# Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership Yearly Report 2024- 2025





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## Foreword and Introduction from Safeguarding Partners

As the three statutory safeguarding partners for Calderdale – the Director of Children’s Services, the Calderdale District Commander of West Yorkshire Police, and the Director of Nursing & Quality for the Integrated Care Board – we are proud to present the annual report of the Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) for 2024–2025.

This report reflects a year of committed partnership working, where agencies have come together with a shared purpose: to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Calderdale. We are pleased to see how the Partnership continues to strengthen its ability to provide constructive challenge, mutual support, and clear accountability, ensuring that safeguarding practice is scrutinised and improved. The introduction of new tools and approaches – including more robust processes for escalation and resolution of professional concerns – shows how we continue to learn from local and national reviews and apply this learning to strengthen our collective response.

We recognise that the challenges facing children, young people and families remain significant. Many of our children live with the impact of poverty, inequality, neglect and abuse, and too many continue to be harmed outside the home. We cannot underestimate the complexity of this context, and we are clear that there is always more to do. However, the strength of Calderdale’s safeguarding arrangements lies in the commitment of partners to work together, share intelligence, challenge one another and act quickly when children are at risk.

Looking ahead, we remain focused on embedding the voice of children and families in all aspects of our work, addressing the impact of harm both inside and outside the family, and continually improving the way we work together as a partnership. Our ambition is that every child in Calderdale grows up safe, supported, and able to thrive.

We thank all those who contribute to safeguarding children in Calderdale – practitioners, volunteers, leaders and, importantly, families themselves – for their dedication and commitment. Together, through this partnership, we will continue to drive improvement and make a positive difference for children, young people, and families across our borough.

**This report will be shared with the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements Unit (DfE):** [**safeguarding.reform@education.gov.uk**](mailto:safeguarding.reform@education.gov.uk) **to support national analysis and learning and ensure our report informs policy and practice development, and with the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel:** [**Mailbox.NationalReviewPanel@education.gov.uk**](mailto:Mailbox.NationalReviewPanel@education.gov.uk) **to identify any issues that may require escalation to a national level.**

**Locally, the report has been signed off by Calderdale MBC, the ICB, and West Yorkshire Police through their respective governance arrangements, and will also be shared with the Health & Wellbeing Board, the Youth Justice Board, and other local scrutiny arrangements to ensure wider oversight and accountability.**

## Calderdale Area Profile

The population of Calderdale is 208,700. This includes 49,600 children, making up 24% of residents.

30.5% of children aged 0 to 15 in Calderdale live in poverty (compared to the England average of 22.1%), and in some areas rates are as high as 77.7%.

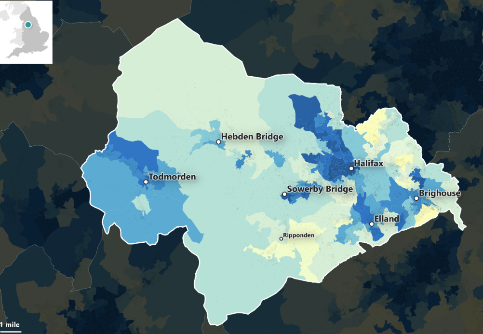
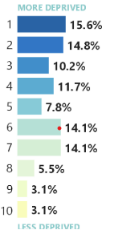
Ethnic diversity is increasing, particularly in Halifax, where communities from South Asian and Eastern European backgrounds make up a growing proportion of the population. 82.7% of Calderdale residents confirmed their ethnicity as “White – English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British” in Census 2021. The three largest minority ethnic groups in Calderdale were “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 2025 shows that 25.6% of primary school pupils and 28.4% of secondary school pupils have a minority ethnic background.

The employment rate is 74.0%. 27.1% of children are eligible for free school meals with rates as high as 63.3% in some areas. 29,293 households claim either Universal Credit or Housing Benefit. 11,624 (40%) of these households include dependent children.

In 2024 67.2% of pupils achieved the Key stage 2 expected standard slightly lower than the England average of 67.7%.

The number of children looked after has remained stable but is higher than regional comparators. The number of children in care in Calderdale at 31st March 2024 was 81 per 10,000, higher than the England average of 70 per 10,000.

## Statutory Requirements of the Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership

The Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) meets its statutory responsibilities through strong and coordinated multi-agency arrangements, aligned with national guidance and evidenced through annual reporting, reviews, and published learning. Leadership is shared between the Local Authority, West Yorkshire Police, and the West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (Calderdale Place). There are agreed Lead Safeguarding Partners and Delegated Safeguarding Partners who form the CSCP Executive and jointly hold accountability for local safeguarding arrangements. The partnership’s published arrangements clearly outline governance, priorities, and decision-making structures.

A broad range of relevant agencies are actively engaged in the CSCP’s work, including education, early years providers, health services, probation, and the voluntary sector. Engagement is embedded across the Executive and in thematic subgroups, many of which are shared with the Calderdale Safeguarding Adults Board and the Community Safety Partnership, strengthening whole-family and contextual safeguarding approaches. The partnership’s inclusive structure ensures the voice of all sectors, including early years and community organisations, informs local safeguarding practice.

Independent scrutiny is commissioned to provide objective oversight, contribute to reviews, and support a culture of accountability and continuous improvement. The CSCP uses a variety of aggregated scrutiny methods, including commissioned experts, independent challenge event, multi-agency audits, Rapid Reviews, and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs). Learning is disseminated through accessible formats such as 7-Minute Briefings, multi-agency training, and learning events, with a clear focus on evidencing how findings lead to improved outcomes. Regular challenge events and feedback loops support tracking the implementation and impact of learning.

The CSCP Yearly Report captures performance data, audit findings, learning from reviews, and reflections on partnership challenges. It also demonstrates how scrutiny has influenced practice and sets out priorities for the year ahead, maintaining transparency and driving ongoing improvement in safeguarding children across Calderdale. Finally this Yearly Report details how the CSCP meets the national statutory requirements of a multi-agency safeguarding partnership.



## Progress against statutory guidance

### Implementation of changes set out in statutory guidance

The changes made to the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements were reported on last year (2023-2024) and published in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.

### Contributions of each safeguarding partner

1. Partnership Governance and Structure

The Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) is underpinned by clear governance and strong joint leadership from the three statutory partners—Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council, West Yorkshire Police, and the West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board. Together, they provide direction, oversight, and accountability for safeguarding arrangements across Calderdale.

The current **Lead Safeguarding Partners** are:

* Robin Tuddenham – Chief Executive, Calderdale Council, Place Lead Calderdale, NHS West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board
* John Robbins – Chief Constable, West Yorkshire Police
* Rob Webster – Chief Executive, West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board

The **Delegated Safeguarding Partners**, who rotate the Executive Chair function during this reporting period were:

* Julie Jenkins – Director of Children’s Services, Calderdale MBC
* Penny Woodhead – Director of Nursing and Quality, Calderdale and Kirklees ICB
* Michael Brown – District Commander, Calderdale Police

Changes to the current delegated safeguarding partners will be take place early in the next financial year due to planned retirement.

The rotational chairing of Executive meetings by each statutory partner has strengthened ownership and accountability across the CSCP. Rather than relying on an independent chair, this model ensures that each partner is directly engaged in shaping the future direction of the partnership, driving forward priorities, and maintaining oversight of progress. By sharing this responsibility, partners are required to take an active leadership role, embedding joint accountability and reinforcing a culture of collective responsibility.

Strategic representatives from education and the voluntary sector further strengthen the Executive, bringing breadth of perspective and challenge to partnership discussions.

Strategic priorities are delivered through a multi-agency subgroup structure covering key safeguarding themes such as exploitation, risk and vulnerability in adolescence, learning and improvement, and performance and quality assurance.

The CSCP Secretariat provides the infrastructure to support both the CSCP and the Calderdale Safeguarding Adults Board, as well as leading the coordination of Domestic Homicide Reviews. This integrated model promotes efficiency, cross-learning, and a ‘whole-family’ approach to safeguarding across Calderdale.

b) Partnership Contributions and Shared Accountability

Each statutory partner plays a distinct, complementary role in advancing the work of CSCP:

* West Yorkshire Police bring leadership on child exploitation and vulnerability, contribute actively to subgroups, and provide governance for Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews. Their role ensures that criminal justice and public protection are embedded within multi-agency safeguarding responses.
* Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council provide coordination across early help, statutory intervention, and education. The local authority plays a central role in quality assurance, case reviews, and system-wide improvement activity.
* The West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) provide strategic health leadership, coordinating input from NHS providers and safeguarding professionals. They play a key role in thematic reviews, and responses to issues such as neglect, parental vulnerabilities, and infant harm.

All partners contribute to performance monitoring, quality assurance, and thematic analysis, supporting a consistent focus on outcomes for children. Broader membership across the Executive and subgroups (see appendix) adds further value by surfacing emerging risks, sharing effective practice, and engaging in constructive challenge and scrutiny.

The wider partnership plays an active role in multi-agency discussions, shaping the development of safeguarding practice across Calderdale. Members listen to current concerns, identify the priorities and pressures affecting children and families, and consider how these are being addressed. This insight is then cascaded back through their own organisations and networks, ensuring that learning, new tools, guidance, policies, procedures, and approaches are disseminated consistently across the local system.

Importantly, shared subgroups with the Safeguarding Adults Board strengthen the ‘Think Family’ approach, fostering a more integrated understanding of risk and enabling holistic safeguarding responses across children’s and adults’ services.

### Aggregated Scrutiny

Throughout 2024–2025, Calderdale CSCP has continued to apply a wide range of aggregated scrutiny methods to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements and promote learning and improvement. Further detail is within this report, but they include:

* **Multi-Agency Audits**: A series of themed audits were conducted across the year. These audits involved frontline professionals from across agencies and provided a detailed picture of practice, areas for development, and examples of effective multi-agency working.
* **Statutory Reviews**: The CSCP commissioned **Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs)**. Findings from reviews have been shared through multi-agency learning events and have directly influenced changes in local policy and practice.
* **Independent Scrutiny Activity**: Independent Experts and Scrutineers such as representatives from the Department for Education, attended Executive and subgroup meetings, observe meetings, conducted challenge sessions, and provided critical reflection on local partnership working. Their reports offer insight into both strengths and areas for improvement and have been used to refine priorities and drive accountability.
* **Challenge and Learning Events**: Regular multi-agency challenge sessions were held following audits and reviews. These created space for reflective discussion, holding partners to account for implementing learning, and identifying what has changed as a result.

### **Impact on Outcomes for Children and Families**

The CSCP remains committed to ensuring that learning, scrutiny, and assurance activity translate into tangible improvements for children and families. Over the past year, impact can be evidenced across multiple dimensions of safeguarding practice:

* **Training and Workforce Development**  
  A comprehensive multi-agency training programme has continued to build professional confidence and competence. Targeted sessions—such as safer sleep, neglect, and working with resistant families—have been delivered in direct response to learning from reviews and audits. Evaluation evidence shows increased practitioner confidence, better identification of risk, and stronger application of safeguarding frameworks in frontline practice.
* **Practice Improvements**  
  Findings from multi-agency audits and challenge events have informed significant revisions to tools and processes, including the updated **Neglect Toolkit**, new **Threshold Guidance**, and the revised **Escalation Protocol**. These changes have enabled earlier intervention, clearer professional challenge, and more effective coordination across agencies.
* **Voice of the Child**  
  The CSCP Young Advisors continue to shape partnership priorities by ensuring children’s lived experiences remain central. Their input has influenced how services communicate with young people and has supported the development of accessible, child-friendly resources that enhance engagement and trust.
* **Whole-Family Working**  
  Joint working with the Calderdale Safeguarding Adults Board has embedded a stronger **Think Family approach**, with shared subgroups providing cross-cutting insight into parental vulnerabilities such as domestic abuse, mental health, and substance misuse. This has improved identification of cumulative risk and enabled a more integrated safeguarding response.
* **Evidence of Impact**  
  Case studies, practitioner feedback, and follow-up audits demonstrate more consistent use of shared tools, clearer professional roles, and improved outcomes for children. Examples include earlier recognition of neglect, better-informed decision-making at the Front Door, and strengthened support for families experiencing multiple vulnerabilities.

