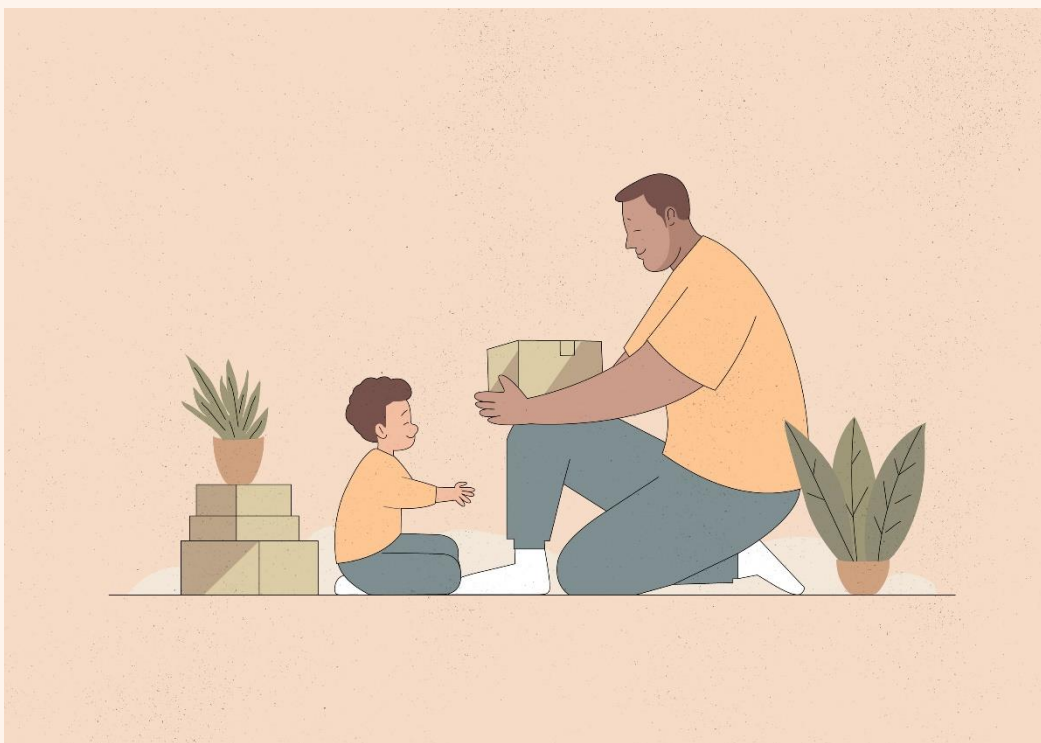


# Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership Yearly Report 2023- 2024



Calderdale  
**Safeguarding**  
**Children**  
Partnership

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## Foreword and Introduction from Safeguarding Partners

We are pleased to be introducing another great annual report that evidences our quick response to new and emerging risks and the strength of the work to Safeguard Children in Calderdale.

The partnership has quickly identified national and local challenges for families and how we can best support them. An example of this is making the link between deprivation levels and child protection. Major reviews of children's social care in England have affirmed that family poverty and inequality are key drivers of harm to children.

Changes in the economic conditions of family life alone – without any other factors – impact on rates of abuse and neglect. We know that increases in income reduced rates significantly which is why the work of the Council and partnership has led to address the cost of living pressures is important: [Help and support with money | Calderdale Council](#).

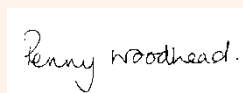
The voice of our children in Calderdale has been strong and listened to this year and we are fortunate to have our Young Advisers. They joined us at our development day and challenged us all to consider what more can we do to help children transition effectively.

We want every child in Calderdale to have hope and aspiration for the future, so the manifesto from young advisers gives us a clear mandate on what to focus on this coming year.

Finally, a huge thank you to each and every person in Calderdale working every day to keep our children safe from harm. None of this could be achieved without you and the amazing support we get from Julia Caldwell and the whole safeguarding partnership team.



**Julie Jenkins**  
Director of Children's Services  
Calderdale MBC



**Penny Woodhead**  
Director of Nursing and Quality- Calderdale & Kirklees West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board



**Michael Brown**  
Chief Superintendent  
Calderdale District Commander  
West Yorkshire Police

## 1. Calderdale

The population of Calderdale is 207,700. This includes 49,400 children, making up 24% of residents.

22.6% of children aged 0 to 15 in Calderdale live in poverty (compared to the England average of 19.8%), and in some areas rates are as high as 69.6%. 82.7% of Calderdale residents confirmed their ethnicity as “White – English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British” in Census 2021.

The three largest minority ethnic groups in Calderdale are “Pakistani or British Pakistani” (8.5% of residents), “Indian or British Indian” (0.9%), and “White: Irish” (0.8%). When looking at children - the school census in January 2024 shows that 24.9% of primary school pupils and 27.5% of secondary school pupils have a minority ethnic background.

The employment rate is 77.1%. 25.5% of children are eligible for free school meals with rates as high as 63.8% in some areas. 27,387 households claim either Universal Credit or Housing Benefit. 10,385 (38%) of these households include dependent children.

In 2023 60% of pupils achieved the Key stage 2 expected standard slightly higher than the England average of 59%. The number of children in care in Calderdale at 31st March 2023 was 79 per 10,000, higher than the England average of 71 per 10,000.

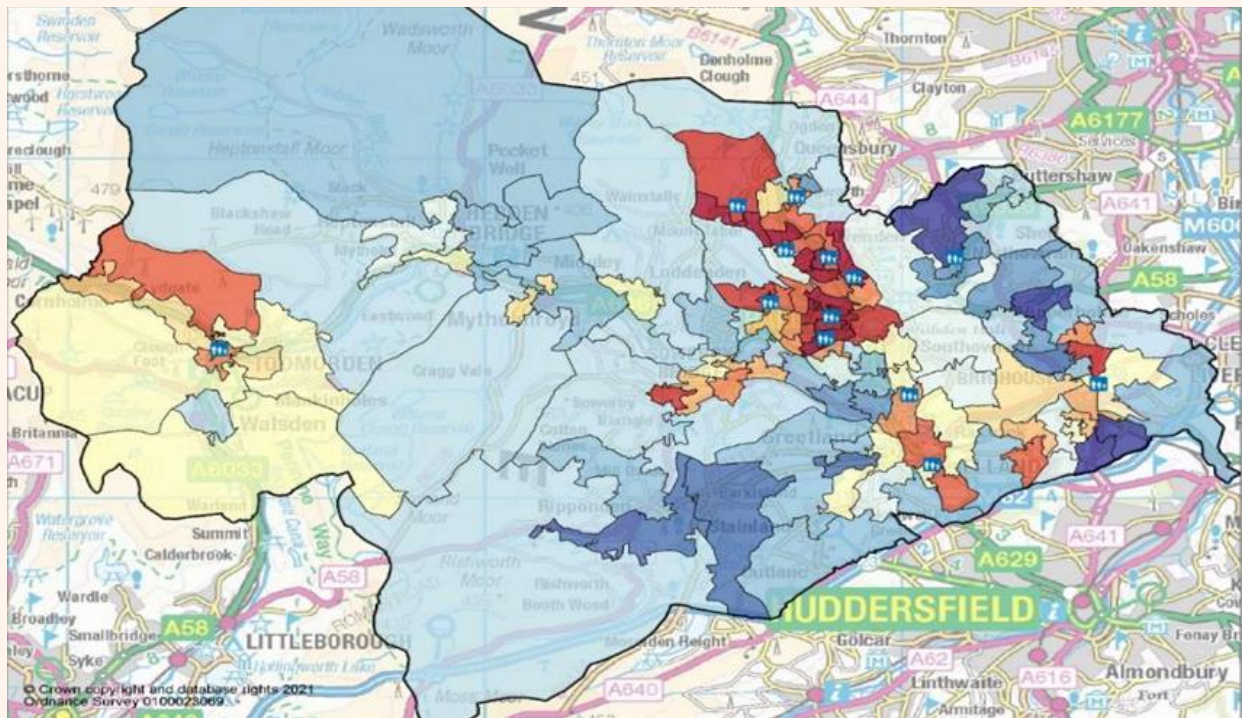


FIGURE 1 SHOWS THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE INDEX OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION (IMD) 2019 IN CALDERDALE. THE RED AND ORANGE COLOURS REPRESENT THE MOST DEPRIVED AREAS, THE BLUE REPRESENT THE LEAST AREAS OF DEPRIVATION.

## 2. CSCP Governance, Alignment and Accountability

### *The contribution of each safeguarding partner to the functioning and structure of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements*

The Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) has joined-up leadership and clear lines of accountability to coordinate and receive assurance about the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in Calderdale. Each statutory safeguarding partner plays an active role in these arrangements and discharges their statutory duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The three statutory safeguarding partners lead and co-chair the CSCP Executive. The CSCP reinforce how agencies, and their frontline professionals, are clear about their own and each other's roles and responsibilities and how they work together. Performance management, quality assurance and engagement with families and front-line practitioners provide evidence of the effectiveness of joint working arrangements, and help to initiate improvements across the journey of the child. High quality and thorough Reviews deliver and embed learning which is supported by Challenge Events to evidence impact.

