Chair’s Message

This will be my final message as Chair of the Islington Safeguarding Children Board. I have completed four years and it’s time for a change.

It has been a very rewarding thing to do because of the quality of the people I’ve been privileged to work with and the strong and good relationships with many partner agencies.

During the four years the Board has matured and strengthened and safeguarding has been officially classed as good in the borough. That of course is because of the hard and unrelenting daily work of many expert and committed professionals in all the services involved in keeping children safe. Many thanks to all of you and my best wishes to my successor. It was lovely to see so many of you at the annual conference. It was a great success and brought together many agencies that do so much good work in Islington.

Janet Mokades, ISCB Independent Chair

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Neglect

Out of the 117 children with child protection plans in March, 60 were subject to plans as a result of neglect.

Neglect is defined as the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

This could be when a child's/young person's personal or intimate requirements are ignored, not ensuring children/young people are safe, or exposure to undue cold, heat or unnecessary risk of injury.

Some of the signs of neglect include:

- Constant hunger
- Compulsive eating
- Scavenging
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Untreated medical problems

Children can be left in neglectful homes too long without appropriate support and intervention. This can cause long-term damage to the child. Early identification is key to improving outcomes for children living in neglectful homes. The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) can help you identify neglect and intervene early. It is designed to be used when you’re worried about how well a child/young person is progressing. For example, concerns about their health, development, welfare, behaviour, progress in learning or any other aspect of their wellbeing. It is also a tool to help you review progress and assess change.

For information about CAF and to access training on CAF/e-CAF contact Michelle Virdi, Workforce Development Manager, michelle.virdi@islington.gov.uk

E-safety

This is the first generation who have never known life without virtual worlds and gaming.

Whilst the benefits are huge both socially and educationally, so too are the risks posed to children/young people, including:

- Over-use (and distraction) by the whole family
- Digital footprint
- Cyberbullying
- Inappropriate content and sexualisation
- Grooming

The children who are most vulnerable to online abuse are also the most likely to lack access to the support, guidance and resources that could help them. Due to the risks, E-safety has become a significant OSFTED focus.

There are also risks to adults and staff/volunteers working with children. Staff/volunteers need to consider their own digital footprint and appropriate use of technology, particularly when working around children and young people.

ISCB was one of the first Safeguarding Children Boards to develop an E-safety subgroup. We have developed an E-safety strategy, a sample E-safety policy for organisations to use, educational and policy resources and co-ordinate the multi-agency training as well as training in schools.

If you have any questions or want advice contact Katy Potts, Primary ICT and E-Safety Lead for Schools
Katy.potts@islington.gov.uk

For more information about E-safety visit the ISCB E-safety website page: www.islingtionscb.org.uk/key-practice-guidance/Pages/E-safety.aspx

For information about CAF and to access training on CAF/e-CAF contact Michelle Virdi, Workforce Development Manager, michelle.virdi@islington.gov.uk
New definition of domestic violence

In September 2012 the government widened the definition of domestic violence to include 16-17 year olds and to reflect coercive control. The new definition was implemented in March 2013.

**Domestic violence is now defined as:**

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling*, coercive** or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional

*Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

**Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

This definition, which is not a legal definition, includes so called ‘honour’ based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

If you are concerned about a child/young person where there is, or you suspect, domestic violence in the home or you have concerns that a young person’s intimate relationship is abusive, contact Children’s Services Contact Team Social on 020 7527 7400, cscreferrals@islington.gov.uk

For further information about the MARAC contact:

Lesley Weber, specialist domestic violence social worker, lesley.weber@islington.gov.uk

Anne Clark, Community Safety Unit, domestic violence co-ordinator, anne.clark@islington.gov.uk

For information about the referral process contact the MARAC co-ordinator, Mia Bruni, mia.bruni@met.pnn.police.uk

Islington’s Multi-agency Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

Islington’s MARAC is a co-ordinated response to the highest risk domestic violence cases in the borough.

All key statutory and voluntary agencies meet monthly, share information and create a unique safety plan for each survivor and their children. This is in order to reduce future harm to high risk survivors and their children.

This multi-agency partnership assists in meeting the social, welfare, economic, safety, accommodation, criminal and civil justice needs of survivors. Sharing information through the MARAC enables agencies to act from a better understanding of the situation and the risks faced by the survivor and their children.

During 2011-12, 197 cases were reviewed which involved 235 children.

All staff from across the statutory and voluntary sectors can refer cases to the MARAC.

Free monthly MARAC training covering the process and what is required is available from the Community Safety Unit. For information contact Anne Clark, details opposite.
‘Honour’ based violence and forced marriage

‘Honour’ based violence and forced marriage affects children, young people and adults. In relation to children and young people it is child abuse.

What is ‘honour’ based violence?

‘Honour’ or izzat is the reputation and social standing of an individual, a family or a community. For some families the most important thing is their cultural view of honour. Honour based violence encourages violence towards family members who are considered to have dishonoured their family. It is a crime or incident which has been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community. Family members, associates and members of the community are often involved, meaning that victims are at risk from their parents, families and community. It includes forced marriage, honour killings and extra control at home.

