

What Impact has the E-Learning Training had on Practice?

‘Introduction to Safeguarding’ & ‘Awareness of Child Abuse and Neglect’

The following report provides an analysis of responses by practitioners who have completed one of the 6 different elearning modules provided by the Virtual College to cover the NSCB’s ‘Introduction to Safeguarding’ course. The 5 modules are detailed below. This analysis was undertaken to understand the impact taking this course has had on practitioners at least three months after they had taken the module.

- Introduction to Safeguarding
- Awareness of Child Abuse and Neglect – Foundation
- Awareness of Child Abuse and Neglect – Core
- Awareness of Child Abuse and Neglect – Young People’s Version
- Awareness of Child Abuse and Neglect – Police Version

1.0 Background

The NSCB E-Learning courses provided by the Virtual College are available to all practitioners working in Northamptonshire as part of the children’s workforce free of charge. Below are the learning objectives for the ‘Introduction to Safeguarding’ course. All of the learning objectives for the Awareness of Child Abuse and Neglect courses follow the same pattern and expand on knowledge a little more dependent on the level of contact professionals have with children or young people.

- Explain the profound impact some well known cases of child abuse and neglect have had on legislation.
- Understand the importance of early intervention.
- Make use of national guidance, legislation and local policies and procedures to guide in work.
- Work more effectively with other agencies.
- Define the four main types of child abuse and neglect.
- Follow the appropriate procedures if you suspect child abuse or neglect.

2.0 Methodology

This analysis looked at the difference the training made to individual’s practice in their ability and confidence when working with children and young people.

The research was conducted by way of a questionnaire accessed via Survey Monkey sent to learners who had completed one of the E-Learning courses from 1st September 2015 – 31st December 2015. The survey remained open for a period of 2 months (11th April – 3rd June 2016) with a number of reminder requests to complete sent during that period. In July 2015 the NSCB also added an automatic 3 month evaluation to all e-Learning courses accessed via the Virtual College. For the purposes of this report analysis is made from both sets of data.

Participants were asked to respond to statements with the following options strongly agree / agree / neither agree or disagree / disagree and strongly disagree. Participants were then asked to comment on why they had chosen that option and evidence what had been done / changed as a result. See Appendix 1 for the questions asked to learners.

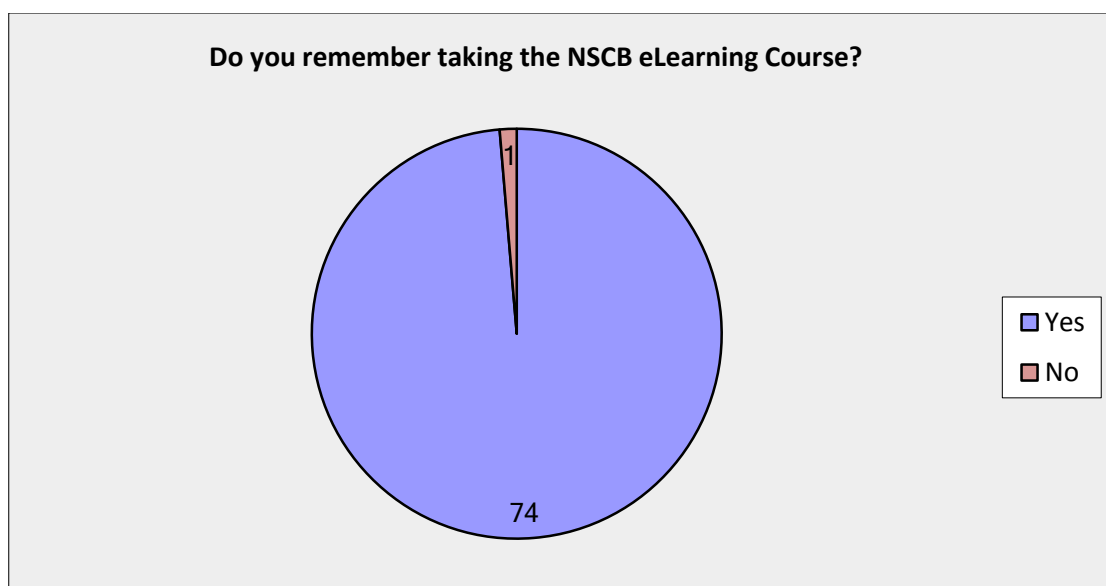
3.0 Response Rate

Since July 2015 a total of 1145 learners have completed one of the E-Learning modules and have received a request via the Virtual College to fill out an automatic 3 month evaluation. To date 180 (16%) have completed this evaluation. In addition 586 specific requests were sent to learners who completed a course in September – December in total 75 (13%) responded to this questionnaire giving a total of 255 responses to analyse as part of this report. Feedback and research from other areas and impact evaluations is that this is a positive return rate although on the face of it this may seem a low response rate we are able to draw conclusions into the impact this course is having on the workforce. Moving forward the Learning and Development Sub Group will be looking at how this can be improved for future evaluations with the aim of receiving around a 50% return rate on impact evaluations.