The membership of the Executive is enhanced by representatives from the education and voluntary sector as is the wider subgroup structure (see appendix). The voice of young people is primarily represented through the CSCP Young Advisors – a team of young people who help to scrutinise and provide the voice of children and young people, to inform the CSCP priorities. Other methods of communication and engagement with children, families and communities are through individual agency engagements, safeguarding engagement networks, audit activity, and consultation surveys.

The CSCP secretariat holds responsibility for the management of both Children's Partnership and Safeguarding Adults Board's functionality and are the lead for the districts' Domestic Homicide Review workstreams. This strengthens joined up learning and accountability in Calderdale, to work more efficiently and effectively for the local community.

### 2.1 Financial Contributions

<b>Contribution</b>	<b>2023/24 Final Outturn Position</b>
ICB Contribution	£80,360*
Police Contribution	£14,630
CMBC Contribution (Childrens Budget)	£114,010
S31 Grant re Safeguarding Partnerships	£47,300
Other Contributions	£2,010
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£258,310</b>

\* £30,000 of ICB contributions have been spent on dedicated IDVA Work in the authority following savings made through the LSCP budget.



### 3. Changes following implementation of Working Together 2023

Calderdale multi-agency safeguarding arrangements largely remain unchanged following publication of Working Together 2023. The Calderdale SCP has had no Independent Chair since the shift from Local Safeguarding Children's Board to Partnership.

The Lead Safeguarding Partners are:

- Chief Executive Calderdale MBC, Robin Tuddenham
- Chief Constable West Yorkshire Police, John Robbins
- Chief Executive West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board, Rob Webster

The Delegated Safeguarding Partners are:

- Julie Jenkins, Director of Children's Services, CMBC
- Penny Woodhead, Director of Nursing and Quality, Calderdale and Kirklees WY ICB
- Mick Brown, District Commander of Calderdale District Police

There is evidence of how safeguarding partners are ensuring the adequate representation and input of education at both operational and strategic levels of the arrangements. The CSCP Executive includes Education representatives from Primary and Secondary Head Teacher networks, the Chair of Calderdale Governors Association, and the Vice Principal of the College. The wider structure of subgroups and workstreams has representation from Early Years, Alternative Provision, and more from school and education settings.

Representatives from schools, early years and alternative provisions participate in specific workstreams, such as Risk and Vulnerability in Adolescence subgroup and in audits. The Schools Safeguarding Advisor, the front door education representative, and the Vulnerable Learner Team link closely with the Safeguarding Partnership both through subgroup attendance and directly with the Safeguarding Partnerships Manager. This ensures alignment with CSCP messages through DSL networks and enables voices from the education sector to inform development of policy procedure, guidance or toolkit and in CSCP decision making.

The Safeguarding Partnerships Manager and Secretariat staff attend Early Years Networks to give updates, listen to themes from the sector, and to complete specific pieces of work such as the Organisational Safeguarding Assessment, or consult on new policy.

The voluntary and community sector is represented at the CSCP Executive by the CEO of the Domestic Abuse provider service and by the Delivery Manager of the Voluntary Sector Infrastructure Alliance in Calderdale. The wider subgroup structure includes partners from voluntary and community-based settings working with children, families, adults, and marginalised communities.

The CSCP will be seeking assurance that organisations have embedded changes to Working Together 2023 through the Organisational Safeguarding Assessment in the year 2024-2025.

#### 4. Independent Scrutiny & Assurance

Independent Scrutiny in Calderdale occurs at both strategic and operational levels. The partnership uses the [Independent Scrutiny and Assurance Framework](#) to seek assurance about the effectiveness of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements through a range of scrutiny methods. The Framework describes how data informs initial analysis, the quality assurance mechanisms dive deeper, the challenge and critical friendship corroborate or provide further areas to explore, the voice of children and families triangulate learning or provide further challenge, and independent scrutiny provides conclusions.

The three statutory partners actively lead, take responsibility for, and have a direct line of sight to front line practice, which is reinforced by not having a separate Independent Scrutineer or Chair who might replace some of this activity.

The three Delegated Safeguarding Partners and other Executive members are involved in Challenge Events for each statutory Review. This involves scrutinising front line practitioners and line managers about the changes, improvements, impact, or barriers and further learning following review. This is evidenced in more detail later in the report.

Similarly, at an operational level, the multi-agency audits undertaken by the partnership are challenged through follow up interviews and request for evidence by practice peers. This critical friendship provides reflection about the impact of any review or audit activity, and its effectiveness in improving outcomes for children.

A multi-agency dataset provides opportunities to monitor any impact on children and families. The dataset includes performance management information, with comparators, focussed on the current CSCP priorities. The data is shown over a 3–4 year time period and by quarter so that the multi-agency partners can scrutinise, question and understand how the partnership is making a difference to outcomes for children and what the impact of service interventions are. Each indicator has a ‘story behind the data’, which illustrates actions being taken to improve, reasons for changes in trends, and feedback from agencies to help the Partnership uncover and analyse impact in its fullest.

Executive and Subgroup members provide critical challenge and reflection and formally hold each other to account. Examples of this systemic challenge can be found in the Executive, where the Police Strategic Lead raised the issue of children having to be cared for in the police station, particularly on Friday evenings. In response, the Local Authority’s Children & Young People’s Service implemented a new pathway and employed an on-call Foster Carer for those specific situations.

Other examples of challenge and accountability have resulted in the Partnership undertaking Multi-Agency Reflective Practice Sessions, to unpick systemic disputes which have not been resolved, and negotiate how those situations could be better managed in future, with improved outcomes for children.

In addition, the CSCP commissions external Independent Scrutiny from experts in practice to inform assurance, and to determine whether the multi-agency working arrangements are improving outcomes for children and young people, and whether there are any areas for improvement.

This year, the Independent Scrutiny of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements will be further inspected by the wider partnership through face-to-face development sessions and written formal questions, giving wider partners the ability to feed in their thoughts around what the emerging risk is and what the CSCP should be focussing on, whether they think the CSCP has achieved what it set out to and whether there are better ways of getting improved outcomes for children and young people in Calderdale.

The Partnership has been interviewed and scrutinised with the MACS Evaluation (Multi-Agency Child Safeguarding) by Kings College London and the University of Bedfordshire. The aim of this evaluation is to provide evidence about what makes LSCPs effective and how well joint working arrangements improve outcomes for children.

The CSCP will also be seeking independent scrutiny from a safeguarding partnership specialist through both examination of this yearly report and follow up face to face meeting to explore how effectively the Calderdale Partnership operates in its duties. Reporting from both will feature in the 2024-2025 Yearly Report.

#### 4.1 Independent Scrutiny: Children Looked After placed in Calderdale from other areas

The Calderdale partners commissioned a piece of Independent Scrutiny through external experts, the NWG (National Working Group) to scrutinise the impact on children, services and communities of other areas placing children who are looked after (CLA) in Calderdale.

The CSCP was made aware of the high numbers of children placed in Calderdale by partners challenging at the CSCP Executive, and through performance management figures which showed a disproportionately higher number of children placed in Calderdale compared to other areas, and compared to Calderdale's own children who are looked after.

At the time of commissioning the work in 2023 there were 32 registered placement settings (28 private company providers) and 15 unregistered. Several of these placements offer specialist services e.g. harmful sexual behaviour, sexual trauma placements and dedicated homes for victims of child exploitation. Some issues highlighted by partners to be explored.

In an audit undertaken at the end of 2021, 80% of children who moved into Calderdale from another area have required/were due a further health assessment by the Calderdale CLA Health Team. 100% of cases required some input from the CLA health team. A Deeper Dive found in a 3-month period an average was for a looked after child from another area to access the GP 6.4 times and the Emergency Department 1.4 times.



For police, the demand and complexity of missing out of area children is significant. Real challenges with out of area children arriving in Calderdale without notice and no awareness of the risks for the children meant poor-quality missing reports being made where risks, family members and associates aren't known.

Often when challenged in strategy meetings, residential homes have said the risk was downplayed by the placing authority. This has resulted in occasions where immediate notice has been served on children in placements, resulting in police protective powers being used and children sleeping in the Police Station because the placing authority would not take responsibility.

We set a high level of expectation for child protection in Calderdale across the partnership. For missing children, we expect the completion of missing management plans, Philomena Protocol, and good communication with agencies. We expect placing authorities to set robust plans to prevent and respond to safety concerns, particularly for those who are most vulnerable, and who are at risk of criminal exploitation.

The terms of reference were for an independent expert to gain a deeper understanding of:

1. The issues facing CLA placed in Calderdale from other authorities
2. The current safeguards to protect the safety and wellbeing of those children
3. The response from Calderdale agencies to safeguard and promote wellbeing
4. The impact on services locally
5. The impact on Calderdale children, both who are looked after and who are not
6. Best practice which might be adopted in Calderdale to improve outcomes
7. What can be done to improve the negative impacts on local capacity and resource.
8. The impact of failing care homes and what the partnership can do about settings which may be failing but where there is no commissioning
9. What more could be done locally to improve multi-agency working
10. What may need to be raised nationally, which cannot be resolved locally.

The NWG met with, interviewed, and challenged Youth Services, Residential staff, Placements Manager, Missing Leads from local authority and police, early intervention workers, hospital staff, designated medical professionals, LADO, Social Care, Mental Health Services, outreach for 10-25 year olds, Education leads and school staff, and substance misuse services.

In addition, they observed the Calderdale 'Missing' Meeting, the 'Joint Missing Partnership Meeting', the 'Child Exploitation Operational Group' and the 'Matrix meeting'.

