

WINTER NEWSLETTER 2020

Foreword from the Independent Chair of the RSCP

Welcome to the Winter edition of the RSCP newsletter.

The Partnership's first meeting of 2020 took place on 14 January, and on the next page you will find a summary of the issues discussed and some of the outcomes. We were particularly pleased to welcome to the meeting Seb Adjei-Addoh, the new Detective Superintendent for safeguarding in the East Area BCU, and the strong commitment Seb has already made to partnership work.

The highlight of the meeting was the opportunity to hear from three young people who attend Redbridge Alternative Provision – David, Kyara and Harmain - who told us from experience what it's really like as a young person getting involved with our multi-agency safeguarding system. They spoke warmly about some of the positive experiences they have had, but they were also rightly very challenging. They told us how frustrating it is when professionals seem to think they know all about them before they've even met – 'people just make assumptions about you because they've read the file'. They spoke about how 'assessment' can feel like it's just working through the boxes that need to be ticked. Over and over again they emphasised the importance of building up trust – 'the more time you spend with someone, the more you trust them'. And they were very straight about how clumsy professionals can occasionally be when they're trying to develop a relationship – 'I've just met you and would you like to come to Thorpe Park with me?'. Perhaps most direct was the answer one young person gave to the question, 'Where do you feel safe?' – 'We don't feel safe anywhere.' While it was clear that professionals need to do more to

help young people to understand the system, the real challenge that came out of the session was asking us to think about ways in which we might need to change the system.

The meeting also agreed [Terms of Reference](#) for the new Redbridge Safeguarding Children Partnership. These include a headline responsibility for identifying and taking action on local priorities - challenges which, within the wider BHR Partnership, are particular to Redbridge. A small Executive group has recently met to begin drafting proposals on what those priorities might be for 2020/21. Early ideas, to inform proposals to the next RSCP meeting in early May, include the need to complete the work started this year on transitional safeguarding, to try and make sure that vulnerable and exploited young people don't fall off the cliff edge of support just because they've reached their eighteenth birthday; some concentrated work to tackle the challenges presented by the large number of young people in the care of other local authorities placed in Redbridge; work on the interface between safeguarding and issues like ADHD and autism - a potentially hidden area of need; and a continuing focus on the issue of consanguinity and its risks.

We would very much welcome your suggestions on the issues the Partnership should focus on in 2020/21 – in the context of already high performance, where are our biggest challenges for further improvement? We would really like to hear from you at Redbridgescp@redbridge.gov.uk.

At each meeting the Partnership reviews multi-agency performance data for the most recent quarter. Two things leapt out from the Quarter 2 data (to the end of September 2019). The first was the steep and accelerating increase in demand: the

number of referrals to social care in the first six months of 2019/20 were up by 25% compared to the same period the year before, and for the first time in several years the number of children on protection plans has gone up – from 249 at the end of March 2019 to 325 six months later. The other thing, though, was the outstanding way in which measurable performance on a range of indicators has been sustained or even improved from an already high level. In the first half of the year for example, despite this 25% rise in referrals, 95.3% of assessments were completed within the statutory timescale of 45 working days, 98.3% of initial child protection case conferences were held within the required timescale, and 95.7% of child protection reviews were completed on time. This continued level of performance, in every case far better than either national or statistical neighbours' figures, is a huge tribute to the skill and dedication of frontline practitioners, managers and business support staff.

Regards

John

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Board Report

Feedback from the RSCP Meeting – 14 January 2020

Summary of items discussed by the Board

Among other items, the Partnership:

- Heard from a group of young people about their experience of the safeguarding and welfare system – “telling it like it is”. Some of the key messages are described in the [Chair’s Foreword](#).
- Reviewed progress against the four priorities which the Partnership has agreed for 2019/20: safeguarding vulnerable adolescents; support to schools and other educational settings; learning from practice; and learning from children, young people, and families. There is a summary of some of this work on [page 3](#) of this newsletter.
- Considered safeguarding performance data for the first six months of 2019/20. The steep and accelerating demand on children’s social care, and the continuing high performance in the face of that demand, are discussed in the [Chair’s Foreword](#).
- Received an update from the Council’s Corporate Director of People on early discussions and developments within the new BHR Safeguarding Partnership.
- Agreed terms of reference for the [Redbridge Safeguarding Children’s Partnership](#), and a statement of the values and principles that will underpin its work.
- Received and discussed an update on the One Front Door Project. In the first phase the project is concentrating on bringing together entry points and promoting more integrated working between different aspects of services for children – children’s social care, Families Together Hub (early help services), and early years. In the next phase (2020/21), the project will develop proposals for integrating adult safeguarding contacts and referrals into new MASH arrangements. For more information on the One Front Door Project, contact Change@redbridge.gov.uk
- Received and discussed a report on progress and developments within the Redbridge Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service (EWMHS), formerly CAMHS, launched in June 2018. The Partnership noted a range of improvements in the accessibility of the service, which is now accepting all referrals through the Wellbeing Hub and offering initial telephone assessment and screening for risk within two weeks of referral. There is a steady increase in the number of referrals received. The support to schools offered by the STAR (Support Time and Recovery) workers has been particularly appreciated. However there remains a high level of vacancies within the service: even with the use of agency staff, 25% of posts are currently vacant. The average waiting time from referral to treatment in the period July to September 2019 was 13.6 weeks compared to 7.2 weeks in the same period in 2018. More information about the EWMHS can be found at on the [NELFT website](#).
- Received and discussed a report on progress against the action plan to deliver the Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Strategy agreed by the former LSCB in January 2019. The Partnership was pleased to note considerable achievement against the specific actions laid out in the plan. The meeting agreed that there was a need for a clearer evaluation of the Strategy’s impact, to come to a future meeting.
- Welcomed a report on the development of the Mapping Exploitation Tool, which will deliver a dynamic and interactive profile of child sexual and criminal exploitation in Redbridge – who the children are, the nature and location of their exploitation and vulnerability, where they live, where they go to school, and who is associated with whom, including any gang affiliation. There have been delays in development, largely due to recruitment issues, but it is hoped the tool will be in use by the summer.

Priority 1

Safeguarding adolescents

The BHR Partnership has tasked a working group to develop proposals for a co-ordinated BHR-wide approach to tackling county lines. At borough level, we now have a single strategic group to oversee and co-ordinate work to address both the criminal and sexual exploitation of young people – the Multi-Agency Sexual and Criminal Exploitation Panel. A new service initiative, Families are Forever in Redbridge, offering a family therapy approach to work with young people aged between 10 and 14 at risk of exploitation, was launched on 28 January. For more information, see page 4 of this newsletter. Work has also been undertaken to pilot bespoke contextual safeguarding plans for individual schools.

Jointly with the Redbridge Safeguarding Adults Board (RSAB), the Partnership is developing proposals for an effective response to the needs of young adults at risk of exploitation, recognising that adolescence as a developmental phase does not suddenly end on the eighteenth birthday. Terms of reference for the project have been drawn up, and a task and finish group with representation from across the People Directorate and other agencies is currently being established. It is hoped that the group will begin meeting in February.

Priority 2

Supporting schools and other education providers

In spite of all the pressures they face, schools have sustained active participation in the Safeguarding Children Partnership.

The Partnership's Business Manager has engaged with Designated Safeguarding Leads to discuss the results of a recent RSCP survey which highlighted a number of safeguarding issues in relation to which schools sometimes identify a need for more support from partners – for example, neglect, physical chastisement, peer-on-peer abuse and cyber bullying.

Schools' participation in the multi-agency training programme has increased year by year – up from 78 attendances in 2016/17 to 205 in 2018/19.

We are urgently seeking a school representative on the RSCP Training Sub Group to make sure that training needs for school staff in relation to multi-agency safeguarding practice continue to be identified and responded to – see page 6.

