



BIRMINGHAM
**Safeguarding
Children**
PARTNERSHIP



Annual Report 2024/25

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Foreword from the Lead Safeguarding Partners

As statutory Lead Safeguarding Partners, we share equal responsibility for providing strong, collaborative leadership, focused on continuously improving our multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, to protect and promote the welfare of children and young people in Birmingham.

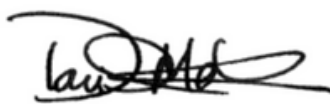
In April 2023, the Birmingham Safeguarding Children Partnership (BSCP) published its [Business Improvement Plan 2023-2025](#), setting out its shared vision and strategic safeguarding priorities for the next two years. As Safeguarding Partners, we have worked closely with a wide range of organisations and partnerships, collectively referred to as 'relevant agencies', to coordinate our intervention and resources to make real progress on our four key priorities.

This annual report focuses on the period 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025, evaluating our progress in implementing the identified actions in the second year of the [Business Improvement Plan 2023-25](#). The report also captures how we have embedded the new national safeguarding framework and guidance set out in [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#).

We are extremely grateful to all our partners, frontline practitioners, volunteers, and those special individuals in our community for their steadfast commitment to keeping children safe, improving their life chances, and helping us achieve our shared ambition that Birmingham is a great place to grow up!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Guildford'.

Craig Guildford
Chief Constable
West Midlands
Police

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Melbourne'.

David Melbourne
Chief Executive Officer
Birmingham and
Solihull Integrated Care
Board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joanne Roney'.

Joanne Roney
Managing Director
Birmingham City
Council



Introduction

This annual report sets out how agencies have worked together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Birmingham during the 2024/25 financial year. It also provides a rigorous and transparent assessment of the effectiveness of our multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (MASA) and charts progress on the implementation of the second and final year of our [Business Improvement Plan 2023-25](#).

During this period, we have overseen the smooth transition to the new statutory roles of Lead and Delegated Safeguarding Partners and development of our independent scrutiny arrangements, as defined in the national guidance.

This annual report will be formally presented to Birmingham City Council's Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the NHS Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board Quality Committee. A copy will be sent to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and the Department for Education. It will also be available to read and download from the BSCP website: www.lscpbirmingham.org.uk

The report is comprised of seven sections:

Part 1 – Our Shared Ambition, Governance, Leadership, and Accountability Arrangements

This section sets out the shared ambition, purpose, and strategic priorities of the safeguarding partners for the last two years, together with details of the changes in governance, leadership, and accountability arrangements undertaken during the year.

Part 2 – Local Context and Key Facts about Birmingham

This section provides background information and statistical data to provide a local context to the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements developed to protect and safeguard children and young people in Birmingham.

Part 3 – The Effectiveness of Safeguarding Arrangements

In April 2023, BSCP published its two-year [Business Improvement Plan 2023-25](#). This section provides an evaluation of progress on the second and final year of the delivery plan. It provides assurance on the effective implementation of planned intervention against each of the four strategic safeguarding priorities.

Part 4 – Learning and Development Framework

This section provides an overview of the Partnership’s workforce development programme, public awareness campaigns and regional collaboration to develop, cascade and embed good practice.

Part 5 – Learning from Audits and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

This section provides an overview of the key learning to emerge from Rapid Reviews and Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, where abuse or neglect is known or suspected and a child has died or been seriously harmed. This section also explores the outcomes of partnership audit and quality assurance activity focused on improving our multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

Part 6 – Funding and Business Support

This section provides a breakdown of BSCP’s budget and details of individual agency financial contributions, together with an analysis of key areas of expenditure during the 2024/25 financial year, linked to the strategic safeguarding priorities.

Part 7 - Conclusion and Priorities for the Year Ahead

The conclusion reflects on the overall progress and impact of the [Business Improvement Plan 2023-25](#), and looks forward to the safeguarding challenges and priorities for the next two years, commencing from 1st April 2025.



Part 1 – Our Shared Ambition, Governance, Leadership and Accountability Arrangements

In April 2023, the BSCP published its [Business Improvement Plan 2023-2025](#), setting out its shared vision and strategic safeguarding priorities that safeguarding partners and relevant agencies would work collaboratively to achieve over the two-year period.

In January 2025, Safeguarding Partners hosted a development session bringing together strategic safeguarding leads from across the city to coordinate further improvement, and reflect on progress and the impact of partnership intervention in the second and final year of the [Business Improvement Plan 2023-25](#).

Our Shared Ambition, Purpose, and Strategic Priorities

BSCP works in close collaboration with key statutory partnerships across the city to keep children safe, reinforcing the shared strategic ambition set out in the [Change for Children and Young People Plan 2023-2028](#).

Our Shared Ambition:

Birmingham, a great place to grow up!

Our Shared Purpose:

Providing strong leadership and partnership to ensure local delivery, partnership practice, shared risk, and accountability by:

- setting standards, providing guidance and procedures for multi-agency safeguarding practice, and holding partners and partnerships to account;
- ensuring sound practice with a positive impact on outcomes for children and young people;
- ensuring a programme of learning and development that supports leadership and practice, while also learning from the best and from Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews;
- modelling a culture of evaluation, learning, and continuous improvement; communicating effectively with the wider safeguarding system of organisations and individuals, including voluntary organisations and service users;
- driving progress through sub-groups and workstreams which regularly report to our Executive Board;

The [Business Improvement Plan 2023-25](#) complements and builds upon partnership collaboration overseen by the Birmingham Children and Young People Partnership Board, as we share the same ambition for children and young people in the city. The [Business Improvement Plan 2023-25](#) should be read in conjunction with BSCP's published [Governance Arrangements](#), which provides greater detail of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and organisational structure that supports implementation of the [Business Improvement Plan 2023-25](#).

