

Annual report of the Merton Safeguarding Children Board

2013/14



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1.0 Chair's Introduction

With my appointment as a new Chair and with a new interim Business Manager in place at the start of the 2014/15 municipal year we actively took the decision to delay the production of the 2013-14 report to enable me to review with the Board its effectiveness and to develop, agree and implement changes to the constitution. This work was completed in the autumn 2014 following which this report was completed. It therefore covers the period April 2013 to December 2014. A new Annual Report will be completed at the end of 2015.

I started my role as MSCB Chair in April 2014 with an induction programme which included overseeing the Annual Quality Assurance Review of all SCB agencies Section 11 returns. This was an enormously valuable exercise. The DCS and I met with local health agencies including the CCG and the acute trusts, with CSF services: children's social care, education, youth justice; with the Police and Safer Merton; with adult services and the Mental Health Trust. We will be taking the learning from this into our QA process for 2015 by including peer challenge in the process.

An early highlight of 2014 was our MSCB conference January 2014 which had a focus on adolescence reflecting some of the issues arising out of our 2013 Serious Case Review. It was an early indication for me of the commitment of local SCB partners and the engagement of the frontline staff across agencies in working together to protect and safeguard young people of all ages.

During 2014 the MSCB and Children's Trust also undertook a self evaluation of our work using the Ofsted Single Inspection Framework. We noted the board strengths as:

- Senior representation and engagement from agencies
- A Lay member and a Young Member linking with the Children in Care Council
- A strong performance focus including the annual QA process
- Financial contributions from all relevant partners
- Annual conference and comprehensive training programme.

Our agreed areas of focus included:

- Building on the annual QA meetings and multi-agency auditing to further strengthen peer challenge;
- Implementing new sub board structures with a stronger QA sub board;
- Reviewing our Board infrastructure to support the board's extended role under Working Together 2013;
- Ensuring we maintain our focus on the voice of the child;
- Learning the lessons of SCRs nationally and from our local SCR and any learning reviews;
- Strengthening our links with the adult safeguarding board; and
- Ensuring we are sighted on the issues for looked after children placed in our boroughs by others as well as maintaining our focus on Merton LAC.

Merton Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report

The national focus on Safeguarding issues has continued throughout the year with the publication of the Rotherham Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation and heightened awareness of the Prevent agenda with young people being groomed to participate in wars over seas and terrorist activities at home. We concluded the year by undertaking a self evaluation of our work on Children at Risk of Sexual Exploitation. We also participated in a peer review with our neighbours Sutton, Richmond and Kingston and contributed to a Pan London review overseen by the London Safeguarding Children's Board. The learning from all these processes will inform our 2015 work programme.

To ensure we are driving the changes needed and maximising our impact we concluded 2014 by establishing our Business Improvement Group to oversee the work programme in detail and to provide additional peer challenge. Thus we will start 2015 in a good place to deliver our ambitions for all children and young people, but in particular those who are vulnerable and at risk.

I would like to close by thanking all Merton SCB agencies for their hard work and continued commitment to making a difference for Merton's children.

Keith Makin

MSCB Chair

December 2014

2.0 Progress of MSCB Business Plan 2013 – 14

The MSCB has a well established Business planning process with the plan receiving regular scrutiny at board level. The last update received by the board was in Nov/Dec 2014 and is attached as an appendix.

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

Priorities for this business year are:

- 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 vulnerabilities¹, 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.

3.0 Key Achievements and Challenges for the MSCB 2013 – 14

- The Board has successfully secured senior representation and engagement from all agencies.
- The Board has also reviewed the terms of reference for the QA Sub Group to give it a sharper focus on performance.
- We have been able to appoint a second Lay member and a young member (CICC) for 2015
- The Board continues to maintain a strong performance focus – data set and Chairs QA annual review
- All partners contribute financially to the work of the Board and there is good support from partners on the main Board and with the sub-groups.
- We held our Annual conference in January 2014. The conference challenged participants regarding the learning from SCRs and had a particular focus on neglect and adolescents; cross generational abuse and the impact of parental substance misuse. The event was rated highly with the majority of participants rating the event as excellent.
- Comprehensive work programme and good linkage to Children's Trust and HWBB

¹ e.g. domestic violence, sexual exploitation, parental mental ill-health, neglect, alcohol and substance misuse, abusive cultural practices,

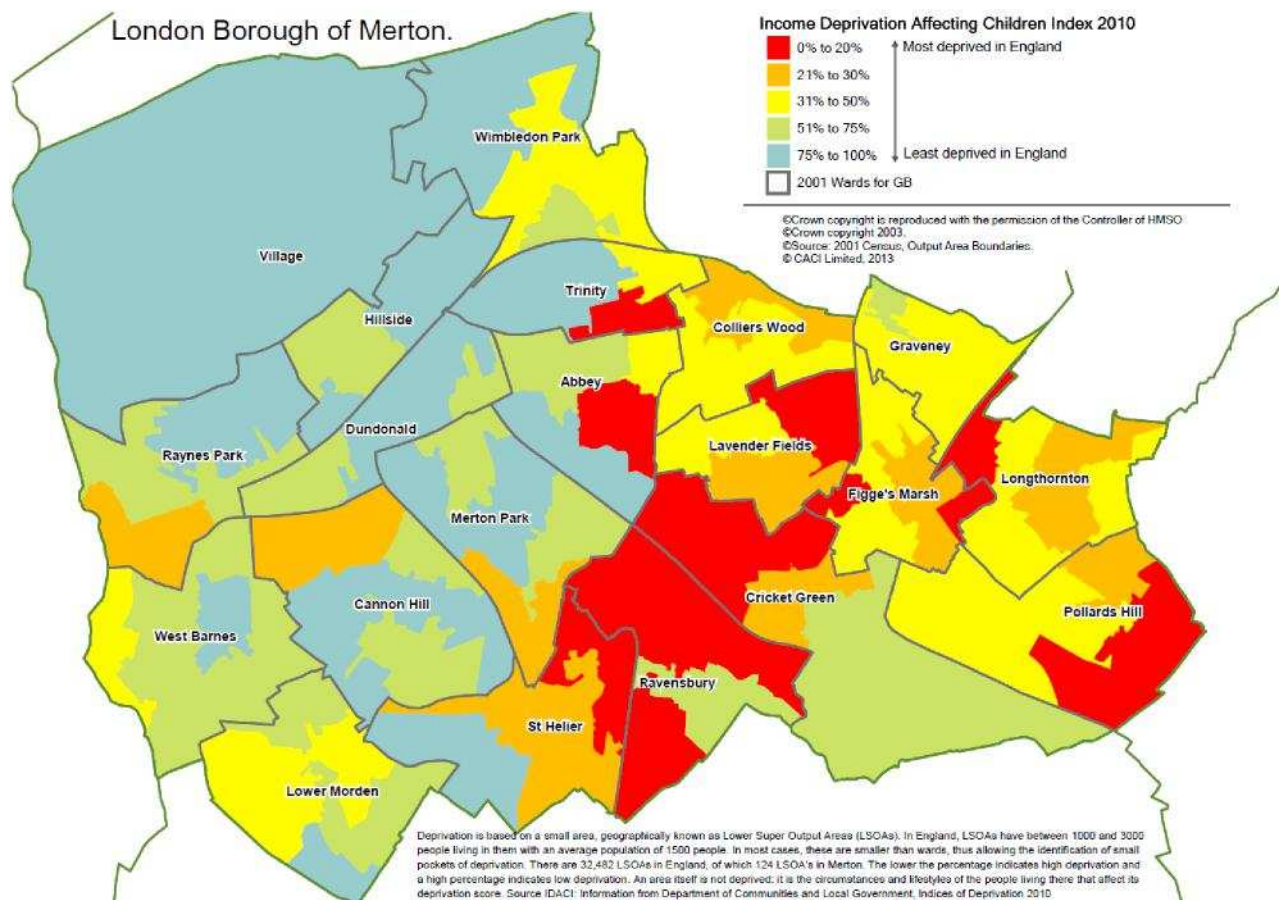
4.0 Local context and need of the childhood population for Merton

4.1 Merton the place

Merton is an outer London borough situated in south west London, covering 14.7 square miles. Merton has a total population of 200,543 including 47,499 children and young people aged 0-19 (Census 2011). The number of 0-19 year olds is forecast to increase by 3,180 (7%) by 2017, within which we forecast a 20% increase of children aged 5 to 9 (2,270). We have a younger population than the England average and have seen a 39% net increase of births over the last ten years (2,535 births in 2002 rising to 3,521 in 2010). The birth rate reduced in 2012/13 and again slightly in 2013/14 suggesting that the rate is stabilising. However the last ten years alongside other demographic factors has placed additional demand on all children's services.

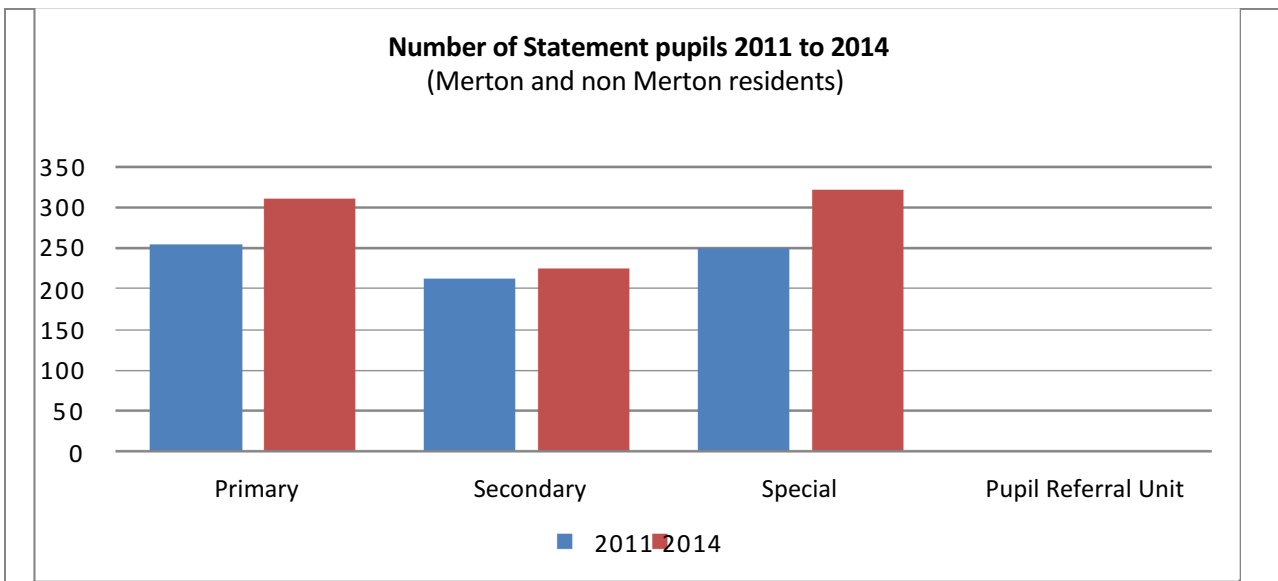
Predominantly suburban in character, Merton is divided into 20 wards and has three main town centres; Wimbledon, Mitcham and Morden. A characteristic of the borough is the difference between the more deprived east (Mitcham/Morden) and the more affluent west (Wimbledon). There are a number of pockets of deprivation within the borough mainly in the eastern wards and some smaller pockets in the central wards. These wards have multiple deprivation, with high scores on income deprivation, unemployment and limited educational attainment. Merton has 39 Super Output Areas which are amongst the 30% most deprived areas across England for children. This means 45% of Merton school pupils are living in an area of deprivation (30% most deprived, IDACI 2010). Since 2010 we have seen an increase of 23% of children who are eligible for free school meals (2010, 2881 FSM children, 2014, 3548 FSM children).

