

## Merton Safeguarding Children Partnership News Bulletin – September 2023

### Welcome and PIP Team News

Welcome to the September's edition of the MSCP News Bulletin! Autumn has now approached, time for us to start pulling out our coats again. Please have a browse of our personal training courses that we have on offer, over the next couple of months as well as a range of local publications and national news. As always, please let us know of anything that can be included in the bulletins via emailing [mertonscp@merton.gov.uk](mailto:mertonscp@merton.gov.uk).

### Welcome and Goodbyes

**Young Scrutineer Recruitment:** We are delighted to welcome our Young Scrutineer, Beth Stephens. Beth brings in a wealth of experience from her work with Merton's Youth Parliament and other commitments within the borough. She will be getting stuck in straight away supporting Sarah Lawrence, our Independent Scrutineer, with a piece of scrutiny on family and social networks during September and October.

## Local News

### **Launch of Merton Family Hub**

The Merton Family Hub is a place where families and young people can access the support, help and advice they need, for all stages of family life. As the purpose of the hub is to connect families and young people with access to help, when and where they need it, the Merton Family Hub will not be one single place. Instead, it will be made up of a mix of Family Hub buildings, online information and other sites such as Children's Centres, Youth Centres and Libraries.

In August, hundreds of local families and young people helped celebrate Family Hub Play Day by joining free events at Phipps Bridge Youth Centre, Church Road Children's Centre, Acacia Adventure Playground and Acacia Children's Centre.

More information on Merton Family Hub is also available on our [website](#) and you can get in touch with the Family Hub team at [familyhubs@merton.gov.uk](mailto:familyhubs@merton.gov.uk) if you have any questions or queries.



## Contextual Harm Awareness Day

Will take place from 1-5pm on Friday 29th September 2023 at the Chaucer Centre. Please contact [Rebecca.Freeman@merton.gov.uk](mailto:Rebecca.Freeman@merton.gov.uk) to book your place and see more details on the flyer below:



Contextual Harm  
Awareness Day 23.pd

## ICON Week

The third annual ICON week (25 to 29 September 2023) is here to raise awareness of infant crying and how to cope to support parents/carers and prevent serious injury, illness and even death of young babies because of Abusive Head Trauma that happens when someone shakes a baby. ICON was launched in Merton in December 2022. Many webinars are taking place throughout the week and are open to everyone.



For more information and joining instructions, please visit [www.iconcope.org/iconweek2023](http://www.iconcope.org/iconweek2023)

You can also find out more on the MSCP website: [Abusive Head Trauma and ICON](#)

## Final few days for Merton Children & Young people survey

Merton's Participation & Engagement team have been working hard to gather feedback from children and young people over the summer to help with the refresh of several strategies including SEND, Early Help, and the Children and Young People plan. We have already received over 1200 responses from children and young people on the online survey and are excited to share the findings over the coming months. **The survey closes on Tuesday 3 October, so this is a final call to promote to children and young people to help us get as many responses as possible!**

- [Children and Young People Survey](#)

## 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.

Training	Date and Time
<b>September 2023</b>	
<i>Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) training: Managing allegations against staff - Virtual session</i>	Thursday 28 September 2023 (10:00 - 13:00)
<i>Faith-Based Abuse and Forced Marriage</i>	Friday 29 September 2023 (10.00 - 15.30)

<b>October 2023</b>	
<i>Forced Marriage, Honour-Based Violence/Abuse and Female Genital Mutilation</i>	Tuesday 10 October 2023 (10:00 - 12:00)
<i>Domestic Violence and Abuse - Virtual Session</i>	Tuesday 17 October 2023 (9:30 - 12:00)
<b>November 2023</b>	
<i>Relationship-Based Practice In Merton</i>	Wednesday 1 November 2023 (09.30 - 13.00)
<i>Multi Agency Safeguarding Training</i>	Wednesday 8 November 2023 (09.30 - 12.30)
<i>Contextual Safeguarding - All-Day Training</i>	Thursday 16 November 2023 (09.30 - 16.30)
<i>Substance Misuse/Exploitation Training</i>	Tuesday 21 November 2023 (09.30 - 15.30)
<i>Evidence Based Interventions to support Parents experiencing conflict in their relationships</i>	Wednesday 29 November 2023 (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) 5 weeks</i>	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) 10 weeks</i>	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) 6 weeks</i>	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) 6 weeks</i>	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 behavior.
<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 are as follows:

## **LSCP Training**

The LSCP is the London Safeguarding Children Partnership, and they provide some free training advertised [here on their website](#).

## **South London Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) network events**

- 19 October - Lunch and Learn - Understanding the role of the ISVA: [sign up here](#)
- 22 November - Lunch and Learn - Benefits of holistic health assessments: [sign up here](#)

## **Domestic abuse and vicarious trauma training**

The training will take place on Wednesday 11 October 2023 - 11.00am - 12.30pm (Online). See more details and how to register on the flyer below:



domestic abuse  
vicarious-trauma train

## **Free online training**

Thrive LDN has developed a couple of free, concise, online training modules to support individuals and organisations:

- [Trauma-Informed Practice training – Thrive LDN](#) - The training supports an understanding of how trauma influences and shapes the lives of those it touches regardless of previous knowledge or role.

