

Joint Targeted Area Inspection: Reading

24th February - 10th March 2025

Multi-Agency Improvement Plan

Area for priority action:

Shortfalls in the multi-agency strategic safeguarding partnership leading to systemic weaknesses in multi-agency safeguarding practice. This includes inconsistent information-sharing between partners resulting in delays for children, poor-quality risk assessments that fail to address the experiences and needs of children and often weak decision-making for children.

Improvement Objectives - SUMMARY	Characteristics of good:
<p>SUMMARY OF CHANGE REQUIRED</p> <p>The JTAI identified the following areas of improvement, this plans list the actions that will contribute to one of more of these areas under each theme:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The voice and experience of individual children exposed to domestic abuse, so they are listened to and acted on by practitioners across the partnership. 2. Strategy meetings and other safeguarding meetings involving children should involve all relevant partners and happen in a timely manner. 3. Issues with timely and consistent information sharing relating to risk, needs and plans for children. 4. Understanding of threshold of need across the partnership to meet the children's needs. 5. Consideration of the cumulative impact of repeated experience of domestic abuse and cumulative impact on the child. 6. Children's safeguarding partnership use and insight of detailed and relevant data to help understand the impact on children who are victims of domestic abuse. 7. Commissioning of support services for children and families. 8. Oversight and effectiveness of MARAC arrangements. 9. Ensuring effective challenge and escalation when an appropriate response is not received. 10. Strategic governance arrangements to ensure they are aligned with other partnerships for children who are victims of domestic abuse. 	<p><i>Children's voices are clearly articulated and their lived experience of domestic abuse and its impact is well understood. This understanding, informed by a comprehensive local probe/ profile, informs operational and strategic responses to domestic abuse that are delivered to a high standard across the local partnership in a coordinated way. Risk management, safeguarding thresholds and responses are well understood by all agencies and where issues arise/standards are not met, partners adopt a solution focused, collaborative approach to problem-solving which includes the appropriate & timely use of formal escalation processes. MASA priorities are child focused and progress against outcomes is informed by a partnership data set. MASA governance is aligned across other partnerships, including those where children are not the sole focus.</i></p>

Improvement Objective 1: VOICE AND EXPERIENCE OF INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN		Moderate risk: Activity is necessary	Characteristics of good:				
Accountable lead: TVP		Children's voices are listened to and the experiences of individual children who have been exposed to domestic abuse are acted on by practitioners across the partnership.					
REF	Action	Complete by	Owners	Theme	Plan	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
1.1	MULTI-AGENCY: ABE Interviewing with police is in place – to upskill social workers and police officers when undertaking Sect 47 enquiries.	In place	Police and CSC	Service Delivery and Design	Operational	Blue	
1.2	MULTI-AGENCY: All partners across the Reading partnership can evidence that they collectively listen to the voices of children who have been exposed to domestic abuse, and understand their lived experiences, and then act on that evidence.	30.06.2025	BWSCP	Service Delivery and Design	Operational	Amber	
1.3	MULTI-AGENCY: Undertake a multi-agency audit of domestic abuse that includes hearing the voice and understanding the experience of children	30.09.2025	BWSCP	Service Delivery and Design	Operational	Amber	

Improvement Objective 2: STRATEGY MEETINGS		High risk: Urgent activity required	Characteristics of good:				
Accountable lead: BFFC		Strategy and other safeguarding meetings relating to children's well-being are timely and includes the involvement of all relevant safeguarding partners when concerns arise.					
REF	Action	Complete by	Owners	Theme	Plan	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
2.1	MULTI-AGENCY: Multi-agency safety planning as practice standard: Clear expectations to be set in respect to child-centred and individual safety plans as an outcome of strategy meetings; when a strategy meeting is not in place within 1 working day and before an ICPC.	30.05.25	BFFC with partners	Learning and Training	Strategic	Blue	Amber
2.2	MULTI-AGENCY: Multi-agency workshop to socialise and embed practice expectations. Any delay to be escalated in line with the BWSCP procedure and a log to be kept that is reported on at the MASH Operational Group and escalated to the Berkshire West MASH Strategic Oversight Group.	30.06.25	BFFC with partners	Learning and Training	Strategic	Green	Amber
2.3	MULTI-AGENCY: Peer Review in BFFC CSPoA being undertaken by Kent to assess effectiveness of CSPoA – this will be informed by all JTAI findings, including a focus on strategy meetings.	underway	Partnership and Kent CC	Service Delivery and Design	Strategic	Green	
2.4	MULTI-AGENCY: Checklists to be in place to ensure all professionals involved with a child, or significant adults involved with the child, are considered at strategy meetings. In CSPoA, to provide reassurance that Probation is contacted to check their involvement with an adult, as routine practice. This to be confirmed through a dip sample of cases that came in over the next 2 months and to feedback to the monitoring group mid May 2025.	15.05.25	BFFC	Service Delivery and Design	Operational	Green	Amber
2.5	MULTI-AGENCY: MASH practitioners to ensure that the recommendation for a strategy meeting made to the Assessment Team is more robust with clear timescales to minimise drift and the impact of cumulative delays upon a child and family.	30.05.25	BFFC	Service Delivery and Design	Operational	Green	Amber

Improvement Objective 3: INFORMATION SHARING		Moderate risk: Activity is necessary	Characteristics of good:				
Accountable lead: BFFC		There is timely and consistent information-sharing about risks, needs and plans for children.					
REF	Action	Complete by	Owners	Theme	Plan	Progress RAG	Impact RAG