Priority 3

Learning from Practice

The Learning and Improvement Sub Group have developed a model for multi-agency Learning Reviews – reviewing cases which do not meet the threshold for notification as a serious incident or for a Child Safeguarding Practice Review, but which nevertheless offer important opportunities for learning and improvement. It is being piloted in two Learning Reviews, both considering cases of teenage suicide, which will be reported to the Partnership at its next meeting. At BHR level, a draft Quality Assurance Framework is in development. It will include proposals for a multi-agency thematic case audit programme across BHR, focusing in the first instance on domestic violence, and for a themed BHR Practitioner Learning Event to be held twice a year. A proposed BHR-wide approach to the review of serious incidents and cases, with a common template for all agencies across BHR to use in collating information, is also in development.

Priority 4

Learning from children, young people & families

At each of its last two meetings the RSCP has heard directly from young people about their priorities and their experiences.

One of those priorities presented to our October meeting was a campaign to end period poverty. Recent Government announcements on the [provision of free sanitary products in schools](#) are encouraging.

Launch of New Service

In October 2019 Functional Family Therapy (FFT) were awarded £781,055 from the Youth Endowment Fund to provide an evidenced based intensive family therapy to young people aged 10-14 involved in gangs or at risk of criminal exploitation.



Through the fund the service will be delivering FFT, a licensed evidenced based model developed in the USA. The service provides up to 6 months of intensive family therapy delivered in the family home. It aims to develop an understanding of how the family functions, their strengths and to develop ways to support their son or daughter away from the risk of gangs and criminal exploitation.



The service will be delivered by 3 trained practitioners who will operate from the Family Intervention Team (FIT) based at Station Road, Barkingside. In this way they will work alongside social workers who work with the most complex cases to prevent children coming into care.

The social workers are collocated with a range of commissioned and funded services including St Giles who deliver one to one intervention to address criminal and sexual exploitation and to coordinate work for those with gang affiliation. It is anticipated that the FFT workers will start working with families from March 2020.



On 27 January 2020 the new service was officially launched. Attendees had the opportunity to learn more about how the FIT works, the co-located services available and how the FFT service will be incorporated.

The launch included a presentation by Helen Midouhas, MS Ed, LPC and FFT Implementation Specialist from Seattle who explained how the FFT model developed and its international success (see above photo).

RSCP Training Programme Calendar

To keep fully informed about RSCP events, do follow us on ...



@RedbridgeSCP

Below are the [upcoming learning events](#) that still have places available from the new [RSCP Training Programme 2019 - 2020](#). These multi-agency courses reflect the safeguarding priorities in Redbridge and compliment training already available within individual agencies. These are great for both professional and team development. You can see more about each event by clicking the links. Sign up is via our online [Nomination Form](#). Courses are £35 for half a day and £65 for a full day. There is no charge for attendance if you work or volunteer in the voluntary and community sector.

"Training was fantastic. Everything was made to be accessible - everything talked and discussed, could be applied easily in the work place."

"I also enjoyed the opportunity to work with the other delegates, who gave valuable input and expressed interest in my organisation and great willingness to work together. I was impressed by their knowledge, dedication and commitment."

Course	Date
Managing Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers	13/02/2020
Working with Young People in Relation to Gangs/Knife Crime	25/02/2020
Safeguarding Through Relationship and Sex Education	27/02/2020
Safeguarding Children who go Missing	05/03/2020
Safeguarding Children in a Digital World and Online Bullying	10/03/2020
Working with Race, Culture and Belief Systems in the Context of Professional Curiosity	19/03/2020
Understanding Drug Use and the Impact on Safeguarding Children	26/03/2020

Working in Diverse Communities

Published case reviews highlight that key to good safeguarding practice is the knowledge and confidence to work with families from different cultures and religions.

A lack of understanding and the cultural context of families can lead to professionals overlooking situations that may put family members at risk; whilst the desire to be culturally-sensitive can result in professionals being reluctant to challenge or accepting lower standards of care.

Our course, [Working with Race, Culture and Belief Systems in the Context of Professional Curiosity](#), being held on **19 March**, aims to enhance practitioners' knowledge, skills and understanding of how race, culture and/or faith and belief systems can impact on our safeguarding children practice.

The course will also focus on key learning from Serious Case Reviews, the roles and responsibilities of practitioners, the legal framework and how to identify risk factors. You can book your place on this popular course [on-line here](#).

