



St Helena Government

SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN'S BOARD NATIONAL RESPONSE PLAN

MARCH 2019

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NATIONAL RESPONSE PLAN

Saint Helena Vision

The members of the St Helena Safeguarding of Children's Board want to ensure every child growing up in St Helena has the best possible start in life. The Board believes that by helping families and the community to support their children and young people in these valuable years, it can promote positive, long-term impacts on the children's future health, wellbeing and achievements and encourage them to thrive and prosper in adulthood. The Board's vision supports the St Helena Island 10 Year Plan 2017 -2027.

The Safeguarding of Children's Board has three strategic priorities.

These are:

Strategic Priority	What will we do to achieve this priority
Strategic Priority 1: Children and Young People get the best start in life, they are physically and emotionally healthy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ All children have access to a stable and balanced diet, which supports their ability to learn and to develop in a healthy way.➤ Improved community awareness to support families on all incomes to prepare and eat healthy meals.
Strategic Priority 2: Children and Young People are safe and secure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Increase awareness and understanding of keeping personal safety both online and real world➤ Increase awareness and reduce youth substance misuse, (drugs and alcohol)➤ Develop awareness of the impact of unsafe road practices.
Strategic Priority 3: Families are resilient and able to access support when they feel they need it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Services are provided to ensure children are kept safe and that solutions where possible are sought within the family friends network.➤ Preventative services are worked upon across the partners to support families to find their own solutions.

The Safeguarding of Children's Board have developed a National Response Plan which sits alongside and closely links with the strategic priorities of the Board. This plan is structured around five key themes; Policy and Governance; Criminal and Civil Justice; Support and Societal and is a live document which will be updated on a regular basis.

There is a need to acknowledge and recognise that much progress has been made across all services within St Helena since 2015 and the WASS inquiry. However sustaining and embedding practice, policy and legislation will require ongoing financial aid and support.

As with all societies, life changes and the world develops. Within this the risks and needs to children living in our communities changes. There will be an ongoing need to ensure that services across St Helena have the capacity to adapt, change and develop to meet the changing needs of a developing community. Much of this will be driven by the work of the committed local staff working within St Helena government, NGO's and the Elected Members with the support of the Technical Corporation (TC) staff. However there will be an ongoing need to ensure that appropriate financial aid and support is provided for St Helena to ensure that services are able to meet the identified needs of its children and young people.

Key Theme: Policy and Governance.

- There is Leadership and Strategic Vision supporting effective Child Protection processes.
- There is a body that provides oversight, drives strategy and undertakes continuous monitoring of progress, analysis of risk and response.
- There is a commitment and plan to improve legal framework to investigate and ensure the protection of children.

Actions Taken:

- Saint Helena have established a Safeguarding of Children's Board with representation from key Directorates, Elected Members and NGO's.
- There is now a Children's Champion role within St Helena.
- The safety and protection of children is a key part of the Saint Helena Island 10 Year Plan 2017/2027 and there is a clear commitment from the Chief Secretary, Governor and the Elected Members to ensure that St Helena has effective Child Protection processes in place.
- The Education Directorate has completed a review of safeguarding policies and has put in place comprehensive policies and associated guidance to keep children safe in education, including anti-bullying policies for schools.
- Schools have SEND registers in place and these are reviewed and updated regularly in cooperation with the Inclusion team.
- Commission for Equality and Human Rights Ordinance 01.08.2015 (establishing the EHRC)
- Welfare of Children (Adoption) Regulations 7.10.2015

(use of the Safeguarding of Children's Board as an adoption panel)

- Mental Health and Mental Capacity Ordinance 29.02.2016 (repeal of outdated law – LPAs, deputies, MHT, Overseas Removal Order)
- Welfare of Children (Official Foster Care) Regulations 16.01.2017 (to provide for official foster carers)
- Sexual Offences Act (Application) (Amendment) Order 30.03.2017 (to allow for notification requirements)
- Children's Residential Home Regulations (December 2017)
- Development of a Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs appropriate to the St Helena context.

