



#### **In this issue:**

This edition features details of a **safeguarding conversation** held in February—see the 6-step briefing on pages 2-3.

See page 4 for details on how to give feedback **following child protection conferences**, and a reminder about **information sharing**.

Read on for details of developments in **Somerset’s safeguarding arrangements**.

### **Somerset Safeguarding Children Arrangements**

Arrangements for safeguarding children in England are changing and the Somerset Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) will be replaced by new safeguarding arrangements later this year.

These new arrangements, which will be implemented from October 2019, outline how more emphasis will be placed on considering outcomes for children and young people, and the impact of work that organisations in Somerset do to keep children safe, well and achieving their aspirations.

Safeguarding activity will scrutinise work with children and families, hear their voices, and share learning so that we can improve together.

The process to report concerns about a child remains the same, and the operational activity within organisations does not change. Further information about the new safeguarding arrangements will be available as they develop.

**Caroline Dowson**  
**SSCB Business Manager**  
**Somerset Safeguarding Children Board**



# SAFEGUARDING CONVERSATION

## 6-STEP BRIEFING

### 1. The Background

The **safeguarding conversation** in February focused on a family of three children; one at primary school, one at secondary school and one now an adult. The two younger children have additional needs.

### 2. Safeguarding Concerns

The family came to the attention of services because of the younger children's autism. The parents' first language is not English, but this was not experienced as a barrier and no interpreting services were needed.

### 3. The Incident

Concerns about the family were escalated following an incident of **domestic abuse**. After a strategy discussion and Section 47 enquiries, the children were made the subjects of Child Protection Plans at an Initial Child Protection Conference, in the category of **emotional abuse**.

Progress has subsequently been made, and the case has been stepped down to Child in Need.

### 4. The Review

'**Safeguarding conversations**' are a series of workshops that are conducted in the spirit of Appreciative Inquiry to enable the Board members to highlight key learning points from practice which can be used to inform and improve services and practice.

They take the form of an **informal discussion** between two Board members and the practitioners involved in one specific case and offer a rare opportunity for a group of practitioners to **reflect on one area of work**, to identify what has worked well, what could be improved and to highlight issues they have encountered to the Board.

## 5. Strengths noted in this case

- The team around the family adopted a **positive, respectful, strengths-based approach** from the beginning.
- The children's **voices and experiences** were kept to the fore, and significant efforts made to understand the experience and views of two children who could not engage verbally.
- There was a **consistency of workers**.
- **Respectful and non-judgmental engagement** with the father supported the process and enabled him to engage at a very early stage.
- The child protection plan was based on a **thorough assessment** of strengths and risks.
- The EHA and safeguarding consultation lines were experienced as **helpful** by the schools, as were the regular DSL briefings.

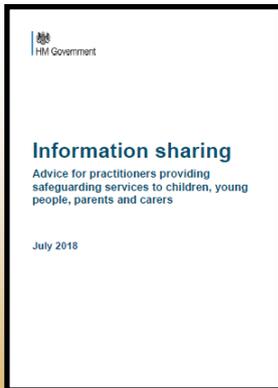
## 6. Key learning points

- A **strength based approach**, involving all members of the family, is a good basis on which to build a sound and effective child protection plan.
- It is important to keep the **views and experiences** of all the children in mind, whether or not they have additional needs.
- Risk management, particularly in cases of domestic abuse, may result in **families being drawn too early into statutory processes** instead of being supported at the level of child in need.
- There is some **confusion about the inter-relationships** between the various structures and processes which have been introduced in Somerset to support families and professionals, such as Team Around the School, One Teams (and their equivalents), Team Around the Child. This may also include misunderstandings over the need for **consent to share information**.

See **page 4** for advice about information sharing.



# Things you should know



## Information Sharing Seven Golden rules

1. Data protection is not a barrier to information sharing
2. Be open and honest
3. Seek advice
4. Share with consent where appropriate
5. Consider safety and well being
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure
7. Keep a record

For more information see the government guidance [Information sharing](#), or the South West Child Protection Procedures (SWCPP) chapter on [Information Sharing](#).

## Professionals' feedback for child protection conferences

We value feedback from all professionals who attend Child Protection Conferences. Your feedback can help us to learn and improve the way in which we run conferences and ensure that we make plans that are clear and outcome focused for the families we work with.

We would be grateful if you could click on the link below and complete the feedback form. There is no need to register, just complete the form and click Finish.

[www.somersetconsults.org.uk/consult.ti/CPConferenceProfessionals/answerQuestionnaire?qid=5359043](http://www.somersetconsults.org.uk/consult.ti/CPConferenceProfessionals/answerQuestionnaire?qid=5359043)

Thank you for your help. Your feedback is really important to us as we will use this information you give us to try to improve the services we provide.

Responses will be analysed and themes identified to help us improve the way we run conferences and to ensure that we are making clear, outcome focused plans with and for the families we work with.

**Jane Sprague**

**Service Manager Safeguarding, Care & Quality Assurance**

## Contact the SSCB!

Your feedback is welcome, please send to [lscb@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:lscb@somerset.gov.uk).

The SSCB has a circulation list to send alerts when new newsletters or learning bulletins are published. If you do not currently receive these alerts and would like to sign up to the list, visit our website [sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk](http://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk)

