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# Annual Report of Local Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people

2020/21



North Lincolnshire

**CHILDREN'S  
MULTI-AGENCY  
RESILIENCE &  
SAFEGUARDING  
BOARD**



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Alongside our Children's MARS Local Arrangements and other key documents, all policies, procedures and tools referenced in this document are published on the Children's MARS website.

# Welcome and Introduction

Welcome to our **Annual Report of Local Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people 2020/21**

In North Lincolnshire, children, young people, families and communities are at the heart of what we do and we are proud to acknowledge and celebrate the positive outcomes achieved and the strength of partnership working.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created unprecedented challenges, developments and opportunities to the services we provide to children, young people families and communities. The ongoing progress made in developing services that help and work with vulnerable children, their families and communities placed North Lincolnshire in a strong position to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic through creative, innovative and flexible practices.

Business has continued across all functions of our Local Arrangements, whilst simultaneously adapting and supporting the overall COVID-19 response. In line with Government guidance, and as deemed appropriate, there has continued to be face to face contact with children and families in need of help and protection, children in care and care leavers. This has been underpinned by local visiting guidance which is regularly updated to reflect the current position.

We have continued to respond to the needs of individuals and diverse communities, prioritising the most in need, to help and protect children, young people and families, while we support and protect our workforce. It has enabled us to continue the excellent progress in achieving our ambition for children to be **in their families, in their schools and in their communities**.

This report is an excellent opportunity to acknowledge the work across the partnership, to reflect on how we have embedded and refined our Local Arrangements and the critical success factors. Our strong partnerships, clear processes and robust practice across the early help and safeguarding system have enabled us to continue to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and families, including in changing circumstances through our response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are building on our outstanding partnerships and practice to ensure that everyone is able to recognise and fulfil their responsibilities including through anti oppressive and anti-racist practice. We continue to focus on making sure that our children, young people and families are at the centre of the early help and safeguarding system. This is set within the context of our One Family Approach which aims to create a system that works for all children, young people and families. Our ambition is for children to be **in their families, in their schools and in their communities** and we will prioritise those who have additional need, to reduce inequalities and improve outcomes for all children and families, taking account of ethnicity, race and religion and those with specific additional vulnerabilities.

Across the partnership, we are aspirational and committed to improving outcomes for children, so they can achieve their potential and be **in their families, in their schools and in their communities**. Through our [Children's Multi-Agency Safeguarding and Resilience \(MARS\) Local Arrangements](#), we want to help and protect children and families including promoting resilience and early help which we believe are fundamental to a successful safeguarding system.

The Supporting Families Programme, which closely aligns with the ambitions and values of our One Family Approach and our Local Arrangements, has a renewed focus on the importance of bringing services together around families to delivery whole family working and it emphasises the importance of early help in reducing the likelihood of poor outcomes for children and families.

We have high expectations of ourselves as partners to deliver outcomes through integrated working and we have a culture of high challenge and high support which is indicative of our robust, longstanding and creative partnership arrangements.

We would like to thank our Independent Scrutiny Officers for leading on a range of scrutiny and assurance activity and for their constructive challenge, evaluation and areas for consideration on how to drive continuous improvements.

This report fulfils our statutory responsibility to publish a report at least once in every 12-month period and sets out what we have done as a result of our Local Arrangements, including on child safeguarding practice reviews, and how effective these arrangements have been in practice.

In addition, the report also includes:

- evidence of the impact of the work of the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies, including training, on outcomes for children and families from early help to looked-after children and care leavers
- an analysis of any areas where there has been little or no evidence of progress on agreed priorities
- a record of decisions and actions taken by the partners in the report's period (or planned to be taken) to implement the recommendations of any local and national child safeguarding practice reviews, including any resulting improvements
- ways in which the partners have sought and utilised feedback from children and families to inform their work and influence service provision

We are committed to a culture of listening, learning, reviewing and adapting and this is reinforced through our republished arrangements, our learning and improvement culture that is welcoming of improvements and innovations and the multi-agency practice developments and service transformation that continue to evolve.



**Mick Gibbs**  
Director of Children  
and Community  
Resilience  
North Lincolnshire  
Council



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



**Darren Wildbore**  
Chief Superintendent  
South Bank Divisional  
Commander  
Humberside Police

## Key Highlights and Successes

**Key highlights in relation to performance and populations which indicate our system is working and making a difference to children and families include:**

- The vast majority of performance and activity information relating to the early help and protection system continue to show sustained high performance, compliance with local practice standards and statutory timescales
- Enquiries, contacts, referrals, repeat referrals and assessments by Children's Services have remained consistent evidencing the continued drive to ensure children and families are supported at the right level and at the earliest opportunity
- Children in North Lincolnshire who are in need of help and protection make good progress, and are supported to live safely within their family network
- The children in care population is at its lowest level since before the end of 2015/16, which reinforces our ambition for children to be in their families, in their schools and in their communities
- We have reduced the number of children in external foster care and residential provision enabling them to remain connected to their local support networks and community
- The number of children entering the youth justice system as first-time entrants continues to reduce demonstrating the success and effectiveness of the preventative approach

**Over the last year, there have been a range of key activities, impacts and achievements for example:**

- Increased the oversight of helping and protecting children in care and care leavers
- Continued to have strong leadership through the Children's MARS Board and a good line of sight to front line multi-agency practice and the quality of services that support children, young people and families
- Ongoing development and implementation of our robust scrutiny and assurance framework, including independent scrutiny, through thematic and agency specific assurance events and multi-agency case audit practice learning line of sight events leading to changes in practice
- Strategic thinking and developmental discussions to progress the development of a joint safeguarding self-assessment across the Children's MARS Board and Safeguarding Adults Board, which meets the requirements of Section 11 of the Children Act 2004
- Ongoing and renewed focus on engaging with and listening to children, young people and families to understand their views and experiences that influence service improvement leading to better outcomes
- Amplified focus on communications through the Children's MARS website and @SafeNorthLincs social media platforms, with a focus on the impacts of COVID-19 i.e. in relation to hidden harm, as a means of sharing information and communication and publishing key documents and resources on our Children's MARS website
- Rich and robust education and learning offer, to include more e-learning and virtual opportunities for learning and to respond to key drivers and thematic areas of focus

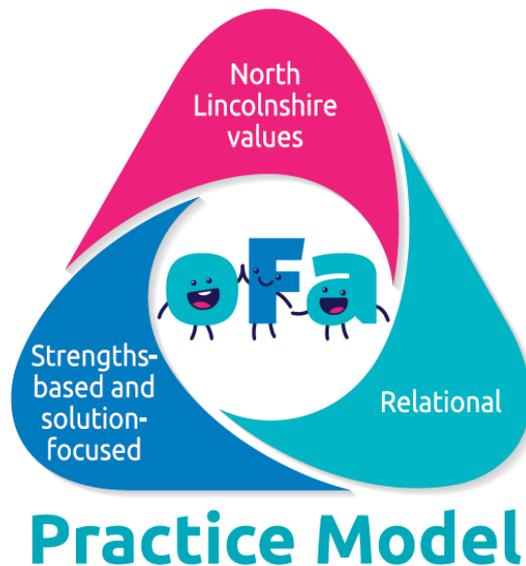
# Key Highlights and Successes

Specific key developments also include:

## One Family Approach and One Family Approach Practice Model

In September 2020, three strategic documents were signed off across the partnership, to set the foundations for driving forward partnership action and system change in the future. These include the [North Lincolnshire Children's Commissioning Strategy](#) which clarifies the One Family Approach and commissioning intent in relation to health, social care and education for children, young people and families; the [Helping Children and Families in North Lincolnshire document](#) which sets out our local definitions of levels of need, in line with our organisational model; and the [Children's Challenge](#) which articulates challenges from children, young people and families for partnership action and for themselves.

The One Family Approach is underpinned by our One Family Approach Practice Model, which is articulated as follows:



We have embraced our One Family Approach which is based upon our children, young people and families being able to build upon their strengths and resilience to find or be enabled to find solutions. Through workforce development and our ongoing commitment to working towards our ambition for children to be **in their families, in their schools and in their communities**, the One Family Approach, underpinned by the One Family Approach Practice Model is permeating through systems and processes. Staff are more confident about articulating the One Family Approach Practice Model and it is embedding in their behaviours and practice.

**RELATIONAL PRACTICE:** Mum of young person who was previously on a child protection plan as a result of risk outside the home fed back to the Independent Reviewing Officer, 8 months after the plan had ended: *Mum said her daughter is doing really well and she wanted to say thank you for the help and support they received. All the workers involved were 'like family' and she would love to help other parents who are experiencing and going through what she has as a parent. Mum spoke really fondly of the social worker, FaSST targeted family support worker and others who helped them through the difficult and challenging journey and she was extremely proud to share her daughter's progress, including going to college. She also talked about her own experiences as a parent and how she felt supported by everyone involved during the past few years.*

## Key Highlights and Successes

### Targeted Family Support

Working together across agencies more closely from a locality perspective has led to a more integrated approach to identifying vulnerable families needing early help, who may be less visible to services. The 0 to 19 health and wellbeing service, FaSST targeted family support service, children's centres and education inclusion have worked closely and frequently together. They have shared RAG rating processes and are increasingly using a tasking approach to maximise resource, share information and understand local need to best target the families that need help and to identify the most vulnerable and who could become invisible. This model of working, alongside the creation of a strong online offer of information, advice and more enabling family help and support, aligns well with the One Family Approach.