Our Shared Priorities

The Lead Safeguarding Partners identified four safeguarding priorities, which Delegated Safeguarding Partners are tasked with overseeing the effective implementation of through the [Business Improvement Plan 2023-25](#).

Priority 1: Ensuring effective implementation of '[Working Together to Build Strong Family Foundations \(Childhood Neglect Strategy 2022-2026\)](#)'.

Priority 2: Assuring a coordinated and coherent inter-agency response to children impacted by domestic abuse and violence in families.

Priority 3: Developing a joint approach to understanding and responding to children who are, and who become, invisible to services.

Priority 4: Enhancing anti-discriminatory practice by improving partnership focus on the work we do in the context of equity, equality, diversity, and inclusion.

Governance, Leadership, and Accountability Arrangements

In March 2024, the Lead and Delegated Safeguarding Partners agreed the timetable and milestones for the smooth transition to the new governance, leadership and accountability arrangements as prescribed in [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#).

Our [Governance Arrangements](#) were updated in December 2024 and are scheduled to be reviewed and revised in October 2025.

The published [Governance Arrangements](#) clarify how the partnership arrangements operate in Birmingham. It also explains the new statutory roles and functions of Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSPs), Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSPs), the new co-chairing arrangements which were introduced from October 2024, and the continuous development of our independent scrutiny arrangements.

The new governance, leadership, and accountability arrangements place a joint and equal responsibility for the effectiveness of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements on the LSPs.



The Lead Safeguarding Partners are:

- Managing Director of Birmingham City Council (BCC)
- Chief Constable for West Midlands Police (WMP)
- Chief Executive Officer for Birmingham & Solihull Integrated Care Board (BSOL ICB)

LSPs have agreed to meet quarterly with DSPs to set the strategic direction, vision, and culture of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and review performance and progress on the implementation of the [Business Improvement Plan 2023-25](#). Regionally, LSPs from the seven safeguarding partnerships[1] in the WMP force area will meet annually to explore opportunities for greater regional collaboration, share emerging good practice, and tackle safeguarding themes and issues which transcend local boundaries. The first regional LSPs meeting is scheduled for 1st October 2025.

LSPs have nominated DSPs to speak with authority, make decisions on behalf of the LSPs, and hold their organisations to account. The DSPs provide oversight of the quality of safeguarding practice, with a specific focus on our shared safeguarding priorities.

The Delegated Safeguarding Partners are:

- Executive Director Children and Families, Birmingham City Council
- Birmingham Local Policing Commander, West Midlands Police
- Chief Nurse, Birmingham & Solihull Integrated Care Board
- Chief Executive, Birmingham Children's Trust



Sue Harrison
Executive Director
Children and Families
Birmingham City
Council



James Thomas
Chief Executive
Birmingham
Childrens Trust



Tom Joyce
Birmingham Local
Policing Area
Commander
West Midlands



Helen Kelly
Chief Nurse
Birmingham and
Solihull Integrated
Care Board

Independent Scrutiny

National guidance prescribes that Safeguarding Partners must ensure that there are arrangements in place for the effective independent scrutiny of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#) sets out seven core functions of independent scrutiny.

[1] Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton.

Functions of independent scrutiny role

1. Provide safeguarding partners and relevant agencies with independent, rigorous, and effective support and challenge at both a strategic and operational level.
2. Provide assurance to the whole system in judging the effectiveness of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements through a range of scrutiny methods.
3. Ensure that statutory duties are being fulfilled, quality assurance mechanisms are in place, and that Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and national reviews are analysed, with key learning areas identified and effectively implemented across the safeguarding system.
4. Ensure that the voice of children and families is considered as part of scrutiny and that this is at the heart of arrangements through direct feedback, informing policy and practice.
5. Be regarded as a 'critical friend' and provide opportunities for two-way discussion and reflection between frontline practitioners and leaders. This will encourage and enable strong and clear strategic leadership.
6. Provide independent advice when there are disagreements between agencies and safeguarding partners and facilitate escalation procedures.
7. Evaluate and contribute to published multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and the annual report, alongside feeding into the wider accountability systems such as inspections

Independent scrutiny acts as a 'critical friend'; assisting LSPs and DSPs to continuously improve the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and provide impartial advice and assurance on the effectiveness of partnership intervention. Independent scrutiny helps identify areas for further improvement in our safeguarding practice to deliver better outcomes for vulnerable children and families in Birmingham. An Independent Scrutineer was appointed in January 2025, but due to personal commitments had to stand down from this role after a month. DSPs acted quickly to put in place interim independent scrutiny support to oversee the partnership's two-year programme of Independent Scrutiny, until a new Independent Scrutineer is appointed. The plan involves a number of proposed pieces of thematic independent scrutiny, has been informed by existing and new priorities agreed by the BSCP, and considers key issues identified by young people and those who facilitate youth engagement work across the city.

The themes include providing assurance in respect of the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements in relation to:

Year 1:

- early identification and responses to children at risk of or experiencing neglect
- identification and responses to intra-familial child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation
- children who become out of sight to services
- children at risk of, or who are, experiencing harm outside the home as a result of exploitation and/or serious youth violence
- understanding the impact of disproportionality by protected characteristics and arrangements to promote equality, equity, diversity and inclusion

Year 2:

- impact of children's voices and lived experiences on service design, delivery, and evaluation
- promoting children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing
- responses to children as victims of domestic abuse
- transition from child to adult services

The BSCP is committed to publishing the independent scrutiny findings of its effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements on its website, to enable transparency and build public confidence in the work that we are doing.

