Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership (MSCP)

Welcome to the MSCP Bulletin - December 2025

Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership
Safeguarding Medway's children together

Who are MSCP and what is their role?

Medway Council, Kent Police and the NHS Kent and Medway are the three safeguarding partners that make up MSCP. We aim to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together in a system where:-

- children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted
- partner organisations and agencies collaborate, share and co-own the vision for how to achieve improved outcomes for vulnerable children
- organisations and agencies challenge appropriately and hold one another to account effectively
- there is early identification and *analysis* of new safeguarding issues and emerging threats
- learning is promoted and embedded in a way that local services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice
- information is shared effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision-making for children and families.

December Content:

- Factsheet Spotlight: The National Referral Mechanism (NRM)
- Preparing for a Joint Targeted Inspection (JTAI)
- Child Sexual Abuse: MSCP Strategic Position Statement
- Animated version of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- NSPCC Recourses for Education Partners
- Clear Minds Safer Homes Campaign
- Kent and Medway Child Exploitation Identification Tool
- Webinars from Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Awareness Month, September 2025
- Celebrating our fourth annual Neglect Conference
- Graded Care Profile 2 for Neglect – A Reminder
- Spotlight on our e-Learning courses - child sexual abuse & recognising grooming
- Train the Trainer CPD Certified
- Training Dates

Factsheet Spotlight

The MSCP produce factsheets where there is learning from local or national child safeguarding reviews or developing areas of practice. The factsheets are reviewed and agreed by the Learning Lessons sub-group.

The spotlight for the December bulletin is **The National Referral Mechanism (NRM).** The NRM is a framework for identifying potential victims, including children, of human trafficking and modern slavery, ensuring that they receive appropriate multi-agency support. The factsheet includes details of the NRM and how to make a referral.

MSCP Priority - Effective Partnerships

Preparing for a Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI)

What is a JTAI?

A Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) is a focused inspection carried out by Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire &

Rescue Services (HMICFRS), and sometimes His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP). These inspections assess how effectively local agencies work together to safeguard children.

The current focus of JTAIs is the response to child sexual abuse in the family environment.

Why it matters:

JTAIs provide a valuable opportunity to reflect on how our services collaborate to identify and respond to children in need of help and protection. The focus is on recent practice—typically within the last six months—and how well agencies work together at both strategic and operational levels.

What to expect:

- They will review case audits, observe practice, and speak with practitioners, managers, leaders, and families.
- Findings will highlight strengths, areas for improvement, and examples of good practice.

How to prepare:

- Watch the What is a JTAI? video explainer made by Rachel Egan the MSCP Independent Scrutineer.
- Read the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel report on child sexual abuse "I wanted them all to notice" Protecting children and responding to child sexual abuse within the family environment and reflect on the following questions:

How does my practice need to change so that the needs, voice and experiences of children who are sexually abused or at risk of being sexually abused are better addressed?

How well are the specific needs of children from black and minoritised communities understood and addressed with respect to child sexual abuse within the family environment?

How well do I seek the views of children and non-abusing parents/carers?

Child Sexual Abuse - MSCP Strategic Position Statement

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is a deeply harmful and often hidden crime. The MSCP is committed to ensuring that all children are protected from sexual abuse. We aim to create a coordinated, evidence-informed, and trauma-responsive system that identifies, prevents, and responds to child sexual abuse across all agencies.

This statement sets out our strategic position, informed by:

- The National Review into Child Sexual Abuse within the Family Environment by the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel.
- Resources and guidance from the Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse (CSA Centre).
- The Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) framework on the multi-agency response to CSA in the family environment.

We will:

- Ensure our strategic approach is survivor-informed, trauma-aware, and culturally competent.
- Promote professional curiosity and confidence in identifying CSA, including intra-familial abuse.

Strategic Vision

We are committed to ensuring that safeguarding responses are proactive, child-centred, and multi-agency. Our vision is to build a system where:

- Children are heard, believed, and supported.
- Professionals are confident and equipped to identify the signs and indicators and respond to CSA.
- Agencies work collaboratively to prevent harm and promote recovery.

