

# Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership Progress Report: October 2019 - March 2020



**Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility**



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# Foreword: Lead Safeguarding Partners

This is the Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership's (BHSCP) first report. It charts the BHSCP's early progress as it establishes its identity as a newly formed Safeguarding Children Partnership.

When we developed and published our safeguarding arrangements our ambition lay in taking the opportunity to review and change some of our ways of working - building on strengths within the good partnership relationships that already exist, whilst also focusing on how we can make a real difference to multi-agency frontline practice. By developing and spreading good practice based on what we know works well and is evidence based we aim to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families.

One year on and six months into our new arrangements we are keen to move away from a safeguarding partnership style which relied on large board style meetings, and embrace a focussed strategic approach which is centred on understanding and building on our strengths whilst addressing challenges.

Our various strands of independent scrutiny will enable us to test over time how well we have moved the partnership forward and built upon existing foundations of good multi-agency working. Crucially, all work undertaken by agencies should evidence that professionals understand and reflect the voice of children, young people and their families in their decision making.

The advent of the Coronavirus pandemic is a critical time for safeguarding and it is vital that we have the flexibility to adapt; thereby delivering the most effective whilst efficient and innovative ways of providing services and support to children, young people and families who most need it. Utilising local and national research and feedback from the community will enable us to fully understand its impact on the city.

We are impressed by how well agencies have already worked together across the city in response to Covid-19 in terms of ensuring effective safeguarding arrangements were in place despite being in an emergency response mode. We should like to extend our thanks to all staff who stepped up and went above and beyond to ensure children were and continue to be safeguarded.

A culture of close multi-agency co-operation is key to leading us beyond this crisis. We need to develop sustainable service delivery methods and ways of working together. New ways of working must also support our front line professionals who are currently facing exceptional challenges in their day to day work. We believe that a resilient and collaborative multi-agency workforce deployed both locally and across Sussex will help to ensure that we keep our children, young people and their families safe and support their health and wellbeing.



*Deb Austin*

Deb Austin  
Interim Executive Director,  
Families, Children and Learning,  
Brighton & Hove City Council



*Jonathan Hull*

Jonathan Hull  
Detective Superintendent,  
Public Protection  
Sussex Police



*Naomi Ellis*

Naomi Ellis,  
Head of Safeguarding and  
Looked After Children,  
Sussex Clinical  
Commissioning Groups



# Introduction



## About this report

This is the first report published by the Brighton and Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership. It covers the 6 month period, October 2019 and March 2020<sup>1</sup> following implementation of our new partnership arrangements in late September 2019. It explores how the BHSCP started to deliver our vision for Brighton & Hove's children and families, looking at successes to date and key challenges for 2020-21.

The final week of this reporting period saw a national lockdown commence as a result of Covid-19; with an unprecedented global response to this pandemic. Safeguarding children was immediately identified as a key risk by the BHSCP. Whilst the focus of this report is on how the safeguarding arrangements are working including relationships with strategic partners across the city, when looking to the future the short and longer term impact of Covid-19 is one of the key challenges facing the partnership.

## About Brighton & Hove

The city of Brighton & Hove population is estimated<sup>1</sup> to be 290,900 in 2019, of which 21% are under 20 year of age; 19.5% are from a black or minority ethnic group; 18% of the city's residents were born outside of the UK; and between 11 and 15% of the population aged over 16 is estimated to be lesbian, gay or bisexual.

The most recent local authority Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)<sup>2</sup> noted that the city is ranked as the 131<sup>st</sup> most deprived local authority in England (out of 317); however pockets of the city are amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England. 16% of Brighton & Hove children are estimated to be living in poverty; whilst this is below the national figure (17%) it is above the South East regional rate (13%).

According to Department for Education 2019 data, 67% of primary school pupils reached the expected standard of attainment, above the 65% average for England. 47% of secondary students achieved Grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSEs, compared to a 40% average for England.



<sup>1</sup>Data published within this report may span April 2019 to March 2020 for comparison purposes— further data is available via the JSNA report (see 2 below).

<sup>2</sup>Health and Wellbeing in Brighton and Hove: Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) July 2019.

# Independent Scrutiny of the BHSCP

*“The role of independent scrutiny is to provide assurance in judging the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area, including arrangements to identify and review serious child safeguarding cases.”*



Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

I feel extremely privileged to have been entrusted with the role of Independent Scrutineer for the BHSCP. As you read this section, and other parts of this annual report, I would ask you to consider that BHSCP is emerging from a transition period, agencies continue to develop the new Partnership and work hard to get the best possible outcomes for children and their families. The Partnership will make mistakes, it will do things that it can be incredibly proud of and it is important continuous improvement comes from both. I remain completely confident that there is a very genuine commitment to providing the best possible safeguarding for the city's children across the statutory agencies and wider Partnership.

The role of Independent Scrutineer is set out in 'Working Together'. My role is to:

- ◆ Provide assurance in judging the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in Brighton & Hove.
- ◆ This includes scrutinising arrangements to identify and review serious child safeguarding cases.
- ◆ Be part of a wider scrutiny system which includes the independent inspectorates' single assessment of the individual safeguarding partners and the Joint Targeted Area Inspections.
- ◆ Implement a robust system of independent scrutiny
- ◆ Be objective, act as a constructive critical friend and promote reflection to drive continuous improvement.
- ◆ Consider how effectively the arrangements are working for children and families as well as for practitioners, and how well the safeguarding partners are providing strong leadership and agree with the safeguarding partners how this will be reported.



# Independent Scrutiny (continued)

In the first six months I've delivered a focussed piece of work on Domestic Abuse and its effect on children. This is discussed later in the report but it's an example of the more detailed and structured work that I believe will benefit the Partnership in developing multi-agency policy and practice. The excellent reaction of professionals when asked to join focus groups helped me understand the issue across a number of perspectives and is an example of why I can say that there is a real enthusiasm to learn and improve within the Partnership. Unfortunately, the current pandemic has resulted in a delay in considering many of the recommendations I made, whilst this is understandable to a degree, I will be seeking assurance that recommendations have been considered and appropriate improvement plans put in place.



I have been included in strategic meetings and provided feedback regarding aspects of the current C19 arrangements. I believe that the way in which strategic leaders from the three statutory agencies have conducted business and worked collaboratively has been outstanding. The will to support each other and the pride they have shown in their staff has been an example of what good leadership looks like at a time of crisis. They would be quick to point out the professionalism and resilience of practitioners across the Partnership as being key to success.

Post pandemic I intend to scrutinise the inclusion of the wider Partnership in safeguarding. Maintaining the positive impact of partners to our safeguarding efforts is of paramount importance. I will also seek to complete more focussed work in areas that impact the city's children, including the BHSCP priorities.

My overarching view is that the BHSCP have delivered a Partnership model that will develop into a strong basis on which to provide effective multi-agency safeguarding.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Robson', is positioned above the printed name.

