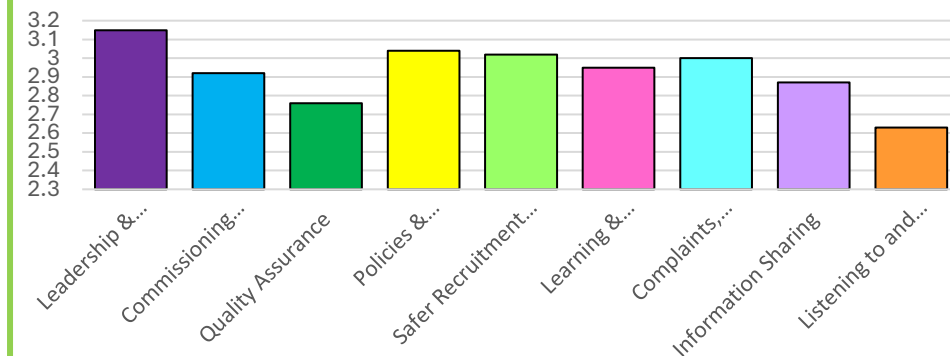


Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership – Section 11 23/24

In 23/24, agencies completed their Section 11 Audits. This audit was conducted using the Regional Audit Tool alongside 9 other areas within the Wider West Midlands. More information on the areas involved and the benefits the regional approach has on our partner agencies can be found [here](#). In total, 16 agencies completed a Section 11 return which was a 100% compliance rate.

Overview: The S11 audits allow agencies to provide a self-assessment of where they stand in respect of nine key areas: Leadership & Accountability, Commissioning Arrangements, Quality Assurance, Policies and Procedures, Safer Recruitment & Selection, Learning & Development and Supervision of Staff, Complaints, Whistleblowing and Managing Allegations, Information Sharing and Listening to and Working with People.

Quantitative findings: The S11 grading scale asked respondents to grade their organisation on a series of topics with Inadequate, Requires Improvement, Good and Outstanding. These were given numerical values of 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively, which were used to generate averages and identify statistical trends. The graph to the right shows the averages among the 9 areas questioned (to 2 d.p).



Positive practice

Agencies have clear leadership and clear responsible officers for safeguarding who are engaged in the Safeguarding Partnership.

- Agencies ensure safeguarding is an integral part of procurement and contract processes.
- Almost all agencies have a Quality Assurance Framework in place and/or a dedicated programme of auditing.
- Agencies have clear safeguarding policies which are used in conjunction with multi-agency safeguarding procedures.
- Agencies have clear recruitment and selection policies in place and undertake DBS checks where necessary.
- Agencies have a clear and communicated Learning and Development programme.
- Agencies have effective systems in place for whistleblowing, complaints and dealing with allegations of abuse.
- Most agencies have clear information sharing guidance relevant to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children and young people.

Regional analysis

As the Solihull Section 11 was part of the regional project, we were able to look at regional averages and identify some comparative data. In relation to regional averages, the areas of lowest confidence are Commissioning Arrangements and Quality Assurance. Solihull have the lowest overall average across the region however it is important to note that the Section 11 is a self-assessment tool and during the analysis of the returns it was felt that several agencies had scored themselves unfairly.

Next steps for individual agencies: Agencies have identified their own action plans to each question where necessary. There are 84 actions in total across 16 agencies. Agencies are responsible for completing these actions and the SSCP Support Hub will request updates in Q1 24/25 to track progress.



