

# BRIGHTON AND HOVE SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP

Annual Report 2022 - 23



Brighton & Hove  
**BHSCP**  
Safeguarding  
Children Partnership

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# Foreword from our Lead Partners

Welcome to the 2022-23 annual report, on behalf of the three statutory partners, thank you for taking the time to read this and for your support in our continuing progress to improve how we work together to deliver the best possible services to our communities.

This annual report outlines the work of our safeguarding children partnership during a year of achievements with some inevitable challenges, and we hope you find it useful in understanding the partnership's work and celebrating those achievements. These are only possible through the dedication and diligence of the many people working with children, young people and families across a range of agencies. We have maintained our commitment to focus on our most vulnerable families, providing a coordinated approach across statutory agencies with our colleagues from the community, voluntary and social enterprise sector (VCSE).

The Partnership is well-established with proactive Subgroups and robust Pan-Sussex links with West and East Sussex Partnerships. The Steering Group and Partnership Board, chaired by the Independent Scrutineer, provide comprehensive oversight and bring together strategic leaders and practitioners; to be a learning partnership designed to develop safeguarding services through training, reflection, evaluation, and challenge. Our vision to improve the lives of children and young people in Brighton and Hove remains our shared priority.

The continued development and implementation of a new early help strategy will tackle disadvantage and provide opportunities to improve life chances for all our children and young people. The last year has also included the transformation of Children's Centres to Family Hubs providing multi-agency support services from pre-birth to age 19 from April 2023.

We affirmed our commitment to be an anti-racist partnership by publishing our anti-racist practice statement, and by hosting our successful anti-racist practice conference as part of our Safeguarding Week in November 2022. The conference was complimented by 12 workshops related to the impact of disadvantage under the banner 'A Fairer Brighton and Hove', these were facilitated by partner agencies and colleagues from the VCSE sector.

The Partnership will continue to keep the safeguarding of children and young people in our city at the heart of what we do moving forward.



*Naomi Ellis, Director of Safeguarding  
& Clinical Standards, NHS Sussex*

*Naomi Ellis*



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

*Deborah Austin*



*James Collis, Chief Superintendent,  
Public Protection, Sussex Police*

*James Collis*

## A Message from our Independent Chair and Scrutineer



Chris Robson, Independent Chair & Scrutineer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Robson'.

Thank you for taking the time to read the Brighton and Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership (BHSCP) Annual Report. This document should give you an open, honest view of how the Partnership works to safeguard our children and young people. As the Independent Chair and Scrutineer of the BHSCP I have the responsibility for scrutinising this report and making sure it is accurate and provides the information you, the reader, requires. I hope that it meets your expectations, provides you with the information you need and above all gives you complete confidence in the way the Partnership strives to safeguard children in Brighton & Hove.

I wanted to start my introduction by offering some reassurance regarding the strength of the Partnership. During the reporting period covered by this document I have observed some truly outstanding partnership work. The safeguarding culture in Brighton and Hove is mature and affords everyone the opportunity to be confident that they will be supported as they strive to improve outcomes for our children and families. That culture permeates from the very top of the organisations through to the practitioners whom we rely so heavily on.

Representation at Partnership meetings is excellent and there is a culture of support and challenge as we strive to reach our joint objectives. Perhaps of greatest importance is the fact that Brighton and Hove is blessed with a professional, caring and incredibly hard-working community of individuals who work and volunteer in the safeguarding arena. Without these people we would not be able to provide the level of support to children and families. On behalf of the Partnership, I would like to offer each of them our sincere thanks for all they do.

This report sets out our achievements, concentrating in part, on the areas we have prioritised. Whilst it is right that we celebrate success it is also important that we recognise that we should always seek to improve. I have seen a real will to seek continuous improvement in Brighton and Hove, the training offer is excellent, supported by an exceptional lead and effective trainers from a wide range of backgrounds. The response to learning reviews is effective and all partners are alive to disseminating lessons learned at the earliest opportunity. This has been evidenced in all aspects of reviews but particularly in 'Delta', a challenging multi-agency review where the Partnership worked tirelessly to ensure appropriate lessons were learned. Please spend some time reading the sections of this report that details some of these reviews. They touch on some of the most distressing cases our practitioners, communities and families are involved in. They also offer some of the best opportunities for us to learn and improve outcomes for children.

I would also like to take a moment to thank the fantastic work of the BHSCP business team, particularly our Partnership Business Manager (PBM). They work tirelessly behind the scenes to make sure that our business runs smoothly. This report is a Partnership document and many people have contributed, but it is pulled together by the PBM. This is an example of the dedicated, professional role they play; I could provide countless more. I would like to thank the PBM and the team on behalf of all the partners.

It is important that this report is fair, informative, and balanced, having read it I am completely satisfied this is the case. I want to thank everyone involved in the BHSCP for their tireless work over the last twelve months. Thank you for your continued support.

Finally, when you read this report, I would ask that you consider the impact you can have. Safeguarding children is the responsibility of all of us, professionals, volunteers, families, friends, and communities. Please don't be afraid to raise concerns, seek advice or offer to help.



# Introduction to BHSCP

**The Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership (BHSCP)** is independently chaired and consists of three key agencies who collectively hold statutory responsibilities for keeping children and young people safe: the Local Authority (through Families, Children and Learning), Health (through NHS Sussex ICB) and Sussex Police.

**Our Objectives:** To co-ordinate the local work undertaken by all agencies and individuals to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, to ensure the effectiveness of that work.

## **Our vision and values**

Our vision is that 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.

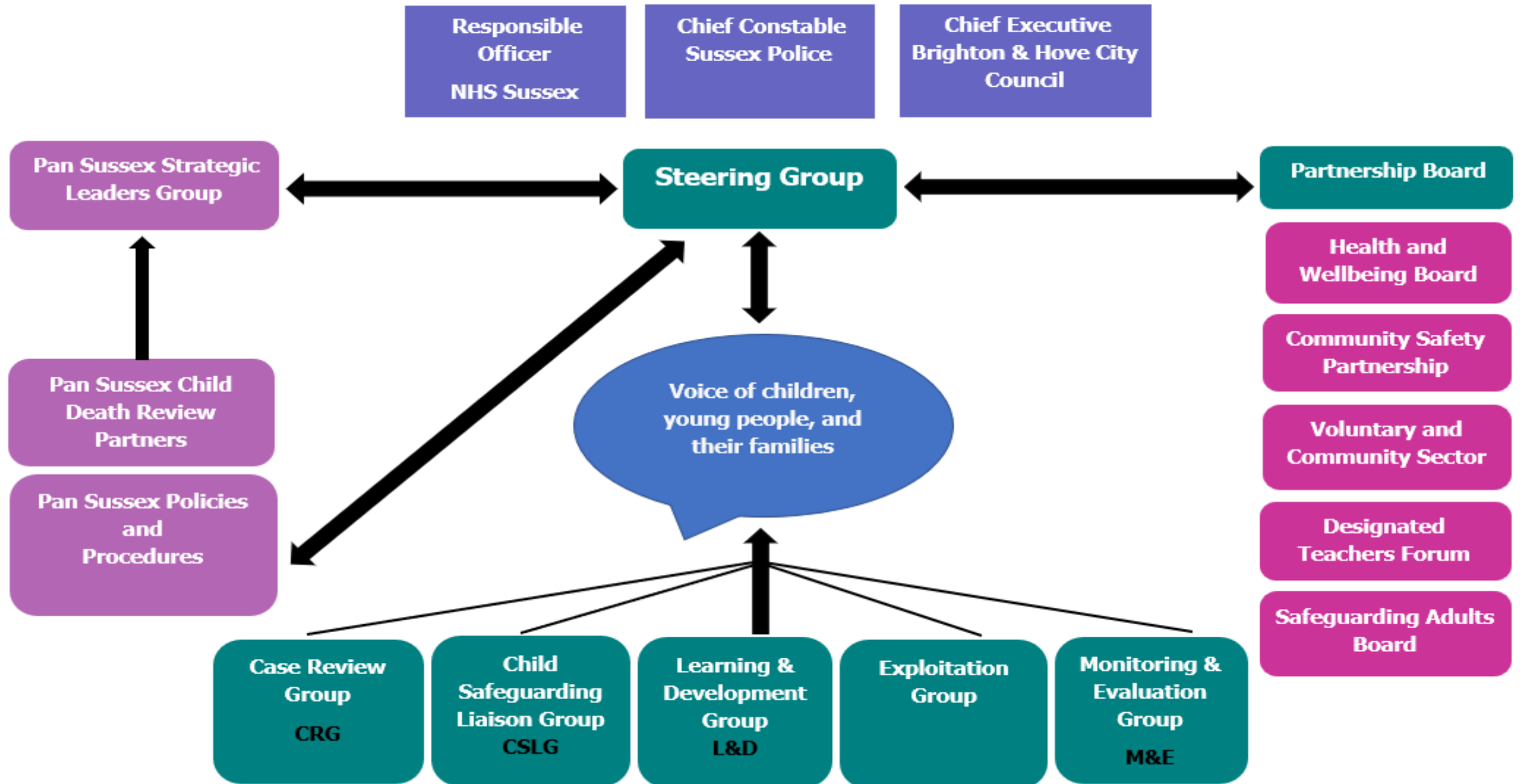
## **Our vision is underpinned by our core values:**

- 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.
- Promoting preventative and early help approaches for outcomes to be improved there should be timely identification of a problem; the earlier the better to secure maximum impact and greatest long-term sustainability.
- Always alert to transition points: for outcomes to be improved known transition points should be planned for in advance.

## **Our principles**

- To work in partnership.
- To commit to genuine engagement: listening to, and acting, on what our community tells us.
- To be a learning partnership.
- All BHSCP activity is characterised by an attitude of constructive professional curiosity and challenge.
- To be flexible to respond to emerging threats and risks.
- To always ask 'so what' to ensure what we do makes a difference.

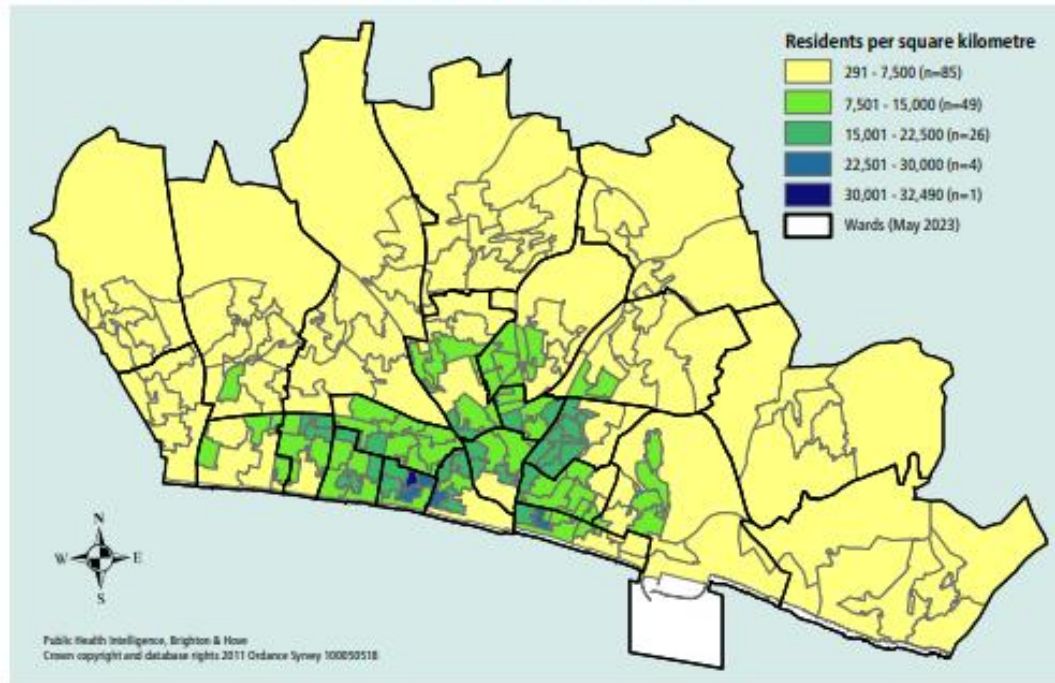
## BHSCP Structure – Groups and Strategic Partners



# Brighton and Hove: Our Population

The data included on these pages has been taken from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and A Better Brighton and Hove for all, kindly shared with BHSCP by Brighton and Hove City Council. Needs Assessments are available online from BH Connected Community Insight | Reports | Surveys | Needs Assessments | Performance <http://www.bhconnected.org.uk/content/needs-assessments> and [A better Brighton & Hove for all - the council's new plan for the city \(brighton-hove.gov.uk\)](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk)

## Brighton & Hove resident density



**Brighton & Hove has seven neighbourhoods in the 1% most densely populated areas in England**

(2021 Census)

## Population

**276,300 residents**

(2021 Office for National Statistics mid-year population estimates)

**15% under 16 years**

(19% South East, 19% England)

**72% 16 to 66 years**

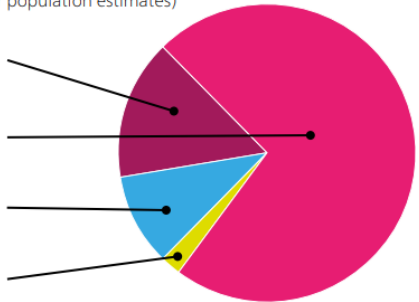
(64% South East, 65% England)

**10% 67-84 years**

(16% South East, 15% England)

**2% 85 years or older**

(3% South East, 2% England)



## Deprivation

**131st most deprived local authority in England (of 317)**

(2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation)

The highest concentration of deprivation is in the Whitehawk, Moulsecoomb and Hollingdean areas. Along the coast, to the west of the city and in Woodingdean there are also pockets of deprivation. All these areas are in the 20% most deprived areas in England.



**18.7% of residents aged 60 or over are living in income deprivation (England 14.2%)** (2021 Census)

**1 in 4 children in the city are living in poverty AFTER housing costs (England 1 in 3)**

## Residents born outside of the UK

**20% of residents were born outside of the UK**

(South East 16% England 17%).

**45% of international migrants living in Brighton & Hove were born in the EU**

(South East 38% and England 36%).

108 languages are spoken in schools including BSL  
(2023 school census)

**30%** of children in schools identify as other than White British



## Children and young people in care

**82 in every 10,000 children and young people (0-17 years old) are in care**

(31 March 2022)

(South East 56, England 70)



## Ethnicity

**More than a quarter of our residents (26%) are Black and Racially Minoritised**

(non White UK/British)

South East (21%) England (27%)

While the overall population of the city has increased by 1%, the number of Black and Racially Minoritised residents has increased by 35% since the last Census.

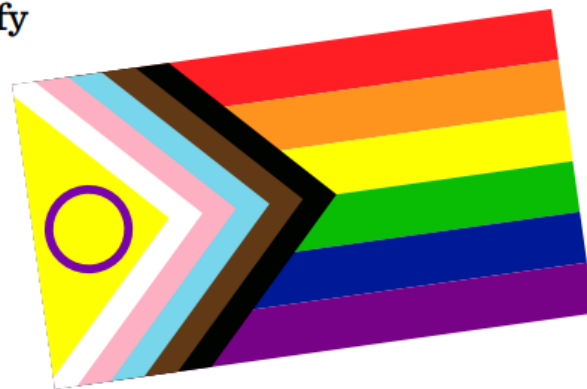
From  
53,251  
in 2011

to  
72,272  
in 2021

## LGBTQ+

**1 in 10 adults (16+) identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Other**

**1 in 100 adults (16+) identify as a gender different from their sex registered at birth**





# Brighton and Hove – Our Children, Young People and Families

This section demonstrates some of the key statistical indicators used to guide the Partnership's priority safeguarding areas including children missing from education, referrals to Front Door for Families (FDfF) and Community Adolescent Mental Health Services, children subject to a Child Protection Plan, and Strengthening Families Assessment Plans completed within 45 days.



