

WINTER NEWSLETTER 2024

Foreword from the Independent Chair & Scrutineer



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

The last meeting of the Redbridge Safeguarding Children Partnership (RSCP) took place on 17 January, the details of which are shared on [page 3](#). The meeting also considered the new priorities for 2023 – 2024. Meanwhile, there is a final update on those for 2022 – 2023 on [page 5](#).

One of the priority areas for 2023 - 2024 will remain Contextual Safeguarding. As an outcome from last year, the review of what this looks like in Redbridge has been concluded. An additional meeting of the RSCP is planned in February to give dedicated time to review the report and plan the response to the recommendations. In advance of the final report being shared the author shared some of the key findings with the meeting.

Contextual Safeguarding is the response by partner agencies to extra-familial harm - risks faced by children and young people outside their home and family. In adolescence, independent of their family, children form relationships in schools, locally and online that can make them vulnerable to exploitation. Factors that increase the risk of experiencing exploitation are being excluded from school, being care experienced and going missing from home, being found in locations or contexts where others have experienced harm.

A significant finding of the review is that there is an over-representation of black boys in particular, amongst those most at risk of contextual safeguarding, which will need to be central to the response, details of which will be featured in the Spring Edition of the newsletter, due out in April.

Alongside the work that will be required in relation to the findings from the Contextual Safeguarding Review, the RSCP will also have to respond to the updated Statutory Guidance, [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#), published last month. A summary of the changes made from the 2018 edition can be found [here](#). The document contains a number of changes, the most significant of which are those affecting the strategic part of the system, namely Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships (LSCPs). Partnerships will no longer be allowed to elect to employ an independent chair and there will be two levels of representation from the three statutory safeguarding partners.

- Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSPs). The LSPs must be the most senior member of paid service. For Local Authorities this is the Chief Executive, in ICBs this is the Chief Executive and for police this is the Chief Police Officer.
- Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSPs). Each LSP must appoint a DSP for their organisation. DSPs should be sufficiently senior to be able to speak with authority, take decisions on behalf of the LSP and hold their sectors to account. The DSPs should have the authority to carry out these functions, while ultimate accountability

remains with the LSP as the individual responsible for the delivery of the statutory duties of the safeguarding partners.

- The Partnership Chair. The LSPs must appoint one of the DSPs to be the Partnership Chair. The role can be rotated between the three DSPs if this is what the LSPs decide.
- The role of education. It is recommended that LSPs have a representative from the education sector present at strategic discussions and it is expected that local arrangements include all education and childcare providers working with children.

There is a new non-statutory requirement for local authorities to notify the Department for Education (DfE) and OFSTED of the death of a care leaver under the age of 25. If partners think there may be learning from the death, even if criteria for a serious incident are not met or the care leaver is over 18, they may wish to undertake a local Child Safeguarding Practice Review. In the last edition I highlighted the work of the Redbridge 'One Panel', which is the arena to raise any serious safeguarding incidents.

The RSCP must submit details of their new local arrangements to the DfE by December 2024. The Newsletter will keep everyone up to date with these plans as they develop. The guidance also requests the annual report for SCPs are produced at the end of the financial year. To bring the RSCP in line with this new schedule, the annual report for 2022-23 will be extended to cover activity until the end of March 2024.

There are some significant changes that affect operational practice.

- **Early Help** The role of education and childcare settings in supporting children and keeping them safe has been strengthened, along with emphasising a **child's right to education**. Improving engagement with family networks in decision making and supporting children, in particular through family group conferencing, is emphasised.
- **Section 17 Child in Need** The guidance clarifies that it is not a requirement for section 17 assessments and support work to be led by a social worker. The local authority, with safeguarding partners and relevant agencies, should set out in their local protocol who can act as a lead practitioner in supporting children and their families under section 17, and reflect that the decision about who will act as lead practitioner will be made in line with practitioner knowledge and skills, resources, commissioned service requirements, relevant professional standards as appropriate and accountabilities. They should also set out the skills, knowledge, experience, and competence required for the lead practitioner role and how this will be monitored locally.
- **Child Protection Working Together** introduces a set of

new Multi-Agency Child Protection Standards. These Standards are in addition to the [Children's Social Care National Framework](#) which sets out expectations for Local Authority staff. These standards apply to all practitioners working in services and settings who come into contact with children who may be suffering or have suffered significant harm within or outside the home. They set out the expectations of practitioners at the different stages of the child protection process. Local safeguarding partners need to ensure all practitioners are supported to be able to achieve these Child Protection standards, including through:

