

# **Brent Safeguarding Children Partnership**

# **Annual Report**

1 October 2020 - 30 September 2021

# Contents

## 1 Multi-agency safeguarding children partnership arrangements in Brent

- Brent Statutory Safeguarding Partners Executive Group
- Brent Safeguarding Forum
- Case Review Group
- Learning & Development Advisory Group
- Independent Convenor
- Support arrangements
- Financial arrangements

## 2 Safeguarding children partnership activity 2020-2021

- Timeline of activity: October 2020 – September 2021
- Multi-agency learning and development programme
- Child K Serious Case Review

## 3 Achievements

- Identifying and responding to emerging safeguarding issues
- Changes to Brent practice and procedures because of rapid reviews and Child K SCR

# 1. Multi-agency safeguarding children partnership arrangements in Brent

- 1.1. The Brent safeguarding partnership arrangements began to operate in September 2019 following the introduction of the Children and Social Work Act in 2017 and the publication of the revised statutory guidance Working Together 2018; both of which set out what is expected of organisations, individually and jointly, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- 1.2. Brent's multi-agency safeguarding oversight arrangements were first agreed in June 2019 and were published on 21 September 2019. They set out the arrangements which capitalise on the strengths and local progress previously made by the Brent Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- 1.3. Brent's arrangements consist of a two-tier structure with the Executive Group providing high-level strategic direction to a delivery focused Brent Safeguarding Children Forum made up of a diverse and wide-ranging partnership.
- 1.4. Further details of the Brent Safeguarding arrangements can be found on the [Brent Safeguarding Partnerships website](#).

## Brent Statutory Safeguarding Partners Executive Group

- 1.5. The Executive Group fulfil the objectives, functions and responsibilities set out in Working Together 2018 to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in Brent by;

- agreeing the overarching strategic vision and local priorities for safeguarding children
- challenging and holding the Safeguarding Forum to account
- agreeing, publishing and reviewing the safeguarding oversight arrangements
- monitoring serious child safeguarding cases which raise issues of importance
- ensuring that the arrangements to work together to identify and respond to the needs of children in the area are effective and robust
- identifying any new safeguarding issues and emerging threats
- making strategic links with other Brent partnerships
- making provision for independent scrutiny of the safeguarding arrangements

- 1.6. The Executive Group membership includes:

<b>Brent Council</b>	Chief Executive Strategic Director of Children and Young People and Statutory Director of Children's Services The Leader and Statutory Lead Member for Children's Services (Safeguarding, Early Help and Social Care) <sup>1</sup>
<b>North West London collaboration of Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)</b>	Director of Quality, Nursing and Safeguarding
<b>Metropolitan Police</b>	Superintendent (Public Protection-Safeguarding Lead), North West BCU
<b>Independent Convener for Brent Safeguarding Children Forum</b>	

- 1.7. Details on the activity of the Safeguarding Forum during this period are in Section 2 of this report.

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<sup>1</sup> The Leader of Brent Council and the Statutory Lead for Children's Services (Safeguarding, Early Help and Social Care) are politically accountable for ensuring the local authority fulfils its legal responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. They provide the political leadership needed for the effective co-ordination of work with other agencies who have safeguarding responsibilities and therefore are members of the Executive Group.

## Brent Safeguarding Children Forum

- 1.8. The Brent Safeguarding Children Forum is a wider partnership forum accountable to the Executive Group.
- 1.9. The Forum co-ordinates and monitors multi-agency safeguarding oversight arrangements as set out in Working Together 2018 and is led by an Independent Convenor.
- 1.10. The Forum is responsible for;

- driving delivery of local safeguarding priorities set by the Executive Group
- building relationships with other strategic partnerships, the local community, local schools and other educational establishments
- seeking assurance on behalf of the Executive Group that partners are fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities, sharing information effectively and have robust safeguarding policies and procedures in place through multi-agency audits (including consideration of a S.11 type audit as used under the previous LSCB arrangements) and challenge at Forum meetings
- ensuring that safeguarding partners and relevant agencies follow the London Child Protection Procedures
- develop and maintain a Brent Thresholds document giving guidance on children getting the right help at the right time
- developing, implementing and monitoring the impact of an interagency safeguarding children learning and development programme, incorporating local and national learning from serious child safeguarding cases
- analysing and considering partnership responses to any new safeguarding issues and emerging threats identified by the Executive Group
- undertaking Local Learning Reviews on behalf of the Executive Group
- developing ways for the safeguarding oversight arrangements to include the voices of children and families in Brent (e.g. refining rapid reviews to include agencies who can properly represent the voice of the child/ren, such as schools)
- considering multi-agency management information (e.g. scrutinising annual reports presented to the Forum) and intelligence to establish an overview of and assess the effectiveness of safeguarding activity within Brent
- supporting agencies in resolving disputes that have been appropriately escalated
- scrutinising the learning, good practice and implementation of recommendations from rapid reviews

- 1.11. The Safeguarding Partners selected the agencies and organisations drawn from a list of 'relevant agencies' set out in Working Together 2018. These agencies and organisations have been chosen as they provide key strategic and operational insight for the safeguarding of children and young people in Brent.

- 1.12. The selected relevant agencies form the core membership of the Brent Safeguarding Children Forum. Forum members are expected to;

- proactively and enthusiastically engage with the partnership safeguarding arrangements
- be able to influence the strategic planning for safeguarding children within their agency
- be able to secure appropriate information from their agency to support the partnership work
- ensure that decisions of the Forum are taken forward within their own agency, and any impediments or delays to their implementation are reported to the Board
- be responsible for communicating the partnership work effectively within their agency

- 1.14. The lay members act as valuable ambassadors to help build stronger links with the local community as part of the new arrangements and are encouraged to:
- promote awareness of safeguarding across Brent’s communities
  - represent the community voice at Safeguarding Forum meetings
  - engage with Brent’s people and local groups to support community cohesion
- 1.15. The Forum continues to develop and strengthen the existing engagement from early years, schools and the Further Education College in the borough and has a significant membership from this sector.
- 1.16. The membership of the Forum includes representation from the following partners, relevant agencies, organisations and lay members;

<b>SAFEGUARDING PARTNERS</b>	
<b>NWL CCG, Brent</b>	Designated Safeguarding Children Professionals for Brent Named GP for Safeguarding
<b>Brent Council</b>	Statutory Lead Member for Children’s Services (Safeguarding, Early Help and Social Care) Children and Young People Housing Needs Safeguarding Adults Public Health Community Safety
<b>Metropolitan Police</b>	North West Borough Command Unit (BCU) Public Protection
<b>AGENCY/ORGANISATION</b>	
Education establishments	College of North West London / United Colleges Group Newman Catholic College Lyon Park Primary School The Village and Woodfield Special Schools Kingsbury High School Preston Manor School
Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust	
Central North West London Mental Health Foundation NHS Trust	
Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS)	
London Ambulance Service	
London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust	
Probation Service	
Queens Park Rangers Football Club	
<b>OTHER</b>	
Lay members	

- 1.17. Attendance at all Safeguarding Forum meetings is monitored and where any concerns arise regarding attendance and engagement of relevant agencies, the Independent Convener raise these with both the agency concerned and the Executive Group.
- 1.18. During 2020-2021, the partnership and agency attendance at Forum meetings has been exemplary and no concerns have been raised.
- 1.19. Details on the activity of the Safeguarding Forum during this period are in Section 2 of this report.

