



Kingston and Richmond  
Safeguarding Children Partnership

# Kingston & Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership

## Vulnerable Child and Adolescent Strategy

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## **Related policies & publications**

**Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018**

**London Child Protection Procedures 2021**

**London Child Exploitation Operating Protocol 2021**

**KRSCP MACE Protocol 2021**

**KRSCP VCA Practice Standards 2021**

**Youth Safety Strategy Kingston and Richmond 2021**

### **Introduction:**

Contextual safeguarding is our KRSCP Priority. This strategy sets out the multi-agency arrangements for identifying and responding to children, young people and families affected by any form of child exploitation in Kingston and Richmond, including criminal exploitation and gang activity. This strategy will draw from a number of current protocols and strategies to combine and integrate these into one document. Sections 2-6 lay out Terms of References for several Panels and meetings.

This strategy encompasses the local Youth Safety Strategy, the governance of MACE, the oversight of the VCA Vulnerable (Child and Adolescent) Subgroup and its Terms of Reference, and the Terms of Reference for the Children Missing Education Group, Missing Children Panel (MISPER) and Return Interviews for missing children.

By combining all areas of youth safety and adolescent vulnerability, we aim to ensure a robust multi-agency response across Kingston and Richmond, so that we can identify children at risk of involvement in anti-social behaviour, emergent criminality and gang activity and identify appropriate responses. It is important that this strategy is used to ensure a consistent risk assessment for all children. In safety planning we wish to enable professionals to empower children and their families to make safe choices and improve their outcomes, if they are at risk.

**THIS IS NOT AN OPERATIONAL DOCUMENT- PLEASE REFER TO THE MARVE / MACE Terms of Reference:** <https://kingstonandrichmondsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk/news-resources/policies- and-procedures-87/child-exploitation-marve-88.php>

### **Referral and Consultation Pathway**

**Any practitioner concerned about any form of child exploitation should make a referral to SPA. The referral pathway can be seen in the flow chart in section 2 of the strategy with the associated referral forms and risk assessments. This referral will then be considered for the MARVE (Pre-MACE )and MACE Panels.**

### **To make a referral contact:**

### **Children's Safeguarding Single Point of Access (SPA) Team**

**[spa@achievingforchildren.org.uk](mailto:spa@achievingforchildren.org.uk)**

**020 8547 5008**

**Out of hours: 020 8770 5000**

### **SPA online Referral**

## **Purpose of the strategy**

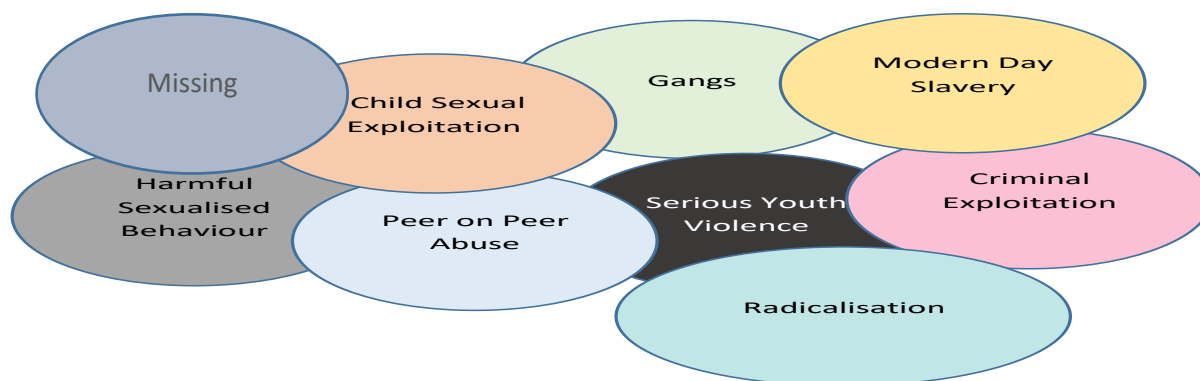
Our vision is simple: to safeguard children and young people from harm as a result of going missing; child sexual exploitation; or trafficking (or exploitation arising as a consequence of being the victim of trafficking including County Line drug dealing). A multi-agency focus on risk, harm and vulnerability is critical. To achieve this, four key areas for activity have been identified:

Understanding and Identification  
Prevention  
Intervention and Support  
Disruption and Justice

KRSCP will endeavour to prevent children and young people being exploited by understanding the issues associated with this activity. For those children who go missing from home, from care or from school we will ensure there are follow up conversations with appropriately trained professionals to understand why they are going missing and effect adequate safeguarding arrangements to deliver positive change. We will create robust pathways that ensure we know who these children are, whether this is a pattern of behaviour and how effectively our systems are working to effect change. We will ensure that the highest risk young offenders are considered in this Panel.

We understand that there is a significant correlation between children who are going missing from home and risks of sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, gangs and serious youth violence. Therefore, we recognise that to prevent the risk of children and young people being exploited we need to understand and address the reasons

underpinning any missing episode. We also know that issues of child exploitation can also include peer on peer abuse, serious youth violence and radicalisation.



### Vision for Kingston and Richmond

- All children and young people understand what constitutes all forms of child exploitation, recognise when they or others are at risk of this form of abuse and are confident to seek support.
- All children and young people are supported to develop healthy friendships and relationships.
- Children and young people who are particularly vulnerable to child exploitation are identified and supported by their families/carers, professionals, and their community to build resilience against exploitation.
- Children and young people who are being exploited are identified, safeguarded, and supported for as long as they need.
- Professionals, local businesses, families, carers, and local people can identify the signs of exploitation, know what to do with that information, and are aware of the KRSCP agencies' responses to abuse.
- Those who seek to exploit children are identified, disrupted and convicted.
- Robust offender management post-conviction and/or effective intervention strategies reduce the risk presented by identified abusers.

### Governance

The MACE and Pre-MACE (MARVE) meetings are multi-agency statutory Panels overseen by the Vulnerable Child & Adolescent Subgroup, which is a part of the KRSCP (Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership). This Panel will review the multi-agency plans prepared for children at risk of every type of exploitation in Kingston and Richmond, including children placed here by other boroughs and children from Kingston and Richmond placed to live in other parts of the Country. The MACE or Pre-MACE Meeting does not take the place of a strategy meeting or mapping meeting but is in place to ensure plans are in place and relevant to any child or young person at risk of exploitation and that contextual risks are recognised. The IOM (Integrated Offender Management) aspect of this work is accountable to the YOS (Youth Offending Services) Board and the CSPs (Community Safety Partnership) and ultimately the YJB (Youth Justice Board). The MACE and Pre MACE benefits from the YOS Intelligence information and the attendance of the IOM Officer.

Please see Section 2 below for the Terms of Reference and quality assurance plans for this work in Richmond and Kingston. Procedures are built upon the DfE Working Together 2018 guidance and the London Child Protection Procedures. This strategy has been devised and updated by the Chairs of the MACE and other multi-agency professionals. The KRSCP has a dispute resolution procedure.

The MACE Panel Chairs will report to the VCA (Vulnerable Children & Adolescent) Subgroup of the Multi-agency Safeguarding Children Partnership in Kingston and Richmond. The VCA Subgroup will meet quarterly.

The MACE meetings will provide the subgroup information on the following:

- Volume of cases.
- Communities effected, to allow awareness raising and targeted intervention.
- Patterns of exploitation and harm identified.
- Activity against perpetrators.
- Performance of individual agencies.
- Number and type of disruptions e.g. civil orders, charging of offenders, closure of premises etc.
- Attendance at Panel meetings by partner agencies

Analysis of the following will also be provided on an annual basis:

- Profiles of those who are perpetrating sexual or criminal exploitation;
- Information about effective interventions;
- Issues, themes and patterns emerging from analysis of current cases.

## **Escalation/Disagreement**

If any member of the Panel wishes to register dissent from the Panel decision, the Panel decision will be reviewed by an independent senior manager from AFC, a representative from the KRSCP and the co-chairs of MACE within 7 days.