Working in Education?

Looking for a chance to influence safeguarding practice?

Those working in Education are key partners in safeguarding children. Whilst no single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances, educators have the most contact with children outside the home.

As the vigilant and trusted adults beyond the family they are well placed to listen to children. School and college staff are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, and prevent concerns from escalating, ([Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019](#)).

We have had a great response to our efforts to engage education professionals in our training courses, demonstrating their commitment to offering safe spaces for children and young people and to be responsive to a range of issues such as the challenges of peer on peer abuse and child and adolescent mental health.

The RSCB Training Subgroup works to support learning and development in safeguarding, including the oversight of our annual [RSCP Training Programme](#) and enjoys participation from a range of multi-agency partners. We are currently seeking a new representative from Education in Redbridge.

The Sub Group holds a two hour meeting four times a year, in term time, in central Ilford.

If you would like the opportunity to offer your insight and experience, alongside a range of multi-agency professionals, or would just like to learn more about being a member, please email Amanda, RSCP Training Manager at amanda.jones@redbridge.gov.uk.

County Lines – Free Film Screenings & Workshops



The writer/director [Henry Blake](#) has produced a short film based on a 14 year old, Tyler Hughes, who is sent to a coastal town to sell drugs. He finds himself trapped in a series of complex and dangerous situations with the adults that are exploiting him.

The film is informed by Henry's work with survivors of criminal exploitation and inspired by the different stories that have been shared with him. The film is followed by a question and answer workshop. You can read a short interview about the film that Henry Blake gave to the [Evening Standard](#) last year.

The event is free to front line staff working with children, young people and families across Redbridge, Barking and Dagenham and Havering. It will be of particular interest to social workers, family support workers, police, youth offending staff, youth workers and school staff.

The film will be shown on several different dates in February and March at the Broadway Theatre, Barking, IG11 7LS. Bookings can be made via [Eventbrite](#). Any questions can be addressed to the organisers via CSP@lbbd.gov.uk.

What happened when Andy and Amanda went to a Parent Zone Resilient Families Online Safety Workshop



We learnt about how safeguarding in a digital age depends on good parenting, as well as supportive work from schools

and other agencies, and what Parent Zone are doing to help get this message out there.

They have loads of information on [their website](#) that can help parents navigate what at times seems like a tricky area.

We know a lot of our schools' partners have also had training from Parent Zone and we'd encourage you all to use your membership as much as you can while you've got it.

To those education partners who haven't explored the opportunities presented by the organisation, we'd encourage you to take part in what you can!

Most of all, the message we'd pass on to our partners is that if someone is delivering 'good enough' parenting in the 'real world', they have everything they need to do it in the 'digital world' too.

We as professionals can help them by reinforcing their good parenting but too often we disempower them by telling them to fear the unknown and making gaps in knowledge feel like unbridgeable chasms.

If we can provide some positive reinforcement and help parents feel like they can do it, we'll be helping them make online spaces safer for the children of Redbridge.

As well as the information for parents above, Parent Zone also has a [dedicated page for schools](#). We also have some information for professionals on the topic on [our website](#) and we'd like to hear from you if there are things you find helpful or things you'd like to see there.

Finally, while we're on the subject of keeping children safe online, we still have some places left on our [Safeguarding Children in a Digital World and Online Bullying course](#) on 10 March 2020, delivered by Amanda Jackson, e-Safety Lead at London Borough of Havering and we'd encourage you to come along. You can [book your place here](#). We look forward to hearing from you!

Stop press Redbridge Safeguarding Adults Board is recruiting Lay Members

The **Redbridge Safeguarding Adults Board (RSAB)** is looking to recruit voluntary Lay Members to join its Board.