Merton income deprivation affecting children index 2010



Thirty five per cent of Merton’s total population is Black, Asian or Minority ethnic (BAME) this is expected to increase further to 39% by 2017. Pupils in Merton schools are more diverse still, with 66% from BAME communities, speaking over 120 languages (2014). The borough has concentrations of Urdu speaking communities, Sri Lankan, South African and Polish residents. The most prominent first languages for pupils apart from English are Tamil 5.9%, Urdu 5.9% and Polish 4.5%.

The number of children with Statements and School Action Plus pupils in Merton schools is also rising. Numbers of SEN Statements in Primary schools has risen from 255 in Jan 2011 to 310 in Jan 2014 (+22%), numbers of SEN Statements in Secondary schools has risen from 212 in Jan 2011 to 224 in Jan 2014 (+6%) and the number of SEN Statements in Special schools has risen from 249 in Jan 2011 to 321 in Jan 2014 (+29%).



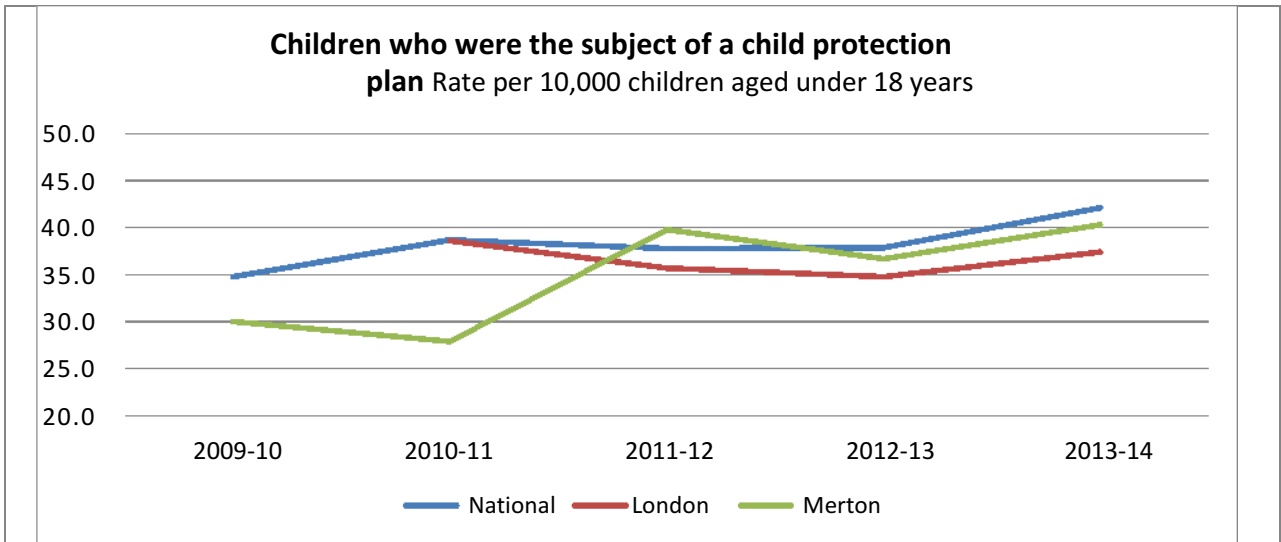
We can also demonstrate a similar rise in pupils with School Action Plus cohorts in primary schools rising from 737 in Jan 2011 to 814 in Jan 2014 (+10%)

4.2 Merton’s children in need, children with a protection plan and those looked after

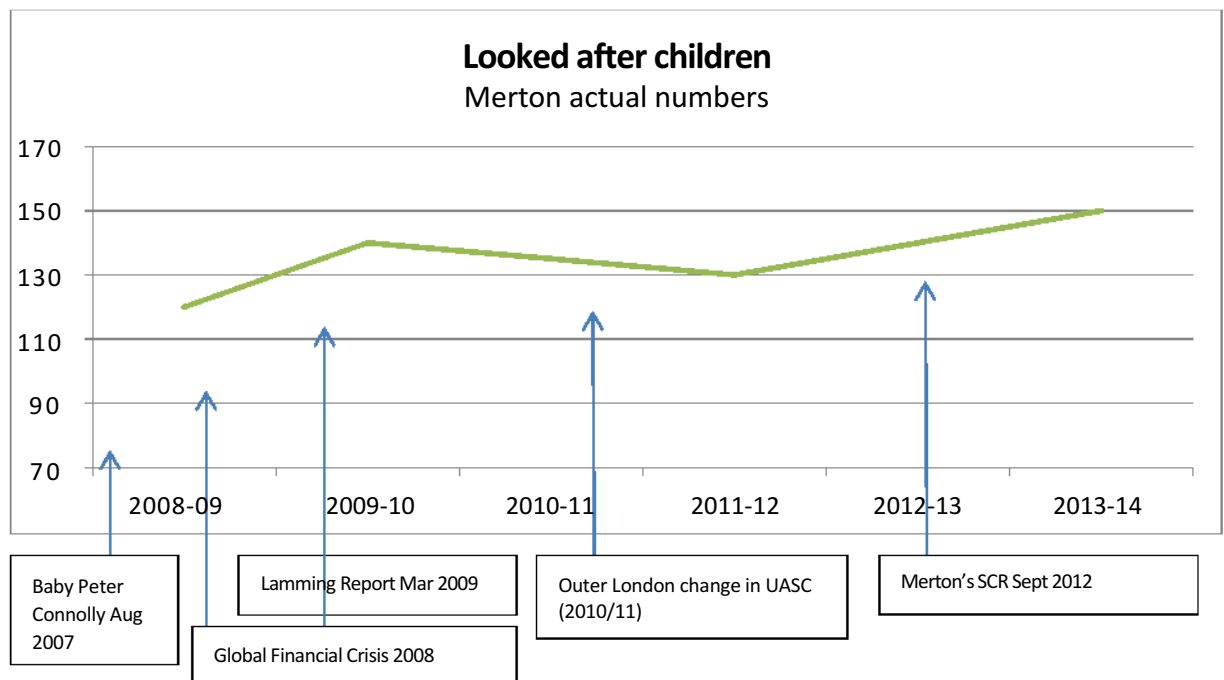
Merton’s children in need rate per 10,000 (2013/14, 355.1) is lower than the London average 367. 8 but higher than the National 346.4, we remain close to our statistical neighbours (2013/14). Our CIN rate has increased over a number of years alongside our population changes from 171.0 in 2008/9, 276.8 in 2009/10, 288.3 in 2010/11, 371.3 in 2011/12, 336.8 in 2012/13 and 355.1 in 2013/14.

Rates of Children subject of a child protection plan in Merton (40.3 2013/14) are similar to national (42.1) and London (37.4). As at the end of 2013/14 11.3% of children became subject of a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time, this is lower than the national (15.5%) and London (13%) averages (2013/14).

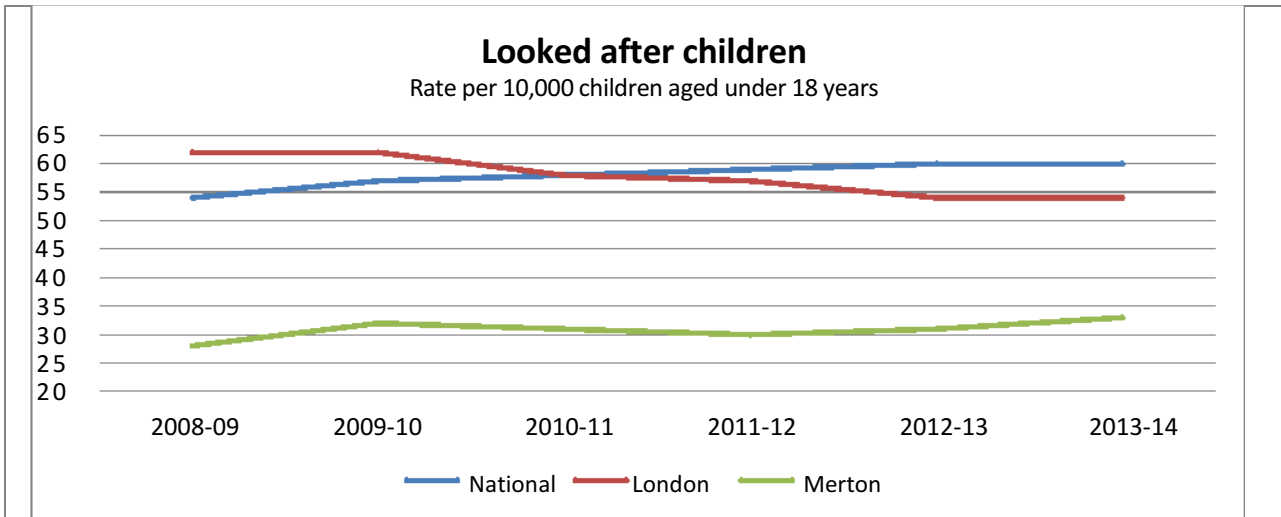
Nationally 4.5% (2013/14) of children were subject of a child protection plan lasting two years or more, in Merton this was 3.3% (2013/14) this relates to 6 children.



Merton’s looked after children population in the last ten years has ranged from a low of 96 (2006/7) to 140 (2012/13), rising further to 160(+) during 2013/14 and end the year with 150 children in care. This increase has been reviewed and audited to establish what is behind this trend. There are a number of reasons for this increase including increased national awareness of children’s safeguarding, an increasing birth rate and more general demographic changes. Merton has a higher than average profile of looked after children at the older age range, including a significant increase in the numbers of Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers and an increase in young people coming into care through the Southwark Judgement.



Merton’s LAC rate per 10,000 remains within the range of its comparable statistical neighbours (2014/15). London’s LAC rate per 10,000 ranges from the low 40s to the high 60s. Merton’s rate per 10,000 in March 2014 was 33, this remains within the range of our statistical neighbours.



Merton's LAC gender distributions are similar to national averages; we have more LAC boys than girls.

The age profile of children looked after at 31 March in Merton varies from the national norm with Merton caring for a large number of older looked after children aged 16 and over. In Merton 41% of our looked after children are aged 16 and 17 compared to 21% nationally.

Merton has a changing profile of ethnic groups for LAC. The majority of children looked after in Merton are from a white background, this is lower than the general resident population (18%). There are fewer Asian or Asian British than the all persons Merton population also. Mixed ethnic backgrounds, Black or Black British heritage and 'other ethnic groups' have looked after children proportions greater than the resident population. We continue to report an increase in the category of 'other ethnic groups' in 2013 and 2014 circa 80% were known to the authority as Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children.