Organisational Structure

To support the revised governance, leadership, and accountability arrangements, we have strengthened the partnership's infrastructure and Business Support Unit. The multi-agency safeguarding arrangements incorporate influential strategic representation from Education at the Executive Board and Safeguarding Leaders Assembly and operationally through the Safeguarding in Education Group and sub-groups, ensuring that the views and contributions of education and childcare providers enhances decision-making at the highest level.

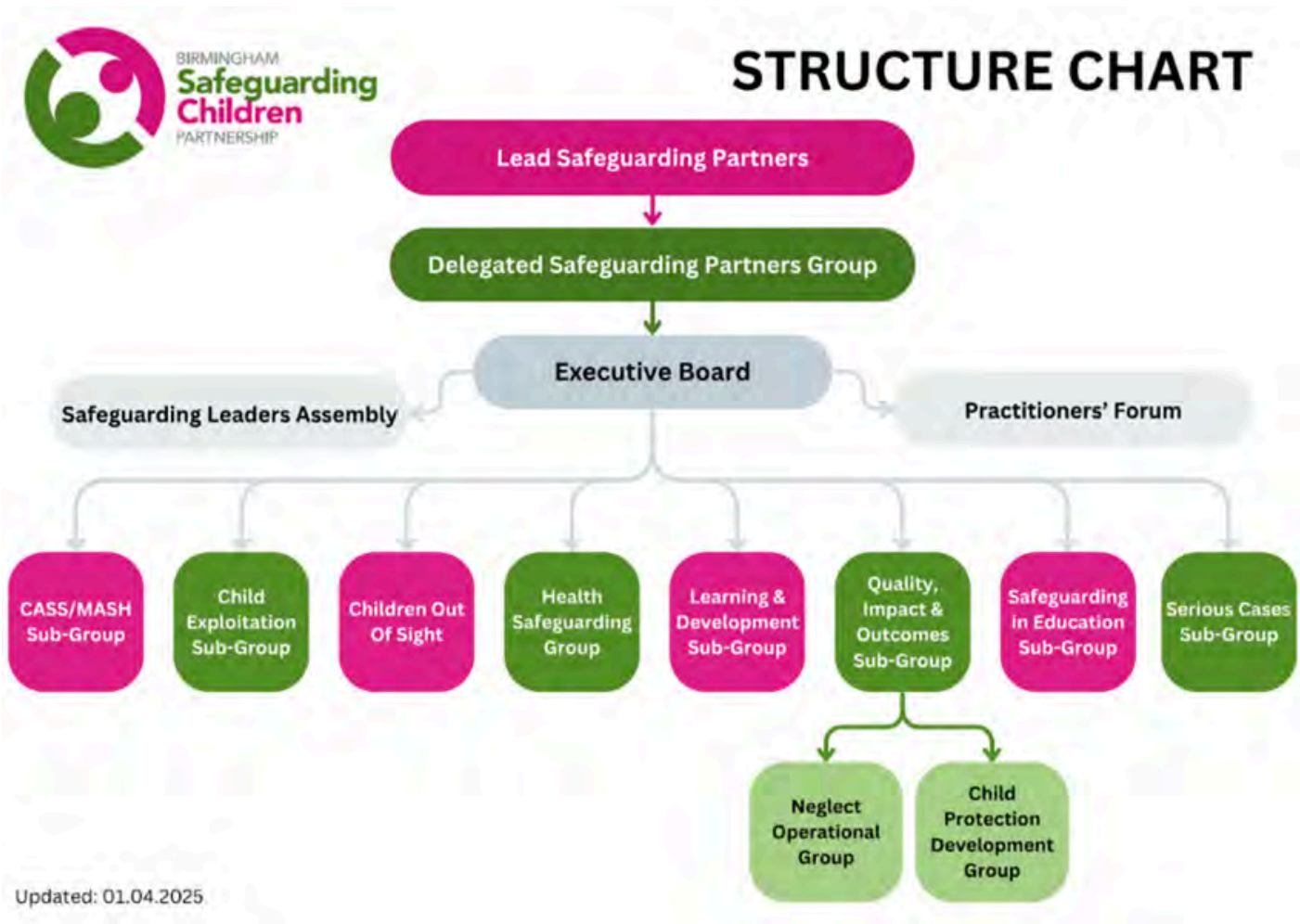
We have introduced co-chairing arrangements throughout the safeguarding structure, demonstrating shared leadership, accountability, and active engagement in the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Safeguarding Partners co-chair the Executive Board, Safeguarding Leaders Assembly, Practitioners Forum, sub-groups, and Task and Finish groups, all of which have clear terms of reference, and an agreed work programme aligned to delivery of the priorities set out in the Business Improvement Plan 2023-25. The dedicated Business Support Team assists in the coordination, support, and delivery of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

DSPs have developed the sub-group structure outlined below in Figure 1 to specifically focus on improving partnership performance and collaboration on key safeguarding priorities, and to assist the effective discharge of LSPs' statutory functions. Throughout the year, the Executive Board reviews progress on each sub-group's performance and progress against its work programme, examining impact using both quantitative and qualitative data and information. The co-chairs of each sub-group will come together at least twice a year to ensure connectivity and co-ordination of their business, to identify common themes and disseminate learning aimed at enhancing safeguarding practice. The continued development of a multi-agency dashboard as part of our wider quality assurance and improvement framework supports the work of the sub-groups in evaluating their impact in improving outcomes for children and families.

