



Merton Safeguarding Children Board

Business Plan 2018 – 19

Progress of this Plan will be updated monthly & monitored at each MSCB Meeting

Presented to the Board May 2018

Introduction

Merton Safeguarding Children Board aims to ensure that local services work knowledgeably, effectively and together to safeguard children and young people and to support their parents.

As part of our continuous improvement approach the Board has identified some key development priorities for 2016/17, these have been extended to 2018 and 2019. These are linked to our business as usual work plan undertaken by the MSCB and its sub groups. Alongside these priorities we are also seeking to improve our Quality Assurance and Learning and Improvement System to ensure that there is clear understanding of the complexity of work to protect children at the frontline. The Board continues to seek to improve its links to practitioners and their managers as part of our quality assurance processes to inform service improvement and development as well as maintaining our strong focus on the Voice of the Child/Young person.

Priorities for this business year are:

1. Managing the arrangements for the transition from Merton Local Safeguarding Children Board to the Merton Safeguarding Children Partnership

In 2019 the Board will see the dissolution of LSCBs and the establishment of Safeguarding Partnerships. In addition to reviewing the progress that the Board has made to date, we will need to develop clear plans about the future shape and direction of the Board.

The MSCB is Outstanding with no recommendations regarding improvements. Building from a secure base, the Board has agreed not to radically change its constitution but to use the Children and Social Care Act 2017 as an opportunity to strengthen our partnership to ensure that safeguarding children remains a priority for all partners in our safeguarding system and to ensure that there is the most effective representation from statutory and other key partners in the work of safeguarding Merton's children and families and promoting their welfare.

At the Board's Away day it was agreed that a task and finish group would be established to propose the arrangements for the establishment of Safeguarding Partnership.

2. Think Family – to support children and adults in our most vulnerable families to reduce risk and ensure improved outcomes.

A great deal of work has been undertaken to embed Think Family as an approach to interventions with children and families across both adults and children's services. We are making good progress in ensuring that our partnerships enable the most vulnerable families to be supported; that vulnerable parents are enabled to care for their children and children are in turn receive the care they need to thrive and achieve their potential. Evidence from local and national research tells us that our most vulnerable parents/families are those who

- Experience poor mental health,
- Struggle with substance misuse,
- Are affected by domestic abuse,
- Parents with learning difficulties that may affect their ability to respond to the changing needs of their children

The evidence nationally and locally also shows that vulnerable families are best supported when there is effective joint working between adult and children facing services. When professionals understand the underlying causes of issues like neglect and other form of abuse and offer effective support early before these problems get worse.

Building on this work, the Board is seeking to drive improvements in our practice with vulnerable families so that stigma is reduced and families with poor mental health and substance misuse issues will feel confident in seeking help and support. We are also assure ourselves that practitioners are supported with the skills and confident to engage with all of families including

- Families who are difficult to engage
- Families who are challenging (for a variety of reasons including social class – evidence from practice and SCRs show that affluent families can pose distinct challenges to multi-agency safeguarding systems resulting in harm to children; families who present as ‘powerful’ etc.)

The Board is also seeking to further strengthen the role of education, as they are a critical part of the team around the family.

3. Supporting Vulnerable Adolescents – adolescence is a time of significant change for all young people.

We know that, for some young people, adolescence is a time of particular vulnerability. We are determined to support adolescents who are at risk of

- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE),
- Children who go missing from home/school/care
- Children and young people who are at risk radicalisation and violent extremism,
- Children at risk of serious youth violence and gangs
- Children at risk of criminal and other forms of exploitation including county lines, peer on peer abuse and harmful sexual behaviour.
- Self-harm and poor mental health para-suicide

The Board is seeking to develop a strategic response to Contextual Safeguarding. In particular we are seeking to development a coordinated response to adolescent risk/harm which occurs outside of the family home in spaces such as the neighbourhood, school, community centres and housing estates.

The Board would also like to be more systematic regarding its work in listening to children and allowing them to shape the services that are provided to them. The Merton User Voice Strategy outlines the variety of ways in which the views and opinions of children and young people are considered. The Board would like this to be more coordinated so that the impact of our work with children, young people and their families can be measured more effectively.