**Next Steps**  
The CSCP will continue to build on these gains by:

* Embedding a stronger focus on **impact measurement**, ensuring every activity is tested against outcomes for children and families.
* Strengthening feedback loops so that **frontline practitioners** can see how their input has influenced system-wide change.
* Expanding opportunities for **children and young people to shape safeguarding practice**, particularly around digital safeguarding and risk outside the home.
* Continuing to align children’s and adults’ safeguarding activity to deliver a more **cohesive whole-family response**.

### Engagement with Children & Families to Shape Safeguarding Services

The CSCP remains committed to listening to and acting on the voices of children, young people, and families to inform and improve safeguarding services.

Listening to Families and Communities: The partnership also set an ambition to gather feedback from children, families, and communities who have experienced safeguarding services, and to gain assurance that their voices are influencing practice and service development. While there has been some community-level engagement around safeguarding more broadly, this remains an area for further improvement. The CSCP recognises the importance of hearing directly from children with lived experience of child protection services and will work with other partnerships to explore more effective ways to facilitate this engagement and ensure their voices are reflected in decision-making****.

The graphic below gives some examples of what children, who are being supported by Children’s Services, are saying they want to change. Every quarter these voices are gathered and reported through the CSCP Sub group structure.

* **Supporting Young Advisors**: The CSCP has continued to support and engage with Calderdale’s Young Advisors, who are working on issues that matter most to young people. This year, a newly appointed Quality Assurance Officer has developed a strong relationship with the group, providing support around their current focus on stress and emotional wellbeing. This has included developing a stress-related survey and creating a "stress pack" with practical advice. The Young Advisors have taken a lead role in shaping the project—writing the survey, analysing responses from their peers, and offering clear, youth-led advice on what support would be most helpful.
* Calderdale children provided some of the following statements about what makes a **Healthy Relationship** in the Young Advisors Survey which received 347 responses. Young people said the following about good, healthy, relationships:

Someone who they can trust and are loyal Rarely have disagreements

One that isn’t toxic Can go to them with problems

Your kind to each other Respect and think about others

Help each other out They don’t peer pressure you

Always tell the truth even if it's hard to hear Spending time together

Don’t be mean to each other Getting along and don't argue

Laughing out loud Don’t leave people out

Can keep secrets Don’t lie to each other

Supports you Ability to listen to each other

Having a lot in common and laugh with each other

Following the survey and report, the Young Advisors produced an interactive poster for supporting children to access resources on healthy relationships. This is currently in development.

* **Promoting Online Safety through Creative Engagement**: As part of a wider focus on online safety, the CSCP launched a borough-wide **poster competition** targeting primary-aged children. The initiative was a resounding success, receiving over 250 entries from schools across Calderdale. The posters displayed an impressive range of advice, creativity, and understanding around staying safe online. Winners received vouchers in recognition of their efforts, and all submissions were publicly showcased in Halifax Borough Market to highlight young people's voices and raise awareness in the wider community.



### Analysis of Areas with limited progress

The Partnership is committed to honest reflection on areas where progress has been limited, recognising that some challenges lie beyond local influence and require national action. Despite strong partnership working in Calderdale, several areas remain where impact has been constrained.

One significant challenge is technology-based abuse, including grooming, exploitation, online bullying, harmful material, and sites promoting self-harm or suicide. While partners have worked hard to raise awareness, provide education, and strengthen responses, the pace of technological change and the global nature of platforms means local safeguarding can only partially mitigate these risks without broader national regulation.

National policy frameworks also limit local impact in key areas. Rising school exclusions, compounded by statutory guidance, and the policy on elected home education, which requires schools to remove children from roll when parents provide notice, reduce professional oversight for some vulnerable children.

Poverty, deprivation, and inequality continue to add complexity to safeguarding work. Increasingly, children are being harmed in families with no previous safeguarding history, making it harder to identify risks such as non-accidental injuries. The reduction in universal services—particularly health visiting, which has [fallen by up to 40 % between 2015 and 2023](https://www.nursinginpractice.com/latest-news/health-visitor-shortages-leaving-primary-care-overwhelmed/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)—has reduced early identification opportunities, contributing to a rise in emergency attendances for young children ([up 42 % over the past decade](https://www.nursingtimes.net/childrens-nursing/more-babies-attending-ae-as-health-visitor-numbers-fall-15-12-2023/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)).

Although progress in these areas has been limited, there is evidence of continued activity. Partners have strengthened pathways for online risks, delivered targeted practitioner training, and improved responses to children missing from education or at risk of exclusion. These actions have increased multi-agency awareness and coordination, but they cannot fully offset the structural and systemic challenges described above.

Looking ahead, the Partnership will continue to focus on achievable local actions: raising awareness, enhancing professional curiosity, and strengthening multi-agency responses. Simultaneously, the CSCP will escalate these challenges through regional and national networks, advocating for wider policy and system change. Through these efforts, we remain committed to protecting children in Calderdale as effectively as possible within the constraints we face.

### Learning from Serious Incidents

Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) Governance & Process Developments

* In 2024, the local CSPR guidance was updated to reflect the statutory changes introduced by *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)*.
* A new Information Sharing Agreement was introduced, covering both the CSPR and Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) processes to strengthen legal and procedural clarity.
* During this period, four Rapid Reviews were undertaken. One of these progressed to a full Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR), which remains ongoing.

Child T – Multi-Agency Reflective Learning

The Business Unit was commissioned to lead a Multi-Agency Reflective Practice Session (MARPS) in relation to a complex and challenging case concerning Child T. The focus of the review was on the child’s journey through the health and care system.

Two separate reflective sessions were with frontline practitioners directly involved with the child and family and with their respective line managers and supervisors. The reflective learning sessions resulted in 18 recommendations. Key areas of learning have been incorporated and a revised multi-agency pathway for managing the discharge of children and young people with complex additional and/or mental health needs has been introduced alongside a terms of reference for a multi-disciplinary team approach, ensuring collaborative planning for care and safe discharge from acute hospital settings.

Agencies have demonstrated good progress in implementing their individual action plans.  
The next stage will involve testing the revised approach in a similar future case. A challenge event is scheduled on the CSPR Subgroup’s forward planner for 2026. This event will review any cases involving complex mental health inpatient admissions.

CSPR Learning Briefing

A briefing highlighted key learning from CSPRs on non-accidental injury to babies, identifying areas for system-wide improvement. This will be the focus of future CSCP quality assurance and audit activity to establish whether the learning has had the intended impact.

* [**Invisible Men** –](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1017944/The_myth_of_invisible_men_safeguarding_children_under_1_from_non-accidental_injury_caused_by_male_carers.pdf) Agencies must improve how fathers and male carers are actively considered in assessment and inter-agency work.
* **Professional Curiosity & Challenge** – Practitioners to embed [curiosity and challenge](http://calderdale-safeguarding.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Safeguard-Guide-No-9-Professional-Curiosty-and-Challenge.pdf) in practice and risk assessments.
* **Child-Focused Assessments** – [Pre-birth and subsequent child assessments](https://westyorkscb.proceduresonline.com/p_pre_birth.html?zoom_highlight=birth) must reflect the child’s lived experience and increased risks.
* **Integrated Services** – Strengthen communication and joint working across adult and children’s services (DA, mental health, substance misuse).
* **Escalation Pathways** – Ensure all agencies have [clear escalation routes](https://westyorkscb.proceduresonline.com/p_res_profdisag.html?zoom_highlight=escalation) for rising risk.
* **Child’s Perspective** – Use tools (e.g. [*Day in the Life*](https://safeguarding.calderdale.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/a-day-in-the-life-child-and-adult.pdf)) to see from the child’s viewpoint and monitor progress.
* **Parental Non-Engagement** – Where parents are resistant or don’t engage with services, it may mean that a child’s needs are not being met or that risk is increasing; professionals need to be proactive, and ensure actions meet the Childs Timescale. [Pathway and Letter for Engaging Hostile and Resistant Families](https://safeguarding.calderdale.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Pathway-Working-with-Resistant-Families.pdf) and [Was Not Brought Safeguard Guide](https://safeguarding.calderdale.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Safeguard-Guide-no-10-Was-Not-Brought.pdf) can help.

##### Child Death OVerview PAnel (CDOP)

Calderdale, Kirklees and Wakefield share arrangements for reviewing the deaths of all children in these areas. The pan CDOP has continued to use the eCDOP system for all child death notifications.

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. CDOP Coordinators ensure that the documentation to be discussed at the CDOP meeting is circulated in advance, so members have time to review it and come ready to give their input and feedback.

In 2024–2025, there were 11 child deaths, a figure broadly consistent with previous years (10 in 2023–2024 and 14 in 2022–2023). During 2024–2025, the Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) reviewed six cases. While this number is too low to enable meaningful statistical reporting in this public annual report, learning from each case has been acted upon, and emerging themes and trends continue to be monitored.

Previous reviews have highlighted the need for ongoing focus on safer sleeping practices, as well as addressing maternal obesity and smoking in pregnancy. The following section outlines the work undertaken to address these issues and to strengthen the child death review process.

**Priority 1: Promoting Safer Sleep and Contributing to Research**

* **Training & Resources:** Every Sleep a Safe Sleep (ESASS) training remains embedded in professional practice, including midwifery training, and over 90 early years staff trained. Updated ESASS webinar and new West Yorkshire Safer Sleep Guidance published.
* **Influence & Campaigns**: ESASS model showcased regionally; new CONI guidance pending approval. A Safer Sleep campaign highlighted out-of-routine risks.
* **Impact**: Wider workforce reach, strengthened guidance, and greater consistency across the region.
* **Next Steps**: Expand training (including parent/carer versions), increase multi-agency training, and further embed practice through Family Hubs and antenatal education.

**Priority 2: Supporting Women at Risk of Maternal Obesity**

* **Service Delivery**: Healthy Start Scheme promoted across maternity pathways; specialist clinic established for women with BMI 35+. BMI included in audit processes.
* **Impact**: Improved early intervention, better practitioner confidence, and clearer referral pathways.
* **Next Steps:** Align with new NICE guidance, introduce postnatal care plans, universal antenatal classes, communication toolkit, and strengthen preconception/postnatal support.

**Priority 3: Strengthening Child Death Review (CDR) Processes**

* **Progress**: eCDOP system successfully implemented, improving security, consistency, and coordination across the tri-partnership. CDR meetings now fully embedded and compliant with statutory guidance.
* **Impact**: Improved information governance, real-time updates, and enhanced professional challenge.
* **Next Steps**: Refine use of eCDOP, strengthen thematic learning, and monitor consistency across partnerships.