**17,240**

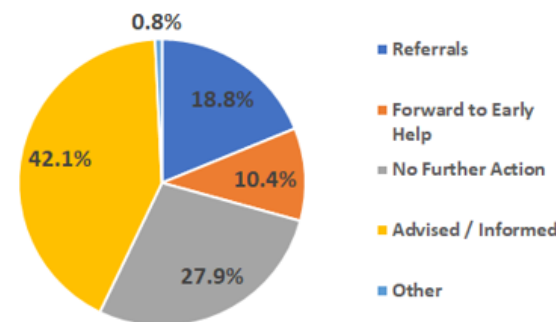
Initial Contacts to Front Door for Families (FDfF) during the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, up from **16,731** during the previous 12 months.



**3,247**

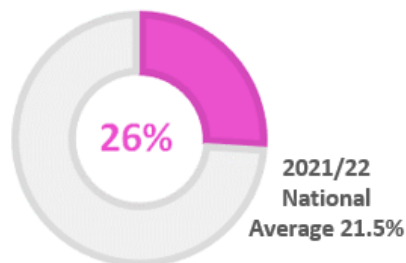
Initial contacts with a referral outcome during the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, up from **3,006** during the previous 12 months

Initial Contacts to FDfF Year Ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 by Outcome



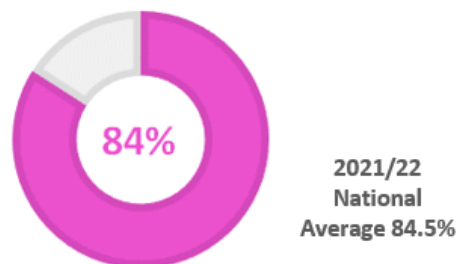
Re-Referrals to Children's Social Care year ending 31 March 2023

■ Re-referral



Strengthening Families Assessments Completed within 45 working days Year Ending March 2023

■ On Time ■ Late



The above chart shows Initial Contacts to Front Door for Families during the year ending 31 March 2023 by outcome



**460**

Pupils educated at home at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, up from **423** at March 2022.



**285**

Children subject of a Child Protection Plan at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, up from **281** at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.



**72**

Referrals to CSARC\* during the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, with **26** children seen.



**198**

Pupils on a reduced timetable on census day Spring Term 2022/23, down from **227** in the Spring Term 2021/22

\*Sussex Children's Sexual Assault Referral Centre

This section demonstrates some of the key statistical indicators used to guide the Partnership's priority safeguarding areas including children missing from education, referrals to Front Door for Families (FDfF) and Community Adolescent Mental Health Services, children subject to a Child Protection Plan, and Strengthening Families Assessment Plans completed within 45 days.

#### 2021 Safe and Well at School Survey



**91%**

of primary school pupils feel safe at school



**75%**

of secondary school pupils feel safe at school

#### School Absence and Suspensions



**24.13%**

of all pupils who are persistent absentees in the 2021/22 academic year, up from **11.7%** in 20/21 and above the 21/22 national average of **22.50%**



**4.88%**

Rate of suspension for all pupils in the 2021/22 academic year, up from **4.4%** in 2020/21 but below the national average of **6.91%**

#### Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)



**67%**

of referrals receive clinical triage within 3 working days of being received by the service during the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, below the target of **75%**



**19%**

Access to assessment <25WD (routine), below the target of **75%**



**80%**

Second appointment for treatment taking place within 2 weeks of first treatment appointment, below the target of **95%**

#### Hospital Admissions and A&E Attendances 2021/22



**375**

Hospital inpatient admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries to children aged **0-14**. This is a rate of **96.6** per 10,000 compared to the England average of **84.3**



**9,150**

Attendances at A&E in 0-4's in 2021/22. A rate per 1,000 of **785.1** compared to the England average of **762.8**



**195**

Hospital admissions as a result of self-harm children and young people aged 15-19 in 2021/22. A rate per 100,000 of **1,174.2**, above the national average of **641.7**

# Business Plan 2020 -23

Every Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP) has a Business Plan to outline priorities and how we are going to tackle key safeguarding areas. Our vision is that 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. As part of business planning, we identified four priority areas to enable this vision – these are set out above showing the lead agency for each one. It is important each priority has a different lead agency to demonstrate how we work collaboratively to safeguard the children and young people of Brighton and Hove. The current Business Plan covers April 2020-March 2023 and was written as the first plan under the new safeguarding children partnership arrangements; the priorities are delivered through Subgroup activity.

The following section provides an overview of the Business Plan and our priorities, identified challenges, and multi-agency achievements.

## **Priority 1 – Partnership Engagement and Accountability**

### **Lead Agency – Brighton & Hove City Council:**

#### **Strategic Objectives:**

- 1.1 Assure the efficacy of the new safeguarding arrangements and mechanisms for partners to be held to account for their safeguarding practice.
- 1.2 Strengthen the governance interface between the BHSCP and other key strategic forums across the city and pan Sussex.
- 1.3 Understand and provide robust and timely strategies/responses to address external factors which may impact on safeguarding Brighton & Hove.
- 1.4 Involve and consult children and young people in the process of helping them to stay safe and promote their wellbeing.
- 1.5 Engage with voluntary, charity, social enterprise (VCSE) and faith groups in training, challenge, and consultation.
- 1.6 Promote an anti-racist ethos through identification, an acknowledgement of the existence and impact of racism, and reparative work where needed to change systems and practice, thereby ensuring race equality for children, young people, and their families across the city.

## **Priority 2 – Safeguarding children from violence and exploitation**

### **Lead Agency – Sussex Police**

#### **Strategic Objectives:**

- 2.1 Develop a profile analysis for each of the elements of complex safeguarding to target interventions.
- 2.2 Organisations and agencies have the skills and knowledge to recognise and undertake high quality assessments regarding exploitation delivering interventions for children, young people, and families at all levels of need.
- 2.3 Target intervention where children and young people are deemed to be at risk of extra-familial harm.
- 2.4 Prevent the exploitation of children through raising awareness, building young people's resilience, providing appropriate diversionary activities. and upskilling practitioners across the partnership.

## **Priority 3 – Reducing Neglect**

### **Lead Agency – Brighton & Hove City Council**

#### **Strategic Objectives:**

- 3.1 Strengthen the governance of partnership arrangements to further support a co-ordinated and multi-agency response to neglect.
- 3.2 BHSCP in partnership with the Voluntary, Community Sector to ensure role out and use of neglect tools and strategies to ensure early prevention and detection of neglect.
- 3.3. The Partnership is assured that an effective whole family approach to assessing neglect, as well as planning and monitoring interventions is embedded city wide across agencies and organisations.

## **Priority 4 – Mental Health and Emotional Health and Wellbeing**

### **Lead Agency – NHS Sussex**

#### **Strategic Objectives:**

- 4.1 Evaluate the availability and impact of services and resources on the safety of young people experiencing emotional and mental health issues.
- 4.2 Strengthen the governance interface between the BHSCP, NHS Sussex and Public Health on the local suicide prevention strategy and action plan.





# How we Deliver our Priorities

Our priorities are delivered through our Subgroup activity. Each of our Subgroups reports to the Statutory Lead Partners, the Steering Group, and the Partnership Board every quarter.

BHSCP works collaboratively with other Partnerships and Boards in Brighton and Hove to co-ordinate services, whilst collectively focussing on safeguarding the children and young people in our city.

Our partner agencies coordinate audit and evaluation to actively monitor the effectiveness of practice and services, and improve outcomes for local children, young people, and families.

We work with our Pan-Sussex Partners to provide cross county professional challenge, shared learning, and a shared approach to safeguarding practice.

Latest BHSCP Business Plan is available from - <https://www.bhscp.org.uk/safeguarding-partnership-documents/business-plan-and-strategies/>

# Business Plan 2020 – 23 – Achievements and Challenges

## Priority 1 – Partnership Engagement and Accountability

**Aim:** To embed the principles of safeguarding children citywide

### Progress and Achievements:

The Partnership arrangements have provided strategic leadership to fully embed the principles of multi-agency safeguarding across all aspect of our work. The arrangements encourage children, young people and their families, the local community, and professionals to actively shape the work of BHSCP.

The Partnership demonstrates effectiveness in delivering against statutory functions, leads the safeguarding agenda, challenges the safeguarding work of partners, and the Partnership has committed to an approach that learns lessons and embeds good practice. Public safeguarding awareness has improved, enabling our community to act as the eyes and ears and understand how, when, and where to seek help should they witness, or suspect abuse or neglect is happening.

During the reporting year BHSCP has strengthened the governance with other key strategic forums including:

- The Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB),
- Community Safety Partnership,
- Pan-Sussex Strategic Leaders Group,
- The Association of Safeguarding Partners (tASP),
- Pan-Sussex Policies and Procedures Group,
- The Health & Well-being Board.
- The Partnership has also developed and maintained robust relationships with community and voluntary organisations in training, challenge, and consultation.

BHSCP has involved and consulted children and young people in the process of helping to keep them safe. The Partnership has adopted anti-racist working to identify where people are discriminated against because of race or membership of global majority communities, and to take active steps to address the systems, privileges and everyday practices that maintain this unequal treatment, whether they be intentional or unintentional.

Pan-Sussex and multi-agency assurance activity tests compliance and effectiveness of local safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures; and the Partnership is confident it can swiftly identify and respond to risks and issues that impact the Partnership. BHSCP continues to use learning from audit, local and national practice reviews, and feedback to improve safeguarding practice in Brighton and Hove.

The transformation phase from the Local Child Safeguarding Board (LCSB) to the Partnership in its current form as BHSCP has concluded. Therefore, whilst engagement and accountability continue to be part of the foundations and daily business of the Partnership; the Business Plan for 2023 – 2026 will monitor Priority 1 but focus on the Priorities 2,3 and 4.

# Business Plan 2020 – 23 – Achievements and Challenges

## Challenges –

**Voice of Children and Young People** remains an active development area for the Partnership and will feature as part of our forward planning and our Section 11 Reflection and Challenge Workshops in September 2023.



## Priority 2 – Safeguarding Children from Violence and Exploitation

**Aim:** To ensure 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 any form of violence, from any source, are identified and assessed effectively resulting in timely and appropriate intervention.

### Progress and Achievements:

Our Partners, Safer Communities, contributed to the joint bid from Brighton and Hove City Council, East Sussex County Council and Sussex Police to the Home Office for the **National Referral Mechanism Decision Making Panel** pilot. The bid was successful, and the panel is now up and running locally. The impact of this is much swifter decision making for potential child victims of modern slavery or human trafficking.

With funds received via the Home Office for the **Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP)**, Safer Communities have commissioned interventions aimed at children and young people who are at risk of serious violence and exploitation. Examples include Brighton Streets (detached youthwork), Hospital Youthwork Project based in Brighton General Children's A&E, and Audio Active SHIFT mentoring.

## Development of the 4P Management Plan in Brighton and Hove - *Prevent, Protect, Pursue, and Prepare.*

Developed by members of the Exploitation Subgroup including reps from Sussex Police, Safeguarding Adults Board, Community Safety Partnership, and BHSCP. The Plan maps the delivery of single and multi-agency interventions under the 4P strands to avoid duplication and identify gaps. Each strand is owned by two strand leads, one for Adult's/Children's with owners drawn from across agencies. Populated plans allow strand owners to assess the gaps in provision and identify potential areas to enhance partnership working. The Management Plan due to be published to Exploitation Subgroup in May 2023.

## Challenges –

**Missing UASC from Hove hotel** - Since July 2021, over 1600 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children have passed through a hotel pending transfer to the care of a Local Authority under the National Transfer Scheme. To date 137 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children have been reported missing, with 73 children not yet found. BHSCP commissioned a piece of scrutiny from our Independent Scrutineer in January 2023. The report, published in February 2023, found episodes of children reported missing were higher in the summer of 2022 but there was no evidence to support claims of kidnapping or direct evidence of coercion by criminal gangs – a summary of the report follows on pages 21-22.



# Business Plan 2020 – 23 – Achievements and Challenges

## Priority 3 – Reducing Neglect

**Aim:** To ensure the needs of children and young people affected by neglect are identified and assessed effectively resulting in timely and appropriate intervention.

### Progress and Achievements:

**Safeguarding children and young people who experience neglect audit** was completed in Jan – March 2023 to evaluate the effectiveness of multi-agency practice with children and young people who experience neglect in the context of parental domestic abuse, mental ill-health and/or substance misuse. The report and Learning Briefing is due to be published later in 2023.

The audit identified several strengths including appropriate agency responses and action, appropriate response from Front Door for Families, robust multi-agency safeguarding plans, and good evidence of a strong and consistent team around the family which supported progress and improved outcomes for the child.

### Challenges:

Neglect is a form of child abuse that can have serious and long-lasting impacts on a child's life. The four main types of neglect are: **physical, educational, emotional, and medical neglect** – all can cause harm, and even death. Neglect can happen at any time during a child's life, even pre-birth, neglect can also co-exist with other factors such as poverty, and sexual harm. But despite an additional 101 practitioners completing the Child Neglect and/or GCP2 courses in 2022-23, and the encouraging feedback received through evaluation, the number of completed GCP2 Assessments was still alarmingly low in Brighton and Hove.

[Neglect is also Child Abuse: Know All About It | NSPCC](#)

**Learn to Train:** In response to the Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2) Assessment Tool being underused in relation to the number of professionals trained in its use, the Partnership commissioned NSPCC training to expand the number of accredited multi-agency trainers. In February 2023, the Learn to Train course was completed by 9 professionals from several agencies including Early Help/Family Hubs, health agencies, and education - who will also be GCP2 Champions within their own agencies. The Learning and Development Officer has accessed NSPCC Masterclass sessions covering several themes including overcoming barriers to assessment tool use.

A multi-agency **GCP2 Steering Group** was developed to oversee the delivery of the commissioned NSPCC Assessment Tool agreed with BHSCP, the delivery of the training across all partners, and to report on progress to Lead Partners and the Steering Group moving forward.





# Business Plan 2020 – 23 – Achievements and Challenges

## Priority 4 – Mental Health and Emotional Health

**Aim:** Consistently good service for children who need support for emotional and mental health issues.

### Progress and Achievements:

- **Pan-Sussex Self-harm Learning Network:** The Pan-Sussex programme delivered workshops to 233 education professionals, 1618 non-education professionals, 153 parents and carers and delivered a virtual conference attended by 993 professionals with 433 subsequent YouTube views. Online workshop recordings and additional self-harm workshop sessions from a leading expert are available for education staff and other professionals via the [Schools Mental Health & Wellbeing \(BHISS\)Resources | BEEM](#) education portal. As part of the network commission a [new suite of self-harm information](#) was developed on the YMCA e-wellbeing site with information and signposting on self-harm for children and young people and for professionals.
- **Self-harm guidance and flowchart for schools:** Pan-Sussex self-harm guidance and flowchart will be updated autumn term 2023. This guidance and revised drug and alcohol guidance for schools to be sent to independent schools in spring term 2024.
- **Toolkit in the event of an unexpected death or suicide in the school community:** The toolkit was launched in October 2022 alongside bitesize orientation training for school and college leaders and a wider programme of suicide awareness training created specifically for education staff by [Grassroots](#) with Public Health.
- **Suicide Prevention 'Assist' training:** This training was coordinated by the Schools Mental Health Service providing in person and virtual sessions to all primary schools, secondary schools, and colleges. Bespoke sessions were also designed and offered to staff in special schools.
- **Discharge and Safety Plans:** These are now shared with the School Mental Health Service when a child or young person presents at the hospital with self-harm. However, the service has reported this is not always consistent, and they do not receive paragon reports. If a child lives outside of Brighton and Hove but attends a Brighton and Hove school, this also proves a challenge. However, West Sussex YES are looking into a solution.
- **School Mental Health Service support in schools for pupil, parents, and school staff:** A wide range of both one off and session-based workshops have been delivered into individual schools and citywide.



### Challenges:

Mental health and well-being of children and young people remains a priority area for agencies not just education and Schools Mental Health Service. The progressing work strands above have provided some mitigation, but all agencies will continue to monitor closely including the children not accessing school premises as electively home educated or missing from education.

# BHSCP Activity – Learning, Improvement, Evaluation and Evidence, Assurance, and Impact

The Wood Review (2021) of new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements states: 'Safeguarding partners have introduced a wide range of new measures to ensure independent scrutiny and challenge of the new arrangements. This includes peer challenge, Independent Scrutineers, commissioned external reviews, ... engaging lay members and the use of local authority scrutiny and health and wellbeing committees. We need to draw together a secure evidence base for the impact of independent challenge and scrutiny on the outcomes for children.'

