

JOINT EDUCATION & YOUTH AND SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday, 24 th March 2016
Report Subject	Safeguarding and Child Protection
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Social Services and Cabinet Member for Education
Report Author	Chief Officer (Social Services)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To provide members with information in relation to Safeguarding and Child Protection within the county boundaries.

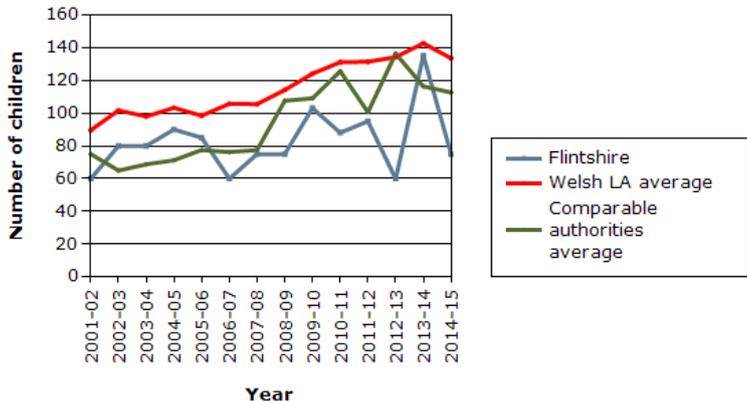
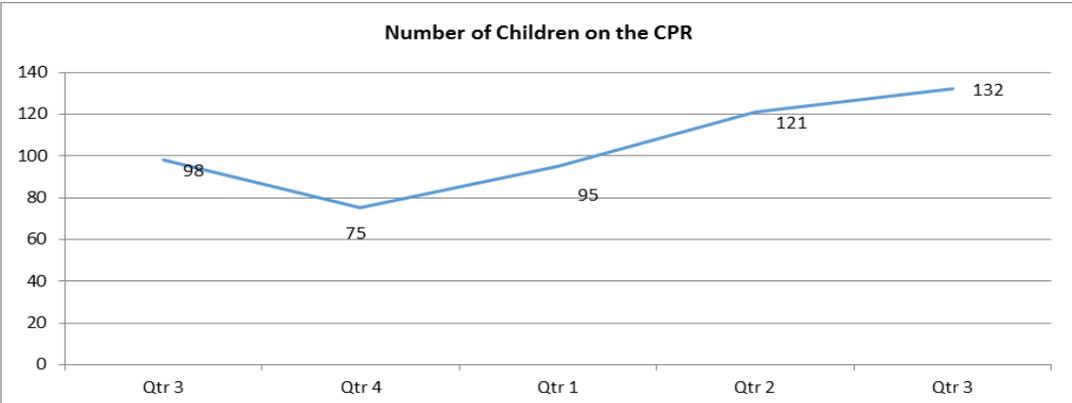
In line with the Council's strategy for developing a systematic Performance Management Framework, Social Services routinely collates safeguarding activity for children in need and those children whose names are included on the Flintshire Child Protection Register.

This report is to inform Members of key statistical and performance related information about children for whom the Authority has significant safeguarding responsibilities.

