



**Item 2i
Appendix A**

Merton Safeguarding Children Partnership Business Plan 2019 – 2021

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

Updated by the MSCP Executive Group in January 2020

Introduction

Merton Safeguarding Children Partnership (MSCP) works to ensure that local services work knowledgeably, effectively and together to ensure the highest quality work to safeguard children and young people and support their parents. The MSCP Priorities are agreed by the Statutory Partners, Relevant Agencies and Co-opted Members at the annual Partnership away day in March. These priorities are then developed into a 24 month Business Plan that is monitored by the Executive Group, with exceptions presented to the wider MSCP at each meeting.

The Business Plan is aligned to the MSCP Multi-Agency Quality Assurance Framework and performance indicators to ensure that there is clear line of sight between the priorities of the Partnership and the work of each Sub-Group.

In developing its priorities and the Business Plan the MSCP seeks to demonstrate its commitment to continuous improvement by ensuring that these build on the work achieved in the previous bi-annual Business Plan (that is, 2017-2019). Therefore, our priority in relation to early help builds on the work done to review and refresh the Merton Child, Young Person and Family Well-Being Model, the Merton Social Work Practice Model and other work being done across Merton.

Our work on Think Family builds on the work to address poor parental mental health, parental substance misuse and the work to support parents who have a disability. This work has led the Partnership shift its focus onto domestic abuse and neglect as specific forms of harm that require a joined up Think Family approach.

Finally, our work in relation to child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, county lines, gangs and serious youth violence has led to our focus on further developing our strategic response to adolescent and contextual safeguarding.

MSCP Priorities

Priorities for 2019-2021 business years are outlined as follows:

1. Early Help

Early Help: is part of a whole system approach and is based on a clear understanding of local need. Good early help will mean that children and their families will experience a high quality and coordinated service that meets their assessed needs and prevents issues from escalating into a safeguarding risk. The Partnership's priority is to ensure that there is clear coordination and quality assurance of early help; with

effective integration between the Early Help and the MASH and First Response services with a shared focus on the journey and experience of the child and family.

2. Think family: Domestic Abuse and Neglect

'Think Family' represents our joined up approach to working with families, both children and adults, so that families' needs are assessed holistically and there is a coordinated response to assessed needs. We ask colleagues in adult services to 'See the Adult; See the Child', understanding that adults in need of support, who are also parents, may need specific support to parent well. We ask colleagues in children's services to understand that the solutions to our concerns about children's wellbeing may lie in ensuring that adult services are meeting the needs of their parents. Our work in relation to Think Family covers a broad range of issues that impact on family life, but for the purposes of this business plan is focused on effectively responding the following two forms of harm:

- a) **Think Family: Domestic Abuse:** our priority is to protect children who are at risk of domestic abuse by working effectively with families, including victims and perpetrators of abuse to create and sustain a safe parenting environment. The MSCP will monitor, coordinate and evaluate the work of partner agencies to help and protect parents and children at risk of domestic abuse. This work includes effective coordination of the work with other multi-agency groups that have responsibility for responding to domestic abuse.
- b) **Think Family: Neglect:** our priority is to help children who are at risk of being neglected by their parents or carers. The partnership will monitor, coordinate and evaluate the work of all agencies to ensure that children at risk of neglect receive help and protection and that parents and carers are supported to meet children's needs.

3. Contextual Safeguarding

The Partnership will work with all agencies to ensure that there is a highly coordinated multi-agency and whole-council approach to a range of adolescent risks that occur in contexts beyond the family home (e.g. neighbourhood, schools, local shopping centres, youth venues etc.). These risks include child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation, serious youth violence, peer on peer abuse, harmful sexual behaviour and other overlapping forms of harm. The Partnership is aware of the risks of exploitation in their local area.

This Business Plan contains the MSCP priority actions. The on-going work of the MSCP 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 MSCP.

New focus areas 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 MSCP Executive meeting by the Partnership Manager for monitoring. Exception reports will be taken to full Partnership meetings.

Golden Threads

1. The voice and experience of children will be acknowledged throughout the work of the MSCP.
2. Neglect and the so-called 'Trigger Trio'¹ will be considered throughout our safeguarding practice.
3. The impact of poverty, disadvantage, trauma and other adverse childhood experiences will be recognised and acknowledged for its impact on the capacity to parent well, and on children's resilience.

