



Merton Safeguarding Children Partnership Bulletin - June 2021

Welcomes and Goodbyes

Business Support Unit

It has been a busy couple of months for the Merton Safeguarding Children Partnership, with lots of new faces. Welcome to Dominic Mackie and Helena Davey, who join the MSCP's Business Support Unit as Policy and Partnerships Officers, and to Chloe Windsor, our new Partnership Administrator who takes over from Ruth Mandry. A big thank you to Ruth for all her work with the team and supporting the smooth operation of the MSCP over the last few months.

Independent Person

Welcome to Aileen Buckton, who has joined us as the Independent Person for Merton Safeguarding Children's Partnership. Aileen already chairs the Merton Safeguarding Adults Board and comes to us with a wealth of safeguarding experience, having previously worked at Lewisham Council as Executive Director of Community Services. We look forward to learning from her expertise.

Executive

Det Supt Owain Richards has announced that he is moving to a new post as BCU Commander - Central West (Westminster | Hammersmith & Fulham | Kensington & Chelsea). A big thank you to Owain for all of his work as Executive member for the police and welcome to Det Supt Andrew Wadey who will be taking over Owain's role.

Sub-group chairs

There have also been some changes in the Safeguarding Partnership subgroups. Lin Graham-Ray, El Mayhew and Matt Griffiths are stepping down as chairs for the Quality Assurance, Promote and Protect Young People and Domestic Abuse and Think Family subgroups respectively. We thank them for all their work in chairing these meetings and progressing vital work.

We welcome Sue Myers (AD Children's Social Care & Youth Inclusion (LBM)) as the new Quality Assurance chair, DCI Amanda Mawhinney (Metropolitan Police) as the new Promote and Protect Young People chair, and Margaret Mansfield and Dr Benedicta Ogeah (Designated Safeguarding Leads – CCG) who will be co-chairing the Domestic Abuse and Think Family subgroup.

A short summary is provided below:

Subgroup	Chair	MSCP Policy Officer Support
Domestic Abuse and Think Family	Margaret Mansfield/Dr. Benedicta Ogeah	Dominic Mackie
Promote and Protect Young People	DCI Amanda Mawhinney	Dominic Mackie
Policy and Training	Elizabeth Fitzpatrick	Dominic Mackie/Helena Davey
Quality Assurance	Sue Myers	Helena Davey
Early Help and Neglect	Allison Jones	Helena Davey

Local news

Publication – LSCPR Jason

A new Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review was published on 24 June 2021 regarding “Jason,” a British teenager involved in County Lines. Learning themes include: the multi-agency No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) assessment, housing difficulties for vulnerable children, exclusion, and support for BAME children in schools. You can read the full review [here](#).

YOT Inspection Update

During May 2021, Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) inspected our Youth Justice Service (YJS). Although the final gradings will not be published until the end of August with the full inspection report, inspectors provided positive feedback during the inspection on the work of the YJS and wider partnership. A huge thank you to all multi-agency partners who deliver youth justice services in Merton and who took part in showcasing our work at this inspection.

Adolescent Neglect Survey

The Promote and Protect Young People subgroup has produced a survey on adolescent neglect and how well it is understood amongst multi-agency partners. This is to assure the quality and effectiveness of the work being done to safeguard adolescents against neglect. We are initially running the survey for two weeks until Friday the 9th July - you can participate in the survey by clicking on the following link: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/LSXCB7V>

Drug Edibles/Substance Misuse

Recently, Merton Borough has had several cases where young people have been approached to buy “edibles” on social media which have then been consumed in some cases. They look like sweets but contain drugs. There have been incidents where young people have suffered hallucinations which triggered anxiety or they have lost consciousness, requiring emergency treatment.

Cannabis can be mixed into cakes, tea, yoghurt, or sweets. The amount of cannabis in these products can vary greatly and sometimes other harmful drugs are added. The effects of consuming edibles are unpredictable, and it can be quite easy to accidentally take a larger dose.

If you are made aware of any social media accounts advertising these items, The Merton Safer Schools Team asks you to report this information to the Police, School or Crime Stoppers. Multi-agency partners can access free training on substance misuse using the events and courses link in the Upcoming MSCP Training section below.

Merton Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report

The Merton Safeguarding Adults Board have recently published their annual report for 2019/20 - you can access it on their website [here](#).

Upcoming MSCP Training

To book any of the training below, please go to our [events and courses page](#).

Effective Support for Families in Merton – Thursday 8 July, Wednesday 18 July

Multi-agency Safeguarding Training – Wednesday 30 June

Female Genital Mutilation – Wednesday 7 July

Substance Misuse Part 1 – Thursday 8 July

Substance Misuse Part 2 – Thursday 15 July

Reducing Parental Conflict - Virtual session to be done at your own convenience.

Due to recent learning from a child death in Southwest London, we are promoting the below Safe Sleeping from the Lullaby Trust, especially for foster carers and social workers.

<https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/professionals/training/sids-and-safer-sleep-training/>

Regional news

Serious Case Reviews

Members of our team recently attended a pan-London event, and some interesting learning was disseminated from serious case reviews in other London boroughs. Links to the full reports are in the titles:

[Baby T - London Borough of Redbridge](#)

Learning themes include: the dispersal of asylum-seeking mothers and their babies before the child is eight weeks old, effective interpreting services and access to advice on crying babies.