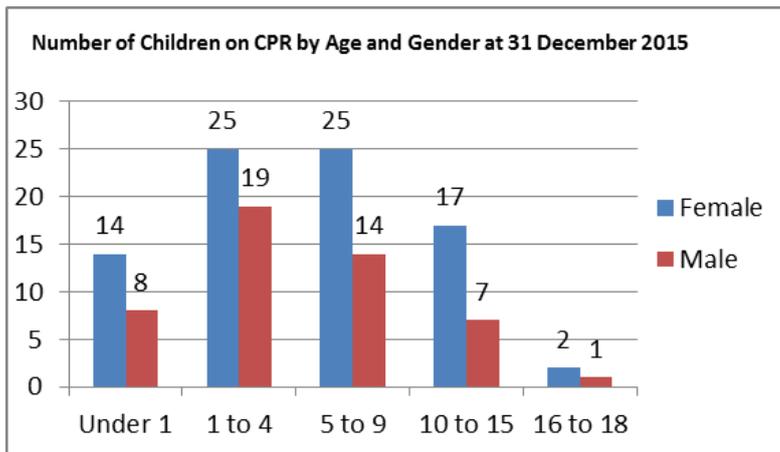
RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Members accept this report as information in relation to Safeguarding and Child Protection for the period 1 st April, 2015 to 31 st December, 2015.
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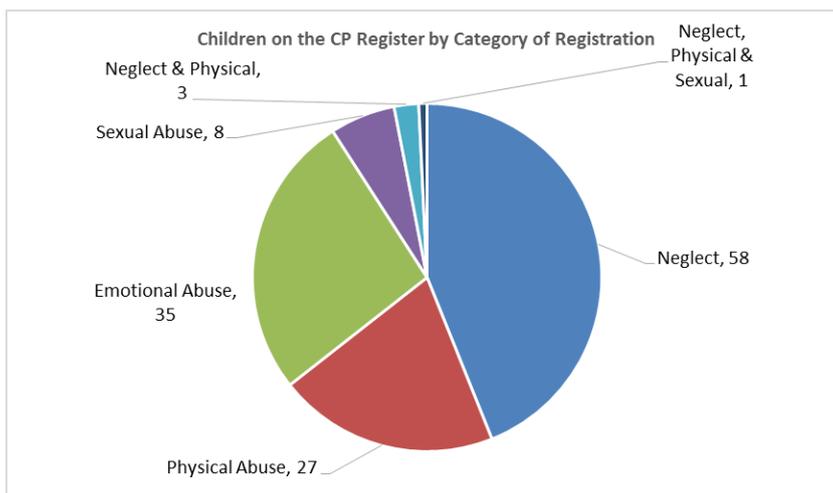
REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION REPORT APRIL 2015 – DECEMBER 2015																																																												
1.01	<p>Child Protection Register</p> <p>The purpose of the Child Protection Register is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide a record of all children in Flintshire with unresolved child protection issues and who are currently the subject of an inter-agency protection plan; and To ensure that the plans are formally reviewed every six months. 																																																												
1.02	<p>Number on the Register</p> <p>The table below shows the trend in numbers on the Child Protection Register from 1st April 2001 to 31st March 2015. The graph shows that within this 15 year period, there has been a modest rise in the numbers on the register with a variation from year on year including a decrease in the last year.</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Estimated data for Number of children on the Register (2001-02 to 2014-15)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Flintshire</th> <th>Welsh LA average</th> <th>Comparable authorities average</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>2001-02</td><td>60</td><td>85</td><td>65</td></tr> <tr><td>2002-03</td><td>75</td><td>95</td><td>70</td></tr> <tr><td>2003-04</td><td>80</td><td>95</td><td>75</td></tr> <tr><td>2004-05</td><td>90</td><td>95</td><td>75</td></tr> <tr><td>2005-06</td><td>85</td><td>95</td><td>80</td></tr> <tr><td>2006-07</td><td>65</td><td>95</td><td>80</td></tr> <tr><td>2007-08</td><td>75</td><td>100</td><td>80</td></tr> <tr><td>2008-09</td><td>100</td><td>110</td><td>100</td></tr> <tr><td>2009-10</td><td>90</td><td>120</td><td>110</td></tr> <tr><td>2010-11</td><td>95</td><td>125</td><td>120</td></tr> <tr><td>2011-12</td><td>90</td><td>125</td><td>100</td></tr> <tr><td>2012-13</td><td>60</td><td>125</td><td>130</td></tr> <tr><td>2013-14</td><td>135</td><td>140</td><td>110</td></tr> <tr><td>2014-15</td><td>75</td><td>135</td><td>110</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Flintshire	Welsh LA average	Comparable authorities average	2001-02	60	85	65	2002-03	75	95	70	2003-04	80	95	75	2004-05	90	95	75	2005-06	85	95	80	2006-07	65	95	80	2007-08	75	100	80	2008-09	100	110	100	2009-10	90	120	110	2010-11	95	125	120	2011-12	90	125	100	2012-13	60	125	130	2013-14	135	140	110	2014-15	75	135	110
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1.03	<p>During the 9 months from 1st April 2015 to 31st December 2015, the number of children on the register have modestly increased in line with national fluctuations. As at 31st December, 2015 the number of children on the CPR was 132. This remains below the Welsh average.</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Number of Children on the CPR</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Quarter</th> <th>Number of Children</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Qtr 3</td><td>98</td></tr> <tr><td>Qtr 4</td><td>75</td></tr> <tr><td>Qtr 1</td><td>95</td></tr> <tr><td>Qtr 2</td><td>121</td></tr> <tr><td>Qtr 3</td><td>132</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Quarter	Number of Children	Qtr 3	98	Qtr 4	75	Qtr 1	95	Qtr 2	121	Qtr 3	132																																																
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1.04 A breakdown of the children on the register at 31st December, 2015 by age and gender is provided below. 50% of children on the CPR were under 5 years old, this compares to the Wales average of 41% as at 31st March, 2015.