A number of the sub-groups have an active role in developing, monitoring, and evaluating the impact of specific strategies relating to thematic areas of safeguarding practice. In December 2024, the Partnership published details of its [Governance Arrangements](#), which provide greater details of the shared leadership and accountability arrangements for the

statutory Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements, as well as the structure, terms of reference, and membership of each sub-group.

Figure 1: sub-group Structure Chart



Part 2 - Context and Key Facts about Birmingham

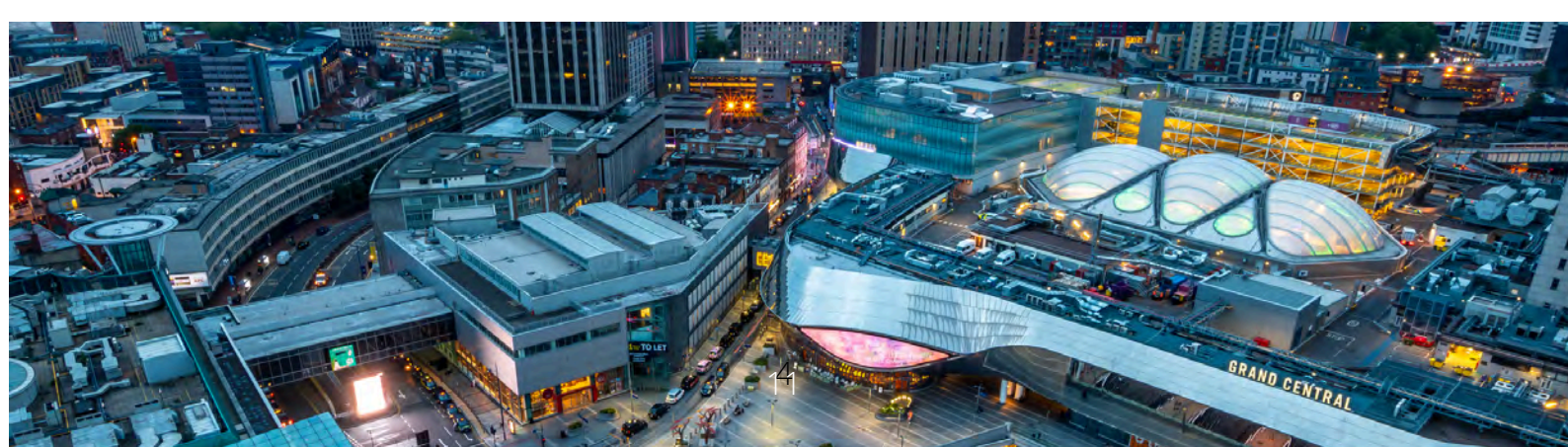
Birmingham is the second largest city in the UK, with an estimated population of over 1.14 million residents. It is a super-diverse city, demonstrating the richness and depth of the cultures and communities that make up its population.

The 2021 Census showed that over 90 languages are spoken across the city, and Birmingham is home to a significant range of religious communities. The city hosts a variety of cultural festivals and events celebrating its diversity, such as the Birmingham Mela, Chinese New Year, and Pride celebrations. Furthermore, Birmingham is one of the youngest cities in Europe, with 40% of its population under the age of 25.

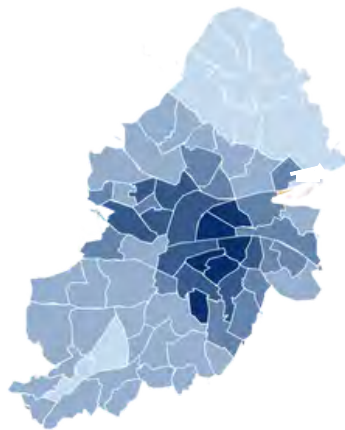


As the 'second city', Birmingham continues to attract high levels of investment. It is also home to three world-class universities, iconic cultural venues – such as the Hippodrome, Birmingham Library, Symphony Hall, and the Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery - and is a major retail destination due to the Bullring Shopping Centre and annual Christmas markets. It boasts more green space than any other European city and more canals than Venice. With air and rail transport links to the rest of the UK and beyond, living in Birmingham presents exciting opportunities.

However, according to the Resolution Foundation, 48% of Birmingham's children are growing up in poverty, 8% higher than the national average. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation's UK Poverty 2025 report shows "In some constituencies in the West Midlands... over 1 in 2 children are in poverty. These include many in Birmingham: Ladywood (55%), Hall Green and Moseley (55%), Yardley (53%), Perry Barr (53%), and Hodge Hill". With the city's population projected to grow to 1,186,000 (3.9%) in 2028 and to 1,230,000 (7.8%) by 2038, this growth will inevitably have an impact on public services for children and families, such as education, transport, housing, and health.



