



**Nottinghamshire
Safeguarding
Children Partnership**

NSCP Newsletter

December 2021

Welcome to the December edition of the NSCP newsletter and wishing you all a relaxing holiday season. This edition contains various news items including information about the triennial review of Nottinghamshire's rapid reviews as presented to the Partnership Forum in November, a progress report on whole family safeguarding and strength-based practice in Nottinghamshire plus an update on the tackling child exploitation project. After what has been another challenging year for many personally and professionally, I would like to say a huge thank you to you all on behalf of the Strategic Leadership Group for your continued commitment to safeguarding. I hope you will find the newsletter both interesting and informative.

**Rosa Waddingham
SLG Chair, Chief Nurse - Nottingham and
Nottinghamshire Integrated Care System and CCG**

Engagement work with sports clubs, faith groups and voluntary sector organisations

Two events took place in October as part of the NSCP's commitment to build greater engagement with these key safeguarding partners.

The events allowed an opportunity for safeguarding leads to participate in discussions about how best to safeguard children in their organisations. Real life safeguarding scenarios were presented by Nottingham Forest, the National Ice Centre, and the YMCA for the sports/voluntary organisations event, and by the Methodist Church, Trent Vineyard and Beeston Free Church for the Faith event. Ruth Pearson, a very experienced social work practitioner and trainer, spoke to the two events about child neglect and how organisations can be very much a protective factor in their contact with children and young people.

42 safeguarding leads from faith groups and 32 safeguarding leads from sports and voluntary sector organisations attended the 2 events. The content of the events and opportunities for discussion were very well received. Feedback from the participants was very positive, and a plan for further work to build on and expand the engagement and the potential to improve the safeguarding of children in these groups has been formulated which will be presented to the NSCP Strategic Leadership Group in January 2022.



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– project report**

**NSCP annual report of
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NSCP Early Help Strategy

**Updated Pathway to
Provision**

**Refresh of the Joint
Health and Wellbeing
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Triennial review of Nottinghamshire's rapid reviews

Rapid reviews became a requirement on 1st July 2018 following the publication of Working Together 2018. 25 rapid reviews were completed in Nottinghamshire between July 2018 and October 2021. Findings of the triennial review were presented to the NSCP partnership forum in November.

- ❖ The primary nature of abuse was physical in 16 of the rapid reviews.
- ❖ in 17 of the rapid reviews the source of harm was the child's parent, parent's partner, foster carer (1) or other family member (2). The source of the harm was extra-familial in 4 of the reviews.
- ❖ 12 rapid reviews have been completed since the pandemic started. Of these 8 identified a significant impact of Covid 19; from the effects of reduced face to face contact with professionals to reduced opportunities for family members to raise concerns and the impact of overcrowding.

6 rapid reviews followed **injuries to a baby under one year old**.

- ❖ 5 reviews – the babies were non-mobile
- ❖ the suspected perpetrator was the parent/parent's partner in all 6 reviews
- ❖ issues with lack of knowledge re. men in household – 3 reviews
- ❖ domestic abuse an issue - 3 reviews
- ❖ & parental mental ill health – 3 reviews
- ❖ [Pathway for bruising in non -mobile babies](#) has been revised and promoted in 2021 training

2 rapid reviews followed **sudden unexpected death in infancy**.

- ❖ both deaths involved co-sleeping with parental drug or alcohol use
- ❖ continued cross partnership work to address SUDI

4 involved **child criminal exploitation**.

- ❖ all involved drug use
- ❖ none of the 4 young people considered themselves to have been exploited
- ❖ good multi-agency working evident

6 children were **in local authority care**.

- ❖ 2 with foster carers
- ❖ 2 in semi-independent placements
- ❖ 2 in residential placements

In 6 rapid reviews **the male was not engaged**.

- ❖ either agencies were not aware of the men, or they were known but insufficiently assessed

The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel annual report 2020

The annual report of the national Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel highlights six key practice themes to make a difference in reducing serious harm and preventing child deaths caused by abuse or neglect. The report makes the point that underpinning them all is the importance of effective leadership and culture. There is an expectation that these six themes will be a focus for shared learning with safeguarding partnerships.

Effective rapid reviews identify immediate learning, how and when that learning can be disseminated and set out a clear rationale for whether to initiate a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review.

Six key practice themes to make a difference

1. Understanding what the child's daily life is like
2. Working with families where their engagement is reluctant and sporadic
3. Critical thinking and challenge
4. Responding to changing risk and need
5. Sharing information in a timely and appropriate way

The findings of Nottinghamshire rapid reviews were broadly consistent with this national analysis. Gaps in information sharing between partners were identified in Nottinghamshire, and some issues with the quality of assessments. Good quality assessments are critical to the ability to respond to changing risk and need, and to critical thinking and challenge.