- [#ZeroSuicideLDN – Thrive LDN](#) -The training takes around 20 minutes to complete and is designed to help people identify warning signs and feel comfortable having conversations about suicide with friends and family.

The National FGM Centre are offering a free short e-learning on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). This tool will enable you to think holistically about FGM and will take you through key information about the practice, its context within harmful practices, and will also test you along the way.

- [FGM E-Learning Course – National FGM Centre](#)

## Regional / National News

### **Children England News**

#### **Government confirms 2-year plan to boost access to PE and sport**

The Department for Education has said that the [School sport and activity action plan](#) will support teachers and schools to deliver 2 hours of high-quality PE and provide competitive and extra-curricular opportunities to both girls and boys.

#### **Launch of FFC pathfinder programme**

The Families First for Children (FFC) pathfinder programme was announced in February 2023 as part of the government's children's social care implementation strategy, [Stable homes, built on love](#). It responds to recommendations from the [Independent review of children's social care](#), the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel report on [child protection in England](#) and the [Competitions and Market Authority's market study of children's social care provision](#).

#### **Information for local authorities on family finding, befriending and mentoring**

The government has announced that £30 million of funding will be made available over 2 financial years to increase the number of local authorities with family finding, befriending and mentoring programmes for children in care and care leavers. These programmes will help children in care and care leavers to identify and connect with the important people in their lives and create safe, stable, loving relationships.

#### **Care experience survey**

The Children's Commissioner for England has launched a survey focusing on whether or not children in care and care experienced people think care experience should become a protected characteristic, and why. The Commissioner is also interested in hearing from others, including adults who work with care leavers. Those interested can have their say [here](#).

#### **Government blog on school attendance**

The Department of Education has published a blog post on *ghost children*- a term used to describe children who are not in regular school attendance- where they detail the ways the government are supporting schools to boost attendance, as set out in their attendance strategy and [guidance](#). The MSCP are supporting local work to boost school attendance, through the Prevention & Early Intervention subgroup.

### [Children England and 4in10 join early years coalition](#)

The Early Education and Childcare Coalition (EECC), which officially launches in September, brings together 30 high profile organisations striving to establish an early education & childcare system that works for all. The coalition was co-founded by sector-leading experts and voices- some of whom can be viewed in EECC's promotional video [here](#).

4in10, meanwhile, who are running [research](#) on the childcare crisis, are calling for participants to take part in one-to-one interviews with Research and Learning officer, Emily Baker. The interviews would focus on parents' recent or current experiences of using government-funded schemes offered in the form of funded hours as well as their experience seeking early years education and childcare for their young children when self-funding. To learn more or express an interest in participating, please email Emily at [emily.barker@childrenengland.org.uk](mailto:emily.barker@childrenengland.org.uk)

Initiatives include a data visualisation tool which, they claim, *make it easier for teachers to analyse attendance*, expanding the Attendance Hubs programme, as well as the Attendance Mentors programme- delivered by children's charity Barnardo's.

### [London Challenge Poverty Week \(LCPW\) 2023](#)

As we head toward autumn, London Challenge Poverty Week 2023- coordinated by [4in10: London's Child Poverty Network](#)- is now rapidly approaching. From 16th-22nd October, London-based charities will come together to highlight the injustice of poverty gripping the city. 4in10 have organised a number of [free training](#) events, as well as a shareable [fact sheet](#). See [here](#) for how to get involved.

### [Request a print copy of the ChildFair State Vision](#)

There are still a few copies of the [ChildFair State Vision](#) available. You can use Children's England's [online form](#) to request a free copy and tell them how you plan to use it. They will do their best to send a copy to anyone who can use it to help make services more 'childfair', in whatever small or significant way.

## 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 – MSCP Meetings

### October 2023

Thursday 5 October 23 (12:30-13:00) - Executive Meeting

Monday 16 October 23 (14:00-17:00) - MCSP Meeting (Full Partnership)

*Monday 23 October 23 (10:30am-12:00pm) - Sub Group Chairs*

*November 2023*

*Thursday 2 November 23 (12:30-13:00) - Executive Meeting*

*Monday 6 November 23 (9:00-11:00am) - Prevention & Early Intervention*

*Tuesday 7 November 23 (11:00am-1:00pm) - Policy & Training Group Subgroup*

*Monday 20 November 23 (10:30 -12:30pm) - Effective Safeguarding & Support*

*Tuesday 21 November 23 (2:00-4:00pm) - Promote & Protect Young People Meeting*

*Tuesday 28 November 23 (2:00pm-4:00pm) - Quality Assurance & Practice Review Meeting*