



## Merton Safeguarding Children Partnership News Bulletin – December 2022

### **Welcome and PIP Team News**

Welcome to the December 2022 issue of the Merton Safeguarding Children Partnership news bulletin. There is lots happening within the MSCP in the coming weeks and months. Please do have a browse in our local, regional, and national news sections. As always, if you have anything to include in future bulletins, please contact us at: [MertonSCP@merton.gov.uk](mailto:MertonSCP@merton.gov.uk). May we take this opportunity to wish all our partners a restful and joyful Christmas period and a very happy new year.

### **New Appointments**

#### **Support Officer (Project and Service Improvement)**

We are very pleased to welcome **Calvin Eyeson** to the Improvement & Partnerships Team in the role of Support Officer. Calvin will be supporting the work of the Service Improvement Advisor and will be joining us in December. Please join us in wishing him the very best as he settles into his new role.

### **Goodbyes**

#### **Dominic Mackie – Policy and Partnerships Officer**

We are very sad to be saying goodbye to **Dominic Mackie**, one of our Policy and Partnerships Officers who will be leaving Merton in December for a new post within the Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership. Dominic has been instrumental in improving our processes around policy work in the MSCP and Children, Schools and Families, and in putting the voices of children and young people at the heart of what we do through supporting the Young Residents Survey and Children's Trust Board. Surrey will be very lucky to have him, and we do hope you will keep in touch, Dominic!

#### **Robyn Northcott – Business Support Manager**

We also very sadly say goodbye to **Robyn Northcott**, our Business Support Manager who will be leaving us to join the SENDIS team in December. Robyn has provided exceptional support not only to us, but also to the wider Children, Schools and Families Directorate. She has helped us forge greater connections with education colleagues and supported development of our SEND work – for example,

the strengthened relationship with Kids First and her support delivering our first annual SEND conference. Although she won't be leaving the Directorate entirely, she will be very greatly missed, and we wish her all the very best in her new role!

## Local News

### Ofsted SEND Revisit in Merton

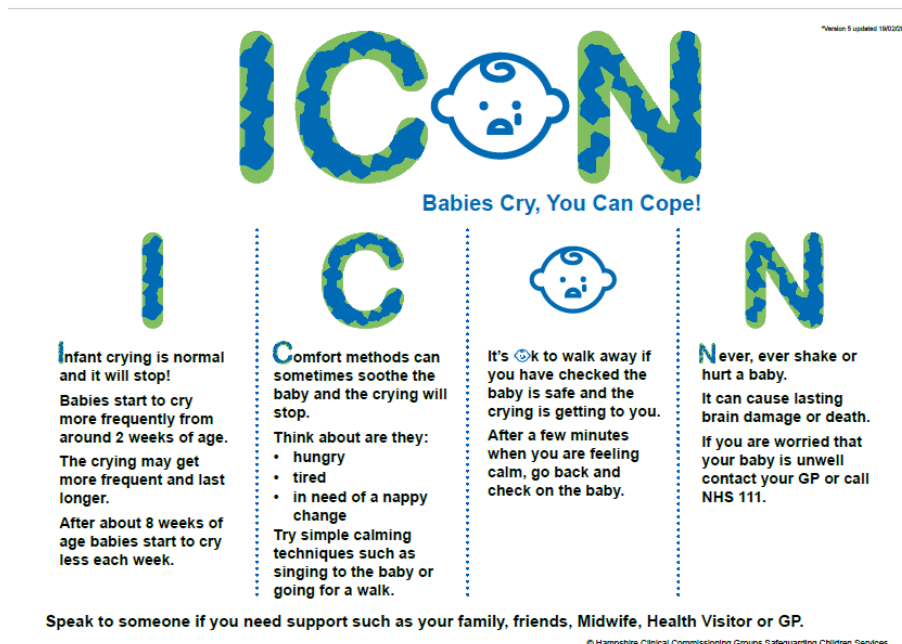
Back in September 2019, Ofsted highlighted several areas of concern with Merton's provision of SEND. Between 17 and 19 October 2022, inspectors from Ofsted and the CQC returned to the borough and spoke with children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), parents and carers, and practitioners and managers across the local partnership.