[David - Bi-Borough](#)

Learning themes include: the gap of support for autistic children with additional disabilities, residential treatment options for young people with high-risk behaviours and more conversation surrounding “callous and unemotional traits.”

National news

National Policy, Research and Legislation

The Queen’s Speech

On Tuesday 11 May 2021, the State Opening of Parliament was marked with the Queen's Speech which outlines the Government's plans for the parliamentary year ahead. Violence against women and girls and domestic abuse were highlights; a new Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy will be published to better target perpetrators and support victims.

Meanwhile, The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 will underpin Government’s commitment to tackling domestic abuse. It will create a new offence of non-fatal strangulation and give the police new powers including Domestic Abuse Protection Notices. The Domestic Abuse Strategy will also focus on prevention and will be accompanied by £25 million of investment on programmes to work with perpetrators.

Finally, improvements will be made to the help and support provided for children and the families that care for them. It is continuing to champion 'Family Hubs' and encourages local authorities to make them a place for parents and carers to access local Start for Life services.

Child Death and Deprivation Research

The NHS has recently reported that about 700 child deaths could have been avoided each year in England by reducing rates of social deprivation. The research analysed the records of 3,347 children who died in England between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020. It identified a clear association between the risk of death and level of deprivation, for all categories of death apart from cancer. It concluded that more than a fifth (23%) of all child deaths might be avoided if all children, regardless of postcode, had the same mortality risk. You can read the report, in more detail, [here](#).

Ofsted Review of Sexual Abuse in Schools and Colleges

An Ofsted review was published on 10 June and notes that schools and colleges cannot tackle sexual harassment and sexual violence, including online, on their own; the Government must also tackle the issue through the Online Safety Bill and other measures. The review makes several recommendations for Government, as well as the inspectorates, and one for safeguarding-children-partners: *“Partners should work to improve engagement with schools of all types in their local area, tailoring their approach to what their analysis (produced in partnership with schools/colleges and wider safeguarding partners) indicates are the risks to children and young people in their local area.”*

Report on Missing Children

The charity, Missing People, is publishing a new report from a consultation project with looked-after or care-experienced young people. Looked-after children are disproportionately more likely to be reported missing. With the help of carers and social workers, Missing People has begun to explore views on what should happen and how best to support others who go missing. Headlines include young people’s views on how relevant agencies should respond to them as well as a call to mitigate any issues that may cause a young person to go missing. The full report can be read [here](#).

Independent Child Trafficking Guardians Service

The ICTG Service has launched and is now accepting referrals in Merton and nationally. An ICTG referral should be made in addition to the NRM (National Referral Mechanism) referral. During this phase of the roll out, targeted testing of three recommendations from the Independent Review of the Modern Slavery Act in the following ICTG Sites will take place:

- Removal of the 18-month limit for ICTG support to ensure that the support provided is based on the individual needs of the child.
- Enable those children who need it, to continue to receive ICTG support following their 18th birthday (London and Warwickshire).
- Allow children who have a figure of parental responsibility for them in the UK to access one-to-one support where there is an exceptional need (Wales, the East Midlands, and West Midlands Combined Authority).

National Safeguarding Reviews and Reports

Several safeguarding reviews have been published recently. You can read the overviews below as well as find links to the full reports.

Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel – Annual Report for 2020

Three headline messages: 1. To give a real and strong voice (and influence) to children. 2. The urgency of addressing what might be described as stubborn and perennial problems in multi-agency child protection practice. 3. The need to understand and evaluate robustly the impact of learning from rapid reviews as well as local and national practice reviews. [The Child Safeguarding Annual Report 2020 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Alan Wood Review of Multi-agency Safeguarding Arrangements

Key messages: The new reforms are embedding and 90% of people who took part in the survey have been positive about them. Resources are under “much stress” with reference to the ADCS Safeguarding Pressures report; central government does not demonstrate a joined-up culture. [Wood Review of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

What Works for CSC – Analysis of Safeguarding Partners Annual Reports 19/20

Best Reports: These made use of a range of evidence sources (data, inspection, multi-agency audit, workforce feedback, and the views of children and families) to identify priorities and evaluate their impact. Weaker reports were descriptive rather than evaluative, with a focus on actions completed in relation to partnership priorities. [Analysis of Safeguarding Partnerships' yearly reports 2019-20: Overview report \(whatworks-csc.org.uk\)](#)

Important contacts

To contact us with any queries, questions or items to add to future news bulletins:

Email: MertonLSCB@merton.gov.uk

Telephone: 020 8545 4866

To contact Merton MASH:

Email: MASH@merton.gov.uk

Telephone: 020 8545 4226 or 020 8545 4227 (out of hours 020 8770 5000)

Forward Look

13 July 2021 – *Promote and Protect Young People subgroup meeting.*

21 July 2021 - *Executive meeting.*

4 August 2021 – *Early Help and Neglect subgroup meeting.*

20 August 2021 – *Domestic Abuse and Think Family subgroup meeting.*

29 September 2021 – *Full Partnership meeting.*