The total number of Children Looked After in Merton during 2013/14 was 253. On 31 March 2014 there were 150 children and young people looked after by Merton (33 rate per 10,000); 83 of these children were looked after for one year or more. Our children have a range of complex needs at the point they become looked after 19% (2014) have SEN statements. Significant numbers of our LAC have experienced mental health and drugs or alcohol abuse issues within their families. We have lower rates of younger children in care and higher rates of older children in care compared to the national. Merton's LAC age profile compared to national is as follows: 1-4 years olds (Merton 10%, National 17%), 5-9 year olds (Merton 13%, National 20%) and for 16+ (Merton 41%, National 21% all 2014).

At 31st March 2014, 53 of 150 looked after children were placed over 5 miles away. Of these 16 were placed 6-10 miles away

- (1/16) placed for adoption.
- (11/16) in foster care (10 agency; 1 in-house).
- (2/16) in children's homes.
- (2/16) in residential accommodation not subject to children homes regulations (supported lodging).

Of our 150 looked after children, 37 were placed over 10 miles away:

- (2/37) placed for adoption.

- (1/37) fostered with a relative or friend.
- (16/37) in foster care (16 agency; 0 in house).
- (9/37) in a children's homes.
- (2/37) in a residential school.
- (1/37) in a YOI or prison.
- (2/37) in NHS/Health Trust or other establishment providing medical or nursing care.
- (1/37) in residential accommodation not subject to children homes regulations (supported lodging).
- (2/37) in secure accommodation.
- (1/37) in a residential care home.

Merton expects the highest standards of care for all our looked after children and we have a policy of not using external placements which are not rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted. There are no suitable children's homes within Merton which we would choose to use (except for Merton's own respite unit for children with disabilities). There are limited placement options within neighbouring authorities. We use agency carers only when we are unable to place in-house or it is in the best interest of the child both in terms of safeguarding but also in terms of suitability of match. We continue to focus on increasing the numbers of in house foster carers based on our LAC sufficiency needs analysis.

Merton's fostering agency was rated Good by Ofsted in November 2012, inspectors noting that "Children and young people are able to make good progress in relation to their starting points across all aspects of their care and effective arrangements are in place to support this. Children and young people have positive views about their care and their relationships with foster carers".

Merton's adoption agency was inspected in January 2013. Ofsted found that we provided an effective service to all affected by adoption and gave an overall judgement of Good. Inspectors noted that the DfE adoption scorecard published in 2012 highlighted historical poor timeliness issues but found that the authority had worked hard to improve. They recognised that subsequent year on year performance showed substantial improvements across all areas albeit that the impact of the rolling three year data would continue to impact on published performance tables for some time. We recognise the need to maintain our improvement trajectory and continue to act more quickly in our family finding and deliver our action plans to improve permanency and speed up care proceedings. Whilst we have achieved timely and effective placement for many of our children and this is evident in our data, sibling groups tend to take longer as do those with disabilities to secure permanency. Ofsted noted that Adoption is viewed as a positive option for all children needing permanency, whatever their needs or characteristics and that "the lifelong implications of adoption are fully understood and people's needs are catered for, whatever their age".

We remain fully committed to achieving timely permanency for all our children.

4.3 Children at Risk of Sexual Exploitation

During 2014 Merton undertook a CSE self review of the local arrangements in London to manage Child Sexual Exploitation. We also met with colleagues in Kingston, Sutton and Richmond to undertake a peer review session in early December 2014.

A CSE sub group of the MSCB has been in place following the issuing of guidance around CSE. The MSCB reviewed its CSE arrangements in 2012 putting in place a strategy and strengthening the work of the PPYP in 2013. It established the PPYP as a sub group of the MSCB. The PPYP group has a broad multi-agency membership including representation from: Barnardos, Jigsaw4U, Catch22, Education Welfare, Youth Offending Service, Police

(Missing Persons Officer and the new Central CSE team), Primary Health (School Nursing and Health Visiting), Pupil Referral Unit, MASH and the 14+ Looked After Team. In December 2013 the CSE service was awarded the London Safeguarding Children Award in recognition of the multi-agency work to identify and protect young people at risk of CSE in Merton.

4.4 CSE Cases

The following is a snapshot taken in autumn 2014.

- All 30 CSE cases are or have been open to CSC&YI.
- 1 of the open cases is male.
- 12 cases have been or are subject to a child protection plan.
- 8 cases are looked after young people 7 of which are placed out of Borough
- Ethnicity is broadly in line with the changing demographics in Merton with just over 50% from a White/British or White background
- The age distribution shows 13% of young people referred for possible sexual exploitation are aged 13 and under.
- The majority at 35% were aged 15 at the time of referral.
- Risk factors include 5 cases with drug and alcohol concerns and 6 with mental health issues.
- Routes of victimisation include 6 gang related: 14 older male and 9 victimised through peers and 1 trafficked young person.
- 5 of the cases have been identified as at risk because of images and messages posted on social media.

In 2012-13 123 young people were identified by the MASH and First Response service as being at risk of CSE following assessment. This identification process involved ticking a box that was labelled CSE. Many of the young people who were identified showed some of the indicators that might place them at risk of CSE, others were referred on to the PPYP and others may simply have been younger siblings of older young people who were at risk. While many practitioners have a good understanding of CSE we have recognized that we need to embed the Barnardos risk assessment matrix more formally across our systems to support a more consistent approach to the risk assessment of young people.

The identification of young people at risk of CSE has been supported by the work of Jigsaw4U (since 2009), Barnardos (since 2011) and a specialist Young Women and Girls Worker in the Family and Adolescent service (since 2014), who works with young women in the Borough on the edge of gangs at risk of CSE and those in abusive relationships. These voluntary agencies have both directly supported professionals by providing training and briefings. The vast majority of cases coming to the attention of these commissioned projects have been through the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and Children's Social Care.

The full self evaluation will go to the MSCB, Safer and Stronger Exec Board, One Merton Group and other appropriate boards and bodies in January 2015 and will inform MSCB Business Planning 2015/16.

4.5 Children Missing from Home and School

A review of children missing in the Merton between January 2013 and September 2014 has demonstrated that there is a clear connection between those children deemed to be at risk of CSE and being missing from home or Care. Many of the children known to PPYP have been reported missing. The vast majority of children reported as missing were referred to a specialist project Jigsaw 4U. Importantly however, many children known to be at risk from

CSE were not necessarily reported as missing and this reveals the complex causes and indicators of risk in this area. 33% of young people who were at risk of CSE (referred to PPYP) also had missing periods from home or care.

The Jigsaw4u Project Worker plays a significant and important role in safeguarding for young people in Merton who go missing and especially those experiencing sexual exploitation. This includes advocating for a child protection response, providing information to social workers which enables them to form a more coherent picture of what is happening to a young person, helping to locate and safeguard vulnerable young people who are missing. The worker also provides information and intelligence increasing the ability of the multi-agency network including the Police to identify hot spots, potential perpetrators and gangs and through this the worker develops local intelligence links and supports best practice. The report on their activity for the last year shows:

- 75 young people received a service (43 young people had a 1:1 service)
- 56 adults had a service (53 had a 1:1 service)
- 64 independent return interviews conducted
- 282 x 1:1 sessions were delivered to young people
- 156 x 1:1 sessions were delivered to adults
- 48 mediation sessions were delivered
- 2 group work programmes were delivered.
- 86 meetings were attended including Promote and Protect Operational and Strategic Groups, core groups, Sexual Exploitation Strategy Meetings. professionals meetings, LAC reviews.

The London Borough of Merton operates a Children Missing Education panel which reviews young people who have persistent absence –over 85%. This panel meets on a monthly basis and tracks a wide range of children noted to be missing education for a number of potential reasons such as ill health, newly arrived and placement change or disruption. The annual report on CSE shows increasing levels of referral with higher numbers of boys missing 55% than girls 45%. It was also noted that the numbers of looked after children notified to be missing education had also increased. Recent checks of the respective database showed that there were three young people open to the PPYP who had also been referred to the CME panel. The manager of the EWS team and the Schools Inclusion Manager sit on both the CME panel and the PPYP panel.

Young people vulnerable to being out of education, employment or training are also identified and supported by the My Futures team providing systemic interventions and practical support to families and liaising with key professionals addressing concerns such as substance misuse and adolescent mental health.

This will also continue to be a focus for 2015/16.

4.6 Prevent

During 2014 the issue of young people becoming involved in extremist activity has become much more heightened and we will be reviewing our local strategy and policy in early 2015 to respond to the changing legislation and rising concerns.

5.0 Statutory and Legislative Context

Merton Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB) is the Local Safeguarding Children Board for Merton.

Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB) have a range of roles and statutory functions.

Section 13 of the Children Act 2004 requires each local authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board for their area and specifies the organisations and individuals (other than the local authority) that the Secretary of State may prescribe in regulations that should be represented on LSCBs.

Children Act 2004 Section 14 sets out the objectives of LSCBs, which 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 purposes.

The LSCB is not an operational body and has no direct responsibility for the provision of services to children, families or adults. Its responsibilities are strategic planning, co-ordination, advisory, policy, guidance, setting of standards and monitoring. It can commission multi-agency training but is not required to do so.

The delivery of services to children, families and adults is the responsibility of the commissioning and provider agencies, the **Partners**, not the LSCB itself.

Regulation 5 of the **Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006** sets out LSCB duties as:

5.1 (a) developing policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area of the authority, including policies and procedures in relation to:

- (i) the action to be taken where there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare, including thresholds for intervention;
- (ii) training of persons who work with children or in services affecting the safety and welfare of children;
- (iii) recruitment and supervision of persons who work with children;
- (iv) investigation of allegations concerning persons who work with children;
- (v) safety and welfare of children who are privately fostered;

5.1 (b) communicating to persons and bodies in the area of the authority the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, raising their awareness of how this can best be done and encouraging them to do so;

5.1 (c) monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of what is done by the authority and their Board partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advising them on ways to improve

5.1 (d) participating in the planning of services for children

Regulation 5 (2) relates to the LSCB Serious Case Reviews function and regulation 6 relates to the LSCB Child Death functions.

Regulation 5 (3) offers that an LSCB may also engage in any other activity that facilitates, or is conducive to, the achievement of its objectives.

These duties are further clarified in the statutory guidance: ***Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, 2013 (WT 2013)***

LSCB duties are specified in WT 2013, Chapters 3, 4 and 5, with a responsibility to have oversight of single agency and multi-agency safeguarding and promotion of children's welfare (under Children Act 2004, section 11) as set out in WT chapters 1 and 2. See appendix for clarification for Agency responsibilities under section 11)

6.0 MSCB Inter-relationships and Influence with other Key Partners

The MSCB has a well established business planning process with the plan receiving regular scrutiny at board level. The last update received by the board was in Nov/Dec 2014 and is attached as an appendix.

7.0 MSCB Sub-groups

7.1 Quality Assurance Sub-group

The purpose of the Quality Assurance (QA) sub-group is to ensure children and young people are safeguarded and protected by overseeing the quality of single and multi-agency work carried out in partnership across the children and young people sector.