4.0 Results

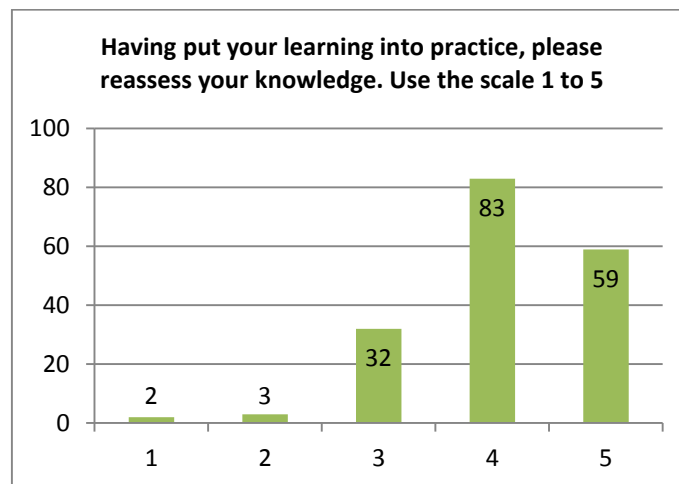
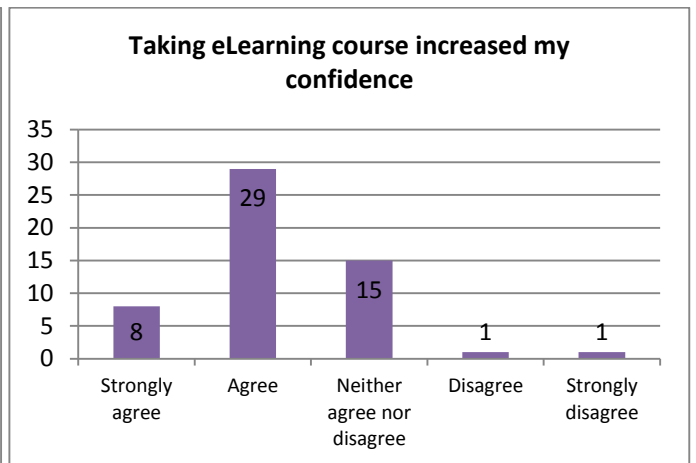
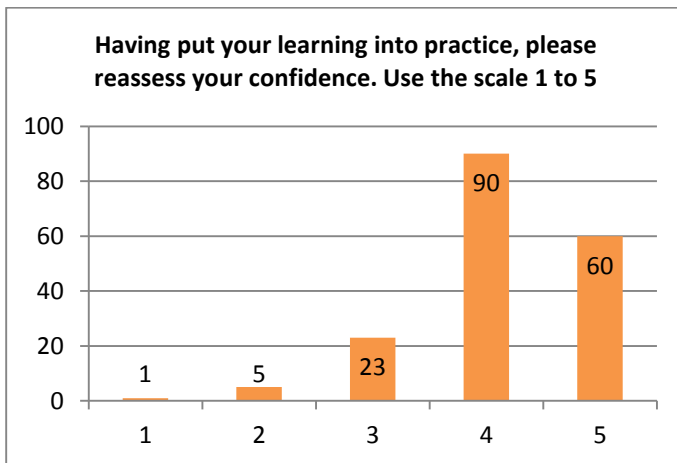
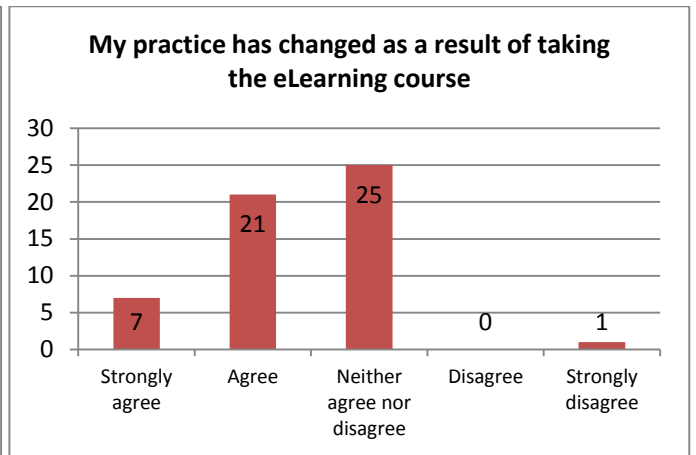
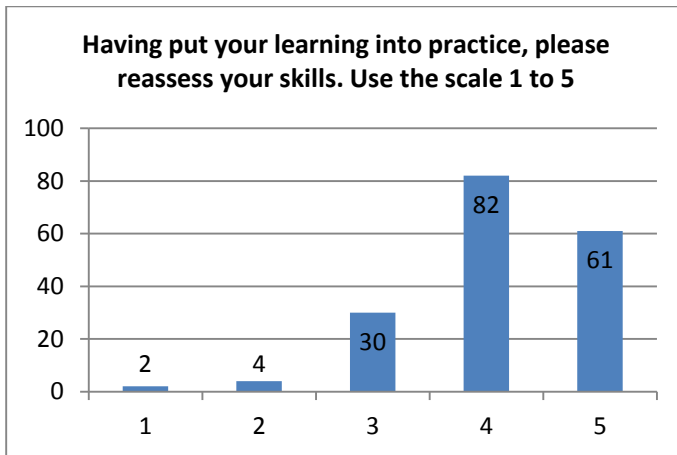
The below analysis combines the 2 questionnaires completed *(Full data table for both surveys, graphs and responses can be found in Appendix 2)*