[Wood Review of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)



## Learning

Ensuring high quality single-agency and multi-agency safeguarding training is provided at different levels to meet local needs to protect and promote the well-being of children and young people. Using Practice Reviews and audit activity as a means of gathering potential learning.



## Improvement

To review and improve inter-agency practice through evaluation, analysis of operational practice, assessment of local and Pan-Sussex learning provision, and the inclusion of national reviews and learning.



## Evaluation and Evidence

The Monitoring & Evaluation Subgroup undertakes multi-agency quality assurance activities to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the work of the Partnership to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Brighton & Hove.



## Assurance

Through a planned audit programme overseen by the Independent Chair of Monitoring and Evaluation subgroup, challenge and scrutiny via the Independent Scrutineer, Partnership Board, and Lay Members. Data analysis via the 'Dashboard', Assurance Requests, and Additional Information Requests (A.I.Rs). Disclosure to Lead Partners via Risk Registers, Business Planning, Subgroup Chair Updates and the Annual Report.



## Impact

The activity of the BHSCP and the multi-agency partners individually and collectively should demonstrate positive impact on outcomes for children, young people, and families in Brighton and Hove.

# BHSCP Activity – Governance, Accountability, Challenge and Scrutiny

**Steering Group** – This group oversees the strategic direction and work of the Partnership as set out in the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (WT2018). The Steering Group is attended by Lead Partners, agency Leads, and is Chaired by the Independent Scrutineer.

## Purpose

- To ensure the BHSCP is fulfilling its statutory duty to monitor and challenge the effectiveness of the local multi-agency response to safeguarding children and young people.
- To oversee strategic activity undertaken across the Partnership to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people.
- To analyse data and intelligence to be fully appraised of the effectiveness of help, including early help, being provided to children and their families.

**Partnership Board** – The Children and Social Work Act 2017 in conjunction with statutory guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 requires partner agencies, to work together to safeguard children, young people, and their families effectively and to promote their emotional health and wellbeing.

The role of the Partnership Board is to bring together wider partners from across statutory and voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE) organisations Brighton and Hove to ensure the strategic direction as set by the Steering Group and BHSCP Subgroups is taken forward and operationalised in all organisations.

The Partnership Board should ensure that all agencies and organisations have access to and an understanding of the full scope of the BHSCP's work and how they contribute to working together to safeguard children and promote their wellbeing across the city.

## Purpose

The main purpose of the Partnership Board is to:

- Operationalise the strategic aims of the Steering Group
- Raise issues put forward by Steering Group
- Engage the wider safeguarding community

The Partnership Board is attended by Lead Partners, agency Leads, wider agency representatives; and is Chaired by the Independent Scrutineer.

[Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)



# Independent Voice and Challenge – Lay Members and Independent Scrutiny

During this reporting year the Partnership was supported by three volunteer, independent Lay Members who attend our Partnership Board, Case Review Group, Learning and Development, and Monitoring and Evaluation subgroups.

The role of a Lay Member is crucial to the Partnership as they provide an independent voice in the decision-making processes and provide a unique perspective as members of public from the Brighton and Hove community.

Lay Members are appointed to BHSCP for a term of two years, with the option to extend the tenure, subject to agreement by the Lay Member and the BHSCP. Training and support is provided through the BHSCP Training Programme and the Business Team.

**Plans for 2023-24** – The Partnership is currently holding a vacancy for a Lay Member role. We are also committed to increasing the voice and perspective of children and young people by exploring the possibility of a Young Persons' Lay Member Expert by Experience or Advisor. Recruitment to this unique role could bring an additional voice and perspective to the Partnership.



## What our Lay Members Say...

“As a lay member in BHSCP since 2017, I have had an opportunity to learn about how the safeguarding children system operates, from relevant legislation, agencies involved in safeguarding of children and how the agencies (Social services, Local Authority, Police, Health, Education, etc.) work together to ensure positive outcomes. The Board I attend (called Monitoring and Evaluation subcommittee) welcomes hearing lay members' perspectives and have responded proactively to any question or suggestions I have had, aiming ultimately to support delivery of BHSCP strategy regarding prevention of neglect to children. There are training opportunities available to practitioners and all involved in the sector that are open to Lay members as well. BHSCP have integrated Lay Members into their operation very well.”

**Independent Scrutiny as detailed in WT2018:** 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 ...Whilst the decision on how best to implement a robust system of independent scrutiny is to be made locally, safeguarding partners should ensure that the scrutiny is objective, acts as a constructive critical friend and promotes reflection to drive continuous improvement. The independent scrutineer should 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.

[Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/working-together-to-safeguard-children)



# Independent Scrutiny – Unaccompanied Asylum-seeking Children (UASC) in Brighton and Hove

The Independent Scrutineer was commissioned by BHSCP to complete a fast-time review of the safeguarding arrangements of the UASC hotel in the city. This review was undertaken under Working Together 2018 and considered what this case reveals about the wider systems including joint working between the local authority, the Home Office, and local Police.

This piece of scrutiny was not an investigation but a learning and improvement opportunity. The report included a focus on the systems in place and what is working well in a strengths-based approach, alongside an exploration of where systems are not working well and where there might be gaps in multi-agency working.

## *Thematic Review - Areas of inquiry/themes to be explored by Independent Scrutineer:*

1. What is the scale of the problem, specifically how many children have been reported missing?
2. Are the concerns raised accurate, is there an evidential basis for the concerns?
3. What was the status of the missing children?
4. What steps are being taken locally and nationally to find missing children and resolve the issue?
5. What steps are being taken to prevent further children going missing?
6. Is there evidence of criminal coercion or exploitation? If so, how is this being addressed?
7. Is the Partnership doing all it can to respond to the safety of these children?
8. UASC are placed in hotels under the care of the Home Office. What part do they play in preventing children going missing?
9. Does the Home Office support Brighton & Hove agencies to prevent children going missing, investigate episodes of missing children, and develop best practice in this key area?
10. Is there any learning or recommendations that could improve practice and reduce risk to these and other UASC?



# Key Findings and Recommendations

The Scrutiny Report concluded 'there is a genuine will across all agencies to protect and safeguard the unaccompanied asylum-seeking children'.

The use of hotels as temporary placements was born out of a need to reduce the risk of harm associated with holding them in a place designed for adult migrant arrivals. This process has been managed by the Home Office who have no statutory responsibility for this provision. The numbers of children involved, and complexity of the situation, would involve the deployment of resources which are beyond the capacity of the Local Authority. The report details seven recommendations and concludes from the data provided there is a clear picture that, without significant intervention, this issue is likely to recur in spring and summer this year. Planning to deal with this is essential. A full statement including the full report is available from BHSCP website - [BHSCP statement - Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children \(UASC\) Scrutiny Paper - BHSCP](#)

**Recommendation 1** – The Home Office make an immediate decision on the continued use of the hotel to accommodate UASC. If the decision is to continue to use the hotel, then the next recommendations made should be considered.

**Recommendation 2** – A definitive legal view should be arrived at regarding the status of the UASC. This is essential going forward and will provide a legal context to decisions made and accountability.

**Recommendation 3** – A multi-agency planning meeting should be called to establish a joint strategic response to anticipated seasonal UASC arrivals (those expected to arrive in spring / summer 2023). This meeting should consider accountability, resources, all safeguarding issues including missing episodes and communication strategies. The meeting should also examine any views on possible alternatives to the current provision. The specific issue of overrepresentation of Albanian children in missing episodes should be addressed. Planning needs to occur for this group who are at greater risk of exploitation through their missing episodes.

**Recommendation 4** – If the hotel remains open then an independent inspection system must be put in place to reassure all agencies and central government of the hotel's suitability to house these children. This should be an OFSTED inspection that would look at systems and practice. This is essential to the continued safeguarding of UASC placed in these circumstances.

**Recommendation 5** – The National Transfer Scheme should include greater accountability for all Las and ensure that its mandatory status is enforced. Those who do not take UASC should be held to account and penalised for non-participation. This must be viewed as a national issue with the responsibility for ongoing care being shared equitably.

**Recommendation 6** – Plans must be put in place to fund the extra resource required to adequately safeguard these children. This reaches beyond their initial care needs and should extend to increased resource requirements across all agencies involved in every aspect of their care, including missing person investigations and exploitation initiatives.

**Recommendation 7** – The Home Office and local political leaders should engage with media outlets to encourage a more balanced approach to the coverage of the issue. The impact of the headlines and articles produced should be considered in a wider safeguarding context. Editors and those responsible for these articles should be asked to consider the language used and provided with pathways to report concerns to agencies who can act on them.

# Assurance Through Monitoring and Evaluation

**Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Subgroup** – The BHSCP has a key role in achieving high standards in safeguarding and promoting welfare, not just through co-coordinating, but also by evaluation and continuous improvement. Under Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2018 the purpose of BHSCP local arrangements is to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together in a system where agencies and organisations 'challenge appropriately and hold one another to account effectively' to provide 'early identification and analysis of new safeguarding issues and emerging threats.'

[Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/working-together-to-safeguard-children)

## **Key Achievements and Challenges in 2022-23 –**

**Development and publication of a new performance Dashboard** to increase the transparency of performance and assist in effective scrutiny and challenge across all agencies. The Dashboard indicators support the Partnership's understanding of progress to deliver its business priorities. The populated Dashboard can now be used to by partners to hold each other to account, and by M&E Subgroup to provide assurance on progress, develop Additional Information Requests (AIRs) and Assurance Requests (MAARs), and propose areas of focus for single and multi-agency audit activity.

An unpopulated version of Dashboard has been included as example of good practice by tASP in their work programme 'Establishing an Outcomes & Evaluation Framework for Safeguarding Partnerships' commissioned by Department for Education (DfE). This has also been shared with the Safeguarding Adults Board, and our Pan-Sussex partners in East and West Sussex; all have given positive feedback.

**Population of BHSCP Performance Dashboard** has presented some challenges for the M&E Subgroup. The overall impact of the dashboard has been the improvement of reporting in wider partnership contexts, however the section of the dashboard focused on Strategic Priority 2 - *Safeguarding children from violence and exploitation* is awaiting the provision of some data. A new Information Sharing Agreement (ISA) has been developed and ratified to facilitate this and to overcome this challenge.

## **Additional Information / Multi-Agency Assurance Requests –**

To formalise how agencies provide additional information / assurance to the Partnership the M&E Subgroup developed a process, report templates and standardised email templates - these are now active and embedded in the M&E and Steering Group processes.

**Multi-agency Assurance Requests (MAARs)** aim to provide a structured process for the BHSCP Monitoring and Evaluation Subgroup to gain assurance that issues arising from multi-agency audits are not reflective of wider practice and / or agencies are sighted on the issue as an area for improvement, are taking action to address it and are monitoring improvement through internal quality assurance processes. **Additional Information Requests (AIRs)** are used to request further information based on performance queries identified by the performance data submitted for the Dashboard.



# Assurance Through Monitoring and Evaluation

**MAARs and AIRs** are providing assurance via M&E delivering increased accountability. Using these processes M&E sought and provided assurance to the Steering Group in relation to the:

- Child Sexual Assault Referral Centre (CSARC) Pathway – Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) Health Assessments
- Adolescent Violence Risk Management (AVRM)
- Pan-Sussex Audit – *Safeguarding Children who are Electively Home Educated*
- Multi-agency Audit – *Neglect of Children Impacted by Complex Parental Issues*

Visibility of Single Agency Quality Assurance activity was identified as a challenge in the Annual Report 2021-22. Assurance Requests were made in 2022-23 to gain assurance agencies are monitoring improvement through internal quality assurance processes.

All agencies provided an overview of:

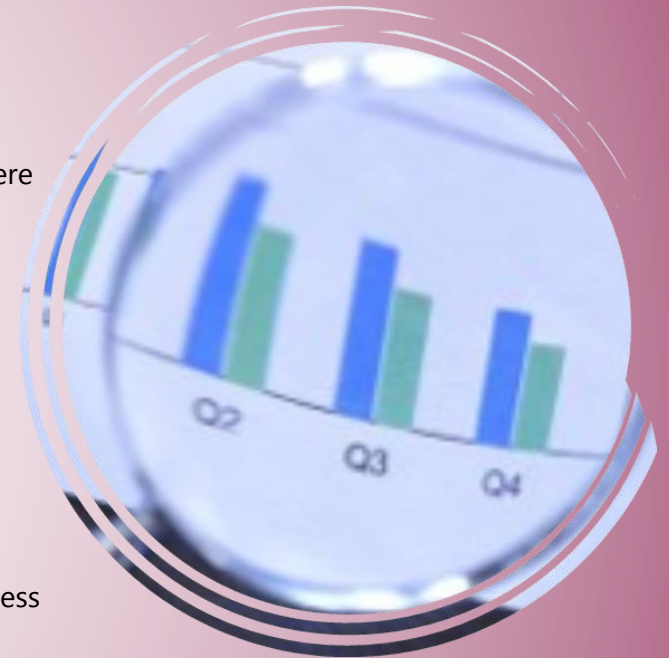
- QA Framework
- Single Agency Audit Activity planned and completed in 2022-2023
- Learning
- Impact of learning
- Learning that has multi-agency / partnership implications
- QA Schedule for 2023-2024

Completed MAARs provide assurance that agencies are monitoring improvement through internal quality assurance processes and address this previous concern around visibility.

**Plans for 2023-24** – The M&E Subgroup plan to fully embed the MAAR and AIR processes whilst developing the Dashboard to reflect the strategic objectives and priorities of the BHSCP Business Plan 2023-26.

The development and introduction of Multi-agency Audit Practitioner Events. This approach will give practitioners/managers an opportunity to challenge each other, discuss issues in more detail, highlight good practice, consider whether things could have been done differently etc. before the audit findings are written up. This process will also mean that the final report will have a greater multi-agency focus.

The Pan-Sussex Section 11 Audit to be completed including the introduction of the online Practitioner Survey to provide practitioners the opportunity to be more involved.





# Assurance and Improvement Through Audit

## Safeguarding Children and Young People who Experience Neglect Audit –

The purpose of the audit was to evaluate the effectiveness of multi-agency practice in safeguarding children and young people who experience neglect, in the context of parental domestic abuse, mental ill-health and/or substance misuse. The key lines of enquiry were as follows:

- Is multi agency practice safe and effective?
- Is multi agency safeguarding intervention improving the outcomes and the lived experience of children & young people experiencing neglect?

The cases of eight children were selected for audit using Children's Services data and included a range of age, ethnicity, gender, disability/SEND.

An audit tool was used by managers and practitioners to record their findings, the auditors spoke to practitioners about their views on the case, including examples of multi-agency work.

## Summary of Findings –

Overall, the quality and effectiveness of multi-agency practice was variable with half of the audits graded as requiring improvement. Where practice was strong, the professional network shared their concerns about neglect and supported a referral to the Front Door in a timely way. The Report identified further examples where effective relationships were built with both parents, transparency was achieved, and there was close collaboration between agencies and there was a strong and consistent multi agency team around the family which supported progress and led to improved outcomes for the child. The Audit identified several strengths including where neglect was recognised, and the responses and actions taken by agencies were appropriate. However, the Audit also highlighted cases where practice wasn't strong, and assurance is required on behalf of the Lead Partners.

Findings were used to develop the 9-Minute-Briefing for circulation to professionals.

## Assurances –

The M&E Subgroup have sent Assurance Requests to agencies based on the **Assurances and Recommendations** detailed in the Report. Agencies will attend M&E in September/November 2023 and January 2024 to discuss their responses.



# Learning and Development

**Learning and Development (L&D) Subgroup** – The Subgroup is currently Chaired by a Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children - NHS Sussex. The Subgroup meets four times per year to review the training programme, analyse training data such as attendance and evaluation feedback, and to develop the training programme with the Learning and Development Officer. The role of the L&D Subgroup includes consideration of BHSCP Learning Briefings from audit outcomes and child safeguarding practice reviews including national reports which link to training and learning. The Subgroup comprises of representatives from the wider partnership including Health, Children's Services, Police and Education.

## Key Achievements and Challenges in 2022-23:

The successful delivery of the **Anti-racist Practice Conference** in November 2022 would be the main achievement for this reporting year, this is discussed separately later in this report.