Chris Robson

Independent Chair and Scrutineer

Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership



# Our vision & values... which inform our business plan

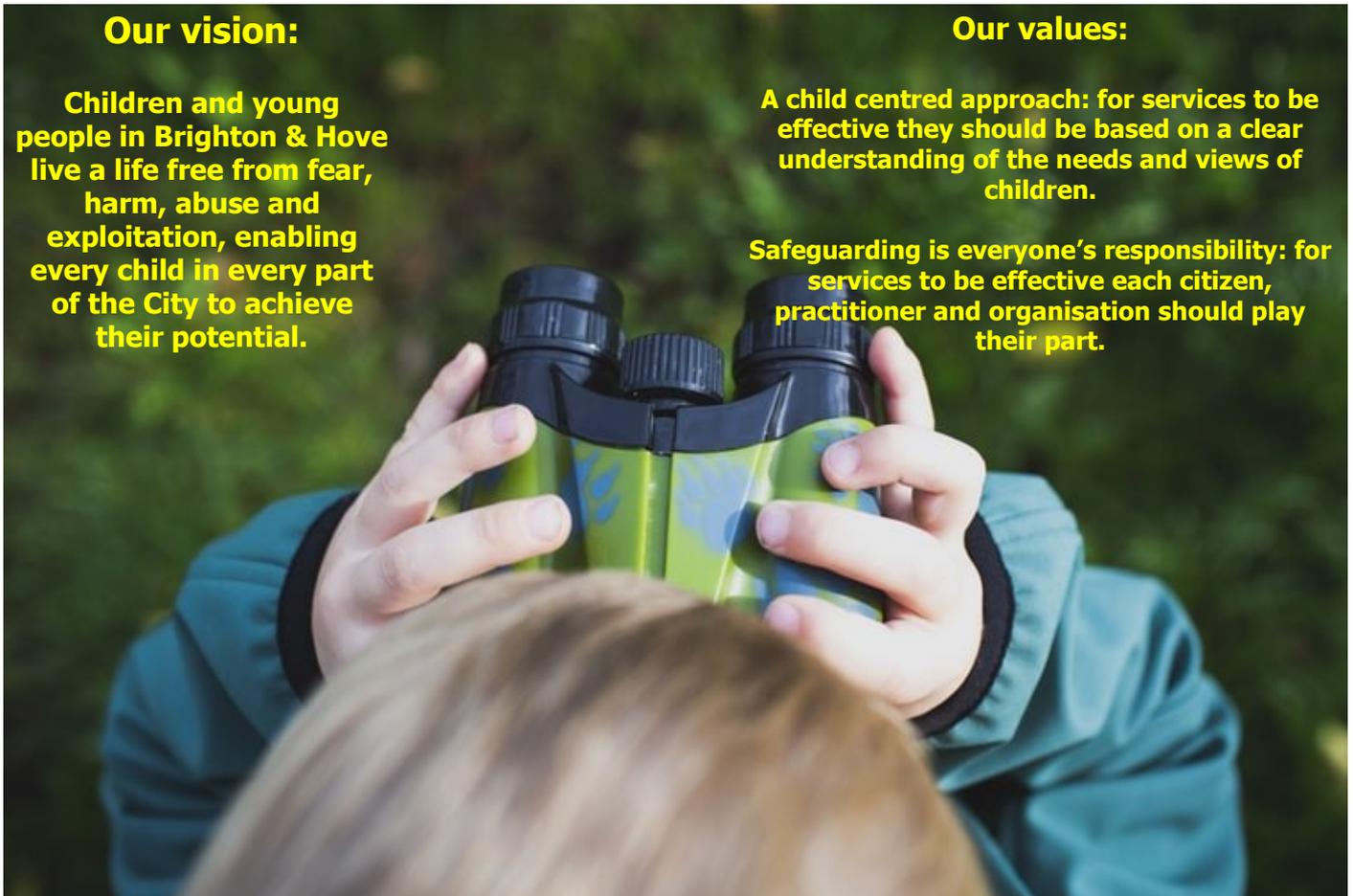
## Our vision:

Children and young people in Brighton & Hove live a life free from fear, harm, abuse and exploitation, enabling every child in every part of the City to achieve their potential.

## Our values:

A child centred approach: for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each citizen, practitioner and organisation should play their part.



### Priority 1 - Partnership Engagement and Accountability:

The new arrangements will provide strategic leadership to embed the principles of safeguarding citywide.

### Priority 2 - Safeguarding children from violence and exploitation:

There is a clear understanding of the scale of complex and contextual safeguarding within Brighton & Hove and that the needs of children and young people affected by violence are identified and assessed effectively.

### Priority 3 - Neglect:

The needs of children and young people affected by neglect are identified and assessed effectively resulting in timely and appropriate intervention.

### Priority 4 - Mental Health and Emotional Health and Wellbeing:

Service provision for children who need support for emotional and mental health issues is consistently good across Brighton & Hove.

*The 6 months covered by this report saw the partnership develop its new business plan priorities and associated activities to deliver its vision. During this period of transition the BHSCP looked at progress made nationally by Safeguarding Children Partnership 'Early Adopters'<sup>3</sup> and how this learning could be applied to further develop its partnership arrangements, learning from its own experiences and those of other local authority areas.*

<sup>3</sup> National Children's Bureau: Safeguarding Early Adopters report (published autumn 2019)

# Strategic Leadership and Delivery

## ‘Safeguarding is Everyone’s Responsibility’

### Pan Sussex Strategic Leaders

The Pan Sussex safeguarding lead partners met in October 2019 to consider how best to link up pan-Sussex partnership working in the future. For example, considerations around further developing consistency across training and quality assurance work, such as audit themes, will build upon existing Pan Sussex working in these areas. The leaders look forward to implementing recommendations arising from a Sussex-wide review of Children and Young Persons' Emotional Health and Wellbeing Services. The review is expected to be completed in the summer of 2020, paving the way for consistent and improved Pan-Sussex services to support some of our most vulnerable children and young people.

**The Steering Group, comprised of the three lead partners<sup>4</sup> and senior safeguarding leads, oversees the strategic direction and work of the Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership. It links to the BHSCP subgroups, making sure that work plans are delivered and emerging issues are quickly identified and acted on.**

### Steering Group

The Steering Group meets quarterly; during this period it met on one occasion, where it focussed on development of the partnership’s business plan priorities and strengthening the partnership. Terms of Reference for sub-groups were developed to ensure that the right delivery mechanisms were put in place which underpin the partnership’s shared vision and enable partners to work collaboratively to develop the best possible services and support.



The business plan commenced in April 2020 and will run for three years. The 2020-21 BHSCP annual report will reflect on progress made in light of adjustments to safeguarding practice and in particular in light of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

### Partnership Board

The Partnership Board (PB) supports delivery of the Steering Group’s strategic objectives.

The purpose of the PB is to:

- ◆ Ensure good representation from organisations on subgroups
- ◆ Operationalise the strategic aims of the steering group
- ◆ Raise issues put forward by Steering Group
- ◆ Engage the wider safeguarding community

In December 2019 the PB debated business plan priority work and made recommendations to the Steering Group about the focus and scope of the partnerships’ priority work. PB members advocated the need to improve engagement with both the community and children and young people. This approach will help the BHSCP to understand how to improve its services, for example identifying and addressing service gaps, thereby improving outcomes for children and their families.

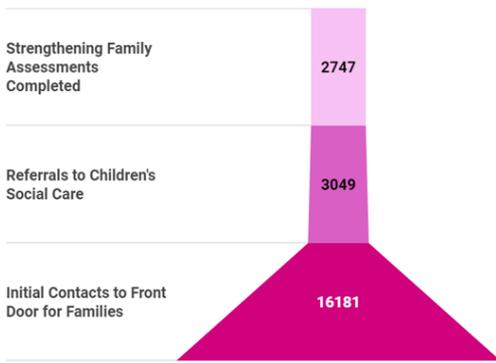


The BHSCP’s strapline message “Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility” echoes a key message from statutory guidance (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018): there is a collective ownership and responsibility taken for safeguarding in the city by all - statutory agencies, community organisations and the city’s residents. The Partnership Board must also ensure that it is able to understand the impact of the BHSCP’s work on outcomes for children and families and also highlight areas of concern to the Steering Group.

