

THE NEWHAM SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP

ANNUAL REPORT APRIL 2022 - MARCH 2023



We are committed to ensuring that vulnerable children and families in Newham are provided with high quality support and protection to achieve the best possible outcomes.

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1. PURPOSE OF THE ANNUAL REPORT

In order to bring transparency for children, families and all practitioners about the activity undertaken, local safeguarding partners must publish a report at least once in every twelve-month period. The report must set out what they have done as a result of the arrangements, including on Local Safeguarding Child Practice Reviews (LSCPR), and how effective these arrangements have been in practice. (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018). In addition, the report should also include:

- Evidence of the impact of the work of the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies, including training, on outcomes for children and families from early help to children in care and care leavers.
- An analysis of any areas where there has been little or no evidence of progress on agreed priorities.
- A record of decisions and actions taken by the partners in the report's period (or planned to be taken) to implement the recommendations of any local and national SCPR, including any resulting improvements.
- Ways in which the partners have sought and utilised feedback from children and families to inform their work and influence service provision.

This report details the progress made by the Newham Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) over the period April 2022 to March 2023 in achieving its priorities and the outcome of any recommendations contained in the 2021/2022 report.



2. THE PARTNERSHIP

The defined safeguarding partners are Newham Council, NHS North East London (NEL) Health and Care Partnership and the Metropolitan Police through their Basic Command Unit in charge of local policing in Newham. Most services operate within the geographical boundaries of the London Borough of Newham, while NHS NEL cover several East London boroughs and the Metropolitan Police operate London-wide. Under arrangements published in September 2019, the three statutory partners have a joint responsibility for child safeguarding in Newham. In Newham, the partners decided that education services would be the fourth partner and would have equal status in all of the arrangements, given their importance to the developing lives of children and young people and how they are kept safe.

An Executive oversees and drives forward multi-agency child safeguarding in Newham. This meets every two months and holds partners to account through a 'high support, high challenge' culture. The main functions of the Executive are to:

- Agree annual priorities for the Partnership and review progress through scrutiny of the business plan
- Hold partners to account through scrutiny of key performance data, the analysis of local issues and what is being done about them and operating a 'golden thread' culture between the Executive and the front line of local agencies so that issues on the ground can be subject to scrutiny and trouble shooting
- Be themselves held to account by the Independent Chair who will with the statutory partners be responsible for driving forward change and service improvements in Newham.
- Allocate resources and funding, including setting the annual budget of the Partnership

The Independent Chair, Julia Stephens-Row was appointed in 2019.



3. OUR VALUES

We are committed to ensuring that vulnerable children and families in Newham are provided with high quality support and protection and achieve the best possible outcomes. The business plan for 2020/23 reflects the priorities that have continued from the priority-setting event in February 2020, in addition to new priorities that have arisen in the last year (both non-Covid and Covid related). Data, Rapid Reviews, Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and their associated learning, the knowledge and expertise of professionals and the views of children and young people, inform it.

The Business Plan is reviewed annually and actions are monitored regularly by the NSCP Executive.

Vision

Making the best place for children and young people. All young people in Newham will:

- Grow up healthy, happy and safe
- Flourish in our schools
- Benefit from training and employment opportunities
- Play an active role in our community

Objectives

- To coordinate what is done by each agency to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each agency and by agencies working together



Underpinning principles

- Think Family
- That Newham is a trauma-informed borough (led by Health and Wellbeing Board)
- A focus on mitigating the impact of Adverse Childhood Experience (led by Health and Wellbeing Board)
- The NSCP aims to be a mature, high trust partnership in which conflicts are resolved through conversation. This means
 - A culture of early identification and referral to partner agencies
 - Open and transparent dialogue between partner agencies
 - Respect
 - Handling disagreements through conversation which seek to arrive at a joint understanding
 - No weak link in the 'professional supply chain' to safeguarding children.

4. GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

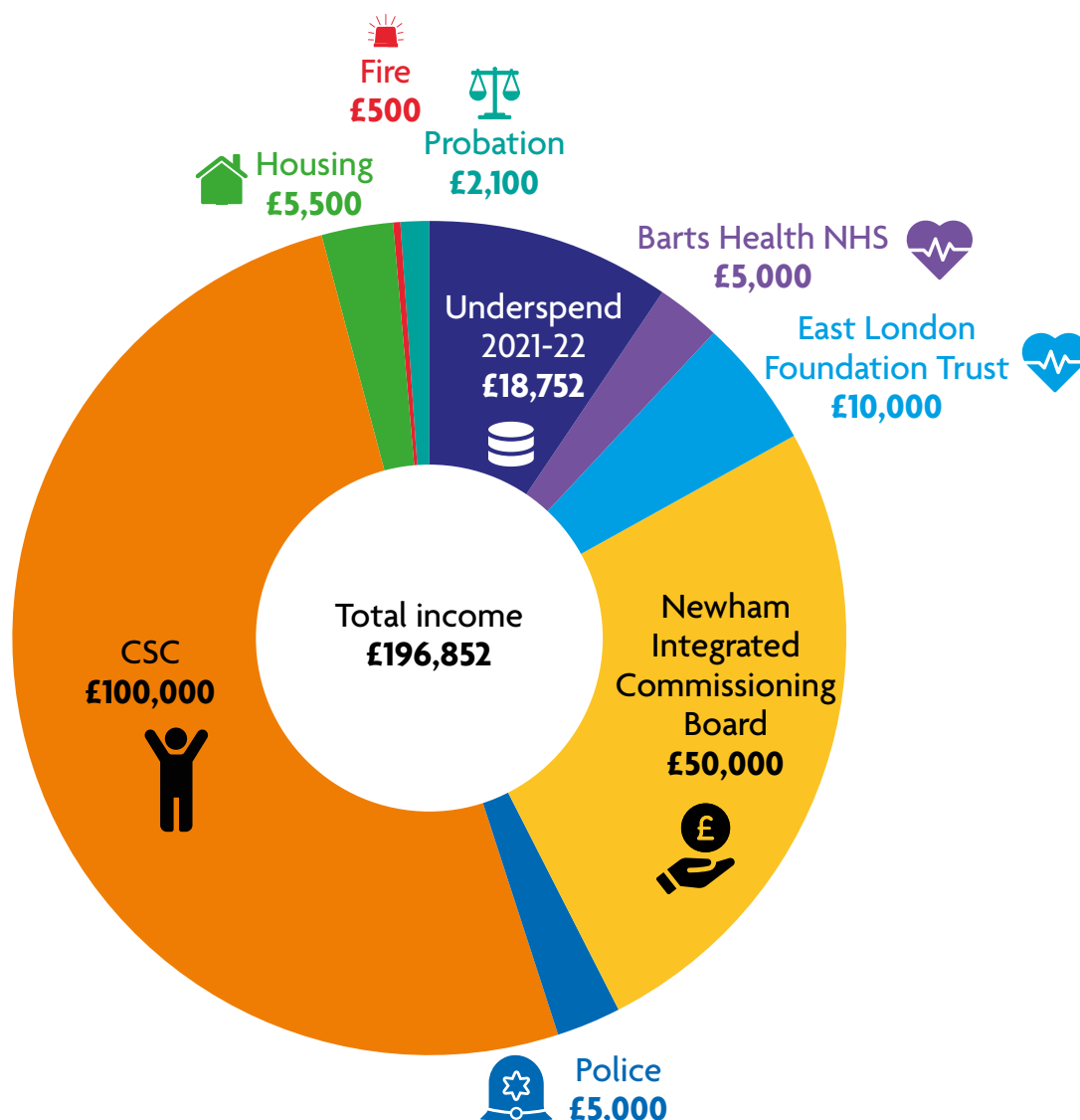
As well as the Executive there are four sub-groups: the Performance Quality Assurance (PQA) group; the Safeguarding Children Practice Review (SCPR) group; the Safeguarding in Education Reference Group and a Safeguarding Workforce Development group that was established in late 2022. In addition, there are two task and finish groups working jointly with the Safeguarding Adult Board (SAB), one focusing on All Age Exploitation and the other on Safeguarding Transitions across services. Further details, including the membership and terms of reference of partnership groups can be found in the NSCP published arrangements on its website www.newhamscp.org.uk. These arrangements will be reviewed late in 2023 in the light of the any changes following the Working Together consultation, which is currently taking place.

