



Social Services Annual Council Reporting Framework

Annual Report of the
Head of Children's Services
2014



monmouthshire
sir fynwy

Introduction

This is Monmouthshire's fourth Children's Services overview report and is my first report as Head of Service responsible for Children's Services. The report's purpose is to give an accurate and honest appraisal of current services in Monmouthshire and outline the priorities for improvement over the next year

The report is based on a number of sources of information including statistical information, feedback from service users, feedback from staff and other partners.

My overall view is that some areas of our services have made improvements in service delivery in the last 12 months. Over this time there have been significant changes to how Children's Services works due to changes in the structure of the service and judicial reform in relation to care proceedings. These significant changes now need to be embedded into practice and focus upon sustaining service delivery and improving the quality and outcomes for children, young people and their families.

The LAC inspection in April 2014 raised a number of issues around practice improvement for Children's Services. These included clear management of s.47 and risk management processes. These issues will be addressed over the next 6 months

A number of key areas of service development was addressed in 2013- 2014. These include:

- Maintaining reduced social work case loads and investment in temporary staff in order to achieve positive outcomes for children and their families.
- We have implemented the re-structure of Children's Services in April 2013 and completed a review of this in November 2013.
- The Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service, which was implemented in September 2012 has continued to develop and provide significant work across the service and partners.
- We have worked with a number of partners across Gwent to deliver the Missing Persons Hub which has been in place since the 1st April 2013.
- We have implemented the JAFF/TAF model in Monmouthshire with hubs in the 4 Comprehensive Schools in the area and The Acorn Centre for 0-4 year old children. This transferred to the Partnership and Engagement Team in autumn 2013 and will continue to be developed through this Directorate of the Council.
- A Fostering Inspection took place in November 2014 and at the time of writing this report the outcome of this inspection is awaited.

- We have continued to implement our assessment tool using a systems approach to provide a more understandable and transparent process when working with parents and carers.
- We have trained social workers to complete parenting assessments and no longer contract for these to be completed externally, increasing skills and knowledge of key staff
- Following the judicial reforms all Social Workers have had training in the new Public Law Outline and further training with local Judges has taken place in March 2014.
- We have remained actively involved in the All Wales agenda to improve the delivery of social services through a collaborative approach with other providers.
- We have worked in collaboration with our partners in Gwent to deliver the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board from April 2013.
- Work to implement a Gwent wide Adoption service based in Blaenau Gwent has taken place over the past year and will commence from the 1st April 2014.
- A systems review has taken place between Adult Services and Children with Disabilities Team to increase our understanding of what the challenges are for families, practitioners and managers. This will begin to shape and develop future service delivery for young people with disabilities and enable effective transition planning from an earlier age.
- There has been improved permanency planning and outcomes for children and young people through adoption, Special Guardianship, long-term fostering and Kinship, which over the past year has seen an increase in children placed for adoption and those placed via Special Guardianship arrangements.
- As a result of the restructure a Contact Team has been created, which coordinates all of the contact needs for the service, to ensure contact is effectively facilitated for children who are separated from their families.
- Consultation on the Corporate Parenting Strategy is nearing completion, including a young person's version and consultation taking place with young people.
- Agreement has been obtained during this year for a Children in Care Council and an apprentice post to be created to lead and develop this work. This post will be filled by a care leaver.
- In addition the Council has agreed a number of initiatives related to those leaving care and work opportunities.
- Significant work has taken place to gain a clearer understanding of costs within Children's Services in relation to budget costs, unit costs for looked after children and special guardianship unit costs.
- In addition significant savings have been achieved as a result of staff receiving training to complete parenting assessments as opposed to this work

being completed externally and the creation of a Contact Team has delivered savings in organising contact for families.