Percentage of children in absolute low income families in Birmingham



- 3.0 - 14.7
- 14.7 - 26.3
- 26.3 - 38.0
- 38.0 - 49.6
- 49.6 - 61.3



9.4%
of households are
overcrowded

(Birmingham City Council)

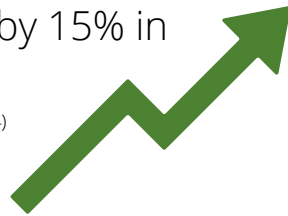


39.8%
of children are eligible
for free school meals,
significantly higher than
the national average

(% of pupils eligible for FSM 2022/23
(academic) for Birmingham and All English
metropolitan boroughs)

Children with child in need plans
rose by 9% and those with child
protection plans rose by 15% in
2023/24

(BCT Annual Report 2023/24)



In 2023/24, 2,300 children
were being looked after by the local
authority

(Children in Need and Care in Birmingham)



26% of 10 and 11-
year-olds are obese
or severely obese

(National Child Measurement Programme,
2023-24, NHS)

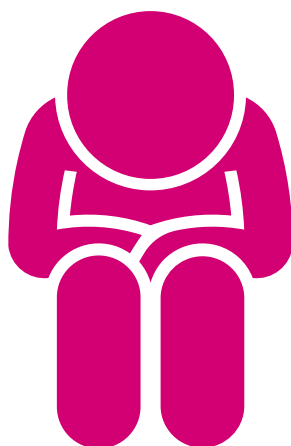


14.8% of households
receive housing
benefits, the highest
proportion across all
English metropolitan
boroughs

(Proportion of households in receipt of
housing benefits (from Jun 2024 to Nov 2024)
for Birmingham)

48%
of children
live in
poverty

(The Resolution Foundation)



32.5% of children live in
absolute low income
families. The national mean
is 14.2%

(Birmingham City Observatory)



In 2023, 6.1% of 16-17 years olds were not in
employment education or training

(Proportion of 16 and 17 year olds who were not in education, employment or training (NEET), or their activity was not known in Birmingham)

Part 3 - The Effectiveness of Safeguarding Arrangements

The two-year [Business Improvement Plan 2023-25](#) sets out four key safeguarding priorities and 49 specific actions aimed at enhancing partnership intervention to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children and young people in Birmingham. During the last two years the partnership has made significant progress in implementing the identified actions. 47 (96%) of the actions have been completed, with significant progress on the remaining outstanding actions.

However, there has been some slippage on two actions relating to the Safeguarding in Faith Communities Project. The planned launch of a regional safeguarding guidance and toolkit for faith-based organisations is now scheduled for summer 2025. The delay was to enable effective consultation with faith leaders and Designated Safeguarding Leads. This has subsequently delayed the evaluation of the project, which will now be re-scheduled for April 2026, for inclusion in the 2025/26 yearly report.

The below pie chart (Figure 2) provides an overview of the overall implementation of actions at the end of the second and final year of the [Business Improvement Plan 2023-25](#). Appendix 1 'Activity and Progress Summary' provides a more detailed breakdown of each of the 49 specific actions together with evidence of progress.



Figure 2: Overview of implementation of actions at the end of Year Two of the Business Improvement Plan 2023-25



The [Business Improvement Plan 2023-25](#) sets out 49 specific actions:

- 47 actions have been completed (96%)
- There is slippage on two actions (4%)

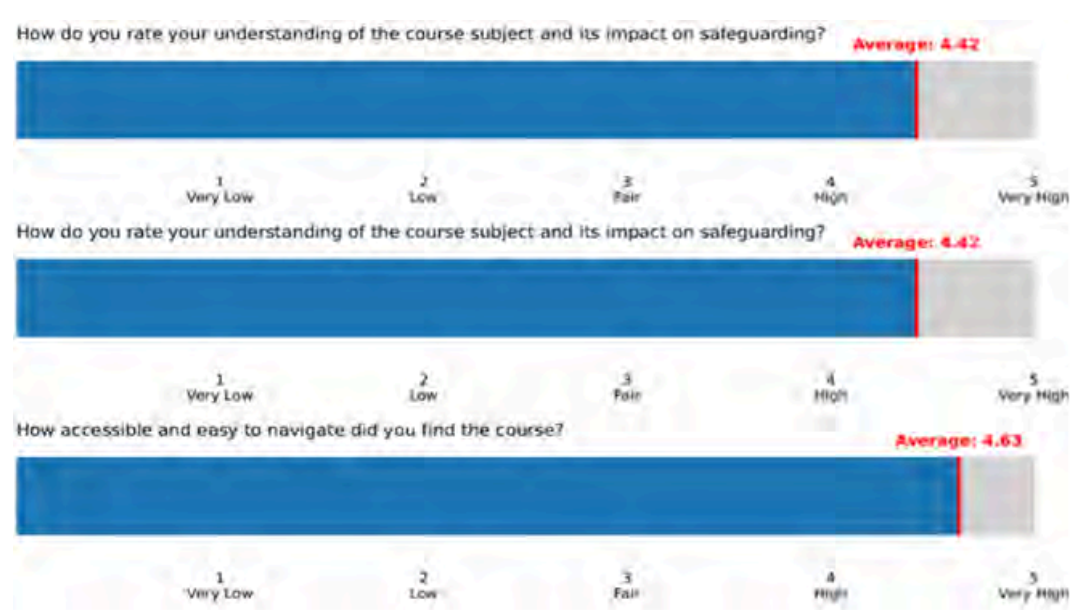
The golden thread that links these priorities is ensuring that the voice and lived experience of children, young people and families informs and influences the continuous improvement in partnership working across the city. A summary of the key activity and progress in respect of the four safeguarding priorities is outlined below.

Priority 1: Ensuring effective implementation of ‘Working together to Build Strong Family Foundations’ Strategy 2022-2026 (Childhood Neglect Strategy)

BSCP launched its [Childhood Neglect Strategy 2022-2026 – ‘Working Together to Build Strong Family Foundations’](#) - at its Practitioners Conference in September 2022. It has four strategic priorities and is supported by a multi-agency Neglect Toolkit, which seeks to equip practitioners with the tools they need to identify, assess, and respond to neglect at the earliest stage to avoid escalating need and risk and to ensure that children and families receive the right help and support at the right time.

