

# Children and Families Scrutiny Panel

Thursday, 8th August, 2024  
at 5.30 pm

## **PLEASE NOTE TIME OF MEETING**

Conference Room 3 - Civic Centre

This meeting is open to the public

### **Members**

Councillor Barnes-Andrews (Chair)  
Councillor Allen  
Councillor Beaurain  
Councillor Chapman  
Councillor Kaur  
Councillor G Lambert  
Councillor Webb

### **Appointed Members**

Catherine Hobbs, Roman Catholic Church  
Vacancy Primary Parent Governor  
Vacancy - Secondary Parent Governor  
Rob Sanders, Church of England

### **Contacts**

Democratic Support Officer  
Ed Grimshaw  
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# **PUBLIC INFORMATION**

## **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL**

**Role of this Scrutiny Panel:** To undertake the scrutiny of Children and Families Services in the City, including the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Early Help, Specialist & Core Service, looked after children, education and early years and youth offending services, unless they are forward plan items. In such circumstances members of the Children and Families Scrutiny Panel will be invited to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee meeting where they are discussed.

### **Terms Of Reference:-**

Scrutiny of Children and Families Services in the City to include:

- Monitoring the implementation and challenging the progress of the Council's action plan to address the recommendations made by Ofsted following their inspection of Children's Services in Southampton and review of Southampton Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) in July 2014.
- Regular scrutiny of the performance of multi-agency arrangements for the provision of early help and services to children and their families.
- Scrutiny of early years and education including the implementation of the Vision for Learning 2014 – 2024.
- Scrutiny of the development and implementation of the Youth Justice Strategy developed by the Youth Offending Board.
- Referring issues to the Chair of the LSCB and the Corporate Parenting Committee.

### **Public Representations**

At the discretion of the Chair, members of the public may address the meeting on any report included on the agenda in which they have a relevant interest. Any member of the public wishing to address the meeting should advise the Democratic Support Officer (DSO) whose contact details are on the front sheet of the agenda.

**Access** – access is available for the disabled. Please contact the Democratic Support Officer who will help to make any necessary arrangements.

**MOBILE TELEPHONES:-** Please switch your mobile telephones or other IT to silent whilst in the meeting.

### **Business to be Discussed**

Only those items listed on the attached agenda may be considered at this meeting.

**QUORUM** The minimum number of appointed Members required to be in attendance to hold the meeting is 3.

**Use of Social Media:-** The Council supports the video or audio recording of meetings open to the public, for either live or subsequent broadcast. However, if, in the Chair's opinion, a person filming or recording a meeting or taking photographs is interrupting proceedings or causing a disturbance, under the Council's Standing Orders the person can be ordered to stop their activity, or to leave the meeting.

By entering the meeting room you are consenting to being recorded and to the use of those images and recordings for broadcasting and or/training purposes. The meeting may be recorded by the press or members of the public.

Any person or organisation filming, recording or broadcasting any meeting of the Council is responsible for any claims or other liability resulting from them doing so.

Details of the Council's Guidance on the recording of meetings is available on the Council's website.

### **Rules of Procedure**

The meeting is governed by the Council Procedure Rules and the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules as set out in Part 4 of the Constitution.

**Smoking policy** – the Council operates a no-smoking policy in all civic buildings.

**Fire Procedure** – in the event of a fire or other emergency a continuous alarm will sound, and you will be advised by Council officers what action to take

**Southampton: Corporate Plan 2022-2030 sets out the four key goals:**

- Strong Foundations for Life.- For people to access and maximise opportunities to truly thrive, Southampton will focus on ensuring residents of all ages and backgrounds have strong foundations for life.
- A proud and resilient city - Southampton’s greatest assets are our people. Enriched lives lead to thriving communities, which in turn create places where people want to live, work and study.
- A prosperous city - Southampton will focus on growing our local economy and bringing investment into our city.
- A successful, sustainable organisation - The successful delivery of the outcomes in this plan will be rooted in the culture of our organisation and becoming an effective and efficient council.

**Dates of Meetings: Municipal Year**

2024	2025
18 July	30 January
08 August	27 March
26 September	
28 November	

**DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Members are required to disclose, in accordance with the Members’ Code of Conduct, **both** the existence **and** nature of any “Disclosable Pecuniary Interest” or “Other Interest” they may have in relation to matters for consideration on this Agenda.

**DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

A Member must regard himself or herself as having a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter that they or their spouse, partner, a person they are living with as husband or wife, or a person with whom they are living as if they were a civil partner in relation to:

- (i) Any employment, office, trade, profession, or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
- (ii) Sponsorship:

Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from Southampton City Council) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expense incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

(iii) Any contract which is made between you / your spouse etc (or a body in which you / your spouse etc has a beneficial interest) and Southampton City Council under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed, and which has not been fully discharged.

(iv) Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of Southampton.

(v) Any license (held alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of Southampton for a month or longer.

(vi) Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) the landlord is Southampton City Council, and the tenant is a body in which you / your spouse etc has a beneficial interests.

(vii) Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of Southampton, and either:

- a) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body, or
- b) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you / your spouse etc has a beneficial interest that exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

### **Other Interests**

A Member must regard himself or herself as having an 'Other Interest' in any membership of, or occupation of a position of general control or management in:

Any body to which they have been appointed or nominated by Southampton City Council

Any public authority or body exercising functions of a public nature

Any body directed to charitable purposes

Any body whose principal purpose includes the influence of public opinion or policy

### **Principles of Decision Making**

All decisions of the Council will be made in accordance with the following principles:-

- proportionality (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome);
- due consultation and the taking of professional advice from officers;
- respect for human rights;
- a presumption in favour of openness, accountability, and transparency;
- setting out what options have been considered;
- setting out reasons for the decision; and
- clarity of aims and desired outcomes.

In exercising discretion, the decision maker must:

- understand the law that regulates the decision making power and gives effect to it. The decision-maker must direct itself properly in law;
- take into account all relevant matters (those matters which the law requires the authority as a matter of legal obligation to take into account);
- leave out of account irrelevant considerations;
- act for a proper purpose, exercising its powers for the public good;
- not reach a decision which no authority acting reasonably could reach, (also known as the "rationality" or "taking leave of your senses" principle);
- comply with the rule that local government finance is to be conducted on an annual basis. Save to the extent authorised by Parliament, 'live now, pay later' and forward funding are unlawful; and
- act with procedural propriety in accordance with the rules of fairness.

# AGENDA

## **1 APOLOGIES AND CHANGES IN PANEL MEMBERSHIP (IF ANY)**

To note any changes in membership of the Panel made in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.3.

## **2 DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL AND PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

In accordance with the Localism Act 2011, and the Council's Code of Conduct, Members to disclose any personal or pecuniary interests in any matter included on the agenda for this meeting.

## **3 STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIR**

## **4 DECLARATIONS OF SCRUTINY INTEREST**

Members are invited to declare any prior participation in any decision taken by a Committee, Sub-Committee, or Panel of the Council on the agenda and being scrutinised at this meeting.

## **5 DECLARATION OF PARTY POLITICAL WHIP**

Members are invited to declare the application of any party political whip on any matter on the agenda and being scrutinised at this meeting.

## **6 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (INCLUDING MATTERS ARISING)** (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the meetings held on 18 July 2024 and to deal with any matters arising, attached.

## **7 EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE** (Pages 5 - 10)

Report of the Executive Director, Children and Learning, providing an overview of Early Years and Childcare Services in Southampton.

## **8 REPEAT CHILD PROTECTION PLANS - ANALYSIS** (Pages 11 - 22)

Report of the Executive Director, Children and Learning, outlining the work undertaken to understand why some families come back to Child Protection Planning for a second or subsequent time.

**9 ANNUAL CONVERSATION WITH OFSTED AND PROGRESS OF POST-INSPECTION IMPROVEMENT PLAN** (Pages 23 - 66)

Report of the Executive Director, Children and Learning, introducing the service's update to Ofsted at its annual engagement meeting.

**10 CHILDREN AND LEARNING - PERFORMANCE** (Pages 67 - 104)

Report of the Scrutiny Manager recommending that the Panel consider and challenge the performance of Children's Services and Learning in Southampton.

**11 MONITORING SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS** (Pages 105 - 110)

Report of the Scrutiny Manager recommending that the Panel considers the responses to recommendations from previous meetings and provides feedback.

Wednesday, 31 July 2024

Director – Legal and Governance

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SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL  
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 JULY 2024

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Present: Councillors Barnes-Andrews (Chair), Chapman, Webb, G Lambert, Beaurain and Cooper  
Appointed Members: Rob Sanders

1. **APOLOGIES AND CHANGES IN PANEL MEMBERSHIP (IF ANY)**

The apologies of Councillor Kaur were noted. It was noted that following receipt of the temporary resignation of Councillor Kaur from the Panel, the Monitoring Officer acting under delegated powers, had appointed Councillor Cooper to replace them for the purposes of this meeting.

The Panel also noted that Councillor Allen was in attendance virtually.

2. **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR**

**RESSOLVED** That Councillor Webb be appointed as Vice Chair for the 2024-2025 municipal year.

3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (INCLUDING MATTERS ARISING)**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 March, 2024 be approved and signed as a correct record.

4. **OUTCOME OF LOCAL AREA SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) AREA INSPECTION**

The Panel considered the report of the Executive Director for Children and Learning outlining the outcome of the local area Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) inspection, conducted by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in April / May 2024.

Councillor Winning (Cabinet Member for Children and Learning), Rob Henderson (Executive Director, Children's Services and Learning) and Dr Debbie Chase (Director of Public Health) were in attendance and, with the consent of the Chair, addressed the meeting.

It was noted that OFSTED had recently published their report into the Provision of Special Educational Needs in Southampton and therefore the papers were no longer required to be treated as confidential.

The Panel discussed a number of points including:

- The accuracy of the Council's SEND self assessment;
- The key learning points from the inspection;
- The Council's SEND transformation programme and Capital programme;
- The uptake of the mandated healthy children programme and any potential variations to this across the City;

- The number and percentage of elective home educated children with SEND is circulated to the Panel; and
- The development of the SEND Partnership action plan.

### **RESOLVED**

- 1) That, reflecting issues raised by the inspection about the visibility of some children with SEND, the number and percentage of elective home educated children with SEND is circulated to the Panel.
- 2) That, to help target activity aimed at improving uptake, analysis is undertaken of the mandated healthy child programme developmental checks to identify if there are any significant variations across the city, geographical or otherwise.
- 3) That the issue returns to the agenda of the Panel in November to consider the SEND Partnership action plan developed in response to the inspection findings.

### 5. **FAMILY SAFEGUARDING MODEL**

The Panel considered the report of the Executive Director - Children and Learning, providing an introduction to the Family Safeguarding Model.

Councillor Winning (Cabinet Member for Children and Learning), Rob Henderson (Executive Director, Children's Services and Learning), Steph Murray (Deputy Director - Children's Social Care Delivery) and Matt Jenkins (Head of Family Safeguarding) were in attendance and, with the consent of the Chair, addressed the meeting.

The Panel discussed a number of points including:

- The risks and challenges associated with the Family Safeguarding Model approach that could prevent it from delivering the required outcomes and how these will be mitigated;
- The performance outcomes expected through the introduction of the Family Safeguarding Model;
- Commitment from key partners to make the model work;
- Learnings from Hertfordshire that provides assurance that demand can be reduced and savings achieved from 2024/25; and
- The composition of the Operational Board, including representation from schools.

### **RESOLVED**

1. That the Panel suggested that a Headteacher is invited to attend Operational Board meetings to enable feedback about the impact of the Family Safeguarding Model on school outcomes to be identified and recorded.
2. That an update on progress implementing the Family Safeguarding Model is presented to the Panel at the 30 January 2025 meeting.

### 6. **CHILDREN AND LEARNING - PERFORMANCE**

The Panel considered and noted the report of Scrutiny Manager recommending that the Panel consider and challenge the performance of Children's Services and Learning in Southampton



Councillor Winning (Cabinet Member for Children and Learning), Rob Henderson (Executive Director Children and Learning) and Steph Murray (Deputy Director, Children and Learning) were in attendance and, with the consent of the Chair, addressed the meeting.

The Panel discussed a number of issues including:

- The reduction in the number of children entering the safeguarding system in Southampton;
- The increase in the percentage of children subject to 2 or more child protection plans;
- The welcome increase in the initial health assessments undertaken on time and the number of in house foster carers.
- The consistently high percentage of audits that show practice to be good or outstanding;
- Increasing workforce stability and reducing caseloads of social workers;; and
- The progress on the new children's homes.

7. **MONITORING SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Panel received and noted the report of the Scrutiny Manager which enabled the Children and Families Scrutiny Panel to monitor and track progress on recommendations made at previous meetings.

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# Agenda Item 7

<b>DECISION-MAKER:</b>	CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE
<b>DATE OF DECISION:</b>	8 AUGUST 2024
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN AND LEARNING SERVICE

<b><u>CONTACT DETAILS</u></b>			
<b>Executive Director</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Executive Director Children and Learning</b>	
	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Robert Henderson</b>	<b>Tel:</b> <b>023 8083 4899</b>
	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Robert.Henderson@southampton.gov.uk</b>	
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Service Manager for Early Years</b>	
	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Darrin Hunter</b>	<b>Tel:</b> <b>023 8083 2112</b>
	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Darrin.hunter@southampton.gov.uk</b>	

## **STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY**

Not applicable

## **BRIEF SUMMARY**

The provision of high-quality early years and childcare services has proven to have positive long-term benefits including improving education and health outcomes, reducing crime and increasing productivity.

Southampton City Council's Childcare Service has been developed in response to the statutory duties placed upon all local authorities under the Childcare Act 2006 and Childcare Act 2016. It sets out to deliver the Government's vision to provide parents/carers with more choice about how to balance work and family life by ensuring the sufficient supply of good quality, flexible, affordable childcare choices in response to parental demand.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

	(i)	That the Panel consider and scrutinise the information provided related to Early Years and Childcare in Southampton.
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## **REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

1.	In recognition of the long-term benefits associated with high quality early years and childcare provision, it is appropriate that the Panel understand and challenge the Council's approach to Early Years and Childcare services.
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## **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

2.	Not applicable.
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## **DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)**

	<b>Background</b>
3.	Southampton City Council currently has a statutory duty to secure sufficient high quality early education places for eligible 2-, 3- and 4-year-olds and sufficient childcare places for working parents.

4.	<p>Following the announcement in the March 2023 budget, early education and childcare for working parents is being extended to support more families. Eligible working parents of children aged from 9 months will be able to get up to 30 hours a week (if taken term time) of Free Early Education and Childcare from September 2025. This entitlement will be rolled out in phases starting from April 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>From April 2024</b> - working parents of 2-years can get up to 15 hours a week of free education and childcare.</li> <li>• <b>From September 2024</b> - working parents of 9 months – 3 years old can get up to 15 hours a week free education and childcare.</li> <li>• <b>From September 2025</b> - working parents of 9 months – 3 years old can get up to 30 hours a week free education and childcare.</li> </ul>
5.	<p>To support the delivery of the statutory duties, the Council is required to undertake an annual childcare assessment which takes into account housing and business developments, birth data, population forecasts, and vacancy information from providers, and enables us to ensure that as far as possible new places are being created in areas where there is an identified need.</p>
6.	<p>One of the disadvantages of undertaking an annual assessment is that the data collated, soon becomes out of date in response to the ever-changing childcare landscape. To address this, Southampton now undertakes a termly sufficiency assessment with all Ofsted registered providers. We are fortunate to have a 100% return rate from all 290 providers, and this ensures that the information we receive is more accurate and provides better opportunities for the Council to respond, where the support is needed most.</p>
	<p><b>Priorities</b></p>
7.	<p>The sufficiency surveys also include feedback from the sector on the challenges facing them at the time. We also collect detailed information of vacancy levels, waiting lists, staff qualification levels, numbers of staff leaving the sector, reasons why, how many new staff have been recruited and at what level. Our database contains comprehensive data about every registered childcare provider within the city and this helps the service identify early trends, forecasts and respond to the challenges before they develop into major issues.</p>
8.	<p>For 2024/25 the following areas have been identified as key priorities for action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The successful roll out of the early years extended childcare entitlements</li> <li>• The successful roll out of the school’s wraparound childcare offer</li> <li>• Ensuring Southampton has sufficient childcare places available in response to changes in parental demand</li> <li>• Building resilience within the sector to support greater sustainability</li> <li>• Responding to the critical shortages of staffing within the childcare sector</li> <li>• Supporting families and childcare providers in response to the increasing levels of children with SEND</li> <li>• Continue to improve safeguarding practices and training</li> <li>• Improving quality of all registered provision across the City</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing the take up of the disadvantaged 2-year-old offer</li> <li>• Coordinating and delivering the Healthy Early Years Award Programme (Childhood Obesity Strategy)</li> <li>• Coordinating and delivering the Early Years Mental Health and Well Being Award (Part of the Healthy Early Years Award Programme).</li> </ul>
	<b>Structure and Governance</b>
9.	<p>The Early Years and Childcare Service currently employs over sixty staff, most are part-time and work term time only. Between the seven individual teams/services, the service is responsible for an annual budget of more than £20m, comprising of ringfenced capital and revenue funding from the Early Years block of the Dedicated Schools Grant and High Needs Block alongside income generated from sales.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Childcare Development Team (4FTE)</li> <li>• The Early Years Advisory Teachers &amp; Area SENDCos (5FTE)</li> <li>• The Family Information Service (1FTE)</li> <li>• The Nursery Funding Team (3FTE)</li> <li>• The Speech and Language Services (5FTE)</li> <li>• Startpoint Sholing Childcare Nursery (13 FTE)</li> <li>• Startpoint Northam Childcare Nursery (8FTE)</li> </ul>
10.	<p>Oversight of the service is initially through the Early Years Management Team. They meet monthly to monitor performance, assess impact and identify ongoing efficiencies. They in turn report directly to the Early Years, Prevention and Intervention Partnership who in turn report to the Children and Young Peoples Strategic Partnership Board.</p>
	<b>Places</b>
11.	<p>Following the government’s announcement in 2023 regarding the biggest ever expansion of childcare across England, Southampton’s Early Years Service began developing plans in collaboration with the sector. This collaboration and joint working have been instrumental in ensuring that Southampton City Council has successfully discharged its statutory duties in meeting its agreed targets with the DfE for the expansion of early years childcare places for March 2024 and for September 2024. Furthermore, it has plans already in place with the sector to develop the places needed for September 2025, these will be available to families ahead of this target date. With regards to general childcare sufficiency, the continued termly childcare sufficiency surveys demonstrate that need is being met with vacancies being reported throughout the city.</p>
	<b>Performance</b>
12.	<p>As of 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024, 99% of Southampton’s early years providers in Southampton, has been inspected and rated as ‘Good or Outstanding’ by Ofsted. This is above the national average of 97%. Furthermore, Southampton has a higher percentage of early years settings who were judged by Ofsted as Outstanding at their most recent inspection (16%) when compared to the national average (14%) and that of the average for the Southeast region (15%).</p>

