

# CHILDREN'S MARS BOARD NEWS UPDATE



## Welcome

Welcome to the seventh 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.

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## CHILDREN'S MARS BOARD — APRIL 2020 UPDATE

Safeguarding partners met again at the Children's MARS Board on 24 April 2020. They continue to develop strong, collaborative relationships with a focus on being proactive and forward thinking.



Key areas of discussion included:

- Updates on the local response to the COVID-19 pandemic including the response to national guidance
- Progress relating to the safeguarding partner's portfolio areas
- Updates from the Early Help Strategic Leads Group, Safeguarding Pathway Lead Officers Group and the Safeguarding Practice Learning and Improvement Group
- Thematic areas of focus - Domestic Abuse, Child Exploitation and Missing Children and Neglect

## Message from the Safeguarding Partners

Representing the three statutory safeguarding partners of North Lincolnshire Council, Humberside Police, and North Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group, we have been hugely impressed with examples of creative responses by local agencies, health services, schools and settings, the early years sector and community groups to ensure a continuation of help and support for our most vulnerable families during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We would like to thank you for the contribution that you and your team make to the help and support on offer for the children and families of North Lincolnshire, who as we are sure you'll agree, have responded fantastically to the current challenges. We have been inspired and impressed by local stories of courage, kindness, and love, and this is testament to the families and communities who we serve every day.

## Children's MARS Training

A summary of training for 2019/2020 was presented to the Children's MARS Board. Throughout the year over 990 delegates from across the partnership have attended our face-to-face courses. A further 298 practitioners have completed our workbooks which are available on our website.

Moving forward, alternative methods of training are being considered to continue to deliver training for staff across North Lincolnshire.

The training programme for 2020/21 is being refreshed to include a number of additional e-learning courses that professionals can access online. Information regarding available training can be accessed on the [Children's MARS website](#).

A limited number of Reducing Parental Conflict e-learning licences have been made available for both practitioners and managers. A breakdown of the course content is included within the training programme.

A number of awareness e-workbooks have been developed to raise practitioners awareness of a number of safeguarding issues. These are available for download from the [training page](#).

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## Launch of Relationship Matters

Relationship Matters is a new partnership between the Children's MARS Arrangements and 14 other local authorities across Yorkshire and the Humber region helping families who may be having relationship difficulties.

A new website has been launched to offer families information, tips and help and what better time than now as the coronavirus has made big changes to the way in which we live our everyday lives.

Relationship Matters can help everyone recognise the signs such as:

- Arguing and rows, shouting all the time about things like money, parenting and housework
- Sulking and the silent treatment, slamming doors or walking away from each other
- Finding it hard to say sorry after an argument and move on
- Using hurtful texts, emails or Facebook against each other

The website can give everyone hints, tips and information about how to stay calm and work it out and where to go next if extra help is needed. [www.relationshipmatters.org.uk](http://www.relationshipmatters.org.uk)

## Safeguarding Children and Young People in Education

An exceptions report was provided to the Children's MARS Board in respect of safeguarding children in education, particularly vulnerable children.



### Key Updates

- To support schools and settings to continue to meet children's needs in this period of unprecedented change and challenge, key local authority staff meet daily to ensure systems and processes continue, guidance is developed and support is rapidly put in place to meet the emerging needs of children and families as well as our educational establishments. This has included information sharing and partnership working with other agencies to support our most vulnerable young people and communities. A key focus of this has been to ensure that children and young people continue to be appropriately safeguarded during this period both in terms of children and young people being in school and also those at home.
- Including schools with nurseries and private, voluntary and independent settings, there are currently around 100 Ofsted registered Early Years providers open in North Lincolnshire to support key worker and vulnerable children. That represents around half the settings. Feedback through regional networks suggests that this is a much higher percentage of Early Years settings remaining open than is the case in some other authorities.
- Schools have daily updates and contact from the local authority to share current guidelines around provision, safeguarding, transport, free school meals and resources including links to the most up to date information from the DFE. Leaders use these conversations to seek guidance and support and share the work their schools are doing to support children and families at this time.
- There has been close working between the local authority Safeguarding Officer and schools when children appear via IMAP who may have escalating needs which move them towards the schools' vulnerable list. Timely updates for schools continue regarding Domestic Abuse cases linked to Operation Encompass.

*Multi-Agency Practice in North Lincolnshire*

## Early Help Strategic Leads Group

### Role and Remit

The Early Help Strategic Leads Group (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).