- Consideration of a new IT system has commenced, which is being created from a practitioner perspective to be intuitive and be easily amended as practice and documentation changes.
- An inspection from Estyn has taken place in February 2014, which has evidenced continued implementation of the improvement plan with colleagues in the Children and Young People Directorate and schools.
- During the past year a strategic and operational structure that sustains and delivers the outcomes for children and their families who are subject to Child Protection processes has been strengthened achieving close monitoring of plans and escalation in a timely manner as necessary, reducing delay for children and young people.
- The Monmouthshire Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy was launched in November 2012. Mechanisms are in place to ensure wide dissemination and adoption of this policy across settings and services.
- An audit framework is now in place for settings and services that promotes self-assessment to review policies and procedures around safeguarding
- A significant training framework has been implemented and delivered over the past year, on all issues related to safeguarding and the well-being of children and young people.
- We have strengthened the Quality Assurance framework in a number of ways including the Child Protection Coordinator completing quarterly audits, developing and facilitating training for identified problem areas e.g. core groups, themed audits have also taken place on a multi- agency basis of any issues raised
- The mapping exercise of the level of need and the services that are available through the Youth and Early offer initiative have been completed with colleagues from a range of agencies.
- Personal education plans has been given a significant focus over the past year, with a worker based in education to complete these tasks. This has resulted in a significant increase in the completion of the plans and therefore a rise in this performance indicator.
- A brief review with education and health of the delivery of the brighter futures agenda took place during 2013.
- We have achieved our target to ensure that foster carer's annual reviews take place within statutory timescales.
- We have delivered significant improvements in reducing offending through the use of the restorative justice model through our multi professional Youth Offending Service.
- Work has taken place on developing a community campaign that seeks to improve the knowledge of the wider community about the positive outcomes that the Youth Justice Service delivers.
- The Youth Offending Service has continued to deliver the Assessment Planning Intervention and Supervision (APIS) and Assessment training tool.
- Over the past year links and working relationships have improved with all partners and in particular the Youth Service.

- Work has taken place over the past year to establish clear processes to enable parents and young people to seek to prevent anti-social behaviour.
- Every victim has been contacted to establish restorative justice interventions as per requirements.
- All young people involved with substance misuse are referred to the substance misuse worker who screens referrals and actions as necessary to appropriate services

A significant amount of work has taken place in Children's Services, over the past year, however we need to improve and develop in the following areas:

- We need to strengthen the processes that track, monitor and review our budget expenditure to ensure that children's social services will be sustainable in future years. We need to strengthen our commissioning processes within children services and in partnership with all providers of services to children and their families in Monmouthshire to deliver effective, economic and efficient provision.
- We need to continue to strengthen our professional practice, skills and knowledge base through training and development, in order to deliver improved outcomes for our children, young people and their families.
- We need to enable practitioners to return to a focus on gaining children and young people's views effectively.
- As part of the safeguarding work across the county, improved links will be developed to work with commissioned and contracted services that will ensure compliance with Monmouthshire's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- We are seeking to develop a multi-agency/ complex supervision for specific individual cases to share and develop learning from case work, in addition to the current model of supervision
- Develop and implement an action plan following on from the LAC inspection in April 2014.
- Further work is required in the implementation of the payment for skills in fostering. This work has commenced with a scoping exercise and this work will be conducted in conjunction with the Training Team within Monmouthshire County Council.
- A review and update of policies and procedures will take place
- Re-establishing of Social Work core practice skills will continue e.g. enabling understanding of children through play, care planning

These are my views and I would like to hear what your views are about what we are delivering and what you would like to see improved.

Tracy Jelfs

Head of Children's Services.

tracyjelfs@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Service Context

Children's social services provide a range of services to children, young people and families within Monmouthshire. There are 19,815 children who live in Monmouthshire and we are working with around 481 children at any one time.

The county covers a large geographical area and is predominantly rural with four urban areas in Monmouth, Chepstow, Caldicot and Abergavenny where the four secondary schools are based. There are thirty four primary schools. Against this background it is a challenge to provide consistent service delivery and provision. Children's Social Service's works collaboratively with the Welsh Assembly, other local authorities, Health and Education, Adult services, the Police and other partners. A number of our support services for vulnerable families are currently commissioned from the third sector including Action for Children, Women's Aid and others.