A targeted parent training offer has been delivered virtually both on a group work and individual basis to those parents identified as requiring extra help with aspects of family life and caring for children of all ages. The suite of training includes Expecting and Arrival of Baby, The Growing Baby, Child Development and Home Visits. This has been implemented to strengthen knowledge and develop skills specifically in relation to the most vulnerable children with whom we work to enhance practice, increase awareness and take into account child development and increased risk factors highlighted as a result of the pandemic.

A family solutions approach with families continues to be used across services, and across the pathway, to enable families to identify support within their own networks, build their own resilience and create their own solutions within their own networks and communities. This emphasis will grow as the One Family Approach is agreed and rolled out across the partnership.

## Key Highlights and Successes

### Relationships with schools and focus on vulnerable children in education

Throughout the pandemic there has been an amplified commitment to maintaining and further developing relationships and support to schools to respond to and mitigate issues, and to provide learning opportunities for all children, particularly the most vulnerable, and to support their emotional health and wellbeing. Safeguarding partners have communicated to schools to thank them for their continued commitment, to reiterate core responsibilities and share sources of information and access to resources.

We have continued to maintain a focus on vulnerable children in education including those with SEND and children open to a social worker. Opportunities were identified to work together to enhance practice and improve outcomes and a One Family Approach daily tasking meeting was established, focusing on individual cases within a high challenge/high support model. Working collaboratively together, it takes a shared perspective, identifies specific actions, and leads and enables consistent messages and communications to schools and families. Where vulnerabilities were identified for those in need or at risk of harm, specific actions to reduce risk were identified to lower risk and increase resilience. Individual circumstances have continued to be reviewed and help provided and reviewed. Work to date has demonstrated swift agile responses, resource flexibility, innovation and shared commitment. The daily tasking meetings, which were established in May 2020 in response to COVID-19, are now embedded into practice and they are continually reviewed to reflect the changing context maintaining a one team approach to supporting more vulnerable children to access education as appropriate.

Early Help Locality Meetings have continued to take place with robust partnership representation, for example schools, early years, children's centres, FaSST targeted family support service and Ongo. The meetings are a regular opportunity to reflect on current and emerging themes, share best practice, identify and address issues and support early help activity. There has been an increase in the number of early help assessments undertaken by schools and a plethora of examples of schools leading on early help activity leading to better outcomes.

We have continued to facilitate Operation Encompass where the police update schools regarding domestic abuse incidents, issues and concerns in order that they can be additionally vigilant to support the needs of individuals. Some families that appear more than once have been captured at the Domestic Abuse Triage. Analysis was undertaken to ascertain whether more children have special educational and/or additional needs due to living in a domestic abuse environment, though there is no evidence to suggest this. However, we are mindful that living in an environment where domestic abuse is a feature will have an impact on children, and schools, along with other partners are responsive to this. Schools have reported they find Operation Encompass notifications extremely useful to be able to offer relevant support to their students and families and there are reflective accounts from schools where they are helping adults recognise their behaviours and have healthier relationships with each other and their children.

# Key Highlights and Successes

## Partnership Integrated Triage (PIT)STOP

PITSTOP was piloted in March 2021 with a view to providing a more streamlined and robust offer of help to children and families and to ensure needs are met at the earliest point. Due to the success of the pilot, it is proposed that the PITSTOP be mainstreamed into practice, that the Domestic Abuse Triage function be captured within it, and that it is likely to be rolled out across the Humber region. The overall aims and purpose of the PITSTOP is to jointly consider police information (that has already been through police decision making processes and determined that partnership triage is required) with a view to identification of potential levels of need and appropriate responses in line with North Lincolnshire's Helping Children and Families document 2020/24.

The PITSTOP ensures that the values and principles of the One Family Approach permeate throughout practice across the partnership by effectively identifying risk, needs, harm and vulnerability. This is to ensure that children and families receive the help they need, by the most appropriate person at the lowest level and the earliest stage of a problem arising and protecting our most vulnerable. The PITSTOP has also resulted in:

- an increased partnership link to consider needs and vulnerability, which has enhanced locality-based problem solving
- ensuring holistic information is shared to inform effective decision making without delay
- improved quality of information, with consistent analysis of need
- identifying themes and emerging trends within communities to enable proactive targeting of resources and build resilience
- a long-term approach to reduce future risk, needs and vulnerability which in turn builds resilience and reduces demand and cost
- sharing the relevant information to identify the most appropriate person to provide the right help at the lowest level

The Youth Justice Partnership (YJP) is engaged in the PITSTOP which has enabled the partnership to identify opportunities for preventative work with children at an earlier stage.

## Impact:

The PITSTOP has assisted in understanding emerging risks in particular locality areas resulting in the proactive targeting of resources and interventions, including with key businesses, faith groups and neighbourhood watch groups to build community resilience and intervention within schools to prevent need escalating in particular around issues of bullying, peer abuse and online abuse.

PITSTOP meetings has ensured a greater understanding of each others' roles, responsibilities and models of intervention. This understanding has enhanced children's experiences, for example, diverting from arrest where there are concerns of child to parent abuse/violence by utilising restorative practices in targeted early help work and the Non-Violent Resistance pathway.

Through the use of the vulnerability tracker and mapping of emerging risks alongside higher-level risks, the partnership has been able to understand the connectivity and precursors to high risk (for example bullying as a precursor to exploitation) and proactively target and build the resilience of the community.

Within meetings, the appropriate and proportionate information is shared to ensure informed and holistic decision making, for example, where the police received a call regarding parental conflict between separated parents, the health visitor was able to undertake a piece of restorative intervention with both parents regarding conflict resolution and effective co-parenting drawing upon family solutions, ensuring need was met at the lowest level by the most appropriate person.

# Key Highlights and Successes

## You Say Who

Relationships matter in North Lincolnshire and where children do enter care, our aim is wherever possible to reunite them with their families or extended families in a timely and supportive way. Where it is not possible for children to remain within or return to their own family networks, we want children who enter care to experience stability, experience positive relationships with trusted adults and achieve to their potential. A key focus is therefore placed upon actively building and maintaining important connections and relationships, whether this be with parents, family members, friends, or other significant relationships. To achieve this, we have fully embedded the multi-agency 'You Say Who' practice framework to place sustainable relationships at the heart of planning for children. This has included building on the strengthened practice in relation to reunification of children in long term care to their family utilising the NSPCC Reunification Framework highlighted in the Care Crisis Review. Staff across the workforce challenge themselves with regards to the young people they are working with, and objectively consider whether reunification is an option for these children. This is identifying more cases on a regular basis whereby reunification/rehabilitation could be a possibility, despite not being considered previously.

Underpinned by the ethos of 'You Say Who', we believe that family time is vitally important and has a number of benefits for children and their families. It is acknowledged that continuing family time throughout the pandemic was critical, albeit more challenging, but we have continued to enable children to maintain relationships with their parents and/or return home, addressing issues of loss and separation, identity for children, which in turn can have a positive effect on children's well-being. The model has enabled social workers to work holistically with children and parents and to support, monitor the parental changes, and reassess risk. The impact of the model of intervention continues to enable children to return to live within their birth family and be supported to return to their community, furthermore the children and their parents no longer require social work intervention. By using the You Say Who/reunification assessment framework, it has strengthened the child's and parents' relationships. For all children in care, at each review junction, there is an update on parental changes and reflection on the reunification process.

## Care Leaver Services and Support

In response to an increase in the overall population of care leavers, the complexity of the issues (including work with young people who face risk outside the home) and supporting unaccompanied asylum seekers, the support and services for care leavers have undergone a significant transformation resulting in an improved offer and integrated delivery model. Care leavers are encouraged and well supported to transition to adulthood and independence with a network of help and support based on relationships and ensuring the help each young person needs is in place. Increased capacity has been developed to support this e.g. a dedicated education officer to support children in care and care leavers into education, employment and training and the financial policy has also been enhanced with a clear focus on raising aspirations and supporting young people to achieve their goals. Young people have access to suitable accommodation and receive support to ensure their health needs are met (including health passports). There is also an open door policy and care leavers continue to be able to access information and support throughout their lives.

Our highlights and developments mean that North Lincolnshire is well positioned to continue our journey of developing our services for our care leavers to ensure we drive forward ambitious practice and ensure that our young people achieve their goals and aspirations and become active participants within their communities.

# Key Highlights and Successes

## Holding On

The 'Holding On' multi-agency practice approach is ongoing and has continued to adapt and develop. The Holding On Approach is a voluntary offer of support for mothers and fathers who have experienced children being removed from their care and / or who are at risk of repeat removals of children from their care.

This approach provides an opportunity for the adults to focus on their own needs and to learn new ways to adapt to challenges and stresses. It is recognised that stress can come in the shape of family or relationship problems, health problems, or workplace and financial worries, among others. The approach wants to help adults develop 'resilience' and the ability to bounce back from a negative experience. The model is based on the premise that resilience is something that can be learned and developed, if the adult is given the opportunity to discover their strengths and abilities.

The North Lincolnshire model is inclusive and sustainable, whereby a 'support offer' can be made to both mothers and fathers. The model is based upon pulling together existing resources and services to provide an offer of support to the individual. Key to this is the individual identifying the areas of support they feel are most important to them. For example, to date for some individuals it has been around helping them to understand their life journey and how they came to be where they are and helping them work towards a better future by accessing support in the community.

There are currently 9 Holding On Practitioners who are linked with 15 adults, across the practitioners. The support provided is varied and includes:

- Life journey work
- Supporting through grief and loss
- Support around housing, finances and health.