The opening question from the survey monkey questionnaire disseminated by the Business Office asked if learners remembered completing the course. All except 1 person stated they remembered completing the course as shown in the graphic below, disappointingly the 1 person who stated they did not remember completing the course failed to answer the follow up question which would have hopefully gave some insight into why they were unable to remember the course and make improvements.



The following series of questions contained in both questionnaires asking learners how different aspects of practice, skills and knowledge has improved. The results of this are very positive with very few selecting the lower responses leading us to be able to conclude that learners have made changes to practice improved skills and confidence has increased as a result of completing the training. This has made them more aware of safeguarding and what to look for when working with children and young people. Evidence of this positive changes in behaviour can be found in the quotes below. From an evaluative point of view it is often more interesting to view some of the negative responses as these often provide best insight in how the courses and modules can be improved further.

Looking at the negative comments some of which are detailed below the majority did not relate to the course content and did not see the relevance to their role or job. In the light of the NSCB objective that 'Safeguarding is Everyone's Business' this shows that it is essential for agencies to explain to staff why they are being asked to undertake any training and ensure that the learning from training is followed up in supervision and team meetings in line with the approach to learning detailed in the NSCB Learning and Development Strategy.



“I am more aware of what to be looking/listening for, but have little direct contact with the children in the setting, so little has changed for me.”

“I am more aware of children and the conditions they live, or noticing key things that could need further investigation.”