Key Strategic Drivers

a. National Review Findings

The 2024 national review analysed 136 serious safeguarding incidents and 41 case reviews. Key findings include:

- Failure to listen to children: Many children communicated distress in subtle ways, but professionals did not act.
- Over-reliance on disclosure: Safeguarding responses often waited for children to speak out, despite evidence that most do not disclose abuse.
- Weak multi-agency coordination: Poor information-sharing and fragmented responses led to missed opportunities.
- Inadequate risk assessments: Known offenders were present in over a third of cases, yet risks were not robustly managed.

- Cultural and disability considerations: Responses often failed to account for race, ethnicity, and disability, creating barriers to protection.

b. JTAI Framework Alignment

The JTAI framework emphasises:

- A joined-up multi-agency response to CSA.
- Early identification and intervention, especially in intra-familial contexts.
- Voice of the child as central to safeguarding practice.
- Learning from case reviews to improve future responses.

Strategic Objectives

Objective 1: Prevention and Early Identification

- Promote professional curiosity and awareness of CSA signs and indicators.
- Address barriers to disclosure through safe, trusted relationships.
- Utilise national campaigns and resources designed specifically for parents/carers to raise awareness and prevention of child sexual abuse including NSPCC *Talk PANTS*

Objective 2: Multi-Agency Response and Support

- Consistent use of Kent and Medway CAS pathway to strengthen joint working and information-sharing.
- Improve data collection and analysis using the CSA Centre *Improving your data on child sexual abuse*

Objective 3: Workforce Development

- Learning Lessons group to undertake a workforce learning and skills scoping exercise (training and tools) to identified strengths and gaps.
- Promote CSA Centre free learning modules to enhance agencies own training programmes including:
- Spotting the signs and indicators of child sexual abuse
- Speaking to children about child sexual abuse
- Supporting parents/carers when their child may have been sexually abused
- Promote reflective supervision and learning from reviews and multi-agency audits.

Objective 4: Voice of the Child

- Ensure children's voices are central to all safeguarding decisions.
- Actively listen and respond to children's concerns, even when indirect.

Objective 5: Quality Assurance and Learning

- Monitor CSA responses through single and multi-agency audits.
- Share learning from the national review and local case studies.

Governance and Accountability

The MSCP Executive Group is responsible for the implementation of the strategic vision with delivery through the JTAI Preparation Working Group and Learning Lessons group.

Progress will be reviewed every 3 months and informed by:

- Medway LCSPRs currently in progress
- JTAI inspection outcomes.
- CSA Centre research and guidance.

An animated guide to Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

Did you know there is an animated video for Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2023?

The video explains to children and their families how individuals and agencies work together to help, support and protect them. Led by the Department of Education these materials were co-produced with children.

NSPCC Resources for Education Partners

Speak out. Stay safe is a safeguarding programme that is free and available to all primary schools in the UK and Channel Islands. The programme is for children aged 5-11 and is an effective way to support school's safeguarding duties. It links directly to the curriculum, helping teachers reinforce key messages about abuse and neglect as part of their school's teaching on relationships.

Our programme helps children to:

- Understand abuse in all its forms and how to recognise the signs of abuse
- Know that abuse is never their fault and that they have the right to be safe
- Learn where to get help, including Childline

What's included:

- Virtual assemblies for children aged 5-7 and 7-11, available in English, Welsh and BSL – delivered by teachers in class
- Follow on lesson plans with engaging activities to help re-enforce and embed our key messages
- Face-to-face workshops for children aged 6-7 and 9-11, delivered by NSPCC volunteers (subject to availability)
- Support from an NSPCC Schools Coordinator who can answer questions and share other resources and training on offer

The NSPCC also have a fully updated SEND Speak out. Stay Safe programme available which is also completely free

Additionally, the NSPCC also have a completely new service for home school and Alternative provisions. The NSPCC's Speak out. Stay safe. Practitioner Toolkit resource is now available and a completely bespoke version for those who home educate their children – the resources can be accessed here: SOSS for Home Education

Talk Relationships – Healthy relationship resources for secondary schools

Talk Relationships supports secondary schools confidently deliver inclusive relationships and sex education (RSE), so that all young people understand healthy behaviours in relationships and recognise their right to be safe, heard and respected.