3.1	MULTI-AGENCY: Multi-agency practice expectations to be discussed, socialised and embedded through a workshop to address practice relating to: - Improving the safeguarding notification processes and develop effective and timely information sharing with all partners, especially GPs. - Ensure communication and co-ordination at the earliest opportunity when information becomes known about children in different households linked to the same adults and associated risks. - Capture the voice of the child, wishes, feelings and lived experiences as standard by all agencies - Distribute and socialise the consistent and informed use of DASH forms in all agencies to provide consistent benchmarking of risk. Health to ensure DASH form is completed, and risks known by HV and GP around DA to be shared with their service even if the pregnant mother does not disclose this.	30.06.25	BFfC	Learning and Training	Operational	Green	Amber
3.2	MULTI-AGENCY: Audit the quality, consistency and timeliness of information-sharing between the partner agencies involved in safeguarding children and domestic abuse.	30.07.25	BWSCP	Information Sharing	Operational	Green	

Improvement Objective 4: THRESHOLD OF NEED		High risk: Urgent activity required	Characteristics of good:					
Accountable lead: BFfC		Thresholds of need are well understood across the partnership to meet children's needs and minimise risks.						
REF	Action			Complete by	Owners	Theme	Plan	Progress RAG
4.1	Multi-agency: Action is taken to consider how well thresholds of need are understood across the partnership to meet children's needs and minimise risks.	30.05.2025	BFfC	Service Delivery and Design	Operational	Green		

Improvement Objective 5: CUMULATIVE IMPACT		Moderate risk: Activity is necessary	Characteristics of good:					
Accountable lead: TVP		Practitioners and managers understand of the importance of consistent consideration of the cumulative impact on children from repeated incidents of exposure to domestic abuse.						
REF	Action			Complete by	Owners	Theme	Plan	Progress RAG
5.1	MULTI-AGENCY: Males identified as potential perpetrators of Domestic Abuse must be considered by front line practitioners as to what involvement and understanding they have regarding the impact of their behaviour	30.06.2025	TVP with support from BFfC	Service Delivery and Design	Operational	Green		

Improvement Objective 6: USE OF DATA		High risk: Urgent activity required	Characteristics of good:					
Accountable lead: BFfC		The Safeguarding Children Partnership is well informed by comprehensive detailed relevant data to sufficiently understand the experience of children who are victims of domestic abuse and the prevalence of the issue in their area.						
REF	Action			Complete by	Owners	Theme	Plan	Progress RAG
6.1	MULTI-AGENCY: Domestic Abuse needs assessment of the safeguarding partnership to be informed by relevant data from health, police and Local Authority in order to plan for the needs of the local population.	30.06.2025	BFfC	Information Sharing	Operational	Amber		
6.2	MULTI-AGENCY: Consolidation of performance information and data related to Domestic Abuse to fully understand the needs of the local population and impact upon safeguarding children.	30.06.2025	BWSCP	Information Sharing	Strategic	Amber		
6.3	MULTI-AGENCY: Review information sharing protocols and information sharing templates to ensure all agencies disclose relevant and appropriate information at the right time to enable effective safeguarding of children and young people whilst maintaining compliance with data protection requirements	30.05.2025	BWSCP	Information Sharing	Operational	Amber		

Improvement Objective 7: COMMISSIONED SERVICES		High risk: Urgent activity required	Characteristics of good:					
Accountable lead: TVP		There is effective commissioning of support services for children and their families based on a clear understanding of local need.						
REF	Action			Complete by	Owners	Theme	Plan	Progress RAG
7.1	MULTI-AGENCY: Overcome criteria and barriers to accessing specialist services such as Freedom programme and DA work with both parents	30.06.2025	BWSCP	Service Delivery and Design	Operational	Amber		

Improvement Objective 8: MARAC ARRANGEMENTS		Moderate risk: Activity is necessary	Characteristics of good:					
Accountable lead: TVP		There is good oversight and effectiveness of multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC).						
REF	Action			Complete by	Owners	Theme	Plan	Progress RAG
8.1	MULTI-AGENCY: Refresh and update partnership knowledge of MARAC function and role and their potential impact for practitioners across different agencies.	30.06.25	TVP	Learning and Training	Operational	Green		

Improvement Objective 9: CHALLENGE AND ESCALATION		Moderate risk: Activity is necessary	Characteristics of good:					
Accountable lead: BFfC		Professionals challenge and escalate concerns about children that are not receiving an adequate response.						
REF	Action			Complete by	Owners	Theme	Plan	Progress RAG
9.1	MULTI-AGENCY: The partnership takes action to evidence how professionals effectively challenge and escalate concerns about children that are not receiving an adequate response, and how this impacts on the lives of children.	30.06.25	BWSCP	Service Delivery and Design	Strategic	Amber		

Improvement Objective 10: STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS		High risk: Urgent activity required	Characteristics of good:					
Accountable lead: BFfC								

Accountable lead: BFFC				There is effective strategic governance arrangements to ensure priorities are set and aligned with the other strategic partnerships, with a focus on those children subject to domestic abuse				
REF	Action	Complete by	Owners	Theme	Plan	Progress RAG	Impact RAG	
10.1	MULTI-AGENCY: Strengthen the role and oversight that the performance and Quality Improvement Sub Group and the BW Executive have to ensure both forums hold all partners to account and provide appropriate scrutiny and direction in order to secure the improvement required.		30.06.25	BWSCP	Strategic Partnership (MASA)	Strategic	Green	
10.2	MULTI-AGENCY: Strengthen formal communication and reporting arrangement across the strategic partnership - Domestic Abuse Board, Safeguarding Children Partnership, Community Safety Partnership etc		30.06.25	BWSCP	Strategic Partnership (MASA)	Strategic	Green	

KEY

Blue	Completed
Green	On track
Amber	Emerging possibility that action will not be completed on time, attention needed
Red	Highly likely action will not be completed on time, urgent action needed