The NWG found real strengths in the multi-agency partnership in Calderdale such as:

- Ownership, care, and passion for the support of children placed in Calderdale
- Commitment to partnership working within Calderdale

- Notifications to other LAs when children are placed OOA
- Capacity/resource limitations not impacting on service delivery for Children
- Commitment to regional working within West Yorks - White Rose Framework
- Calderdale's commitment to implementing their 'Value'
- Missing from Care Framework pilot in Calderdale
- Willingness to include other areas in the multi-agency systems
- Openness to challenge and learning

There were key findings including:

- Although a lot of Care Homes attend the Joint Missing Partnership Meeting with effective partnership working, some don't, and attendance should be encouraged.
- Cross border working – needs to be more escalation to placing Local Authorities
- Exits from placements in Calderdale need to be planned better by placing authorities
- Notifications/information sharing from placing authorities not working well.
- Maximise opportunities arising from multi agency strategic meetings.
- Enhance collaborative decision making from partner agencies when 'approving' new care placements - to emphasise focus on spaces/places and perpetrator hot spots.
- Support offer isn't fully informed 'operating blind' so the placing authority needs to work with the local area to ensure the best outcomes for the child.
- Consider whether commissioning budgets are sufficient to meet needs.
- Further develop and strengthen the intersectionality and contextual response.
- Collection and use of data to inform strategic and operational responses

The NWG also found potential national implications to be considered. The CSCP will consider how this is raised nationally and will report in the 2024-2025 Yearly Report

- Inspection/scrutiny of compliance with statutory duty for notifications
- Planning process (reactive)
- Variations of safeguarding responsibilities amongst partner agencies
- 'Passports'/handover packages
- Consider opportunities to enhance effective cross border information sharing through commissioning agreements
- Consider 'SPOCS' to facilitate and support information sharing
- Consider whether 'admissions' policy fully supports safeguarding
- Consider national information sharing database to support cross border safeguarding

Good assurance was found through this independent scrutiny, and there are clear areas each partner is looking at addressing, to improve the lives of children who are looked after, and children in Calderdale. The CSCP will be receiving a formal report in the 2024-2025 year, to act locally and understand how any national considerations can be raised.

#### 4.2 Independent Scrutiny through Quality Assurance

The Calderdale Quality Assurance Subgroup helps to monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding services in Calderdale: Audits examine individual cases and provide evidence of good practice and areas for further scrutiny or improvement, and surveys of staff and service users provide triangulation and further evidence of the effectiveness of multi-agency working.

The aim of the subgroup is to facilitate high quality, multi-agency scrutiny and challenge, to reflect on findings and learning and to make recommendations for improvement.

In 2023-2024, the following Quality Assurance activity was carried out:

- Exclusions audit
- Elected Home Education audit and survey of young people and parents
- Front Door audit
- Risk and Vulnerability in Adolescence and Serious Youth Violence audit and survey
- Domestic Abuse Multi-Agency audit
- Safeguarding Supervision survey
- Self-assessment and assurance about children who have special educational needs or disabilities who are placed in residential care

The multi-agency group regularly receive audit activity from the Local Authority Children & Young People's Service and highlight good practice, note areas for improvement, provide opportunities for partners to challenge and track improvements.

The group collated a multi-agency report on the impact of poverty and cost of living crisis on safeguarding. The impacts from services across Calderdale were presented to the Strategic Anti-Poverty group in May 2023. As a result of this paper, each audit going forward would consider the impact of IMD, social inequalities and cost living.

In May 2023, capacity issues were highlighted to be of concern from front line practitioners, however there was also assurance given by the same practitioners that there was still good multi-agency engagement with partners in spite of the increased demand for services.

The group provided challenge on whether there was sufficient independent scrutiny and assurance of the front door, and agreed to undertake 4 Multi-Agency audits a year.

It was identified in 23/24 that there was a lack of evidence of progress following audit recommendations and actions, therefore progress events will be held following all multi-agency audit activity, to check on the 'So What' following audit. The first of which is reported here on the Exclusions Audit.

#### 4.3 Impact of CSCP Quality Assurance – Children Excluded from Schools

Following the Performance Management group raising the concern that the numbers of children being excluded from school was rising, a multi-agency audit was completed in May

2023 which found learning and improvements for CSCP partners. Less than a year later, a Challenge Event was held to scrutinise how they'd responded to the findings of this audit. The Challenge Event provided assurance about the following improvements and impact:

- The pathway for [Working with Non Engaged Families](#) was updated following the finding that the majority of families who had children excluded from schools had not engaged with early intervention services offered to them.
- The [Was Not Brought](#) Safeguard Guide was relaunched after the audit showed the number of children who had not attended appointments and were then removed from services.
- Performance Management Data for 'Was Not Brought' was collected to show the numbers of children not being brought to health appointments and the actions taken to follow up.
- A [Guide to Writing Multi-Agency Chronologies](#) was written to support practitioners with evidencing trauma, interventions, the need for services and identifying what support might be needed for pupils at risk of exclusion.
- The Vulnerable Learners Team offered training for school staff to better deal with complex and challenging behaviours. An Independent Consultant was brought into the Secondary Heads conference who presented on how to reduce exclusions, as well as trauma informed practice.
- Data is shared about the highest excluders, and the Exclusions Officer proactively attempts to reduce the numbers of exclusions with these schools through helping them to access Early Help support, and developing new alternative provision.
- The Special Educational Needs Team have stepped up to offer support schools for children with SEN. The Vulnerable Learners Team have also invited schools to express interest in running their own Alternative Provision facility, supporting pupils, and preventing them being excluded. They have invited primary schools to offer nurture units/provision with specialist teachers to support children. Other schools could then refer children to this provision too. This would support integration back into mainstream schools, giving the pupils coping strategies.
- One Academy now offers various pathways for their young people e.g. Year 7s coming from Pupil Referral Unit are put onto an 'Engage' programme, rather than straight into mainstream class, to help them settle back into mainstream education. There is lots of other interventions for Key Stage 3 too - the Head Teachers have been encouraged to share this positive learning with other schools and how this can be regulated for those children who cannot sit in a classroom full time.
- The Education and Inclusion Team produced a 'Multi-Agency Directory' to schools with links and guidance of where to look for support and alternative options prior to exclusions. This directory is great, but can become out of date so a digital portal is being considered. In addition, the Violence Reduction Partnership are looking at a West Yorkshire directory of services for schools. Calderdale have shared their version

with VRP. This WY version will give schools an even wider option and will be particularly useful for children who live and attend across borders.

- There was a further recognition that Post COVID, and with the cost-of-living crisis; mental, social, and emotional health needs have increased and increased in complexity. The Exclusions Officer has further supported, handheld and assisted individual pupils as well as schools.
- The Assistant Director has spoken to the Department for Education and Ofsted colleagues about the lack of opportunity for challenge by the Local Authority, particularly around the government policy that schools can refuse pupils who have been double excluded for two years. He has challenged Ofsted and inquired when they're going to look at exclusions as part of their inspection framework.
- The Exclusions Officer has trained Governors on what questions they should be asking when reviewing an exclusion application and what they should expect in terms of information provided from school around reasons for exclusion. Training also provided on what happens at panels, how to reinstate children into mainstream school, and how to conduct independent review panels. SENDIASS also offer governor training around children with SEN in Calderdale.
- Early Help Services in the Local Authority have put two dedicated officers in schools to bring early help pathways for those families with children at risk of exclusion. They are not just relying on schools referring, they are looking at the risks for the children, what's impacting on that child not attending schools.
- The Early Help Services conducted an audit in January 2024 to check whether education was a focus in Child in Need cases. The audit found positive results that education was a focus and as always areas to improve on in practice.
- A new dedicated post will be employed to focus on reducing exclusions of pupils who are a Child In Need, on a Child Protection Plan or who are Looked After.
- The audit recognised that multiple school moves can be an indicator that a pupil might be at risk of exclusion, the Exclusions officer in response to this reported this data to all secondary schools who have responded well with different approaches to transition and appropriate SEN support.
- An Early Help Pathway worker now attends schools every month to help identify and support pupils at risk of exclusion. More pupils are now on early help pathways from school referrals.
- The DfE guidance was updated which was expected to support more holistic assessments in schools before children are excluded, but this guidance was in favour of the exclusion route, which meant the trend of exclusions continues to rise.

#### 4.4 Impact of CSCP Quality Assurance – Children who are Electively Home Educated

CSPC performance management has seen an increase in the number of children and young people becoming Electively Home Educated (EHE) in Calderdale over recent years. A total of 441 Children were EHE in November 2023, compared to a total of 342 in November 2022.

The CSCP partners highlighted the unknown risks to those children who are not seen in mainstream education where there had previously been safeguarding concerns. The audit was biased and included ONLY those children who had safeguarding referrals to Children's Social Care previously. The CSCP considered and found assurance about the following:

Children are clearly identified as EHE or Children Missing from Education (CME), and safeguarding partners receive regular data about the numbers, characteristics and issues of concern about children who are being EHE or missing education.

It was not clear whether children's voices, needs and perspectives have been considered in the decision by the parent/carer to home educate them. The CSCP tried to seek the perspectives from both the parents and children, but no response was gained.