### Key Updates

- Audit and management oversight activity, via the multi-agency audit group and within agencies, continues to identify effective early help taking place in North Lincolnshire. The vast majority of this help takes place within the context of strong relationships and reflects commitment to families and a culture of collaboration and support.
- There have been no changes to Working Together 2018 statutory guidance since the start of the pandemic. Early help in North Lincolnshire is delivered across a broad range of agencies, services, schools and settings and each will have implemented specific adaptations in response to government guidance and the impact of staffing changes.
- There are a number of local examples of multi-agency responses to the pandemic that demonstrate the resilience, creativity and commitment of professionals in North Lincolnshire working to help enable children and families to stay safe, healthy and together in their schools and communities.

## Safeguarding Pathway Lead Officers Group

### Role and Remit

The Safeguarding Pathway Lead Officer Group (SPLOG) oversees and quality assures multi-agency working specifically within the 'safeguarding pathway' for children. Specific areas are:

- The interface between Early Help and the Integrated Multi-Agency Partnership (IMAP)
- Multi-agency working and decision making within IMAP
- The quality of multi-agency assessments
- The effectiveness and timeliness of multi-agency help and protection

### Key Updates

- Populations data show that the overall number of children subject to statutory interventions is reducing, evidenced most noticeably by the reduction in children in care which bucks the national trend and demonstrates local focus and success in maintaining children in their families and communities.
- Across the safeguarding partnership, the response to the pandemic has demonstrated resilience, flexibility and innovation and we continue to help and protect our children and families, prioritising the most vulnerable while ensuring we support and protect our workforce.
- All key multi-agency interfaces and forums have continued remotely, making use of digital solutions. The child protection conference partnership forum has been established as the key vehicle for overseeing multi-agency attendance.

- Within children's social care, a RAG rating system is used daily to ensure visiting and responses that reflect changing levels of need.
- Children's centres, nursery staff and FaSST, alongside education inclusion officers have come together to deliver an integrated One Family targeted help offer, including information, advice and guidance and set up to support statutory functions if needed.
- The creative approaches and innovation relate not only to working differently, but also to developing service delivery towards self-help and building resilience, for example the increased use of signposting to online resources locally and nationally, and the roll out of online parenting programmes

## Safeguarding Practice Learning and Improvement Group

### Role and Remit

The Safeguarding Practice Learning and Improvement Group (SPLIG) has responsibilities for:

- Co-ordinating the outcomes from local multi agency scrutiny and assurance activity, reviewing monitoring and implementing areas for development to ensure the Children's MARS arrangements positively impact on the shared commitment towards continuous improvements to front line practice
- Disseminating the learning from local scrutiny and assurance activity, local and national child safeguarding practice reviews, other national reports and research

### Key Updates

- An interim revision of the Children's MARS Improving Child Protection and Safeguarding Practice policy and procedure has been developed in keeping with the joint communication from the Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) Panel and the Department for Education on arrangements for CSPRs during this period.
- The proposed Practice Learning Line of Sight Event planned for 27 March was postponed. North Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group will take the lead on behalf of the Children's MARS to review learning from published Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) from other localities and work with multi-agency colleagues to explore local relevance and develop briefings for staff.
- In respect of the single case and multi-case Practice Learning Line of Sight events in respect of children living with mental ill health, the SPLIG identified that the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Steering Group be asked to consider the findings due to their membership of more relevant subject matter expertise.
- The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel Annual Report 2018/19 was received by the SPLIG. The group also received a further report from the National Panel: 'It was Hard to Escape': Safeguarding Children at Risk from Criminal Exploitation March 2020. The Child Exploitation and Missing Strategy Group have been asked to take the lead on responding to this report and provide feedback to the SPLIG.

# Partnership Group Updates

## Further Information

For further information visit our website [www.northlincscmars.co.uk](http://www.northlincscmars.co.uk) or contact us by email at [mars@northlincs.gov.uk](mailto:mars@northlincs.gov.uk)

If you wish to subscribe for Children's MARS communications emails, including updates on training, events and new resources for professionals, please complete the [communications sign up form](#).

Follow us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/SafeNorthLincs](http://www.facebook.com/SafeNorthLincs)

Follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/SafeNorthLincs](http://www.twitter.com/SafeNorthLincs)

Safe North Lincs is a partnership between the Children's MARS Board and the Community Safety Partnership. Our vision is to promote the safeguarding and resilience for children, families and communities to enable people to feel safe and be safe in North Lincolnshire.

The logo consists of the words 'SAFE', 'NORTH', and 'LINCS' stacked vertically in a bold, sans-serif font. 'SAFE' is in white, while 'NORTH' and 'LINCS' are in a dark grey color. The text is centered within a solid orange square background.

**SAFE**  
NORTH  
LINCS