

SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2020

Foreword from the Independent Chair of the RSCP

Welcome to the Summer 2020 edition of the RSCP newsletter.

I am more than usually delighted to introduce this edition of the RSCP newsletter. It's been a long gap! Since the Partnership met and reported in January, everybody's world has been turned upside down by the terrible impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Services have faced huge challenges but staff at all levels in all agencies have responded in a way that can only be described as heroic, and the achievements of all the staff and volunteers involved in going the extra mile and beyond have been quite extraordinary. Inevitably, some colleagues will also have been touched in their personal lives by the tragic consequences of the pandemic, and all members of the Partnership want to express their deepest condolences to all those who have suffered loss.

The spring meeting of the RSCP was cancelled to allow all partners to concentrate on the immediate demands of reshaping and maintaining essential services. However, the summer meeting took place on 14 July – via Microsoft Teams of course. It was important to maintain some of its "business as usual" activity, and a summary of some of the items discussed will be found on the next page of this newsletter. However, the bulk of the meeting was devoted to reflecting on the experience of service provision and service users during lockdown.

Part of this discussion focused on the multi-agency safeguarding risk register which had been drawn up by a group of senior leaders from

statutory partners, identifying key safeguarding risks to children and young people during the pandemic, the actions in place to mitigate those risks, and, using the data available, the degree to which the risks are being effectively mitigated. The eighteen risks identified were RAG rated as red (high risk), amber (medium), and green (low risk). Five risks were identified as red, with an acknowledgement that, despite all the work being undertaken, it will not be possible to assess the extent to which the risks have materialised until services are fully in the recovery phase. They all remain to an extent "known unknowns". These highest risks are:

- Risk of an increase in abuse and neglect resulting from increased stress on families.
- Risk that new cases of abuse and neglect are not effectively recognised or referred due to lack of professional, family and community contact.
- High vulnerability of babies and young children to abuse, compounded by lockdown and closure of early years settings.
- Young people at risk of deteriorating mental health and wellbeing, with reduced access to services.
- Children and young people at increased risk because of increase in parental mental ill-health.

The meeting was also able to consider the immensely valuable report of a survey of young people's experiences and concerns during lockdown, led by the Youth Council. 915 children and young people, aged from 8 to 18, responded to the survey. It isn't possible to adequately summarise the richness of the information available in this report, but two key

concerns stood out. 25% of young people said they were feeling down, and 28% said they were worried about their mental health. Secondly, the long-term impact of the prolonged out of school situation is a huge concern for young people, particularly those in Year 10 and above. The discussion clearly highlighted the careful attention which will need to be given to the individual needs and experiences of young people as there is (hopefully) a full return to school in September.

My first report as independent scrutineer of the RSCP, which will be published by 31 October, will include a full evaluation of the Partnership's response to the crisis. I want to make sure this is informed by front line experience, and hope to set up several online events for practitioners and other staff involved in direct work in September to feed into the review.

Keep safe and well.

Regards

John

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Board Report

Feedback from the RSCP Meeting – 14 July 2020

Summary of items discussed by the Board

Among other items, the Partnership:

- Reviewed and reflected on the multi-agency response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This included consideration of a multi-agency COVID-19 safeguarding risk register, and a survey of young people's experiences and concerns during lockdown to which 915 young people in Redbridge contributed. This is discussed in more detail in the [Chair's Foreword](#).
- Agreed a set of priorities for the Partnership's work programme for the period September 2020 to August 2021. These are set out in more detail on [page 3](#), but the headline priorities are: safeguarding vulnerable adolescents; continuing to monitor and support the multi-agency response to the COVID-19 pandemic; and evaluating the multi-agency response to child sexual abuse within the family against the highly critical findings of the joint inspectorates' report published earlier this year. A summary table is also available on the [RSCP website](#).
- Endorsed a set of principles to underpin its work on safeguarding vulnerable adolescents proposed by the Executive of the London Safeguarding Children Partnership. These can be found on [page 7](#).
- Welcomed an introduction to the work being led by the new Head of the Safeguarding in the East Area Basic Command Unit (BCU), Superintendent John Carroll, to develop a Safeguarding Strategy for the BCU. The draft strategy has a very strong focus on a child-centred response and on partnership working.
- Considered safeguarding performance data for the full year 2019/20. In what was overall again a dataset indicating very strong performance, the Partnership noted what appeared to be a slow but consistent upward trend in the re-referral rate to children's social care, and asked for some analysis to be done on this.
- Discussed a report from the Learning and Development Sub Group of a multi-agency learning review of the tragic suicides of two young people from an Eastern European community. (The incidents were unrelated and the two young people unknown to each other). The review identified a range of good practice in agencies' response to both young people. However, there was a clear common theme. Both children were born in their country of origin and joined a family who were already in the UK in later childhood. The impact of their early experiences, of migration, and of potentially disrupted attachments was not explored in sufficient detail.
- Received a report from BHRUT of the outcomes from their 2019/20 safeguarding audit programme. The Partnership was impressed by the thoroughness of the programme, and some generally positive findings. It was concerned to learn of the very long time spent in A&E experienced by many children presenting with mental health problems, due to waits for psychiatric assessment or in some cases in-patient beds.
- Received a very positive report on the 2019/20 RSCP training programme, and agreed the [training programme](#) for the remainder of the year. All training will be delivered online until at least the end of 2020. The Partnership agreed a temporary reduction in training fees to £50 for a day's training (from £65) and £25 for a half day (from £35).

Priority 1

Safeguarding adolescents

Completing the work begun in 2019/20 on transitional safeguarding – a joint project with the [Redbridge Safeguarding Adults Board \(RSAB\)](#) to develop proposals for an effective Redbridge 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.

- Continuing to monitor the multi-agency response to contextual exploitation through the work of the Multi-Agency Sexual and Criminal Exploitation Panel (MASCE) and the development of the Mapping Exploitation Tool.
- Carrying out a multi-agency self-assessment against the “questions and challenges in four key areas that we believe every partnership should be working on and be able to answer” posed in [“It was hard to escape: safeguarding children at risk from criminal exploitation”](#), a thematic review published by the Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) Panel. The ‘four key areas’ are problem identification, supporting your staff, service design and practice development, and quality assurance.

The [London Safeguarding Children Partnership \(LSCP\)](#) nine principles for safeguarding adolescents (see [page 7](#)) will be embedded in the above work streams and across the agencies in the Partnership.

Priority 2

Monitoring and supporting the multi-agency safeguarding response to the COVID-19 pandemic

Continuing to monitor and support the multi-agency safeguarding response to the challenges of the Covid19 pandemic, the safeguarding risks that have been identified in this context, and the management of the recovery phase.



Priority 3

Child sexual abuse in the family environment

The [Joint Targeted Area Inspection \(JTAI\) report](#) on the multi-agency response to sexual abuse in the family environment, published in February 2020, identifies nine challenging findings which are highly critical of much practice in this area. The Partnership will carry out a ‘true for Redbridge?’ multi-agency self-assessment against these key findings.

Focus on ... Out of School Settings in Redbridge

Many children and young people attend a variety of Out of Schools Settings and activities in Redbridge, often, without their parents' or carers supervision. These settings provide an important service to children in our community with opportunities to gain useful skills, make new friendships and improve their physical, social and emotional wellbeing. Activities are varied and range from sport, arts, language, learning a musical instrument, joining a youth organisation, such as Scouts, doing extra studies in a tuition centre or education in their own faith.

An Out of School Setting does not include schools or colleges registered by the Department for Education (DfE) or any organisation registered by Ofsted and are not required to be registered by any statutory organisation. There are **no regulations** governing many out of school activities, therefore, the Local Authority **does not** currently endorse any setting in the borough other than those with an official and up to date registration.

