CSE has been reflected in new expectations of LSCB boards to provide regular assessments and outcome of these assessments. These are new expectations on LSCB annual reports, to reflect government decisions relating to Child Sexual Exploitation on page 70.

The guidance requires LSCBs boards to:

- Conduct regular assessments on the effectiveness of Board partners' responses to child sexual exploitation and include in the [annual] report information on the outcome of these assessments.
- The assessments should include an analysis of how the LSCB partners have used their data to promote service improvement for vulnerable children and families, including in respect of sexual abuse.
- The guidance requires additional information from LSCBs about children 'missing from care'. The report should include appropriate data on children missing from care, and how the LSCB is addressing the issue (to improve outcomes).

- Where the LSCB has a secure establishment within its area, the report should include a review of the use of restraint within that establishment and the findings of the review should be reported to the Youth Justice Board.

7. Information sharing

Information Sharing WT15 is on page 17 information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2015) Supports front line practitioners, working in child or adult services, who have to make decisions about sharing personal information on a case by case basis. The advice includes the seven golden rules for sharing information effectively and can be used to supplement local guidance and encourage good practice in information sharing.

8. Other changes in brief

- Channel panels WT2015 reflects duties set out in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 regarding Channel panels, to come in to force on 12 April 2015. Page 19.
- Child protection for foreign national children WT2015 includes change to reflect the publication of new guidance on Working with foreign authorities on child protection cases and care orders (published July 2014). Page 23
- Children returning home from care WT2015 makes explicit the requirements and expectations for continued assessment, planning, support and review for children who return home where this is both planned and unplanned. (See flowchart on Page 51).
- Probation WT215 Reflects the structural changes to probation under the Transforming Rehabilitation Programme and the findings of HM Inspectorate of Probation thematic inspection on protecting children. Page 60.
- Special Educational Needs / Educational Health and Care Plans include guidance with the new SEN provisions following the Children and Families Act 2014. Page 94.
- Young Carers and Parent Carers – WT2015 includes the new duties to assess young carers and parent carers, as introduced in the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Care Act 2014. Page 97 – 98
- Schools WT2015 clarifies that the guidance applies in its entirety to all schools, including independent schools, academies and free schools, who all have duties in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils, consistent with Keeping Children Safe in Education.