Executive Members and Chairs of Sub-Groups and Task and Finish Groups at July 2023

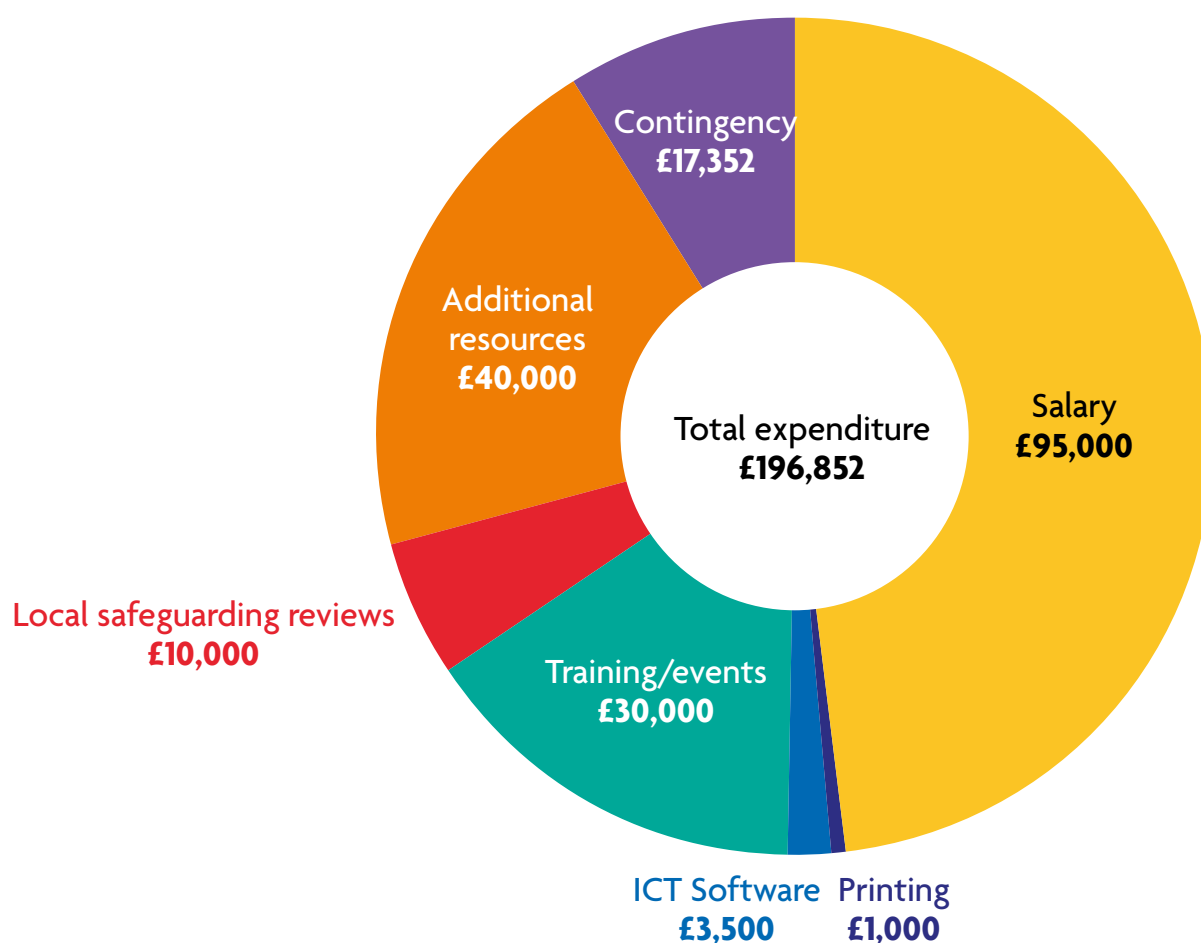


5. BUDGET AND RESOURCES

Each of the local safeguarding partners contributes to the NSCP budget as well as offering their time and expertise to the activities of the partnership. These activities include participating in meetings; multi-agency audits and child safeguarding reviews; delivering training and ensuring the roll out of key learning and messages. The commitment, contribution and engagement of partners in supporting child safeguarding in Newham is acknowledged and valued.



Income source 2022/23	Amount	Comment
Carry over from 2021/22	£18,752	Underspend from previous year
Barts Health NHS	£5,000	
East London Foundation Trust	£10,000	
Newham Integrated Commissioning Board	£50,000	
Police	£5,000	
CSC	£100,000	
Housing	£5,500	
Fire	£500	
Probation	£2,100	Increased from £1000
Total	£196,852	



Expenditure 2022/23	Full Year Budget	Year End Spend	+/-
Salary	£95,000	£98,727	+3,727
Printing	£1,000	£20	-980
ICT software	£3,500	£2,700	-800
Training/ events	£30,000	£28,800	-1,200
Local safeguarding reviews	£10,000	£9,825	-175
Additional resources	£40,000	£40,000	£40,000
Contingency	£17,352	£4,971	-12,381
Total	£196,852	£185,043	-11,809

Salary costs are related to the Business Office Manager, part time Training Officer and Independent Chair. Newham Council meets the cost of the business support and the performance data functions for the partnership. In 2022/23, two independent authors for local child safeguarding practice reviews were commissioned from external sources. The additional resource cost is related to the retention of a part time resource deemed as business critical due to insufficient capacity to cover all safeguarding reviews and for completion of the annual report. A contingency fund has been built into the budget to cover costs in the event of the requirement for spend on additional reviews.

For 2023/24, the partners have agreed to increase the capacity and impact of the NSCP Business function. The role of the Service Manager has been re-instated for 2023/24 and will be funded by Newham CYPS and further support is being sought both in kind and financially from partners.

6. NEWHAM AT A GLANCE

Child Population

There are more than **90,000** children and young people living in Newham who make up **24.4%** of the borough's population.



27,217 children are aged 0-4 years and **58,851** are aged 5-17 years. In 2020, there were **3,800** new births, the highest recorded number in London.

Newham supports approximately **3,000** children with an Education Health and Care Plan as at the end of summer term 2023.

Diversity

Seven in ten residents come from a Black and Global Majority (BGM) background: **45.4%** are from an Asian background; **27.6%** from a White background; **17.8%** from a Black background; 5% from a Mixed Background and **4.1%** from Other Background.



Over **200** languages are spoken. **58.6%** residents speak English as their first language and after English, Bengali, Urdu and Gujarati are the main three languages spoken in the borough. **42%** of residents identify as Christian; **32%** as Muslim; **8.8%** as Hindu and **2.1%** as Sikh.

Deprivation and Poverty

While Newham is moving in a positive direction, it is still within the **10%** most deprived boroughs in the country. **50.3%** of children live in poverty, the second highest in the UK.



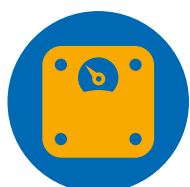
Housing

Newham has one of the most severe affordable housing shortages in the UK with **28,000** people on the housing list and more than **5,500** families with children living in temporary accommodation.



Health

Child obesity is a health issue in Newham affecting **23.7%** of reception aged children and **42.7%** of Year 6 children.



The rate of obesity for Year 6 children is significantly higher than for London (37.9%) and England (34.3%).



For further information on the health and wellbeing of children in Newham, please refer to the Joint Strategic Needs Analysis 2021/2023. www.newham.gov.uk/downloads/file/3607/cyp-jsna-august-2021

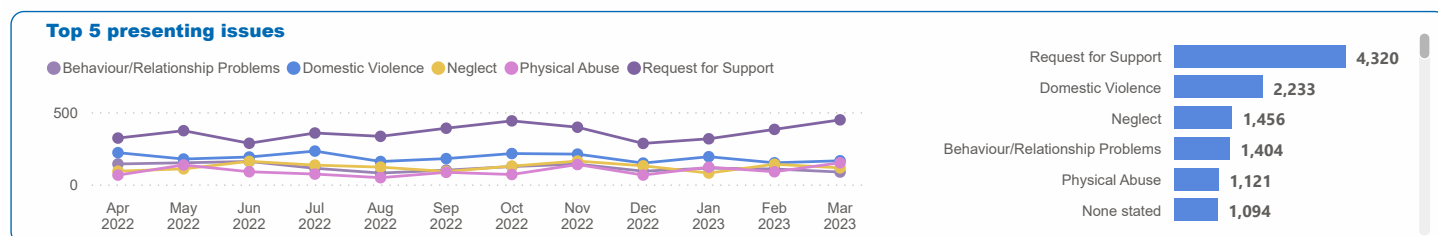
7. NEWHAM CHILD SAFEGUARDING DATA

The Newham Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) provides a single point of contact for all requests concerning support or protection for children aged 0-17 years. Parent/carers, members of the public and anyone working with children and families can refer to the MASH. https://azcareportal-live.newham.gov.uk/azriageportal/jsp_mash/admin/login.jsp.

In 2022/23, 19,114 contacts were made to the MASH. This is a similar figure to the previous year (19,315) but is a sustained rise from 2020/21, when 16,500 contacts were received. Of the contacts received this year, 24% led to a Level 1 Advice or Information outcome; 49% to an outcome for Level 2a or 2b services and 27% to an outcome for Level 3 and Level 4 statutory services. Further details are shown in the table below.

