



SSCB Learning Action Plans: Snapshot Evaluation Report

June 2015

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Introduction:

Surrey Safeguarding Children Board uses an online evaluation service to evaluate and monitor the impact of the safeguarding courses delivered through its training programme. We use this feedback to ensure our courses are fit for purpose, meet the needs of Surrey professionals and ultimately safeguard children and young people. This consultation is ongoing, however, an interim report has been produced, entitled 'Surrey Says' and this document should be read in conjunction with that report.

In addition to the online course evaluation, Learning Action Plans are completed by all delegates after attendance at Foundation Module One: Introduction to Safeguarding (FM1). This provides us with a method of assessing in greater detail the impact of the safeguarding training. Our overall aim is to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of training, especially multi-agency training, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Of central importance to the FM1 training course is the multi agency approach to safeguarding children. We aim to have a broad representation of agencies on each course. The graph in Figure 1 below outlines the mixture of agencies we have attending our courses:

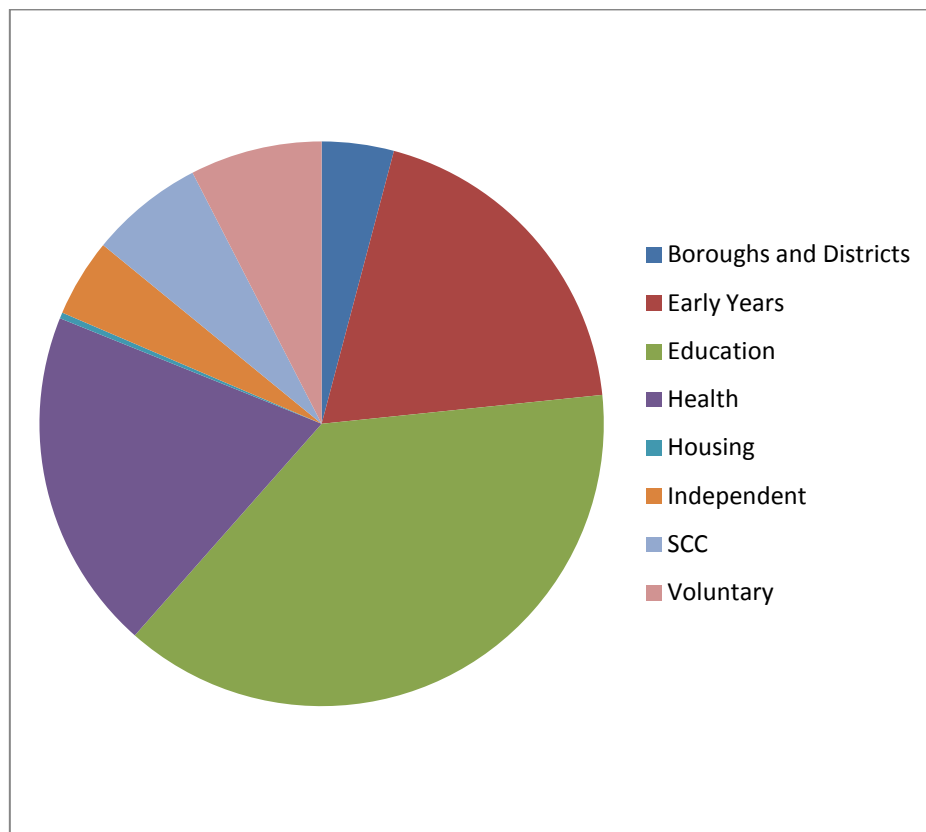


Figure 1 – Attendee Employment Sectors on Courses Since April 2014

We aim to increase engagement from the Boroughs and Districts and housing providers. Our Serious Case Review process has shown that these are professionals who have indirect contact with at risk children and who could provide valuable insights into home environment, community engagement and family dynamics in informal service settings-such as leisure centres, activities of children and their parents.

Assessment Criteria:

There are five key areas that we are seeking to measure using the Learning Action Plans:

1. Whether the course meet candidate needs
2. Candidate Learning Outcomes
3. Impact on candidate awareness, confidence and knowledge
4. Barriers to implementation of learning in candidate's professional settings
5. Whether delegates intend to pursue further training with the SSCB

1. Whether the course meets candidate needs:

This question is assessed by asking the delegates to reflect on their own learning objectives, and whether they felt the course met these objectives.

