

SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2021

Foreword from the Independent Chair of the RSCP

Welcome to the Summer 2020/21 edition of the RSCP newsletter. The last full meeting of the Partnership took place on MS Teams on 16 July, and a summary of some of the items discussed can be found on the next page.

In the last [Newsletter](#), I drew attention to the letter Adrian Loades sent to partner agencies in May about the unprecedented number of referrals being received by social care, and the importance in that context of ensuring the quality and timeliness of referrals, and consideration of the thresholds for referral. As Adrian wrote, “You will appreciate that when dealing with literally hundreds of contacts, receiving those with missing information, no clarification on what the safeguarding concern is, or misdirected referrals, impacts negatively on our response to all children at risk.” There was a very productive discussion on this at the RSCP meeting. It is always open to agencies to contact the MASH for advice about potential referrals, and schools’ colleagues in particular commented on how useful this, and the support of the CAF Team, are in considering the appropriate channelling of referrals. Partners particularly valued the opportunity to participate in the fortnightly multi-agency Thresholds and Referrals Meeting which is open to professionals working with children, young people and families in Redbridge. The meeting provides an opportunity to discuss thresholds and gain feedback on the quality, timeliness and appropriateness of referrals submitted to the MASH. It is also a forum for agencies, including health providers, schools and voluntary sector organisations to **feed back to Children’s Social Care**. If you are interested in taking part in

this meeting, please do contact [Lesley Perry, RSCP Manager](#). You can view the Terms of Reference for the meeting on the [RSCP website](#). While ensuring consistency in the quality and timeliness of referrals remains a continuing challenge, the clear partnership approach to addressing it highlights a key strength of multi-agency safeguarding in Redbridge.

Another of those strengths is the **partnership’s openness to challenge**. Two of the reports at the July meeting highlighted this. One was a **‘true for Redbridge?’ self-assessment** against the challenges posed by the findings of a [Joint Targeted Area Inspection](#) of the multi-agency response to child sexual abuse in the family environment. The other was a response to the key questions posed to local partnerships by the [Child Safeguarding Practice Review \(CSPR\) Panel report on “It was hard to escape: safeguarding children at risk of criminal exploitation”](#): how good is our knowledge of the scale of the problem, how well are staff supported to respond to it, how well equipped are services to address it; and how effective is scrutiny and quality assurance in this area of work? I will discuss the findings of both reports in my Annual Scrutiny Report which will be published in the autumn. It is fair to say in summary that both reports highlighted some very good practice, but also some clear gaps and areas for improvement. It seems clear that child sexual abuse within the family is under-recognised in Redbridge, as it is nationally. Only 1.2% of children subject to child protection plans in the borough are subject to those plans under the category of sexual abuse; yet early childhood experiences of sexual abuse frequently come to light later in presentations to both adolescent and adult mental health services. There is good awareness of child

criminal exploitation in some areas of the partnership, but it is patchy. One of the key findings of the CSPR Panel report was: **“We cannot emphasise enough the learning from this review about the impact of exclusion from mainstream school. Leaders of local safeguarding agencies and headteachers must work together to ensure an immediate response to providing full time [25 hours a week] education. This is vital in preventing the escalation of risk and harm”**. The partnership is keen to understand more clearly how services in Redbridge are able to respond to this challenge, and asked for a fuller report on this for its October meeting.

I hope that by the time you read this you are either looking back on or looking forward to a well-earned break from the pressures, demands and sometimes distress of the most extraordinary fifteen months.

Keep safe and well.

Regards

John

This issue	Page
Board Report	2
Safeguarding Priorities	3
Focus on ...	4
RSCP Events Calendar	5
News	6
Contact Information	7

Board Report

Feedback from the RSCP Meeting – 16 July 2021

Summary of items discussed by the Board

Among other items, the Partnership:

- Received safeguarding performance data for the period January to March 2021, enabling performance across the full 2020/21 year to be considered. The data clearly showed the impact of successive phases of the Covid-19 pandemic, with referrals to social care falling during periods of lockdown and surging as restrictions were removed. Even under these pressures, performance on the timeliness of assessments, reviews and child protection conferences remained outstanding. Early help and universal services also made a very strong contribution, with a 50% increase in the number of CAFs completed compared to the previous year.
- Discussed work to improve the appropriateness, quality and timeliness of referrals. This is discussed further in the **Chair's Foreword**.
- Received an update on matters considered by the BHR Safeguarding Partnership. One issue reported on was the reference from the RSCP to explore the support available across BHR for families with babies born during the pandemic. Partners did not report significant increases in activity in this area, but did ask for a BHR review of health capacity and workloads to be brought to their next meeting.
- Discussed self-assessments against the findings of both a Joint Targeted Area Inspection of the multi-agency response to child sexual abuse within the family and a review by the national Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel on child criminal exploitation. Both reports are discussed briefly in the **Chair's Foreword**.
- Received annual reports on children missing from home or care in 2020/21, the work of the Families Together Hub, and child exploitation. These will be discussed in more detail in the Chair's Annual Scrutiny Report, which will be published in the autumn.
- Received a report on the children's social care response to the increase in domestic violence during the pandemic. The Reach Out service, providing bespoke support and pathways into support from the Families Together Hub, has been shortlisted for the Municipal Journal Local Government Award for innovation in children's services. Good luck for the final in September!
- Received a report on the RSCP Training Programme 2020/21 and agreed the **training programme for 2021/22**. Participation in the 2020/21 programme remained very strong, despite a four-month suspension of the programme at the beginning of the pandemic and the move of all training on to a virtual platform. Pro rata to the duration of the programme, average monthly attendance increased by 30%.
- Agreed to continue to meet on MS Teams until March 2022, and to hold at least a yearly face to face meeting from April 2022, subject to Public Health advice at the time.

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. A further planning meeting has been arranged between **Redbridge Children's Social Care** and Adult Social Care representatives in September.

Carrying out a multi-agency self-assessment against the questions and challenges 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. A report based on this self-assessment was presented to the July Partnership meeting.

The London Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) nine principles for safeguarding adolescents to be embedded in the above work streams and across agencies in the Partnership (see page 2 of the [RSCP Plan and Priorities 2020 – 2021](#)).



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 none challenging findings which are highly critical of much practice in this area. The Partnership carried out a 'true for Redbridge?' multi-agency self-assessment against these key findings. A report on this was presented to the July Partnership meeting.

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.

Redbridge Educational Wellbeing Team (REWT) are a team of senior specialist educational psychologists and assistant educational psychologists. REWT was created by the Access and Inclusion Team, part of Redbridge Council.

The aim of REWT is to build skills, knowledge and confidence of school staff and other professionals regarding developing children and young people's emotional well-being.

REWT focuses on empowering schools to work with children with social, emotional and mental health issues and to have ways of responding when concerns about wellbeing arise.

REWT supports schools through evidence-based training packages, through signposting and by delivering targeted interventions. REWT also provides consultation services to Looked After Children.

REWT run sessions for Redbridge parents and these will resume in September.

You can find out more by checking out the new **REWT YouTube channel (Educational Psychology REWT)** on which you can view three short videos about the work of REWT.

Please subscribe, like and share the videos with colleagues and other interested parties to help build a community in which connections can be made and support provided through a psychological lens.

It is planned that new videos will be uploaded regularly.

The REWT YouTube channel aligns with the service's vision and mission statements:

Nurturing mental health and resilience in Redbridge school communities

We provide safe and nurturing spaces to talk and learn about mental health and psychology. We empower people to live their best life, working in partnership with our school communities. We strive to reduce stigma, raise awareness and enhance emotional wellbeing and resilience for all.

The last REWT Newsletter of this academic year is available to [view](#). Education Psychology Service also has a page on the [Council's website](#). You can contact REWT via 07741 331009 or e-mailing via REWT@redbridge.gov.uk



Learning Together - Redbridge SCP Multi-Agency Training 2021 - 2022

We are delighted to launch our **2021/22 RSCP Training Programme**, your multi-agency safeguarding training for professionals and volunteers working with children and families in Redbridge.

We've all had to adapt our learning to a digital format over the last eighteen months and our evaluation of our 2020/21 online programme has been really encouraging. Through feedback our Team has been improving our digital offer, utilising interactive software and developing extra resources to support trainees:

"This training was delivered on video call, a first for everyone. I think these things worked well, participation using chat messages allowing multiple trainees to answer at once, Mentimeter representing the collective thoughts and breaking up the slide show with videos."

"The trainer was great, lots of real-life examples. I thought the variety of video clips and links provided for further information/reading was very useful."

