

# CHILDREN'S MARS BOARD

## NEWS UPDATE



**Edition 3 - August 2019**

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### Welcome

Welcome to the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the news update for the North Lincolnshire Children's Multi Agency Resilience and Safeguarding (MARS) Local Arrangements. This news update is one way of communicating information and messages relating to the Children's MARS arrangements.

The focus of this edition is to update on the Children's MARS Board, raise awareness of progress in relation to the safeguarding partner's portfolio areas, highlight what is working well and summarise areas for development of key partnership groups. Other communications and relevant contacts are included.

**Please share this information across your agency/organisation and use it as a means of prompting discussion, sharing learning and improving practice.**

### Children's MARS Board

Safeguarding partners met again at the Children's MARS Board on 24 April 2019 and 17 July. They continue to develop strong, collaborative relationships with a focus on being proactive and forward thinking.

Key areas of discussion included:

- The transition from LSCB to Children's MARS document was endorsed by the Board. The outstanding actions required to transition to the new child death review (CDR) arrangements have been completed as the CDR partners have published the [Northern Lincolnshire Child Death Review Arrangements](#).
- The terms of reference have been in development since the inaugural Children's MARS Board meeting, though they have now been agreed and can be accessed [here](#).
- Progress relating to the portfolio areas and updates regarding key partnership functions including the Early Help Strategic Leads Group, Safeguarding Pathway Lead Officers Group and the Safeguarding Practice Learning and Improvement Group
- Children's MARS Business Report provided an overview of activity and impacts relating to the priority areas including domestic abuse, child exploitation and neglect

### Children's MARS arrangements – refreshed and republished!

As early adopters of the multi agency safeguarding arrangements, our Children's MARS Local Arrangements were originally published in October 2018. In line with our commitment to listen, learn, review and adapt, we refreshed our arrangements and republished in June 2019 (in line with statutory timescales). To access the new arrangements and associated documents, go [here](#).

## Safeguarding Partners update

Since the Children's MARS Board in April, there have been some key changes to safeguarding partners. Darren Downs has now taken on the role of Chief Superintendent on the North Bank and Darren Wildbore, has come into post as Temporary Chief Superintendent on the South Bank. Darren Wildbore picked up the chairing role for the Children's MARS Board in July.

The safeguarding partners have a lead responsibility for specific portfolios, which underpin the Children's MARS local arrangements delivery plan, as follows:



Mick Gibbs  
Director of Children and  
Community Resilience  
North Lincolnshire Council

**Lead for:**

Stakeholder engagement/voice  
Safeguarding Practice Review



Clare Linley  
Director of Nursing and Quality  
North Lincolnshire Clinical  
Commissioning Group

**Lead for:**

Scrutiny and assurance  
Training



Darren Wildbore  
Temporary Chief Superintendent  
Humberside Police and  
Chair of Children's MARS Board

**Lead for:**

Performance  
Funding

## Safeguarding Partners portfolio areas - updates

### Scrutiny and Assurance

As per the local arrangements, the [Children's MARS Scrutiny and Assurance Framework](#) has also been re-published. Principally, the framework remains the same, though as a result of our listening, learning, reviewing and adapting, we have further developed and refined the mechanisms to ensure robust scrutiny and assurance, including independent scrutiny.

Examples of recent scrutiny and assurance activity include:

- Section 11 self-assessment process – January to March 2019
- Agency specific assurance event (NLC Children's Services front door) – February 2019
- Agency specific assurance event (NLaG) – March 2019
- Agency specific assurance event (RDaSH) – April 2019
- Practice Learning Line of Sight event on children living with domestic abuse – June 2019

The emerging themes, actions and learning have been assimilated, shared with partners and distributed to key partnerships where appropriate. They will also be summarised in the upcoming annual report.

There was an independent scrutiny event in July 2019 to fulfil the requirement to scrutinise the annual review and to seek assurance as to whether safeguarding partners are fulfilling their statutory responsibilities. More information will be included in the annual review to be published soon.

## Independent Scrutiny Officers

We are recruiting Independent Scrutiny Officers, who will contribute to independent scrutiny functions of the Children's MARS arrangements. The role of independent scrutiny is critical to provide assurance in judging the effectiveness of our local arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in North Lincolnshire.

