

Children and Families Scrutiny Panel

Thursday, 26th September,
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 G Lambert
Councillor Webb
Vacancy

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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Scrutiny Manager
Mark Pirnie
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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 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.

4 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.

5 STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIR

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 8 August 2024 and to deal with any matters arising, attached.

7 THE YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE

(Pages 5 - 14)

Report of the Executive Director - Children and Learning providing an update on the performance of the Youth Justice Service in Southampton.

8 SOUTHAMPTON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP (SSCP) ANNUAL REPORT

(Pages 15 - 40)

Report of the Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) outlining the activity of the Safeguarding Children Partnership during 2023 - 2024 in response to the strategic priorities 2023 – 2026.

9 CHILDREN AND LEARNING - PERFORMANCE AND TRANSFORMATION

(Pages 41 - 78)

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

10 MONITORING SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS

(Pages 79 - 84)

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

Wednesday, 18 September 2024

Director – Legal and Governance

SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 AUGUST 2024

Present: Councillors Barnes-Andrews (Chair), Webb (Vice-Chair), Chapman, G Lambert, Beaurain, Cooper and Mrs Blatchford

Apologies: Councillors Kaur and Allen
Appointed Members: Rob Sanders and Catherine Hobbs

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

It was noted that following receipt of the temporary resignation of Councillors Kaur and Allen from the Panel, the Monitoring Officer acting under delegated powers, had appointed Councillors Mrs Blatchford and Cooper to replace them for the purposes of this meeting.

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

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2024, be approved and signed as a correct record.

10. **EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE**

The Panel considered and noted the report of the Executive Director, Children and Learning, providing an overview of Early Years and Childcare Services in Southampton.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Learning and the Service Manager for Early Years were in attendance and, with the consent of the Chair, addressed the meeting.

The Panel discussed a number of points including:

- The ability of the Early Years sector in Southampton to meet the extended childcare entitlements.
- The equity of provision across the city.
- The service's gathering and utilisation of intelligence to support the sustainability of early years provision.
- The provision and targeting of places for disadvantaged children.
- The awareness and additional resources required to address SEND requirements within early years provision.
- Workforce recruitment and retention issues and the plans in place to mitigate these challenges.
- The resilience of the sector and ability to respond to any future variations.

The factors that have resulted in the comparative strength and success of the early years sector in Southampton

11. **REPEAT CHILD PROTECTION PLANS - ANALYSIS**

The Panel considered the report of the Executive Director, Children and Learning, providing analysis to understand why some families come back to Child Protection Planning for a second or subsequent time.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Learning and the Deputy Director, Children and Learning, were in attendance and, with the consent of the Chair, addressed the meeting.

An overview was provided setting out current levels of repeat child protection plans, issues raised by the analysis and action in train to improve outcomes, including the implementation of the Family Safeguarding Model.

The Panel discussed a number of key points as follows:

- The limitations of previous social work practice in Southampton and the legacy that this has created.
- The importance of good handovers between social workers to support effective decision making.
- The engagement of key partners in child protection plans.
- The actions taken to reform practice that provide assurance that the number of repeat child protection plans will continue to reduce.
- The delivery of the recommendations outlined in the analysis and the proposed review in 6 months' time to identify if progress has been made.

RESOLVED

- i) That, to reinforce the message about the value of good practice, the analysis of repeat child protection plans is circulated to all social workers.
- ii) That, reflecting concerns raised in the analysis relating to the impact of changes in social worker, the service undertakes an audit on the quality of handovers provided by social workers.
- iii) That the scheduled follow up analysis of repeat child protection plans is provided to the Panel when it is available.

12. **ANNUAL CONVERSATION WITH OFSTED AND PROGRESS OF POST-INSPECTION IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

The Cabinet Member for Children and Learning and the Deputy Director, Children and Learning, provided the Panel with an overview of the annual meeting with Ofsted and the progress to date in relation to the post inspection improvement plan. The meeting with Ofsted was reported as helpful in relation to assessing improvement against the specific recommendations made.

There remain specific ongoing areas of improvement that the Panel discussed including:

- The proposed new Safeguarding Partnership involving Adults and Children Safeguarding.

- The quality and effectiveness of support to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.
- Housing, education, employment and training for care leavers.
- Identification, assessment and support for children in private fostering arrangements.

RESOLVED

- i) That an all-members briefing is scheduled to inform councillors about the changes that have been undertaken across Children's Services and Learning.

13. **CHILDREN AND LEARNING - PERFORMANCE**

The Cabinet Member for Children and Learning, the Strategic Performance Manager and the Deputy Director, Children and Learning, provided the Panel with an overview of current performance across Children's Services and Learning.

The Panel noted the steady improvements across a number of indicators but outlined their expectations that, as part of 'Building for Brilliance', performance relating to timeliness of visiting and supervisions will consistently be at 90% and above and that, given the increasing stability, reducing number of children in the safeguarding system and the capabilities of the workforce, the Panel will be holding the service to higher standards moving forward.

14. **MONITORING SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

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Agenda Item 7

DECISION-MAKER:	CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL
SUBJECT:	THE YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE
DATE OF DECISION:	26 SEPTEMBER 2024
REPORT OF:	ROB HENDERSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND LEARNING

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
Executive Director	Title	Executive Director for Children and Learning.	
	Name:	Rob Henderson	Tel: 023 8083 4899
	E-mail	Robert.henderson@southampton.gov.uk	
Author:	Title	Head of Young People's Services	
	Name:	Tim Nelson	Tel: 023 8254 5329
	E-mail	tim.nelson@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY
None

BRIEF SUMMARY
<p>This report provides an update of the performance of the Youth Justice Service in Southampton. Particular areas of focus are the recommended areas of scrutiny discussed by the Panel in March 2024. These areas are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of children sentenced or remanded to custody • Improvements in education outcomes • Levels of serious youth violence

RECOMMENDATIONS:				
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>(i)</td> <td>That the Panel note the partnership focus on reducing custody rates and serious youth crime in Southampton.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(ii)</td> <td>That the Panel is provided with a further update on education outcomes, once the national comparator data is available.</td> </tr> </table>	(i)	That the Panel note the partnership focus on reducing custody rates and serious youth crime in Southampton.	(ii)	That the Panel is provided with a further update on education outcomes, once the national comparator data is available.
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REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS		
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>1.</td> <td>To enable effective scrutiny of progress against the local Youth Justice Strategic Plan and the work of the multi-agency Vulnerable Adolescent Board.</td> </tr> </table>	1.	To enable effective scrutiny of progress against the local Youth Justice Strategic Plan and the work of the multi-agency Vulnerable Adolescent Board.
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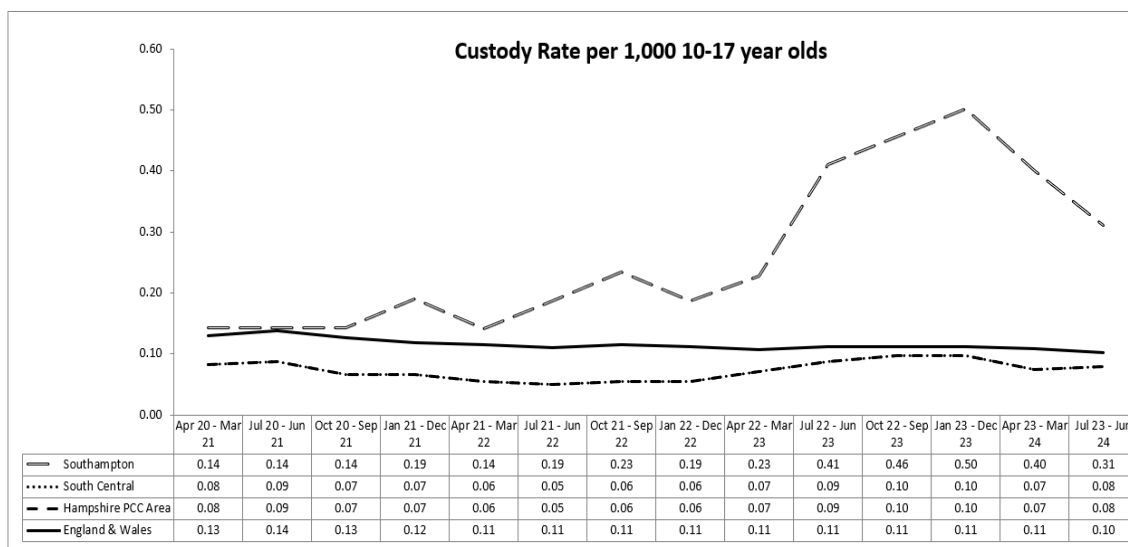
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED		
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>2.</td> <td>None.</td> </tr> </table>	2.	None.
2.	None.	

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)		
Context		
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>3.</td> <td>Overall, in 2022/23 Southampton remained highest amongst iQuanta comparator Community Safety Partnerships and higher than the national average when considering both the volume (rate) and severity of total police recorded crime. This suggests that in 2022/23 Southampton experienced more crimes per population,</td> </tr> </table>	3.	Overall, in 2022/23 Southampton remained highest amongst iQuanta comparator Community Safety Partnerships and higher than the national average when considering both the volume (rate) and severity of total police recorded crime. This suggests that in 2022/23 Southampton experienced more crimes per population,
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- as well as a more severe mix of crimes compared to comparators and the national average. The data from the Safer City Partnership 2023/24 shows an improving picture of reducing offending in the City across most crime types. This data is yet to be published.
4. The 'All-crime' picture through 2022/23 undoubtedly impacted on youth crime, with an increase over that year of knife crime in the youth cohort, specifically hostility between two Urban Street Gangs.
 5. Nationally, the Youth Justice Board (YJB) has been instrumental in changing the narrative for children in the criminal justice system. The evidence-based 'child first' approach is helping to support and shape youth justice policy, driving the principle that children within the criminal justice system have complex needs and are in need of help and support, stability and care. While risk management, victims and community safety are a priority, the child and their needs should be at the centre of our collective decision making and service provision.
 6. Our youth justice comparator group has recently changed. YJS comparator groups are not the same as Community Safety Partnership or police force comparator groups but are based on the DFE Children's Services Statistical Neighbour Benchmarking Model. So, while partnerships are looking at similar offence data, we are all using different comparator groups.

Youth Justice Custody Rates

7. The custody data below was published by the Youth Justice Board within YDS publication 119 and is the latest available National data that includes custody up to June 2024.



The above graph shows a steady increase in custody rates for Southampton children between April 2020 and December 2024. Overall, nationally, custody rates for children have been reducing, and Southampton rates have highlighted the City as an outlier to that trend. In 2022 there were some very significant incidences of serious violence in the City. The children involved in these offences went on to receive custodial sentences in 2023. At this point, SYJS were higher than the YJS Family average (rate of 0.16 per 1,000 10-17 YO) and higher than the national average (rate of 0.10 per 1,000 10-17 YO), the rates for 2023 placed Southampton as one of the highest in the country for rates of children receiving a custodial sentence. This context also affected the number of remands: in 2023 there were 10

	instances of remand (seven youth detentions and three remands to Local Authority Accommodation, comprising of 8 children).
8.	<p>Remand and Custody – safeguarding management</p> <p>The national prison estate is experiencing resourcing issues for a growing prison population. This is also impacting on the youth estate, with the current youth system experiencing challenges in meeting the needs of this reducing but complex group of children. The service is proactive in terms of the concerns for the safety of our children in custody. All of the sites where children were residing were visited by senior leaders in the summer of 2023. Meetings were held with the Head of Youth Custody Services; their safeguarding lead and regular meetings were also arranged with the Feltham Resettlement Head of Service.</p>
9.	<p>Response and Impact: Reduction in custody rates</p> <p>The data published by the Youth Justice Board is a rolling 12-month period. The reporting period ended in June 2024. To date, in 2024 there have been four custodial sentences (one child received two sentences of custody, one was 18 when sentenced, but due to appearing as a youth at his first court appearance, he is represented in YJ figures). While rates remain high, we can see a declining trend. In the year to date 2024-2025 there have been two remands to the local authority and three remands to youth detention (one for one night, followed by a remand to the Local Authority the following day, and two young people who were remanded to the care of the Local Authority and subsequently remanded to youth detention. One has since been sentenced to custody). Again, although high, this is an improving picture, evidencing that the work achieved by the partnership has started to have an impact.</p>
10.	<p>The work of the Partnerships includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and improving ‘alternative to custody’ packages, building on the Intensive Supervision and Surveillance requirement, which is imposed by the Court and is seen as a direct alternative to remand and custody. These packages are bespoke to the child and these types of orders often comprise up to 25 hours per week of intervention over a seven-day period. They also include a curfew. We have taken steps to improve how we present these packages to the court, increasing awareness of what this offer looks like, providing information and reassurance to partners by outlining the detail of the bespoke offer. These steps have also involved meeting with sentencers, a hub event to talk to our children, a prospectus showing what such a package would look like in reality, and a change to court reports reflecting our ‘child first’ approach. • A drive to reduce caseloads in youth justice so that case managers are able to deliver on resource-intensive court orders. The development of the Young People’s Service has also promoted a joined-up approach across Youth Justice and Social Care to respond to children who have received intensive orders. • Assertive representation of senior leaders at court to articulate plans and to evidence to the court the Council and Partnership commitment to these children and how seriously we take this commitment. <p>This approach has led to two children being given the opportunity to work with us in the community as an alternative to custody, one in February 2024 and one in March 2024. This approach is providing opportunities for courts, children and the partnership to explore alternatives ways of managing children who present a risk of</p>

harm, while still seeing them as children and protecting and supporting them and their families.