Outcome Details of Contacts	Total no.
Level 1 Advice or Information Only	4,583
Request for Information	30
Level 2a Children's Centre	1,331
Level 2a Community Health	1,213
Level 2a Domestic Violence Support Service	414
Level 2a Early Help and Support Co-coordinator	834
Level 2a FGM Support Service	70
Level 2a School Support	2,286
Level 2a Substance Misuse Service	17
Level 2a Voluntary Service	207
Level 2b Early Help - Families First	1,230
Level 2b Early Help – Parent/Carer Assessment	149
Level 2b Early Help – Young Carer Assessment	5
Level 2b Early Help – Preventing Child Exploitation Harm Hub	320
Level 2b Youth Justice Service – Targeted Support	43
Level 3 Children's Social Care – Child in Need	3,843
Level 3 Youth Justice Service – Statutory Intervention	49
Level 4 – Children's Social Care – Child Protection	1,341

The next table shows the top 5 presenting issues stated in the contacts made to the MASH.



Children in Need, Child Protection and Children in Care

Of the 19,114 contacts, 5,158 (26.9%) went onto become referrals. A contact is progressed to a referral when it is determined that an assessment and/or services may be required for a Child in Need, under Section 17 Children Act 1989, which is a statutory intervention. In March 2023, there were 3,415 children receiving a Child in Need intervention compared to 3,181 at the start of the year. The number of children with a Child Protection Plan, increased from 258 in April 2022 to 295 in March 2023. In March 2023, 9% of the children on Child Protection Plans were subject to a plan for the second or subsequent time. This is a good performance and shows that most Child Protection Plans are improving outcomes for children. The number of Children in Care has remained stable with 413 children in March 2023 compared to 418 children in April 2022 although the profile of Children in care has changed with less Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children being in our care as of March 2023.



8. PROGRESS AGAINST OUR PRIORITIES

8.1 All age exploitation - joint with Newham Safeguarding Adults Board (NSAB)



We will co-ordinate and drive forward multi-agency programmes and interventions in Newham

which combat exploitation in all its forms e.g. financial abuse, modern slavery, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and radicalisation. By raising awareness and making the borough a safer place to live.

The All Age Exploitation partnership meetings are driving improvement in the support we provide to children who have been groomed into joining “County Lines” drug retailing operations and other forms of exploitation. The group also focuses on exploring opportunities to successfully disrupt and prosecute the criminal networks that benefit for these crimes.

IMPACT:

- Increased the use of the National Referral Mechanism which is the framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support.
- The four most recent Rapid Reviews following incidents of extra-familial harm show increased professional recognition of child exploitation and the use of screening tools. The single integrated exploitation pathway is being used and is embedded.
- A Borough-based Intelligence and Information Sharing Partnership meets three times a week to screen and research individual referrals and determine the most appropriate pathway for the child or young adult of concern. As well as discussing the individual, location, space and contextual information is all explored. This is building up knowledge over time, across the borough and between boroughs to help to reduce harm.
- Those working in Newham have access to a comprehensive child exploitation training programme attended by 250 people in the last year. There was a recommendation in the previous year’s report to complete an evaluation of this training. Due to limited capacity it was not possible to do this, however the impact reported by some training delegates, on what they found most useful was captured with some extracts below.

“Being encouraged to have a more open approach around girls and gangs/ county lines”

“A focus on trauma and how fears and anxieties are expressed through their behaviour”

“Understanding about adultification and its impact on children and adolescents”



A Task and Finish group has been established to drive forward the Modern Day Slavery Action plan. Cuckooing (a form of action, in which the home of a vulnerable person is taken over by a criminal in order to use it to deal, store or take drugs; facilitate sex work; as a place to live; or to financially abuse the tenant) has also been identified as a priority area for 2023/26.

The Newham Prevent team works to protect those who are vulnerable to radicalisation and supporting terrorism or violent extremism from those who seek to recruit people to support their cause. The team commission a number of external providers to deliver Prevent based projects in Newham to children, young people and adults.

IMPACT:

- Increase in the training offer to professionals with a growth in the number of sessions offered to designated safeguarding leads and schools.
- Pupil Full-Day Workshops, Assemblies, and Specialist Staff Sessions, delivered in 24 schools have reached 1285 people.
- The team engage with Education to approach supplementary school settings in the borough to support their training needs.

We have taken on board the learning from the Child Q local safeguarding review (Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership). This highlighted adultification, as a form of discrimination against black children and adolescents, and in line with a previous year's recommendation, our partnership is challenging any evidence of practice and policy that works against achieving best outcomes for children.

8.2 Children and Young People in Newham Want to Feel Safe



Through the Adolescent Exploitation Strategy, the NSCP is aligned with and supports the delivery of the priorities and activities of the Youth Safety Board. Our approach is to be relentless in our pursuit of safety for young people. Therefore, it is important to not just make sure we are providing the right services to young people, but that we are also improving the system overall and changing things that will make Newham better in the long term.

Impact of the Adolescent Exploitation Strategy:

“Professionals identify exploitation risks for children well. The referral pathway is clear and statutory interventions are used appropriately when risks increase. A range of panels share intelligence and consider diversion and disruption tactics. Engagement with the right multi-agency

partners is achieving a good, shared understanding of exploitation risks across the borough. Workers consider the Inspection of Newham local authority children’s services 18 to 29 July 2022 5 impact of past trauma and work together to deliver focused action and plans to safeguard children and young people.” Ofsted Inspection of LBN Children’s Services, July 2022.

A comprehensive, internal review of the Youth Safety Plan in November 2022, highlighted that progress has been made in the following key areas:

- Better and more sophisticated use of data, soft intelligence and information that is being shared across different parts of the system to inform a joined up service offer to vulnerable children, young adults and families. Data is now presented in a Crime and Youth Safety Dashboard to the Youth Safety Partnership Board.
- Design and implementation of a single multi-agency pathway for referral, assessment, planning and review to tackle child exploitation and violence.
- Improved partnership delivery with Police, Probation, Health, Youth Justice, Youth Empowerment Service, Community Safety, Housing, Adult Social Care, Schools and communities on place based services and intelligence working to create safer communities .
- Capturing the voices of children and young adults and demonstrating the importance of their voices being heard, listened, and responded to in shaping policies, service design and pathways that have a long-lasting legacy.

Children and young people on the Participation and Engagement Programme provided their feedback below.

“I’ve been given lots of tools around feelings & behaviours that I can access. I was supported to join the debate team at school and was given great feedback on my public speaking and knowledge topics.”

“We have spoken about social justice in our meetings. We have explored youth voice forums outside my school, which allows me to say about what crime looks like in London and provides my ideas on how to tackle this positively. I’m excited to explore this more”.



Children and young people have said that they want more proactive crime reducing measures put in place across the borough such as metal detectors, community support and policing to prevent and reduce knife crime. Children and Young Peoples Services will continue to work actively with Education colleagues the Police, Community Safety, the Voluntary Community and Faith Sector and other partners to support the necessary plans and changes to improve safety in the local community.

One of the priorities in the Youth Safety Plan for 2023/25 is to conduct deeper research into the journeys and experiences of specific groups and communities in Newham to ensure that we are giving the best support. Aligned with this priority, the NSCP will be carrying out a thematic safeguarding review of children that have been involved in serious safeguarding incidents characterised by extra-familial harm. This learning from this review will give us a better understanding of the causes and effects of vulnerability that impact on exploitation and youth safety.

8.3 Transitions – Joint Priority with Newham Safeguarding Adults Board



We will empower vulnerable young people to move from child to adulthood in a safe and positive way, supported by their families focusing on Care leavers; children with learning disabilities and special educational needs; those experiencing difficulties with mental health and young parents.

Significant work is being undertaken in the local partnership to improve support for children and families with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The Local Area is subject to an improvement plan and is working closely with the Department For education to deliver services that are inclusive and supportive and improve children's outcomes.

The London Borough of Newham (LBN) Transitions Programme Project has to date focused specifically on the pathways for people who receive care and support from CYPS Social Care and Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and who will continue to need support under the Care Act, and people who receive care from CYPS social care and are 'on the edge' of needing services under the Care Act or who are likely to be referred under our Safeguarding Policy. Part of the challenge in relation to transition planning has been the need to resolve and improve some LBN internal processes and practices related to the effective co-ordination between CYPS, SEND and Adult Social Care.

The Transitions Board began meeting in December 2022 and their work will continue in 2023/24 with an additional work stream for Transitional Safeguarding. Within the next stage of the project, the Transitions Board will aim to become fully multi-agency in approach, and co-produce key pieces of work with young people and their families. From September 2023, the Project Board will be merging with the Preparation for Adulthood Board to become a

multi-agency partnership forum and this will continue to enhance and develop our collective response. Safeguarding will be both implicit and explicit in the terms of reference and programme plan for this board.

IMPACT:

The Transitions Board has been effective in addressing key areas of practice, process and planning for children, in order to make the transfer of arrangements in respect of care, support and safeguarding as seamless as possible. The Board has been effective in joining together a shared sense of purpose and in providing clarity and guidance in respect of systems and processes that enable children, young people and their families to be consistently maintained and responded to in the transfer of arrangements and between teams.

The recommendations in the previous year's report either have been completed or are being progressed within the current work plan.

The work and learning from the board has highlighted some key groups where decision-making and wider support services are required in order to facilitate improved outcomes for children turning 18 years of age, particularly focusing on safeguarding for those children and young people with SEND and those who are involved with the criminal justice system.