The main challenge for Learning and Development in 2022-23 was **the closure of the Learning Gateway booking system** in September 2022. This came about soon after the reintroduction of in-person training as the Covid-19 restrictions eased. In response the Partnership Business Team moved to a manual system of booking training with all bookings being managed through the main BHSCP email, with course promotion through the BHSCP website.

We were joined by a new Learning and Development Officer in September 2022 who strengthened the training offer available to professionals in Brighton and Hove by commissioning expert by experience trainers and organisations. These courses became available from Spring 2023 and have been well received by partners.

Attendances for 2022-23 have decreased overall for all courses, but we saw an increase in the combined attendances for the core Working Together in Child Protection (WTCP) Safeguarding Children Days 1, 2 & 3 from 152 in 2021-22 to 225 in 2022-23.

## Plans for 2023-24:

In 2023-24 we have several key events/projects planned –

- The launch of DadPad and CoParentPad Apps in Brighton and Hove – details on page 29-30.
- The launch of the Training Programme for 2023-26.
- Completion of a full Training Needs Analysis as part of the Subgroup Workplan and L&D Strategy review.
- The development of a GCP2 Steering Group to support the use of the assessment tool and the introduction of the GCP2 Trainers and Champions accredited in February 2023.

## BHSCP Course Attendances 2022-23

Course	Attendances
Graded Care Profile (GCP2) Training	81
Child Neglect	20
WTCP: Safeguarding Children 1: Developing a Core Understanding	85
WTCP: Safeguarding Children 2: Assessment Referral & Investigation	65
WTCP: Safeguarding Children 3: Child Protection Conferences & Core Groups	75
The Impact of Domestic Violence and Abuse	40
Harmful Practices	28
The Impact of Parental Substance Misuse	3
Child Sexual Exploitation	20
Trauma Informed Approaches	77
Suicide Awareness with Under 16s and Over 16s	12
Fabricated/Induced Illness & Perplexing Cases	19
Non-Accidental Injuries	5
Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders	15
Joint Investigations	10
Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements MAPPA	10
Exploitation	36
Safeguarding in a Digital Age and Online Safety	30
Project SOLAH – 'Safety Online at Home'	18
Difficult or Evasive Behaviour	5
Safeguarding and Adultification Bias – Child Delta LCSPR Learning Event	56
Improving Outcomes for Children who are Looked After	5
Cultural Competence	23
Supporting LGBT+ Children and Young People	32
Working with Children and Young People in the Gypsy and Traveller Communities	10
Anti-racist Practice Conference	160
Safeguarding Week – A Fairer Brighton & Hove Workshops	103
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1043</b>

# Learning and Development

## Evaluation and Feedback –

Overall, there has been a high return on evaluations, for example, 90% of Working Together in Child Protection (Safeguarding Children Day 1) evaluations were completed on the post course evaluation portal. Generally, feedback was positive, and learners reported course objectives met their needs.

Between 80-90% of learners felt the course objectives met their needs across all BHSCP courses.

**Working Together in Child Protection (Safeguarding Children Day 1)**  
80% felt the course delivery was excellent and just under 20% felt the course delivery was good.

**Working Together in Child Protection (Safeguarding Children Day 2)**  
*How well was the voice of the service user represented in the training?*  
88% - Completely  
12% - Partially

“Real examples of cases especially the conference was brilliant as it was prepared and delivered well using real scenarios and provided how the case ended.

Lots of space for discussions and questions. Thank you!”

“The mock child protection conference was very powerful and memorable.

The facts, stats, and sharing of experiences was also highly valuable. The trainer was excellent.”

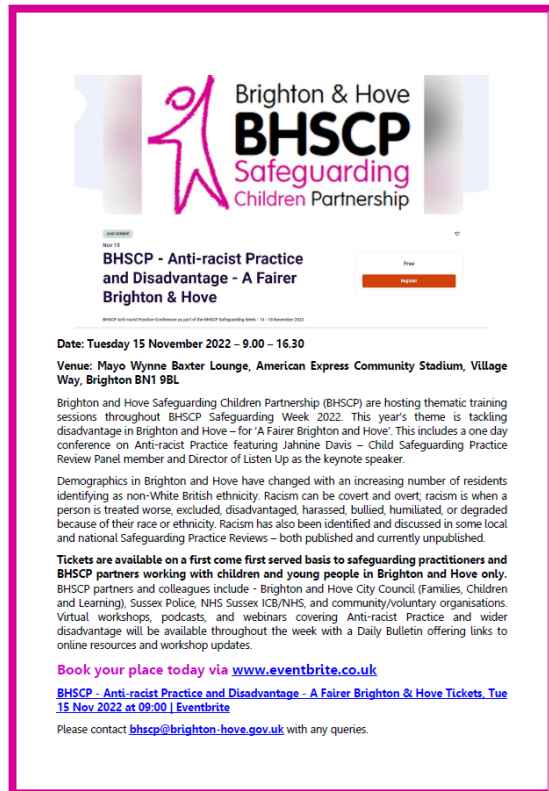
“The trainer delivered the training in such a good way that keeps you engaged.

The day was beneficial to have such an interactive exercise.”

“I feel this will be beneficial in my work. Good tool for measuring the quality of care given to a child.”

# Anti-racist Practice Conference and Safeguarding Week 2022

**BHSCP Safeguarding Week 2022** – We hosted thematic training sessions throughout their Safeguarding Week in November 2022. Safeguarding Week has a different theme each year, the theme for 2022 was tackling disadvantage in Brighton and Hove – for 'A Fairer Brighton and Hove'. The week included an in-person conference and virtual workshops.



The poster features the BHSCP logo at the top, which includes a stylized figure and the text 'Brighton & Hove BHSCP Safeguarding Children Partnership'. Below the logo, the event title 'BHSCP - Anti-racist Practice and Disadvantage - A Fairer Brighton & Hove' is displayed. The date and time are listed as 'Date: Tuesday 15 November 2022 - 9.00 - 16.30'. The venue is 'Mayo Wynne Baxter Lounge, American Express Community Stadium, Village Way, Brighton BN1 9BL'. A paragraph describes the event as a one-day conference on Anti-racist Practice featuring Jahmine Davis as the keynote speaker. Another paragraph discusses the demographics in Brighton and Hove and the impact of racism. A ticketing section states that tickets are available on a first come first served basis and provides a link to book via [www.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk). The eventbrite link is repeated: 'BHSCP - Anti-racist Practice and Disadvantage - A Fairer Brighton & Hove Tickets, Tue 15 Nov 2022 at 09:00 | Eventbrite'. A contact email [bhscp@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:bhscp@brighton-hove.gov.uk) is provided for queries.

**Date:** Tuesday 15 November 2022 – 9.00 – 16.30

**Venue:** Mayo Wynne Baxter Lounge, American Express Community Stadium, Village Way, Brighton BN1 9BL

Brighton and Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership (BHSCP) are hosting thematic training sessions throughout BHSCP Safeguarding Week 2022. This year's theme is tackling disadvantage in Brighton and Hove – for 'A Fairer Brighton and Hove'. This includes a one day conference on Anti-racist Practice featuring Jahmine Davis – Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel member and Director of Listen Up as the keynote speaker.

Demographics in Brighton and Hove have changed with an increasing number of residents identifying as non-White British ethnicity. Racism can be covert and overt: racism is when a person is treated worse, excluded, disadvantaged, harassed, bullied, humiliated, or degraded because of their race or ethnicity. Racism has also been identified and discussed in some local and national Safeguarding Practice Reviews – both published and currently unpublished.

**Tickets are available on a first come first served basis to safeguarding practitioners and BHSCP partners working with children and young people in Brighton and Hove only.** BHSCP partners and colleagues include - Brighton and Hove City Council (Families, Children and Learning), Sussex Police, NHS ICB/NHS and community/voluntary organisations. Virtual workshops, podcasts, and webinars covering Anti-racist Practice and wider disadvantage will be available throughout the week with a Daily Bulletin offering links to online resources and workshop updates.

**Book your place today via [www.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk)**

**[BHSCP - Anti-racist Practice and Disadvantage - A Fairer Brighton & Hove Tickets, Tue 15 Nov 2022 at 09:00 | Eventbrite](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk)**

Please contact [bhscp@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:bhscp@brighton-hove.gov.uk) with any queries.

**BHSCP Anti-racist Practice Conference 2022** – Demographics in Brighton and Hove have changed with an increasing number of residents identifying as non-White British ethnicity. Racism is when a person is treated worse, excluded, disadvantaged, harassed, bullied, humiliated, or degraded because of their race or ethnicity – this can be overt or covert. Anti-racist practice seeks to identify where people are discriminated against because of race or membership of global majority communities, and to take active steps to address the systems, privileges and everyday practices that maintain this unequal treatment, whether they be intentional or unintentional.

BHSCP hosted a one-day Anti-racist Practice (ARP) conference as part of our Safeguarding Week in November 2022. The conference included local and national experts as speakers discussing racism, ARP, disadvantage, intersectionality, and adultification. The conference was supported by 6 community stallholders representing VCSE organisations associated with the anti-racist discussion who challenged delegates to be active white allies. The Conference was attended by 160 professionals from across all partner agencies, and the feedback was positive from delegates, speakers, and stallholders.

**Thematic Workshops** – BHSCP hosted 12 workshops facilitated by trainers from partners agencies and colleagues from community and voluntary sector organisations.

All workshops related to the impact of disadvantage across several areas including –

- Supporting LGBT+ Children and Young People, Supporting Trans Children and Young People,
- Harmful Practices, Harmful Sexual Behaviours in Education,
- Racialised Trauma, Working with Interpreters,
- Health Inequalities, Poverty and the Cost-of-Living Crisis, The Disadvantage Strategy Framework and Family Hubs,
- Violence Against Women and Girls, Domestic Violence and Abuse: The Impact on Children and Young People,

Workshops were attended by 103 professionals working with children and young people in Brighton and Hove.



# DadPad and CoParentPad

## What is DadPad?

DadPad is an essential guide for new dads developed with the NHS. The online App and hardcopy guides provide quick reference information, guidance, and support for new dads in the care of their baby. The guide covers from pregnancy, to the birth, and through to the baby's first birthday.

## What are the benefits?

- Reduce anxiety by getting involved and gaining in confidence in how to care for a baby.
- Dads learn how to create a strong bond with their baby and healthy attachment.
- Build stronger family relationships by sharing the load and learning how to parent together.
- Recognise the signs of postnatal depression and learn how and where to get help early.
- Quick read guides covering the basics of baby care including crying, feeding, holding, soothing, and sleeping.
- Developed with dads and health professionals so the information is relevant and comes from a trustworthy source.

## When will it be available in Brighton and Hove?

BHSCP commissioned a 4-year license for DadPad (and CoParentPad) in March 2023. The App has been in development to ensure all the information and service directory is Brighton and Hove focussed including local VCSE organisations. The App will include full details for a range of service providers including Health Visiting, Family Hubs, and Perinatal Mental Health Services – it is a digital 'one-stop-shop' for new dads.

## What is CoParentPad?

The CoParentPad includes the same benefits and similar information as the DadPad but has been developed to support non-birthing/non-gestational parents who identify as LGBT+. The quick reference guide is designed to provide an affirming alternative to the DadPad but will only be available in hardcopy initially. The developers have designed CoParentPad to meet the specific needs of LGBT+ parents and have worked in co-production with and listened to LGBT+ parents and health professionals to achieve this.

## When and how will DadPad and CoParentPad be available?

Key stakeholders in Brighton and Hove attended a Pre-Launch Event in July 2023 where they could access the draft App to ensure it was accessible and correct – feedback was positive and DadPad committed to making some minor amendments based on the feedback.

Information and hardcopies of the guides will be available through maternity services and Family Hubs. BHSCP will be hosting virtual workshops for practitioners in September and October 2023 and plan to launch in November 2023. DadPad and CoParentPad will be available free in Brighton and Hove.

[DadPad | The Essential Guide for New Dads | Support Guide for New Dads \(thedadpad.co.uk\)](https://thedadpad.co.uk)

[Co-ParentPad Launch | Support for new parents \(thedadpad.co.uk\)](https://thedadpad.co.uk)



# Co-ParentPad<sup>®</sup>



DadPad<sup>®</sup>

# Learning Through Case Reviews

A key function of the Partnership is to reflect on systems and practice following a serious child safeguarding incident. A Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR) is undertaken when a child dies, or the child has been seriously harmed. The purpose of a practice review is for agencies and individuals to learn lessons to improve the way in which they work individually and collectively, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, and ultimately to deliver improved outcomes for them.



**The Case Review Group (CRG)** – This multi-agency group consider whether the Partnership should undertake Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (LCSPR), follow the progress of reviews underway, agree final reports, develop action plans and track progress of actions to ensure learning recommendations are met and implemented. CRG also works with the L&D Subgroup to deliver Learning Events for practitioners and wider partners to disseminate the learning from local and national reviews.

## **Key Achievements and Challenges in 2022-23:**

The Partnership published the **Child Delta LCSPR** in November 2022 following the tragic death of a 20-month-old girl in December 2019; the review looked at what lessons should be learnt and what needs to be put in place to do all we can to prevent a similar tragedy ever happening again. The review made a total of 17 recommendations and the multi-agency Action Plan is ongoing but substantially completed.

Members of CRG have participated in several meetings looking at ways **to improve joint working relationships** with Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), Pan-Sussex joint working practices with the Child Death Overview Panel, and closer working with the Safeguarding Adults Board and Adults Services.

The key challenge in 2022-23 has involved **unavoidable delays to progressing safeguarding practice reviews due to parallel processes** and in particular the impact this has on the families and the practitioners involved. As a Partnership we have acknowledged the impact the review subject, and the associated processes, can on those involved. Partner agencies have committed to ensuring sufficient well-being support in place for all. One LCSPR has been on hold for some time due to parallel processes. Early learning was circulated to professionals, and we plan to restart the review in September 2023.

## **Plans for 2023-24:**

- Finalise a Pan-Sussex LCSPR '*Menu of options*' providing standardised choices at the Rapid Review stage.
- Develop internal resource to undertake reviews where appropriate.
- Embed follow up review events to capture the impact on practice from learning, and to provide feedback/closure for the operational staff involved in a review.
- Developing a means to monitor quality assurance and value for money when commissioning external reviewers.
- Continue to work closely with the L&D and M&E Subgroups to join up the *Review, Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation cycle* to bring about sustainable change.
- Complete and publish current LCSPR previously on hold, disseminate further learning.
- Conclude the Learning Audit developed from a Rapid Review that was not progressed to LCSPR.



The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel's annual report 2020 (Published 2021) notes that Safeguarding Children Partnerships should have 'Evidence of the impact of the work of the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies, including training, on outcomes for children and families.'

Sir Alan Wood's Report: Sector expert review of new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (May 2021) states 'We need to draw together a secure evidence base for the impact of independent challenge and scrutiny on the outcomes for children.'

## Learning from LCSPR –

**LCSPR – Child Delta:** A rapid review was conducted in early 2020, following a serious safeguarding incident in December 2019. CRG decided the criteria for a LCSPR had been met and the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (National Panel) concurred. Commissioning of the review was delayed initially by post-mortem test results and investigations initiated by Sussex Police. A further delay occurred following the arrest of mother in October 2020, and again in early 2022 whilst a new Reviewer was commissioned. The Report was published in November 2022 and the Inquest was scheduled for July 2023.

### Findings and Recommendations Identified in the Review:

The review identified several key factors including neglect. The Reviewer found that decisions and safety planning on this case were based on the positive assessments undertaken by practitioners regarding Mother's parenting and initially on Delta's development. Since Delta's death, the criminal investigation has highlighted Mother's ability to manipulate those around her and her apparent skilled capacity for deceit of all those around her, including family, friends and multi-agency professionals.