1.05 The category of registration for children on the register on 31st December, 2015 is broken down below.



The majority of cases in Flintshire are Neglect, with Emotional Abuse now more prevalent than Physical Abuse. However, Emotional Abuse is considered to be implicit in all types of abuse and therefore the Emotional Abuse category will only be used where there is no other abuse indicated.

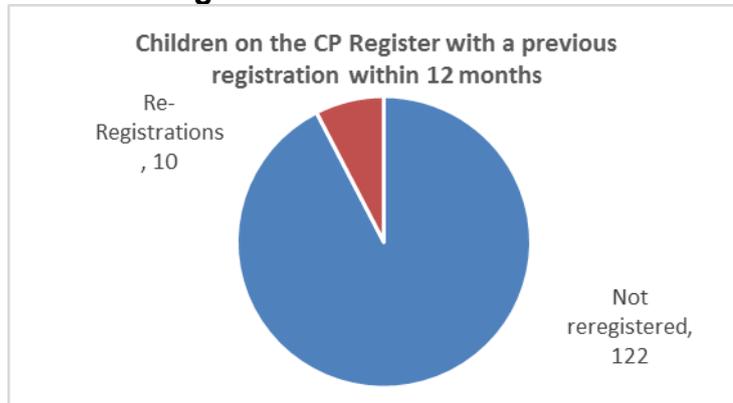
These cases of Neglect and/or Emotional Abuse are usually linked to incidents of domestic abuse and this has been the case in Flintshire for some time, a trend which is also seen regionally and nationally.

The category of Physical Abuse is used where there is evidence of actual physical

harm or where there is domestic violence evident, in which case the category may indicate a risk of physical harm.

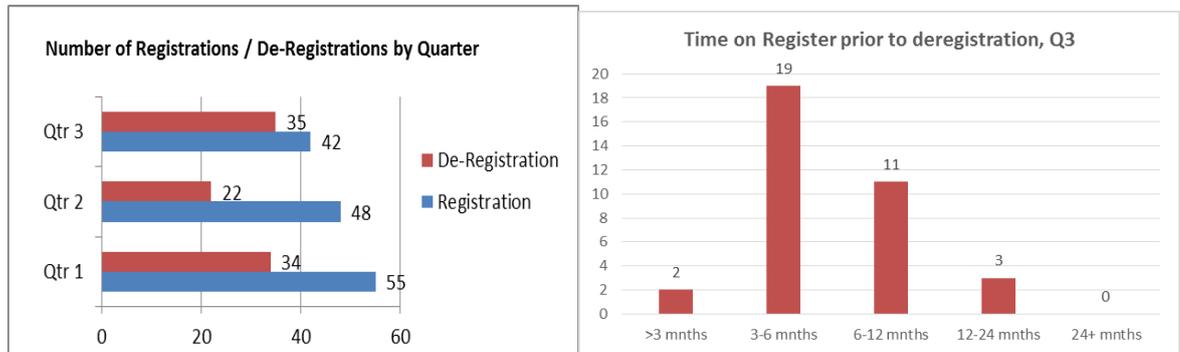
Flintshire continue to register under multiple categories in line with guidance, this allows us to reflect the true risk.

