

SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2022

Foreword from the Independent Chair & Scrutineer



A warm welcome to this summer edition of the RSCP newsletter.

The last meeting of the Redbridge Safeguarding Children Partnership took place on 4 July, the details of which are shared on [page 2](#).

Firstly though, a few updates from the last edition of the Newsletter. Following the publication of the outcome letter from the Ofsted visit in April to the Council's Children's Services 'front door', (full findings again [here](#)), I had the pleasure of spending some time in the MASH to see for myself the great work that takes place there. I was welcomed by the Team who shared in detail how referrals and contacts are reviewed in partnership with other agencies. I was very impressed by the keen management oversight of cases.

I am also pleased to report that meetings are now taking place in response to the Ofsted findings to strengthen further the role and contributions of partners in the MASH.

As part of the visit, I also met with the Child Protection and Assessment Team (CPAT) and was impressed by their dedication and focus on improving

outcomes for children and families. They also shared how they support newly qualified social workers.

I have been getting to know more about the various organisations, services and teams in Redbridge working with children, young people and their families and carers. This has been through one to one meetings with managers in our partner agencies, and also through the "Meet the Chair" sessions – the last one of which is due to take place on [7 September](#). I am happy to say that there is general feeling from the frontline that partnership working to safeguard children is well embedded in Redbridge.

The next update is in relation to the publication of the [CSPR Panel Report Child Protection in England: the national review into the murders of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson, May 2022](#). The Panel held a webinar to provide a forum for further discussion on the findings. The key messages for safeguarding partners are as follows, alongside a response as to what is happening locally:

- **Robust multi agency strategy discussions** – work is already underway reviewing the data set of the RSCP to monitor multiagency attendance
- **Sufficient resources are in place from across all agencies** – this is already in process following the Ofsted visit for the MASH and findings from the multiagency data set referred to above will provide an overview as to

where there may be challenges

- **There are robust information sharing arrangements** – no update
- **Referrals are not deemed malicious without a full and thorough multi agency assessment** - the RSCP is working on developing a resource (briefing and 7-minute guide) to support practitioners

As you will see in the next section, a priority for the RSCP is to respond to further developments following this important review.

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 challenging work you under take.

Stay safe and well in the heat.

Eileen Mills

Independent Chair & Scrutineer

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Partnership Report

Feedback from the RSCP Meeting – 4 July 2022

Summary of items discussed at the last meeting

Among other items, the Partnership received presentations on and discussed the topics below.

Redbridge Crime Commission Report – Implications for Safeguarding Children - the findings of the [Redbridge Crime Commission Report](#) were shared with a focus on what is in the action plan to keep children in Redbridge safer and areas where the RSCP and the Community Safety Partnership can collaborate. These include strengthening the response to Domestic Abuse; keeping women and girls safe by working with residents to identify environmental improvements; ensuring safety issues are actively addressed in schools; and creating opportunities to intervene early to divert young people from drug related crime and antisocial behaviour.

Transitional Safeguarding – a joint presentation from Redbridge Children and Adult Services outlined a proposal for a panel to review all cases of young people at risk of exploitation who would not normally receive services under the Care Act 2014 to look at what services can wrap around to support them as they approach and go beyond their 18th birthday.

Update on the Integrated Care System (ICS) – Integrated Care Board (ICB) and ‘place based’ arrangements - from the 1 July Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) ceased to exist and were replaced by the Integrated Care System (ICS) in the form of an Integrated Care Board (ICB), a collaboration of commissioning and health providers. Redbridge is part of the North East London (NEL) ICS. All statutory duties of the former CCGs, including safeguarding, now sit with ICB.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Annual Report 2021 – 2022

Every local authority has a statutory requirement to have a [Local Authority Designated Officer \(LADO\)](#) who is responsible for co-ordinating the response to concerns that an adult who works with children, may have caused them, or could cause them harm. During 2021-22, a total of 465 referrals were received which reflect a year-on-year increase. 22% (99 cases) met the threshold for further investigation. There continues to be evidence that the promotion of the LADO service and the training that is being offered is resulting in professionals accessing the advice and support of the LADO when concerns arise.