A key element of the strategy is to equip the workforce to recognise and respond to neglect. In April 2024, BSCP held [Neglect Practice Week](#) and in June 2024 launched the [Neglect Foundations eLearning module](#). As of March 2025, a total of 251 participants from a wide range of organisations – including early years, education, health, probation, and the private, voluntary and independent sector – had completed the eLearning module. Upon completing the course, 94% of participants rating their subject knowledge as 4 stars or higher[2]. Figure 3 provides an evaluation of the positive impact of the Neglect Foundations eLearning module.

Figure 3: Neglect Foundations eLearning Module evaluation

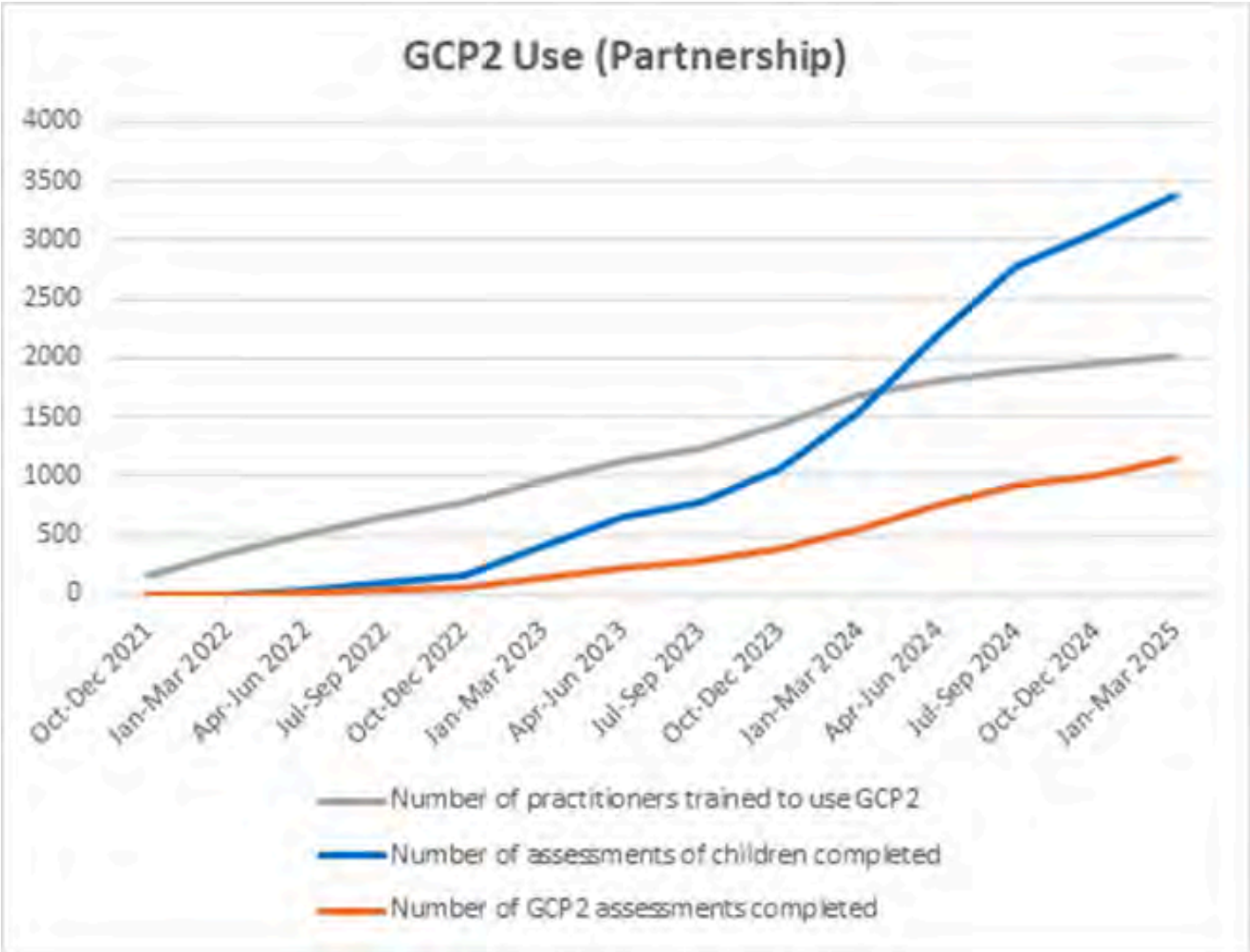


[2] Following the training, 50% of participants rated their subject knowledge as 5 stars, 44% rated it as 4 stars

This has been complemented by the roll-out of the Neglect Screening Tool and Graded Care Profile-2 (GCP2). In January 2023, the NSPCC assessed Birmingham to be at just under 60% implementation; in April 2025 the NSPCC assess Birmingham to be at 96%.

The chart below (Figure 4) shows the upward trend of numbers of practitioners trained to use the GCP2 tool for assessing the impact of neglect on children and the number of assessments completed between October 2021 and March 2025.

Figure 4: GCP2 Use (Partnership)



Impact reports completed by the Neglect Lead Manager provide some evidence of improved quality of assessments, notably resulting in the right support being provided earlier or more effectively and therefore leading to better outcomes for children and families. At the end of March 2025, 38% of children subject to a child protection plan in Birmingham were under the category of neglect, which is well below the national average.