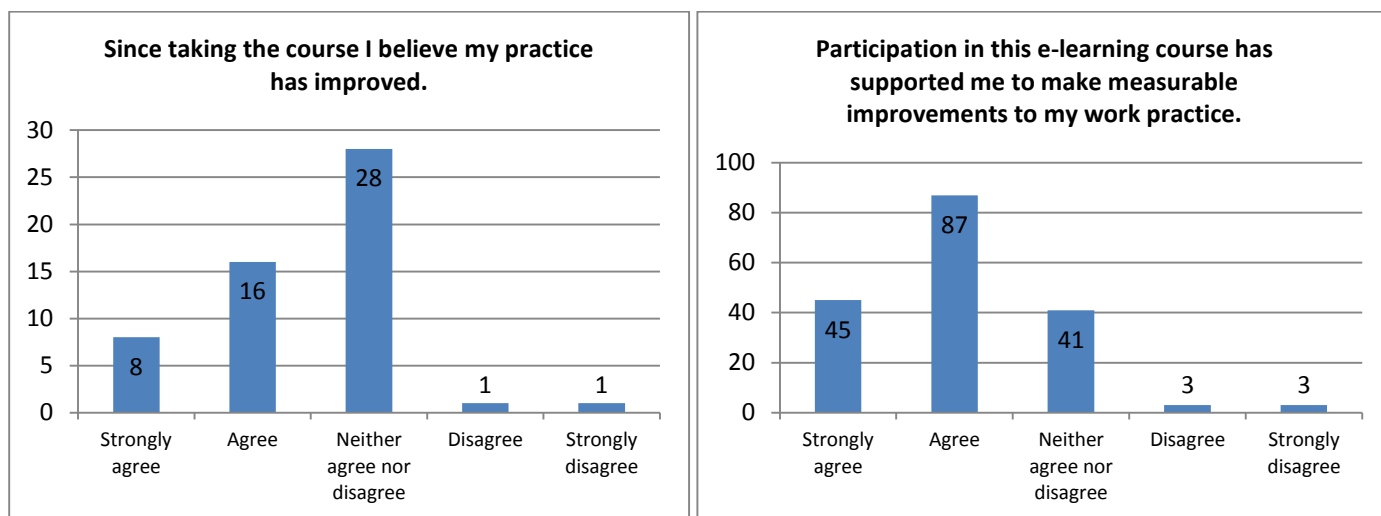
“I have been able to share and discuss the different feelings/concerns I may have towards a child's wellbeing.”

“I understand more about the different levels of abuse now. I can approach children in a way they won't feel threatened and pushed. I was a little apprehensive in how to deal with things until I took the NSCB learning training.”

“Because I can now recognise the different kind of abuses and try to find more about what’s happening and inform any colleagues and seniors.”

“It hasn't as the course we were asked to do wasn't particularly relevant”

The following 2 questions asked learners if they felt they had improved practice as a result of taking the course. As you can see by the graphs below the overall picture is very positive with a large number of people stating that they believe their practice has improved as a result of taking the course. This is a very positive outcome for the NSCB which show this suite of E-Learning courses is having a positive impact on practice and providing the NSCB with good value for money. The 8 learners who have stated that they do not believe practice has improved as a result is a little disappointing however after analysing the responses to these question, this can be put down to not being aware why they were taking the course and taking it as a refresher which also accounts for a number of learners who responded with ‘Neither agree nor disagree’.



“We now have not only me as a confident safeguarder, but a whole staff team”.

“There is always room for improvement and complacency leads to inevitable errors”.

“I think a gain of knowledge and reassessing on a regular basis is a good thing you to bring you up to date on safeguarding”.

“I have found since doing the course that I notice more things than before. And I put in to practice my skills at every opportunity”.

“The course was insightful, but I feel it was not really relevant to my job role as kitchen server as I am only working 10 hours a week at the school. However it would be valuable for someone who is working longer hours at the school to receive this training”.

“As I have done safeguarding training before, as well as learnt about the specific working practices in my place of work, this was more a refresher course for me”.

“The course was a mandatory course for work. I work in a library where we already have safeguarding procedures”.

As part of the automatic Virtual College 3 month impact evaluation learners are asked to state what they have started doing and what they have changed as a result of taking the course. There are a lot of very positive comments in this part of the result table evidencing that practitioners have made real changes that will help safeguard children and young people as a result of this course. A number of these examples can be seen below.

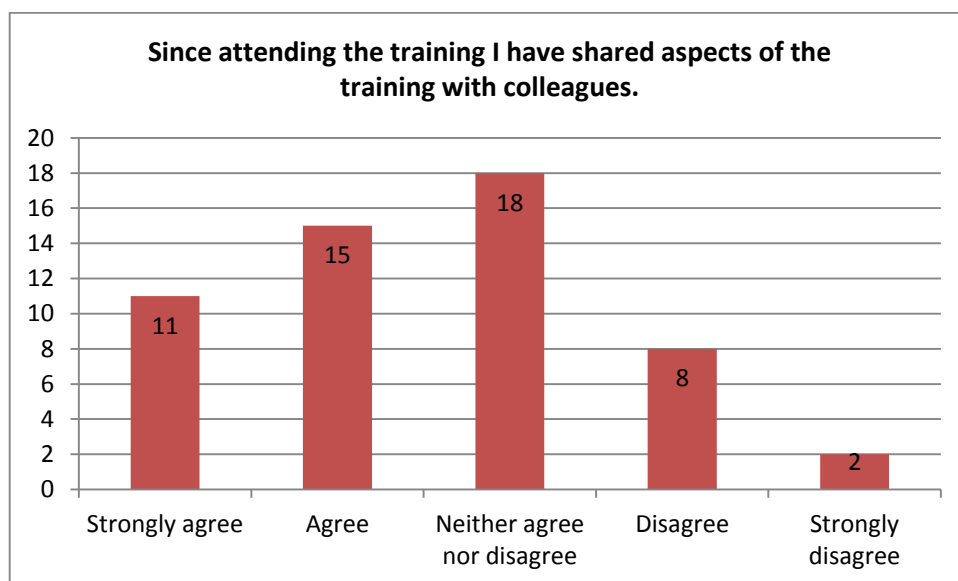
“Ensuring Safeguarding is built into the Shared Services checklist for ENC and Bringing in policy to make taxi licensing safeguarding training mandatory”.