**Priority 4: Reducing Smoking in Pregnancy**

* **Support Services**: Dedicated stop-smoking service with NRT and behavioural support, alongside Yorkshire Smokefree, financial incentives, and ‘Swap to Stop’ vape kits. Remote CO monitoring expanded access.
* **Impact**: Smoking at Time of Delivery rate reduced to under 7%, a significant local achievement.
* **Next Steps**: Expand support to wider family members, align with national programmes, and build preconception smoking cessation messaging into wider prevention work.

**Future Priorities: Deprivation, Poverty and Inequality**

Child death data across Calderdale, Kirklees and Wakefield continues to show stark inequalities, with the majority of deaths concentrated in the most deprived communities.

The Calderdale, Kirklees and Wakefield CDOP will prioritise place-based approaches and address wider determinants of health to reduce inequalities in child mortality.

### Key decisions and actions taken

The safeguarding partners have continued to make strategic decisions and take actions to improve outcomes for children across Calderdale. These include implementing recommendations from local and national Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, strengthening multi-agency pathways, improving professional training, and enhancing processes for scrutiny and assurance.

To be transparent, the full detail of these decisions and actions, and their impact, is provided throughout this report. Rather than repeat that information here, readers are referred to the relevant sections on multi-agency safeguarding initiatives, statutory review responses, audits, quality assurance activity, and targeted interventions, which collectively demonstrate the Partnership’s commitment to continuous improvement and child-centred practice.

* 1. Financial breakdown and value for money:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Contributor | Value of Contribution 2024/25 |
| ICB Contribution | £65,360 |
| Police Contribution | £14,630 |
| CMBC Contribution (Childrens Budget) | £114,010 |
| Total Income | **£194,000** |

The Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) is committed to ensuring that all safeguarding activity delivers demonstrable impact and represents good value for money. In 2024–2025, the total partnership budget was **£194,000**, which supports the core functions of the Children’s Partnership.

Strategic Use of Resources

The partnership applies a whole-system approach to safeguarding that maximises shared resource use and avoids duplication. Functions such as business support, training coordination, communications, and learning dissemination are delivered across children’s and adults’ safeguarding and for tackling domestic abuse, ensuring cost-effective use of personnel and infrastructure.

This integrated model allows for:

* **Shared leadership and oversight** of cross-cutting issues (e.g. domestic abuse, exploitation, transitions, self-neglect).
* **Joint commissioning and delivery** of learning and development programmes across the workforce.
* **Consistent standards and streamlined governance** across all statutory review processes (Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, Safeguarding Adult Reviews, and DHRs).

Investment Areas and Outputs

Over the year, the partnership has invested in the following priority areas:

* Delivery of **multi-agency audits and case reviews**, resulting in improved practice in the front door, information sharing, and response to risk.
* Commissioning and publication of **statutory reviews** including one Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR), two Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs), and thematic learning from historic cases.
* Implementation of a **multi-agency training programme** reaching thousands of practitioners, with strong evaluation evidence of improved confidence and competence.
* Development of accessible **learning briefings, practitioner toolkits, and targeted communications**, ensuring lessons from local and national reviews are embedded into day-to-day practice.

Outcomes and Impact

Through our structured learning and improvement framework, the CSCP demonstrates clear impact in areas such as:

* **Improved multi-agency working**: evidenced through case audit findings and frontline feedback.
* **Stronger risk recognition and management**: including in the front door, domestic abuse, and extra-familial harm.
* **Timely learning from reviews**: with embedded processes to ensure recommendations are acted upon, monitored, and reviewed for effectiveness.
* **Amplification of child and family voice**: ensuring lived experience informs partnership priorities.

Value for Money Principles in Practice

We deliver value for money by aligning with the **4Es**:

* **Economy**: Shared staffing and infrastructure across children’s and adults’ safeguarding.
* **Efficiency**: Coordinated learning, joint reviews, and streamlined governance.
* **Effectiveness**: Improved outcomes through multi-agency scrutiny, learning, and implementation.
* **Equity**: Focused attention on vulnerable groups and system-level barriers to safeguarding and wellbeing.

Forward Look

In 2025–2026, the Partnership will further strengthen its Value for Money approach by:

* Implementing a **robust evaluation framework** to better evidence the impact of CSCP scrutiny and learning activity.
* Enhancing the **integration of adults, children, and community safety functions** in response to shared risks (e.g. domestic abuse, mental health, exploitation).
* Exploring opportunities for **co-commissioning and innovation** with wider community and regional partners.
* Utilising underspend on a new **Risk Outside the Home Officer** to strengthen systems and support for children at risk of contextual harm.

### Representation of the education sector

Education Sector Representation in CSCP Arrangements (2024–2025)

There is clear evidence of how safeguarding partners ensure **adequate representation and input from the education sector** at both operational and strategic levels of the CSCP arrangements.

Strategic Level Engagement

The CSCP includes a broad range of education leaders, ensuring strategic decision-making is shaped by direct input from the sector:

* Strategic education representatives include:
  + Members of the Primary and Secondary Headteacher Networks
  + The Chair of Calderdale Governors Association
  + The Vice Principal of Calderdale College
  + Early Years Leaders
  + Family Hub Leaders

This ensures that early years, schools, colleges, and governance perspectives are incorporated into partnership decisions, scrutiny activity, and learning priorities.

Education representatives contribute to:

* Setting and reviewing strategic priorities
* Shaping and scrutinising the Business Plan and performance framework
* Responding to thematic issues such as school attendance, exploitation, and mental health

The picture shows Julie Jenkins, Director of Children's Service speaking at the Kings Centre in Park Ward, to front line practitioners in early years, education and voluntary sector services.



Operational Level Engagement

At the operational level, the education sector is actively involved through subgroup structures, thematic workstreams, and direct engagement with the Business Unit.

* The wider structure of CSCP subgroups and workstreams includes representation from:
  + Early Years settings
  + Mainstream and Alternative Provision
  + Specialist Education Services
* Education professionals actively participate in:
  + The Risk and Vulnerability in Adolescence Subgroup
  + Multi-agency audits, including deep dives and Section 11/175 assessments
  + Tool and guidance development, including contributions to policy, procedures, and toolkits
* Key education-linked roles contribute consistently:
  + The Schools Safeguarding Advisor
  + The Education representative at the Front Door
  + The Vulnerable Learner Team

These representatives not only attend subgroups but also maintain regular contact with the Safeguarding Partnerships Manager, strengthening the link between operational safeguarding activity and CSCP strategy.

* DSL networks (Designated Safeguarding Leads) receive updates and briefings aligned to CSCP learning, priorities, and statutory changes, helping to cascade messages and good practice.
* The Performance Management Officer attends DSL meetings for Organisational Safeguarding Assessment updates.
* The Safeguarding Partnerships Manager and Secretariat staff attend Early Years Networks to provide updates, gather sector feedback, and collaborate on specific projects

This regular engagement ensures the lived experience and voice of education professionals inform both day-to-day safeguarding practice and the broader partnership response.

The CSCP would not be effective without the engagement of the education sector in the partnership working arrangements.

### Use of Data and Information Sharing

Using Data to Drive Learning and Improvement

The CSCP has a long-established Performance Management Group and Performance Management Officer that plays a central role in overseeing the safeguarding system through robust use of data and information. This multi-agency group monitors activity across the full child’s journey, from early help through to children looked after (CLA), and across all points of intervention in between.

The group’s approach is highly analytical, drawing on data from the local authority, health services, police, and education partners. Reporting is structured around the “So What?” framework, with lead officers providing context, interpretation, and narrative to explain what the data shows. Quarterly meetings provide multi-agency challenge and exploration to help to inform the CSCP of an independent view of what the data and intelligence is showing. These insights highlight emerging trends, potential areas of concern, improvements resulting from interventions, and examples of good practice. Officers explain changes—both factual and hypothesised—helping the partnership understand why certain patterns are appearing and what is being done in response.

This approach ensures that data is not just descriptive but actionable, informing decision-making, service planning, and resource allocation. For example, the group identifies declining trends or worrying patterns and explores strategies to address these, while also celebrating improvements, such as increased referrals following training or enhanced outcomes for children and families after targeted interventions. Multi-agency collaboration and shared understanding of data enable coordinated responses, improve transparency, and support a culture of continual learning and improvement across the safeguarding system.

Through this structured, evidence-informed approach, the CSCP demonstrates a strong commitment to using data strategically to safeguard children, strengthen multi-agency working, and drive continuous improvement across Calderdale.

Information sharing across agencies has improved, supporting earlier identification of risk and more coordinated responses. This approach ensures that learning from data is embedded within the partnership and translated into improved outcomes for children and families.

Positive Developments:

At the end of 2024/25 there have been some good news stories that have been reported in the Performance Management Report and Subgroup by the gathering of the “story behind the data”.

* The Children Missing Education situation is improving at the end of the year with the new Pupil Movement form having been implemented for school submission to the Education Welfare team resulting in improved data recording.
* The Early Help Pathway Co-ordinators have had a positive impact on the number of Early Help Plans started during 2024/25 and have helped with reducing the number of children and young people moving up to Child in Need or Child Protection. The number of children on CiN plans and on Child Protection plans remain static and in line with national figures.
* The BLOSM service is having a positive impact on those young people who attend Emergency Department due to substance and/or alcohol misuse and are seen as a vital service.
* The proportion of Care Leavers that stay In Touch has been very good in 2024/25 as well as the proportion in Suitable Accommodation.

These processes and outcomes evidence how Calderdale’s partnership is embedding a culture of learning, ensuring that insights from data are translated into tangible changes in practice and better outcomes for children and families.

**Next Steps**  
Building on the strong foundations of the Performance Management Group, the CSCP will continue to strengthen how data and intelligence are used to inform safeguarding practice and strategic planning. Priorities for 2025/26 include:

* **Deepening Analysis** – moving beyond trends to focus on the quality of practice and outcomes, including greater use of longitudinal analysis to track the impact of interventions over time.
* **Enhancing Accessibility** – refining how data is presented so that it is more accessible and usable for frontline practitioners and senior leaders alike, ensuring insights drive timely action across all levels of the partnership.
* **Integrating Qualitative Evidence** – embedding case studies, voice of the child, and practitioner feedback alongside performance metrics to provide a richer understanding of the lived experience behind the data.
* **Strengthening Predictive Insight** – exploring opportunities for more proactive use of data, such as predictive analysis and thematic deep dives, to anticipate risks earlier and inform preventative responses.
* **Driving Accountability** – further embedding the “So What?” challenge process to ensure that data is consistently translated into action, and that impact is routinely tested against outcomes for children and families.
* **Improving System Connectivity** – aligning CSCP performance data more closely with regional datasets and the work of the Safeguarding Adults Board, ensuring a joined-up approach across the whole safeguarding system.

Through these next steps, the CSCP aims to not only sustain but deepen the impact of its performance and intelligence function, ensuring that Calderdale remains proactive, evidence-led, and responsive to the needs of children and families.

### Independent Scrutiny

Independent Scrutiny in Calderdale occurs at both strategic and operational levels. The partnership uses the [Independent Scrutiny and Assurance Framework](https://safeguarding.calderdale.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/CSCP-independent-scrutiny-and-assurance-framework-1.pdf) 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.

#### 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 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 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.

