



Tim Loughton MP

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families

Sanctuary Buildings Great Smith Street Westminster London SW1P 3BT

tel: 0870 0012345 ministers@education.gsi.gov.uk

To: LSCB Chairs
Directors of Children's Services

Cc: Lead Members
Chief Executives

22 September 2010

WORKING TOGETHER TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN (2010)

Dear colleague

I am writing to inform you about a change to the statutory guidance set out in *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010)* insofar as it relates to Government Offices.

Activities delivered by GO Children and Learners Teams

The Coalition: our programme for government announced our decision to close the Government Office for London and to review the position of the other eight Government Offices (GO). On 22 July, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government announced the intention in principle to abolish the remaining eight GOs, subject to using the Spending Review to resolve consequential issues. A final decision will be made at the end of the Spending Review in the autumn.

The Secretary of State for Education has decided to end virtually all DfE functions currently delivered by the GO Children and Learners teams. We have also decided to terminate the contract for the Children and Learners Strategic Advisers and to end the contracts of other GO-based advisers, including safeguarding advisers. The Department has issued operational guidance to the GO Children and Learners Teams covering the closure activity we expect during this exit period. The Directors of Children and Learners in each region will work with Directors of Children's Services and others in the sector to manage a planned and orderly exit from the Department's activities. These decisions are in line with our commitment to empower local authorities by removing top down monitoring, support and challenge and a general move to bring field forces to an end and invest in sector-led models of support. This approach also responds to demands from the sector to free up local authorities so they can focus on their own improvement priorities and determine for themselves the best way of achieving positive outcomes for children and young people.

The only activity currently carried out by these GO Children and Learners teams which will be re-configured and moved in to this Department is the gathering of information on serious child care incidents and Serious Case Reviews. This activity will in future be carried out by a team within the Department, which will liaise with you to obtain the

same information as you previously provided to the GOs. Officials will be writing to you separately about these new arrangements which we expect to take effect from 1 October 2010 in relation to London and from a later date, still to be agreed, in the other regions. Officials will also advise you of a small consequential change in child protection correspondence handling arrangements which have previously involved GOs.

As a consequence of the ending of safeguarding adviser contracts, there are a number of changes which need to be made to statutory guidance. These changes will take effect from 1 October 2010. However, as explained above, other activity will continue beyond that date as part of a planned and orderly exit from the Department's activities.

In addition to the changes to statutory guidance, please also note that Ofsted will no longer suggest to LSCBs that they invite GOs to SCR evaluation feedback meetings and will no longer copy GOs into SCR evaluation letters.

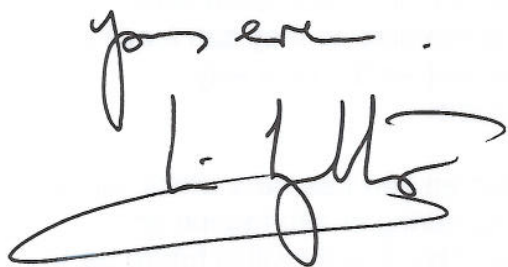
Changes to statutory guidance

This section of this letter is guidance to local authorities and their Board partners on Local Safeguarding Children Boards issued under section 16(2) of the Children Act 2004. In exercising their functions relating to a Local Safeguarding Children Board, local authorities and their Board partners must have regard to any guidance given to them for the purpose by the Secretary of State.

From 1 October 2010:

1. *Working Together to Safeguarding Children (2010)* should be read as if all references to Government Offices and GO Children and Learners Teams were omitted;
2. paragraph 8.24 is replaced by "Where the timetable for completion of the SCR is extended beyond the timeframe of six months from the date of the decision to proceed with the SCR, the LSCB should inform Ofsted of the new completion date and of the reason for the extension";
3. in the first sentence of paragraph 8.51, the Department for Education is added (in place of the relevant GO Children and Learners Team) to the list of bodies which the LSCB should ensure are appropriately briefed in advance about the publication of the executive summary and overview report.

If you have any queries relating to this letter, please contact Jeanette Pugh, Director, Safeguarding Group, Level 1, Sanctuary Buildings, 20 Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Loughton', with a large, sweeping underline.

TIM LOUGHTON MP