Independent Scrutiny Officer(s) play a significant role in our [Scrutiny and Assurance Framework](#).

An update will be provided in the next edition of our News Update.

## Voice

A Square Table event took place on 28 March 2019 to consider young people's issues as part of the wider children's planning arrangements and Children's MARS arrangements and opportunities for co-production.



The invite was extended to members of North Lincolnshire Youth Council, Children in Care Council/Care Leavers and young people in receipt of services and the event was attended by ten young people and key officers (representing safeguarding partners). The event was co-facilitated by the Director of Children and Community Resilience, North Lincolnshire Council and a young person.

Emerging headlines from the event were focused around the following areas:

- Community issues
- Knife Crime
- Resilience
- Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health
- Positive Activities
- Transitioning to Adulthood/Schools
- Communication and Engagement
- Children's Challenge

The outcomes of the event have been shared with key partnerships including the Children's MARS Board and the Children and Young People's Partnership, so that people who are in a position to shape and influence have access to young people's perspectives. The full write up from the event can be located [here](#).

## Training

Children's MARS Training Programme 2019/20 is available [here](#). Upcoming courses include:

- Trauma – **9 September**
- Neglect & Graded Care Profile 2 – **9 September**  
Practitioners may choose to attend just the neglect morning session, just the GCP2 afternoon session or the full day.
- Child Protection – **2 to 3 October**
- Early Help Assessment – **5 November**

To book your place, please complete and return the Course Booking Form, located [here](#), and return it to [mars@northlincs.gov.uk](mailto:mars@northlincs.gov.uk)



## Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

The [Improving Child Protection and Safeguarding Practice policies and procedures](#) have been revised and re-published.

Notification forms are also available:

- Serious Child Safeguarding Incident - Notification to Safeguarding Partners
- Local Learning Review - Notification to Safeguarding Partners

## Stakeholder Partnership

The latest Stakeholder Partnership took place in June 2019 which focussed on:

- Children's MARS updates
- Outcomes of Square Table Event
- #nomoreknives campaign
- Domestic abuse update
- Policy watch

There was also an opportunity for partners to reflect on their involvement in the arrangements and the partnership structure.

Taking account of feedback, further suggestions were made regarding the format, focus and membership of future meetings, which will be fed into the next Children's MARS Board.

The next meeting will be scheduled for October 2019.

## Funding

The funding for 2019/20 has been agreed across safeguarding partners and contributing agencies.

There is a need to consider funding arrangements for 2020 and beyond.

This will be a key discussion at future Children's MARS Board meetings.

As part of this, there will be a review of the Innovation Hub which will inform future funding requirements.

## Performance

The performance framework has been developed and is focused around a two tier reporting system, as follows:

### **1 - Standard quarterly performance report which will be routinely available for every Board meeting**

This will include:

- partnership information across the whole of the early help and safeguarding pathway in respect of activity, performance and trend data
- an analysis of this information indicating any areas of exception or concern and any areas of particularly good practice which require to be highlighted to the Board

### **2 - A quarterly performance and quality of practice 'deep dive' analysis of identified areas across the safeguarding pathway**

It is proposed that these deep dives will be undertaken by the Innovation Hub, alongside relevant partners, and will be identified and agreed by the Board dependent upon either:

- the need to further explore and understand any areas of concern or exception
- to more fully understand performance and outcomes relating to the Board's areas of focus or emerging issues

In addition, the Chairs of the strategic groups will consider and further develop their own groups' more detailed data sets and performance indicators in respect of their areas of focus and the work of the strategic groups.

## Partnership updates

The chairs of the key partnership groups are as follows:

- Early Help Strategic Leads Group – Tom Hewis, Head of Early Help and Independent Review, NLC
- Safeguarding Pathway Lead Officers Group – Ann-Marie Brierley, Head of Safeguarding Children, NLC
- Safeguarding Practice Learning and Improvement Group – Sarah Glossop, Designated Nurse, CCG

The new arrangements have provided an opportunity for the groups to reflect on their purpose, what's working well and areas for improvement where relevant. Future reporting will specifically clarify how the groups contribute to the Children's MARS five intents, which are detailed on the [website](#) and in the local arrangements.