The audit found that roles and responsibilities in relation to EHE are understood by statutory agencies, and they know what to do if they are concerned that children who are EHE may be at risk of harm and may be being deliberately hidden from the sight of statutory agencies. There was good evidence of the Vulnerable Learners Team supporting families directly, making good use of voluntary and community support to engage with parents, and good evidence of multi-agency working from Youth Justice, Police, Social Care, Early Help, Substance Misuse, the Prevent Team and the Child Exploitation Team. The role and contribution of different health professionals is well understood, and they have a good understanding of EHE.

Children's vulnerabilities and safeguarding needs are understood at the point of being removed from school rolls, including if there have been concerns about not being brought to health appointments. 'Was Not Brought' guidance has been disseminated and 'Was Not Brought' data is scrutinised regularly by the Performance Management Group to ascertain if professionals are acting appropriately when children do not turn up to appointments.

There were suitable multi-agency plans in place for children for safeguarding, however for non-statutory interventions there was a recognised difficulty in engaging with some families and therefore the ['Pathway for Working with Non-Engaged Families'](#) was re-written.

Particular attention was given to children where there have been previous safeguarding concerns. There was good evidence that the EHE Officer was notified of safeguarding concerns.

The multi-agency audit team were concerned about the schools inability to 'persuade' families to keep their children in mainstream school due to legislation that they must off-roll pupils as soon as parents have stated their intention to EHE – this is a national issue.



#### 4.5 Independent Scrutiny: Serious Youth Violence

A Self Assessment from all partners within the scope of the Joint Targeted Area Inspection on Serious Youth Violence (SYV) was completed for Calderdale. Partners reviewed their position and approach to Serious Youth Violence. They provided relevant evidence and good practice which highlighted where there were any gaps or where pieces of work needed to be completed.

There was constructive sharing amongst partners, relationships were strengthened with Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP), the Violent Crime and Safer Streets Group, and the VRP Business Delivery Groups to look at strategies and programmes tackling Serious Youth Violence in Calderdale and wider West Yorkshire.

Positive training has been available for partners in Calderdale including Safeguarding Vulnerable Young People in partnership with Halifax Panthers looking at Violence Against Women and Girls, Gangs and County Lines, Critical Perspectives and Responses to Knife Crime.

An audit looking at children involved in Serious Youth Violence has been arranged for May 2024 which will look at children within the scope of Risk and Vulnerability. An audit tool was created in consultation with Youth Justice Service and Child Exploitation team to try and focus practitioners on asking questions about the young people they support.

There will also be a questionnaire sent to children and young people to gather their views on risk and violence in their community too. Consultation has taken place with the Speech & Language Team within the YJS to look at how this questionnaire can be accessible to children who may have speech and language needs.

The scrutiny found that if there were to be cuts in funding to the YJS, it would be detrimental in reducing the early intervention impact that the YJS in working with vulnerable children involved in violence. It also noted that long waiting times for vulnerable children waiting for neurodivergent assessments could potentially put children at further risk. The final element noted and fed to the risk and vulnerability in adolescence group was that there was inconsistency of schools reporting to the police, which might affect outcomes for vulnerable children – some schools reported all incidents, and some did not due to fear of criminalising the children.

#### 4.6 Independent Scrutiny: Front Door

This is ongoing independent quality assurance through critical self-assessment and audit to scrutinise the front door arrangements from a multi-agency perspective. The front door arrangements in Calderdale are the Multi-Agency Screening Team (MAST).

A critical Self-Assessment from all the partners was created in 2022 and has been regularly updated and challenged by the multi-agency partnership. Some challenge comes from within the same agency, which is excellent practice and shows the Partnership how open and honest services are in self-assessing and driving improvements.

Relevant evidence and good practice is collated from each partner. This self-assessment, the evidence, and the noted areas for improvement are reported through to the CSCP Executive to be further examined and to note actions underway to improve.

Healthy challenge is further encouraged during regular multi-agency audits. Some challenges in 2022-2023 have resulted in escalation up to the Executive, where they have been resolved and agreement achieved, resulting in stronger partnership working. Since the initial challenges the auditors arrive at multi-agency audits having already critically assessed their own cases, and with actions having already been undertaken prior even to the audit.

We have analysed learning from other local authorities who have experienced a Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) on the multi-agency response to identification of initial need and risk. Focus areas highlighted in JTAI reports have been embedded in audit questions for Calderdale.

A schedule of audit activity continues to scrutinise the multi-agency working of the MAST. Each audit has a different focus e.g. SEND, Domestic Abuse, intrafamilial sexual abuse etc. Some of the findings and impact of the independent scrutiny on the front door include:

The audit exposed a challenge in that SEN children, specifically SEND E and SEND K were not clearly identifiable/flagged when referred through to MAST. Performance Officers are looking into this and considering ways to support MAST in recognising if children referred have SEND. This will be picked up outside the audit.

Voice of the child, consent and the use of School computer systems and links have all be noted as positive throughout the audits. The tenacity of social workers has been noted in advocating the need of a Child in Need (CIN) plan and working with parents to access the right support for the child. It has also been noted that the Neglect Toolkit was used within case work.

There was learning about the screening process involving all the correct practitioners which was fed back for both the individual cases and systemically. A refinement of the process for involving the health colleagues was also recognised as needing improving and immediate agreement and confirmation was sent out. Multi-agency front door audits continue to be held bi-monthly.

## 4.7 Independent Scrutiny: Other Quality Assurance Audits and Analysis

### Domestic Abuse Multi-Agency audit

In January 2024, a multi-agency audit of domestic abuse practice was conducted. It should be noted that during the audit conducted in January, agencies immediately identified practice issues for follow up in their services and these have already been acted on. There was lots of assurance and good practice found in representation at multi-agency meetings, and robust processes. There was a collaborative approach with examples of persistence and commitment to victims and their families.

There was evidence of sensitive practice with victims, responding to their holistic needs and good examples of the voice of the child in police, children's social care, school nursing and health visiting teams and from the specialise domestic abuse provider. Examples of dynamic response to risk was found, with services responding quickly to new information shared at meetings, reviewing risk, and agreeing new plans and courses of action. Despite intense pressures on services and high demand levels, the audit provided good examples of services working well together to maintain quality services.

There were some inconsistencies in practice which were mapped in an action plan and included clarity of process when signing off minutes, and appropriate actions being assigned. There were also queries raised about taking historical information into account, the clarification in language of the type and frequency of abuse, information known about perpetrators, and a systemic issue about combining Strategy Meetings, which will be led by the Partnership to clarify best practice. The Safeguarding Partnerships Manager works closely with the Calderdale Domestic Abuse Lead to include learning from this and other Reviews into the Calderdale Domestic Abuse Improvement Action Plan.

### Safeguarding Supervision survey

This is the third multi-agency audit on Safeguarding Supervision, previously conducted in 2019, and 2021. An online survey looked at how well the Safeguarding Supervision Framework was embedded, used and how practitioners are being supported through reflective supervision.

A total of 149 responses were received from across both multi-agency safeguarding partnerships, with approximately half from practitioners and half from managers who work with Children and/or Adults at risk in Calderdale. Professionals from statutory, voluntary and community sector responded.

Only just over half of the respondents had heard of the [Calderdale Safeguarding Supervision Framework](#) but of these 99% said the framework was useful and used. 64% of respondents said they received supervision in their role, and 11% said they were not sure. 85% said their supervision provided reflective practice and only 1 person rated their supervisions as poor.

Some good examples of how effective supervision had impacted on staff were: “not letting things drift, capturing discussion, key learning points and sharing those with relevant staff”, “Shared knowledge, learning from Serious Case reviews, being heard, having the opportunity to discuss worries”, “Discussing things helps to ensure we are working together and working well to safeguard children and families”, “All cases are discussed and risks are considered as well as Multi agency meetings e.g. MARAC”. Many more examples were given.

Most respondents said safeguarding supervision considered the impact of lived experiences for the child and how this relates to the outcomes of assessments and interventions.

Since this audit, the CSCP has re-promoted training which includes supervision training and the uptake has increased from 45 last year to 107 this year, as well as 24 attending an additional session ‘Contemporary Research on Supervision’ by Professor David Shemmings.

#### Assurance about children who have special educational needs or disabilities who are placed in residential care

Following the National Hesley Group report, the Calderdale Partnership formally sought assurance about the systems, processes, safety, and wellbeing of CLA in residential care. Assurance about the joint planning and work of the Local authority and Integrated Care Board services was given, the suitability and quality of placements, the role and oversight of the Independent Reviewing Officers, and evidence of the voice of the child and family.

The Local Authority also completed a comprehensive review of LADO records and regulation 44 reports of its one residential school with specialist provision in the Borough spanning the period 2019-2022. Where contact has been made with LADO, it has been found that safeguarding is central to the decision making and the threshold for service has been appropriately applied. There are no concerns identified in the Reg 44 reports.

In addition, a new full-time Designated Clinical Officer for Children with complex needs has been recruited. This role is joint post between LA and health and aims to align strategic context and strengthen and ensure we have a fully integrated quality assurance framework.

#### Child Exploitation

Following Independent Scrutiny of the effectiveness of Child Exploitation arrangements in the previous year, the CSCP challenged the team to understand if changes to practice had been made, and to ascertain any impact on practice or people.

The Child Exploitation Team evidenced through observation of practice that the meetings are now more effectively prepared for and managed; the right information is disseminated prior to meetings to enable attendees to understand what risks are going to be discussed and to prepare their single agency input.

More proactive consideration is taking place which includes lead professional clarity, ways to achieve best outcomes, and holistic planning.