Throughout the year, the Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership has sought to observe and evaluate how agencies work together effectively to provide children and families with the right help at the right time, in line with the Joint Targeted Area Inspection focus of *‘The Multi Agency Response to Identification of Initial Need and Risk’*. The partnership has helped to coordinate, monitor, promote and evaluate the work of the partners and how effectively each agency contributes to the multi-agency response, including early decision-making across early help, child in need and child protection. The multi-agency Quality Assurance Subgroup receives summaries of the learning from Police, Children’s Social Care, and health focussed audits. These have included on domestic abuse and risk outside the home as priorities for the CSCP.

Children who are victims of domestic violence

Domestic abuse remains a key safeguarding priority for the CSCP, with children recognised as direct victims. To support assurance and continuous improvement, the CSCP has undertaken extensive independent scrutiny and analysis of how children exposed to domestic abuse are identified, assessed, and safeguarded across the multi-agency partnership. This includes audits of case practice, a huge piece of work on self-assessment compared to the JTAI framework, review of referral and risk assessment processes, and consideration of learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs).

The 2024 audit and subsequent assurance work highlighted the strengths of the Calderdale system, including:

* Collaborative and persistent multi-agency practice, with good representation in meetings such as DRAMM and MARAC.
* Use of safety planning and risk assessment, alongside consent and incorporation of the child’s voice in decision-making.
* High-quality, trauma-informed practice from teams such as the Family Intervention Team (FIT) and Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs), demonstrating sensitivity to victims’ holistic needs.
* Positive engagement across health, education, social care, housing, and voluntary sector partners responses to changing risks.

Areas for further development were also identified, including:

* Strengthening consistency in multi-agency processes, including minute sign-off, action tracking, and invitation practices.
* Enhancing clarity and use of professional language, particularly in recording risk and perpetrator information
* Improving engagement with non-responsive victims and increasing focus on perpetrator accountability, including during prison release and post-DHR learning.
* Ensuring effective communication and timely involvement of health professionals and schools in safeguarding plans.

Impact & Next Steps:

* The audit and assurance work provide confidence that multi-agency systems are largely effective in protecting children from domestic abuse, with clear examples of good practice across services.
* Next steps include continued refinement of risk assessment, professional training, and quality assurance frameworks; strengthening perpetrator management and interventions; ensuring all agencies consistently capture and act on the child’s lived experience; and embedding learning from DHRs into operational practice.
* CSCP will maintain continuous monitoring, challenge, and improvement of safeguarding children affected by domestic abuse.

Serious Youth Violence

#### The Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) continues to prioritise understanding and mitigating serious youth violence, recognising its dual impact on both those who perpetrate and those who are victims. In May 2024, an audit was conducted on a small cohort of children engaged with the Youth Justice Service (YJS), focusing on safeguarding practice, risk management, and vulnerability in line with Calderdale’s Risk and Vulnerability in Adolescence Strategy.

Key Findings

The audit highlighted several areas of good practice across multi-agency work, including: use of chronologies, effective risk assessment tools, information sharing, child-centred approaches, and engagement with the voice of the child. The expertise and support from the YJS were evident, particularly in addressing neurodiverse needs, domestic abuse exposure, and the challenges of education engagement. Flexible approaches, such as adapting return home interviews to meet young people’s needs, were noted as important for safeguarding.

#### Feedback from Young People: Knife Crime Survey

A survey with young people from YJS resilience groups explored perceptions of knife crime, safety, and local support. Findings suggested that most felt safe, but some identified specific risks in their communities. Carrying knives was predominantly for protection, influenced by peer or family factors. Young people highlighted the importance of improved education, family support, visible community safety measures, and more effective service delivery. All had received education on knife crime and found it helpful.

Strategic Impact and Next Steps

The audit reinforces the importance of multi-agency coordination, early identification of vulnerabilities, and child-centred approaches in mitigating serious youth violence. Key next steps include enhancing flexible engagement, strengthening education support for at-risk children, and ensuring that intelligence and learning from young people inform preventative interventions. Continued scrutiny and partnership working aim to reduce risk, improve outcomes, and support safer communities across Calderdale.

**Missing Children**

The CSCP recognises that children who go missing—whether from home, care, school, or wider professional oversight—face heightened risks of harm and exploitation. Building on previous audits of children excluded from education and those who are home educated, the Partnership has continued to focus on children who are “missing from sight” as well as those recorded as missing from education.

An audit of Return Home Conversations (RHCs) in 2024 found that two-thirds of young people participated in face-to-face conversations, with all children offered an RHC within recommended timescales wherever possible. The audit highlighted that consistency of contact, respectful communication, and flexible approaches are essential to building trust and supporting meaningful safeguarding.

In addition, CSCP is part of the assurance group for the new *Missing From Care Pilot* led by West Yorkshire Police. CSCP will undertake a further audit to monitor the effectiveness of the protocol and in particular ensure that those most vulnerable—particularly children at risk of exploitation—do not slip through the gaps.

#### **Conclusion and Ongoing Commitment**

Across domestic abuse, serious youth violence, and missing children, the CSCP recognises the significant and evolving risks faced by children both within the family and outside the home. Independent scrutiny has provided valuable assurance of effective multi-agency safeguarding practice, while also identifying areas where systems and responses can be strengthened.

Going forward, the CSCP will continue to prioritise rigorous, independent scrutiny of domestic abuse and of risk and harm to children outside the home, ensuring that learning informs practice and drives measurable impact. Through sustained challenge, assurance, and partnership working, the CSCP remains committed to strengthening protection, amplifying the child’s voice, and reducing harm for Calderdale’s children and young people.

#### Impact of Independent Scrutiny – Front Door Arrangements

There 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).

The following multi-agency audits have been undertaken between April 2024 and March 2025 to seek assurance of Calderdale MAST.

Children referred to MAST with SEND – 1st May 2024

**Strategic Overview – Safeguarding Children at the Calderdale Front Door, Including SEND**

This audit reviewed how effectively children and young people—including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)—are safeguarded through the Calderdale Multi-Agency Screening Team (MAST). The audit highlighted that identifying children with SEND on existing systems can be challenging, with only one case clearly recognised as having SEND on the Children’s Social Care system. This has prompted further review by the Business Intelligence Team and senior leaders to ensure that current and future IT systems, including MOSAIC, better capture and support the needs of SEND children.

**Findings:**

* **Strengths:** Consent was consistently sought and maintained, the child’s voice was well documented in most cases, social workers advocated effectively using tools such as the Neglect Toolkit, and cases were generally managed in a timely and coordinated manner. Thoughtful consideration was given to children’s medical, emotional, and social needs, particularly for complex cases.
* **Areas for Development:** Gaps were identified in multi-agency screening, risk assessment completeness, communication with referrers and health professionals, and timely case transfers. Opportunities exist to strengthen professional curiosity, ensure the child’s voice is fully considered in exploitation contexts, and improve information sharing and coordination across services.

**Impact & Next Steps:**

* The audit provides assurance that children are largely safeguarded effectively through MAST include enhancing identification of SEND children, improving information-sharing and communication with referrers and health partners, embedding professional curiosity, and reviewing processes for risk assessment and case transfers.
* Learning from the audit will inform IT system improvements, training, and practice guidance, ensuring that children with SEND and complex needs continue to receive timely, coordinated, and proportionate safeguarding support.

Children referred to MAST victims of Intrafamilial Sexual Abuse and the quality of strategy meetings – 16th September 2024

This audit endeavoured to look at how children who have experienced sexual abuse (more specifically intra familial sexual abuse) are referred, assessed, and supported. The audit findings were then tiagulated with the findings from [National review into child sexual abuse within the family environment - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-review-into-child-sexual-abuse-within-the-family-environment)

* There was clear rationale documented for why Strategy Meetings were convened, and all meetings took place in a timely manner.
* The quality of Strategy Meeting minutes was consistently good, with detailed information and case history recorded.
* Robust safety plans were developed in each Strategy Meeting and clearly documented in the minutes.
* Most cases had clear safety plans with specific actions assigned to named individuals.
* In several cases, all relevant partners were invited and attended the Strategy Meetings.
* Outcomes were appropriately shared with relevant partners in the majority of cases.
* It was agreed in all cases that the intervention by the front door/MAST team effectively reduced risk to the child.
* Perpetrators were questioned or arrested promptly in several cases.
* Support offered to child victims to aid their recovery was clear and positive in multiple cases.
* There was evidence of strong multi-agency collaboration, particularly around complex concerns such as child sexual abuse, with active involvement from referring professionals and thorough information sharing to enhance risk analysis.

This audit findings compelled the partnership to agree on a shared understanding of the storing and distribution of strategy meeting minutes and scrutinise the importance of the right professionals being in attendance at the Strategy meetings. There was learning around sharing PNC and PND checks in a timely manner by police.

The Strategy Meeting process was found to be effective and timely in all cases with robust and clear safety plans. In all cases the intervention from the front door helped to identify and reduce the risk for the child.

Children referred to MAST with Mental Health issues and the quality of referrals – 27th January 2025

This audit endeavoured to look at how children who were referred into the MAST team due to needing support around their mental health were supported. The audit also looked at the quality of referrals from partners into the front door. The audit questions were formed using findings from [**Feeling Heard**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/feeling-heard-partner-agencies-working-together-to-make-a-difference-for-children-with-mental-ill-health) report. This audit also sought to review the quality of referrals coming into the MAST team, based on findings from the most recent JTAI Inspections of the multi-agency response to identification of initial need and risk in Richmond, Rochdale, Buckinghamshire and Torbay. Attempting to evaluate aspects such as how well referrals captured the child’s voice and considered their unique circumstances, professional curiosity, information sharing, and the overall quality of the referrals.

**Findings:**

* Overall, referrals often showed evidence of joint working, consent, and attention to historical information and wider contextual factors. High-quality police referrals were highlighted as examples of good practice.
* Common themes in children’s cases included pre-existing mental health support, child-to-parent conflict, historical domestic abuse, neurodiversity, and negative impacts of social media.
* Areas for improvement included clearer communication between agencies, particularly with health partners; better inclusion of family circumstances and the child’s voice in some referrals; and enhanced awareness of referral pathways, including distinctions between CAMHS and other local mental health services. School nursing involvement and links to Early Help pathways were also identified as areas requiring further attention.

**Impact & Next Steps:**

* The audit demonstrates that MAST referrals are generally well-informed and collaborative, supporting timely and proportionate responses to children’s mental health needs.
* Next steps include strengthening inter-agency communication, clarifying referral pathways for mental health services, enhancing training on capturing children’s voices and lived experiences, and improving school and health partner engagement.
* Sharing examples of high-quality referrals and good practice across agencies will support consistency and professional learning, ensuring children receive the right support at the right time.

### Implementation of National Reforms

#### **Implementing National Safeguarding Reforms: Families First Strategic Group**

In response to the national reforms set out in the **Children’s Wellbeing and Schools Bill (2025)**, the CSCP is playing a key role in the development and implementation of the **Families First Programme**—Calderdale’s local transformation programme to deliver improved safeguarding and wellbeing outcomes for children and families.

The **Families First Strategic Group**, chaired by the Assistant Director for Early Intervention and Safeguarding, brings together senior leaders, operational managers, practitioners, and representatives from health, police, education, public health, and the voluntary and community sector.

