

**Children, Families &
Education Directorate**

**Children's Safeguards
Unit**

**Annual Report
Academic Year 2006**



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1. Introduction

This report attempts to summarise the level of child protection activity undertaken by Children's Safeguards Unit personnel in their day to day contact with schools, other agencies and LA services during the academic year ending August 2006.

The academic year has presented many challenges to the Unit as the new Children, Families & Education Directorate becomes established. Working together arrangements with Police and Children's Social Services colleagues continue to be positive and this is generally to the benefit of schools and services when conflict resolution is necessary in particular cases on occasions. The workload of the Team has increased significantly during the academic year following the appointment of a Children's Officer to lead on child protection for the Early Years sector. The introduction of a new Database has also provided many challenges in recording and reporting on statistical data which has contributed to this report. Consequently, due to some teething problems and staff familiarisation with the system, the data presented for this year's Annual Report is more limited than in previous years.

DfES Guidance 'Safeguarding Children in Education': Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and Other Staff' was published in September 2005, and this introduced aspirational time-scales within which investigations should be concluded. These time-scales have been built in to the Child Protection procedures for Managing Allegations Against Staff which were approved by KCPC (now the Kent Safeguarding Children Board). Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and related guidance has reinforced for schools where their responsibilities lie for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The subsequent development of a Safeguarding Self-Review Tool which was implemented following a pilot by a number of schools has also helped to enhance this process whilst also partially fulfilling the Local Authority's monitoring function of safeguarding activity.

The introduction of 'Every Child Matters' which helps to inform the new inspection framework, has placed safeguarding at the core of everything that we do in schools and Local Authorities. As a consequence, the CSU contribution to the Local Authority's Annual Performance Assessment (in preparation for the future Joint Area Review) has helped inform priorities for development activity in the coming year. In addition, the coming together of services under the new Children, Families and Education Directorate is presenting many opportunities to review the collective resources available, and develop strategies to maximise further safeguarding potential for the benefit of Kent children.

The statistical data contained in this report is collated from the much more detailed Area Reports produced by the Children's Officers that contain very sensitive Cluster based information that cannot be circulated more widely. **Information contained in this report is also confidential and should not be copied or distributed further without the prior consent of the Children's Safeguard Unit.**

Kel Arthur
Head of Service
Children's Safeguards
January 2007

1 PURPOSE AND OUTCOMES OF THE UNIT

The fundamental purpose of the Children's Safeguards Unit (CSU) is to provide support, guidance and challenge to schools with regard to their key responsibility to ensure that children are protected from abuse. Strategic planning and operational practice of the unit is driven by the principles that underpin the Children Act 1989 and these provide a framework for the objectives of the Service: -

- ◆ **Paramount** – the needs of the child are seen as paramount at all times.
- ◆ **Protection** – the Service aims to promote high standards of Child Protection policy procedures and practice in all schools that provide for Kent children.
- ◆ **Prevention** – The Service aims to raise the profile of children's rights and promote schemes of work in schools across the county that will help to empower children to better protect themselves. In addition we need to ensure that care provided, particularly in residential special school settings, conforms with the requirements of the National Minimum Standards and outcomes for children are in line with ECM expectations.
- ◆ **Partnership** – The Service strives to work collaboratively with internal and external customers and other stakeholders to ensure that the objectives of the service are achieved and maintained. Clear demarcation of roles and responsibilities as defined in *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006* helps to provide a focus for this objective. Unit staff will endeavour to function in a reasonable, transparent and proportional manner when working in partnership with schools, parents, where appropriate, and multi agency colleagues although it should be recognised that responsibility for statutory intervention in cases of child protection remains with the police and children's social services.

1.1 Mission Statement

The Children's Safeguard Unit recognises that if children and young people are to achieve academically, socially and emotionally, it is imperative that their primary needs for safety and protection are met. All children have a fundamental right to be protected from harm and the Unit strives to raise awareness of child protection, care standards and children's rights across the parameters of educational provision.

The values and beliefs that underpin the work of the Service that are consistent with the principles enshrined in Ways For Success, are driven by professional social work ethics that reinforce the rights of the individual to be heard, to be treated fairly and to be afforded opportunities to pursue their potential, regardless of their race, age, gender, disability or sexual orientation. Service staff are committed to challenging discrimination and disadvantage that we may encounter in our day to day work and the principles of anti-oppressive practice will be adopted to address issues of ignorance, power and powerlessness that lie at the root of discrimination and victimisation.

2. Consultations

The Children's Safeguards Unit have been consulted on 950 recorded occasions during the academic year by schools or services within the Local Authority. Although the child protection support function is primarily aimed at schools and education services within the CFE directorate, protocols have been agreed with Youth and Community Service and Kent Adult Education to provide ongoing support and advice even though these services now sit within the new Communities Directorate.

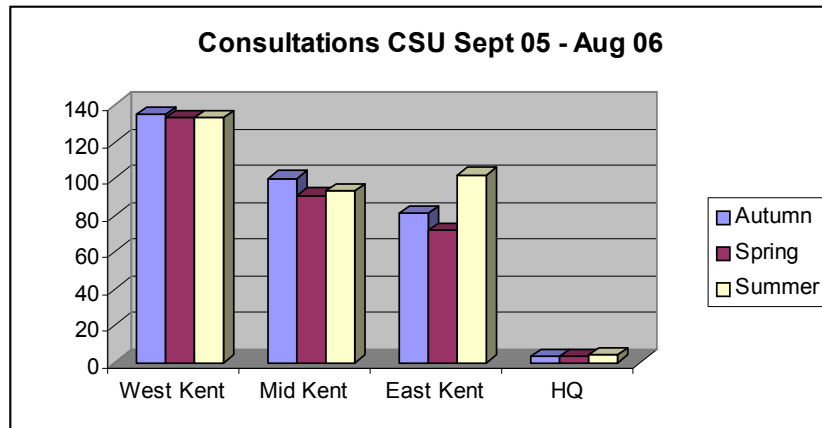
The nature and complexity of consultations continues to present a challenge as many will lead to the need for further legal advice or attendance at multi-agency meetings in support of schools or services. The range of professionals who use the consultation facility has increased but approximately 62% of all calls emanated from Headteachers / Deputies or Designated Child Protection Co-ordinators (DCPC).