Supporting Newham Care Leavers:

Newham's first 'step-down' accommodation, providing housing for up to 30 care leavers, opened this year as a result of a joint initiative between LBN Housing and CYPS. A previously vacant council building has been used to good effect and the young people have built a good rapport with neighbours and local residents and provided some positive feedback on the accommodation:

“The Independent Living Officer is really nice and helpful”. “The staff are very friendly”. “There is not much I would change. I really like it”.

8.4 Communication and Engagement



We will ensure that the views of children and young people, and their parents and carers, contribute to developing best practice, and that frontline staff and managers are integral to informing learning and improvement.

The previous year's recommendations in relation to communication and engagement were taken forward this year. Partners and agencies were asked to share information about their ongoing engagement with children, young people and their families and how this is influencing priority setting and decision-making. The aim of this was to provide a benchmark of progress made and to understand partner's aims and objectives for the coming 12 months. Some examples of the types of engagement taking place are provided below.

Barts Health NHS Trust

Completed a 'Voice of the Child Audit' in January 2023, which made a positive finding in 39% of cases. The voice of the child was most evident where a child and adolescent mental health assessment had been made or where a 'Home, Education, Activities, Drugs, Sex and Relationships, Self-harm and Depression, Safety and Abuse Assessment' (HEADSSS) tool had been completed. The voice of the child was less evident when a referral had been made by delegation from another practitioner. There is a need to raise awareness and support staff to engage in difficult conversations with service users, gaining their perspectives.

Children's Social Care

Routinely record the voice of the child and views of family members in their assessments and plans. Pre-meetings are held with children and families attending Child Protection conferences and reviews to ensure that their voices are heard and that they are able to participate in decisions and plans being made. It was reported that feedback from children and families increased from 23% to 50%, this year. An App called 'Mind of My Own' which aims to empower children and young people to participate in their lives and communicate their views to a trusted adult has been piloted by 11 social workers this year. Images and other



tools are used with children who use non-verbal means of communication and these are shared by the Practice Development Social Workers with all staff. There are examples of good practice and increasing confidence and skill in this area being demonstrated. For example the use of pre-Mental Capacity Act assessment being carried out with a young people, who have learning disabilities and limited ability to communicate verbally, in situations where Forced Marriage Protection Orders are required.

East London Foundation Trust

Has a strong 'Think Family' model embedded within its service. The voice of the child theme is prevalent within safeguarding children supervision and Newham practitioners have good compliance of 86% with supervision. Feedback is routinely collected following our interventions and service delivery. During assessment and admission, staff are encouraged to speak to the child and gain their perspective. ELFT has also conducted a number of events with young people, called all about me, to ensure that developments in the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) strategy are co-produced from the start.

Education

Designated Safeguarding Leads have played an active role with the NSCP and views of school staff and children have been captured and acted upon, including supporting schools with managing referrals for elective home education; developing robust anti bullying procedures and promoting child safety in an 'on and off line' space. Other areas that have been addressed include the significant increase in the use of Vapes and providing information on the health risks of these and the area of emotional health and wellbeing. Training delivered by specialist services in child adolescent mental health services has been promoted and utilised within schools. In addition, the information collected from Section 11 Audits (next audit planned for autumn 2023 Term) includes the lived experiences of pupils and staff in relation to curriculum, learning, enrichment, environment and relational safeguarding.

Met Police

Newham children and adolescents who are the victims of crime are interviewed by specially trained officers and with the assistance of independent intermediaries and appropriate adults whose role it is to facilitate communication and ensure that the voice of the child is heard and fully considered. This process also ensures that the voice is captured in an evidential format, which is crucial to ensuring those who abuse or exploit children are held to account. The needs and wishes of children who are victims of crime are at the heart to our investigations and of the criminal justice process. Only in exceptional circumstance, in cases of overwhelming public interest, would a prosecution be considered without their informed consent.

Children who come to notice in the course of all aspects of police business are recorded on the "Merlin" database and information is shared with partners through our hubs to deliver positive safeguarding outcomes. Our Child Exploitation Team work closely with our Gangs Unit and in partnership with Newham Social Services to engage with children at risk of exploitation and to offer pathways away from vulnerability. Our schools officers interact directly with children on a day-to-day basis in our educational settings and build a trust-based rapport. Our Volunteer Cadet Corps offers opportunities for children to engage positively with community-based activities and develop their skills and confidence through adventurous training.

Opportunities to conduct surveys and similar projects for children and families are being considered centrally, but are not being conducted at present.

NHS North East London Integrated Care Board NEL ICB

Designated professionals are developing a strategy for children, young people and care leavers. In order to deliver real and lasting change for care-experienced children and young people and develop policy responses that meet their needs, we wanted to understand what really matters to our children and young people across the various stages of their lives; before care, in care and after care. In the last couple of months, each place-based area in NEL has carried out various participation exercises with our target populations, engaging them in dialogue about their health needs. We are currently in the evaluation stage of this feedback. However, we are on course to meet our goal of having young people at the heart of the next strategy for children / young people and care Leavers within the NEL footprint.

Youth Empowerment Service, LBN

Work to obtain the voices of children and young people across service areas using a range of engagement methods and activities. This feedback is used to inform the annual service plan, service provision and the delivery of future work programmes. Here are some of the changes that have been made in response to their feedback:

- Increasing advocacy provision - youth workers have successfully gained qualifications in providing trauma informed advocacy that they continue to use to support children and young people accessing the service.
- Professionals showing cultural humility and an interest in their identity / ethnicity – YES have provided youth workers with Cultural Humility training to ensure that all youth workers are equipped/skilled to deliver on such practice.
- More support for the LGBTQ+ community – YES Participation Service are providing children and young people with a safe place to receive regular support in Newham in addition to signposting other support and provision across London. The service has also provided training and awareness sessions to partners.

Newham Children's Rights Advocacy Service is part of Youth Empowerment and provides independent advocacy for children and young people of all abilities and needs that have a statutory plan. The advocate can support children and young people in ensuring that their wishes and feelings are given consideration about decisions that are being made about their lives.

Engagement with staff

There are a number of ways that the partnership communicates and engages with staff and leaders to inform learning and improvement and to share good practice. Mentimeter has been a useful tool to use at events to engage attendees and capture the information exchange.

1st Friday Forum for practitioners is a platform for sharing best practice and information across the partnership that now meets bi-monthly with 25-40 professionals in attendance each time. Designated Safeguarding Leads in Education have the highest regular attendance. The programme for 2022/23 is summarised here.

Learning Events: following the lifting of Covid restrictions, the NSCP hosted three learning events. These face-to-face events enable us to seek assurance from partners that safeguarding is being embedded in their organisations and provide excellent opportunities for networking and relationship building.

May 2022 Applying the learning from our LSCPR. We were delighted to welcome Jahnine Davis from the National Child Safeguarding Panel to share learning from a national perspective. Information on the changes made to our local safeguarding system are summarised in section 5 of this report.

September 2022 Partnership Assurance Event. This event focused on Leadership and Accountability; Learning from Reviews and how the Voice of the Child is captured through the safeguarding process. We recognise that our partners are at different stages in developing their approaches and this event provided a baseline for measuring future progress. Assurance was provided that all partners had arrangements in place for induction and refresher safeguarding training and had a named lead professional for child safeguarding.

March 2023 Professional curiosity and Professional Challenge with Learning and Development Priorities. In the morning, local speakers shared best practice and current research on the topics of professional curiosity and professional challenge followed in the afternoon, by an interactive review of the Learning and Development priorities for 2023/26.

7 minute video briefings cascade the learning from our rapid reviews and local safeguarding practice reviews in a timely way, with four new videos produced this year. Most of the video briefings are held in a confidential part of the NSCP website and 196 practitioners have been provided with access to this. We know that these videos are being shared within individual agencies but very few agencies are completing the feedback loop to the NSCP.

APR
2022

National Review into the murders of Arthur Labinio-Hughes and Star Robson

MAY
2022

'Ellie'; NSCP Rapid Review 7 minute video briefing
LBN Early Help and Support Pathways for Children and Families
LBN Modern Day Slavery Strategy and Action Plan

JULY
2022

LBN Caring Dads Intervention programme
Perinatal Mental Health in Newham

SEPT
2022

Family Rapid Review and 7 minute video briefing
'Anna' NSCP LSPR 7 minute video briefing

NOV
2022

NSCP Rapid Review involving child sexual abuse 7 minute video briefing

JAN
2023

'Sadie' Newham LSPR Learning Event

MAR
2023

Rochdale Child Death Awaab Ishak - LBN Housing response to damp and mould issues

Learning briefings following the Sadie LSCPR – section 8.5 reports on these briefings.

Regular Newsletter: shares information on local and national safeguarding developments and local training.

8.5 Promoting Practice Learning and Improvement



We will work to, and promote, improvements to practice which builds on all aspects of good practice and what we know to be useful when assessing, implementing and evaluating what we do.