## Case Review Group

1.20. The Case Review Group is critical to the work of the Safeguarding Partners in Brent. It is the key mechanism for carrying out reviews of serious safeguarding cases that meet the criteria set out in Working Together 2018 (see paragraph 1.27 for more information).

1.21. The Case Review Group meeting is chaired by the Independent Convenor and is responsible for:

- considering all serious incident cases in Brent and making recommendations to the Safeguarding Partners for determination if the learning review criteria has been met
- identifying recommendations for any lessons to be learnt from serious incidents in Brent
- coordinating the arrangements on behalf of the Safeguarding Partners for commissioning and publishing local child safeguarding practice reviews
- developing the terms of reference, monitoring progress developing improvement plans coming for each local review
- making recommendations for multi-agency learning events based on the findings arising from case reviews and what the process is for undertaking them
- sharing examples of good practice to develop understanding of what works well

1.22. The Case Review Group has a fixed core membership drawn from the statutory safeguarding partners and relevant agencies. It has the flexibility to invite other relevant professionals to discuss certain cases as and when appropriate (including rapid reviews).

1.23. The core membership of the Case Review Group includes representation from the following partners, relevant agencies and organisations;

SAFEGUARDING PARTNERS	
<b>NWL CCG</b>	Designated Professionals for safeguarding children Named GP for Safeguarding
<b>Brent Council</b>	Children and Young People Community Safety Legal Services
<b>Metropolitan Police</b>	North West Borough Command Unit (BCU) Public Protection
AGENCY/ORGANISATION	
Central London Community Healthcare Trust	
Central North West London Mental Health Foundation Trust	
London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust	

1.24. In recognition of the sensitive and confidential nature of business, all agency representatives/members must sign a confidentiality agreement, which includes the requirement to appropriately share and securely store information.

1.25. The Case Review Group also ensures that where possible and appropriate to do so, children, young people and families are involved in local child safeguarding practice reviews/serious case reviews. For example, dialogue with the parents of Child K as part of the serious case review mentioned in section 3 of this report.

1.26. The Case Review Group maintains links with the NWL Child Death Review process and ongoing considerations take place about linking review processes locally where child deaths are considered as part of both processes.

## Serious child safeguarding incidents

- 1.27. Working Together (2018) sets out the arrangements for handling serious child safeguarding cases. The purpose of these arrangements is to identify improvements to be made to safeguard and promote the welfare of children both at a local and national level. It has been recognised that whilst local learning is relevant, it also has a wider importance for all practitioners working with children and families and for the government and policy-makers.
- 1.28. The responsibility for how the system learns the lessons from serious child safeguarding incidents lies therefore at a national level with the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and at local level with the Brent Safeguarding Partners. The Safeguarding Partners have developed a process to identify and review serious child safeguarding cases, which, in their view, raise issues of importance in relation to their area.
- 1.29. Serious child safeguarding cases are those in which:
  - serious abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected and
  - the child has died or been seriously harmed
- 1.30. When it has been determined that a serious safeguarding incident has taken place, Brent Safeguarding Partners must undertake a rapid review of the case.

The aim of a rapid review is to:

- gather the facts about the case, as far as they can be readily established at the time
- discuss whether there is any immediate action needed to ensure children's safety and share any learning appropriately
- consider the potential for identifying improvements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- decide what steps they should take next, including whether to commission a Local Safeguarding Practice Review

- 1.31. The strong multi-agency involvement in the Brent Safeguarding Children Forum has ensured that effective escalation routes are in place when multi-agency issues arise. The Forum and Case Review Group has been a driving force in the development of rapid review processes and the subsequent action on learning points in Brent, with positive engagement of partners evidenced in each review undertaken in Brent leading to cross-partnership learning and practice improvement.
- 1.32. The Executive Group have supported the development of reviews, a new way of working for all agencies, so that they are helpful and informative for practice learning, clear, well written and thorough which enabled them to understand the case well and ask further questions where necessary. Safeguarding Partners take ownership for this process and each partner reviews and signs off the final report before submission to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel.



## Learning and Development Advisory Group

- 1.33. The Learning and Development Advisory Group is part of the Safeguarding Partnership arrangements.
- 1.34. The part time Strategic Partnerships Learning and Development Co-ordinator supports the Learning and Development Advisory Group.
- 1.35. The functions of the Learning and Development Advisory Group are to:

- promote learning from safeguarding best practice
- promote learning around identified local and national priorities
- promote learning from local and national learning reviews and audits
- provide updates on the progress and the impact of the multi-agency learning offer
- provide recommendations and suggested actions to improve multi-agency practice through learning and development in Brent

- 1.36. The membership of the Learning and Development Advisory Group includes representation from the following partners, relevant agencies and organisations;

SAFEGUARDING PARTNERS	
<b>NWL CCG</b>	Designated Professionals for safeguarding children Named GP for Safeguarding
<b>Brent Council</b>	Children and Young People Community & Wellbeing
<b>Metropolitan Police</b>	North West Borough Command Unit (BCU) Public Protection
AGENCY/ORGANISATION	
Central London Community Healthcare Trust	
Central North West London Mental Health Foundation Trust	
London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust	
Lay members	

- 1.37. Details on the multi-agency learning and development programme offered during this period are in Section 2 of this report.

## Independent Scrutiny

- 1.38. The Safeguarding Partners agreed that the Safeguarding Forum is led by an Independent Convenor, who also undertakes the role of the Independent Scrutineer.
- 1.39. The Independent Convenor's role includes:

- appropriately challenging partner agencies and professionals for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in Brent
- providing direction to the Safeguarding Forum and ensuring statutory obligations and local priorities are being delivered
- overseeing the progression case reviews to ensure they meet required timescales
- ensuring that key local issues and national developments are considered by the Safeguarding Forum
- challenging and monitoring the performance and participation of partners in the work of the Safeguarding Forum
- chair and agree the record of rapid reviews and oversee the implementation of recommendations and learning



## Support arrangements

- 1.40. Support staffing arrangements for the Brent safeguarding children partnership arrangements are funded and resourced by Brent Council.
- 1.41. The Strategic Partnerships Team is responsible for leading the coordination of the arrangements and is based in the Assistant Chief Executive's Department. This team is managed by the Strategic Partnerships Manager.
- 1.42. Alongside the safeguarding children partnership arrangements, the Strategic Partnerships Team also coordinates activities for other strategic partnerships in Brent including; Brent Safeguarding Adults Board, Brent Health and Wellbeing Board and Brent Children's Trust
- 1.43. This staffing structure enables stronger strategic coordination between the strategic partnerships in Brent to both avoid duplication and develop joint initiatives. It also successfully facilitates a level of independence from operational activity.
- 1.44. The following staffing provision within the Strategic Partnerships Team that coordinate the safeguarding children arrangements include:

### A full time Strategic Partnerships Lead

(This post also manages and coordinates the Brent Children's Trust)

### A part time Strategic Partnerships Learning and Development Coordinator

(This post also manages the Safeguarding Adults Board learning and development)

- 1.45. The Brent Council Governance Team provide some administration support for both the Executive Group and Safeguarding Forum meetings (approximately 1 day a month).