13.	In recent years Southampton's published Early Years Foundation Stage Profile results have gone from 61.8% of children achieving a good level of development in 2021/22 to 66.9% in 2022/23. This placed Southampton ahead of all of its statistical neighbours. Forecasts for 2023/24 show that we expect to maintain this level at 66.6%.
	<b>SEND specialist provision</b>
14.	Dingley's Promise specialist Early Years provision opened in April and has been accepting children referred through the Early Years Panel. 41 children have been referred since opening, there are currently 37 on roll. As at September, 65% of children accessing the provision will have transitioned or will transition to a mainstream provider – this is an excellent outcome and evidences the ability of the setting to provide specialist support in a way that reduces escalation.
	<b>Workforce</b>
15.	<p>A significant amount of the services resources has been focused on responding to the critical issues around recruitment and retention. The following activities provides a flavour of work that has been achieved which through our termly monitoring is evidencing that it is already having an impact on recruitment and decreasing the levels of staff exiting the sector. Although it is this area that is now having the biggest impact on future development and sustainability. Since last year we have been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with Itchen, City, Eastleigh and Totton colleges around supporting students to find placements, careers information, local job market, and for college lecturers and staff to exchange relevant information to support the sector.</li> <li>• Working with all providers to gather data on movement within the sector and analyse reasons for staff leaving and support with their recruitment and retention issues</li> <li>• Working with JCP (Job Centre Plus) to deliver information sessions for clients interested in early years and childcare (EY&amp;C) jobs, positively resulting in new appointments into the sector.</li> <li>• Raising awareness and knowledge of apprenticeships to providers and potential staff through social media campaign during National Apprenticeships Week 2024.</li> <li>• Developing Newly Qualified Practitioner and apprentice program to support people in 1<sup>st</sup> year of practice</li> <li>• Providing an information stall at several recruitment events- 2023 - April JCP jobs fair, July JCP event, November City college event, 2024 - May Get Inspired for year 9- 10 students, June Employment Hub job fair</li> <li>• Developing new childminder recruitment campaign with comms team (September launch)</li> <li>• Provider's job vacancies collection and promotion</li> <li>• Website- review/rewrite recruitment and retention pages</li> <li>• Working with Education colleagues, schools, post 16 and college students to support working in EY&amp;C</li> <li>• Childminders: a year ago we had only two new childminders register. Due to our Recruitment and Retention activities we have recruited</li> </ul>

	ten new childminders in the last year, and we currently have another seven prospective childminders going through the Ofsted registration process.
16.	Over the last 12 months the data shows a total of 342 staff vacancies arose within the sector and a total of 230 were successfully recruited to. Working in collaboration with the sector and other agencies we have reduced the vacancy rate from 40% in Autumn 2023 to 22% in Summer 2024.
	<b>Sustainability</b>
17.	Nationally, we are seeing an increase in the number of providers who are closing. This was evidenced in Southampton which has recently witnessed the closure of 17 established childcare settings over the last 18 months. The positive news is that the Early Years Service has been successful in replacing all except one of the closed nurseries, which is expected to open later next year, with many more developments scheduled for opening in Autumn 2024, April 2025 and September 2025.
18.	Southampton's Early Years Nursery funding rate is amongst one of the highest within neighbouring local authority areas, calculated on the level of deprivation within the city. This does put Southampton providers in a better financial position than our neighbours and does contribute to their overall sustainability.
19.	However, for childcare providers, trying to sustain the provision using the early years government funding alone can present significant challenges. Consequently, more providers are now being forced to introduce a consumable charge to parents and carefully review their business plans and financial planning. The government have responded by increasing the levels of nursery funding and this has helped.
20.	In Southampton the termly sufficiency data enables the Council to accurately ensure that providers have high occupancy levels whilst still ensuring parental availability. Also, as childcare vacancy levels decrease, we can quickly respond with new/expanded childcare places in response to increasing demands. We also offer business sustainability advice and support providers accessing external funding opportunities. We also promote to parents and providers the options that exists around supporting childcare costs such Universal Credit, Tax Credits, Tax Free Childcare schemes and studying grants etc. We have set up shared networks and collaborative working with the sector who will signpost parents to neighbouring provision if they become over-subscribed.
21.	The Panel are requested to discuss the issues identified relating to Early Years provision with the Cabinet Member for Children and Learning and the invited officers.
<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>	
<b><u>Capital/Revenue</u></b>	
22.	Paragraph 9 identifies the budget for the service.
<b><u>Property/Other</u></b>	
23.	N/A
<b>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	

<b><u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u></b>	
24.	Statutory duties are outlined in the Childcare Act 2006 and Childcare Act 2016.
<b><u>Other Legal Implications:</u></b>	
25.	N/A
<b>RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS</b>	
26.	Oversight of performance and risk is provided by the Early Years, Prevention and Intervention Partnership who in turn report to the Children and Young Peoples Strategic Partnership Board.
27.	External monitoring is undertaken regularly throughout the year and includes our DfE Early Years Regional Lead, The Early Years Senior HMI within Ofsted and their local inspection team, DWP - Childcare Works and a host of DfE appointed monitoring agents such as Education Development Trust, Coram Family Trust, Hemsalls, and DfE research teams.
<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS</b>	
28.	Southampton's overarching Children and Young People's Strategy is underpinned by eight strategic plans. One of these is <a href="#">The Southampton Early Years Strategy 2022-2027</a>

<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED</b>	All
<b><u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u></b>	
<b>Appendices</b>	
1.	None

**Documents In Members' Rooms**

1.	None
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**Equality Impact Assessment**

<b>Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out?</b>	<b>No</b>
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**Data Protection Impact Assessment**

<b>Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out?</b>	<b>No</b>
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**Other Background Documents**

**Other Background documents available for inspection at:**

<b>Title of Background Paper(s)</b>	<b>Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential</b>
1.	<a href="#">The Southampton Early Years Strategy 2022-2027</a>



# Agenda Item 8

<b>DECISION-MAKER:</b>	CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	REPEAT CHILD PROTECTION PLANS - ANALYSIS
<b>DATE OF DECISION:</b>	8 AUGUST 2024
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	ROBERT HENDERSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN AND LEARNING

<b><u>CONTACT DETAILS</u></b>			
<b>Executive Director</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Executive Director, Children and Learning</b>	
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<b>Author:</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Service Manager - Independent Reviewing Service</b>	
	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Karen Cairns</b>	<b>Tel: Ext 4102</b>
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<b>STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY</b>	
Not applicable	
<b>BRIEF SUMMARY</b>	
This item outlines the work undertaken to understand why some families come back to Child Protection Planning for a second or subsequent time. An analysis, attached as Appendix 1, was undertaken of 16 families to gain an understanding of why this occurs and to establish what action can be taken and considered to reduce repeat plans in the future. The recommendations will address the issues identified from the analysis to improve future practice.	
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS:</b>	
(i)	That the Panel consider and scrutinise the analysis undertaken on repeat Child Protection Plans, attached as Appendix 1.
(ii)	That a further briefing paper is submitted in 6 months' time to establish if the Family Safeguarding Model has made a difference to repeat Child Protection Plans in Southampton.
<b>REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	
1.	To enable the Panel to scrutinise performance and plans associated with reducing the number of children subject to repeat child protection plans.
<b>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</b>	
2.	Not applicable. The item was requested by the Chair of the Scrutiny Panel.
<b>DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)</b>	
3.	In Southampton our repeat Child Protection Conferences data is higher than our neighbouring authorities. To gain an understanding of the reasons why children were subject to further child protection planning and establish if we can learn from findings and adapt our practice, an analysis of 16 families,

	including 38 children, who presented to conference for a second or subsequent time was undertaken. The analysis is attached as Appendix 1.
4.	The Panel are requested to discuss the analysis and the associated recommendations with the invited officers.
<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>	
<b><u>Capital/Revenue</u></b>	
5.	None at this stage
<b><u>Property/Other</u></b>	
6.	None at this stage
<b>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	
<b><u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u></b>	
7.	The Children Protection Act 1989; Working Together 2023
<b><u>Other Legal Implications:</u></b>	
8.	None
<b>RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS</b>	
9.	The analysis has been undertaken to identify opportunities to improve practice and outcomes for children and young people in Southampton. Implementing the associated recommendations will help to reduce the risk of children and young people being subject to repeat child protection plans in Southampton.
<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS</b>	
10.	None at this stage

<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:</b>	
<b><u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u></b>	
<b>Appendices</b>	
1.	Child Protection Analysis – Briefing paper

**Documents In Members' Rooms**

1.	None
<b>Equality Impact Assessment</b>	
<b>Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out?</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	
<b>Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out?</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Other Background Documents</b>	
<b>Other Background documents available for inspection at:</b>	

<b>Title of Background Paper(s)</b>	<b>Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)</b>
1.	None

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### **Repeat Child Protection Plan (CP) - Analysis Briefing Paper**

#### **Summary**

An analysis of 16 families, 38 children, who presented to conference for a second or subsequent time was undertaken to gain an understanding of the reasons why children were subject to further child protection planning. In Southampton our repeat Child Protection Conferences data is higher than our neighbouring authorities so the analysis undertaken was completed to establish if we can learn from findings and adapt our practice.

In Southampton we undertake two types of conferences, risk inside the home and Risk Outside the Home (ROTH). The data submitted does not differentiate between the two types of conferences we hold within Southampton; this can produce a negative return as currently it is not a legal requirement to submit data to the DFE regarding how many children are subject to a ROTH conference. Part of the analysis was to understand if this was having an impact on our data as our neighbouring authorities within the LSPB do not hold ROTH conferences at this time.

It was also important to evaluate the reasons for repeat Child Protection (CP) planning to gain an understanding of what lessons can be learned to improve future practices. This will ensure sustainable change for the families we work with and reduce the risks children are exposed to. During Q4 172 conferences were held, 16 of these families had previously been subject to Child protection plans. It was established throughout the analysis all cases reviewed were risks within the home environment. 8 families had returned to CP planning within 2 years, all other cases presented following 2 years plus.

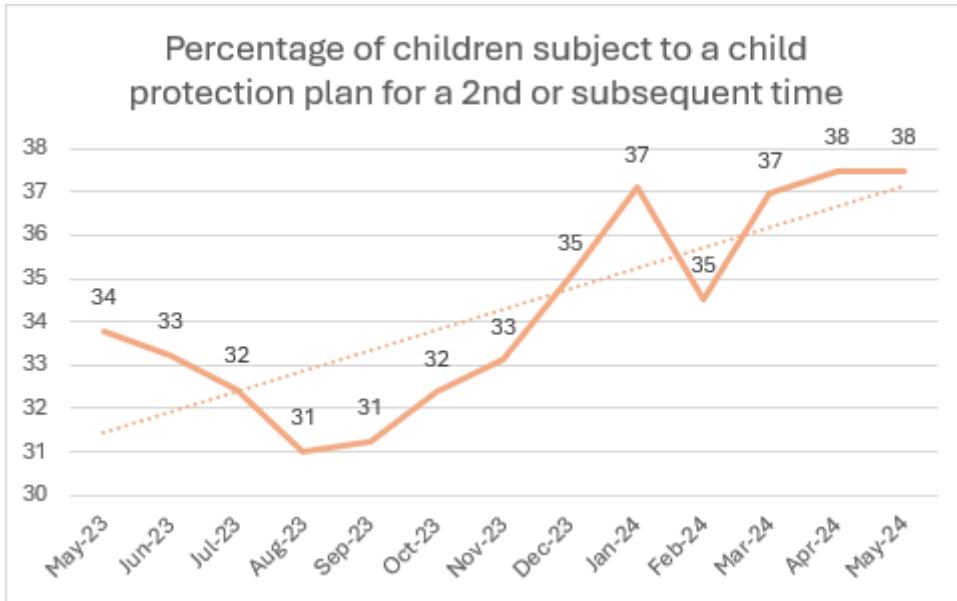
The analysis will provide a useful benchmark to measure the success of the Family Safeguarding Model within Southampton. It will also address any learned lessons making recommendations which can be embedded in future practice going forward to reduce the frequency of repeat child protection plans.

#### **Background**

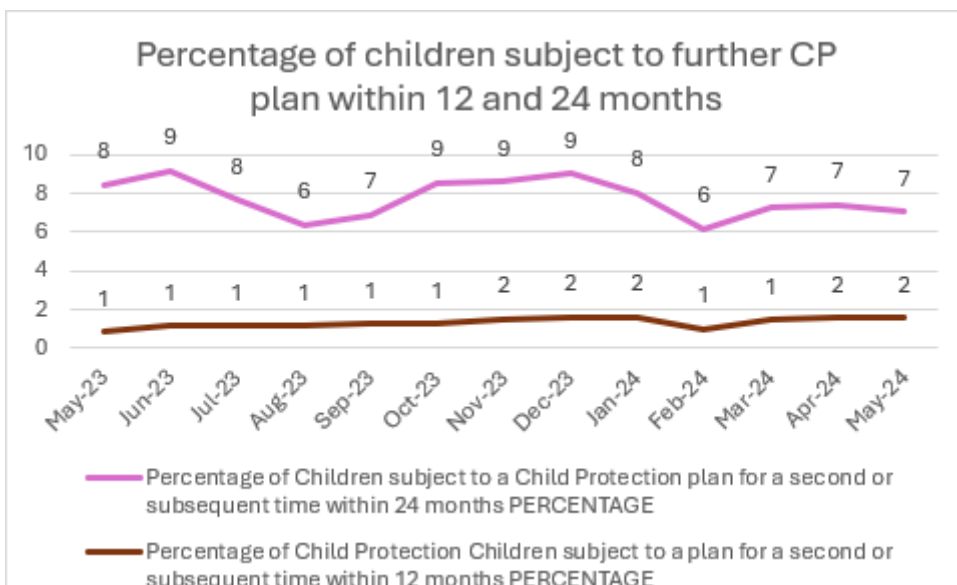
Analysis of Q4 data for the South East, spanning January to March 2024, shows that, of the total children subject to a CP plan in Southampton, 33% had previously been on a CP Plan at any time previously in their lives. Only 3% of the total number of children on a CP plan had been on a CP plan in the preceding two years.

Within the Southeast region, 26% of children had previously been on a CP Plan and 12% had been on a CP plan within the previous 2 years. This highlights that whilst there are a higher proportion of children in Southampton who have previously been on CP planning than in other Authorities in the area, significantly fewer have needed to go back on CP planning within 2 years. Our closest statistical neighbours within the region, Portsmouth, have figures of 41% at any time and 26% in the preceding 2 years.

Data shows an increase in the percentage of children subject to CP planning for a second or subsequent time, and a projected increase in the trajectory.



There appears to be a more stable picture for the percentage of children who were made subject to repeat CP planning for the second (or subsequent) time over a 12- or 24-month period.



The Local Authority has been embedding systemic social work into practice throughout the workforce. This would not have been available to practitioners or have been employed in practice during the preceding period of CP planning. Therefore, any impact that this has in relation to sustainability of change intervention will not be reflected in this analysis. The Systemic Practice Model was introduced between 28/04/2022 and 21/11/2022 to form part of the Destination 22 transformational programme. An evaluation of the model was completed in July 2023 which refers to Systemic Practice as “starting to embed”. The three cases that had a repeat CP plan within 1 year supports this.

The Local Authority has also introduced the Safe and Together model of intervention with families in which domestic abuse is a risk, alongside employing designated practitioners to work with male perpetrators to provide meaningful intervention and a

shift in thinking and acceptance which will then enable them to access evidence-based intervention programmes to reduce risk and impact of domestic abuse by holding perpetrators accountable for their behaviour and choices and supporting them to develop alternative strategies to manage at times of stress, pressure, anger and conflict. This intervention was not available previously and, instead, focussed on adopting an approach whereby the victim was required to take responsibility for her own and her children's safety within a challenging environment where in so doing she may actually increase risk. In all cases reviewed the female was the victim of domestic abuse. Whilst there continue to be examples of male perpetrators disengaging from the planning process, the focus of the work with victims is now on partnering with them to look at how they create safety and ways they can build on this. The impact of this approach in reducing risk of future harm and repeating patterns of behaviour / experience will not be able to be assessed during this analysis, as it was not available to the families in the timeframes of the preceding planning for these families.

The Local Authority has now partnered with Hertfordshire to look to embed the Family Safeguarding Model. Training is currently underway with a view to this being launched imminently and the Local Authority is working with partner agencies with a view to accessing additional expert resources required to roll out this model. All practitioners are required to attend a 2-day training course in Motivational Interviewing. It is anticipated that the use of this methodology will support sustainable change alongside social workers using the neglect toolkit when dealing with neglect.

