



OPEN LETTER TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, STATUTORY HEADS AND LSCB CHAIRS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

VCF – The Victoria Climbié Foundation UK is writing to offer its review of the **Multi Agency Critical Incident Exercise (MACIE)** established and delivered by the Metropolitan Police Hydra Operations.

This course is aimed at strategic heads of all agencies working to protect children and in our view it is the answer to uncovering shortfalls around effective communication and information sharing.

Held as a two-day course, including an overnight stay, the course is FREE to all delegates and provides a wonderful opportunity for learning and networking with statutory peers. The multi-agency approach to child protection is key, indeed it will not by its nature be delivered as sole agency training, even though there have understandably been requests to do so.

For VCF it provides an exemplary model for putting guidance into practice – which is at the heart of all training delivered by the Foundation – and a must to inform learning and best practice.

It is 10 years since the establishment of the Metropolitan Police Child Abuse Investigation Command and much has been done to move the child protection work forward.

The highlight of the day was to witness, for example, Education willing to persist and validate their responsibilities within the safeguarding agenda. The training allows professionals the time to reflect and the opportunity to truly address child protection work. Over the last decade, the focus for agencies to meet targets set by government has meant a shift away from real social work or other frontline practice. The MACIE training has grown from strength to strength in terms of addressing effective child protection work, often dealing with sensitive areas such as culture, race, faith, the meaning of apology, and above all the need to share detailed information. It unifies the relevant statutory services to work together in the interests and welfare of the child in mind, and addresses the dangers of a unilateral position when dealing with child protection issues. It also addresses the need to recruit and retain staff.

In conclusion, the training can be further developed by including aspects of the SCR process to facilitate shared learning around monitoring of required actions, and to ensure that families are effectively engaged within the SCR process such that their views are well reflected in Overview Reports.

Mor Dioum, VCF Director

Course Information

The course was originally devised as a direct result of the death of Victoria Climbié and has since been revised with the help of Safeguarding partner agencies, in order to address the recommendations that emanated from that Inquiry, the Bichard report and Every Child Matters.

The exercise has been designed and developed through multi- agency participation using the police training simulator 'Hydra', the aims and objectives of which are provided prior to the training.

Professor Jonathan Crego of the Metropolitan Police Service will lead you through the exercise and will be there to guide and support you throughout the day.

You will be taken through an exercise which addresses the abuse of a number of children. You will commence the day working with your own agency colleagues and later in the day, you will be working within a multi agency group.

In order that you have some perspective on how the course is structured, I thought it may be of interest to give you a brief outline of the make up of syndicates. The exercise consists of five groups; Diamond, Sapphire, Emerald, Pearl and Ruby.

The Diamond Group is a panel of "critical friends" that will examine issues, but also consider and challenge, where appropriate, the deliberations of other delegates. Delegates from Police, Social Care, Education and Health make up the remaining 4 syndicates.

No pre-reading is necessary although delegates are expected to be familiar with current Working Together to Safeguard Children or regional Child Protection Procedures and current law / regulations / practice pertaining to their own field of expertise.

"I have tried three times to get out of coming on this course, it has however been the most impactive piece of training I have ever been on." Consultant Paediatrician

"This was one of the best presented and delivered course I have been on. The time for personal input and developing trust between agencies is really crucial in guiding and developing good practices to safeguard children, who are, after all our most precious assets" CP Lead - Education

"I think this was an excellent course. It is hard to find a specific of what I have taken away only that I think from all agencies it is very beneficial in ways that may not be readily apparent." DS MPS

"It was an excellent course- better than I had expected. I would like to see further courses, and wonder if there is a way some of the learning could be extended down to people like our senior trainees in all agencies who are going to be "doing" a lot of the work in the future." Consultant Paediatrician

"Excellent training, excellent facilitator, make it mandatory as part of SCD 5 training for DSs and DIs and DCIs, and our other agency counterparts" DS Child Protection Investigation Team, MPS

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