## Financial arrangements

- 1.46. The safeguarding partners agree the partnership financial funding to support the local arrangements on an annual basis and the financial year runs from the 1 April to the 31 March the following year.

### Safeguarding Partnership Contributions

- 1.47. Whilst Working Together 2018 states the funding from each partner '*should be equitable and proportionate*' this is not so in Brent:

#### Brent Council

- As Brent Council's contribution consists of the support staffing /resource arrangements for the partnership, no additional financial contribution is made to the partnership financial arrangements. *The staffing/resource arrangements are equivalent to **approximately £127,000***

#### Metropolitan Police

- All London boroughs, regardless of size, continue to receive the same level of financial contribution from the Metropolitan Police, which is agreed centrally and set at **£5,000**.

#### Northwest London CCG

- NWL CCG financially contribute towards the partnership financial arrangements, this is a continuation of the contribution previously made by Brent CCG and is set at **£45,900**.

## Relevant Agency Contributions

1.48. Between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021, Brent Safeguarding Children Partnership also received financial contributions from the following relevant agencies:

- National Probation Service **£1,600**
- London Fire Brigade **£500**
- London North West University Healthcare Trust **£11,000**

## Partnership Financial Budget

1.49. The total annual financial contributions to the safeguarding partnership arrangements for 2020/2021 is therefore **£64,000**.

Financial Contribution	Amount (£)
Metropolitan Police	5,000
NWL CCG	45,900
National Probation Service	1,600
London Fire Brigade	500
London North West University Healthcare Trust	11,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>64,000</b>

1.50. The income and expenditure are managed and monitored by the Strategic Partnerships Team on behalf of the partnership.

## Partnership Financial Expenditure

1.51. The table below outlines the expenditure of the safeguarding arrangements during the 2020-2021 financial year:

### Expenditure 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021

Expense	Amount (£)
Independent Convener	31,850
Online multi-agency learning and development management system	1,118
External facilitators delivery of L& D multiagency programme	900
Strategic Partnerships joint website maintenance	350
Serious Case Review (Child K)	9775
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>43,993</b>

1.52. The total underspend of £20,007 was moved to the partnership's financial reserves.

## 2. Brent Safeguarding Children Partnership Activity

### Timeline of activity: October 2020 – September 2021

Meeting	Key areas of focus
<b>Case Review Group meeting</b> 1 Oct 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The standing membership was expanded to include a representative from Brent Community Safety.</li> <li>The group discussed Brent's involvement in a number of other borough reviews.</li> <li>There has been some interest from other boroughs in Brent's process for carrying out rapid reviews.</li> <li>The group continued to monitor the actions and recommendations identified from local rapid reviews.</li> </ul>
<b>Executive Group meeting</b> 29 Oct 2020	<p><b>Brent Council</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The LA had recently won an award for Council of the Year; it was felt that the Children and Young People's department, robust safeguarding practices, and strong relationships with partner agencies were contributors to that success.</li> <li>Although there had been some increase in safeguarding referrals, it had not been as high as expected; the referrals that were being made however were highly complex. This was in line with trends seen nationally.</li> <li>There had been significant increase in early help referrals, particularly around the beginning of signs of neglect associated with poverty, unemployment and in those parents of children with no recourse to public funds.</li> </ul> <p><b>NWL CCG</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some changes have been made to the NWL CCG senior management structure. A chief operating officer will cover the NWL CCG cohort (consisting of eight boroughs) with individual borough leads covering both children and adults safeguarding reporting into them.</li> <li>A review of the safeguarding arrangements across the NWL area had been conducted. One outcome was that partners felt there needed to be a local safeguarding presence in each borough, and for there to be a greater alignment between designated safeguarding doctors and designated nurses.</li> </ul> <p><b>Metropolitan Police NW BCU</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The partnership was assured that the capacity for child safeguarding investigations remained good during the pandemic.</li> <li>Levels of Domestic Abuse incidents had stabilised and returned to pre-pandemic levels, with around 95 incidents and 60 crimes a week.</li> <li>The local procedures for missing children and child exploitation were under review and gaps had been identified in dealing with complex cases where children may have engagement in multiple boroughs.</li> </ul> <p><b>Safeguarding Children Forum</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The group received updates on progress on actions from three recent Brent rapid reviews and the Child K Serious Case Review.</li> <li>There was a vacancy for the position of co-chair of the Learning and Development Advisory Group. This role would need to be in a position to support the other co-chair who was a lay member of the Forum. No nominations had been made at the Forum and individuals would be approached if necessary.</li> <li>A recommendation was made that the strategic partners consider the introduction of mandatory safeguarding training for all staff in their organisation if this is not already in place.</li> </ul>

