

# CHILDREN'S MARS BOARD NEWS UPDATE



## CHILDREN'S MARS BOARD—SEPTEMBER 2021

Welcome to edition 12 of the news update for the North Lincolnshire Children's Multi Agency Resilience and Safeguarding (MARS) Local Arrangements. Safeguarding partners met again at the Children's MARS Board on 8 September 2021.

Key areas of discussion included:

- Progress relating to the safeguarding partners' portfolio areas
- Updates from the Children's Help and Protection Pathway Group and the Safeguarding Practice Learning and Improvement Group
- Shine a Light areas of focus - Risk Outside The Home
- North Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Strategy and Needs Assessment
- Multi-Agency Looked After Partnership annual report
- Updates on local response to the Ofsted report on sexual abuse in schools and colleges



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

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### Children's MARS website updates

We have been working to keep our key documents, local resources and policies and procedures up to date and available on our website. The below documents have been updated and made available on the Children's MARS website:

#### Policies, procedures and guidance

- Child Sexual Exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation
- Child Criminal Exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child criminal exploitation
- One Family Approach: Practice Model briefing
- LADO referral form

We have also published the North Lincolnshire Risk Outside the Home Approach which is available in the policies and procedures section of the website.

#### Training page

- A harmful sexual behaviour awareness training presentation aimed at schools, colleges and settings is now available

## Children's MARS Annual Report 2020/21

The Children's MARS Annual Report for 2020/21 has been published on the Children's MARS website.

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 annual report also sets out the key areas of focus in which the Children's MARS Board wish to 'shine a light' and to maintain oversight of to ensure there is focussed partnership action and system change to contribute to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and families

The Shine a Light areas of focus for 2021/22 are:

- To further develop the multi-agency approach to **Risk Outside the Home** with a focus on **harmful sexual behaviour**
- To further develop the multi-agency approach to **Child Sexual Abuse in the family environment**

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.

## Children's MARS local arrangements and key documents

As part of our commitment to listen, learn, review and adapt the Children's MARS local arrangements and other key documents have been refreshed and republished on the Children's MARS website.

Key documents include:

- Children's MARS local arrangements
- Children's MARS local arrangements appendices
- Children's MARS Memorandum of Understanding
- Children's MARS information sharing agreement for learning through scrutiny and assurance activity
- Children's MARS scrutiny and assurance framework

## Children's MARS training

The Children's MARS Education and Training programme 2021-22 is available on the [Children's MARS website](#). The programme contains further information on upcoming courses and learning aims.

Upcoming Courses:

- Female Genital Mutilation—18 November 2021
- Prevent—24 November 2021
- Reducing Parental Conflict—25 and 26 November 2021
- Child Protection—1 December 2021
- Reducing Parental Conflict—Train the Trainer—8 and 9 December 2021
- Drug Trends and local updates—7 December 2021
- Honour Based Abuse and Forced Marriage—10 December 2021
- Reducing Parental Conflict—13 and 14 December 2021
- Reducing Parental Conflict—11 and 12 January 2022

A waiting list is in effect for Brook Traffic Light Tool training and more training dates will be available soon.

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## North Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021/24

North Lincolnshire's Domestic Abuse Strategy has been published on the council website. The strategy sets out how partners respond to domestic abuse including:

- adults and young people (16 and 17 years old) who are experiencing domestic abuse
- children who see, hear or experience domestic abuse
- those who are perpetrating domestic abuse

It responds to domestic abuse in the context of:

- abuse between people personally connected to each other
- abuse which continues after a relationship has ended (which is known to be a time of heightened risk for victims and children, and a time when children are often used by a perpetrator to continue the abuse)
- forced marriage, so-called 'honour-based abuse' and other forms of violence against victims that are linked to domestic abuse such as female genital mutilation

Further information and a copy of the strategy can be found using the link below:

[Tackling domestic abuse in North Lincolnshire - North Lincolnshire Council \(northlincs.gov.uk\)](https://www.northlincs.gov.uk)