What are the warning signs?

- Family history of siblings/relatives being forced to marry, gone missing, self-harm or suicide
- Child expressing they are going abroad and have concerns about this
- Relatives making decisions on behalf of the victim
- Victims may truant or have extended absences from school due to policing at home
- Victims may report that they are being kept at home against their will
- There may be a decline in academic or work performance
- The victim may report threats to kill which tend to be credible

Do not attempt to mediate between the young person and any family members

- Mediation, reconciliation, and family counselling as a response to forced marriage can be extremely dangerous and put the young person at risk
- Do not assume that the victim has been behaving ‘badly’ to be at risk
- Failing to conform in a relatively minor way may give perpetrators sufficient self-justification to inflict serious harm or to kill
- Be aware of the potential seriousness of the danger and the immediacy of the risk
- Be aware that other individuals may be at risk, for example, siblings, boyfriends, girlfriends

What is forced marriage?

Forced marriage is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of both people. One or both parties may be forced to marry due to emotional pressure, intimidation, threats and/or physical abuse. The person is made to feel that unless they marry as instructed, they are bringing unacceptable shame and dishonour on their family. According to the government’s Forced Marriage Unit those most at risk are 15-24, but 30% of their cases involve minors, some as young as 10 years old.

An arranged marriage is not the same as forced marriage. It is an on-going tradition in many communities for families, relatives and friends to introduce suitable prospective spouses. It is then up to both parties to end this arrangement with marriage or not. The marriage is entered into freely by both people, with their full involvement. The difference between forced marriage and arranged marriage is consent.

Why do they happen?

- To maintain the family’s honour in the eyes of the community
- To control someone’s behaviour so that it meets the traditional expectations of a person’s family or community. For example, controlling unwanted behaviour and sexuality, particularly that of women, and preventing ‘unsuitable’ relationships
- Peer group or family pressure
- Protecting perceived cultural or religious ideals
- Prevent relationships with individuals from outside one’s ethnic, cultural, religious or social group
- Long-standing family commitments
- Providing a carer for a disabled family member/reducing any perceived stigma of disability
- To help claims for residence and citizenship

The long, school, summer holiday is a time when a young person is at high risk of forced marriage as they can be taken to their family’s country of origin without missing school.

If you are concerned that a child is at risk of ‘honour’ based violence or forced marriage contact Islington’s Children’s Services Contact Team, 020 7527-7400, cscreferrals@islington.gov.uk

If a child is at immediate risk contact the police on 999.

Further information is available on the ISCB website, www.islingtontscb.org.uk
Legal Aid and Family Law disputes

From the 1st April 2013, changes to legislation came into force affecting the availability of legal aid for anyone experiencing Family Law disputes.

Since the reforms were introduced the level of service cover has reduced significantly to only those cases where a Family Law protective order is required or where an individual can provide evidence of domestic abuse.

Qualification for legal aid in the first instance still takes into account the financial means of the client, determining whether their income and any capital they have is within the legal aid threshold.

If the client qualifies financially, legal aid is available for:
• Care, adoption, wardship
• Domestic violence (injunction or occupation orders)
• Forced marriage protection
• Child abduction (domestic and international)
• Some international child maintenance
• Homelessness

Where a client is a child under 18, a victim of domestic violence or a case involving the protection of the children, legal aid is available for:
• Locating a snatched child
• Contact and residence
• Parental orders
• Divorces, separation, civil partnership and financial matters

The Ministry of Justice has produced guidance for victims of domestic abuse on how they can apply for legal aid in order to get help. To be eligible, the client will need to be able to provide their solicitor with some evidence that they have been a victim of domestic violence, (as defined by the government definition) in the preceding 2 years/24 months.

The types of evidence a client will need to show include:
• Criminal conviction/caution for a domestic violence offence or on-going criminal proceedings
• An injunction or undertaking in the last 24 months
• A letter confirming the client has been subject to a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)
• Finding of fact of domestic violence by a court
• A letter from a GP or nurse confirming an examination of injuries or condition consistent with domestic violence and no reason to believe this has not been caused by domestic violence
• A letter from a social worker confirming the client has been/is at risk
• A letter from a refuge confirming that the client has spent at least 24 hours in the refuge

All evidence needs to be from the preceding 24 months.

For further details visit the Ministry of Justice website ‘legal aid for victims of domestic violence’
IMECE Women’s Centre 30th anniversary celebration

IMECE Women’s Centre (formerly known as Turkish Speaking Women’s Group) was set up in 1982 as a women’s self-help group. It is now an established organisation providing a wide range of services to support women from all communities.

The 30th anniversary celebration was hosted in the House of Lords by Baroness Meral Hussein-Ece, OBE, formerly a local Councillor in Islington. Domestic violence (DV) coordinators from various boroughs, local authority officers, safeguarding managers, funders, commissioners, partner organisations, and many of the women who were involved in the establishment and growth of IMECE were in attendance to celebrate and share their experiences of their involvement in IMECE over the last 30 years. The evening concluded with IMECE’s 30th anniversary video which provided a summary of IMECE’s story.