OCTOBER 2020

Meeting	Key areas of focus
<p><b>Case Review Group meeting</b> 3 Dec 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The input from the Case Review Group to the draft Safeguarding Partners Annual Report covering the period October 2019 – September 2020 was discussed.</li> <li>• The response from Child Safeguarding Practice Panel in relation to one rapid review was discussed.</li> <li>• In response to a query from the panel about Brent services that are in place that work with perpetrators of Domestic Abuse the group highlighted that:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Brent has a perpetrator intervention programme for both male and females, delivered by RISE mutual. This programme is a 16-week course with additional one to one support for perpetrators, who are predominantly men.</li> <li>○ Brent also has a Victim Survival Worker that links into this programme and updates victims on the progress of the perpetrators.</li> <li>○ The Brent violence and vulnerability programme offers support work for perpetrators that are in prison and are due to be released back into the community.</li> <li>○ The IRIS intervention programme for GPs will be delivered across Brent in early 2021.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Updates on the progress of rapid review recommendations were shared</li> <li>• The progress of three Brent Domestic Homicide Reviews were discussed.</li> <li>• The Brent input to and links from six other borough reviews (both rapid reviews and local child safeguarding practice reviews) was discussed.</li> <li>• One specific input into another borough’s local safeguarding practice review relating to support from Brent Housing Needs was discussed in detail including how learning had already improved practice.</li> <li>• The group continued to monitor the progression of the Child K SCR.</li> <li>• The group agreed that the introduction of the fact-finding exercise to aid the decision making process for Rapid Reviews has been successful. It was felt that the process is very robust and allows the partnership to gather information at an early opportunity.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Safeguarding Forum meeting</b> 10 Dec 2020</p>	<p><b>Metropolitan Police NW BCU</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operation Philomena was launched in the borough. This is a police initiative developed to help locate and safely return a young person as quickly as possible when they are missing. This operation involves the Police, LA and local Children Care Homes</li> </ul> <p><b>Brent Council</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The LADO Annual Report provided an overview of the management of allegations and the role of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in Brent for the period of 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020. The report provided quantitative and qualitative evidence relating to the LADO Service in Brent with key messages of what went well and what required improving had been summarised.</li> <li>• The Annual School Exclusions report for the academic year of 2019 – 2020 provided a good understanding of what occurred within Brent schools. The strategies to reduce exclusions in the 2020-21 academic year were highlighted and included:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Targeted early intervention to enable Brent children and young people to stay in mainstream schools.</li> <li>b) A continued focus on the disproportionate levels of fixed term and permanent exclusions experienced by boys of black Caribbean heritage and black African boys.</li> <li>c) Strengthening the alternative provision offer utilising the existing establishments and the newly established Alternative Provision School due to open in January 2021.</li> </ol> </li> </ul> <p><b>Health services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The demand in mental health assessments continued to rise with many new cases of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) identified in children. The number of young people presenting to CAMHS with mental health issues and psychosis had increased.</li> <li>• Across the NHS, staff had continued to feel the pressures of demand and experienced exhaustion.</li> </ul> <p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An upsurge of COVID-19 cases amongst teenagers was reported and arrangements were in place within education settings to manage this.</li> </ul> <p><b>Current multiagency safeguarding concerns</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There has been an increase in child protection cases with presenting issues including mental health, anxiety, poverty, domestic abuse and abuse with the use of an implement</li> </ul>

Meeting	Key areas of focus
<b>Case Review Group meeting</b> 28 Jan 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In response to the recommendations of one rapid review, a desktop audit was carried out on health services provided to mothers and babies in Brent. As some concerns were raised regarding the transfer of information from midwifery to health visiting services, the group agreed that further assurance is required that action will be taken to strengthen processes going forward.</li> <li>The Brent input to and links from six other borough reviews (both rapid reviews and local child safeguarding practice reviews) was discussed.</li> <li>Consideration was given to the development of a joint Brent/Harrow self-harm and suicide protocol and it was agreed that this would be suggested to the Brent and Harrow Suicide Prevention Group.</li> </ul>

Meeting	Key areas of focus
<b>Safeguarding Forum meeting</b> 4 Feb 2021	<p><b>Metropolitan Police NW BCU</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A restructure of the Police Safeguarding Unit had been completed with Commander Melanie Dales leading the newly formed Public Protection Unit, which represents the policing contribution to safeguarding in the broader sense. The new unit includes 13 strands of public protection work overseen by a lead responsible officers and deputies.</li> <li>An update on Operation Encompass highlighted that work was being undertaken between police and Brent schools with the aim of increasing engagement.</li> </ul> <p><b>Health services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The NWL CCG Safeguarding Annual Report highlighted work undertaken to gain assurance that services commissioned have appropriate arrangements in place to safeguard adults and children. This report also highlighted that Brent CCG Designated Professionals continued to support GP practices with both advice and Level 3 training (to over 150 staff) on themes such as domestic abuse and fabricated induced illness.</li> <li>The NWL Child Death Overview Panel Annual Report highlighted the development of the NWL arrangements for carrying out child death reviews. These arrangements were to be implemented from 1 April 2021.</li> </ul> <p><b>Brent Council</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Private Fostering Annual Report recorded that there had been 18 new enquires, of which, 16 were confirmed as Private Fostering. This increase in comparison to the previous year was believed to be a result of an awareness campaign, which included the circulation of redesigned material and the delivery of over 29 online workshops.</li> </ul> <p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools had felt that there were in a better position in this Covid-19 lockdown as they had clarity on how they would operate under the imposed restrictions. Most of the children attending school were either Looked After Children (LAC) or children with Special Educational Needs (SEN).</li> <li>Concerns over internet safety were expressed with the potential exposure and risk of children spending more time online.</li> </ul> <p><b>Current multiagency safeguarding concerns</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>London Ambulance Service staff had raised concerns regarding the safety of children being left home alone when their parents/carers were taken into hospital.</li> <li>The current issues explored by the partnership during the meeting included poverty, domestic abuse and child mental health concerns and details of the local support services for these issues were shared.</li> </ul> <p><b>Brent Thresholds Guidance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Forum agreed to begin work on refreshing the Brent Thresholds Guide.</li> </ul>

**Executive Group meeting**  
15 Feb 2021

#### **Brent Council**

- Since late January 2021, the LA had seen a significant number of adolescent safeguarding issues around knife crime. It was recognised that this might in part be because schools were partially closed.

#### **Metropolitan Police NW BCU**

- The police were experiencing pressures with long-term child abuse investigations due to the Crown Prosecution Service requiring a high volume of third party information.

#### **NWL CCG**

- The rollout of the Covid-19 vaccination programme to people at higher clinical risk, including carers and young adults in residential settings was also allowing healthcare teams to identify safeguarding concerns within these settings.

#### **Safeguarding Children Forum**

- The Forum received updates on progress on actions from three recent Brent rapid reviews
- The Forum was encouraged with the partnership work that was continuing between the LA, Metropolitan Police and CCG.
- The Executive Group discussed and signed off the Child K Serious Case Review

#### **Meeting**

#### **Key areas of focus**

**Case Review Group meeting**  
1 Apr 2021

- Metropolitan Police investigation developments in two cases regarding prosecutions were discussed.
- The theme of medical neglect was identified in multiple rapid reviews therefore the existing multi-agency learning and development programme should include raising awareness of medical neglect as part of the existing 'responding to child neglect' session.
- The findings and recommendations from the health table top exercise conducted as a result of one rapid review were shared:
  - The methodology took a whole systems approach with a focus on the system rather than the individual case.
  - There was a focus on a list of questions aimed at GPs, health visiting services and maternity services. These questions were drawn up using the key themes identified in the case.
- The findings of a recent NWLH Serious Incident (SI) review were shared
- The group continued to monitor developments of the Crown Prosecution Service decisions on one case that was subject to a rapid review in April 2019.
- Updates on police investigations and court cases from other cases that were subject to rapid reviews were shared.