This section includes a summary of the Rapid Reviews and Local Safeguarding Child Practice Reviews (LSCPR) undertaken and a record of decisions and actions taken by the safeguarding partners to implement the recommendations of these, including any resulting improvements. Last year's recommendations in relation to practice learning and improvement have all been carried out.

The chairing of Rapid Reviews and the chairing of stakeholder panels for the LSCPR and Local Learning review (underway) has been well supported by the Safeguarding Leads from the East London Foundation Trust, 0-19 Child Health Service and NHS North East London ICB.

Rapid reviews

There were three notifiable incidents to the National Panel, which involved 5 children, from 4 families. This is a significant reduction on the previous year, when 14 children were involved in 7 notifiable incidents. This is due to a reduction in the number of incidents involving criminal exploitation (linked to the sale of illegal drugs). However, this type of extra-familial harm still forms the majority of notifiable incidents and local adolescents continue to be at risk from this type of harm.

The first Rapid Review involved two children who witnessed the murder of their mother by their father. The father was convicted of murder in and following the trial, a Domestic Homicide Review, led by the Newham Community Safety Partnership, is underway.

The second Rapid Review involved two adolescent boys. One boy was the victim of a serious assault and the other boy was arrested for his attempted murder and detained in a Young Offenders Institution. The injured child has made a good recovery.



The third Rapid Review involved the attempted murder of an adolescent boy known to be at risk of criminal exploitation. Two adults were arrested and charged. With expert medical care, the boy has made a good recovery from his injuries.

Each Rapid Review has a Learning and Improvement plan, which is tracked bi-monthly by the NSCP Safeguarding Children Practice Review Group. A number of key changes and resulting improvements can be seen in the multi-agency safeguarding system as a result of the learning from Rapid Reviews.

In respect of criminal exploitation, improved information-sharing through the Police-led Intelligence Hub is supporting better risk management and planning for individual children and police attendance at strategy meetings is strengthening child protection enquiries. Use of the National Referral Mechanism and findings from these referrals, is contributing to child-centred plans for children involved with the Criminal Justice System. The mentoring offer to vulnerable adolescents who are involved with the Youth Justice Service and/or Children's Social Care is providing a relational intervention based on self-awareness and empowerment.

The Barts Newham University Hospital Safeguarding Team is working closely with colleagues in the Emergency Department to ensure that contextual safeguarding and exploitation is recognised and referred to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub. The inclusion of parents in Discharge Planning Meetings at the hospital is involving them, alongside professionals, in multi-agency safety planning for children.

Police Merlin notifications have been changed to ensure that all incidents of domestic abuse by parents are notified to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, including incidents that take place in households where there are no children living. Those notifications that involve a child are also shared with the child's school as part of our Operation Encompass approach to providing wrap around support for children who have been witness to a violent incident or abusive incident in their home.

The Named Nurse for Safeguarding East London Foundation Trust (ELFT) (Newham) chaired the rapid review following the domestic homicide. This highlighted an improvement to safeguarding processes in the Liaison and Divert service that supports the mental health needs of people in police custody. As well as identifying a local improvement action, the Named Nurse shared our rapid review learning with the NHS England and Improvement Working Group, who commission the Liaison and Divert Service, to ensure that learning is more widely shared to improve safeguarding.

In 2023/24, we will continue to develop our responses to intersectionality (the interconnected nature of social categorisations such as race, class, and gender, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage) and the adultification of children. We are committed to improving the speed of response when vulnerable children first go missing and the response to presentations of hand injury in the Accident

and Emergency Department. We also need to develop our whole system thinking about how we support vulnerable adolescents and their key workers. We have much more to learn from children and their families about the difference that services can make to improve their lives.

Local Safeguarding Child Practice Reviews 2022/23 (LSCPR)

We report this year, on two Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and the resulting improvements that we have made as a result of the learning from these the reviews.

'Anna' – LSCPR (December 2019).

Anna is an 18 month old toddler who died as a result of non-accidental injuries. The reporting of this review had to be delayed until the outcome of the criminal trial of mother's partner in 2022, when he was convicted of causing her death. The review learning and improvements from Anna's tragic death were implemented in 2020, resulting in key changes to local safeguarding practice, which are summarised below.

A 7 minute video briefing was made to share the learning about what happened to Anna. Included in the video is learning from 'The Myth of Invisible Men', National Research published in 2021 about safeguarding children under 1 from non-accidental injury caused by male carers.

Recommendation/area for development and improvement	Progress outcome
Front line Police Officers recognise the signs and symptoms of domestic abuse and utilise referral pathways for support.	A flagging system for Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Referrals was introduced embedded to ensure that all appropriate cases are referred.
There is a full consideration of maltreatment and subsequent full examination where children present with multiple injuries to hospital	The hospital standard operating procedure for dealing with bruising and unexplained injuries was updated in 2020 and the updates cover the changes that were identified in Anna's review. In 2022, an audit of 10 admissions provided assurance that these changes had been embedded. Body maps had been completed in respect of the 10 children in the audit and all had been discussed in the Multi-agency Psycho-Social meeting.
Health professionals understand the heightened importance of recognising and escalate signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect with children who are unable to verbalise their lived experience.	Health partners have confirmed that safeguarding supervision is available to all staff and that they know who to contact for advice. The importance of using escalation is regularly reinforced.
Professionals have the relevant information to consider patterns and act on escalations of cases recorded as 'was not brought'.	GP Training to share the learning was delivered. Joint meetings between the safeguarding leads to enhance partnership working have been established between Children's Social Care and Barts NHS Health Trust. The 0-19 Child Health Service ensure that the families are linked on the shared clinical record and have health safeguarding advisors working in the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, whose role includes information sharing.

‘Sadie’ LSCPR (November 2022)

Sadie is a care leaver who disclosed serious abuse by a male relative, over a period of years, while she was living with foster carers. The multi-agency team around Sadie had strong suspicions that she was being harmed, but this did not lead to interventions historically that may have prevented this abuse continuing. Sadie is now safe and living independently. The police have carried out a criminal investigation that has been sent to the Crown Prosecution Service.

Sadie’s review has had a profound effect on those working with her and with other children in care. The review contained 10 key areas of learning which are summarised below. Child sexual abuse has been agreed as a safeguarding priority in the NSCP Business Plan for 2023/26.

The learning from the Sadie review was shared in January – March 2023, through a series of four, 60-minute briefings, attended by 199 practitioners. The programme covered: main lessons from the review and how to apply these to own practice; understanding the role of escalation in child safeguarding and what to do if you are worried about a child; where to find information and resources for working with children at risk of sexual abuse.

Recommendation/area for development and improvement	Progress outcome
Section 47 enquiries fell short of expected practice standards. Discussions were between the police and Children’s Social Care rather than including the wider network and health colleagues who knew Sadie well. Learning from this review also tells us that there was also a lack of focus on the behaviours of the alleged perpetrator.	The recommendation was to commission joint section 47 training based on best practice. There has been a delay in commissioning this training but a new lead has been recently appointed to take this forward.
Through the lens of the multi-agency information brought together in one document by this review, the risks that were present are very apparent. As with many local partnerships, there is currently no system in Newham that could easily record, collate, and share a multi-agency chronology of significant events about a child, and this would be a useful practice aid if it were developed.	We have introduced a requirement to compile a multi-agency chronology when a case has reached the formal stage in the NSCP Escalation Policy.
Practitioners from the multi-agency network involved with children where there are worries about sexual abuse and exploitation need to be more cognisant of the indicators of sexual abuse.	We have widely shared and promoted the resources from the Centre for Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse and publicised the North East London CSA Hub, established in 2022. Practitioners can refer to the NEL CSA Hub if they have concerns that a child may be have been sexually abused.
Evidence of supervision in the child’s records and consultation with designated health professionals was limited in this case and could have been used to better effect to reflect on the issues and concerns.	Newham Safeguarding Children’s Partnership (NSCP) should oversee partner agencies’ reviews of their existing supervision practices and seek assurances that agencies have robust managerial oversight of actions, decisions, and plans in relation to children where there are concerns about sexual abuse. An audit of cases is planned for 2023/24.