RAG Ratings Legend

BLUE Indicates that the action has been completed and is now business as usual (BAU)

GREEN indicates that the action is on target for completion or delivery;

AMBER indicates that there is a delay (or attention is otherwise warranted);

RED indicates that this action or target is at risk and remedial action needs to be taken if this project is to be delivered.

¹ The trigger trio is domestic abuse, parental substance misuse and poor parental mental health

		and their families as tested by children and family voice and thematic audits	Early Help and Neglect Subgroup		
			Quality Assurance Sub-Group (audit oversight)		
1.3. The Partnership has in place a quality assurance framework and a practice model for the effective delivery of early help. The practice model is clearly compatible with and links to the social work practice model.	To work with partners and the QA Sub-Group to agree performance measures and a QA framework for early help.	The Partnership has oversight of the quantity and quality of early help assessments, including step up and step down.	The Executive Group Early Help and Neglect SubGroup	Allison Jones	March 2020
			Quality Assurance Sub-Group (data oversight)		
1.4 The Partnership has assurance that there is continuity of approach in early help with the Merton Social Work Practice Model	Partners and key stakeholders will apply and extend the Merton Practice Model across early help	Early help processes and practice tools are aligned to the Merton Practice Model as appropriate There are clear support pathways in place.	Executive Group Early Help and Neglect Subgroup	Allison Jones	March 2020

<p>1.5 The Think Family Strategy and the commissioning priorities include early help (this includes support for parents whose ability to parent is impacted by their learning disability, their substance misuse or their poor mental health).</p>	<p>Early help commissioning activity and service development are aligned to the Partnership’s strategic priorities</p>	<p>The commissioning and delivery of early help reflects the Partnership’s strategic priorities.</p>	<p>The Policy Sub-Group Early Help and Neglect subgroup</p>	<p>Allison Jones</p>	<p>March 2020</p>
<p>1.6 The Partnership is assured of the performance of early help through quantitative and qualitative measures.</p>		<p>MSCP Dataset Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • % Early help assessments by agency² • Number of early help assessments by agency • Numbers of children stepped down from children’s social care • Number of children with completed early help assessment or subject of other multi-agency targeted intervention <p>We will learn from parents and children about their experiences of early help</p>	<p>Early Help and Neglect Subgroup</p>	<p>Allison Jones</p>	

² Agencies have effective systems to identify children at risk of or subject to abuse or neglect; agencies make timely referrals to early help or children’s social care, (Source Neglect JTAI Evaluation Criteria)

		<p>The Partnership will conduct audits into the quality and effectiveness of early help</p> <p>Base line audit of early help</p> <p>Review audit early help</p>	<p>Participation Manager</p> <p>QA Sub-Group</p>	<p>Chelsea Renehan</p>	<p>March 2020</p> <p>Autumn 2019</p> <p>Autumn 2020</p>
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2.a Think Family: Domestic Abuse: To protect children who are at risk of domestic abuse by working effectively with families to create a safe parenting environment. The Safeguarding Partnership will monitor, , coordinate and evaluate the work of partner agencies to help, protect children at risk of domestic abuse, including working effectively with other multi-agency groups that have responsibility for responding to domestic abuse

What do we want to achieve	What will we do?	How will we know this is working? (How much? How well? What difference has this made?)	Governance oversight	Lead	Target date
2.a.1 A reduction in Perpetrators' violent and abusive behaviour	<p>Targeted use of accredited perpetrator programmes³</p> <p>For the Partnership to seek assurance from relevant agencies that the multi-agency system has in place appropriate programmes to address perpetrator behaviour and that these are aligned to need and level of risk</p> <p>The Partnership is assured that multi-agency work with perpetrators is creating safety for children and families</p>	<p>Victims/survivors tell us that they are no longer subjected to violence or coercive control.</p> <p>The Partnership will review those evidence-based programmes are in use and seeking evidence of the impact of these programmes on perpetrator behaviour and on child and family safety and well-being</p> <p>Reduction in repeat incidences of domestic abuse.</p> <p>Reduction in coercive control</p> <p>Reduction in physical and sexual violence</p>	<p>Policy Sub-Group with, Safer Merton, VAWG with the SAB</p> <p>DA and Think Family Subgroup</p> <p>QA Sub-Group with Commissioners and Safer Merton</p>	Safer Merton	<p>September 2019</p> <p>January 2020</p>