A **shared vision**, aligned with Calderdale’s 2034 ambition, underpins this work: that all children and families should have access to **high-quality, joined-up support** that is co-designed with communities, driven by data and lived experience, and built on Calderdale’s established **systemic practice model.**

In Calderdale, we are in a strong position to deliver these reforms. We already have well-established Family Hubs, recognised for their strong co-production and engagement with children and families. Our Families Intervention Team (FIT) provides a robust Early Help offer, with clear evidence of positive outcomes for children and families. FIT workers are already leading Child in Need cases, under social work supervision—a model that reflects national direction. We also have Family Group Conferencing in place and benefit from a mature and committed multi-agency partnership. While we still have more to do to align and embed our existing strengths within the Families First framework, we are not starting from scratch. One area that will require development is the establishment of Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams, but due to the strength and confidence in other areas, we are pressing ahead. The whole partnership has stepped up with energy and commitment, looking outward to learn from other areas and ensure that our implementation is informed by evidence of what works and how others have overcome barriers.

#### Key areas of activity include:

* Establishing the strategic **planning group**, agreeing governance & terms of reference.
* Developing a **Performance & Intelligence framework** to track outcomes and inform decision-making.
* Launching a **coordinated engagement programme** with children, families, and practitioners to shape reforms.
* Strengthening **front door (MAST)** arrangements and reviewing Early Help, Family Group Conferencing, and kinship care services.
* Planning for a **pilot multi-agency child protection team** and exploring **co-located working arrangements** (Q1–Q2 2026).
* Investing in **training and development**, including consideration of systemic practice and multi-agency delivery models.

While early in its implementation phase, the programme reflects a **proactive, joined-up approach to national reform**. The CSCP will continue to provide oversight, and contribute to the delivery of a more **integrated and effective safeguarding system** for children and young people in Calderdale.

## Additional Information

### Focus on strategic priorities:

Improving outcomes for victims and survivors of Domestic Abuse – including Children

The CSCP has continued to play an active and supportive role in improving outcomes for victims and survivors of domestic abuse, including children and young people. In close collaboration with the Domestic Abuse Strategic Board, the CSCP has contributed to the development of a more robust and evidence-informed response to domestic abuse across the borough.

In Calderdale, EdShift support children affected by domestic abuse, offering emotional help and education through creative programmes.  Their work helps children feel safer, more confident, and better able to understand and talk about their experiences.

As well as the aforementioned audits, self-assessment activity, and learning from DHRs, a key area of progress has been the introduction of a new Domestic Abuse Performance Management dataset from the CSCP, designed to provide a clearer picture of local needs, service impact, and emerging trends. To support effective oversight, a dedicated multi-agency Performance Management Subgroup has been established which spans CSCP, Safeguarding Adults and Community Safety partners. This group brings together partners to independently scrutinise domestic abuse data, identify gaps, and ensure a more joined-up and accountable response to tackling domestic abuse. The DA dataset is evidencing how practice and outcomes are affected following learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews, and CSPRs where DA is a feature.

The CSCP has also supported efforts to strengthen the skills and confidence of the workforce in responding to domestic abuse. In particular, targeted training has been delivered to agencies and professionals in response to learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs). The CSCP seeks regular assurance from partners that their staff are accessing the most up-to-date training and guidance, and that domestic abuse is a core component of safeguarding learning and development programmes.

The CSCP has led significant improvements to the MARAC process to ensure a more robust, timely, and effective multi-agency response to domestic abuse. Drawing on learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews, local observations, and analysis of domestic abuse data, the partnership has embedded changes that strengthen both practice and strategic oversight. The revised process ensures that all relevant information is collated to inform high-quality risk assessments, that multi-agency risk management plans are clear, coordinated and outcome-focused, and that records, review points, and contingency plans provide accountability and assurance. Outcomes are now circulated more effectively to relevant agencies, enabling swift and joined-up safeguarding responses.

Strategically, the CSCP will be reviewing MARAC procedures as to how it anticipates and responds to escalating risks. This includes considering a multi-agency review mechanism where there are indicators of increased risk, such as the retraction of a statement in high-risk cases or the release of a perpetrator from custody on remand. A stronger focus has also been placed on the systematic exploration of historical information, ensuring patterns of behaviour and cumulative risk are not overlooked. Together, these developments ensure that risk is assessed in a more holistic way, that agencies act swiftly when circumstances change, and that the partnership maintains a clear line of sight on the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements. Ultimately, this positions the Calderdale partnership to deliver greater impact in reducing harm, improving safety, and driving long-term improvements in the response to domestic abuse.

Other sections of this report further highlight the focussed work of the partnership on domestic abuse.

Risk Outside the Home

Calderdale’s Multi-Agency Response to Risk Outside the Home is a facilitated a dedicated multi-agency CSCP workstream focused on Risk and Vulnerability in Adolescence. This area of work recognises the complex and contextual risks that some young people face in adolescence, including during key transitional stages as they move towards adulthood.

The workstream has brought together a broad and committed multi-agency partnership to build shared understanding, develop practice, and improve outcomes for children and young people exposed to extra-familial harm. Together, we have developed a clear picture of the local context, recognising the unique demographic and socio-economic landscape of Calderdale, and how this influences the nature of risk and required responses.

Key achievements of this work have included:

* **Developing the Local Evidence Base**: Intelligence and performance data has been collated and analysed to monitor trends and measure progress on issues such as knife crime, child sexual exploitation and abuse (CSE/CSA), missing episodes, school exclusions and suspensions, harmful sexual behaviour (HSB), A&E presentations for substance misuse, and crimes where children are victims, including sexual offences.
* **Undertaking Targeted Multi-Agency Audits:** The partnership has undertaken focused audits on key areas of concern, including school exclusions, elective home education (where there have been prior safeguarding concerns), serious youth violence, mental health, and homelessness risks for 16–17-year-olds. These audits identified examples of strong multi-agency working and highlighted areas where local influence is limited due to wider policy constraints, such as national directives on exclusions. However, they also generated valuable learning, which has been translated into SMART actions. These are monitored through established multi-agency partnership meetings, with progress reported to the CSCP Executive.
* **Raising Awareness and Building Capacity**: Awareness raising, training, and guidance have been provided across the partnership to increase understanding of contextual and transitional safeguarding. This included a high-profile keynote conference delivered by Dez Holmes, a leading voice in this field.
* **Strengthening Strategic Capacity**: Recognising that professionals across agencies are balancing this work alongside significant demands in their core roles, the CSCP has invested in dedicated resource by recruiting a **Risk Outside the Home Officer**. This role, hosted within the CSCP Secretariat and managed by the Safeguarding Partnerships Manager for an 18-month period, will lead on the development of local policies, procedures, training and the implementation of innovative approaches to safeguarding adolescents and supporting transitions to adulthood.
* **Embedding Transitional Safeguarding and Cross-Partnership Collaboration**: Strong and effective links have been developed with the Calderdale Safeguarding Adults Board (CSAB), supported by a shared Secretariat and joint infrastructure. Shared development sessions have focused on Transitional Safeguarding, highlighting how Calderdale services are flexing their responses beyond statutory thresholds to better support young people. The CSCP and CSAB are actively collaborating to develop joint protocols and explore ways in which services can adapt to prevent a ‘cliff edge’ at the age of 18. Particular focus has been given to young people who may not meet adult service criteria but remain vulnerable—such as those with mental health needs, who have been exploited, or have previously been subject to child protection plans. The shared vision is to create a seamless pathway into adulthood, supporting young people to become resilient and safe adults. To improve mental health support for care leavers, Calderdale’s Care Leavers Team secured ICB funding for a full-time mental health professional. This strengthens transitional safeguarding by ensuring young people continue to receive emotional support as they move into adulthood.

Risk Outside the Home: Education, Exclusions, and Children Missing Education

Alongside the Risk Outside the Home workstreams, the CSCP has considered related areas such as school attendance, exclusions, and children attending accident and emergency with injuries. These issues remain important indicators of broader safeguarding concerns, and the partnership continues to scrutinise data and trends to inform timely responses.

**Permanent Exclusions and Suspensions**  
In 2024/25, Calderdale saw a reduction in permanent exclusions by just over 10%, with the most notable improvement in secondary schools (down 20%). Primary phase exclusions remained broadly static, though some increases were noted in the Spring term. Suspensions showed mixed performance, with secondary schools largely stable and primary phase suspensions reducing significantly. While challenges remain in addressing the needs of excluded pupils, early intervention, preventative work in mainstream schools, and reintegration through Fair Access Protocol meetings are showing promising impacts. The priority moving forward is to embed the three-tier Alternative Provision model, strengthen multi-agency preventative approaches, and ensure children remain in, or return to, mainstream education with the right support.

**Children Missing Education (CME)**  
CME referrals increased during 2024/25, reflecting improved identification and recording processes. Centralised data now captures a wide range of cases, including home educated children where provision is unsuitable, permanently excluded children not accessing statutory Day 6 provision, and pupils who have not started at their allocated school. Early identification and intervention enable families to access advice, support, and solutions quickly, with most cases resolved within six weeks. Robust systems and partnership working help safeguard children by ensuring they remain engaged in education and reducing the risk of social isolation or disengagement.

**Electively Home Educated Children (EHE)**  
The number of home educated children rose by 26.6%, including an increase in those with EHCPs. While parental choice limits direct control, proactive engagement through weekly duty sessions and strengthened collaboration with schools aims to offer support, prevent unsuitable home education, and reintegrate children into school where appropriate. Enforcement actions have successfully returned children to education, safeguarding their right to learning and ensuring vulnerable cohorts are monitored and supported.

**Strategic Impact and Next Steps**  
Through enhanced data systems, targeted intervention, and multi-agency coordination, Calderdale is improving its response to children at risk of exclusion, or missing education. The ongoing focus remains on early identification, collaborative support with families and schools, and embedding preventative approaches across the partnership. Further work will continue to refine systems, address resource pressures, and strengthen pathways to ensure all children in Calderdale can access safe, suitable, and consistent education.

#### BLOSM

BLOSM supports vulnerable individuals aged 11 and over attending Accident & Emergency at Calderdale Royal Hospital and Huddersfield Royal Infirmary. The multidisciplinary team works in both hospital and community settings to identify needs and connect people to appropriate community services, aiming to reduce unnecessary A&E visits.

The service focuses on reducing avoidable emergency attendances by addressing complex social and health needs, providing timely support, and promoting long-term wellbeing.

Key areas include Youth Navigation (support for ages 11–25), Substance Care (support for drug and alcohol issues), High Intensity User support (for frequent A&E attendees), and Staff Development promoting trauma-informed care.

Since 2022, BLOSM faced staffing changes but improved consistency by recruiting its own Youth Navigation team in 2024. This has strengthened relationships and engagement with young people. Challenges include funding uncertainty beyond 2024/25 and delays in community referrals. The team aims to demonstrate impact as an admission avoidance service, continuing to build partnerships and capture feedback. Positive feedback highlights the value of their person-centred approach.

Poverty and Social Deprivation

The impact of poverty, deprivation and inequality on children’s safety and wellbeing remains a significant concern for the Partnership. Evidence from local and national reviews shows a consistent and disproportionate link between levels of deprivation and child deaths, neglect, and abuse. Across Calderdale, Kirklees and Wakefield, the Child Death Overview Panels continue to monitor these inequalities closely, recognising the persistent gap in child mortality rates between the most and least deprived communities. Targeted work is being explored to address contributory factors, such as poverty and unsafe sleeping practices, with a focus on how agencies can intervene earlier and more effectively.