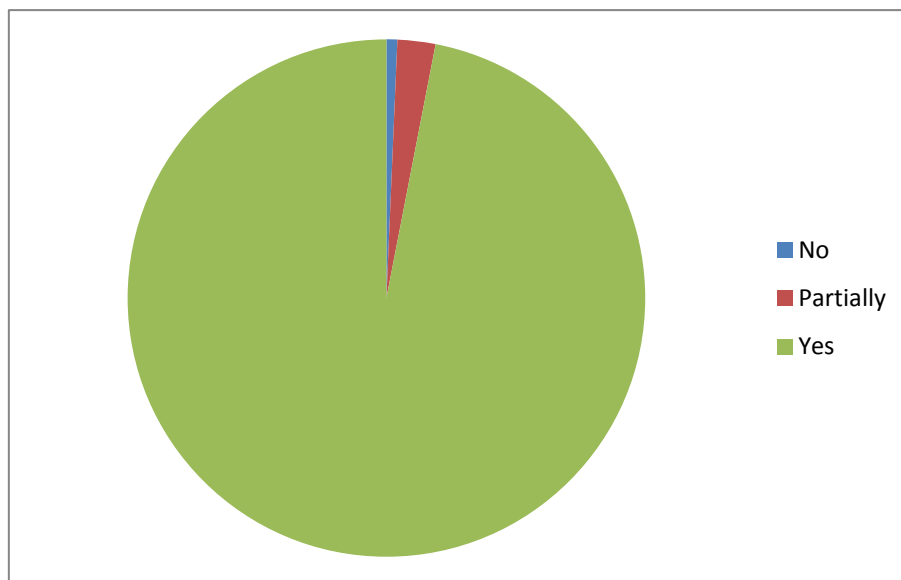


Figure 2 – Candidate Reflections on whether FM1 met their intended learning objectives.

From our random sample of 295 delegates there were two delegates who felt that the course did not meet their learning objectives, their comments are quoted as follows:

“From the first module, I do not feel the role and duties of a CPLO have been clearly identified and interpreted.” *Candidate from a June 2014 training course.*

“I found the course very similar to Working Together which I had very recently attended also.” *Candidate from a September 2014 training course.*

Since receiving these comments both Working Together (delivered as single agency training, often as part of an induction course) and our FM1 modules have been re-modelled. Delegates should not find a significant overlap between the materials covered in these courses, but should find that they complement one another. Since many of our education delegates undertake FM1 training in preparation for becoming DCPOs (formerly CPLOs) our courses now contain outlines and details of many policies and procedures a DCPO will need to know.

2. Candidate learning outcomes:

This is probably the evaluation criteria which is most revealing in terms of the strengths and weaknesses of the course. For evaluation purposes delegates are given a question in which they are free to outline what they feel they have learned during FM1. This is then followed up with a series of guided questions to draw out their understanding of specific areas of the course.

What have you learnt on the course?

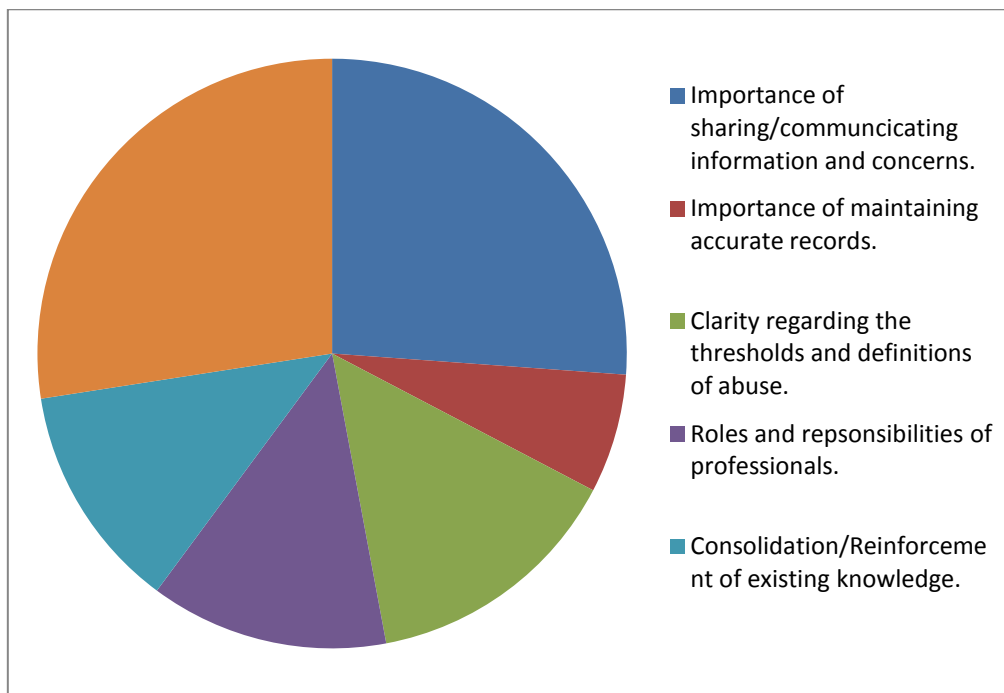


Figure 3 - What delegates feel they have learned on FM1 since April 2014

As a result of your learning how will you change your professional practice?