Another aspect of the consultation function is to provide the education perspective on inter-agency working groups established by the Kent Safeguarding Children Board and related local child protection committees that focus on both policy and operational practice at a local level. At the request of other agencies we have also begun to record specific requests for advice on issues of domestic violence and young abusing children. We do not believe, however, that the statistics collated during the last academic year accurately reflect the significance of these areas of concern. The Child Protection Newsletter continues to be the medium used for cascading information on safeguarding issues out to schools and services, although increasing numbers of schools accessing Clusterweb will inevitably lead to a review of the need to print and distribute up to 6000 copies of the Newsletter every year.

Child in Need/ Child Protection Consultation undertaken by Area during the Academic Year to July 2006.

Term	West Kent	Mid Kent	East Kent	HQ/OLA	Total
Autumn	135	100	81	3	319
Spring	133	91	72	3	299
Summer	133	93	102	4	332
Total	401	284	255	10	950

Consultations



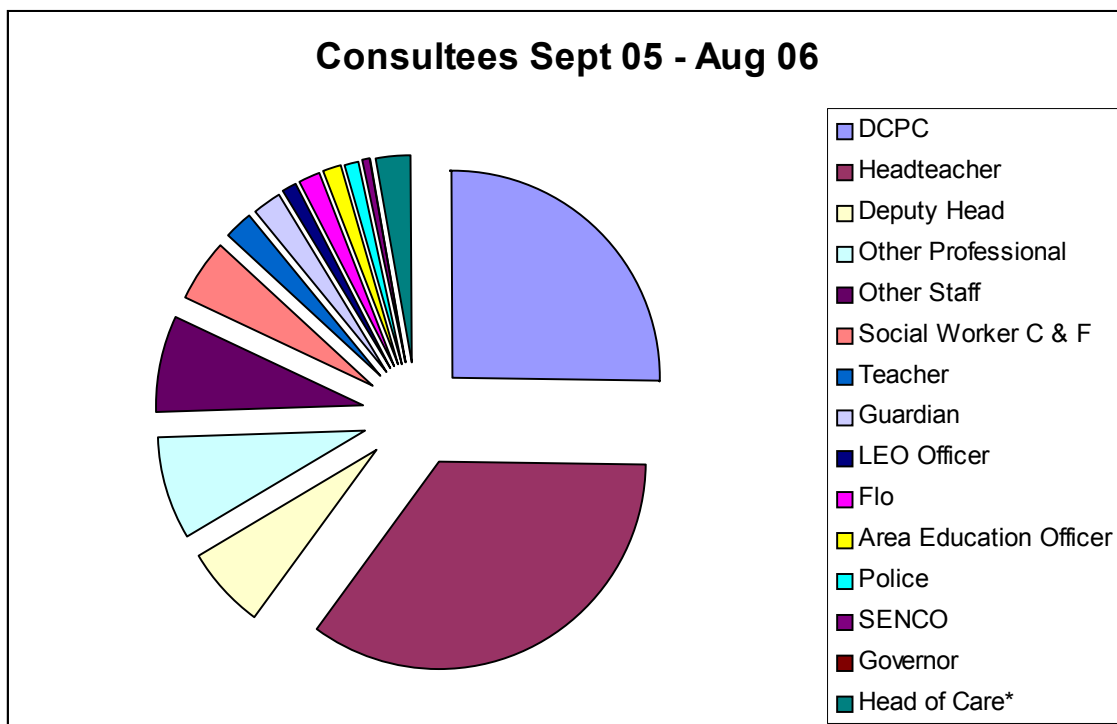
Whilst many consultations result in advice offered through a single contact, there remain a significant number which require on-going input from the Area Children's Officer to ensure resolution of issues, either through liaison and negotiation with colleagues in other agencies, progression of the complaints process within Education and externally or direct support to education staff where matters have become complex and constrained. It is interesting to note that a number of common themes from previous years remain:

- Thresholds for child protection referrals
- Information sharing and issues of parental consent
- Communication of decisions by Social Services.

Cluster specific data can be accessed via the Area Children's Officer (Child Protection).

Analysis by Consultee to August 2006

Consultee	West Kent	Mid Kent	East Kent	HQ
DCPC	101	70	42	2
Headteacher	140	101	95	0
Deputy Head	25	9	5	0
Other Prof	32	25	33	3
Other Staff	31	32	39	3
Social Wrkr	20	3	9	0
Teacher	9	4	2	0
Guardian	8	6	2	0
LEO Officer	5	15	11	2
FLO	7	4	1	0
Area Ed Officer	5	1	0	0
Police	5	1	1	0
SENCo	2	7	6	0
Governor	0	2	0	0
Head of Care	11	4	9	0