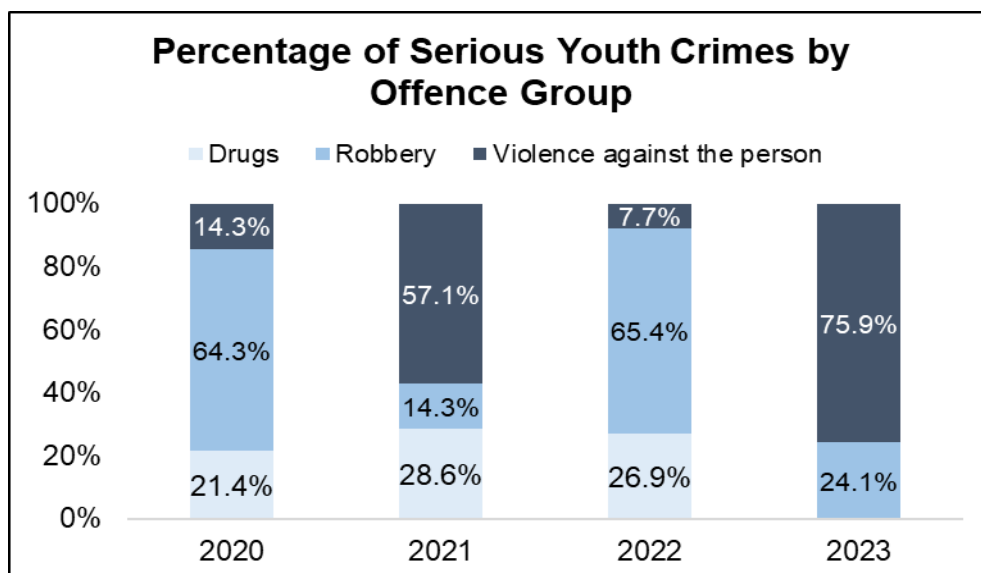
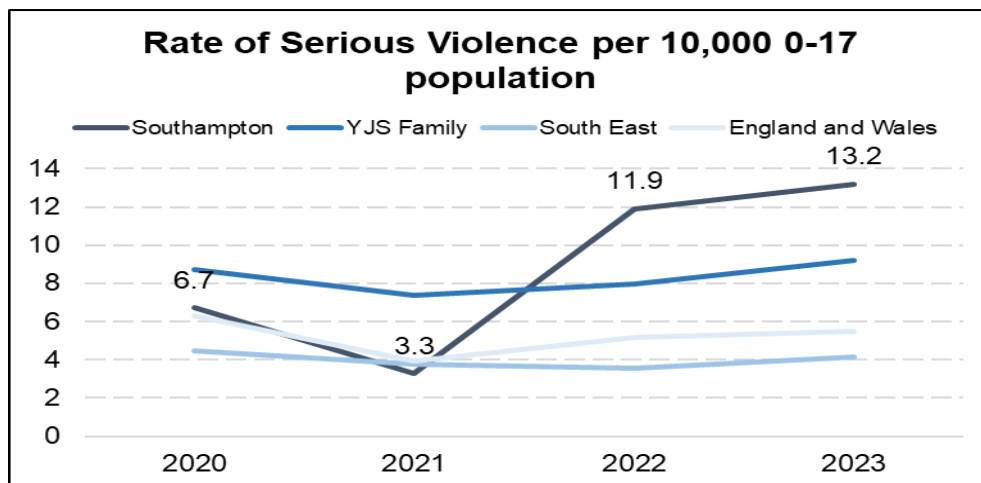
Serious Youth Violence

11. Definitions of Serious Youth Violence

The Youth Justice Board's operational definition of Serious Violence (SV) is any drug, robbery or violence against the person offence that has a gravity score of five or more. Robbery offences all carry a gravity score of 6. Gravity scores range from 1 (least serious) to 8 (most serious). Youth Justice Board definitions of serious violence also include drug related crime.

The serious violence toolkit counts the number of proven offences committed by children aged 10 to 17. A proven offence is one for which a child receives a youth caution or sentence. The quarter the offence is shown in the data is the quarter the outcome was received in, not when the offence was committed. The data only shows offences that have led to a substantive outcome, not offences still in the system that have yet to result in a sentence (police investigation timeliness and court delays affect timeliness of outcomes and therefore the accuracy of data). The data also does not reflect the level of incidences in the City that do not lead to any formal outcome.

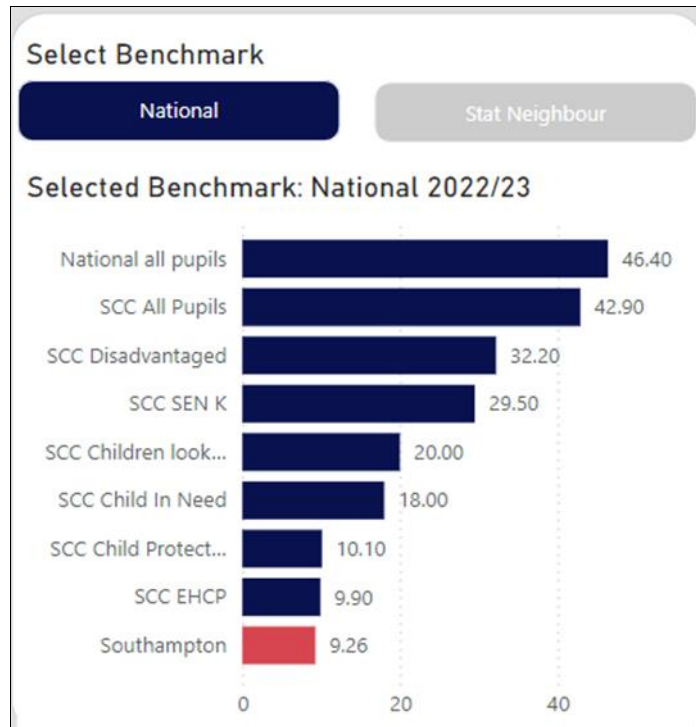
Southampton saw an increase in serious youth violence between 2021 and 2023, referred to in the youth custody section of this report.



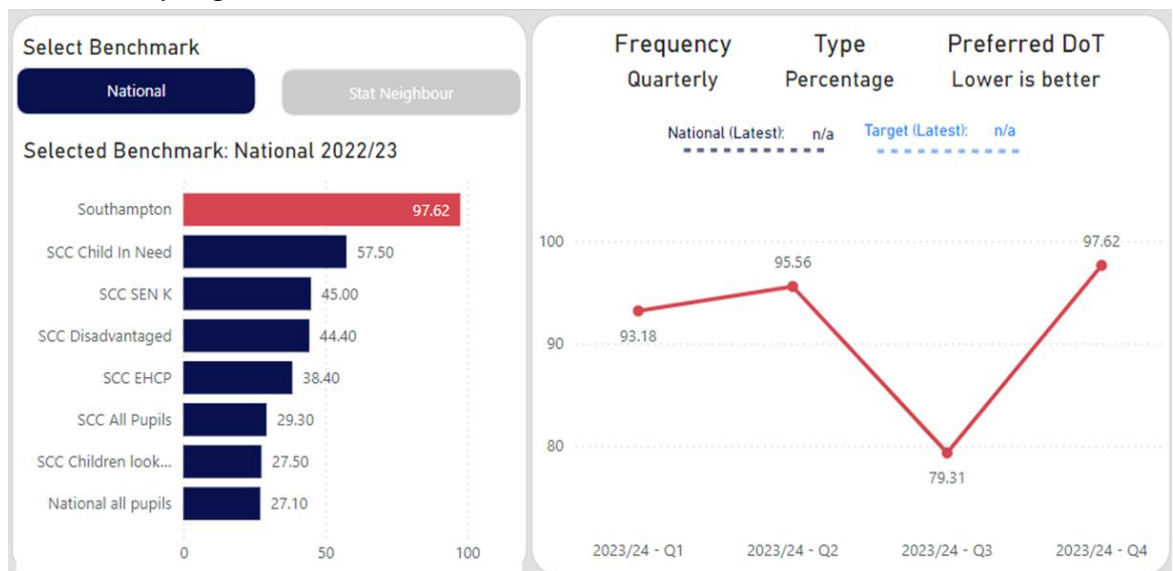
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12.	<p>Response and Impact: reduction in harm score</p> <p>The partnership response to these challenges has been robust and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The building of a governance response as a partnership to serious incidents in the City. This has developed from an operation in the East of the City in Spring/Summer 2023, taking a partnership response to a specific area where there were high rates of knife-enabled incidents (Operation Meero). • Creation of local serious youth violence meetings. The partnership then sought to make this approach ‘business as usual’ and develop similar responses across the whole City. Partnership meetings have now been set up across each police area with commitment from across agencies to support their delivery. Current work is focused on how these meetings merge with the partnership action groups and how we use this space to problem solve about how to make places and spaces safer for communities. • The creation of a Focused Deterrence model for Southampton (evidence-based approach to tackling serious violence). The partnership secured funding from the Violent Reduction Unit (VRU) to help us create a model that works for the City, consider the resourcing required from the partnership, and bring the partnership together, creating a multi-agency team that works in localities. This team’s workflow would come from the serious violence meetings already set up and running. These roles have been identified and we are in the process of setting up this team, which would report to the Youth Justice Service Manager. There is a high level of commitment from our local VRU who have committed funding. This has enabled our recruitment of external support to drive this project forward. 																				
13.	<p>The work involved a partnership response to reducing risk in the area which included an increased police presence, a review of all the children at risk and offers of intervention for all of the children identified, an outreach response into the area, referrals and support of children into holidays activities over the summer. It also involved high visibility patrols in the area, considering the context and making spaces safer (CCTV, public meetings with the community, requests made for additional funding). Police harm score following 3 months of intensive partnership work reduce the harm score from 240 to 10.</p> <p>Ongoing work includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Partnership Action Groups creating multi agency responses to areas of need and risk. ▪ Ensuring commissioned services can respond to the needs of the City by creating flexible and responsive services operating at a local level. 																				

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coordination of Youth Outreach activity across the City to ensure it is targeted at hotspot areas identified through the analysis of data and as part of that contextual response. ▪ The development of a learning, skills, work experience offer within the Youth Justice to provide hope, aspiration and diversion to the Youth Justice Cohort of young people.
	<p>Youth Justice and Education</p>
<p>14.</p>	<p>Context and data</p> <p>Nationally outcomes for children who are in the youth justice system are poor, with a high proportion of children not in mainstream education, or with poor attendance. Many have missed out on universal services, have undiagnosed needs or are struggling to cope in alternative provision settings. Those who are in school have high exclusion rates. Some children express their frustration through dysregulated and heightened behaviour leading to exclusion from a normal school regime and part-time timetables with limited hours of contact with learning.</p> <p>Children who lose connection with the school community tend to feel rejected and this often increases difficult behaviours. A large proportion of children in the youth justice system are not in school at all, and a number have been absent from school for a number of years. It is difficult for these children to step back into a structured environment as part of a group setting. They often struggle to catch up on their missed education. These children feel alienated from their peer groups and have a large amount of unstructured time. When they are offered off site or online learning, they may not have the tools to access such provision because they struggle to learn without support. Many have parents who don't have the capacity to support their education at home.</p> <p>Due to the review of the YJ education KPIs we are currently unable to benchmark ourselves against our comparators. The Youth Justice Board has indicated that this will be possible from October 2024.</p> <p>We are able to match Key Stage 4 Attainment 8 outcomes against adolescent young people open to Youth Justice within Quarter 4 2023/24. To provide context to this performance, pupil groups from Education and Social Care have been included using 2023 performance outcomes.</p> <p>Attainment 8 is a way of measuring how well pupils do in key stage 4, which they usually finish when they are 16 years old. The 8 subjects which make up Attainment 8 are: English maths 3 subjects from qualifications that count towards the English Baccalaureate (EBacc), like sciences, language and history 3 more GCSE qualifications (including EBacc subjects) or technical awards from a list approved by the Department for Education. Each grade a pupil gets is assigned a point score from 9 (the highest) to 1 (the lowest). Each pupil's Attainment 8 score is calculated by adding up the points for their 8 subjects, with English and maths counted twice.</p> <p>In the bar charts below, the red coloured bar for 'Southampton' denotes the Youth Justice cohort. It shows that young people involved with the SYJS perform at a lower level than the national average and Southampton 'all pupils', at a level that aligns with children subject to child protection planning and children with education, health and care plans (EHCPs). As stated, it is vitally important that we start receiving comparable data from the Youth Justice Board so that we can accurately</p>

measure our performance for young people involved in the youth justice system against our YJS family members.



Young people open to SYJS within Quarter 4 made up 10% of the total persistent absence cohort during the Autumn and Spring terms from academic year 2023/24. However, within the YJS cohort the level of persistent absenteeism is consistently high over 2022/23 and 2023/24.



15. **What have we done about it?**

In 2022 Youth Justice had a peer review specifically focused on improving education outcomes. Progress against the review action plan includes the following activity:

- In the last year we have recruited to the Education Manager role and trialled a year of a speech and language therapist dedicated to youth justice. The education manager role's focus is driving YJS outcomes for YJS children in Education Training and Employment. The overall aim is to improve attendance, reduce children not in education, employment or

training, and advocate better for children with a comprehensive understanding of their needs.