We are very happy to announce that Merton's SEND partnership has now hit all targets for improvement set out by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC), which recognises the council and local NHS have "made sufficient progress in addressing all of the significant weaknesses identified at the initial inspection". You can read the full letter from Ofsted [here](#).

We'd like to share our sincerest thanks to all partners, parents/carers and young people who contributed to this outcome, through collaborating over the past couple of years to achieve the improvements recognised by inspectors, as well as giving up their time to speak with inspectors.

### The Launch of ICON in Merton

The MSCP is leading the system-wide launch of the ICON model of support for young babies and their parents, from 5th December 2022. ICON stands for:



**ICON**  
Babies Cry, You Can Cope!

**I** Infant crying is normal and it will stop!  
Babies start to cry more frequently from around 2 weeks of age. The crying may get more frequent and last longer.  
After about 8 weeks of age babies start to cry less each week.

**C** Comfort methods can sometimes soothe the baby and the crying will stop.  
Think about are they:  
• hungry  
• tired  
• in need of a nappy change  
Try simple calming techniques such as singing to the baby or going for a walk.

**O** It's **OK** to walk away if you have checked the baby is safe and the crying is getting to you.  
After a few minutes when you are feeling calm, go back and check on the baby.

**N** Never, ever shake or hurt a baby.  
It can cause lasting brain damage or death.  
If you are worried that your baby is unwell contact your GP or call NHS 111.

Speak to someone if you need support such as your family, friends, Midwife, Health Visitor or GP.

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As part of launch week, the MSCP has organised two special online “Launch and Learn” sessions on what ICON is, with the first session well attended on Monday 5 December. These are available to everyone, and we encourage as many people as possible to attend to find out more about how you can embed the model into your own daily practice.

You can book your place on the next session by clicking the link below:

[Wednesday 7 December - 11:30-12:30](#)

For more information about the ICON message, or to view and download resources, please visit:

[ICON – Babies Cry, You Can Cope \(iconcope.org\)](http://iconcope.org)

### **Launch of VAWG Strategy, and achievement of White Ribbon Accreditation**

Merton Council has launched its new strategy for the next three years to help prevent all forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG) and domestic abuse in the borough. The strategy brings in departments across the council as well as external partners such as the police. You can view the [new strategy here](#).

The strategy is formed of five key priorities: to raise awareness and implement coordinated partnership working; to prevent VAWG through early intervention; to support victims; to hold perpetrators of VAWG to account; and to improve the safety of women and girls.

We are also proud to announce Merton Council has been awarded White Ribbon Accreditation and we would like to encourage you to promote White Ribbon within your organisation.

<https://www.whiteribbon.org.uk/what-we-do>

White Ribbon looks to stop violence against women before it starts by raising awareness of the social norms surrounding men and the part these norms play in harassment, abuse and violence towards women. For further information about White Ribbon, and Merton’s involvement, please click [here](#).

### **Anti-Bullying Best Practice Toolkit**

In November, the MSCP launched its new Anti-Bullying Best Practice Toolkit, which has been created to support schools and other professionals prevent and deal effectively with bullying. The toolkit has been developed by the Merton Anti Bullying Operation Group with representatives from the Virtual Behaviour Service, the Virtual School, School Improvement, Youth Participation as well as staff and pupils from Merton’s primary and secondary schools.

During the launch event on Thursday 10 November attendees heard from the Anti-Bullying Operational group as well as children and young people talking about bullying and the impact can have on them. The toolkit provides an overview of bullying and the types of bullying that young people may face. It also provides advice on how to support children who have been bullied and are targets of bullying.

An accompanying Guidance for Schools document provides additional information on the prevention of bullying, reporting of bullying, response and interventions. There is also model Anti-Bullying Policy that can be used as the basis for a school anti-bullying policy. Download the Anti-Bullying Toolkit from the MSCP website [here](#) and the guidance for schools [here](#).

## **Upcoming Training**

The table below shows up-and-coming training sessions for multi-agency partners. Please visit the dedicated MSCP [training page](#) to book places. All training listed below is virtual.