Next Steps:

- Undertake a skills audit of the Board members and deliver training and development via FCO support for the Board to ensure it has the relevant skills and capabilities to embed and drive good practice.
- Ensure that all NGO's and Civil Society Groups have Safeguarding Policies in place and have the opportunity to attend relevant Child Safeguarding training.
- St Helena are developing a working partnership with the Signs of Safety Community and this will involve leadership support to ensure that good child safeguarding practices have commitment from all levels of government, both politically and within policy development.
- Developing an agreed structure for multi-agency cooperation in providing professional psychological services, building on existing practice.
- Review the TOR for the role and work as a Board to ensure the Children's Champion takes a lead on ensuring the child's voice is incorporated into everything that we do.

Outcome:

- There is a professional Safeguarding of Children's Board in place with strong partnership support, providing challenge and scrutiny across all areas of practice, policy and legislation.
- Children living in St Helena are protected by relevant policy and legislation.
- All services are delivered ensuring they meet the needs of the children living within St Helena.

Key Theme: Criminal and Civil Justice:

- There are trained officers, investigations are reactive and proactive and are victim focused. There is good and clear cross territory cooperation.
- Ensuring the judiciary and prosecutors are trained and victim focused.

- There are clear offender management processes in place which prevents and reduces re-offending of those who are in the criminal justice system.

Action Taken:

- In the past 12 months the establishment of UK trained Detectives has fallen by one to two Detective Constables and a Detective Sergeant (two of which have Child Protection and sexual offences investigation backgrounds), this however still allows for reactive, historical and proactive investigations such as CSE to be conducted effectively.
- In September 2017 trainee local investigator embarked on a traineeship to CID, unfortunately the individual did not come up to the required standard and has subsequently ceased the program. A program such as this is required so ensure sustainability within the Criminal Investigations Department.
- The legislation available to law enforcement agencies and Prosecutors both in terms of local ordinances and enacted UK legislation currently does not afford children and young people the best possible protection in terms of reflecting the evolving nature of offending. There are however proven mechanisms for ensuring that change can be made such as those used in 2017 to ensure child cruelty has a power of arrest attached to it.
- The Welfare of Children Ordinance 2008 lays out a framework akin to that laid out in the 1989 UK Children's Act. There are robust inter agency working practices, held to account by the Safeguarding of Children's Board and underpinned by local policy and procedure (St Helena Working Together 2016) akin to the UK – Working Together 2018.
- Both in the upper and lower courts the judiciary permit use of the special measures laid out in the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999, with examples of video links being used to allow complainants to address the Court from loci away from the Court complex including overseas.
- UK trained barristers are used both in Family and Criminal proceedings – this ensures UK practice is reflected in the Court room on St Helena, with evidence presented and tested correctly.
- There is an effective appeal process available to all parties.
- Multi agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) have been in place for five years. The structure and processes mirror those currently found in the UK. This allows for the effective risk management of those convicted of serious sexual or violent crimes in the community.
- Multi agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC) have been in place for three years. The structure and processes mirror those found in the UK. This allows for a multi-agency response to high risk victims of domestic abuse, be they adults or under 18's. By virtue protection is given to children and young people living in the household.
- St Helena has two Probation Officers and one trainee Police Offender manager (POM). The POM will be responsible for supervising registered sex offenders in the community, (currently 27 with a further 7 in custody), using a range of risk management tools (static and dynamic) and control measures.