**Safeguarding Forum meeting**  
22 April 2021

- 61 local schools had signed up to the Operation Encompass programme following the NWBCU Police attendance at a recent Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) network meeting and provided a detailed insight to Operation Encompass.
- The Forum spent the majority of the meeting discussing the local response to the 'Everyone's Invited' website (created 8 March 2021).
- Brent Council officers had reviewed the testimonies on the site and confirmed that any allegations relating to the local area have been followed up with the relevant institutions with support offered. No referrals had been made through BFFD regarding any allegation to date.
- Brent has an agreed framework for Relationships and Sex Education, which sets out the national policy, Brent's position and schools' responsibilities relating to the delivery of Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education. This structure was agreed and refreshed in January 2021.
- School Designated Safeguarding Leads had continued to work through the DSL network to provide peer support; ensuring relevant policies, procedures and practice were in place.
- The Metropolitan Police had begun to review testimonies posted on the website and it was noted that action could not be taken in response to anonymised testimonies. Although no specific issues were raised in Brent, the Police were supporting schools that had concerns.
- Safer School Officers had been briefed and were available to support head teachers who had been made aware of any allegations.
- While sex education was not included in primary school lessons, the understanding of consent was embedded from nursery age.
- A further meeting to discuss a coordinated response about Brent's approach to 'Everyone's Invited' to reassure the strategic partners will take place.

**Extraordinary Safeguarding Forum meeting**  
29 April 2021

- This extraordinary meeting was dedicated to discussing the findings and recommendations of the Brent Child K Serious Case Review (SCR).
- The Independent Reviewer presented the SCR and co-led the discussions with the Independent Convener.
- The Forum also considered the Brent Youth Violence Improvement Plan, which incorporated the learning identified in the Child K SCR.



Meeting	Key areas of focus
<p><b>Case Review Group meeting</b> 10 June 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An update from the NWLUHT SI action plan was shared, with the action plan being 60% completed.</li> <li>• Key messages are being explored with maternity services staff in relation to the importance of working with mothers who are un-booked and a new maternity booking/mini-booking system is being launched.</li> <li>• A learning event has taken place with 59 GPs that focussed on the interface with the 0-19 service and maternity services and explored HV links to GP practices and formats of discharge summaries.</li> <li>• All community midwives have now been issued with laptops to ensure records are electronic.</li> <li>• A large portion of the meeting was focussed on monitoring actions identified as learning from rapid reviews.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Executive Group meeting</b> 28 June 2021</p>	<p><b>NWL CCG</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An inspection of NWL maternity services in April 2021 deemed them inadequate. Work was underway with related services to ensure the safeguarding of children and mothers is a priority. An Improvement Board had been convened to bring together the NHS Trust, NWL CCG and relevant partners every two weeks. A summit would also be held monthly to ensure recommendations were implemented and to monitor improvements.</li> </ul> <p><b>Implications of the Wood Review of Multi-Agency Safeguarding arrangements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The group considered the findings and recommendations of the Wood Review of Multi-Agency Safeguarding arrangements</li> <li>• The financial contribution from the Metropolitan Police to each multi-agency arrangement area in London was in practice set by the Mayor's Office for Policy and Crime. This was currently set at £5,000 for each borough and had not changed for some years. However, the partnership was assured that these arrangements were actively under review.</li> <li>• It was felt that delegation was well organised amongst statutory safeguarding partners in Brent and added value to the executive process, especially those partners that were able to contribute consistently to discussions and follow up on actions directly. Members were satisfied that the current delegation arrangements worked well for Brent.</li> <li>• Regarding the level of support, analysis and intelligence provided to statutory safeguarding partners, it was felt that the current level was at the required level. It was accepted that the level provided was adequate in relation to the resources available and, in comparison to other boroughs, rapid reviews were undertaken often and to a high standard.</li> </ul> <p><b>Brent's response to the Ofsted review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In response to the testimonials published on Everyone's Invited website in March 2021, a safeguarding workshop was undertaken with all secondary providers in Brent, and the Safeguarding Forum undertook a session for Designated Safeguarding Leads(DSLs) during which a multi-agency safeguarding conversation took place. All but three schools attended these sessions, and follow up sessions were planned with those that did not attend.</li> <li>• Similar sessions would take place with primary providers, recognising that some responses on the Everyone's Invited website were from children who attended primary settings.</li> <li>• A serious safeguarding incident has taken place and a rapid review would be undertaken in July 2021.</li> <li>• The group agreed to extend the length of the Executive Group meetings to at least 1 hours 30 minutes.</li> </ul>



Meeting	Key areas of focus
<p><b>Safeguarding Forum meeting</b></p> <p>1 July 2021</p>	<p><b>Operation Spitfire</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operation Spitfire is a safeguarding proactive investigation team made up of a small team of officers with skills and experience using covert methodology, including surveillance, to disrupt criminals and safeguard individuals.</li> <li>• There is particular focus on cases of repeat missing children, county lines and those believed to be on the edge of gangs.</li> <li>• NWBCU originally piloted the Operation Spitfire in response to the identification of an intelligence gap. Due to the success of this programme, the pilot has been adopted across London with every command unit having a predatory offender unit. These dealt not only with proactive county lines child criminal exploitation but also focused on arresting high risk, high harm offenders, particularly registered sex offenders, high risk suspects and hard-to-find domestic abuse perpetrators.</li> <li>• Case examples were shared with the Forum that demonstrated the success of the programme in Brent including identifying a person holding the line in a county lines investigation using telephone data. This had enabled them to arrest the perpetrator and safeguard a 15-year-old teenager involved in running the line.</li> </ul> <p><b>Brent Family Front Door Annual Report 2020-2021</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Forum discussed key points, including the move to remote working, the increase in contacts regarding mental health issues, depression and self-harm, and the increase in physical abuse referrals including using an implement.</li> <li>• A focus for the coming year would be to work with community organisations to educate families on what constitutes appropriate chastisement.</li> <li>• Education colleagues highlighted the increase in complex cases and identifying the right resources and support for those children was becoming increasingly difficult, specifically related to children's mental health.</li> <li>• In response to the increasing concern of poverty in the borough, Brent Council was looking to link a benefits advisor from the Department for Work and Pensions with the Front Door to provide benefits advice.</li> <li>• There was also work being developed around how the Front Door communicated and captured information from colleagues, particularly around serious youth violence, looking at a way to accept group referrals to work together to capture information about peer networks.</li> <li>• MASH health practitioners started taking part in all strategy meetings from February 2021. This was very beneficial but also had an impact on capacity.</li> <li>• Partners were reminded that the Front Door had a consultation phone line for practitioners seeking advice about a potential referral.</li> <li>• The Forum noted the large volume of referrals to the Front Door, an average of 600 a week, and around 950 a week for the past month. The Convenor highlighted that every contact involved significant research and decision-making and the Forum agreed the volume and demand of the work undertaken was widely appreciated.</li> <li>• A London-wide review of the Metropolitan Police MASH referral process has begun.</li> </ul> <p><b>Response to Ofsted Review of Sexual Abuse in Schools and Colleges</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The review had involved a focus on multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Particularly, the review asked how well safeguarding processes were understood with multi-agency partners, whether working with safeguarding partners needed to be strengthened, and how children who experienced abuse were being supported in a timely and appropriate manner.</li> <li>• The review included clear recommendations around working together with local safeguarding partners and schools and colleges.</li> <li>• In response to the review, a workshop was held with safeguarding partners and schools in Brent.</li> </ul> <p><b>Crimestoppers Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) campaign</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This campaign was running through July targeting the London boroughs of Brent and Ealing, it was focussing on finding the perpetrators of FGM in response to a concern that FGM practices were happening within the UK due to the pandemic travel restrictions.</li> </ul>