## **Methodology**

An audit tool was devised which the Independent Child Protection Chairs have used on a sample of 38 children from 16 families subject to repeat CP planning. These were then collated and analysed overall against themes that appeared to be emerging. This enabled there to be quantitative information gathering alongside the qualitative information.

## **Findings**

The results found from the 16 families analysed, 3 families had repeat CP planning within 1 year, 5 families within 1 – 2 years, 6 families within 2-5 years and 2 families within 5 years + from the previous episode.

Out of the 16 families analysed, 12 families were presented to conference due to the children being exposed to domestic abuse. In 11 a significant contributory factor was parental mental health issues, impacting on their ability to function. 8 featured parental substance misuse and in 4 families there were concerns about parental alcohol misuse. In only 2 families was there no evidence or concerns relating to the toxic trio (mental health, domestic abuse and drug or alcohol misuse). In both of these families there were concerns about the male having committed previous sexual offences towards related or unrelated children. In 10 families there was evidence of at least two aspects of the toxic trio.

At the time of the initial or review conferences, there was no evidence of there being a full chronology having been completed, therefore not all historical information was considered within the conference process or within the Social Workers report submitted to conference. In these cases, whilst there may have been reference to past history of involvement, there was little, if any, analysis of the impact or meaning of this for the children. Similarly, there was little evidence of a cultural genogram having been completed from which patterns of functioning and trigger points could be taken into consideration. 3 of the families had parents who were care experienced and in 4 families there was evidence that parental trauma / adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) had been taken into consideration.

In 4 families there was evidence of previous physical assaults or abuse towards related or unrelated children. In each of these families, there was domestic abuse. In four families there was also evidence that previous children were no longer residing with their parent, and in 2 of these 4 families the parent was not having any contact with their older children. These families were brought to conference because of concerns about the impact of domestic abuse. It was noteworthy that in only one family where domestic abuse was a feature were checks completed with police and social care of adults regularly within the home. It was unclear if the perpetrator was known to MAPPA and probation had not been consulted or invited to conference.

A key factor found within these families was that they had a number of changes of social worker during the preceding period of child protection planning (10 families). Six out of ten families also experienced a change of manager during the period of child protection and 4 of these 6 also had a change in the Independent CP Chair during the period. This is likely to mean that there was no consistent social work oversight of these families, and a likelihood of information not being fully transferred and decision-making not being able to be made holistically.

Of these 14 families, the decision to de-plan from the preceding period of Child Protection planning was taken where there was evidence of incomplete interventions relating to the risk that brought these families to Conference. In 10 families, the decision to de-plan was made without there having been evidence of sustainable change over the course of at least 3 months. In 8 of the families the decision to de-plan was made with incomplete interventions on the plan relating to risk, and without 3 months' evidence of sustainable change. Of these 8 families, in 6 there was evidence that disguised compliance was not identified. 5 of these families had experienced a change of social worker during the period of CP planning and 2 had also had a change of manager and CP Chair. In all but one of the 4 families where an issue was dropped from the CP plan, or not carried over to the Child in Need (CIN) plan which later re-emerged, there had been a change of social worker and there was evidence of disguised compliance. In each of the 6 families where there was evidence of parental non-engagement with the planning (intervention) process, the decision to end the CP plan was taken without evidence of at least 3 months' sustained change.

In each of the 3 families that closed to Children in Need planning at parental request prior to the intervention being completed, the decision to end the plan was taken without at least 3 months' evidence of sustained change. Each family had



experienced changes of social worker during the period of CP planning. Two families had not completed the intervention that was agreed relating to risk reduction at the point of closure to Children's Services, and in two families there had been failure to involve wider family / friendship network in the planning process to support sustainability and change. Of these, a lead professional was only identified in one family.

In only one of the 16 families identified, was the original risk that brought the family to conference not the subject of their return to conference. In this family there was a significant gap in Children's Services' involvement of 9 years, and the most recent period of CP planning was related to a completely different scenario whereby the mother had ended her relationship with the father of the older children, remained separated from him, and the concerns that brought the family back to conference was after a subsequent relationship in which she entered into much later and had a child with multiple disabilities within broke down and she was struggling to meet the complex needs of her children without the support of the child's father living in the home.

## **Conclusion**

There were no concerns relating to the application of threshold regarding all cases being presented to an Initial conference. There was good evidence in each case that the children had been placed at risk of harm or suffering from harm which demonstrates threshold was applied correctly. The reports submitted to conference considered the children's needs, risks and family situation however there was very little information or analysis regarding the historical concerns. This would have impacted on the development of a successful Child protection plan leading to sustained change within the family.

There was only one instance where the risks of significant harm in the subsequent period of planning was completely unrelated to the initial risks that led to the first period of CP planning, this indicates that the original plan was not successful in the vast majority of cases in securing change for the families and addressing the underlying risk.

It does not appear that chronologies and cultural genograms are being routinely used in order to fully inform family history and functioning. It appears that these tools are considered to be required for transfer and closure tasks, and there is little reference to analysis of them within assessments, supervision, or CP conferences to guide risk assessment, sustainability of change or clear SMART child protection plans increasing the repeat plan data.

It does not appear that parents' own social histories and experiences of being parented are taken into consideration as this was not demonstrated within the Social Workers assessment or within the information provided by our partner agencies. There was little evidence of a trauma informed approach within the child protection plans regarding what the parents or children have been exposed to. This is now being considered within Child Protection Conferences.

It appears that further work would be beneficial to secure engagement from key agencies, such as Community Mental Health Services, Drug and Alcohol services and the Hampton Trust. There was little evidence of them attending conferences and providing their professional insight into understanding of risk from their individual areas of professional expertise or to advise and assist the Core Group with their planning to support risk reduction and relapse prevention.

There are a number of cases where parental mental health was being managed by GPs, and little evidence of their contributions to conference, which would help to assess compliance with recommended treatments for the purpose of managing impact and stabilisation – e.g. medication being taken in accordance with prescription / being regularly re-ordered. Where contributions were made, these bore little relevance to the risks being discussed and appeared to be focussed more on such things as how many times the child had been seen by the GP during the period, whether they had accessed emergency health care and whether their childhood immunisations were up to date. If parents are receiving regular treatment and medication, it would be helpful to understand the impact this has on their parent ability going forward.

Most families within the sample experienced multiple changes of social worker during the course of their intervention. In some, this was compounded by changes of manager and changes of Independent Chair which may have led to a dilution of information on the understanding of the family dynamics and history. There was a focus in some instances on what was assessed to be a primary risk. When new social workers were allocated the case, it appears the original concern was dismissed and replaced with other risk factors. This was often compounded by a change of social worker and manager and Independent Chair. With the new team structure and retention of staff now strong in Southampton Children Services department it is hopeful this won't be an issue going forward. Child Protection Chairs are allocated at point of referral and remain throughout the duration of child protection planning wherever possible giving the family and professionals consistency.

Indicators of disguised compliance do not appear to have been picked up; disengagement within planning appeared to have been noted but not necessarily explored and analysed for their implications in reducing risk or impact on sustainability of change within supervision, assessments, reports to conference and conference discussions, this was seen in 6 cases that were analysed.

There appears to be a lack of confidence in maintaining CP planning for children where the risk of significant harm continues to exist but there had not been a specific incident, or concerns raised between conferences despite the tasks within the plan not being fully achieved. Child Protection Chairs are now ensuring they highlight the threshold clearly to core group members when concluding the conference.

In 6 cases there was clear evidence that the support of family and friendship networks was not considered. When there was evidence of family being supported, this did not appear to take into consideration fully the relationship dynamics, instability in relationships or highlight family and friends' own understanding of the

risks and worries or an agreed family contingency plan if they were concerned. Agreements appeared loose and it was not clear that families understood their role. There was little reference to where they could go to for support if they had any worries or challenges. It is hopeful the new Family Safeguarding Model will enhance this going forward.

It was clear in 5 families the cases were closed prematurely. 4 families were closed without a lead professional, this did not allow the social worker to gather evidence that that the families were able to consistently embed their learning or devise a support plan for universal services for support going forward if required.

### **Recommendations:**

- Social workers to ensure they embed historical information into Child Protection Reports – Safeguarding Practice Managers and Service Managers will need to embed this within their teams.
- Social workers to submit and updated chronology and cultural Genogram to the CP chair for all ICPC's – Safeguarding Practice Managers and Service Managers will need to embed this within their teams.
- Work to promote continuity of case holding responsibility, management, and Conference Chairs. Where transfers are needed, the importance of reviewing chronologies and genogram should be a priority for incoming social workers, managers, and Conference Chairs – Safeguarding Practice Managers and Service Managers will need to embed this within their teams.
- Social workers to ensure they contact probation within the S47 investigation and establish if any perpetrator is open to MAPPA. This will need to be highlighted and considered within the Case Conference report. – Safeguarding Practice Managers and Service Managers will need to embed this within their teams.
- Social workers are to ensure they invite KEY agencies to conferences such as Hampton Trust, Drug and Alcohol Services, Adult Mental Health Services – Safeguarding Practice Managers and Service Managers will need to embed this within their teams.
- Child Protection Chairs to complete a repeat plan analysis on every case where children have previously been on a CP plan within 2 years following each ICPC – Child Protection Chairs and Service Manager.
- A further briefing paper to be submitted in 6 months' time to establish if the Family Safeguarding approach has made a difference on repeat Child Protection Plans.

- CP chairs to use the new Threshold Document within Conferences to support core group members applying it correctly when deciding what type of plan is required.
- Child protection Chairs and Team Managers consider strengthening the Safety Statements with the professional network and family in order to agree what evidence of change would look like and the length of time sustainability of these changes would be required to satisfy safe de-planning.
- Training to enhance understanding of working with disguised compliance and the rule of optimism and to promote changes in practice.
- A lead professional to be identified at point of closure and families being linked to family hubs.

<b>DECISION-MAKER:</b>	CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	ANNUAL CONVERSATION WITH OFSTED AND PROGRESS OF POST-INSPECTION IMPROVEMENT PLAN
<b>DATE OF DECISION:</b>	8 AUGUST 2024
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN AND LEARNING SERVICE

<b><u>CONTACT DETAILS</u></b>			
<b>Executive Director</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Executive Director Children and Learning</b>	
	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Robert Henderson</b>	<b>Tel:</b> 023 8083 4899
	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Robert.Henderson@southampton.gov.uk</b>	
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Head of Quality Assurance</b>	
	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Stuart Webb</b>	<b>Tel:</b> 023 8083 4102
	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Stuart.webb@southampton.gov.uk</b>	

<b>STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY</b>	
Not applicable	
<b>BRIEF SUMMARY</b>	
This paper introduces the service’s update to Ofsted at its annual engagement meeting. The service reported progress against the inspectorate’s recommendations after the Inspection of Local Authority Children’s Services (ILACS) inspection in June 2023.	
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS:</b>	
	(i) That the Panel note the content of the presentation attached as Appendix 1.
	(ii) That the Panel note the content of the Ofsted Annual Engagement Meeting letter attached as Appendix 2.
<b>REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	
1.	The Ofsted Annual Engagement Meeting provides context regarding the service’s direction of travel.
<b>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</b>	
2.	Not applicable.
<b>DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)</b>	
3.	Southampton Children and Learning Service hosted Ofsted for its annual engagement meeting on 4 <sup>th</sup> July 2024. Ahead of this, the service had shared its self-evaluation of practice and self-evaluation. The management teams of both service areas (social care and education and early years) had a dedicated session with inspectors.

4.	<p>The service provided updates on progress since the last Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) inspection in June 2023. In addition, Ofsted requested updates on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children</li> <li>• Local response to Working Together and social care reforms</li> <li>• School attendance</li> <li>• Elective Home Education (EHE) and Education Other than in School (EOTAS)</li> <li>• Post 16 provision</li> <li>• Early Years sufficiency</li> </ul> <p>The service responses are contained in the appended presentation to Ofsted.</p>
5.	<p>The inspectorate invited discussion regarding the potential theme for a focused visit inspection under the <a href="#">ILACS framework</a> and the service recommended looked after children and / or care leavers, so that progress against the inspection recommendations could be tested.</p>
6.	<p>Attached as Appendix 2 is the Ofsted Annual Engagement Meeting letter developed in response to the visit. Both the presentation and letter make reference to developing a safeguarding partnership which incorporates children, adults, and the community safeguarding board. This is a draft proposal that is awaiting approval from Cabinet.</p>
<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>	
<b><u>Capital/Revenue</u></b>	
7	N/A
<b><u>Property/Other</u></b>	
8.	N/A
<b>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	
<b><u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u></b>	
9.	Children Act 1989
<b><u>Other Legal Implications:</u></b>	
10.	N/A
<b>RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS</b>	
11.	<p>Service improvement is overseen by the service senior leadership team, using Southeast Sector Led Improvement Partnership (SESLIP) peer scrutiny, alongside other opportunities of support through the Department of Education and Local Government Association. Service financial stability is overseen by the corporate improvement board, which is attended by an independent children's service's expert.</p>
<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS</b>	
12.	<p>The 2024 updated Corporate Plan includes the following strategic objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe and stable home environments</li> <li>• Accessible education and skills pathways.</li> </ul>

	By delivering consistently good outcomes for the city's children and young people, Southampton's Children's Services and Learning Directorate will contribute to achieving these objectives.
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<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED</b>	All
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
<b>Appendices</b>	
1.	Ofsted Annual Engagement Meeting SCC presentation
2.	Ofsted Annual Engagement Meeting Letter

**Documents In Members' Rooms**

1.	None
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**Equality Impact Assessment**

<b>Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out?</b>	<b>No</b>
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**Data Protection Impact Assessment**

<b>Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out?</b>	<b>No</b>
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**Other Background Documents**

**Other Background documents available for inspection at:**

<b>Title of Background Paper(s)</b>	<b>Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)</b>
1. None	

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# Annual Engagement Meeting

4<sup>th</sup> July 2024

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[southampton.gov.uk](http://southampton.gov.uk)

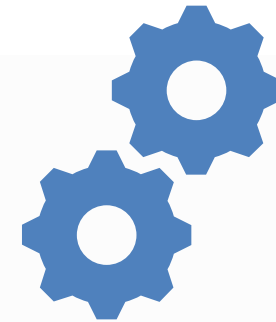


Agenda Item 9  
Appendix 1

# Local Authority Context: Political & Financial

- Challenging financial climate, with government assistance
- Well embedded financial improvement board
- Stretching but achievable savings targets in the context of steadily reducing demand
- Transformation programme well underway – focus on practice, efficiency and innovation
- All parts of the Council are expected to embark on a rapid redesign – ours is complete
- Yearly elections can lead to ‘stop start’ culture

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# Local authority context: multi-agency working

- Improvements in relationships with police (e.g. Prevent, strategy meetings)
- Strong SEND partnership
- Voluntary sector engagement positive
- Family Safeguarding partners well engaged
- Strong SSCP Serious Incident Learning Group (SILG) and Education sub-group
- Multi-agency Teams Around the School (Central, East, West) now well established

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- Strong SEND partnership
- Specific partnership projects: Careers Enterprise Company, Primary Heads Inclusion group, Saints foundation
- Targeted Support Meetings (absence)
- Successful Holiday Activity and Food Programme
- Early Years – Private Voluntary and Independent sector
- Healthy Schools alliance

# Local authority context: Broader issues affecting delivery of children's social care and learning

## Schools

- Number of children facing poverty
- Number of EHCPs and children with SEN K
- Number of young people who are NEET
- Volume and complexity of complaints

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## Social Care

- High levels of youth crime
- High levels of deprivation
- Two asylum seeker hotels with children being identified
- Challenges with CAMHS capacity – waiting times for assessment and prescribing



# Our key challenges



Financial challenges: safely reducing demand, spending less



Co-production and participation



Focus on global majority communities/workforce: new strategic post



We need better coordination of data and insight for SEND and education



Provision for SEND and rising exclusions



We are still building the experience of our social care workforce

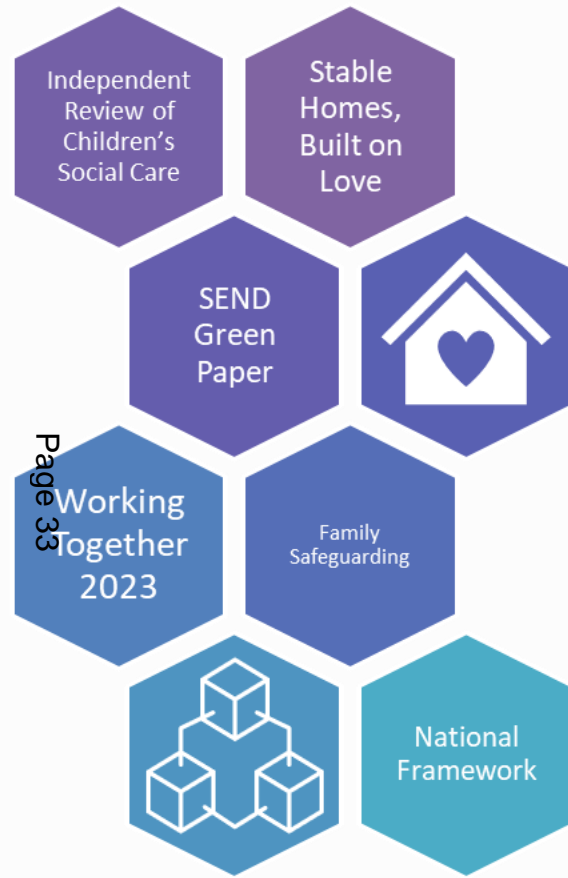


Sufficiency and placement instability continues to be a challenge

# Social Care



# Improving Outcomes for Children

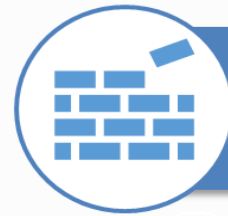


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Our Building for Brilliance priorities are well known and embraced by the service.