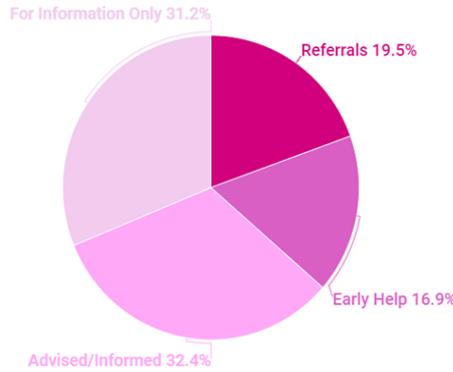
<sup>4</sup> The three lead partners are responsible for ensuring that partners work across the city to safeguard children and young people and promote their health and wellbeing. Further information can be found in the [BHSCP’s partnership arrangements](#).

# About Brighton & Hove children and families

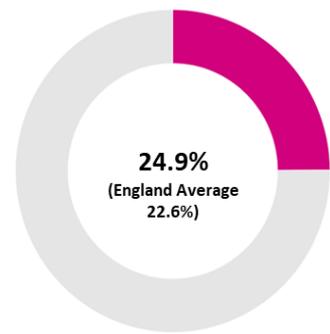
## Initial Contacts, Referrals and Assessments



## Initial Contacts by Outcome



## Re-Referrals to Children's Social Care



**510**

Early Help Assessments completed year ending 31st March 2020



**1,431**

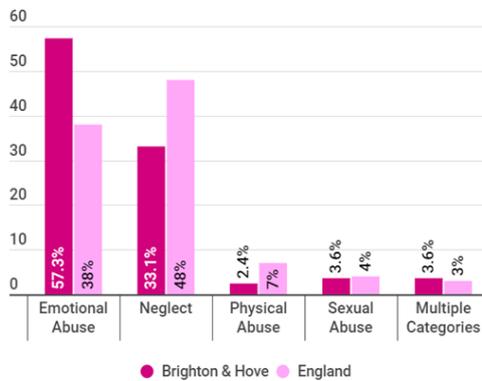
Children and young people who were receiving support from any Early Help Service



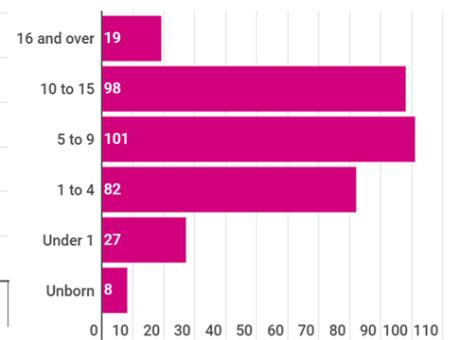
**335**

Children subject of a child protection plan at 31st March 2020, up from 315 at 31st March 2019

## Children Subject of a CP Plan by Category of Abuse



## Children Subject of a CP Plan by Age



## Children Missing from Education



**30**

30 Children Missing from Education under Criteria 1 and 2

**Criteria 1:** 11 pupils known to be not on roll and missing  
**Criteria 2:** 19 children who were reported to have come off roll from a school with an unconfirmed destination in another authority.

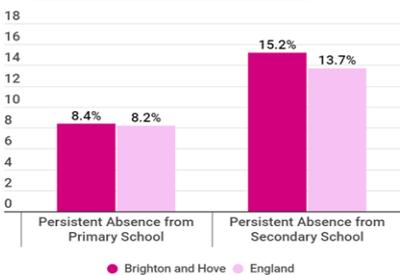
## Pupils Educated at Home



**294**

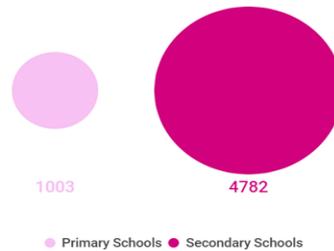
Children educated at home at 31st March 2020, up from 223 at 31st March 2019

## Absence from School 2019/20



A pupil is classified as a persistent absentee if they miss 10 per cent or more of their possible sessions (i.e. 90% attendance).

## Sessions (half days) missed through fixed term exclusion 2018/19



5.5% of pupils received a fixed term exclusion in 2017/18 (latest published data), above the national average of 4.8%.



**1,340**

Cases open to CAMHS at 31st March 2020, up from 1,065 at 31st March 2019



**69**

Young people in the transition process to Adults Services at 31st March 2020



## Referrals to CSARC

**69**

Children Referred to CSARC during year ending 31st March 2020



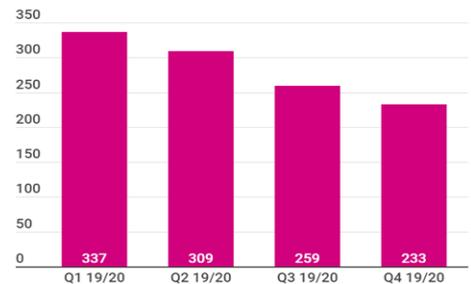
**30**

Children Seen

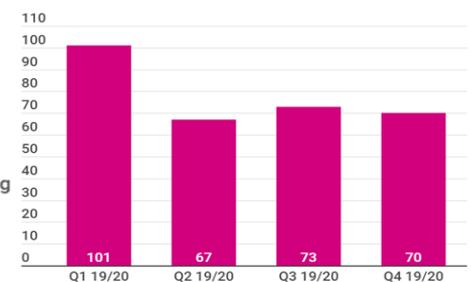
## MACSE / MACE / AVRMs nominals Q4 2019-20



## Under 18 Missing Reports 2019-20



## Single Combined Assessment of Risk Forms (SCARFs)



# Early Help

## Early Help

Early Help brings together professionals who will work with the whole family to help to bring improvements for everyone. Early Help could include support with parenting, employment, anti social behaviour and emotional well being. This approach enables early identification of need and assessment with shared decision making with families. A single assessment will offer families access to the support they need across multiple agencies if required.

An Ofsted focussed visit to Brighton & Hove children's services in March 2020 noted that "The implementation of a new children in need strategy in October 2019 is proving to be largely effective in ensuring that the same priority and attention is given to this work as is given to child protection work. This is seen in the increasingly frequent visits to children and the now consistently broad multi-agency attendance at child in need network meetings".

Action has been taken to improve multi-agency attendance at strategy discussions in response to child protection concerns where services are already working with children.

## Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2)

The BHSCP Training Officer (TO) led a working group to plan implementation of GCP2. GCP2 is a new neglect assessment tool for use across partner agencies and organisations to support early identification of child neglect. 20 multi-agency staff are now trained to use the model under a train the trainer approach; next steps are for roll out to all staff.



A highlight for the BHSCP was the NSPCC's recognition of the TO's innovative creation of a pocket sized

GCP2 information card created specifically for Sussex Police officers use. The TO received an NSPCC award in January 2020.



## Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass operates to improve and speed up information sharing between Sussex Police and schools, enabling the latter to provide appropriate help and support.