³ This may be cost prohibitive – it may be more cost effective to invest in a train the trainer model which can be delivered by teams across the partnership

	The Partnership work with relevant agencies to make it safe to report DA	<p>Children who have witnessed DA tell us that they no longer witness violence or coercive control</p> <p>Victims/survivors of DA report that perpetrators are engaging with their families in non-violent, non-coercive ways</p>			
2.a.2 Increase in the safety, well-being and freedom of survivors who have experienced domestic abuse	Work with partners to ensure that there are effective arrangements and services to address DA and that these arrangements and services are able to evidence a positive impact for the children and survivors of domestic abuse	<p>Increased identification and referral of victims of DA</p> <p>Increase in the identification of repeat victims</p> <p>Increase in the numbers of children protected from witnessing DA evidenced by DA ceasing in those families where it has been identified as a risk</p> <p>Perpetrators are held to account</p> <p>Children tell us they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Happy at home Attending school Achieving their potential Enjoying a better relationship with parents/carers 	Policy Sub-Group with, Safer Merton, VAWG with the SAB DA and Think Family subgroup	Safer Merton	March 2021

<p>2.a.3 (a)The Partnership has an accurate map of provision at all levels of need</p> <p>2.a.3 (b) The Partnership is assured that commissioned provision effectively address the needs of children, victims/survivors of DA and perpetrators of DA</p>	<p>Review current provision of services to address DA at all levels of need.</p> <p>Identify gaps in provision and gaps in practice.</p> <p>Develop an action plan to address identified gaps.</p>	<p>Families report:⁴ Respectful communication Freedom from violence and abuse</p> <p>Children who have experienced DA report that they are: Safer, healthier and happier children Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires</p>	<p>Quality Assurance Sub-group DA Think Family Subgroup</p> <p>QA Sub-Group with Safer Merton and VAWG strategic group</p> <p>DA Subgroup and Think Family</p>	<p>Safer Merton</p> <p>MSCP Training</p>	<p>March 2021</p> <p>Autumn 2019</p> <p>Autumn 2019</p> <p>Autumn 2019</p> <p>Winter 2019</p> <p>March 2020</p>
<p>2.a. 4 The Partnership has assurance that professionals and support staff see incidents of domestic abuse</p>	<p>Re-launch the MSCP Guidance on DA</p>	<p>Thematic audits of DA and work with perpetrators</p>	<p>Quality Assurance Sub-Group (oversight)</p>	<p>MSCP Training</p>	<p>March 2020</p>

⁴ This is based on the Respect Outcomes Framework 2017

<p>through the eyes of the child. They are well trained, confident and knowledgeable and they understand the impact of domestic abuse. Children and families receive help and protection from domestic abuse</p>	<p>Research and deliver best practice briefings</p>	<p>Follow-up audit</p> <p>Increase in the identification and referral of DA</p> <p>Increase in referrals from Partners</p> <p>Increase in referrals from Primary Care</p>	<p>DA and Think Family Subgroup</p> <p>Learning and Development Sub-Group</p> <p>MSCP Training</p>		<p>Autumn 2019</p> <p>March 2021</p>
<p>2.a. 5 The Partnership has assurance that there are effective interventions in place to support children and survivors and to encourage perpetrators to change their behaviour and there is good evidence that children and victims of domestic abuse are safeguarded as a result of this.</p>	<p>Provide leadership and oversight to ensure that interventions are appropriate to the needs of children and families.</p> <p>The Partnership will seek assurance from commissioners that commissioned programmes are evidenced-based as being</p>	<p>Effective interventions are measured by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the reported experience of survivors of DA and their children (b) the reduction of the numbers of children on CP plans where DA is a primary factor. <p>We see an improvement in the effectiveness of information sharing about perpetrator behaviour.</p> <p>MSCP Indicators</p> <p>Maternity: Number of concerns raised about Domestic Abuse</p> <p>Number of repeat Domestic Abuse victims who are parents</p>	<p>Quality Assurance Sub-Group in partnership with VAWG Board and Safer Merton</p> <p>DA and Think Family subgroup</p>	<p>Safer Merton</p>	<p>September 2019</p> <p>March 2020</p>

	<p>effective in supporting children and survivors of DA and in supporting perpetrators to change their behaviours.</p>	<p>Numbers of reported Domestic Abuse where children are present Number of police call outs for Domestic Abuse where children are present Number of MARAC cases that involve children Number of MARAC repeat victims who are parents Number and % of open assessments where Domestic Abuse is a factor Number of early help assessments that featured Domestic Abuse.</p>			
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2. b Think Family: Neglect: To help children who are at risk of experiencing neglect. The Partnership monitors, coordinates and evaluates the work of the all agencies to ensure children at risk of neglect receive help and protection.