Recommendation/area for development and improvement	Progress outcome
<p>It was clear and well documented that Ms A and Mr B were acting very inappropriately towards Sadie throughout this period. The network were aware of this and agencies such as schools, foster carers and health agencies raised these concerns.</p>	<p>The leadership team in Newham's Children's Social Care have issued a reminder to practitioners, managers and Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) (who chair children in care reviews) about the importance of following the established procedure for family contact for children in care. The learning has been shared widely and will continue to be re-enforced and staff reminded about risk assessing and reviewing contact regularly.</p>
<p>The Safeguarding Children's Partnership in Newham has a clear escalation process, which practitioners were aware of, yet it was not utilised. Deference to the views of others and barriers to effective challenge is a feature of other multi agency reviews over several years. This would be worthy of further exploration by the Partnership.</p>	<p>As part of the learning events that were held January-March 2023, we consulted with practitioners about the changes needed to empower and support effective professional challenge and have made changes to the Escalation Policy to reflect their feedback. Escalation is referred to in all NSCP multi-agency training.</p>
<p>Greater liaison between health services who knew Sadie would also have been beneficial. Services provided to her did not always communicate with each other and presented in this instance as being fragmented. The complexities of Sadie's physical and mental health should have been better understood by the IRO and brought together under the auspices of the care planning process. The effectiveness of the IRO role was also limited.</p>	<p>It has been reported that there are now much improved relationship between CYPS and Health Partner agencies. A regular joint meeting, attended by senior leaders, provides a forum in which to raise issues and to track progress on health issues. Where there are concerns, these are now easily escalated due to the relationships that have been built. Practice and Outcomes meetings have been established with IRO service as part of this including escalations, a dispute process is in place and a different culture is being embedded.</p>
<p>Considering the findings in this review about children who experience multiple oppressions and disadvantage, professionals in the partnership should also be equipped with the knowledge and understanding of intersectionality to properly identify and consider these factors when assessing and managing the risk to children.</p>	<p>Intersectionality is now pro-actively discussed at each Rapid Review and has been incorporated into NSCP multi-agency safeguarding training.</p>
<p>British Pregnancy Advisory Service (BPAS) to ensure that all young people who are in care or are care experienced have a safeguarding risk assessment completed. The pregnancy of a child in care is a significant event and a child in care review should be triggered to discuss the support the young person is likely to require.</p>	<p>British Pregnancy Advisory Service (BPAS) has updated its Safeguarding Policy following the review. Children's Social Care is reviewing which mechanism should be used for the internal notification of this significant incident.</p>
<p>The review raised a question about how accessible sexual health services are to young people, including children in care and how these services link to the overall care planning processes for this group both strategically and operationally.</p>	<p>The Termination of Pregnancy service is currently in the procurement process, with a plan for there to be a North East London wide service. The safeguarding element of the procurement process will be robust and informed by the lessons from Sadie's review and this will be overseen by the North East London NHS Designated Safeguarding Lead.</p>

Feedback from Attendees: What will you take away from this briefing?

Professional curiosity – all the time!	The importance of health being present at strategy meetings	The importance of sharing your concerns with colleagues
Communication with all parties, no-one should be excluded	That the Escalation policy should be at hand and professionals should not be concerned about using this	Really thinking about behaviours and what may be happening for that child
Agree about professionals curiosity and exploring potential lines of enquiry ASAP!	Importance of open transparent communication between all professionals involved	Evidence is not always as important as strong suspicions

What do you think you will do differently?

Make sure all relevant professionals are in meetings	Challenge	There are times, if you have been in the job long enough, where you react on gut instinct – but you need to still push to make sure everyone listens!
Making sure there's time for reflection and space held for curiosity	Remind teachers that children won't usually come out and tell you directly what is happening to them	Useful to know about the local support re abuse. I can add to our support directory (when I get around to actually creating one!)

Impact Testing

In June 2023, we brought together senior leaders from the review panel to find out what has changed as a result of Sadie's review and have summarised their response.

What changes do you see at a multi-agency level?

There is more willingness to share risk across partner agencies, evidence of multi-agency collaboration and problem solving and listening to children and young people and advocating for changes at higher levels.

Respectful challenge is being seen. Better inter-professional relationships at a senior level.

What changes do you see in your own agency?

Increased use of safeguarding supervision, escalation and increased professional curiosity. Wider conversations to support challenge. Children's Social Care has seen more challenge from partners in relation to section 47 enquiries and professional meetings.

What assurance can we give children and young people now?

Sadie's review has really helped us to re-focus. The NSCP have made child sexual abuse a priority and also mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse is now required as a result of the National Review.

If a child in care becomes pregnant, we would find out more about who is involved, and not accept 'cover stories'. We want children and young people to know that we will be persistent in different ways when there are concerns that they are not ready to share with us. All professionals can help to do this, not just social workers.

What messages can we give to children and young people?

If an adult asks you to keep a secret, it's best to tell someone. Adults don't usually ask children to keep secrets for them. Talk to an adult that you trust – this doesn't have to be a professional.

We will see you and we will support you.

How will we know that things have changed?

By hearing from young people directly.

Support is provided locally by people that they know.



National Review of Safeguarding Children with Disabilities and Complex Health Needs in Residential Settings

In August 2022, all Directors of Children’s Services nationally were asked to complete ‘Quality and Safety Reviews’ for all children with complex needs and disabilities currently living within homes with the same registrations (i.e. residential specialist schools registered as children’s homes) to ensure they are in safe, quality homes, which are meeting their needs. Newham had four children meeting this criteria and an in-depth, multi-agency review was completed for each child. Newham were satisfied that three out of the four children were safe, well cared for, appropriately educated in line with their Education, Health and Care Plan and that they are thriving in their homes with minimal areas for improvement. Newham were satisfied that the fourth child was currently safe, and that she is in the main well cared for, however there were concerns identified which needed to be addressed in order to provide full assurance and high monitoring of this child and placement and these have been enacted.

An overview report with the following recommendations was produced and the actions are being progressed by a Task and Finish Group reporting to the Performance



and Quality Assurance Sub-Group. The group will also be benchmarking local practice against the findings of the National Panel Phase two report, published in May 2023. An operational quality and safety review group has also been established.

Recommendation	Possible Action
Monitor the children’s progress from this review.	Review these children in three months’ time to measure progress, safety and impact.
Reviewing all similar children’s cases in Newham, regularly to ensure scrutiny and receive assurance	Multi-agency/ multi-disciplinary annual review of children with disabilities placed in residential specialist schools registered as children’s homes, and in just residential schools also.
Reviewing cases where children with disabilities are placed for respite in homes	Annual review as above
Reviewing cases where children could remain at home with a larger package of support	Thematic review of children who have moved to homes recently, from home based support to learn about what we can do differently to enable children to remain at home
Reviewing Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) referrals for children with disabilities living in residential homes	To inform Newham’s understanding the quality of our LADO processes in these areas, with regards to the current guidance from initial findings. A review of the last three years LADO referrals for these homes, to and from Newham, whether they concern Newham children or not.
Strengthen Newham’s monitoring of children in these type of placements	Review the monitoring processes currently in place, ensuring we use a multi-disciplinary and multi-agency approach to this.

8.6 Domestic Abuse



We will seek assurance from Community Safety partners through the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Abuse Board that safeguarding issues are considered throughout the response to domestic violence and abuse.

Domestic abuse referral rates were high during Covid lockdowns and reporting continues to be high across Newham as it is for other London boroughs. This aligns with the increased awareness of domestic abuse and violence against women and girls in the media, and in London particularly, via multiple campaigns from the London Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime

Newham published a new Domestic Abuse Strategy for 2022-2025 and this strategy is led by the voices of domestic abuse survivors, local residents, partnership agencies and community organisations in Newham. The strategy reflects a public health approach that is community focused and offers a whole family approach to domestic abuse.

Supporting children and young people is one of the 12 priorities in the strategy. This is already being achieved through providing specialist support and trauma-informed approaches to children and young people and support to parents and carers to help them understand the impact of domestic abuse. The work of 'Operation Encompass' and 'Everyone's Invited' in schools is providing specialist Independent Domestic Abuse Advisors to support children at school and see them in other safe spaces. Clear reporting pathways are being developed in schools, colleges and pupil referral units to encourage children and young people to disclose abuse and support. Schools and educational establishments will be developing partnership relationships with Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls providers who can provide specialist advocacy, therapeutic support and training and support work to promote healthy relationships to help address gender based violence in schools.

IMPACT:

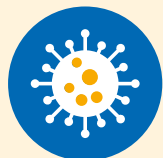
In 2022, the Youth Empowerment Service carried out a piece of participation work to support the Domestic Abuse Strategy. Some young people who have experienced domestic abuse reported that they did not always feel heard by practitioners when they requested protection and support. This work has ensured that people affected, have access to a qualified trauma informed advocate. The service has included a mandatory training workshop in their annual safeguarding schedule, to support youth workers to identify abuse and to support young people to access provision. The Youth Empowerment Service are also completing youth surveys to gain a richer understanding of the lived experience of young people who have experienced domestic abuse.

The Home Office funded 'Safe and Together' Training programme was extended to Newham within Children's Social Care this year and training attended by 76 multi-agency staff. The training model and practice framework is based on keeping the child and non-offending adult safe the together; partnering with the non-offending parent and intervening with the perpetrator to reduce risk and harm to the child.

The NHS North East London ICB is supporting the Safe and Together programme going forward into 2023, alongside a continuing commitment by LBN and has also commissioned the IRIS programme which is an evidence-based, effective and cost-effective intervention to improve the primary care response to domestic violence and abuse. This is nationally recognised and is helping to improve the General Practice response to the safety, quality of life and wellbeing of survivors of domestic violence and abuse.



8.7 Road to Recovery after Covid



As we come out of lockdown restrictions, we will seek assurances that the system is coping with the anticipated increase in referrals and that multi-agency assessments are of quality.