Prior to each school day, a nominated Key Adult at participating schools will be informed when a child or young person has been involved in or exposed to a domestic incident. This allows the school to act immediately through 'silent' or 'overt' support, depending upon the needs and wishes of the child.

In Brighton & Hove 90 schools participate in the scheme. This includes Primary, Secondary and Sixth Form schools and colleges.

The scheme is now well established across the city. In 2019 there were 716 recorded notifications to schools. In 2020 to date (March 2020) there have been a further 167 notifications.

In summer 2019 a Sussex wide survey was sent to all participating schools seeking their views about the scheme. 39 schools in Brighton & Hove

responded. Sussex police have used the feedback to improve the service, including the timeliness of notifications and the range: young people under 18 years of age attending 6th form colleges are, as a result of feedback, within Op Encompass's scope.



# Domestic Abuse: How partners are working across the city to support children and families



**In November 2019 the Independent Scrutineer hosted domestic abuse focus groups comprised of 26 managers and practitioners to discuss how children, young people and their families are supported.**

*Nationally 831,000<sup>5</sup> children under the age of 17 are estimated to be living in households that reported domestic abuse.*

*At the beginning of 2020 children who were subjects of a Child Protection Plan in Brighton & Hove 63.4% had domestic violence recorded as a risk factor.*

In the autumn of 2019 the Steering Group commissioned the Independent Scrutineer to look at progress made by partners working with children and families suffering domestic abuse. The Partnership Board (PB) met in early 2020 to discuss the report findings and consider how best partners can work together to safeguard children experiencing domestic abuse. The PB highlighted key considerations for the Partnership to address in 2020-21:

- ◆ Information sharing and assessment of risk: making sure the right professionals are involved as soon as possible.
- ◆ Assurance that effective assessment of risk and safety planning are in place, including early help.
- ◆ Waiting lists: therapeutic support is available to children and young people however currently demand exceeds resources available; and impact of support should be measured.
- ◆ Working with those who perpetrate domestic abuse to tackle repeat offenders.
- ◆ Child focused thinking – what is the lived experience of the child/ren?
- ◆ Raising awareness of domestic abuse citywide: i.e. families, their networks and the wider community.



<sup>5</sup> Office of the Children's Commissioner estimates based on population increase since the ONS survey 2016

# Learning Reviews and Practice Improvement

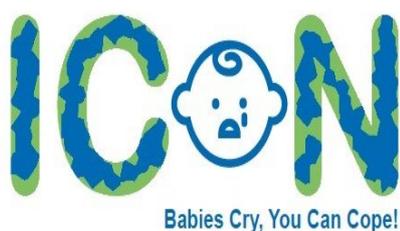
## Case Review Group

The Case Review Group (CRG) meets monthly to look at how to ensure that when a child dies or is seriously hurt safeguarding partners across the city can understand what happened and why. This helps partners to identify practice improvements to be made to better safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The Independent Scrutineer reviewed the system for identifying rapid reviews and local child safeguarding practice reviews and found them to be fit for purpose.

During this reporting period the CRG undertook a rapid review<sup>6</sup> and commissioned a local review; key learning themes around neglect, exploitation and substance misuse were identified at an early stage.

## ICON

As a result of recent learning from a review, partners invested in 'ICON' resources which are being rolled out across the city by professionals working with families both ante and postnatally. Research has shown that crying babies can cause an adult to momentarily lose control and shake a baby, causing potentially catastrophic injuries that lead to death and disability. These injuries affect a baby's brain (known as abusive head trauma) as well as injuries to the eyes, leading to conditions such as cerebral palsy, blindness and epilepsy.



ICON is a national preventative programme to reduce abusive head trauma in babies. It

provides parents and carers with advice and support to manage their baby's crying with the aim that they can avoid injuries. ICON provides professionals in Brighton & Hove with the tools to discuss and work with families and develop strategies to cope with crying. Training has been undertaken and leaflets distributed to various key areas, such as midwifery, A&E and paediatrics. Midwifery will be introducing a discussion with new parents at 32 weeks gestation, birth and discharge home.

## Child Safeguarding Liaison Group

The Child Safeguarding Liaison Group (CSLG) is an interagency forum that also meets monthly to review and improve joint working practice in respect of interagency Child Protection processes. The forum provides an opportunity for practitioners and managers to raise specific concerns and also share good practice.

The need to ensure that the right people have the right amount of information at the right time to enable them to make informed assessments is a key component of multi-agency safeguarding.

Partners discussed and resolved a specific issue by exploring how best to accommodate a safe space for practitioners and managers to challenge and support practice. They also explored ways to maximise agencies participation in strategy and child protection meetings.



The group looks at the practical implications of local and national learning and contributes to policy and process development.

CSLG activity reflects a mature partnership: the group has promoted closer co-operation and respectful challenge leading to positive improvements such as refined and updated guidance both locally and pan Sussex. The CSLG also links front line work directly to the Steering Group, notifying senior leaders of significant emerging issues and potential risks to front line practice delivery. It is understood that this group has had a positive impact on interagency co-operation and challenge resulting in a reduction in formal inter-agency escalations. This will be tested by monitoring the BHSCP's escalation process.

<sup>6</sup>"When a serious incident becomes known to the safeguarding partners, they must consider whether the case meets the criteria for a local review. ....The safeguarding partners should promptly undertake a rapid review of the case". Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

# Monitoring and Evaluation of our work



*Monitoring and evaluation of our work looks at the effectiveness of the partnership both as individual agencies and organisations and as a collective workforce.*

The BHSCP Monitoring and Evaluation Group has:

- ◆ Continued to develop data and information to track the BHSCP's performance and identify emerging risks and issues.
- ◆ Commissioned an audit which revisited intra-familial Child Sexual Abuse with a specific focus on establishing whether learning from the last audit was embedded and led to practice improvement.
- ◆ Looked at findings of the BHSCP's Criminal Exploitation audit and contributed to the development of an action plan for delivery by the BHSCP's Exploitation Group.

A key challenge continues to be capacity and maintaining pace in developing and implementing the plans following audit, for example a recent audit looking at the emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people across the city.

Ensuring robust links remain between all the BHSCP's working groups, including e.g. the Monitoring & Evaluation and Learning & Development groups is an additional consideration following sub-group membership changes as a result of the new partnership arrangements.

Further development of scrutiny of the partnership's arrangements will be part of the BHSCP's business plan priority work from 2020-21. Measuring the positive impact of multi-agency work has had on making a real difference to children, young people and their families is key to this.



# Learning and Development Activity

## About the BHSCP multi-agency training offer

Partners continued to develop, and update training offers to keep the BHSCP offer relevant and informative. The new partnership arrangements have supported a more integrated approach to training across Sussex, and where possible we have looked to combine offers, rather than duplicate.

**(Table 1) The number of courses run and attendance**

Core Child Protection Courses	Courses Presented	Attendance
Developing a Core Understanding	6	157
Assessment, Referral and Investigation	5	121
Child Protection Conferences and Core Groups	5	121
		<b>399</b>
Level 3 - Specialist Child Protection Courses		
Domestic Abuse and Violence	3	44
Exploitation - Day 1	3	46
Exploitation - Day 2	2	18
MAPPA – Multi Agency Public Protection	2	7
Neglect Training	3	53
Hidden, (Private fostering, Home education, Travellers and Migrants)	1	14
Young people displaying Sexually Harmful Behaviours	1	10
Dealing with Child Sexual Abuse	1	13
Mental Health & Children’s Services: Working Together with Families	2	8
Safeguarding Adolescents	2	15
Disguised Compliance	2	23
Safeguarding in a Digital World	3	43
Joint Neglect Seminar	1	20
Gangs & Youth Violence	5	66
Trauma Informed Practice	3	62
Professional Differences	1	14
Sudden Infant Death – Rapid Response	1	11
		<b>467</b>

Core training days are mandatory for all staff who are new to safeguarding roles. The clear benefits of multi-agency training are evident in the positive feedback received, both for the core training days and for the more specific and specialised training offers. Multi-agency training also affords professionals the opportunity to network and resolve practice issues.