“If there are children at a property which I am visiting I am more wareful of other issues that could be happening”.

“Been more aware of children and young people and how they can be protected, how we can better communicate with other agencies and never assume”.

“Talking and listening to children, making sure the children are safe while walking around school and making sure children feel safe and protected”.

“Referring to MASH when concerns are raised. Vulnerability and risk assessments being completed for young people we come into contact with that are at risk or vulnerable. Information share with other agencies. Update learning via online courses”.



As part of the NSCB Learning and Development Strategy, agencies and learners are encouraged to share learning with colleagues to ensure that the knowledge gained from taking a course is transferred into practice and the workplace. It is a little disappointing that only 26 respondents agree or strongly agree with the statement. The following statements have been recorded within the survey and explain some of the responses. This question does reiterate the statement above showing that for training to be effectively embedded it needs to be discussed by managers in team meetings and during supervision sessions.

“I have required all staff within my service area to take the course”.

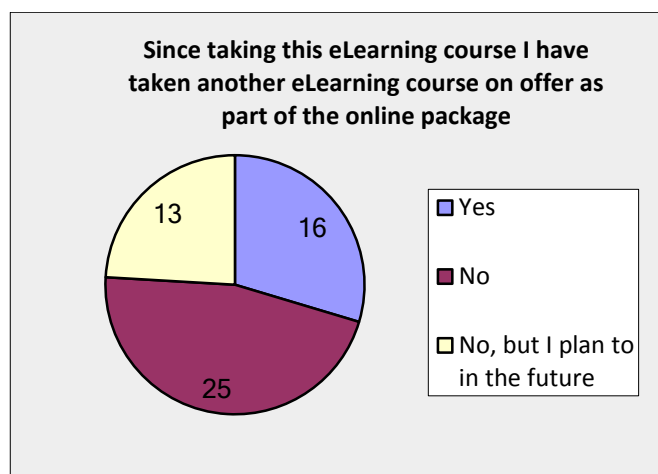
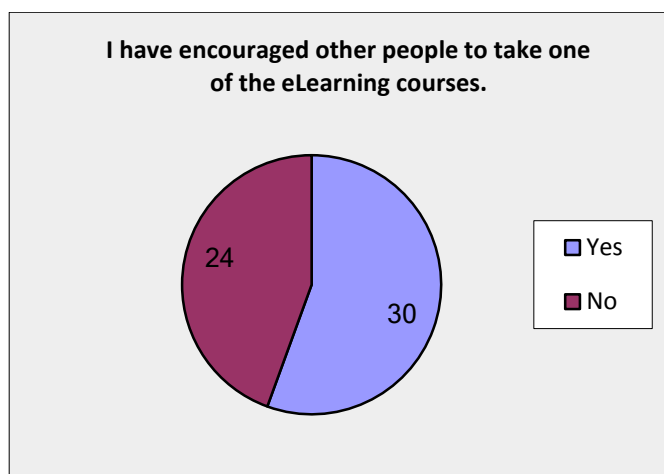
“Most of my colleagues have also done the training, so have not felt the need to share anything”.

“My colleagues and I discussed the training - but our safeguarding lead shares updates etc with us”.

“Included aspects from e learning in the safeguarding training I deliver internally.”

“After every session all of the team of youth workers have a meeting and we all share our experiences and views. Some difficult sessions where we identify abuse is reported and is discussed, we always refer to the guidelines of safeguarding”.

“It increased discussions at work.”



The above graphs show how learners have either encouraged others to take the course or plan to take further courses themselves in the future. These results are positive as over half the people accessing courses have encouraged others to complete a course and as we have seen in the responses above a number of people completed the course as a team enabling us to conclude the course has reached an even wider number of people.