- We have created the HELP pathway, an integrated health and education pathway for all YJS children coming into the cohort to better understand and support need and deliver and advocate at the right level. The pathway involves representatives from education psychologists, speech and language, children and adolescent mental health services, education, special educational needs team and substance misuse. Examples of its value is that it allows a better understanding of the child when making key decisions such as outcomes that means a child enters the criminal justice system or our contribution to the in year fair access panel where schools are making decisions about managed moves for example. This pathway gives children and families access to specialist services that they might have not had opportunities for due to school attendance issues, it also empowers case managers to advocate for them at school, in court and when referring into community provision.
- The other area of significant development is the skills agenda. The education manager, also a teacher, has been building opportunities to learn and achieve at the Young Peoples Hub. The service is now an accredited learning centre for Lazer awards, a body that allows the service to create options to gain qualifications. This was a year-long process in terms of application and has allowed us to develop a skills programme in the hub. Examples of this are tutoring, a café intervention and a local charity, who are now able to ensure their interactive sessions can also lead towards qualifications and currency into other providers.
- The service has applied for Alternative Provision status and is currently going through a quality assurance process. This would allow us to offer this provision to a small group of children in the City where other options have not been successful and whose risk profile has limited their options. The aim is time limited offers of support with a view to integration back into community provision.
- The service has applied for Alternative Provision status and is currently going through a quality assurance process. This would allow us to offer this provision to a small group of children in the City where other options have not been successful and whose risk profile has limited their options. The aim is time limited offers of support with a view to integration back into community provision.
- Examples of the types of work the service has developed include dedicated YJS CSCS card course in collaboration with the Princes Trust (where YJS supported to enable children who would not normally pass their risk assessment process, opportunities to attend), developing the cafe intervention (Opportunity Brews that provides customer service, food hygiene, barista training opportunities), securing funding for bike maintenance sessions weekly and tutoring on a one to one, recognising that our children require this dedicated and focused time.
- This work has also facilitated better packages for the court to consider as alternative to custody options and has allowed the service to respond quickly to children appearing before the court in an unplanned way for serious offences. In the past we would have suggested that without

	education that alternative to custody packages could not be facilitated. We are now creating solutions to that.
	Next Steps
16.	<p>While a great deal has been progressed this year as outlined above, this has yet to be reflected in our data. We will start to see the impact of the huge focus on this area in terms of delivery of services, but the causation of the problem is entrenched and complex and so to is the solution to resolving the issues. The Youth Justice Service Manager has visited other areas across the country to understand what they are doing to tackle these challenges. The findings are that there are few services that are offering opportunities in the way we are, with most areas still grappling with this problem.</p> <p>Next steps include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continuing to build on this offer creating opportunities for children in their locality. This includes a collaboration with a local roasting house and coffee business providing a range of work experience options through creation of a coffee blend to selling the coffee. Resources have been found to progress this and plans are in place. This would aim to expand the current café intervention. ▪ Further CSCS card courses are being planned, supported by the Violent Reduction Unit, but building on that first course and developing pathways with include work experience, apprenticeship opportunities and permanent employment. The next course is scheduled for November. ▪ Further funding opportunities are being explored to ensure that the tutoring and bike mechanics work can continue. The tutoring has been well sorted after by children and families. ▪ Creation of a young sessional role for a child who has been through or system and who is able to help and support other children. ▪ Mentoring opportunity focused on supporting children back into education, training or employment. If a child has been out of education, or has never worked, finding a place is sometimes the easy bit. The hard bit is to support a child to take a step into something new and huge resource, time and effort goes into this knowing that hope and aspiration as well as a shift of identity can be the key to reduction in offending.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Capital/Revenue/Property/Other</u>	
17.	The partnership budget is monitored by the Vulnerable Adolescent Board on a quarterly basis
18.	The service is based in the Youth Hub in Southampton Civic Centre.
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
19.	Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Children Act 1989 and 2004
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	
20.	None

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	
21.	The Vulnerable Adolescent Board has quarterly oversight of the operations of the Youth Justice Service and progress against the Youth Justice Strategic Plan.
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
22.	<p>The 2024 updated Corporate Plan includes the following strategic objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe and stable home environments • Accessible education and skills pathways. <p>The actions and recommendations detailed in this report are important in achieving these objectives.</p>

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

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)
1.	Southampton Youth Justice Service report to the Children and Families Scrutiny Panel March 2024

Agenda Item 8

DECISION-MAKER:	CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL
SUBJECT:	SOUTHAMPTON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP (SSCP) ANNUAL REPORT
DATE OF DECISION:	26 SEPTEMBER 2024
REPORT OF:	SOUTHAMPTON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
Executive Director	Title	Executive Director Children and Learning	
	Name:	Robert Henderson	Tel: 023 8083 4899
	E-mail	Robert.Henderson@southampton.gov.uk	
Author:	Title	Safeguarding Partnership Manager	
	Name:	Rebecca Holdsworth	Tel: 023 8091 7671
	E-mail	Rebecca.holdsworth@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

BRIEF SUMMARY

This Yearly Report outlines the activity of the Safeguarding Children Partnership during 2023 - 2024 in response to the strategic priorities 2023 – 2026 as required in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, detailing what has been achieved, the impact and areas for development in 2024 – 2025.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- | | | |
|--|-----|--|
| | (i) | That the Panel note the progress of the 5 outcomes agreed by the Partnership for the first year of the 2023 – 2026 Strategic Priorities. |
|--|-----|--|

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1. | It is important that the Panel are aware of the work of the Safeguarding Partnership to ensure that the strategic priorities are progressed for children and their families. |
| 2. | To ensure the information contained in the report is used to support the work of the scrutiny function. |

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- | | |
|----|----------------|
| 3. | Not applicable |
|----|----------------|

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

- | | |
|----|--|
| 4. | The SSCP Yearly Report, attached as Appendix 1, will be published on the SSCP website before 30 th September 2024. The Independent Scrutineer of the Partnership will be in attendance at the meeting to answer questions from the Panel relating to the contents of the report and the SSCP. |
| 5. | The report covers: |

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSCP Governance Structure • Strategic Priorities 2023 - 2026 • The Local Authority Context • HIOW Constabulary and NHS Hampshire and Isle of Wight • Financial Contributions • Future priorities
6.	<p>The report includes progress updates on the partnership response to local safeguarding priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact of Neglect • Serious Youth Violence and Criminal Exploitation • Child Sexual Abuse • Participation in Education • Right Service, Right Child, Right Time.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Capital/Revenue</u>	
7.	The partnership financial contributions are outlined in the report.
<u>Property/Other</u>	
8.	Not applicable
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
9.	The duty to undertake overview and scrutiny is set out in Part 1A Section 9 of the Local Government Act 2000.
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	
10.	The Yearly Report is a requirement of the statutory guidance “Working Together to Safeguard Children” 2023.
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	
11.	Consideration of the 2023/24 SSCP Yearly Report will help to target the work of the Scrutiny Panel to ensure that focus is directed at improving outcomes for children and young people in Southampton.
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
12.	Not applicable

KEY DECISION?	No
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	None
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	Draft Southampton Safeguarding Children Yearly Report 2023/2024
Documents In Members’ Rooms	
1.	None

Equality Impact Assessment		
Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out?		No
Data Protection Impact Assessment		
Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out?		No
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)	
1.	None	

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Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) Yearly Report

April 2023 – March 2024

Contents

This Yearly Report captures the work of the SSCP for the period April 2023 – March 2024, which is a statutory requirement from Working Together 2023, including learning from reviews and an analysis of how effective the arrangements have been in improving the outcomes for children and families in the city. The report looks at the information that helps us to understand what life may be like for children and young people in our city and examines the activity and impact of partners working together.

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Foreword from Scott MacKechnie, Independent Scrutineer

It is my pleasure to introduce the yearly report of the Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) for 2023/24.

This yearly report, written in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, details the work that the SSCP has undertaken to carry out and achieve the objectives of its three-year (2023-2026) strategic plan, as well as highlighting contributions from our partner agencies.

This has been my first full year of being the Independent Chair and Scrutineer. My role has provided support and challenge to the partnership. This is an important function and one that I take very seriously. I provide independent oversight of all the work of the partnership. This provides assurance to the safeguarding partners of an independent lens being applied to safeguarding practice, analysis and any resultant recommendations.

I am very aware of the challenges ongoing within the public sector locally and nationally, particularly related to increased demand, as well as budget and workforce pressures. This is highlighted in the report particularly from the Local Authority, showing the real challenges associated with budget pressures, which they have been very transparent about with the public.

Despite this our senior leaders remained dedicated to working collectively to ensure we effectively safeguard and promote the wellbeing of our children and families, showing innovative practise to improve outcomes for children and families.

I personally meet with the senior leads from the statutory partners and the chairs of the sub-groups that drive the business of the SSCP. This supports our wide range of partners to maintain a clear focus to deliver the partnership's priorities and workstreams, but also provides a governance framework for accountability.

At the start of this reporting period, a development day was held with executive group members to review the governance and develop a [new strategic plan](#) for the 2023-2026. New governance arrangements were established, with re introduction of the Executive group and reaffirming the role of existing sub groups, but creating new sub groups to align with the strategic plan. The executive group and partnership board are updated on the key work of the sub groups at each meeting, progressing the strategic priorities of the partnership.

A significant part of my role, alongside the safeguarding partners, is maintaining a "critical friend" overview of organisational changes and inspections. This has been significant in this reporting year. The local authority was inspected by OFSTED as part of the Inspecting local authority children's services (ILACS) framework. I was delighted to see the dedication, professionalism and innovation across the local authority result in them moving up to a 'good' grading. This is good news for the city and a strength for our children and families as well as our communities across Southampton.

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary also reorganised during this period and assurance was sought of their continued focus on embedding the Child Centred Policing Strategy. Our Health colleagues within NHS Hampshire and Isle of Wight (Integrated Care Board), as well as NHS Solent undergoing organisational change consultation, with its progress reported on regularly at the SSCP Executive and Board, with a focus on assurance that changes will not impact on child safeguarding services and responses.

2023-24 has been a busy year for the services and agencies that are part of the SSCP multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and this report highlights some of the ongoing challenges, but also the response to and impact of the multi agency network.

The SSCP will continue to work together on agreed priorities in our strategy but will reactive to new issues as they arise, particularly relating to our statutory duties.

The introduction of Family Help and also the commencement of the [Family Safeguarding model](#) in Autumn 2024 are significant changes to organisational structures and models bring a multi disciplinary 'whole family approach'. The evidence base from other local authorities shows how the approach to working with parents; providing help and support to create lasting change, created by this model has a significant impact and this is an important and exciting time for the City. The implementation will be monitored and governed by the SSCP.

The multi-agency response to child exploitation, has resulted in the introduction of a Risk Outside the Home (ROTH) pilot. This is an innovative project that has evolved during this year and the partnership has been regularly updated on the progress. The pilot was started with a contextual safeguarding conference in October 2023 and will be evaluated by Durham University.

Serious youth violence is an ongoing challenge within Southampton, and as a result a SSCP priority, which is supported by the Violence Reduction Partnership and Safer City Partnership. You will note in the report the considerable investment and commitment to steering young people away from serious violence and the carrying and use of knives that is underway in the city.

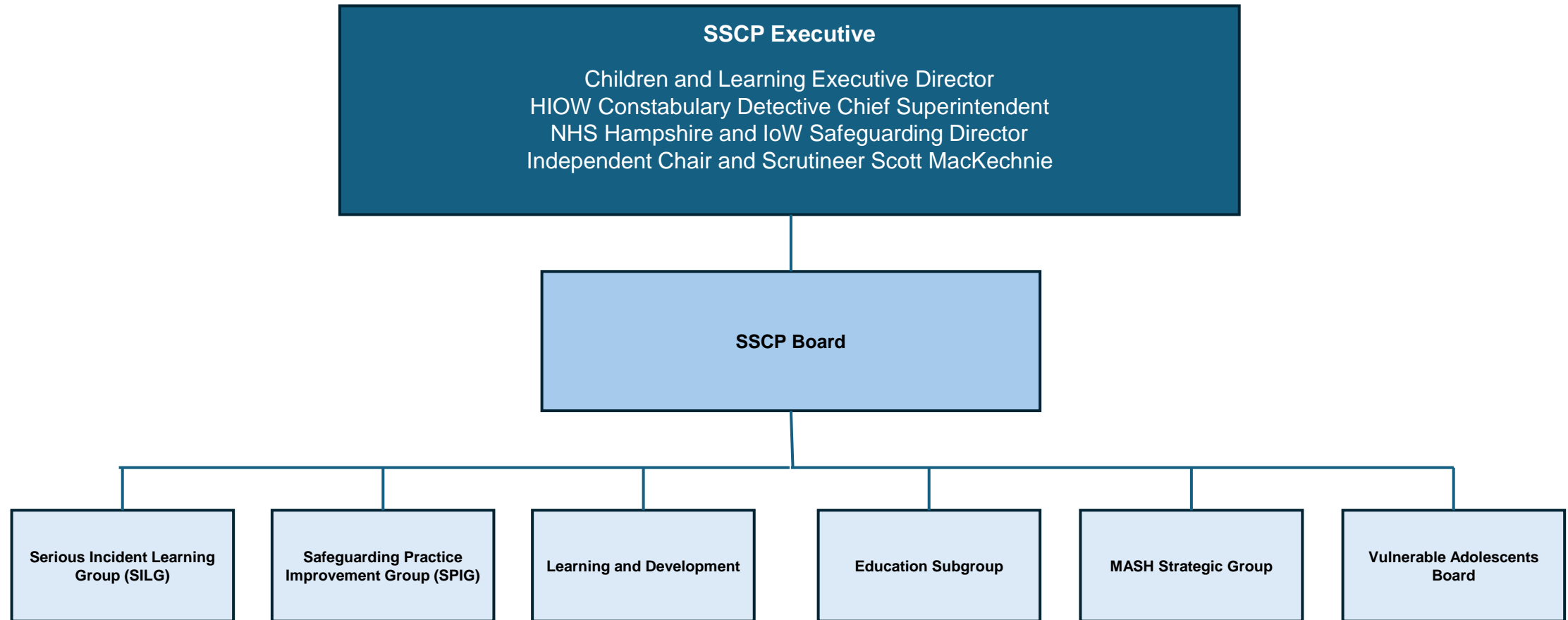
We must ensure our practitioners are supported to do their best for children and their families. The SSCP introduced a learning and development sub group in 2023, who are not provide continuous professional development for the workforce, both providing structured learning and awareness raising for the partnership network.