Data also highlights the wider impact of deprivation on the daily lives and risks faced by children and young people. At BLOSM Accident & Emergency, for example, the majority of young people attending are from the most deprived areas, with 74% of engagements coming from these communities. This trend mirrors wider safeguarding concerns: poverty and deprivation are strongly correlated with children in need of help and protection, those subject to child protection procedures, looked after children, and care leavers. They are also linked to school exclusions, sexual harm, and increasingly to children who are educated at home.

The CSCP recognises that tackling the root causes of harm requires a whole-system approach. While safeguarding services cannot resolve poverty alone, the Partnership has a vital role in understanding the impact of deprivation on children’s lives, challenging agencies to consider these factors in assessments, and ensuring responses are tailored to the realities faced by families. Going forward, the Partnership will continue to strengthen its work on inequalities, contribute to the learning and priorities of the Child Death Overview Panels, and promote targeted, joined-up responses that address the risks associated with deprivation.

The picture shows one of the launches of the new CSCP Neglect Toolkit at the Anti-Poverty Event in May 2024 at Todmorden Town Hall.



### Workforce Development

#### Multi-Agency Training

The Multi-Agency Training statistics from April 2024 to March 2025 show another increase in both eLearning and face to face learning sessions. The training most frequently accessed align with those promoted by the CSCP, and are from learning from Reviews, from areas highlighted as needing improvement, from national drives and from local demand.

Some highlights from the year include:

Live Face to face Training

This year, 1576 places were filled, a continuing increase from last year, with a 561 increase over the last 2 years. Previous years’ face to face training figures show:

* 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
* 1015 places were filled on live sessions 2022-23
* **1484** **places were filled on live sessions 2023-24**

The following courses had the highest number of attendances:

* Prevent Series of Training
* Lunch and Learn (Learning from Reviews, SAR, CSPR and DHR)
* Threshold Guidance for Safeguarding Adults at Risk
* Fatherhood Institute series of briefings
* Working Together 2023 and ‘Meet the Teams’ (introductory sessions to introduce and understand the different early help and safeguarding services in Calderdale from across the multi-agency partnership)
* Trauma Informed practice - introduction
* Modern Slavery, Spiritualistic and Ritual Abuse (photo from this event preparation below).



e-Learning:

In 2024-25 a total of 6601 licences were issued. This compares to 5780 licences allocated in 2023-2024.

The types of e-learning courses most frequently accessed include Child Criminal Exploitation, Gangs and County Lines, Child & Adult Sexual Exploitation, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Basic safeguarding, radicalisation and extremism, reducing parental conflict, Self-Harm, Supporting teenagers and young people, Toxic Trio, Impacts of Domestic Abuse, Mental Capacity Act and working with Children with disabilities and learning difficulties.

Some examples of the difference training has made to practitioners include:

* To continue having an openminded about people’s actions but to consider the reasons more deeply as to why some behaviours are as they are
* We are not challenging beliefs but the abuse that someone may be subjected to
* Thinking about why people may not attend appointments and how trauma can have an impact on their engagement.
* This reinforced the messages that it is not just about sharing information, the information has to be understandable and clear for all agencies.
* In order to effectively support, there is need to understand their background or history. This could greatly determine how successful the support would be.
* The analogy used to explain how the behaviours are formed and reinforced within the brain pathways was fascinating. I will definitely use this to explain to people why children repeat unwanted behaviours despite being told over and over again.

An increase in Foster Carers attending the training is as a direct result of the local authority working more closely with them to encourage uptake.

A specific conference held across the Yorkshire and Humber region for ‘Improving Cultural Competency: Identifying and Addressing Barriers to Better Outcomes’ had excellent take up with Calderdale professionals having the most attendees.

There is a strong commitment to learning and continuous improvement in Calderdale. The CSCP has made significant efforts to ensure that training is meaningful and relevant, consistently linking it to learning from reviews, as well as findings from quality assurance processes and independent scrutiny that highlight areas for local development.

The Learning & Improvement Officer works with frontline managers and experts to develop local learning. This collaborative approach ensures that training, briefings, and toolkits developed by the CSCP are locally relevant and aligned with best practice. By working closely with frontline managers and subject matter experts, the Learning & Improvement Officer creates resources that reflect current safeguarding priorities, and incorporate emerging learning from serious case reviews, inspections, and sector developments. Having both online and face-to-face delivery makes training accessible and flexible, while maintaining opportunities for interactive discussion and shared problem-solving. As a result, professionals across the partnership are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to apply learning in their roles, ultimately strengthening safeguarding practice and improving outcomes for children, young people, and families in Calderdale.

Impact of multi-agency learning

**Improved Identification of Intrafamilial Child Sexual Abuse (CSA):**  
In response to a recognised gap in professional confidence around identifying intrafamilial CSA—particularly among social workers—planning is underway for a new MA training session: *Recognising and Responding to Child Sexual Abuse within the Family*. The low number of identified cases raised concerns about under-recognition. The forthcoming training, developed in partnership with local authority colleagues, will support a shared understanding and response across the partnership, tailored to the differing roles of those working with children and families. This initiative aims to ensure consistent and effective identification and intervention.

**Strengthening Safeguarding Practice with Non-Verbal and Disabled Children:**  
Learning from a foster carer Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) led to immediate action in developing and delivering MA training focused on identifying sexual abuse in non-verbal children. Feedback and ongoing engagement with the SEND and Disabled Children’s Team further revealed a wider knowledge gap in recognising various forms of abuse in both preverbal and non-verbal children. As a result, a more extensive and inclusive training offer is being developed to enhance the safeguarding response for some of the most vulnerable children. This demonstrates a responsive and evolving training model, shaped by real-world learning and service-user need.

**Enhanced Multi-Agency Contribution to Child Protection Conferences:**  
The longstanding challenge of partner agency preparedness for Child Protection Conferences has been significantly mitigated. Over the past three years, bespoke training has been delivered to support professionals’ understanding of their role, the conference process, and report-writing expectations. This year, a notable decline in course bookings—combined with feedback from Independent Reviewing Officers—indicates that earlier training has embedded well. IROs have observed improved confidence among professionals, with higher quality reports and more meaningful contributions. This reflects sustained impact and improved multi-agency functioning. Planning is now underway to broaden the scope of this training to support contributions to other child protection meetings.

**Increased Safeguarding Leadership Capacity in Non-Education Settings:**  
Following an earlier piece of work that identified gaps in Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) coverage in non-school settings, there has been a sharp increase in uptake for the *Non-School DSL* course. The most recent and forthcoming sessions have been oversubscribed, prompting the addition of extra dates. This reflects raised awareness, increased demand, and a strengthening of safeguarding leadership capacity across the wider system.

#### Safeguarding Week 2024

Calderdale Safeguarding Week 2024 delivered a coordinated programme of **23 learning sessions**, engaging over **520 professionals** from children’s and adults’ services. The event combined online, hybrid, and face-to-face delivery and formed part of a wider West Yorkshire initiative. Sessions covered a broad range of safeguarding topics, including exploitation, online safety, working with fathers, safeguarding in sport, Prevent, extremism, and managing allegations.

The week demonstrated strong **cross-partnership commitment** to professional development, knowledge sharing, and continuous learning. Highlights included a regional webinar by Neil Allen on Mental Capacity and Deprivation of Liberty, which was highly rated and strengthened practitioners’ understanding of complex legal frameworks. Locally, face-to-face sessions promoted engagement and inter-agency collaboration, while online formats broadened access and participation.

Evaluation feedback suggests that participants felt better equipped to apply learning in practice, with improved confidence, curiosity, and intentions to share insights within their teams. Website traffic to Safeguarding Week pages more than doubled from 2023, indicating increased interest and reach, although social media engagement was modest, highlighting opportunities to broaden partner communication in future.

**Impact:**

* Strengthened workforce knowledge, confidence, and professional curiosity across the safeguarding system.
* Enhanced multi-agency collaboration and engagement through face-to-face and hybrid sessions.
* Improved accessibility and reach through digital and regional initiatives.
* Directly informed ongoing improvements in safeguarding practice and professional development planning.

**Next Steps:**

* Build on evaluation findings to further enhance programme accessibility, particularly through recorded sessions and wider communications.
* Broaden partner engagement in publicity and social media to maximise reach and awareness.
* Continue to embed learning from Safeguarding Week into practice, supporting more confident, informed, and collaborative safeguarding responses.
* Maintain alignment with regional initiatives to ensure consistency and shared learning across West Yorkshire.

### Transitional Safeguarding

The CSCP and Safeguarding Adults Board continue to prioritise Transitional Safeguarding, recognising the heightened vulnerabilities of young people moving from childhood into adulthood. The 2024 Joint Development Day brought together 21 organisations to reflect on progress against the previously agreed Transitional Safeguarding Principles, share good practice, and consider emerging risks across health, social care, youth justice, and voluntary sector services.

Discussions highlighted positive developments in multi-agency coordination, including joint transition panels, early identification of needs, and personalised approaches for young people. Examples included strengthened pathways for neurodiverse young people, enhanced mental health and trauma-informed support, and targeted initiatives such as Young People’s Violence Advocates and mentorship schemes. Agencies reported progress in embedding Transitional Safeguarding Principles into service delivery, aiming to ensure smoother, safer, and more supportive transitions to adulthood.

The development day also surfaced ongoing challenges, including resource pressures, gaps in adult services for neurodiverse and complex needs, and the need for more flexible, person-centred approaches. Emerging risks identified included rising mental health needs, domestic abuse, homelessness, child exploitation, and young people feeling unsafe in their communities.

**Impact:**

* Transitional Safeguarding practices in Calderdale are increasingly coordinated across child and adult services, with stronger communication, early planning, and multi-agency oversight.
* Pilot initiatives and tailored interventions are beginning to support young people more effectively, particularly in mental health, housing, and complex needs.
* Young people’s perspectives are increasingly being considered in planning transitions.

**Next Steps:**

* Continue strengthening multi-agency collaboration, particularly through transition panels and Family Hubs, to ensure holistic support for young people aged 15–25.
* Address gaps in adult services, including neurodiversity, trauma-informed care, and mental health pathways, through targeted training and development.
* Promote flexibility and continuity of care, including maintaining relationships with key workers, mentorship, and life-skills support.
* Formalise networks of approved therapeutic providers and services to streamline pathways for care leavers and those with complex needs.
* Expand evidence-informed initiatives such as the Complex Lives Panel and other best-practice models across services.
* Maintain focus on embedding Transitional Safeguarding principles across all agencies, with continued monitoring, evaluation, and involvement of young people in shaping services.

The picture below shows the multi-agency Transitional Safeguarding Event held by the CSCP and Safeguarding Adult Board at the Orangebox Young People’s Centre in Halifax Town Centre.



While significant progress has been made, the partnership acknowledges that this remains a developing area of practice. Ongoing commitment and focused leadership will be essential to embed new ways of working and deliver improved outcomes for vulnerable young people in Calderdale.

### Thresholds

##### Continuum of Need - Thresholds of Need and Intervention

The Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) maintains a Continuum of Need document to provide transparency and guidance for practitioners across the partnership. The document sets out local thresholds, helping professionals identify levels of need, determine appropriate responses, and ensure children and families receive timely and proportionate support.