4. Early Help – To develop an early help system that is responsive and effectively prevents escalation of concerns.

Merton has reviewed it Children Young People and Families Well-Being Model. We are now reviewing our Early Help and Preventative work; in particular we are exploring models for coordinating preventative and early help across the well-being model. As part of our review we will

- Consider the interface between our MASH and EH arrangements
- Review our service offer at all levels of the Model and Engage partners in discussion on thresholds, clarify Step-Up Step Down processes and the tools to support early help assessment CASA and intervention (Signs of Safety/signs of well being)
- Review our partnership quality assurance of EH

Addressing the incidence and impact of neglect is a cross-cutting theme that runs across the work of the Board and each of our priorities.

This Business Plan contains the MSCB priority actions. The on-going work of the MSCB and its Sub-Groups and Task Groups continues alongside it and will be incorporated into the Sub-Groups' annual work plans and reporting cycle to the MSCB.

New priorities may be added during the year, including any identified risks which will be monitored in the confidential risk log below.

The Plan will be updated and presented to each MSCB meeting by the Board Manager for monitoring and exception reporting

Objectives		Outcomes	Actions (who and what)		Resources	
					Governance oversight	When?
1.1	The purpose of this task and finish group is to draft a constitution/partnership agreement for the Merton Safeguarding Children Partnership and to propose a partnership agreement which will form the legal basis for the partnership.	<p>The new partnership to consider the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Partners b) Relevant agencies • Geographical Footprint • Leadership and governance? • Independent Scrutiny • Quality Assurance • Training and Practice Development • Funding • Dispute Resolution • Listening and responding to children 	<p>The Independent Chair Assistant Director of Children's Social Care and Youth Inclusion The Director of Education Senior Representative from the Police Senior Representative from the CCG Senior Representation from Housing MSCB Business Manager</p>	<p>A task and finish group comprised of key partners are to explore options and propose a draft partnership agreement to the Board for sign off</p>	<p>The MSCB partnership and Strategic Boards CCG Rep MPS BCU Rep Education Rep CSC Rep Housing Rep HWBB Rep Lead Member</p>	<p>January 2019; with a view to the Board being dissolved 31st March 2019 and constituted as a safeguarding partnership from 1st April 2019</p>

Objectives		Outcomes	Actions (who and what)		Resources	
					Governance oversight	When?
2.1	To embed the Think Family Approach across the multi-agency partnership	We want to make it easier for all types of families to access help and support without stigma or blame. Especially families experiencing DVA, mental health, substance misuse, disability,	To approve the DVA Strategy	The Think Family Strategic Board to further embed multi-agency work across adult and children's services	Policy Sub-Group	January 2019
			To Implement the Mental Health Protocol	CMc		
			To approve and implement a Parental Substance Misuse Protocol	Policy Sub-Group Substance Misuse Commissioned Service		
			To approve Protocol for Supporting Parents with disabilities			

Objectives	Outcomes	Actions (who and what)		Resources	
				Governance oversight	When?
	We want all our practitioners to be skilled at working with all types of families and are positive at engaging with them	To review our training offer to ensure that practitioners have access to appropriate training	Learning and Development Sub-Group	Learning and Development Sub-Group	January 2019
		To seek assurance from agencies that supervisory arrangements provide support with regard to authoritative practice with families	Section 11 and challenge Process		May – June 2018

Objectives		Outcomes	Actions (who and what)		Resources	
					Governance oversight	When?
		We work well with schools and educational institutions as they are a key part of the team around families	To work with schools and educational establishments to ensure that they have the capacity and confidence to lead preventative multi-agency safeguarding	Schools Representatives	Learning and Development Sub-Group Policy Sub-Group PPYPS	January 2019