*Key partnership updates*

## Children's MARS subgroup updates

### Key Updates - Children's Help and Protection Pathway (CHaPP) Group

- Independent scrutiny has taken place in relation to strategy meetings, highlighting effective partnership working, attendance and decision making. Practice standards have since been developed to help further strengthen the analysis of information before it is presented
- The PITSTOP is now embedded, and continues to develop, providing a strengthened and earlier partnership response to families who are responded to by the police, where a referral to children's social care is not required
- The CHaPP received progress updates in relation to partnership groups/ initiatives including reducing parental conflict, graded care profile 2, emotional wellbeing and mental health, and risks outside the home
- As a 'hidden harm', risks outside the home have been given high priority in North Lincolnshire, building on strong systems and practice identifying and tackling exploitation. Significant development work is underway in relation to the local ROTH approach including practice, processes, and procedures. The ChaPP has taken updates in relation to ROTH however the links will be made even stronger moving forward as the work and functions of the Child Exploitation Senior Officer's Group have now been agreed to move under the auspices of the ChaPP

### Key Updates - Safeguarding Practice Learning and Improvement Group (SPLIG)

- The SPLIG took updates on the scrutiny and assurance action plan and will consider opportunities to further embed learning
- To strengthen the partnership contribution to the ongoing communications work, the Children's MARS Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and annual planner were presented to the SPLIG to drive communications work and agree key messages
- A strategic briefing relating to recent national reports including the Sir Alan Wood Review report and the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel Annual Report was circulated to the SPLIG for consideration and disseminated to members of Children's MARS subgroups
- A Police Agency Specific Assurance Event took place on 23 June 2021 which focussed on the Protecting Vulnerable People Unit, the Child Exploitation and Missing Team, Neighbourhood Policing/Early Intervention and the Safeguarding Governance Unit. An outcome letter detailing the findings and recommendations from the event has been provided to police leads and an overview was presented to the Children's MARS Board

## Key Updates - Safeguarding vulnerable children in education

- A locally developed sexual abuse in schools audit tool, based on the findings of the Ofsted report into sexual harm: '[Review of Sexual Abuse in Schools and Colleges](#)' has been distributed to all schools and colleges in order to support leaders and governors self-evaluation and deepen understanding of the implications of the report in the context of their individual schools and communities. Schools are currently completing this audit tool and in the process of returning audits to the local authority for collation and analysis. This will enable a robust action plan to be created, but also the opportunity to share good practice. A direct action of the report is that the Children's MARS Annual Safeguarding Audit will be updated to reflect the findings and recommendations of the Ofsted report into Sexual Abuse in schools and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021.
- Schools are supported to access available appropriate resources to take a whole school/system approach to prevention of harmful sexual behaviour
- Work is ongoing to refresh the offer to peer mentors and buddies in schools and alternative providers and to progress plans for a Staying Safe Conference in 2022. The conference agenda will be informed by consultation with key stakeholders and will include a focus on the implications from the Ofsted review and consideration of sexual harm

## Key Updates - 'Shine a light' area of focus: risk outside the home

The Children's MARS Board heard a summary of the work done over the past year to reduce the harm from child exploitation. A range of scrutiny and assurance activity has been undertaken to clarify the strength of practice and inform further strategy and practice developments.

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 harm outside their families.

Through scrutiny and assurance activity there is evidence of the quality of practice. Some examples of this are:

- Professionals retained empathy and persistence in working with the young people to build meaningful and purposeful relationships
- The investment in relational working alongside the young people, creating trust and not taking all control from them, began eventually to help them disclose their abuse
- The MACE meeting is highly effective in the way information and intelligence is shared between partners
- 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

## Partnership Communications

Key messages are continuing to be communicated via Safe North Lincs in relation to our areas of focus and key themes locally. We have also supported the Children's Society #LookCloser campaign in October 2021 which aims to raise public awareness of the signs of child exploitation.

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner have recently funded research to feed into the local work around violence against women and girls. Women and girls aged over 16 who live in the Humberside area are being asked to complete a survey which discusses their experiences of abuse and violence. The link to the survey and accompanying QR code is being promoted across our email and social media channels. All partners are encouraged to support the survey by sharing it across their networks.

The link to the survey — <https://freeonlinesurveys.com/s/SVL0h1tt>



## Further information

For further information visit our website or follow us on Facebook or Twitter @SafeNorthLincs

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

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

 [@safeNorthLincs](#)

 [mars@northlincs.gov.uk](mailto:mars@northlincs.gov.uk)

 [www.northlincscmars.co.uk](http://www.northlincscmars.co.uk)

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