"This was my first online training experience. It worked well helped by a very skilled and engaging trainer."

We want to thank all our facilitators, many of whom are local practitioners and experts for their time and effort and our trainees for their commitment to transferring learning into outcomes for children.

This year's offer will be a blended programme, offering a mix of online sessions and some planned classroom training, best suited to multi-agency understanding. We will also be offering some free briefings on a range of safeguarding issues. If you're not currently on our mailing list, you can sign up [here](#) for regular updates. Below are some of the courses running in September and October. Bookings can be made [on-line](#). Check out the whole Programme [here](#).

Course	Date(s)
Domestic Abuse and Safeguarding Children	Friday 22/10/21
Interfamilial Child Sexual Abuse	Thursday 30/09/21
Abuse in Teenage Relationships	Wednesday 13/10/21
Awareness of Child Sexual and Criminal Exploitation	Thursday 14/10/21 FREE
Child Protection Conferences and the Strengthening Families Approach	Monday 20/09/21
Early Help for Children and Families – An Introduction to the CAF (Common Assessment Framework)	Thursday 21/10/21 FREE
Safer Recruitment (accredited by the Safer Recruitment Consortium)	Tuesday 12/10/21
Understanding Thresholds and Making Referrals	Wednesday 20/10/21
Working Together to Safeguard Children – A Shared Responsibility (Safeguarding Level 2)	Wednesday 06/10/21
RSCP Designated Safeguarding Lead (Safeguarding Level 3)	Wednesday 06/10/21

Do you know anybody who is looking after somebody else's child?



Is the child under 16 (or 18 if they have a disability)?

Is the child living with someone who is NOT their parent, step parent, sibling, aunt, uncle or grandparent? This also includes host families to overseas students

Is it due to be for more than 28 days?

This is called "private fostering" and we must be LEGALLY notified to ensure the child is safe.

Please contact the Child Protection and Assessment Team (CPAT):

020 8708 3885

CPAT.Referrals@redbridge.gov.uk

or visit www.redbridge.gov.uk/private-fostering for more information

The Amber Project – Free Webinar

Did you know that child abuse linked to faith or belief, such as accusations of witchcraft and spirit possession can result in considerable harm? It is much harder to define due to its complex nature and the prevalence of this abuse is likely to increase due to COVID-19. Do you know about this type of abuse? Could you recognise the signs? The Amber Project is facilitating two webinars on the topic, free to professionals and volunteers working with children, young people and families. The aim is to enhance the response to child abuse linked to faith or belief. A pan-London webinar, will take place on 22 September at 10:30 – 12:30. Please register [HERE](#). For further information, please contact Redbridge Out of School Settings Team on: OOSS@Redbridge.gov.uk.

Private Fostering

Do you know of a child who is being cared for by someone who is not a close relative for more than 28 days?

Private fostering describes an arrangement when someone who is not a close relative, cares for another person's child under the age of 16 (18 if they have a disability) for 28 days or more. A close relative is considered to be an aunt, uncle, grandparent, step parent or siblings. Other family members such as cousins or great aunts are not classed as close relatives for the purposes of Private Fostering. Private Fostering also includes families hosting overseas students being educated in the UK.

To notify the Local Authority about a private fostering arrangement in Redbridge, please contact the Child Protection and Assessment Team (CPAT) on 020 8708 3885 or by email CPAT.Referrals@redbridge.gov.uk For more information please visit the Council [website](#).

Redbridge Fostering Panel

A great opportunity has arisen for a **Social Worker/Education Professional/Person with care experience** or others who would like to increase their skills, knowledge and experience.

The Redbridge Fostering Panel is looking to increase its pool of Panel members. The Panel usually sits twice a month and panel members rotate their attendance. This is a valuable development opportunity for individuals to extend their skills and knowledge of fostering and permanency.

If you commit to becoming a Panel Member, to ensure quoracy it is necessary that you attend Panel on a regular basis.

If you are interested in becoming a Panel Member or would like to find out more, please contact Gloria Samuel, Service Manager via Gloria.Samuel@redbridge.gov.uk or call Angela Lockhart on 020 8708 7490 to arrange to observe a Panel.

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)

Tel: 020 3182 3515

E-mail bhr.cdop@nhs.net



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 will be published in October 2021.