

# CHILDREN'S MARS BOARD NEWS UPDATE



## Children's MARS Board—October 2022

Welcome to the 17th edition 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 28 October 2022.

Key areas of discussion included:

- Progress relating to the safeguarding partners' portfolio areas
- Updates from the Early Help Strategic Leads Group, Children's Help and Protection Pathway Group, the Safeguarding Practice Learning and Improvement Group and the Risk Outside the Home Strategic Group
- Updates on independent scrutiny of the Partnership Integrated Triage (PITSTOP)
- An update on safeguarding children in education and electively home educated children
- Indicative feedback from recent inspection activity in relation to Local Authority Children's Services and the Police



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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We have been working to keep our key documents, local resources, 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](#)

- Risk Outside the Home info-sheet
- Quality standards for child protection conferences
- Best practice guidelines for preparation for and attendance at child protection conferences

#### [Learning from practice](#)

- 7 minute briefing—Information Sharing

#### [Training and education](#)

- Early Help awareness e-workbook

## Learning from practice

### Key themes from the Multi-Agency Reflective Practice Forum (MARPF)

The MARPF is held on a monthly basis to reflect on practice, based upon prior single agency audit and quality assurance. A summary of the key strengths highlighted at the MARPF this quarter includes:

- Evidence of persistent approaches successfully achieving trusting relationships with the Youth Justice Partnership and the social worker
- Good practice was highlighted relating to the engagement with fathers
- Evidence of the Risk Outside the Home Approach being used in practice - the Risk Outside the Home toolkit featured within the discussion and the co-ordinated multi-agency response through the Multi-Agency Child Exploitation meeting positively reduced risk

### Case Specific Practice Learning Line of Sight Event - Child Criminal Exploitation

A multi-agency case audit practice learning line of sight event took place in December 2022.

Good practice and key learning include:

- Proactive multi-agency working is evident and robust
- All agencies were in agreement with the plans for the young people and felt their voice was being heard
- Information sharing is robust and proactive
- The One Family Approach was evident in that practice was relational, strengths based and creative
- The final report by the Independent Review of Children's Social Care recommends new universal care standards for children in care which start off with building and maintaining loving relationships and such relationships have been shown during the case discussions
- The whole partnership has put an emphasis on the quality of relationships. This aspect comes through as the number one thing in the 'Ready or not': care leavers' views of preparing to leave care, Ofsted report
- Staff are flexible in their roles and there is a willingness to keep reviewing and changing the plan where required
- There is evidence of outcome focussed planning – all professionals are striving for the same outcome and are on the same page
- There is a strong focus on relationship building both between professionals and the young person, and between family members in the child's life
- There is a real focus on the child's voice and lived experience, using a non-judgemental loving approach
- Acknowledging the complexities and challenges in cases of child exploitation, the practitioners in the room were caring, compassionate and empathetic
- A focus on promoting and supporting young people's talents, interests and aspirations was evident and this should be continued
- The Panel reflected on the keynote speech from the Children's MARS conference and how creating 'fire exits' and opportunities for young people by building on their aspirations was evidenced in these cases

## Launch of new Early Help forms and online system

The Early Help Strategic Leads Group has led on the redesign of the early help assessment and plan which was initiated following consultation across the partnership. The new forms and guidance are available on the [early help page](#) of the Children's MARS website.

Now available on the early help page is:

- Information and links to access the online early help system
- A refreshed leaflet for families around early help assessments
- New guidance on early help, the role of the lead professional and when to complete early help for children with special educational needs and disabilities



A Spotlight on early help is available on the [Children's MARS website](#) which shares further information about the changes in local practice and processes around early help.

## Children's MARS training

The Children's MARS Education and Training programme 2022/23 contains information on our upcoming courses and is available on the [Children's MARS website](#).

Upcoming Courses:

- Early Help: Practice and Process—8 February, 9.00 to 12.30, Venue TBC
- Assessing the protective skills of mothers, partners and adult carers—Lucy Faithful Foundation—15 February, 9.00 to 4.30, The Wortley House Hotel
- Graded Care Profile 2—23 February, 1.30 to 5pm, Church Square House
- Risk Outside the Home (including child exploitation) - 7 March, 9.30 to 12.30, MS Teams
- Reducing Parental Conflict—9 and 10 January, 9.30 to 12.30 each day, MS Teams
- Strategy Discussions—15 March, 9.30 to 4.30, The Wortley House Hotel

## New education and training resources

Following on from the Child Protection in England report, a [7-minute briefing on Information Sharing](#) has been developed and published on the Children's MARS website.

An [Early Help Awareness e-workbook](#) has been developed and made available on the training page of the Children's MARS website. Upon completion on the e-workbook, a certificate will be provided by the Children's MARS Board.