3. Allegations Against Staff

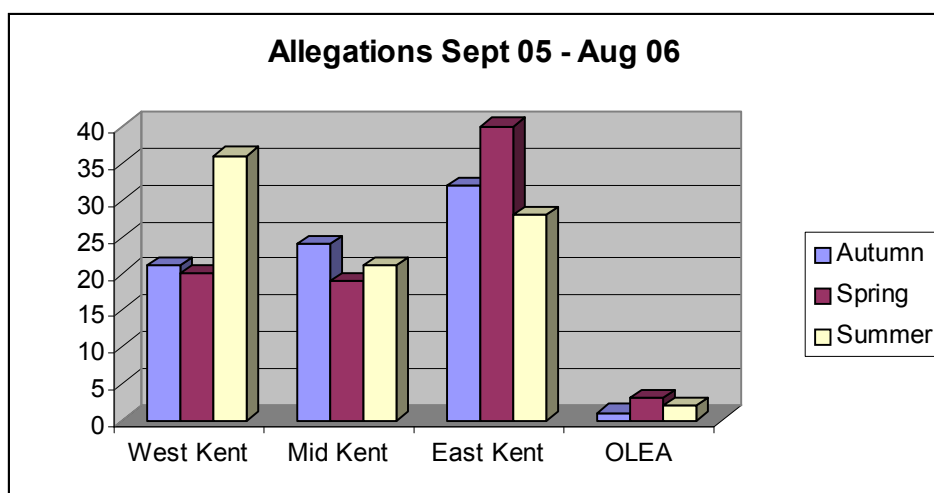
Supporting schools and Services through the process of managing allegations against staff continues to be the most sensitive and challenging of the functions that the CSU provides. Although the DfES issued new guidance *'Dealing With Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and Other Staff'* (2005) which introduced aspirational time-scales within which allegations should be investigated, this continues to be an issue for staff, managers and the teaching unions. In cases where allegations do not reach the threshold for referral to Police and Social Services, it is feasible for internal management investigations to be concluded within indicative time-scales. Schools are supported by the Schools Personnel Service in most cases in resolving matters as quickly as possible and the CSU have been commissioned as Investigating Officers on a number of occasions this year to support this process. However, in cases that proceed to Section 47 investigations (which constitutes about one third of all allegations) proceedings are often delayed due to the process of criminal investigations and referral to the Crown Prosecution Service. Those that did not cross this threshold were referred back to the school for management action as appropriate. Only the most serious of cases led to formal suspension (20 cases) which is 8% of the total, and this reflects more effective risk assessment and creative use of alternatives to suspension.

There were a total of 247 allegations made against staff during the last academic year. As in previous years the majority of allegations were Physical in nature which constituted 57% of the total. It is also apparent that there has been a significant reduction in allegations of a sexual nature (41 cases as opposed to 64 cases during the previous academic year, which reflects 17% of the total).

Teaching staff (42%) remain the most vulnerable to allegations, but this does not include allegations against supply teachers during the last academic year. It should be noted that 11% of all allegations were made against supply or self-employed teachers, and these cases present particular challenges in following through allegations when schools stop using the supply teacher. Attempts are currently underway to engage with local supply agencies to agree protocols for information sharing and following through disciplinary issues. Consultation has also been had with the DfES outlining these concerns, but in the absence of clear guidance from Central Government it is vital that schools undertake rigorous vetting processes before any sessional staff start working with children.

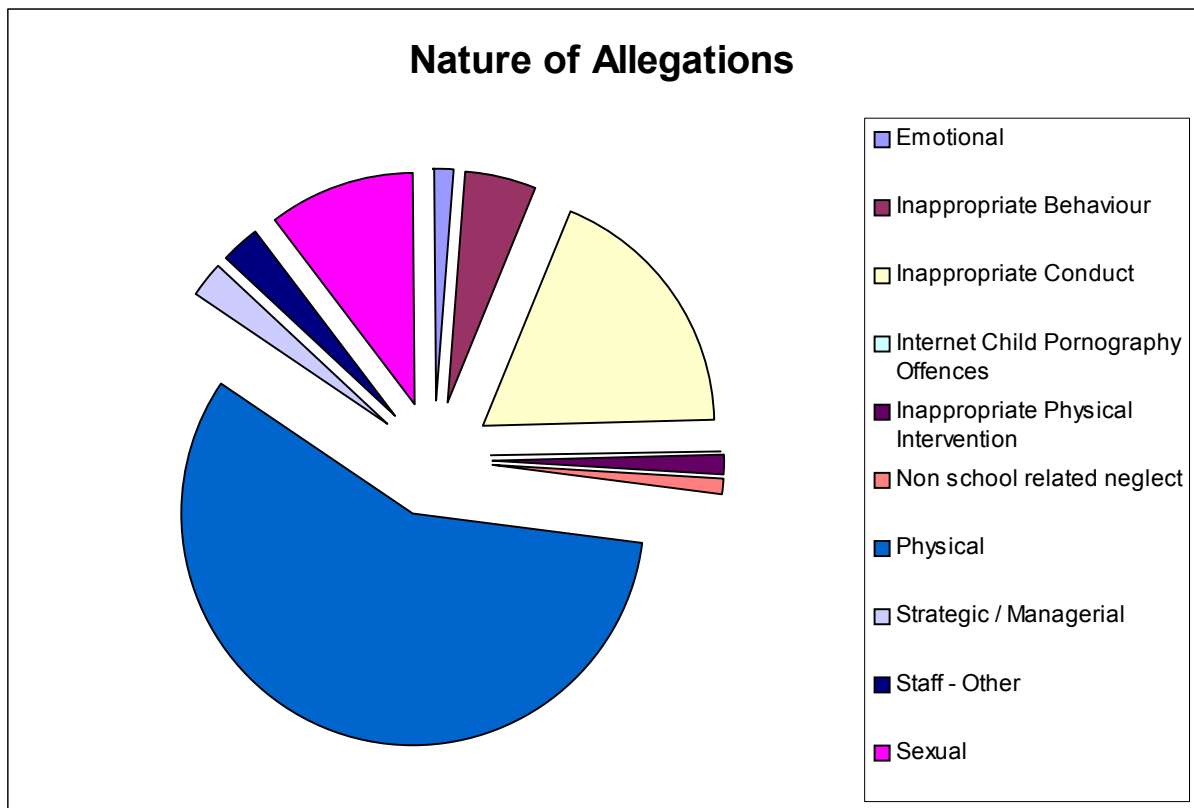
The overall total of allegations reported during the last academic year reduced by 7 cases against the total for the previous year. Although this total still identifies a worrying statistic it should be recognised that this represents less than 1% of the workforce. It also reflects a developing trust and confidence in the Children's Safeguards team who were consulted at stage one by Headteachers in line with procedures. It is also evident that on the few occasions that have not been managed in line with procedures, schools have come into conflict with parents and the statutory agencies. This has led to Police criticism of primary evidence being compromised due to investigations being initiated by Headteachers prior to consultation taking place. Consequently a series of bespoke training events are being developed on managing allegations against staff for the coming year and this will be delivered jointly with colleagues in the Schools Personnel Service, and will hopefully include Local Education Officers who express an interest.