Return to School

The Education Partnership Board continued to meet every other week to discuss emerging issues and the support required. Clear arrangements were put in place for tracking the attendance of vulnerable pupils and those in alternative provision, in liaison with Children's Social Care (CSC). A link was put in place between the CSC recording system (Azeus) and the school's recording system (Safeguard) which enabled a social worker to review attendance data for each of the children that they are working with.

Early Years Joint work across Education, Public Health and Best Start in Life supported settings to remain open and provided guidance, public health seminars and information. The take up of childcare continued to increase in the period as parental confidence was building. Children's Centres were supported to manage an increase in referrals for family support and have reached more families.

Mental Health and wellbeing

The increased complexity among young people presenting with mental health illness to acute hospitals has been recognised nationally. In response to a rise in local demand, a multi-agency Newham Workforce Task and Finish group, led by NHS NEL and CSC to discuss local pathways and management, was set up, with a weekly 'high level' meeting with agency leads to discuss system difficulties in meeting the young person's needs. During the pandemic 16/17 yr olds with mental health difficulties were cared for in Paediatric services. More recently, they have at times been cared for in acute medicine services, who have required support from the safeguarding children's team to safely discharge children from hospital. The NSCP discharge protocol has been updated recently and there is a multiagency audit in progress at time of completing the report.



Managing social care demand

As described in section 7 of this report, there has been an increase in contacts to the MASH since 2021/22. The additional social work funded by LBN and health capacity funded by the NHS North East London ICB has remained in place in the MASH to meet this demand and ensure that families continued to receive timely interventions.

Children who go Missing

The Return Home Interview Service saw a significant rise in service requests over the last year and found that engaging with children in return home interviews was most difficult after Covid restrictions were lifted in between July-September 2022. However, this has been turned around and the data shows a steady increase in service reach for the latter half of the year.

Police response

Demand on services has stabilised after the crisis period of the COVID 19 pandemic. The last two years have seen a return to uninterrupted school provision and a restoration of most of the usual pathways for children at risk coming to notice of our service.

No Recourse to Public Fund

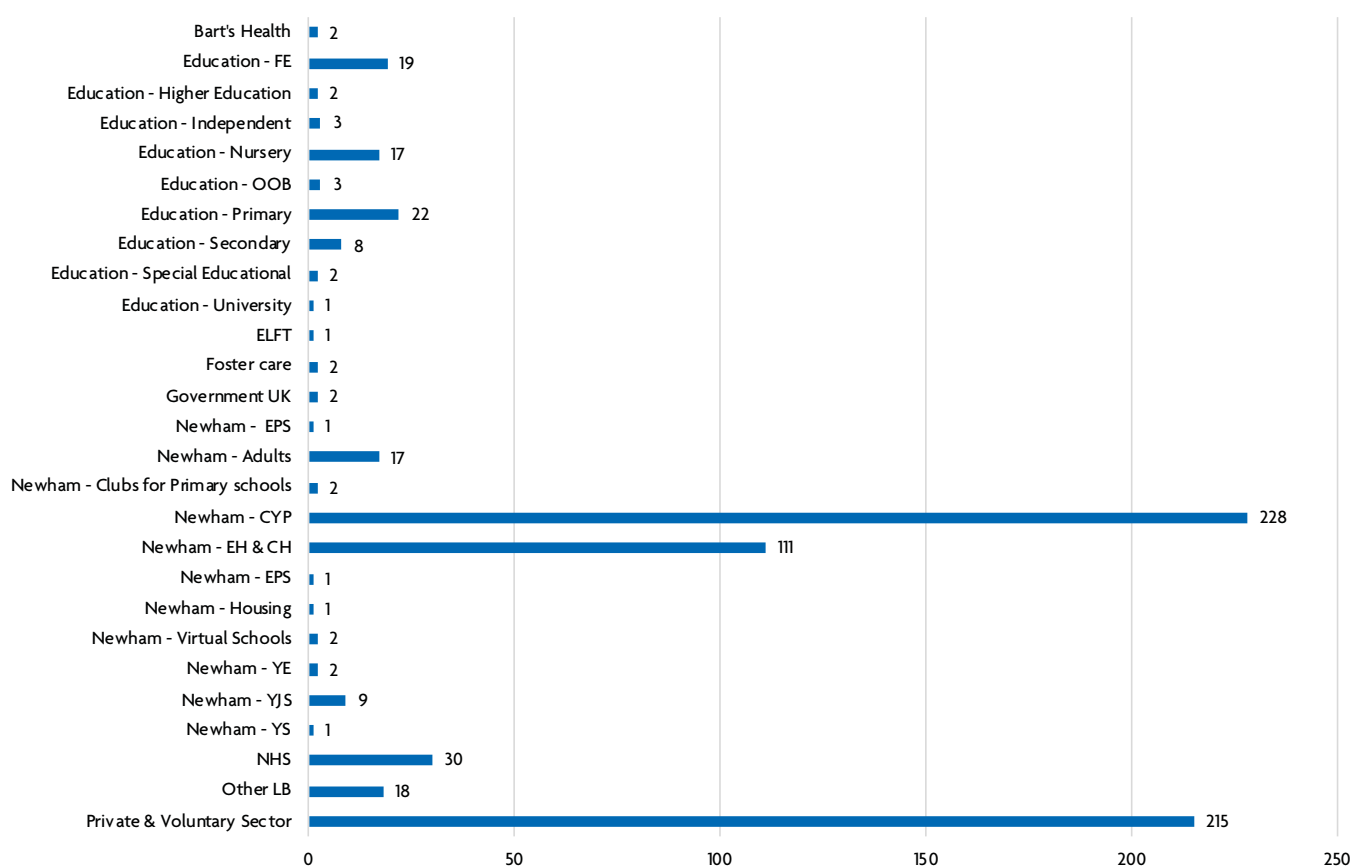
Work took place with local organisations to ensure that families that are seeking asylum and are living in Newham receive early help support, their children have school places and they receive support to apply for Free School Meals.

Cost of Living Crisis

Work was undertaken by the Early Help Service and the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector Partners to mitigate the impact of this on families in Newham by addressing income inequality food shortages and providing access to the 'Warm Hubs'.

9. TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR 2022/23

This year, the NSCP continued to provide a comprehensive learning and development programme which emphasises the importance of collaboration between organisations and agencies to safeguard children, young people, and families effectively and is accessible online. <https://www.newhamscp.org.uk/learning-zone/>. There was a reduction in the number of people booking on training this year (725) compared to the previous year (868). As in previous years, attendance is highest from staff working in the Private and Voluntary sector and staff from Children and Young Peoples Services, LBN.



A new NSCP sub group for Safeguarding and Workforce Development was established in late 2022. This group will be able to commit more time to ensuring that the training is a key focus. At each meeting, data will be shared regarding uptake and cancellations and a plan to focus on impact has also been agreed.

A training needs analysis session was undertaken in March 2023 with good engagement from across the partnership and a revised Learning and Development offer has been proposed which will be commissioned over the summer and will commence in September 2023.

One issue affecting the uptake of training has been the NSCP website-booking calendar. Mitigating action has been taken to explore a new learning management system that has been successful with Children's Social Care. The training report will be shared with the safeguarding partners to review their uptake of the training offered and identify any steps they will be taking to increase this.

A proposal for an improved system has been discussed at the Safeguarding and Workforce Development group and agreed by the Executive, as this will have a financial implication.

10. SAFEGUARDING HIGHLIGHTS FROM PARTNER AGENCIES

The Safeguarding Partners were invited to provide brief highlights of their safeguarding work in the reporting period.

Children and Young Peoples Services, LBN

The Ofsted Inspection of CYPs services in July 2022 reported that “Children in the London Borough of Newham receive good-quality services. Leaders and operational managers have supported frontline staff to significantly improve practice since the last inspection, when the overall effectiveness was judged to be inadequate. Leaders are ambitious in delivering effective help, care and protection for children. These improvements have been made within a challenging context, with a legacy of poor practice, the impact of COVID-19, the complexity of some children’s needs and significant workforce challenges. A highly visible and permanent senior leadership team has brought stability and a transformation in engagement with partners, creating a determined ‘one-council approach’ to providing the services children need to thrive.” <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50192878>

In the period that followed the end of Covid lockdowns, the resilience of the workforce was given priority. The Children’s working group linked closely with the council workforce group to ensure clear communications with our staff around visits, risk assessments and arrangements for returning to the office where relevant. The staff wellbeing programme was refreshed and regular sessions with the DCS and senior CYPs managers through Director’s Question Time and the use of reflective spaces with the Clinical Team have supported open communications and engagement with our staff.

Barts NHS Health Trust

The safeguarding team have been engaging with clinical areas to retain compliance for supervision whilst acknowledging the impact that the pandemic has had on staff availability and need for restoration. Each service is contacted to arrange supervision sessions; with discussions that consider different ways to achieve compliance. Supervision sessions are also offered within the hospital once per month. At the time of completing the annual report the compliance for supervision was 80% and 90% compliance for maternity.