An annual celebration event was held on the 7 May 2020 and this provided the opportunity to consider the achievements of the project, which included that 2 parents that the project had worked with had gone on to be future parents and the children were being successfully parented by them. The other adults that the project had worked with had not gone on to be parents and had instead made other choices for themselves. The project is now taking the next steps to further develop and this includes the launch of a Holding On Café and the development of peer buddies.

# Independent Scrutiny of the Children's MARS Local Arrangements

As part of our commitment to listen, learn, review and adapt and to ensure that we are fulfilling our responsibilities under Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, our Local Arrangements for 2020/21 have been independently scrutinised. The Independent Scrutiny Officer indicated that the recommendations from last year have all been fully considered and implemented where appropriate. This year's independent scrutiny of our Local Arrangements included:

- desktop research/prior reading of Children's MARS Board, sub groups and other records
- facilitation of a multi-agency strategic leaders and practitioners forums
- met with key officers who manage and support the Children's MARS Board
- engagement with safeguarding partners and system leaders

Feedback from **Edwina Harrison, Independent Scrutiny Officer** is highlighted below.

## Strengths

- The three statutory partners expressed the intention to continue with "business as usual" during the pandemic. This has been achieved with many aspects of partnership working having been strengthened. The work of the Children's MARS Board has continued and ownership at strategic level is being shared as planned
- There are also numerous opportunities for the broader safeguarding partners to be involved. Specifically, the Helping Children and Families in North Lincolnshire document is well understood and is making a tangible difference to partnership working across the safeguarding system in giving confidence to all partners about how to influence decision making
- The reach of the safeguarding arrangements to the front line has been maintained and enhanced through relevant, stimulating and high quality training and development
- Following on from improvements in previous years as a result of these events communication has been given a high priority and the website is seen as a valuable resource
- Practitioners describe the environment in North Lincolnshire as one of "high support and high challenge" with a focus on children and families rather than on agencies
- The culture within the Local Arrangements is one of continuous review and improvement where feedback is welcome. It is used to constantly refine the processes which provide the information to the Children's MARS Board
- Priorities for the work programme are set through active awareness of national research and also informed by local information which is gathered through the partnership arrangements at operational level

## Areas for Consideration

- There are many examples of how the partnership has been strengthened during the pandemic. As people return to their offices and teams it will be important to understand what worked so well and ensure that it is incorporated into the new working practices

## Governance and Partnerships

The key roles and functions of the board, are detailed in the [Terms of Reference](#) and the responsibilities are detailed in the Local Arrangements and underpinning [Memorandum of Understanding](#).

As part of our commitment to listen, learn, review and adapt, in July 2020 the board agreed to combine the Safeguarding Pathway Lead Officers Group and the Early Help Strategic Leads Group to form a new lead officer group. The group would provide leadership and oversight and take assurance about the whole help and protection pathway from the interface between informal and formal early help through to statutory child protection planning. As part of the review of the subgroup arrangements, there has been a strengthened focus on impact via performance management and quality assurance. Reporting responsibilities are now more equally shared between the safeguarding partner agencies and there is a strengthened oversight of early help and hidden harm.

Efficient board arrangements with shared chairpersonship, core membership and active, engaged discussions and decision making continues. The officers attending the board have been expanded to reflect an increase focus on vulnerable children in education. The Lead Member for Children and Families has been included as a participatory observer within partnership arrangements.

North Lincolnshire has an embedded, responsive partnership system and approach. Reporting to the Children's MARS Board, the Children's Help and Protection Pathway (CHaPP) group is our established assurance mechanism which oversees good practice as well as emerging practice and performance issues. There have been bespoke CHaPP meetings to 'deep dive' into specific areas of practice to ensure high challenge and high support leading to partnership action, improved practice and improved outcomes. Examples of bespoke meetings include:

- Two bespoke meetings held pertaining 'hidden' harm' including representation from services to children and services to adults to fully explore the offer provided and identify any gaps in provision
- A bespoke meeting held on the theme of emotional wellbeing and mental health to respond to an increase in A&E attendances relating to self-harm

Further information about our partnership structures can be found in the Local Arrangements which have been updated in year to reflect the changes in our partnership arrangements.

Overall, the Local Arrangements are serving us well and continue to have a positive impact on outcomes for children and families.

# Performance

We know how our system from early help to children in care and care leavers makes a difference so that children are in their schools, in their families and their communities

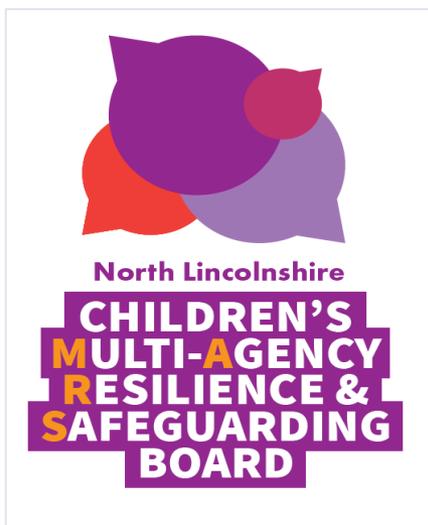
## Key performance updates

- **The number of formal early help assessments recorded has increased in recent months:** It is evident from audit activity, scrutiny of multi-agency practice and feedback from children, families, and professionals that a large amount of informal help is being provided to children and families within their own communities and schools. There has been a strong focus on early help within schools and the data reflects this in terms of the increase in early help assessments undertaken by schools and settings.
- **Enquiries, contacts, referrals, repeat referrals and assessment are lower this year:** This indicates that the work to further embed the Helping Children and Families in North Lincolnshire document across the partnership is having an impact, ensuring children's needs are being met at the lowest level; and that partner agencies are aware of how to seek guidance and support outside of the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) where appropriate
- **The number of strategy discussions has increased in the last few months:** This reflects the complexity of work across the service. Dip sampling and audits identify that strategy discussions are held appropriately, and outcomes are aligned to the child's needs and presenting risk
- **The numbers and rates of children subject to child protection plans remains below national and statistical neighbours:** Timeliness of child protection conferences remains at 100% compared to a national average of 78% and statistical neighbours at 80%. The numbers and rates of children subject to child protection plans remain below national and statistical neighbours
- **There has been a reduction in the use of fixed terms and permanent exclusions:** There has been an amplified focus across the Local Authority and education settings to co-produce system-wide solutions which has resulted in a significant reduction in both fixed term exclusions and permanent exclusions across the majority of schools
- **Alternative learning provision figures have reduced:** The numbers of children accessing alternative learning provision have reduced significantly and the focus has shifted to the use of in-school inclusive space and support and managed transfer where a new environment is beneficial
- **There has been a decrease in the number of children reported missing:** Overall, the number of missing incidents and missing children for 2020/21 was lower than 2019/20 by 52% and 26% respectively

# Performance

## More key performance highlights

- **The number of children identified to be at risk of exploitation has decreased for CSE, however increased for CCE during the year:** There has been an enhanced overview of risk outside the home and management oversight of this cohort of children continues through regular case audits and within case supervision. Alongside this, cases discussed within the Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) meetings have an additional layer of oversight from across the partnership. MACE Triage continues to assist partners to draw out themes and connections that can be proactively targeted within MACE meetings over and above the child's plan
- **Electively home educated (EHE) figures started to go down prior to COVID-19 but have increased in recent months:** At the highest point in 2019 the EHE figure for North Lincolnshire was 168 but following the introduction of a new 12-week case managing approach North Lincolnshire's trajectory in relation to EHE started to go down, the lowest figure being 132. Since the end of September 2020, there has been a steady increase in numbers requesting EHE (linked to COVID-19 anxieties) and we continue to take a case managing approach to each request with an education inclusion officer assigned to each case. The case managing approach identifies need at a much earlier opportunity, alongside early indications of parents not providing a suitable education. This has resulted in a speedier return to formal education in a number of cases. Work continues in relation to liaison between families and schools through daily tasking meetings
- **The number of cases discussed at Domestic Abuse Triage meetings has increased this year:** There was a higher number of cases discussed at Domestic Abuse Triage meetings during this year compared to last year. The triage meeting discusses children whose parents/carers have been classed as low/medium risk
- **There was an 31% increase in the number of cases heard at Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) in 2020/21, though the proportion of repeat cases has not significantly increased:** This is despite MARAC being held weekly during the early lockdown period, moving to fortnightly and back to weekly from January 2021. The number of 16 and 17 year olds discussed at MARAC increased although numbers remain small
- **The number of Graded Care Profile 2 assessments completed has decreased:** The Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2) assessment figures are collated from Children's Services SPOC enquires, assessments, plans and child protection conferences, and verified so that children are not counted more than once. It is of note that there may be additional GCP2 assessments completed at different stages in the child's journey across the early help and safeguarding system. This data is still under development



Shine a Light Area of Focus

## Risk Outside The Home

We said we would further develop the multi-agency approach to risk outside the home and work with adolescents and their families

## Risk outside the Home

There is much to commend about the arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people suffering, or at risk of suffering, from exploitation and harm outside their families.

Through multi-agency case audit practice learning line of sight events on the theme of exploitation, there is evidence of quality of practice, e.g.

- Professionals retained empathy and persistence in working with the young people to build meaningful and purposeful relationships
- Competent and confident risk management and decision-making which resisted relocating or removing the young person from the family, neighbourhood and community they grew up in
- Approach continued to further strengthen the all-round support and work to remove those who sought to harm and sexually abuse the young person
- The investment in relational working helped to create trust and enable a young person to retain a level of control which helped them to disclose the abuse

Following an evaluation of the MACE meeting by **Dave Basker, Independent Scrutiny Officer**, it was determined that it is highly effective in the way information and intelligence is shared between the partner agencies.