There still appeared to be some drift in the amount of time taken to complete Child Exploitation Assessments fully – this capacity issue is being addressed as is the voice of the child throughout the process. Each child now has a CVET (Child Vulnerability and Exploitation Team) lead from the Police, and the Missing coordinator now attends Matrix meetings, but this too needs to be embedded as is sometimes varying due to capacity.

#### 4.8 Independent Scrutiny: Performance Management

The Performance Management Report gathers data and “the story behind the data” for scrutiny and assurance. The group shares challenges, escalates declining trends and good practice to the CSCP Executive. The aim of the subgroup is to facilitate high quality, multi-agency scrutiny, assurance, and challenge, and to reflect on findings, initiate actions or resolutions, and promote learning.

There is transparent challenge in the scrutiny of this data, some findings result in Audits being carried out for further scrutiny or improvement and they provide further evidence of the effectiveness of multi-agency practice. The dataset links to the following areas of the CSCP Business Plan:

#### Links between Safeguarding and social inequalities/poverty

During 2023/24 we continued to capture Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) data in the Performance Management Sub Group (PMSG). Disproportionality data was collated and reported to the CSCP. This showed a strong link between poverty and safeguarding issues, which was the hypothesis before we gathered the data.

The Early Help, Child in Need, and Child Protection data was found to be disproportionately higher in the most deprived areas than in the general population.

Currently, the Permanent Exclusions data has no IMD, but this will be provided by the Vulnerable Children team in 2024/25.

#### Contextual Safeguarding / Risk and Vulnerability in Adolescence

The following indicators are collected to inform and explain the local need and risk of harm outside the home for young people. We reviewed the dataset throughout the year too, to establish if we were collecting the right data, whether there was any missing, and to assess how the data capture was informing our partnership working. Some new data captured included:

The indicator for **School Exclusions and Suspensions** has new data to capture the Number of Suspensions, Number of Pupils suspended and Excluded Pupils notifications. Capturing this data has improved knowledge and allowed more work to be done with schools by the Education Welfare service during 2023/24.

The indicator for **Elective Home Education** now gathers the number of children with SEND and the proportion that have an EHC Plan. This has allowed a better partnership understanding of the situation. Lots of work has been done by Exclusions & Reintegration, in the Education Welfare service, to improve the relationship of parents and schools with an aim to reduce the number of children who move to EHE.

A new indicator that gathers the **BLOSM** (Bridging the Gap Leading a Change in Culture Overcoming Adversity Supporting Vulnerable People Motivating Independence & Confidence) (data from the Calderdale & Huddersfield Foundation Trust) showed a high number of engagements following young people attending the Emergency Department which is a good news story and shows young people are getting the interventions they may need following crisis. This data provides information about young people up to the age of 25. IMD data shows a higher number of engagements for young people from the most deprived areas.

In Child Protection level data, Police data captured new data for the indicator for **Violent crimes where a child is a victim. For Knife Crime**, the data now shows whether there was an injury or not. This new data has allowed a better understanding of the violent crimes and knife crimes happening to young people but was not raised as any significant levels or increases in Calderdale.

The indicator gathering **Children Missing from sight** data now includes data from Regulated and Unregulated Care Homes.

During the year, there were indicators which were escalated to the strategic level for their awareness in this area. **School Exclusions and Suspensions** and the **Elective Home Education** were escalated and consequently audited – the results of which can be found in this report.

#### *Assurance of the effectiveness of safeguarding services in Calderdale*

In 2023/24, the Dataset Review allowed some simplification of data collation and analysis, and collection of more information on outcomes by the questions asked for the ‘story behind the data’ in the Performance Management Report. The understanding of impact and outcomes was more of a focus in 2023/24.

Where possible in 2023/24 data has included personalised characteristics which highlighted any concerning trends, with IMD and Ethnic Group being 2 key areas, but gender and age have also been gathered. Gathering this type of information will continue to be monitored going forwards and continue to inform CSCP priorities as outlined above.

Many of the 21 indicators in the data continued to provide positive assurance about multi-agency safeguarding working in Calderdale. Challenge has continued to be one of the helpful aspects of the participation and responses to challenge of the safeguarding data continued to be answered and resolved. The co-operative work between the Performance Management and Quality Assurance sub groups evidences impact of scrutiny and challenge.



## 5. Voice and Engagement

*Ways in which the safeguarding partners have sought and utilised feedback from children and families to inform their work and influence service provision*

### 5.1 Young Advisors – Engagement with Children and Young People

The Young Advisors are a group of young people employed by the Partnership to scrutinise how well we safeguard children and young people; to ascertain views on what is important to young people; to seek feedback about how the partners make a difference to children; to influence service delivery.

#### **Recruitment**

At the beginning of 2024 a recruitment campaign commenced to increase the size of the group. The Young Advisors led on the recruitment campaign, and distributed it across schools, social media, and youth groups. Four new members were recruited and the group currently consists of 9 members ranging from different schools, aged 13 – 17.

#### **Challenge from Young Advisors**

The Young Advisors devised a set of challenge questions for the Joint Safeguarding Partnerships development day in November 2023. A member of the group attended the event to ask services the following questions:

1. What do you think you are doing really well with Safeguarding Young People?
2. What do you think you could do better at?
3. Where are you improving, and how will this improve things for young people?
4. How do you monitor the improvements you have made?
5. How do you gather voice of young people, and how have you used it to improve services?

#### *What do we do well in Safeguarding Children & Young People?*

- We have dedicated services
- We work well with other agencies
- We have passionate and committed staff who try their best for children and families
- Good communication / partnership work / multi agency for established staff
- Children and Young People system working effectively
- Strengthened Front Door to Childrens Social Care including Early Help
- Two new Education workers
- Ofsted inspection in May was positive
- Intervening early – even if threshold not met
- Timely decision making
- Information sharing
- Lived experience and capturing voice of child
- We're a small authority so we know our children well
- We are able to challenge each other and still have a positive working relationship

- CPOMS (school IT system) is used in Social Care, and every school uses it so there is easier information sharing to ensure a more seamless service for children

#### What can we do better?

- Address “burn out” of staff and employees & support new staff better
- Expand experience, share knowledge and experience - better staff retention
- Shift focus back to face to face (work + training), or use more effective hybrid options
- More voluntary organisations to do Organisational Safeguarding Assessment reporting
- Pressure around recruitment + retention (Early Years and Children’s Centres)
- ‘Quality Mark’ ensuring quality of safeguarding training is verified – for private providers
- Transitions from childhood to adulthood
- Integrate the voice of child into decision making
- Contingency planning
- Ensuring children who are home education are safe and developing well
- Managing complex needs and more targeted prevention
- Cultural Change – shift from ‘what we can’t do’ – approach to ‘what can we do’

#### Where are we already improving and how will this improve things for young people?

- Recognition of need for retention and planning to become more trauma informed
- Embedding learning from Reviews to improve services
- Working on Single Point of Contact with Open Minds to improve system for families
- Recognise mental health of staff e.g. introducing ‘Take 10’ for staff, to support resilience and recognise pressures in order that staff can better support young people
- More Early Help Pathways mean less interventions at crisis point for children
- Introduction of Outcome Star to evidence the impact for children and families

#### How do you monitor the improvements you have made?

- Case file audits
- Ofsted, CQC, HMICFRS, JTAI inspections
- Performance reporting
- CSCP subgroups
- Monitoring resources
- Review processes
- Need to develop feedback mechanisms for YP – exploring the use of safe social media

#### How do you gather the voice of young people, and how have you used it to improve services?

- Child focus in interventions and record keeping evidenced through audit
- Intervention is driven by individual need for tailored approach
- ‘Young Commissioners’ within Commissioning team
- Asking the ‘so what’
- Independent Advisory Group (IAG) to include Young Advisers
- YP involved in Corporate Parenting Board influences service delivery
- Locala (Health) – systems capture child’s voice for better individual interventions

This feedback will be examined further at the subsequent CSCP development Day in 2024.

## 5.2 Young Advisor report on 'Healthy Relationships'

The Young Advisors conducted a survey with children and young people in Calderdale on the topic of 'Healthy Relationships'. They aimed to find out what young people know about healthy family, friendship, peer, and romantic relationships, and to use results of the survey to recommend how services can support young people to have healthier relationships.

A total of 347 responses were received from a range of mainstream schools and colleges, as well as alternative provision including being educated at home, and some young people who are not in education, or training (NEET).

### *Summary of Key Findings:*

- Children and Young People had received less information or education on healthy family relationships, and more likely to have received information or education on healthy romantic relationships. However, they felt there was less resources available for healthy romantic relations than family or friend relationships.
- Education on healthy relationships appears to have been provided in secondary school, with some lack of knowledge and education for college aged pupils – potentially due to the Covid-19 pandemic resulting in a lack of education on this topic during their high school years.
- Education on healthy relationships should be given to all young people, regardless of their gender identity and sexuality. Education on romantic relationships should try to be diverse, and not just be based on heterosexual relationships.
- Most young people gave examples of a healthy family relationships and friendships in their life. Some young people had not yet experienced a romantic relationship.
- Most had somebody to turn to for support if their relationships were going so well, but some did not have anyone they could turn to for support. And not all young people knew what support was available to them around healthy relationships.
- Social media and through lessons and assemblies in school and college was their preferred method of receiving information about healthy relationships.