If you know someone who lives in Redbridge, is not employed by any of our partner agencies, and has an interest in the work that organisations in Redbridge can do to support adults at risk, please ask them to check out the advert and role profile on:

mylife.redbridge.gov.uk/redbridge-homepage/categories/keeping-safe/redbridge-safeguarding-adults-board/

The Safeguarding Adults Board now has a Twitter account so you can follow them [@RedbridgeSab](#)



Serious Case Review (SCR) Report – Baby ‘T’

On 14 January 2020, Redbridge Local Safeguarding Children Board published a [report](#) of a Serious Case Review on the case of a child named in the report as Baby T. The independent reviewer, author of the report, is David Mellor, a retired senior police officer.

Baby T died on 5 October 2017 when she was eleven months old. She was being illegally childminded when she sustained her fatal injury. Her carer, a resident of Barking and Dagenham, was convicted of her manslaughter in July 2019. Baby T’s mother was a Vietnamese national who was at the time awaiting the outcome of an asylum application.

The carer, referred to in this report as Female C, was also Vietnamese. She had overstayed her original visa and was awaiting a decision on application for leave to remain in the UK, with in the meantime no right to work and no eligibility for financial support from public funds.

The Redbridge Local Safeguarding Children Board expressed its heartfelt condolences to Baby T’s mother for her devastating loss. No blame attaches to her for her baby’s death. However, in spite of her mother’s care, Baby T was vulnerable by virtue of her circumstances.

The review focused on the experiences of mother and child through the UK asylum system, and the degree to which practitioners and agencies appreciated and sought to mitigate the potential risks to the baby as the infant child of an asylum seeker who had mental health issues, who was quite isolated, who had limited access to resources, and who experienced being moved at short notice from one part of the country to another.

It paints a graphic and detailed picture of those experiences. It finds that the Home Office lost sight of Baby T and her mother for ten out of the eleven months of the baby’s life, and was not able to fully meet its statutory obligation to carry out its functions in a way that takes into account the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the UK.

The review details many examples where agencies that came into contact with mother and baby made considerable efforts to help and support her, in ways that were, in the words

used by the independent reviewer to describe one particular incident, “resourceful, caring and kind”. It also however identifies a pattern in which agencies would touch their lives for a brief period but were unable to sustain ongoing involvement in a way that fully met mother’s needs for support and fully took account of Baby T’s potential vulnerability.

The report makes a number of recommendations, to the Home Office, to individual agencies, and to the newly established Safeguarding Partnership in Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge. It also recommends that the Government should introduce legislation which would require the Home Office to inform a local authority of the details of any child placed or dispersed to their area with an asylum seeker parent or parents.

Currently, highly vulnerable children can be placed by a public agency in a particular area and there is no guarantee that the agency with the lead responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children – local authority children’s social care services – will even know of their existence.

In the press release issued on publication of the report, John Goldup, Independent Chair of the former LSCB and now of the RSCP, said: “The review does not purport to offer solutions to the huge challenges of the asylum system, but it does recommend some improvements as they affect children.

What it does do, though, is bring to life the human reality that lies behind bureaucratic terms such as “asylum seeker” and “dispersal”. For Baby T, that reality was a disrupted and, sadly, a very short life.”

The full report can be accessed via the [RSCP website](#).


Contact Information

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Website: www.redbridgescp.org.uk

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RSCP Training

RedbridgeSCP.Training@redbridge.gov.uk

Requests, enquiries and feedback can be made using the on-line [Contact Form](#).

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

LADO@redbridge.gov.uk

Tel: 020 8708 5350

Mobile: 07584 127461

Child Protection Referrals

Tel: 020 8708 3885 (Office Hours)

Tel: 020 8708 5897 (Evenings and weekends)

CPAT.Referrals@redbridge.gov.uk

Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)

Nem-tr.CDOP@nhs.net

Tel: 020 8708 3455/5961

Mobile: 07701295120



Your views count!

We want your views on safeguarding issues that are important to YOU. Articles should be 200 – 300 words in length. We also welcome feedback, comments and suggestions for future content. Please contact Lesley Perry, RSCP Manager, via RedbridgeSCP@redbridge.gov.uk or on 020 8708 5282 or 07775399017. Our next edition – Spring 2020 – will be published in May 2020.

Additionally, young people can share their views on the safeguarding issues that concern them at any time through completion of our [on-line survey](#). There is also [one](#) for parents and carers.