During the period covered by this report the QA sub-group has been chaired by the Assistant Director of Children's Social Care and Youth Inclusion and includes representation from relevant agencies. The QA sub group maintains and interrogates the MSCB dataset, monitors serious incidents and responses to local and national issues arising out of SCRs and oversees multi-agency audit activity for the Board. A refreshed MA QA framework was adopted by the Board in March 2013 and has been refined in 2014. We are working together to further strengthen our shared audit programme and to ensure audit informs practice improvement. The data set supports the MSCB in reviewing service access and thresholds as well as caseloads and access to supervision and training.

There has been a renewed focus on the auditing role of the group and meetings are now held on a monthly basis in effect to ensure that the group can effectively undertake auditing. We have planned to undertake 4-5 audits on a bi monthly basis and expect to complete 20 multi agency audits by the end of this year. Since January 2014 the group has undertaken audits on 10 cases and have also received a report regarding 4 multi agency audits completed independently by Cordis Bright in January 2014. The multi agency audits completed by agencies have been undertaken on a thematic basis. So far this year we have reviewed in the initial audit cases of families where domestic violence was present, hard to reach families and those subject to a plan for more than 2 years. The latter theme has been explored alongside the recently reconvened Child Protection Panel which reviews children who have been subject to a plan on more than one occasion or for more than 2 years. Thematic audits for the 2015 include Children with Disabilities and Children living with a parent with mental health problems. The sub group has also agreed that agencies can request specific audits on cases where near misses or particular concerns have arisen around multi agency working. To date none of these have been requested. The reports from audits are collated and disseminated to the training sub group and the policy and communication group if particular training needs, procedural issues or communications are required. The sub group also consider themes arising from discussions about performance.

The group supports and encourages single agency reports being presented and social care and health have provided feedback about internal audits of their activity. These have included the findings of the Cordis Bright audits and the IRO quarterly report.

Evidence of effective multi agency practice has been seen. Challenges to the system have been identified as managing chronic neglect, maintaining an understanding of families' long

term engagement with services and patterns of care, managing very challenging and avoidant families.

The group has reviewed the current performance reports which go to the Board. Proposals to assist the Board in analysing the information will be made following discussions with the Chair. Themes identified to date for further exploration from performance information has been a recent increase in young people presenting at St. George's Hospital with concerns about self harm and the high proportion of children subject of Child Protection Plans under the category of Emotional Abuse. The Cordis Bright multi agency audits raised issues about the need to develop Education and Health Care Plans to continue to strengthen coordination around transitions for young people with disabilities.

The group is strengthening its capacity and feeds back audit findings to the Board throughout the year.

7.2 Promote and Protect Young People Sub-group

The purpose of the Promote and Protect Young People is to act as a multi-agency forum on behalf of the Merton Safeguarding Children Board to respond to the agenda around at risk areas in relation to children and young people in Merton. It also will monitor the effectiveness of the Local Authority response to 'Statutory guidance on children who run away and go missing from home or care' (2009) and the 'Pan London Protocol for Children and Young People abused through Sexual Exploitation'. The sub group also monitors the effectiveness of the inter-agency arrangements for identifying and supporting young runaways; including cases where children and young people may have been trafficked, either from abroad or within the UK and statutory responsibility for Children Missing from Education and statutory guidance.

The PPYP group is co chaired by CSF's principal Social Worker and a Senior Police Officer has a broad multi-agency membership including representation from: Barnardos, Jigsaw4U, Catch22, Education Welfare, Youth Offending Service, Police (Missing Persons Officer and the new Central CSE team), Primary Health (School Nursing and Health Visiting), Pupil Referral Unit, MASH and the 14+ Looked After Team. More detail on the sub group's work on CSE is detailed above. In addition the PPYP oversees the Board's work on missing children.

The Sub Group has had a key role in the MSCB self evaluation of its CSE work and has been reviewing the CSE Strategy and risk assessment tools which were all refreshed during 2014.

The PPYP CSE self-review identified the following strengths:

- The London Borough of Merton has had a standing and functioning Multi Agency Group overseeing CSE in the Borough for some time. The PPYP Operational group was established in autumn 2011, building on the Young Runaways group established in 2009
- There is a great deal of activity to co ordinate and support raised awareness (CSE Champions, Barnardos Team Briefings, MSCB Training programme)
- Our MSCB strategy was developed in 2012 and this was in the process of being refreshed. This has now been completed

- Young People are being identified and appropriately referred to the PPYP and cases are being reviewed on a multi-agency basis through the MASE.
- Direct work is coordinated across agencies with shared information and intelligence.
- Management of children missing from education and home is robust

The CSE self review also identified the following areas for development:

- A performance dataset around CSE is needed
- Benchmarking activity against comparators would assist in assessing prevalence
- The awareness raising strategy could benefit from a developed programme of work
- More work to raise awareness by parents is needed.
- The development of a borough wide risk assessment tool could help to clarify the threshold in this specialist area.

The development areas are being addressed through the CSE action plan. This is monitored by the PPYP at each sub-group meeting.

CSE Champions in schools was identified as a priority and the matter was taken to the secondary heads meeting in June. The CSE champions have now been identified and an induction was delivered in September 2014.

The PPYP also revised its terms of reference which is to be presented to the main Board for approval in January 2015.

7.3 Training Sub Group

The purpose of the Training sub-group is to ensure children and young people are safeguarded and protected by overseeing the training and workforce development undertaken in partnership across the children and young people sector, including the training funded and provided on behalf of the Merton Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB).

The Training Sub Group is now chaired by the Head of Education Inclusion and oversees the development, implementation and review of the MSCB training and development programme. The MSCB and Children's Trust provide a joint Children's Workforce Induction available to all employees and volunteers across partner agencies which cover key issues such as: the Merton C&YP Well Being Model; safeguarding and the MASH; information sharing etc. The MSCB and Children's Social Care Training team run a comprehensive and extremely well evaluated training programme, responsive to the requirements and needs of service providers. During 2012/13 58 MSCB courses were attended by 820 colleagues from across agencies, the average course rating was 3.5. During 2013/14 90 training courses were attended by 1295 staff from across agencies, this year the average course rating was 3.4. An e-learning offer is also available covering generic and specialist areas. In 2014 we are taking part in the pilot Pan-London learning evaluation tool on behalf of the London SCB. Bespoke and targeted training has been provided to follow recommendations in our recent SCR action plan.

7.4 The Policy Sub-Group (formerly Policy and Communications)

The purpose of the Policy sub-group is to encourage and develop effective working relationships between partners in the Merton Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB) working

to safeguard children and young people from harm, including the requirements of *Working Together to Safeguard Children* and other guidance on multi agency working. The subgroup reports and is accountable to MSCB.

The decision was taken during the year to revise the sub-group structure and separate the functions of policy development and communication. This process included revising the current terms of reference and work plan as well as to create a defined core membership. The revised terms of reference is to be presented to the main Board at the meeting on 20th January 2015.

7.5 CDOP

The CDOP covers both Sutton and Merton and is chaired by the Director of Public Health. Over the period the CDOP has worked hard to address a backlog of cases inherited at the point the PCT ceased to exist and is now up to date with current cases going through the system. The CDOP has submitted its annual report to the board.

7.6 Structure and Effectiveness of the MSCB and Key Changes

During 2014 we reviewed our constitution and examined the effectiveness of all our sub groups. As a result we approved a new constitution and a suite of documents strengthening local arrangements:

- The Board adopted an FGM Mission Statement
- A new Learning and Improvement Framework was adopted
- New terms of reference was drafted for all sub-committees
- The multi-agency case work auditing process was refreshed and a new audit tool has been produced and adopted
- The Board has also adopted a new Performance Management Framework with a Challenge Process with the Chair and Agency Leads.
- The Communication Strategy and Participation have both been drafted and are in the process of being reviewed for adoption by the Board.

The board has worked hard to strengthen its effectiveness by appointing a Head Teacher of one of the Secondary Academies; the appointment of a Head Teacher of a Secondary Community School and the appointment of a Head Teacher representing Special Schools. We have also appointed an interim Designated Nursed (two members of the Clinical Commissioning Group both share this role).

The most significant change is that we have established our Business Implementation Group. The Business Implementation Group will co-ordinate, prioritise actions and ensure the coverage of statutory functions & business plan by ensuring governance and connectivity across the Sub Groups and task groups.

The Business Implementation Group will enable commissioning agencies to secure and plan delivery of the total work programme. It will contribute to board and agency self-evaluation and to challenge and improvement priorities.

The Business Implementation Group will report to and be accountable to the MSCB.

The Business Implementation Group Membership

Merton Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report

Business Implementation Group Membership	
	Independent Chair
P	Vice Chair to be drawn from the Statutory Members
P	Chief Officer, Merton Clinical Commissioning Group
P	Borough Commander, Met Police
P	Assistant Chief Officer, London Probation
S	A Voluntary Sector Agency
S	Lay Member for a year at a time between the two Lay Members
P	Director, Children Schools & Families
P	Head of CSC & YI, CSF
P	Head of Education, CSF
P	Director of Public Health, Merton Council
P	Senior Service Manager, CAFCASS

Sub Group Chairs may be asked to attend the Business Implementation Group if the business of their sub group is on the agenda.

Sub groups are chaired by officers from a range of agencies including Health, Children's Social care, Police, Education and the voluntary sector.

7.7 MSCB Budget

The MSCB has a healthy budget and all agencies contribute. Its income for 2013/14 was £161,000, in 2014/15 the MSCB income is £200,000.

8.0 SubGroup and task and Finish Group Summary Reports / Effectiveness

8.1 HR Sub Group (Joint with Sutton)

The joint sub group has continued to meet and has HR representatives across agencies from both boroughs. It brings together HR professionals to ensure good and best practice is disseminated across all agencies. The sub group produces an annual report for the board.

8.2 Learning & Improvement Reviews and Serious Case Reviews

The MSCB commissioned a Serious Case Review in response to the tragic death of a Merton young person which was published summer 2013. The finding of the Review was that although there were lessons to be learnt and areas in which services could be improved, there was no information known to any agency which would suggest that the young person's life would end as it did, or that indeed she was at any risk of harm. Following careful analysis of the Review report an action plan was established and all agencies have worked together to ensure learning from our collective or individual agency response to the young person during her lifetime informs service improvement. The MSCB has been monitoring the overall SCR action plan and the SCR panel reconvened six months post publication to review progress on the SCR and IMR action plans. Workshops for staff were held on the specific recommendations and our MSCB annual conference 2014 was themed around the issues from this and other published SCRs.

The MSCB contributed to a learning review concerning a Croydon resident who was placed briefly in the borough in temporary accommodation and who subsequently committed murder.

On 25th March 2014 CSF received a serious LADO notification regarding Child J, an 11 year old boy placed in a residential school setting. The LADO notification concerned a deteriorating situation regarding this young person which resulted in an escalation in care management, including the restriction of his movements and the need to provide restraint to prevent harm to Child J and others.