During the latter part of 2024-2025, focus shifted to addressing the cumulative and chronic impact of neglect on children through supporting parents and carers to achieve sustainable changes in their parenting, supported by Birmingham Children's Trust's 'Trust 2025' transformation programme.

Although neglect is not one of the four current strategic priorities, the multi-agency Neglect Operational Group continues to progress the implementation of the priorities within the Neglect Strategy and evaluate the extent to which this has made a positive impact on practice. Year 1 of our independent scrutiny arrangements will seek to evaluate the impact of the implementation of the strategy on multi-agency safeguarding responses to neglect. This will inform work by the Neglect Operational Group to develop new priorities for action as part of the refresh of the city's Neglect Strategy from 2026.

Priority 2: Assuring a coordinated and coherent inter-agency response to children impacted by domestic abuse and violence in families

BSCP hosted two significant events in November 2023 – our 'Working as Partners to Safeguard Children from Domestic Abuse' Practitioners Conference and a Strategic Leaders Assembly – which contributed directly to the revision of the city's [Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy: 'Working to Transform Lives'](#). The strategy was launched by the Birmingham Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership Board on 19th November 2024 at an event attended by over 100 partners – it sets out shared values that have been shaped by survivors and specialists.

The strategy builds on previous priorities and introduces two new priorities to protect children and young people and hold perpetrators to account.

- Whole Systems Approach
- Prevention – Changing Attitudes and Behaviours
- Prevention – Early Identification and Help
- Safety, Support, and Recovery
- Children and Young People are Protected - this involves raising awareness of healthy relationships, and identifying, supporting, and, where necessary, safeguarding children and young people affected by domestic abuse.
- Holding Perpetrators to Account - developing an intervention pathway that sets out a

range of actions that holds perpetrators to account, at every opportunity across the system.

In respect of the priority relating to children and young people, the Delivery Group has begun to map specialist services for children available across the city, design a directory to share with partner agencies, and started developing a toolkit for working with children.

A multi-agency Steering Group has been re-established to oversee the co-ordination of Operation Encompass; the sharing of police information relating to domestic incidents involving children within the household with education settings. In 2024/25, 16,992 incidents were shared with schools and other educational setting compared to 15,491 the previous year. There has been a steady increase in the proportion of schools engaged in Operation Encompass and improvements to the timeliness and quality of information sharing. A regional policy and protocol has been developed by West Midlands Police in partnership with other agencies, to ensure a more consistent and efficient approach to Operation Encompass.

In 2024/25, 3,242 high-risk victims of domestic abuse were discussed at the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) compared to 2,970 for 2023/24. These discussions involved 5,185 children in 2024-25 compared to 4,901 the previous year.

A progress report in respect of the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy will be presented for assurance to the BSCP in November 2025. Children as victims of domestic abuse is included within the two-year independent scrutiny plan.

Priority 3: Developing a joint approach to understanding and responding to children who are, and who become, invisible to services

BSCP have established a 'Children Out of Sight' Group to explore the reasons, risk, and vulnerability of different cohorts of children who are out of sight of statutory partners. The group have implemented support for practitioners, clarifying pathways to enable better access to specialist advice and support where there are concerns for a child out of sight. The group has developed a more sophisticated understanding of both needs and risks associated with some cohorts of children who do not access universal services.

A multi-agency Complexity Hub pilot was launched in June 2025, with the purpose of reviewing specific children who are out of sight to universal services and, where decision-making is complex, promoting partnership working and reflection among frontline staff.

The Complexity Hub ensures a line of sight to vulnerable children, identifies gaps in multi-agency involvement, and reports to the Children Out of Sight Group on risks in current pathways. The Complexity Hub meets at least ten times per year, with an agreed process to hold urgent discussions about an individual child if required.

In March 2025, the BSCP co-chairs wrote to the Managing Director of BCC expressing concerns regarding the service provision and oversight of children

who are Electively Home Educated, whilst recognising that the council's awareness of this issue and that action was being taken to build capacity with the Elective Home Education (EHE) Service.

The EHE Service maintains a register of children who are electively home educated. At the end of March 2025 there were 3,727 children who were registered, an increase of 699 since March 2024. Of those, 67 are receiving early help support, 17 have a child in need plan, ten have a child protection plan, four children are in care, and 119 children have an education, health and care plan (EHCP), totalling 181 children known to Birmingham Children's Trust. There are 83 electively home educated children that received SEND support prior to leaving school, which has ceased at the point of registering with the EHE Service.

Joanne Roney, Managing Director of BCC provided assurance of the significant expansion of the EHE Service, which will see an increase from eight EHE advisers to 18 by December 2025. Additional assurance will be sought as part of our independent scrutiny arrangements relating to children out of sight, currently scheduled to take place towards the end of 2025/26 of our two-year plan.

Priority 4: Enhancing anti-discriminatory practice, by improving partnership focus on the work we do, in the context of equity, equality, diversity, and inclusion

In March 2025, the National Panel published a Panel Briefing 4 – [‘It’s Silent: Race, Racism and Safeguarding Children’](#). The Partnership has acted quickly to embed the learning locally undertaking a benchmarking exercise to evaluate progress on each of the eight recommendations and identify areas for further development. In July 2025, the BSCP Executive Board held a strategic workshop to review the outcome the benchmarking exercise and reflect on progress to embed the emerging good practice. Following the workshop, Delegated Safeguarding Partners established a short-term task and finish group led by the partnership's Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Champion to continue to embed the learning and to report back to the Executive Board on progress.

