



ANNUAL REPORT 2021 - 2022

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CHAIR'S FOREWORD

As independent chairperson and scrutineer of the Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (TLSCP) I am pleased to present our Annual Report for 2021-2022. This has been a year of continuing development and strengthening of the Safeguarding Partnership building on the recommendations of the external peer review which had taken place at the end of 2020. As a result, the TLSCP has a comprehensive data set to help consider how partner agencies are working together to support families and safeguard children and where we can improve. This report includes details of how our partnership is scrutinised, how we learn from local and national reviews and then how this informs the learning and development programme for staff working across both the public, voluntary and community sectors. An example

of this is the learning we have been doing to further multi agency working with young people vulnerable to becoming involved in serious youth violence.

As a Safeguarding Partnership we work closely with the Domestic Abuse and Community Safety Partnerships as well as taking opportunities for activities with Southend and Essex Safeguarding Children Partnerships. We are also continuing to develop an all-age approach to safeguarding with the Thurrock Safeguarding Adults Board.

In the coming year we want to find ways to better monitor the impact of our programme of activity and to ensure the feedback and voices of children, young people and families inform safeguarding practice in Thurrock.

Our priorities for 2022-24 are Neglect promoting multi agency working to provide help at the earliest time to families; Violence & Vulnerability linking with partners within Thurrock and with Essex and Southend; Think Family to take a family-based approach to safeguarding in order to improve protection of children; Transitions & Transfers to ensure support for children at significant life stages and working with the Thurrock Safeguarding Adults Board particularly as young people transfer to adult services; and Emotional Wellbeing for both children and young people and the multi-agency workforce.

The TLSCP wants to thank all the front- line staff and managers who have been working so hard to keep services operating throughout the last year and during the pandemic. This has been an incredibly challenging time for families, children and young people and the children's workforce in schools, children's and local authority services, the police, health agencies, other statutory services and the voluntary sector.

Jenny Coles

Independent Chairperson and Scrutineer, Thurrock Local Safeguarding Partnership

INTRODUCTION

Statutory requirements for local arrangements to safeguard children are set out in government guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 published in July 2018 and amended in 2020. This report sets out what we have achieved under the new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, including child safeguarding practice reviews, and how effective these arrangements have been in practice.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

INTRODUCTION FROM SAFEGUARDING STATUTORY PARTNERS

Annual Report of Thurrock LSCP which covers the period of 2021-2022.

Thurrock LSCP is required to publish an Annual Report on the effectiveness of safeguarding in its area, including an assessment of local safeguarding arrangements. This report sets out the progress and achievements in the last year and the work undertaken.

This report captures some of the excellent work of the Partnership to support and challenge improvement of services for children and its work in raising awareness within all elements of the community.

Our vision is that every child and young person in Thurrock will grow up safe from maltreatment, neglect and criminal activity. We commit to further improve our safeguarding system with the focus firmly on the lived experience of the child or young person.

Practice has evolved with the embedding of the Signs of Safety approach to Child Protection Conferences and Graded Care Profile 2 is being rolled out to support our response to our neglect priority. We are pleased with the progress being made locally during this period as we emerge from the pandemic and the challenges that arise as a result. The Partnership will continue to be vigilant in providing a high level of challenge to Partners responsible for keeping the children and young people of Thurrock safe.

We would like to thank all partners, agencies and the Business Team who have contributed to the work of the LSCP over the year for their continued hard work, support and commitment.

Sheila Murphy

Neil Pudney

Linda Moncur

Thurrock Childrens Social Care

Essex Police

Thurrock MSE ICB



SINGLE AGENCY ASSURANCE STATEMENTS

Essex Police

Essex Police are a committed statutory partner within the Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children’s Partnership. Safeguarding of children and vulnerable families will always be a priority for Essex Police. Through the TLSCP we ensure that arrangements and processes are in place to capture the voice of children, learn lessons and working together with our partners in accordance with legislation, statutory guidance and best practice to ensure the best outcomes are delivered for families across Thurrock.

Thurrock Children's Social Care

Thurrock Children's Social Care remains a committed statutory partner of the Thurrock Child Safeguarding Children Partnership. Legislation and guidance lay down the statutory duties of Children's Social Care. There is a requirement to demonstrate that appropriate systems are in place for discharging these duties which is ultimately tested through the Ofsted Inspection process. Thurrock Children's Social Care has a central role in safeguarding children and young people and ensures robust arrangements are in place to provide strong leadership, vision and direction for Safeguarding, by providing clear accessible policies and procedures in line with relevant legislation, statutory guidance and best practice. Children's Social Care was judged as good in the last full inspection in November 2019, and the Ofsted focussed visit in June 2021 and had no areas for priority action identified. These findings are underpinned by evidence of strong Governance, leadership, learning and improvement. More recently Thurrock's Joint Area SEND revisit in December 2021 concluded that sufficient progress had been made against areas for action and the YOS inspection in May 2022 was graded Good with Outstanding features. The work and development of services is overseen by monthly Development Board meetings which involve the lead portfolio holder and the DCS, and reports are regularly submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Corporate Parenting Board.

NHS Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

NHS Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group (TCCG) is a committed statutory partner of the Thurrock Child Safeguarding Children Partnership. The Accountability and Assurance Framework (2019) outlines the statutory duties of CCG's and CCGs are required to demonstrate that they have appropriate systems in place for discharging these. Thurrock CCG recognises safeguarding as a high priority for the organisation and ensures robust arrangements are in place to provide strong leadership, vision, and direction for Safeguarding, by providing clear accessible policies and procedures in line with relevant legislation, statutory guidance, and best practice. The Designated Professionals for safeguarding children are involved with the various partnership sub-groups and work closely with key providers, including acute Trusts, community services, mental health Trusts and primary care, to ensure system oversight, assurance, support, and advice.

As we transition into the Mid and South Essex Integrated Care Board (MSE ICB) from 1st July 2022, Thurrock CCG will continue to work closely with CCGs in Mid and South Essex. Following a whole system review of child / adult safeguarding arrangements in January 2020 a decision was made to continue to collaborate SET through Safeguarding Clinical Network (SCN), MSE Matrix Group and Health Executive Forum (HEF). The SCN brings together CCG safeguarding leads and executive nurses to drive forward the safeguarding agenda, highlight risk and collaborate on areas of mutual interest. The HEF has executive representation from all Health commissioners and Providers to providing strategic direction to the health economy. As we become an ICB as a system, we will continue to work in partnership with partnership boards in collaboration to co-produce priorities and agendas to ensure safeguarding our population is safe and robust for better outcome for our vulnerable population.

Thurrock Local Safeguarding Childrens Partnership is a statutory arrangement which has a range of roles, scrutinising and challenging local safeguarding arrangements and practice, as part of its responsibilities under Section 14 of the Children Act 2004.

The Partnership has an independent co-ordinating and challenging role around safeguarding practice across its Partner agencies and these functions are carried out through the Management Executive Board, Strategic Group and its sub-groups.

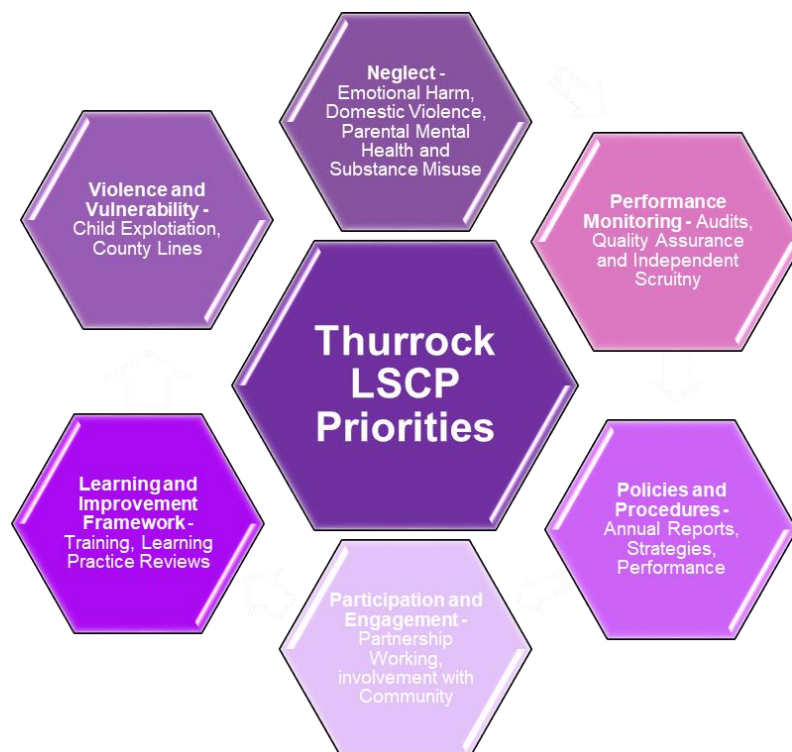
While the LSCP does not have the power to direct Partner agencies, it has a key role in making clear where improvement is required. Each Statutory Partner and relevant agency retains their own existing line of accountability for safeguarding (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018).

**THURROCK LSCP STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND DELIVERY PLAN
2019/2022**

For 2019 -2021, the Partnership agreed its six priorities as:

- ❖ Neglect
- ❖ Performance Monitoring
- ❖ Policies and Procedures
- ❖ Participation and Engagement
- ❖ Learning and Improvement Framework
- ❖ Violence and Vulnerability

The period of COVID meant that this delivery period was extended to the financial year 2021-2022.



Our Delivery Plan sets out actions that we will take in order to address the need within our priorities. Progress on the delivery plan has been monitored and tracked by the relevant sub-group, who reports to the Strategic Partners and is fed up to the Management Executive Board to ensure accountability and outcomes achieved.

Among the successfully completed actions are:

- ❖ Fully implemented a Neglect sub-group to review the multi-agency response to Neglect
- ❖ Review and update of the SET Management of Suspicious Injuries and Bruising in Children
- ❖ New Independent Chair Scrutineer in post and provides independent scrutiny of the Partnership
- ❖ Action Plan of 26 recommendations following the independent scrutiny of the Partnership into its effectiveness completed and embedded
- ❖ Annual Reports received from all Partners covering Safeguarding received and
- ❖ Multi-agency dataset devised, implemented and reviewed for effectiveness
- ❖ Engagement with children and young people and ensuring their voice and lived experience is heard
- ❖ Learning and development offer and resources reviewed to reflect learning from audits, and local and national reviews.

OUR STRATEGIC AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

Thurrock LSCP Strategic aims are:

1. To ensure Safeguarding is everyone's business
2. To reduce the number of children in need of responsive safeguarding through effective help and support at an earlier stage
3. Ensure the voice of the child is listened to
4. To develop a Partnership fit to meet future demands

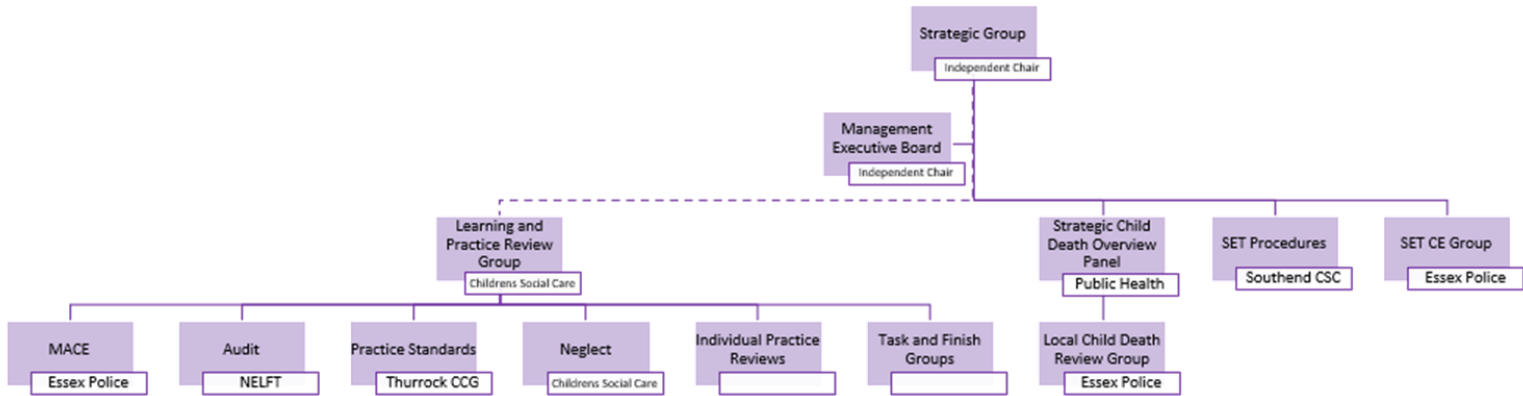
The following principles underpin the work of the LSCP.

The Partnership will:

- ❖ Keep the safeguarding and welfare needs of children at the centre of everything it does
- ❖ Operate a challenge and assurance function to both partner members and external organisations
- ❖ Involve children, families, carers and frontline practitioners and managers in its work
- ❖ Develop strong working relationships with Strategic Partners to promote clear roles, responsibilities and governance arrangements
- ❖ Be open and transparent in the work that it undertakes
- ❖ Be a learning and development Partnership that seeks continuous improvement.

THURROCK LSCP STRUCTURE

The Partnership functions through a hierarchal structure led by the Safeguarding Statutory Partners through a Strategic Group. Its structure is reviewed annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose to safeguard Thurrock’s children.



To ensure the Partnership is aware of all cross cutting safeguarding impacts, representation on other boards and multi-agency groups includes:

- ❖ Thurrock Safeguarding Adults Board (Business Manager)
- ❖ Thurrock Health and Well Being Board (Chair)
- ❖ Thurrock Community Safety Partnership (Business Manager)
- ❖ SET Child Exploitation Group (Business Manager and Chair of MACE Group)
- ❖ SET Proceadures Group (Business Manager)
- ❖ Regional LSCP Chairs and Business Managers Group (Chair and Business Manager)
- ❖ Violence Against Women and Girls Group (VAWG) Business Manager

WHO MAKES UP THE PARTNERSHIP?

STRATEGIC

The Strategic Group is made up of the three statutory partners: Thurrock Council, Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Essex Police.

MANAGEMENT EXECUTIVE BOARD

A Management Executive Board oversees and drives forward multi-agency child safeguarding in Thurrock. The Board meets four times a year and hold partners to account through a ‘high support’, ‘high challenge’ culture.

SUB-GROUPS

In addition to the Executive there are five sub-groups who are responsible for specific areas of work:

- Learning Practice Review Group
- Audit Group
- MACE Group
- Neglect Group
- Practice Standards Group

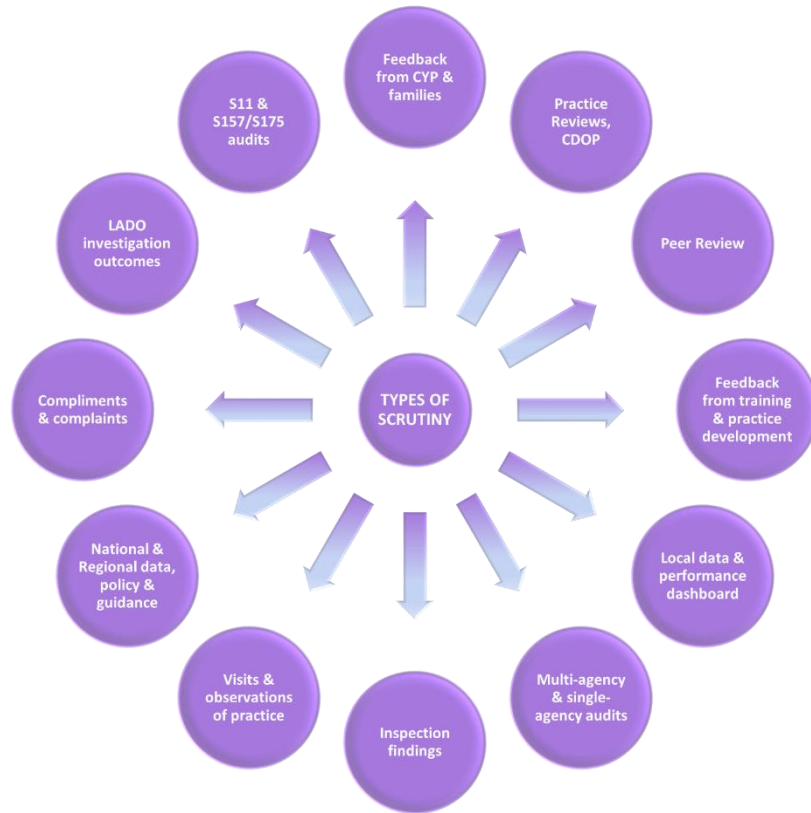
Task and Finish groups are convened where needed to complete short pieces of work.

HOW IS OUR PARTNERSHIP SCRUTINISED?

The newly appointed Independent Chair Scrutineer provides assurance in judging the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area, including arrangements to identify and review serious child safeguarding cases (Working Together 2018).

Additional scrutiny arrangements include a range of mechanisms, deployed to provide robust examination of performance and practice. Following the independent Peer Review of the LSCP in 2020, all 26 recommendations are complete and embedded which has developed the Partnerships effectiveness.