Term	West Kent	Mid Kent	East Kent	OLEA	Total
Autumn	21	24	32	1	78
Spring	20	19	40	3	82
Summer	36	21	28	2	87
Total	77	64	100	6	247



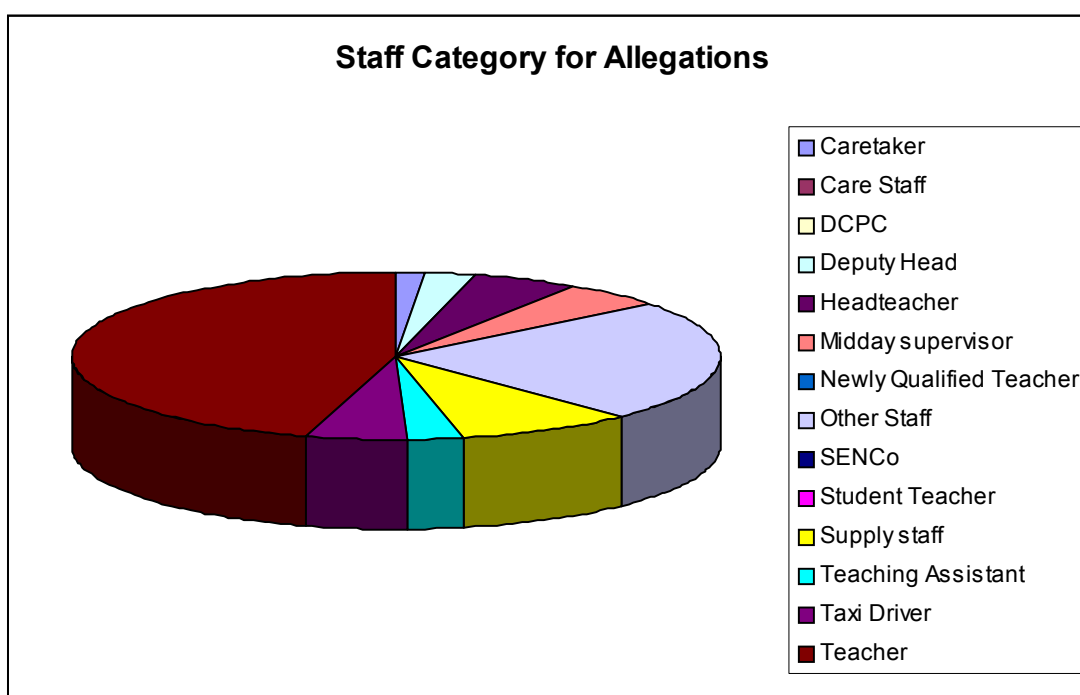
Nature of Allegations

Type	West Kent	Mid Kent	East Kent	OL EA	Total
*Physical	45	37	56	4	142
Sexual (incl. abuse of trust)	8	9	22	2	41
Emotional	1	1	3	0	5
Inappropriate Behaviour	18	14	19	0	51
Non-School Related / Other	5	3	0	0	8
Total	77	64	100	6	247



Staff Category

Position	West Kent	Mid Kent	East Kent	OLEA	Total
Caretaker	1	2	0	0	3
Care Staff	0	1	0	1	2
DCPC	0	1	0	0	1
Deputy Head	2	1	2	0	5
Headteacher	4	0	3	0	7
Midday supervisor	4	2	0	0	6
NQT	0	1	0	0	1
Other Staff	18	10	21	3	52
SEnCo	0	1	0	0	1
Student Teacher	0	1	0	0	1
Supply staff	7	9	12	0	28
Teaching Assistant	2	11	16	0	29
Taxi Driver	4	2	0	1	7
Teacher	35	22	46	1	104
Total	77	64	100	6	247



4. Training

The Children's Safeguards Unit have undertaken a wide range of Child Protection Training for staff working in educational settings in Kent.

The period since July 2004 has seen many changes in legislation and guidance regarding child protection and safeguarding children, including the implementation of the 2002 Education Act, the 2004 Children Act and Every Child Matters. The training has been regularly updated to reflect these changes. There is in particular a shift in emphasis from the traditional basic child protection which involves categories of abuse, signs and symptoms etc towards the wider concept of safeguarding which includes developing safe cultures within schools, safe practice for staff and empowering children to better protect themselves.

Activity

Across the CSU a total of 234 training sessions were provided in the year 2005/6 (whilst this represents a small decrease on the previous year it should be noted that one Area did not have a full-time Children's officer due to maternity leave).

Training for Designated Child Protection Co-ordinators

Target set by DFES guidance - to provide appropriate training to ensure that all DCPCs have the opportunity to attend initial training and update training on a two year cycle. To achieve this in Kent schools, the CSU would need to provide approximately 350 places per annum.