## Children's MARS subgroup updates

### Key Updates - Early Help Strategic Leads Group (EHSLG)

- A number of colleagues across health and social care have worked together to develop a new format and training package for early help professionals, including an introduction, intermediate and higher-level modules. The first events in November at The Baths Hall were well subscribed which reflects the demand for training and the interest in the new format and system
- The EHSLG has taken an interest in the developing Family Hubs agenda. Although the local Family and Community Hub model is at an early stage, the offer will bring together the universal and community provision available for all families, using insight and data to target access and engagement for those families, groups and communities that have the highest need, who may be most vulnerable and who experience the greatest inequalities in health and wellbeing outcomes. Within this context is an opportunity for our early help and targeted offer to become more integrated, delivering from the Family Hub network and working more closely in communities with schools, colleges and settings

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

- The CHaPP considered the potential impact of winter pressures and the cost of living increases and agreed that as a system, we need to ensure our frontline teams are alert to the signs and symptoms of additional adversity and are able to signpost families to sources of help
- Demand for targeted and specialist services across the help and protection pathway continues to be high, including a rise in demand at the 'front door' of children's social care. Assurance was given that practice standards and compliance with statutory guidance continues to be met meaning that children continue to receive a timely response
- Audit and oversight continues to evidence that risk outside the home accounts for a significant proportion of calls into IMAP, within strategy discussions and assessments and is also being seen in PITSTOP and in other forums. This demonstrates high levels of confidence within the system in terms of identifying and responding well to risk outside the home

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

- The SPLIG received updates on recent scrutiny and assurance activity including the outcomes from the Multi-Agency Reflective Practice Forum (MARPF). The learning from the MARPF provided assurance that partnership working is strong and the One Family Approach is evident in practice
- Feedback on Children's MARS education and training remains overwhelmingly positive in terms of increased confidence in the subject matter and around the training content and mechanisms for delivery
- Linking to our shine a light area of focus regarding teenage relationship abuse, the Children's MARS team attended the Democracy Day in July 2022, at which they captured the views of young people regarding their understanding and awareness of healthy relationships and teenage relationship abuse
- The SPLIG considered the progress relating to the preparation for Joint Targeted Areas of Inspections which is being led via a bespoke multi-agency inspection preparedness meeting

### Key updates - Risk Outside the Home Strategic Group

- The Risk Outside the Home Strategic Group considered a number of reports including the Child Exploitation Annual Report and the Missing Children Annual Report which shares key performance information and the impact and outcomes of local development work
- The group considered the local response to online abuse. A bespoke task and finish group was established to consider what the current local issues are, what our offer is and how we can improve communications around this
- Work continues to progress on the development of performance data relating to child exploitation and risk outside the home. The group considered the linkages between other sources of data, intelligence and profiles which can be used to enhance the existing partnership data set
- The group agreed to hold a bespoke development session to look at progress against the Risk Outside the Home Strategy and delivery plan for 2022/23 and to consider areas for future partnership action to include in the delivery plan for 2023/24

### Key updates - Safeguarding children in education

- Work has continued to raise awareness of the changes in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 amongst staff along with key local updates relating to early help, the One Family Approach and the role of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- The multi-agency response to sexual harassment and abuse of learners emerging practice has been shared with all educational settings through a bespoke Children's MARS briefing
- The Children's MARS annual safeguarding audit for 2022 has been sent out to all schools, college, alternative provision and out of county provision. The audit has retained questions from the bespoke audit of sexual harassment and abuse in schools completed in 2021 to provide further assurance on the response from education settings
- All new school governors have received induction training relating to safeguarding in North Lincolnshire and Keeping Children Safe in Education. A bespoke best practice training offer for governors has been developed and shared with all newly appointed governors and existing chairs of governors

### Key updates - Electively home educated (EHE) children

- The Board heard updates on the Education Bill which is currently going through Parliament. The Bill includes new responsibilities on elective home education. Once the Bill is passed, families must register with local authorities for elective home education. This still does not allow the authorities legal access to families, nor does it insist on families working with local authorities. However, the Bill will place a responsibility on local authorities to provide support to families if they wish
- Locality coffee mornings for EHE families started in November 2022 which enables families to access a range of support and opportunities to seek advice and guidance from partner agencies. A number of other events to encourage families to access support are being held on themes such as water safety and swimming, internet safety and cycle safety

## Communications and stakeholder engagement

We are continuing to share messages via Safe North Lincs and through our email communications in response to key documents, emerging themes and further opportunities for education and training.

The Children's MARS Spotlight is a mechanism for coordinating key communications messages, tools and resources and upcoming training associated with the Children's MARS 'Shine a Light' areas of focus.

The theme of the latest Spotlight is working and engaging with fathers and male carers. You can view it on the [communications page](#) of the Children's MARS website.



### Further information

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

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If you wish to subscribe for Children's MARS communications

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

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, Safeguarding Adults 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.



*Scan our QR Code to be taken directly to the Safe North Lincs Facebook page*