SSCP have published 3 CSRP's during this year's reporting period and details of each are included later in the report. Each report is significant and unique, but equally very important to the safeguarding system in the city. The recommendation from each report is summarised and part of my role is to ensure that there are plans to embed this learning and monitoring its effectiveness. This will be ongoing, but some of the impact of the implementation of each is included in the report. The voice of children and young people, their families are important to the partnership and the engagement with Uma, has provided some powerful learning for our staff and I once again thank her for her bravery and willingness to engage with the partnership team.

The engagement with Uma, and then other young people has been the catalyst to the 'Let Our Voices Be Heard' event, which will take place in October 2024. This will include learning from our reviews and audits but be provided with the support and through the lens of young people.

I would like to extend my thanks to all our partners for their continued support during the year, which I believe bears testimony to the positive and transparent relationships within the board and the extended partnership.

Governance structure of the Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership



The SSCP Executive was established as the overall decision making group at the beginning of the reporting year as this had not previously been in place. The subgroup activity has been streamlined between 2023 – 2024 to ensure compliance with Working Together 2018 and more latterly 2023. The SILG is a multi-agency group which consider the Serious Incident Notifications and recommend Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs) to identify learning for the partnership. Once completed, the CSPRs inform action planning for practice improvement which are evaluated through audit activity and data analysis by the multi-agency SPIG. The subgroups work together to identify Learning and Development needs across the partnership. The Education Subgroup is a relatively new subgroup with detailed activity found later in the report. The MASH Strategic Group has been re-established to ensure scrutiny of the activity at the front door for children, young people and their families and now has clear governance into the SSCP Executive. The Vulnerable Adolescents Board incorporates the Youth Justice Board and works closely with the Safe City Partnership to understand and address the areas of need in the city for the young people of Southampton.

The Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership Strategic Priorities 2023 - 2026

Outcome 1	We will address the impact of neglect and gain assurance around the embedding of the neglect strategy for all practitioners working with children and their families
Outcome 2	We will work as a partnership to support the reduction of serious youth violence and child exploitation
Outcome 3	We will promote the Child Sexual Abuse Strategy and the roll out of the CSA toolkit so that children who experience child sexual abuse will receive more effective services
Outcome 4	We will focus on Children's Participation in Education across the Partnership to promote children's educational progress, for their wellbeing and for their wider development
Outcome 5	We will support the partnership with a focus on the appropriate application of the Pathways document across partner agencies to ensure the right service is provided with the right children at the right time

The Local Authority Context and what we are doing with partner organisations

The **Children's Services and Learning** operates in a challenging financial climate, with government assistance and a well-embedded financial improvement board. The service has set stretching but achievable savings targets in the context of steadily reducing demand. A transformation programme is well underway, with a focus on practice, efficiency and innovation. The service initiated a rapid redesign of its structure and function, in line with the local and national agenda.

The service also faces the challenge of yearly elections. The service has maintained a strong relationship with the elected members and the senior leadership team and has communicated its vision and priorities clearly and consistently. The service was subject to an Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) in June 2023. It achieved a grade of 'Good' for the first time in the service's history, with a grade of 'Outstanding' for leadership. The Youth Justice Service piloted His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP), with an ungraded but positive outcome.

The service has improved its **multi-agency working**, with examples of **successful partnerships and projects**, including;

- Improvements in relationships with police (e.g. Prevent, strategy meetings)
- Risk Outside The Home (ROTH) contextual safeguarding conferences, evaluated by Durham University
- Strong Special educational Needs and Disability (SEND) partnership
- Voluntary sector engagement, particularly to support vulnerable young people
- Family Safeguarding partners well engaged
- Strong SSCP Serious Incident Learning Group and Education subgroup
- Multi-agency teams around the school now well established in localities
- 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
- Health schools alliance

Our Building for Brilliance priorities (Children and Learning focus);

- Right service, right time: Family Help: Launching a larger Family Help Service, with significantly more social workers, absorbing most children in need and early help / CIN assessments
- Family Safeguarding: Reshaping Childrens Resource Service (CRS) and MASH, moving CRS to the start of a child's journey within the Family Help Service and creating a multi-agency Family Safeguarding Service, focusing on children where harm is present, side by side with adult specialist workers
- Family Networks: Extending our family group conferencing, family networks and family seeking offer to support alternative options to care
- Neglect / CSAFE (child sexual abuse in the family environment: Specialist Assessments: Increasing social worker capacity to undertake specialist assessments, without losing our excellent Specialist Assessment Team
- Quality Assurance: Strengthening our quality assurance framework, with a focus on outcomes, learning and feedback

Our key challenges;

- Financial challenges: safely reducing demand, spending less
 - Co-production and participation: involving children , young people and families in decision-making and service design
- Focus on global majority communities / workforce: new strategic post to address the needs and aspirations of diverse communities and staff
 - Data and insight: improving the coordination and use of data for SEND and education
 - Provision for SEND and rising exclusions: ensuring high quality and inclusive education for all children and young people
 - Workforce: building the experience and retention of our social care staff
- Sufficiency and placement instability: increasing the availability and quality of placements for children in care and care leavers

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary

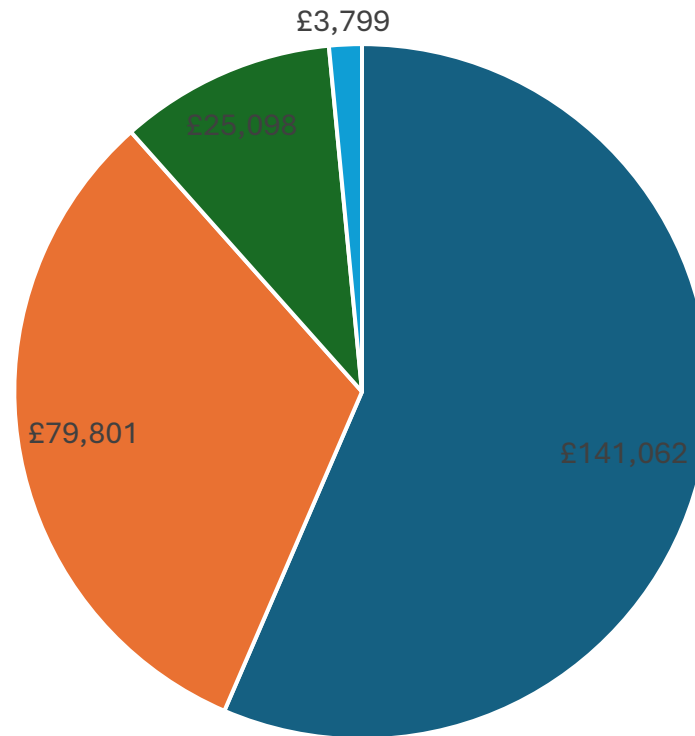
- Over the last year, since the appointment of our Chief Constable Scott Chilton, we have a new vision of keeping everyone safe by prioritising the relentless pursuit of criminals, delivering exceptional local policing and putting our victims first. There have also been changes to our operating model which continues to deliver against our vision and priorities.
- In partnership with Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton (HIPS) safeguarding children's partnerships, we have contributed to the co-creation of the HIPS Exploitation and HIPS Child Sexual Abuse Strategy to support our practitioners in identifying and tackling exploitation of children across our two counties.
- Locally, we are excited to be jointly trialling the introduction of 'custody passports' for children in Southampton custody to support their specific needs and help our custody officers gain an understanding of how to meet them.
- Internally, we have delivered a significant programme of training on a number of topics ranging from mental health, exploitation, public protection notices, child centred policing to effective information sharing with partners, roles and responsibilities of children services departments. The audience has included both our existing staff/police officers and every police officer joining the organisation as a new recruit. We have also undertaken joint training initiatives with SSCP as we recognise the value of joint understanding and sharing of resources to be most effective and efficient. The effort from these initiatives continues to influence the quality and quantity of our information sharing with partner agencies. Our robust internal audits have provided assurance about the progress made across a number of areas and in particular, the voice of the child. We recognise that we will need to continue to improve and are committed to being consistent in our delivery of these improvements.
- Externally, HMICFRS recently inspected our custody centres. There were areas that were brought to our attention where we need to do better and areas where our approach to children received positive comments. The inspectors positively mentioned the custody video book for children, the custody notification process, public protection policy for children in custody and our overall care and support of children. We are reflecting on their report and making immediate changes where necessary to ensure we deliver the best for our public.
- Operationally, we have continued to work with all our local partners to divert children away from criminality. In Southampton, our joined up approach to prioritising and focussing our efforts in a structured way has contributed to tackling some of the complex neighbourhood issues involving children. As a partnership, we are committed to evaluating the effectiveness of this approach and to understand and share the learning for future practice.

NHS Hampshire and Isle of Wight

- As a safeguarding partner, the ICB have ensured health representation on the Partnership Board, Executive, subgroups and task and finish groups and supported the development of the partnership business plan and workstreams.
- This includes the chairing and organisation of the Serious Incident Learning Group and the Childrens Learning and Development Group with the support from the partnership team. The Designated professionals, named nurses and named GPs continue to support audits as part of the Safeguarding Practice Improvement Group. This has further supported the wider safeguarding business plan and its priorities for Southampton in identifying gaps and potential improvement of services across the city.
- Learning through reviews has been reflected through all subgroups, supported by the Designated professionals, named nurses and named GPs. This has supported further learning and training identified for multi-agency professionals across the city.
- The Designated professionals remain key members of the corporate parenting board, ensuring the voice of our children in care/care leavers is pertinent to any decision making. The partnership plan to develop the learning of children looked after is overseen through this board.

Financial contributions to the Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership 2023 - 2024






%age contributions



■ Southampton City Council ■ NHS Hants and IoW ■ HIOW Constabulary ■ Probation

Strategic Priorities 2023 – 2026

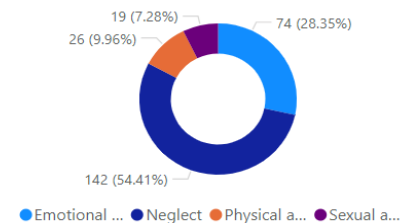
Outcome 1: We will address the impact of neglect and gain assurance around the embedding of the neglect strategy for all practitioners working with children and their families

	In 2023 the population of Southampton was estimated to be 264,957, which is a slight increase from 263,769 in 2022
	Children between the ages of 0 – 5 make up 6.3% of the population = 16,808, which is a decrease from 17,032 in 2022
	Young people between the ages of 16 – 24 make up 18.6% of the population = 49,155, which is an increase from 40,884 in 2022
	Southampton remains ranked as the 55 th most deprived out of 317 local authorities
	34% of all pupils in state funded Southampton schools are eligible for free school meals (nat average is 23.8%), which is an increase from 30.4% in 2022

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Child Protection Planning 2023 - 2024

Cases by Latest Category of Abuse



45% of CP plans that started in the last 6 months were under the category of neglect. This is less than the previous year and less than the England average, but slightly higher than statistical neighbours.

Of the 311 children subject to CP planning 51% are under the category of neglect, the highest proportion. (35% emotional abuse, 8% physical abuse, 7% sexual abuse). This is higher than 22/23 and the England average, and significantly higher than statistical neighbours.

Police data shows a steady increase in the numbers of neglect crimes reported in Southampton;

Q1 – 45

Q2 – 58

Q3 - 61

Q4 - 48

Education data includes the use of the Neglect Toolkit per school and is gathered through the self evaluation information.

What have we learnt as a Partnership?

Sometimes a child suffers serious harm or death as a result of abuse or neglect. The purpose of a child safeguarding practice review (CSPR) is to identify improvements that can be made to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Understanding not only what happened but why it happened can help improve the response of organisations and agencies working with children and families in the future. The experiences of Stephen (not his real name) and his family led to a [CSPR](#) by the partnership. The 6 step briefing can be found on the website [stephen-6-step-briefing-final.pdf](#) ([southampton.gov.uk](#)) and has resulted in partnership activity relating to the strategic priority of neglect.

Stephen

- At the time of the circumstances leading to the decision to undertake a review into how agencies work together, Stephen was 8 years old. There was a history of involvement with services resulting from concerns of neglect, including the state of the home address, not attending school and challenges in working with the family. During a police visit for an unrelated incident, concerns were raised around the home conditions and Stephen's presentation as he was not wearing clothes. His mother told the police that he had autism and was electively home educated. Advice was given to improve the home conditions, however Stephen was taken into police protection due to concerns around neglect. Stephen later returned to his home address with support services in place and a greater understanding of the dynamics within the family. A school place was identified and Stephen has attended since that time. The impact of the period wherein Stephen was placed in foster care in the context of his additional needs is considerable and practice improvements were required to ensure that the multi-agency network developed the skills to work with families, whilst keeping the children with their families if at all possible.
- The family were able to share their views around the impact of Stephen's removal and tools and training has been provided to support practitioners. These have been shared widely in workshops and training sessions across the partnership. The use of language when working with families where engagement may be deemed to be challenging has been a focus of the Partnership and is considered in audit activity and the development of the *When Engagement is Difficult or Not Working Guidance* [When Engagement is difficult or not working](#) ([southampton.gov.uk](#)), which encourages professional curiosity around what may be happening for families. Stephen's family were concerned as to how Stephen would be viewed with his presentation, and once this was identified, the multi-agency network were able to work with the family to support them to make sustainable changes for Stephen's future. The exploration of unconscious bias is a theme which has emerged over the last 12 months, as the family were described as 'resistant' in records and this was found to have impacted on the way in which some agencies perceived them.
- The impact of partnership activity in response to findings from practice reviews is analysed through the subgroups and governance is provided through the Delegated Safeguarding Leads and Lead Safeguarding Partners.