Meeting	Key areas of focus
<p>Safeguarding Forum meeting</p> <p>16 Sept 2021</p>	<p><b>Operation Encompass</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvements had been made in relation to ensuring that all children were being recorded who were present at an address where a domestic abuse incident had been reported.</li> <li>• Education members spoke on the benefits of Operation Encompass, which enabled settings to provide support to a child and develop dialogue with the family soon after a reported domestic abuse incident.</li> </ul> <p><b>Operation Philomena</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The operation works with partner agencies to identify safeguarding concerns when a young person goes missing from care. Across the NW BCU the Police had seen 14 new care homes sign up in the last 3 months, with a total of 21 signed up within Brent.</li> <li>• This operation was also linked to Operation Make Safe, that worked to safeguard children and young people at risk of sexual exploitation</li> <li>• The Council were working with Barnardo's to supplement the work of Operation Philomena through improving the quality and service support available from semi-independent providers to children and young people. Regular meetings with the police around the issue of children going missing were taking place.</li> </ul> <p><b>Response to Ofsted review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In early spring, the Brent safeguarding partnership had responded to the Everyone's Invited website swiftly with the Forum making time specifically to receive assurance from partners. The start of the school term had been positive and the system was not seeing any patterns of increased referral or risk.</li> <li>• The 'keeping children safe in education' guidance had been updated and education members highlighted that there was an evident heightened awareness and vigilance amongst staff.</li> </ul> <p><b>Brent's partnership response to the impact of domestic abuse on children</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Forum discussed the new Domestic Abuse Act 2021, the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people, and the response from partners.</li> <li>• Brent had been accredited by Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance, signifying the commitment to supporting victims. Additionally, the Housing Team had eight officers specifically trained to support domestic abuse victims.</li> <li>• During 2020-2021 348 children were discussed at Brent MARAC, including 31 unborn babies, 84 children had been referred to Advance (the domestic abuse support service within Brent) and 3,225 families were receiving domestic abuse support in Brent.</li> <li>• There are several additional interventions in Brent for victims and survivors of domestic abuse, such as the Chrysalis Advice Centre, Rise Mutual, the NIA, and Global Thinking.</li> <li>• The council is working on the commissioning contract for the domestic abuse service and are keen to target specific communities that are known to have a higher than average representation of domestic abuse.</li> <li>• Partners were continuing to explore options to expand the resources available to support victims of domestic abuse in Brent.</li> </ul> <p><b>Safeguarding concerns for Afghan Evacuees and Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is unclear how many families were initially being accommodated in Brent or for how long. The likelihood was that the majority of Afghan evacuees and asylum seekers would not be resettled in Brent.</li> <li>• Evacuees and asylum seekers were being given initial health assessments in their quarantine hotel and then when they moved to their bridging hotel, they were given a more in-depth assessment with referrals made at that point. A group had been set up to look at where that information was going.</li> <li>• From a safeguarding perspective, no safeguarding issues had been identified and colleagues were reminded to refer safeguarding issues in the normal way.</li> <li>• Some difficulties have been identified for safeguarding around the arrangements at the ports and inadequate assessment screenings, with 30 young people in dispute with age assessment, around 60 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children now looked after. This was expected to rise until October 2021.</li> </ul>
<p>Case Review Group meeting</p> <p>30 Sept 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Brent rapid review initial scoping document was reviewed and a section focussing specifically on exploring culture and diversity was added.</li> <li>• Updates were shared on all cases subject to rapid review that have ongoing police investigations in process.</li> <li>• The group discussed the findings from a recent rapid review.</li> <li>• The procedure for identifying and reviewing Serious Child Safeguarding Cases in Brent was updated.</li> </ul>

## Multi-agency learning and development

- 2.1. The Safeguarding Partners continue to offer a multi-agency learning and development programme built upon the previous LSCB programme.
- 2.2. The programme is coordinated by the part-time Strategic Partnership Learning and Development Coordinator and the multi-agency Learning and Development Advisory Group, which reports into the Safeguarding Children Forum. The Safeguarding Children Forum is kept regularly updated of the multi-agency learning programme through a standing item at each meeting.
- 2.3. The programme is aimed to comprise of a range of different learning opportunities such as themed briefings, awareness raising events and joint learning events/sessions with other strategic partnerships including Brent Safeguarding Adults Board
- 2.4. The Safeguarding Children Forum is kept regularly updated of the multi-agency learning programme through a standing item at each meeting.

### Multi-agency learning and development programme summary

- 2.5. From September 2020, work resumed on a new virtual multi-agency schedule including planning for the programme to focus on learning from local reviews.
- 2.6. The learning from rapid reviews led to the re-development of the multi-agency virtual sessions specifically concentrating on domestic abuse and additional training focussing on themed topics including adolescent mental health, serious youth violence and responding to child neglect
- 2.7. The table below details the multi-agency sessions as part of the strategic partnership learning and development programme that was delivered during this period:

Course Topic	No of sessions	No. of fully attended delegates
Adolescent Mental Health	2	22
Advance Joint Domestic Abuse and MARAC Training	5	74
Domestic Abuse: A local focus on children and young people in Brent	3	62
FGM - Female Genital Mutilation	1	6
Responding to Child Neglect	2	41
Parental Mental Health	2	23
Prevent and Radicalisation	4	59
Safeguarding Young Carer Training	4	47
Serious Youth Violence	2	37
Gang affiliation, criminality, vulnerability and safeguarding	2	55
Transitional Safeguarding Webinar	3	69
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>495</b>

- 2.8. During the reporting period, the multi-agency learning development programme consisted of 11 safeguarding children course topics focussing on priority themes identified by the partnership aimed to promote improved outcomes of care for children and young people in Brent.
- 2.9. The programme comprised of 30 learning sessions which was delivered to a total of 495 multi-agency professionals and volunteers in Brent
- 2.10. Staff and volunteers from education settings and Brent Council continue to be the highest proportion of attendees, as well those from the voluntary and community organisations.

2.11. The table below outlines the level of partner organisation attendance:

Organisation/Sector		Delegates
Adults Services	Day/Support Centre	2
	Residential/Home Care/Supported Living	19
Health Services	Brent CCG	17
	Central London Community Health Care Trust	31
	Central North West London Health Care Trust	32
	London Ambulance Service	15
	London North West Healthcare NHS Trust	17
Education	All through schools	13
	Further Education/College	10
	Nursery (including Private/Independent/Voluntary)	20
	Primary school	23
	Secondary school	8
	Special school	1
Brent Council		157
Children's Centres/Family Wellbeing Centres		24
Children's Home		10
Faith Setting		5
Housing Provider (Registered)		2
Probation Services		21
Voluntary/Community Organisation/Charity		68
<b>Total</b>		<b>495</b>

2.12. Feedback from evaluation forms would suggest the session are successfully being valued by delegates and is helping to contribute towards positive outcomes for children and young people

2.13. Safeguarding partner agencies regularly provide updates on the impact of learning and development activities at Brent Safeguarding Children Forum.