IMECE’s services include violence against women advice, information and support; specialist welfare advice; outreach; training for professionals and community members; volunteering; English as a second language (ESOL) classes; confidence building classes; campaigning and social gatherings. Every year IMECE works with numerous forced marriage and ‘honour’ based violence cases, supporting women from black, minority ethnic and refugee (BMER) communities. In 2011–2012 IMECE’s total income maximization for clients through benefit applications, appeals and change of circumstances was over £1 million.

IMECE accepts agency and self-referrals.

For further information, advice or to make a referral please contact:
IMECE Women’s Centre,
2 Newington Green Road, London N1 4RX,
020 7354 1359  www.imece.org.uk

Working Together 2013

The revised version of Working Together came into effect on the 16th April 2013.

The key changes include the following:

• The definition of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is now to include taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes
• There should be a range of effective, evidence-based early help services in place. The early help should draw upon the Common Assessment Framework (CAF). These services should be evaluated to demonstrate the impact they are having on the outcomes for the child
• Removal of the distinction between initial and core assessments. The maximum time for the single assessment to conclude is 45 working days from the point of referral
• All statutory agencies are now required to report all allegations against staff and volunteers in their professional and personal lives to the local authority designated officer (LADO) within 1 working day
• Health professionals to understand risk factors, communicate effectively with children and families, liaise with other agencies, assess needs and capacity, respond to those needs and contribute to multi-agency assessments and reviews
• In addition to identifying when a child may be a victim of a crime, police officers should be aware of the effect of other incidents which might pose safeguarding risks to children and where officers should pay particular attention
• Faith organisations, voluntary and private sectors have a duty to have appropriate arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
• A strong focus on the role of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) to scrutinise local arrangements and monitor, challenge and hold partners to account

ISCB has developed an action plan to ensure that we meet the new requirements of Working Together 2013.

Further information on Working Together 2013 can be found on the ISCB website www.islingtonscb.org.uk
Facts and figures: child protection

Here you’ll find information on how many children have child protection plans (CPP), how old they are, why they have child protection plans and what kind of contributory factors have been associated with the family.

How many children have a child protection plan?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Number with CPP</th>
<th>Number with CPP per 10,000 Islington under 18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mar-12</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr-12</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May-12</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun-12</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul-12</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug-12</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep-12</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct-12</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov-12</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec-12</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan-13</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb-13</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar-13</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What age are children with child protection plans?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>England % (Mar-12)</th>
<th>London % (Mar-12)</th>
<th>Mar-12 %</th>
<th>Feb-13 %</th>
<th>Mar-13 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unborn</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 4</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 9</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 15</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16+</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Why do children have child protection plans?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Mar-12</th>
<th>Feb-13</th>
<th>Mar-13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neglect</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Risk factors in families who have children with child protection plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adult Factor</th>
<th>Feb-13</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Mar-13</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Violence</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Mental Health</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young parent under 18</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult physical disability</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult learning disability</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In March 2013

- There were 22 conferences (5 initial and 15 review, 2 transfers-in and 0 transfer-outs) held in March 2013. Domestic Violence, Drugs and Alcohol and Other were the main contributory factors.
- There was an increase in the number of children who were the subject of a CPP at the end of March 2013 to 117.
- 10 children became subject to a Child Protection Plan in the month and 4 of these had previously been subject to a plan.
- There was 1 unborn child with a plan at the end of March 2013 and 1 child with a plan aged ‘16+’.
- There was an increase in the Neglect since last February 2013.
- There were 313 Children Looked After (CLA).
International Mother Tongue Day – 26th of February 2013

The Mother Tongue Supplementary Schools Partnership (MTSSP) in conjunction with Islington schools celebrated UNESCO’s International Mother Tongue day on the 26th February.

Over 100 people attended. Guest speakers included the Mayor of Islington, Councillor Jilani Chowdhury, and Catherine West, the leader of Islington Council. The event marked Islington’s linguistic diversity and the children’s achievements in our schools. Children were nominated by their supplementary schools and received certificates in recognition of their achievements.

Mebrahtu Russom, Chair of MTSSP, explained that the main purpose of MTSSP was to raise the children’s educational attainment through helping and supporting organisations that provide mother tongue supplementary classes.

Barrie O’Shea, head teacher of Duncombe Primary school, highlighted how the appreciation of diversity was central to the recognition of the gifts all the children brought to their learning, and to encourage the children’s learning in their mother tongue was to unlock their huge potential.

Charmaine Kenner, an expert in complementary schooling from Goldsmith’s College, University of London, presented her research into complementary schools and the positive impact they had on pupil achievement.

For information about support offered to supplementary schools contact Abed Moftizadeh, Islington’s Community Learning Consultant, School Improvement Service, Abed.Moftizadeh@islington.gov.uk

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