BHSCP training was delivered to 866 attendees (April 2019 – March 2020)

399 staff attended core training.

**Table 2: Attendance at Core Training by Agency (01/04/19–31/03/20)**

Agency	Developing an Understanding	Referral, Assessment & Investigation	Case Conference & core groups
Police	0	0	0
Education	53	52	54
Health	3	2	2
CVS	31	21	13
Probation	5	4	6
BHCC	50	29	35
Early Years	14	12	10
Housing	1	1	1
Other	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>121</b>



# Learning and Development Activity (continued)

## Safeguarding week - November 2019

Safeguarding Week focused on exploitation and the trauma it can cause.

72 Staff attended safeguarding children events that week.



In November 2019, in partnership with colleagues from the West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership, the BHSCP ran a full day seminar about Neglect. This was hosted in West Sussex and attended by staff from both localities. There were a range of speakers and the day was well received by those that attended.

Those attending were asked to evaluate their confidence around identifying and tackling neglect before the conference and at the end of the day using a scale system of 1-10.

Based on feedback from evaluations submitted;

- 58% of delegates reported *increasing their knowledge* by 1 point after attending the conference.
- 33% of delegates reported *increasing their knowledge* by 2 or 3 points after attending the conference
- 42% of delegates reported *increasing their confidence* by 1 point after attending the conference

42% of delegates reported *increasing their confidence* by 2 - 4 points after attending the conference

## Learning & Development Headlines:

**Harmful Practices Training** - The new Brighton & Hove City Council lead for Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and Domestic and Sexual Violence is exploring options around recommissioning this training. A new offer will be available as the year (2020-21) progresses.

**Covid-19** - At the end of March, lockdown measures to tackle the coronavirus pandemic resulted in the closure of the BHSCP's face to face training offer. Alternative methods to convert training courses into on-line presentations and virtual offers will be a priority. Whilst this is not ideal and it is hoped that face to face training may resume again during 2020-21 the reality is that the ongoing uncertainty around Covid-19 measures means that alternative training provision methods are needed.



Challenges for the BHSCP remain around ensuring multi-agency attendance at mandatory training, including police staff attendance. The voluntary and community sector also continue to face challenges to ensure that volunteers have knowledge and follow up support to enable them to recognise and respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns.

The BHSCP is grateful to the Training Pool comprised of multi-agency leads across the partnership without whom, the BHSCP could not run and present such a full programme of expertly led events. The ongoing commitment and passion of the trainers is key to enabling the continuation of a full and wide ranging programme of safeguarding training delivery across the partnership.



# Protecting Children and Young People from Exploitation

## Partners working across the City

The BHSCP Exploitation Group under its new arrangements sees the Safeguarding Adults Board and Community Safety Partnership come together with the BHSCP to set the strategic direction of partners collective work to tackle exploitation. This joined up approach recognises the linkages and interdependencies within this work and will avoid omission and duplication of work.

## Raising awareness in the community



The 'night time economy' plays a crucial role in helping to safeguard children by understanding when and how to raise safeguarding concerns.

## Missing Children

Children who are being exploited for criminal gain may also go missing from home. Timely 'return home interviews' with all children and young people who go missing from home are vital to help agencies build a picture of the child or young person's experiences and quickly identify whether a child or young person is being exploited. Agencies can then support the individual to reduce future missing episodes.

Between January and March 2020, a total of 96 children/young people were recorded as missing from home or a placement in care with a total of 264 missing 'episodes' between them. 66 individual missing episodes in the quarter had a return interview within 72 hours out of 141 missing episodes during this period. The figures for this period were slightly lower than between September and December and demonstrate a need to improve the timeliness in which return home interviews are conducted.

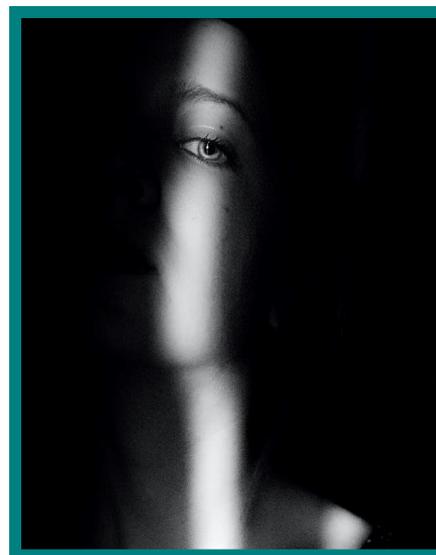
## Exploitation Audit

A multi agency audit looked at "children who are at risk of, or who are being exploited".

Areas of good practice were identified which provided positive assurance to the Partnership. An action plan will address recommendations summarised below:

- Improve the identification and understanding by professionals of extra familial risks faced by young people (contextual safeguarding).
- Increase awareness across agencies of the impact that a young person's involvement in county lines/criminal exploitation might have on younger siblings in the household.
- Improve the communication with children and young people with learning disabilities who are at risk of exploitation, to ensure that they understand the risks, their situation and decisions made which involve and/or are about them.
- Each agency involved in the audit to share and embed the learning with practitioners and the Partnership should ensure that learning from this audit is used to improve practice.

Work is in progress to address the audit recommendations via a multi-agency action plan.



Abianda, a social enterprise that works with girls and young women affected by gangs, delivered awareness raising training for over 30 professionals.



# Looking to the Future

In late March, at the end of this reporting period, the safeguarding world underwent radical change. The unprecedented government response to a global pandemic, the consequences of which are not fully understood at the time of writing this report are highly likely to have a profound effect on the partnership's approach to safeguarding children in the future.



Whilst immediate responses from agencies turned to implementation of robust child protection measures, the virtual world replaced vital face to face meetings. The effectiveness of this response will be carefully monitored but may never be fully understood. Could a serious child safeguarding incident be attributable to the restrictions and limitations Covid-19 on our collective ability to safeguard and protect our resident children?

Potential legacy issues of missed education, housing pressures and increases in child poverty alongside a longer term reduction in resources available to safeguard children are all unknown; but they are all potential outcomes of the pandemic's secondary wave of destruction.

In addition to the impact on children and families, our service users, professionals across the partnership have had to quickly adjust to new ways of working. Some changes have led to positive improvements such as enhanced IT and greater use of virtual meetings. The quality of the latter and the impact of the lack of face to face interactions on staff networks, morale and individual emotional health are yet to be quantified. What is known is that the longer effects of Covid-19 will be felt for some time.

At the time of writing the BHSCP's training offer is under review - delivering an extensive training programme in accordance with the 'new normal' will require a variety of innovative approaches. With months of missed training anticipated there will be a focus on compensating for lost training.

