



The Protection of Children in England: A Progress Report

This report was published by Lord Laming on 12th March. It was commissioned by Ed Balls following the Joint Inspectors' report into the death of Baby P in Haringey.

The report evaluates the practice that has been developed since the publication of the report of the Independent Statutory Inquiry following the death of Victoria Climbié. It identifies the barriers that prevent good practice becoming standard practice and makes 58 recommendations for action to be taken for improvements in safeguarding children across the country. The recommendations include:

- The establishment of a National Safeguarding Delivery Unit (NSDU) to report directly to the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Families, Children and Young People
- The introduction of new statutory targets for safeguarding and child protection alongside the existing statutory attainment and early years targets as quickly as possible.
- The National Indicator Set should be revised with new national indicators for safeguarding and child protection developed for inclusion in Local Area Agreements for the next Comprehensive Spending Review.
- DH must clarify and strengthen the responsibilities of Strategic Health Authorities for the performance management of Primary Care Trusts on safeguarding and child

protection. Formalised and explicit performance indicators should be introduced for Primary Care Trusts.

- All Directors of Children's Services who do not have direct experience or background in safeguarding and child protection must appoint a senior manager within their team with the necessary skills and experience.
- Ofsted should revise the inspection and improvement regime for schools giving greater prominence to how well schools are fulfilling their responsibilities for child protection.
- The Care Quality Commission, HMI Constabulary and HMI Probation should review the inspection frameworks of their frontline services to drive improvements in safeguarding and child protection in a similar way to the new Ofsted framework
- Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission, HMI Constabulary and HMI Probation should take immediate action to ensure their staff have the appropriate skills, expertise and capacity to inspect the safeguarding and child protection elements of frontline services. Those Ofsted Inspectors responsible for inspecting child protection should have direct experience of child protection work.

Evaluating New Local Safeguarding Children Boards

The Centre for Child and Family Research (CCFR) and the Centre for Research in Social Policy (CRSP), both based at Loughborough University, are undertaking a joint research project designed to evaluate the effectiveness of new Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs).

The evaluation, funded by the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Department of Health, will explore the structures and processes adopted by LSCBs to fulfil their core functions, whilst examining if new structures and processes have overcome identified weaknesses of Area Child Protection Committees (ACPCs) and promoted co-operation between services responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

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