



The Merton Safeguarding Children Board is a statutory body established under Section 13 of the Children Act 2004 and the statutory guidance in Chapter 3 of Working Together 2015. The Independent Chair of the MSCB is Keith Makin.

The objectives of the Board as defined by statute are:

- (a) to coordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area; and
- (b) to ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes¹.

The MSCB has a well established Business planning process, with the Business Plan receiving regular scrutiny at each meeting of the Board's Business Implementation Group. The last update received by the Board at its annual Away Day in March 2015 is attached as an appendix.

Key areas of focus in the plan over the period of this report have been:

- quality assurance and challenge to improve direct safeguarding with children, young people and their parents in all local agencies,
- engaging with and listening to children and young people,
- continuous learning and feedback,
- better understanding of our local needs, including children with particular vulnerabilities², with particular emphasis on child sexual exploitation (CSE emphasis added Nov 2014)
- greater involvement of schools and early years services as places where children and young people are best safeguarded,
- increasing understanding about chronic neglect and working to safeguard children who are particularly vulnerable; and
- better communication to the local community and to practitioners about safeguarding.

One of the strategic priorities of the Board is increased and effective engagement with Faith groups and BAME communities in Merton and safeguarding issues. **Our goal is to ensure that the Board is to support Faith groups and BAME communities to ensure that all Merton children are safeguarded and are empowered to achieve their full potential as citizens of a diverse and multi-cultural community.**

We realise that the MSCB cannot do this alone and must work in partnership in order to achieve this goal. Partnership implies mutuality both in terms of understanding, communication and information sharing. The Board also understands that an important part of its role is to listen to and learn from

¹ Children Act 2004 Section 14

² *e.g. domestic violence, sexual exploitation, parental mental ill-health, neglect, alcohol and substance misuse, abusive cultural practices,*

all sections of Merton's diverse religious and ethnic communities; we want the partnership to be meaningful.

My purpose is to introduce myself as the Merton Safeguarding Children Board Manager and to continue the process of engagement.

The MSCB offers a wide variety of multi-agency training on a variety of safeguarding issues which is free to voluntary organisations and community groups.

The MSCB is also available to offer advice and support to ensure that organisations and groups have policies in place to ensure that they are fully compliant with relevant legislation regarding safeguarding.

My name is Paul Bailey, I am the MSCB Business and Development Manager and I am based in the Civic Centre and can be contacted on 0208 545 4866 or at MertonLSCB@merton.gov.uk.