Further sources of scrutiny can be found in the following areas:



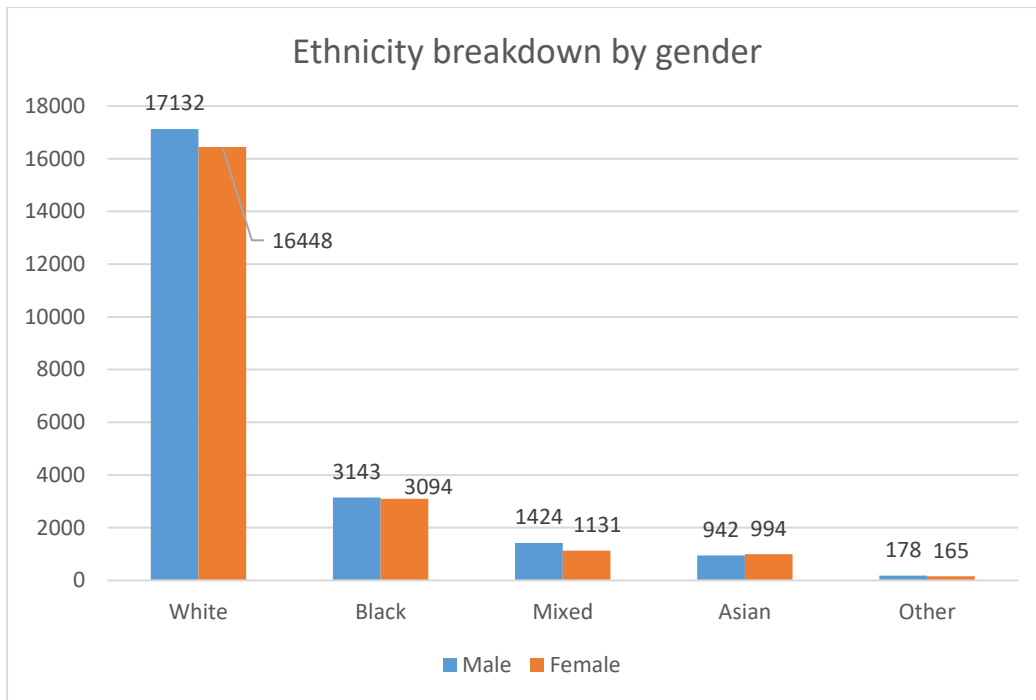
LSCP IN NUMBERS

Thurrock has a population of approximately 146,343 as at 2019*.

The overall child population is (0-17) is 44,650.

Thurrock's children and young people population is diverse, just under 25%* of children and young people come from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds.

*Office of National Statistics (ONS) 2019.



LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The overall purpose of the Learning and Development (L&D) programme is to support statutory and voluntary organisations and schools to comply with their Section 11 requirements under the Children Act 2004.

The LSCP L&D programme includes course specifications that correspond to different competency levels and delegates are asked to ensure that they book onto the course that address their individual training needs.

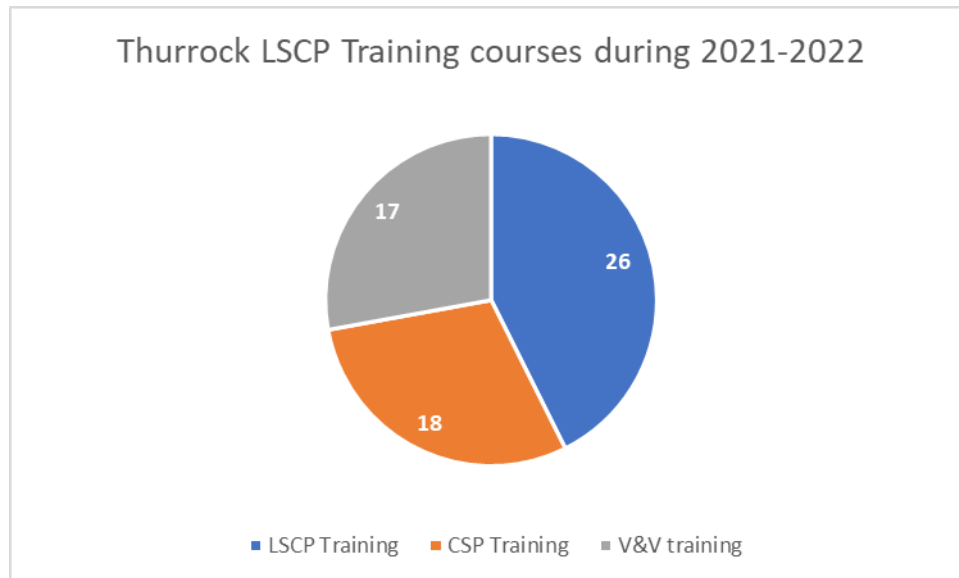
The awareness training supports our mission to make safeguarding children everyone's business to understand and recognise risk factors and understand how to apply the LSCP threshold guidance for referral and assessment.

The LSCP also arrange themed conferences and seminars that are targeted to the strategic leadership and management, safeguarding specialists and a variety of frontline roles across the partnership.

The L&D programme is reviewed annually, and new events are added to respond to and help embed learning from national and local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs) and findings from multi-agency case audits.

All learning and development events have been adapted to enable virtual attendance via Microsoft Teams and an e-learning platform.

During the period 2021 – 2022, 61 learning and development events reflecting partnership priorities were held and there were more than 1000 instances of attendance by multi-agency professionals. Some learners attending were from the Southend and Essex Partnership areas attending Violence and Vulnerability courses. Training events are also delivered in partnership with Thurrock Community Safety Partnership and the Violence and Vulnerability Board.



Feedback from training is consistently positive and evaluations evidence ‘golden threads’ between learning and practice. Evaluations are used to refresh content and target gaps in the learning and development programme and learning resources.

LESSONS FROM SERIOUS CASE REVIEWS (SCRs) AND LOCAL CHILD SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE REVIEWS (LCSPRs)

During this period an independent Thematic Review of Serious Youth Violence and Gang Related Activity was commissioned and recently published.

The key learning and recommendations from the review will be disseminated through a summary booklet, podcast, practitioner learning event and a 7-minute briefing. The Learning Practice Review and Strategic Groups will provide oversight of the implementation of the action plan once formulated and ratified and reported to the Management Executive Board.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Section 11 Compliance Audit

The Partnerships Section 11 process is robust and provides good assurance regarding the quality of Partner’s commitment and prioritisation of safeguarding. The annual returns are

reviewed by the Audit Group for compliance and any action plans monitored for improving outcomes.

Education Section 157/175 Audits

There is a good level of response received from schools along with the requirement for additional information supporting the PREVENT agenda. The submissions are quality assured by the Audit Group and where relevant actions plans are in place to monitor compliance and improvement processes.

FINANCE AND RESOURCES

Contributions:

Contribution Breakdown	Budget
Local Authority	116,977.10
Police	58,488.55
National Probation Service	3,630.82
Thurrock CCG	58,488.55
	237,585.02

The budget is made up of contributions from the Statutory Partners and a relevant agency and is reviewed annually.

THE REPORT OF THURROCK LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDRENS PARTNERSHIP

Learning Practice Review Group (LPRG)

Chaired by: Thurrock Children’s Social Care

Background

The LPRG was established following the Safeguarding Arrangements which came into effect in 2019. It replaced the previous Serious Case Review Groups and took on some of the functions of the Management Executive when it was the LSCB. The main aim of the LPRG is to focus on learning, delivery, and outcomes. The terms of reference were agreed at the outset- August 2019 and the last review of the terms of reference was in October 2021.

Membership and chairing

The chair is currently Janet Simon, Assistant Director, Children’s Social Care and Early Help. The membership includes the key statutory partners, Police, Health & CSC, and includes Housing, Probation, CAFCAS, Public Health, SERICC & Adult Safeguarding.

Meeting frequency

Meetings are currently held every 2 months. Following Covid, meetings have been held virtually. The virtual platform has resulted in an improved attendance at all LSCP meetings.

Key agenda items

The Group review the reports and receives updates from the Audit, Practice Standards and Neglect subgroups and the MACE and signs off key partnership documents.

The delivery plan for the LSCP is reviewed at each meeting. Learning Practice reviews are tracked, and the action plans monitored. The training programme, attendance, feedback, and costs/income are reviewed and tracked.

The development of a training plan for Signs of Safety across the partnership is discussed at each meeting. Information from the Child Death Review Panel is discussed, and any learning identified

Partner agencies update on developments in their agency to inform colleagues and improve inter agency communication. Feedback from SET groups and Safeguarding Leads Forum is shared.

Main actions

- The group reviews and approves terms of reference for the various groups that report into the group.
- The following documents have been signed off – Threshold document, Neglect Strategy and Learning & Improvement Framework.
- The reports from Practice Standards Group, Neglect Subgroup, MASH Strategic Governance Board and Safeguarding Leads Forum are now part of the formal LSCP monitoring process and are on the agenda for the LPRG.
- The Data Dashboard has been developed and is reviewed and discussed

Focus Areas

Themes during 2021/22 period that have been covered include:

- Female Genital Mutilation
- Liberty Protection and Inherent Jurisdiction
- Think Family Approach
- Training
- Use of Data
- Neglect

Learning from Reviews

If there is a case which requires notification to the National Safeguarding Panel, the chair of the LPRG will Chair the Rapid Review. All case review action plans are developed through meetings attended by multi-agency representatives, to identify actions required by the partnership to address the recommendations. These action plans have been ratified through the LSCP Learning Practice Review Group, Management Executive Board and Statutory Partners.

During this reporting year we have worked hard across the partnership on the recommendations arising out of case reviews and a Peer Review of the partnership previously

published. Action Plans for our Peer Review and two case reviews are now complete and signed off by Strategic Partners. Ongoing work to provide safeguarding assurance forms part of business as usual. Actions contained within two case review action plans are part of our current work

Following a serious incident of youth violence Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) commissioned a focused review of Serious Youth Violence and Gang Related Activity, along with a deep dive case audit.

The review which will identify areas of learning will be published in June 2022 and initial findings include:

- that there was a strong commitment from all agencies and individuals to tackle serious youth violence.
- The structures, processes and procedures that are currently in place, and those proposed actions, are addressing where possible serious youth violence.
- No practice or system failings were identified.

Training

The Group has oversight of training offered via the LSCP and discusses and identifies training needs and receives a bi-annual report which provides data on attendance and nonattendance by the partnership as well as feedback on training provided. Training has included:

- Graded Care Profile 2 Awareness
- Designated Safeguarding Leads Training
- Multi-Agency Child Protection Training
- Safer Recruitment
- Gangs and Serious Youth Violence
- Trauma Informed Practice

Audit Group

Chaired by: NELFT.

What did we do?

The LSCP audit group meets on a bi-monthly basis and is well attended. There are regular representatives from the CCG, NELFT, CSC, police and the LSCP business support team. Practitioners involved in cases are to contribute and participate in discussions around practice, what needs improving and what is working well.

Over the last year, the LSCP audit group has reviewed the effectiveness of child safeguarding practices. There has been a deep dive and thematic review into youth violence in Thurrock. There was a focus on a local case in which a young person who was known to Youth Offending Services (YOS), Health, Police and CSC seriously injured another young person and how services could improve information sharing and improve risk assessments to prevent further incidents. The report has recently been published.

We have looked at the transfer in process and how processes can be improved to ensure vulnerable families receive the appropriate support from Thurrock services. Outcomes from the audit group has opened up communication between local housing departments and their counterparts, health have reviewed the transfer of records process.

NELFT have recently updated the transfer of records policy and have made contact with safeguarding leads at other trusts to improve the transfer process.

Thurrock LSCP adopted the signs of safety process for child safeguarding practice. This was recently reviewed at the audit group, where it was established that practitioners find the process helpful in identifying risk and strengths.

The audit group has reflected the Thurrock LSCP priorities addressing:

- Neglect
- Performance Monitoring
- Policies and Procedures
- Participation and Engagement
- Learning and Improvement Framework
- Violence and Vulnerability

What was the impact?

Feedback is given to practitioners and managers via the Audit Group, this has resulted in improved practice.

To improve contribution to the audits, it has been agreed that the LSCP Business Manager will escalate a lack of response to the Audit Group representatives.

What we plan to do next?

We have set out the next cases to be reviewed with a focus on the areas of priority for the LSCP.

MACE Group

Chaired by: Essex Police.

Following on from the successful integration of the new safeguarding arrangements implemented through the MACE group, the new chair, Detective Inspector Brian Palombella has now assumed responsibility for chairing the meetings moving forwards.

The MACE group continues to report directly into the LPRG (Learning Practise Review Group) encompassing: Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Child Exploitation (CE), Missing, Modern Day Slavery, Domestic Abuse and Contextual Safeguarding. At the end of each MACE meeting a report is compiled to be presented at the LPRG.

OP GOLDCREST continues to progress and evolve in terms of its integration across services since the initial launch in 2019. The initial PIER evaluation found that the project “effectively worked” as an alternative way to report abuse for young people at risk of sexual abuse. Feedback from stakeholders was “largely positive” in all four areas of relevance: effectiveness, appropriateness, efficiency and impact. Further bespoke training with service providers continues to be undertaken, with continued success in terms of uptake and engagement with young people using this pathway as a way to secure wider support, without the need to formally engage with Police. This continues to be a useful vehicle to enable social workers and other key professionals to start those difficult conversations, around risk-taking behaviours and sexual exploitation. There will be further activity in terms of media and partnership engagements around this project over the coming months as we look to expand its success, and our vision to integrate this process across the entire county.

There remains continued activity between Police and partners around OP MAKESAFE, which continues to raise and maintain awareness of CSE in the community amongst local businesses and hotels/B&B’s, with continued training, visits and engagement with Community Policing teams. Spot checks via OP KIRN have identified some wider opportunities for learning and dissemination and highlighted the importance of managers and employees at such premises regularly refreshing their knowledge around CSE and CCE.

OP ENCOMPASS continues to grow and evolve in terms of awareness and integration into the sharing and dissemination of information between Police and key partners where children who are either victims of, or witness domestic abuse. OP ENCOMPASS offers educational establishments the opportunity to provide wider support and care via Key adults at such premises, which continues to reduce the harmful impact that domestic abuse can have on a child’s mental and emotional health and well-being.

Working practices and protocols set in place during the initial COVID lock-down periods are now well-established and teams continue to engage and operate in a hybrid-working manner, making best use of the available technology to expedite the sharing of information, with MACE meetings regularly taking place with partners via Teams.

At every MACE meeting, the contextual safeguarding report continues to be discussed with focus around activity associated with developing trends, hotspots for exploitation and continues to include an overview and discussions around the Risk Management Meeting associated with young people that are going missing.

Neglect Group

Chaired by: Thurrock Children’s Social Care

What did we do?

As part of the partnerships Neglect Priority, the LSCP Neglect Group was created and is into its first year. The group was created to reduce the incidences of neglect of children and young people within the borough through a multi-agency partnership approach and further to reduce repeat incidents of neglect for individual children and young people.

This group meets on a quarterly basis, meetings are well attended by representatives from across the partnership and the Business Team provide support. Members contribute to and participate in discussions on the Neglect Strategy, Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2) Assessment Tool Implementation Plan and on learning and development activities to raise the profile of the tool and its use.

In the year 2021-2022, the Neglect Group has reviewed the Neglect Strategy in light of the restrictions imposed during the pandemic, which made delivering some parts a challenge. The group has monitored and tracked the GCP2 Implementation Plan, which has seen practitioners train as Train the Trainers in GCP2, the creation of an annual training programme, the delivery of GCP2 awareness and training sessions incorporation the Signs of Safety approach, to a range of multi-agency practitioners, identified GCP2 champions in agencies to support staff in the completion of the tool, the creation of a Neglect 7-minutes briefing and a rise in the numbers of completed assessments.

What was the impact?

Practitioners are aware of the GCP2 tool, how to obtain training on how to use it and are able to identify and support children and families where neglect is present. Numbers of completed assessments have risen in the 12 months and support has been written into plans to provide intervention and support to families.

What we plan to do next?

To build on the work already done we plan to deliver a multi-agency Neglect Conference launching the strategy, create a Neglect Screening Tool, devise a Neglect Tool Kit, launch a neglect campaign in partnership with the NSPCC and deliver a Reflective Neglect Learning Workshop for practitioners to explore how to develop our multi-agency response to neglect.

Practice Standards Group (PSG)

Chaired by: Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group (TCCG)

The PSG is a new Multi-Agency Group. There have been six meetings held from February 2021 to June 2022. This report covers April 2021-March 2022. The group consist of members across the partnership and key agencies. As a collective group, we believe Practice Improvement is at the heart of the role of the safeguarding arrangements. The group examines a range of information (case review recommendations, practice issues) relating to safeguarding practice and procedure for all Thurrock Babies, Children, Young people and Families (BCYPF). This multi-agency partnership forum identifies where partnership is working well and share models of good practice. The forum also explores where partnership working requires improvement and develops practice standards.

The PSG aims to support Partnership working through:

- Sharing learning from single agencies, including voluntary sectors
- Sharing learning from Serious Incidents (SIs)
- consider the learning from single agency deep dives

- Identify key priority areas for analysis and make recommendations to multi-agency practice improvements
- Receiving thematic information and learning on Escalations from Stage 3 and 4 of the Escalation Policy
- Making recommendations for training and development to the Learning Practice Review Group (LPRG)

The table below gives a narrative from the PSG for the 2021-2022 reporting Period.

What did we do?

Between April 2021 to March 2022, there has been four meetings held. The key agenda items covered within this reporting year were:

1. Serious Case Review (SCR) Sam & Kyle Recommendation 2.3 – ‘Create and implement models of multi-agency group supervision’ to be run between agencies to explore and build on better co-operation and understanding of handling complex or persistent cases’

- Work Generated - Partnership Complex Case Discussion Group

To implement the recommendations and learning from the above case review, the PSG after numerous discussions agreed to pilot the ‘Partnership Complex Case Discussion Group’ where invited members, including frontline practitioners and lead managers working with families in stuck and complex cases will have a safe place or forum to discuss issues around complex cases collectively, once a term. The PSG is in the process of finalising the guidance for the above group, whilst members also discuss within their agencies the appropriate cases to consider for the group.

2. Composite Action Matrix Recommendation 20 Peer Review

It is in the remit of the PSG to look at the standards across the partnership on the key themes that are coming out of the composite action plan and take it back to the respective agencies to look at ways of improving standards. On critical review of the document, the themes identified in the reporting year included: Information Sharing, Neglect, and Non-Accidental Injuries (NAI) in pre-mobile babies.

Neglect continues to be one of the TLSCP priorities for further work in 2022-2024. The PSG will continue to work with other subgroups, partners, and practitioners in Thurrock to identify and recognise issues of neglect in our population, and work with and within Thurrock to ensure the appropriate resources are available.

NAI’s – The numbers for NAIs have significantly increased across the wider system. The chair for the PSG has led on the health economy NAI’s reviews, where the learnings have been shared with health partners. Other strategic partners have equally reviewed the data within their organisations and immediate learnings put out. As a SET system, there is currently a SET Multiagency NAI Planning Group, where a system conference is being planned for October 2022 to share any learnings. This will also raise the awareness and the need to be professionally curious to raise attention timely to prevent and or minimise any abuse/impact.