## **Information sharing agreement**

The MACE and Pre MACE (MARVE) Panels are Strategic and Operational Panels responsible for coordinating information sharing and multi-agency interventions to disrupt and respond to child sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, harmful sexual behaviour and serious youth violence for young people aged up to 25 year old. Between the ages of 18 and 25, it is expected that the relevant borough's Community Safety Partnership will define the key lead responsible workers for these young people, with complete transition to adults' services workers taking place during this time period. The MACE Panel Meetings have been established to provide a comprehensive approach to tackling issues of exploitation and harm of or by children and young people across Kingston and Richmond.

The MACE Panel Meetings are the key mechanism for agreeing how relevant organisations will co-operate and work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in effectively tackling exploitation, vulnerability and risk.

The purpose of sharing information is to:

- increase the safety, health and wellbeing of vulnerable children

- determine whether any perpetrators pose a significant risk to any vulnerable child or other children and
- construct jointly and implement a risk management plan that provides professional support to all those at risk and that reduces the risk of harm
- improve agency accountability

Information presented should make a clear distinction between fact and opinion. All individuals who are discussed at these meetings should be treated fairly, with respect and without improper discrimination. All work undertaken at the meetings will be informed by a commitment to equal opportunities and effective practice issues in relation to age, disability, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation, gender and gender identity. However, the Panel will consider how the any diversity issues impact on safety and the needs of the young person.

#### Recording of information:

- Minutes will be taken throughout the Panel and typed directly into a secure laptop
- These will be sent securely to Panel members
- **All agencies must ensure that minutes are retained in a confidential and appropriately restricted manner.**

#### Sharing of information

- Information discussed by the agency representative, within the ambit of the Panel meeting is strictly confidential and must not be disclosed to third parties without the agreement of the partners at the meeting.
- The individual discussed can be made aware of the discussion and actions – unless this increases the risk of significant harm to / from them. This should be a Team Manager decision and if there is any doubt then clarify the sharing of information with the chairs.

## **Kingston and Richmond Missing Children's Panel Terms of Reference**

### **Introduction**

The MASE and MISPER Panels were introduced a number of years ago to provide a multi-agency strategic oversight for children who were reported missing or deemed to be at risk of sexual exploitation. The MASE and MISPER Panels have been successful in ensuring these vulnerable Children and Young People get the necessary support to manage and reduce CSE and missing risks, however in accordance with the MASE and MISPER remit the work has been limited to addressing CSE and missing cases.

In response to identified national and local trends concerning the multi-faceted nature of child exploitation and adolescent risk including but not limited to County Lines, Knife Crime, Trafficking, Gangs and Groups. AfC in partnership with the Met Police and KRSCP developed proposals to streamline MISPER and replace MASE with a new panel that will in addition to CSE consider children at risk or vulnerable to all forms of criminal exploitation. On 6 September 2018 the KRSCP (sub-group for VCA) approved the terms of reference and timeline for the implementation of the MARVE and changes to the MISPER Panel.

## **Terms of Reference**

The MISPER Panel is held every 2 weeks, combining Kingston and Richmond children. It will review data of children who have been missing over the last previous 2 week period.

The data used will be that received via the Single Point of Access (SPA) and collated by the Return Interview Team manager. This will include children missing from care and children missing from home.

The MISPER Panel will have multi-agency representation including Health, Education, Police, and Children's Services.

The Panel will chaired by either the Head of Permanence or the Permanency Service's Associate Director at AFC.

The meeting will consider for each case;

- Whether the missing protocol has been followed to ensure a robust response to the case being presented.
- The nature and degree of risk to each child or young person and review actions that have been taken in order to reduce the risk.
- The MISPER Panel will identify any high risk children or young people and escalate to the pre -MACE (MARVE) Panel for their risk management oversight.

## **Operational Process**

The MISPER Panel will sit from on Wednesdays, every 2 weeks.

The Manager of Return Interview Team will send to the MISPER Business Support inbox the data on the Friday before the Wednesday meeting. MISPER Business Support will notify attendees, via email, by the Monday lunch time prior to the meeting that the data is ready to view. External agencies will be sent the data via secure email.