It outlines processes for Early Help assessments and access to targeted Early Help services under sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004, promoting a consistent, multi-agency approach to early identification and intervention. It also clarifies criteria for referral to Children’s Social Care for statutory assessment and intervention, including cases under sections 17, 20, 31, and 47 of the Children Act 1989.

The guidance provides structured procedures for managing cases involving abuse, neglect, exploitation, children in the youth secure estate, and children with disabilities, helping professionals understand their responsibilities and available pathways. The document is supported by training, briefings, and practitioner tools, and is accessible via the CSCP website, which supports informed decision-making and consistency in safeguarding practice.

##### Challenge, Escalation and Dispute Resolution

We recognise that professional differences will inevitably arise in safeguarding practice. What matters is how these are resolved—swiftly, constructively, and always with the child or adult at risk at the centre of decision-making.

Over the past year, we have strengthened our approach to supporting professionals in resolving disputes:

* Updated the Dispute Resolution Process (2024): ensuring clear, step-by-step guidance for resolving professional differences.
* Implemented a new Professional Dispute Resolution Template: enabling agencies to record escalations, actions taken, and the outcome of disputes.
* Promoted the process regularly: through partnership communications, training, and subgroup discussions, to keep awareness high and support consistent use across the partnership.
* Embedded learning from reviews: We have acted on repeated findings from local and national reviews (CSPRs, DHRs, SARs), where lack of timely escalation has been a common theme. Our strengthened processes are designed to address this directly.

By embedding these improvements, the CSCP (together with the Safeguarding Adult Board) have made it easier for professionals to escalate concerns confidently, resolve disputes quickly, and ensure that safeguarding decisions remain focused on achieving the best outcomes for children and adults at risk.

### Specific cohorts: Focused attention on vulnerable cohorts

Protecting Our Most Vulnerable Children: Babies Under One

The CSCP has maintained a strong focus on safeguarding babies under the age of one, recognising them as a vulnerable group in our community. This year, partners have worked together to scrutinise data and intelligence relating to missed or unattended paediatric appointments, and to strengthen our quality assurance activity around non-accidental injury in infants. This has led to the development of new protocols, targeted audits, and the roll-out of initiatives such as the ICON programme, ensuring a consistent and proactive approach to prevention, early identification, and intervention for our youngest children.

**Paediatric ‘Was Not Brought’ (WNB) Referrals**  
In 2024/25, referrals to the CHFT Safeguarding Team under the *Was Not Brought* pathway almost doubled compared to the previous year. This increase is a positive reflection of the work undertaken to raise awareness and upskill staff across the organisation. Weekly monitoring by the Safeguarding Team ensures timely follow-up with families, supported by a clear Standard Operating Procedure.

Audit activity has provided assurance that referrals are being managed effectively, with consistent communication and timely re-engagement of families. Recent improvements now require cases to remain open until attendance at a rebooked appointment is confirmed. A re-audit in 2025/26 will assess the impact of these changes, ensuring the process continues to protect children from unmet health needs or hidden safeguarding risks.

**Non-Accidental Injury and the ICON Programme**  
The CSCP has strengthened practice around non-accidental injury in babies through updated multi-agency [protocol for non-mobile babies with injuries](https://westyorkscp.trixonline.co.uk/chapter/multi-agency-protocol-for-the-assessment-of-non-mobile-babies-with-injuries-including-bruising-burns-and-scalds-in-non-mobile-babies) and a Calderdale-specific [flowchart](https://trixcms.trixonline.co.uk/api/assets/westyorkscp/25ad2654-2e8b-452d-90ff-1edd63c00663/non-mobile-baby.pdf) designed to reduce delays in assessment. These changes ensure swifter, more coordinated responses when concerns are identified in non-mobile infants.

The relaunch of the [**ICON**](https://iconcope.org/)programme (“coping with crying”) was a key priority, following learning from Baby S (CSPR, Calderdale). A cross-partnership audit found that ICON messaging is being routinely delivered by midwives, health visitors, GPs, and perinatal mental health teams, with good practice evident across services. Agencies have developed targeted action plans to address gaps, particularly around consistency and ensuring resources are also shared with fathers and wider caregivers.

In addition, Calderdale Family Hubs held their first Baby Week, promoting emotional wellbeing, early connections, and positive parenting support for expectant families and those with babies and toddlers.

Calderdale Family Hubs held their first Baby Week focussed on the ‘Best Start – Connections’ for emotional health and wellbeing showcasing activities and support for expectant families and families with babies and toddlers.

**Impact & Next Steps**  
The partnership’s work has strengthened early safeguarding for babies, ensuring that missed appointments are followed up and risks of non-accidental injury are addressed promptly. Improved protocols, audit activity, and the ICON programme have embedded consistent, evidence-informed practice across health and care services.

Next steps will focus on:

* Continuing to monitor and refine the *Was Not Brought* pathway to ensure all infants are re-engaged in care.
* Strengthening engagement with fathers and wider family members in ICON messaging.
* Building on audit findings to address barriers and share examples of good practice across services.
* Promoting early emotional wellbeing and parent support through initiatives such as Baby Week and Family Hub activities.

#### Early help

Calderdale’s Early Help approach aims to provide children, young people, and families with support at an early stage, helping to reduce the likelihood of issues escalating to specialist services. Multi-agency collaboration—including the Families Intervention Team, Family Hubs, Children’s Centre Family Support Staff, Targeted Youth Support, the Young Carers Network, schools, and early years providers—supports identification of unmet needs, assessment of vulnerability, and delivery of timely interventions.

The Early Help Strategy offers a structured framework and pathway, embedding the Continuum of Need (the Thresholds guidance) into practice. This framework supports practitioners in decision-making, information-sharing, and collaborative work with families. For families, the strategy offers earlier access to support, clearer plans, and a more coordinated experience, contributing to improved outcomes.

The Early Help Guidance and Advice Service, operating alongside the Multi-Agency Screening Team (MAST), provides a single point of contact for families and professionals seeking information, guidance, or access to services. Performance and audit evidence suggests that the service supports timely advice, signposting, and coordination across universal and specialist services—including parenting programmes, emotional wellbeing support, services for children with disabilities, and wider community resources. This approach helps reduce the need for multiple referrals and supports a more consistent response across the partnership.

Observations on Impact: Early Help in Calderdale appears to offer earlier engagement with families and a clearer pathway for professionals seeking guidance. The approach seems to support resilience, prevent escalation of need, and contribute positively to children’s and families’ wellbeing. Continued monitoring of performance measures and evaluation is important to ensure the approach consistently achieves these aims.

The scale to the left shows Childrens views on the impact of Early Intervention services in Calderdale in 2024-2025, it supports the views of practitioners that early help in Calderdale is effective and having the intended impact.

### Mental health:

Supporting the mental health of children and young people remains a key priority for the partnership. We recognise that emotional wellbeing is central to safety, resilience, and positive life outcomes. Over the past year, the partnership has worked closely with health providers, schools, voluntary sector organisations, and public health colleagues to strengthen access to advice, signposting, and therapeutic support. This includes monitoring demand and waiting times, promoting digital and community-based offers, and addressing emerging risks such as substance and alcohol misuse. Our focus is on ensuring children and young people receive timely, coordinated, and compassionate care, while shaping future services through transformation work aligned with the THRIVE model.

Getting Advice & Signposting (First Point of Contact)

In 2024/25, the Getting Advice & Signposting service received 4,222 referrals, a 3% increase on the previous year. Nearly half (43%) were first-time referrals for children and young people with no previous contact with Northpoint, demonstrating the service’s vital role as an accessible entry point. At year end, 120 referrals were awaiting outcome, with systems in place to monitor and manage waiting numbers.

Neurodevelopmental (ND) needs continued to account for the majority of referrals (57%). While waiting lists remain significant, partners are working to streamline processes, with 107 children awaiting clinical review, 211 awaiting questionnaire returns, and 601 on the SWYPFT ND waiting list.

Digital support has remained strong, with 1,223 new Kooth registrations and over 4,400 log-ins during the year. The most common presenting issues were anxiety/stress, friendship concerns, and self-harm.

Despite increased demand, recruitment challenges, and workforce changes, providers have maintained performance. A Service Transformation Review, commissioned by the ICB with Public Health, Education and VCSE partners, is underway to inform future commissioning under the THRIVE model, focusing on joined-up pathways and stronger collaboration with the voluntary sector.

Emergency Department Attendances for Substance/Alcohol Misuse – Summary

CHFT, alongside partners including Locala, SWYFT, Humankind, and BLOSM, continues to deliver a joined-up response for children and young people attending ED with substance or alcohol-related concerns. Good practice includes timely referrals during ED presentations, effective information sharing through the Paediatric Liaison Service, and follow-up community support.

Challenges remain due to high ED demand and staff turnover, which can sometimes lead to incomplete referrals. To address this, safeguarding training, induction, and targeted communication are reinforcing the importance of dual referrals to both Humankind and BLOSM. Substance liaison practitioners and trauma navigators are now strengthening follow-up and continuity of care.

Impact is clear: BLOSM provides vital post-discharge support to vulnerable young people, with funding extended until March 2026. The addition of substance liaison practitioners in ED and wards has further improved outcomes and ensured continuity of safeguarding. Overall performance is rated Amber – Static, with no escalation required, but continued focus on referral pathways will be essential.

**Impact & Next Steps**  
The partnership has worked hard to try to ensure that children and young people in Calderdale continue to access timely advice, digital support, and community-based interventions despite rising demand. Strengthened referral pathways, improved follow-up in Emergency Departments, and extended funding for BLOSM are already making a difference for some of the most vulnerable young people. Looking ahead, the Service Transformation Review will provide the foundation for commissioning under the **THRIVE model**, with a focus on reducing waiting times, improving access for children with neurodevelopmental needs, so young people receive the right support, in the right place, at the right time.

### Engaging parents/caregivers:

The Partnership recognises that effective safeguarding depends on meaningful engagement with parents and carers. The Partnership are committed to:

* Listening to parents and carers: ensuring their views are considered as part of assessments, planning, and reviews.
* Improving communication: providing clear, accessible information to help families understand safeguarding processes, expectations, and support available.
* Embedding parental voice in assessments: encouraging practitioners to explore the lived experience of children alongside the perspective of parents and carers.
* Supporting positive change: working collaboratively with families to build on strengths while addressing risks and concerns.
* Promoting consistency: ensuring that professionals across agencies approach parents and carers with curiosity, respect, and sensitivity, avoiding jargon, having clear language, and ensuring understanding.
* Learning from feedback: using parental feedback from reviews, audits, and casework to inform service development and practice improvement.

Through this approach, the Partnership seeks to strengthen trust with families, improve the quality of assessments, and ensure that safeguarding responses are effective, proportionate, and centred on the needs of children.

## Future Planning

#### Areas for Ongoing Focus

While the Partnership has made strong progress over the past year, we remain clear that safeguarding is a dynamic and continually evolving area of work. Looking ahead, the CSCP will continue to prioritise:

* **Risks outside the home:** strengthening our collective response to extra-familial harm, including criminal and sexual exploitation, serious violence, and peer-on-peer abuse.
* **Online safety:** working with partners, schools, families, and young people to address the growing risks children face in the digital environment, ensuring responses keep pace with emerging threats.
* **Transitions to adulthood:** improving how agencies support young people as they move into adulthood, recognising this as a period of heightened vulnerability where safeguarding support must remain consistent.
* **Scrutiny and assurance:** further embedding a culture of robust self-evaluation, peer challenge, and shared learning to ensure safeguarding arrangements remain effective and drive improvement.
* **Children’s Services reforms:** supporting the development and implementation of national and local reforms in Children’s Services, ensuring that changes are shaped and informed by strong multi-agency safeguarding practice.