The need to understand what the child's daily life is like, and the way this impacts on their development and welfare, is central to protective safeguarding work. The complexity of situations in vulnerable families, including when neglect, domestic abuse and parental substance abuse are issues, can lead to a focus on parental needs rather than a focus on the risks faced by children. This was identified as a theme in Nottinghamshire.

In addition, in Nottinghamshire some challenges with joint working between partners were identified as a theme.

Whole family safeguarding and strength-based practice in Nottinghamshire



From Strength to Strength

Nottinghamshire's Children and Families department has made a commitment to embracing and implementing Whole Family Safeguarding and strengths-based practice to provide a better future for the children and families of Nottinghamshire. Whole Family Safeguarding is a whole system operating model which takes a strength-based approach to supporting families so that children in need of help, protection and care achieve their best possible outcomes. Evidence suggests that strengths-based practice leads to a range of benefits, including improved quality of practice and therefore outcomes, improved retention of staff and more collaborative support to children and families at an earlier stage.

A range of design sites will be developed across the department to test strengths-based approaches in practice, some of which you are likely to encounter when working with children and their families. In April this year we began to make changes to the way in which we work within our child protection conferences. Our new approach to conferences has a greater focus on participation and building on the child, family, and community strengths to promote positive and sustained change. Other early design sites across the department include:

- Providing earlier, personalised, and multi-disciplinary support to teenagers at risk of coming into care
- Providing earlier, more focussed support to reduce the need for families to progress through care proceedings
- Providing a child focused and young person-centred approach to looked after reviews for children in care.
- Providing earlier support to families and schools where the child has special educational needs and disabilities

How can you get involved?

We will be working closely with the Safeguarding Assurance and Improvement Group and our partners throughout this period of change and development. We will be asking for feedback as we implement change and for our partners to be involved in smaller working groups such as those outlined above. If this is something you would like to be involved in directly then please get in touch by emailing Childrens.projects@nottscc.gov.uk. We are excited about the future of our practice with children, young people, and their families and we hope that as you start to experience the changes you will be too. Thank you for your support in advance and we look forward to embarking on this journey together.

Multi-disciplinary approaches and safeguarding teams

Nationally, there is a move to exploring multi-disciplinary approaches including multi-disciplinary teams. Locally we recognise the opportunities and benefits of working more closely with our partner agencies when we are working with children who require help, protection, and care. Over the next few months, we will be working together to consider how we might work even more closely. This will include learning from experiences of other Local Authorities who have embedded multi-disciplinary working and asking for their support in the context of our ambition to work in a strengths-based, multi-disciplinary way. We will develop and implement multi-disciplinary approaches to providing help, protection and care to vulnerable children and their families. The first phase will involve implementing a multi-disciplinary approach to supporting children receiving help and protection through one of the district child protection teams, with a target implementation date of April 2022. Initially this will involve domestic abuse workers, substance misuse workers and adult mental health professionals.

Further development and next steps

A strength-based approach to practice involves working collaboratively and offering high support and high challenge not only with children and families but with each other. As part of the work on child protection conferences and looked after meetings we have established a small working group with our partner agencies. The work on implementing a multi-disciplinary safeguarding team has also started and we have a multi-agency steering group and task and delivery groups who are committed and enthusiastic about an initial pilot in April 2022.

Virtual Training Events

It's been another busy year with us continuing to offer all our face-to-face courses virtually via Microsoft Teams, with 1,937 course places been taken up so far this year.

Some of the subjects we have offered include: decision making & disguised compliance, parental substance misuse, working together to safeguard children, safeguarding children today, working with intimidation, resistance & avoidance, sudden unexpected death in infancy & safer sleep for babies, effective strategy discussions, safeguarding children at risk of neglect, working with children and young people impacted by self-harm & suicide, child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation & county lines, volatile substance abuse, and perplexing presentations including fabricated or Induced Illness.

Course evaluations have been very positive, with partners very appreciative that we have still offered a full training programme.

- *“Very interesting & engaging despite being virtual” (CCE & county lines)*
- *“Very informative and practically based. Really useful ideas & tips. Well presented with a good mix of small group work. (Working with intimidation, resistance & avoidance)*
- *“After the training I feel more confident in giving information to parents regarding safe sleep and aim to promote safer sleep messages to all families I work with (SUDI & safer sleep)*
- *This was a great opportunity to refresh my knowledge and be brought up to date with recent changes locally & nationally. It was also very well organised. (Safeguarding children today.)*

For any queries about any of our training events please contact:
sarah.bale@nottscc.gov.uk or telephone:
01159 774439

Consultation

Through course evaluations forms & surveys we have been asking for feedback from all delegates & trainers on how effective you have found our virtual training events and moving forward (when safe to do so) whether you feel we should go back to offering face to face classroom events or remain as virtual training events. We are still analysing the feedback, but the early indication is that you would like us to offer a blended approach. We will bear this in mind when setting out our training programme for 2022-23.

