

Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership



Executive/Management Group/Subgroup	
TITLE OF REPORT:	Thematic Review of Child Exploitation Safeguarding Practice February 2021 – Update
Presented at GSCP Executive	
Presented at GSCP Management Group	24th March 2021
Presented at Other Meeting (Including Date)	GSCP Quality and Improvement in Practice Subgroup (QiiP) 4 th March 2021 GSCP Child Exploitation and Missing Subgroup 9 th March 2021
LEAD	Sue Fereday T/DCI Public Protection Unit. Chair: Child Exploitation and Missing Subgroup

1. Background

During June and July 2020, the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (GSCP) scrutinised three separate cases where a young person had suffered significant harm and which had involved Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). They recognised the potential to improve the way agencies worked together to safeguard young people and commissioned this Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR).

An independent author was appointed to work with the safeguarding partners in a thematic review of safeguarding practice and structures. The intention being to use the experiences of the three young people to guide a wider review, focusing on strategic development rather than an individual case. Its purpose to:

- Support the development of safeguarding practice and services.
- Identify potential improvements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

A wide number of agencies participated and key thematic areas offering the potential to improve outcomes for young people were identified.

2. Report

The Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership are already progressing with the recommendations from the review asking the Child Exploitation and Missing Subgroup to lead on the implementation and how the partnership intends to deliver improvements to safeguarding practice.

Partnership activity against the recommendations started prior to publication on receipt of the final draft from the independent author in November 2020. The below sets out the activity undertaken, in progress and planned for 2021.

Recommendation 1:

The GSCP should develop a new Child Exploitation Strategy, based upon the principles of contextual safeguarding. This should include the identification of relevant pathways and the commissioning of services.

Update:

The partnership has committed to rewriting its strategy looking at options of working with the National Working Group (NWG) and other experts in this area to advise and support the creation of a Young person's 'Outside the Home' Strategy". The intended aim to ensure the partnership has a collective confidence and knowledge about how to take effective action –options available and how to collectively and consistently implement them.

The GSCP Child Exploitation and Missing Subgroup are leading on the development of the multi-agency strategy with a working group created towards the end of 2020. The group have met a number of times before and since publication on the 10th February 2021 to start scoping the revised strategy including setting out a proposed timeline that should see a draft available for the GSCP Executive to sign off in the summer of 2021. A project Management resource has been allocated to assist in the project and to add capacity to the working group.

Firmer understanding of deadlines and milestones will be set out at the Child Exploitation & Missing subgroup on the 9th March 2021.

Recommendation 2:

All agencies should introduce a trauma informed referral assessment process which is child and young person focused.

Update:

In direct response to this recommendation, partnership referral and assessment processes are being reviewed to ensure they are trauma informed and the child's voice is clearly represented. This has already commenced with the new child exploitation screening tool with further reviews planned or underway. For example work on the MARF and VIST is underway as well as an NHS England pilot project to review entry and access to emotional wellbeing and mental health services in the county, this links to recommendation two of the report.

These reviews are taking place with the support of partners such as the 'Nelson Trust' who are accredited trainers for a trauma informed approach. To further ensure a trauma informed approach is taken when completing and assessing referrals, training will be sought for staff and woven into existing processes. An example of this is demonstrated in the Trauma Informed Model of Care (TIMOC) pilot being conducted with Trevone House staff group.

The Child Exploitation and Missing Subgroup will be monitoring and overseeing the progress against this action through 2021 with an expectation it should be completed and reported back to the GSCP Executive later in the year.

Recommendation 3:

CAMHS should review the current referral process to ensure that it is child and young person focussed, and that the new referral process is widely understood & promoted across partner agencies.

Update:

Gloucestershire is one of 12 national NHS England pilot sites to look at transforming CAMHS and wider mental health services. This review of the counties emotional wellbeing and mental health services is currently underway and will be completed later in 2021.

As part of the mental health transformation programme the review has already undertaken

- a review of need in partnership with Public Health
- consultation with children, families, clinicians and stakeholders locally to gain insight into what works well, and what needs to improve. We continue to co-design our new offer going forward.
- NHS England Improvement as part of the system wide review of mental health support for children and young people in Gloucestershire.

This has resulted in a number of recommendations to take forward which includes:

- Better quality of referral information which will enable the principle “no referral is rejected” but forwarded to most appropriate option for support, by developing robust referral criteria/referral form and communicating this to all stakeholders.
- Telephone triage with all families as a first contact to ensure that all of the information is captured at referral point and options can be discussed directly with children and young people and their families.
- When referrals are received and other children’s services are involved there will be a multiagency meeting arranged to ensure that the partnership is working together collectively to best support children and family’s needs in the round.
- Create a central resource where the partnership can describe a system wide offer of support to children, young people and families and provide information about support available, clearly articulating an offer. This includes implementing the principles of THRIVE.
<http://implementingthrive.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/THRIVE-Framework-for-system-change-2019.pdf>
- In addition the partnership is evaluating the pilot of providing therapeutic input to foster carers and social workers to best support children in care.
- Longer term we aim to work with partners to develop a single point of access by operationalising a system-wide ‘front door’ calling upon the expertise and skills from across the system adopting the philosophy that no request for support is rejected.

It is anticipated that this review and pilot will be concluded in 2021 allowing the partnership to ensure that emotional wellbeing and mental health specialist service provision is widely understood, accessible and child focused.

Firmer understanding of deadlines and milestones will be set out at the Quality and Improvement in Practice subgroup on the 4th March 2021.

Recommendation 4: Gloucestershire Constabulary should review compliance with their VIST safeguarding policy in relation to adolescents and ensure measures are in place to improve the identification and reporting of adolescent risk.

Update:

- Significant work has already been undertaken to review and refresh the Constabulary’s VIST guidance. The VIST itself will now be reviewed to ensure it accurately reflects appropriate and proportionate aspects of the Neglect Toolkit and a trauma informed approach and importantly reviewing whether child exploitation is accurately reflected in the question sets. This work will continue in the first quarter of 2021 with future plans for education and awareness raising of some of the complexities identified through this LSCPR. The Child Exploitation and Missing Subgroup will receive an update on this work at their next meeting in March 2021.
- An audit has been conducted into the quality of VIST submissions which has identified common themes and misconceptions; this information is being used to ensure training is focused on the core issues. Training, started in August 2020, will continue targeted at a range of front line staff and then across other areas of the partnership.
- Changes to the MASH and Public Protection intranet pages are planned to ensure information is constantly available for reference.
- Regular check and test processes are in place at various levels to correct compliance issues and ongoing compliance and quality assurance will be tested with monthly quantitative and qualitative evaluation. The outcome of this piece of work in response to this recommendation will be reported to the CE and Missing Subgroup in May 2021.
- While this recommendation specifies the Constabulary it has been recognised that all partners should review their compliance and quality in respect of the identification and reporting of risk. Indeed similar reviews in the auditing of MARF submissions has already started in GHC along with work in CSC to add the new Criminal Exploitation screening tool to their online workspace to highlight identification of risk. This wider partnership work will be monitored by the Child Exploitation and Missing subgroup and the GSCP Management Group through 2021.

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