Consideration of RSCP priorities for 2022-23 the meeting discussed the following areas of focus these are now out for wider consideration across the partnership for final agreement and actions

1. Transitional Safeguarding - to continue the work started in 2019.
2. Contextual Safeguarding - developing a joined-up multi-agency response and support for children at risk of and experiencing exploitation with the Redbridge Community Safety Partnership.
3. Responding to Local and National Safeguarding Reviews and Reports - supporting the response and developments arising from the publication of the [Independent Review of Children’s Social Care, Final Report, May 2022](#); the [Child Safeguarding Practice Review \(CSPR\) Panel Report – Child Protection in England: National Review into the murders of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson, May 2022](#);
4. Children & Young Peoples Mental Health - supporting a response to the growth in children and young people’s mental health, including raising awareness of different support and resources available
5. [Child Friendly Redbridge](#) - supporting the progress to achieve ‘Child Friendly Redbridge’ status, and the specific priorities of the Redbridge Youth Council relating to safeguarding

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 small working group has now formed and met earlier this month and will meet again in March.

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 recently published report of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) [Child Sexual Exploitation by Organised Networks](#) will also be considered in this work stream.

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 a number of 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 and the Learning and Improvement Subgroup is taking forward the Action Plan.

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. Verbal updates from partners are being presented to each quarterly meeting focusing on the challenges and learning from this difficult time.

Focus on ... the Families Intervention Team (FIT)

The Family Intervention Team (FIT) is a specialist statutory team within the Council's Children Services, working with children and young people exposed to extra familial abuse (harm outside of the family unit), also known as contextual safeguarding. FIT work with children, young people and their families who are being supported through a Child Protection Plan or Child in Need Plan where the predominant concerns are around child sexual exploitation or criminal exploitation, going missing, as well as those on the periphery of the youth justice system.

In recognition of the broader issues of gang violence and child exploitation on a local and national level, the FIT strives to promote a holistic approach to safeguarding children who are faced with adverse risks outside of the familial context and is equipping practitioners with relevant resources and specialist knowledge. The aim is to work creatively and intensely with children, young people, and their families to mitigate contextual risk and actively engage young people in diversionary activities to improve outcomes. This approach is critical to the FIT's safeguarding practice and motivation to improve life chances of those young people on the edge of care or involved/exposed to gang violence/knife crime, online exploitation, criminal exploitation, county lines, substance misuse and sexual exploitation in the Borough.

FIT specialise in understanding the adolescence stage of development, including the changes in brain development, primary attachments, self-concept, identity, emotional wellbeing, puberty body changes etc. Adolescence leads to an influx and decline in different hormones and chemicals being released which can result in extreme behaviour changes. These variables can lead to risk-taking behaviours e.g. experimenting with substances, alcohol, theft, relationships etc; at a time when the focus for attachments become their peers rather than their primary carers. This can lead young people to become vulnerable to grooming and exploitation as they are situated within a complex arena of susceptibility, plus the vast pressure added through social media platforms accessed by young people.

When working with young people where there is evidence of exploitation, FIT offer both

Empowerment, and Engagement Groups. Group work helps engage young people in divergent activities whilst also exploring healthy relationships, sexual health and violence against women and girls. FIT workers accompany young people to youth activities in Redbridge, including those offering sports and music.

More recently, FIT have introduced an immersive experience for parents and young people exposed to contextual harm. The Virtual Reality (VR) Headsets offer a number of VR films that follow fictional teenage characters affected by a range of issues. The aim of using VR is to start conversations with young people about the potential real-life risks they could face, help them identify their vulnerability, and to discuss alternatives. The use of VR also offers parents/carers some insight into the world of exploitation and empowers them to consider risk and adapt their behaviours to support their child.

An example of the feedback on the use of VR by one young person was *"I joined a gang in Year 6. By Year 7, I was visiting crack houses, running errands and two years ago my best friend died in my arms. I had become a witness to a murder."*

I joined an Engagement Group. On the fifth session I created a presentation for other young people on the real life without glamour of working the street...I practiced my presentation with FIT Social Workers in Fairlop Park and presented it to Groundworks. It was the first time I was able to talk about things".

A mother also provided feedback on her experiences of the use of the VR headsets, *"The technology [VR] opened my eyes to the risk and dangers to my son".*

FIT workers strive towards recognising themes, patterns, and trends amongst this vulnerable cohort of children and young people. There is a strong drive to understand and stay abreast of changes in behaviour locally, nationally and on social media.