The Reviewer stated:

*'...Mother demonstrated that she was an exceptionally capable and loving parent. That she would have left her 20-month-old daughter ill and home alone has shocked all who knew Delta. It was not predictable to any of the practitioners involved with the family.'* (LCSPR Child Delta, p.76, 2022)

This is a view the Reviewer later repeated to the coroner as part of her evidence at the inquest. However, the Reviewer did identify key learning and made 17 recommendations to the Partnership including –

### Greater possible risks *may* have been identified had there been:

- Identification of Mother's ongoing mental health needs, as indicated by her reported anxiety, panic attacks and eating problems, and her lack of speaking about her Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).
- Identification that Mother's lack of acknowledgement of, and receipt of therapy for, her earlier traumas could be a risk indicator for her long-term emotional welfare and consequently a potential risk for her daughter's welfare.
- An assessment from Delta's perspective, in December 2018, **prior** to closing the Child in Need (CIN) service. This should have taken account of Mother's deceit in relation to college attendance, the loss of a nursery placement providing monitoring of Delta's welfare and plans for Mother's independence.
- A step-down process from CIN which involved the identification of a lead professional and continued multi-agency meetings focused on Delta.
- A holistic assessment prior to any decision about independence and the type of accommodation required to provide safe care of Delta.



### Learning from LCSPR Child Delta :

An Action Plan was developed by the CRG leads to progress all the recommendations including actions initiated from early learning including:

- A system of daily checks was brought in immediately at the accommodation where Child Delta and her mother were placed.
- The child of any young parent who has a social worker now has their own separate social worker focusing on their needs.
- Every young parent placed in supported accommodation has their case regularly reviewed by the multi-agency professionals working with them.
- Children's social care services have reviewed how risks to young parents and their children are assessed. As a result, protocols and guidance have now changed.

In partnership with the L&D Subgroup a Learning Briefing and Report Summary was published to all agencies, a *Safeguarding and Adultification Bias Learning Event* was planned for July 2023, and the training programme now includes safeguarding and adultification bias courses available to all partners.

Furthermore, BHSCP course content has been reviewed to ensure that training discusses the importance of risk management relating to a child's vulnerable child.

### Learning from National Reviews –

In May 2022 National Panel published the '**National Review into the Murders of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson**' making recommendations for central government and for all local safeguarding partners. This review was discussed in several Partnership meetings and the link to the review was cascaded via the Weekly Highlights email to agencies and professionals.

[National review into the murders of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/national-review-into-the-murders-of-arthur-labinjo-hughes-and-star-hobson)

In March 2022, the City of Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership published their **LCSPR Child Q** report. The report was discussed by CRG leads, and it was agreed the key learning around adultification bias was linked to the early learning identified in the Child Delta review. The review was also discussed as part of a Partnership Board agenda item in April 2022.

As part of a Priority 1: Accountability and Engagement piece of work lead agencies had been asked to present to the Board outlining the work they are doing with Black and minoritised/global majority children and families\*. Children's Social Care presented at the meeting in January, Sussex Police presented in April and NHS Sussex presented later in the year. In their presentation Sussex Police confirmed that learning from the Child Q review is embedded in the monthly learning updates provided to all officers and as part of their Learning panels. The Board were assured by Sussex Police's response to the review.

*\*Black and minoritised/global majority is used here, but it is recognised that language of identity is personal to an individual, can be subjective, and can change over time.*

[Child-Q-PUBLISHED-14-March-22.pdf \(chscp.org.uk\)](https://chscp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Child-Q-PUBLISHED-14-March-22.pdf)

# The Development of the BHSCP Anti-racist Practice Statement

*There is no place for racism in Brighton & Hove. We recognise that the impact racism has on our communities is devastating. It is our responsibility to create safe, inclusive and supporting environments and challenge racism when we see it. We stand firmly together with our partners in being committed to tackling institutional and interpersonal racism in all its forms. We commit to listening, monitoring and continually evaluating our practice because we recognise that good anti-racist practice for the Partnership leads to better outcomes for our children in our city.*

Anti-racist practice seeks to identify where people are discriminated against because of race or membership of global majority communities, and to take active steps to address the systems, privileges and everyday practices that maintain this unequal treatment, whether they be intentional or unintentional.

This statement seeks to set out the principles and actions we will adopt towards this aim. Anti-racist practice extends to how we work together as colleagues and professionals, as well as with families, children and young people.

**We should speak up when professionals interact or behave in a way that is disrespectful or unacceptable, whether of families or of colleagues.**

Published – December 2022

Full statement available from: [Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Children's Partnership Anti Racist Practice Statement – BHSCP](#)



# Improvement Through Subgroup Activity

**Child Safeguarding Liaison Group (CSLG)** – CSLG is an interagency forum that meets monthly to review and improve joint working practice in respect of multi-agency Child Protection processes. This includes analysis of examples of operational practice within the context of Child Protection enquiries and investigations. The Subgroup challenges practice and, where necessary, brings matters to the attention of relevant managers and agencies on behalf of the BHSCP with the aim of organisational and partnership learning.



## **Subgroup Activity in 2022-23:**

Mental Health pathways continues to be a significant area for discussion in CSLG. For example, during 2022-23 the group discussed the national shortage of CAMHS beds for children and decision making between approved mental health professional, Custody, CAMHS, SECAMBS. Discussions have taken place around 'Pathways to Hospital' where complexity around mental health presentation and eating disorders presentations are present.

Other areas of discussion included –

- UASC and age disputes/agency responses.
- Information sharing from early years providers to primary schools.
- A Family Court ordering a skeletal survey without medical advice.
- Out of Hours arrangements – emergency doctors service, FDF, Police and health agencies.
- Complex health presentations query child sexual abuse (CSA) and fabricated/induced illness (FII)
- Police body worn cameras and medicals.

## **Key Achievements and Challenges in 2022-23:**

The integration and maturity of the Subgroup, good attendance and participation. The Subgroup Chairs Forum meets regularly to continue discussions in sharing learning and information across the partnership's sub-groups.

The development of practice notes and learning shared for all partners and the 'So What?' challenge. The group aims to ensure learning is shared and impacts positively on practice and therefore the outcomes for children. Issues recently discussed and learning developed include CSA, SUDI and safer sleeping messages, complex health care packages and mental health pathways from custody. A Practice Note completed by Children's Social Care colleagues in relation to 'Star and Arthur' national review was shared within CSLG. Plaudits and learning from interventions managed well is beginning to be shared - these are passed on to services as appropriate. Celebrating good practice as well as learning from challenges is an aim for CSLG. Practice notes are available to professionals via the website – link below.

[Practice Points - BHSCP.](#)

Some practical challenges to ensure the CSLG meeting is accessible to all partners and a resource challenge stemming from a capacity issue within the Business Team through vacancy for much of the year - these challenges were managed.

CSLG needs referrals to consider each month as a prerequisite of the meeting generating discussion and learning. Most meetings have at least one case discussion on the agenda, but this needs to be managed.

#### **Plans for 2023-24:**

Further development of the use of plaudits and cases where things have gone well. Aim to ensure the Partnership learns from cases of excellence as well as where things have not gone well. To ensure there is always a case for discussion. Consideration of themes as well as individual cases, and a rotating 'discussion lead' across all agencies to ensure cases are available.

#### **Feedback from CSLG Membership:**

- Clear positive link from CSLG case discussions into Policy and Procedure change. Examples given around harmful practices.
- The CSLG has respectful challenge and no sense of defensiveness from colleagues.
- Peer support, awareness of who can provide advice.
- An opportunity for agencies to reflect on practice - example given around health reports and if they are pitched well/limited use of jargon.
- The group process can allow resolutions and reparation of relationships between professional networks.

## **Exploitation Subgroup –**

This multi-agency Subgroup works in direct partnership with the Community Safety Partnership and the Safeguarding Adults Board. As a group they have oversight of BHSCP work on exploitation, modern slavery and human trafficking, and of the Violence & Exploitation Reduction Action Plan (VERAP).

The Exploitation Subgroup is Co-Chaired by the Detective Chief Inspector from Serious Investigations Unit, Sussex Police and the Head of Safer Communities, with support from the Exploitation and Violence Reduction Coordinator.

#### **Subgroup Activity in 2022-23:**

The new Serious Violence Duty came into force in early 2023, applying to several public bodies in attendance of the Exploitation Subgroup. This requires strategies at both police force area and CSP level and that specified public bodies work in unison to address serious violence locally. Sussex's current readiness for the duty has been rated as "mature" by the Home Office's commissioned consultancy (Crest Advisory) though further work remains in terms of community engagement.

A review and update to the VERAP ahead of 2023-24 was conducted over the last quarter of 2022-23, taking in to account the Serious Violence Duty and with due regard to the Brighton & Hove Community Safety Partnership Strategy.



### **Key Achievements and Challenges in 2022-23:**

Safer Communities contributed to the joint bid from Brighton and Hove City Council, East Sussex County Council, and Sussex Police to the Home Office for the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) Decision Making Panel pilot. The bid was successful, and the panel is now up and running locally. The impact of this is much swifter decision making for potential child victims of modern slavery or human trafficking.

Successful bids were entered for Home Office funds to implement the Serious Violence Duty. These funds will be applied to existing Violence Reduction Partnership activities, as well as specialist Community Engagement Manager post, to be based within the Trust for Developing Communities.

Significant turnover for key positions within Sussex Police related to the exploitation agenda lead to some challenges in receiving updates to the VERAP.

Safer Communities and other partners have fed into the local meetings with the Home Office regarding the placement of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) in local hotels. Following very high volumes of children going missing in the summer of 2022 these meetings have provided oversight of and a robust challenge to Home Office arrangements. This remains an area of significant concern and will likely present a challenge for child safeguarding processes locally going forwards.

### **Plans for 2023-24:**

Work to further embed knowledge and practice regarding the Serious Violence Duty locally.

Work within BHCC to improve understanding and practice of the Modern Slavery Pathway across pathway services and local authority more broadly. This will include work with BHSCP to ensure training needs for practitioners are met locally.



# Updates from our Partners

**Children's Social Care – Brighton and Hove City Council (BHCC):** One of the Lead Statutory Partners, covering all aspects of statutory safeguarding work under the Children's Act.

**Key Achievements and Challenges of 2022-23:** Youth Offending Service (YOS) – Outstanding inspection, Special Educational Needs (SEN) inspection – we were awarded the top grade. Quality mark achieved for Access to Records.

In the reporting year the main challenge has involved staffing issues and the work needed to maintain a Social Work workforce. For example, the service is running with a 19% vacancy rate in frontline social work teams. A second challenge has been placement sufficiency; there is a national shortage of placements which leads to difficulty in finding registered placements that are local and appropriate, resulting in a lack of choice.

**Agency involvement in Partnership workstreams:** As a Lead Partner the agency is fully embedded in the work of the Partnership. For example, Children's Social Care supported the commissioning of further CVSE work for 2022-23 as part of the Harmful Sexual Behaviours in Education project with Trust for Developing Communities and YMCA Downlink WiSE due to start in September 2023. Children's Social Care were also very involved in the development of the Anti-racist Statement, Anti-racist Conference, and the Safeguarding Week activities with trainers delivering several workshops.

**Agency Involvement in Partnership work on prevention and/or Early Help:** Children's Social Care has been fully involved in the development and transformation of Family Hubs. As part of this transformation, the Threshold Document review has been identified as an area of further development for 2023-24.

**Agency contribution to BHSCP Business Plan Priorities in 2022-23:**

1. Fully engaged in all working groups and Subgroups as lead agency. Chair CRG, CSLG & PSP&Ps. Manage the partnership on behalf of BHSCP.
2. AVRMS is operational and considered a piece of good practice. YOS serviced inspected as outstanding in 2022. NRM decision making pilot taken on.
3. Promoted GCP2 Assessment Tool with professionals, this is now embedded into Eclipse. Produced learning reflections focused on neglect.
4. Supported the development of Multi Agency Mental Health Education Triage (MAMHET). Promotion of Single Point of Advice (SPoA) in FdF – which provides a simplified single route to access specialist emotional wellbeing and mental health support, although there is still some work to do here. Suicide response processes have been reviewed and strengthened.

**How can the BHSCP further develop and improve to ensure that children, young people, and their families are safeguarded effectively:** Through further development of the Dashboard including preparation for JTAI and ILAC inspections. Improve children's voice in the Partnership and Partnership workstreams. Celebrate services and good practice. The **#SeeSomethingSaySomething** was an example of the Partnership use of raising awareness through public campaigns – it would be good to see similar campaigns in 2023-24.



**NHS Sussex ICB** – Represent Health as one of the three Lead Partners of BHSCP.

**Key Achievements in 2022-23** – From April 2022, the delivery of the health input into the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) came under the remit of NHS Sussex, along with increased staffing resource for the Brighton MASH.

**Key Areas of Impact from the MASH team in Brighton and Hove include:**

- Improved attendance by health at Strategy meetings.
- Improved sharing of domestic abuse Single Combined Agency Report Form (SCARF) to the health system, greater engagement in Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) in Brighton and Hove.
- Audit of MASH records has shown improvements include collecting Acute/Minor Injury Unit/UTC information and Mental health information under the new team- helping to provide a more holistic approach to risk assessment.
- NHS Sussex ICB have improved the quality and speed in which health information is available to make threshold decisions - this has been evidenced in MASH audit.
- The team have completed training with local primary care teams in Brighton and Hove to support the sharing of information.

**Key Challenge in 2022-23** – Ensuring a safe response to the mental health challenges facing children and young people in Brighton and Hove was a significant challenge during the year. There were increasing numbers of children on mental health waiting lists with unmet mental health needs across the city being on Paediatric wards and Royal Alexander Children's Hospital when there was a national shortage of Tier 4 provision and appropriate social care placements.

A weekly CAMHS escalation call was held by the provider collaborative to help ensure high risk children were reviewed regularly, appropriate placements were sourced and when necessary, extra mental health support was provided to Royal Alexander Childrens Hospital teams to safely meet these children's needs whilst they remained inpatients.

**Agency involvement in Partnership workstreams:** During Q4 partnership funding was agreed to launch **DadPad and CoParentPad** across the city. These apps have key topics to support new fathers/male carers/Co-Parents with important guidance, this is an important part of the Partnership's response to learning identified in the Myth of Invisible Men Report. The DadPad tool has been positively reviewed in West Sussex with evidence of its impact on fathers. The NHS Sussex team led on the implementation of this initiative for the Partnership and will continue the roll-out and ongoing evaluation during 2023-24.

**Joint Target Area Inspection (JTAI)** – The framework was changed from an Exploitation theme to Early Help. A health provider workshop was held, main health providers were kept up to date with changes and have continued to inform their organisations. The workshop was extremely well evaluated by provider organisations safeguarding leads and was subsequently developed into a regular working group. It helped the health partners share essential learning, align internal processes for inspection planning and identified health-wide areas for improvement, such as identification of the need for specialist exploitation training for staff. NHS Sussex responded to this learning, by delivering a bespoke Exploitation conference in January 2023, which was made available to all multi-agency partners.

[Joint targeted area inspection of the multi-agency response to children and families who need help - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)



## How has NHS Sussex ICB contributed to the BHSCP business plan priorities during 2022-23:

### Partnership Engagement and Accountability:

- Representation from NHS Sussex designated nurse and/or designated Doctor in all Subgroups.
- Strategic leads from NHS Sussex involved in all key strategic decisions through representation at Steering Group and Partnership Board. The Learning and Development Subgroup is chaired by the NHS Sussex Designated Nurse.
- Section 11 was a key partnership focus during the financial year: Self-assessment tool was amended move focus on improvement rather than compliance, this was well received. The NHS Sussex Section 11 self-audit identified the organisation was safely discharging its statutory obligations but identified key stretch targets related to training delivery for the year 2023/24.

### Safeguarding children from children exploitation:

- NHS Sussex worked with NHS England and Sussex Police to improve the sharing of anonymised data for the TSV/VRP dashboard from health providers
- NHS Sussex provided training around criminal and sexual exploitation of children to primary care
- During Q4 2022-23, NHS Sussex hosted a virtual conference including sessions on 'cuckooing', tackling serious and organised crime and 'honour-based' abuse. The conference was very well attended by a wide range of professionals and was positively evaluated, with learning being shared and developed into practice.

### Reducing Neglect

- Neglect audit completed and neglect strategy reviewed with partnership.
- NHS Sussex supported the Pan Sussex EHE audit discussed on page 53, identified improvements and provided assurance.
- NHS Sussex held JTAI workshops for health for preparedness for JTAI including communication to Primary care. The workshops have been adapted to allow an ongoing working group continue the development of shared approaches to each new JTAI topic as they have been released.