The representative from Children's Service responsible for reporting on the case will come to the meeting with an update on responses and actions taken in relation to missing child or young person. Managers should review all RHIs and any decisions made regarding the missing episode recorded within 24 hours. If there is no involvement from Children's Services the Return Interview Team manager will lead on reporting in relation to the child or young person.

The Panel Chair will agree the minutes by the Thursday following the meeting. The MISPER Business Support then will email attendees on the Friday following the meeting the Panel minutes.

Children who meet criteria for Pre-MACE (MARVE) Panel will be noted as such in the minutes and actions. The Return Interview manager will ensure that these cases are taken to Pre-MACE and the Pre-MACE Business Support will also add the cases to the Pre-MACE agenda.

The attending representative from Children's Service and responsible manager will have responsibility to ensure that action points from the meeting are undertaken and updates provided to Business Support MISPER inbox within 1 week of the MISPER Panel.

For cases open to Children's Services, Social Care, the key discussions and actions will be entered onto the child or young person's case note under heading of MISPER meeting by the MISPER Business Support.

## ATTENDEES

<b>Education</b> Children Missing Education rep AfC Virtual School AfC	<b>Health</b> CLA Health, Kingston & Richmond CCG School Nursing CLCH – Richmond School Nursing YHC-Kingston Sexual Health- Wolverton Clinic Virtual link to CAMHS	<b>Police</b> South West BCU Misper Representative
<b>AfC</b> Youth Resilience Service YOS Children's Social Care Safeguarding, CLA, Leaving Care Team, Early Help, Family Support, Referral & Assessment, Return Interview Team	<b>Voluntary sector</b> –eg Dogs' Trust, Red Thread,	

## BUSINESS SUPPORT

All communications about MISPER will come from, and need to go to, the MACE & MISPER inbox: [marvemisperbusinesssupport@achievingforchildren.org.uk](mailto:marvemisperbusinesssupport@achievingforchildren.org.uk)



### **Terms of Reference Return Interviews**

The missing children workers are based in the Single Point of Access (SPA) and will undertake all Return Interviews for children and young people who live at home or are looked after children living in or out of the borough of Richmond and Kingston.

Information about missing children is obtained from police Merlins and shared the missing children's manager. The expectation is that the missing children worker should contact the young person or parent/carer and complete a return interview within 72 hours of the child/young person being located or returning from a missing episode.

Parents and carers are offered the opportunity to provide any relevant information and intelligence in relation to the missing episode, this may help to prevent further instances of the child or young person going missing in the future and identify any support needed for them going forward.

The Return Interview will:

- Identify any harm the child may have suffered- including harm that might not have been disclosed as part of the safe and well check – either before they went missing or whilst missing
- Where possible, Identify which locations the young person visited and who they have been and in contact with during that period
- Understand and try to address the reasons why the young person ran away
- Help the young person feel safe and understand that they have options to prevent repeat instances of them running away
- Provide them with information on how to stay safe if they choose to run away again, including helpline numbers

The Return Interview needs to be shared with the police through the missing person's team via emailing the relevant police missing unit. This Return Interview is used to assist in future missing investigations and intelligence around general criminal activity that impacts on vulnerable individuals (e.g. CSE risks).

## **Terms of Reference for the Children Missing from Education Group**

### **Purpose**

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an education suitable for their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Achieving for Children must ensure, with its partners, that this is the always the case.

The children missing education group has been created to provide an overview of children missing from education, to ensure that they are monitored across the two boroughs and that support is put in place. The group oversees the implementation of the children missing from education protocol and resolves any issues that emerge relating to children at risk of becoming missing from education, children missing education and children not receiving a suitable level of education.

### **Reporting and Governance**

The board will report to the multi-agency resource and decision making Panel and KRSCP Subgroup: CSE/missing from home, care and education. The CME meeting reports to the KRSCP VCA Subgroup which provides strategic oversight and scrutiny of all issues relating to children missing from home, care, education and those at risk of CSE.

### **Board Meetings**

Board meetings are held monthly.