Many of the responses to this question were duplicated in responses to the question 'How has this course challenged your values, attitudes and thinking around your professional practice?' Responses to both questions evidenced a significant level of professional reflection across all candidate's employment sectors. The most common action point identified by professionals was that they now placed a greater importance on writing up and dating all concerns and disclosures and recording them accurately. Their reasoning was that this would provide them with evidence and a reference point when making referrals or sharing information. This is a very positive outcome and we will seek to encourage this further in future FM1 courses.

What are your time scales for improving your professional practice?

The responses to this question were twofold, some of the delegates identified immediate action points within their organisations that were raised by the training. The vast majority of delegates responded that they felt that the course had highlighted a need for continuous application and reflection on areas FM1 course content.

3. Impact on candidate awareness, confidence and knowledge:

How has this course challenged your values, attitudes and thinking around your professional practice?

The graph in Figure 4 below shows the six areas professionals focused on in their answers to this question. Some professionals focused more on one or two of these points and others gave a more extensive reflection on all of them.

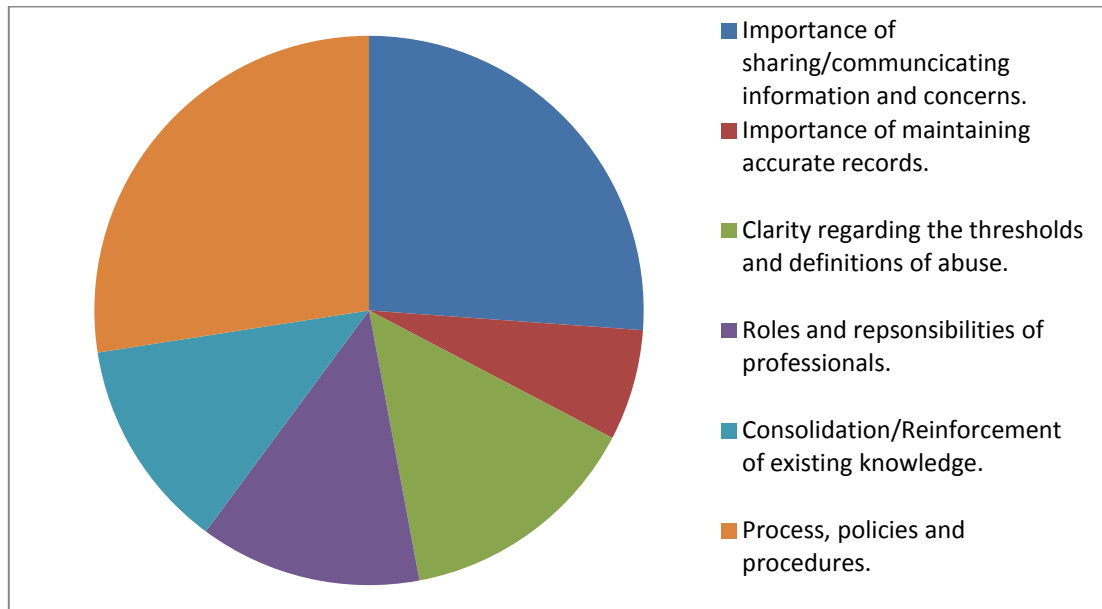


Figure 4 - Areas which delegates feel they have been challenged in their values, attitudes and thinking whilst attending FM1 since April 2014

How will others perceive that your practice has changed?

Responses to this question identified that delegates placed a high importance on the need for more collaborative reflection and communication between professionals in their settings. A few also felt that it would be beneficial to give a more formal feedback from FM1 to their colleagues and to suggest changes to internal policies and procedures to reflect their learning.

In what ways will you feel differently about your practice?