- i) An unrelenting focus on protection and the best outcomes for children
- ii) Creating learning cultures in which practitioners stay up to date as new evidence of best practice emerges
- iii) Creating an environment in which it is safe to challenge, including assumptions that relate to ethnicity, sex, disability, and sexuality
- iv) Supporting practitioners with effective supervision as determined by their regulatory body in which they can critically reflect on their findings and strengthen their analysis
- v) Helping practitioners to understand the impact of their decisions on the child and family

It will be beneficial for all professional to be familiar with the changes in Working Together 2023 in readiness to participate in the

changes that will be required for implementation.

In summary, 2024 is set to be a busy year for the RSCP and this time next year will have a new look!

Thank you for your continued hard work and commitment to the children and families of Redbridge and I look forward to working with you all as we respond to the challenges of the Contextual Safeguarding Review and the changes to Working Together 2023.

Best wishes
Eileen Mills

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Feedback from the RSCP Meeting – 17 January 2024

Summary of items discussed at the last RSCP meeting

In addition to the presentations and discussions mentioned in the [Foreword](#), the RSCP included the following updates:

Notifications Project Report

Redbridge is home to Children Looked After that have been placed by other Boroughs. Historically the Local Authority and **partner agencies haven't been receiving all the notifications of these children and**, more importantly, and risks they may face or potentially create. The project has focused on ensure the information on the children placed here is accurate and engagement with placing authorities. The risk assessment part of project is going well. Meetings held with placing authorities facilitate a discussion about **risk but also services available in the area. The impact of the work means children's needs are identified early.**

LBR Child Protection Annual Contact Report 2022-23

A 'heat' map has been embedded into this **year's** report reflecting contact data by Redbridge Wards. Viewing the data in this way will support the council and partners to plan and focus services and interventions in the boroughs where they are most needed. The contact and referral data reflects the surge in demand seen in the aftermath of the pandemic has plateaued. There has been an increase in contact rates but decrease in referral rates 2022/23 when compared to previous years. The report has identified demand is changing both in terms of need, risk and demographics of the children who we come into contact with:

- o The report has highlighted children aged 10-15 are more likely to be subject to a contact.
- o Males are more likely to be subject to a contact or referral and outside of the top 3 subcategories of need, they are most at risk of extra familial harm.
- o Children who live in the east wards of the borough are most likely to be subject to a contact and referral.
- o Asian ethnicity groups are the most represented in the overall Redbridge population, however they are underrepresented in the contact and referral data.
- o Domestic abuse remains the highest reason for contact and referral, with parenting concerns being the second highest reason for contact for the first time, followed by physical harm which is moved to third.
- o When we consider the referral rate, we have seen increases in the subcategories need associated with extra-familial harm, which is encouraging as it suggests those children are being identified by the wider professional network.

The report highlighted areas for the RSCP to respond to:

- Reduction of GP contacts into the MASH
- How we support practitioners across the partnership to implement the new [Multi-Agency Safeguarding Referrals & Threshold Guidance](#) which incorporates the [London Safeguarding Matrix of Need](#).
- Improving the identification of neglect across the partnership and increase the use of the [neglect toolkit](#).
- Increase the use of the CAF particularly where there are concerns regarding mental health
- Increase the co-location of partner agencies in the MASH, to improve the expert advice on contacts within the first 24 hours, ensuring there is proportionate responses to contacts.