Strengthening the BHSCP's operational and strategic alliances across the city and beyond has never been more important. At a time when post Covid-19 pressures emerge a clear join up with key partners including the Health and Wellbeing Board, Safeguarding Adults Board and Community Safety Partnership on such issues such as improving transitions of children in receipt of services to adulthood, emotional health and wellbeing and exploitation can ensure a collaborative focus on priority areas of work and avoid overlooking key work strands.

A pan Sussex policy lead started in post from 1st April 2020 to co-ordinate a consistent approach to child safeguarding policies and processes.

The lead partners await the outcome of the Department for Education's<sup>7</sup> review of progress of the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, and how this may inform adaptations to our partnership arrangements to help us to continue to further improve and innovate.



Our Partnership work needs to be fully integrated to enable the BHSCP to develop its reach across the city. By improving our engagement with the community and crucially with children and families to truly understand their day to day lives will help partners to improve and target services as well as support every child in every part of the City to achieve their potential and improve outcomes for them. This work is integral to the BHSCP's new business plan.



<sup>7</sup> The Department for Education appointed Sir Alan Wood CBE to review how the new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements for local areas (introduced in July 2019), are addressing criteria set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 guidance. 17

# Updates from Partner Agencies and Organisations

## Voluntary and Community Services (VCS)



Community Works, Safety Net and the BHSCP have been working together to improve engagement with the VCS. A package of training has been maintained even throughout the pandemic including Safeguarding for Trustees, and a Safeguarding Q&A for front line workers. Our aim is to build ever stronger partnership arrangements to assist in safeguarding in the city.

The VCS responded extensively to the Prevention Peer Review, completing surveys, writing case studies and taking part in workshops with the Local Government Association; the VCS look forward to working together on the recommendations. COVID 19 has created a challenging environment for voluntary and community organisations, there are concerns about funding, opening services back up again after moving them online and supporting service users in an uncertain environment but we know that effective partnership is the best route out together.

### Lay members

The BHSCP is fortunate to be supported by two lay members; they are invaluable to the partnership, as independent observers they provide feedback to the partners with a particular focus on quality and impact of partnership working as well and an objective perspective regarding learning from serious child safeguarding incidents.

As local residents the lay members bring their individual experiences of living in the Brighton & Hove community to this role. In addition to their local knowledge and experience lay members have a scrutiny function and their absolute independence enables them to provide constructive challenge.



# Updates from Partner Agencies and Organisations

## Private Fostering: raising awareness



A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18 if disabled), by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

Local authorities are required to raise public awareness of the requirement to notify the local authority of private fostering arrangements and therefore to reduce the number of 'unknown' private fostering arrangements. In 2019-20 a number of initiatives were undertaken to highlight the notification arrangements to existing and potential private foster carers, voluntary and statutory agencies, and members of the public:

- ◆ In March 2020 the Private Fostering Monitor delivered training to professionals from services working with children and families in Brighton & Hove. The training is part of a Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership (BHSCP) one day training event called Hidden Children and Young People: Working with Invisible Families.
- ◆ Information about private fostering has been included in the primary and secondary school application guides 2019-20.
- ◆ Information about private fostering is regularly shared by the Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership (BHSCP) with professionals and members of the public via the BHSCP website and social media.
- ◆ We continue to raise awareness about private fostering with Language Schools; Guardianship Agencies and other Homestay Providers.

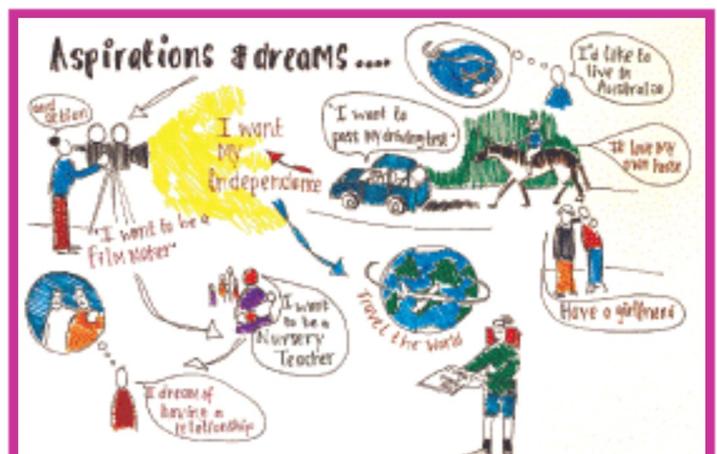
## Monitoring Compliance: Duties and Functions

29 children were living in Private Fostering Arrangements in 2019-20 compared to 31 in 2018-19. During the year, 16 new notifications were received and 15 were confirmed as being private fostering. All new notifications received an initial visit, with 62% taking place within 7 working days, down from 80% in 2018-19. Where visits did not take place within 7 days, in the majority of cases the delays were an additional 1 to 2 days.

## Voice of children who are looked after

There are forums running in the city for young people in care and care leavers which enable them to have a voice and to be a part of decision-making processes, such as the Corporate Parenting Strategy. Forums include: Children in Care Council (CiC), Young Ambassadors (YA) and ARC (Ask, Report, Change).

The CiC worked with an artist to create a visual description of what matters most to them and how partner agencies, led by the local authority can help them to 'reach for the stars'.



# Updates from Partner Agencies and Organisations

## Sussex Community Foundation Trust

The Sussex Community Foundation Trust (SCFT) offers a range of children's community health services which includes the Healthy Child Programme (HCP) 0-19 years which is delivered by Health Visitors and School Nurses offering a Universal, Universal Plus and Universal Partnership Plus service to children and their families.

The Children's Sexual Assault Referral Centre (CSARC) covers the whole of Sussex and is a welcoming child centred service to meet the specific health needs of children who have been sexually abused, by offering a health assessment at a purpose built centre, Pebble House, based in Brighton. The CSARC is operationally managed by a SCFT Consultant Community Paediatrician and a Specialist Nurse.



A key achievement for SCFT has seen the development of pathways in the HCP Healthy Futures Team which has offered enhanced intensive support to over 300 vulnerable children, teenagers and their families across the city. Criteria for support includes teenage parents, pre-birth assessments, asylum seeking families and refugees, families from the traveller community, children educated other than at school and children placed in emergency housing.

SCFT Named Professionals involvement in the bi-monthly multi-agency neglect consultation group for practitioners, which takes a multi-agency approach to solving complex matters, is a notable example of positive partnership working in challenging circumstances.

Other areas which have seen SCFT work collaboratively with partners include:

- ◆ Specialist Nurses who work at the Front Door for Families have improved sharing of health information with partner agencies including children's social care and the police.
- ◆ Development of out of school drop-in spaces for children and young people at priority Youth service sites including Allsorts Youth Project for LGBTQ young people and a Young Asylum Seekers group. The drop ins are run by School Nurses.
- ◆ "Chat health", a confidential health and advice text service aimed at 11-19 years, which is run by School Nurses. Between 1st April 2019 and 31st March 2020 the service received 1,322 messages from children and young people and sent 1,375 messages in response. The service resulted in 28 referrals to School Nurses for face to face contact.
- ◆ CSARC Clinicians plan to deliver a Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) awareness raising Webinar including FAQs about the Children's SARC to all professionals, following the findings from the recent multi-agency CSA audit. This is in addition to our Open Days, which will be delivered virtually from September and within that, a targeted offer for Social Workers.



# Updates from Partner Agencies and Organisations

## Public Health

Public health has a key role in commissioning services aimed at early identification and prevention services, helping develop children and young people's health and wellbeing. Public Health provides direct support or can refer to appropriate services.