The Independent Scrutiny report states that:

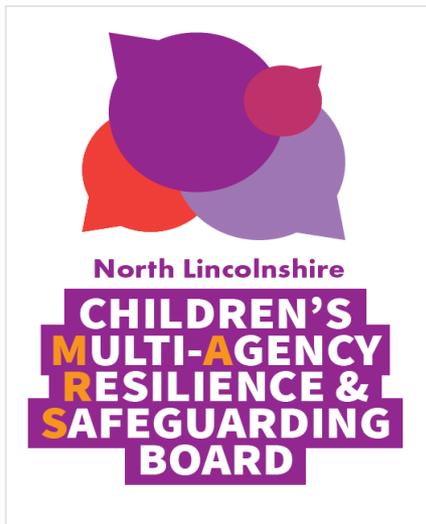
*There was much to celebrate in the multi-agency case audit practice learning event in terms of the quality of practice. Despite many challenges and much uncertainty, professionals retained empathy and persistence in working with the young people to build meaningful and purposeful relationships.*

*The focus on the context in which harm was happening and the systematic approach to enhancing the already existing statutory plans through detailed analysis of the people, places, spaces and locations, was outstanding and effective in responding to criminal and sexual exploitation.*

*The issue of the use of victim blaming language identified in the learning events was speedily responded to in the MACE meeting and through training events and guidance issued to managers and practitioners via the Children's MARS Board.*

# Risk outside the Home

Area for further consideration and development from independent scrutiny	Response
<p>Further enhance the excellent systems in place and the high calibre of practice that already exists in North Lincolnshire through putting in place a collective and consistent approach to transform the places, spaces and locations where the criminal and sexual exploitation of children and young people is known to take place</p>	<p>Partnership action taken to transform harmful places and spaces with successful reduction of crime and vulnerability in these areas. A model has been developed into practice and will be replicated across other key hotspot locations</p>
<p>Continue to evaluate the impact of the recent work to address language and terminology which can at times be 'victim blaming' by implying that children and young people are making choices. All agencies and bodies within the children's partnership should ensure, as far as is possible, that their staff are aware of this and that they have access to, and understand, the recent guidance and learning tools disseminated through the Children MARS Board</p>	<p>Change the Narrative: Appropriate Language relating to child exploitation toolkit developed and disseminated across the partnership (and via the Children's MARS website)</p> <p>Training was commissioned through the Children's MARS Board relating to appropriate language. The training had overwhelmingly positive feedback including one practitioner who shared that <i>'this is training that every professional should attend - we need to keep at the front of our minds the language that we use, the power of it and it impacts on our practice and engagement with families'</i></p> <p>Ongoing focus on language as a mechanism for changing behaviour and monitored through scrutiny, assurance and audit activity i.e. in relation to children's case records</p>
<p>Consider how best to develop a consistent stance across the partnership on when and in what circumstances the use of secure accommodation and police powers of protection may have a role in safeguarding adolescents from exploitation and significant harm</p>	<p>A bespoke senior leads meeting was chaired by an Independent Scrutiny Officer to consider the use of police powers of protection and the use of secure accommodation</p> <p>The meeting facilitated greater understanding of the legislative basis, appropriate applicability and drawbacks of these powers</p>



Shine a Light Area of Focus

## Respond to COVID-19 and emerging harm

We said we would continue to respond to COVID-19 and emerging harm across the early help and safeguarding system

## Respond to COVID-19 and emerging harm: 0 to 2

### What have we done?

- Under the Children's MARS local arrangements, there have been three multi-agency case audit learning events on children's cases relating to babies and young children. These events were led by **Dave Basker and Linda Williams, Independent Scrutiny Officers and the Designated Nurse for Safeguarding, NL CCG**. 7-minute briefings on the learning from the events have been circulated to practitioners and managers across the partnership and made available on the Children's MARS website
- NL CCG have led a programme to introduce and disseminate the ICON programme across the partnership. All materials are available on the Children's MARS website and have been communicated through @SafeNorthLincs. The Children's MARS joint safer sleeping policy and procedures are in place and have been circulated across the partnership including to foster carers
- A helping and protecting babies and young children briefing has been developed and disseminated across the partnership
- Focused development sessions have been held for practitioners who work with children, families and adults on hidden harm including Adult Mental Health, Child Exploitation, Domestic Abuse, Adult Substance Misuse and Children's Mental Health
- A hidden harm info-sheet containing multi-agency resources and tools has been developed and disseminated
- The virtual antenatal offer has been developed in partnership between midwifery services, 0-19 health and wellbeing service, FaSST targeted family support service and Adult Community Learning, and has received positive feedback from some parents
- A letter about hidden harm was distributed across the partnership on behalf of the safeguarding partners which included resources for children, young people, parents and professionals
- Children's social care and health services across the partnership reviewed the circumstances of families with babies and young children during 2020, wider than those at risk of significant harm, in the context of national concern of increased risks to certain groups of children and a rise in serious incident notifications to the national panel for babies. Proactive partnership work included the setting up of One Family Approach integrated service meetings (midwifery, health visiting service, FaSST targeted family support service) to develop packages of support for children receiving early help or close to such. This led to the strengthening of our local multi-agency pre-birth to 2 pathway for children/families with additional vulnerabilities and the development of the Multi-Agency Pre-Birth Liaison and Consultation (MAPLAC) meeting.

**MAPLAC:** Building on the benefits of a more integrated targeted family support offer, 2020/21 saw a number of early help and prevention partnership developments. The MAPLAC meeting has been established as a partnership forum with colleagues from across midwifery services, the 0 to 19 health and wellbeing service and Children's Services including the FaSST targeted family support service. This forum is a liaison and consultation panel with oversight of cases of pregnancy with identified additional vulnerabilities where the family would be likely to benefit from targeted early help at the earliest stage possible, to enable them to meet the needs of their unborn baby.

## Respond to COVID-19 and emerging harm: 0 to 2

### Outcomes and Impact:

- Increased management oversight at the front door and strengthened pre-birth to 2 year old pathway and integrated working across the partnership
- Refined and enhanced joint working between paediatricians, Children's Services and police in relation to the child protection medical process
- Dissemination of a multi-language poster to promote access to help and support across diverse local communities
- Increased awareness and understanding of access to services for adults, e.g. mental health, domestic abuse and substance misuse through hidden harm workshops and dissemination of resources and tools for practitioners to utilise
- Strengthened the engagement and participation of adult based services through the bespoke CHaPP meetings
- 26 parents completed an evaluation/feedback form on completion of the virtual ante-natal programme. All 26 parents reported an increase in their knowledge and confidence regarding parenting as a result of the programme

### MAPLAC strengths:

- The process has shown a number of benefits in respect of facilitating early partnership planning and has ensured that all key agencies are aware of the pregnancy at an early stage and enabled ante-natal support and help to be quickly picked up alongside any other assessment or plan, for example during a statutory children's services assessment
- Universal and targeted ante-natal packages of support and intervention were routinely and effectively implemented alongside other assessments and plans as appropriate
- Early intervention alongside statutory children's services assessment enables families to be 'stepped-out' to universal and early help services on completion of an assessment rather than needing statutory social work planning.
- Evidence of effective relational work by all partners including specialist midwives

### Next steps

- Hold a multi-agency case audit practice learning line of sight event on children's cases relating to babies and young children to provide further assurance of local practice in preparation for the publication of the national Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel's review on non-accidental injury in children under one

# Respond to COVID-19 and emerging harm: Child Sexual Abuse

## What have we done?

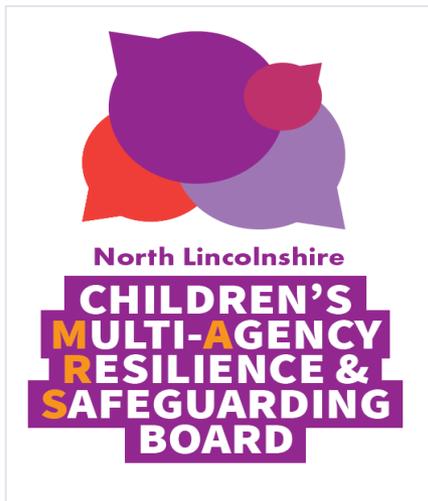
- Through the SPLIG, we have acknowledged the Joint Targeted Area Inspection 'The multi-agency response to child sexual abuse in the family environment' published in 2020 and commenced a benchmarking exercise
- We have developed a Child Sexual Abuse in the Family Environment toolkit

## Outcomes and Impact:

- A development session will be held to consolidate the current position regarding Child Sexual Abuse in the Family Environment toolkit and agree next steps
- The toolkit provides information for all agencies to identify and respond to children who are at risk of, or subject to, child sexual abuse in the family environment. It also:
  - outlines how agencies can help children if they are beginning to identify concerns and refer to statutory services
  - outlines the support and services that such children and their parents can access support and recovery
  - gives contact details for both local and national support agencies that can be accessed by children and families independently

## Next Steps:

- It is acknowledged that there remains a need to retain child sexual abuse in the family environment as one of our shine a light areas of focus for 2021/22. This will ensure that we progress our proposal to hold a development session, the outcomes of which will help to shape and drive partnership action. As part of this, there will be a focus on better understanding our local profile and levels of need. We also propose to hold a multi-agency case audit practice learning line of sight event.



Line of Sight Area of Focus

**Domestic Abuse**

# Reduce Harm from Domestic Abuse

There has been an increase in the intensity of multi-agency activity to monitor, analyse, evaluate and action plan to support and protect victims of domestic abuse and their children and address the behaviour of perpetrators both locally and sub regionally across the Humber area.