"All DSLs have done the Neglect Toolkit training which was very useful and helped us understand the resources that were there and they found them good. It has given them an additional layer of curiosity. It is useful when we have families where we are trying to understand the level of need. The value of the launch was with the training that was offered which was really helpful."
Valentine primary school

"I think it is really user friendly and easy to navigate. I have had great feedback from staff. The case studies I found really useful as someone who delivers safeguarding training to discuss and unpick with staff. It makes things clear about who and what is out there."
Sinclair primary school

"I have used it and colleagues have used it in the past to assess our concerns to verify what we see and how we view a situation. It helps us with our decision making on how we can support families. It is something that is readily available. I am aware that it is there to underpin and support us if we need questions answered."
Holy Family Catholic School

What have we done about the findings from Stephen's review?

Neglect remains the most used category for child protection planning and a consistent theme in referrals into children's social care and is the first of the strategic priorities of the partnership. The partnership have worked collaboratively to produce the Neglect Toolkit, with practical guides and exploration of what life is like for children and their families and how agencies can work with them to understand the multiple factors impacting on family circumstances, both in the family home and in the wider community and networks. The impact of the cost of living and stressors families experience all need to be considered when working with children and their families to provide the right level of intervention that are tailored to their needs and can help to make the right changes at the right time [SSCP Neglect Toolkit \(southampton.gov.uk\)](#). The partnership identified a gap when considering the experiences of children with additional needs as a result of Stephen's review and an enhanced guide with further practical tools and support was developed collaboratively [Neglect toolkit - children with additional needs \(southampton.gov.uk\)](#). The partnership have undertaken audit activity around the use of the toolkits and the impact on children and their families with a programme of review and monitoring as part of the Safeguarding Practice Improvement Group.

The partnership undertook a deep dive audit around neglect and identified areas of good practice;

- There was evidence of actions to use the neglect toolkit in conference planning
- The voice of the child was at the centre of case recording, writing to the child and carrying out direct work utilising the toolkit and guides
- There was a real sense of focus on family's strengths rather than using victim blaming language
- Information sharing and attendance at multi-agency meetings was positive, with a clear lead to reduce multiple retelling of stories for families
- The 'day in the life of the child' section of the toolkit was very powerful

Areas for development and monitoring were also identified and these will be reviewed by the subgroup;

- The police to promote the use of the neglect toolkit and attendance at training
- All agencies to further development assurance activity and monitoring around how they analyse their response to issues of neglect and the use of the available guidance and toolkit
- Further development of capturing the voices of children and families and understanding 'how it felt for you'
- The development of additional training around protective characteristics, unconscious bias and cultural competence

Outcome 2: We will work as a partnership to support the reduction of serious youth violence and child criminal exploitation

The Vulnerable Adolescents Board is a multi-agency working group with representation from health, police, social care, primary, secondary and special schools. They report to the partnership through the Partnership Board and the overall governance is overseen by the Executive. The Executive Director for Children and Learning chairs this Board.

What has gone well? The **Vulnerable Adolescents Board (VAB)**;

- **Custody Rates.** In 2023 Southampton had the second highest custody rates in the country for children. Whilst numbers are small it was a really concerning escalation of serious violence, remand and custodial sentences. In 2023 there were 10 instances of remand, this was 7 youth detentions and 3 remand to Local Authority Accommodation comprising of 8 children. In the same year there were 11 custodial sentences. Into 2024 there has been 3 remands into custody (one for one night) and one remand to Local Authority Accommodation (the same child that was remanded for one night was then Remanded to LA the following day), and one custodial sentence. Whilst we are only part way through 2024 there are positive signs to the work achieved through providing robust alternative to custody packages and reassurance to partners around the ability to risk manage high risk children in the community
- **Development of Critical Moment Interventions Framework.** Critical Moment Interventions are evidenced based response to young people where there is suspicion of exploitation, young people are offered a critical moment interventions at key moments such as an arrest, hospital presentation re injuries which are suspected to linked to violence or exploitation or where there is a serious relationship breakdown. The interventions show care and compassion to the young person, help young people contemplate change and opportunity for the young person to share information.
- **Development of Disproportionality Champions and pilot.** Disproportionality within Youth Justice has been an area of focus in Southampton. Disproportionality was a focus of the YJS Peer review in 2023 and was a feature for those young people in custody in 2023. Driven by the VAB disproportionality champions have been established in a wide range of public services to raise awareness and tackle disproportionality. Additionally, a pilot around preventing disproportionality has been developed between Bevois Primary School and the Young People Service.
- **Development of Skills, Accreditation.** As part of the cities strategy to prevent reoffending a substantive programme of skills development have been developed and delivered from the hub at the Civic Centre. The opportunities include Maths and English Tutoring, Hospitality training and accreditation, ASDAN and Laser Awards, CSCS card for entry into the construction industry, Cycle Maintenance and Barbering. Three young sessional workers have been employed to support the delivery services and activities from the hub.
- **Edge of Care Work** – The work of the Young People Service around maintaining and rebuilding relationships within families has been particularly effective. With very few entries into care via 16 or 17 year old homelessness or family breakdowns for children over the age of 13.
- **Risk Outside the Home (ROTH),** Pilot with Durham University and Professor Carlene Furmin as example of the high esteem the work with vulnerable adolescents in the city has on national scale.

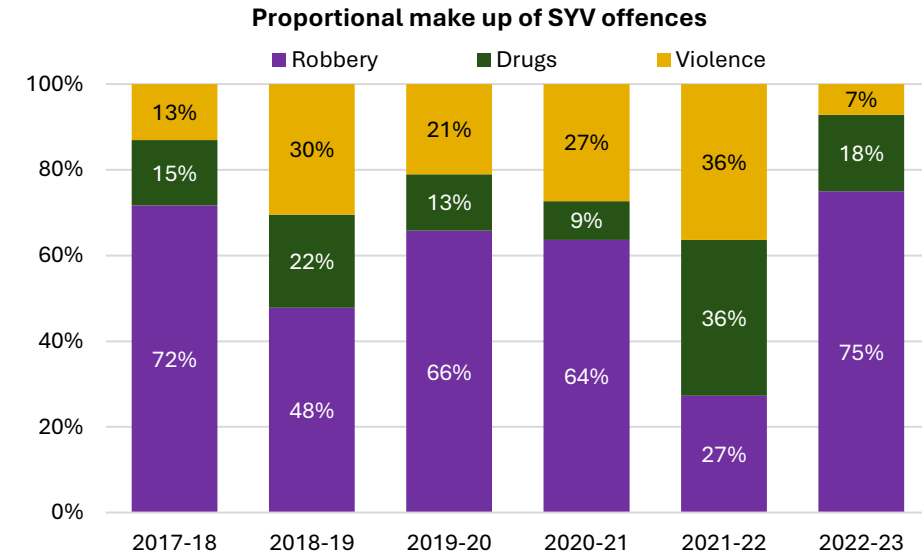
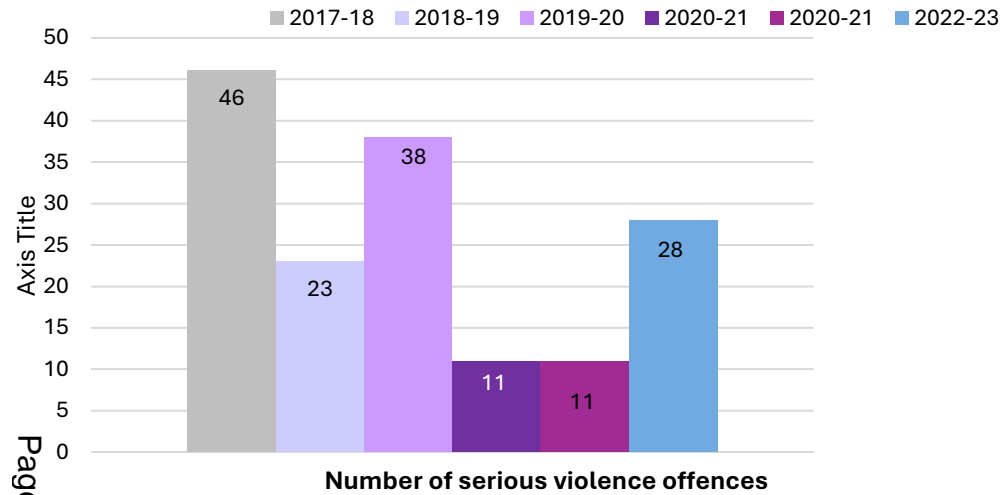
- The constabulary education partnership team have worked with engaging children in schools, particularly around inline safety, exploitation and knife crime. They have been involved in a number of safeguarding fayres hosted in schools in Southampton bringing together local services who all have the shared goal to keep children safe.

Areas of challenge and what we are doing about them;

- **Re Offending Levels** – The VAB continues to be concerned about re-offending levels in the city, these are higher than regional and most statical neighbours. This area of work is the number one focus for the Youth Justice Partnership in 2024 and 2025. The further continuation of the skills development work and supported employment opportunities and the combining of ROTH and Focused Deterrent are expected to have positive impacts on reducing reoffending. These will be evaluated through the work of the VAB and the Violence Reduction Unit and the development of a data dashboard will inform the overall governance from the Safeguarding Partnerships, including the Safe City Partnership.
- **School Exclusions** – School exclusions in the city are higher than regional and statistical neighbours. It is recognised this a feature which leads to negative outcomes such as exploitation, violence and criminal justice outcomes. The Autum of 2024 will see closer working arrangements between the VAB, schools and SCC education colleagues to tackle this challenge.
- **Serious Youth Violence** – Serious Youth Violence is an area of concern across the city, this in line with national trends. The Focused Deterrent a Youth Endowment Fund evaluated approach to preventing Youth Violence is being developed and delivered across the city with support from the Violence Reduction Unit and Office of Police and Crime Commissioner.

Number and rate of serious violence offences – Southampton

Data refers to serious youth violence offences committed by children 10 – 17 years



Southampton		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Number of SYV offences		46	23	38	11	11	28
Rate per 10,000 of the general 10-17 population		24.2	11.7	18.7	5.2	5.2	12.8
% SYV comprise of total offences		7%	5%	8%	4%	4%	9%

The impact of initiatives and partnership work

In Q4 of 2023 - 24, 66.67% of children 12+ subject to child protection / ROTH planning were assessed using the CERAF (child exploitation risk assessment framework) as the risks associated with exploitation, following the interventions, has reduced.

In Q4 of 2022 – 23, the risks associated with exploitation were found to have reduced for 37.5% of the same cohort.

There are a number of factors impacting on this reduction, including greater use of the CERAF as a tool, with reviews when new information of situations occur, and no less than 12 week frequency. When intervention is reaching the conclusion, a CERAF is completed to evidence risk reduction.

In Q4 of 2023 – 24, there was an increase of 2.73% in the number of children 12+ from ethnic minority backgrounds receiving prevention services. The reporting was based on children allocated for assessment and intervention and does not account for intervention via community based youth outreach which is developing across the city.

This remains low compared to national data of 35.4% and highlights the concerns around disproportionality within the youth justice cohort. The activity in 2024 – 25 across the partnership and specifically in the Vulnerable Adolescents Board will continue to monitor, evaluate and identify areas of development around disproportionality.

The number of children 12+ subject to child protection planning who have become children looked after by the local authority in Q4 of 2023 – 24 have reduced by 14.93% from 36.6% over the reporting year. No children subject to ROTH conferencing have become looked after by the local authority in Q4 of the reporting year.

Outcome 3: We will promote the Child Sexual Abuse Strategy and the roll out of the CSA toolkit so that children who experience child sexual abuse will receive more effective services

Nationally, there has been a **steady decline** in the number of assessments recording child sexual exploitation concerns, with nearly 5,000 fewer in 2022/23 than five years earlier

Two-thirds of the 152 local authorities in England placed no or very few children on child protection plans because of sexual abuse concerns, and just seven local authorities placed five or more children per 10,000 child population. This is the **lowest number in 14 years**, and the second lowest in the 29 years this data has been published. Child sexual abuse was the reason for just 3.6% of all new child protection plans, **the lowest proportion** ever recorded

Police forces in England and Wales recorded 105,286 child sexual abuse offences during the year, 2% more than in the previous year. This small overall rise was entirely driven by a 14% increase in the recording of **child sexual abuse image offences**. Continuing a long-term trend, charges were more likely for offences of sexual exploitation and sexual grooming, and **least likely** for offences relating to **sexual activity and rape**

(Trends in official data – Centre of excellence for CSA 2022 – 2023)

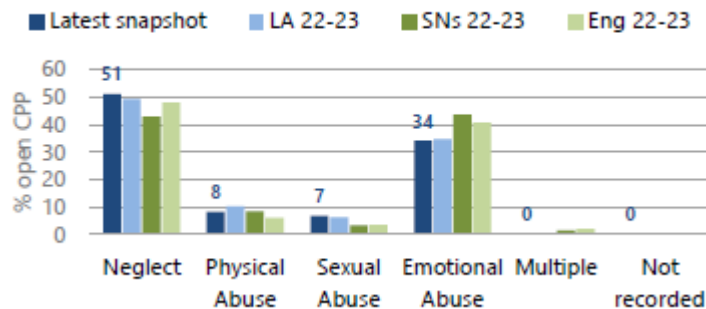
The Southampton picture and how we are addressing the challenges

The collation of data around child sexual abuse in Southampton is in development. The police are now able to provide more detailed information which has started in July 2024 and will inform the activity of the partnership over the coming year. Health data shows the number of children who are referred for medical assessments in relation to sexual abuse concerns. The low numbers are considered in the audit activity and have informed the work of the partnership to inform greater understanding of the impact on a child’s physical, emotional, social and mental health. Training provision to increase awareness is provided and an event is planned for the Autumn 2024 to reach 200 frontline practitioners to support the development of a highly skilled workforce to respond expertly to children and young people. This is further informed by the CSPRs undertaken and the powerful voice of Uma, who was involved from the start of the review and bravely shared her experiences.