There are four service areas-;

- **Family Support Services.** This includes the Family Support Team and the Children with Disability Team. These teams provide an initial assessment service from which they then provide a service or they may refer to another more appropriate provider. The teams work with children and families who are considered to be in need; who may be on the Child protection register or who may be looked after by Monmouthshire County Council either on a voluntary basis or because they are subject to Care Proceedings. The children's disability team is located in this service area but is a separate team.
- **Supporting Children and Young People's Team, Placement and Support Team and Adoption services.** These teams provide a service to children who are looked after and through into adult hood, up to the age of 24 years. The Fostering service recruit, assess and support foster carers who care for Monmouthshire looked after children. The adoption service was part of a joint service with Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen which was managed by Blaenau Gwent. From the 1st April 2014 there will be a Gwent wide adoption service in place, which will be managed by Blaenau Gwent.
- **The Youth Offending Service** is a joint service with Torfaen but managed by Monmouthshire on behalf of both partners. The focus of the service is to prevent offending and re-offending. It is delivered through three teams who work within a multi professional model. It is funded by a range of agencies

including Social Services, the Police, Health, Probation and the Youth Justice Board.

- **Safeguarding and Quality Assurance.** This team provides a senior lead on all matters relating to safeguarding both in respect of Social Services but also across other departments such as Education. There is an Independent Reviewing Officer who reviews the care plans of Looked After Children and there is a Child Protection Coordinator who manages the Child Protection conference process. The Service Manager has responsibility for the above and oversight of safeguarding developments and emerging themes from the board e.g. Learning and Review Group.

The Family Support Team, Supporting Children and Young People's Team, Placement and Support Team and the Children with Disability Team are all located in Chepstow. The Adoption Service is delivered from Blaenau Gwent whilst the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service are based at Magor. The Youth Justice Service is delivered on the border of Torfaen and Monmouthshire at Mamhilad. There is a Gwent wide Emergency Duty Service delivered from Caerphilly. All staff in Monmouthshire work in an agile manner, which means that they can effectively work anywhere across the county as long as they have suitable access for IT arrangements.

In the following sections each of the service areas is further explored:

Family Support Service

There has been significant progress in the delivery of this service over the last year. Caseloads have mainly stayed at a lower level with the continued effective decision making in respect of plans for children and their families. Combining the Referral and Assessment Team and the Family Support Team as part of the re-structure has resulted in clearer decision making, with no transfer of child protection cases on to another team. Cases are worked within this team throughout the child protection process and will not move from the team unless the case is escalated to Court. Following the restructure in 2013 a review has taken place to analyse the effectiveness of the new structure.

Over the last year we received 3,813 contacts related to 1714 children and young people which resulted in us accepting referrals for 417 children and young people. This has evidenced a slight reduction in contacts and referrals on the previous year. The Joint Assessment Framework and the Team Around the Family were introduced in April 2013 and it is too early to clearly link this reduction in contacts is as a result of this process being implemented.

The main child protection concerns relate to parental substance misuse, domestic violence, mental health issues and poor parenting resulting in emotional and physical neglect. For example, Abergavenny is one of the hot spots in Wales for the use of Methedrome and the use of alcohol remains a consistently strong feature in many families known to social care.

Table 1. Percentage of Referrals on which a decision is made in one working day:

2010 - 2011	2011 - 2012	2012 - 2013	2013-2014
98.1%	98%	93.9%	97.7

Source: SCC/006

This figure has improved over the past year, but can be affected by the fact that the current ICS works on day basis rather than 24 hours, which means that a small percentage of referrals have been recorded as being outside of the timescales but necessary decision making took place within the required 24 hour timeframe.

Table 2. Percentage of Initial Assessments carried out within 7 working days:

2010 - 2011	2011 – 2012	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014
76.4%	77%	76.8%	79.1%

Source: SCC/042a

The percentage of Initial Assessments completed within 7 working days has increased over the course of the year and has exceeded the previous 3 years. This reflects that case loads have been effectively managed to enable staff to complete the work in a timely manner. However, as noted in last years report, it should be recognised that there will always be some children and families whose needs cannot be initially assessed in the statutory timescales, due to specific needs, such as a child with a disability in the family.

Referral data

The rate of re-referrals has decreased with 55 re-referrals out of 415 compared to a re-referral rate of 69 out of 425 cases in 2012-2013. It is unclear at this stage whether the implementation of JAFF in Monmouthshire has provided a suitable framework to enable work to be carried out at levels 2 and 3 of the model ensuring that children and young people continue to be support once the statutory intervention has concluded.

This service has improved overall in the past year and continues to make decisions that are timely. In addition the new structure has ensured that child protection work is completed in a single team, which has provided consistency for families and decision making processes. There have been changes to judicial processes which resulted in the need change to practice processes to ensure compliance. Work has been underway in the service since September 2013 to provide training and change processes to accommodate this.