### Mental Health and Emotional Health and Wellbeing - Key developments specific to Brighton and Hove during 22/23:

- Expansion of the Children and Young People's Wellbeing Service (interventions for mild to moderate need when specialist CAMHS is not needed) .
- Partnership working to improve how young people and families access services.
- Additional investment to improve therapeutic support for children in care.
- Targeted mental health support for young people in temporary accommodation.
- Specialist CAMHS depression and anxiety coping skills pilot developed and evaluated by a group of experts by experience.

### Plans for 2023-24:

- GCP2 refresh to include Antenatal GCP2. Re-establish the GCP2 Steering Group. NHS Sussex to provide training to provider agencies.
- Continue Data Dashboard development to ensure decision-making is based on sound data. An ongoing action for 2023-24 will be to improve the quality of mental health data - review current provider-led data available to the dashboard and ensure this is triangulated with commissioning data.
- Learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews and Safeguarding Adult Reviews to assist understanding of the impact of domestic abuse/coercive control on the lives of children and those who care for them.





**Sussex Police:** One of the Lead Statutory Partners, represented in all meeting cycles, with the following responsibilities in Brighton and Hove -

- Sussex Police are the biggest referring agency to the Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
  - Sussex Police works with all children coming to police attention, regardless of age, and where there is a policing need. Sussex Police provides support and information to partners to encourage the best safeguarding outcomes.
  - Sussex Police are active members in Strategy meetings and ICPC (RCPC' reports provided).
- 
- Sussex Police leads on finding / returning missing children and all subsequent investigations including Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) / Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE).
  - Police Protection is actively used where the criteria is met and provides the emergency response to immediate safeguarding concerns.
  - Golden Hour: Process whereby Police notify Children Services that a child has been arrested and promote safeguarding. Recognising the arrest of the child is a result of failures elsewhere.
  - Golden Hour working group currently shows 99%+ compliance.
  - Op Encompass embedded. Schools informed of children that are subject to Domestic Abuse households and are notified of new incidents within 24 hours.
  - Sussex Police investigate every crime or incident where a child is involved as the victim or a suspect. Understanding the "why" is fundamental with the desire to not criminalise children unnecessarily. This is well embedded across investigation teams.
  - Sussex Police actively undertakes and participates in learning reviews with an embedded review officer.
  - Active members of the Child and Young Person Plan (Police lead pillar 1 – keeping children and young people safe)

**Key Achievements and Challenges of 2022-23:** In Autumn 2022 Sussex Police funded and recruited to a small exploitation team. The objectives of this team are multi-faceted and includes challenge, improving practice, reviewing the forces strategic approach, in addition to supporting thematic leads through the development and delivery of training, focused action and engagement.

One of the key challenges in this reporting period is the implementation of the Signs project. This project sought to improve the quality of information shared with partners through moving risks assessments and associated notifications from an incident to a nominal based model. However, while it was recognised this would lead to a significant increase in submissions it was not anticipated that the nominal based model would obscure aspects of the incident from recipients of notifications. Signs 2, due to go live in November 2023, will seek to capture all the benefits of the pilot while migrating back across to an incident-based model.

**Agency involvement in Partnership workstreams:** The 'Whole Family Working Strategy' has been established between Sussex Police, Brighton and Hove City Council, the Partnership and the NHS. This is a joint priority and commitment to providing help and support to families in Brighton and Hove before any risk and vulnerabilities can escalate. There is one assessment that all partners can access. Whole family working means assessments, thresholds, and measures that are collected by Sussex Police can be integrated with what is collected from other services to ensure family focussed, outcome-based working.

Families that are confident in the professionals they work with, will be encourage to independently access community and voluntary support services for their needs.

[Brighton and Hove – Helping Children and Families, Threshold Document.](#)

### Agency contribution to BHSCP Business Plan Priorities in 2022-23:

1. Child Death/Suspected Physical Abuse Working Group. A 'How do I' learning and guidance page developed for 'Child Death and Non-Accidental Injury Investigation' – provides comprehensive information to guide officers on signs, protocols, policy, and investigating.
2. Improving quality of SCARF submissions.
3. Updated Force Policy (557/2022 Child Protection and 914/2021 Modern Slavery).
4. CSE Force Lead for promoting the agenda across the Force leads a Bi-monthly Child Protection and Exploitation Working Group.
5. Funding of Exploitation Manager and Coordinators assist in ensuring subject matter experts are available to comment in wider array of force meetings.
6. Repeat CSAE Perpetrators Strategic Intelligence Review commissioned and completed. Findings shared with BHSCP and our Pan-Sussex Partnership colleagues.
7. Operation Denver: Team of Offender Managers being set up to disrupt NFA'd (no further action) suspects who were investigated for a sex offence against a child. Suspects are targeted to find any other opportunities to prevent further risks.
8. Neglect training and the introduction of the Crewmate Neglect Tab - provides officers with accessible on hand guidance on neglect via their devices at the scene and remotely. Further training for frontline officers would be beneficial.

As expected, Sussex Police's contributions link mostly to their lead area Priority 2: Safeguarding children from violence and exploitation.



**National Probation Service:** This agency's key function is to assess risk to children posed by adults on probation. To liaise with partner agencies to share information and manage risks of harm to children. To manage risks of harm to children posed by adults on probation. To complete interventions with people on probation to address risks of harm.

**Key Achievements and Challenges of 2022-23:** Setting up the co-location of a Probation Officer with Front Door for Families one day a week has been a key achievement for 2022-23. This Officer is building connections and is in close contact with Social Services' staff on the days not located in FDfF. This has aided dialogue on referrals and prompt information sharing. The Probation Service leads are hopeful of expanding this co-location to include administrative support and another probation practitioner over the next year.

The biggest challenge for colleagues over 2022-23 has been capacity issues and a shortage of case administrators. This means the information required at the Court stage, is not available, limiting the sentencing options available. It also limits the provision of robust risk assessments at Court and delays the completion of effective risk management plans. Capacity issues can result in delays in sending out CP1s post-sentence, leading to delays in getting the key information needed for assessments and to fulfil safeguarding responsibilities.



**Family Hubs Service – BHCC:** The Council were awarded funding from the Government in May 2022 to develop the Family Hub model in Brighton and Hove to boost the lives and outcomes of children, young people, and disadvantaged families across the city. The Family Hub model has been successfully introduced in many areas across the UK including our local neighbours in West Sussex. Family Hubs provide Early Help support through Family Hubs (formerly Children’s Centres), Early Years, nurseries and Youth Services.

**Key Achievements and Challenges in 2022-23:** Transforming Early Help services to a Family Hubs model – New Family Hubs team developed with one referral route for Early Help support and move to shared case management system with social care. Transformation was completed by April 2023, but as with all service transformations there were some challenges including the restructuring services to meet demand.

The Family Hub Service brings together services for children and young people aged 0-19 years, and for young people with Special educational needs up to the age of 25. There are four Hubs in Brighton and Hove, but services are also delivered from other locations. Services include information, advice and guidance, parenting support, maternity and health visiting services. Family Hubs also offer young people the opportunity to have a say in the way services are run and specialist support for young people in care.

**Agency contribution to BHSCP Business Plan Priorities in 2022-23 and BHSCP Improvements for 2023-24:** The Family Hubs Service is focussed on providing a multi-agency response to supporting families at the earliest possible opportunity reducing risk and supporting the Partnership across the four Business Plan Priorities. The service has been designed to develop and embed multi-agency working practices to improve outcomes for children and young people, and to safeguard them.

Family Hub representatives are members of the BHSCP Subgroups and on the Partnership Board.

The next steps include improving formal links with BHSCP and improving Steering Group oversight as this will further develop clear and robust governance arrangements. Family Hubs will support the launch of DadPad and CoParentPad with health colleagues and will be involved in child neglect and GCP2 arrangements through early intervention working with the whole family.

The Family Hub Service plans to embed the ‘Making Every Contact Count’ [Making Every Contact Count \(MECC\) | Health Education England \(hee.nhs.uk\)](https://www.hee.nhs.uk/making-every-contact-count) principles into their ‘no wrong door’ approach as part of their commitment to the BHSCP Business Plan 2023-26.



**Safer Communities – BHCC:** The key function of the service is the coordination of the Violence and Exploitation Reduction Action Plan (VERAP), ownership of BHCC's internal pathway for Modern Slavery, and attendance at BHCC's National Referral Mechanism Decision Making Panel pilot and the Adolescent Vulnerability Risk Meeting. The Safer Communities team work together with several partners including Sussex Police, the local probation, fire & rescue, police and health services, and community and voluntary sector organisations. The Exploitation Subgroup is co-Chaired by Sussex Police and Safer Communities.

**Key Achievements and Challenges of 2022-23:** The main achievement from 2022-23 would be the successful bid to the Home Office for the National Referral Mechanism Decision Making Panel as detailed on p.15.

The Key challenge would be the placement of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) in hotels by the Home Office and subsequent number of children who went missing from the hotel in Hove is hugely concerning and rightly drew significant attention from the media, politically and from the public, both locally and nationally. Safer Communities' role has been consultative, working within the local UASC network headed by Children's Services.

**Agency involvement in Partnership workstreams:** Safer Communities coordinated the Partnership response to child safeguarding concerns posed by a travelling entertainment company, following an alleged sexual assault of local a child, initially identified by the AVR. This led to the cancellation of the company's local events for 2023, enhancing the safety of the alleged victim as well as other potential victims.

**Agency Involvement in Partnership work on prevention and/or Early Help:** With funds received via the Home Office for the Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP), Safer Communities have commissioned interventions aimed at children and young people who are at risk of serious violence and exploitation. Examples include Brighton Streets (detached youthwork), Hospital Youthwork Project based in Brighton General Children's A&E, and Audio Active SHIFT mentoring.

#### **Agency contribution to BHSCP Business Plan Priorities in 2022-23:**

1. Safer Communities co-leadership of the Exploitation Subgroup and coordination of the VERAP has driven partnership engagement and accountability in this area, ensuring partners take ownership of their actions and provide meaningful attendance at meetings.
2. Safer Communities coordination of the Exploitation Subgroup and VERAP, as well as contributions to the NRM Decision Making Panel Pilot, AVR and commissioning of VRP interventions have helped driven local child safeguarding in respect of violence and exploitation.
3. Attendance at the AVR, Safer Communities have fed into case conferences/MDT meetings for vulnerable children and young people, experiencing or at risk of exploitation, during which their mental health and overall emotional wellbeing was considered.



**East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (ESFRS):** An emergency service offering prevention services to reduce fire, water and road risk. ESFRS provide educational content to children and young people including fire setting risk reduction and a safeguarding process to discharge our statutory obligations.

**Key Achievements and Challenges of 2022-23:** ESFRS have engaged with the Home Office to offer prevention advice to unaccompanied children and young people who have been accommodated under the UASC scheme. ESFRS have worked with Sussex Police to develop an awareness package including personal safety, fire, water, and road safety advice that is delivered to children and young people as they pass through the hotels. The package is delivered in person by ESFRS staff as well as by Home Office staff based in the hotels. Evidence of success can be demonstrated by an incident in Eastbourne last summer whereby three young people got into difficulties whilst swimming in the sea and were rescued by lifeguards. One youngster was resuscitated and recovered after being airlifted to a London hospital. It was the advice to swim on lifeguarded beaches these youngsters followed that made the difference and resulted in a life saved. Acknowledging this incident occurred in East Sussex, the same advice is given in the two UASC hotels in Brighton and Hove as the incident could easily have happened in the City.

Accessing children who are electively home educated (EHE) to be able to offer ESFRS range of prevention activities in the same way this can be achieved within schools and colleges. ESFRS recognise that whilst several EHE children receive sound education opportunities there will be many who have been removed from school settings for a variety of reasons and they no longer have access to our preventative messaging and lessons.

**Agency involvement in Partnership workstreams:** ESFRS has supported the development of exploitation prevention by introducing county lines and exploitation awareness in our mandatory annual safeguarding training for staff and volunteers

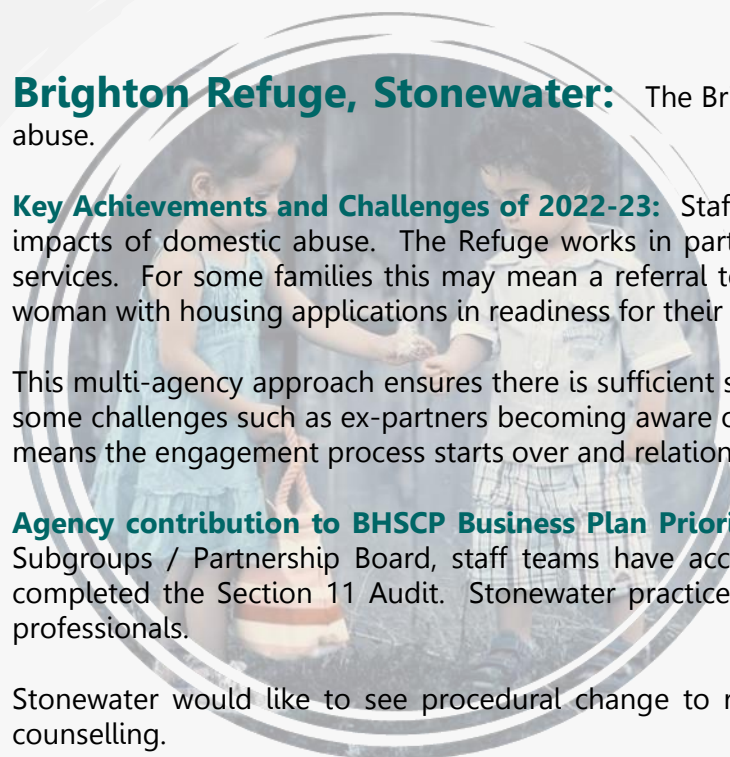
**Agency Involvement in Partnership work on prevention and/or Early Help:** ESFRS offer prevention opportunities across a wider landscape than schools, colleges and EHE to tackle emerging trends such as exploitation and deteriorating mental health and created a Youth Engagement post achieve this.

ESFRS has strengthened its engagement with CAHMS particularly in respect of fire setting behaviour which has significantly increased post-Covid. Our interventions have evolved, and staff receive additional training and support to tackle the increasing trends.

**Agency contribution to BHSCP Business Plan Priorities in 2022-23 and BHSCP Improvements for 2023-24:**

1. ESFRS has updated their internal safeguarding training content to reflect current risks; ESFRS has improved its interactions and support to local VCSE organisations such as Safety Net / Impact Initiatives.
2. Introduction of county lines and exploitation into annual safeguarding training; developed and delivered prevention to UASC migrants.
3. Closer working with community hubs and food banks to support families thereby reducing fire and other risk within homes.
4. Working more closely with CAMHS, colleges and schools to support children and young people at risk of deliberate fire setting; delivering Safety in Action to provide resilience to avoid risky situations; developing delivery of Fire Cadets with an aspiration to open a unit in Brighton & Hove.

ESFRS would like to see a focus on self-neglect in areas such as hoarding and substance misuse which are primary factors in dwelling fires which pose risks to families.



**Brighton Refuge, Stonewater:** The Brighton Refuge is a safe space providing accommodation and support for women and their children who are fleeing domestic abuse.

**Key Achievements and Challenges of 2022-23:** Staff at the Refuge have supported women and their children with the physical, financial, and the emotional and mental health impacts of domestic abuse. The Refuge works in partnership with statutory and community partners to ensure women and their children can access and engage with support services. For some families this may mean a referral to social work, liaising with schools and school allocation, and/or referrals to CAMHS. The Refuge also provides support to woman with housing applications in readiness for their Refuge license ending.

This multi-agency approach ensures there is sufficient support available to the family, whilst providing them with the opportunity to move forward. However, there have still been some challenges such as ex-partners becoming aware of their location. The family usually needs to move on to a new Refuge for their own safety and the safety of others. But this means the engagement process starts over and relationships between the family and services / key workers need to develop again.

**Agency contribution to BHSCP Business Plan Priorities in 2022-23 and Improvements for 2023-24:** Brighton Refuge, Stonewater have engaged with BHSCP by attending Subgroups / Partnership Board, staff teams have accessed training and conferences, Stonewater access and develop policy and procedure to support staff, and Stonewater completed the Section 11 Audit. Stonewater practice supports the early identification of neglect through regular room checks and positive liaison with social work and other professionals.