What do we want to achieve	What will we do?	How will we know this is working? (How much? How well? What difference has this made?)	Governance oversight	Lead	Target date
<p>2.b. 1 The Partnership has assurance that children who are at risk of neglect receive a skilled, timely, joined up response that reduces the risk of neglect and keeps them safe.</p>	<p>Identify children at risk of neglect at the earliest opportunity; in order to reduce the numbers of children experiencing neglect</p> <p>Respond promptly and effectively to address the underlying factors;</p> <p>Acknowledge that adult vulnerability may impact on capacity to parent well, and take steps to provide support to parents to help them address neglectful behaviours;</p> <p>Maintain our focus on the experiences of children;</p> <p>Minimise the long term effects of childhood neglect and provide therapeutic support to overcome these;</p>	<p>MSCP Performance Indicators</p> <p>Risks to children living with neglect are prevented and reduced.⁵</p> <p>Children have good attendance at school⁶</p> <p>Children have up-to-date immunisations</p> <p>Children have good physical and dental health</p> <p>The home environment is clean and safe</p> <p>Parents with mental health difficulties, substance misuse issues learning or other disability (which adversely affects parenting) have their needs addressed</p>	<p>Quality Assurance Sub-Group</p>	<p>El Mayhew</p>	<p>March 2020</p>

⁵ Neglect JTAI Criteria

⁶ Good attendance is attendance of 95%

	<p>To ensure that the importance of neglect and its incidence is recognised by all partners in the strategic planning and service design</p>	<p>Family safety plans are in place for when the primary care-giver is unwell.</p> <p>Children report good and safe parenting</p> <p>Children living with neglect receive the right help and protection because of application of appropriate thresholds, effective information sharing and timely intervention</p> <p>The impact of neglect on children is reduced because they and their families can access a sufficient range of local services, including therapeutic help that improves children's emotional well-being and safety.</p>			
<p>2.b.2 The MSCP has in place a multi-agency neglect tool that is aligned to the Merton Practice Model</p>	<p>To work with the Signs of Safety Lead and relevant partners to adapt the piloted neglect tool so that it is fully aligned to the Merton Practice Model and the work being done in Early Help.</p>	<p>The neglect tool is aligned to the practice model</p> <p>An implementation plan is in place.</p> <p>There is a communication strategy, training plan and briefing packs</p> <p>The tool is being used by practitioners across the Partnership</p>	<p>Policy Sub-group Early Help and Neglect subgroup</p> <p>Learning and Development</p>	<p>EI Mayhew</p>	<p>January 2020</p>

<p>2.b.3 The Partnership has assurance that the agreed neglect tool is used and embedded across Merton</p>	<p>Provide a series of briefings on the use of the tool</p> <p>Agree with each agency a communication strategy to promote and embed the tool</p>	<p>This will be tested as part of the audit below</p>	<p>Learning and Development Sub-Group</p> <p>Early Help and Neglect Subgroup</p>	<p>MSCP Training</p>	<p>Autumn 2019</p>
<p>2.b.4 The Partnership has assurance regarding improvements in the quality and impact of the multi-agency work to address neglect in Merton</p>	<p>The Partnership will conduct a deep dive review of neglect in Merton</p>	<p>Multi-agency and single agency case audit to assess the quality and impact of the work on neglect</p> <p>Baseline audit of neglect</p> <p>Review audit of neglect</p> <p>We obtain evidence from voices of children and their families regarding the quality and impact of our work with them in relation to neglect</p> <p>MSCP Indicators</p> <p>Numbers of children under 5 on a CP Plan where neglect is a factor</p> <p>Numbers of Adolescents (children aged 13-18) on a CP plan where neglect is a factor</p> <p>Children known to MARVE where there is current or historic neglect</p>	<p>The Quality Assurance Sub-group</p>	<p>El Mayhew</p>	<p>March 2020 and March 2021</p> <p>Spring 2020</p> <p>Spring 2021</p>

		Numbers of children on repeat plans where neglect continues to be a factor			
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3. Contextual Safeguarding: We safeguard children who are at risk of significant harm in contexts beyond their families. The Partnership has a highly coordinated multi-agency and whole-Merton approach. The Partnership is aware of the risks of exploitation in their local area.