Safety first/protecting children and young people

We recognise the many exemplary providers who create positive and safe environments for children to flourish, and we want to ensure that all Out of School Settings are a safe place for children to be, regardless of what activity they are participating in. Coaches, tutors, religious leaders and all other providers involved in Out of School Settings have an over-riding responsibility to protect and safeguard children and young people from the risk of harmful practices

Consideration for parents and carers

As a parent or carer, it is important when choosing an Out of School Settings that certain questions are asked of a provider, such as whether staff have undertaken DBS checks, how safe is the environment. A provider should be able to reassure you that your child/ren will be safe in their setting and demonstrate the steps they are taking to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

The Government has issued guidelines to help parents and carers make the right decisions for your child(rens) safety, wellbeing due to COVID-19, click [here](#) to find out more.

Responsibilities for out of school providers

All Out of School Setting providers have an obligation to ensure that children and young people in their care are offered a safe and comfortable environment in which to learn or have fun. They also have a responsibility towards the people who work for them whether they are employed or voluntary.

The Children's Act 2004 places a duty on organisations to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children as well as ensuring that all adults who work with children and young people are safe to do so. As Out of School Settings include a wide range of activities and ages the arrangements for keeping children and young people safe will vary.

Membership Scheme

To help ensure that all activities are safe and enjoyable for everyone, the Out of School Settings Team will be launching a new Membership scheme this year. To register your interest please [contact us](#) and Sign up to our newsletter [here](#) to receive important updates.

If you have a concern about a child and would like to seek advice regarding child abuse or neglect please contact the Child Protection Assessment Team (CPAT). Referrals can be sent to cpat.referrals@redbridge.gov.uk or [more information can be found here](#). Telephone Tel: 020 8708 3885 (9.00am to 5.00pm) or 020 8708 5897 (after 5.00pm and weekends). E-mail cpat.referrals@redbridge.gov.uk

Whether you are a parent, carer, provider, or volunteer working with children and young people in an activity and would like further help and advice on any aspect of **SAFETY IN SETTINGS** please contact the Out of School Settings Team on:

OOSS@redbridge.gov.uk or telephone 07808861646.

RSCP Training Programme Calendar

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



@RedbridgeSCP

This year's [RSCP Multi-Agency Training Programme](#) will begin using a new online format and we've been busy redesigning our sessions to make them as interactive as possible, with pre-reading and resources for 'training transfer'; equipping participants to implement their learning with children and families. Courses from September to December will range in length from 2 hours (£25) to four hours (£50). Sign up is as usual, via our online [Nomination Form](#). There is no charge for attendance if you work or volunteer in the voluntary and community sector.

The 64 sessions in this year's programme are divided into three sections:

- **Understanding Safeguarding Risks;** reflecting the learning needs in the findings of the [Triennial Analysis of Serious Case Reviews 2020](#) and the RSCP priorities (see [page 3](#)).
- **Contextual Safeguarding;** working with the risks and challenges faced by children and young people outside the home, such as criminal and sexual exploitation and maximising resilience.
- **Safer Settings;** focusing on the knowledge, skills and principles that underpin services working with children and families, for example, Designated Safeguarding Lead (L3), Working Together to Safeguard Children (L2), Supervising Safeguarding Practice, Managing Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers and Voice of the Child and Safeguarding.

"The tutor was excellent; responsive and had excellent knowledge of, and passion for her subject and was open to the ideas of delegates, 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."

Details of upcoming courses are below.

Course	Date(s)
Working Together to Safeguard Children (Safeguarding Level 2)	08/09/2020 05/10/2020 08/12/2020
The Voice of the Child and Safeguarding	15/09/2020
Safer Recruitment (Accredited)	24/09/2020
Working with Young People in Relation to Gangs and Knife Crime	29/09/2020
Working with Race, Culture and Belief Systems in the Context of Professionals Curiosity	06/10/2020
Child Exploitation Training for Practitioners	22/10/2020
Designated Safeguarding Lead Training (Safeguarding Level 3)	20/10/2020



Child Friendly Redbridge

Work as part of the [Child Friendly Redbridge](#) programme continues, with the voices of children and young people from across the

Borough feeding in to our response to the pandemic as we work towards a new normal.