In total 480 places were offered on DCPC Module 1, DCPC Module 2 and DCPC Refresher day training. This enabled us to accommodate independent schools, the Youth Service and other organisations such as Safe Schools and Alternative curriculum providers.

The total numbers attending these centralised events was 441 which reflects an attendance rate of 92%. Attendees are also able to access a training CD to cascade basic awareness within their own schools/service and for staff induction purposes.

Training in schools.

All schools need to have Child protection training every 3 years to comply with DfES guidance. This may be facilitated by the Designated person within the school, although generally schools and services commission the Children's Safeguards Unit to provide whole school training on a bespoke basis. The CSU provided 146 sessions on a twilight or inset basis during the last academic year. A Training for Trainers course was also provided in the 2005 Autumn Term.

Other Training

The CSU has provided training to many other groups including School governors, Connexions (Kent and Medway) and Head teacher induction sessions. Increasing

demand is also apparent from 'Para Professional' groups in response to workforce reform initiatives.

The CSU has also contributed to various Cluster training days and undertaken joint training with Schools Personnel Service on Allegations against Staff. The Training and Development Officer has provided joint training on behalf of the Kent Safeguarding Children Board training group and is an active member of the multi-agency KSCB Training subgroup which includes members from Social Services, Police, Health and Probation.

The Children's Officer (Training and Development) is also the Local Authority's nominated link between schools and the National College for School Leadership's Online training programme for Safe Recruitment which was introduced post Bichard.

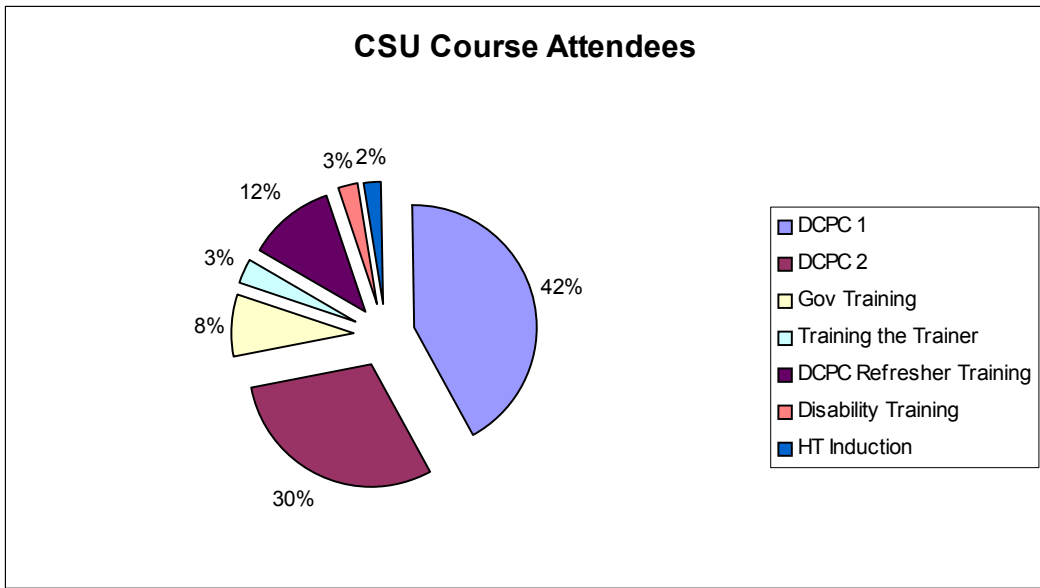
Future Developments

The CSU will remain responsive to changes in the legislation and guidance and aim to meet the training demands of the changing workforce. Two areas for development have been identified for 2006/7

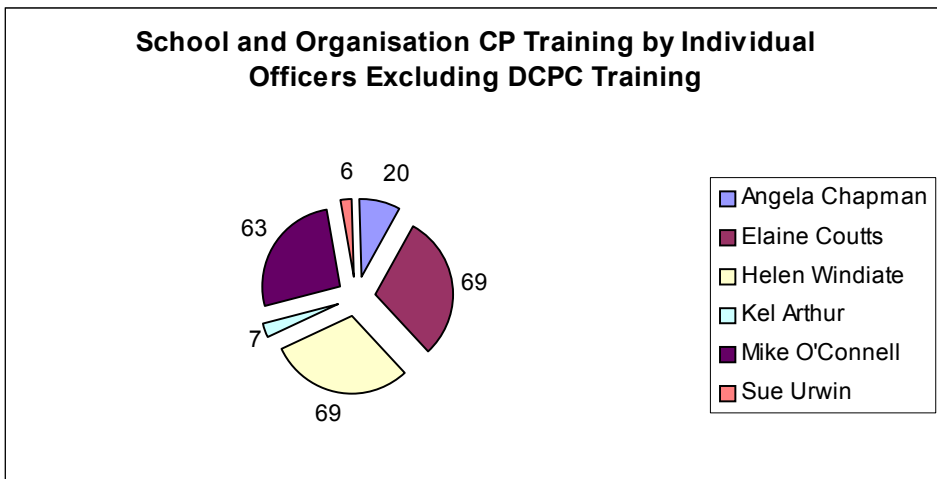
Training for pastoral support staff – there has been a huge increase in non-teaching staff in schools, particularly staff providing support for vulnerable pupils. Many of these staff have been appointed because of positive personal qualities but may have had little professional training. The CSU will be targeting training for this group including basic awareness and safe practice.

E-safety – There is growing concern regarding use of the internet and on-line predation. The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Unit CEOP has been formed to tackle the issue nationally and a programme of education for schools "ThinkuKnow" has been developed and introduced. The CSU will be working in partnership with the e-safety group in developing schools policies, providing training for staff and pupils whilst also being a source for advice on these issues where appropriate.