They are the building blocks for continually improving practice and establishing a more financially sustainable service.

We have future proofed our redesigned service, building on the national and local agenda.



## Building for Brilliance; Building for Sustainability; Building for Families, with Families



Ensure that children get the **right support at the right time**, meeting need early, reducing demand and spend on statutory services



Develop **strong, vibrant localities** where families can receive the help they need and practitioners can share their knowledge and expertise



Support children to **remain within, or return to, their birth families**, seeking out and reuniting family members, reducing care costs and freeing up placements for other children.



Promote **permanence and placement stability**, creating strong forever families and reducing increasingly costly alternatives



Build a **permanent, stable, energised workforce**, increasing consistency for children and reducing agency spend



Embed our **practice framework and practice standards** across the whole service, doing the basics brilliantly and being ambitious in our practice expectations

# We have redesigned our service

## We have:

- Launched a larger Family Help Service, with significantly more social workers, absorbing most Child in Need and Early help/CIN assessments.
- Reshaped CRS and MASH, moving CRS to the start of a child's journey within the Family Help service.
- Created a multi-agency Family Safeguarding Service, focusing on children, where harm is present, side by side with adult specialist workers.
- Extended our family group conferencing, family networks and family seeking offer to support alternative options to care and more resilient families.
- Increased social worker capacity to undertake specialist assessments, without losing our excellent Specialist Assessment Team (SAT).

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## Design Principles

-  We want to be at the forefront of national best practice
-  A Family Safeguarding-ready service – strong multi-agency teams
-  Career pathways & resilient teams
-  Building and innovating – FGCs, Family Coaches, Intensive Response
-  Sustainable and affordable service, minimal reliance on agency
-  Market supplement, unfunded posts, regrading of roles
-  We are refocusing on our core priorities



# Children's Services New Structure

Executive Director Children Services & Learning  
Rob Henderson

Deputy Director Children Services  
Steph Murray

Head of Service  
Quality Assurance  
Stuart Webb

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Head of Family Help  
Dan Buckle

Head of Family Safeguarding  
Matt Jenkins

Head of Young Peoples Service  
Tim Nelson

Head of Pathways  
Through Care &  
Resources  
Anisha Reed

Safeguarding  
Partnership  
Team &  
Independent  
Reviewing  
Service

Workforce  
Academy,  
Compliance  
&  
Performance  
Leads

Children's  
Resource  
Service  
(MASH, EDT  
& LADO)

Family Help  
Locality  
Teams

Family Hubs

Family  
Safeguarding  
Locality  
Teams

Special  
Assessment  
Team &  
Family  
Connections  
Team

Jigsaw  
(Children  
with  
Disabilities)

Young  
Persons  
Service

Youth Justice  
Service

Intensive  
Response  
Service

UASC,  
Children in  
Care & Care  
Leavers  
Teams

Fostering,  
Adoption &  
Placements  
Teams



# What we are most proud of this year



Sharp focus on improving outcomes while reducing demand



Strong, motivated, permanent workforce with manageable caseloads



Family Safeguarding – genuine buy in



Risk outside the Home



Strengthened partnerships



Building for Brilliance priorities embraced and embedded



Reduction in custody nights and positive YJS pilot inspection

# Local authority context: high-profile cases that are likely to attract media attention

- Recent death of a care leaver
- Attempted murder trial – young person known to YJS
- 'Contempt of court' case linked to proceedings (brought by Local Authority). Precedent set?

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# Ofsted Areas for Improvement (ILACS)

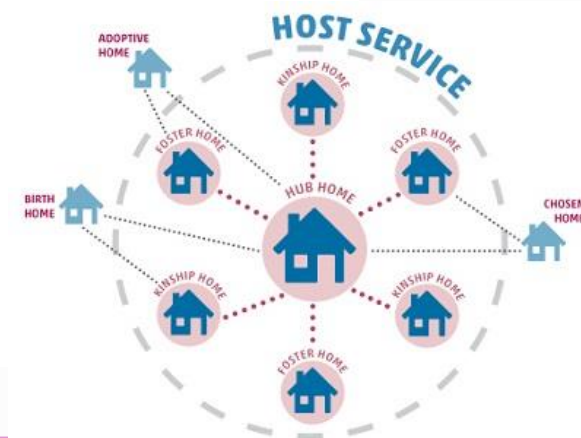


# Sufficiency: foster placements and short breaks

Sufficiency of in-house, IFA and respite placements are still a challenge, however:

- Fostering team is permanent with strong leadership and improving performance/culture
- We have re-launched recruitment strategy. Recruitment is increasingly successful: innovative campaigns, specialist scheme for children with complex needs
- Our new in-house carers' payments schedule is competitive
- Placement referrals and child profiles are significantly better, improving options for children
- Staying Put policy updated with a transparent and equitable offer
- Weekly family and placement stability panel successfully embedded
- Performance reporting is now accurate and comprehensive
- Successful recruitment of Mockingbird Hub Home Carer
- Residential short breaks - Senior leaders for the Jigsaw team are working with ICB and partners to increase and enhance the current offer.

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# Sufficiency: Regulated Settings and SCC homes

## Unregistered and unregulated provision

- 42 young people aged 16 and 17 are currently residing in semi-independent settings that are in the process of being registered by Ofsted
- All providers have applied to register, some have received their registration, others are still waiting
- One child (14) is residing in a bespoke arrangement, in transition to a residential special school
- One child (15) is living in an unregistered children's home. Alternative options being assertively pursued
- Deputy Director approval required for all unregistered placements, with regular visiting, QA visits, and oversight at Exceptional Arrangements panel
- Implementation of Supported Accommodation Reforms Grant £531,808

## SCC registered provision

- We are applying to register one of our Staying Close homes to accommodate 16+ young people with 24-hour support, plus our own supported lodgings scheme
- We are in the process of developing two children's homes in the City, both are anticipated to be operational by March 2025:
  - Westwood House - Short term assessment service in partnership with Solent NHS
  - Westridge (Henderson House) - 4-bed Children's home for 12-17yr olds.



# Outcomes for Care Leavers

## Progress

- Strong Local Offer for care leavers.
- New specialist UASC team supporting children and young people until age 25.
- Training programme to develop confident direct work & interventions with care leavers.
- Strong partnerships with local businesses: employment, training and apprenticeship opportunities.
- DfE funding for befriending and mentoring scheme. 25 young people attached in the first 12m.
- Improvements in relationships with housing with a joint approach to housing needs.
- Rent Guarantor scheme launched.
- Staying Close offer strong and valued by young people.
- We are working with local supported accommodation providers to develop stronger commissioning arrangements.
- We are increasing participation events and drop-ins, including Eid celebration and Care Leavers Week.

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# Outcomes for Care Leavers

## Next Steps

- We have a stronger independence skills training offer and are in the process of rolling this out.
- Caseloads are higher than we would like, and care leaver numbers are steadily rising.
- Not enough care leavers are in education, employment and training.
- Further collaboration, learning and training are needed, particularly around transitions to adult services
- Pathway Plans would be strengthened with greater focus on YP involvement, updates after significant events, greater multi-agency engagement (especially EET and health), sharper focus on offending behaviour and diversion
- We have not yet achieved allocation of a PA to all young people at age 16

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# Health Outcomes for Children in Care

## Next steps

- Initial health assessments timescales are now around 80%
- More health care plans to be co-produced with children
- Care leavers receive a health passport. We are seeking yp feedback on the NHS app and Healthier Together
- Recording of dentistry on Care Director needs improvement
- We need to improve understanding of adult health pathways
- Literature explaining health reviews to be co-produced with children
- We are working hard to improve engagement with health reviews, with different venues etc
- Recruitment of Clinical Psychologists within PTC and Fostering team is underway

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**This booklet is**

## All About Me

For children, young people and adults with learning disabilities coming to Southampton University Hospital NHS Trust

My name is:

If I have to go to hospital this book needs to go with me. It gives hospital staff important information about me and make sure I get the best care. It needs to hang on the end of my bed and a copy should be put in my notes

This passport belongs to me. Please return it when I am discharged

**Hospital staff— please look at my passport before any investigations, care or treatment.**

- Things you must know about me
- Things that are important to me
- My likes and dislikes

Either I have completed this passport, or a member of my family or support worker who knows me very well.

Hampshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust | Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust

# Private Fostering

## Progress

- All children who are Privately fostered are allocated within the Family Safeguarding and Family Help and Young Peoples Teams. A named Service Manager is responsible for overseeing and tracking the children.
- All Private Foster Carers have been allocated to their own social worker within the Kinship team where they are assessed and receive specialist support in their caring role.
- We have undertaken work to raise the awareness of what private fostering is and developed communication and publicity for our colleagues, partners and the community.
- Preliminary work has taken place to bring the small cohort of Privately Fostered children into our performance dashboards and assurance clinics as a 'virtual caseload'.

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# Ofsted Topics for Discussion

## Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers / Social Care Reforms



Home Office

Page 15

### Funding to Local Authorities Financial Year 2024/25



### Children's Social Care:

How we're transforming  
the sector



Children  
& Learning  
Making a difference



SOUTHAMPTON  
CITY COUNCIL

# Children's Social Care Reforms / Working Together

- Lead Safeguarding Partners and Designated Safeguarding Partners have been identified
  - Safeguarding Children and Adults Boards are better aligned
  - We are establishing an overarching executive to include the Community Safety Partnership and align strategies to consider all residents of the city
- We are building the participation of children, young people and parents with an immersive event 14th October 2024

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- We are developing a Young Scrutineer model to consider the impact of strategies, policies and procedures
- We are working with DfE education rep to plan workshop activity to ensure education settings are involved at all levels of decision making - 19th September 2024
- Partnership launch: guidance on 'when engagement can be challenging'. Principles from WTSC23 on working with parents
- The SSCP has not yet published our lead practitioner guidance. Internal guidance is in draft and will be presented to next SSCP.



# Children in Need Caseholding

- All cases are reviewed by a social work manager and deemed appropriate for allocation to a Family Practitioner (matching skills and experience), with recorded management oversight and rationale
- Most assessments will be undertaken by a social worker. If allocated to a family practitioner, there is oversight and sign off by a qualified social worker, with supervision and oversight from a social work manager
- CIN meetings, reviews and strategy meetings are always chaired by a social worker or social work manager
- Should the case require a strategy meeting or s47 assessment the case will be primary allocated to a qualified social worker and the FP will remain allocated to sustain positive relationships with the family
- All CIN cases held by a family practitioner will have an identified social worker alongside, named or co-allocated (usually Senior Social Worker or ATM) for consultation and joint visits if required.
- As we develop our Family Help model, we will continue to explore the interface between CIN and Early Help framework and where families' needs can best be met.

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# Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

- Specialist UASC team launched. SWs and PAs support children and yp up to age 25
- Increase in events and activities to engage, combat loneliness and develop community networks
- NTS referrals remain slightly below our 0.1% quota, with a higher number of referrals via Kent emergency support plan
- Processes for accepting young people via local hotels has improved
- Well-developed process and improved understanding of the requirements for age assessments
- Bespoke training for staff to improve practice in respect of Age Assessments, Triple Planning, NRPF, HRA and ARE
- Education offer remains good, with focused Virtual School support and access to ESOL courses
- We actively recruiting specialist UASC supported lodgings (via registered provider) and foster carers

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CIC numbers have remained the same in the past year at 36	CL numbers have risen, net by 18 in the past year to 67
8 age assessments completed in the last 12 months	Improved and timely access to IHA's
21 semi-independent placements, 5 in-house foster placements, 10 IFAs – recruitment of specialist FCs	18+ receive personal allowance and accommodation if they do not have settled status

# Next steps and focused visit







# Education and Early Years



**Children  
& Learning**  
Making a difference



**SOUTHAMPTON**  
CITY COUNCIL

# Learning & SEND Services New Structure

Executive Director Children Services & Learning  
Rob Henderson

Head of Education Services  
Clodagh Freeston

Head of Education Support

Head of  
SEND  
Tammy  
Marks  
(Juno  
Hollyhock  
maternity  
cover)

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School  
Admissions  
& Place  
Planning

Post 16-  
Education

Music  
Service

Early Years

Education  
Welfare

Inclusion &  
Language  
Service

Education  
Psychology  
Service

School  
Advisors

Virtual  
School

SEND  
Team &  
Specialist  
Services

# What we are most proud of this year

-  Quality of performance information and performance culture
-  Reduction in young people who are 'Not Known'
-  Early Years and Schools – good and outstanding
-  Positive feedback from SEND inspection
-  Team Around the School
-  Successful HAF programme
-  Young Carers re-launch
-  Successful Education Leaders Conference

# Progress and Attainment

## Inspection Activity

- In the last 12 months all published graded Ofsted inspections (20), 18 were good and outstanding. The remaining two are academies. 79% of pupils are attending good or outstanding schools.
- 98% of Early Years providers are good and outstanding.

## Attainment

- The proportion of children achieving a Good Level of Development is in line with the National average (67%) in EYFS.
- Reading and Maths Expected Standard at KS1 is in line with National average (68% reading, 70% Maths).
- Writing at KS2 expected standard has a small gap of 1% to National, but we are 2.6% above Statistical Neighbours (SN).
- Reading and Maths at KS2 Expected Standard is in line with SN performance.
- Southampton's KS4 Attainment 8 performance (42.9) is above the SN average (42.6).
- Southampton's EBacc average points score is in line with SN average (3.67).

## Progress

- KS2 Progress in Reading and Writing is better than the SN average.
- KS4 Progress 8 was 0.07 below the SN average.



# Pupil Attendance

## Context

- New 'working together' guidance full implementation and embedding since September 2022. DfE Attendance Advisor – positive feedback and closure of support.
- Southampton Attendance Action Group meeting: continues to raise pupil absence as a priority across the city, sharing good practice and robust data analysis.

## Impact:

- Page 55 Latest Statistical First release shows **all** phases seeing a reduction in overall absence from Autumn 2022 to Autumn 2023
- Primary overall absence is improving at a **faster rate than national**
- Special overall absence **continuing to improve for the past four years**
- Team Around the School multi-agency approach demonstrating improvement in absence in all TAS groups

## Next steps:

- Specific targeting of secondary phase in all measures - Overall absence; Persistent Absence and Severe Absence.
- Focus overall on all phases to improve SEN K absence

# Exclusions

## All Phases Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions

- Rise in suspensions and permanent exclusions and are above national in most areas.

## Primary Suspensions/Permanent Exclusions

- Increase in number of permanent exclusions from 22/23
- Gap to national for primary suspensions is decreasing from 22/23

## Secondary Suspensions/Permanent Exclusions

- Permanent Exclusions have reduced compared to 22/23, but remains too high and above national.

## What we have done:

- Working Group – Exclusion Toolkit
- Additional de-escalation training for schools (Maybo and Securicare)
- Project work with key schools to address long term needs
- Aligning Primary SEMH outreach service with Primary Heads Inclusion Group
- Developed joint work with Hampshire County Council and Portsmouth City Council – Prejudicial Language

## Next Steps:

- 5-year Exclusions Strategy
- New approach to 6th Day Provision to increase reintegration to school
- Creating a Front Door for schools' website
- Delivering new 2-part Exclusions Training for Governors and school leaders



# Reduced Timetables

## Where we are now:

- Currently have 209 confirmed reduced timetables across the city, across 41 different schools (All Phases)
- Secondary schools make up a large proportion of the submission with KS4 being the most significant age group
- Demographic data suggests a higher % for those pupils who are: White British, Disadvantaged, KS4 and with SEN K.
- The average number of hours provided as part of a RTT is between 15 to 20 hpw

## Next Steps:

- Forensic focus at Targeting Support Meetings and new attendance coding
- Strategic review of all processes and needs assessment
- Greater focus on internal training and support
- Wider sharing of termly data as part of Children and Learning data reporting

# Alternative Provision

## Where we are now:

- Quality Assurance of providers is well established (where the LA is the commissioning body) providing the LA with knowledge of what provision is available, with more providers are coming forward to become assured LA providers
- Advice and guidance provided to all schools.
- Individual Pathways (secondary internal, non-AP) have been developing, including in primary (pilot).
- Pupil Referral Units – one recently inspected, and one continues to be 'good'.

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## Next Steps:

- A further city discounted offer of platform of support for SEMH is being negotiated to enable a parity of support across the whole City being readily available.
- CPD for providers is in planning stage for September - to include local safeguarding processes, how to record, monitor and report progress; networking and need session
- City wide training for PATHS is in place for September.





# Post 16 Education

## Progress from last year

- Combined NEET and Not Known reduction (from 7.3% to 6.6%) (NEET 4.6%, Not Known 2% (the latter is better than national)).
- Curriculum mapping complete
- Careers Hub has moved 'in-house' which enables us to have improved oversight of the quality of CIAG and well as improved links with businesses.
- Establishment of 14-25 Strategic Board (June 2024)

## Page 59 Current Challenges

- Risk of NEET proportion is high
- Resilience of YP is low
- Engagement from one provider is poor
- Loss of provision in the City (pre and post 16)
- Review of Transition Project

## Next Steps

- Exploration of joint commissioning of Post 16 SEND Provision
- Plans to boost vocational provision in schools
- Risk of NEET support going into all three colleges

# Early Years Sufficiency, Recruitment and Retention

## Early Years and Extended Entitlements

- Termly Sufficiency data collection including live vacancy data from all Ofsted registered providers
- We currently have 290 early years and childcare providers in the city this is an increase from 282 in April 2024.
- System in place to support providers who are judged less than good by Ofsted
- LA has successfully managed to not only replace but increase provision across all types of childcare.
- Early indicators suggest that disadvantaged two-year-old places may reduce as a result of take up of the governments extended entitlements offer

## Wraparound Childcare

- Page 60 In the city our Ofsted registered providers currently offer 5838 places (including out of school sector). which has increased by 500 since April 2024. We anticipate this number to increase as we gather more information from our schools and the PVI sector who engages in the wraparound childcare initiative. Plans are in place for September to ensure the LA discharges its statutory duties under the governments wraparound childcare programme. This potentially may have to be tweaked should there be a change in government following the election in line with published Manifesto's etc.