Public Health supported the successful launch of the second year of the YMCA Downslink Group delivered 'Right Here' project, now with 8 secondary schools and two sixth form colleges taking part to improve health outcomes for young people (aged 16 –15) .

Mental Health Champions in schools and colleges enabled young people to:

- ◆ Express their views and ideas in order to increase awareness amongst the wider school population;
- ◆ Identify and develop specific anti-stigma projects and contribute to the planning and delivery of mental health work in schools.

Public Health led collaborative work with the Mental Health Liaison Team at the Royal Alexandra Children's Hospital, Families, with partners including Children and Learning and the Children's Adolescent Mental Health Team to improve support to children and young people following a presentation at A&E for deliberate self-harm.

## National Probation Service (NPS)

The National Probation Service is part of the Criminal Justice System working with offenders who pose either a direct or in direct threat to children. Key achievements this year included:

- ◆ Promotion of Relate's Being Parents' First project for service users with children which includes free counselling.
- ◆ Mandatory Child Protection and Domestic Abuse Training delivered to all staff.
- ◆ Work with care leavers who are over 18 years of age: assessments and interventions are reflective of individual needs within this cohort.

A key challenge for the NPS is the provision of suitable accommodation for service users who pose a threat to children. Without suitable accommodation an offender's risk (to children) is much more difficult to manage. The NPS needs support from partner agencies to secure accommodation for service users who pose a risk to children. A collaborative approach would enable the NPS to monitor service users effectively at an approved address and reduce the likelihood of them gravitating towards addresses where children are living.



# Updates from Partner Agencies and Organisations

## Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust (SPFT)

SPFT provide specialist mental health services to children and young people in Brighton and Hove and across Sussex. The SPFT safeguarding team provide clinical consultations, support, supervision and CORE and specialist safeguarding training.

SPFT's training strategy has been a real achievement:

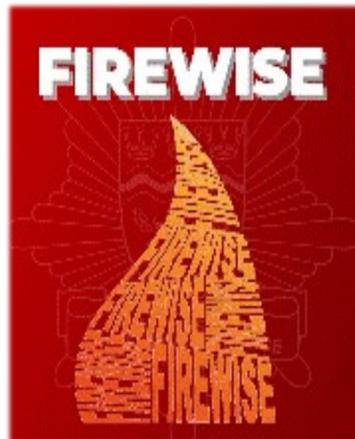
- ◆ Training for 2019 - 20 was reviewed and updated to increase knowledge and understanding of key partners' roles and to build relationships. The feedback is positive and SPFT have increased knowledge of safeguarding, emerging risk and learning from child safeguarding practice reviews.
- ◆ Following internal review a training session on sexual abuse and the role of the SARC was developed in partnership with the Designated Doctor for Safeguarding Children. This has greatly improved CSARC understanding and knowledge has resulted in staff visiting the CSARC and referrals being made appropriately, and relationships with the Front Door for Families developed.
- ◆ How to make a good referral, understanding of referral thresholds, what to expect from the referral and how to escalate and consider concerns when outcomes differ from expectation. Another element of this has been the early identification or abuse and neglect and how to intervene. The benefit of guest speakers is that training attendees hear about the early identification and interventions offered from practitioners and clinicians.



## East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (ESFRS)

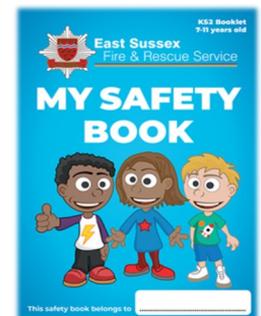


In addition to emergency response service, ESFRS's deliver an extensive Prevention programme, including risk reduction for fire, road and water and home safety visits.



Children who play with fire do so for a variety of reasons. ESFRS provide a preventative fire setting intervention for children and young people called FireWise, which is delivered by a trained Education Team.

ESFRS have continued to develop the award winning Safety in Action (SIA) education programme aimed at Year 6 students and home educated children, to provide a safe learning environment for children.



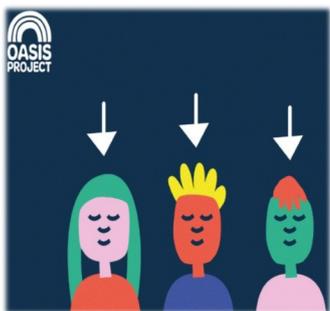
ESFRS describe their current greatest challenge: to reach more children at risk of injury associated with accidents or fire setting through more effective referrals by partners and families.



# Updates from Partner Agencies and Organisations

## Oasis Project

Oasis provides services for women with drug and alcohol problems and provides care and support to children and young people affected by drug and alcohol misuse in the family. Oasis work in partnership to deliver treatment services across the city.



Oasis offers direct support to children affected by drug/alcohol use in the family. This service is offered for children aged 5-18 and is predominantly funded by Charitable Trusts.

A challenge faced by Oasis remains around maintaining stability of service provision e.g. increased caseloads within treatment services are impacting on our capacity to swiftly respond to the needs of families and safeguard children.

Oasis has been really pleased to be part of a national initiative to improve outcomes for children whose parents drink dependently.

## Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Adults Board

The Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) oversee and seek assurance around the safeguarding arrangements for vulnerable adults in Brighton and Hove in line with the Care Act 2014.

The SAB provided information in a timely and supportive way to help the BHSCP progress Learning Reviews and other pieces of work.

Through regular liaison with the BHSCP the SAB sought to ensure that there is consistency in communications. This also supports a Pan-Sussex approach and is in line with our statutory partners. The SAB are keen to continue working with the BHSCP and further develop our relationship.

There are safeguarding themes and challenges that span both children's and adults' services (such as transitions and exploitation) that will benefit from a joined-up approach and improve collective knowledge and understanding.

## Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals (BSUH)

BSUH is an acute teaching hospital working across two main sites The Royal Sussex County Hospital in Brighton and the Princess Royal hospital in Haywards Heath. The Brighton site includes the Royal Alexandra Children's hospital (Alex). The Sussex Eye Hospital is the major trauma centre for the region. The Alex cares for 45,000 children every year and the Care Quality Commission rated it as 'outstanding' last summer. As an acute hospital the team assess children and young people who attend hospital and liaise with key professionals involved with the family.