Stonewater would like to see procedural change to reflect the short period of time families stay at the Refuge, meaning children could be fast-tracked for support such as counselling.

**Safety Net – Impact Initiatives (SN-II):** To promote children and young people safety and well-being at home, school and in their communities through empowerment, education and support. SN-II do this through direct work with children and young people and their families as well as delivering training for professionals and organisations. At the beginning of 2023 Safety Net merged with Impact to become a key part of their Children, Young People and Families Services - carrying out vital work to help children and young people in need, providing safe places for them to live, learn and play.

**Key Achievements of 2022-23:** The merger with Impact Initiatives means the important work Safety Net has been providing over the last 27 years in Brighton and Hove will continue, and Impact initiatives is now considered a stronger organisation.

**Agency contribution to BHSCP Business Plan Priorities:** SN-II provide a valuable VCSE perspective in Partnership Board meetings and BHSCP activity. SN-II offer Early Help support to children and young people who don't reach the threshold for statutory support but experience significant mental health/wellbeing difficulties. SN-II work prevents further escalation and provides longer term support to those exiting statutory services.



**Public Health:** Commissions services that provide universal, early help and targeted support for children and young people and their parents and carers. Safeguarding children and young people and vulnerable adults is an essential part of the commissioning and delivery of those services.

**Key Achievements of 2022-23:** Supporting four CVSE commissioned services to review relevant Section 11 audit requirements. Several actions were raised and delivered on in response to the revised S11 standards including; updating of induction and safeguarding policies to incorporate professional curiosity around culture and religion; increasing the focus on Children who are Looked After in safeguarding and delivery policies and procedures.

**Agency involvement in Partnership workstreams:** The Public Health Starting Well Programme Manager is a member of the Monitoring and Evaluation Sub-Group and helped to shape the Dashboard.

**Agency Involvement in Partnership work on prevention and/or Early Help:** Public Health's focus is on prevention and early help and membership at Partnership Board, Monitoring and Evaluation and Exploitation Subgroups ensures that early help and prevention view in areas such as the ICON programme.

**Agency contribution to BHSCP Business Plan Priorities in 2022-23:**

1. Good attendance and engagement at Partnership Board and Subgroups.
2. Comprehensive response to S11 audit including support for commissioned services to meet audit standards.
3. Public Health is a key Family Hubs Transformation programme partner working to increase access to and quality of the 0-19 offer.
4. Providing additional funding for activity based groupwork interventions in the Schools Wellbeing Service. Development and delivery of guidance for schools and colleges in the event of an unexpected death

**BHSCP Improvements for 2023-24:** Making more links to adult mental health commissioning and services to develop a shared view around prioritising access to mental health services for parents and carers in need of support, to reduce the impact of parental mental ill health on children and young people.



**Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust (SPFT):** SPFT provides mental health services in Sussex which include Learning Difficulty, specialist services, forensic services and adult and child mental health services.

**Key Achievements and Challenges of 2022-23:** SPFT has completed a piece of work around Looked After Children and data collection.

This work has provided impact and analysis of our systems and interface with partners including data collection and parameters. Led by the Named Nurse for Looked After Children / Care Leavers including the development of a training proposal / plan. From a systems perspective SPFT have begun to fully appreciate the statistical data around this cohort, this is informing practice development. The ongoing challenges with recruitment to Named Dr roles for Children and Looked After Children – business case has been written.

The Anti-racist practice conference had a real impact on SPFT practice. To ensure we reviewed our clinical consultation to capture these elements and our training programmes have also been updated.



**Agency Involvement in Partnership work on prevention and/or Early Help:** The development of a Suicide Prevention Lead role, SPFT have engaged well with schools and partners.

**Agency contribution to BHSCP Business Plan Priorities in 2022-23:**

1. SPFT are fully engaged in partnership working. Not only with the Partnership Board and Subgroups but also in supporting frontline staff with escalation, multiagency meetings alongside audit and quality improvement plans.
2. SPFT have revised their exploitation policy which has included a complete update of the policy to ensure it is using appropriate language and is accessible for clinical staff
3. SPFT has a Neglect strategy which is embedded in policy, training and clinical consultation. This includes the promotion of day in the life tools, impact chronologies and multi-agency working.
4. As a mental health provider SPFT focus is to deliver mental health support and interventions



**University Hospitals Sussex**  
NHS Foundation Trust

**University Hospitals Sussex (UHSx):** Agency Safeguarding functions include identification and response to child safeguarding concerns for all children who have contact with UHSx services. This includes:

- Accident & emergency.
- Paediatric Inpatient, Paediatric Outpatient.
- Looked After Children services in Worthing.
- Child Protection medical service.
- Sexual health services.
- Adult services who see children or where there are concerns about parents – Think Family.
- Staff members where there are allegations in relation to their work with children inside or outside of the work environment.

**Key Achievements and Challenges in 2022-23:** The merger of child safeguarding teams across the Trust has improved processes and enhanced team working which included training in safeguarding supervision. The team is more cohesive and has better communication across the Trust and is now able to support delivery of a multi-disciplinary team (MDT) supervision model for specialist and ward-based teams.

Ongoing challenge to support children and young people with mental ill-health and in distress. Keeping a child at high-risk for self-harm on a paediatric ward or in the Emergency Department is extremely challenging. The lack of community and inpatient provision for children waiting for a care or Mental Health placement is increasingly difficult to manage safely in the acute setting. Of particular concern are children and young people who have autism or who are waiting for an assessment and who have an overlying mental health presentation.



### Agency contribution to BHSCP Business Plan Priorities in 2022-23:

1. Full engagement with subgroups. Development of NHS Sussex ICB reporting agreement to be shared with Partnerships. I CB attendance at safeguarding committee providing assurance.
2. Identification and response to children at risk of exploitation with particular focus on the emergency department. Inclusion of risk, identification and response incorporated in training offer. Youth worker post working with emergency department and wards to identify / work with young people at risk of exploitation.
3. Incorporated in training programme. Supervision with MDTs with a focus on identifying neglect, with a particular focus on services such as dentistry.
4. Extensive work with mental health liaison teams in the hospitals to support large numbers of children with mental ill-health on the wards. Ongoing development of care planning agreements and a review of mental health assessment processes. Looking at safety on the wards and in the emergency department, the skills of the paediatric workforce including additional training and supervision, the role of enhanced care support workers and the use of de-escalation techniques.

**Sussex Community Foundation Trust (SCFT)** – Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust (SCFT) serves a wide geographical area which includes, West Sussex, Brighton & Hove, and High Weald, Lewes and Havens, and provides health services in the community to both adults and children. SCFT is committed to the promotion of the welfare of children and the protection from abuse and neglect. SCFT offers a range of services which includes the Healthy Child Program (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.

Other services include Community Children's Nursing Team, child development services and therapists such as physio, audiology and occupational therapy. The Sussex wide Children's Sexual Assault Referral Centre (CSARC) is operationally managed by a SCFT Consultant Community Paediatrician and nursing service delivered by the Looked After Children nursing team.



**Agency Involvement in Partnership work on prevention and/or Early Help:** Safeguarding is a fundamental part of SCFT recruitment process, ensuring appropriate checks are in place to ensure all staff are employed within SCFT services to contribute to the delivery of excellent care within the community. All staff have access to mandatory and statutory safeguarding training for adults and children appropriate to their role and position within the Trust including higher-level training for those in specialist roles.

SCFT has a safeguarding team which provides specialist advice for both adults and children across all services and supports staff to recognise signs of abuse and how to report it. The Trust works effectively with all safeguarding partnerships to ensure a multi-disciplinary and cross agency approach.

The safeguarding team works closely with new service developments to ensure they provide high quality and effective health services. The team is part of a Quality and Safety Department, which enables close working both with specialist safety teams and clinical staff. This ensures they focus on learning for improvement and strengthens their personalised approach to safeguarding.

**Employability Skills and Employment Service:** This local authority-based service covers two key areas for children and young people in the city -

**Youth Employability:** This team tracks every Yr12 & Yr13 (16-17yrs old) to record their current education, employment, training situation (EET) or if they're not in EET. The team offer support, provide home visits and make appropriate referrals to FDfF.

**Youth Employment Hub:** Provides a safe space with a five day drop in for ages 16-25yrs. Works with external partners to encourage engagement, wellbeing and youth voice.

**Key Achievements in 2022-23:** All teams are more professionally curious and able to ask uncomfortable questions, professionally challenge and report concerns. This can be evidenced by an increase of concerns reported by advisers to management, which have ranged from reporting children (siblings) missing in education, safety planning, reporting domestic violence, exploitation, to something doesn't feel right and more investigation is needed. Specific examples include being able to advocate for support through Kinship care, alerting FDfF to siblings who needed to claim asylum, reporting coercion and allegations of violence.

**Agency involvement in Partnership workstreams:** Employability have embedded safeguarding into processes and practice, and the Section 11 Audit is used as a continuous development and assessment tool within their service. Skills & Employment has brought 16-18yrs networks together and created a new Pastoral network – engagement has been excellent, and examples of actions include a co-produced transition support document and Sussex Police sharing missing persons information to colleges through the Employability Service.

The service has contributed to all BHSCP priorities through projects, working closely with the FDfF Education Officer and Designated Safeguarding Leads attending BHSCP training with education colleagues.

**Education and Virtual School:** The role of this service is to support the educational achievement of children in care, children previously in care and children with a social worker.

**Key Achievements and Challenges in 2022-23:** Every child in care (CiC) had personal education plan (PEP) completed within the time frame. This means that every CiC has a coherent plan around their education, with interventions in place to support attendance and progress. Persistent absence levels dropped by 10% during this time frame - compared to the previous academic year. However, the children who are severely absent continue to pose challenges for the service.

**Agency involvement in Partnership workstreams:** Virtual School developed an escalation process for children with an Education, Health, Care Plan (EHCP), who are placed outside the authority and experience delay in securing a school place.

#### **Agency contribution to BHSCP Business Plan Priorities in 2022-23:**

1. Virtual School now provides social care with data updates for CiC with a social worker and meets with social care to explore solutions to low attendance of these cohorts of children.
2. The PEP will very soon be available for foster carers to view online – this will enhance our partnership working for CiC.
3. Safeguarding is now a standing item on our team meetings – themes covered include neglect and the awareness of the GCP2 tool is discussed and championed in these meetings.
4. The Virtual School has delivered training to Designated Teachers, to help them to support children with social, emotional and mental health.



**Community Works:** Voluntary and community sector organisations operate across Tiers 1-4 from Universal Level to Specialist Services to address Acute & Chronic Need for young people in Brighton & Hove. They provide early recognition and intervention, referral to partner agencies and Front Door for Families. The large and diverse reach of charities, community groups, clubs and not for profit organisations is a cornerstone of good safeguarding practice. This is especially important where small groups connected with and represent communities of interest such as race, faith, culture and disabled people or LGBT groups. Local Community Works groups are embedded within the Brighton and Hove community.

**Key Achievements and Challenges of 2022-23:** Community Works organisations have collaborated on the rollout of ICON and the future rollout of DadPad and CoParentPad, and the dissemination and delivery of training as part of the multi-agency training programme.

Organisations report an increased complexity to referred cases. Concerns often include multiple issues (homelessness, child and adult safeguarding, hunger, drug and alcohol use, mental ill health) and often affect multiple people across families. Subsequently, safeguarding concerns are taking more of organisational capacity resulting ongoing and increasing waiting lists. The voluntary and community sector is experiencing significant negative impacts from the cost-of-living increases. These increases impact the services provided and those accessing these services. Community Works report this has significantly impacted those who are isolated from support and potentially exacerbates risk of harm to children and young people in the city.

**Agency Involvement in Partnership workstreams and work on prevention and/or Early Help:** Community Works has coordinated the input of Community Reps in local action planning and has supported Rep involvement in the Family Hubs as well as disseminating key information to the voluntary and community sector including transformation updates. Community Works is represented on the Partnership Board providing challenge and discussion in meetings i.e., raising concerns about missing unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in the city.





# Working with our Pan-Sussex Partners

**Pan-Sussex Policies and Procedures:** This Subgroup meets to co-ordinate the development of safeguarding and child protection policies, procedures and guidance used across Sussex to safeguard children and young people. The group is well attended, with all participants engaging proactively and meaningfully with policy reviews. Where possible the policy authors/practitioners are invited to the meeting to demonstrate the value and impact of working together across the Sussex footprint. The webpage is publicly accessible via [Welcome to your Pan Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures Manual | Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures Manual](#)

The group performs two key functions –

1. To review 110 Pan-Sussex safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures to ensure they are fit for purpose and support practitioners across the three Safeguarding Partnerships.
2. To disseminate key policy and procedural changes.

## Key Achievements of 2022-23:

**Criminal and sexual exploitation including serious organised crime and gangs** – In September 2021 there was a review of the following policies:

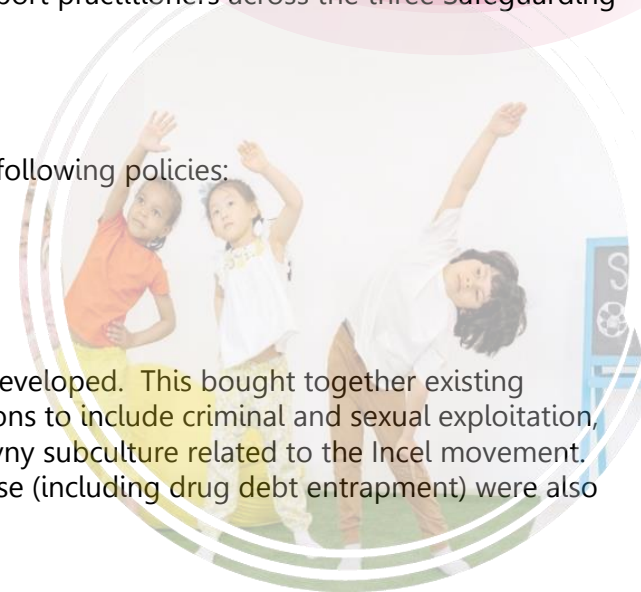
- Child victims of modern slavery and human trafficking
- Safeguarding children and young people who may be affected by gang activity
- Criminal and/or sexual exploitation
- Young people and substance misuse

As a result of these policy reviews a new policy [Criminal and sexual exploitation including serious organised crime and gangs](#) was developed. This brought together existing guidance around criminal and/or sexual exploitation with serious organised crime and gangs. The revised policy expanded definitions to include criminal and sexual exploitation, organised crime groups/gangs, adultification bias, contextual safeguarding and extra-familial harm, conspiracy theories and misogyny subculture related to the Incel movement. Cross references between associated policies relating to modern slavery and human trafficking and young people's substance misuse (including drug debt entrapment) were also made during this large-scale review.

**Responding to a potential cluster of suicides for children and young people aged under 18** – In January 2022, the group developed a Sussex-wide procedure to support professionals and agencies to respond to multiple completed child suicides. Practitioners and leaders from Children's Services, Sussex Police, Public Health and Health organisations joined together to develop the [Responding to a potential cluster of suicides for children and young people aged under 18](#) procedure which incorporates approaches informed by complex (organised and multiple) abuse investigations across the county.

## Challenges:

- The group continues to look for ways of promoting the dissemination of the [Pan Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Briefing](#) across all agencies.
- Whilst the group can see which procedures are most viewed and which search terms the most popular, further analytics from the website are limited.





**Elective Home Educated Children Audit:** During 2022 three local authority areas agreed to undertake a Sussex wide audit about Elective Home Education (EHE). This helped us to understand the potential benefits and challenges around both EHE and more broadly how partner agencies and organisations work together across a wider geographical/political footprint.