## Child K Serious Case Review (SCR)

2.14. Child K was murdered in 2019 in an attack, which is believed to have been part of a series of connected violent assaults and deaths involving young people associated with rival criminal groups across more than one London borough. Child K moved to Brent with his family from another area in the months before his death.

2.15. The Serious Case Review was carried out under the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 and published in April 2021. The review highlights 15 recommendations for practice improvement and the Case Review group is responsible for monitoring partners' response to these recommendations.

2.16. Following the publication of Brent's Child K SCR and other similar SCRs relating to Serious Youth Violence, the London LSCP Chairs Network organised two webinars in April and July 2021 to share the learning points common to these reviews. Over 70 LSCP Chairs, Business Managers and other interested persons attended the webinars and work is being progressed through the LSCP Chairs Network.

2.17. The Independent Convener of Brent Safeguarding Forum led a meeting on 25 February 2021, which was also attended by colleagues from Islington and Camden. This meeting reviewed the recommendations, considered progress taken in addressing the recommendations and formulated an action log to monitor how the recommendations are being implemented.

2.18. In response to the recommendations from the Child K SCR, alongside learning from a recently published Islington Serious Case Review, Brent Council Children and Young People department implemented a six-month Serious Youth Violence Action Plan to improve practice in supporting young people at risk of serious youth violence.

2.19. A copy of the full Child K SCR can be downloaded from the [Brent Safeguarding Partnerships website](#).

## 3. Achievements

### Identifying and responding to emerging safeguarding issues

- 3.1. The Safeguarding Partnership has been proactive in working together to identify and respond to emerging risks for Brent children and young people:
- There has been a significant rise in demand to support families through the Brent Family Front Door since summer 2020. The number of contacts being made to Brent Family Front Door has varied during the different stages of national lockdown which began in March 2020, but a clear pattern of rising demand has been established, with those cases that were subsequently referred being much more complex and with higher incidences of neglect.
  - Although there has been a significant overall reduction in violent crime (including knife crime) in Brent, Brent Safeguarding Partners saw a significant number of adolescent safeguarding issues around knife crime in early 2021. This is in the context of growing national concern regarding incidents of serious violence involving young people.
  - Domestic abuse, historically a consistent issue in the majority of referrals received through Brent Family Front Door, continued to be present as a significant issue throughout the last two years, with levels in 2021 above pre-lockdown levels.
  - Poverty had been raised as a real issue for families during the pandemic, with there being an increase of families running into financial difficulties.
  - The demand for mental health support in Brent has grown hugely during the period of the pandemic. As a result, the Integrated Care System Board will be looking at CAMHS as an area of priority investment, as well as reviewing how children and young people could be supported from an earlier stage.
- 3.2. Children have been impacted significantly by the pandemic and identifying risks and vulnerabilities was subject to significant challenges. The Brent Safeguarding Children team in the NWL CCG provided regular updates and training to primary care specifically relating to key child health outcomes to ensure baby checks and vaccinations were offered during the pandemic.
- 3.3. Brent Safeguarding Partners were invited to contribute to the Ofsted Thematic Review of sexual harm in schools and colleges in the spring and summer of 2021. Senior representatives from the three Safeguarding Partners Brent Council, North West London CCG and the Metropolitan Police plus schools met with Ofsted on 5 May 2021 to explore what is working well currently, and whether there are any gaps in national guidance about sexual harassment between children.
- 3.4. The Safeguarding Partnership inform and develop partnership action to improve safeguarding. Most recent Safeguarding Partnership led actions include the following examples:
- Following the CQC inspection of London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust maternity services in April 2021, NWL CCG Safeguarding Partner representatives provided assurance to the Executive Group on work underway as a priority with related services to ensure the safeguarding of children and mothers was ensured. An Improvement Board had been convened to bring together the Trust, CCG and relevant partners to deliver a maternity improvement action plan, with a system oversight meeting chaired by the ICS Executive.
  - Brent Children's Trust, chaired by the Strategic Director, Brent Children and Young People provides strategic leadership of collaborative work with North West London CCG. Brent Public Health drives a consistent approach to working with children across partner agencies. The attendance of the Safeguarding Forum Independent Convenor has increased the level of safeguarding scrutiny in joint planning arrangements and ensured that safeguarding actions are progressed swiftly between Brent Council and the NHS. This has also helped confirm improving access to mental health support for Brent children and young people as a priority in the new Health and Wellbeing Strategy of the Brent Health and Wellbeing Board.



3.5. The Brent Safeguarding Children Forum implements the work of the Executive Group to ensure strong operational partnership work. In 2020/2021, the Independent Convenor, with the support of the Local Authority, secured increased membership representation of the Forum from Brent primary and secondary schools. This enhanced representation from January 2021 has positively enhanced the work of the Forum, specifically with the consideration of Brent's safeguarding partnership response to the Ofsted review of sexual harm and abuse in schools and colleges.

## Changes to Brent practice and procedures because of rapid reviews and Child K SCR

3.6. The following submissions are from key safeguarding partners outlining changes made to policies and procedures as a result from the learning from rapid reviews and the Child K SCR during the period of this annual report

### NWL CCG – Brent

The Designated Safeguarding Professionals are involved in reviewing serious or critical incidents and deaths by working collaboratively with health providers across the health economy. They work alongside services such as Primary Care, Hospital Trusts and London Ambulance Service to review clinical care, as well as partnership and safeguarding aspects of each case.

Learning from a recent rapid review following the death of a baby at the hands of his mother led to the following actions:

- A detailed review was conducted of the maternity and primary care services involved with the family. A key part of this was to scrutinise existing processes being used by health providers and making recommendations to reduce risk and have robust procedures for identifying concerns.
- Sharing the learning across the wider Brent Primary Care Network, has highlighted that mother and baby discharge forms from maternity services should be reviewed by a clinician. The aim is to identify potential risks or mothers who might require additional support. A similar recommendation has been made concerning the process of inviting new mothers and baby for review at the practice, with those who do not attend being contacted individually to discuss and explore any concerns.
- Joint working between maternity and 0-19 service has resulted in regular meetings to share safeguarding concerns. The 0-19 services have also proposed their own mechanisms to link directly with GPs and provide better information sharing pathways.
- Within the maternity setting, there have been improvements to the maternity discharge summary to include risks around un-booked pregnancy, languages spoken and need for an interpreter. These were all identified as potential contributory risk factors in this case.

To increase the active participation of health partners in key safeguarding discussions, the Named GP (representing the CCG) participates in the Brent Family Front Door MASH audits. These regular audits include representatives from key safeguarding partners. The aim is to review a number of referrals received into the Brent MASH and scrutinise the decision-making by Children's Services. This way of quality assuring the MASH process also allows other agencies to offer their viewpoint. The auditors assess the incoming information to see the quality of referrals received, which in turn determines decision-making.