Whilst providing support to BCYPF and practitioners alike. The SET Procedures for Management of Suspicious, Unexplained Injuries and Bruising in Children is now available and accessible through Partnership websites.

3. Work Generated - Practitioners Quality Conversation - TLSCP Priorities for 2022-2024

In December 2021, the PSG invited Frontline Practitioners as representative for agencies to the meeting. The session was organised to seek the views, opinions, and suggestions from practitioners on the Thurrock LSCP Partnership priorities for 2022-2024. The PSG believes hearing the voices of frontline practitioners is key to implementing any plans, strategies, and embedding these into practice. It also engages them and provides commitment and ownership to the TLSCP Priorities.

The following key questions were explored with deep discussions with the frontline practitioners:

- What do you know about Thurrock Local Safeguarding Child Partnership (TLSCP)?
- What priorities do you think the Partnership should consider for 2022/24? Why?
- What emerging themes/areas of concerns do you experience and practical barriers?
- What can the Partnership do to support you in your role?

To identify the priorities, the Independent Chair Scrutineer and Statutory Partners considered the results of consultation with multi-agency frontline practitioners, the multi-agency data received during the year 2021 – 2022, case audit outcomes, national and local reviews. The Partnership have agreed five priorities for 2022 – 2024. It is worth noting the PSG contribution to this outcome.

- Neglect
- Violence and Vulnerability
- Think Family
- Transitions and Transfers
- Emotional Health and Well Being

The PSG will continue to support and work with the Partnership to implement and embed these areas into practice to safeguarding our vulnerable population for all ages.

4. Agency Escalations

As one of the main purposes of the PSG is to review safeguarding practices across all agencies and for learning and understand the types of escalations within agencies in Thurrock, it was agreed that agencies would provide updates twice a year on any thematic areas of escalations. The group will be looking at this twice a year, i.e. six monthly to give agencies enough time to gather and analyse agency escalations before they are shared at these meetings. Learning the escalations across agencies will provide an overview on system issues and concerns.

5. LSCP Delivery Plan – conduct thematic on specified areas to improve outcomes for Children and Young People

The Thurrock Partnership Delivery Plan aims to improve standards of practice that impact on children and young people. The PSG oversees the work of the Delivery Plan on behalf of the Partnership, one of the actions on the plan was to select a thematic piece of work to review that will benefit Thurrock CYP and Families. Pre-Birth assessment was agreed. This piece of work was to look at any practices needed to improve or change in relation to pre-birth assessments, as there had been several concerning cases.

- Pre-Birth Assessment

Following discussions across the system there is now a piece of work being undertaken across SET Partnerships on Pre-Birth Assessments and the learning from the audit will be shared in due course.

What was the impact?

As Thurrock Partnership, we are listening more to Frontline Staff, hearing their voices, and evidencing how their voices are making a difference and impact on Thurrock Partnership decision making from a strategic level – for example the Thurrock LSCP Priorities for 2022-2024.

These priorities will impact on system workforce and how we work with BCYPF, knowing where Thurrock resources are needed most.

What do we plan to do next?

Priorities for the PSG from a Partnership perspective will be implementing and embedding and socialising the TLSCP 2022-2024 Priorities and supporting partners to safeguarding BCYPF in Thurrock.

Impact of Covid - One of the challenges across agencies is workforce and capacity/workloads demand across agencies. The PSG recognises and acknowledges the representatives on the PSG also have their agencies day to day demands and the same pool of staff. We need to find new ways of working to ensure the demand and requests from Thurrock are met in a timely manner.

From a PSG perspective, the group plans to continue the pieces of work started last year, to ensure these come to an effective, sustained, and successful fruition. Examples include:

- Partnership Complex Case Discussion
- Agency Escalation Group
- Repeat the Practitioners Quality Conversations - The group plans to invite the Practitioners back in December 2022, a year on for a follow up Practitioner Quality Conversation (PQC) to inform the TLSCP on progress.
- Invite more Guest Speakers to the PSG to improve practice and learn from innovative ideas.

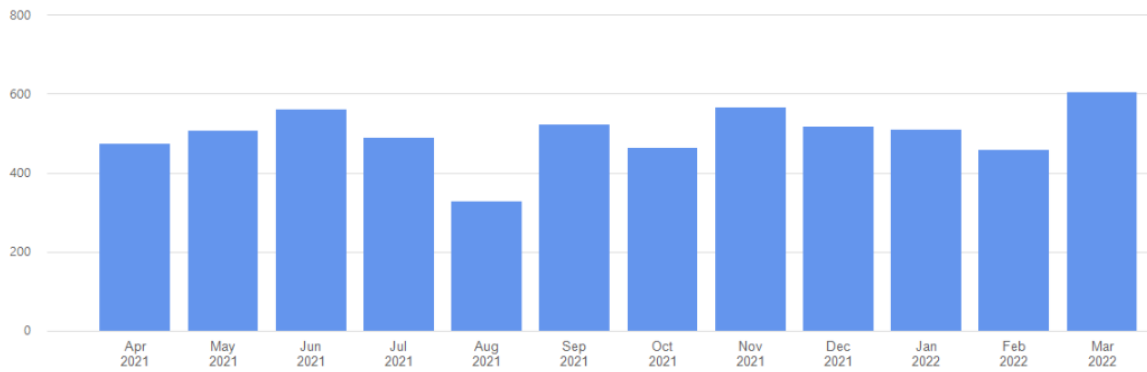
Thurrock’s MASH Team

Chaired by: Thurrock Children’s Social Care

What did we do?

Contacts

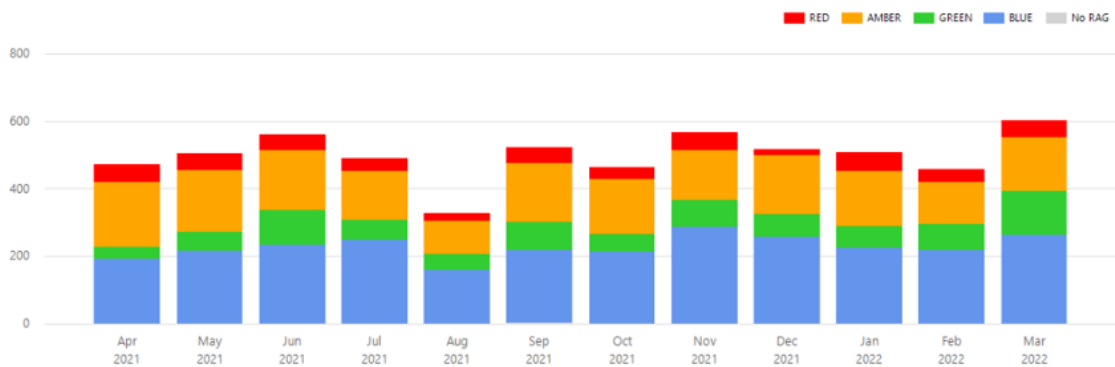
MASH Contacts - Completed Volume



	Apr 2021	May 2021	Jun 2021	Jul 2021	Aug 2021	Sep 2021	Oct 2021	Nov 2021	Dec 2021	Jan 2022	Feb 2022	Mar 2022	Total
Total	472	506	561	489	328	523	463	566	517	508	458	603	5994

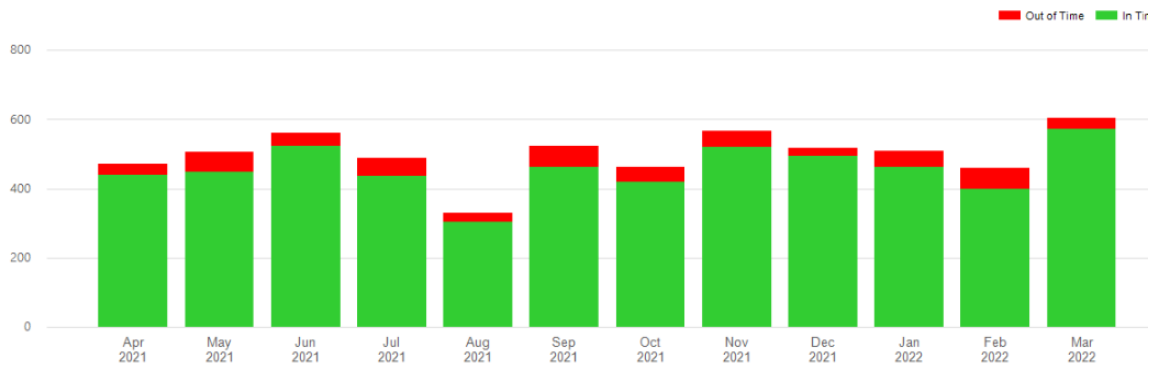
- Thurrock MASH received 5994 contacts April 21- March 22. Fluctuations tend to reflect school term times and holidays.

MASH Contacts - Completed by Revised RAG Rating



- 31% of the total number of contacts were graded as Amber and 45.51% were graded as blue. Average of 8.6 % were rated Red.

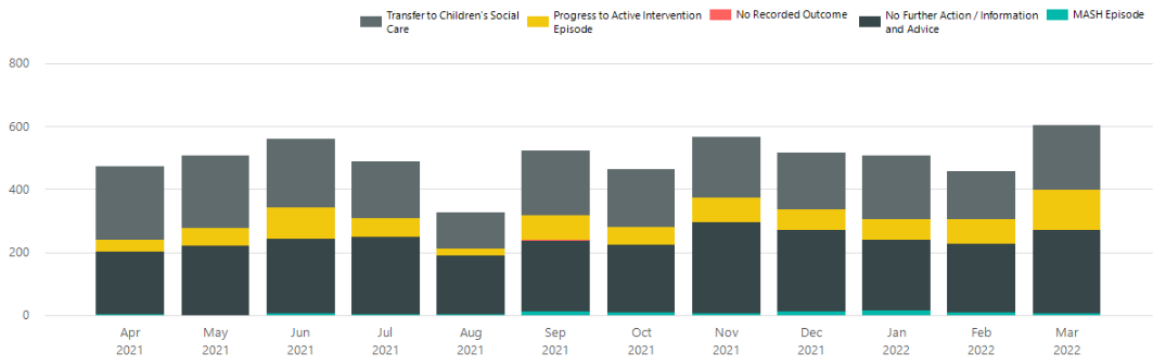
MASH Contacts - Completed by In/Out of Timescale



	Apr 2021	May 2021	Jun 2021	Jul 2021	Aug 2021	Sep 2021	Oct 2021	Nov 2021	Dec 2021	Jan 2022	Feb 2022	Mar 2022	Total
In Time	93.2 %	88.7 %	93.2 %	89.0 %	92.7 %	88.1 %	90.7 %	91.7 %	95.7 %	90.7 %	87.1 %	94.9 %	91.4 %
Out of Time	6.8 %	11.3 %	6.8 %	11.0 %	7.3 %	11.9 %	9.3 %	8.3 %	4.3 %	9.3 %	12.9 %	5.1 %	8.6 %

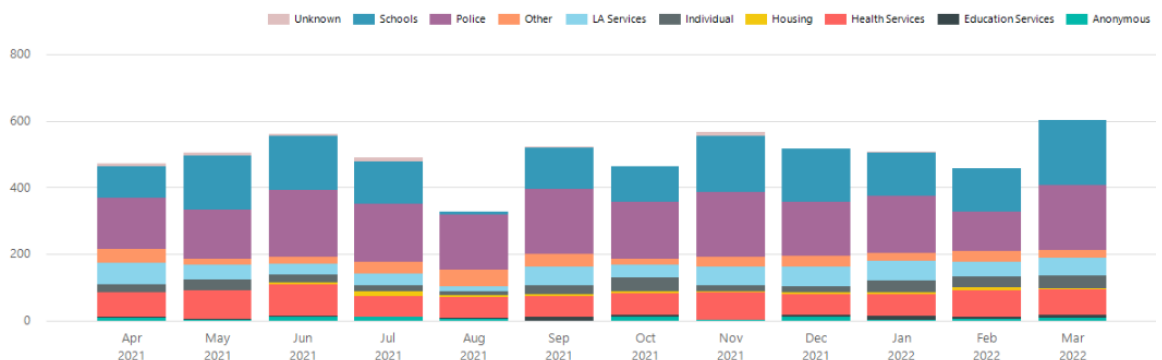
- Over 91% of the total number of contacts were completed within timescales (24 hours).

MASH Contacts - Completed by Main Outcome



- 46% of the total number of contacts led to no further actions, and 38% led to CSC's intervention.

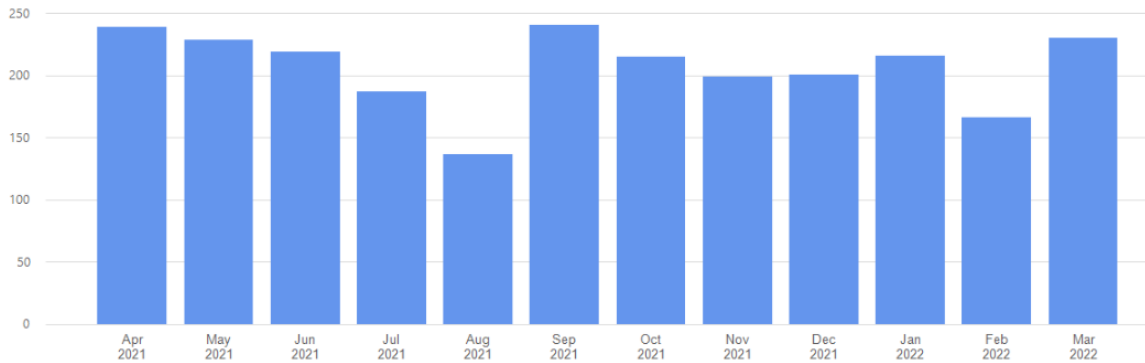
Completed Contacts by Category of Referral Source



- 34.2% of contacts were made by the police, 26.3% schools and 14.6% were made by health. This is similar to the previous annual report- with a slight increase in the percentage from schools and decrease in those from police

Referrals

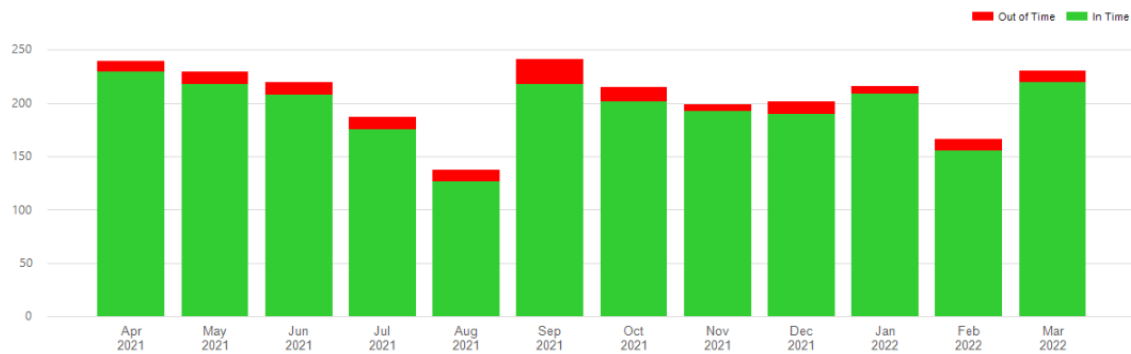
LCS Referrals - Completed Volume



	Apr 2021	May 2021	Jun 2021	Jul 2021	Aug 2021	Sep 2021	Oct 2021	Nov 2021	Dec 2021	Jan 2022	Feb 2022	Mar 2022	Total
Total	239	229	219	187	137	241	215	199	201	216	166	230	2479

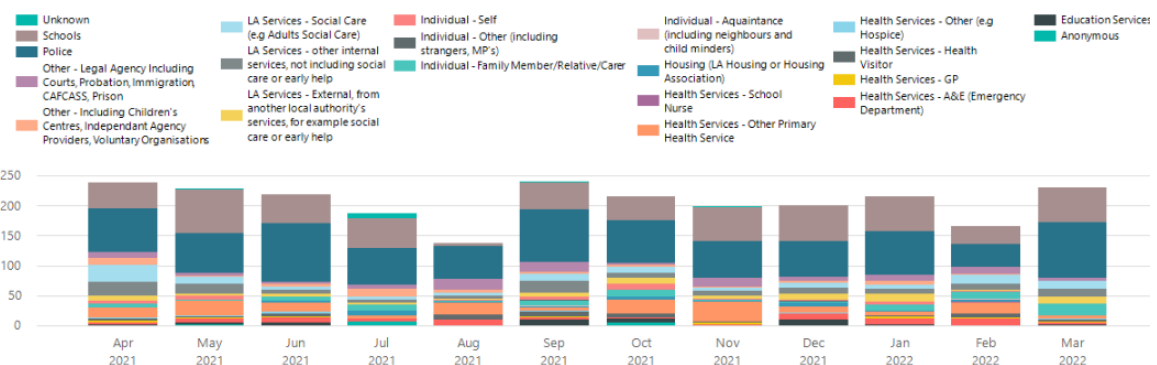
- 2479 referrals were converted from contacts April 21- March 22.
- Over 93.3% of the total number of referrals led to C&F assessments.

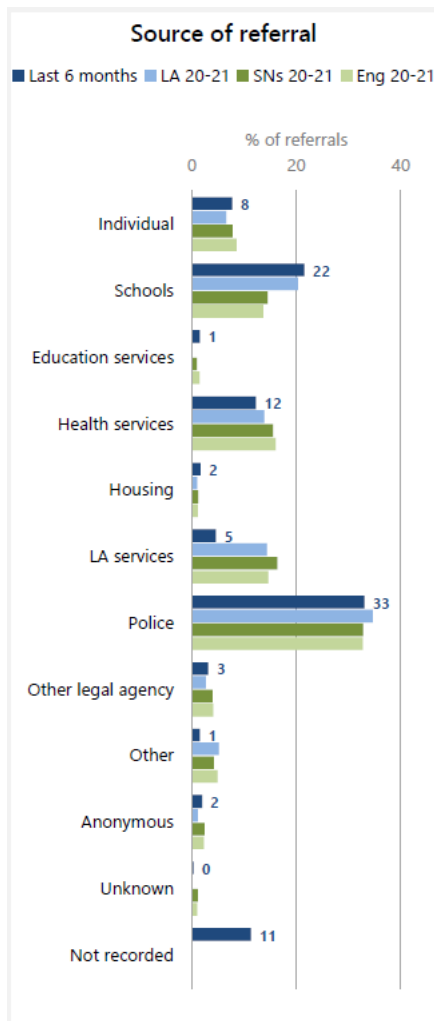
LCS Referrals - Completed by In/Out of Timescale



- 94.4% of referrals were processed within timescales

LCS Referrals - Completed by Category of Referral Source





On the left table there is a break down of the referral sources into more detail particularly in relation to health.