Through a review of the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) process and meetings, a progress report on the impact of the Re:Form non-convicted perpetrator programme and an audit of referrals made to Children's Services, practice highlights include:

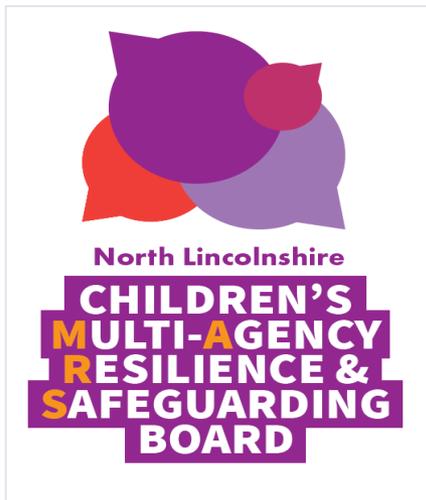
- There are strong arrangements in place around the MARAC including consistent attendance by core agencies and skilled and knowledgeable chairs and members
- Strong multi-agency action plans are agreed at MARAC to reduce the risk to victims and children with include that IDVAs attend child protection conferences and appropriate referrals are made to local perpetrator programmes and the activity of offenders is disrupted
- The Re:Form programme has changed behaviours resulting positive impacts, for example, where children have returned home to their parents' care following father's completion of the programme and where children's statutory plans have stepped down to early help
- From progress reporting on the impact of the Re:Form programme one participant said *'I realise now what I was doing to my kids, behaving how I did...I can now reflect on my behaviour and see that it is wrong'*
- Referrals to Children's Services detailed specific information relating to domestic abuse incident contexts and impact on children including good summaries of relevant historical information encompassing such from other local authority areas where victims had fled to North Lincolnshire
- Good analysis of father's/partner's personal issues and any involvement with, for example substance misuse, services were taken into consideration in decision making and referral outcomes

The Relationship Matters website was created in collaboration with local authorities across the region in order to support families and professionals in reducing the impact of parental conflict upon children. This website provides a range of resources and materials that can be accessed by families or can be utilised by professionals in their work with families. Initial feedback regarding the benefits of this website have been positive. A pathway of support for families experiencing parental conflict has been developed that can be accessed by agencies through the FaSST targeted family support service.

Regular communications have been promoted through @SafeNorthLincs relating to domestic abuse including the Home Office #YouAreNotAlone campaign, posters created by the Humberside Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Ask for Ani scheme and the Boots Pharmacy safe spaces for victims of domestic abuse.

A Children's MARS Domestic Abuse toolkit was published which provides information for all agencies to identify and respond to domestic abuse. The toolkit also contains a wide range tools, resources and details of support services for practitioners to use when working with children and families.

We have worked collaboratively to ensure preparedness for the upcoming Domestic Abuse Act. As part of this, we have commenced work on a needs assessment capturing widespread information and progressed strategy development. This provides a sound basis for ensuring compliance with forthcoming statutory responsibilities and helps us to begin to formulate our intended shine a light areas of focus to drive forward partnership action and system change, including intervening at the earliest point. In preparing for the establishment of a Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board and the governance arrangements we will build on the existing Domestic Abuse Strategy Group that has been in place for a number of years. Through the development and implementation of the strategy, we will focus our partnership action on our shine a light areas of focus to improve outcomes for victims, children and perpetrators.



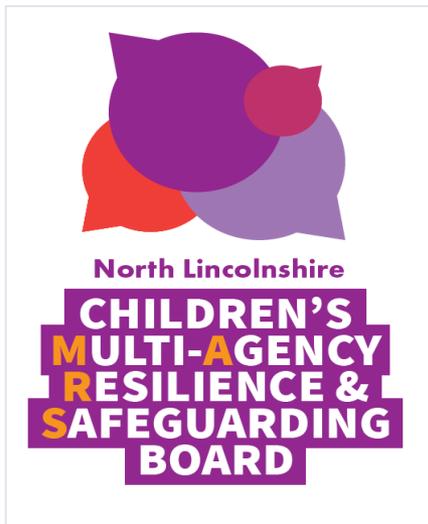
Line of Sight Area of Focus

**Emotional Wellbeing and  
Mental Health**

## Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health

Through the Children's MARS Board, underpinning and associated partnership and governance arrangements, there has been a 'line of sight' focus on seeking assurance regarding emotional wellbeing

- We have held hidden harm workshops for practitioners that included adults and children's mental health. Accompanying resources, tools and leaflets were collated and shared widely after the events
- To respond to and mitigate issues pertaining emotional wellbeing, including as a result of the pandemic, there has been a continued focus upon supporting the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children, young people and their parents at a universal level. This has included the ongoing commissioning of the Kooth web-based support service for young people and the further development of the Infant Mental Health Alliance between the council, NLaG and RDaSH NHS Foundation Trusts to develop an infant mental health strategy and pathway for children pre-birth to three years to support peri-natal, ante-natal and post-natal mental health for families
- There has been a clear drive and commitment towards ensuring our young people are digitally connected and so that they do not experience digital poverty. This is evidenced by the procurement of MIFI devices for all care leavers in the community and support for them to access the internet. This helped to reduce social isolation for our young people and enabled them to remain connected to their support networks and their wider community, leading to more positive emotional wellbeing
- Hints and tips leaflets for parents and carers and for children and young people regarding staying safe and well during COVID-19 were developed and disseminated during the lockdown periods. Feedback was provided during a multi-agency case audit practice learning line of sight event in which practitioners had used the leaflets with children and families to signpost them to support and start a conversation around their emotional wellbeing



# Learning and Improvement

## Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

The Children's MARS Board / safeguarding partners have not been notified of any serious child safeguarding incidents during the period of this annual report.

Independent scrutiny of the identification and notification process that was implemented as a result of our Local Arrangements took place. This included independent scrutiny of cases considered by North Lincolnshire Children's Services as potentially meeting the criteria for serious child safeguarding incidents.

The Independent Scrutiny report highlights: *Clear processes are in place in Children's Social Work Services for the identification of cases which might meet the criteria for referral to the Children's MARS Board. Comprehensive procedures which reflect national guidance are in place and are on the Children's MARS website if a case is felt to meet the criteria. On the basis of the past experience North Lincolnshire can be confident in its decision making about identification and notification.*

As part of the Safeguarding Practice Learning and Improvement Group (SPLIG), partner agencies and key relevant agencies were asked to provide assurance around serious child safeguarding cases. This was completed to assure ourselves that there had been no serious cases that were not notified to the safeguarding partners. This was also completed in the context we have been an area where there is a low prevalence of notifications over the past few years. Agencies provided assurance that they

- have internal processes in place for identifying potential serious child safeguarding cases
- are aware of the criteria for a serious child safeguarding case and how to notify the safeguarding partners for them to consider whether the criteria are met and whether a rapid review is undertaken to determine if a child safeguarding practice review is required
- have internal processes in place and are aware of/know how to request that the safeguarding partners or their representatives consider undertaking a child safeguarding practice review if the criteria are not met, yet the case may raise issues of importance to the local area and there has been the identification of good practice, poor practice or 'near miss' events
- have or have not discussed and considered one or more potential serious child safeguarding cases yet concluded that they do not meet the criteria for notification

Key staff were knowledgeable about the process and Children's MARS policies and procedures. The Children's MARS Board were subsequently assured that agencies know how to identify and notify the safeguarding partners of a serious child safeguarding case.

## Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel: National Reviews

We have taken account of learning from review activity led by the national Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel including the learning points in their first report **'It was hard to escape: Safeguarding children at risk from criminal exploitation'**, March 2020 and the Child Exploitation and Missing Strategy Group has considered these feeding actions into the Child Exploitation and Missing Action Plan as required. 22 questions were set against 4 domains in relation to problem identification; supporting your staff; service design and practice development; and quality assurance. Through a collaborative benchmarking exercise, North Lincolnshire partners agreed that the necessary arrangements are in place, up to date, and meet the required standard in relation to 16 questions, demonstrating a strong partnership approach and positive local practice. For the remaining 6, it was agreed that some measures are in place but others require review or improvement. These related to the following areas of focus:

Question	North Lincolnshire position	Actions and decisions	Impact of actions taken to date
Are your services flexible enough to respond to the critical moments in children's lives?	<p>There is evidence of good practice across the partnership, though critical moments are often responded to by chance or anecdotally.</p> <p>Staff may not consciously think about critical/reachable moments when carrying out routine business</p>	<p>Children's MARS child protection and child exploitation training as well as other single agency's safeguarding training/staff development to be updated to include how to respond to critical moments</p> <p>To develop a special edition news update on lessons learned to include critical moments and disseminate across the partnership</p> <p>Incorporate critical/reachable moments into the Children's MARS child exploitation policies and procedures</p>	<p>Through training and the special edition news update, practitioners' have more awareness of pro-actively identifying and responding during critical moments.</p> <p>Our One Family Approach practice model gives permission for staff who come into contact with children during such moments to take advantage of these opportunities in children's lives to make a difference to their outcomes</p>
How well are families being engaged in the joint protection of their children?	<p>Work has been completed to strengthen and change the way professionals respond to parents as safeguarding partners. There are positive examples of parents being empowered</p>	<p>Further work to be done across agencies to strengthen and change the way practitioners engage with parents as safeguarding partners</p>	<p>Through independent scrutiny and multi-agency case audit, positive examples of parents being empowered and supported have been identified.</p> <p>Positive feedback has been received from parents about how they feel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>they have been helped through difficult and challenging times by practitioners across the partnership</li> <li>support has strengthened parent-child relationships and has developed family resilience</li> <li>has improved social, emotional and educational outcomes for their children</li> </ul>

# Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel: National Reviews

Question	North Lincolnshire position	Actions and decisions	Impact of actions taken to date
Are adult and children's services working together where needed?	Through our established partnership and governance arrangements there are a range of opportunities for adults and children's services to work together to address concerns relating to exploitation. As part of the developing arrangements for the ROTH strategy group there have been further opportunities to strengthen and refine the membership of the group to ensure connectivity between services to children and services to adults	Strengthen joint working between adult and children services through the MACE meetings.  Further develop and embed transitional support	A transitions MACE process/meetings led by adult social care has been developed. There is now a strengthened focus on young adults at risk of exploitation and a multi-agency focus on transitions
What is the pattern and trend in school exclusions? What is the nature of alternative provision available?	The education daily tasking meetings consider all children of school age and ensures appropriate provision is in place. When children are excluded, professionals work with the providers to ensure that they are aware of the potential risk of exploitation	Further work is required to look at 16 and 17 year olds who are in transition	Through the MACE process education partners are included as part of transitions planning. Further work is to be done to strengthen transitions for those children who are not discussed at MACE meetings
Is there a sufficient focus on disruption of criminal activity as well as support for victims?	Disruption is considered and implemented as part of the MACE process and there have been positive examples of disruption within hotspot locations	Implement location-based action plans in relation to local hotspot areas to address crime, anti-social behaviour, exploitation and vulnerability of children and adults to reduce harm to children  Further work to be done around including the 'eyes and ears' of the community within disruption activity	The location-based action plans have led to an increase in early identification and intervention with young people in the area vulnerable to exploitation. There has been strengthened partnership working across Children's Services, including between the Youth Offending Service, Child Exploitation Intervention Team and Neighbourhood Policing which has led to an increase in the submission of partnership intelligence forms
Review current arrangements for recovering children from outside the local authority area in order to satisfy itself there are comprehensive arrangements that can reach any part of the UK	Under the auspices of the One Family Approach practice model and our commitment to a relational approach we would identify a person with a positive relationship with the child to transport them in the event that they needed recovering from another area in line with their needs and circumstances	No further action required	Not applicable

## Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel: National Reviews

We have also taken account of learning from the second national review commissioned by the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel ‘**Out of Routine: A review of sudden unexpected death in infancy (SUDI) in families where the children are considered at risk of significant harm**’ published in July 2020. The key learning points and key features of a 'prevent and practice' model for reducing the risk of SUDI outlined in this report have been considered to improve the way we work across the partnership with families where children are at risk of significant harm to reduce the risks of SUDI, and as suggested by the national Panel, to address a much wider range of risks to their children’s health, safety and development through embedding the practice within respectful and authoritative relationship-based safeguarding practice.

The matrix below covers the 5 reflective questions.

Question	North Lincolnshire position	Actions and decisions	Impact of actions taken to date
How well do we understand the views of parents about safer sleep information: format, accessibility, timing, key messages and 'conversations' with practitioners? How is this integrated with messages around normal infant care and safety?	<p>We have some understanding of parental feedback on safer sleeping methodologies taken from planned consultation via surveys such as the RDaSH NHS Foundation Trust’s 'Your opinion counts' survey, through satisfaction reports, feedback from practitioners across health and children's social care, evaluations after antenatal and parenting courses and specific audits completed across the 0 to 19 health and wellbeing service</p> <p>Consideration is given by health and social care staff to observe the space/equipment where the child will be sleeping to ensure that the environment is safe and equipment is in line with the safest practice. This provides evidence of whether parents have put advice into practice and of their understanding</p> <p>Key messages are delivered at significant times prenatally and postnatally and as part of the five key face to face contacts made by health visitors. Further work required with parents around safer sleeping is identified within key partnership forums such as the MAPLAC meeting and at key points across the wider pre-birth pathway. Public health campaigns have taken place at key times such as during hot weather to remind the public about safer sleeping and increased temperature risks</p>	<p>Seek further assurance from key services across health and children’s social care about the ways that safer sleeping and other infant care and safety messages are delivered in line with parents' views</p> <p>To deliver joint training around the ICON programme and safer sleeping</p>	<p>Parents and other household members are included in the delivery of safer sleeping advice and the messages are reinforced through literature and available in different formats tailored to need, circumstances and risk. The language that is used by professionals is consistent to aid the reinforcement of messages</p> <p>Joint training has been completed across the 0 to 19 health and wellbeing service and children's social care in relation to the ICON programme</p> <p>Ante-natal and parenting training has also been updated to share ICON information with parents</p>

# Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel: National Reviews

Question	North Lincolnshire position	Actions and decisions	Impact of actions taken to date
How far do practitioners in our workforces have the knowledge and understanding appropriate to their role to promote safer sleeping?	<p>Partners who work directly with children in their early years including maternity, neo-natal, health visiting and children's centres are accredited to silver standard through the Baby Friendly Initiative. As part of the process, practitioners must demonstrate a level of understanding around safer sleeping and safe infant care</p> <p>The delivery of advice and relevant resources around safer sleeping is a core skill within health. Key children's social care staff are also trained to provide advice to parents and to recognise and respond to safer sleeping issues</p>	<p>Complete further training around safer sleeping with additional key staff across children's social care and the wider workforce</p> <p>Seek re-accreditation from the Baby Friendly Initiative</p>	<p>As part of the Baby Friendly Initiative re-accreditation process, assessments took place across the service and evidenced that agencies continue to maintain excellent practice for mothers, babies and their families and that the standards are embedded within practice</p> <p>Staff have access to up to date training and refresher information to deliver advice to parents and to consider during assessment and intervention work</p>
How is the recognition of unsafe sleep arrangements and risk of SUDI incorporated into multi-agency safeguarding procedures and practice tools for responding to neglect, domestic violence and abuse, children of alcohol and substance-misusing parents, and children at risk where a parent has a mental health problem?	<p>North and North East Lincolnshire have joint safer sleeping guidance which provides specific advice for a range of professionals including substance misuse workers, mental health professionals and housing teams</p> <p>The NSPCC Graded Care Profile 2 is used in North Lincolnshire to assess the quality of care provided to a child and identify potential concerns around neglect. Within the tool there are considerations around sleeping arrangements for babies and young children and the guidance references the risks of co-sleeping encouraging practitioners have the conversation about safer sleeping</p> <p>There is a commitment across the partnership to use the Lullaby Trust tools and resources when working with children and families where concerns have been identified around safer sleeping</p>	<p>Promote practice tools around safer sleeping and the risk of SUDI through Children's MARS communications and include them on the Children's MARS website</p>	<p>Safer sleeping guidance, tools and resources were included as part of the hidden harm resource info-sheet that was disseminated across the partnership following the hidden harm workshops</p> <p>Information from the Lullaby Trust and Little Lullaby for young parents is available on the Children's MARS website and has been promoted widely on social media, through toolkits and news updates</p>

## Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel: National Reviews

Question	North Lincolnshire position	Actions and decisions	Impact of actions taken to date
<p>Is there sufficient workforce capacity to develop and maintain support for parenting (including safer sleep advice) with families with additional needs and for highly vulnerable families? If not, what initiatives have been taken to address this or work within the constraints?</p>	<p>There is sufficient capacity within the multi-agency workforce to provide advice to all families at a universal level</p> <p>There is also sufficient capacity through the enhanced health visiting programme and children's centres to provide intensive support and advice where required. Also, there is sufficient capacity across children's services for social workers and other practitioners to provide parenting support and safer sleep advice</p>	<p>No further action required</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>How is the partnership assured about the effectiveness of its work to promote safer sleeping and reduce the risk of SUDI?</p>	<p>Specific assurance relating to safer sleeping has been provided across the partnership through the CHaPP meeting. Safer sleeping and the promotion of the ICON programme was a specific focus of the bespoke CHaPP meeting relating to hidden harm</p> <p>Independent scrutiny has taken place in respect of 0-2s across children's social care and the 0 to 19 health and wellbeing service. This work provided further assurance that the work that takes place relating to safer sleeping is robust</p>	<p>Further promote safer sleeping advice and the ICON programme as part of the Children's MARS communication and engagement strategy</p>	<p>There has been an enhanced focus on communications to professionals and members of the public through @SafeNorthLincs social media and through partner's social media and communications channels</p>

## Scrutiny and Assurance

The Children's MARS Scrutiny and Assurance Framework was published alongside the Local Arrangements. In addition to scrutiny and assurance activity already referenced, there has been additional activity, including independent scrutiny, through thematic and multi-agency case audit practice learning line of sight events leading to local learning, partnership action, changes in practice and outcomes.

Following the Ofsted focussed visit in March 2019, the quality of partnership contributions to strategy discussions was identified as an area for development. Although, this action was remedied at the time, independent scrutiny of strategy discussions took place in November 2020 to seek assurance that contributions continue to be effective and are of high quality. Safeguarding partner representatives also sought assurance that the outcomes of strategy discussions are proportionate and consistent. It is anticipated that this event will be repeated in 2021/22 in order to assure lead officers that the areas for development have been implemented and embedded and that strategy discussions remain of high quality.

Multi-agency case audit practice learning line of sight events continue to generate an evidence base of effective local practice and learning which the Children's MARS Board has utilised strategically to further develop and improve multi-agency practice. A summary of learning and key themes are provided to those involved and disseminated widely through the Children's MARS news updates and 7 minute briefings that are available on the Children's MARS website.