### Key Findings:

- **Effectiveness of EHE teams:** All three Sussex EHE teams were recognised as being proactive and engaged members of the child's network and contributed effectively to safeguarding processes and interventions.
- **Voice of the child and their lived experiences:** Although there was some good evidence of direct work with the child/family, the challenge of seeing a child alone or at all meant that the child's voice, and understanding of their lived experience, was missing in too many of the audited cases. Difficulties engaging a parent(s) presented a particular challenge for professionals and this was compounded by the constraints of current EHE legislation that does not require parents to engage with services around EHE.
- **Considering ethnicity and culture:** Practice in respect of equality, diversity and inclusion was variable. Good practice was noted e.g., where the child's ethnicity was considered at the start of the Strategy Discussion which put any additional needs the child may have had in relation to this, at the forefront of practice; however, this approach was inconsistent across Sussex.
- **Impact of COVID-19:** Nationally and locally the number of children who are EHE substantially increased during COVID-19. In some cases, COVID-19 was used as a reason for refusal of home visits by the EHE team. Numbers of EHE children continue to remain high, with mental health and anxiety increasingly given as reasons why a child is not able to attend a mainstream school. Longer term, local services and schools will need to consider how they are meeting the needs of these children for them to remain in school.
- **Neglect and EHE:** Professionals demonstrated variable understanding of when a safeguarding referral should be made in respect of educational neglect and/or educational neglect was not given sufficient weight within assessments and decision making. Neglect strategies and tools are being reviewed to ensure appropriate consideration of educational neglect.

### Recommendations:

1. Pan-Sussex Procedures should reflect that it is best practice for professionals to talk to children about their wishes and feelings about being electively home educated in 8.19 Elective Home Education | Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures Manual (Within 6 Months).
2. BHSCP L&D Subgroup to support the professional network to develop their understanding of EHE to include the statutory guidelines; the limitations; the local decisions of how to respond to them; the reasons why parents choose to home educate etc (Within 6 Months).
3. Police, CAMHS and Primary Care to consider adding an EHE flag to their IT systems (Within 6 Months).
4. Promote the good practice and learning for improvement from this audit in a '9 Minute Briefing' (Immediate).

### Monitoring:

All agencies were asked to complete Assurance Requests based on the findings of the Audit and the recommendations for Brighton and Hove. These were presented in several M&E meetings during 2022-23 – assurance was confirmed.

**Pan-Sussex Learning and Development Planning Group:** The function of the Pan-Sussex Learning & Development (L&D) Planning Group is to agree and co-ordinate the planning of pan-Sussex Learning and Development activity. Pan-Sussex partnerships L&D Consultants/Officers and Business/Partnership Managers bring relevant areas of discussion for pan-Sussex L&D opportunities and learning/good practice to share. The group to link into, and be referenced in, local partnership's L&D strategies and frameworks but it is not envisioned that a separate Pan-Sussex L&D strategy will be created. However, where feasible strategies and frameworks will align.

**Workstreams started in 2022-23:**

- The introduction of Supporting LGBT+ Children and Young People courses.
- The introduction of Adultification Bias courses.
- The Introduction of Supporting Trans Children and Young People courses.
- Conference preparations – planned for November 2023, theme: neglect and coexisting factors.
- Gaps analysis across Partnerships.

**Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP):** The death of a child is a devastating loss that profoundly affects all those involved. There has been a legal requirement across England since April 2008 for Child Death Overview Panels (CDOP) to review child deaths (including live-born babies of any gestation) up to the age of 18 years. The purpose for reviewing these deaths:

- Is grounded in respect for the rights of children and their families with the intention to ascertain why children die.
- To put in place interventions to protect other children, to prevent future deaths from occurring.

**Child Death Review Partners:** Pan-Sussex Local Authorities and Integrated Care Boards (NHS Sussex ICB) hold legal responsibility for reviewing child deaths in Sussex as set out by the Children Act 2004, amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

**Role of the CDOP:** The Panel conducts statutory reviews on behalf of the Partners to provide independent multi-agency scrutiny for the deaths of all children in Sussex including those resident in Brighton and Hove. The reviews take place once all other child death processes, including coronial inquests and safeguard practice reviews (LCSPR), have concluded.

**Statutory Framework:** Child Death Review Statutory and Operational Guidance 2018 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.



## Summary of Reviews:

The Pan-Sussex CDOP held 21 meetings in 2022-23 – 11 main panels and 10 neonatal\* themed meetings. The CDOP held 6 panel relating to completed suicide/self-harm, malignancy (cancer), epilepsy, learning disability, and sudden infant death. The CDOP was notified of 71 deaths of children resident in Sussex in 2022-23. This is lower than in 2021/22 but higher than in 2020/21, the year with lowest child mortality on record within England.

In 2022-23 the CDOP reviewed 81 deaths – 13 in Brighton and Hove, 23 in East Sussex, and 45 in West Sussex. Pooled data over an extended period indicates the largest category of death used by CDOP is perinatal/neonatal event (37% for Sussex and 33% for England). This is followed by chromosomal, genetic and congenital anomalies (21% for Sussex, 26% for England). Cancers are the third highest cause of death (10% for Sussex, 8% for England). Modifiable factors were identified in 27% of deaths reviewed in 2022-23, this represents a decrease from 2021-22 where 44% of deaths included the identification of modifiable factors. Children are most at risk of death within the first 12 months, with over 50% of all deaths notified to the CDOP being infants under one year.

*\*neonatal – refers to a newborn baby in the first 28 days of life.*

**Cases of SIDS reviewed by the Pan-Sussex CDOP:** Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the unexpected and sudden death of a child aged under one year, where investigation has not established a cause of death.

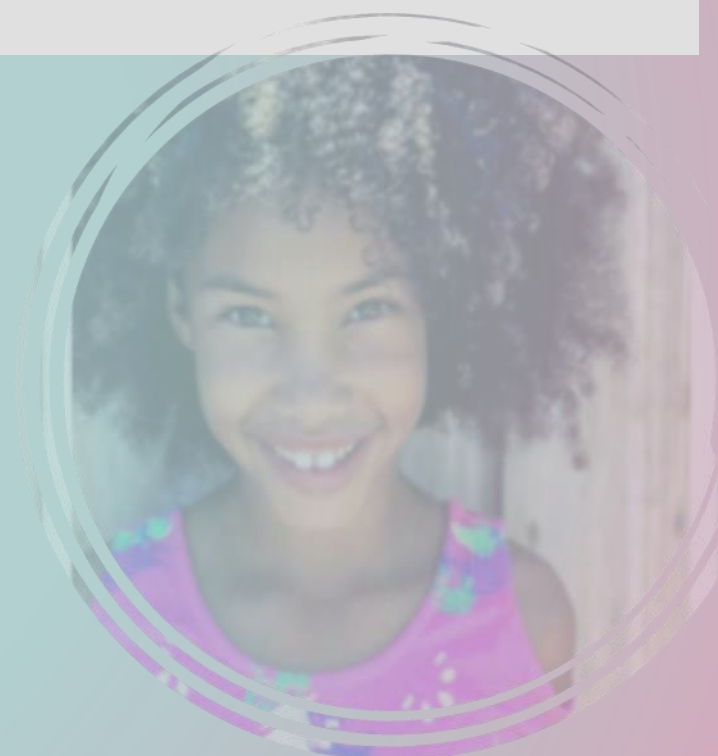
A thematic report produced by the National Child Mortality Database (Dec 2022) identified several modifiable factors that may help to prevent SIDS deaths including unsafe sleeping arrangements, smoking and parental alcohol/substance misuse. The cases reviewed by the Pan-Sussex CDOP identified similar factors and themes.

### Key Functions of the CDOP and the interface with the BHSCP:

- To collect, collate and analyse the information obtained about each child death to confirm or clarify the cause of death, to determine any contributory factors, to determine whether the death was modifiable, and to identify learning arising from the child death review process that may prevent future child deaths.
- To make recommendations to all relevant organisations where actions have been identified which may prevent future child deaths or promote the health, safety and wellbeing of children.
- To produce an annual report for child death review partners on local patterns and trends in child deaths, any lessons learnt, and actions taken, and the effectiveness of the wider child death review process.
- To contribute to local, regional and national initiatives to improve learning from child death reviews including, where appropriate, approved research carried out within the requirements of data protection.

*Child Death Overview Panel Annual Report 2022-23*

For more information about the CDOP and published CDOP Annual Reports - [Child Death Overview Panel \(CDOP\) - Sussex Health and Care \(ics.nhs.uk\)](https://www.ics.nhs.uk)





# Future Planning

## **Partnership Arrangements –**

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 has been reviewed with consultation from 21 June – 6 September 2023. The Partnership will need to consider how any changes will affect the current arrangements for 2023-24.

## **DadPad and CoParentPad –**

The Partnership Business Team will be releasing communications throughout September and October to all agencies and via the BHSCP website and social media. Practitioner training will take place in September and October 2023, and the launch in November as part of BHSCP Safeguarding Week 2023.

## **Learning and Development –**

Planning and delivery of the Pan-Sussex Neglect Conference on 29 November 2023.

Development of Learning and Development Strategy linked to full Training Needs Analysis.

Ongoing development of the GCP2 programme through the GCP2 Steering Group and Champions.

Promotion of SUDI and Safer Sleep multi-agency training to ensure parents and carers receive the correct advice from all practitioners.

Review of Pan-Sussex Suicide Prevention training offer.

Development of enhanced neglect and GCP2 training to be developed and delivered for Sussex Police officers.

Development of additional courses – including exploitation, Harmful Sexual Behaviours, Cultural Competence, and Suicide Prevention.

## **Harmful Sexual Behaviours in Education –**

Roll out of '*Patterns and Progress Pilot*' to 10 secondary schools in partnership with the Trust for Developing Communities (TDC) and YMCA Downlink Group / WiSE.

Roll out of '*Support on Harmful Sexual Behaviour Project*' in Brighton & Hove's Special Schools in partnership with TDC and YMCA Downlink Group / WiSE.

Embed the recommendations of the Harmful Sexual Behaviour Response and Recognition Group report 2021-23

## **Policy & Procedures –**

Review of Threshold Document and Early Help Strategy.

Information Sharing Agreement ratified by statutory leads and embedded into practice across all partners.

Use of standardised LCSPR documents (Pan-Sussex) to become practice.

## **Business Team –**

Website refresh and update.

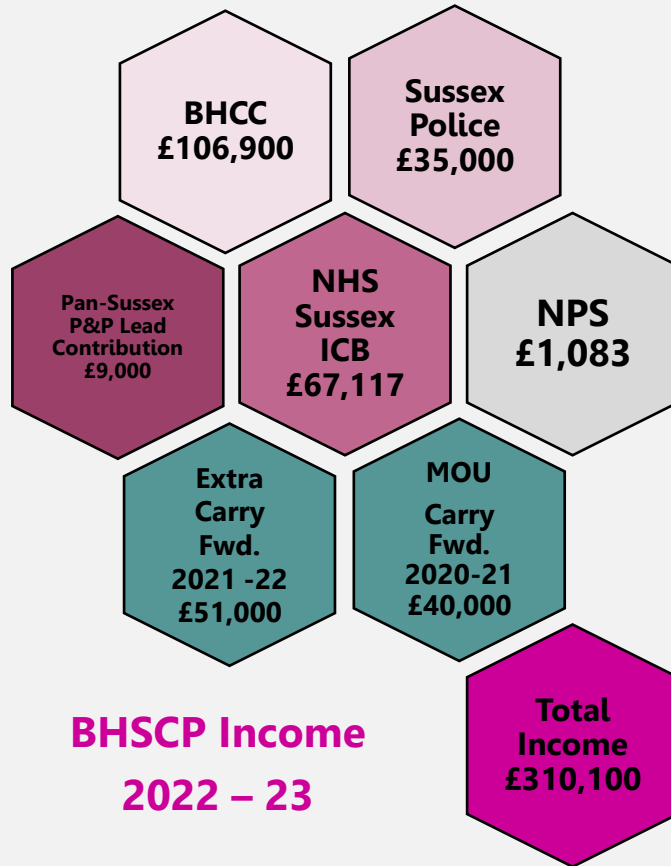
Publication of Business Plan 2023-26.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation –**

Further development of the Dashboard.



# Finance Report 2022 - 23



## BHSCP Expenditure – Headline Costs 2022 – 23

Staffing	£112,694.66
Independent Scrutiny	£13,344.67
Training including Safeguarding Week 2022 workshops	£13,709.13
Anti-Racist Practice Conference	£8,738.00
Learning Reviews	£16,515.00
IT/Equipment/Resources	£3,010.11
DadPad and CoParentPad App (Licences, hardcopy, and Pre-Launch Event)	£17,700.00
Miscellaneous Costs	£950.00
Consultancy Costs	£12,696.04
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£199,357.61</b>
MOU Carry Forward to 2023 – 24	£45,000.00
Additional allocated funding to be carried forward to 2023 - 24 as agreed by Steering Group	£65,742.39
<b>Total Expenditure including carry forwards</b>	<b>£310,100.00</b>



# Acknowledgements

**Lead Partners**

**Independent Scrutineer  
Subgroup Chairs**

**Partnership Business Manager  
Learning and Development Officer  
Partnership Coordinators  
Agency Leads**

Deb Austin, Naomi Ellis, Chief Supt  
James Collis  
Chris Robson  
Rachel Egan, Justin Grantham, Jenny  
Whyte, Jo Player, DCI Luke Kyriakides-  
Yeldham, and Emma Gilbert  
Sarah Smart  
Tom Edwards  
Daisy Piatt and Nicky Packham  
Mia Bryden, Tom Bennett, Rebecca  
Butler, David Kemp, Jo Templeman, Sarah  
Colombo, Jennifer Tulloch, Eleanor  
Gregory, Russell Hite, Martin Ryan, Laura  
Litchfield, DCI Jon Gillings, Sam Page, Jo  
Gough, Michael Newman, and Sam  
Wilson



# References and Useful Links

Population data	<a href="http://www.bhconnected.org.uk/content/needs-assessments">http://www.bhconnected.org.uk/content/needs-assessments</a>
Latest BHSCP Business Plan	<a href="#">A better Brighton &amp; Hove for all - the council's new plan for the city (brighton-hove.gov.uk)</a>
NSPCC resource	<a href="#">Business Plan and Strategies - BHSCP</a>
Mental Health resources	<a href="#">Neglect is also Child Abuse: Know All About It   NSPCC</a>
Mental Health resources	<a href="#">Schools Mental Health &amp; Wellbeing (BHISS)Resources   BEEM</a>
Mental Health resources	<a href="#">new suite of self-harm information</a>
The Wood Review 2021 - Child Safeguarding Review Panel	<a href="#">Grassroots</a>
Working Together 2018 - Child Safeguarding Review Panel	<a href="#">Wood Review of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (publishing.service.gov.uk)</a>
BHSCP online statement	<a href="#">Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>
DadPad App	<a href="#">BHSCP statement - Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) Scrutiny Paper - BHSCP</a>
CoParentPad	<a href="#">DadPad   The Essential Guide for New Dads   Support Guide for New Dads (thedadpad.co.uk)</a>
Child Delta LCSPR Report	<a href="#">Co-ParentPad Launch   Support for new parents (thedadpad.co.uk)</a>
National Review Report – Star and Arthur	<a href="#">Lead-Partner-FINAL-REPORT-02.11.22-v4.pdf (bhscp.org.uk)</a>
National Review (CHSCP) – Child Q	<a href="#">National review into the murders of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>
Professionals link	<a href="#">Child-Q-PUBLISHED-14-March-22.pdf (chscp.org.uk)</a>
ARP Statement online	<a href="#">Practice Points - BHSCP.</a>
Child Safeguarding Review Panel	<a href="#">Brighton &amp; Hove Safeguarding Children's Partnership Anti Racist Practice Statement – BHSCP</a>
Child Safeguarding Review Panel	<a href="#">Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>
Healthcare and Social Care – MECC	<a href="#">The Child Safeguarding Annual Report 2020 (publishing.service.gov.uk)</a>
Pan-Sussex Procedures website for professionals	<a href="#">Making Every Contact Count (MECC)   Health Education England (hee.nhs.uk)</a>
Child Death Overview Panel	<a href="#">Welcome to your Pan Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures Manual   Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures Manual</a>
JTAI	<a href="#">Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) - Sussex Health and Care (ics.nhs.uk)</a>
	<a href="#">Joint targeted area inspection of the multi-agency response to children and families who need help - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>

# BHSCP Website Information



BHSCP Website

[www.bhscp.co.uk](http://www.bhscp.co.uk)



BHSCP Training

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