A Merton LADO strategy meeting was held within 24 hours in order to put a plan in place to meet Child J's needs and to protect him from harm. The Surrey LADO was notified, as was Ofsted, whose inspectors visited the school. CSF commissioned an internal management review which was conducted by the Assistant Director of Children, Schools and Families Department, who had no prior involvement with the case, and the MSCB commissioned a Learning and Improvement Review (LIR) which was conducted by Jane Wannacott, who reported her findings in February 2015. The decision to conduct a LIR was reported to the National Panel who endorsed this decision.

9.0 Agency Effectiveness in Safeguarding – reports for each key agency drawing on Section 11 and QA and Performance Meetings

Section 11

Relevant agencies completed their Section 11 audit tool in 2013 and these were reviewed for the April/May 2014 QA reviews with all agencies undertaken by the Chair and DCS. The Pan London Audit Tool was used for this purpose and then agencies were challenged through the QA process.

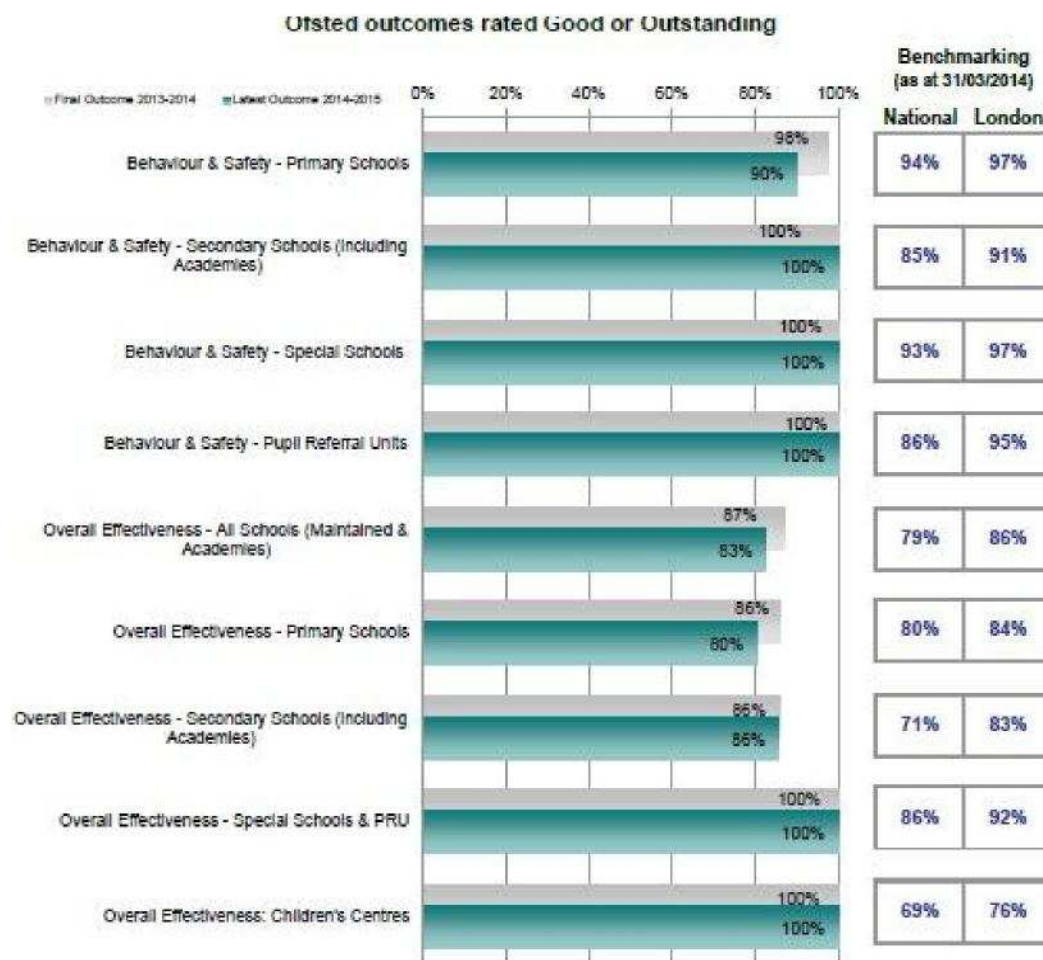
9.1 Schools

During the period covered by the report the LA School Improvement Service has developed, implemented, reviewed and refreshed their Schools' Safeguarding Audit Tool the completion of this complies with the Section 11. Schools make returns to the LA. In addition the LA undertakes safeguarding Reviews of schools at their request or where a specific concern for example a parental complaint or incident has occurred.

The borough has 3 Harris Academies who complete the Harris Foundation Section 11 which meets the required standard. St Mark's Academy completed the council's audit tool. The tool was sent as an example of good practice to independent schools in the area.

School inspections cover safeguarding under behaviour and attendance. The December 2014 Ofsted profile for schools in this area is as follows:

9.1.2 Ofsted inspection outcomes rated Good or Outstanding



9.2 CSF department

CSF department completed section 11 audits for Children's Social Care; Early Years; the Youth Service, Education Inclusion and The Family & Adolescent Service (including Youth Justice).

For 2013 CSF restructured its children's social care to deliver a Multi Agency safeguarding Hub and to implement the new Troubled Families initiative which is called Transforming Families locally. During 2014 Children's Social Care Services reviewed remits and capacity

issues across the teams and are added additional social work staff into the MASH and core social work teams. It also implemented a new caseload policy to ensure fair distribution and manageable workloads across the service. The recruitment and retention of social worker in common with most authorities continues to be challenging and the MSCB and CSF management continue to monitor use of agency staff closely and the department has a proactive recruitment and retention strategy.

The council is in the process of procuring a new social care information system to support good casework practice. The aim is to provide casework staff with a system which is more user friendly than the current system and to enable a more comprehensive dataset (in line with new Annex A) to be inputted and reported both for internal management information and for statutory returns. In the interim period prior to the commissioning of a new system, we are reviewing key business processes and developing a wider set of Business Objects reports for the current Carefirst system.

Following the full review of our early intervention and prevention strategy in 2012/13 the council produced revised structures for children's social care and our enhanced services as well as new commissioning intentions for our EIS commissioned services. A range of services were commissioned externally for 2013-16 with a strong focus on early help/intervention and prevention as well as specialist support for vulnerable groups. Safeguarding is embedded in all specifications as is a strong performance focus on impact and outcomes.

9.3 Acute Trusts

9.3.1 Sutton and Merton Community Health Service

The Royal Marsden and the service provider completed a Section 11 Audit covering all children's community health services including the provision of health services for looked after children and care leavers.

In early 2014 the S&MCHS were commissioned to deliver a family Nurse Partnership providing intensive support to young mums (under 19) who are vulnerable or at risk. The FNP will complete its first annual review in early 2015,

9.3.2 SW London & St George's Mental Health Trust

Whilst the Trust completed their audit it was undertaken at a time of considerable change due to a major transformation programme.

9.4 Community and Housing Dept. - London Borough of Merton

C&H dept. completed S11 audits for Public Health, Adult Social Care and Housing.

9.5 Corporate Service – HR – London Borough of Merton

A section 11 audit of the council's safe recruitment and employment practices was undertaken. The council has also re-issued advice to schools in the period covering revisions to the vetting and barring arrangements and on the new DfE guidance on disqualification by association

9.5 Metropolitan Police/Probation/Cafcass

The regional organisations submitted the relevant regional Section 11 assessments. For 2015 we will need to make arrangements with the two new probation services that cover London Borough of Merton.

9.6 Youth Crime Executive Board (YCEB)

The YCEB is chaired by the Director of Children's Services and the vice chair is a Senior Police Officer and is the governance structure for the work of the Youth Offending Team (YOT) including the Youth Justice Annual Plan, performance and Quality Assurance. It also oversees the partnership response to Serious Youth Violence, Gangs and Troubled Families, known locally as Transforming Families (TF). Membership includes CSF: CSC; YJ; LAC, Education Inclusion, Police, Probation and the CCG.

The YCEB's key priorities over the last year have been maintaining the performance of the YOT, delivering and extending the TF programme and overseeing serious youth violence work. We have also been overseeing the impact of the C&F Act LASPO requirements.

The Family and Adolescent Service (FAS) was restructured and many key functions have moved across to TF where interventions are targeted before problems escalate within a family. This has involved working closely with schools, academies, the Police and the Education Welfare Service. This work has included contributing to the CSF Equalities Action plan and actions are now in place to ensure that young people from deprived wards in the borough are supported. An example of this work is the PRG Phipps Bridge work, which is focused on reaching young men from BAME and White working class backgrounds.

As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, the YCEB commissioned Cordis Bright to provide support and challenge in our ambitions to improve casework. This work includes the consistent use of auditing and the closer scrutiny of cases during the supervision process. Case managers have also had one to one coaching with Cordis Bright. We have also enhanced the quality assurance process with YJS/YOS which includes adhering to the management auditing timetable and the use of thematic audits. All key documents are gate kept and monitored prior to court and there are regular reviews of work. There is evidence that Merton's low custody rates are influenced by thorough assessments and specific interventions which are presented as robust alternatives to custody.

The YCEB remains committed to the core value of ensuring the voice of the child (VOC) and that this is captured and acted upon. The Online Viewpoint Questionnaire is completed with young people and Merton has exceeded the required target. In addition to this, Youth Board Panels meet regularly with the FAS Manager and YJS manager. Feedback is received from young people and suggestions for change are acted upon. The YJB National Audit by YJS was completed in August 2014 and showed positive results around engagement with young people around frequency of contacts and the timeliness of Referral Order Panels.

The YCEB continues to focus on Ending Serious Youth Violence (ESYV). The objective is to target more high risk offenders. We recognise that a multi-agency approach is essential in tackling this. We are working closely with key partners such as the Police, CSF, education, health and the voluntary sector. The MOPAC funded Gangs Worker continues to provide support to young men vulnerable to being caught up in gang-related crime and anti-social behaviour. Also a gangs' matrix has been delivered and assists with reviewing this area of our work.

We use a range of approaches to identify and support vulnerable young people including the use of the 'tightrope assessment approach' and this will be supplemented and strengthened in 2015 by training around the 'signs of safety' approach. AIM training has been delivered to CSC and members of the Youth Inclusion Team. It is hoped that this will support practice with YP who display sexually harmful behaviour. The goal is to equip staff with the ability to carry out robust assessments of young people who display sexually harmful behaviour.

We are also focusing on the Child Sexual Exploitation agenda especially with regards to reducing the vulnerability of young women and girls. This is done through the work of the Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) Panel and the Youth Offender Management Panel (YOMP). In addition to this, a Young Women's worker, funded by MOPAC, received clinical supervision from the Ops manager in YJS.