Multi-agency case audit practice learning line of sight events that have taken place within 2020/21 have highlighted a number of key themes relating to areas of good practice and assurance:

- Practitioners are skilled and knowledgeable and there is evidence of relational, strengths-based, child centred and trauma informed practice
- There are many examples of effective joint working and communication between professionals across the partnership and creative solutions have been implemented as a result of COVID-19
- The values and principals of the One Family Approach are being demonstrated within practice
- There are positive examples of professional debate and challenge when dealing with complex cases and willingness to learn across agencies

## Scrutiny and Assurance

The Section 11 process places a duty on specific organisations and agencies to ensure they fulfil their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The Children's MARS Board has undertaken a review of the Section 11 safeguarding self-assessment audit together with the Local Safeguarding Adults Board and a joint safeguarding self-assessment audit has been developed to reduce duplication for agencies who complete it. The joint safeguarding self-assessment was disseminated to agencies to complete in December 2020 and submitted early 2021. Overall, the self-assessments provided assurance that the agencies subject to Section 11 are fulfilling their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It is anticipated that updates will be requested in 2021 for agencies to address any identified areas for development. As per the Children's MARS Scrutiny and Assurance Framework, the outcomes of individual agencies self-assessments will be used as a basis of any subsequent agency specific assurance events in year.

Under Section 175 of the Children Act 2004, the 2020/21 Safeguarding Audit for schools and colleges overseen by Governors measured compliance with the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and enabled the Children's MARS Board to receive assurance about essential safeguarding practice across all schools, colleges and settings attended by North Lincolnshire children and young people. The outcomes of the audit highlighted consistently good practice in relation to safeguarding across schools, academies and colleges and strong partnership working.

In addition to this all Private, Voluntary and Independent Childcare Providers complete the Safeguarding Audit. Nurseries and pre-schools complete it on an annual basis and childminders on a bi-annual basis. Analysis of the data takes place that informs the Early Years training calendar. Bespoke safeguarding training is offered to providers alongside refresher and awareness training. Good practice is shared via workshops and information updates that are communicated through a monthly e-newsletter to all providers. The PVI and Independent Childcare providers safeguarding audit for 2020 demonstrates a recognition by the early years sector of the importance of auditing their safeguarding policies, procedures and practice as the audit continues to be written more in depth year on year. This provides assurance that there is a sound understanding of how children are being safeguarded and identified some areas of good practice.

Findings from the audits are analysed and shared with the Children's MARS Board and action plans are put in place to monitor further improvements.

## Multi-Agency Education and Training

Taking account of government advice and guidance regarding COVID-19, all face-to-face training was postponed in March 2020. Child Protection training has continued to be offered as a priority course throughout the year via Microsoft Teams and has continued to be well attended and in high demand. The Child Protection Masterclass has been a key mechanism to embed the One Family Approach and to raise awareness of the Helping Children and Families in North Lincolnshire document with new staff across the partnership.

The Children's MARS workbooks were refreshed and reconfigured into e-workbooks for staff to complete virtually. Over the year, this has led to an increase in the number of workbooks completed across the partnership as they are easier to access and complete.

Key highlights include:

- 109 practitioners trained in Child Protection
- 65 practitioners trained in Mind Your Language: Appropriate language within the context of safeguarding and child exploitation
- 139 e-workbooks completed across a range of awareness topics including safeguarding, child criminal and child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation
- 19 senior leaders attended bespoke training around learning from inquiries, serious case reviews and inspections
- Almost 200 Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and school pastoral staff have attended the quarterly DSL briefings and have been trained in child exploitation, prevent and managing allegations. Presentations have been given on a range of local services such as the Re:Form programme and Who's In Charge programme

Due to the cessation of face to face training, there has been a focus on activity to communicate learning and key messages from national reports, local independent scrutiny work and national training opportunities to enhance practice. Some of these examples include:

- 5 toolkits for practitioners have been published and disseminated. These included practical information to support practitioners during the lockdown period such as using technology to support children and families and thematic toolkits such as protecting babies and young children
- 7 minute briefings and special edition newsletters have been used to communicate learning to frontline practitioners
- National and regional online webinars and training courses have been promoted through the Children's MARS communications channels on a range of subjects including domestic abuse, child trafficking, suicide prevention and sharing of intelligence

## Multi-Agency Education and Training

In her review of the Local Arrangements, Edwina Harrison, Independent Scrutiny Officer highlighted that:

*There is a culture within North Lincolnshire that there is an emphasis on individual responsibility for developing skills and that the combination of communications including those on the Children's MARS website, cascaded through newsletters and online events and training are an effective route to increasing consistency and understanding across agencies by impacting on the skills of the front line workforce.*

*One agency which works across geographical boundaries commented that "Email comms are shared out regularly and there are opportunities to dial into training. We use a multitude of training across the region and share it out but more opportunities and resources are received from North Lincolnshire than the other areas in the region".*

The Children's MARS annual training activity and evaluation report for 2020/21 highlighted that there has been an overall improvement on practitioners' confidence in the subject matter after all Children's MARS training courses. Based on feedback and evaluation, training remained of a high quality, delivered by knowledgeable and engaging trainers with examples of positive impacts on practice such as enhanced knowledge and skills to engage, assess, plan and work directly with children, young people and families.

Since 2019, 185 multi-agency staff were trained in Reducing Parental Conflict including additional modules for supervisors and regional workshops for middle managers. Building on from this, work has continued this year to embed the Reducing Parental Conflict programme within practice. Feedback has been gathered from families who were supported by FaSST targeted family support service:

- 'Contact is easier the boys just get dropped off and collected'
- 'We are now talking instead of shouting'

Practitioners in FaSST targeted family support service have fed back that:

- 'parents are more in tune with one another and are working on considering the other person'
- 'parents are showing an understanding of the impact that the conflict has on the child'
- 'watching the videos had a bigger impact than the discussion-based activity and the outcome achieved was that the parent has been able to reflect on the different strategies that she can put into practice that will help reduce parental conflict'

## Communication

There is a commitment to communicating across the safeguarding partner organisations and other agencies. The Children's MARS website is central to our communications approach and is regularly refreshed to include a variety of resources, tools and learning from local and national reviews for professionals to access.

Children's MARS news updates continue to be used to communicate information and messages relating to the Local Arrangements to key stakeholders.

As a recommendation from the independent scrutiny of the Local Arrangements in 2019/20, a Children's MARS communication and stakeholder engagement strategy was developed and published. The accompanying communications and stakeholder engagement planner is monitored via the SPLIG and communications are coordinated according to local trends and emerging themes and link into relevant national campaigns.

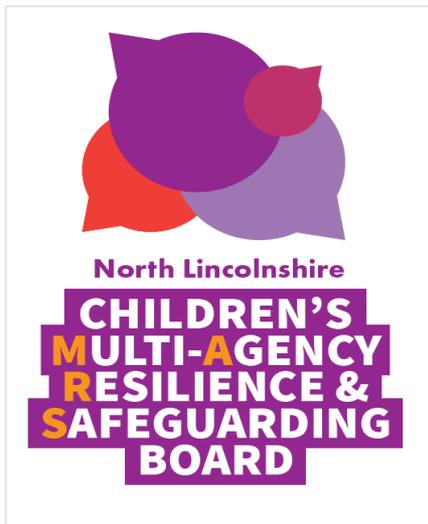
The Children's MARS annual social media activity and evaluation report for 2020/21 highlights that there has been a gradual increase in the number of followers on the @SafeNorthLincs social media feeds which has allowed key messages to be shared across North Lincolnshire. Links have been established with key communications representatives from across the partnership which has created opportunities to collaborate on a multi-agency basis to share messages and reach a wider and more diverse audience. Regular email communications via the Children's MARS communications list alert practitioners to what is new and available both locally and nationally. This has been an important mechanism to increase the reach of key messages and promote the work of the Children's MARS Board across the partnership.

## Funding

Safeguarding partners have a shared ownership of funding responsibilities and they have agreed equitable and proportionate contributions to ensure the implementation of the Local Arrangements. These consist of actual funding and in-kind resources, for example representatives from safeguarding partner organisations contribute to the development and delivery of the education and training programme. In addition, each of the safeguarding partners have agreed that key subject matter experts from their organisations will lead specific pieces of work to progress the areas of focus, strategies and action plans.

In the event of a safeguarding practice review, it has been agreed that funding will be met by the three safeguarding partners and where necessary, each partner will contribute equitable and proportionate funding over and above the normal allocation in order to fulfil the costs of any review.

Funding from wider individual agencies has continued for 2020/21 (including from the National Probation Service, Community Rehabilitation Company, John Leggott College and North Lindsey College).