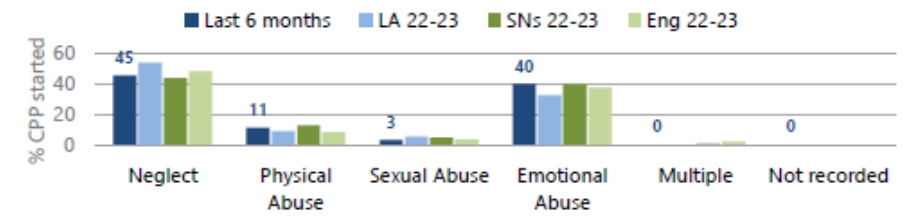
2023	Number of children seen for CSA exams (without forensic sampling)			Number of children seen for CSA exams (with forensic sampling)			
	Under 13	13 – 16 yrs	16 – 18 yrs	Under 13	13 – 16 years	16 – 18 yrs	Total
Southampton and SW Hants	18	4	2	4	2	0	30

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Latest category of abuse for current CP plans



Initial category of abuse for CPP started



- NHS Hampshire data
- Children and Learning Southampton data

What have we learnt as a partnership?

The SSCP published 2 Child safeguarding Practice Reviews which have informed service delivery and the provision of training and a planned event in 2024 to ensure that practitioners across the partnership are highly skilled in their responses to children and young people who may have experienced child sexual abuse, both in the family environment and in the wider community. The full reviews can be found here [Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews \(southampton.gov.uk\)](https://www.southampton.gov.uk)

Uma

- At the time of the review, Uma was 14 years of age and looked after by the local authority. Uma's courage to report their experience of rape resulted in a man previously unknown to them being convicted of rape.
- Historically, Uma experienced abuse and neglect from a young age and Uma reported sexual abuse from men subsequently joining their family. Their parents experienced difficulties with their mental health and Uma experienced domestic abuse in the home environment.
- Uma experienced several placement breakdowns and has some history of self harming and sexual exploitation on-line and in person.
- Uma worked alongside the review team and independent reviewer to share and consider their story. This collaborative process was extremely powerful and enabled the reviewer to identify system wide learning.
- The language used in professional records and the unconscious bias identified when Uma was reported missing has led to changes in practice of missing young people and timely responses with appropriate grading of the missing episodes between the police and children's services. Language is a key theme which now underpins audit activity, training and will underpin the planned immersive conference event planned for the Autumn, with participation and inclusion from young people from a local school and the Youth Commission.

The Partnership have listened to the powerful views of Uma, who informed the key lines of enquiry and had input into the review report throughout the process.

"Any child who has been sexually abused is more at risk of being groomed and abused again"

"We shouldn't be blamed for being groomed and abused."

"It was scary how quickly I was targeted and abused on-line"

"I was sure that professionals thought I was a liar when they didn't take any further action about my abuse allegations"

"Do professionals understand how hard it is for kids and their ability to trust when there are lots of changes of professional?"

"I always want to know what is happening as this is my actual life"

Willow

- At the time of the review, Willow was 17 years of age and looked after by the local authority. Willow and her siblings experienced numerous assessments during their childhood in relation to concerns around physical abuse, neglect, maternal drug use and domestic abuse.
- As Willow developed through her teenage years, increasing context safeguarding concerns developed in relation to poor school attendance, cannabis use, missing episodes and her associates.
- Willow reported a number of sexual assaults against adult males she had met through friends and at a hotel.
- Willow was approached through her social worker to participate in the review. Willow explained that although she felt she would have a lot to say about her experiences of working with different professionals, she did not feel able to at the time. Willow was able to say that she did not think that professionals asked her the right questions, highlighting further the need for specialised training to upskill those working with vulnerable young people.
- In addition to the changes made from the recommendations following Uma's review, the understanding of professionals and carers of risk outside the home was raised as an area for development. In Southampton the ROTH conferencing has been successfully embedded with support from Durham University, and plans are in train to further develop this for young people who are looked after by the local authority.
- Willow's experiences have demonstrated the importance of ensuring the right professionals who know young people best are involved in planning for their safety at each stage.
- It is essential that young people's lived experiences, childhood trauma and connections are understood and inform tailored packages of support for their individual needs. The fostering team have worked closely with partner agencies and foster carers.
- The Young People's Service are working closely with education to prevent the exclusion of children who are risk of exploitation by developing a deeper understanding of their presentation and asking the right questions when there are concerns.

How do we know the impact of the learning from Uma and Willow’s experiences is embedding in frontline practice?

The multi-agency Safeguarding Practice Improvement Group undertook an audit to gain assurance of improvements made and to identify any further areas for development across the partnership.

<p>Improvements in recording and language used to describe to young people and events</p>	<p>There has been an improvement in recording across the partnership with attention to the impact of language. Social care records are now written to the child. Further consistency is required across all agencies. It is important to have a clear plan as to which professionals are the best to speak with young people. The audit found that immediate and short-term interventions were good, however further work is required to focus on the longer term impact on young people’s emotional, mental and social health, which will be included in a collaborative practice development session with expertise from all partner agencies, facilitated by an external organisation.</p>
<p>Capturing the Voice of the Child</p>	<p>There was evidence of positive interactions and recording of the voice of young people, including observations of reactions, family dynamics and young people’s wishes and feelings. The audit identified that further work is required around sibling abuse. The children and learning service’ workforce academy are planning a month of practice focus on child sexual abuse in the Autumn of 2024, which will include the voice of the child, sibling abuse and responding to presentation of young people rather than an over reliance on reporting of abuse. This will be available for partner agencies, to develop the skills of the workforce across the city.</p>
<p>Multi-agency working</p>	<p>The audit identified that a greater understanding of child protection medical assessments was required to ensure that children and young people have the right supports in place to consider their short-term and longer term emotional, mental health, social and physical health needs. Training is now available for practitioners and further education will be provided through the practice month and immersive conference event in the Autumn. The expertise of health professionals has been highlighted when explaining the process to children, young people, their carers / parents and professionals.</p>
<p>Protective Characteristics</p>	<p>The audit identified that further consideration, understanding and involvement of local networks, including faith and community groups was needed. There has been extensive developments in the use of cultural genograms and a programme of work is in progress to build relationships with community and faith groups in Southampton to increase knowledge, awareness and safeguarding discussions across the diverse demographics of Southampton.</p>
<p>The interface between police and social care when young people who are looked after by the local authority are reported missing</p>	<p>Following the experiences of Uma and Willow, the use of the Philomena protocol has been strengthened and the grading of missing episodes has been addressed by the police. There is more timely communication between the police and the young people’s service and Return Interviews are appropriately undertaken. Further work is required to ensure that the CERAF tool is used regularly and planning in place with the multi-agency network.</p>

Outcome 4: We will focus on children’s participation in education across the partnership to promote children’s educational progress for their wellbeing and their wider development

	2022 - 2023
Total overall absence – primary, secondary and special schools	7.9% of the total school population = 0.6% above the national average This reduced to 7.3% in the Autumn term of 2023 = 0.7% above the national average
Total persistent absence (over 10%) – primary, secondary and special school	23.2% of the total school population = 2% above the national average This reduced to 21.2% in the Autumn term of 2023 = 1.8% above the national average
Overall absence Primary	6.3% of the total = 0.4% above the national average. Following the Covid pandemic in 2020/21, there was an increase to 6.8% in 2022/23, which is currently reducing
Persistent absence primary	18.3% of the total = 2.1% above the national average. There was a spike in 2022 of 24%, which is currently reducing
Overall absence secondary	10.2% of the total = 1.2% above the national average. This has been a slight increase since 2022 from 9.7%
Persistent absence secondary	28.8% of the total = 2.3% above the national average. 2022 saw a spike of 29.6%, dropping to 27% in the Autumn term
Overall absence special schools	11.4% of the total = 1.6 below the national average. This is similar to 2022, with a slight increase to 11.6%
Persistent absence special schools	38.4% of the total = 0.1% above the national average. There has been a slight reduction from 40.4% in 2022
Classified as having SEN support	16.2% of primary age children = 2.9% higher than the national average
Pupils with SEN support who are also considered disadvantaged	48.9% of primary aged children = 8.7% higher than the national average 52.4% of secondary aged children = 12.2% higher than the national average
Pupils with SEN support who are classified as minority ethnic	35.8% of primary aged children = 7% higher than the national average 25.7% of secondary aged children = 3.1% lower than the national average
Pupils with SEN support who have a first language other than English	24.8% of primary aged children = 9.6% higher than the national average 14.1% of secondary aged children = 1.1% lower than the national average

The **Education Subgroup** is a multi-agency working group with representation from health, police, social care, primary, secondary and special schools. They report to the partnership through the Partnership Board and the overall governance is overseen by the Executive. The Executive Director for Children and Learning and Head of Education attends the Partnership Board and the Executive.

What has gone well?

- Development of Safer Internet Day which is now an annual event
- Audit of Safe4Me resources for schools to ensure appropriate coverage and link to the PHSE curriculum
- Creation of police referral welfare check guidance
- SSCP inclusion in school safeguarding review work
- Annual delivery of learning from CSPRs at the DSL conference by the SSCP
- Schools' safeguarding evaluation developed into a web-based format for easier accessibility to improve analysis. Early Years tool is to be developed
- Physical intervention task and finish group created guidance on language and practice and a supporting leaflet for parents and carers
- De-escalation training and physical intervention training provided by Aim with the requirement that at least one person is specifically trained to help reduce suspensions and permanent exclusions for earlier support for children and young people
- An information document has been created with support and information for staff and volunteers subject to allegations of abuse
- A policy update on the transfer of records to ensure receiving settings have the right information to support children and young people
- A focus on serious youth violence – safeguarding fayres organised and Operation Sceptre more widely publicised, including year 6 pupils, which focusses on knife crime. Choices training rolled out across schools
- CERAF (child exploitation risk assessment framework) promotion through a joint workshop to support the language used when talking about young people
- The creation of a system for Assured providers for Alternative Provision
- The creation of a system to report illegal schools on the SCC website
- Permanent exclusion guidance reviewed and updated to prevent exclusion for children and young people wherever possible
- Joint work between education and GPs to address the high levels of authorised absences which has seen a decrease

Areas for future development and how we are addressing them;

- The Partnership need to develop a greater understanding of the volume of referrals to CAMHS for assessment of neurodiversity from schools, where other factors may be an influence on presentation, to ensure that children and young people receive the right level of support to help them participate in education
- Collaborative work with CAMHS to identify children and young people who are absent from school and at risk of or experienced exclusions who are also on the waiting lists for assessment of neurodiversity
- The partnership would like to further analyse the disproportionality of children and young people excluded from schools from black Caribbean and black African backgrounds
- The Safeguarding Improvement Practice Group will be focusing audit activity on children's participation in education in the Autumn term
- The Partnership will be prioritising a focus on the voice of children and young people in Southampton to understand insight into their experiences of education in the city to understand what works well and how their views can influence service development
- A workshop is arranged with the education representative for the DfE in September to develop how the Partnership Arrangements will be compliant with Working Together 2023
- A list of all educational settings is currently being compiled to ensure they are included as relevant agencies in line with Working Together 2023 and communication links are in development
- The Educational Neglect Guidance will be completed and supported through e-learning. This will be evaluated through the measurement of data once accessible to understand the impact
- Working Together to improve school attendance is an ongoing area of activity
- The promotion of the development of the Family Safeguarding Model will continue to ensure that children and families receive the right level of intervention and support for sustainable change
- A programme of analysis of schools' self-evaluations will help to target areas for improvement

Outcome 5: We will support the partnership with a focus on the appropriate application of the Pathways document across partner agencies to ensure the right service is provided with the right children at the right time

The **MASH strategic subgroup** has been re-established and has membership from a wide range of partner agencies.

The governance of the subgroup is through the SSCP Board and the Executive.

The implementation of the Family Safeguarding Model is underway with collaboration with partner agencies.

The inclusion of adult workers with specialisms in domestic abuse, substance use and mental health will be officially launched in September 2024 and will ensure that the whole family and network is supported to empower sustainable change within families for the best outcomes for children, young people and their families.

The partnership will oversee the governance of the Family Safeguarding Model, monitoring the data and effectiveness of the model, ensuring that the right service is provided to the right children and their families at the right time.

A programme of audit activity within the MASH strategic subgroup is planned and the development of the Conversational Model at the front door will promote partnership working to strengthen the use of toolkits and guidance in identifying the appropriate interventions.

A scrutiny visit by the Independent Scrutineer was undertaken at the start of the following reporting year 2024 – 2025.

The performance data for the reporting year 2023 – 2024 can be found below to demonstrate the trends in the impact of the arrangements at the front door for children, young people and their families.

Data showing trends of contacts and referrals into Southampton Children's Social Care

Indicator	Mar 22	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Jun 23	July 23	Aug 23	Sep 23	Oct 23	Nov 23	Dec 23	Jan 24	Feb 24	Mar 24
Number of contacts in the month	1785	2023	1544	1828	1948	1804	1471	1532	1923	1763	1459	2018	1818	1758
Number of referrals into statutory services in the month	310	433	282	301	285	310	263	267	276	315	216	308	197	201
Number of referrals into early help in the month	327	183	131	181	154	172	162	109	139	166	142	144	129	88
Number of child and family assessments completed	322	400	309	425	283	292	259	231	222	255	216	266	200	231
Number of s47 enquiries completed	Not available	169	138	126	124	121	86	81	131	112	101	77	86	79
%age of s47 enquiries resulting in initial child protection case conferences (not already cp or in LA care)	Not available	38	34	26	43	21	45	20	20	33	12	22	21	26
Number of children in the care of the local authority	Not available	539	505	517	518	507	510	505	504	507	510	494	492	490

Looking Forwards for the Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership

The Southampton Safeguarding Partnership will continue to **enhance** the existing **strong relationships** with partners to promote the wellbeing and **safeguarding** for children, young people, families and adults in the city.