## Recruitment and Retention

- Significant ongoing work with local colleges in relation to training, placement identification, job placement etc.
- Developing Newly Qualified Practitioner and apprentice program to support people in 1<sup>st</sup> year of practice
- Developing new childminder recruitment campaign with comms team (September launch)



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26 July 2024

Mr Robert Henderson  
Executive Director of Children and Learning  
Southampton City Council

Sent by email to: [robert.henderson@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:robert.henderson@southampton.gov.uk)

Dear Rob

## **Annual engagement meeting about social care and education, 4 July 2024**

Thank you for meeting with Peter Cox, Amanda Maxwell, James Broadbridge and myself to discuss social care and education in Southampton.

### **Social Care**

Thank you for sharing your detailed self-evaluation (SEF) and explaining to us the current context in Southampton. This included information about the key strengths, challenges, and the areas you aspire to further develop and improve. You told us that the numbers of children and families that you support are now in line with your statistical neighbours. You also described the areas of practice development in response to the findings from the 2023 ILACS inspection. This included awareness raising and data reporting of private fostering; the creation of a specialist team of practitioners to support your unaccompanied asylum-seeking (UAS) children and young people, and the actions to develop the offer of services to support your growing population of care experienced young people. You have specifically developed the 'drop in' sessions which provide information and support to care leavers to help them access education, employment and training opportunities as well as other helpful practical advice and support with accommodation options.

The helpful update provided about the extensive whole service transformation work was interesting. This work has been underway for some time and has recently reached its final stages. You described the need to do this to ensure that you meet the needs of

Southampton City's children and their families. You also described the need for this to offer best value. You have implemented a variety of strategies as part of this work, which include a reduction in the number of heads of service, creating additional middle management capacity and generating funding to support you in developing key areas of practice to help you achieve your goals.

The most significant change is the implementation of your chosen practice model and approach, 'The family safeguarding model'. Staff have accessed training to support them in applying this approach and you told us about some of the positive feedback you have received from staff regarding this. You informed us about some current challenges being encountered in appointing adult mental health workers for the service and you have a plan to address this.

You have told us that you have 40 UAS children in your care currently and that you are near your required quota through the national transfer scheme. The ILACS visit in 2023 triggered you to move swiftly to develop a specialist team to support this group of children. This service is now in place, and you are ensuring that staff have the required skills to do this specialist work. Some of these young people are currently living in semi-independent accommodation arrangements. You also told us about your plans to improve your sufficiency of in-house foster carers who can offer care to these children.

You currently have 42 young people living in supported accommodation and it is your understanding that all the providers applied in time and so are operating under the exemption. We reminded you of the portal which you can access to assure yourselves of this information. You have also been successful in gaining additional money via a DfE grant to develop and improve your staying close offer. You have two children placed in unregistered children's homes at this time and you have measures in place to assure yourselves of the quality of these arrangements. You are progressing your plans to open two children's homes, and these are on target to be in place by Spring 2025. One of these is a joint venture with health.

You updated us about your work in response to the changes to Working Together. These include developing a safeguarding partnership which incorporates children, adults, and the community safeguarding board. This will be chaired by the chief executive of Southampton City Council. You reported that partnership working across the city appears to be stronger than it has ever been. The partnership continue to use a scrutineer to provide additional professional challenge to these arrangements.

The update about the work you have been doing to introduce your alternatively qualified workers was interesting. You are awaiting formal sign off and agreement to your process, procedures, and protocols regarding this work. While you await this, you have continued to assess and put plans in place to ensure workers are equipped and supported with their practice. You described in your self-evaluation the skills audit which has taken place, to support you with your understanding of workers' skills, capabilities, and areas for further development.

You set out in your self-evaluation document and through the discussion, the areas of practice that have improved. Specifically, the progress made to sustain and stabilise the workforce and reduce the use of agency staff. You also described your initiatives to 'grow your own', alongside the impact and measures in place to support a less experienced workforce.

We were very sorry to hear about the recent death of a care experienced young person. Thank you for providing us with the update regarding this and the arrangements in place to support their family and your staff.

You have told us that your topic preferences for a focused visit would include children in care and care leavers.

## **Education**

You detailed recent changes to the structure of learning and SEND services aimed at improving attainment, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, enhancing attendance, and reducing exclusions, which have recently spiked in the authority. To achieve these goals, you are in the process of recruiting a temporary Director of Transformation.

You highlighted numerous successes and achievements of the local authority this year. These include improving the quality of performance information and culture, attributed in part to the recruitment of a Principal Data Analyst who is now tracking data against the education strategy. The number of not in education, employment, or training (NEET) 'unknowns' has been reduced to below the national average, allowing better support for these young people. You are rightly proud that the number of outstanding and good schools in the area exceeds the national average and are pleased with the positive feedback from the recent area SEND inspection. Additionally, the relaunch of the Young Carers program has resulted in a 500% increase in disclosures of caring responsibilities from children and young people in the past 12 months, a move praised by schools and colleges. This initiative enables a better understanding and support for these vulnerable learners, particularly where it impacts on NEETs and disadvantaged communities.

We discussed the Council's support for education leaders, including the recent Education Leaders Conference, where governors and leaders participated in talks and workshops on leadership, moral purpose, and culture building. The 'By Heads, For Heads' program for new or aspiring heads was also described, which plays a vital role in strengthening leadership and resilience in the area.

In terms of progress and attainment, you noted that 18 out of 20 inspections in the last 12 months were graded as outstanding or good. 79% of pupils attend outstanding or good schools, rising to 98% for early years settings. Early years development levels are in line with the national average. Reading and mathematics at key stage 1 meet expected standards and are in line with national averages, while key stage 2 writing is slightly below the national average. Key stage 2 reading and mathematics meet expected levels and align

with statistical neighbour averages. At key stage 4, the attainment 8 score is above the statistical neighbour average, and the EBacc performance is in line with this measure.

Reading has been a long-term focus, with initiatives for targeted support yielding significant improvements. Early data indicates continued positive progress in these schools. Efforts to achieve greater depth in writing for more able pupils have also seen success, with one school reporting a 33% increase in attainment due to direct work with consultants.

Attendance has been identified as a specific concern. The full implementation of the 'working together' guidance has received positive feedback from the DfE attendance advisor. The Southampton attendance group prioritises pupil absence, with recent data showing reductions in overall absence rates across all phases, especially in primary schools. Future efforts will target secondary phase attendance and SEND support, supported by multi-agency meetings for immediate advice and support. Discussions with healthcare providers are also underway to better manage absence certifications.

Despite high exclusion rates, significant efforts have been made to prevent increases. The primary issues remain with male learners from disadvantaged backgrounds, areas of deprivation, and SEND support. Notably, the three schools with the highest exclusion rates are seeing reductions, attributed to new leadership and better collaboration with the local authority. The exclusion working group is organising additional de-escalation training and aligning social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) outreach work with primary heads to improve exclusion rates. A new two-part exclusion training program for governors and senior leaders is being developed, along with a trial of a new approach to sixth-day provision for better reintegration. Investments in emotional literacy support assistants and forest schools are also being monitored for their impact on improving behaviour. Additionally, governors are now overturning more exclusions, reflecting stronger governance.

Currently, 209 learners are on reduced timetables, primarily in secondary provision, and from disadvantaged backgrounds, including SEND support. These decisions are made through multi-agency collaboration. A strategic review of this area is planned, along with more focused internal training for schools.

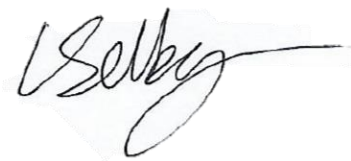
The quality assurance of potential alternative provision (AP) is well established, with appropriate advice and guidance provided to all schools. Further training on safeguarding, transition support, and best practices in recording and monitoring progress for AP learners is planned.

Post-16 learner progress was also discussed. You reiterated the success in reducing NEET unknowns, crediting the restructuring of the careers hub for improved careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) in the area. However, the proportion of learners at risk of NEET remains high, and the resilience of young people is low. The careers hub staff are working closely with schools, colleges, and youth provision to encourage college enrolment. A curriculum mapping exercise has been completed, noting an increase in learners studying level 2 English and mathematics, matching national trends. Concerns were raised about the loss of provision due to a recent college merger.

Regarding early years provision, you now complete termly sufficiency data, enabling close tracking of availability. There is sufficient availability of places in the region. Efforts are being made to support the recruitment and retention of early years staff, with retention identified as the primary issue. Celebratory initiatives and the development of a newly qualified practitioner program aim to support staff in their first year of practice, allowing the local authority to better shape the curriculum and meet employers' business needs.

Thank you again for making the time to meet with us.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L Selby", is written over a light blue rectangular background.

**Lee Selby**

Assistant Regional Director, South East

Please note: This letter is not published by Ofsted and the comments made have not been evaluated as part of an inspection.

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<b>DECISION-MAKER:</b>	CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	CHILDREN AND LEARNING – PERFORMANCE & TRANSFORMATION
<b>DATE OF DECISION:</b>	8 AUGUST 2024
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	SCRUTINY MANAGER

<u><b>CONTACT DETAILS</b></u>			
<b>Executive Director</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Executive Director – Enabling Services</b>	
	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Mel Creighton</b>	<b>Tel:</b> 023 8083 3528
	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Mel.creighton@southampton.gov.uk</b>	
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Scrutiny Manager</b>	
	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Mark Pirnie</b>	<b>Tel:</b> 023 8083 3886
	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Mark.pirnie@southampton.gov.uk</b>	

<b>STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY</b>	
None	
<b>BRIEF SUMMARY</b>	
Attached as Appendix 1 is a summary of performance for Children’s Services and Learning up to the end of June 2024. At the meeting the Cabinet Member and senior managers from Children’s Services and Learning will be providing the Panel with an overview of performance across the directorate.	
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS:</b>	
	(i) That the Panel consider and challenge the performance of Children’s Services and Learning in Southampton.
<b>REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	
1.	To enable effective scrutiny of Children’s Services and Learning in Southampton.
<b>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</b>	
2.	None.
<b>DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)</b>	
3.	To enable the Panel to undertake their role effectively members will be provided with monthly performance information and an explanation of the measures.
4.	Performance information up to 30 June 2024 is attached as Appendix 1. An explanation of the significant variations in performance has been included.
5.	The Cabinet Member for Children and Learning, and representatives from the Children’s Services and Learning Senior Management Team, have been invited to attend the meeting to provide the performance overview.
<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>	
<u>Capital/Revenue/Property/Other</u>	

6.	None directly as a result of this report.
<b>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	
<b><u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u></b>	
7.	The duty to undertake overview and scrutiny is set out in Part 1A Section 9 of the Local Government Act 2000.
<b><u>Other Legal Implications:</u></b>	
8.	None
<b>RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS</b>	
9.	None
<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS</b>	
10.	<p>The 2024 updated Corporate Plan includes the following strategic objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe and stable home environments</li> <li>• Accessible education and skills pathways.</li> </ul> <p>By delivering consistently good outcomes for the city's children and young people, Southampton's Children's Services and Learning Directorate will contribute to achieving these objectives.</p>

<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	No
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<b>WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:</b>	None
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**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

**Appendices**

1.	Summary of performance and commentary – June 2024
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2.	Children and Learning Glossary
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**Documents In Members' Rooms**

1.	None
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**Equality Impact Assessment**

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out?	No
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**Data Protection Impact Assessment**

Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out?	No
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**Other Background Documents**

**Other Background documents available for inspection at:**

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
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1.	None
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# Children & Learning Service Performance Report

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July 2024



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SOUTHAMPTON  
CITY COUNCIL

Agenda Item 10  
Appendix 1

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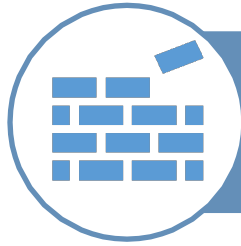
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# Purpose

In order to evidence that Children & Learning Services are making a positive difference for children in the city, we consider our monthly performance data that is linked to the key outcomes of our governing strategy, Building for Brilliance 2023.

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## Building for Brilliance; Building for Sustainability; Building for Families, with Families



Ensure that children get the **right support at the right time**, meeting need early, reducing demand and spend on statutory services



Develop **strong, vibrant localities** where families can receive the help they need and practitioners can share their knowledge and expertise



Support children to **remain within, or return to, their birth families**, seeking out and reuniting family members, reducing care costs and freeing up placements for other children.



Promote **permanence and placement stability**, creating strong forever families and reducing increasingly costly alternatives



Build a **permanent, stable, energised workforce**, increasing consistency for children and reducing agency spend



Embed our **practice framework and practice standards** across the whole service, doing the basics brilliantly and being ambitious in our practice expectations





# Right support at the right time – Family Help

Indicator	Jun-22	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Target	RAG	Direction of travel	So'ton 22/23	Statistical Neighbours	South East	England
Number of referrals into Early Help	203	154	172	162	109	139	166	142	144	129	90	87	127	113		-	↓	-	-	-	-
Number of referrals that were stepped down from CSC (no assessment required)		35	21	46	27	16	23	18	36	24	15	15	20	21		-	↑	-	-	-	-
Number of Early Help assessments started	147	82	119	71	66	89	91	80	79	86	65	71	71	79		-	↑	-	-	-	-
Number of contacts in the month	1867	1948	1804	1471	1532	1923	1763	1459	2018	1818	1780	1705	1714	1675		-	↑	-	-	-	-
Rate of contacts per 10,000 population under 18 years old		4229	4272	4173	4123	4166	4159	4171	4207	4251	4201	4233	4206	4151		-	↑	-	-	-	-
Number of referrals into statutory service in the month	322	285	310	263	267	276	315	216	308	197	202	191	185	207		-	↓	-	-	-	-
Rate of referrals per 10,000 population under 18 years old		762	761	760	754	747	732	720	715	691	645	627	603	588	581	●	↑	759.8	640.1	-	544.5
Number of C&F assessments completed	296	283	292	259	231	222	255	216	266	200	233	186	229	203		-	↑	-	-	-	-
Rate of assessments per 10,000 population under 18 years old		827	829	807	776	756	736	716	707	685	651	627	588	573	580	●	↑	778.4	628.5	-	557.4
Percentage of assessments completed within 45 days		90	89	90	80	87	92	81	89	90	85	83	88	85	81	●	↓	81.6	81.1	-	82.5
Number of children with Child in Need Plan (not CWD)	325	493	467	462	433	388	464	449	480	453	396	377	372	329	-	-	↑	-	-	-	-
Number of children with Child in Need Plan (CWD)		244	254	243	243	237	230	228	221	222	212	213	209	208	-	-	↑	-	-	-	-





# Right support at the right time – Family Help

## Desired outcome

Improved shared understanding of thresholds resulting in less contacts a month, an increase in referrals and assessments for Early Help, a reduction in statutory referrals and assessments and children open to statutory services. This will result in more focused and intensive work with families requiring statutory services resulting in less children subject to CP planning and coming into our care.

## Progress analysis

- Our new Family Help Service was implemented on the 24<sup>th</sup> June. We are looking forward to seeing the impact of this service over the coming months.
- June had a small reduction in contacts from the previous 3 months with 1675 contacts. This is down 14% from June 2023.
- The rate of referrals has continued to reduce to 588, down 23% since June 2023. We are close to meeting our new target of 581, which would place us in the top 5 performing statistical neighbours.
- Subsequently, our rate of assessments has reduced to 573, 31% less than June 2023.
- We have consistently met or exceeded our statistical neighbour average rate (81%) of completing assessments within 45 days since June 2023.





# Right support at the right time – Family Safeguarding

Indicator	Jun-22	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Target	RAG	Direction of travel	So'ton 22/23	Statistical Neighbours	South East	England
Number of strategy discussions held		207	144	161	152	152	173	124	147	97	144	121	120	74	-	-	⬆️	-	-	-	-
Number of Section 47 enquiries completed		124	121	86	81	131	112	101	77	86	90	75	84	49	-	-	⬆️	-	-	-	-
Rate of Section 47 enquiries completed		355	346	336	320	323	306	301	297	285	274	261	251	238	247	🟡	⬆️	352.2	253.0	-	191.6
Percentage of Strategy discussions resulting in Section 47		60	84	53	53	86	65	81	52	89	63	62	70	66	-	-	⬆️	-	-	-	-
Percentage of Section 47s (not already CP or in our care) resulting in ICPC		43	21	45	20	20	33	12	22	21	28	24	19	11	31	🟢	⬇️	23.9	31.1	-	33.0
Number of children subject to CP Plan at end of month	425	351	345	346	318	311	320	309	304	307	276	257	256	249	-	-	⬆️	-	-	-	-
Rate of children subject to CP plans	86	71	70	70	64	62	64	62	61	60	56	52	51	50	49	🟡	⬆️	63.90	52.90	-	43.20
Number of children in our care	554	517	518	507	510	503	507	510	494	492	490	488	488	479	-	-	⬆️	-	-	-	-
Rate of children in our care per 10,000	112	105	105	103	103	101	102	102	99	99	98	97	98	96	87	🔴	⬆️	114.00	100.90	56.00	70.00
Number of children open to the service (Assessment, CIN, CP, CLA, CL)	2407	2304	2297	2259	2112	2085	2111	2036	2069	1986	1973	1905	1865	1748	-	-	⬆️	-	-	-	-
Rate of children open to the service (Assessment, CIN, CP, CLA, CL)	483	453	448	422	414	418	423	408	415	396	396	382	374	351	350	🔴	⬆️	524.8	428.8	-	642.7



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# Right support at the right time – Family Safeguarding

## Desired outcome

Improved shared understanding of thresholds around strategy discussions and section 47 enquiries alongside focused and effective interventions with families during assessments and child in need plans. This will result in less children subject to CP planning and coming into our care.

