



# WSCP Newsletter

## April 2020

### Update from the Safeguarding Partners

This latest edition of the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP) newsletter provides an update on the temporary changes to our working arrangements in response to the restrictions resulting from the Covid-19 virus.

On Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March the WSCP Executive held a conference call to discuss how the partnership could continue to deliver its statutory functions whilst recognising both the need to avoid bringing practitioners together and the impact of the additional burden currently placed on those practitioners in front line services as a result of the virus.

As a result of the discussion the Safeguarding Partners have agreed the following:

The **Executive Group** will focus on monitoring the effectiveness of the multi-agency arrangements which have been put in place in response to the current situation. The Executive received assurance from the partners that the critical multi-agency functions of our child protection system continue, for example strategy meetings, visits where the risk is immediate and high, agency representation within the Family Front Door, home visits by Health Visitors where there is a safeguarding concern, management of those offenders who pose a risk to children etc. We will continue to ensure that these multi-agency arrangements remain effective and support any adaptation necessary to meet changing circumstances and potential risks as they develop.

In recognition of how quickly the situation is developing the Executive Group has agreed to conference call fortnightly.

In relation to the **WSCP sub-groups**:

The **Quality Assurance Practice and Procedures Group** is suspending all multi-agency audit activity in recognition of the need to allow managers to focus on delivering core front-line business. We will however continue to develop and review our procedures as required as this can be completed remotely. We will also be preparing our Section 11 audit, so it is in place for when we return to normal business.

The **Child Safeguarding Practice Review Group** will continue to be responsible for managing rapid review processes as required. This will be done remotely. The National Review Panel has this week published helpful guidance in relation to their expectation of timescales for the various notifications and reviews. In relation to Serious Incident Notifications the timescale of five working days remains, however in respect of rapid reviews, serious case reviews and child safeguarding practice reviews the expectation of timescales has been relaxed. In view of this guidance and a recognition of the importance of meaningful practitioner involvement in any review, the Executive has taken the decision to delay for the foreseeable future the one review we currently have ongoing.

The **Get Safe Strategic Group** incorporates areas where there may be increased risk to children and young people as a result of current restrictions on the general public. Online exploitation is an area of particular concern as children and young people spend more time on-line at home rather than in school, and as such it will be important for partners across Worcestershire to support the dissemination of information on staying safe online to children, young people, parents and carers. It is also important that those who are at risk of all forms of exploitation remain protected, and this will form part of the ongoing monitoring of our multi-agency responses. In addition, although as with other forums, partner time and capacity will be challenged, we will continue to develop our local procedures relating to our Get Safe action plan where possible.

In response to day to day concerns the Get Safe multi agency operational work at the Family Front Door continues, and in line with the Children Social Care protocol young people will receive Keeping in Touch calls and visits where risk is assessed as 'High' and 'Immediate' or 'Priority'.

### **Training**

As would be expected in these circumstances all classroom based training which has previously been advertised or promoted via this newsletter has been placed on hold. This includes the management of allegations training and the forthcoming PCC funded 'Raising Awareness of Exploitation and Vulnerability' courses. We will however aim to provide you with helpful resources and guidance via this newsletter over the coming weeks and months and will continue to update you regularly on the work of the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership.

### **Thank You!**

Finally, the members of the WSCP Executive would like to extend their thanks to you all for your continued hard work, commitment and support in ensuring the children and young people of Worcestershire stay safe during these exceptional times.

### **A Final Reminder.....**

The Worcestershire County Council advice page is updated daily with the latest and most accurate information from Public Health England and the NHS on the Coronavirus outbreak so please have a look: <http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/coronavirus>