When compared to statistical neighbours and nationally Thurrock tends to receive more referrals from school and less from health than comparators. See current information from the last 6months April to August 22

Evidence for and evaluation of effectiveness

- Over 91% of all contacts and 94% of referrals were completed within timescales.
- No risks were identified with regards to the practice within MASH during internal and external audit. This includes focused visit in Jun 2021 and a live audit with partner agencies in May 22. In addition to regular multi agency dip sampling
- Risks identified in respect of children were responded to appropriately and within timescales.
- Evidence of multi-agencies collaboration continue to be seen in cases within the MASH and now more partner agencies are on site including Probation and Health and Police.

The May 2022 live audit embraced the learning from national high profile child death reviews to test the robustness of MASH processes. The outcomes were listed as follows

WHAT WORKS WELL

- ✓ The overall practice in MASH as good
- ✓ Clear processes, structure and timescales in place
- ✓ Contacts are clear about the concerns about the Child/Young Person/Family
- ✓ Thresholds are carefully considered
- ✓ Initial RAG rating reflective of the identified risk in majority of the cases

- ✓ Families are spoken to and consent obtained where appropriate by MASH
- ✓ Information from key partner agencies such as Health, Police and Education is being sought and promptly received
- ✓ The impact on the Child or Young Person is carefully analysed by the MASH practitioners
- ✓ There are very clear outcomes and recommendations being made to PASS and a breakdown of a proposed plan of how the family could be supported

WHAT WE COULD DO BETTER

- Child's voice to be more evident both in the referrals and in the MASH Risk Assessments
- Practitioners to be more professionally curious regarding information being shared and request further information, as necessary.
- Physical presence of other agencies will make information gathering easier and faster (Probation and YOS).
- More evidence of partners sharing the referrals with families
- Information provided by Health was not always sufficient and did not address any issue of concern; they are sometimes given information without a full consent which prevents them from being more proactive in assessing the needs of the family
- More consideration for obtaining information from agencies around the Fathers (GP, Adults services).
- Support to practitioners to understand child to parent violence (potentially delivered via LSCP across the partnership)
- MASH practitioners could benefit from understanding what services are available from Adult Services so they can approach the family as a whole.

What we plan to do next?

The multi-agency audit was effective in improving partner agency collaboration. Consideration is being given to Open Day when agencies can visit the MASH.

Challenges

- The past few years have presented a number of challenges which will have far-reaching future implications in the medium and long term. We anticipate that the impact on children and families will lead to increased levels of need. It is likely that there will be increased numbers of families living in poverty, and increased need and risk due to mental illness, substance misuse, domestic abuse and homelessness. We continue to experience a number of families being placed in Thurrock from a number of London Boroughs, as Thurrock's housing is more affordable.
- Following on from the significant fluctuations we saw in demand on the service linked to Covid over the last couple of years, we are now seeing a statistical return to previous level of demand on the service. Situations children and their families find themselves in appear to be more complex. In the wake of Covid there are significant financial

pressures placed on all in society, but ones that are likely to be hit the most are those that are vulnerable.

- We have in the last 12 month seen a reduction in contacts coming into the MASH being transferred into Children Services, this has been achieved and maintained by working with partner agencies and Universal Services where appropriate. This has ensured that families are working with the right agencies at the right time, we have not seen an increase in re-referrals in this period. We are also utilising the Early Offer of Help in Thurrock more than over previous years, which is allowing for families to have access to support before things escalate.

Priorities

- Appropriate decision making within the MASH to ensure the safety of children remain the prime focus of the service.
- Supporting families at the earliest opportunity
- Continuing to build strong & diverse multi-agency partnerships

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Service, Thurrock Council Thurrock Local Authority Designated Officer

The LADO Service has continued to develop and build positive relationships with partner agencies working together to keep children safe in Thurrock. Information sessions regarding the management of allegations and the role of the LADO continue to be disseminated to statutory and voluntary sectors within Thurrock. Good links with Partner Agencies, Educational Establishments, Nursery and Early Years Providers, Fostering Agencies, the Football Association, Rugby and Cricket Boards have all been established by the LADO during the course of Managing Allegations. Contact for advice, support and guidance continues to be received from all sectors. The LADO has also provided support and advice to the Safeguarding Team of the Church of England Diocese and is currently working to expand this across all multi-agency faith groups.

How to contact the LADO Service, make a referral and seek advice and guidance has been widely distributed by the LADO this can also be found on the Thurrock Council Website. Educational establishments also promote this information on their individual websites, contact from parents seeking advice or reporting a concern has also been received by the LADO Service. At the start of each new school academic year, the LADO sends out a letter to each and every educational establishment in Thurrock, providing contact details and a Guidance Document about the management of allegations and the role of the LADO.

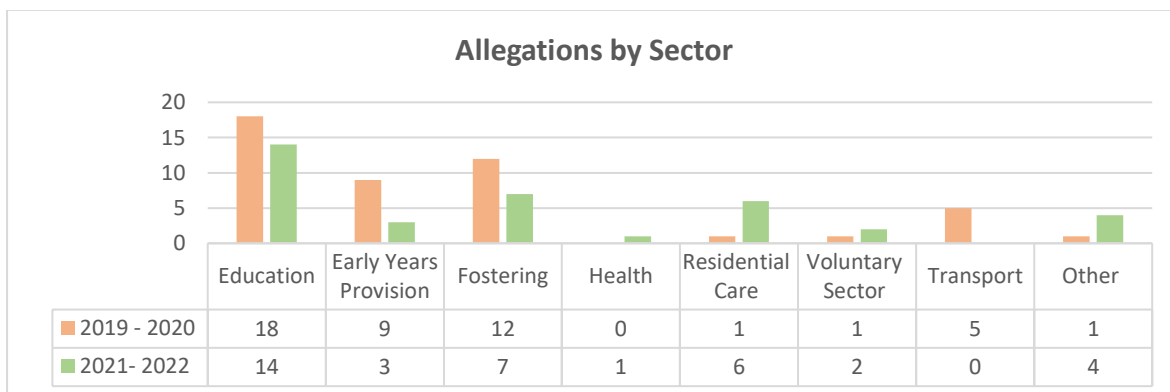
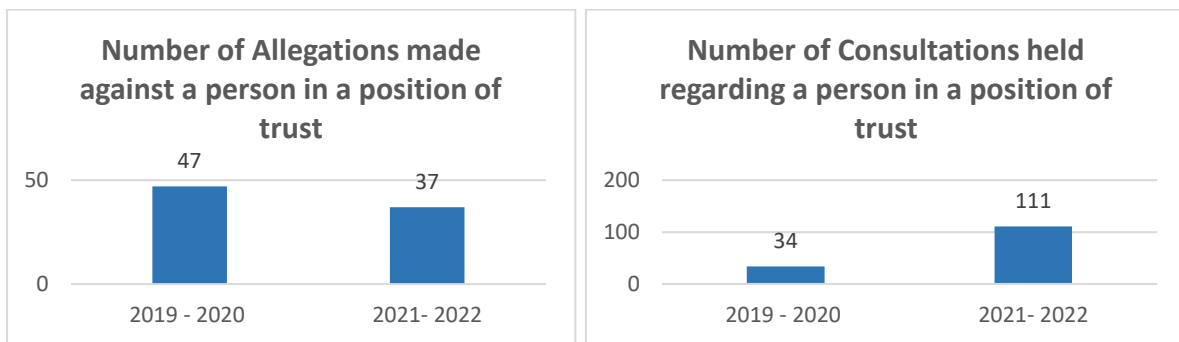
Following the identification of the need for further training for educational establishments with regard to safer recruitment, the management of allegations and how to undertake an investigation, the LADO in conjunction with the LSCP discussed the merit of providing further training through the LSCP. A suitable trainer was commissioned to deliver this training. Feedback from the training has been very positive although there is room for more participants to take up the training. This will be evaluated at the end of the year.

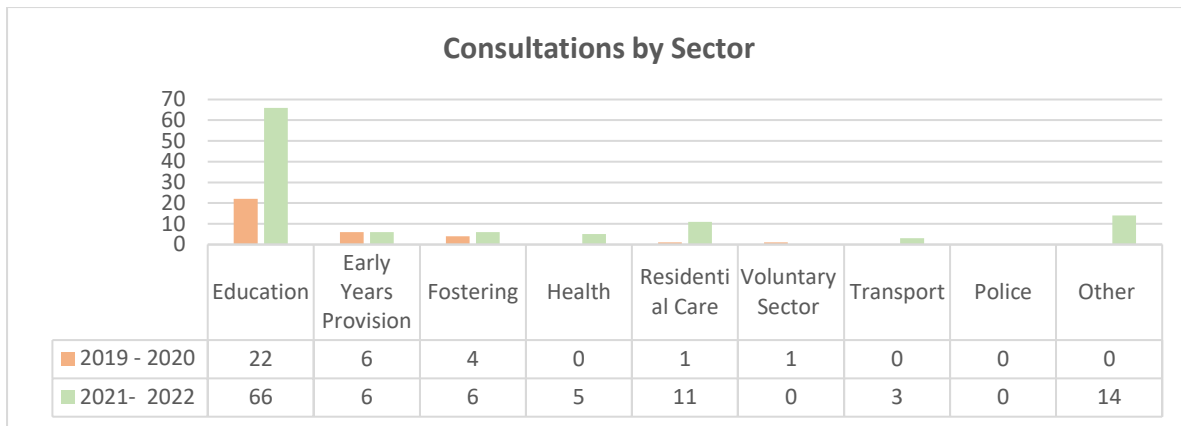
Over the last year, the LADO Service has seen a significant increase in the number of referrals received when compared to last year. A total of (148) referrals were received to the LADO Service in 2021-2022, compared with (81) for the year 2019-2020. Referrals are categorised into two separate groups, those that meet the LADO threshold (Allegations) and those that do

not meet the LADO threshold (Consultations). The actual number of Allegations received in 2021-2022 (37) decreased when compared to 2019-2020 (47). However, the number Consultations received significantly increased in 2021-2022 (111), when compared to (34) in 2019-2022.

Educational Establishments remain the highest sector for both Allegations and Consultations received into the LADO Service. This is not necessarily a negative, it signifies that schools are aware of the need to seek advice, guidance and consultation where concerns have been raised in regard to the conduct/behaviour of staff. Equally, a reduction in the number of Allegations that met the threshold of harm is also positive. The reduction in numbers does not necessarily mean that there is a lack of reporting to the LADO, the significant increase in consultations would suggest this is not the case.

Similarly, this year has seen reductions in the number of allegations received in both Early Years establishments and Fostering Services. However there has been an increase in the number of allegations received in respect of Children’s Residential Units. This primarily related to two residential units in the Borough which resulted in the LADO and Ofsted working together to address the identified concerns. One unit is now under new ownership and the other has made significant progress since employing new management and liaising with the LADO Service.





There may be several reasons for the increase in consultations, firstly because the role of the LADO has and continues to be promoted through the Designated Leads Forum, the annual letter sent out by the LADO, and the training provided around the management of allegations. Part of the role of the LADO is to provide advice, guidance and consultation. Secondly, the COVID-19 pandemic appears to have had an impact upon some children’s levels of anxiety and their social and emotional development/behaviour, which potentially affects their ability to manage their emotions and behaviour more reasonably in the classroom environment. This then has an impact upon staff trying to support and manage these difficulties and as a result concerns and complaints are made by the children and their parents when situations have not been managed appropriately. However, these low-level concerns do not reach the threshold of harm and the employer is tasked to address them through their own complaints’ procedures. Those that do reach the threshold of harm are managed through the LADO procedures.

Agencies are fully aware of the management of allegations procedures, they know how to contact the LADO Service, they know who the Local Authority Designated Officer is and what their responsibilities are, they continue to seek support, advice and guidance and this is reflected in the significant increase in consultations.

The number of referrals that reach the threshold of harm have dropped which would indicate that partner agencies are working hard to keep children safe from harm and are seeking advice where appropriate, and are referring to the LADO Service when they should be

The LADO continues to communicate with the National LADO Network and attends the Regional LADO network meetings. The Pandemic meant that we had to adapt to new ways of working, and Management Planning Meetings continue to be held virtually. We have found virtual meetings to be most productive in terms of attendance from other partner agencies.

The LADO continues to promote closer working relationships with the police and health services. Links have been made with Essex Police Complaints Department and the Common Law Police Disclosure and Assessment Unit.

Going forward, the LADO Service is keen to make closer links with multi faith and voluntary groups in the community. The LADO is participating in a working group looking at ways to reach out to multi faith groups in the community and will be attending a planned Interface Conference to be held later in the year.

Effectiveness of Early Help (Brighter Futures) Thurrock Childrens Social Care: Early Help and Prevention Service

Corporate Director of Childrens Services

The Brighter Futures Board is responsible for discussing how successfully the strategy is being implemented and ensuring that multi agency solutions are possible with minimal friction. For each strategic priority a different lead has been assigned to take ownership:

SP1 - Assistant Director for Education and Skills

SP2 - Assistant Director for Public Health

SP3 - Assistant Director for Children's Social Care

SP4 - Director for CYP, MSE

The Board has been part of ensuring that the delivery of Family Hubs, Early Help, Think Family and whole system working is successful.

There is a strong culture of working together to achieve a set of common aims and an understanding that success for families and good outcomes for children comes from clearly defined priorities, aims and a clear vision that is adopted by all of the partners.

We understand the benefits of preventative interventions. We use analytics to help shape our interventions and system through understanding what works and what has the most impact on certain groups of people.

The launch of the Think Family approach in April 2022 starts in Early Help, throughout the family's journey into statutory services. The aim is to intervene early, with evidenced based interventions, bring in the family network to divert families away from statutory services, by offering a whole family approach to planning.

The service is well staffed and trained to offer interventions at the right time to ensure needs do not escalate.

Each strategic priority in the Brighter Futures Strategy includes a 'How will we know when we are there' section intended to judge our success against. For example, some of the measures from SP2: 'Children are able to access the services they need and be healthy, focussing on prevention and early intervention' are:

- Proportion of CLA that receive statutory Health assessments in the recommended timescale increases (IHAs and RHAs)
There is a reduction in the gap between the most and least deprived groups that achieve school readiness by reception year whilst the overall proportion does not decrease.
- Proportion of children in year R and year 6 that are a healthy weight increases
The gap between the most and least deprived groups being obese at year 6 reduces.
- Increase the % of children who receive 2 doses of MMR by the age of 5
Increase the % of CLA with up-to-date immunisations

These are clear measures that fall across several different domains and require multi-agency collaboration.

However, they are all accountable to the Assistant Director of Public Health. Additionally, it is very easy to know whether these measures have been met or not."

There has been a focus on Early Help with the development of the Think Family approach, where early intervention using whole family working and including families support network aims to decrease the number of children needing statutory services. Those families that are subject to Child Protection Services and the Public Law outline will receive intensive support via evidenced based parenting interventions, assessments and Family Network Meetings, earlier to ensure that better outcomes for families can occur without the need for Court Proceedings.

The Early Help service has been strengthened in its capacity and skills base, to ensure that the right families receive the right support at the right time.

We have seen an increase in the numbers of assessments being completed by the Prevention and Support Team in 2021/2022, from 748 the year before to 1059. With more families being stepped down from CSC from 327 to 441. Whilst there has been a slight increase of cases being stepped up to Social Care, the data shows that the Prevention and Support Service continues to perform well against its performance indicators.

Feedback from families is very positive about the services they receive, and quarterly multi agency audits have been consistently good in relation to the work with families and partners. For the 4th year in succession, we have achieved 100% of our targets set for the Troubled/ Supporting Families Programme which evidences that we have successfully 'turned around' vulnerable families with intensive support and intervention.

What we plan to do next?

- Develop the Early Help Service Provision including services for 11–18-year-olds (25 if SEND), delivered by The Family Hubs going forward.
- Maintain Multi Agency audits focus on Early Help and the decision making in MASH for Tier 2 service delivery.
- Evaluate impact of increased capacity in Early Help on caseloads in Social Care and take corrective steps if needed to increase capacity in Social Care teams if needed.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Think Family approach.

The priority for 2022-2023 is to ensure that we deliver against the milestones set for the development of Family Hubs and the Start for Life programme alongside our partners.

This programme reflects our Think Family ambitions and will enable us to further develop this way of working. We had already planned to review our Early Help offer and will do this alongside Health and Education partners to determine how best to deliver the funded elements of the Family Hub programme. We will also map existing provision for young people and consult with them to ensure we are able to provide a comprehensive and relevant offer for them. We will review our existing Children's Centres, youth hubs and other local authority and partner delivery points to create a cohesive, all age hub network across the borough.

Missing Children Children's Social Care and Prevention Service

What did we do?

- Multi-agency working to promote risk recognition, response and risk reduction.
- Scrutiny of activity levels, analysis of patterns and quality of risk reduction has received continued focus in the last year.
- Good evidence of risk recognition and safety planning.
- Information on missing children is circulated daily to managers within Children's Services.
- A weekly report on Missing Children is sent to Senior Managers, the DCS and the Portfolio holder.
- INSPIRE Youth has taken over the contract for RHIs since April 2020.
- In 2021/2022, 47.3% of children with missing episodes engaged in RHIs, however performance improved in March 2022 to 67.7%, and it further improved to 78.6% in April 2022.
- The multi-agency risk management group, chaired by the CE and Missing Manager, meets weekly. The group focuses on multi-agency safety planning and disruption of activities of gangs and other groups or individuals to reduce risk.

Evidence for and evaluation of effectiveness

- A Thematic audit was completed in July 2021 to inform practice. This audit reported improvements in the quality and timeliness of safety planning.
- Some common themes emerging from the review of safety plans and return home interviews include pull factors of peers and a desire to return home for children looked after due to boundaries set within placements.
- Intelligence from RHIs is shared at risk management meetings for individual children but also with our community safety network or other key players such as British Transport Police, to disrupt activities or address locations where there is increased risk to children.