1.06 Previous Registration within 12 months



Ten children from 4 families on the Child Protection Register were the subject of a previous registration within 12 months, this compares to the Welsh national average of 15. Repeat registrations frequently indicate a change of circumstances within the family, resulting in an increase in the level of risk. All cases of re-registration are subject to an independent audit by the North Wales Safeguarding Children Board.

The graphs below shows the number of registrations and de-registrations in the year to date, and the time spent on the register prior to de-registration.

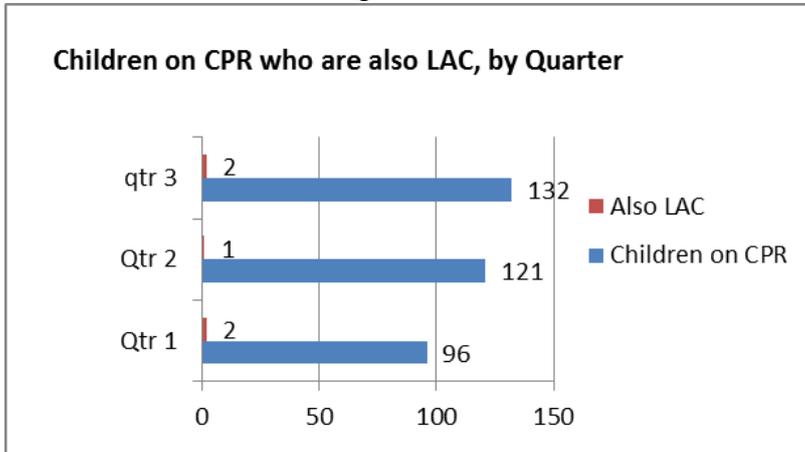


1.07 Children on the Register reaching the time of their third review are automatically reviewed under the new court and Public Law Outline and are subject to a legal advice meeting.

The Children’s Safeguarding Managers undertake a regular review of cases that have been on the child protection register for twelve months or more, and report the findings to the Senior Manager. This process provides an additional layer of oversight to ensure children are not on the register longer than necessary. On

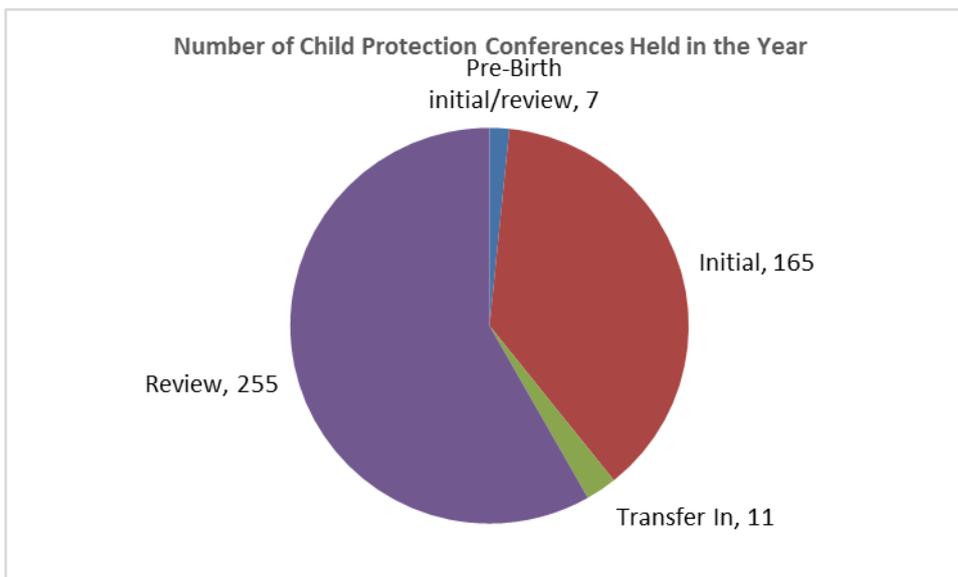
31st December, 2015, no children had been on the register in Flintshire for more than 24 months. Protracted registration potentially indicates that the child protection plan needs addressing or the case escalating if parental change is absent.