Suggestions for improving support and resources on **Healthy Family Healthy Friendships, Romantic Relationships** included:

- More early intervention - intervene earlier to stop unhealthy relationship from forming, or intervene when they are in an unhealthy relationship
- More help from services to support families to stay together
- Better access or knowledge of food banks and free school meals
- More services that help the whole family rather than individual members
- More 1 on 1 support
- More help services in smaller places in Calderdale – this means they think the support needs to be more distributed across Calderdale.
- More advice available on what to do in an abusive situation or relationship
- More assemblies and support around family abuse in school
- Hosting a group session would be the best way to help young people learn about healthy peer relationships - include going into youth clubs
- Online websites
- To be able to talk to a professional/member of staff who listens, and not interrupt

- Schools check up on students in order to make sure they are ok rather than the student having to seek out help.
- More information, more helplines, more posters and more lessons to be based around healthy relationships.
- More input from people in the age groups that the content is targeted to - see more collaboration to take place between young people and services in order to get help and information that is relevant for the age groups problems.
- Relationship Therapy
- Anonymous Support
- Young people would like advice and support from other young people who have been through experience.
- Better access to age-appropriate books on healthy relationships that target younger could support children and young people to have better relationships.

### Recommendations

- Services to consider creating a joint directory of support to highlight where young people could go for support with any relationship struggles.
- High schools to improve their school websites and include information on where pupils can get support for Healthier Relationships.
- Schools to do more lessons and assemblies on what healthy and unhealthy relationship are, including family relationship, friendships and romantic relationships – Consider using [A positive force in education | Pol-Ed - A positive force in education](#) and [Connect \(ceopeducation.co.uk\)](#)
- Young Advisors to produce an educational poster to promote Healthy Relationships and distribute to buildings where young people spend the most time.
- Young Advisors to share key findings and recommendations in a social media style reel for young people in Calderdale.
- For future surveys, the Young Advisors need to ask about gender and about any learning difficulties/ disabilities/ SEND as well as all other demographic information. They need to ensure to include all schools, including SEND special schools.

At the next challenge event the Young Advisors will ask how services have acted on these recommendations.



### 5.3 Engagement across the Wider Partnership

The Safeguarding Engagement Subgroup is a new subgroup, joint with the Calderdale Safeguarding Adults Board (CSAB), aiming to undertake the following:

- 1) Facilitate methods for children, young people, families, adults, and residents to help to influence, improve and develop safeguarding services in Calderdale.
- 2) To seek views / feedback / thematic complaints & compliments / thematic trends from children, families, and adults in Calderdale, to hear their lived experience. The group will discuss how these will influence CSCP/ CSAB, services or practice.
- 3) To develop and deliver effective engagement with services users, professionals and third party/ voluntary sector and local communities to increase knowledge around support services on offer, and how people, families and communities can be involved in helping safeguarding be 'everyone's business'.
- 4) Communicate key messages from CSCP and CSAB out to communities, agencies and front-line workers.

The group agreed a new terms of reference and established a wide range of members to attend this subgroup to try and cover all voice across Calderdale. It is a great opportunity for networking of information and insight. The membership is wider than usual subgroups and many of those attending aren't represented in other SAB or CSCP subgroups or workstreams, so the feedback from participants was that it was very useful to know what was happening locally around safeguarding, what the priorities were, and how they might contribute to it.

The group is an opportunity for partners to share themes and trends of voice from the people using their services, as well as from Front Line Practitioners

The group members identified what organisations and services are already doing to capture and listen to the voice of the people of Calderdale. This provided the CSAB and CSCP with assurance and any gaps and areas for improvement.

The CSCP (and Safeguarding Adults Board) are currently working on number of Toolkits which will help organisations who may not deal regularly with safeguarding issues, such as Faith settings, voluntary sector services and sports organisations. There will be a variety of supportive formats including glossy guidance, online support and West Yorkshire-wide resource. In addition, the Partnership has successfully set up Safeguarding Briefings with the Sports sector which run bi-annually.

In September 2023 we started using the SWAY Newsletter to communicate our Safeguarding Partnerships news. These are all uploaded onto the CSCP Website: [Safeguarding Partnerships Newsletters – Safeguarding Calderdale](#)

## 6. Independent Scrutiny: Child Safeguarding Practice Review

### 6.1 Calderdale Safeguarding Practice Review Subgroup

The CSPR subgroup holds the role of being a multi-agency senior manager level quality assurance mechanism for every review and local learning that takes place.

The CSCP concluded the Baby S Child Safeguarding Practice Review about a very young baby who suffered significant harm Calderdale in 2022 from suspected non-accidental injuries.

The action plan resulting from the recommendations in this report is complete and included:

- Learning from the [Myth of Invisible Men](#) to be considered by each organisation and its impact on practice & multi-agency working [Hidden-Men](#). Assessments must consider all the people significant in the child's life.
- Development and improvement of communication and integration between child services and adult services needs to include response to parental mental ill-health and substance misuse and parenting assessments.
- Think Family agenda recognises and promotes the importance of a whole family approach, built on the principles of "Reaching out: think Family" [Think Family SCIE guide](#)
- The ICON (I can cope with crying – prevention of shaken babies) roll out to health partners to be audited to understand how well embedded this is. ICON to be further enhanced by wider dissemination to all multi-agencies across the partnership [ICON](#)
- West Yorkshire Consortium Inter Agency Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures has included a chapter on [engaging with fathers, male partners or carers and other significant adults](#)

In July 2023 the CSCP held an extraordinary meeting to conduct a review of all recent CSPR's including Baby S, which have taken place in Calderdale over the last 4 years, including a review of the recommendations, themes, and learning compared to national findings. The themes included information sharing between mental health and Childrens Social Care, work around Hidden Men and others and Domestic Abuse featuring heavily.

There was much assurance given with evidence of good practice in response to the learning from these reviews, in particular changes to policy, practice, training and awareness. The multi-agency partnership recognised the best practice and improvement already made to services in Calderdale and how this was impacting on families in Calderdale. There was also a recognition that there were still areas which needed further scrutiny and improvement.

The CSPR Panel produced an assurance document which incorporated recommendations from both the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and the Tri-ministerial letters in relation to the National panel's report into the tragic deaths of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson and independent review of children's social care compared to our local findings and improvements.

A multi-agency reflective session (MARPS) was undertaken in relation to a challenging case in Calderdale involving a number of different organisations to identify any learning with regards to single and multi-agency working, with the aim of enhancing practice and



improving outcomes for Children and Young People with complex mental health and additional needs.

Learning resulting in 19 recommendations including:

- Use of a [Multi-Agency Chronology](#) in complex cases may have a strong impact on understanding, assessments, decision making and potentially outcomes.
- If [thresholds](#) not met, there still needs to be expert advice, guidance and intervention from that agency.
- [Escalation & flex](#): Senior managers need to reflect in rare cases of this kind what services can be flexed and shaped around the child and family in order that a child's safety and wellbeing can remain of paramount importance.
- **Lack of process and Navigation** - there are complexities around which part of the health system can offer which element of support and there wasn't clarity about who could co-ordinate this support - a new process and [flowchart](#) was developed between CAMHS, social care and the hospital.

These recommendations are being considered by each organisation and how they can address these in practice. Challenge Events will be planned as per the Calderdale Progress Review process.

### **Any impact or change to practice as a result of your activity**

ICON – the evidence based programme consisting of touchpoint interventions that reinforcing the simple message of the ICON Mnemonic was relaunched.

- Infant crying is normal, and it will stop.
- Comfort methods will sometimes help.
- Ok to walk away if the baby is safe.
- Never ever shake or hurt a baby

An audit is currently underway amongst health services to review how this has been embedded in practice and what the impact this evidence-based programme is having in Calderdale.

One of the recommendations to a CSPR conducted in Calderdale resulted in a Task and Finish group being arranged to consider a Think Family approach across Calderdale. This group considered

- \*Think Family approaches in other areas
- \*What we already do in Calderdale (MEAM, Systemic Practice, EH Pathway)
- \*What other priorities we have for improving practice (e.g. Risk and / Domestic Abuse / Transition etc)

This work is ongoing and will be reported on in next years' report.

## 7 Scrutiny through the Organisational Safeguarding Assessment

The Organisational Safeguarding Assessment provides evidence that partners are fulfilling their statutory duties and helps agencies to self-reflect about the improvements they can make to practice.

In 2023-2024, the Organisational Safeguarding Assessment (OSA) was a West Yorkshire-wide online tool which covered the requirements under Section 11 of the Children's Act 2004. The process in Calderdale also includes peer review, challenge, support and generates actions and learning for improvement.

The OSA has 9 sections, containing 38 questions about Safeguarding which over 250 children's and adult services in Calderdale (including some which span a wider footprint) provided self-assessment and evidence against these standards. Positively, the breakdown from respondent's self-assessments show that 88% of the questions were rated as Green, 5% Amber and 1% Red.

Themes reflecting good practices were evident in the submissions, highlighting:

- Good Senior / Strategic Safeguarding representation
- Effective incorporation of children's voices
- A comprehensive, holistic approach to safeguarding
- Successful Multi Agency Partnership working driven by robust procedures and policies, quality training, information sharing and a commitment to diversity, inclusivity and equality. (See Appendix for list of changes to Procedures)
- Adherence to statutory guidance for both volunteers and staff.