Changes made as a result of previous learning/priorities

- Return Home Interview data and information from interviews is analysed to identify trends / patterns / themes. This informs strategic planning for the service and wider community, and safety planning for individual children.
- There has been a continued focus on promoting Return Home Interviews to children who have been missing. The target is 80%. This is monitored weekly with INSPIRE.
- Practice workshops to further strengthen individual safety planning.

What was the impact?

- Increased take up of Return Home interviews with information that assists with identifying risks to young people, especially exploitation and therefore safety planning can be put in place to disrupt this activity.
- A reduction in children and young people going missing, however there remains an increase in missing episodes that is due to a small cohort of young people going missing frequently. Regular Strategy meetings are being held to identify the reasons for this and to minimise any risks of exploitation.

What we plan to do next?

- Continue to analyse Return Home Interview data and information from interviews to identify trends / patterns / themes. This will inform strategic planning for the service and wider community, and safety planning for individual children.
- Continue to focus on promoting Return Home Interviews to children who have been missing in order to meet the target is 80%.
- Continue Practice workshops to further strengthen individual safety planning.

Challenges and priorities for this year (2022/2023)

- Increase the take up of Return Home interviews from INSPIRE
- Decrease the number of children going missing.
- Decrease the number of missing episodes.
- Gain a greater understanding of the cohort that go missing frequently
- Ongoing mapping of young people to inform a Contextual Safeguarding approach to diversion and disruption of CE/CSE.
- Share information of the mapping exercises with partners to effectively safeguard young people that are frequently missing from home and care.

Youth Crime Governance Board Youth Offending Service Corporate Director of Childrens Services

What did we do?

The Youth Crime Governance Board completed the Youth Justice Plan 21-24 with 6 priorities. These priorities are reviewed by the Board monthly.

- **Violence and Vulnerability**
The Public Health approach seeks to improve the health and safety of all individuals by addressing underlying risk factors that increase the likelihood that an individual will become a victim or perpetrator of violence.
By definition, Public Health aims to provide the maximum benefit for the largest number of people. Programmes for prevention of violence based on the Public Health approach are designed to expose a broad segment of a population to prevention measures and to reduce and prevent violence at population level.
- **Effective Partnerships**

Thurrock Youth Offending Team recognises the need for effective partnership working at both a strategic and operational level to ensure the services it provides young people are relevant and targeted.

- **Education Training and Employment**
Improve our offer of suitable and sustainable ETE provisions by working with key partners to provide services that meet the needs of its cohort.
- **Prevention and Support**
Commit to the continued development of preventative interventions to improve life chances and opportunities for children, young people and their families at the earliest point in time.
- **Evidenced Based Practice**
Ensure our youth justice practice continues to develop in line with the evidence base and remains relevant for our current cohort
- **Diversion**
“Promote a childhood removed from the justice system, using pre-emptive prevention, diversion and minimal intervention. All work minimises criminogenic stigma from contact with the system.” (YJB strategic plan 2019-2022)

Evidence for and evaluation of effectiveness

There is a delivery plan that has been produced so our strategic priorities and objectives can be reviewed by the governance board. It has been designed to evidence our progress across our 6 priorities using a direction of travel system. We also provide a narrative around our progress by highlighting what is going well, what isn't and what we intend to focus on over the forthcoming period.

Due to the fact we are working from a three-year strategic plan the delivery plan will also be incorporated within our annual reviews and can be shared with the YJB. This provides up to date progress reports of our work and ensure we remain focused on delivering our objectives.

During the monthly updates, the direction of travel is rising on all areas following review by the Board.

There is a good level of awareness of child exploitation and the risks arising from involvement with Gangs.

There is a clear focus and firm safeguarding response in relation to children at risk of and experiencing Sexual and Criminal Child Exploitation in the context of Gangs and Trafficking. We have well-developed Gang Related Violence Strategic and Operational Groups to monitor and track individuals and their activities.

Changes made as a result of previous learning or priorities

We have included an additional priority that will focus on the disproportionality of Black and Mixed heritage young people in the Criminal Justice system. Whilst this is a National issue, Thurrock has also seen a rise in this vulnerable cohort.

The multi-agency Risk Management Meeting convenes weekly and focuses on Gangs and Exploitation (including trafficking), to review and track children who have been missing in the

previous week. The group focuses on multi-agency safety planning and disruption of exploitation by gangs and other networks or individuals, to reduce risk.

There are additional operational meetings held within Children's Social Care to plan and disrupt activity.

Bi-Monthly Contextual Safeguarding Reports are completed for Senior Managers and Strategic Partners. The reports provide an overview of the contextual safeguarding issues present in the borough and affecting the young people we work with, to promote disruption and reduce risk.

Thematic audits which were completed in 2021 to inform practice, evidenced significant improvements in working with and minimising risk.

Teams and Service areas have CE Champions, who work closely with the CE and Missing Manager in supporting Social Workers with training, mapping and safety planning.

Gang Injunctions are used when needed, last in 2020 to disrupt gang activity and associated exploitative harm to children. These were successful, resulting in the gang in question becoming obsolete.

We have already developed joined up working between Early Help, Social Care, YOS, the Youth Service and Community Safety partners to engage with individual young people and deliver community interventions i.e detached youth work in known hotspots to reduce the risk of CE. The development of Family Hubs to include young people will build on this and strengthen our impact.

Additional funding has been secured to support the Violence and Vulnerability programme across Essex. We have a 'Reachable Moments' offer, increased detached Youth Work and improved early intervention for schools and colleges.

Ongoing support is provided by the dedicated Gangs and CE workers to Social Workers regarding safety planning, increased awareness and use of contextual safeguarding.

Continued awareness raising and training events are held.

There is ongoing development around mapping of individuals, gang networks, criminal activity and geographical considerations.

What was the impact?

We were successful in securing funding for a Specialist Support Worker, who alongside the CE and Gangs Senior Practitioner offers individual and group support, as well as training and interventions to Schools and Colleges.

Following an increase of youth violence early in the Spring of 2021, an Independent Review was commissioned by the LSCP which highlighted a positive multi agency response to youth violence. Action was taken to strengthen prevention and awareness. Children's Social Care has worked with Housing to develop a support offer to families who have moved to Thurrock from other LAs, where safety is required from Gangs.

In Q4, YOS has outperformed both statistical neighbours and England in relation to its reoffending rate per offender after 12 months. YOS reoffending rate was 29% compared to 36% for statistical neighbours and 37% for England.

Following a successful bid with other Eastern Region LAs Thurrock has been able to invest in additional support from a local provider for young people that are at risk of exclusion or have been excluded due to CE, as well as further investment in ANTSER VR training resources and an extension of the Reachable Moments offer.

What we plan to do next?

- Continue to work with multi-agency partners in Adult Safeguarding to promote risk recognition and response to vulnerable adult Care Leavers and other adults at risk of exploitation and trafficking.
- Ongoing support provided by the dedicated Gangs and CE worker to Social Workers regarding safety planning, increased awareness and use of contextual safeguarding.
- Continued awareness raising and training events.
- Operation Goldcrest to continue.
- Ongoing development around mapping of individuals, gang networks, criminal activity and geographical considerations.
- Further work is required with Met Police to achieve improved information sharing and attendance at Strategy Meetings, as local gang activity often takes place across the county border into London.
- YOS reporting of Reoffending rates and knife crime is monitored quarterly via the Youth Crime Governance Board.
- Additional Task and finish groups have been set up to tackle disproportionality in BAME children in the Criminal Justice System and effective resettlement

Challenges and priorities for this year (2022/2023)

- To implement the recommendations from the HMIP Inspection of the Thurrock Youth Offending Service that was undertaken in May 2022. Report will be made public in August 2022.
- A focus on the disproportionality of Black and Mixed Heritage Young people in the Criminal Justice System with a dedicated Task and Finish Group.
- A focus on Diversion with a refresh of the Out of Court Disposals Policy and Procedure.

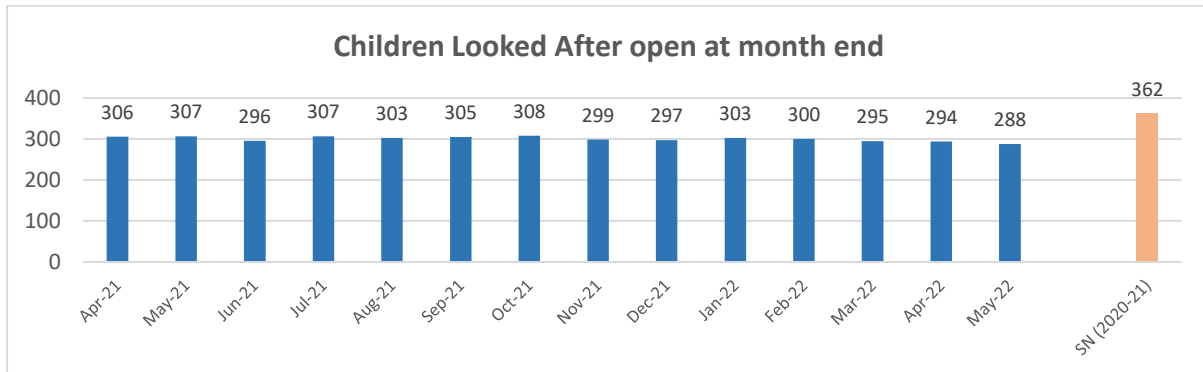
Looked After Children

Children Looked After, Thurrock Council Children's Services Strategic Lead

What did we do?

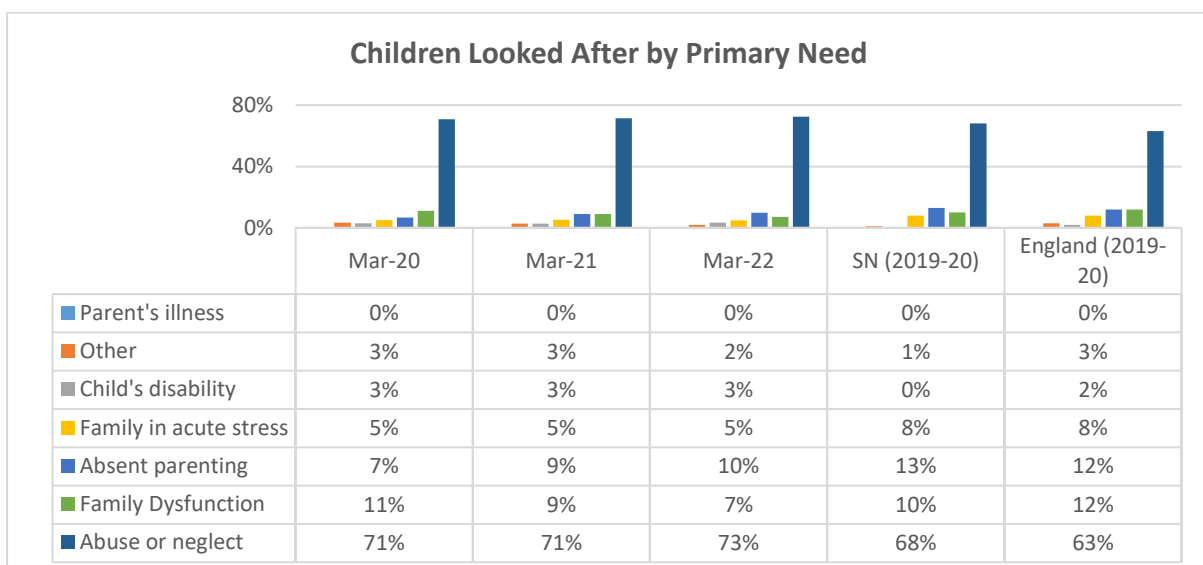
When a child is unable to live with their birth family there are a range of options that can be considered to meet their needs whilst they are living away from home. This could be to live with foster carers or reside in the care of friends or family of the child (these carers are known as 'connected persons'); live in a residential home or, for some older children over the age of 16 years they are able to live in supported accommodation. The service is dedicated to ensuring children enter into Thurrock's care only when they need our care and, they are looked after in the right placement. Young people should be able to have secure, stable and settled placements so they can transition into adulthood with the skills to progress to independent living.

As of the 31st of March 2022, the number of children in the care of Thurrock Council was 295, this is a small decrease on the previous year. Much of this is attributable to fewer arrivals of UAS children and progression of proceedings in court. Fewer older children (aged 14+) children have entered care in 2022 due to more extensive interventions at home. The graph below demonstrates this small reduction has continued into the next financial year and that Thurrock remains a little below its statistical neighbours:



As outlined in the previous report the availability of placements for looked after children nationally is reduced. This initially began due to the COVID 19 pandemic, but shortages continue due to, increasing numbers of children in care, fewer available foster placements nationally and shortages in care staff in residential care. As of the 31st March 2022, of the 294 children in Thurrock’s care, 36% were placed within Thurrock and 66% were placed within 20 miles of home. The geographical size of Thurrock means that those children not placed in the borough are generally in neighbouring or nearby authorities such as Essex, Southend, London Boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge. Placements at a greater distance are generally reflect the need to access specialist residential provision.

The primary reason children enter care is due to the protective action of Thurrock Council due to the risk of, or experience of abuse and neglect. The graph below demonstrates the reasons for entering care and Thurrock’s performance in relation to its statistical neighbours:



Unaccompanied Minors:

Thurrock continues to be a port of entry for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children. In 2021/22 changing migration routes have meant that fewer children are arriving Thurrock as small boat crossings at other ports are preferred. Central Government updated the National Transfer Scheme, which has brought the benefit of improved compliance nationally but locally we have noted transfers taking longer to complete. Thurrock Council remains at or just below its quota of 31 UASC who are looked after.

Evidence for and evaluation of effectiveness

Thurrock Council continues to evidence strong performance in relation to its duties to looked after children:

Performance Measure	Annual Average for 21/22
Of CLA at the end of the month; the % with an assessment in the last 12 months	100%
Of the CLA reviews held in month; the % completed in timescale	99%
Of the CLA visits completed in month; the % completed in timescale	91%
Average number of CLA who go missing each month	30
Of the CLA missing episodes where the child returned in month; the % who were offered a return interview	94%
Of the CLA missing episodes where the child returned in month and were offered a return interview; % who received a return interview	42%
Of the Care Plans completed in month for; the % completed in timescale	81%
Of CLA at the end of the month; % with 3 or more placements in the last 12 months	14%
Of the CLA as at the end of the month aged under 16 who have been continuously CLA for at least 2.5 years; the % who have been in the same placement for at least the last 2 years	66%
% Children participating in CLA reviews	92%

What was the impact?

The information above demonstrates that Thurrock Council acts to provide care to children would have been at risk of harm or who are vulnerable through other substances This demonstrates that, children are regularly seen by their Social Worker and they have an up-to-date assessment of their needs. Children's care plans are reviewed regularly and on time. About two thirds of children benefit from stable placements and less than 15% experience three placement moves in a year. There is good evidence that most children take part in and contribute to their care planning.

Development work and Challenges and priorities for this year (2022/2023):

The CLA service is focussed on the following:

- Improving the timeliness of Initial Health Assessments
- Identifying and developing the local Residential Care Capacity
- Responses to CE, CSE and Missing Children
- Improving placement stability

Aftercare Service

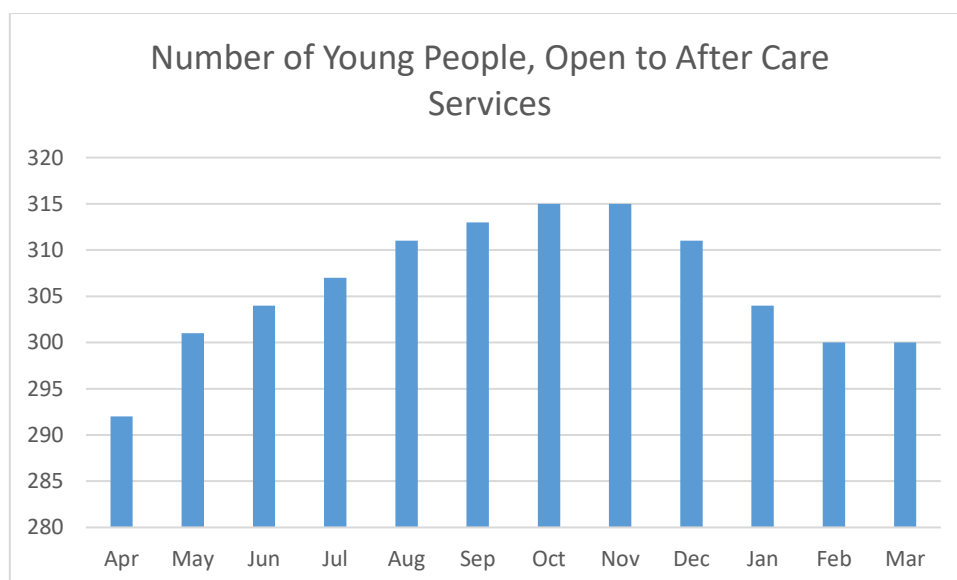
Children Looked After, Thurrock Council Children’s Services, Strategic Lead

What did we do?

Thurrock Council acts as a Corporate Parent providing the care, services and concern for children and young people that is expected of good parents. A Care Leaver, as defined in the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, is a person who has been ‘looked after’ or ‘in care’ for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14, and who was in care on their 16th birthday. A young person’s status as a care leaver is categorised as follows:

- Eligible child - a young person who is 16 or 17 and who has been looked after by the local authority/health and social care trust for at least a period of 13 weeks since the age of 14, and who is still looked after.
- Relevant child - a young person who is 16 or 17 who has left care after their 16th birthday and before leaving care was an eligible child
- Former relevant child - a young person who is aged between 18 and 25 (or beyond if being helped with education or training) who, before turning 18 was either an eligible or a relevant child, or both.:

The number of young adults open to the After Care Team has been around 300 with some variation over the year.



The team also works with children who are looked after by Thurrock Council aged between 16-18 years to assist in their preparation for early adulthood.