Audit findings and next steps for the Partnership

- Some agencies are unable to fully evidence that supervision is happening on a regular basis for all staff and volunteers as a result, the SSCP Audit Group have conducted an audit around supervision/1:1 to understand how well professionals in Solihull are being supported in their roles to deliver the best outcomes for children, young people and families.
- Capturing the voice of the child across statutory agencies is an area of concern and therefore these findings will be used along with the findings from the SSCP Voice of the Child Audit to develop and implement updated guidance around capturing the child’s voice including a range of tools for frontline practitioners to use.
- Some agencies felt that more could be done in relation to information sharing to ensure their agencies are compliant. As a result, the SSCP have updated [guidance around Information Sharing](#) in line with the new [DfE Information Sharing guidance](#) published in May 2024 and disseminated this around the Partnership.
- Whilst auditing is taking place, it is not evident as to how the learning from single and multi-agency audits is disseminated, being embedded into practice and making a difference to children and young people. The SSCP now ensure all learning from audits is disseminated appropriately to all relevant staff in a timely way through our newsletters.

Supervision Audit: The multi-agency audit group developed a survey style audit to gain an understanding around the quality of supervision and 1:1’s across the partnership. In total, there were 150 respondents from frontline working with children, young people and families within Solihull. The findings are available on the [SSCP Learning from Audits Webpage](#).

Voice of the Child: The findings from the S11 Audit and Multi-Agency Case Audit have been used to update and develop guidance around capturing the Voice of the Child. To support frontline practitioners to do this, the Partnership are in the process of developing tools which can aid in understanding what life is like for the child/ren they are supporting. These tools are currently being trialled with a range of pupils throughout Solihull to ensure they are engaging and purposeful. These tools will be available on the SSCP website for practitioners.

Triangulation with frontline practitioners

As part of a supervision survey, 150 frontline practitioners were asked an additional 4 questions as follows:

Do you know how to report a safeguarding concern? **Yes 150/No 0**

Do you know who to go to regarding any safeguarding concerns? **Yes 150/No 0**

Are findings from audits (single and multi-agency) and reviews disseminated throughout your organisation? **Yes 123/No 27**

Does your organisation have policies in place for:

- Safeguarding? **Yes 149/No 1**
- Whistleblowing? **Yes 143/No 7**
- Complaints? **Yes 146/No 4**
- Allegations of abuse against members of staff? **Yes 142/No 8**
- Escalation, resolution of professional dispute? **Yes 131/No 19**
- Information sharing? **Yes 140/No 10**

Voice of the Child



Background: In November 2023, a dip sample audit was undertaken to assess how well the multi-agency workforce are obtaining and acting on the Voice of the Child. The sample of children included children who were looked after, children on a Child in Need Plan and children subject of a Child Protection Plan. The children were aged between 7 and 17.

Good Practice

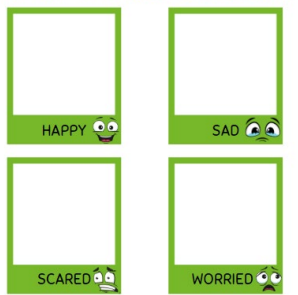
- Schools demonstrated a lot of positive practice in obtaining the Voice of the Child. It was clear that the schools involved in the audit use a range of tools to obtain the child’s voice and record these, enabling the Child’s views to be included in multi-agency meetings.
- The voice of the child was included and acted on in the Looked After Reviews we considered as part of the sample.
- Children’s Services case notes for some of the children and young people were detailed and informative. It allowed the auditors to get a real feel and understanding of what life was like for the child from the young person’s perspective.

The audit findings remind us to:

- Ensure a Child’s voice is not lost within a sibling group, particularly when siblings have additional needs.
- Ensure the focus remains on the child and that the voice of parents/carers does not dominate direct work.
- Ensure the positive work undertaken to obtain the Child’s voice is included in multi-agency meetings.
- Consider a wide range of tools to obtain the Child’s voice, paying attention to the child/young person’s age and ensuring tools are age-appropriate and engaging.
- Ensure children and young people are aware of why services are involved (where appropriate) and empower young people to attend multi-agency meetings about them.
- Ensure record keeping is up to date and accurate which includes being able to retrospectively understand when and how the Voice of the Child has been obtained.



What makes me feel...



Consent and Information Sharing Briefing

April 2024



REGIONAL AUDITS (S11 AND CARE ACT COMPLIANCE) FOR WEST MIDLANDS