10 Views of Children and Young People and the Community

The Children's Trusts User Voice Strategy 2014-16 is intended to capture and monitor work undertaken to facilitate service users' influence on service design and continuous improvement. A quarterly report draws together 'user voice' actions identified in Children Schools and Families Level 3 Service Plans and implements quarterly monitoring of progress made against these activities. This process aims to enhance and embed a culture of 'user voice' as central to service planning and delivery, and to support our delivery against five key commitments made in our strategy, as listed below:

We will continue to find engaging ways for children, young people, parents and carers to represent their views, and to consult with our service users and other children and young people on their terms and on familiar territory:

- **Commitment 1** - We will continue to embrace a variety of models of feedback and participation, recognising that one style may not fit all.
- **Commitment 2** - We will continue to develop participation methods for children and young people's views to be more strongly heard in key governance structures such as Merton's Children's Trust and the Local Safeguarding Children Board. We will also publicise routes for feeding issues raised by young people and other service users to decision makers.
- **Commitment 3** - We always try to understand what our feedback is telling us. We will analyse our feedback and consider what we have been told when planning our services to ensure we continuously improve. We will log summaries of our feedback findings and information about our approaches in a central repository for cross departmental use and learning.
- **Commitment 4** - We will, where appropriate, publish our feedback findings in the Young Merton Together online magazine to share our findings with others across the department and local authority, Children's Trust and Local Safeguarding Children's Board.
- **Commitment 5** - We will ensure that services and service users who take part in events or share their views always get feedback about what has happened to their input and any outcome from it.

We have an approach to listening to the views of children and young people, carers, parents and other service users in four key ways:

- **Approach 1** - A 'practice approach' expected of all practitioners and managers which puts children's wishes and feelings at the centre of decision making and planning.
- **Approach 2** - Merton's youth participation promise.
- **Approach 3** - Targeted user feedback.
- **Approach 4** - Complaints and compliments.

Where our children and young people feel they need support to represent their views we provide that support through an independent advocacy service.

Our looked after children continue to be represented by the Children in Care Council (CICC) which is regularly consulted on how to improve the support that looked after children and care leavers receive. The CICC is supported by Merton's Participation Team who reports regularly on its activities, to the Corporate Parenting Group.

We are committed to ensuring that young people have a strong voice in governance structures. We have regularly monthly meetings of the Youth Parliament, discussions at recent meetings have centred on the following issues: a process for feeding back young

people's crime and safety concerns to the Safer Merton Committee; Islam in modern society including a change in attitudes to Muslims since 9/11; ISIS and Save our Girls (Young Girls kidnapped in Nigeria); attending the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel to discuss e-safety and cyber bullying; and ideas for developing an approach to 'user voice' across the borough. In addition the Youth Conference was delivered by young people in October 2014 and focused on two issues – domestic violence and votes for 16 year olds.

The above provides a sample of User Voice actively, key elements of user voice are reported frequently to the Children's Schools and Families department, the Corporate parenting board, the MSCB and Children's Trust.

11 Conclusions and Priorities for 2013 – 14 Business Year

On the evidence set out in this report we judge our current arrangements to be good, providing reasonable assurance that all partners are doing as much as they can to ensure the safeguarding and safety of children and young people. The Board has worked hard to restructure itself for effectiveness it is hoped that the changes we have made in governance will enable a more robust level of challenge and accountability; the Business Implementation Group will ensure that the Board is more capable of executing its key priorities as well as monitoring and reviewing its effectiveness.

Training levels continue to be good across all agencies and the MSCB ensures an appropriate programme for multi agency training is provided. Learning from Serious Case Reviews and other related activities is an established feature of the partnership.

The commitment of the partnership to continuous improvements continues to be a positive feature and we aim to demonstrate our ability to monitor and challenge performance in the next year.

In conclusion the MSCB is compliant with statutory guidance and working well to protect children and young people in the London Borough of Merton.

Areas which will continue into 2015 include:

The Board is seeking to improve its Quality Assurance and Learning and Improvement System to ensure that there is clear understanding of the complexity of work to protect children at the frontline. The Board is seeking to improve its links to practitioners and their managers.

In reviewing its own effectiveness the Board is seeking to streamline its business processes to ensure SMART working and to prioritise and de-bureaucratise its work streams.

Priorities for the 2015 calendar year are:

- 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 vulnerabilities**, 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.



Appendices

Appendix 1: MSCB Business Plan 2014-2016

Merton Safeguarding Children Board

Business Plan 2014 – 16

Agreed 16 September 2014

Progress of this Plan will be updated monthly & monitored at each MSCB Meeting

October 2014

Introduction

Merton Safeguarding Children Board aims to ensure that local services work knowledgeably, effectively and together to safeguard children and young people and to support their parents.

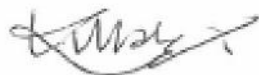
The Board is seeking to improve its Quality Assurance and Learning and Improvement System to ensure that there is clear understanding of the complexity of work to protect children at the frontline. The Board is seeking to improve its links to practitioners and their managers.

The Board recognises that Partner agencies have been undergoing their own changes and that the revised governance and implementation of these changes take time but that safeguarding children must remain a priority.

In reviewing its own effectiveness the Board is seeking to streamline its business processes to ensure SMART working and to prioritise and de-bureaucratise its work streams.*

Priorities for this business year are:

- *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 vulnerabilities**,*
- *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.*



Keith Makin
Independent Chair, Merton Safeguarding Children Board

**SMART Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic/Resourced & Timely - also Proportionate*

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

Merton Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report

Objectives	Actions	Outcomes	Resources		
			Who? (Work plans etc.)	When?	
1. Embed the revised Learning and Improvement System agreed in July 2014 Implement the revised Performance Management Framework					
1.1	Continue to embed and strengthen multi- agency case auditing	Identify and train auditors to include wider group of agencies	Clarity about the learning and QA process, including the multi-agency workforce	QA SubGroup	Sept 2014
1.2	Ensure Initial CP Conferences are audited within each audit and as a specific focus at least once annually	Revise themed audit schedule and ensure at least one ICPC is audited in each	LSCB will be informed about the quality of ICPCs	QA SubGroup	From Sept 2014 – 5 or 6 audits a year subsequently
page 49	Extend auditing to include the views of practitioners and service users	Agree process for involving practitioners	Better systemic understanding of the complexity of delivering safeguarding at the frontline	QA SubGroup	Sept 2014
	1.3	<p>Deliver Learning &Improvement Feedback Briefings to multi-agency practitioners and first line managers</p> <p>Use briefing sessions to seek feedback from practitioners</p>	<p>MSCB to deliver summary feedback workshops on lessons from audits, case reviews locally and wider</p> <p>Cascade materials to be provided for use within agencies</p> <p>Feedback 'system' issues and practitioner feedback to LSCB</p>	<p>Front line staff aware of issue and how to improve practice</p> <p>Better staff awareness of local and key lessons</p> <p>LSCB better informed of frontline issues</p>	<p>LSCB Manager & Training Officer</p> <p>Agencies to release staff and use cascade materials</p> <p>Reports to QA & Training SubGroups</p>

Merton Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report

Objectives	Actions	Outcomes	Resources		
			Who? (Work plans etc.)	When?	
1.4	Introduce revised School Safeguarding Audit process (section 11) and establish reporting back to MSCB	School HTs to be consulted on and receive the school self-audits	QA that schools meet the revised guidance	AD Education – Heads, School Improvement & Designated Teachers Group	Autumn Term. QA report to LSCB in Jan 2015
1.5	Develop a multi-agency Performance Framework – to inform MSCB and partners of macro need to aid strategic planning and monitoring	Confirm draft governance processes and ensure multi- agency contribution to quarterly data monitoring	Quality date on incidence, need and service delivery	QA SubGroup	Sept 2014 and quarterly thereafter
1.9 Page 50	Ensure multi-agency safe recruitment and staff management	LADO review – including resources	Staff are aware of expectations about behaviour Safe recruitment guidance and practice is in place Agencies self-audit against agreed standards and report to LSCB LSCB and Partner agencies learn from cases of concern	AD Social Care HR SubGroup	Sept 2014
		<i>Agree local guidance & Audit?</i>		HR SubGroup	HR Nov 2014
		Annual HR SubGroup and LADO reports to MSCB		LADO	LADO July 2015

Merton Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report

Objectives	Actions	Outcomes	Resources		
			Who? (Work plans etc.)	When?	
1.7	Continue to improve practice and multi-agency responses to families where there is concern about domestic violence, mental health and/or alcohol or substance mis-use	Ensure priority multi-agency training Undertake multi-agency audits Increase awareness and understanding of complexity	Improved understanding Earlier recognition Effective planning Fewer children affected by	QA SubGroup & Training SubGroup Promote and Protect YP Strategic Group	Reports to LSCB in quarterly meetings
Page 51	Ensure agency and multi-agency compliance with safeguarding standards	Continue the monitoring of agency section 11 compliance and actions through biennial section 11 audits and annual Agency QA and Performance Management Challenge Meetings (Peer review) Safeguarding Audits of schools as equivalent to section 11 see 1.4 above to be fed back into the Performance Challenge Meetings in April 2015	An annual overview of Partner Agency safeguarding standards	LSCB Chair Board Manager All Partner agencies	April 2015

Merton Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report

Objectives		Actions	Outcomes	Resources	
				Who? (Work plans etc.)	When?
2.1	Develop a LSCB Participation Strategy for Children and Young People	Review and map current agency systems for consulting children and young people and how safeguarding is and can be woven into that.	A clear mechanism to consult children and young people Understanding of young people's concerns and how to respond to them	<i>Policy and Communication SubGroup?</i>	Nov 2014
2.2	Develop a strand for children and young people into the revised Communication Strategy	Review how young people seek to communicate LSCB articles in Young Merton and other publications	Integrated communications strategy	<i>Policy and Communication SubGroup?</i>	
2.3	To seek young people's views on safeguarding and on services to increase the LSCB's awareness – particularly in the area of increased vulnerabilities	To explore working with school councils, children in care and young people's groups to facilitate dialogue about the LSCB role and young people's views on	A network of fora where safeguarding can be explored from a young person's perspective and the LSCB can test its relevance to young people	Commission Action Research Project / BASPCAN / South Bank University Children's Social Care	Autumn Term 2014
2.4	To invite young people to be actively involved in the LSCB Annual Conference	Invite school councils and youth groups to devise a presentation to the Conference / LSCB	Increased understanding of children and young people's concerns and perspectives on safeguarding	Training SubGroup & CSF Community Sector?	March 2015
2.5	Feedback from young service users on the work undertaken	Involve young people in case auditing See 1.3 above	Increased awareness of young people's views about the services and their quality.	QA SubGroup	Nov 2014

Merton Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report

Objectives		Actions	Outcomes	Resources	
				Who? (Work plans etc.)	When?
3.1	Implement revised guidance for schools: 'Keeping children safe in education', April 2014	LSCB Chair to write to schools & set out LSCB expectations & seek stronger partnership	A strong link between the LSCB and schools	Chair	Sept 2014
3.2	Strengthen school membership of the LSCB and the LSCB involvement in schools' designated persons meetings and HT's meetings	Increase school representation on MSCB LSCB Chair to write to schools & establish a clear relationship with Heads Fora	Increased involvement of Head Teachers in the LSCB, increased understanding of young people's needs	AD Education Chair	Sept 2014
3.3	Review and improve the multi-agency response to Domestic Violence including peer relationships	Agree revised Domestic Violence Strategy	Improved understanding across Partnerships of leadership in DV and protection of children and young people	MSCB	Sept 2014
3.4	Review and agree the multi-agency response to Self-Harm	Agree and implement Self-Harm Protocol	Increased awareness of signs and multi-agency responses	Policy and Communications SubGroup	Nov 2014
3.5	To agree clear multi-agency approach to parental mental-ill health	Agree and implement Mental Health Protocol	Increased awareness and understanding of the impact of mental ill-health on parenting and the inherent risks and interventions	Policy and Communications SubGroup	Nov 2014
3.6	To introduce a multi-agency strategy to prevent Female Genital Mutilation	Agree and implement Female Genital Mutilation Strategy	Increased awareness of Female Genital Mutilation, how to recognise risk and respond sensitively and to prevent it	Policy and Communications SubGroup	March 2015