Talk Relationships includes:

- A Whole School Approach (WSA) to RSE:
- 5 documents to support in implementing a whole school approach framework
- 8 real-life Case Studies showcasing best practice
- Youth Voice Matters toolkit to involve pupils in the delivery of RSE
- A **free** e-learning course for teachers delivering RSE (CPD certified)
- A **free** e-learning course for school leaders, on implementing a WSA (CPD certified)
- 15 free lesson plans (also in Welsh), created with the PSHE Association. Topics include healthy relationships, consent, sharing nudes and more.
- 6 SEND-specific lesson plans (also in Welsh), adaptable for the needs of different students.
- A helpline dedicated for secondary educators delivering RSE

To sign up for our Talk Relationships e-learning or to download the lesson plans, visit **nspcc.org.uk/talkrelationships**

Clear Minds Safer Homes - Raising Awareness about Cannabis Use.

The Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership have launched Clear Minds Safer Homes campaign designed to raise awareness among professionals working with children and families about the potential risks posed by parental cannabis use. While cannabis may be perceived by some as low-risk, its use in caregiving environments can compromise parental capacity and increase vulnerabilities for children.

MSCP Priority - Contextual Safeguarding and trauma informed practice

Kent and Medway Child Exploitation Identification Tool

Strengthening Our Safeguarding Practice – Use of the Child Exploitation Identification Toolkit

As part of our ongoing commitment to safeguarding children the MSCP is strongly encouraging all practitioners to make consistent use of the **Child Exploitation Identification Toolkit** in their practice.

This toolkit is a vital resource designed by a multi-agency group to assist practitioners in identifying whether a child may be experiencing or be vulnerable to exploitation.

It's important the you take a moment to familiarise yourself with the toolkit. Your proactive engagement is key to ensuring we remain vigilant and responsive to the challenges facing children at risk of exploitation.

MSCP Priority - Effective Early help

Webinars from Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Awareness Month, September 2025

FASD Awareness Month took place in September. and recordings of each of the four sessions that took place can be found below.

They cover a range of topics - the factual and the anecdotal - and we believe these sessions will be a fantastic training resource for anyone:

- New to FASD as a topic
- Or, experienced individuals in need of a refresher.

Please note the recordings were originally intended for an audience of professionals only.

How common is FASD and how can it be diagnosed?

FASD - learning from those with lived experience:

The psychology of FASD

Alcohol awareness and prevention

If you have any questions or queries regarding these sessions or FASD in Medway, contact (matthew.charles@medway.gov.uk) or Peter Fryer (peter.fryer@medway.gov.uk).

MSCP Priority - Neglect

Celebrating our fourth annual Neglect Conference

Thank you to the 160+ of you who joined us for the fourth annual neglect conference, this year focusing on adolescents.

The morning was hosted by the MSCP Independent Scrutineer Rachel Egan. We were pleased to welcome Dez Holmes from Research in Practice, Amy Lockwood from Childnet International and Dr Richard Patey from Medway Foundation Trust as our guest speakers who delivered a range of interesting and thought-provoking presentations.

These presentations included understanding adolescent neglect, the digital space and health and adolescents. If you would like a copy of the speakers presentations please contact us mscptraining@medway.gov.uk

Rachel opened the conference with a video from the Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership created by young people to help other young people learn what neglect is. If you couldn't join us, please do take a few minutes to watch the video

Graded Care Profile 2 for Neglect – A Reminder

For over 5years the NSPCC Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2) has been the MSCP agreed partnership tool for assessing and intervening when neglect is a concern. In addition, since January 2025 Medway Council Children's Services have required an initiated or completed GCP2 to accompany contacts when neglect is a concern.