The **diverse demographics** and **rich culture** of Southampton will be promoted and **celebrated** with co-design and co-production developed to shape and inform service delivery across the partnership.

There will be **greater alignment** between the Safeguarding Children, Safeguarding Adults and Safe City Partnership with the recognition that to make sustainable changes for children and young people, the partnership need to consider the needs of **all residents**. This will promote a city which is **vibrant and safe** for children and young people as they develop into adulthood, with additional focus on Transitional Safeguarding.

The partnership will continue to **identify** and **oversee** the implementation of learning from **reviews** and **audit activity** and gain assurance of the embedding of developments.

There will be a focus on the implementation of **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023**; the Published Arrangements will be published by December 2024.

We will look forward to the continued development of the **Strategic Priorities** through the dynamic work of the subgroups, Systems Board and with the **overall governance** from the Executive Group.

Thank you for reading the Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership Yearly Report.

[Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

Safeguarding.partnershipsteam@southampton.gov.uk



Agenda Item 9

DECISION-MAKER:	CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL
SUBJECT:	CHILDREN AND LEARNING – PERFORMANCE & TRANSFORMATION
DATE OF DECISION:	26 SEPTEMBER 2024
REPORT OF:	SCRUTINY MANAGER

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY	
None	
BRIEF SUMMARY	
Attached as Appendix 1 is a summary of performance for Children’s Services and Learning up to the end of August 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.	
RECOMMENDATIONS:	
(i)	That the Panel consider and challenge the performance of Children’s Services and Learning in Southampton.
REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS	
1.	To enable effective scrutiny of Children’s Services and Learning in Southampton.
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED	
2.	None.
DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)	
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 31 August 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.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Capital/Revenue/Property/Other</u>	

6.	None directly as a result of this report.
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
7.	The duty to undertake overview and scrutiny is set out in Part 1A Section 9 of the Local Government Act 2000.
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	
8.	None
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	
9.	None
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
10.	<p>The 2024 updated Corporate Plan includes the following strategic objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe and stable home environments • Accessible education and skills pathways. <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>

KEY DECISION?	No
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	None
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	Summary of performance and commentary – August 2024
2.	Children and Learning Glossary

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)
1.	None

Children's Social Care Performance Report

September 2024

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Agenda Item 9
Appendix 1

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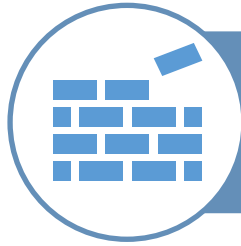
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Purpose

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



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Right support at the right time – Family Help

Indicator	Aug-22	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Target	RAG	Direction of travel	So'ton 22/23	Statistical Neighbours	South East	England
Number of referrals into Early Help	196	162	109	139	166	142	144	129	90	87	127	113	182	94		-	↓	-	-	-	-
Number of referrals that were stepped down from CSC (no assessment required)		46	27	16	23	18	36	24	15	15	20	21	17	13		-	↓	-	-	-	-
Number of Early Help assessments started	126	71	66	89	91	80	79	86	65	71	71	83	113	47		-	↓	-	-	-	-
Number of contacts in the month	1959	1471	1532	1923	1763	1459	2018	1818	1780	1705	1714	1675	1845	1491		-	↑	-	-	-	-
Rate of contacts per 10,000 population under 18 years old		4173	4123	4166	4159	4171	4207	4251	4201	4233	4206	4151	4161	4168		-	↓	-	-	-	-
Number of referrals into statutory service in the month	264	263	267	276	315	216	308	197	202	191	185	207	254	156		-	↑	-	-	-	-
Rate of referrals per 10,000 population under 18 years old		760	754	747	732	720	715	691	645	627	603	588	576	555	581	●	↑	759.8	640.1	-	544.5
Number of C&F assessments completed	369	259	231	222	255	216	266	200	233	186	229	203	195	162		-	↑	-	-	-	-
Rate of assessments per 10,000 population under 18 years old		807	776	756	736	716	707	685	651	627	588	573	550	530	580	●	↑	778.4	628.5	-	557.4
Percentage of assessments completed within 45 days		90	80	87	92	81	89	90	85	83	88	85	80	82	81	●	↑	81.6	81.1	-	82.5
Number of children with Child in Need Plan (not CWD)	384	462	433	388	464	449	480	453	396	377	372	329	334	317	-	-	↑	-	-	-	-
Number of children with Child in Need Plan (CWD)		243	243	237	230	228	221	222	212	213	209	209	212	222	-	-	↓	-	-	-	-



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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

- Unusually for August, we saw a reduction in referrals into Early Help compared to the two previous years.
- With schools closed, it is expected that contacts and referrals into the service reduce in August. We saw numbers of contacts down 15% from the average, but comparable with August 2023. The number of referrals were down to 156, a new low, and the rate of referrals is now 555, below our new target of 581. It is expected that the number and rate of referrals will increase in October and November.
- Assessment timeliness has improved to above target as expected after last month, with the focus on performance within Jigsaw specifically. This places us within the top three performing local authorities in our statistical neighbours.
- The number of children with an active Child in Need plan reduced in August, this is 31.4% lower than August 2023. This reduction can be linked to an increased focus on families receiving the right help from the right service and the provision of more effective, focused and regular support; therefore not remaining open for as long as previously.

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Right support at the right time – Family Safeguarding

Indicator	Aug-22	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Target	RAG	Direction of travel	So'ton 22/23	Statistical Neighbours	South East	England
Number of strategy discussions held		161	152	152	173	124	147	97	144	121	120	98	147	109	-	-	↑	-	-	-	-
Number of Section 47 enquiries completed		86	81	131	112	101	77	86	90	75	84	49	98	67	-	-	↑	-	-	-	-
Rate of Section 47 enquiries completed		336	320	323	306	301	297	285	274	261	251	238	239	234	247	●	↑	352.2	253.0	-	191.6
Percentage of Strategy discussions resulting in Section 47		53	53	86	65	81	52	89	63	62	70	50	67	61	-	-	↑	-	-	-	-
Percentage of Section 47s (not already CP or in our care) resulting in ICPC		45	20	20	33	12	22	21	28	24	19	11	17	27	31	●	↑	23.9	31.1	-	33.0
Number of children subject to CP Plan at end of month	388	346	318	311	320	309	304	307	276	257	256	249	221	234	-	-	↓	-	-	-	-
Rate of children subject to CP plans	79	70	64	62	64	62	61	60	56	52	51	50	44	47	49	●	↓	63.90	52.90	-	43.20
Number of children in our care	551	507	510	503	507	510	494	492	490	488	488	479	473	470	-	-	↑	-	-	-	-
Rate of children in our care per 10,000	112	103	103	101	102	102	99	99	98	97	98	96	95	94	87	●	↑	114.00	100.90	56.00	70.00
Number of children open to the service (Assessment, CIN, CP, CLA, CL)	2428	2259	2112	2085	2111	2036	2069	1986	1973	1905	1865	1763	1742	1713	-	-	↑	-	-	-	-
Rate of children open to the service (Assessment, CIN, CP, CLA, CL)	487	422	414	418	423	408	415	396	396	382	374	354	349	344	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

- The rate of Section 47 enquiries remains below the target of 247 at 234.
- The rate of children subject to CP is up a little at 47, down 33% from August 2022. This is below the statistical neighbour average of 53 and we have met our target of 49. It is not unusual for the rate of children subject to child protection planning to increase in the autumn term, so we have some flexibility now to increase and still stay within our target range.
- The number of children in our care has reduced to 470 with a rate of 94. This is down 7% from August 2023, and 15% from August 2022. Our target for the rate of children in care is 87, we are expecting to reach this by March 2025 and are on track to do so.
- The number of children open to the service overall reduced by 24% from July 2023 to 1713 and a rate of 344; this is below the statistical neighbour average of 429 and in line with our target of 350. This has been achieved through ensuring families are offered a service that is appropriate and that we are offering effective interventions that create change within an appropriate timescale, keeping children safe within their networks wherever possible.

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Strong, safe & vibrant localities

Indicator	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Target	RAG	Direction of travel	So'ton 22/23	Statistical Neighbours	South East	England
Percentage of re-referrals within 12 months	19%	21%	21%	32%	25%	30%	24%	28%	26%	20%	26%	21%	24%	20%	●	↓	22%	20%		21%
Percentage of referrals leading to NFA	10%	10%	8%	4%	5%	4%	2%	4%	5%	9%	13%	21%	15%	7	●	↑	14%	7.6%	-	7.1%
Percentage of children subject to 2nd or more CP plan	31%	31%	32%	33%	34%	37%	35%	36%	38%	38%	37%	38%	38%	25%	●	→	33%	25%		24%
Percentage of children subject to child protection plans with recent core group held in time	69%	85%	84%	89%	74%	88%	89%	93%	88%	87%	88%	96%	80%	95%	●	↓	-	-	-	-
Percentage of children with Child in Need Plan (not CWD) with CIN review within last 12 weeks	79%	80%	70%	76%	81%	70%	70%	87%	87%	83%	91%	92%	88%	95%	●	↓	-	-	-	-
Percentage of initial health assessments delivered within 20 working days of date child became looked after.	20%	57%	9%	0%	33%	92%	67%	80%	71%	92%	100%			95%	●	→	-	-	-	-
Percentage of children in care for at least 12 months for whom health assessments are up to date.	82%	80%	79%	78%	78%	83%	87%	88%	87%	86%	85%	86%		95%	●	↓	-	-	-	-



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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

- With the new set up for tracking re-referrals, the rate has increased in August to 24%, this is higher than the target of the statistical neighbour average of 20%. Our rate of re-referrals remains within the three highest of statistical neighbours for Q4 of 2023/24. An audit into this cohort is underway within the QA service.
- The percentage of referrals leading to No Further Action (NFA) reduced to 15%, this has been explored and is linked to our Children's Resource Service undertaking more work to explore the situation for children prior to sending for assessment. At present, the process for these more in-depth reviews is resulting in the children counting as a referral, but this will be reviewed as the outcome is that no service or assessment will be offered.
- Core group activity dipped significantly in August, this is linked to schools and nurseries being closed, the high prevalence of professionals with annual leave and a representative not always being available to attend. It is generally better for children to hold these important meetings when the professionals who know them best can attend.
- The August data regarding initial health assessments for children that have come into our care is not available until the end of the month. July saw 100% of children that came into our care received an initial health assessment within timescales.





Children remain within or return to their birth families

Indicator	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Target	RAG	Direction of travel
Number of children in our care	510	505	504	507	510	494	492	490	488	489	479	474	470	-	-	↑
Rate of children in our care per 10,000	103	102	101	102	102	99	99	98	97	98	96	95	94	87	●	↑
Number of new CLA in month	17	15	13	17	21	8	7	14	17	15	8	13	8	11	●	↑
Number of new CLA in month who are UASC	3	4	2	1	1	2	2	4	2	0	6	1	1	-	-	→
Number of Ceased CLA in the month excluding UASC	14	17	13	10	15	17	6	15	18	9	17	15	9	-	-	↓
Number of CLA achieved CAO or SGO	3	5	3	1	1	1	1	1	4	2	7	2	5	3.5	●	↑
Number of CLA returned home as part of care planning	5	6	6	6	5	9	1	4	4	1	0	5	0	6.5	●	↓
Number of CLA placed with parents at the end of the month	39	34	33	38	43	49	49	45	43	40	37	32	42	25	●	↑
Number of CLA placed in Connected Carer placements at the end of the month	40	42	41	51	56	54	57	65	73	68	65	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 40 fewer children in our care than we did in August 2023. Our goal for March 2025 is to achieve a rate of 87; we are on track to achieve this.
- In August, 8 children came into our care including 1 UASC. Our plan is to reduce the number of children entering our care to an average of 11 a month, linked to the Family Safeguarding approach being fully launched in September 2024. Since April 2024, we have averaged 12 new care entrants a month; a number of these children have already returned home. Our Building Bridges service is increasingly supporting families where children are at risk of care or to return children home within 2 weeks of entering care where this is a safe plan.
- We had 9 non-UASC children leaving care in August. 5 achieved permanence with a family member. We are on track for the end of year target. However, our sustained progress last year in returning children from care to their families has lessened in the last few months. A locum social worker in Pathways Through Care is solely focused on assessing suitability for discharging care orders for children placed with parents, and court dates for several have been booked in the coming months.