Areas identified for ongoing attention and development in the submitted evidence included:

- Continuous need to keep skills current, embed new skills & assess impact of training.
- Understanding the impact of new services.
- Improving accessibility for children and families in need of support.

The evidence also highlighted that ongoing importance and areas of focus for the CSCP Executive, including Trauma-Informed practice, Complex Needs, Mental Health, Poverty, Risk and Vulnerability in Adolescence, Violence, Online Safety, and Transition from childhood to adulthood remained priorities for partners.

The Young Advisors were involved in independent scrutiny and challenge to partnership which is detailed further up this report.

## 8 Independent Scrutiny & Assurance: Child Death Overview Panel

During 2023/2024 there have been 10 deaths recorded, which is slightly lower than the past 4 years. During the year 13 cases have been reviewed and completed, with a further 11 cases to be reviewed.

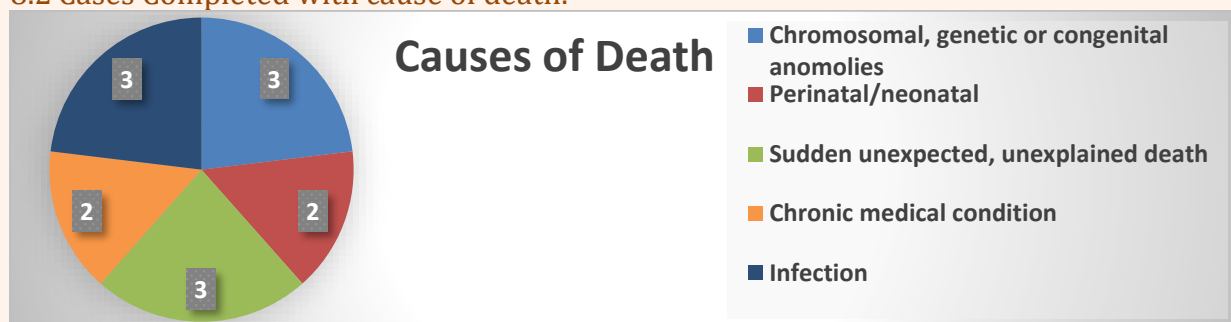
### 8.1 Modifiable Factors

Of the cases reviewed 5 (38%) had modifiable factors, and these have been identified as:

- Smoking
- Alcohol consumed prior to co-sleeping
- Premature baby not born in an obstetric centre

Previously the Calderdale, Kirklees and Wakefield CDOP partnerships had noted higher than national average numbers of modifiable factors, specifically in relation to Consanguinity. As the previous Annual Report highlighted, there was a national decision-making flowchart to agree when the issue of consanguinity is across the country. We implemented this in 2023-2024 and the numbers now are in line with national averages.

### 8.2 Cases Completed with cause of death.



CDOP meetings continue to be held virtually. They are well attended by a wide range of multi-agency professionals. This ensured that any learning and actions to come from a child's death could be identified and shared without delay, helping to prevent future deaths.

### 8.3 Impact of the Calderdale CDOP on National Reporting

The Calderdale CDOP wrote to the National Child Mortality Database (NCMD) to include 'instable housing' and 'whether the parent was a previous looked after child' to inform analysis and better understand the relationship between child deaths and inequalities. The Safeguarding Partnerships Manager was successful and it is now included in the national reporting mechanism.

### 8.4 Priorities for CDOP for 2024-2025

The following have been identified as priorities for the Panel for the year ahead:

- To continue work around safer sleep, providing further guidance & research
- Continue to build upon and strengthen existing child death review processes.
- Continue to scrutinise the impact of social and health inequalities.

## 9 Learning & Improvement: Multi-agency Training & e-learning

### 9.1 Learning & Improvement: Safeguarding Week



Calderdale's Annual Safeguarding Week included a varied programme of online, hybrid and face to face events, with events being offered nationally, regionally, and locally.

Contributions were received from the multi-agency partnership and included a good mix of sessions and resources for practitioners who work with Children and/or Adults. The week offered 29 learning sessions with more than 250 people attending.

Calderdale hosted a West Yorkshire Wide event with Cath Knibbs, an author, researcher and Child and Adult Trauma Psychotherapist. All respondents rated the session a 4 or 5 and said that it challenged their thinking of ACES and Trauma, and following the session they had a better understanding of children and young people's behaviours. Feedback was positive:

*"I cannot put into words how good this training was. Amongst the best training I have ever attended in 20 years of practice. I will recommend management encourage all the 0-5 workforce to watch the play back if it is available."*

*"Cath was so passionate and knowledgeable the time just flew, I have learned so much and what I knew has now got the evidence to support it. Thank you so much."*

*"Fantastic. One of the most informative and useful training sessions I have done, thank you".*

There was also access to a range of other useful resources such as videos and links on relevant topics on offer during the week, available via the CSCP website. Analytics from the CSCP/CSAB website showed that there were 233 page views, with 119 users accessing the dedicated Safeguarding 2023 webpage.

Social media analytics showed that the reach across social media was down significantly from previous years, with 7044 Impressions throughout the week, and 53 Engagements throughout the week, compared to 18193 impressions and 181 engagements in 2022, and 59315 impressions, and 481 engagements in 2021, so further investigation is required.

Evaluation forms were used to gather feedback which was positive; practitioner knowledge increased because of accessing the sessions; practitioners said the learning would enhance their practice, and support them when working with children, families and adults.

Evaluation has shown that online learning works well for most but offering a range of sessions helps to suit everyone. Suggestions of how to improve the Safeguarding Week programme included recording all events so that if they could not attend at the time, they could access the sessions later.

## 9.2 Training

There has been a significant increase in the training attendance. Live training has gone from 1030 attendances in 2022-23 to 2459 in 2023-24. The types of course being attended are those we promoted and wanted to upskill on – such as Domestic Abuse, Equality Diversity and Inclusion, Fatherhood Institute Briefings, Every Sleep a Safe Sleep, and Supervision.

Two Trauma Informed Practice courses were delivered by Professor David Shemmings, 62 people attended. There remains demand for further trauma informed training, enthusiasm from partners is driving commitment to learn more and develop this into practice.

### e-Learning

A total of 6016 e-learning training sessions were completed in 2023-2024 which is an increase from 5201 in 2022-2023.

### Face to Face Training

**915** places were filled on live sessions 2019-2020

**202** places were filled on live sessions 2020-21

**927** places were filled on live sessions 2021-22

**1030** places were filled on live sessions 2022-23

**2459** places were filled on live sessions 2023-24

### Evaluation

Learners are invited to complete evaluation questionnaires for all face to face or live online courses. 417 out of 418 learners said their skills or knowledge of the subject had improved.

Evaluation reports of the full years training have been shared with the providers of each session to analyse and develop the content for the 2024-25 year programme.

### **Some quotes from attendees demonstrating different thinking prompted by the training:**

- It was very interactive and referred to historic case studies which I found beneficial in linking how faith resulted in the abuse taking place. It was an emotional topic.
- Reinforce my curiosity to be mindful to ensure that all family members are spoken to
- The content was fantastic great having people delivering with lived experience of alcohol and drug abuse
- The personal knowledge of the course leader. She was able to describe in real life examples and explain terminology. The session was open and it was easy to join in with discussion which enabled deeper understanding.
- Involving dad's through email/initial contact, just to introduce who I am and services
- I now feel more confident in dealing with safeguarding concerns from staff members. I also have a new confidence that Calderdale has a wonderful and strong safeguarding team.
- During home visits Mum a speaks of behalf of dad, I will definitely be more aware of the role dad/ the males play and the importance of them being part of the assessment process and support. Allowing them a voice.
- All of it. I changed my approach after this training.

## 10 Summary and Future Priorities for the CSCP

The findings from the workstreams of the CSCP detailed in this report have been considered with the strategic Lead Safeguarding Partners and are included in the business planning and subgroup structures. The priorities for the CSCP are detailed below, but are underpinned by statutory function and partnership principles that organisations and agencies are clear about how they will work together to safeguard children and promote their welfare. This means:

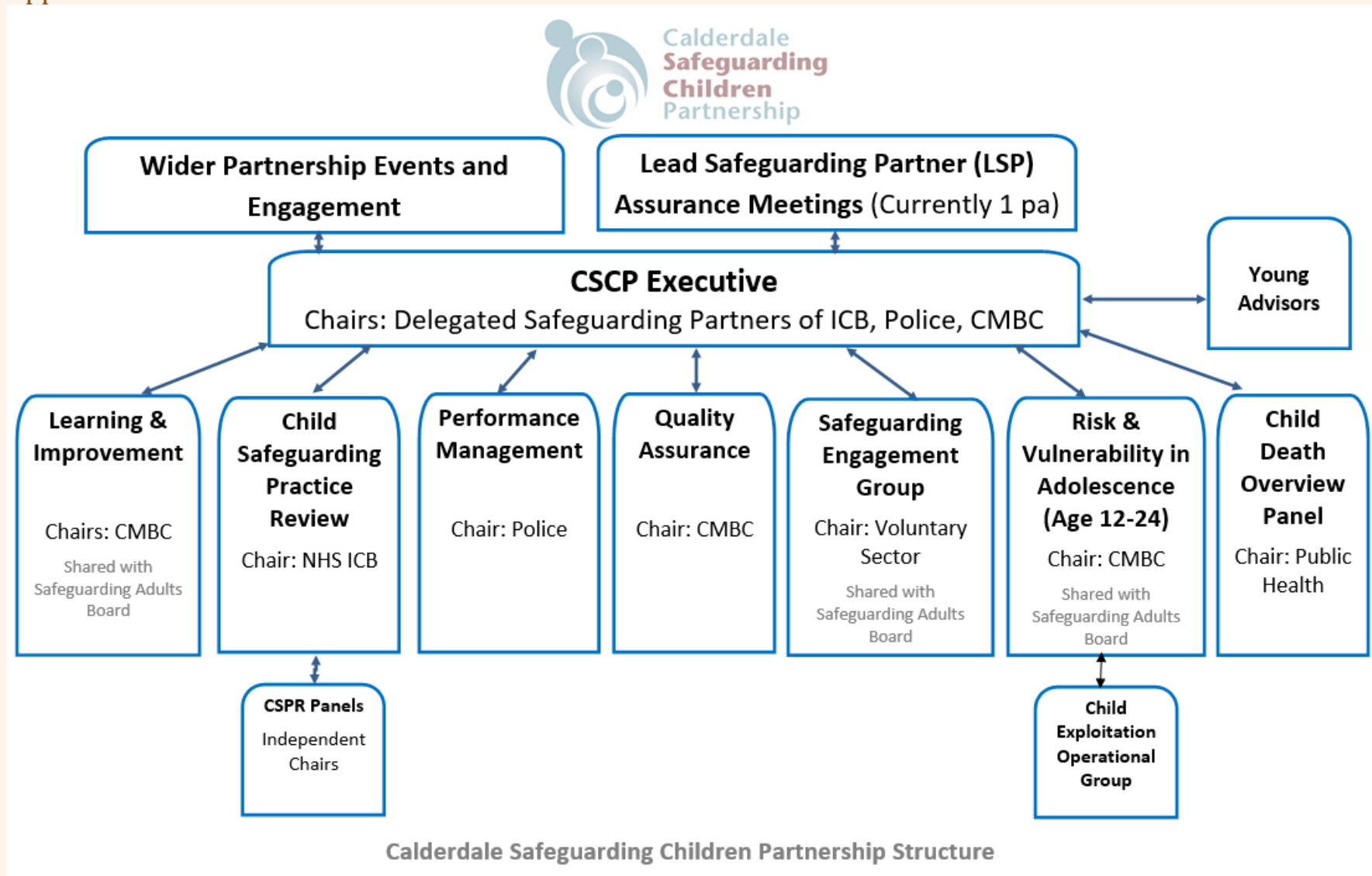
- there is a clear, shared vision for how to improve outcomes for children locally across all levels of need and all types of harm
- when a child is identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm there is a prompt, appropriate and effective response to ensure the protection and support of the child
- organisations and agencies are challenged appropriately, effectively holding one another to account
- the voice of children and families combined with the knowledge of experienced practitioners and insights from data, provides a greater understanding of the areas of strength and/or improvement within arrangements and practice
- information is sought, analysed, shared, and broken down by protected characteristics to facilitate more accurate and timely decision-making for children and families, and to understand outcomes for different communities of children
- effective collection, sharing and analysis of data, enables early identification of new safeguarding risks, issues, emerging threats, and joined-up responses across relevant agencies
- senior leaders promote and embed a learning culture which supports local services to become more reflective and implement changes to practice
- senior leaders have a good knowledge and understanding about the quality of local practice and its impact on children and families

### 10.1 Priorities for 2024-2025

1. Risk and Vulnerability in Adolescence – improving how professionals work with Contextual Safeguarding and Harm Outside the Home focussed on young people aged 10 to 24.
2. Transition to Adulthood working with the Safeguarding Adult Board and partner agencies to improve the transition between children and adult services
3. Supporting how Calderdale organisations prevent, identify, tackle and support victims (including children) of Domestic Abuse.
4. Independent Scrutiny – review arrangements and consider the Calderdale approach against the newly published Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023



## Appendix 1 Structure Chart



## Appendix 2 – Relevant Partner Agencies

- Adult Services and Wellbeing
- CAFCASS
- Calderdale and Huddersfield Foundation Trust (CHFT)
- Calderdale College
- Calderdale Governors Association (CGA)
- Early Years Quality and Improvement (Representing Childminders, Early Years Settings, Out of School Clubs)
- Locala School Nurse and Health Visiting Service
- Probation Service
- Together Housing Group
- Education (Primary and Secondary Head Teachers Association & Designated Safeguarding Lead Network)
- Alternative Providers of Education
- Public Health
- South West Yorkshire Partnership Foundation Trust (SWYPFT)
- Voluntary Sector Infrastructure Service (VSI)
- West Yorkshire Fire Service
- Women’s Centre Specialist Domestic Abuse Provider Service
- Youth Justice Service
- Children’s Residential Homes including private providers
- Independent Fostering Agencies
- Halifax Opportunities Trust and North Halifax Partnership (Children’s Centre, Family Hubs, and Family Support)
- Yorkshire Ambulance Service
- One Adoption
- British Transport Police
- Sports and Leisure Organisations
- Religious Organisations

## Appendix 3 – Changes to Local Multi-Agency Safeguarding Procedures during 2023-2024

Updated Chapters	
Chapter Name	Details
<b>Recognising Abuse and Neglect</b>	This chapter has been reviewed and updated in line with local procedure.
<b>Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)</b>	Section 5, Other Harmful Practices has been added. The Health and Care Act 2022 has made it illegal to carry out, offer or aid and abet virginity testing or hymenoplasty in any part of the UK. It is also illegal for UK nationals and residents to do these things outside the UK. Information has also been added on Breast Flattening which is an offence as set out in CPS So-Called Honour-Based Abuse Legal Guidance.
<b>Forced Marriage</b>	This chapter has been amended in line with local procedure.
<b>MAPPA</b>	This chapter has been updated.
<b>Pre Birth</b>	Section 3, Safe Sleeping has been added. Additional information has been added into Section 4, Working with Fathers/Partners.
<b>Agency Roles and Responsibilities</b>	A new Section, Principles has been added into Section 2, Serious Violence Duty, to include information from the Ofsted Framework JTAI of Serious Youth Violence.
<b>Child Sexual Abuse in the Family Environment</b>	This chapter has been refreshed. Section 6, The Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse has also been added.
<b>Children at Risk where a Parent has Mental Ill Health</b>	This chapter has been reviewed and updated throughout.
<b>Complex (Organised or Multiple) Abuse</b>	This chapter has been reviewed and updated throughout.
<b>Forced Marriage</b>	This chapter has been amended to reflect that the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022 raised the age of marriage and civil partnership to 18 in England and Wales, with effect from 26 February 2023.
<b>Gang Activity and Youth Violence</b>	Information in relation to Serious Violence Reduction Orders has been added into Section 6.
<b>Harmful Sexual Behaviour</b>	Additional links have been added into the Further Guidance and Information section.
<b>Self Harm</b>	This chapter has been reviewed and refreshed in line with local policy.
<b>Suicidal Behaviour</b>	This chapter has been reviewed and refreshed throughout in line with local policy.
<b>Safeguarding Children and Young people against Radicalisation and Violent Extremism</b>	This chapter has been refreshed and links to additional guidance have been added into Further Information.
<b>Agency Roles and Responsibilities</b>	This chapter has been refreshed. Section 6.19, MAPPA has been updated to include information on the extension of the duty to co-operate under the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022. A link to 'Matters of Concern, Safeguarding Concerns, Allegations and Complaints for Children in Custody – Youth Custody Service' has been added into Section 6.9, The Secure Estate for Children. A new Section 2, Serious Violence Duty has also been added.

<b>Information Sharing</b>	Information in relation to the Serious Violence Duty has been added into Section 5.
<b>Allegations Against Persons who Work with Children</b>	This chapter has been amended in line with revised Keeping Children Safe in Education. A new Section 2, The Difference Between an Allegation of Harm and a Concern has been added.
<b>Safer Recruitment, Selection and Supervision of Staff</b>	This chapter has been amended in line with revised Keeping Children Safe in Education. Section 2, Choice of Candidate has been updated to note that Keeping Children Safe in Education provides that schools and colleges should only accept copies of a curriculum vitae alongside an application form. A curriculum vitae on its own will not provide adequate information. Information in relation to online searches has been added into Section 2.4.
<b>Engaging with Fathers, Male Partners or Carers and Other Significant Adults</b>	This chapter has been added to the manual.
<b>Child Exploitation: Policy, Procedures and Guidance</b>	This chapter has been updated as the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 has extended the definition of Position of Trust within the Sexual Offences Act 2003 section 22A to include anyone who coaches, teaches, trains, supervises or instructs a child under 18, on a regular basis, in a sport or a religion.
<b>Agency Roles and Responsibilities</b>	This chapter has been updated as the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 has extended the definition of Position of Trust within the Sexual Offences Act 2003 section 22A to include anyone who coaches, teaches, trains, supervises or instructs a child under 18, on a regular basis, in a sport or a religion. Links have also been added to the HMPP Child Safeguarding Policy.
<b>Allegations Against Persons who Work with Children</b>	This chapter has been updated as the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 has extended the definition of Position of Trust within the Sexual Offences Act 2003 section 22A to include anyone who coaches, teaches, trains, supervises or instructs a child under 18, on a regular basis, in a sport or a religion.
<b>MAPPA Protocol</b>	This protocol has been added to the manual.
<b>Transitional Safeguarding</b>	This chapter has been added to the manual.





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