What do we want to achieve	What will we do?	How will we know this is working? (How much? How well? What difference has this made?)	Governance oversight PPYPS, with Safer Merton	Lead	Target date
3.1 The Partnership has in place a strategic, multi-agency response to contextual safeguarding. This includes the multi-agency response to criminal and sexual exploitation, serious youth violence including gangs, peer to peer abuse, harmful sexual behaviour and other forms of extra familial harm/risks	<p>We work with partners to develop a Contextual Safeguarding Strategy which outlines the action that the multi-agency partnership will take to address the overlapping forms of harm</p> <p>We will produce safeguarding adolescents practice guidance for practitioners working in Merton.</p> <p>We will adapt our assessment processes and interventions to address non-familial contextual factors contributing to risk and harm to children, including</p>	<p>A strategy is in place that is owned and implemented by partners, practitioners, parents, children and young people, schools, local businesses and community centres</p> <p>A reduction⁷ in the numbers of children who are looked after as a result of CSE and CCE</p> <p>A reduction⁸ in the numbers of children experiencing CSE/CCE/SYV</p> <p>Young people in Merton feel safe in their communities as</p>	Safeguarding adolescents task and finish group reporting to PPYPS	Melissa Ireland with multi-agency Task and Finish Group	<p>March 2021</p> <p>March 2020</p>

⁷ Where are we now (baselines)? What will be the percentage reduction we will want to achieve and by when?

⁸ Where are we now (baselines)? What will be the percentage reduction we will want to achieve and by when?

	developing place-based interventions that help to protect multiple children.	measured by asking young people			
3.2 The Partnership will ensure that young people are consulted and involved in the shaping of our response to adolescent risks that occur in contexts beyond the family home (e.g. neighbourhood, educational institutions, local shopping centres, youth venues etc.)	<p>The Young Scrutineer will work with the MSCP</p> <p>Engage with the Participation team to establish an effective framework for hearing and responding to young people in relation or contextual risks</p>	<p>We will include young people in the co-production, co-design and co-delivery of our responses to extra-familial forms of adolescent risk and harm</p> <p>MSCP Indicators</p> <p>Referrals into the Multi-Agency Risk, Vulnerability and Exploitation (MARVE) Panel in period</p> <p>Numbers of children who are assessed at high risk of CSE or CCE</p> <p>Numbers of children for the risk of CSE or CCE has been reduced following intervention</p>	PPYPS	Melissa Ireland with Chelsea Renan	March 2021

		<p>Referrals into Children's Social Care where CSE or CCE is a factor</p> <p>% of CSE or CCE cases open to CIN/CP</p> <p>Number of CP plans with CSE or CCE as a factor</p> <p>Number of CAWN (Child Abduction Warning Notices) issued within the quarter and running total</p> <p>Age and gender profile of children who go missing from home school or care?</p> <p>Numbers of children missing education (CME)⁹</p> <p>Numbers of children missing education who are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on a CIN Plan • on a CP Plan • who are LAC <p>Total number children reported 'missing in period</p>			
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⁹ Children missing education (CME) are defined as: '*children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school*'. Department for Education (2016) 'Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities

		<p>Number of Merton resident children reported missing from home in period (number of missing episodes)</p> <p>Number of Merton looked after children reported 'missing from care in period (including those placed out of borough) (number of missing episodes)</p> <p>% of missing return home/debrief interviews completed within timescales</p> <p>We conduct serious excellence reviews as a way of appreciating and sharing good practice</p>			
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			PPYPS	PP Manager	March 2020
3.3 We will identify contexts of concern (key places, spaces and businesses where young people may be at risk of or concerned about harm including exploitation) and reduce the risk to children in these spaces/places	Develop and agree a process for creating multi-agency safety plans for extra-familial places and spaces that pose a safeguarding risk to children – this will also include persons of concern because of the risk they pose to individual or groups of children	Contexts of concern have safety and protection plan in place which involve parents, young people, business owners, and other stakeholders and which are shown to be effective at reducing the risk of harm. Communities across Merton understand the role they have in maintaining places and spaces that are welcoming and safe for children and young people.	PPYPS	Roberta Evans Melissa Ireland	March 2021