## Progress analysis

- Our new Family Safeguarding Service was implemented on the 24<sup>th</sup> July, the adult facing workers have a staggered start, and mental health workers are yet to be identified by our commissioning partner.
- The rate of Section 47s fell again in June to 238, this is now below the new target we set to reduce by 10% by March 2025.
- The rate of children subject to CP is 50, down 29% from 71 in June 2023. This is below the statistical neighbour average of 53 and almost at the target of 49 for March 2025.
- The number of children in our care reduced to 479 with a rate of 96. This is down 7% from June 2023, and 13% from June 2022.
- The number of children open to the service overall reduced by 24% from June 2023 to 1748 with a rate of 351, this is below the statistical neighbour average of 429 and almost at our target of 350.





# Strong, safe & vibrant localities

Indicator	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Target	RAG	Direction of travel	So'ton 22/23	Statistical Neighbours	South East	England
Percentage of re-referrals within 12 months	35%	26%	19%	21%	21%	32%	25%	30%	24%	28%	26%	20%	26%	20%	Red	Down	22%	20%		21%
Percentage of referrals leading to NFA	8%	9%	10%	10%	8%	4%	5%	4%	2%	4%	5%	9%	14%	7	Red	Down	14%	7.6%	-	7.1%
Percentage of children subject to 2nd or more CP plan	33%	33%	31%	31%	32%	33%	34%	37%	35%	36%	38%	38%	37%	25%	Red	Up	33%	25%		24%
Percentage of children subject to child protection plans with recent core group held in time	83%	79%	69%	85%	84%	89%	74%	88%	89%	93%	88%	87%	83%	95%	Red	Down	-	-	-	-
Percentage of children with Child in Need Plan (not CWD) with CIN review within last 12 weeks	83%	86%	79%	80%	70%	76%	81%	70%	70%	87%	87%	83%	87%	95%	Red	Up	-	-	-	-
Percentage of initial health assessments delivered within 20 working days of date child became looked after.	50%	76%	20%	57%	9%	0%	33%	92%	67%	43%	71%	92%		95%	Yellow	Down	-	-	-	-
Percentage of children in care for at least 12 months for whom health assessments are up to date.	85%	84%	82%	80%	79%	78%	78%	83%	87%	88%	87%	86%	85%	95%	Red	Down	-	-	-	-



# Strong, safe & vibrant localities

## Outcomes

Stronger partner relationships will lead to a better understanding of referral thresholds. Multi-agency plans will be effective at increasing the safety and wellbeing of children. This will lead to a reduction in the referrals from schools, increase in partner agency led Team Around the Family plans, timeliness of Core Group activity, decrease in children with more than one period of CP planning, and increase in Child In Need Plans concluding within 6 months.

## Progress analysis

- The percentage of re-referrals is incorrect this month as a result of the change in Family Help. Where some children have been transferred between Early Help and Statutory teams, this has been counted as a re-referral. An alternative approach is being trialled at present and should result in more accurate data next month.
- The percentage of referrals leading to No Further Action (NFA) increased to 14%, this may also be related to the change in data processes as a result of the transformation and will be reviewed next month.
- An in-depth review of children subject to child protection planning has been undertaken by the Independent Chairs and identified that of those returning for a child protection plan, only 2% had been subject to a CP plan within 12 months, and 7% within 24 months. The high percentage of children that have experienced a child protection plan at some time in their lives previously is expected to reduce in the long term.
- The June data regarding initial health assessments for children that have come into our care are not yet available at the time of writing this report. The May data is positive in that all but one child had an initial health assessment within timescales.





# Children remain within or return to their birth families

Indicator	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Target	RAG	Direction of travel
Number of children in our care	518	507	510	505	504	507	510	494	492	490	488	489	479	-	-	↑
Rate of children in our care per 10,000	105	103	103	102	101	102	102	99	99	98	97	98	96	87	🔴	↑
Number of new CLA in month	17	10	17	15	13	17	21	8	7	14	17	15	8	11	🟢	↑
Number of new CLA in month who are UASC	2	2	3	4	2	1	1	2	2	4	2	0	6	-	-	↓
Number of Ceased CLA in the month excluding UASC	18	13	14	17	13	10	15	17	6	15	18	9	15	-	-	↑
Number of CLA achieved CAO or SGO	4	2	3	5	3	1	1	1	1	1	4	2	7	3.5	🟢	↑
Number of CLA returned home as part of care planning	5	3	5	6	6	6	5	9	1	4	4	1	0	6.5	🔴	↓
Number of CLA placed with parents at the end of the month	44	39	39	34	33	38	43	49	49	45	43	40	37	34	🔴	↓
Number of CLA placed in Connected Carer placements at the end of the month	50	47	40	42	41	51	56	54	57	65	73	68	65	-	-	↑

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# Children remain within or return to their birth families

**Outcomes** – Children in our care return to live with their birth families, and more children are enabled to remain with their birth families, so we bring less children into our care through intensive working with families at child in need and child protection.

## Progress analysis –

- The rate of children in our care has remained below our statistical neighbour average target of 100 since January 2024. We have 39 fewer children in our care than we did in June 2023.
- In June, of the 8 children that came into our care, 6 were UASC. Our plan is to reduce the number of children entering our care to an average of 11 a month, this is linked to the Family Safeguarding approach being fully launched in September 2024.
- We had 17 children leaving care, of these 2 were UASC. Of the 15 non-UASC, 7 achieved permanence with a family member, but 0 was returned home as part of care planning. Whilst we are on track in achieving permanence within families for children, our sustained progress last year on returning children to parents has lessened in the last few months. It will require a renewed focus on the reunification plans for children in the coming months to achieve the targets set out for 24/25.

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# Promote permanence and placement stability

	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Target	RAG	Direction of travel
Number of children in our care	518	507	510	505	504	507	510	494	492	490	488	489	479			↑
Percentage of CLA at end of month with 3 or more placements during the year	14	16	18	17	19	18	19	18	19	18	17	16	14	10	🔴	↑
Number of CLA placed in IFA placements as at the end of the month	146	141	147	142	141	137	133	132	131	131	129	127	119	91	🔴	↑
Percentage of CLA placed in IFA placements as at the end of the month	26	27	29	28	28	27	26	27	27	27	26	26	25	20	🔴	↑
Number of CLA placed in children's homes	43	42	43	43	39	38	35	34	33	35	35	36	36	31	🔴	→
Percentage of CLA placed in children's homes	8	8	8	8	8	8	7	7	7	7	7	7	8	6	🟡	↓
Number of CLA placed in unregulated/ unregistered settings at the end of the month	36	42	42	44	48	48	49	46	47	46	43	42	44	20	🔴	↓
Percentage of CLA placed in unregulated/ unregistered settings at the end of the month	7	8	8	8	10	9	10	9	10	9	9	9	9	4	🔴	→
Number of CLA placed for adoption at period end	19	13	15	15	17	15	13	13	16	15	13	12	11			↑
Number of children placed with SCC foster carers (including connected carers)	206	195	193	198	201	206	205	204	200	202	212	219	215	285	🔴	↓
Percentage of children placed with SCC foster carers (including connected carers)	39	38	38	39	40	41	40	41	41	41	43	45	45	58	🔴	→



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# Promote permanence and placement stability

## Progress analysis

- Placement stability has improved from 19% in February to 14% in June, this is the lowest since last June. Systems and processes within fostering, pathways through care and family safeguarding are being reviewed to ensure earlier identification of placements that may be at risk or under pressure, and that the placement stability panel and the new Building Bridges Team are accessed for intensive support as required.
- The number of children placed in independent fostering agencies has reduced further to 119 from 147 in August 2023, this is the lowest for the last 12 months.
- 215 children are placed within our own foster placements, this is 45% of the overall cohort and up from 193 in August 2023. The ambition is for this to reach 58%, but this will depend on successful recruitment and assessment of new fostering households alongside retaining current carers. Nationally there are significant challenges to recruiting foster carers with significant competition from independent fostering agencies that are able to pay foster carers significantly more per child in their care. We are working with Newton on fostering placement sufficiency as part of their wider remit.
- There are 36 children in children's homes, down from 43 in May 2023.
- We have 44 young people in unregulated or unregistered placements, down from 49 in December 2023. All of these settings are in the process of being registered with Ofsted. These young people have additional Service Lead and Head of Service oversight and are reviewed by the Deputy Director monthly.
- Introduction of the Mockingbird model of fostering is in the implementation phase.



# Promote permanence and placement stability

## Education

- There are 8 children in our care aged 16 or under that are out of education, or not accessing education, 7 have Special Educational Needs.
- 1 is a newly arrived unaccompanied asylum seeking child, the virtual school are liaising with the virtual school where he is placed to secure a school placement.
- Of the remaining 7, 1 has applied to college and the virtual school are clarifying any funding arrangements. 1 is receiving tuition while school consults are active. 1 has a school place identified and is waiting for a transition plan. 1 child is about to move placements, accessing education is part of his care plan. 1 child is receiving tutoring whilst post 16 option being sought for September. Another child requires significant emotional and mental health support, current school struggled and gave notice, AP programme provided whilst alternative school identified.
- 22 looked after young people aged 16 and 17 are not in employment, education or training. This is down from 29 in March. 4 of these have Special Educational Needs. 1 of these is a parent, 3 are not yet ready for education, employment or training. 18 are seeking EET.





# Permanent, stable workforce

Indicator	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Target	RAG	Direction of travel
Total number of children held by social worker	1497	1467	1366	1258	1166	1261	1398	1365	1332	1293	1228	1210	1170			↑
Average number of children per primary caseholder (based on 1 FTE)	15.87	16.40	15.64	14.50	14.21	15.12	15.82	16.00	15.93	15.72	15.26	14.81	13.94			↑
Average number of children per qualified Social Worker (1 FTE)	15.76	16.67	16.46	14.98	14.76	16.33	17.92	17.73	17.76	17.47	16.59	15.71	14.63			↑
Total number of case holders with 20+ children	43	47	36	37	34	43	48	44	44	41	41	32	23			↑
Average number of children per worker with 20+ children (1 FTE)	22.65	22.74	22.88	22.30	21.53	22.16	22.54	22.77	22.84	22.76	22.56	22.75	24.00			↓
Average number of children per worker in top 40	22.85	23.23	22.40	22.05	21.15	22.33	23.05	23.05	23.05	22.83	22.63	22.00	21.75			↑
Percentage of CLA that have been in care for 12+m, with same social worker for last 6 months	62	68	74	75	80	78	73	73	73	71	56	54	58	75	🔴	↑
Percentage of children open for 6+ months that have had 2 or more social workers in the last 6 months	35%	33%	32%	39%	38%	36%	37%	38%	38%	32%	33%	34%	37%	25	🔴	↓



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# Permanent, stable workforce

## Progress analysis

- The total number of children being held by social workers has reduced 22% from 1497 to 1170.
- Caseloads for social workers have decreased from 17.76 in February 2024 to 14.63. At our peak we had 110 caseholding social workers (due to high levels of agency), and currently have 80. We are currently holding a small number of vacancies in our Pathways Through Care service and have reduced the number of agency social workers in the system to 12.
- The number of social workers with 20 or more children on their caseload has reduced from 48 in December 2023 to 23 in June 2024.
- Employee turnover has remained stable in Children & Learning. In our neighbouring local authorities, they have seen an increased reliance on agency staff, which drive up costs and create increased instability for families.
- Maintaining a stable and high-quality workforce remains a key priority for leadership, especially at a time of change and where neighbours offer higher wages to attract permanent staff. The recent launch of the re-design proposals can create uncertainty for staff and there are attractive opportunities for them within neighbouring authorities. Focussed consideration is being given to supporting staff through this process.

## Outcomes

Children and families maintain working relationships with consistent practitioners, who benefit from stable management support and oversight. Agency staff numbers will reduce contributing towards financial responsibility.





# Embedding Practice Framework and Standards

## Outcomes

### Audits will evidence:

- An improved quality of supervision and standard of practice.
- Contingency planning will be clear in all plans from the beginning of interventions and involvements.
- Systemic practice will be evidenced in care recording audits of visits, assessments, plans, supervisions, chronologies.
- Safe & Together will be evident in work with families increasing involvement of perpetrators, partnering with survivors and achieving long term safety for children.

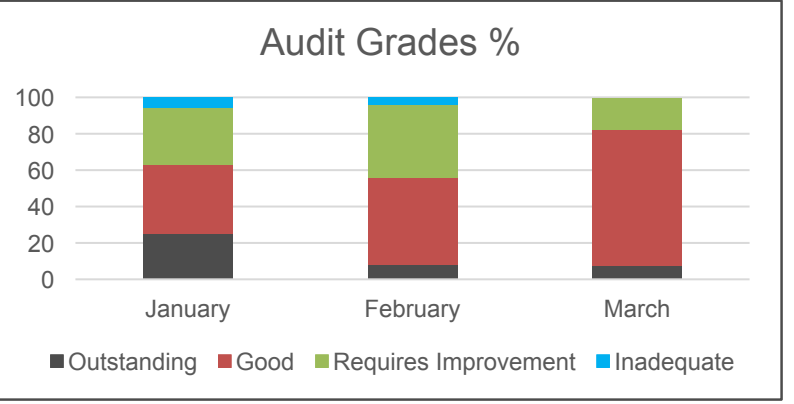
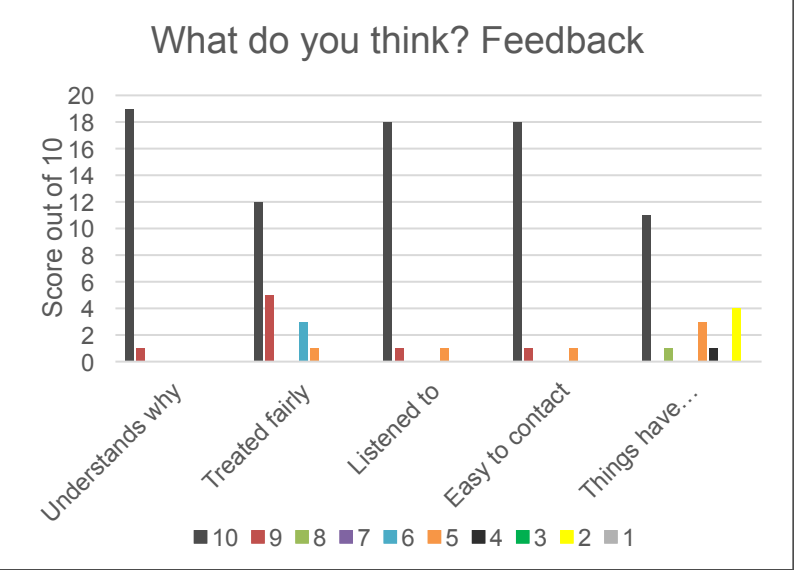
### Progress analysis Quarter 4 Audit overview:

#### Social Work with Families

- 'L believes that even small steps of the plan make this better for her family and she fully understands why we are involved.'
- 'More than one worker - Felt this was very annoying as having to meet new people and tell story over again is not ideal and they struggle to trust people.'
- 'There isn't anything I would change about the support Sarah has offered to myself and my family. She should continue to be her authentic self, to spend time getting to know the family and building rapport before bringing in interventions as we personally found this made a huge difference.'
- 'Wanted help so was happy to have a social worker and understood both roles of assessment social worker and longer term social worker'
- 'Better changing workers as she feels more listened to.'
- 'Has not had positive experiences with other workers but appreciates this was when they were in more need. Felt more listened to now and that I wish to keep the family together. Feels that she can approach her worker and tell her things without being looked down upon'.

#### Young People's Service

- 'The family were telling me all about how brilliant Kara [social worker] is. Dad was saying how much she has done for them and how she is like the backbone of the family and their son really listens to what she says to him, which is a huge help for the family. His son was saying how much he enjoys seeing Kara and has missed her over Christmas/new year and is looking forward to seeing her on Friday!'



# Performance - Visiting

## Progress analysis

- Early Help recording of visits remained at 77% in June but remains higher than months prior to April 2024.
- Visits to children within Jigsaw (children with disabilities team) remains below expectations but has improved with 10 month high at 85%. The service now has a Service Manager, and there are recruitment processes for two team manager positions. There is a clear improvement plan in place for the service, and the team is now fully staffed following the restructure.
- The Pathways Through Care team are finding that higher than average caseloads resulting from staff vacancies are impacting on the recording of visits to children in our care, but these have already reached a 10 month high. Recruitment processes are underway and additional agency workers have been moved into the service.
- Visits to children on a child protection dipped to 88%, which is a concern given these are the children at most risk in the city. This will be reviewed with the management team and an improvement plan agreed.

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Indicator	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Target	RAG	Direction of travel
Percentage of children open to Early Help with a visit in the last 4 weeks	60%	66%	67%	58%	71%	69%	62%	66%	62%	74%	81%	77%	77%	95%	🔴	➡
Percentage of children with an active Child in Need Plan (not CWD) visited within last 6 weeks	95%	96%	94%	96%	96%	95%	96%	95%	97%	97%	98%	99%	98%	95%	🟢	⬇
Percentage of children with an active Child in Need Plan (not CWD) visited within last 3 weeks	74%	77%	77%	77%	86%	85%	89%	85%	87%	88%	90%	94%	90%	90%	🟢	⬇
Percentage of children with an active Child in Need Plan (CWD) visited within agreed timescales	95%	88%	77%	73%	80%	82%	77%	73%	74%	84%	81%	79%	85%	95%	🔴	⬆
Percentage of children subject to Child Protection Plan visited within last 10 working days	90%	84%	86%	90%	88%	92%	85%	93%	94%	91%	98%	99%	95%	95%	🟢	⬇
Percentage of children subject to Child Protection Plan visited within last 4 weeks	98%	97%	96%	98%	97%	99%	96%	99%	98%	95%	92%	91%	88%	95%	🔴	⬇
Percentage of CLA for whom a visit has taken place within agreed timescales	89%	89%	83%	81%	81%	85%	83%	83%	79%	83%	80%	85%	87%	95%	🔴	⬆

# Performance - Supervision

## Progress analysis

- Supervision within Jigsaw and Pathways Through Care have dipped for the same reasons as set out above for the visiting recording in terms of staff and management vacancies.
- Early Help have also struggled due to managers absence, and staff vacancies. Through the recent restructure this has been redressed, and recording will be focus for the new Service Managers in place.

