

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](#).

After a process of single agency case audits, a panel of Children's MARS representatives and an Independent Scrutiny Officer meet with practitioners to discuss a small number of cases. We identify areas of best practice, learning and further improvement relating to multi agency practice then agree any actions.

2 Why it matters?

Child sexual abuse in the family environment is a Children's MARS 'Shine a Light' area of focus for 2021/22.

This event was an opportunity for Children's MARS Board representatives to seek assurance as to the quality and effectiveness of multi-agency practice and how partner agencies are working to fulfill their safeguarding responsibilities. Partners were also able to explore whether there were any areas for further improvement in providing help and protection across multi agency working.

3 Good practice

- Cases involving child sexual abuse are complex, however the values and principals of the One Family Approach are being demonstrated within practice. There was evidence of relational working and the practitioners supporting the family were the best persons to do the work. In both cases, the children were supported to remain in their home, in their school and in their community
- There were examples of practitioners using research, evidence-based tools and learning from past cases to inform assessments and planning
- There is evidence of strong leadership oversight from a multi-agency perspective. Where there were challenges, senior leaders came together to consider what else could be done
- The use of family solutions was evident in that wider family members were involved in the plan
- Children's identity and self-esteem were considered and work around this was built into the help and support being provided

4 Key learning

- Continue to strengthen our approach to involving fathers and male carers to ensure that they are involved at the earliest stage. Also, ensure that we consider wider male family members within the plan such as grandfathers
- We should continue to strengthen our local approach to child sexual abuse in the family environment by enhancing the Children's MARS Child Sexual Abuse in the family environment Toolkit

5 Next steps

- An overview of the event is presented to the Safeguarding Practice Learning and Improvement Group (SPLIG) for consideration. Actions from the event 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 child sexual abuse in the family environment
- Download the Children's MARS Child Sexual Abuse in the family environment Toolkit
- Take a look at the Children's MARS Spotlight on the theme of child sexual abuse in the family environment

7 Further information

- [One Family Approach - Helping Children and Families in North Lincolnshire Document](#)
- [Children's MARS Toolkit – Child Sexual Abuse in the family environment](#)
- [Children's MARS Spotlight - Child Sexual Abuse in the family environment](#)
- [CSA Centre practice improvement resources including toolkits and guides](#)

 [@safeNorthLincs](#)

 mars@northlincs.gov.uk

 www.northlincscmars.co.uk