The Barking Birth Centre, which is a standalone birth centre based at Barking and is part of Newham Maternity services, had an unannounced visit from the Care Quality Commission in August 2022. There was positive feedback in relation to safeguarding practices within the service for Adults, children and unborn also highlighting that where safeguarding concerns were identified, there were birth plans on the electronic system which had input from the safeguarding team. The report acknowledged that staff understood how to protect women from abuse and the service worked well with other agencies to do so and that staff had access to the maternity safeguarding team who are based in Newham Hospital. The report also identified that training compliance was below the trust target of 90% for Safeguarding Children Level 3, which at the time of the visit was at 81%. This has been addressed through the team leader and Matron to ensure that staff have who are known to be non-compliant have booked training.

Education

The NSCP Safeguarding Education Reference Group has been established to support, strengthen and inform the vital work of the Partnership. The Safeguarding Education Reference Group has worked with the NSCP to develop responses and how to manage Critical Incidents including embedding learning from National and LSCPR.

The education sector has a wealth of knowledge and breadth of practical experience in safeguarding, care and needs of our communities. The NSCP recognise the value of education establishments and together are working towards developing a calibre of high level training to deliver to Schools, Designated Safeguarding Leads and Head Teachers. The Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) Network forums are running successfully and DSLs continue to meet monthly. The forum provides a space for Education Safeguarding Leads to access information and training. Weekly newsletters are circulated to all Head teachers and to the Chairs of Governors.

Partnership working with schools, education and MASH has strengthened and continues to do so as Newham Local Authority continue with their appointment of a Safeguarding in Education Lead Officer (SELO). Designated Safeguarding Leads continue to have access to the MASH consultation service to discuss possible referrals. The use of virtual technology continues to enable greater participation in safeguarding strategy meetings. The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and SELO provide an individual and organisational response to safeguarding concerns.

NHS North East London Integrated Care Board (ICB)

Designated Safeguarding Children and Children in Care professionals, Named GPs for safeguarding children and Designated doctors for Child Deaths in each borough. These professionals work alongside the Quality Leads as members of the Chief Nursing Officer's department to improve Quality and Safeguarding of Health Services. The ICB has a statutory function to promote the health and wellbeing of Children in Care, this includes ensuring that commissioned health assessments are of a good quality.

Within Newham the Designated Nurse for Children in Care (ICB) works closely with the Named Nurse for Children in Care (CIC), and quality assures a proportion of all review health assessments. The Named Doctor for Children in Care within East London Foundation Trust completes quality assurance exercise for all initial health assessments. Following a review of Children in Care health services across NHS NEL, the ICB have conducted a NEL Peer review, to align all these services to statutory guidance, and ensure robust governance structures for reporting on the health needs of children in care is improved. The NEL ICB Safeguarding team have developed a safeguarding checklist, which will be used with all future contract monitoring process of health services commissioned. The Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children attends safeguarding governance boards for Health and Social Care providers in Newham.

Met Police Newham



The Missing Persons Unit has been expanded and resourced to provide an enhanced service to High Risk missing people, who because of their vulnerability are often children. They work closely with the Child Exploitation Team and Child Social Care to resolve missing episodes. The Child Abuse Investigation Teams and Referral Desks have been brought together under one Senior Leadership Team to ensure closer working both internally and in partnership with child protection social workers. Unrelated to COVID, the MPS is still experiencing staffing challenges, particularly regarding the availability of trained detectives and specialist supervisors. This continues to be addressed centrally.

11. CONCLUSIONS

This year, the partnership has continued to demonstrate high ambition and determination in its aims and objectives to safeguard children and young people in Newham. Equal importance and attention is given to protection from abuse and neglect within families and protection from extra-familial harm in the community. The work on Transition is moving forward in a positive way. The mechanisms that are in place to share information and intelligence are being consistently used and this is strengthening multi-agency practice at an operational level.

Significant learning is taking place following local reviews, with clear action plans that are tracked by the Safeguarding Children Practice Review Group. The learning from reviews is well disseminated and being applied to develop and strengthen practice across the local safeguarding system. The learning from National Reviews into the deaths of Star Hobson and Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Safeguarding Children under 1 from Non-Accidental Injury Caused by Male Carers, have also been shared through our learning cascade.

This year, has seen scrutiny of the ways in which the different partners engage with children and their families and how their feedback is used to improve service delivery. The partnership may decide to build on this work, by looking at this area through the lens of children and families, at different points in their contact with services. Such an approach is being taken in the Thematic Review of Children Subject to Extra-familial harm and is expected to increase our knowledge about what works best in helping to improve outcomes for vulnerable children.

Time and effort has been invested in building relationships between the safeguarding partners and these relationships and the communication at a senior level are strong, which allows for greater levels of scrutiny, challenge and support. Partners report that there is a more open and transparent dialogue when concerns are raised and that disagreements are handled through conversations that seek to arrive at a joint understanding. There has been a successful series of learning events over the course of the year that have been well supported and well attended.

The partnership has a clear structure and governance arrangements and there is close alignment with the Safeguarding Adults Board, through a Joint Executive, and with the Community Safety Partnership. The Business Plan is updated annually and progress towards meeting objectives is regularly tracked. Where required, new approaches are taken mid-year to increase impact, for example, the establishment of a Safeguarding Workforce Development Group to drive forward the NSCP Training Programme and incorporate ongoing learning from case reviews.

A local multi-agency data set has not yet been developed. The Performance and Quality Assurance Group has looked at examples of where this is being achieved by neighbouring boroughs, and the impact this has had on improving safeguarding practice across their partnership. The PQA Group has also been trialling a new method to collect data, which requires individual agencies to present relevant data on a rolling basis at the bi-monthly meeting, which has been successful. To support the development of an agreed data set with analysis and measures/performance indicators, the partnership has requested an offer of a one day a month in-kind specialist resource from one or more partner agencies and work towards a system-wide data set will continue in the coming year.

Another challenge this year, has been the capacity to complete the schedule of multi-agency audits. These audits are important as they provide the partnership with information and insights about the quality of multi-agency practice. Linked to the re-instatement of the NSCP Service Manager from April 2023, are cover arrangements that will bring in the skills of a Practice Learning Reviewer from the CYPs Quality Assurance Service, on a part-time basis. This will increase the capacity to undertake audits and provide an opportunity to investigate different methodologies to deliver the partnership's audit function.

12. EMERGING THEMES

Developing a better understanding of the links between intra-familial harm, specifically adult on child physical abuse, and vulnerability to extra familial harm, in particular child criminal exploitation. The thematic review will be an important vehicle towards achieving this.

Building on the learning from the Sadie review, to ensure that there are effective multi-agency interventions for children where there are indicators of child sexual abuse. As child sexual abuse is a priority in next year's Business Plan, the Executive will be agreeing the objectives and work plan to deliver this priority.

The NSCP and Safeguarding Adults Board have joined together to play a key role in supporting a coordinated approach to safeguarding in relation to Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Newham in 2022/23. This followed the Home Office's decision to establish a number of contingency hotels in the borough, to house refugees and asylum seeking people and families. We have engaged with both the Home Office and the private contractors, who have been commissioned to provide accommodation and services, to make clear our shared duties in relation to safeguarding adults and children in the borough. This has included:

- Ensuring providers of accommodation are fully aware of safeguarding referral pathways and responsibilities
- Making safeguarding awareness training available for providers to access
- Completion of Community Impact Assessments
- Conducting multi-agency safeguarding audits to seek to ensure that providers are delivering on their promise to keep residents safe.

A multi-agency operational group has been liaising with regional and national partners to take forward best practice, with regular updates being provided to the Joint Executive for NSAB and NSCP and to a Pan-London Safeguarding Group.



13. PRIORITIES AND PLANS FOR 2023/26

A golden thread running through the priorities will be the consideration of the impact of poverty and the cost of living. For all priorities, a special focus will be given to children with SEND, care leavers, unaccompanied asylum seekers and refugees.

NSCP and SAB joint priorities

1. All age exploitation - with an emphasis on 16-25 age group with a focus on exploitation and youth violence
2. Modern Day Slavery
3. Cuckooing
4. Domestic Abuse: to seek assurance that the domestic abuse strategy and accompanying action plans are reviewed annually and assurance is sought that safeguarding is at the forefront of the activity.

NSCP Children's Partnership Priorities

1. Child sexual abuse including intra familiar sexual abuse and sibling sexual abuse.
2. Child Mental Health.

14. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Each NSCP sub-group and work group to incorporate measures for child and family engagement and participation into their annual work plan.
2. The Performance and Quality Assurance to report to the Executive on arrangements for the delivery of next year's partnership audit schedule and any changes that are required, in terms of methodology and/or resources, to deliver this.
3. The Safeguarding Workforce Development Group to report to the Executive on the take up of the learning and development programme for 2023/26 and the arrangements to collect feedback and assess the impact of training.
4. The Chairs of the Safeguarding Workforce Development and the Safeguarding Children Practice Review Group to work together to close the feedback loop to the NSCP for the 7 minute video briefings in order to provide assurance that the learning is reaching all relevant staff.