### **Terms of Reference to:**

- ensure that children missing out from education are receiving a minimum standard of 25 hours a week of good quality registered education
- ensure effective communication and liaison with the MISPER and MACE meetings so that children are appropriately protected from exploitation and harm and referrals are made in a timely manner to ensure that children and young people receive the support and services that they need
- ensure there is additional support and interventions in place to minimise any risks associated children's lack of full time, mainstream education
- ensure there are no delays in accessing alternative provision
- maintain ownership and an overview of a single register of children missing from education, children at risk of missing education and children not receiving suitable education. Share information between service and organisations
- ensure that all pupils on the register are screened, assessed and risk-rated on a proportionate basis
- ensure that appropriate intervention and action is taken to engage pupils in full time education and reduce any risks of any non-engagement in a full time curriculum
- escalate high risk cases, RAG rated red to the MISPER group or individual pupil management Panel for further review and action
- regularly review and monitor changes in the risk to pupils risk on a proportionate basis
- ensure there are strong reporting systems within schools, between schools and with Achieving for Children of children who are at risk of missing education
- ensure clear standards are set for children educated at home and monitored by inspectors to ensure they receive a suitable education; and

- ensure all relevant Achieving for Children services, schools and partner agencies are aware of the children missing from education protocol and their responsibilities in relation to children who are missing from education or children who are at risk of becoming missing from education.

### **Chairing and Minute Taking**

The group will be chaired by the Associate Director (Early Help and Education) as the children missing from education strategic lead.

The agenda will be distributed at least seven working days before the day of the meeting except in emergency situations agreed by the chair.

Minutes will be taken by the Business Support Team in Education Services, Achieving for Children. Action points will be recorded at each meeting and circulated to all members of the board and relevant parties within two weeks.

The board are all responsible for ensuring actions are completed by agreed deadlines.

### **Performance and Quality Assurance**

The Children Missing from Education register will be provided at least seven working days in advance of the meeting provided by AfC's Performance Team. A lead officer from the Protection and Early Help Service will quality assure all RAG ratings provided by officers at least seven working days in advance of the meeting.

## **Kingston and Richmond SCP Multi-Agency Vulnerable Children & Adolescent Subgroup**

### **Terms of Reference**

#### **Purpose**

The Multi-Agency Vulnerable Children and Adolescent (MACE and Missing Subgroup) is a sub group of the KRSCP and is accountable to the SCP in Kingston and Richmond. It is chaired by the Director of Children's Social Care and the DCI from the Police with membership consisting of senior managers from Children's Social Care, Protection and Early Help, the police, education services, Public Health, health services, CAMHS, and the voluntary sector. The group aims to ensure an effective and timely response from all agencies involved in managing children and young people missing from home, care or education and those at risk of sexual and criminal exploitation, radicalisation and extremism, sexually harmful behaviour trafficking, serious youth violence, gangs and groups and substance misuse. The group also ensures that "MACE" issues and children missing from home, care and education are interlinked at a strategic level to ensure they are addressed independently but with reference to one another.

#### **Roles and responsibilities**

- Implement statutory procedures with regards to MACE and children missing from home, care and education
- Put in place clear local practice and procedures, as required
- Ensure that all objectives are managed in line with statutory requirements and any agreed MACE and Missing Children protocols and ensure recommendations are made to the Independent Chair of the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (KRSCP)
- Work with projects and initiatives, identify any gaps through scrutiny of multi-agency data and learning reviews, devise action plans and implement actions
- Ensure that lessons learnt from MACE and Missing Children processes are disseminated and acted upon and that there is appropriate quality assurance and training in place throughout the agencies and boroughs
- Disseminate learning throughout agencies and the public in Richmond and Kingston to raise awareness of MACE issues.

#### **Membership**

Membership of the Vulnerable Children & Adolescent Subgroup will include representatives from:

- Richmond and Kingston Police SW BOCU
- Children's Social Care
- CAMHS
- Richmond and Kingston Children's Services
- Named Nurses for Community and acute Healthcare providers, Kingston and Richmond
- Kingston and Richmond Public Health
- Domestic Violence Co-ordinators Kingston & Richmond (Community Safety Partnership / Safer Kingston Partnership)
- Integrated Youth Support, Richmond and Kingston
- Kingston and Richmond Education Services

- Voluntary sector
- Phoenix Project AfC
- Gangs Worker, AfC
- Named Nurses Health Providers
- Wolverton Sexual Health Unit, Kingston Hospital
- Maternity Services, if required, Kingston Hospital or West Middlesex University Hospital

Representatives from the other partner agencies may be asked to join the group as required if additional needs are identified or specialist advice is required.