Safeguarding

There has been progress over the last twelve months with a number of new initiatives having to be implemented or considered.

The Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit has continued to complete a significant quantity of work in a short time frame. The Child Protection Coordinator has been tasked with completing quarterly audits for child protection cases. This has been beneficial for a number of reasons including providing closer monitoring of cases with timely escalation to Court processes as necessary and has evidenced key themes and learning. From the identification of these themes relevant training has been provided. The Unit has also been closely involved in completing tasks which were identified in relation to how safeguarding policies and procedures had previously been implemented within Monmouthshire as a result of the Estyn inspection. All children and young people with a child protection plan have an allocated social worker and all children have a child protection plan.

Children on the Child Protection Register

2010 – 2011	2011 – 2012	2012 - 2013	2013-2014
62	78	55	38

Source: ICS Database

This figure represents Monmouthshire children but includes one child who is placed on the Register and is the responsibility of another Local Authority. There has been a continued reduction in children who are placed onto the Child Protection Register, which continues to be monitored. Due to the establishment of Child Protection audits, noted above, this has enabled a more effective process and children do not remain on the Child Protection Register unnecessarily.

The Safeguarding arrangements in Monmouthshire have continued to be strengthened through the delivery of the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service. Through the auditing and review process, the team have led on consistency of decision making and timescales where children are subject to the child protection process. In addition the audits have identified themes that have then resulted in

training needs being identified not only within Children’s Services, but also on a multi-agency basis. The service has made improvements in the implementation of Safeguarding policies and procedures throughout all service providers and will continue to develop into the services that do not deliver directly to children, but could have indirect contact as a result of the service that they provide.

Children with Disabilities

The overall figure for open cases at the end of March was 140 compared to 156 twelve months ago, within this figure there are a small number of children who are looked after(9) and 131 who receive a Child in Need support services.

Table 9. Number of children receiving a service from Social Care:

2011 - 2012	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014
189	156	140

During the past year an experienced manager has taken over the substantive team manager post in this team. This has provided consistent decision making for the team. Working practices are being reviewed and more effective safeguarding procedures, review processes and social care practice standards have been identified and are being implemented. This has taken some time as in some instances training has been needed to implement changes and embedded this in daily practice. The manager has reviewed all cases open to the team, to ensure that cases are managed appropriately.

In November 2013, a systems review took place for the team, jointly with adult services. This evidenced a range of work that was not of value to families and also not of value to practitioners in the team. The team had the opportunity to consider ways in which children and young people could be involved in planning, with appropriate resources. The review highlighted that work was needed to develop a process that would work more effectively with Adult Services and where transition processes could take place, which would meet the needs of the young person, which is not always at the arbitrary age of 14 years old. Going forward this is a significant piece of work for the service and some children and young people are already involved in planning that has a much more person centred approach, to consider more effective ways of planning and support for children and young people. The learning from this will then be implemented across the team. Closer working with Adult Services is needed and this will be developed further over the coming year.

The team has made a good level of progress over the year and continues to establish more effective practice and processes.

Supporting Children and Young People's Team

The looked after children's figures reflect that the numbers of looked after children has overall remained fairly constant over the last year. There have been 47 new entrants into care and there have been 41 children/young people who have left care. In this latter respect, some children have returned home to the care of their wider family through Special Guardianship Orders but others have left the care system and are now care leavers because they have reached 18 years of age.

Number of children looked after:

2010– 2011	2011 – 2012	2012 – 2013	2013 - 2014
81	111	102	106

Source: ICS Database

The numbers of children looked after has slightly increased over the past year and has varied throughout the year. Children and young people who are looked after were moved into this team as a result of the restructure. There have been continued significant work pressures in this area due to judicial changes in relation to the Public Law Outline (PLO) reducing proceedings from in excess of 40 weeks to 26 weeks in addition to a number of cases being escalated as part of audits via the Safeguarding Unit and discussion with managers resulting in cases being escalated to Court. Emphasis has been placed on permanency arrangements for children and young people seeing 10 children placed for adoption and 14 Special Guardianship Orders being granted. The team also work with young people and those who have left care.