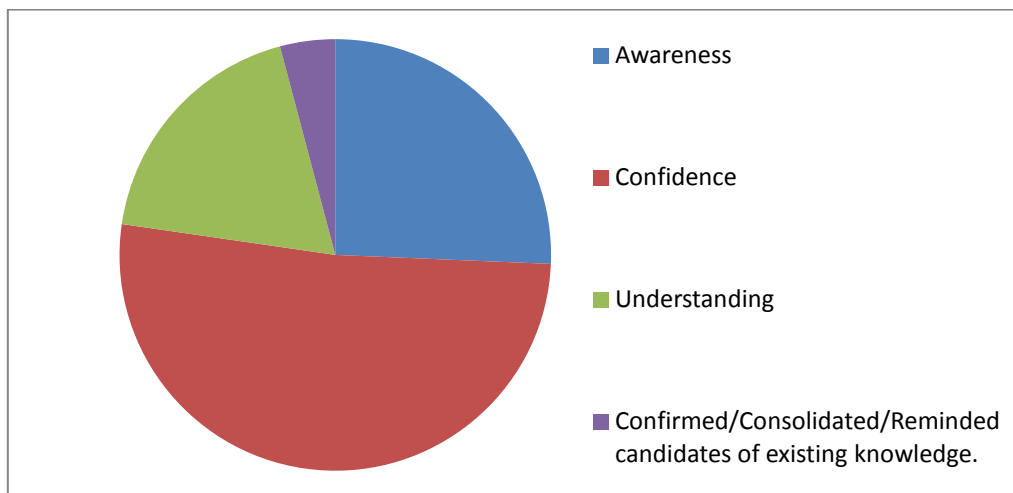


Figure 5 - Professional reflections on changes to how they feel about their professional practice after attending FM1 Courses between March 2014 and April 2015

This question provided the most quantifiable data in terms of FM1's success in raising confidence awareness and knowledge among professionals as a result of their learning on the course. With almost no exceptions, delegates reported that as a result of their training they had gained the confidence, awareness and/or understanding to make referrals and share information in line with current legislation and in accordance with SSCB policies and procedures.

4. Barriers to implementation of learning in candidate's professional settings:

Have you encountered any barriers to making changes to your practice? If so what were they?

There were not a large number of delegates who responded to this question. A collection of problems identified by delegates are provided below. These were identified by Health and Education providers.

Time is the only difficulty when working with families, and ensuring you have enough time to write up records of visits and contacts with families. It is often difficult to contact the general practitioners, and having the time to continue to contact them if you do not hear back. *Health Visitor attending FM1 in October 2014*

Time pressure when I have only 10 minutes per consultation. *Trainee GP attending FM1 in May 2014*

The system of safeguarding is very complicated and it is taking a long time to learn how to work appropriately within the system, but I ask questions and seek advice continuously. – *School Nurse attending FM1 in October 2014*

The health professionals have raised some important areas for improvement here. In their responses to other questions these delegates also provided some suggested changes that could reduce the impact of these problems.

Lack of communication regarding a student in my department. Others informing what 'might' or 'might not' be happening. – *Education Professional attending FM1 in November 2014*

There are always financial implications to any increase in staffing. However, due to the serious nature of the position we are looking to develop, the school understands the need. – *Education Professional attending FM1 in March 2015*

My timetable will need to be altered to accommodate the change in role and to reflect some availability. – *Education Professional attending FM1 in July 2014*

Again these responses demonstrate good levels of insight and reflection on behalf of the delegates. The comments by the first delegate were accompanied by a plan to encourage higher standards of record keeping in her workplace to remove the level of ambiguity created by phrases such as 'might' and 'might not'. The other two delegates identified precisely the solutions to their own barriers, which can only be seen as a positive.

5. Whether delegates intend to pursue further training with the SSCB:

What further learning and practice experience will you need to strengthen your individual practice?

We had a mixture of professional organisations sending delegates to attend FM1. Some sent only 1-4 attendees. The responses to this question by these delegates identified their intention that these professionals would progress through the SSCB Safeguarding training courses. These delegates would then act as lead professionals (such as DCPOs) within their organisations.

Other organisations sent much larger numbers of delegates (on particular partner organisation comprised 15% of all delegates). These professionals were attending to progress the organisation's agenda to raise awareness of recognising abuse and making appropriate referrals across their staff body. The responses to this question indicated that these professionals would not necessarily progress through to FM2 and FM3, but that they intended to continue to refresh and update their knowledge through internal training and refresher courses.

Conclusion:

Our investigation of professional engagement with FM1 through the use of Learning Action Plans would suggest effective working methods in the training and evaluation process. All professionals mentioned the importance of focusing on the ultimate importance of safeguarding the children. Overall we feel quite positive about the learning and development following our training courses. We will endeavour to address the few issues that have arise and continue to improve and update the course content.