<b>Training</b>	<b>Date and Time</b>
<i>Effective Support for Families in Merton</i> <b>(Fully booked – see next session 16 March 2023)</b>	Tuesday 6 December 14:00-16:00
<i>Launch and Learn Session – ICON</i>	Wednesday 7 December 11:30-12:30
<i>Online Safety</i>	Thursday 12 January 09:30-11:30
<i>Domestic Violence and Abuse</i>	Tuesday 17 January 09:30-12:00
<i>Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): Managing Allegations Against Staff</i>	Wednesday 25 January 10:00-13:00
<i>Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty for Children and Young People</i>	Thursday 26 January 09:30-12:30

## **Parenting Programmes**

The Merton Early Years and Family Wellbeing Service aims to enable those working in children’s social care to identify appropriate parenting programmes for families they are working with. Professionals can contact us for further advice/referrals via email at [fsd@merton.gov.uk](mailto:fsd@merton.gov.uk) or alternatively visit our website for more information at [www.merton.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/family-support-and-parenting](http://www.merton.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/family-support-and-parenting)

The table below shows the list of courses available to families and who, specifically, they are aimed at:

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Description</b>
<i>English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)</i>	Under 1 year	Parents with a child in age range with little or no English Language
<i>Baby Early Learning Together (ELT)</i> 5 weeks	0-8 months	Baby Massage with key messages covering the importance of early brain development, communication, and bonding – for new, first-time parents
<i>Baby Incredible years (IY)</i> 10 weeks	0-12 months	Understanding and responding to baby’s cues, the importance of communication and interactions with baby, how and where to go for support and advice.
<i>Toddler Early Learning Together (ELT)</i> 6 weeks	8-36 months	Understanding a child’s development. The importance of play and communication and providing ideas to enhance the home learning environment.
<i>Preschool Early Learning Together (ELT)</i> 6 weeks	19-36 months	Understanding a child’s development and developing school readiness in preparation for nursery or preschool.

<i>Attentive Parenting Incredible Years (IY) 6 weeks</i>	2-5 years	Support to understand child's development, the importance of communication and strategies to manage challenging behaviour.
<i>Empowering Parents, Empowering Communities (EPEC) 6 weeks</i>	5-11 years	Practical support to manage emotional and behavioral development

### **ESOL Courses**

The Learn English in Merton (LEiM) project is a referral service for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses in the borough. Potential learners can come to one of LEiM's referral and advice sessions where their level of English can be assessed, and they can then be signposted to the most relevant class. The advice sessions take place at the following times and places:

<b>Date and Time</b>	<b>Place</b>
Mondays – 1:00pm – 2:00pm	New Horizons Centre, Pollard's Hill
Mondays – 3:30pm – 4:30pm	Vestry Hall, Mitcham
Wednesdays – 1:00pm – 2:00pm	Wimbledon Library

For more information regarding this service, please contact [advice@learnenglishmerton.org](mailto:advice@learnenglishmerton.org), or visit [www.learnenglishinmerton.org](http://www.learnenglishinmerton.org)

### **Merton Hate Crime Advice Surgeries**

Merton Hate Crime Advice Surgeries are a safe space to discuss hate crime and how to report it anonymously. Members of the public can get free advice with no appointment necessary. Surgeries are currently being run over the phone on the second Tuesday of every month, from 12pm to 1pm. Please call 020 8545 4146. Upcoming dates for this year and next are as follows:

Tuesday 13 December 2022

Tuesday 10 January 2023

Tuesday 14 February 2023

## **Regional / National News**

### **Updates to the London Safeguarding Children's Procedures**

This is a reminder that the following updates have recently been made to the London Safeguarding Children Procedures:

- Chapter CP6, Children Moving Across Borough Boundaries has been re-written. Please read the whole chapter [here](#).
- There have also been other amendments to chapters CP2, 3, 4, and 7, as well as chapter PA 2. You can read these amendments [here](#).

