

1 Background

North Lincolnshire Children’s MARS Board hold a range of scrutiny events across different themes as part of our [Scrutiny and Assurance Framework](#).

A panel of Children’s MARS representatives and an Independent Scrutiny Officer dip sampled a series of contacts, referrals and strategy discussion records. Areas of good practice, learning and further improvement relating to multi agency practice was identified.

2 Why it matters?

The event was an opportunity for Children’s MARS representatives to seek assurance as to the quality and effectiveness of decision making and how partner agencies fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities. The panel also sought assurance that the outcomes are proportionate and consistent.

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

3 Good practice

- The multi agency approach and partnership working in North Lincolnshire is strong
- Partnership contributions to strategy discussions have remained at a high level and the quality of information shared and its use has been enhanced
- Initial management oversight / supervision is always present within the records
- Relevant previous history is considered and informs decision making
- The views of children and families are clear within the records
- Relational practice is evidenced across the records
- The outcomes of contacts, referrals and strategy discussions were appropriate and proportionate

4 Key learning

- In a few cases initial management oversight / supervision could have been strengthened in terms of guiding practice
- Staff across the partnership are to be reminded of the reasons for holding a strategy discussion and the sequence of strategy discussion, subsequent section 47 enquiry (if agreed) and outcomes, i.e., if concerns are substantiated that an initial child protection conference is held
- Where a contact/referral concludes that the child’s case is to remain at early help, in a few cases it was not clear that this had been negotiated with the family. Their agreement to remain in early help should be acknowledged within the records

5 Next steps

- The multi agency case audit learning event records are presented to the Safeguarding Practice Learning and Improvement Group (SPLIG) for consideration. Actions from the events will be monitored and reviewed as part of the Children’s MARS scrutiny and assurance action plan.

6 Reflect on the learning

To inform your practice you can

- Discuss this area of work with your supervisor in the context of contributing to strategy discussions and sharing information
- Reflect upon your understanding of the purpose of strategy discussions

7 Further information

- [One Family Approach - Helping Children and Families in North Lincolnshire Document](#)
- [Children’s MARS policy and procedure for assessing need and providing help](#)
- [Children’s MARS policy and procedure for early help](#)

 [@safeNorthLincs](#)

 mars@northlincs.gov.uk

 www.northlincscmars.co.uk