Two children on the register on 31st December, 2015 were also looked after



1.08 Child Protection Conferences

438 child protection conferences have been held between 1st April, 2015 and 31st December, 2015. The breakdown is given below:



Child protection conferences are subject to monitoring via the Performance Measurement Framework.

1.09 The percentage of initial child protection conferences due in the year which were held within 15 working days of the strategy discussion.

For the 12 months to 31st March, 2015 91.2% of initial child protection conferences

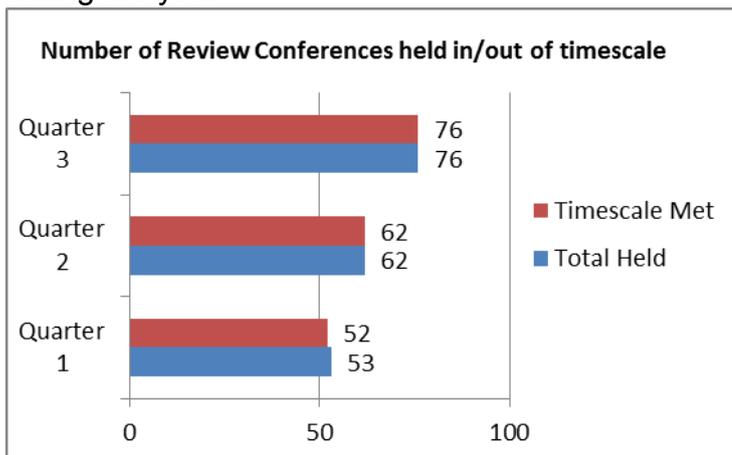
were held within 15 working days of the strategy discussion.

During Quarter 1 (1st April to 30th June, 2015) 80.9% of initial conferences were held within the 15 days due to unprecedented number of requests for initial conferences were 68 children were conferenced from 31 families (compared to Q4 last year when 38 children were conferenced from 19 families).

During Quarter 2 (1st July to 30th September, 2015) 98.2% of initial child protection conferences took place within 15 days of the strategy discussion and finally, in Quarter 3 (1st October, 2015 to 31st December, 2015) 84.8% of initial child protection conferences took place within the 15 days. Delays for the 7 cases were due to diary capacity and non-family attendance.

Occasionally, conference requests are made late to the Safeguarding Unit, or the Chair may decide to delay a conference in order to ensure that all the required information and attendees are available. However, in spite of the consistently high numbers of requests for conference, the Safeguarding Unit are continuing to manage the scheduling of the majority of initial conferences within timescales.

1.10 The percentage of child protection reviews carried out within statutory timescales during the year



The timeliness of child protection review conferences was 100% during Quarter 2 and 3 (1st July to 31st December, 2015).

It is occasionally necessary to reschedule conferences, for reasons out of the control of the Safeguarding Manager. Although it appears worrying, in terms of statistics, for a conference to be held late, we collect reasons for all late conferences and occasionally reschedule because, in the interests of the child, it would be inappropriate for the conference to go ahead. These are usually cases where a family member or professional whose attendance the Chair feels is essential, is unable to attend. But delays can also be due to staff sickness, late request of the conference by the Social Worker, or family non-cooperation. Conferences may also be delayed to ensure that the family have adequate time to