The 'mapping' work of the FIT was reported to be 'sophisticated' by Ofsted in 2019, and a key piece of work that FIT continue to embed in practice, to enable a joined-up approach to safeguarding children and young people from contextual harm.

RSCP Training Programme 2022 - 2023



The Team would like to thank all our participants for attending the 60 courses delivered over the last year. Our new multi-agency safeguarding training programme for 2022 – 2023 will commence in September.

We will continue to support our multi-agency colleagues in their safeguarding practice with a range of courses under our usual series:

- **Understanding Safeguarding Risks**
- **Contextual Safeguarding and Child on Child Abuse**
- **Working Together to Safeguard and Creating Safer Settings for Children and Families**

Our current courses will be reviewed to ensure evidence-based practice, new guidance, and legislation, such as the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, Keeping Safe in Education 2022 etc. and learning from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs) such as [Child 'Q'](#), and the [National Review](#) into the murders of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson are reflected.

Some exciting new courses and briefings will be available in this coming year including:

Professional Curiosity in Practice

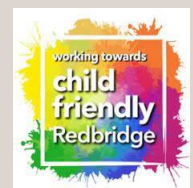
The capacity and communication skill to explore and understand what is happening within a family rather than making assumption or accepting things at face value is a golden thread through all Safeguarding Reviews and audits and is an essential part of safeguarding.

Trauma Informed Practice

Trauma Informed Practice is an **approach** which seeks to understand and respond to the impact of trauma on people's lives. Exploring the effect of power dynamics between families and professionals can build relationships and enable and promote better outcomes.

Children's Rights and Safeguarding

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child has influenced much legislation and fundamental values for Child Protection. Child and youth participation experts from UNICEF UK will be providing an interactive training session that will bring the concepts of participation and engagement to life.



Please sign up to our [Contact List](#) to be the first to see the new programme in August. All will also be revealed on our [website training page](#).

Learning & Development Resources

Whilst waiting for the new Training Programme, below are some new learning resources that you may wish to access:

- NSPCC Learning – [Digging deeper than “did not attend”: the importance of considering why a child was not brought to an appointment](#). This is the first in a series of 'blogs' being rolled out by the NSPCC Library and Information Service specialists on the topic of why language matters.
- [Research in Practice \(RiP\) 'open access' learning resources](#) – topics include decision making in children's social care; re-thinking domestic abuse; embedding digital practice in children's social work; resources for practice supervisors amongst many more.

Foster for Redbridge

Some see hard work. You see a Happy Ever After. Foster for Redbridge and **you** could be the one to teach a teenager independence and help to guide and coach them into adulthood.

Over 200 children in Redbridge are unable to stay at home for a variety of different reasons and need foster care. Be the change that they need and help to make a difference to a child or young person's life.



If you have a place in your heart and home to foster a young person, please call us on 020 8708 6068 or email fostering@redbridge.gov.uk or join us on our next virtual information session. Visit www.redbridge.gov.uk/fostering to book a place.

Private Fostering – Need to Know

Are you looking after a child who is not your own?

- Is the child under 16 (or 18 if they have a disability)?
- Are you NOT the child's step parent, sibling, aunt, uncle or grandparent? This also includes host families to overseas students
- Do you plan to have the child with you 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

Research in Practice (RiP)

One of our statutory safeguarding partners – the London Borough of Redbridge – is in partnership with Research in Practice (RiP). As part of this arrangement, there is some availability for other partner agencies to have access to the excellent resources available. If you are interested in having a RiP account, please contact the RSCP Manager via RedbridgeSCP@redbridge.gov.uk.

research
in practice

Local Government Association (LGA) Transitional Safeguarding Seminars

The LGA are facilitating two on-line seminars in September on the theme of transitional safeguarding. Transitional Safeguarding, one of the RSCP priorities, is an approach to safeguarding adolescents and young adults across developmental stages.

[Transitional Safeguarding – Key Messages from Case Reviews](#)

19 September, 12:00 – 13:00

[Transitional Safeguarding and Homelessness](#)

26 September, 14:00 – 16:00

Click on the links above to book. For further information e-mail the LGA via chip@local.gov.uk

Contact Information

Redbridge Safeguarding Children Partnership (RSCP)

RedbridgeSCP@redbridge.gov.uk

Tel: 020 8708 5282 or 020 8708 3289

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 (Emergencies - 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 towards the end of October 2022.