The CSCP remains committed to working together as a partnership to respond to these challenges, build on our strengths, and keep children and young people in Calderdale safe, supported, and able to thrive.

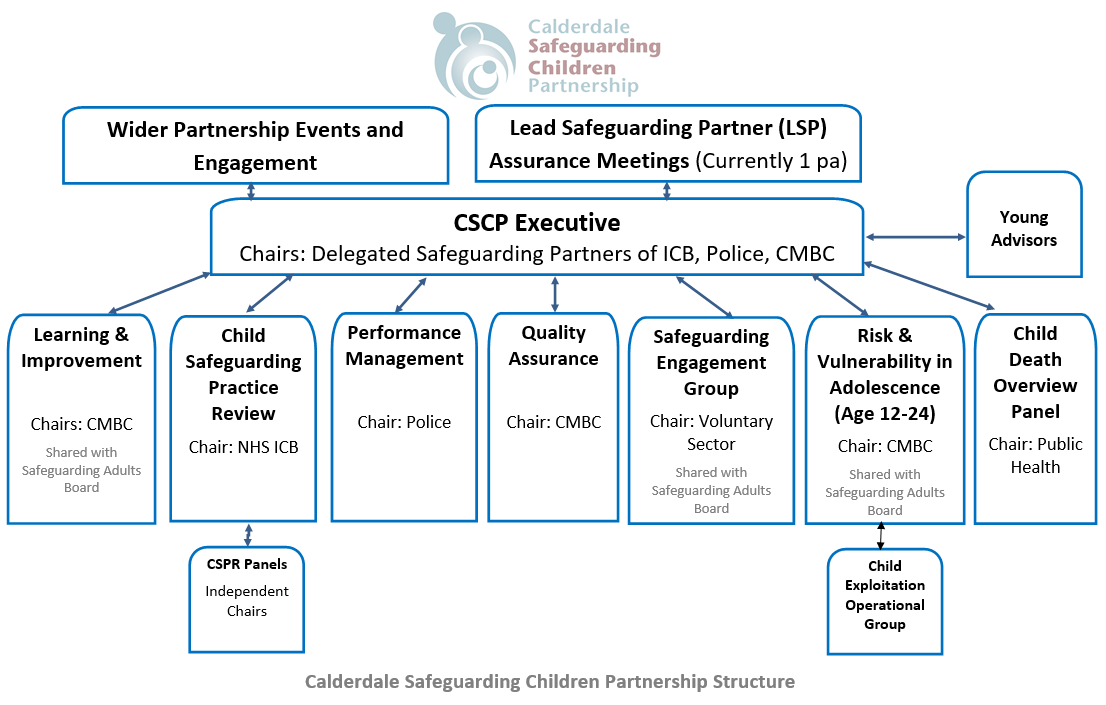
## Conclusion

This year the Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership has continued to deliver on its statutory responsibilities, demonstrating strong multi-agency collaboration and a shared commitment to protecting children. Learning from reviews has been embedded into practice, and well-established pathways for early help, child exploitation and missing children have strengthened the support offered to families. Our use of audits, data and practitioner feedback has provided assurance that improvements are making a real difference.

We recognise, however, that safeguarding is never static. As a Partnership we remain focused on addressing risks outside the home, strengthening responses to online harms, and supporting young people through the transition to adulthood. We will continue to build our culture of scrutiny and assurance, ensuring that agencies both support and challenge one another to improve outcomes. Looking ahead, we are committed to working together to support the wider reforms in Children’s Services, ensuring that safeguarding remains at the heart of change.

By sustaining our collective focus, the Partnership will continue to drive improvement and make a positive difference for children, young people and families in Calderdale.

## **Appendix 1 Structure Chart**

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## **Appendix 2 – Relevant Partner Agencies**

* Adult Services and Wellbeing including Adult Social Care – Calderdale MBC
* Alternative Providers of Education
* BLOSM – supporting 11–25 year olds in the hospital trust with complex social issues
* British Transport Police
* Brunswick Centre (LGBTQ+ Voluntary Sector Service)
* Business Intelligence and Transformation Services
* CAFCASS
* Calderdale and Huddersfield Foundation Trust (CHFT)
* Calderdale College
* Calderdale Governors Association (CGA)
* Children’s Residential Homes including private providers
* Commissioning Officers
* Community Safety Partnership
* Community Sports Development Services
* Day Nurseries
* Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator
* Early Years Quality and Improvement (Representing Childminders, Early Years Settings, Out of School Clubs)
* Early Years, SEND and Portage
* Education providers (Primary and Secondary Head Teachers Association & Designated Safeguarding Lead Network)
* Families Intervention Team
* Family Hubs
* Forget Me Not Hospice
* Halifax Opportunities Trust and North Halifax Partnership (Children’s Centre, Family Hubs, and Family Support)
* Happy Days
* Homelessness Services
* Independent Fostering Agencies
* Ivision Trust – supporting parents whose children have been exploited
* Learning Disability Voluntary Services
* Locala School Nurse and Health Visiting Service
* Mental Health Team in Schools
* Noah’s Ark – mental health voluntary sector provider
* One Adoption
* Prevent Coordinator
* Probation Service
* Public Health
* Religious Organisations
* School Safeguarding Advisors
* Sexual Health Provision
* South West Yorkshire Partnership Foundation Trust (SWYPFT)
* Special school for boys with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties
* Sports and Leisure Organisations
* St Augustine’s Centre (support for people seeking asylum)
* Together Housing Group
* Voluntary Sector Infrastructure Service (VSI)
* Violent Crime Coordinator
* Vulnerable Learners Service
* West Yorkshire Fire Service
* West Yorkshire Financial Exploitation & Abuse Team
* WomensCentre Specialist Domestic Abuse Provider Service
* Yorkshire Ambulance Service
* Young Carers
* Youth Justice Service

## Appendix 3 – Changes to Local Multi-Agency Safeguarding Procedures in 2024-2025

**Updated Chapters – December 2024**

* [Child Abuse and Information Communication Technology](file:///T:\_ARCHIVE%20CustProcs\West%20Yorks%20SCP\Published\2024%20VERSIONS\West%20Yorks%20SCP%20Dec%202024%20amd%20270125\html\p_ca_information.html) - This chapter has been updated in line with the Online Safety Act 2023.
* [Child Exploitation: Policy, Procedures and Guidance](file:///T:\_ARCHIVE%20CustProcs\West%20Yorks%20SCP\Published\2024%20VERSIONS\West%20Yorks%20SCP%20Dec%202024%20amd%20270125\html\p_sg_ch_and_yp.html)- Minor amendments have been made to definitions in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.
* [Children from Abroad, including Victims of Modern Slavery, Trafficking and Exploitation](file:///T:\_ARCHIVE%20CustProcs\West%20Yorks%20SCP\Published\2024%20VERSIONS\West%20Yorks%20SCP%20Dec%202024%20amd%20270125\html\p_child_from_abrd.html) - This chapter has been updated. A link has been added into Section 1.2.1, Age Assessments in relation to the National Assessment to BASW Age Assessment Board Practice Guidance. In Further Information, a link added to Operation Innerste Process: Caseworker Guidance.
* [Dangerous Dogs and Safeguarding Children](file:///T:\_ARCHIVE%20CustProcs\West%20Yorks%20SCP\Published\2024%20VERSIONS\West%20Yorks%20SCP%20Dec%202024%20amd%20270125\html\p_danger_dogs.html)- This chapter has been refreshed.
* [Domestic Abuse](file:///T:\_ARCHIVE%20CustProcs\West%20Yorks%20SCP\Published\2024%20VERSIONS\West%20Yorks%20SCP%20Dec%202024%20amd%20270125\html\p_dom_viol.html) - This chapter has been refreshed.
* [Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)](file:///T:\_ARCHIVE%20CustProcs\West%20Yorks%20SCP\Published\2024%20VERSIONS\West%20Yorks%20SCP%20Dec%202024%20amd%20270125\html\p_fem_gen_mut.html) - Section 7, NHS Data Sharing has been refreshed and updated.
* [Information Sharing](file:///T:\_ARCHIVE%20CustProcs\West%20Yorks%20SCP\Published\2024%20VERSIONS\West%20Yorks%20SCP%20Dec%202024%20amd%20270125\html\p_info_shar_confid.html) - This chapter has been revised in line with updated government guidance.
* [Safer Recruitment, Selection and Supervision of Staff](file:///T:\_ARCHIVE%20CustProcs\West%20Yorks%20SCP\Published\2024%20VERSIONS\West%20Yorks%20SCP%20Dec%202024%20amd%20270125\html\p_safe_recrui.html) - A link to Education Supply Chains – A Better Hiring Toolkit, has been added to the Relevant Guidance section.

**New Chapters – December 2024**

* [West Yorkshire Safer Sleep Protocol Guidance: for professionals working with families where there is a child aged up to 12 months](file:///T:\_ARCHIVE%20CustProcs\West%20Yorks%20SCP\Published\2024%20VERSIONS\West%20Yorks%20SCP%20Dec%202024%20amd%20270125\html\p_safe_sleep_proto_guide.html) - This chapter has been added to the manual.
* [Amendment to process following presentation of non-mobile baby with injuries to GP](file:///T:\_ARCHIVE%20CustProcs\West%20Yorks%20SCP\Published\2024%20VERSIONS\West%20Yorks%20SCP%20Dec%202024%20amd%20270125\html\files\non_mobile_baby.pdf) (Calderdale only)- This new PDF document has been added to the manual
* [Non Mobile Baby Pathway Flowchart](file:///T:\_ARCHIVE%20CustProcs\West%20Yorks%20SCP\Published\2024%20VERSIONS\West%20Yorks%20SCP%20Dec%202024%20amd%20270125\html\files\non_mobile_baby_flowchart.pdf) (Calderdale Only) - This new PDF document has been added to the manual

**Updated Chapters – June 2024**

* [**Recognising Abuse and Neglect**](https://westyorkscp.trixonline.co.uk/chapter/recognising-abuse-and-neglect) **-** This chapter has been reviewed and updated in line with local procedure.
* [**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**](https://westyorkscp.trixonline.co.uk/chapter/female-genital-mutilation) **-** 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.
* [**Forced Marriage**](https://westyorkscp.trixonline.co.uk/chapter/forced-marriage) **-** This chapter has been amended in line with local procedure.
* [**MAPPA**](https://westyorkscp.trixonline.co.uk/chapter/mappa) **-** This chapter has been updated.
* [**Pre Birth**](https://westyorkscp.trixonline.co.uk/chapter/pre-birth) **-** Section 3, Safe Sleeping has been added. Additional information has been added into Section 4, Working with Fathers/Partners.
* [**Agency Roles and Responsibilities**](https://westyorkscp.trixonline.co.uk/chapter/agency-roles-and-responsibilities) **-** A new Section, Principles has been added into Section 2, Serious Violence Duty, to include information from the Ofsted Framework Joint Targeted Area Inspections of the Multi-agency Response to Serious Youth Violence.



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