The MSCP Performance Management and Quality Assurance (PMQA) group have been monitoring the number of practitioners trained to use the GCP2 and the numbers completed with families. Whilst the number of trained practitioners has steadily increased and additional training provided, the number of GCP2s completed with families remains low.

As part of our shared commitment to safeguard and improve outcomes for children and families, it is essential that the GCP2 tool continues to be used consistently and appropriately across all our work where neglect is a concern.

Medway Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR) Laura highlighted the need to improve the early identification and response to neglect. The GCP2 tool plays a vital role in assessing the quality of care provided to children and supports practitioners in identifying areas of concern in a structured and evidence-based way. Its use is a key component of our joint safeguarding efforts and contributes to more coordinated and effective response to neglect.

To this end, please ensure that:

- When making a contact to the Medway Single Point of Access where neglect is a concern an initiated or completed GCP2 is included.
- Licensed practitioners are supported to use the GCP2 with families as soon as possible after the training.
- All relevant staff within your agency have completed the GCP2 licensed course.

Details of the GCP2 resources including the licensed practitioner course and refresher sessions can be found on the MSCP website. Thank you for your continued collaboration and commitment to safeguarding Medway children.

MSCP Training

Spotlight on our e-Learning courses - child sexual abuse & recognising grooming

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is incredibly common but can be hard for adults to spot. This course goes into what CSA is, what the long lasting effects can be and how to spot the signs. It also includes what grooming is, what it looks like and how adults can spot it happening.

e-Learning courses are free to access if you work with children and families in Medway. Once registered you can access the courses at any time. Details for how to register are on the MSCP website.

Train the Trainer CPD Certified

MSCP are pleased to announce our third course to be certificated for Continuing Professional Development. We are committed to delivering the highest quality training and our Train the Trainer course has now achieved CPD certification.

This May, we resumed our Train the Trainer programme, supporting colleagues with an interest in delivering safeguarding children training to a multi-agency audience across Medway. Following the one-day course, Trainers are expected to support the delivery of our Basic and Intermediate Safeguarding children training twice a year.

8 colleagues across Medway successfully completed this course and are going on to deliver this training. We offer support with delivery; we can co-deliver with you and provide observational feedback for our Trainers.

Further details of the course and our offer are on our website.

MSCP Train the Trainer

Training Dates

In Person training:

- Basic safeguarding children – Thursday 5th February 2026, 9:30am – 4pm.
- Intermediate safeguarding children – Tuesday 20th January 2026, 9:30 am – 4pm; Tuesday 3rd March 2026, 9:30am – 4pm.
- GCP2 - Thursday 15th January 2026, 9:30am – 4pm; Tuesday 10th February 2026, 9:30am – 4pm; Wednesday 25th March 2026, 9:30am – 4pm.
- DASH – Tuesday 16th December 2025, 9:30am – 4:30pm.
- Domestic abuse and safeguarding children – Thursday 19th March 2026, 9:30am – 4:30pm.

Virtual training:

- LADO – Wednesday 21st January 2026, 1pm – 4pm; Wednesday 11th March 2026, 10am – 1pm.
- Thresholds: Making referrals, understanding and applying thresholds – Thursday 29th January 2026, 9:30am – 11:30am; Thursday 12th March 2026, 9:30am – 11:30am; Thursday 14th May 2026, 9:30am – 11:30am; Friday 3rd July 2026, 9:30am – 11:30am;

- GCP2 Refresher – Wednesday 10th December 2025, 9:30am – 12:30pm; Thursday 22nd January 2026, 9:30am – 12:30pm; Wednesday 25th February 2026, 9:30am – 12:30pm; Wednesday 18th March 2026, 9:30am – 12:30pm.
- Signs of safety – Wednesday 14th January 2026, 9:30am – 12 noon.
- Working with men and fathers – Wednesday 21st January 2026, 10am – 12 noon.

Contacts

For general enquires email mscp@medway.gov.uk

For training enquires email mscptraining@medway.gov.uk

Social Media

X

Linkedin

YouTube