

7 Minute Briefing

Thematic assurance event - strategy discussions



1 Background

North Lincolnshire Children's MARS Board hold thematic assurance events across different themes as part of our [Scrutiny and Assurance Framework](#).

A multi-agency panel dip sampled strategy discussion records to identify areas of good practice and areas for development. An Independent Scrutiny Officer attended as part of the panel to provide independent views and challenges. A reflective discussion was held where themes were identified and further action was agreed.

7 Further information

- [Helping Children and Families in North Lincolnshire Document](#)
- [Children's MARS policy and procedure for assessing need and providing help](#)
- [Children's MARS toolkits – Domestic Abuse and Child Sexual Abuse in the Family Environment](#)

6 Reflect on the learning

To inform your practice you can

- Discuss this area of work with your supervisor in the context of contributing to strategy discussions
- Reflect upon your understanding of coercive control/domestic abuse and child sexual abuse in the family environment and access the toolkits and training as appropriate

5 Next steps

- The thematic assurance event record will be presented to the Safeguarding Practice Learning and Improvement Group (SPLIG) for consideration. Actions from this event will be monitored and reviewed as part of the Children's MARS scrutiny and assurance action plan.

2 Why it matters?

The event was an opportunity for Children's MARS representatives to seek assurance as to the quality and effectiveness of multi-agency strategy discussions and how partner agencies fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities. The panel also sought assurance that the outcomes of strategy discussions are proportionate and consistent.

Development work has been ongoing through the Children's Help and Protection Pathway (CHaPP) Group and there continues to be a high number of contributions to strategy discussions by partner agencies. This event was an opportunity to look at the quality of partnership working, information sharing and decision making and the connectivity of partnership working.



3 Good practice

- Strong focus on the child, their safety and family history
- Overall, decision making was appropriate, proportionate and the rationale was clearly recorded
- Partnership contribution was strong and efforts were made to ensure the person who knew the child best was present
- Where strategy discussions were held out of office hours, partners views and contributions were gained at the earliest opportunity
- Family solutions were utilised where appropriate to keep the child in their home, in their school and in their community – the One Family approach

4 Key learning

- Build upon practitioners' knowledge and understanding of coercive control, the importance of language so that it is not victim blaming and how to intervene in this context with adults and children
- Continue to further strengthen early help for pre-birth children and babies / their families and the early sharing of information
- Re-raising the profile of indicators of child sexual abuse in the family environment across the workforce and partnership
- Further strengthen strategy discussions through the development of minimum standards of practice to capture the purpose of strategy discussions, expectations of partners and the analysis of information provided to inform the understanding of the child's lived experience and decision making, also the follow up on actions agreed