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Promote permanence and placement stability

	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Target	RAG	Direction of travel
Number of children in our care	510	505	504	507	510	494	492	490	488	489	479	474	470			↑
Percentage of CLA at end of month with 3 or more placements during the year	18	17	19	18	19	18	19	18	17	16	14	14	14	10	●	→
Number of CLA placed in IFA placements as at the end of the month	147	142	141	137	133	132	131	131	129	127	119	118	115	91	●	↑
Percentage of CLA placed in IFA placements as at the end of the month	29	28	28	27	26	27	27	27	26	26	25	25	24	20	●	↑
Number of CLA placed in children's homes	43	43	39	38	35	34	33	35	35	36	34	33	32	31	●	↑
Percentage of CLA placed in children's homes	8	8	8	8	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	6	●	→
Number of CLA placed in unregulated/ unregistered settings at the end of the month	42	44	48	48	49	46	47	46	43	42	45	44	24	20	●	↑
Percentage of CLA placed in unregulated/ unregistered settings at the end of the month	8	8	10	9	10	9	10	9	9	9	9	9	5	4	●	↑
Number of CLA placed for adoption at period end	15	15	17	15	13	13	16	15	13	12	11	13	14			↓
Number of children placed with SCC foster carers (including connected carers)	193	198	201	206	205	204	200	202	212	219	218	215	204	285	●	↓
Percentage of children placed with SCC foster carers (including connected carers)	38	39	40	41	40	41	41	41	43	45	46	45	43	58	●	↓



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Promote permanence and placement stability

Progress analysis

- Placement stability remained at 14% in August, this is a significant achievement because the summer is a known risk factor for children moving placements. Prior to the summer holidays, considerable work was undertaken to identify children at risk of instability and create plans and support specifically for each placement.
- The number of children placed in independent fostering agencies has reduced further to 115 from 147 in August 2023; this is the lowest for the last 24 months. At this rate, we would achieve 94 by March 2025, close to our target of 91.
- 204 children are placed within our own foster placements, this is 43% 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. With the support of Newton Europe we are continuing to focus on the recruitment of in-house carers, and maximising capacity within our fostering households.
- There are currently 33 children living in children's homes, down 23% from 43 in August 2023.
- We have 24 young people in unregulated or unregistered placements, down from 44 in July 2024. This is due to a number of 16+ settings becoming registered with Ofsted. The remaining young people have additional Service Lead and Head of Service oversight and are reviewed in 'Exceptional Arrangements' panel.
- Introduction of the Mockingbird model of fostering is in the implementation phase. The constellation carers are being finalised by the end of September, then the team are working towards the launch.



Promote permanence and placement stability

Education

- There are nine children in our care aged 16 or under who are out of education, or not accessing education. Four have Special Educational Needs.
- The four children with SEND all have applications submitted for education settings. Three are receiving tuition in the interim, and for one we are consulting with an independent school in Hampshire.
- For the five children without SEND, three are newly arrived UASC and school placements are being identified. Both other children have applications submitted to schools. One of these has not yet been offered a place due to school concerns about the existing dynamics within the year group and how the young person would impact on and be impacted by these dynamics.
- 19 looked after children aged 16 and 17 are not in employment, education or training. This is down from 29 in March 2024. Four of these children have Special Educational Needs. Five of these are newly arrived UASC, one is not yet ready for education, employment or training and 13 are actively seeking EET opportunities with our support.



Permanent, stable workforce

Indicator	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Target	RAG	Direction of travel
Total number of children held by social worker	1366	1258	1166	1261	1398	1365	1332	1293	1228	1210	1170	1127	1147			↓
Average number of children per primary caseholder (based on 1 FTE)	15.64	14.50	14.21	15.12	15.82	16.00	15.93	15.72	15.26	14.81	13.94	13.11	12.91			↑
Average number of children per qualified Social Worker (1 FTE)	16.46	14.98	14.76	16.33	17.92	17.73	17.76	17.47	16.59	15.71	14.63	13.26	14.34			↓
Total number of case holders with 20+ children	36	37	34	43	48	44	44	41	41	32	23	27	35			↓
Average number of children per worker with 20+ children (1 FTE)	22.88	22.30	21.53	22.16	22.54	22.77	22.84	22.76	22.56	22.75	24.00	23.26	22.66			↑
Average number of children per worker in top 40	22.40	22.05	21.15	22.33	23.05	23.05	23.05	22.83	22.63	22.00	21.75	21.80	22.20			↓
Percentage of CLA that have been in care for 12+m, with same social worker for last 6 months	74	75	80	78	73	73	73	71	56	54	58	60	60	75	●	→
Percentage of children open for 6+ months that have had 2 or more social workers in the last 6 months	32%	39%	38%	36%	37%	38%	38%	32%	33%	34%	35%	32%	33%	25	●	↓



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Permanent, stable workforce

Progress analysis

- The total number of children being held by social workers has reduced 26% from 1366 in August 2023 to 1147 in August 2024.
- Caseloads for social workers have decreased from an average of 17.76 in February 2024 to an average of 14.34. This includes social workers with reduced caseloads due to being in their first or second year in practice. At our peak we had 110 case holding social workers (due to high levels of supernumerary agency staff), and we currently have 80. The distribution of caseloads across the service is uneven with higher than desired caseloads in Pathways Through Care. This is being addressed by targeted recruitment and the redistribution of vacancies as they arise.
- The number of social workers with 20 or more children on their caseload increased from 23 in June 2024 to 35 in August. This is down from 48 in December 2023 but it is higher than ideal.
- Employee turnover has remained stable in Children & Learning. In our neighbouring local authorities, they have seen an increased reliance on agency staff, which drives up costs and create increased instability for families. There was an increased level of staff sickness in July; the majority of these staff members are back at work now.

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 June '24 Audit overview (emotional abuse):

Family Help

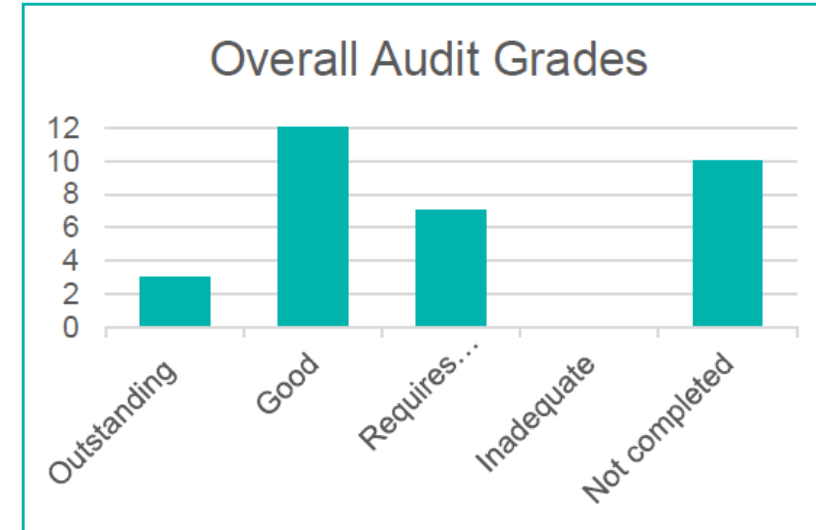
- 1 audit was outstanding, 1 good and 2 requires improvement.
- Referrals were reviewed within timescales with clear management oversight recorded
- Proportionate response based on identified needs and likelihood of harm
- Clear evidence of identification of post closure support
- Delay in allocation for 2 families in East due to capacity
- For 2 families, more evidence was required of analysis in supervision records.

Family Safeguarding

- 1 audit was good, 1 was requires improvement
- Practice was informed by a good cultural genogram, chronology and holistic assessment
- Timely supervision reflects progress
- Family Group Conference used and well attended, but plan not followed through and the review was not well attended.
- CP visits predominantly took place at school and were not always timely
- Further evidence of impact or work by family practitioner would be beneficial.

Jigsaw

- 1 requires improvement audit completed
- Assessment completed in timescales, was balanced and detailed
- Plan covers all relevant areas and outcome focussed.
- Chronology, case summary and genogram requires updating
- CP visits not consistently completed in timescales.



Young People Service

- 2 good audits completed
- Young person had an independent advocate
- CERAF risk reduced following direct work from sessional worker
- School worked collaborative & flexible with social worker
- More evidence of consideration of diversity factors
- Chronology and genogram to be completed
- Slight gap in supervision associated with manager absence



Performance - Visiting

Progress analysis

- Early Help recording of visits improved to the highest rate of 89% in August.
- Visits to children within Jigsaw (children with disabilities team) dropped to slightly below the target.
- 3 weekly visits to children outside of the Jigsaw service with a child in need plan reduced to 86%, which is below the expected standard. The performance of each worker and team is explored within assurance clinics to address any issues.
- 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, and in August a number of staff including managers were off work for a period of time.
- The visits to children on child protection planning being less than 90% is a concern as these are some of the most at risk children in the city. These children were discussed at the recent senior management team meeting to highlight the need for these to be completed and recorded.

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

Performance - Supervision

Progress analysis

- Family Help performance has improved to 89%.
- During August, practitioner and managers take leave, which can impact on the ability to complete supervisions within timescales.
- The Jigsaw team were the only team to remain at or above target during August.

Indicator	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Target	RAG	Direction of travel
Percentage of children open to Early Help with supervision in timescales	89%	82%	81%	68%	79%	74%	87%	79%	79%	78%	74%	87%	89%	95%	●	↑
Percentage of children open for assessment who had supervision in timescales	99%	100%	100%	99%	99%	99%	97%	97%	96%	92%	96%	95%	92%	95%	●	↓
Percentage of children with a Child in Need Plan (not CWD) who had supervision within timescales	84%	86%	89%	91%	97%	88%	90%	94%	88%	97%	93%	93%	84%	95%	●	↓
Percentage of children open to the Children with Disabilities team who had their supervision within timescales	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	98%	99%	97%	94%	93%	99%	100%	95%	95%	●	↓
Percentage of CPP who had their supervision and within timescales	89%	93%	96%	94%	96%	91%	96%	92%	93%	96%	93%	95%	83%	95%	●	↓
Percentage of CLA who had their supervision and was within the timescale	78%	73%	81%	83%	83%	94%	88%	81%	77%	81%	81%	88%	74%	95%	●	↓
Percentage of Care Leavers who had their supervision and was within the timescale	83%	79%	83%	81%	77%	90%	91%	87%	87%	88%	89%	86%	75%	95%	●	↓



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Acronyms

ADM	Agency decision maker
ASYE	Assessed and Supported Year in Employment
BIT	Brief Intervention Team
C&FF	Children and Family First (Early Help service)
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
ciC	Children in Care
CLA	Children Looked After
CP	Child Protection
CRS	Childrens Resource Service
CYP	Children and Young People
EH	Early Help
FEW	Family Engagement Worker
HoS	Head of Service
ICAS	Intervention and Complex Assessment Service
ICAT	Intervention and Complex Assessment Team
Jigsaw	Children with Disabilities Team
KCSiE	Keeping Children Safe in Education (safeguarding legislation and guidance for education settings)
ROTH	Risk Outside the Home
PM	Practice Manager
PTC	Pathways through Care
SL	Service Lead
SW	Social Worker
SWF/SWWF	Social Work with Families
YJS	Youth Justice Service
YPS	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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DECISION-MAKER:	CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL
SUBJECT:	MONITORING SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS
DATE OF DECISION:	26 SEPTEMBER 2024
REPORT OF:	SCRUTINY MANAGER

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
Executive Director	Title	Executive Director – Enabling Services	
	Name:	Mel Creighton	Tel: 023 8083 3528
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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY	
None	
BRIEF SUMMARY	
This item enables the Children and Families Scrutiny Panel to monitor and track progress on recommendations made at previous meetings.	
RECOMMENDATIONS:	
	(i) That the Panel considers the responses to recommendations from previous meetings and provides feedback.
REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS	
1.	To assist the Panel in assessing the impact and consequence of recommendations made at previous meetings.
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED	
2.	None.
DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)	
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.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	

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

KEY DECISION?	No
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	None

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	Monitoring Scrutiny Recommendations – 26 September 2024
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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 and Families Scrutiny Panel

Scrutiny Monitoring – 26 September 2024

Date	Title	Action proposed	Action Taken	Progress Status
18/07/24	Local Area SEND Inspection	1) 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>Public health analysis and actions arising are detailed below.</p> <p>12–15-month review (HR1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9% of children are seen by 12 months, however higher rates are seen for families on the targeted and specialist pathways (43% and 41% respectively) • A higher proportion of those from deprived areas are seen by 12 months • 28% of children recorded as having SEND are seen by 12 months • 63% of children in Southampton are seen by 15 months, again higher rates for targeted and specialist pathways (88% and 82% respectively) • 72% of children recorded as having SEND are seen by 12 months • Bevois is lower than the city average <p>24–30-month review (HR2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the 24-30 month review, 65% children are seen within specified timescale however higher rates are seen for families on the targeted and specialist pathways (84% and 78% respectively) • 85% of children recorded as having SEND are seen within specified timescale • Bevois and Bargate are lower than the city average <p>Steps that service are taking to improve HR1/2 rates</p>	Complete

Date	Title	Action proposed	Action Taken	Progress Status
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus group with service users to improve communication about the reviews, what they entail and how parents can access – focus on literacy • Talking to parents/carers from global majorities to understand how take up can be increased • Demand and capacity review and further training as a result • Targeting certain cohorts e.g global majority, parents/carers living in wards with lower take ups • Piloting change of information provision to parents/carers <p>As a result of starting the above, the following has been noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in 12-15 month review take up to 75% in August • An increase in 24-30 month review take up to 73% in August. 	
08/08/24	Repeat Child Protection Plans	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) That, to reinforce the message about the value of good practice, the analysis of repeat child protection plans is circulated to all social workers. 2) That, reflecting concerns raised in the analysis relating to the impact of changes in social worker, the service undertakes an audit on the quality of handovers provided by social workers. 3) That the scheduled follow up analysis of repeat child protection plans is provided to the Panel when it is available. 	<p>Completed - the Lead Independent Reviewing Officer is scheduled to present at the October 2024 practice forum.</p> <p>In progress - recommendation that this is presented in January 2025.</p> <p>In progress - recommendation that this is presented in January 2025.</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>In progress</p>

Date	Title	Action proposed	Action Taken	Progress Status
08/08/24	Annual conversation with Ofsted	1) That an all-members briefing is scheduled to inform councillors about the changes that have been undertaken across Children's Services and Learning.	In progress - the service has met with the Democratic, Meeting Support & PA Manager and we are working to arrange a briefing date. The Head of Quality Assurance has written to the panel chair and vice chair to start planning floor walks.	In progress

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