## Early Help Strategic Leads Group (EHSLG)

### Purpose

The EHSLG leads, champions, implements and oversees the Early Help offer under the auspices of the North Lincolnshire Organisational Model and Helping Children and Families (Threshold Document 2016/20).

### Progress since the last Board

- Consistent engagement and effective contribution from secondary schools representative
- Initiated learning from audit processes
- Undertaken a systems 'walk through'
- Awarded Dept. for Work & Pensions reducing parental conflict funding for training and strategic development
- Oversight of Graded Care Profile 2 – numbers increasing
- Oversight of The Families Initiative – claims increasing
- Ofsted focused visit in March – 'Thresholds are well understood, and children and families receive support in accordance with their needs at the earliest opportunity'.

### What's working well

- Clear evidence of strong strategic commitment to early help across some partners
- Engagement from schools, and learning from audit is supporting a more consistent understanding of what works, and some of the barriers
- Examples of excellent practice and positive outcomes abound
- The principles of early help and the language of resilience and enablement are well-understood across the partnership in North Lincolnshire
- Thresholds are well understood and there is confidence in decision making

### Areas for development

- Need to expand the membership of and contributions to the EHSLG to reflect the reality and breadth of early help
- This also applies to early help data and impact evaluations
- Need to develop and simplify the early help assessment framework and reporting system
- Still too much 'referring on' happening

## Safeguarding Pathway Lead Officers Group (SPLOG)

### Role and Remit

This group oversees and quality assures multi-agency working specifically within the 'safeguarding pathway' for children.

### What's working well

- Partnership contribution across the safeguarding pathway for children
- Good performance in relation to areas of practice such as multi agency contribution to strategy discussions and attendance at child protection conferences
- Strong understanding of populations, performance and practice
- Increased and shared understanding of thresholds
- Multi Agency Audit Group (MAAG) - which connects to the SPLOG and then feeds back - supporting practice development
- Strong partnership commitment to creative and dynamic practice and doing the right thing for children to prevent them entering care, offending, being exploited or being involved in serious violence
- Practice developments have included work in relation to the pre-birth pathway, exploitation, the neglect Graded Care Profile 2 and the 'You Say Who' model
- Consistent evidence of child engagement, consultation and co-production of training packages and interventions at each stage of the pathway for children and young people

### Areas for development/consideration

- Ensure a sharpened partnership commitment so that the most vulnerable children have an appropriate education package and are creatively supported to fully engage
- Further strengthen the multi agency contribution to strategy discussions and other partnership planning processes
- Fully embed the partnership strategy to serious violence involving weapons
- Partnership reporting of performance and populations to enhance the opportunities for further practice development
- Embed the Partnership Interface meeting so that it focuses more on multi agency practice development to feed into the SPLOG
- Ensure that SPLOG attendees continue to implement areas of practice development and learning from audit as identified

## Safeguarding Practice Learning and Improvement Group (SPLIG)

### Role and Remit

- Learning from:
  - Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs) and multi-agency Local Learning Reviews (LLRs)
  - Other local and national CSPRs
  - Other reports and research
- Planning improvement and development work following local practice learning line of sight events
- Communication of learning to and development of professionals and the wider public
- Training on new arrangements/policies and procedures



## Safeguarding Practice Learning and Improvement Group (SPLIG) continued

### What's happening

Terms of reference developed

- Early Days: three meetings held
  - Terms of reference developed
  - Group still forming
  - Membership evolving
- Transition from Serious Case Review Group to SPLIG (and CSPR Group) continues
- LLR – action plan completed
- Practice learning line of sight event on child sexual abuse within the family environment - action plan completed
  - [7 minute briefing](#) developed and available

### Areas for development/consideration

- LLR action plan – completed and to be endorsed by the Children's MARS Board
- Practice learning line of sight event on child sexual abuse within the family environment - completed and to be endorsed by the Children's MARS Board
- Test of CSPR rapid review process – for discussion at next SPLIG
- Communication mechanisms for sharing learning and development to be further developed (to professionals and the wider public), for example:
  - 7 minute briefings
  - News updates
  - Twitter, website and developing other social media
  - Face to face development sessions and via the Stakeholder Partnership
- Training on the new arrangements/policies and procedures
- Changing the narrative in working with adolescents
- Further develop the SPLIG performance and development framework

## Contacts



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