	read through reports in accordance with the All Wales Child Protection Procedures.
1.11	<p>There has recently been an increase in case conferences for unborn children. Again these increases cannot be quantified. Flintshire arrange conferences for unborn children in line with All Wales Child Protection Procedures guidance, i.e. between 24-32 weeks gestation whilst they undertake assessments. This gives the Social Worker a timescale within which to work rather than bringing mother's into conference late into pregnancy.</p> <p>In the 9 months from 1st April, 2015 to 31st December, 2015 7 Pre-birth Case Conferences took place and we currently we have 8 unborns on the register with another 8 pending over the next few months.</p>
1.12	<p>Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)</p> <p>Currently there are 3 cases on the register linked to CSE. These cases would also be managed under MASM's (Multi Agency Strategy Meetings) which would have plans generated by SERAF assessments.</p> <p>Flintshire County Council's Children's Services and its partner agencies employ the CSE Panel as the mechanism to improve outcomes for children and young people in cases of known or suspected child sexual exploitation.</p> <p>The CSE Panel has three primary roles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To ensure that cases of suspected or actual child sexual exploitation are well-managed and co-ordinated and that all possible action has been taken to protect the victims. 2. To ensure that all cases are considered by a single group who are then able to identify any links between individual cases. 3. To ensure that intelligence relating to patterns of child sexual exploitation in the area can be identified and action taken where necessary. This will include the sharing of intelligence in relation to suspect groups of victims, perpetrators, vulnerable locations etc.
1.13	<p>The Safeguarding Unit</p> <p>The Adults and Children's Safeguarding Units have now been brought together to form the Flintshire Social Services Safeguarding Unit based in County Offices, Flint. The Unit is managed by the newly appointed Safeguarding Unit Manager who reports directly to the Senior Manager Safeguarding and Commissioning. This structure has enabled a sharing of best practice between Adults and Children's Safeguarding, whilst maintaining the expertise in each field. Placing the Unit within the Safeguarding and Commissioning Service Area has also brought greater independence whilst continuing to offer support and advice to the</p>

	<p>frontline workforce.</p> <p>We currently have a vacancy in one of the Children’s Safeguarding Manager roles following the appointment of Jayne Belton as Safeguarding Unit Manager. Jayne continues to deliver many of the key tasks of the Children’s Safeguarding Manager role, until her replacement is recruited. Also, the second Children’s Safeguarding Manager will be leaving the Authority to further his career at the end of May and both posts have been advertised simultaneously are currently out to advert both internally and externally, with interview arranged for the 13th April, 2016.</p>
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	There are no financial implications arising from this report.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	N/A

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	N/A

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>None.</p> <p>Contact Officer: Jane Davies – Senior Manager Safeguarding and Commissioning Telephone: 01352 702503 E-mail: jane.m.davies@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<p><u>Child in Need</u> A child is defined as being in need if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S/he is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him/her of services by a local authority; • His/her health or development is likely to be significantly impaired without the provision of such services; • S/he is disabled. <p>(Section 17, Children Act 1989).</p>
7.02	<p><u>Looked After Child (LAC)</u> A child who is being looked after by their local authority is known as a Looked After Child. They might be living: with foster parents, at home with their parents under the supervision of social services, in residential children's homes or other arrangements.</p>
7.03	<p><u>SERAF Assessment</u> SERAF is the Sexual Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework which forms part of an information and intervention pathway for safeguarding children and young people.</p> <p>The risk assessment tool and information and intervention pathways have been developed in response to practitioners' difficulties in identification and intervention with children and young people at risk of or abused through sexual exploitation.</p>
7.04	<p><u>All Wales Child Protection Procedures</u> All Wales Child Protection Procedures, implemented on April 1st 2008, help safeguard children and promote their welfare.</p> <p>The All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008 replace earlier jurisdiction. The procedures combine the shared knowledge and experiences of Wales' 22 Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) and reflect the changes required as a result of high-profile child protection reports like the Laming Report.</p> <p>They address a wide range of safeguarding issues, including new mediums in which abuse can occur, such as the internet, and incorporate learning from research and practice from other parts of the world.</p>