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Objectives		Actions	Outcomes	Resources	
				Who? (Work plans etc.)	When?
3.7	Ensure multi-agency safe recruitment and staff management	LADO review – including resources Annual HR SubGroup and LADO reports to MSCB	Safe recruitment is embedded into job design, selection, induction and every day staff management and agencies have clear processes to investigate allegations of concern.	AD Social Care HR SubGroup HR SubGroup LADO	Sept 2014 Nov 2014 HR SubGroup Nov 2014 LADO July 2015
Page 54	Continue to improve practice and multi-agency responses to families where there is concern about domestic violence, mental health and/or alcohol or substance mis-use	Ensure priority multi-agency training Undertake multi-agency audits Increase awareness and understanding of complexity Practitioners' Forum to be re-launched	Improved understanding Earlier recognition Effective planning Fewer children affected by	QA SubGroup & Training SubGroup Promote and Protect YP Strategic Group	Reports to LSCB in quarterly meetings Jan 2015

Merton Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report

Objectives		Actions	Outcomes	Resources	
				Who? (Work plans etc.)	When?
3.9	Review understanding of chronic neglect, its impact and intervention	Review recent research into neglect and its impact Review local incidence Include in multi-agency briefings Include as a theme in Annual Conference	Better recognition of neglect	Training SubGroup QA SubGroup	Nov 2014 Nov 2014 Mar 2015
3.10	Ensure that there is an agreed and operating escalation process	Draft Escalation Protocol	Greater awareness of how to challenge in case work and escalate when needed	Policy and Communication SubGroup	Nov 2014
Page 55	To have a revised MSCB Constitution, Performance Framework, Learning and Improvement System and Training Strategy and to seek Partner commitment to the work of the MSCB.	Confirm Constitution Review, MSCB Membership and structure and processes	Clarity about roles and responsibility	MSCB Chair Board Manager All Members	Sept 2014
		To review Annual Business Planning and reporting cycle reducing the frequency of reports to meetings	Possible separation of strategy and practice monitoring		
4.2	Information Sharing Protocol	To review the Information Sharing Protocol in light of changes in partnership structures and commissioning	Clarity about the governance of information sharing at strategic and case levels	Merton Council Board Manager Partner Agencies	Nov 2014

Merton Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report

Objectives	Actions	Outcomes	Resources	
			Who? (Work plans etc.)	When?
4.3 To hold an Annual Stakeholders' Conference for practitioners and supervisors to increase awareness of the MSCB role and work programme and to increase the LSCB's awareness of the complexity of work at the frontline, in order to enhance the MSCB's role and inform its future business planning and priorities: Theme – Learning from and enhancing engagement and practice at the frontline	Agree themes and structure of the Conference Seek involvement of children and young people Seek involvement of practitioners and supervisors	Greater awareness of principles of engagement in frontline practice Consultation between the LSCB, practitioners and service users	MSCB Business Support team Board Manager	Sept 2014 Conference March 2015

Appendix 2: Performance table summary

Children who need help and protection

Referrals and assessments							
Indicators		Merton 2011/12	Merton 2012/13	Merton 2013/14	National 2013/14	London 2013/14	Outer London 2013/14
Referrals	Number	1527	1372	1745	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Rate per 10,000	351.5	311.0	386.5	573.0	469.6	441.1
Referrals where within 12 months of a previous referral	Percentage	17.9%	12%	10.1%	23.4%	16.2%	16.7%
Referrals which resulted in No Further Action	Number	46	33	35	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Percentage	3%	2.4%	2%	14.1%	8.2%	7.5%
Single Assessments completed	Number	n/a	n/a	1533	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Rate per 10,000	n/a	n/a	333.2	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
Single Assessments completed as a percentage of referrals	Percentage	n/a	n/a	87.8%	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
Percentage of Single Assessments completed within 45 days	Percentage	n/a	n/a	81%	82%	78%	Data not available

Children in Need							
Indicators		Merton 2011/12	Merton 2012/13	Merton 2013/14	National 2013/14	London 2013/14	Outer London 2013/14
Children starting an episode of need	Number	1323	1222	1407	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Rate per 10,000	304.5	277.0	311.7	372.6	364.0	336.9
Children in need throughout the year	Number	2546	2373	2513	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Rate per 10,000	586.1	537.9	556.7	680.5	688.0	610.2
Children ending an episode of need	Number	933	887	910	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Rate per 10,000	214.8	201.1	201.6	334.6	320.1	297.4
Children in need at 31 March	Number	1613	1486	1603	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Rate per 10,000	371.3	336.8	355.1	346.4	367.8	312.7

Children in Need							
Indicators		Merton 2011/12	Merton 2012/13	Merton 2013/14	National 2013/14	London 2013/14	Outer London 2013/14
Children in need at 31 March, by duration of open cases (3 months or less – 91 days)	Percentage	18.7%	17.4%	19.8%	24.8%	23.7%	24.9%
Children in need at 31 March, by duration of open cases (between 3 and six months- 183 days)	Percentage	17.2%	10.6%	17.7%	12.2%	12.3%	13.6%
Children in need at 31 March, by duration of open cases (between six months and one year – 365 days)	Percentage	16.9%	19.4%	20.3%	15.8%	14.9%	15.9%

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Children in need at 31 March, by duration of open cases (between one and two years – 730 days)	Percentage	22.8%	21.1%	15.2%	15.1%	16.2%	15.5%
Children in need at 31 March, by duration of open cases (two years or more)	Percentage	24.5%	31.4%	26.9%	31.6%	33.0%	30.1%

Children in Need – Attainment							
Indicators		Merton 2011-12	Merton 2012-13	Merton 2013/14	National 2012-13	London 2012/13	Outer London 2012/13
Children in Need Key Stage 2 – percentage Reading Level 4+	Percentage	Data not available	70.2%	Data not available	56.8%	Data not available	Data not available
Children in Need Key Stage 2 – percentage Maths Level 4+	Percentage	56.7%	57.4%	Data not available	55.7%	Data not available	Data not available
Children in Need Key Stage 2 – percentage Reading, Writing and Maths level 4+	Percentage	Data not available	48.9%	Data not available	42.3%	Data not available	Data not available
Children in Need Key Stage 2 – percentage Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling Level 4+	Percentage	Data not available	53.2%	Data not available	40.9%	Data not available	Data not available
Children in Need GCSE – percentage 5+ A* to C	Percentage	42.1%	41.5%	Data not available	35.3%	Data not available	Data not available
Children in Need GCSE – percentage 5+ A* to C including English and Maths	Percentage	15.8%	24.6%	Data not available	16.1%	Data not available	Data not available
Children in Need KS2-4 – percentage expected progress in English	Percentage	29.6%	30%	Data not available	27%	Data not available	Data not available
Children in Need KS2-4 – percentage expected progress in Maths	Percentage	25.9%	36.7%	Data not available	25.5%	Data not available	Data not available
Unauthorised absence – percentage sessions missed by Children in Need	Percentage	3%	3.7%	Data not available	3.9%	Data not available	Data not available
Overall absence – percentage sessions missioned by Children in Need	Percentage	8.7%	9.3%	Data not available	10.4%	Data not available	Data not available
Persistent absence – percentage Children in Need classed as persistent absentees	Percentage	12.4%	14%	Data not available	15.4%	Data not available	Data not available
Exclusion – percentage of Children in Need with at least one fixed term exclusion	Percentage	7.5%	Data not available	Data not available	7.8%	Data not available	Data not available

*Absence, Exclusions and Attainment data for Children in Need excludes children who were looked after at any point during the year unless those children were also the subject of a child protection plan (as per data represented in DfE Matrix)

Child protection

Section 47 enquiries and initial child protection conferences							
Indicators		Merton 2011-12	Merton 2012-13	Merton 2013/14	National 2013/14	London 2013/14	Outer London 2013/14
Children subject to S.47 enquiries which started during the year	Number	318	493	593	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Rate per 10,000	73.3	111.7	131.4	124.1	11.9	107.7
Children who were the subject of an initial child protection conference which started during the year	Number	223	177	239	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Rate per 10,000	51.4	40.1	52.9	56.8	49.9	48.3

Children who were the subject of a child protection plan							
Indicators		Merton 2011-12	Merton 2012-13	Merton 2013/14	National 2013/14	London 2013/14	Outer London 2013/14
Child protection plans started in the year	Number	192	160	212	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Rate per 10,000	44.2	36.3	47.0	52.1	43.2	41.6
Child protection plans ended in the year	Number	139	171	192	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Rate per 10,000	32.0	38.8	42.5	47.4	39.7	37.5
Children subject of a plan as at 31 March	Number	173	162	182	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Rate per 10,000	39.8	36.7	40.3	42.1	37.4	35.1
Child protection plans reviewed within the required timescales (cases open 3 months or more)	Number	104	118	131	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Percentage	93.7%	97.5%	92.9%	94.6%	97.2%	96.7%
Child protection plans: child seen every 28 days	Percentage	n/a	n/a	53.5%	58.4%	61.0%	60.8%
Child protection plans: child seen every 35 days	Percentage	n/a	n/a	77%	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
Children who became subject of a plan for the second or subsequent time	Percentage	7.8%	10.6%	11.3%	15.8%	13%	12.5%
Child protection plans lasting two years or more	Percentage	1.4%	3.5%	3.3%	2.6%	3.6%	3.0%

Progress of children looked after and achieving permanence

Looked After Children							
Indicators		Merton 2011/12	Merton 2012/13	Merton 2013/14	National 2013/14	London 2013/14	Outer London 2013/14
Children in care throughout the year	Number	210	215	253	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Rate per 10,000	48	48	56	n/a	n/a	n/a
Children in care at 31 March	Number	130	140	150	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Rate per 10,000	30	32	33	60	54	48

Looked After Children – Placements							
Indicators		Merton 2011/12	Merton 2012/13	Merton 2013/14	National 2013/14	London 2013/14	Outer London 2013/14
NI 62 – Stability of placements – number of moves	Percentage	14.7%	15.7%	12.7%	11%	n/a	n/a
NI 63 – Stability of placements – length of placement	Percentage	67.6%	63.9%	58%	68% ^(3 year rolling)	n/a	n/a
LAC Placed over 20 miles away	Percentage	19%	14%	17%	17%	18%	18%

Looked After Children - Reviews							
Indicators		Merton 2011/12	Merton 2012/13	Merton 2013/14	National 2013/14	London 2013/14	Outer London 2013/14
NI 66 – LAC reviews within timescale	Percentage	95.9%	95.9%	97%	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
Children in care participation in reviews	Percentage	79.4%	88.2%	87.4%	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available