Personal advisors and Social Workers in the team work with young people to assist them in ensuring they are in suitable accommodation, have the opportunities of education and employment and that they can access health services. Thurrock Council has a Joint Protocol between Housing Services and Children’s Services to ensure young people are supported to have a housing offer when they are ready to take on a tenancy. Those who have just turned 18 are supported in other arrangements until they are able to find permanent housing, such as:

- Remaining with their Foster Carer under a ‘Staying Put’ Arrangement
- Living in semi-supported accommodation
- Living in ‘Head-Start Housing’
- Choosing to live within their own family
- Attending university
- Supported by Adult Services in a CQC registered home or Shared Lives arrangements (for young adults with significant additional needs)

Young people leaving care can stay in these arrangements for varying period of time. The ultimate goal is to move on to a permanent arrangement. Thurrock’s Aftercare services supports a group of care leavers who were looked after having arrived in the UK as unaccompanied children. As young adults some face additional challenges as the decision as to their immigration status is pending.

The full local offer to eligible young adults with care experience is here:

<https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/young-people-leaving-care/leaving-care>

What was the impact?

The following sets out key areas of performance against our Statistical Neighbours where possible:

Care Leavers <i>Definition 'Relevant and Former Relevant Children whose 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th or 21st birthday falls within Financial Year'</i>	Thurrock Average for 21/22	Statistical Neighbour
17-18 year old cohort	57	56
19-21 year old cohort	164	152
22-25 year old cohort	78	Not available
In Touch: 17-18 year old	80%	96%
In Touch: 19-21 year old	90%	92%
In Touch: 22-25 year old	98%	Not available
In suitable accommodation: 17-18 year old	79%	93%
In suitable accommodation: 19-21 year old	86%	89%
In suitable accommodation: 22-25 year old	93%	Not available
Education, Employment or Training (EET): 17-18 year old	62%	66%
Education, Employment or Training (EET): 19-21 year old	50%	54%
Education, Employment or Training (EET): 22-25 year old	59%	Not available

NEET: 17-18 year old	41%	32%
NEET: 19-21 year old	49%	40%
NEET: 22-25 year old	41%	Not available
Number of Care Leavers currently open who were previously UASC - NEW	112	Not available

This demonstrates that the After Care team maintains regular contact with the majority of young adults allocated. Most live in homes that are suitable and meet need; the lower number for 17-18, reflects children who were remanded to custody prior to sentencing (Children are 'looked after' whilst on remand and when sentenced to prison, this is not counted as 'suitable accommodation'). Thurrock Council performs competitively with its statistical neighbours when it comes to education and employment opportunities for young people leaving care. The performance data for 2021/22 reflects periods of Covid-19 intervention which impact education and employment offers.

Development work and Challenges and priorities for this year (2022/2023):

The After Care service is focussed on the following:

- Improving the timeliness of Housing offers by ensuring Young People are supported to apply, bid for and take advantage of the Thurrock Housing offer
- Identifying and developing the education and employment opportunities
- Re-design of the referral pathway to adult services so assessments of need are received earlier (prior to age 17)

Private Fostering, Thurrock Council Children's Services, Strategic Lead

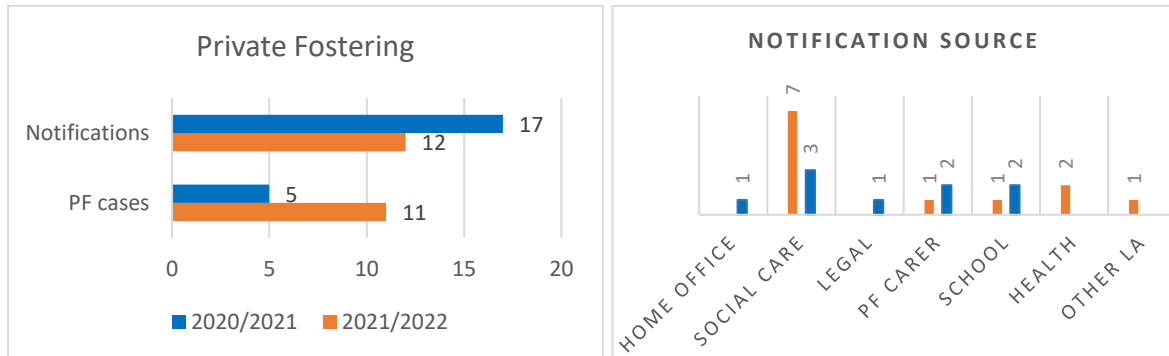
What did we do?

Responsibility for private fostering, which is a distinct and separate activity from other fostering arrangements, is delegated to the fostering service. There is a named lead social worker, managed by the Placement Assessment Team Manager, who undertakes initial visits, Private Fostering Assessments and Regulation 8 visits. The Local Authority has a Duty to respond to all Private Fostering notifications, by visiting the child and carer within 7 working days, and to complete an assessment within 42 working days, including undertaking statutory checks. The child/young person is visited every 4-6 weeks in the first year, and the Private Foster Carer receives supervision. The frequency of visits reduces to 10-12 weekly visits, provided the placement is stabilised, but not until the arrangement has been established for a year or longer.

In November 2019 Private Fostering was one of the areas inspected by Ofsted during their inspection of Thurrock Council's children's social care services. Thurrock were graded as Good by Ofsted, with the following reference to Private Fostering:

'Effective arrangements for identifying and responding to children and young people who are privately fostered helps protect them and ensure they are appropriately cared for. Private foster carers have the same access to training and support as

other foster carers. Privately fostered children are seen regularly and are seen alone.'



Between April 2021 and March 2022, 12 Private Fostering notifications were made. This is a significant reduction from previous years. In 2020/21 there were 35 notifications made. Previously notifications were specifically received via school admissions, however following the school closures and travel restrictions applied due to the Covid19 pandemic, it is viewed that less children were placed by family arrangements in the borough. From the 12 notifications, 11 cases were opened as Private Fostering.

- 7 notifications were made by children’s social care; 6 cases were jointly managed as the children were open cases and being managed under Child in Need or Child Protection.
- A notification was received for a young person who moved from another Borough, where he had been previously Private Fostered.
- A local school notified us of 1 child who had arrangements made by his father to be cared for by a friend
- A notification was received from a family member who was caring for her cousin’s child
- 2 notifications were received from health in respect of siblings

In respect of home visits, Government guidance was followed, including the use of PPE, and Covid19 risk assessment plans were completed prior to visits.

Face to Face workshops were adapted to being held remotely, and a series of PF workshops for a variety of professionals within the community were offered to raise awareness of private fostering.

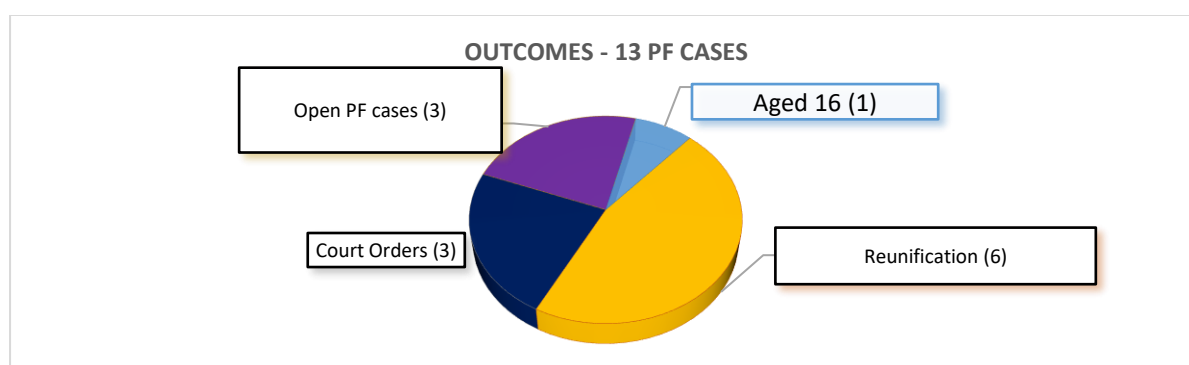
Evidence for and evaluation of effectiveness

Management case audits are conducted on all active PF cases; through these audits the PF Team Manager has been able to ascertain that PF initial visits and PF assessments are completed within timescales, and capture the children’s holistic needs, ensuring they are well cared for and safeguarded within their PF arrangements. The evidence of direct work with

children in private fostering placements continues and permanency plans for PF children, either through reunification with parents or other orders (SGO, Adoption have been tracked and progressed).

A total of 6 private fostering assessments were completed during 2021/22 and a further 5 cases closed due to reunification with parents prior to assessments being completed. The one case where the arrangement was not Private Fostering did not progress to full assessment, and the family were directed to universal services. Six cases with complicating factors were jointly worked with Family Support Teams.

2 cases remained open from previous years. Both have since closed with permanence achieved with 1 placement and 1 SG Court orders granted. A further case was closed to private fostering when a child arrangement order was granted.



6 children were reunited with their families and closed as Private Fostering. From these two children returned to their mother's care following her rehabilitation following surgery, one child returned to their father's care on his release from prison, two returned to their mother's care on her discharge from hospital and one child was reunited with her father in Wales.

1 young person turned 16 and no longer met the threshold for private fostering. She remains living with her cousin and his family under a private arrangement.

As at July 31st 2022, there are 3 children privately fostered in Thurrock. This includes:

- 2 white British female siblings aged 2 and 7, living with their great grandmother. The primary plan is to obtain Special Guardianship Orders.
- 1 black British male aged 11, whose mother is in Africa, living with a family friend.

Changes made as a result of previous learning/priorities and new developments

- Continuous scrutiny in respect of sharing information has been implemented to comply with Data Protection.
- Frequent communication with birth parents, including those not living in the UK has been actively promoted.

- Private fostering manager is attending the Thurrock leads group in respect of Unaccompanied Ukrainian minors, working with professionals to ensure that sponsors and young people are supported.

Fit with and contribution to TLSCP current priorities

The Private Fostering process was developed in order to ensure that children and young people are safeguarded, and their living arrangements are monitored to ensure that the placement is meeting their needs. Any instances of risk of harm are escalated through MASH and the Private Fostering Social Worker continues to be involved.

The Private Fostering Statement of Purpose, and Private Fostering Policy and Procedure are under review. There continues to be robust audits on cases where learning and improvement are fed into the Private Fostering work-plan.

Thurrock Council is a member of the Coram BAAF Private Fostering Special Interest Group and also is represented at Regional and National PF Leads groups. It is evident that nationally there are low notification of Private Fostering arrangements, resources for promotion of PF is limited and without a national campaign is proving to be a challenge. Despite this, Thurrock remain committed to work with local community coordinators to establish stronger links especially with faith groups and the travelling community.

Challenges and priorities for this year (2022/2023)

To increase awareness of private fostering within the Community. It is recognised that the notifications have decreased although notifications are consistently appropriate.

The number of children and young people applying for sponsor visas to live in Thurrock is low although it is recognised that this may change. We continue to work with our education colleagues to ensure that the child and young people arriving from Ukraine are able to access good quality education. To continue working with our Housing colleagues, who are leading on the Homes for Ukraine scheme, to ensure information is updated Foundry database

The development of a safeguarding factsheet, for children and young people arriving from Ukraine, with details of who and how to make to contact, to be devised and printed in Ukrainian and Russian.

To arrange social opportunities for peer development for children, young people and their families from Ukraine.

Adults Social Care, Director of Adults Social Care, Thurrock Council

There have been many challenges as a result of having to focus so intently on the pandemic over the past couple of years. Demand for our services has increased exponentially, both in terms of complexity and in the number of people requiring our support; in such circumstances the risk to vulnerable people has increased and we now need to redouble our efforts to ensure we continue to deliver safeguarding support to those that need it. Furthermore, the increase

in the insular nature of our lives caused by the need to “lock down” has also increased risk, as we know that having friends and family around, or a community presence is one of the most effective preventative measures against people being subjected to abuse. As people begin to reconnect to others and live more normal lives again, we must ensure that we are receptive to the issues that may emerge as a consequence. I am reassured though that the quality of the individuals and organisations working in Thurrock, in terms of their commitment to safeguarding and their level of skills and experience, puts us in a strong position to deal with these challenges in the future.

Thurrock Council has lead responsibility for operational safeguarding of vulnerable adults in the borough. This responsibility is mainly delivered within the Adult Social Care directorate by the Adult Safeguarding Team.

The Adult Social Care (ASC) department is part of the board’s executive, working closely with other statutory partners in the local Clinical Commissioning Group and the Police Service. ASC also provides support to the wider partnership via its role in administration of the Adult Safeguarding Board and Operational Group.

I am pleased to announce that the transformation strategy – “Better Care Together Thurrock – The Case for Further Change” – has now been completed. This strategy has been developed with all system partners involved in the Thurrock Integrated Care Alliance and is system wide. The strategy is person centred, strengths and place based and has been co-designed with our communities. The strategy places those people in need of care and support at the heart of decision making and moves service delivery far closer to where people live, both ways in which safeguarding through prevention can be further enhanced. To allow people to stay independent, as such the approach fits extremely well with the Making Safeguarding Personal agenda.

Thurrock Safeguarding Adults Board, Strategic Lead

This year has been another turbulent year as Adult Social Care face the continued challenges of the pandemic and those associated with its aftermath, alongside significant changes to the working relationship we have with our Health colleagues as they go through a reorganisation, moving from local Clinical Commissioning Groups to an Integrated Care Partnership covering a much bigger footprint. In spite of these challenges our safeguarding performance has continued to be strong, delivered operationally via the various safeguarding teams and strategically through the Safeguarding Adults Board.

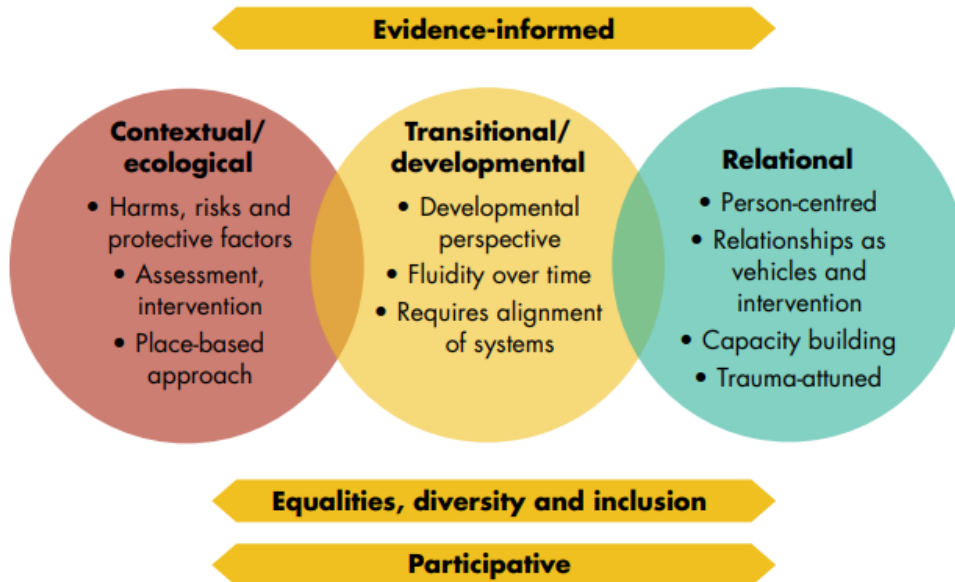
Unfortunately, this year has seen the first Safeguarding Adult Review commissioned in Thurrock and we await its completion in anticipation of ensuring any and all recommendations are swiftly implemented. We have also seen a learning review commissioned, which has already completed, and which produced important findings that a number of local and national agencies are now implementing. Despite the tragic outcome upon which the review focussed it was reassuring to see that the process identified a number of good practice examples, these will be used to build upon to further improve our responsiveness to similar cases in the future.

The Safeguarding Adult Board has continued to work on its strategic priorities around supporting the outcomes from the sexual violence and abuse JSNA and strengthen safeguarding transitions.

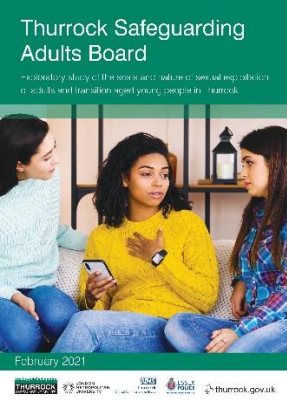
Transition to adulthood can be a particularly challenging and vulnerable time for some young people. Young people experiencing, or who have experienced abuse or harm may often

require ongoing support beyond the age of 18 as harm and its effects do not stop at the age of 18.

They may need support to recover from the harm and/or trauma or because the harm continues into adulthood. The transitions work that we are undertaking is based on the following model taken from Holmes (2018) whilst also considering Children’s and Adults’ safeguarding systems are very different, governed by different statutory frameworks.



Strengthen safeguarding transition arrangements for those moving from children services to adult services.	
What did we do	What do we plan to do next
Continued to gather information about where the gaps are and possible solutions to these	Seek the views of young people who have transitioned between services to find out what they need
Reviewed the recommendations from national reviews involving transition age young people	Raise awareness of contextual safeguarding within the adult workforce
Reviewed the recommendations from ‘Bridging the Gap’ followed up with a presentation from the author Dez Holmes to discuss implementing the recommendations locally	Develop a framework to provide guidance on managing cases where there is a high level of risk, but the circumstances may sit outside of traditional adult safeguarding
Improved information sharing between children and adult social care to identify young people who are at risk of exploitation and approaching critical transition points	Seek assurance from commissioners about how they are commissioning services for young people transitioning to adult services

To contribute implementing the recommendations of the Sexual Abuse/Violence Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)	
What did we do	What we plan to do next
<p>Published the exploratory study of the scale and nature of sexual exploitation of adults and transition aged young people</p> 	<p>Develop a bespoke toolkit for professional use in order to facilitate appropriate responses to disclosure. The toolkit should be used to supplement training and provide information including safeguarding requirements, appropriate language, local service provision and referral pathways</p>
<p>TSAB solely funded a sexual abuse and violence online training package for staff across the partnership which will be rolled out across the workforce next year</p>	<p>To support the Violence Against Women and Girls agenda in implementing a coordinated programme of communications activities to be delivered to the public</p>

Other areas of close working:

- Regular meetings with the Board managers of the Thurrock Safeguarding Adult Board, Local Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Thurrock Community Safety Partnership
- Worked with Southend, Essex and Thurrock Safeguarding Adult, Safeguarding Children and Domestic Abuse Boards to develop resources around 'Think Family'
- Regularly attended MACE and the LSCP Audit Group.
- Through our multi-agency hoarding panel and our newly established hoarding support group we have been providing more targeted and effective support to people who hoard across Children's and Adults Social Services.