2.2	The MSCB is assured of the multi-agency awareness of neglect and its impact and the quality of frontline practice in cases of neglect	For the MSCB to undertake a re-audit of neglect	What	Who	QA Sub-Group and BIG	March '18
		To feedback key practice lessons from the audit	QA Sub-Group and MSCB partners to conduct a multi-agency audit of neglect cases	All relevant MSCB partners including Health (CCG, CLCH, acute trusts, Mental Health Trust), Education, Police, CSC, Voluntary Orgs.	Head CSC & YI QA Chair Paul Angeli	
		To integrate these lessons into current training and practice development initiatives	To add Neglect to the Section 11 Self-audit			
		To have in place a range of approved practice tools to address the incidence of neglect	MSCB to adopt and promote a range of practice tools to address neglect	Carla Thomas CSC Health Police Education Early Years	Policy and Learning and Development Sub-Groups MSCB BSU	March '18
		For the Board to be assured that there is a clear link between the work on neglect including the trigger trio and Think Family	Multi-agency partners to demonstrate an understanding neglect as an effect, with the trigger trio, in many cases, being the cause.	MSCB partners including, SAB Health (CCG, CLCH, acute trusts, Mental Health Trust), Public Health Education, Police, CSC, Voluntary Orgs.	Policy and Quality Assurance Sub-Group Chair	March '18

Objectives		Outcomes	Actions (who and what)		Resources	
					Governance oversight	When?
3.1	Listening and responding to the voices of children and young people	<p>We listen to young people and their lived experience</p> <p>We will identify coordinate the various ways in which we hear from young people and ensure that the Board has oversight. We will also ensure that the voice of the child and the family is heard in the commissioning and delivery of services</p>	The BIG	<p>To review the user voice strategy</p> <p>For the Board to agree on-going ways to secure the of the child in the work of the Board</p>	MSCB	January 2019
3.2	We understand ASD and social communication disorders and provide appropriate support to children and families and practitioners	To ensure that the Board is sighted on the Implementation of the ASD Strategy	CAMHs Transformation Group	To ensure that the risks to children and young people with ASD are managed effectively	PPYPS	January 2019

Objectives		Outcomes	Actions (who and what)		Resources	
					Governance oversight	When?
3.3	Promoting Good Mental Health for Adolescents (12-18 year-olds)	<p>We support good adolescent mental health and emotional well-being – we are clear on the difference between ‘normal’ adolescent behaviour, inappropriate behaviour needing a parental response and adolescent mental health</p> <p>We want to strengthen the link between commissioned services, schools and families (where appropriate)</p>	<p>All agencies Commissioners and commissioned services Secondary Schools</p>	<p>Promote good mental health to more children and young people across the safeguarding system.</p> <p>Champion the voices of Merton young people and parents to influence mental health policy and practice.</p> <p>To work with commissioners and commissioned services to ensure effective, integrated services.</p>	PPYPS Sub-Group	
3.4	Reducing Incidents of Self-harm and preventing adolescent suicide	We prevent self-harm and suicide	<p>CAMHS PPYPS Acute Trusts Red Thread</p>	<p>To review the implementation of the Self-harm Protocol</p> <p>To develop a Suicide Prevention Strategy</p>	PPYP and Policy Sub-Groups	

Objectives		Outcomes	Actions (who and what)		Resources	
					Governance oversight	When?
3.5	Developing a Strategic response to Contextual Safeguarding	<p>We have an effective contextual safeguarding response to adolescent risk including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSE, • gangs and county lines, serious youth violence, • peer on peer abuse, • harmful sexual behaviour • adolescent substance misuse 	PPYPS YJT Transforming Families MPS	<p>To develop a contextual safeguarding strategy</p> <p>To ensure that the strategy is underpinned by a process to manage and review adolescent risk related to peers, space and place</p>	PPYPS	January 2019

Objectives		Outcomes	Actions (who and what)		Resources	
					Who? (Governance/oversight)	When?
4.1	Skilled and coordinated Prevention at all levels of need	Effective coordination and QA of early help	Early Help Task and Finish Group	To propose a model for adoption by the Board	BIG	March 2019
		Aligning assessment tools	Early Help Task and Finish Group	To develop a multi-agency assessment and intervention tool that is aligned to the MWBM and the Social Work Practice Model	BIG	March 2019
		Integrating signs of safety as a part of a preventative response (a shared language and approach for families, professionals and services)	Signs of Safety Steering Group		BIG	March 2019
		Ensuring effective preventative services at all levels of the MWBM	Early Help Task and Finish Group	BIG	March 2019	