- The Probation Officers deliver Behavioural Therapy Programs to those in prison in an attempt to address and challenge offending. Relevant to this plan are the programs aimed at those that have offended sexually against children or are the perpetrators of domestic abuse.
- The 2003 Sexual Offences Act is enacted on St. Helena – this compels individuals convicted of certain sexual offences to become subject of notification / registration for a prescribed period of time.
- Civil control orders such as Sexual Offences Prevention Orders (SOPOs) are currently used to assist in the management of sex offenders, but have been superseded in the UK.
- Investment by the Safeguarding and Police Directorates in IT systems during 2017 /18 has led to better handling of data and more accurate record keeping. Essential in criminal and family proceedings and to identifying / predicting patterns of harm and allowing early interventions.

Next Steps:

- The St Helena Police are in discussion with the Attorney General Chambers and the appropriate Council Committees of to identify the relevant legislation that is absent on St Helena and provide appropriate solutions to ensure children and young people are suitably protected.
- Recruitment for a third Detective Constable is underway. Efforts will be made to identify a local officer to undertake the trainee investigators program.
- There is an ongoing requirement and a need for officers (both local and TC) to access support and CPD from the UK, no formal mechanism in place at this time, currently being explored with the Joint International Policing Hub / UK Stabilisation Unit.
- Emerging threats such as increased internet offending needs to be planned for and capabilities developed on island that do not currently exist including the skills / technical equipment to interrogate handsets, PDAs etc and the drafting of suitable legislation to support this work.
- *Achieving Best Evidence* interview training is required for social workers to enable them to effectively lead child protection inquiries where a child is best known to the social worker, rather than the police. Further work is also required to train local staff to conduct *joint investigations* under S.57 WOCO 2008. Course planned for 2019.
- A local police officer is currently being trained to perform the role of Offender Manager, the move to localise this function is in line with goal of sustainability. In common with the Probation Officers, the approach now being adopted on St Helena with regards to offender management is one of 'strengths based'. This evolution of practice will also be seen in MAPPA over the next 12 months as the 4 *pillars* approach is adopted and implemented.
- In the past 12 months civil Domestic Abuse Prevention Orders have come into being on St Helena giving survivors of abuse, many of whom have children, additional protection to that afforded by pursuing a complaint through the criminal courts. Further work is still required to develop services on island supporting adults and young people living with domestic abuse.

- To further support complainants of sexual abuse a specialist sexual violence advisor is being recruited. This will augment the support already available on island to children and young people that have been abused.
- The use of OTRICS by the police has been expanded to manage the records of registered sex offenders. This permits sharing via VISOR relevant information on such individuals with law enforcement in the UK and across the other OTs. This is an ongoing piece of work aimed at ensuring sharing of information and intelligence.

Outcome:

- St Helena will have an appropriately trained and supported Police force which is able to maintain professional knowledge and expertise to meet the needs of the community.
- Law and legislation supports the Police service to ensure that children can be protected and live happy and safe lives within St Helena.
- An effective Probation Service and POM working to reduce incidents of recidivism.

Key Theme: Support:

- There is an end to end support service in place for Children when they require support and intervention.
- Ensuring a trained and co-ordinated and available protection workforce.
- Provide a clear and referral process for all. (one clear pathway)

Action Taken:

- Children Services within St Helena have established clear referral routes into the service and these are widely understood on the Island.
- There is a referral email box which is checked and reviewed by the manager on a daily basis, telephone referrals are also received.
- St Helena have implemented Working Together 2016 document which details all agencies responsibilities relating to Child Safeguarding. This document is largely based upon the UK Working Together document.
- Children Services deliver a number of direct services to support both children and their families. These include Safer Families Programme, Yours Safely (keep safe for teenagers) Incredible Years Parenting and Friend or Foe (CSE programme)
- The Education Directorate has a functional Inclusion team to support inclusion services in schools
- St Helena has a small drug and alcohol support service and consideration is in place to expand this to encompass earlier intervention and a stronger community engagement element.
- If required St Helena has a Children Residential Home which ensures that when a child needs the government intervention and protection there is place of safety to accommodate them.