Courses Held	Attendees
DCPC 1	212
DCPC 2	152
Gov Training	41
Training the Trainer	17
DCPC Refresher Training	60
Disability Training	14
HT Induction	11
Total	507



School CP Training undertaken by Individual Officers excluding DCPC Training	
Angela Chapman	20
Elaine Coutts	69
Helen Windiate	69
Kel Arthur	7
Mike O'Connell	63
Sue Urwin	6
Total:	234



5. Care Standards in Residential Special Schools

Half termly visits to Local Authority Schools (Standard 33)

The Children's Officer (Care Standards) maintains a programme of visits to Kent's maintained Residential Special Schools in line with Standard 33 of the National Minimum Standards as laid down by the Care Standards Act 2000. The criteria for this Standard states that

'The Governing body, trustees, local authority, proprietor or other responsible body receive a written report on the conduct of the school from a person visiting the school their behalf half termly'

The majority of visits are carried out unannounced. Monitoring includes:

- Checks on the school's records of attendance, complaints, sanctions and the use of physical interventions.
- Assessment of the physical condition of the building, furniture and equipment of the school and
- Opportunities for any child or member of staff who wishes to meet the visitor (in private if they wish).

In total, **21** Standard 33 visits were carried out across 6 schools in the County. Changes to the format took place during 2005/2006 following consultation with Head Teachers and Heads of Care. Positive feedback was received on the new format that reflects the 5 Key Outcomes for Children in line with the *'Every Child Matters'* agenda.

Visits focus on the criteria in the standard that is mainly monitoring care as well as discussions and developments in meeting the *'National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools'*.

In addition to Standard 33 monitoring visits, the Children's Officer chairs the Heads of Care Forum that is represented by both maintained local authority and Independent/non-maintained residential special schools. Speakers this year have included Jonathon Stanley (NCERCC) and Bill Wallace (CSCI). There have been 3 meetings this year.

A review of staffing levels in residential special schools is currently underway and this is being done in conjunction with colleagues in Children's Social Services Residential Managers to ensure that consistency is being applied across services within the CFE Directorate. The Children's Officer (Care Standards) also produces an annual report and analysis based on the findings of the Commission for Social Care Inspection reports on visits to Kent's residential special schools and this can be accessed by contacting the Children's Safeguards Unit on 01622 696366.

The Children's Officer (Care Standards) continues to support the South East Region's programme of monitoring independent sector special schools. Four inspections were carried out during the last academic year in line with link authority arrangements and reports were cascaded across the region

Complaints Investigation

The Children's Officer (Care Standards) has been commissioned on five occasions during the last academic year to investigate concerns on behalf of Kent children placed in Independent sector schools out of County. Close links are also maintained with the NCH who are commissioned to provide an Independent Representation and Complaints Service for Kent children placed in Residential Special Schools and issues are followed up as necessary after consultation with the statutory agencies.

6. Other Activity

- The key development during the last academic year relates to the appointment of a Children's Officer to lead on child protection in early years. Prior to the regulatory function passing to Ofsted in September 2001 many of the safeguarding support functions were carried out by Social Services' Inspection and Registration Unit. However the retained functions, as defined by part VI (Section 79v) of the Care Standards Act 2000, places a statutory duty on Local Authorities to provide the necessary support and training to the Early Years sector. The responsibility for providing child protection support and advice to Early Years settings has been delegated to the Children's Safeguards Unit who have been commissioned to provide a service in line with what is currently provided for Kent Schools. A Children's Officer was appointed in December 2005 to commence the work in ensuring that the welfare needs of very young children are being adequately safeguarded and staff within settings feel confident in dealing with child protection concerns. A scoping exercise has been undertaken and an initial child protection input at 27 briefing sessions were delivered for up to 630 providers across the County as part of the delegated conditions. A comprehensive training programme is to be rolled out for Early Years providers commencing in September 2006 – this will initially target registered managers and supervisors with designated responsibility for child protection within settings. In addition child protection training will be provided for Local Authority visiting staff which will prioritise SENCOs and Early Years Advisory Teachers.
- The Service continues to be commissioned by schools and services within the Directorate to investigate complaints or act as expert witnesses in internal management investigations. During the last academic year we have been involved in investigating complaints which varied in terms of complexity. The service has also been involved in a major review of Child Protection practice in a school and supporting a LA service following a serious case of multiple abuse.
- Another core function of the Service is to undertake investigations on behalf of the LA as part of the Serious Case Review process as defined by Part 8 of Working Together to Safeguard Children 1999. The Head of Service sits on the KCPC multi

agency review panel and during the last academic year CSU personnel undertook two serious case reviews. Recommendations from the subsequent reports are shared with the LA's Child Protection Steering Group and a flow chart has been produced to ensure that information is cascaded down to schools via the CP Newsletter where appropriate.

- Work has been completed and a protocol agreed with Kent Police for the release of evidence to inform disciplinary investigations following the conclusion of police involvement in a case. This has been used on 6 occasions during the academic year and has led to reductions in time-scales for investigations.
- Work is on-going in raising awareness of the impact that domestic violence can have on the emotional development of children. The Service is represented on the Kent Domestic Violence Inter Agency Strategy Group and we were actively involved in planning and funding initiatives at a local level and supporting work on the PSHE curriculum in line with ECM agenda.
- We continue to work in partnership with the voluntary sector. The NCH provides an Independent Representation and Complaints Service to Kent children placed in residential special schools and regular visit are undertaken by NCH staff to engage with children and young people. As part of the service level agreement NCH also provides an independent person to ascertain the views of the child in cases that are taken to the SEN Tribunal.
- Area Children's Officers (Child Protection) continue to contribute to the work of the 3 LCPCs and related sub groups. The West Kent Quality Review Group is chaired by the ACO and contributions are made to a number of Safeguarding Groups set up by the LCPCs. We are increasingly looking to engage school and cluster based colleagues in this process as we move towards greater multi disciplinary working within the new Children, Families and Education Directorate.
- It should also be recognised that from last year's development plan we were unable to appoint to the Children's Officer post for leading on child protection in Independent sector schools. This was due to budgetary constraints and the fact that the post did not fulfil a Local Authority statutory function.
- The Children's Safeguards Service has continued to develop its Child Protection page on clusterweb. Copies of all policy and procedures, training details and Newsletter can be accessed on www.clusterweb.org.uk.