Members of the Redbridge Youth Council and our Child Friendly Redbridge Ambassadors worked alongside the CCG to create a [survey](#) to find out how young people are feeling during lockdown, how it is affecting their mental health and their concerns for the future post-lockdown. The survey received over 900 responses from young people and the findings have been shared with professionals across the Council, as well as with our partners, so that we can begin to look at how we can use the findings to improve our services and offer for young people during these testing times. Officers have been in touch with young people who expressed that they were struggling during lockdown and shared helpful information on topics such as mental health, staying safe during lockdown and exams.

Young people from Redbridge Youth Council, the Youth Service as well as the Child Friendly Redbridge Ambassadors worked alongside artists from SPACE Studios Ilford to create their own zine, called MyZine. At a time when many felt isolated, missing their friends and sharing a sense of anxiety and unease about the future, MyZine provided relief, fun and self-expression, connecting young people with creative ideas and possibilities. Redbridge Youth now has an Instagram feed – check it out [here](#).

The Child Friendly Redbridge Steering Group have resumed meeting regularly and we have also resumed the UNICEF-delivered Introduction to Children's Rights in Practice training sessions on Microsoft Teams. Uptake has been good and evaluation of the training excellent, so this will continue to be delivered over the coming weeks and months.



On-Line Safety

There are a number of different sources on the Internet which groom young people, encouraging participation in activities, sometimes referred to as 'challenges', that are detrimental to their safety and wellbeing, leading to self-harm and in some cases suicide. One way in which professionals, parents and carers can help mitigate against those risks is to encourage young people to talk about their on-line activity, keeping an open dialogue, letting them share what they're playing or looking at, rather than asking them directly whether they have seen or engaged with on-line challenges, which may draw their interest to these sources of harm.

If young people express any concern or worries over material they have seen online, or posts or comments that friends or others have made, it is important to listen to them and offer support. Remember that inappropriate online material, which could be harmful and distressing, can be reported through the individual social media channels e.g. Facebook, Snapchat, for review and potential removal.

It may also be useful to provide advice on how young people can support themselves and their friends. The [Childnet](#) provides information for parents, carers, professionals and children. If you have concerns that a young person may be exhibiting signs of self-harm or suicidal feelings, the [Samaritans](#) provide useful support and guidance, including specifically issues relating to [on-line risk](#). A referral to Child Protection should also be made via CPAT.Referrals@redbridge.gov.uk. Any immediate risk should be reported to the Police via 999.

If you become aware of harmful content online, contact Online Harms Advisory Service at Samaritans, onlineharms@samaritans.org, or contact Public Health England at PublicMentalHealth@phe.gov.uk.

London Safeguarding Children Partnership ([LSCP](#)) - Nine principles for work relating to safeguarding adolescents:

- i. As children get older, their increasing autonomy should be recognised, inform our response and shape how they are involved in decision making. Their wishes and opinions should also inform strategic decision making, including the allocation of resources and the design of services.*
- ii. The risks facing some adolescents, and the protective factors that help keep them safe, are located not only in families but also in their peer groups and wider communities. Services must therefore work in close partnership with families, peer groups and communities.*
- iii. We must never give up on children and young people because they seem reluctant to engage with services or face complex issues. We must always 'go the extra mile'.*
- iv. Responses must address the context of children and young people's lives, including the impact of different forms of social prejudice, inequality and racism. Such factors can mean that many young people find it difficult to trust professionals.*
- v. Policy and practice should address the need for older young people (i.e. those over 18 years) to be able to access appropriate support and protection.*
- vi. A joined up multi agency response must be provided by professionals who have expertise and capability in working with older children and young people.*
- vii. When a child is believed to be involved in criminal or anti-social behavior, assessments should seek to understand safeguarding concerns.*
- viii. Children need to be equipped with the knowledge and skills to keep themselves safe and live healthy, happy and productive lives. For older children this means high quality sex and relationship education.*
- ix. Strategic and operational practice must be based on sound evidence, good and shared intelligence and effective data analysis.*

Contact Information

Redbridge Safeguarding Children Partnership (RSCP)

RedbridgeSCP@redbridge.gov.uk

Tel: 020 8708 5282 or 020 8708 3289

Website: www.redbridgescp.org.uk

@RedbridgeSCP

 @RedbridgeSCP

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 – Autumn 2020 – will be published in October.