Looked After Children – Health							
Indicators		Merton 2011/12	Merton 2012/13	Merton 2013/14	National 2013/14	London 2013/14	Outer London 2013/14
Children with Health Surveillance checks up to date	Number	12	12	8	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Percentage	86%	80%	100%			
Children who have had their annual health assessment	Number	70	70	79	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Percentage	83%	82%	95%	87%	90%	88%
NI 58 - Emotional & behavioural health – Average SDQ score	Score	11.4	14.6	12.3	13.9	13.4	13.7
Children who have had their immunisations up to date	Number	76	75	79	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Percentage	90%	88%	95%	83%	73%	80%
Children who have had their dental checks up to date	Number	83	85	69	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Percentage	99%	100%	83%	82%	88%	87%
Children who have been identified as having a substance misuse problem	Percentage	18.9%	10.7%	8.4%	3.5%	6.1%	6.2%

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Looked After Children – Education							
Indicators		Merton 2011/12	Merton 2012/13	Merton 2013/14	National 2012/13	London 2012/13	Outer London 2012/13
Absence from school of children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months	Percentage	5.50	3.90		4.40	4.50	Date not available

Adoption

	Merton Single Year 2011-2012	Merton Single Year 2012-2013	Merton Single Year 2013-2014	National 3 Year Average 2010-2013	Merton 3 Year Average 2010-2013	Merton 3 Year Average 2011-2014
Adoption						
A1 - Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted (days)	807 days	467.2 days	694.9 days (8cyp)	647 days	685 days	689 days
A2 - Average time between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family (days)	344.1 days	124.25 days	291.7 days (6cyp)	210 days	256 days	281 days
A3 - Children who wait less than 20 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family (number and %)	25%	23%.	76%	55%	42%	51%
A4 - Adoptions from care (number adopted and percentage leaving care who are adopted)	7% (9/93)	6% (5/85)	9% (10/107)	13%	7% (19/272)	8% (24/286)
A5 - The number of children for whom the permanence decision has changed away from adoption	3	2	9	n/a	n/a	n/a
A6 - The percentage of black and minority ethnic children leaving care who are adopted	22% (2/9)	60% (3/5)	50% (5/10)	7%	26% (5/19)	42% (10/24)
A7 - The percentage of children aged 5 or over leaving care who are adopted	11% (1/9)	0% (0/5)	30% (3/10)	4%	11% (2/19)	17% (4/24)
A8 - Average length of care proceedings locally (weeks)	n/a	n/a	n/a	51 wks	65 wks	n/a
A9 - Number of children awaiting adoption	3	7	17	6890		

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Care leavers

Indicators		Merton 2011/12	Merton 2012/13	Merton 2013/14	National 2013/14	London 2013/14	Outer London 2013/14
Care leavers							
Total Care leavers	Number	Data not available	Data not available	96	n/a	n/a	n/a
Care Leavers aged 19	Number	Data not available	Data not available	29	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
	In touch with	Data not available	Data not available	23 (79%)	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
Care Leavers aged 20	Number	Data not available	Data not available	34	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
	In touch with	Data not available	Data not available	28 (82%)	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
Care Leavers aged 21	Number	Data not available	Data not available	33	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
	In touch with	Data not available	Data not available	18 (54%)	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
Subtotal Care Leavers aged 19, 20, 21	In touch with	Data not available	Data not available	69 (72%)	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
% of children leaving care over age of 16 who remained looked after until their 18th birthday	Percentage	66.0%	63.0%	65.1%	68%	n/a	n/a

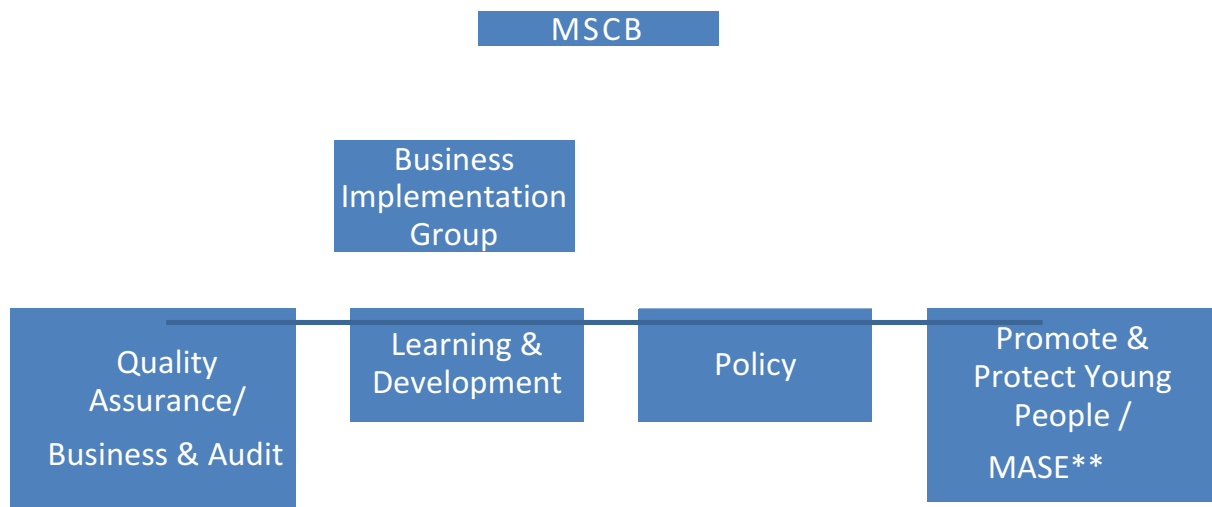
Indicators		Merton 2011/12	Merton 2012/13	Merton 2013/14	National 2012/13	London 2012/13	Outer London 2012/13
Care leavers Accommodation							
% of young people aged 19, 20 or 21 Care leavers in suitable accommodation	Number	Data not available	Data not available	67.7%	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
% of young people aged 19 Care leavers in suitable accommodation	Number	88.2%	85.0%	64.3%	88%	88%	87%
% of young people aged 20 Care leavers in suitable accommodation	Number	Data not available	Data not available	79.4%	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
% of young people aged 21 Care leavers in suitable accommodation	Number	Data not available	Data not available	58.1%	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available

		Merton 2011-12	Merton 2012-13	Merton 2013/14	National 2012-13	London 2012/13	Outer London 2012/13
Care leavers – Education							
Care leavers aged 19, 20 or 21 not in education, employment or training	Percentage	Data not available	Data not available	48.4%	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
Care leavers aged 19 not in education, employment or training	Percentage	17.6%	25.0%	42.9%	34%	28%	29%
Care leavers aged 20 not in education, employment or training	Percentage	Data not available	Data not available	55.9%	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
Care leavers aged 21 not in education, employment or training	Percentage	Data not available	Data not available	45.2%	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
Young people aged 19, 20 or 21 who were looked after aged 16 who were in higher education (i.e. beyond A-Level)	Percentage	Data not available	Data not available	11.8%	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available

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Young people aged 19 who were looked after aged 16 who were in higher education (i.e. beyond A-Level)	Percentage	5.9%	10.0%	0.0%	6%	8%	9%
Young people aged 20 who were looked after aged 16 who were in higher education (i.e. studies beyond A-Level)	Percentage	Data not available	Data not available	14.7%	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
Young people aged 21 who were looked after aged 16 who were in higher education (i.e. studies beyond A-Level)	Percentage	Data not available	Data not available	19.4%	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available

Appendix 3: MSCB Structure



** MASE Multi -Agency Sexual Exploitation Group

In addition there are Joint Sub Groups with Sutton LSCB – namely

Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) and the Joint Human Resources Sub Group.

The MSCB will commission Task and Finish Groups as required.

The MSCB Chair may commission a Panel to undertake SCRs or LIRs.
(See Appendix Eight)

Reporting

Sub Groups will routinely report to the MSCB on their work plans as follows; and where required by exception:

Quality Assurance

- Multi-Agency data – quarterly in arrears
- Lessons from quality assurance at each MSCB meeting

Learning and Development – twice per year

Policy – twice per year

Promote and Protect Young People - twice per year

- Quality and aggregated lessons arising from case monitoring in Promote & Protect/MASE meetings will be reported via QA and to the MSCB

Joint HR Sub Group – once per year

Joint CDOP – once per year, usually through the draft CDOP Annual Report

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The Sub Groups will work together to ensure that Policy Development and Learning and Development reflect lessons being learned through QA and PPYP

Appendix 4: Membership

Membership of MSCB has been agreed as follows:

P Statutory Partner

S Statutory Sector Partner

C Co-opted

V Voting

PO Participant Observer

SA Statutory Advisor

A Advisor

B Board support

	MSCB
	Independent Chair Casting vote
P	Vice Chair to be drawn from the Statutory Members
P V	Chief Officer, Merton Clinical Commissioning Group
P V	NHS England (London)
P V	Chief Nurse, Royal Marsden Hospital, Sutton and Merton Community Health Services
P V	Sutton & Merton Service Director, SW London & St George's MH Trust
P V	Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, SW London & St Georges
P V	St George's Healthcare NHS Trust
P V	Director of Nursing, Epsom & St. Helier NHS Trust
P V	Borough Commander, Met Police
P V	DCI, Child Abuse Investigation Team, Met Police
P V	Assistant Chief Officer, London Probation
P V	Assistant Chief Officer The London Community Rehabilitation Company Limited
S V	Lay Members (Two)
S V	Voluntary Sector Agency (Two)
P V	Director, Children Schools & Families
P V	Head of CSC & YI, CSF
	Head of Education, CSF

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P V	
C V	Director of Public Health Merton, Community & Housing
C V	Safeguarding Adults Manager, Community & Housing
C V	Housing Needs Manager, Community & Housing
P V	Senior Service Manager, CAFCASS
SV	Head Teacher Primary School 'Rep of Governing Body of a Maintained School
SV	Special School
SV	Maintained secondary school
SV	Representative of the proprietor of a city technology college, a city college for technology or the arts, or an Academy
SV	Independent Sector School – vacant at Jan 2015
CV	CP Officer, Merton Priory Homes
PO	Merton Council Lead Member Children's Services Non-voting
SA	Designated Doctor for Child Protection, Merton CCG Non-voting
SA	Designated Nurse Safeguarding, Merton Clinical Commissioning Group Non-voting
SA	Principal Social Worker Non-voting
P V	Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, SW London & St Georges
A	Joint Head of HR Business Partnerships Non-voting
A	Service Manager, Policy, Planning and Performance Non-voting
BS	MSCB Board Development Manager Non-voting
BS	MSCB Administrator/s Non-voting
A	MSCB Training Officer Non-voting

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Statutory Partners will nominate an agreed senior Agency Deputy who is able to speak and take decisions on their Agency's behalf

Sector Partners will cover each other and do not require a deputy for their own agency.

Advisers will not have deputies

Where a Sub Group Chair is appointed who is not a Board Member they will be co-opted to the Board but will not be a voting member, unless they are deputising for an Agency Member.

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