Indicator	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Target	RAG	Direction of travel
Percentage of children open to Early Help with supervision in timescales	82%	72%	82%	89%	82%	81%	68%	79%	74%	87%	79%	79%	78%	95%	Red	Down
Percentage of children open for assessment who had supervision in timescales	100%	100%	100%	99%	100%	100%	99%	99%	99%	97%	97%	96%	92%	95%	Yellow	Down
Percentage of children with a Child in Need Plan (not CWD) who had supervision within timescales	96%	85%	79%	84%	86%	89%	91%	97%	88%	90%	94%	88%	97%	95%	Green	Up
Percentage of children open to the Children with Disabilities team who had their supervision within timescales	100%	100%	100%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	98%	99%	97%	94%	85%	95%	Red	Down
Percentage of CPP who had their supervision and within timescales	98%	87%	85%	89%	93%	96%	94%	96%	91%	96%	92%	93%	95%	95%	Green	Up
Percentage of CLA who had their supervision and was within the timescale	94%	88%	90%	78%	73%	81%	83%	83%	94%	88%	81%	77%	80%	95%	Red	Up
Percentage of Care Leavers who had their supervision and was within the timescale	92%	92%	88%	83%	79%	83%	81%	77%	90%	91%	87%	87%	88%	95%	Red	Up



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## Acronyms

<b>ADM</b>	Agency decision maker
<b>ASYE</b>	Assessed and Supported Year in Employment
<b>BIT</b>	Brief Intervention Team
<b>C&amp;FF</b>	Children and Family First (Early Help service)
<b>CAMHS</b>	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
<b>CiC</b>	Children in Care
<b>CLA</b>	Children Looked After
<b>CP</b>	Child Protection
<b>CRS</b>	Childrens Resource Service
<b>CYP</b>	Children and Young People
<b>EH</b>	Early Help
<b>FEW</b>	Family Engagement Worker
<b>HoS</b>	Head of Service
<b>ICAS</b>	Intervention and Complex Assessment Service
<b>ICAT</b>	Intervention and Complex Assessment Team
<b>Jigsaw</b>	Children with Disabilities Team
<b>KCSiE</b>	Keeping Children Safe in Education (safeguarding legislation and guidance for education settings)
<b>ROTH</b>	Risk Outside the Home
<b>PM</b>	Practice Manager
<b>PTC</b>	Pathways through Care
<b>SL</b>	Service Lead
<b>SW</b>	Social Worker
<b>SWF/SWWF</b>	Social Work with Families
<b>YJS</b>	Youth Justice Service
<b>YPS</b>	Young Person Service

## Abuse

Abuse is the act of violation of an individual's human or civil rights. Any or all types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence, or ignorance. Different types of abuse include Physical abuse, Neglect/acts of omission, Financial/material abuse, Psychological abuse, Sexual abuse, Institutional abuse, Discriminatory abuse, or any combination of these.

## Advocacy

Advocacy helps to safeguard children and young people and protect them from harm and neglect. It is about speaking up for children and young people and ensuring their views and wishes are heard and acted upon by decision-makers. LAs have a duty under The Children Act to ensure that advocacy services are provided for children, young people and care leavers making or intending to make a complaint. It should also cover representations which are not complaints. Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) should also provide a child/young person with information about advocacy services and offer help in obtaining an advocate.

## Agency Decision Maker

The Agency Decision Maker (ADM) is the person within a fostering service and an adoption agency who makes decisions on the basis of recommendations made by the Fostering Panel (in relation to a fostering service) and the Adoption Panel (in relation to an adoption agency). The Agency Decision Maker will take account of the Panel's recommendation before proceeding to make a decision. The Agency Decision Maker can choose to make a different decision.

The National Minimum Standards for Fostering 2011 provide that the Agency Decision Maker for a fostering service should be a senior person within the fostering service, who is a social worker with at least 3 years post-qualifying experience in childcare social work and has knowledge of childcare law and practice (Standard 23).

The National Minimum Standards for Adoption 2011 provide that the Agency Decision Maker for an adoption agency should be a senior person within the adoption agency, who is a social worker with at least 3 years post-qualifying experience in childcare social work and has knowledge of permanency planning for children, adoption and childcare law and practice. Where the adoption agency provides an inter country adoption service, the Agency Decision Maker should also have specialist knowledge of this area of law and practice. When determining the disclosure of Protected Information about adults, the Agency Decision Maker should also understand the legislation surrounding access to and disclosure of information and the impact of reunion on all parties (Standard 23).

## Assessment

Assessments are undertaken to determine the needs of individual children; what services to provide and action to take. They may be carried out:

- To gather important information about a child and family;
- To analyse their needs and/or the nature and level of any risk and harm being suffered by the child;
- To decide whether the child is a Child in Need (Section 17) and/or is suffering or likely to suffer Significant Harm (Section 47); and
- To provide support to address those needs to improve the child's outcomes to make them safe.

With effect from 15 April 2013, Working Together 2013 removes the requirement for separate **Initial Assessments** and **Core Assessments**. One Assessment – often called Single Assessment - may be undertaken instead.

## Brief Intervention Team

Brief Intervention Service undertakes S47 Child Protection Investigations and S17 Single Assessments. They work towards five different outcomes for families.

1. If there are no identified concerns then the case can close.
  2. If the family require ongoing support at an early help level then the social worker will present the case at Step Down Panel in order to access Children and Families First and Universal Services.
  3. Children who require ongoing support with social worker intervention can be made subject to a Child In Need Plan.
  4. Children considered to be at risk of significant harm can be made subject to a Child Protection Plan.
  5. The service are also active in some initial court proceedings.
- The Brief Intervention Service do not hold cases long term therefore when a plan is identified that case will transfer to the appropriate team. All CIN plans and CP plans transfer to the Social Work with Families Service.

## CAFCASS

**Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS)** is the Government agency responsible for Reporting Officers, Children's Guardians and other Court officers appointed by the Court in Court Proceedings involving children. Also appoints an officer to witness when a parent wishes to consent to a child's placement for adoption.

## Care Order

A Care Order can be made in Care Proceedings brought under section 31 of the Children Act if the Threshold Criteria are met. The Order grants Parental Responsibility for the child to the local authority specified in the Order, to be shared with the parents.

A **Care Order** lasts until the child is 18 unless discharged earlier. An **Adoption Order** automatically discharges the Care Order. A **Placement Order** automatically suspends the Care Order, but it will be reinstated if the Placement Order is subsequently revoked.

All children who are the subject of a Care Order come within the definition of Looked After and have to have a Care Plan. When making a Care Order, the Court must be satisfied that the Care Plan is suitable.

## Categories of Abuse or Neglect

Where a decision is made that a child requires a Child Protection Plan, the category of abuse or neglect must be specified by the Child Protection Conference Chair.

## Child Arrangement Order

Child Arrangements Orders replace residence orders and contact orders. Child Arrangements Orders are governed by section 8 of the Children Act 1989. A Child Arrangements Order decides where a child lives, when a child spends time with each parent and when and what other types of contact take place (phone calls, for example). Each Child Arrangements Order is decided on the circumstances of the individual family and on what is in the best interests of that particular child.

## Child in Need and Child in Need Plan

Under Section 17 (10) of the Children Act 1989, a child is a Child in Need (CiN) if:

- He/she is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him/her of services by a local authority;
- His/her health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for him/her of such services; or
- He/she is disabled.

A **Child in Need Plan** should be drawn up for children who are not Looked After but are identified as Children in Need who requiring services to meet their needs. It should be completed following an Assessment where services are identified as necessary.

Under the Integrated Children's System, if a Child is subject to a Child Protection Plan, it is recorded as part of the Child in Need Plan.

The Child in Need Plan may also be used with children receiving short break care in conjunction with Part One of the Care Plan.

### Child Protection

The following definition is taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010, paragraph 1.23.:

Child protection is a part of Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, Significant Harm.

### Child Protection Conference

Child Protection Conferences (Initial – **ICPC** and review – **RCPC**) are convened where children are considered to be at risk of Significant Harm.

### Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

### Children and Families First

Parents or professionals can referral for Children and Families First case holding services through the Children's Resource Service. Families can access our family hubs by contacting us directly in the community. The Children and Families First Case holding locality teams provide the right support to families, at the right time, to achieve change that lasts. It can be provided at any stage in a child or young person's life, from pre-birth through to teenage years.

The service provide targeted intervention using a multi-disciplinary approach that can be delivered to parents, children, or whole families, but the focus is to improve outcomes for children and help prevent any situation from escalating, or further problems arising.

Families should be enabled and supported to have the right conversations, with the right people and at the right time about their needs or concerns, so that statutory interventions can be avoided where this is appropriate. Intervening as early as possible, regardless of the age of the child or young person, can positively improve their outcomes.

Targeted support through Children and Families First is voluntary and consent from children, young people, and their families to work with them should always be sought.

### Children with Disabilities

According to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), children with disabilities "include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis".

JIGSAW (Children with Disabilities Team) is a specialist and statutory multi-agency health and social care service in Southampton that undertakes assessments and provides services at the complex level of needs.

The Team supports disabled children, young people and their families whose main need for service arises from their disability or their intrinsic condition, and where these conditions have a complex impact on the quality of the child's life or/and the lives of their families.

The Service intervenes where their needs cannot be fully met by universal and targeted services alone.

Children are defined as 'children in need' by the Children Act 1989 because of their disability. Some of those children are also assessed as having complex needs that may require specialist support from JIGSAW (Children with Disabilities Team), in addition to universal and targeted services, because they have disabilities or illnesses that are severe and enduring, including one or more of the following;

- Learning disabilities within the moderate, severe or profound range.
- A severe physical (including visual and hearing) health condition or impairment which is life limiting, or significantly affects, or is predicted to affect, everyday life functioning or a child's access to education (e.g. in a wheelchair, has adapted living, requires total personal care support, requires communication aids) and their ability to achieve outcomes appropriate to their age related potential. These children are likely to be subject to Children's Continuing Care Arrangements because of the complexity of their health needs or an Advance Care Plan. They may also have Autism, and their behaviour is likely to present a serious risk of harm to self or others.

Other disabled children may have additional needs but the impact of their disability on their day to day living arrangements means that they do not require specialist statutory support and their needs can be met appropriately with additional support from universal and targeted services, including mainstream Children's Services.

### Children's Centres

The government is establishing a network of children's centres, providing good quality childcare integrated with early learning, family support, health services, and support for parents wanting to return to work or training.

### Children's Social Care

Children's services used to be called 'social services'. Children's services/social care are responsible for supporting and protecting vulnerable children. This includes providing children and their families with extra help. Where children are thought to be at risk of harm, children's services will take steps which aim to make sure they are kept safe. The 2004 Children Act made local authorities responsible for ensuring and overseeing the effective delivery of services for children, working closely with others. They must also promote children's welfare and well-being as defined by the five outcomes. In Southampton all services for children come under the umbrella of the Children and Learning Service.

### Corporate Parenting

In broad terms, as the corporate parent of looked after children, a local authority has a legal and moral duty to provide the kind of loyal support that any good parent would provide for their own children.

### Criteria for Child Protection Plans

Where a decision is made that a child requires a Child Protection Plan, the Conference Chair must ensure that the criteria for the decision are met, i.e. that the child is at continuing risk of Significant Harm.

## Director of Children's Services (DCS)

Every top tier local authority in England must appoint a Director of Children's Services under section 18 of the Children Act 2004. Directors are responsible for discharging local authority functions that relate to children in respect of education, social services and children leaving care. They are also responsible for discharging functions delegated to the local authority by any NHS body that relate to children, as well as some new functions conferred on authorities by the Act, such as the duty to safeguard and protect children, the Children and Young People's Plan, and the duty to co-operate to promote well-being.

## Designated Teacher

Schools should all appoint a Designated Teacher. This person's role is to co-ordinate policies, procedures and roles in relation to Child Protection and in relation to Looked After Children.

## Discretionary Leave to Remain

This is a limited permission granted to an Asylum Seeker, to stay in the UK for 3 years - it can then be extended or permission can then be sought to settle permanently.

## Duty of Care

In relation to workers in the social care sector, their duty of care is defined by the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) as a legal obligation to:

- Always act in the best interest of individuals and others;
- Not act or fail to act in a way that results in harm;
- Act within your competence and not take on anything you do not believe you can safely do.

## Early Help

Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.

Effective early help relies upon local agencies working together to:

- Identify children and families who would benefit from early help;
- Undertake an assessment of the need for early help;
- Provide targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family which focuses on activity to significantly improve the outcomes for the child.

Local authorities, under section 10 of the Children Act 2004, have a responsibility to promote inter-agency cooperation to improve the welfare of children.

## Every Child Matters

Every Child Matters is the approach to the well-being of children and young people from birth to age 19, which is incorporated into the Children Act 2004. The aim is for every child, whatever their background or their circumstances, to have the support they need to:

- Be healthy;
- Stay safe;
- Enjoy and achieve;
- Make a positive contribution and;
- Achieve economic well-being.

This means that the organisations involved with providing services to children are teaming up, sharing information and working together, to protect children and young people from harm and help them achieve what they want in life.

## Health Assessment

Every Looked After Child (LAC or CLA) must have a Health Assessment soon after becoming Looked After, then at specified intervals, depending on the child's age.

## Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR)

When an Asylum Seeker is granted ILR, they have permission to settle in the UK permanently and can access mainstream services and benefits.

## Independent Reviewing Officer

If a Local Authority is looking after a child (whether or not the child is in their care), it must appoint an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) for that child's case.

From 1 April 2011, the role of the IRO is extended, and there are two separate aspects: chairing a child's Looked After Review, and monitoring a child's case on an ongoing basis. As part of the monitoring function, the IRO also has a duty to identify any areas of poor practice, including general concerns around service delivery (not just around individual children).

IROs must be qualified social workers and, whilst they can be employees of the local authority, they must not have line management responsibility for the child's case. Independent Reviewing Officers who chair Adoption Reviews must have relevant experience of adoption work.

## Independent Domestic Violence Advisor

Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVA) are specialist caseworkers who focus on working predominantly with high risk victims (usually but not exclusively with female victims). They generally are involved from the point of crisis and offer intensive short to medium term support. They work in partnership with statutory and voluntary agencies and mobilise multiple resources on behalf of victims by coordinating the response of a wide range of agencies, including those working with perpetrators or children. There may be differences about how the IDVA service is delivered in local areas.

## Initial Child Protection Conference

An Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) is normally convened at the end of a Section 47 Enquiry when the child is assessed as either having suffered Significant Harm or to be at risk of suffering ongoing significant harm.

The Initial Child Protection Conference must be held within 15 working days of the Strategy Discussion, or the last strategy discussion if more than one has been held.

## Intervention and Complex Assessment Service

The services provided by IACS are:

The Brief Intervention Hub is a team who work intensively with children, young people and their families to support them in making and sustaining positive change, so that needs are met, children and young people are safe and to prevent children needing to enter local authority care unnecessarily.

The Family Drug and Alcohol Court (FDAC) is a multi-disciplinary team who work with families whose issues with substance abuse has led to the local authority issuing Care Proceedings. FDAC is an alternative approach to proceedings, with a problem-solving focus, working intensively with parents to try and tackle their substance addictions and have children safely in their care.

The Specialist Assessment Team works with parents to complete complex assessments, interventions and reunification work, in particular when families are involved in Care Proceedings, Public Law Outline (PLO) or Child Protection.

The Phoenix Team is working in collaboration with Pause, a National Charity and are the Phoenix Team @ Pause Southampton. This is a multidisciplinary team of professionals which support mothers post Care Proceedings who have had their children (two or more of) permanently removed from their care within the past two years. The team work intensively with women and support them in all areas of their lives. The ultimate aim is to prevent recurrent removals of children and subsequent Care Proceedings.

### Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

A designated officer (or sometimes a team of officers), who is involved in the management and oversight of allegations against people that work with children.

Their role is to give advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations; liaise with the Police and other agencies, and monitor the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible consistent with a thorough and fair process. The Police should also identify an officer to fill a similar role.

### Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB)

LSCBs have to be established by every local authority as detailed in Section 13 of The Children Act 2004. They are made up of representatives from a range of public agencies with a common interest and with duties and responsibilities to children in their area. LSCBs have a responsibility for ensuring effective inter-agency working together to safeguard and protect children in the area. The Boards have to ensure that clear local procedures are in place to inform and assist anyone interested or as part of their professional role where they have concerns about a child.

The functions of the LSCB are set out in chapter 3 of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

See <http://southamptonlscb.co.uk/> for Southampton LSCB.

### Looked After Child

A Looked After Child is a child who is accommodated by the local authority, a child who is the subject to an Interim Care Order, full Care Order or Emergency Protection Order; or a child who is remanded by a court into local authority accommodation or Youth Detention Accommodation.

In addition where a child is placed for Adoption or the local authority is authorised to place a child for adoption - either through the making of a Placement Order or the giving of Parental Consent to Adoptive Placement - the child is a Looked After child.

Looked After Children may be placed with family members, foster carers (including relatives and friends), in Children's Homes, in Secure Accommodation or with prospective adopters.