### **Governance Arrangements**

The Vulnerable Children & Adolescent Subgroup is accountable to the joint KRSCP.

The Vulnerable Children & Adolescent Subgroup is to be jointly chaired by the Director of Children's Social Care for Kingston and Richmond and the DCI of Kingston and Richmond Police. This arrangement will be reviewed annually.

Sub group meetings will take place four times per year. At least 50% of agencies must be present to enable the meeting to proceed. Where an agency representative is not able to attend, they will identify a colleague to attend on their behalf.

Attendance at Subgroup meetings will be monitored and information included in the Annual Reports for the KRSCP.

The meeting agenda and papers will be circulated at least seven working days before the meeting. Minutes will be distributed to the sub group within three weeks of the meeting.

The Chair will report to the Richmond and Kingston SCP via a progress report at each Board meeting.

They will also be responsible for delivering a work plan, drawn from the KRSCP business plan, here: <https://kingstonandrichmondscb.org.uk/about-kingston-lscb/business-plan-180.php>

The work plan will be reviewed at each subgroup meeting. The Chairs may set up time-limited tasks and finish groups as required to deliver its objectives.

### **Review**

These Terms of Reference and membership will be reviewed annually to ensure they reflect the needs of Kingston and Richmond SCP.

## **Themes and Trends**

### **Gender and Ethnicity**

#### **Boys: Adolescent Risk and Exploitation**

The Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation data set for Kingston and Richmond has consistently identified less boys being at risk of or experiencing CSE than girls. We know that locally we

need to ensure boys' sexual health needs are adequately considered. There is a need for early intervention there is evidence that targeting begins when children are of primary age.

Previously the MASE Panel recognised that girls who have been identified as at risk of sexual exploitation have then become a risk to others (both boys and girls) in regard to 'recruiting' and 'grooming' them into harmful activities.

Adolescence is a time of growth and exploration. In a focus group with young people they have said that in relationships they are worried about:

- Being hurt or abused
- Being touched without their consent
- Verbal and emotional abuse
- Being controlled, and being emotionally blackmailed (e.g. "if you were a good girlfriend/boyfriend you would do...")
- Pressure to be more sexual than they want to
- Understanding consent

## **Ethnicity and Culture**

The KRSCP in Kingston and Richmond have undertaken peer reviews and a feedback review with parents and these exercises have found that when children from BAME communities have been identified as either experiencing CSE or at risk of CSE, issues of ethnicity and understanding of cultural norms of families were not adequately addressed and how this could make children and young people potentially more at risk not clearly explored or addressed. Not using interpreters to communicate with parents whose first language was not English has also been highlighted. One parent from a BAME background felt that his family's cultural norms and sensitivities were not understood when CSE concerns about his daughter were discussed by professionals.

When a child from a BAME community is identified as being at risk of or experiencing any form of child exploitation it is paramount that professionals are confident in discussing the cultural implications and sensitivities for the child, the family and the community to ensure that any additional levels of risk and vulnerability are explored, highlighted and responded to appropriately.

## **Contextual Safeguarding**

There is a growing body of research (see Firmin 2013; Firmin et al 2016; Firmin 2017) which highlights the significance of contextual safeguarding, which promotes the idea that young people's behaviours, levels of vulnerability and levels of resilience are all informed by the social/public, as well as private, contexts in which young people spend their time. Drawing upon research into adolescent development, it recognises that as children grow they spend increasing amounts of time socialising with peers, at school and in public environments independently of parental/carers supervision.

Kingston and Richmond SCP are committed to implementing a Contextual Safeguarding Framework that will allow for a Child Protection system that recognises the weight of peer influence on the decisions that young people make; extends the notion of 'capacity to safeguard' to sectors that operate beyond families and provides a framework in which referrals can be made for contextual interventions that complement work with individuals and families.