There are still many challenges ahead due to the impacts of the pandemic, however, I think that the partnership has been strengthened as a consequence of our joint response and remain confident that we will continue to do everything we can to safeguard vulnerable people effectively in the future.

ESSEX POLICE: KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE

Essex Police has a clear structure and strong governance in place to champion the safeguarding of children throughout the organisation.

In addition to the specialist Child Abuse Investigation Teams, dedicated Children and Young People (CYP) officers work with vulnerable young people through engagement with education, youth clubs and social care to identify support networks for young people and create referral pathways to divert potential victims of exploitation. The focus is on building self-confidence, respect for self and others, and making a contribution to society.

It is recognised that children are often the overlooked victims in a domestic abuse incident between adults. This year, a Domestic Abuse Problem Solving Team (DAPST) was set up to prevent re-offending through intervention, proactive monitoring of preventative orders and an “Achilles’ heel” approach. The team focuses on repeat offenders and repeat victims and will undoubtedly help to reduce emotional and physical distress for children caught up in domestic abuse incidents.

The Force Child Abuse Investigation procedure specifically directs staff to the partnership SET procedures developed in response to the Working Together 2018 guidance. The SET Procedures are well embedded across the organisation and form a central part of compliance and practices within the daily operations within the C&PP Command.

A well-embedded practice for sharing information with partners is utilised by the Force via the PP57 Essex Police Request for Children's Services form. Information sharing with partners is supported through engagement with and attendance at strategy meetings and discussions and case conferences. The officers embedded in MASH engage in daily discussions with Children's Social Care regarding referrals for children and young people.

The Force has a specific Police Protection Powers procedure setting out the powers available under Section 46 of the Children Act. For children taken into Police Protection and awaiting Social Care placement, Sunflower Rooms have been identified at four key police stations and electrical/ decoration work has been commenced in two of them this year. The aim is to provide comfortable rooms that do not look like typical police station rooms, equipped with TV, sofa bed, toiletries, games and even a gaming console; so that a traumatic experience is made to feel safer and less stressful for children.

A specialist Child Sexual Exploitation proactive investigation team proactively pursues and disrupts individuals/groups who seek to sexually exploit children and manage organised non-familiar abuse and complex CSE investigations. The team participate in local MACE meetings and are seeking to increase CSE referrals from the Thurrock area.

The Force's Initial Police Learning Development Programme (IPLDP) provides every student officer with a broad overview of investigative and safeguarding activity. Further training provision is given in the 3-day Public Protection Awareness Programme course and the Initial Crime Investigators Development Programme, which captures front-line officers' responsibilities for safeguarding children and how to report concerns to partner agencies. CAIT accredited detectives complete the Specialist Child Abuse Investigators Development Programme (SCAIDP), giving them the right support to plan, conduct and supervise child abuse investigations and form effective co-operative working practices with other statutory and voluntary agencies to bring about the best possible outcome in relation to allegations of child abuse. They also undertake Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) and National Child Death training courses as well as training to become a Sexual Offences Trained Officer (SOTO).

Vicarious Trauma training was delivered as a mandatory one-day package to all members of C&PP Command this year, to educate all officers and staff as to how traumatised children might present to officers and different ways to engage with them.

A Public Protection Training & Skills board was set up this year to ensure all incoming staff are offered relevant and timely training, identify training gaps from various departments, identify role-specific training required, enable officers to maintain their accreditation via CPD events and discuss general improvements in training provision.

Voice of the Child training was given to Local Policing officers in 2021. A Voice of the Child steering group has been set up to present a formal and consistent process that is tracked and audited and focuses on contextual safeguarding. All force policies & procedures have been reassessed in light of this Voice of the Child work and amendments made where necessary.

All training is supported through the use of e-learning training packages, alongside a varied programme of Continuous Professional Development (CPD).

The force is taking forward recommendations from the recent Thurrock serious violence report with focus on information sharing across agency teams, primary prevention activity, diversionary activity and early intervention to support young people in custody or at risk of exclusion.

A new strategic governance framework has been agreed for Operation Encompass, with this being adopted by the Force Domestic Abuse lead. Renewed efforts will see expansion to involve as many schools as possible, with a consistent process to monitor and evaluate referrals. There is an ambition to widen Encompass across the whole county after it is fully embedded within Thurrock and Southend Local Authorities.

Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

Overview of the Impact of COVID 19

The SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) pandemic has had a profound impact on NHS services across the entire health economy. Over 2021/22 NHS services in Essex have continued to respond to COVID 19 whilst resetting other health services that had been adversely affected since 2020.

Throughout the pandemic, safeguarding (adult and child) remained a business-critical activity and NHS services maintained the integrity of provision to adults at risk, children in need of protection and other vulnerable populations within the parameters of government guidance. The arrival of the Omicron variant in November 2021 and the subsequent national drive on the delivery of the vaccine programme meant that some safeguarding professionals were redeployed to clinical settings.

The longevity of the COVID-19 pandemic has at times adversely impacted the capacity of NHS staff to fully commit to some operational activities. In addition, there has been fluctuating capacity due staff vacancies and secondments. TCCG/MSE ICB remains a committed Safeguarding Partner and the newly appointed (April) Interim Director of Nursing (Safeguarding) brings with her strong leadership and directions for moving forward the agenda and strategies for Safeguarding all ages.

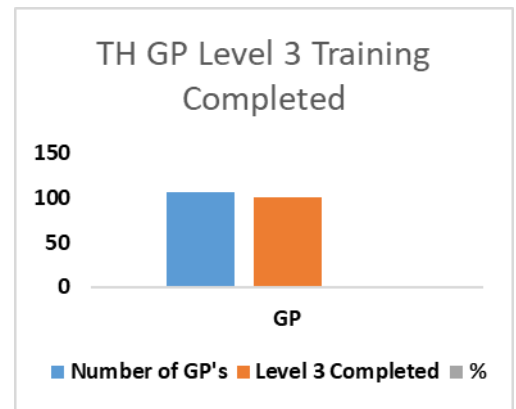
Thurrock CCG safeguarding professionals have supported the TLSCP workplan through its subgroups and workstreams and endeavoured to ensure there is a CCG contribution at all meetings. In particular, the Practice Standard Group been chaired by TCCG has led and contributed to the TLSCP priorities. The transition of CCGs into Integrated Care Systems was also delayed by the pandemic from 1st April 2022 to 1st July 2022. In preparation for this change the 5 Mid & South Essex (MSE) CCGs have been working closely to ensure a smooth transition into MSE Integrated Care Board.

Keeping Children Safe In Thurrock: Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Including Primary Care

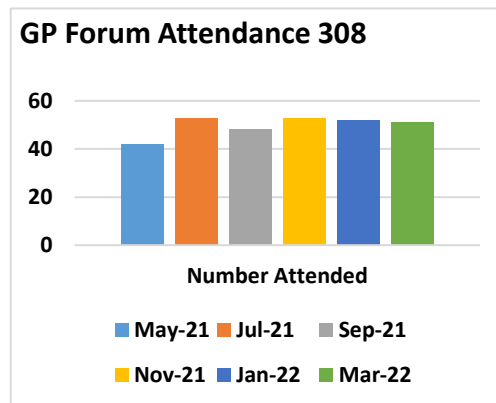
Thurrock Primary care (GP Practices) Level 3 training & GP Safeguarding Leads Forum 2021 - 2022

107 practitioners (GPs and Practice Nurses) attended the yearly Safeguarding and LAC Core Level 3 update.

	Level 3	
Number of GP' Completed		%
107	101	94.39%



GP Forums are bi-monthly and used to raise safeguarding awareness. The frequency increased to provide additional support related to the challenges presented by COVID-19.



System Partnership – There has been various system work that has been led by Thurrock CCG and or on behalf of SCN or MSE ICB, some of these pieces of work has been leading the **FGM Training and Pathways** on behalf of SET Health & Partners. **Attendance: 62** Multiagency Partners. **Recommendation:** To have System FGM Training yearly. Training Pack and FGM Pathways disseminated to Partners, ratified by TLSCB and Implemented by Providers. **Others include – Training for SET Social Workers on Health Services Landscape and Interface between Children Social Care and Health Services. Attendance :60. Recommendation:** Request for six monthly updates.

What you shared is an extremely sensitive and difficult subject. Well done and thanks for further creating awareness on the matter... It is an extremely insightful and well-put together presentation.. Thank you

The pathways have been shared across Maternity. The SG midwives and Named Midwife will support the maternity Matrons and midwives to ensure that the SET pathways etc. are embedded in practice.

I will have more knowledge on the processes of SARC and CP medicals.

A brilliant, thought-provoking session. Thank you so much

I will discuss putting a session together for operational teams and discuss getting this onto our system

Commitment to Partnership & Multiagency Work

- Representatives at all TLSCP Subgroups
- TLSCP Strategic Partnership Group
- Management Executive Group
- Multiagency Audits
- Practice Standard Group (PSG) – TCCG Chair
- Learning and Practice Review Group
- Neglect Subgroup
- Looked After Children Steering Group
- Children In Care Partnership

System Partnership Work – 2021-2022

- Female Genital Mutilation SET Work
- Work between CCG, GPs, and Local Authority
- Leading on Non-Accidental Injuries – Mid & South and SET wide conference work
- Case Reviews Thematic Learning Away day-SET

Implementation of Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (LCSPR)

The CCG Safeguarding team, working in partnership with other statutory and key partners, has continually supported the development and implementation of the recommendations and action plans for Case reviews. The CCG also coordinated and delivered a thematic approach Virtual 'Away Day' to the implementation of system learning which brought agencies together to move this work forward.

Initial Health Assessments (IHAs) for Looked After Children are holistic assessments that involve the review of health needs, the analysis and assessment of past medical history, missed health problems and screening opportunities. There have been historical difficulties, exacerbated by the pandemic, in IHAs being performed within timescale, which have been linked to:

- Communication and information sharing between agencies
- Challenges in arranging and completing IHAs due to shortage of paediatricians
- Challenges associated with children being placed out of area

Following some interventions locally, improvements have been substantiated. Further work is ongoing to ensure these are sustained and to explore commissioning a centralised service across MSE.

Mental health issues for young people continues to be highlighted including death by suicide. This is being addressed through work across multiagency committees and forums.

- Local authorities are constrained in their ability to utilise unregulated placements for children under the age of 16. There has been a significant increase in the attendance of Looked After Children occupying medical beds within MSE.
- **Tier 4 Beds and MSE Hospital Beds Occupied by Complex Young People:** Pressure on the Acute system continues and there are weekly touchpoint system meetings scrutinising packages of care in alternative placements and in the community.

Next Steps

- Effective Due Diligence reporting highlighting key workstreams for first 100 days post ICB.
- Workforce - Recruitment and Retention.
- Joint working across the ICBs and Integrated Care Partnerships (ICPs) through Partnership working, Collaboration and Co-Production.
- Six defined transition workstreams – working across SET ICS and Regional Teams.
- Completion of the policies for ICB.
- Learning and development workstream pulling together all health and care partners shared learning and co-production on Training packages.
- Continuing / Establishing new relationships and Network.

NELFT

Named Professional for Safeguarding Children

What did we do?

NELFT Safeguarding Advice Service has continued to operate as the central hub into which all safeguarding enquiries from members of NELFT staff, or relating to NELFT service users/patients, are received. This has continued to operate remotely throughout the Covid-19 Pandemic. The purpose of the service is to provide advice and support to NELFT staff in relation to safeguarding concerns across the trust and assist operational teams in escalating concerns to the local authority / other agencies when appropriate.

All NELFT safeguarding children training has been updated to reflect the competency requirements in the updated Intercollegiate Document 2018 and in line with updates to the SET procedures, Working Together, Prevent and FGM awareness and reporting. Safeguarding Children training is mandatory and is provided to all staff working for NELFT at levels appropriate to their role. As an organisation, NELFT is compliant with the Care Quality Commission target of 80% for all levels of Safeguarding training.

The Level 2 training is now delivered on-line through a national NHS system and due to the Covid-19 Pandemic the Level 3 safeguarding training has now been made into a virtual training package. As a result, compliance with training has remained steady throughout the Pandemic. In addition, NELFT have been developing a new Level 3 Domestic Abuse and Criminal Exploitation online training that adopts the Think Family approach and covers the lifespan of children and adults.

PREVENT training continues also to be mandatory for all staff.

In addition to the mandatory training, the safeguarding team responds to requests from services to provide bespoke and ad hoc training, in particular where there have been identified themes for learning through Serious Incidents and Learning Reviews.

NELFT is committed to partnership working and promoting collaborative working. The Named Professional for Safeguarding Children, a Safeguarding Advisor or Operational Manager is a standing member of all LSCP including the Learning and Practice Review subgroup.

NELFT also now have 2 safeguarding Advisors who are GCP2 trainers and deliver multi-agency training within Thurrock.

Learning from Reviews is widely shared across the staff in NELFT. For example, NELFT have used 7-minute briefings and bespoke training to address identified themes such as Non-Accidental Injuries and Back to Basics Training.

All clinical staff working with children and young people receive quarterly safeguarding supervision and compliance is monitored regularly at senior leadership meetings.

NELFT policies and procedures continue to be update in the usual cycle of business and are reviewed at any points in between where there are changes to local or national guidelines. For example there is currently an update being undertaken in response to the new national guidelines considering management of Fabricated and Induced Illness and Perplexing Presentations which will be ratified in August 2021 and shared within the organisation.

NELFT audits have been suspended since the start of the Covid-19 Pandemic, but the organisation has continued to regularly contribute to the multi-agency audits held by the Partnership to identify new areas of learning and that group is also chaired by the NELFT Named Professional for Safeguarding Children.

In response to the escalating number of cases of Youth Violence, NELFT have undertaken a thematic review within their own services of these cases to identify further learning.

What was the impact?

Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic it has been hard to assess the impact of the work that has been undertaken by NELFT, however the number of staff contacting the Safeguarding Advice Desk has in general increased over the last 2 years and the complexity of the cases being brought has also heightened. The Think Family model has become more of a focus for the Trust as more of the complex cases are requiring both Childrens and Adults Services working together and there has been a highlighted need for more work to be done around those vulnerable young people transitioning into adulthood and adult services.

What we plan to do next?

In response to the Thematic Review into Youth Violence NELFT have undertaken there are plans to hold a multi-agency conference in 2021.

The Trust needs to find better ways in conjunction with Partnership and other agencies of being able to capture the views and experiences of its service users in order to truly understand the impact the work is having on their lives. This will be done through the partnership audit groups initially.

To ensure all our frontline clinical staff are trained in GCP2 and are using it effectively and regularly in order to identify neglect.

The internal Audit Programme is to recommence.

Example/s of effective practice

NELFT are core member of the newly created Practice Standards Group and will look to share with partner agencies examples of good and outstanding practice across the organisation.

NELFT is part of the Neglect working group that is overseen by the Thurrock Partnership.

NELFT are represented at a variety of multi-agency groups that look to review work that has been undertaken and audit its effectiveness. This includes the MASH audit group which meets regularly to review a theme of referrals into MASH and consider if they have been triaged correctly from a multi-agency perspective. We are also representing health as part of work being undertaken with regards to long-term missing UASC.

Keeping Children Safe in Thurrock: South Essex Rape Incest Crisis Centre (SERICC)

SERICC Director

What did we do?

SERICC:

- provides specialist sexual violence and sexual abuse services to adults, children and their families in South and West Essex who are experiencing, or who have experienced, any form of sexual violence and abuse, at any time in their lives.
- offer free and confidential 'one to one' counselling, online counselling, family support, criminal justice system support, emotional support and practical information.
<https://sericc.org.uk/>

SERICC's Thurrock Brighter Futures Programme

Aims to enable families/carers to make confident, informed, choices that they feel are right for the children in their care. Under this programme SERICC provides an integrated, intensive and highly personalised offer of help intended to support and equip families who have been impacted by sexual violence or abuse to learn and apply parenting skills that develop resourcefulness and resilience while strengthening positive relationships with their children.

Who is it for?

The service is specifically designed for Thurrock families/carers who have experienced any form of sexual abuse including childhood sexual abuse, rape or sexual assault. SERICC work together with the family to agree a support plan to ensure recovery by building confidence, understanding and rebuilding parenting capacity.

Families can be referred to SERICC's specialist sexual violence counselling service regarding emotional well-being issues which will be explored through appropriate therapeutic support. Families can also access the Independent Sexual Violence Adviser Service (ISVAs) for support through the criminal justice process where the abuse has been reported to the police. This service has been designed specifically to raise awareness of online safety, sexual violence and abuse, recognising and understanding signs of sexual abuse, and the impact of childhood sexual abuse and sexual violence has on victims/survivors/families and how it potentially impacts on parenting.

Referral process – Brighter Futures

To Make a Brighter Futures referral please visit our secure online portal:
<https://www.dpmscloud.com/external/referralformorgessex>

Evidence for and evaluation of effectiveness.

SERICC Key statistics. During the period that this report covers, SERICC worked with:

- **530** Thurrock service users, who received specialist sexual violence and abuse counselling, family work and/or specialist Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA- specialist criminal justice system support) services through SERICC's 'Synergy Essex' contract with the Essex Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner (PFCC) and Thurrock Council Children's Services commissioner.
- **166** young people aged **13-25** who received specialist young person's counselling and advocacy services through SERICC's Thurrock Council contract.
- **21 children under the age of 13** who received specialist therapy services through SERICC's Thurrock Council contract
- **36 parents and 39 children** through the Thurrock Council Brighter Futures Programme

- **23 parents** outside of the Brighter Futures program
- **245 aged 26+** who received specialist sexual violence and abuse counselling, family work and specialist Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA-specialist criminal justice system support)
- SERICC have continued to offer multi agency training and awareness raising with across the borough through initiatives such as the ‘Challenging Myths, Changing Attitudes’ programme.

What was the impact?