7. Development Plan

Project/developmen	a/c	Links to other	Deliverables or	Target
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t/key action Outcome	manager	plans	outcomes planned for 2006/07	dates
6.1. Ongoing review of working practices with Social Services/Policy colleagues in preparation for CFE Directorate development of integrated systems and processes for safeguarding children.	Kel Arthur CSU Team Joanna Wainwright Kay Weiss	ECM Outcome Staying Safe CYPP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to review of overall safeguarding functions. • Consideration for CSU to take on brief for supporting process of allegations against all professionals within CFE. • Consideration for review of administration of IRCS contract with NCH. • Maintenance of Child Protection support, advice and training is provided to other Directorates as appropriate. • Representation as appropriate on Kent Safeguarding Children Board and related sub-groups. • Consideration re: extending brief of Standard 33 visits to residential schools to registered KCC residential services for children. 	Sept 2007
6.2. Initiatives to comply with new DfES guidance 'Safeguarding Children and Safe Recruitment in Education'	Kel Arthur CSU Team Rob Semens Karen Watson Teresa Young Area CO (CP)	ECM Outcome Staying Safe CYPP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing use of Self Evaluation Protocol published for monitoring CP practice in schools (following Pilot of Self Review Tool) • Database inputting that will hold key CP information on all Kent schools in line with the requirements of the DfES • Review and update CP procedures and training materials as necessary to ensure relevant and up to date information is cascaded to schools and services. • Ensure that schools can access support re: on-line recruitment training 	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Sept 2007

			<p>provided by the NCSL.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure, via the Bichard working group, that programme of retrospective CRB checks is completed. 	
6.3. Ongoing development of the training strategy that compliments the work of KSCB and considers issues raised by schools and recommendations from Serious Case Reviews.	Kel Arthur Mike O'Connell Claire Ray (CSU Team)	ECM Outcome Staying Safe CYPP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Courses developed on use of the Internet, Disability and Appendix 2 from the National Minimum Standards (Residential Care Conference) Rolling programme of Child Protection training to meet projected target figure of 360+ Designated Child Protection Officers. Facilitate CP Training for 210 whole school staff groups to comply with DfES guidance through a combination of training the trainers and direct delivery. Roll-out of child protection training for Designated staff in Early Years and Childcare Providers and visiting professionals Bespoke Child Protection training for Early Years and Childcare Providers to be developed. 	<p>Sept 2007</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
6.4. Administer Standards Fund moneys allocated for training residential staff in maintained special school to NVQ Level 3 (£40k)	Sue Urwin Kel Arthur	ECM Outcome Staying Safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80% of residential care staff achieving NVQ Level 3 as required by the National Minimum Standard. 	Sept 2007
6.5. Children in Kent Schools are better protected from risk posed by other children who present sexually abusive behaviours.	Kel Arthur Mike O'Connell KSCB Maggie Stephenson	ECM Outcome Staying Safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing research and contribution to the planning and commissioning of specialist services for identified children who present a risk (e.g. Chilston Project). Produce guidance for schools based on the 	July 2007

			<p>AIM principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to review of KSCB Young Abuser procedures and development of guidance to schools when assessing the risk that these children present to others. 	
6.6 Establish better links and involvement of schools / LA with the MAPPA process, particularly when allegations against staff have led to conviction under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.	Kel Arthur CSU Team CSS Team SPS KSCB	ECM Outcome Staying Safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation for new barring and vetting procedures to ensure that accurate data is maintained on convictions, dismissals and referrals to POCA / List 99 • Information sharing protocols for staff who present a potential risk (post Soham) to be developed further on a multi-agency basis. • Confirm arrangements for education service contribution to MAPPA process. 	Dec 2007 Dec 2007
6.7. Development of services to ensure that children in Early Years and Childcare Providers are better protected from abuse.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval and appointment of two additional area based Children's Officers (with clerical support) to lead on Early Years. • Awareness raising and training to inform EY staff of Signs & Symptom and how to report concerns. • Area based consultation s service for EY and Childcare Providers and LA visiting staff. • Specific training programme roll out of strategy. 	March 2007

8 Service Standards

The purpose of the Children's Safeguards Unit is to provide support, guidance and challenge to schools and LA services in all aspects of child protection. These Service Standards have been reviewed and updated to accommodate the requirements of legislative changes. Section 175 of the Education Act places a statutory duty on schools and LAs to have policy and procedures in place that safeguard children and promote their welfare. DfES Guidance 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2007)' provides the focus on which operational procedures have been developed.

The work of the Children's Safeguards Unit is subject to internal monitoring and review on an annual basis. A great deal of the services we provide are of a qualitative nature and the Business Plan will highlight methods to be developed for consulting with service users. Key elements of the service involve responding to customers and the need to evaluate the service is recognised. To facilitate this process the Service Standards Statement is presented in a format that identifies a number of Key Performance indicators that are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timescaled. In addition to the annual self-evaluation of performance against these standards, the NSPCC were commissioned to undertake an independent review of the Service which canvassed the views of schools and a range of other stakeholders. This report has provided some very positive feedback and analysis, and the subsequent recommendations are being built into service development.