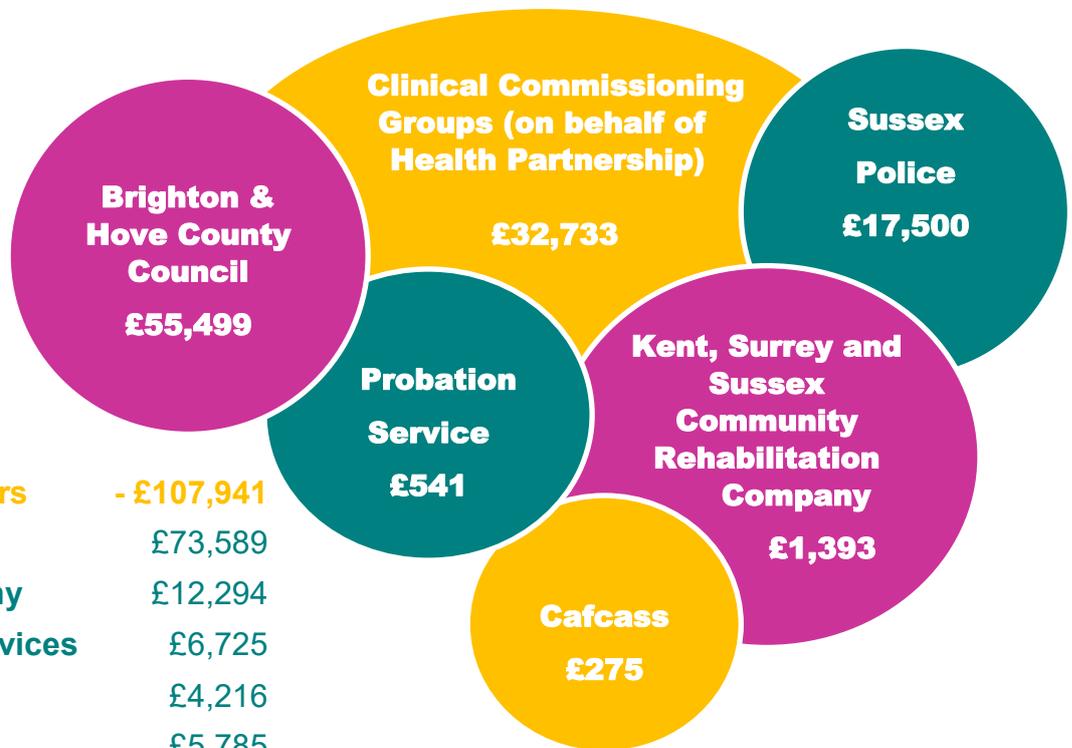
Achievements during this period include:

- ◆ BSUH contributed to the streamlining of the safeguarding birth plan template which is being introduced across Sussex, providing a consistent approach across this area.
- ◆ Work has been undertaken to improve BSUH's response to Children who are looked after by the local authority. The individual's details are now flagged on the BSUH IT system, which helps staff to undertake comprehensive risk assessments and supports effective decision making.
- ◆ The sexual health team are involved with supporting vulnerable and at risk adolescents via multi-agency meetings.
- ◆ Victims of domestic abuse are flagged on BSUH IT systems to help alert staff so they can make informed decisions around risk management.
- ◆ BSUH have started to embed ICON into both maternity and paediatric services, two critical touchpoints for the ICON message.



# Budget October 2019 - March 2020

The BHSCP partners contributed the equivalent funding for half a business year. Funds were vired across from the legacy Brighton and Hove Safeguarding Children's Board budget with partners' agreement. The figures below represent the budget contributions by partners and key expenses between October 2019 and March 2020.



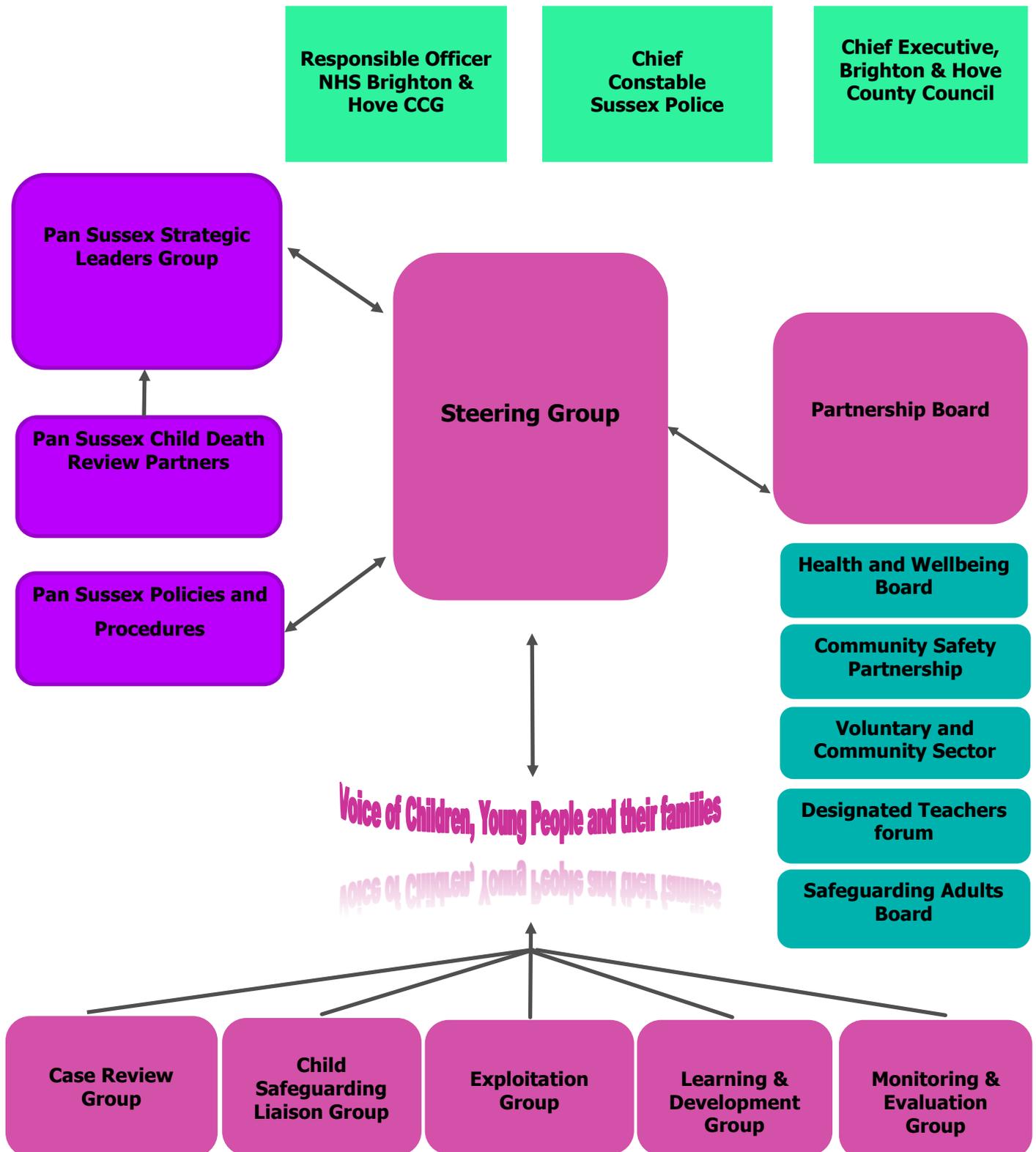
<b>Income from partners</b>	<b>- £107,941</b>
<b>Staffing</b>	£73,589
<b>Independent scrutiny</b>	£12,294
<b>IT, supplies and services</b>	£6,725
<b>Learning reviews</b>	£4,216
<b>Website upgrade</b>	£5,785
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£102,609</b>



The Steering Group agreed to carry forward funds up to a maximum of £40,000 from one business year to the next. This approach recognises that budget flexibility is needed e.g. to fund local learning reviews which may span two financial years.



# BHSCP groups and strategic partners



# Acknowledgements

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Kit Francis	Sussex Community Foundation Trust
Laura Williamson	Community Works on behalf of the Voluntary and Community Sector
David Kemp	East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service
David Satchell	National Probation Service
Jo-Anne Welsh	Oasis Project
Daisy Piatt	Co-ordinator, Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership Business Team
Dave Hunt	Training Officer, Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership Business Team



# Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership: Our Partners



Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility



East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service



Brighton & Hove Community Safety Partnership