There are currently 170 children and young people receiving a service, of which 39 are over the age of 18 years. This figure reflects a decrease on the number of 51 from last year of which 73.3 % are eligible, relevant and former relevant young people have a current pathway plan in place, which is an increase from 68.4% last year. There remain a small number of asylum seekers of whom 3 are under the age of 18 years with 11 are former relevant young people. This latter group are currently involved in seeking to secure their legal status.

From the 1st April 2013 two in house Personal Advisor posts were recruited to, which had previously been outside of Children's Services. This has resulted in an increased provision to support and deliver a service to all young adults between the ages of 18 years to 25 years.

As noted last year multi professional working with health and education has continued to remain a challenge in 2013. The Aneurin Bevan Health Board have been re configuring how it delivers its services this year, this has meant that there has been reduced and inconsistent level of service to children and young people who need therapeutic services. Some of this provision has been provided through Monmouthshire paying the health authority to provide a psychologist. However it is clear that a stronger working partnership with health through the single integrated plan needs to be achieved to enable appropriate services to be commissioned on behalf of Monmouthshire's children and young people.

A cross political party Corporate Parenting Group is in place to strengthen and improve the corporate responsibility for the delivery of outcomes for all looked after children and young people. The draft strategy has been consulted on and included a small group of young people reviewing the young person's version. Cabinet has agreed a number of developments as part of their responsibility as corporate parents, which includes development of a Children in Care Council, an apprentice post to be created to lead and develop this work, which will be filled by a care leaver or a looked after child. In addition the Council has agreed a number of initiatives.

There have been significant challenges to each of the individual teams' ability to deliver qualitative outcomes for children and young people over the past 12 months due to the sustained number of looked after children and the complexity of the individual cases. Linked to this have been the judicial changes and changes to processes to ensure that children and young people remaining for periods on the Child Protection Register without demonstrable progress have been escalated in to Court processes effectively.

Adoption

The adoption service moved to be a joint adoption service with Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent in April 2011. From April 2014 a South East Wales Adoption Service will be in place. This service in time will be directly linked to the National Adoption Service through which a recruitment and the marketing strategy will be delivered.

However it is recognised that the national adoption service will not be able to offer adoption support services or be able to work directly with Children's Services in enabling children's social workers to deliver permanency outcomes for looked after children, this will remain at a regional or local level.

At the time of writing this report no further clarification on the implementation of the National Adoption Service has been advised.

Table 14. Number of children adopted:

2010 – 2011	2011 – 2012	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014
6	1	1	2

There has been a slight increase in the number of children adopted in the past year. There are currently 9 children placed in their adoption placements. All 9 cases have plans in place to finalise adoptions via Court processes, which can take considerable time to progress through the Court.

The service has continued, due to the increasing demand, over the past year to increase the numbers of adopters. Challenges remain for the service to have adopters for children with disabilities, sibling groups and older children, which is representative of the national issues as opposed to a regional issue. The adoption service delivers support to adopters and their children both before the age of 18 years and into adulthood. The service is responsible for providing post adoption counselling and support/intermediate services for adults and their birth families that have been affected by adoption. In addition from a Monmouthshire perspective, the adoption service is required to provide an assessment service for step parents who are seeking to adopt their partner's children. This latter work is often complex.

Placement and Support Team

The Placement and Support Team has continued to make significant progress over the last year with a relatively small staff group. The service was inspected in November 2013 and a report is awaited.

The Payment for Skills Policy approved in October 2012, was implemented from the 1st April 2013. There has been slower progress to deliver improved training and professional development for all of our carers enabling us to strengthen their ability to manage the children who have complex needs. However, a scoping exercise has taken place around training needs.

This service took over responsibility last year of the management of the two residential short breaks units. The carers of one unit resigned and a review of short breaks needs was completed to ascertain a continued need for this service. This has now been completed and recruitment is underway. In addition this service will work alongside the Children with Disability Team and Adult Services to consider new ways of providing care for young people with disabilities as they move through transition and on into adulthood.

As planned as part of the restructure the service increased their permanent staffing complement by 1.5 social workers from the 1st April 2013. It is also of note that during the past year the team have experienced a significant increase in demand for assessment of family carers. This has often been requested via Court in very short timeframes. The increased level of work required additional Fostering Panels to meet demand. During this time work on assessing generic foster carers reduced as a result of this issue.