We will

- When consulted, provide advice that is based on the needs of the child having the paramount consideration, whilst recognising the impact on adults involved.
- Respect the child's and others' rights to confidentiality as outlined in the Children Act 1989 Related Guidance, Data Protection Act 1998 and the Kent Safeguarding Children Board's procedures and have due consideration for equality issues in line with KCC Policy on impact assessment.
- Review annually the standard of service delivery to schools including Governing Bodies, young people and LA personnel in all aspects of children's safeguards provision.
- Work in partnership with multi-agency colleagues including Social Services, the Police and area Health personnel at a strategic and operational level to ensure the best outcomes for children, their families and staff where child protection concerns arise.
- Actively seek customer views regarding the service provided and investigate any complaints or concerns raised in line with KCC Policy.

When we are contacted, we aim to:

- Respond to requests for urgent consultation of a child protection / welfare nature from schools / LA colleagues within the same working day as the request being made.

- Provide initial response to general enquiries by e-mail/fax/correspondence or telephone calls within five working days or less. If the matter has been passed to another person for action we will issue a holding letter or initiate telephone contact to inform the inquirer of this.
- Respond immediately (same day) to any complaints received directly from parents or young people, and agree strategies for intervention where appropriate within five working days or less. Investigation and resolution of complaint to be actioned within 28 days of receiving the complaint and if this is not possible then a letter will be issued explaining clearly the reasons for delay.
- Answer telephone calls personally. Children's Safeguards Service's main switchboard telephones will not utilise answer machines during normal office hours.

In working with other agencies, we aim to:

- Attend 90% of child protection strategy meetings where an allegation of abuse has been made against a member of school staff. Where attendance is not possible, consultation with the chair of the meeting and senior LA colleagues will be offered before and subsequent to the meeting.
- Attend 100% of Multiple Abuse Management Group meetings called in response to allegations of multiple abuse against a member of school staff.
- Provide for the LA, schools, parents and pupils perspectives to inform the work of Kent Safeguarding Children Board by ensuring 100% attendance at KSCB and local Child Protection Committees in each of the areas.
- Report on and collate statistics within 30 working days of the end of the academic year in July on CP activity and allegations of abuse against staff in Kent schools that can be presented to the DfES (statistics only).
- Produce an annual report that reflects level of activity in all of the core functions of the service across the county that can be presented to KSCB early in the new year.
- Actively promote the principles of anti-oppressive practice and challenge issues of discrimination that may become apparent in our day-to-day involvement with schools, young people, parents or multi-agency colleagues.

In providing training and written guidance for schools and education and relevant Services, we aim to:

- Provide up to ten days training delivered by Unit staff each year to the KSCB multi-agency training programme when commissioned to do so.
- Give at least six weeks notice of training events we provide for school staff and education services.
- Respond to requests for schools/education services/early years and childcare providers for whole staff group child protection training within five working days of

receipt of request. Training will be rolled out across the County to ensure that DfES time-scales are adhered to.

- Dedicate staff time to preparing and delivering training to schools and education services in any academic year in line with established training strategy.
- Evaluate all centrally co-ordinated training courses provided. Feedback records will be kept and assessed and training modified accordingly where appropriate.
- Respond to request for child protection training for Governors, Head Teacher induction NQTs and teachers recruited from overseas during period of induction as requested.
- Produce a Child Protection Newsletter for schools and education services personnel every term (three per year).
- Offer a minimum of twelve training events per year for Designated Child Protection Co-ordinators in schools across the county (450 projected places) including participation in Module 2, Refresher Courses and centralised Bespoke training for Para-Professionals provided to meet demand.
 - Consult with representative members of the Education Services Child Protection Steering Group, which meets each term on all matters relating to Policy, Procedures and the raising of standards in child protection practice across the sector.
 - Respond to requests from schools for operational guidance on issues relating to the protection of children. This is in addition to maintaining existing policy and procedures (including Exemplar CP policy for schools)

Monitoring

- Monitor care standards in maintained residential special schools through half-termly visits that are reported on in writing within ten working days of the visit. Contribute to the pooled South East Regional Partnership Programme of link inspections of Independent Residential Special Schools through annual visits jointly with AEN/ASK colleagues as appropriate.
- Provide a monitoring function in line with new legislation and inspection standards that ensures that the LA will intervene effectively and provide support to schools and services where there are child protection concerns – self evaluation format helps to inform this process.

If you have any queries regarding this report please do not hesitate to contact myself or one of the Children's Officers listed below:

Kel Arthur
Head of Service
Children's Safeguards

Contact Addresses Children's Safeguards Service

Head Office – Sessions House		
Kel Arthur Head of Service	Office No: Mobile No:	01622 696366 07786 191359
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Mike O'Connell Children's Officer (Training and Development)	Office No: Mobile No:	01622 696366 07740 183807
Claire Ray Children's Officer (Early Years)	Office No:	01622 696366 07920 108828
Celia Swain PA to Mike O'Connell	Office No:	01622 696677 7000 6677
Teresa Young PA to Kel Arthur and Sue Urwin	Office No:	01622 696366 7000 6366
Kay Ashman PA to Claire Ray	Office No:	01622 696677 7000 6677

West Kent – Kings Hill		
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East Kent – Clover House		
Elaine Coutts Area Children's Officer (Child Protection)	Office No: Mobile No:	01227 284682 07786 191601
Brenda Offord PA to Elaine Coutts	Office No:	01227 284566 7679 4566

Mid Kent – Kroner House		
Kate Davis Area Children's Officer (Child Protection) and Angela Chapman Area Children's Officer (Child Protection)	Office No: Mobile No: Mobile No:	01233 898644 07740 183797 07717 895731
Jill Taylor PA to Kate Davis and Angela Chapman	Office No:	01233 898696 7001 8696

Children's Safeguards Unit Structure Chart