E-Learning

E-learning is still proving to be a very popular method of training, which is suitable for those staff needing an introduction to a subject or wishing to refresh their knowledge around a subject. Over the last year we have offered 3 more new e learning courses: children missing from home & care, what makes a good MASH referral and reducing parental conflict. A new course will also be launched in January 2022 called supporting looked after children. Don't forget we now have 25 e-learning courses for you to choose from. Please go to [E-learning - Learning Pool](#) for full list & more information.

To see what new courses are coming up and to book onto any of our events please go to: nottscc.learningpool.com/login. If you are unable to attend, please cancel your place via the course log in page. This will allow someone else to attend and you may otherwise incur a non-attendance fee.

Project Report Tackling Child Exploitation

Following a successful joint bid made with colleagues in the Violence Reduction Unit and Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership, the NSCP worked with the Tackling Child Exploitation (TCE) Programme to consider our response to child exploitation and extra-familial harm across Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City. The project ran between November 2020 and April 2021. The TCE Programme is funded by the DfE and delivered through Bespoke Support Projects by the University of Bedford, Research in Practice and the Children's Society.

Processes and procedures were reviewed, and a series of workshops were undertaken involving single and multi-agency groups, with a range of staff from practitioners and senior managers. The views of young people were also sought.

The aim was to explore the development of a roadmap to integration and alignment of responses to extra-familial harm in Nottinghamshire County Council, Nottingham City Council and across the two safeguarding partnerships. There was recognition from the outset that this is a complex area of work with an acknowledgement nationally that there is no one solution or 'off the peg' approach that works.

Outcomes

- Recognition that across both city and county partnerships there are robust processes and pathways reflecting the range of threats from extra-familial harm.
- Recognition that there is strong multi-agency working both operationally and strategically
- Noted that multi-agency structures are in place to support the development of the work further
- Further work is needed to improve consistency and awareness
- Further work needed to develop our analysis of information

Conclusions

Overall, it was felt that it would not be appropriate at this stage to attempt to fully integrate responses to extra-familial harm across the range of threats or cross authority given the size of the task and the differences between the city and county authorities at this point.

Other news

Tell us your views – the refresh of the **Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for 2022-2026**. This is Nottinghamshire's plan for improving the health and wellbeing of residents and to reduce health inequalities. The strategy proposes 9 priorities including mental health and domestic abuse. As well as [in person and virtual roadshows](#), there is an [online survey](#), and a [Children and Young People's survey](#), to give everyone the opportunity to give their views about health and wellbeing in Nottinghamshire. Partners are encouraged to complete the survey as well as to distribute it.

The **Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Child Neglect Strategy for 2021-2024**

was launched at the partnership forum on 18 May 2021. Neglect is:

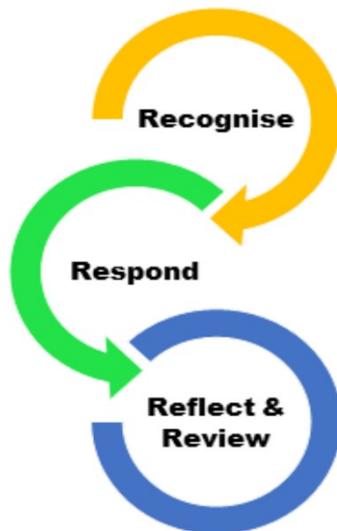
- the most common reason for a child to be made the subject of a child protection plan
- the form of abuse more likely to be repeated
- exposes children to other forms of abuse, e.g. exploitation/increased vulnerability
- can be difficult to identify, making it hard for professionals to take action to protect a child.
- is an area where there can be drift and delay; professionals can become desensitised to a child's living conditions and experiences of poor parenting.



The **NSCP Early Help strategy 2021-2025** sets out the 4 priority areas for improvement of early help services for children and families in Nottinghamshire:

- community resilience – promoting and supporting communities to be resilient.
- family hubs – bringing in a range of teams who serve the local community together to ensure joint working
- contextual approaches – developing our Whole Family Approach to include the wider context in which a child is growing up
- data maturity – improving the way we use data to improve services for families

The neglect strategy focuses on three key objectives and outlines the actions the partnership has agreed to deliver to make lives better for children experiencing neglect in Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City.



The **Pathway to Provision** multi-agency thresholds guidance has been updated:

- information about the children's centre service
- details of the graduated family and parenting offer
- new information in relation to safer sleep for babies
- new online early help referral form
- advice on contacting the MASH via phone or online form for non-urgent enquiries

The **NSCP annual report 2020-21** has been published on the NSCP website, containing details of the partnership's activities and achievements over the past year. Three strategic safeguarding priorities for 2021-22 have been agreed as follows:

Priority 1: understanding and developing the role of the safeguarding partnership in evolving system arrangements

Priority 2: preventing abuse and neglect

Priority 3: improving safeguarding practice