Outcomes are recorded individually for all provided services. **Outcomes:** service users more in control of their lives **97%**; Better health and wellbeing **97%**; More able to access further support **97%**; More able to assert their rights **91%**, Prevention of family breakdown **91%**. Cases referred to the Thurrock Brighter Futures service saw either a social care case closure or de-escalation of a case following the end of the SERICC intervention.

What was the impact?

Learning and Impact of work

Views of parents/carers/children/young people

SERICC Service User Feedback

Quote 1	“Our family would not be where it is today, getting the support we needed through SERICC has made all the difference to us as a family”
Quote 2	“The Keep Safe Works SERICC did with the ‘body charts’ gave my daughter the confidence to speak out towards the perpetrator telling him he was not allowed to touch her and that he lied to her” {Using her loud voice as well”}

Trends

1	Starting to notice more and more children with additional needs coming through the programme.
2	Not a lot of keep safe work being done in schools
3	Lots of family sexual abuse – cousins especially teenagers with younger cousins

Case study

A referral was made to social care when T’s oldest son W disclosed that he had been sexually abused by his father for a number of years. T wasn’t happy to engage with the service, she felt her son’s disclosure was because he had watched something on the T.V, she didn’t really believe the sexual abuse had happened, this made it difficult for her to engage with the service.

T wouldn’t look at the SERICC staff, she struggled to engage with the staff throughout the children’s engagement. T slowly began to engage, her thinking has now changed she is more positive towards the service, she feels she is learning a lot throughout the SERICC children’s programme. She has made recommendations about the children’s service and explained as a parent with additional needs that she would have liked a library of recommended books to

enable her to continue her work at home, she also felt her children wouldn't retain the whole programme and would eventually forget. The children engaged well, T has now engaged in open, honest conversations, she has become more understanding of the need to support her boys in a holistic way and is working more collaboratively with other agencies.

SERICC has also seen a change in her protective factor, initially she didn't believe her son she now is fully aware of the concerns raised and feels she understands the 'red flags'.

T has said statutory support providers are not pitching the right support for children with additional needs.

Improvements this year-what are we doing better as a result of the activity?

- Continuing to use the direct feedback from victims, survivors and their families in the shaping of our service delivery ensuring reflection of local need.
- Identification of organisational developmental service requirements through the analysis of robust SERICC data sets, outcome framework results and survivor voices
- Redesigning the SERICC website
- Creating a Parent's Pack - **Looking After Yourself and Your Child**

This guide is for parents and carers who are supporting a child/ren who have experienced any form of sexual violence and abuse. This guide gives useful tools and coping skills - available on SERICC's website.



What we plan to do next?

- Raise the awareness of child sexual abuse, specifically in relation to the forthcoming Final Report of the national Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA).
- Engaging in dialogue with the TLSCP with regard to the recommendations in the IICSA Final Report.
- Situating in Thurrock a public 'Legacy Bench' as an acknowledgment of child sexual abuse survivor's engagement with IICSA.
- Improve data collection to help us all better understand prevalence of child sexual abuse in Thurrock.
- The Thurrock Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (TJSNA) has identified key recommendations. SERICC will work with the Thurrock Community Safety Partnership and the Thurrock Violence against Women and Girls Board to action key recommendations (COVID has delayed the actions related to the TJSNA).
- Improve the commissioning arrangements for sexual violence and abuse support work. There was a 5.57% increase in demand for SERICC services in Thurrock compared

to the previous year. This represents a challenge to ensure there is sufficient service capacity to meet this need. Furthermore, whilst under-reporting is present across all age groups, children and young people reporting sexual violence and abuse may still not be receiving specialist sexual violence and abuse support, even amid the tighter safeguarding protocols in place around them.

**Southend, Essex & Thurrock (SET) Strategic Child Death Overview Committee
Chaired by: Director of Public Health & Wellbeing, Essex County Council**

What did we do?

Child Death Notifications:

For the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022, 95 Notifications of Child Deaths were received.

Local Authority area of residence	Notifications received
Essex	76
Southend	6
Thurrock	13

Of the 13 notifications received for Thurrock resident children, 3 cases were subject to a Joint Agency Response¹ (JAR).

Annual comparison:

Year	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
No. of notifications received	17	16	20	13	13

Completed Reviews:

88 cases were completed during this period.

Local Authority area of residence	Reviews completed
Essex	69
Southend	8
Thurrock	11

Of the 11 reviews completed for Thurrock resident children, 10 (91%) cases were found to have modifiable factors.

What was the impact?

As a result of notifications of child deaths across Southend, Essex & Thurrock the following themes have been identified:

- Deaths of children with asthma – Four deaths occurred of children with asthma, aged between 9 and 17 years.

¹ The Joint Agency Response process is applied when a death could be from an external cause, or when it is sudden and there is no immediately apparent cause

- Suicides, including influence of social media – There were six deaths of children by suicide or deliberate self-inflicted harm
- Neonatal deaths – 43% of notifications during this period were for babies aged between 0 & 28 days. For Thurrock area this equaled 38% of notifications.

What we plan to do next

- To hold a thematic review of the recent deaths of children with asthma in Southend, Essex and Thurrock
- To develop an Action Plan following the Thematic Review of SET Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI) cases
- To work with partners across SET to consider the recent cases of youth suicide and in particular the possible influence of social media and risk behaviours

Further details and information regarding the work of the Southend, Essex and Thurrock Strategic Child Death Overview Committee will be included within the SET Child Death Review Annual Report for 2021-2022 which will be available in August 2022.

Thurrock Community Safety Partnership

Director of Public Realm

Violence and Vulnerability: Thurrock Community Safety Partnership (CSP) continue to work with Southend and Essex partners to understand Child Exploitation, County Lines, and work to reduce the risk.

This aligned to the CSP priority for 21/22 of 4.2.1 Tackling violence and gang related activity. The following highlights some of the work delivered by the CSP that supports improving understanding and reducing the risk to young people in relation to Child Exploitation, and County Lines.

- Through Essex Police, areas of priority have been identified for intervention (localities work) due to their societal factors and where offenders known to criminal justice services reside (this therefore includes those offenders open to our services but offending out of borough) and where victims / perpetrators known to Essex Police reside (not where offences happen). The areas highlighted were:
 - West Thurrock and South Stifford
 - Tilbury St Chads
 - Grays

Additional funding provided by the Violence and Vulnerability Unit (VUU) has enabled youth outreach work to be delivered in these areas: St Stephens in West Thurrock and South Stifford and Red Balloon deliver detached youth work in Grays, Tilbury, and West Thurrock and South Stifford. This includes the holiday hunger programme, sports activities, and links to existing organisations in the community.

- Mentoring project (CREW) in place through the Youth offer with a focus on SEND and Children in Need

- Protocol has been revised and is in place with schools to reduce exclusions, provide targeted intervention and manage risk & vulnerability.
- Those being exploited or identified as members of a gang are managed through the multi-agency Operational Gang Related Violence Group which meets monthly
- SOS project (run by St Giles Trust) was delivered in the Olive Academy
- Through violence and vulnerability funding Well Homes (within our private housing team) have led on the vulnerable family's project taking 17 referrals of families new to the borough of which we continue to resettle into their community.
- School safeguarding leads have received training and termly update with regards to current risks in relation to Prevent (Counter Terrorism and Extremism).

Participation and Engagement: Engage with the community who all have a role in safeguarding children and ensure the voice of children, young people and families are included in support and plans.

The Safer Streets work in Grays supported this priority which saw Essex Police Community Safety and Engagement Officers and CSP Officers with a number of events including a launch event in August which saw a number of partners attending, hate crime awareness raising in Oct, and promoting personal safety in conjunction with 16 days of activism 2021 in November. This targeted the railways station and we spoke to a number of young people using trains to access their schools. We gave out personal safety alarms and advice on how to report where they didn't feel safe.

In addition, a leaflet for parents was created and distributed through schools

www.thurrock.gov.uk/gangs-and-gang-crime/gangs-and-exploitation

The Young Voices report for Thurrock focused on young people engaging in services in and around Seabrooke Rise and Koala Park. Their biggest concern was knife crime/getting stabbed, followed by theft, big groups of people, shootings and being raped.

In response they said what makes them feel safe is being with friends / group, being in well-lit areas, knowing the area, having trusted adults in the area and their mobile phone.

There was an almost 100% increase in offences of possession of bladed article committed by children resident in Thurrock in 17/18 based on the previous year. However, data for the last three financial years shows that this increase has abated and that numbers have decreased significantly and are now similar to those in 16/17.

Offences of possession with intent to supply decreased significantly in 2020/21 although it is noted that this period could have been impacted by the national COVID 19 restrictions

Changes made as a result of previous learning/priorities and new developments

1. The Localities work remains as a focus with the same areas identified.
2. Operation Minerva will use the data gathered within Safer Streets to part inform plans of action to improve safety and feelings of safety on our streets, particularly in relation to VAWG
3. We are strengthening our engagement with young people through working with the Youth Participation Worker, attending their girl's safety day and providing information in relation to drink spiking and Safer Streets
4. We are seeking funding for a Prevent workshop/conference with young people to raise awareness of exploitation

5. We are looking to make environmental changes to Koala Park so that it feels safer
6. Seeking engagement to launch Street Pastors in Grays and on the railway.

All of the priorities within the CSP for 22/23 will contribute to the priorities and work of the Local Safeguarding Childrens Partnership:

- 1. Tackling disproportionality in relation to Violence Against Women and Girls –** including sexual offences, stalking and rape, whilst recognising that men and boys can also be victims
- 2. Breaking the cycle of Domestic Abuse:** in line with the Domestic Abuse Duty and needs assessment
- 3. Violence and Vulnerability:** Tackling gang related activity and offensive weapons to reduce drug driven violence
- 4. Counter Extremism and Terrorism:** Preventing Violent Extremism locally
- 5. Reduce harm to and safeguard victims from Hate Crime –** including Sex/Gender based hate crime
- 6. Tackling Community based Anti-social Behaviour and Safeguarding victims -** including off road motorbike nuisance
- 7. Human Trafficking and Modern-Day Slavery and Organised Immigration Crime**
- 8. Safer streets through increased visibility and community engagement**
- 9. Tackling offending –** reducing high volume crimes e.g., burglary

Violence and Vulnerability

The following activities planned by the CSP will support delivery of this priority:

- Continue to recognise and respond to the public interest in VAWG and men's violence against women, promote reporting to Safer Streets and act on findings (Op Minerva)
- The Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment identified the following priority areas for victims who are resident within safe accommodation.
 - Support around financial inclusion for victims supporting access to education, training, and employment in preparation for moving on from the refuge.
 - Support to increase staff knowledge and working practices around victims with physical and learning disabilities and mental health issues.
 - Specialist drug and alcohol support for resident adults & children.
 - Support to expedite the process of moving on from refuge to independent accommodation when safe to do so and to ensure support is continued once victims are settled.
 - Implementation of trauma informed psychological support for resident adults and children.
 - Increase in capacity of the existing children's worker to support parenting work.
 - Tutoring for resident children who as a result of moving into refuge have additional identified learning needs.
- We are piloting training to raise awareness of sexual abuse against men and boys.
- We will be part of the wider steering group for the harmful sexualised behaviour audit
- Preventative work will continue to be focused in the Grays area including the schools
- Develop the role of the CE and Gangs Lead and Exploitation worker and the training offer available to professionals, schools and parents.

- Focused campaign to raise awareness in relation to offensive weapons alongside knife bin launch campaign
- Through the Violence and Vulnerability Board the long-term public health approach to this issue should continue and the data start to drive earlier preventative activity
- Support Op Henderson, an operation focusing on addressing CSE and CCE in relation to transport hubs
- Continue to safeguard those at risk of or involved in criminal exploitation through the Operational Gang Related Violence Group
- Support schools to understand risks through a termly contextualised safeguarding report
- Run a programme of street football in parks where concerns in relation to exploitation have been raised.

Transitions and Transfers

The CSP recognises that this is priority area. It is included within the Violence and Vulnerability work plan; we are members of the Adult Safeguarding Transitions Delivery Group and Re-Route will be adopted to work with 17-22 yr. olds who are currently released under investigation (RUI).

Emotional Health and Wellbeing

We will be supporting the LSCP led walk online roadshows to provide an input on gangs and knife crimes to year 5-8 inclusive, accounting for those who missed these important messages due to COVID.

We offer a termly meeting with schools to discuss those at risk of exclusion, exploitation or causing harm in the community. We will also seek to continue to seek funding through the Essex violence and vulnerability unit to support schools in our identified locality areas with mentoring programmes and the Olive Outreach programme
There is an offer of domestic abuse awareness training to businesses.

In addition, we will work with the LSCP to implement any recommendations for the CSP following the Thematic Review led by the LSCP.

Thurrock Adults, Housing and Health

What did we do?

The Housing Safeguarding Team operates as the housing link into the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference. The purpose of the service is to provide a response to disclosures of domestic and sexual abuse, regardless of housing tenure. They also provide advice and support for all housing staff and contractors by guiding them through the reporting and escalation process for any child or adult safeguarding concerns.

The team also manage the Thurrock Women's Refuge contract on behalf of Public Health and as part of our commitment to safe accommodation in the borough we provided an additional three units to the current contract.

In addition, following the allocation of the New Burdens Funding as part of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 we assisted Violence Against Women and Girls Group (VAWG) to implement the recommendations from the Domestic Abuse needs assessment.

We increased the number of support services available to the refuge residents and to support the act which aims to ensure that victims have the confidence to come forward and report their experiences, safe in the knowledge that the state will do everything it can, both to support them and their children. As the act considers children to be victims of abuse and violence as opposed to witnesses, we have provided funding to support:

- Trauma focused counselling for children through the Healthy Relationships Programme
- Increased the capacity of the children's worker in refuge to ensure all who want the support can access it
- Funding for additional Tutoring for children in Refuge –bridging gap in education whilst away from home/delays in accessing education.
- Specialist sexual violence and abuse counselling for survivors in refuge and resettlement into independent accommodation.
- We have updated our leaflets and poster which raise awareness of the work of the team, to reflect the new domestic abuse statutory definition. We are including the leaflet in all our sign-up packs for our new tenants and widely distributing among our local community partners.

What was the impact?

The number of instances of children supported in safe accommodation for the period 1 April 2021 until 31 March 2022 was 35.

During the same period the number of instances of individual children provided with direct support was 38 and the number who received counselling and therapy was 12.

The number of children with protected characteristics who were supported in safe accommodation were 10.

During the period 1 April 2021 until 31 March 2022 the Housing Safeguarding Team supported 737 survivors of domestic and sexual abuse and their families.

What will we plan do next?

Private Rented Sector

A campaign to reach private landlords to build awareness, information and signposting for victims of domestic/sexual abuse and violence. The Southend, Essex and Thurrock

Domestic Abuse Board have provided a resource library to share with our contacts in the Private Rented Sector and local stakeholders. The library supplies an online resource which offers training and support which can be accessed through an online link. We look to promote this resource, particularly with the Private Lettings Team for:

- Private sector lettings
- Inclusive of those who sign a tenancy for the private rented sector properties.
- Private landlord's forum
- Inclusive of those landlords we work with on a regular basis and those known to us.
- Online communication

Examples of effective practice

The Thurrock Anti-Social Behaviour Team have been working with the School Safeguarding Leads from Olive and Hassenbrooks, Hathaway, Gateway Academies. We received lots of complaints from residents about young people gathering in groups and causing low level anti-social behaviour. We met with the schools in monthly meeting to identify the pupils involved.

We contacted the parents and arranged to discuss the details of the complaints and suggested they agree to an Acceptable Behaviour Contract, 100% of the parents signed the contracts and agreed to monitor the behaviour of their children to ensure they complied. The contracts are not legally binding but an attempt to resolve problems through intervention and diversion. Although the contracts do provide prohibitive measures, we also seek more positive provisions to provide support or intervention at the earliest possible stage, following our receipt of the complaints. The process is one of engagement, rather than a punitive measure.

We continued to contact the parents and discuss compliance and this process is continuing. In terms of the new pupil intake the schools decided they would continue to engage with our process to ensure that we are applying preventative measures to ensure there is no further impact on residents.

The officers are planning to start a new process with local public transport providers, to offer a similar service where anti-social behaviour from young people in uniform is impacting their service delivery.

This project is likely to continue as we have found that it produces outcome in line with the Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership priority to reduce the number of children and young people in need of responsive safeguarding through effective help and support at an earlier stage.

Challenges and Risks for 2022/2023

- Recovering from the impact of the pandemic the partnership will continue to progress some of delivery plan items into 2022/2023, especially around the area of Neglect.
- Key risks include ensuring that the system has trained workforce capacity to meet business as usual and any possible rise in safeguarding referrals and the emerging issues and challenges for children, young people and their families following the pandemic.

Our Response

- Priorities set for the next period and the delivery plan has been revised to focus on priority areas.
- The Statutory Partners meet bi-monthly with additional monthly meetings with colleagues from Southend and Essex Councils to discuss current and emerging concerns.
- Safeguarding referrals are closely monitored.
- Multi-agency audits and case reviews will continue to ensure the voice of children and young people and their families are heard and included in work with do with them.

Conclusions

- The Safeguarding Partnership demonstrates good communication and effective working relationships.
- There is good leadership by the Executive and an Independent Chairperson and Scrutineer has been appointed to create a culture of transparency, high challenge and high support working together to solve problems in an effective positive way.
- Progress against priorities is tracked and reported on regularly in a transparent way.
- The audit schedule for 2022/23 reflects partnership priorities.

Recommendations

- To further develop the multi-agency dataset to support the identification of safeguarding areas of focus
- To review and refresh the training offer for 2022/23 to ensure it reflects the TLSCP priorities, complements training already locally on offer and incorporates impact feedback.
- The delivery plan should incorporate local learning from case reviews.

GLOSSARY

CIN	Child in Need
CP	Child Protection
CSC	Children’s Social Care
DA	Domestic Abuse
DHR	Domestic Homicide Review
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Childrens Board
LSCP	Local Safeguarding Childrens Partnership
SCR	Serious Case Review

LCSPR	Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review
RR	Rapid Review
MACE	Multi-agency Child Exploitation
MAPPA	Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements
MARAC	Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference
MASH	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
NELFT	North-East London Foundation Trust
SERICC	South Essex Rape and Incest Crisis Centre