## Children's MARS Local Arrangements

# What Next?

## Areas of Focus for 2021/22

In order to define our **Shine a Light** areas of focus for 2021/22, we have taken account of emerging national themes, outcomes of research, performance data and analysis, practice wisdom, voice and experiences. Key areas of influence include:

- Publication of the National Child Sexual Abuse Strategy
- The Ofsted report on Child Sexual Abuse in Schools and Colleges
- The multi-agency response to child sexual abuse in the family environment: joint targeted area inspections (JTAs) report
- We have locally trained harmful sexual behaviour practitioners, a local project and panel and there is an opportunity to further explore how this practice wisdom and expertise could be extended across our partnership, especially given the national and local attention to violence against women and girls and also peer on peer harmful sexual behaviour
- We are also investing in further awareness raising and specialist training in evidence informed harmful sexual behaviour approaches
- Child Sexual Abuse was identified as a 'shine a light' area of focus in 2020/21 and some partnership action was taken to progress our local thinking, but 'next steps' have been identified for partnership action
- It is acknowledged that child sexual abuse is a difficult form of abuse to identify and can often remain hidden, and an amplified focus is appropriate

As such, our **Shine a Light** areas of focus for 2021/22 are as follows:

'Shine a Light' Areas of Focus	Lead Partnership	Anticipated Partnership Action and System Change
Further develop the multi-agency approach to <b>Risk Outside the Home</b> with a focus on <b>harmful sexual behaviour</b>	Risk Outside The Home Strategy Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roll out and embed the Risk Outside The Home Approach</li> <li>• Refresh Risk Outside the Home Strategy</li> <li>• Develop and implement the Risk Outside the Home action plan</li> <li>• Hold a multi-agency case audit practice learning line of sight event pertaining harmful sexual behaviour outside of the family home including peer on peer harmful sexual behaviour and teenage relationship abuse</li> </ul>
Further develop the multi-agency approach to <b>Child Sexual Abuse</b> in the family environment	Children's Help and Protection Pathway Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership data development and analytics to better understand our local profile and levels of need</li> <li>• Hold a development session, the outcomes of which will help to shape and drive partnership action</li> <li>• Hold a multi-agency case audit practice learning line of sight event pertaining child sexual abuse in the family environment</li> </ul>

As well as our specific 'shine a light' areas of focus, the Children's MARS Board adopts a 'right to roam' approach and as such, will maintain a **line of sight** across the early help and safeguarding pathway in order to seek assurance, challenge, shape and influence partnership action and system change, some of which are the responsibility of other partnership and planning frameworks. As part of this, to orientate 'line of sight' activity, the Children's MARS Board will take account of performance, practice wisdom and voice and experiences on wider emerging need and harm

# Delivery Plan, Implementation and Review

As safeguarding partners and relevant agencies, we will continue to listen, learn, review and adapt in order to ensure our Local Arrangements best meet the needs of the children, young people and families in North Lincolnshire, so they are resilient and safeguarded to enable them to be in their families, in their schools and in their communities.

To do this, our Local Arrangements are underpinned by a strategic and operational delivery plan, with an overarching intent to implement the Local Arrangements, in which actions pertaining to the safeguarding partner's portfolio areas and key areas of focus are captured. Proposed actions for inclusion in the delivery plan have been highlighted as follows:

Portfolio Area	Delivery Plan Action	Safeguarding Partner lead
Local Arrangements	Maintain focus on the implications of the developments pertaining the Humber Coast and Vale Integrated Care System and ensure a continued focus of safeguarding in the context of North Lincolnshire	Safeguarding Partners
Scrutiny and Assurance	Explore, evaluate and develop our scrutiny and assurance framework	Director of Quality and Nursing
Scrutiny and Assurance	Repeat the multi-agency case audit learning event on children's cases relating to babies and young children to provide further assurance of local practice in preparation for the publication of the Safeguarding Practice Review Panel review on non-accidental injury (NAI) in children under one	Director of Quality and Nursing
Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews	Revisit the independent scrutiny of the identification and notification process for serious child safeguarding cases to seek assurance of our local decision making	Director of Children and Community Resilience
Stakeholder Engagement	Develop further opportunities for engagement and co-production to enhance the voice and influence of those with lived experiences	Director of Children and Community Resilience
Data Intelligence and Performance	Further develop the performance framework across the partnership to underpin our Local Arrangements	Chief Superintendent and South Bank Divisional Commander
Funding	Review funding contributions and identify future priorities for expenditure to innovate and to develop evidence informed approaches to practice in order to continue to deliver our Local Arrangements	Chief Superintendent and South Bank Divisional Commander

We are committed to independent scrutiny, which contributes to our annual report and refresh of our Local Arrangements.

# GLOSSARY

C	<p><b>Child criminal exploitation (CCE)</b> involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where a child (or a third person or persons) receive ‘something’ (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them completing a task on behalf of another individual or group of individuals; this is often of a criminal nature</p> <p><b>Child Safeguarding Practice Review</b> may be undertaken following identification and agreement that a case meets the criteria of a serious child safeguarding case. It is for the safeguarding partners to determine whether the criteria are met and whether a local child safeguarding practice review is appropriate taking into account that the overall purpose of a review is to identify improvements to practice. In some cases where the definition of a serious child safeguarding case is not met yet there may be issues of importance to the local area, the safeguarding partners may choose to undertake a local child safeguarding practice review</p> <p><b>Child sexual exploitation (CSE)</b> is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator</p>
F	<p><b>Families are Safe, Supported, Transformed (FaSST)</b> is the targeted family support service in North Lincolnshire</p>
H	<p><b>Hidden Harm</b> can be considered as uncovered and/or unreported abuse of a person or people</p>
I	<p><b>ICON</b> is a national programme which aims to support parents/carers to cope with crying babies and reduce the risk of infants sustaining physical injuries including abusive head trauma</p> <p><b>Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA)</b> provide safety advice and support to high risk victims of domestic abuse</p> <p><b>Integrated Multi-Agency Partnership (IMAP)</b> is a partnership of co-located social work, police, health and education practitioners and supervisors who take contacts and referrals on children where there are safeguarding or protection concerns. They share and analyse information to inform decisions regarding whether a child is in need or in need of protection</p>
K	<p><b>Kooth</b> is an online emotional and mental health support service that young people in North Lincolnshire aged 11 – 24 can access</p>
M	<p><b>Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)</b> is a victim focused meeting where information is shared on the highest risk cases of domestic abuse between different statutory and voluntary sector agencies</p> <p><b>Multi-Agency Looked After Partnership (MALAP)</b> is a multi-agency group who work together to improve outcomes for children and young people in care and care leavers</p> <p><b>Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) Meeting</b> is a partnership group who work together to improve outcomes for children and young people who are experiencing and/or at risk of child sexual or criminal exploitation</p> <p><b>Multi-Agency Pre-Birth Liaison and Consultation (MAPLAC) Meeting</b> is a partnership group who have oversight of cases of pregnancy where there may be identified additional vulnerabilities and the family would be likely to benefit from targeted early help at the earliest stage possible</p> <p><b>Missing Children’s Advocates</b> offer and complete independent return interviews with children who have been missing and share information so that children’s welfare is promoted and that they are safeguarded</p>
N	<p><b>Northern Lincolnshire and Goole (NLaG) NHS Foundation Trust</b> is the provider of NHS services through Scunthorpe General Hospital and community services in North Lincolnshire and two other neighbouring local areas</p> <p><b>Not In Our Community (NIOC)</b> is a campaign developed across the Humberside Police force area that helps young people protect themselves and their friends against grooming and child exploitation</p>

# GLOSSARY

O	<p>The <b>One Family Approach (OFA)</b> aims to create a system that works for all children, young people and families in North Lincolnshire</p> <p><b>ONGO</b> is the provider of social housing and community services in North Lincolnshire</p> <p><b>Operation Encompass</b> is a partnership information sharing process between police and schools which enables support to be offered to children and young people living with domestic abuse</p>
P	<p><b>Partnership Integrated Triage (PITSTOP) Meeting</b> is a multi-agency daily triage which considers police information and identifies and potential levels of need at the earliest level</p> <p><b>Prevent</b> is a Home Office strategy which aims to safeguarding and supporting those vulnerable to radicalisation including children and young people</p>
R	<p>A <b>Rapid Review</b> Is undertaken when the safeguarding partners have agreed that the criteria for a serious child safeguarding case have been met. The Rapid Review enables facts to be gathered, any immediate action to ensure children’s safety to be taken and considers the potential for identifying improvements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The Rapid Review assists the safeguarding partners to decide what steps they should take next, including whether or not to undertake a local child safeguarding practice review</p> <p>The <b>Re:Form</b> programme is a domestic abuse non-convicted perpetrator programme which aims to manage risk to victims and families, increase safety, and reduce incidents thereby improving outcomes around perpetrators being able to sustain non-abusive behaviour</p> <p><b>Rotherham, Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust (RDaSH)</b> is the provider of NHS services and community services in North Lincolnshire</p> <p><b>Risk Outside the Home (ROTH)</b> As well as risks to the welfare of children from within their families, children may be vulnerable to abuse or exploitation from outside their families. These extra-familial risks might arise at school and other educational establishments, from within peer groups, or more widely from within the wider community and/or online. These risks can take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple risks, including exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups such as county lines; trafficking, online abuse; sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation. Extremist groups make use of the internet to radicalise and recruit and to promote extremist materials. Any potential harmful effects to individuals identified as vulnerable to extremist ideologies or being drawn into terrorism should also be considered</p>
S	<p><b>SafeNorthLincs</b> is a partnership social media presence joint between the Children’s MARS Board, Local Safeguarding Adults Board and the Community Safety Partnership</p> <p><b>Section 11 (Children’s Act 2004)</b> places duties on a range of organisations, agencies and individuals to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children</p> <p><b>Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)</b> is used to describe a child or young person who has a learning difficulty and/or a disability that means they need special health and education support</p>
T	<p><b>The Blue Door Support Service</b> is a local Community Interest Company that provides specialist domestic abuse services for victims and children aged 16 to 17 years</p>
W	<p><b>Who’s In Charge?</b> is a 9 week child to parent violence programme aimed at parents whose children are being abusive or violent toward them or who appear out of parental control.</p>
O	<p><b>0-19 health and wellbeing service</b> is the integrated health visiting and schools nursing service for North Lincolnshire. The team lead the Healthy Child Programme and provide a series of public health interventions from the antenatal period to age 19 and up to the age of 25 for young people with special educational needs. Locally, the service is delivered by Rotherham, Doncaster and South Humber (RDaSH) NHS Foundation Trust</p>

## Contact and follow us:



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North Lincolnshire  
Clinical Commissioning Group



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