## **National Reports, Reviews and Guidance**

### **Ofsted Updates**

- A new [SEND Inspection Framework](#) will launch from early 2023, following consultation earlier this year. Ofsted and Care Quality Commission will continue to inspect local area partnerships together, but with a broader focus on outcomes for children and young people with SEND, rather than the previous focus on implementation of the 2014 reforms.
- As of 29 November, there is a new [Joint Targeted Area Inspection of the Multi-agency Response to Children and Families Who Need Help](#), which refers to targeted early help practice and the interface with statutory children in need support. This is another multi-agency inspection, with three inspectorates involved – Ofsted, Care Quality Commission and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services. Preparations for the partnership will be overseen by the Early Help & Neglect MSCP Sub-Group.
- Ofsted is introducing a new, separate judgement to the [framework for inspecting local authority children's services \(ILACS\)](#), about the experiences and progress of care leavers. This follows their recent consultation on changes to the framework, which saw over 90% of respondents support plans for a specific focus on care leavers.

### **Updated Guidance for Safeguarding Partners**

There have been recent updates to the national Child Safeguarding Practice Review Guidance for Safeguarding Partners.

- The first paper explores the current guidance on the management of [bruising in non-mobile infants](#) in the light of published evidence and variations in practice.
- The second paper sets out findings from a [thematic analysis of rapid reviews and LCSPRs where domestic abuse featured](#).

The guidance is particularly aimed at those involved in local child safeguarding practice reviews (LCSPRs) including reviewers, review panel members, and those responsible for decision-making around reviews. You can find a link to the full guidance [here](#).

### **Girl Guiding Survey**

A new survey has revealed that 19% of girls and young women say they did not feel safe in school, with girls and young women of colour less likely to feel safe at school than their white counterparts (65% compared with 70%). The poll by the Girl Guiding charity also revealed stark regional differences, with 22% of girls and young women in the north aged 11 to 16 blaming fear of sexual harassment for holding them back at school. The figure was 16% in London and the south. Similarly, 26% in the north of England said gender stereotyping was holding them back at school, compared with 18% in London and the south. The problem was particularly acute among LGBTQ+ girls and young women, with 37% complaining about gender stereotyping at school. Girlguiding's chief executive, Angela Salt, said: "It is shocking how many girls and young women, some as young as 11 years old, don't feel safe at school, on social media or out in public. Our research shows just how common discrimination, stereotyping and sexism is in our society and how unsurprisingly this creates barriers to happiness, confidence, and success."

## Girls Speak: Pushed Out Left Out

Girls Speak is a national research project run by the Agenda Alliance that focuses on the lives of girls and young women with multiple unmet needs and their experiences with accessing services. Their report, Pushed Out Left Out, was published in November 2022 and researched, through interviews, the service experiences of 36 young women aged between 13 and 26 with multiple unmet needs. It found that girls and young women faced markedly different risks to that of boys and young men, such as sexual abuse, domestic violence and development of depression and anxiety. It also found that statutory services are often inaccessible to girls and young women with multiple unmet needs due to barriers such as thresholds and long waiting lists. Please click [here](#) to read the full report and its recommendations.

## National Safeguarding Review into Children with Disabilities and Complex Health Needs

Phase 1 of the Independent National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel's review into safeguarding children with disabilities and complex health needs in residential settings was published in late October. The report is available to read in more detail [here](#).

Its aim was to make sense of how and why a significant number of children with disabilities and complex health needs came to suffer very serious abuse and neglect whilst living in three privately provided residential settings. It brings into sharp relief how the voices and experiences of this group of children are too often marginalised, misrecognised, and hidden from public sight.

As part of Phase 2 of this review, Merton Council has reviewed the small number of children's cases this applied to locally. Findings highlighted good practice with some areas for improvement, and the learning will be shared with the partnership in the new year.

## Important contacts

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

Email: [MertonSCP@merton.gov.uk](mailto:MertonSCP@merton.gov.uk)

Telephone: 020 8545 4866

To contact the Children and Families Hub:

Email: [candfhub@merton.gov.uk](mailto:candfhub@merton.gov.uk)

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

## Forward Look

**Further 2023 meeting dates will be circulated to all partners when available.**

### January 2023

*Thursday 12 January (12:30 – 13:00) - Executive Meeting*

*Monday 23 January (10:30 – 12:00) - Subgroup Chairs*

*Wednesday 25 January (11:00 – 13:00) - Domestic Abuse and Think Family Subgroup*

### February 2023

*Thursday 2 February (11:00 – 11:30) - Executive Meeting*

*Monday 27 February (10:30 – 12:00) - Subgroup Chairs*