## Brent Council - Children and Young People

Learning from the Child K Serious Case Review and two rapid reviews relating to Serious Youth Violence (March 2021 and July 2021) formed the Brent CYP Serious Youth Violence Action Plan.

There is evidenced progress made against all recommendations from the Child K Serious Case Review and the rapid reviews. Actions completed include:

- Mayor's Young Londoners Fund was used to train multi-agency practitioners and volunteers to deliver the Strengthening Families Strengthening Communities (SFSC) Gangs programme to raise awareness for parents.
- Real-time data on exclusion and other moves out of education are being routinely shared with the Contextual Safeguarding Strategic Group
- Information about support services for parents and carers of children who have been/are at risk of exclusion, or have been placed in Alternative Provision is in the revised SEND Local Offer.
- Training for school governors on exclusions and learning from the Child K SCR took place in September 2021.
- Educational support for children who are at risk of Serious Youth Violence has been enhanced through the expansion of the role of the Virtual School from September 2021 to support children with a social worker.
- School DSLs are routinely invited to initial strategy meetings for prompt information sharing and Community Protection share partnership briefings with Head teachers when a serious incident takes place in the community. A workshop was conducted with DSLs on safety mapping and peer network mapping as part of our Contextual Safeguarding Approach to support information sharing between schools and CYP.
- A transfer-in audit took place in July 2021 and a workshop took place to share key findings in September 2021.
- Brent CYP "Shared Supervision" is being piloted and led by Service Managers. The initial "Shared Supervision" sessions have involved high risk cases open to LAC and Permanency and YOS, involving mentors where appropriate.
- Funding agreed in May 2021 for 3 statutory social workers to sit in the Accelerated Support Team following learning from another Rapid Review involving Serious Youth Violence.

Learning from one rapid review concerning an attempted suicide, was disseminated through a briefing note to all CYP practitioners and three online workshops were offered with over 100 attendees. The workshops and briefings included focus on:

- Working across languages and with a child new to the country
- Understanding a child's lived experiences
- Thresholds and decision-making
- How and when to involve police
- Recognising signs of deteriorating mental health

Guidance on the use of police welfare checks was jointly developed with police. This was circulated and referenced in the practice briefings. Additional audit activity took place on "understanding the child's lived experience" and step-up/step-down processes. Identified actions from this quality assurance activity has been incorporated in the CYP Practice Improvement Plan.



## Metropolitan Police NWBCU

North West BCU are committed to working with partners to protect the most vulnerable people in our communities. With a focus on continuous improvement and learning, the following are some highlights from multi agency approach to development following learning from rapid reviews:

- In response to learning identified from one rapid review, multi-agency sessions led by police were delivered that focussed on Police welfare checks and when they are an appropriate response.
- Joint development days chaired by the MPS lead responsible officer for child protection. The sessions include police and children's social care frontline practitioners and leaders and focusses on the voice of the child and breaking down barriers to joint service delivery.
- Further development days are being planned for newly promoted Detective Sergeants with input from children's social care partners. Consideration is being given to expand these development days to include joint "scenario" based training sessions and include health colleagues.
- Uplift to the NW BCU missing persons team by 100% to enable 16/7 cover and an improved response to support demand reduction work. This decision-making was influenced and supported by feedback from the safeguarding children partnership.
- Continued focus on the Philomena protocol to protect repeat missing children from care homes. A weekly rhythm of multi-agency meetings between police and social care supports this function and the implementation of trigger plans.
- A new Pan Strand violence meeting held weekly to discuss strategic response to violence across the BCU.
- A significant incident process was created locally within the NW BCU to support strategic decision-making and raise strategic awareness when responding to critical incidents. A key theme of this process is engagement with communities, faith groups, partners and media.
- Local restructure of NW BCU public protection Detective Inspectors to better support partnership working and calls to service. This includes one Detective Inspector to focus on missing persons to ensure best outcomes for vulnerable people.
- A continued focus on Operation Encompass with School Designated Safeguarding Leads to protect children and young people at risk of domestic abuse within a family setting.

## Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust (CLCH)

CLCH is the largest community health care provider in London, which in turn provides access and engagement with a wide number of statutory reviews

The learning from Brent Rapid Reviews and research from national reviews (as presented by the author of the Child K SCR) has increased staff awareness and their ability to identify safeguarding themes and issues, especially regarding criminal exploitation and gang culture.

The safeguarding team has used the Brent rapid reviews at safeguarding supervision sessions and weekly huddle meetings, which has supported learning re: contextual safeguarding, being curious and sharing information to safeguard and protect children.

Learning from rapid reviews/Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and the ongoing embedding of actions has been successful; CLCH can demonstrate a robust approach to completing chronologies for all unexpected deaths/ incidents and undertaking internal inquiries to identify any gaps in service delivery and organisational systems.

Multi-agency working is promoted at every opportunity to review and discuss cases of concern, joint professional meetings and visits are encouraged to promote consistency and continuity.

The use of interpreters and the routine questioning of need for an interpreter at the time of booking appointments has significantly improved as direct learning from a recent rapid review involving the death of a baby whose mother spoke no English.

## Central Northwest London Mental Health NHS Trust (CNWL)

Previous learning from a rapid review outlined the difficulties faced by some families in completing the screening questionnaires as part of the CAMHS assessment process. It was acknowledged that these difficulties could potentially delay families accessing services. The Service is currently exploring the possibility of these questionnaires being completed within a session with support from a clinician in order to remove this potential barrier.

CAMHS remain mindful of peer support for family members/parents for all families with whom they are engaged. There is a parent/carers forum in Brent for support/advice and information. There is also an active Carers Steering committee in order to ensure that development of services are informed and led by the voices of family members.

CNWL continue to review their systems for recording families and how to link together information on different family members. There have been a number of briefings across services (both adult and CAMHS) around the research 'Myth of the Invisible man' and the importance of recording significant males within the household. This was included in a recent Trust wide 'Clinical Message of the Week' and has been the focus within reflective sessions in Brent but also Trust wide. This has also now been included within Safeguarding Children Level 3 Training.

There have been some recent 'Think Family' reflective practice sessions within perinatal and adult mental health services during which the Early Help offer in Brent has been explored in relation to cases and services offered discussed. CAMHS are also well linked in to Early Help support.

- 3.7. There remain areas of development with Brent's Rapid Review processes and arrangements. One priority is to develop further the dissemination of case learning from rapid reviews. Rapid reviews are not public published documents; this is one of the intentions of the 2018 reforms, with the thinking that if documents are not published it can encourage more candour and cooperation in reviews. Therefore individual agencies who may have been directly involved in a review do not always have a consistent agreement on sharing all information from a review.
- 3.8. More work is being undertaken in 2021/2022 to disseminate learning to all practitioner groups across agencies to ensure the maximum impact from learning can be made to improve practice.