- Police and Children Services staff have delivered level 2 and level 3 Child Protection Training to a wide range of people working in Health, Education and Police directorates.
- St Helena Children and Adult services have implemented (Oct 2017) an Integrated Recording System (Azeuscare) which will support a professional and accountable practice approach.
- St Helena have begun a three year implementation plan to develop the Signs of Safety practice framework with partner agencies which will support all staff working with children and families to work in partnership with families to ensure children are living in safe homes. The intention is to deliver this across all key agencies (Health, Police and Education).

Next Steps:

- St Helena are in the process of developing a Fostering Service, and will be undertaking community awareness work in May 2019.
- Develop training courses for all staff working for SHG linked to key themes such as neglect / attachment / recognition and signs of abuse etc. and these to be CPD accredited.
- St Helena Children Services are developing leaving care policies and legislation which is a response to current need.
- There is a need for CPD for investigators, Prosecutors and Judiciary - this requirement should be seen as the 'norm' and there needs to be an acknowledgment that TC officers during their contracts will need CPD in addition to building local capacity and skills.
- Peer support needs to be 'built' across the OT's and practitioner support needs to be formalised through established UK structures such as the Ministry of Justice, FCO and the National Police Chiefs Council etc. to ensure St Helena has a work force delivering the best possible service.
- The program of delivering level 2 and level 3 safeguarding training to staff coming into contact with children and young people needs to continue and to include Faith groups, NGO's and voluntary organisations.
- Training of medical practitioners in conducting forensic medical examinations.

Outcome:

- Professionals working with children are appropriately trained and supported to ensure services deliver good outcomes for children.
- Staff (both local and Technical Cooperation) have a clear and appropriate pathway for ongoing CPD training.
- When required St Helena are able to offer alternative permanent family care for vulnerable children.

Key Theme: Societal:

- Educational awareness programme for children, parents, carers, professionals and civil society groups.
- Children and young people have a voice in the development of policy and practice.
- Offender support systems, medical and psychological, self-help and awareness.

Action Taken:

- In conjunction with the Education and Health Directorates, St Helena have three key professionals who deliver training and education and direct work for children, this is an Educational Psychologist, a Therapeutic Practitioner and a Speech and Language Therapist. These professionals work closely with the Mental Health Team in relation to early identification of children who have complex issues. The Therapeutic Practitioner has close links with the Mental Health Team for consultation, planning and providing therapeutic interventions for children in need, children at risk of harm and looked after children on St Helena
- Children Services and Health colleagues deliver Autism Awareness workshops, this is a parent lead forum.
- NGO's who are receiving funding are required to have a Safeguarding Children's Policy which is overseen by Community Development Organisation.
- Equality and Diversity training is offered through the St Helena Community College.
- All schools have active School Improvement Plans which includes at least one target linked to promoting inclusive schools.
- Schools follow a defined PSHE curriculum which includes a focus on preventing bullying and encouraging respect for others and for equality and diversity.
- St Helena in conjunction with the United Nations have developed a Safe Haven service which delivers interventions and public awareness related to domestic abuse.
- The two Probation Officers are charged with delivering cognitive behavioural programs to challenge past offending and to mitigate the risk of repeat offending. Traditional group work is problematic on St Helena – the Probation service offers one to one work.

Next Steps:

- Ensure that all teaching staff have approved Equality and Diversity training.
- Linked to the Strategic Priority (2) and recommendation 3 of the Cafcass report, the Board are looking at work streams / forums and avenues that the child's voice is captured to develop services and practice.
- Children Services and the Police are at the initial stages for developing an Early Prevention Youth Service that will be multi professional.

Outcome:

- All future policies, legislation and practice is informed and influence by the Child's Voice and experience of services.
- Children living within St Helena feel able to express their voice and know where and how they can talk to someone if they are worried or concerned.
- Professionals working with children are up to date in their knowledge to ensure that emerging issues such as internet safety are supported.
- There are good support networks in place to ensure the emotional needs of children living in St Helena are met.