Serious Violence Duty – Update from the Community Safeguarding Partnership (CSP)

The Serious Violence Strategy will be published shortly. It has been developed from a strategic needs assessment developed using partnership data. Key themes from the report are:

- There is disproportionality with over **representation of black and mixed ethnic groups within Children's Social Care, Youth Justice and Probation.**
- Redbridge has an older serious violence profile compared to rest of London, only 33% of victims and 21% of suspects are under 25 in Redbridge.
- Domestic Violence is responsible for a high proportion of violent crime locally and perpetrator programmes locally show drug and alcohol abuse drives violence
- Violence linked to U25 is linked to school commuting and peaks weekdays between 15:00 to 18:00
- Women under the age of 25 suffer a disproportionate level of violent and sexual victimisation (DV + Street Violence)
- Disparity between the perception of crime rates and actual crime rates with residents believing levels of serious violence are increasing hugely when crime data does not show this.

Priority 1

Transitional Safeguarding

The Transitional Safeguarding Panel in Redbridge is now well established. Find out more about the Panel and how to refer a young person to it on the [RSCP website](#). The Panel's work will be reviewed in 2024.



Priority 2

Contextual Safeguarding

The multi-agency review of Contextual Safeguarding has concluded and the report will be presented to the RSCP in February 2024. Agreed recommendations will be taken forward in 2023 – 2024. Find out more about the importance of this area of safeguarding on the [NSPCC Learning website](#).

Priority 4

Children & Young People's Mental Health

Supporting a response to the growth in children and young people's mental health concerns, including raising awareness of different support and resources available.



Priority 3

Responding to 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, amongst other national publications has been key to the work of the RSCP throughout 2022 – 2023.

Priority 5

Child Friendly Redbridge

The RSCP continues to support the work being undertaken by agencies across all sectors to progress to achieve the UNICEF Child Friendly Redbridge status and to raise awareness of issues of concern to the Redbridge Youth Council including sexual harassment in schools; signposting to support for children impacted by domestic abuse or homelessness; and raising awareness of the effects of substance misuse on young people.



Focus on ... Vaping - how Via are supporting young people and those who work with or care for them

Via (formerly known as WDP) is a charity that supports people to transform their lives for the better, helping them to manage their health and wellbeing independently. Via are commissioned to provide several services in Redbridge, which include young people across sexual health (Bewize), drug and alcohol (Fusion), and smoking cessation services (Redbridge Quits Smoking).

Redbridge Quits Smoking (RQS)

RQS launched in April 2023, and works with anyone aged 12+ who lives, works, or studies in Redbridge. RQS are commissioned to work with schools to emphasise the prevention of uptake of both smoking and vaping amongst young people, provide pathways to help young people to access support for smoking and vaping, and develop and share assets about the risks of vaping for those who have never smoked and guide professionals and carers in how to talk to young people about vaping.

Demand has been high for the support provided around vaping. For young people on offer a range of ways to deliver information sessions: assemblies, canteen pop-ups, PHSE classes, or 'choices and consequences' workshops for any age group (including under 12s). As well as providing talks (on one occasion we delivered sessions to 1000 students across the day!), we can provide 1-2-1 smoking cessation or vaping cessation support for those aged 12+ who would like help to stop. RQS work under Fraser Guidelines/Gillick competence, encouraging the individual to let their caregivers know they are receiving support. RQS also offer training and workshops for pastoral leads, designated safeguarding leads, and other professionals as well as caregivers. Last summer RQS delivered a webinar for parents about vaping and how to start a discussion with their child about vaping.

Local insights are also indicating that some young people are adding psychoactive substances to vapes – such as synthetic cannabinoids (e.g., 'spice'). Here the service has the advantage of being able to deliver education sessions around this, and provide support to those needing it, by collaborating with colleagues in Fusion.

Following the launch of the Swap-to-Stop scheme, a key challenge will be in differentiating our messaging about vaping as an effective quit-aid for adult smokers - for whom vaping is less harmful for the smoker and those around them, and to "never smokers" (i.e., young people) who do not need to develop a nicotine addiction in the first place and given that vaping is not completely risk-free. Adults who are being helped to quit smoking with vapes provided by RQS are advised about ensuring any young people they live with do not get access to their vapes, and the law about providing vapes to under 18s.

The government recently stated a commitment to double funding to local authority smoking cessation services from 2024 and to commission consultations on measures to tackle the increase in youth vaping. Via are preparing for opportunities emerging from this funding by increasing capacity, recruiting an apprentice smoking cessation advisor who will develop particular subject matter expertise around vaping and young people.