The fact that 29 learners have either already completed another course or plan to complete another course in the future is very positive as this shows that the NSCB E-Learning package is providing part of the workforce with the skills and knowledge they need to effectively safeguard children and young people in Northamptonshire in a variety of subject areas. The fact that some learners are willing and wanting to expand knowledge even further is very positive and shows the Board is getting value for money in getting knowledge out to the wider partnership workforce.

One of the hardest things to evidence is the impact changes in practice made from training is having on the lives of children and young people; this is especially difficult for E-Learning training. As part of the Virtual College automatic 3 month evaluation learners are asked the question ‘How do you evidence the impact your working practice changes have had for children and young people?’. Below are some of the responses that help us evidence that this training course is having and enabling us to ensure that children and young people in Northamptonshire are safer as a result of staff having access to this training package.

“I evidence the impact my working practice by following the policies and procedures e.g. filling in the child's personal files, observations, communication book, nappy book, accident forms etc. I also use the media such as camera for making the videos or pictures”.

“Discussion with my Team Leader if a MASH referral is required and logging on our computer system that we have done one.”

“I hope my extended knowledge of the signs I should be aware of will impact the effectiveness of my working practice”.

“I've definitely always known how important it is to safeguard children, however after my safeguarding training I've understood on a different level just how important it is on a daily basis and how you always have to be on the lookout for the children”.

“We submit impact stories and we have warm handover forms also evidence sheets for the children's centre services”.

“One child who was incredibly shy and uncommunicative managed to open up and become quite confident and talkative. Whether this was through the benefits of this course or through the provision of a safe, nurturing environment is unclear”.

“Working together with other staff and sharing information to make children safe”.

5.0 Conclusion

As a result of the above we are able to conclude that the ‘Introduction’ suite of courses provided by the Virtual College for the NSCB are fulfilling the aims set out by the Learning and Development Sub Group and Board. The initial aims for the courses were to fulfil the ‘Introduction to Safeguarding’ requirements of the Board and to give staff an awareness raising course into safeguarding. This is especially pleasing as the number who have accessed these courses that have replaced a face to face course are very high and would have taken a number of years to train staff via a face to face method.

The above analysis shows that as a result of taking these courses practitioners are making significant changes to practice which are having a direct impact on the children and young people living in Northamptonshire enabling them to be safeguarded.

One area of improvement that would enable the training to have an even greater impact is for all agencies and organisations working in the county to ensure that training is embedded in day to day practice. To do this agencies must make sure that all team managers and supervisors within organisations are aware of the training and having conversations with staff regarding the reasons for undertaking the training and then following up with staff after the training has been completed to embed learning practice. The NSCB provide a face to face course on supervision and management in safeguarding as well as having a number of E-learning courses aimed at managers and supervisors to give them the knowledge and skills they would need to undertake this part of their role.

This would ensure that all agencies are embedding training in line with the NSCB Learning and Development Strategy which states that only 10% learning is done through the formal routes of face to face / E-learning training the rest is embedded through discussions with managers and teams and in day to day practice.

Overall the E-Learning courses are currently providing the NSCB with good value for money and should continue to be promoted within all agencies to ensure that frontline practitioner’s knowledge is maintained and updated every 3 years as stated in the Learning and Development Strategy.

6.0 Recommendations

1. This report is made available on the NSCB website for dissemination in agency newsletters.
2. The findings of this report are shared with the Executive Support Group and NSCB Board for information.
3. The report is shared with Virtual College to aid future course development.
4. All agencies and the NSCB Business Office to continue to promote the E-Learning courses on offer to ensure we are reaching as many frontline practitioners as possible.
5. All Managers, Team Leaders and partners within the NSCB are aware of the Learning and Development Strategy and ensure discussions with staff undertaking training our taking pace to embed learning.
6. Managers and Team Leaders are encouraged to undertake a Safeguarding course aimed at managers.

7.0 Process Lessons Learnt

Following the low level of responses returned to this evaluation, the Disguised Compliance evaluations and the previous evaluations conducted into Thresholds and Working Together. It is proposed that as well as receiving direct

e-mail requests from the Business Office to complete these surveys, Learning and Development Sub Group members and NSCB Board members will also be requested to encourage practitioners to complete the impact of learning evaluations.

Kevin Johnson
NSCB Project Officer – July 2016