There are currently 4 young people placed in external residential provision provided by a private provider. Four of these young people have significant educational needs which cannot be addressed within Monmouthshire and of those 2 have complex emotional and behavioural/physiological needs. There are 23 placements with independent fostering agencies which is a reduction from 33 in 2013.

This area of the service has seen significant pressure due to judicial time scales and continues to need to prioritise Court work over generic carers. This situation cannot continue to the detriment of assessing generic carers and plans are in place to address this issue.

Youth Offending Service

The Youth Offending Service has continued to deliver improved outcomes for both Monmouthshire and Torfaen. It is unclear as to whether more responsibility will be put on Local Authorities in the coming years and whether as a result current funding structures will change.

From a Welsh Government perspective the funding arrangements for youth crime prevention has changed and this responsibility now sits with the newly appointed Chief Commissioner. For the Youth Offending Service the financial position remains similar, but will need to be monitored should any changes take place to funding streams for the service.

The Youth Offending Service has continued to deliver the Assessment Planning Intervention and Supervision (APIS) via workshops on a monthly basis. The service has participated in and facilitated Restorative Justice training for all relevant staff including those outside the service, for example, police officers, residential workers, community safety officers.

The 'Bureau Model' has been developed and implemented to manage the decision making process for young people involved in offending and focuses on the principles and practices of restorative justice. This model will be reviewed over the coming year. A number of activities have taken place over the year to improve knowledge of

the Youth Justice Service, for example, publicising local projects and reporting to Select Committee about relevant developments.

Links have continued to develop with the Youth Service, specifically in relation to the Youth Offer Group and has assisted in the prevention agenda with the Joint Assessment Family Framework and Team Around the Family implementation in Monmouthshire.

The youth offending service has continued to make progress over the last year. The staff group are committed and competent and this is reflected in the outcomes that the service has achieved.

MOVING FORWARD in 2014

Over the past 6 months we have been undertaking an in depth self-review, driven by frontline staff with external support. We have come to realise that frontline Children's Services have, over time become fragmented and have lost their focus on children, young people and on service development and delivery.

A range of service issues have been self-identified during the first quarter of 2014 and also further identified through the recent LAC inspection, which require a significant focus over the coming year. There is a planned move away from teams to a whole service approach to deliver outcomes for children, young people and where appropriate their families.

As a result next year's ACRF will have a different format to express the changes undertaken over the year. The focus will be on how the services that have been delivered have improved the outcomes for children and young people and evidences the difference we have made to them. This will be developed during 2014.

With this in mind it has been agreed that Children's Services will have a Service Improvement Plan owned by the whole service, to further move away from a team approach to whole service delivery.

A range of practical issues are being addressed alongside that of good practice and a focus on children and young people. Although there are areas of the service that has ensured that children and young people are heard this needs further development and consistent implementation across the service.

Therefore some areas that will be focused on in 2014 are:

- Progress the implementation of the South East Wales Adoption Service from April 2014
- We need to strengthen the processes that track, monitor and review our budget expenditure to ensure that children's social services will be sustainable in future years. We need to strengthen our commissioning processes within children services and in partnership with all providers of services to children and their families in Monmouthshire to deliver effective, economic and efficient provision.
- Work will also be undertaken to develop leadership capacity with Children's Services to assist and embed the changes in the service and to deliver a clear focus on children and young people
- We need to continue to strengthen our professional practice, skills and knowledge base through training and development, in order to deliver improved outcomes for our children, young people and their families.
- We need to enable practitioners to return to a focus on gaining children and young people's views effectively.
- As part of the safeguarding work across the county, improved links will be developed to work with commissioned and contracted services that will ensure compliance with Monmouthshire's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- We are seeking to develop a multi-agency/ complex supervision for specific individual cases to share and develop learning from case work, in addition to the current model of supervision
- Ensure that the written feedback from the LAC inspection in April 2014 is acted on, when we receive it, this is due in June 2014
- Further work is required in relation to the implementation of the payment for skills in fostering. This work has commenced with a scoping exercise and this work will be conducted in conjunction with the Training Team within Monmouthshire County Council.
- A review and update of policies and procedures will take place
- Re-establishing of Social Work core practice skills will continue e.g. enabling understanding of children through play, care planning

It is envisaged that with a clear focus on the planned developments within the service, we can evidence improved outcomes for children, young people and where appropriate their families in 2014.