RQS are keen to link in with all professionals who work with and support young people – including leaving care and looked-after children, school nurses, CAMHS, as well as DSLs and other pastoral leads. To connect to discuss how RQS can help, collaborate, or to discuss any training or workshops for your colleagues or service users, contact helen.oconnor@viaorg.uk. Posters can be downloaded from the RQS and Fusion websites for displaying in settings used by young people.

All Via services comply with local and organisational safeguarding frameworks, policies and procedures. For more information about our services including how to refer, can be found here:

RQS <https://www.viaorg.uk/services/redbridge-quits-smoking/>

Fusion <https://www.viaorg.uk/services/redbridge-fusion/>

Bewize <https://www.viaorg.uk/services/redbridge-bewize/>

RSCP Training Programme 2023 - 2024

The new [23/24 RSCP Training Programme](#) launched in September, and we are already getting good uptake for the 70 learning events we are delivering this academic year. As well as increasing the number of essential courses for creating safer settings for children; Level 2 and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Training, we have some exciting new partnerships contributing to local and national safeguarding initiatives. The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) will be co-facilitating a course on [Understanding Coercive Control](#) and Redbridge Education Welfare Team (REWT) have designed a new course, [Cost of Living Crisis, Poverty and the Effects on Parenting and Children's Mental Health](#). The RSCP Training Manager sits on the London Safeguarding Children Partnership's Training Subgroup and this year as well as our local offer, anyone working with Redbridge children and families can take advantage of their free [Pan London Training Programme](#).

Our upcoming courses include:

Course	Date	Delivery
Professional Curiosity in Safeguarding	06 02 2024	Online
Safeguarding Privately Fostered Children	08 02 2024	Online
Trauma Informed Safeguarding Briefing	27 02 2024	Online
RSCP Designated Safeguarding Lead (Level 3)	27 02 2024	Classroom
Understanding Loss, Grief and Bereavement and the Effect on Children and Families	29 02 2024	Classroom
Safeguarding Children who go Missing	01 03 2024	Online
Safeguarding Children with Disabilities	01 03 2024	Online
Early Help for Children & Families – An Introduction to the Common Assessment Framework (CAF)	06 03 2024	Online
Radicalisation Awareness Workshop	07 03 2024	Online
Sexualisation, development and safeguarding children and young people	12 03 2024	Online
Children's Rights and Safeguarding	13 03 2024	Online
Working with Race, Culture and Belief Systems in the Context of Professional Curiosity	14 03 2024	Online
Introducing The Havens and NEL CSA Hub: Supporting recovery and health of children affected by Child Sexual Abuse	15 03 2024	Online

Check out the full list and availability on our [website](#).

Private Fostering



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 Redbridge Children's Services:
020 8708 3885
CPAT.Referrals@redbridge.gov.uk
or visit www.redbridge.gov.uk/private-fostering for more information

Fostering for Redbridge



New Year New Challenge



Foster for Redbridge
020 8708 6068
fostering@redbridge.gov.uk



Safer Sleep Conference

22 March 2024

Professionals working in North East London with children and families are invited to attend a Safer Sleep Conference on 22 March from 09:00 – 16:00 in Stratford, E15.

The Conference will include presentations on the science behind SIDS, sleeping right for young children, infant feeding and safe sleep and an update from Hackney on their SUDI Prevention Project. E-mail bhr.cdop@nhs.net for further information.

Duty to Refer – Homelessness

[Guidance](#) is available for professionals in relation to the duty to refer when a family in Redbridge are at risk of homelessness. The referral form is available [here](#).

New Year, New Challenge

I will save more money. I will eat more **healthily**. Why not make a New Year's resolution which will change a life?

Over 300 children are unable to stay with their families in Redbridge in each year and need a secure, stable and nurturing home. If you have place in your heart and home and are considering fostering, please call the Redbridge Fostering Service on 0208 708 6068 or email fostering@redbridge.gov.uk or for more information visit the [local authority website](#) where you can book onto a 'virtual' information session.

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 (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 in April 2024.