With effect from 3 December 2012, the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 amended the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 to bring children who are remanded by a court to local authority accommodation or youth detention accommodation into the definition of a Looked After Child for the purposes of the Children Act 1989.

### Neglect

Neglect is a form of Significant Harm which involves the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect can occur during pregnancy, or once a child is born.

### Parental Consent to Adoptive Placement

Parental consent to a child's placement for adoption under section 19 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 must be given before a child can be placed for adoption by an adoption agency, unless a Placement Order has been made or unless the child is a baby less than 6 weeks old and the parents



have signed a written agreement with the local authority. Section 19 requires that the consent must be witnessed by a CAFCASS Officer. Where a baby of less than 6 weeks old is placed on the basis of a written agreement with the parents, steps must be taken to request CAFCASS to witness parental consent as soon as the child is 6 weeks old. At the same time as consent to an adoptive placement is given, a parent may also consent in advance to the child's adoption under section 20 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 either with any approved prospective adopters or with specific adopters identified in the Consent Form.

When giving advanced consent to adoption, the parents can also state that they do not wish to be informed when an adoption application is made in relation to the child.

### Parental Responsibility

Parental Responsibility means all the duties, powers, responsibilities and authority which a parent has by law in relation to a child. Parental Responsibility diminishes as the child acquires sufficient understanding to make his or her own decisions.

A child's mother always holds Parental Responsibility, as does the father if married to the mother.

Unmarried fathers who are registered on the child's birth certificate as the child's father on or after 1 December 2003 also automatically acquire Parental Responsibility. Otherwise, they can acquire Parental Responsibility through a formal agreement with the child's mother or through obtaining a Parental Responsibility Order under Section 4 of the Children Act 1989.

### Pathway Plan

The Pathway Plan sets out the route to the future for young people leaving the Looked After service and will state how their needs will be met in their path to independence. The plan will continue to be implemented and reviewed after they leave the looked after service at least until they are 21; and up to 25 if in education.

### Pathways Through Care

The Pathways Through Care team complete statutory duties on behalf of the Local Authority as pathways Through Care to looked after children and care leavers. For looked after children, the aim of the social workers is to establish trusting relationships with the children in order to gain their wishes and feelings so that their voice is heard in their future planning. The aim is for children to be in stable placements, to be achieving academically, to have consistent contact with significant others that is right for them, for them to have support with their past traumas and to understand their journey in to and through care. Where appropriate, we aim to reunite children with their birth families. We also work with care experienced young people and adults up to the age of 25 years old.

### Permanence Plan

Permanence for a Looked After child means achieving, within a timescale which meets the child's needs, a permanent outcome which provides security and stability to the child throughout his or her childhood. It is, therefore, the best preparation for adulthood.

Wherever possible, permanence will be achieved through a return to the parents' care or a placement within the wider family but where this cannot be achieved within a time-scale appropriate to the child's needs, plans may be made for a permanent alternative family placement, which may include Adoption or by way of a Special Guardianship Order.

By the time of the second Looked After Review, the Care Plan for each Looked After Child must contain a plan for achieving permanence for the child within a timescale that is realistic, achievable and meets the child's needs.

## Personal Education Plan

All Looked After Children must have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) which summarises the child's developmental and educational needs, short term targets, long term plans and aspirations and which contains or refers to the child's record of achievement. The child's social worker is responsible for coordinating and compiling the PEP, which should be incorporated into the child's Care Plan.

## Person Posing a Risk to Children (PPRC)

This term replaced the term of 'Schedule One Offender', previously used to describe a person who had been convicted of an offence against a child listed in Schedule One of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933.

'Person Posing a Risk to Children' takes a wider view. Home Office Circular 16/2005 included a consolidated list of offences which agencies can use to identify those who may present a risk to children. The list includes both current and repealed offences, is for guidance only and is not exhaustive - subsequent legislation will also need to be taken into account when forming an assessment of whether a person poses a risk to children. The list of offences should operate as a trigger to further assessment/review to determine if an offender should be regarded as presenting a continued risk of harm to children. There will also be cases where individuals without a conviction or caution for one of these offences may pose a risk to children.

## Placement at a Distance

Placement of a Looked After child outside the area of the responsible authority looking after the child and not within the area of any adjoining local authority.

This term was introduced with effect from 27 January 2014 by the Children's Homes and Looked after Children (Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) Regulations 2013.

## Principal Social Worker - Children and Families

This role was borne out of Professor Munro's recommendations from the Munro Review of Child Protection (2011) to ensure that a senior manager in each local authority is directly involved in frontline services, advocate higher practice standards and develop organisational learning cultures, and to bridge the divide between management and the front line. It is typically held by a senior manager who also carries caseloads to ensure the authentic voice of practice is heard at decision-making tables.

## Private Fostering

A privately fostered child is a child under 16 (or 18 if disabled) who is cared for by an adult who is not a parent or close relative where the child is to be cared for in that home for 28 days or more. Close relative is defined as "a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of the full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership) or step-parent". A child who is Looked After by a local authority or placed in a children's home, hospital or school is excluded from the definition. In a private fostering arrangement, the parent still holds Parental Responsibility and agrees the arrangement with the private foster carer.

A child in relation to whom the local authority receives notification from the prospective adopters that they intend to apply to the Court to adopt may have the status of a privately fostered child. The requirement to notify the local authority relates only to children who have not been placed for adoption by an adoption agency. On receiving the notification, the local authority for the area where the prospective adopters live becomes responsible for supervising the child's welfare pending the adoption and providing the Court with a report.

## Public Law Outline

The Public Law Outline: Guide to Case Management in Public Law Proceedings came into force on the 6th April 2010. An updated Public Law Outline (PLO) came into effect on 22nd April 2014, alongside the statutory 26-week time-limit for completion of care and supervision proceedings under the Children and Families Act 2014.

The Public Law Outline sets out streamlined case management procedures for dealing with public law children's cases. The aim is to identify and focus on the key issues for the child, with the aim of making the best decisions for the child within the timetable set by the Court, and avoiding the need for unnecessary evidence or hearings.

## Referral

The referring of concerns to local authority children's social care services, where the referrer believes or suspects that a child may be a Child in Need, including that he or she may be suffering, or is likely to suffer, Significant Harm. The referral should be made in accordance with the agreed LSCB procedures.

## Relevant Young People, Former Relevant, and Eligible

- **Relevant Young People** are those aged 16 or 17 who are no longer Looked After, having previously been in the category of Eligible Young People when Looked After. However, if after leaving the Looked After service, a young person returns home for a period of 6 months or more to be cared for by a parent and the return home has been formally agreed as successful, he or she will no longer be a Relevant Young Person. A young person is also Relevant if, having been looked after for three months or more, he or she is then detained after their 16th birthday either in hospital, remand centre, young offenders' institution or secure training centre. There is a duty to support relevant young people up to the age of 18, wherever they are living.
- **Former Relevant Young People** are aged 18 or above and have left care having been previously either Eligible, Relevant or both. There is a duty to consider the need to support these young people wherever they are living.
- **Eligible Young People** are young people aged 16 or 17 who have been Looked After for a period or periods totaling at least 13 weeks starting after their 14th birthday and ending at least one day after their 16th birthday, and are still Looked After. (This total does not include a series of short-term placements of up to four weeks where the child has returned to the parent.) There is a duty to support these young people up to the age of 18.

## Review Child Protection Conference

Child Protection Review Conferences (RCPC) are convened in relation to children who are already subject to a Child Protection Plan. The purpose of the Review Conference is to review the safety, health and development of the child in view of the Child Protection Plan, to ensure that the child continues to be adequately safeguarded and to consider whether the Child Protection Plan should continue or change or whether it can be discontinued.

## Section 20

Under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989, children may be accommodated by the local authority if they have no parent or are lost or abandoned or where their parents are not able to provide them with suitable accommodation and agree to the child being accommodated. A child who is accommodated under Section 20 becomes a Looked After Child.

## Section 47 Enquiry

Under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989, if a child is taken into Police Protection, or is the subject of an Emergency Protection Order, or there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer Significant Harm, a Section 47 Enquiry is initiated. This enables the local authority to

decide whether they need to take any further action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare. This normally occurs after a Strategy Discussion.

Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Emotional Abuse and Neglect are all categories of Significant Harm.

Section 47 Enquiries are usually conducted by a social worker, jointly with the Police, and must be completed within 15 days of a Strategy Discussion. Where concerns are substantiated and the child is judged to be at continued risk of Significant Harm, a Child Protection Conference should be convened.

## SENCO

A SENCO, or Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, is a qualified school teacher who is responsible for assessing, planning and monitoring the progress of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). They are a key point of contact for colleagues and can offer support and advice for the identification of needs and suitable provision to meet those needs.

## Separated Children

Separated Children are children and young people aged under 18 who are outside their country of origin and separated from both parents, or their previous legal/customary primary caregiver. Some will be totally alone (**unaccompanied**), while others may be accompanied into the UK e.g. by an escort; or will present as staying with a person who may identify themselves as a stranger, a member of the family or a friend of the family.

## Social Work with Families

The Social Work with Families Service is a frontline service which supports vulnerable children. They work closely with children, families and different agencies to undertake assessments and intervention and work with children subject to child in need plans, child protection plans and court proceedings.

## Special Guardianship Order

Special Guardianship Order (SGO) is an order set out in the Children Act 1989, available from 30 December 2005. Special Guardianship offers a further option for children needing permanent care outside their birth family. It can offer greater security without absolute severance from the birth family as in adoption.

Special Guardianship will also provide an alternative for achieving permanence in families where adoption, for cultural or religious reasons, is not an option. Special Guardians will have Parental Responsibility for the child. A Special Guardianship Order made in relation to a Looked After Child will replace the Care Order and the Local Authority will no longer have Parental Responsibility.

## Strategy Discussion

A Strategy Discussion is normally held following an Assessment which indicates that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer Significant Harm. The purpose of a Strategy Meeting is to determine whether there are grounds for a Section 47 Enquiry.

## Statement of Special Education Needs (SEN)

From 1 September 2014, Statements of Special Educational Needs were replaced by Education, Health and Care Plans. (The legal test of when a child or young person requires an Education, Health and Care Plan remains the same as that for a Statement under the Education Act 1996).

## Staying Put

A Staying Put arrangement is where a Former Relevant child, after ceasing to be Looked After, remains in the former foster home where they were placed immediately before they ceased to be Looked After,

beyond the age of 18. The young person's first Looked After Review following his or her 16th birthday should consider whether a Staying Put arrangement should be an option.

It is the duty of the local authority to monitor the Staying Put arrangement and provide advice, assistance and support to the Former Relevant child and the former foster parent with a view to maintaining the Staying Put arrangement (this must include financial support), until the child reaches the age of 21 (unless the local authority consider that the Staying Put arrangement is not consistent with the child's welfare).

### Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children

A child or young person under the age of 18 who has been forced or compelled to leave their home country as a result of major conflict resulting in social breakdown or to escape human rights abuse. They will have no adult in the UK exercising Parental Responsibility. While their claim is processed, they are cared for by a local authority.

### Virtual School Head

Section 99 of the Children and Families Act 2014 imposes upon local authorities a requirement to appoint an officer to promote the educational achievement of Looked After children - sometimes referred to as a 'Virtual School Head'.

### Working Together to Safeguard Children

Working Together to Safeguard Children is a Government publication which sets out detailed guidance about the role, function and composition of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs), the roles and responsibilities of their member agencies in safeguarding children within their areas and the actions that should be taken where there are concerns that children have suffered or are at risk of suffering Significant Harm.

### Young Offender Institution (YOI)

The Youth Justice Board (YJB) is responsible for the commissioning and purchasing of all secure accommodation for under 18-year-olds ('juveniles'), whether sentenced or on remand. Young offender institutions (YOIs) are run by the Prison Service (except where contracted out) and cater for 15-20 year-olds, but within YOIs the Youth Justice Board has purchased discrete accommodation for juveniles where the regimes are specially designed to meet their needs. Juvenile units in YOIs are for 15-17 year-old boys and 17-year-old girls.

### Youth Offending Service or Team

Youth Offending Service or Team (YOS or YOT) is the service which brings together staff from Children's Social care, the Police, Probation, Education and Health Authorities to work together to keep young people aged 10 to 17 out of custody. They are monitored and co-ordinated nationally by the Youth Justice Board (YJB).

### Sources

Tri.x live online glossary: <http://trixresources.proceduresonline.com/> - a free resource, available to all which provides up to date keyword definitions and details about national agencies and organisations.

Southampton Local Safeguarding Board <http://southamptonlscb.co.uk/>

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<b>DECISION-MAKER:</b>	CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	MONITORING SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS
<b>DATE OF DECISION:</b>	8 AUGUST 2024
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	SCRUTINY MANAGER

<b><u>CONTACT DETAILS</u></b>			
<b>Executive Director</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Executive Director – Enabling Services</b>	
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<b>STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY</b>	
None	
<b>BRIEF SUMMARY</b>	
This item enables the Children and Families Scrutiny Panel to monitor and track progress on recommendations made at previous meetings.	
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS:</b>	
	(i) That the Panel considers the responses to recommendations from previous meetings and provides feedback.
<b>REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	
1.	To assist the Panel in assessing the impact and consequence of recommendations made at previous meetings.
<b>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</b>	
2.	None.
<b>DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)</b>	
3.	Appendix 1 of the report sets out the recommendations made at previous meetings of the Children and Families Scrutiny Panel. It also contains a summary of action taken in response to the recommendations.
4.	The progress status for each recommendation is indicated and if the Children and Families Scrutiny Panel confirms acceptance of the items marked as completed they will be removed from the list. In cases where action on the recommendation is outstanding or the Panel does not accept the matter has been adequately completed, it will be kept on the list and reported back to the next meeting. It will remain on the list until such time as the Panel accepts the recommendation as completed. Rejected recommendations will only be removed from the list after being reported to the Children and Families Scrutiny Panel.
<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>	

<b><u>Capital/Revenue/Property/Other</u></b>	
5.	None
<b>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	
<b><u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u></b>	
6.	The duty to undertake overview and scrutiny is set out in Part 1A Section 9 of the Local Government Act 2000.
<b><u>Other Legal Implications:</u></b>	
7.	None
<b>RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS</b>	
8.	None
<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS</b>	
9.	None

<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	No
<b>WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:</b>	None
<b><u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u></b>	
<b>Appendices</b>	
1.	Monitoring Scrutiny Recommendations – 8 August 2024

**Documents In Members' Rooms**

1.	None
<b>Equality Impact Assessment</b>	
Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out?	No
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	
Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out?	No
<b>Other Background Documents</b>	
<b>Other Background documents available for inspection at:</b>	
<b>Title of Background Paper(s)</b>	<b>Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)</b>
1.	None



# Children and Families Scrutiny Panel

Scrutiny Monitoring – 8 August 2024

Date	Title	Action proposed	Action Taken	Progress Status
18/07/24	Local Area SEND Inspection	1) That, reflecting issues raised by the inspection about the visibility of some children with SEND, the number and percentage of elective home educated children with SEND is circulated to the Panel.	<p>Southampton currently has 650 pupils who are EHE. Our performance is comparable to our statistical neighbours. Ranging from 0.8% to 1.9% and we are 1.2% (Total in school population). We are above national, but by only 0.1%</p> <p>We are also in line with national for those on CiN and Child Protection Plans.</p> <p>Nationally, we saw a rise over lockdown, but Southampton continued stay relatively stable. But across the country more and more families are choosing to EHE and Southampton has seen this locally also.</p> <p>Of the EHE cohort in Southampton, 4% of the EHE cohort have an EHCP (29 Pupils) and 25% were SEN K (161 Pupils). This is broadly in line with the previous year.</p> <p>All pupils with an EHCP have an allocated EHE Home visitor that will work alongside the SEND Team.</p> <p>There is no requirement for parents to inform the school or us of their reasons and will often not share when asked. The main reasons cited by the families that were happy to give us this information were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dissatisfaction with school due to bullying</li> <li>• Lifestyle/Philosophical choice</li> <li>• Mental health</li> <li>• Not getting preferred choice of school</li> </ul>	

Date	Title	Action proposed	Action Taken	Progress Status
			<p>There is a correlation between elective home education and the level of stability in a small number of schools. The local authority has met with all the headteachers.</p> <p>4 parents did state their reason was dissatisfaction with the school for SEND issues. 1x Primary and 3x Secondary. Feedback is always shared with the SEND service and the School Improvement Officer.</p> <p>If a child is allocated for case work, then the Home Visitor will talk through the experience with the family. Where there are concerns, this will be reported back. We review annually the numbers and reasons and in the autumn term will have conversations with schools, in some incidents we will visit and do a piece of work with them. This is normally when there is a high number or concerns over information/process.</p>	
		2) That, to help target activity aimed at improving uptake, analysis is undertaken of the mandated healthy child programme developmental checks to identify if there are any significant variations across the city, geographical or otherwise.	<p>Data to undertake this analysis has been extracted from the Solent systems including ethnicity, deprivation, electoral ward, EHCP and SEND status.</p> <p>Recognising this work has been undertaken and also that the dataset has not been designed to readily undertake such analyses, we are currently securing some additional analytical support to analyse and interpret this.</p>	Not complete – update will be provided at next scrutiny panel.
		3) That the issue returns to the agenda of the Panel in November to consider the SEND Partnership action plan developed in response to the inspection findings.	The service will make the necessary arrangements for November 2024.	Not complete – deadline November 2024.
18/07/24	Family Safeguarding Model	1) That a Headteacher is invited to attend Operational Board meetings to enable feedback about the impact of the Family Safeguarding Model on school outcomes to be identified and recorded.	Chair of FSM operational board has identified head teacher representative.	Complete

Date	Title	Action proposed	Action Taken	Progress Status
		2) That an update on progress implementing the Family Safeguarding Model is presented to the Panel at the 30 January 2025 meeting.	The service will make the necessary arrangements for January 2025	Not complete – deadline January 2025.

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