The BSCP Multi-Agency Training Offer 2024/25 includes modules aimed at enhancing understanding of anti-discriminatory practice. The training programme incorporates emerging learning on equity, equality, diversity, and inclusion from the outcome of audit activity and learning from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews. The close of the 2024/25 year marked the beginning of a series of webinars related to cultural competency which will continue into 2025/26. The webinar focused on adultification, with over 50 practitioners participating in an online workshop facilitated by Listen Up!, a UK leading cultural awareness and community voices organisation.



During this year the BSCP have continued to work in close collaboration with the Birmingham Faith Covenant Partnership and the Birmingham Council of Faiths on the 'Safeguarding in Faith Communities' project. The project team are in the final stages of developing a city-wide faith directory which will enable the public and professionals to locate and contact places of worship in Birmingham. Consultation with faith leaders and Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) is about to commence on the development of new online adults and children's Safeguarding Guidance and recourses, which is scheduled to be launched in autumn 2025.

The BSCP Faith Project Coordinator works closely with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), providing advice and support for faith-based organisations. This includes the delivery of bespoke safeguarding training, to date over 400 delegates from places of worship across the city have attend the training. Work will continue over the next year to expand and develop the DSL Faith Network.

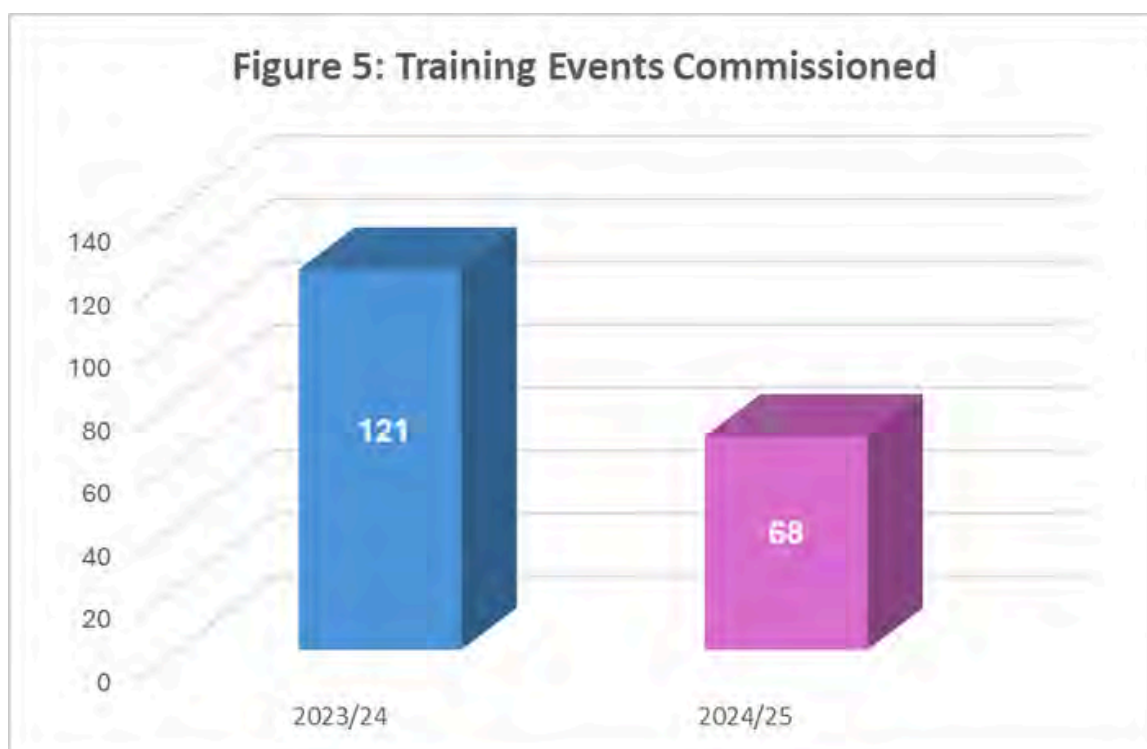
On-Line Guidance and Toolkit- Six Faiths



Part 4 - Learning and Development Framework

The BSCP Executive Board allocated a budget of £120,037 for multi-agency safeguarding training in 2024/25. The Learning and Development (L&D) Sub-Group has delegated responsibility for the development, coordination, delivery, and evaluation of the multi-agency training programme. During the financial year, the sub-group commissioned 68 training courses, covering 17 child safeguarding topics, and providing 1,905 training places. Further details of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Training Programme 2024/25 can be found in Appendix 2.

There was a significant reduction in the number training courses commissioned in comparison with the previous year, with only £67,931 of the allocated funding being utilised by the end of the financial year. The introduction of a new 'Dynamic Purchasing System' proved extremely problematic, adversely impacting on the number and quality of training providers that participated in the tendering process to deliver planned training. Training providers found the system overly bureaucratic and complicated, which impacted on the extent and range of courses that were delivered during the year. A key priority for the L&D Sub-Group for 2025/26 is to streamline and replace the current commissioning arrangements to attract new training providers and maintain flexibility to respond to new training needs as they emerge. The L&D Sub-Group have also noticed a significant change in demand patterns for training, with delegates and agencies preferring a more blended approach of virtual training and eLearning, and less emphasis on attending in-person training. The learning and development offer for 2025/26 has responded to the change in demand, incorporating a more blended approach in deliver of safeguarding training.



eLearning courses

During 2024/25 BSCP launched two new eLearning courses focusing on childhood neglect and the understanding, and application of, Birmingham's threshold document [Right Help, Right Time](#). The number of persons completing the courses are shown below:

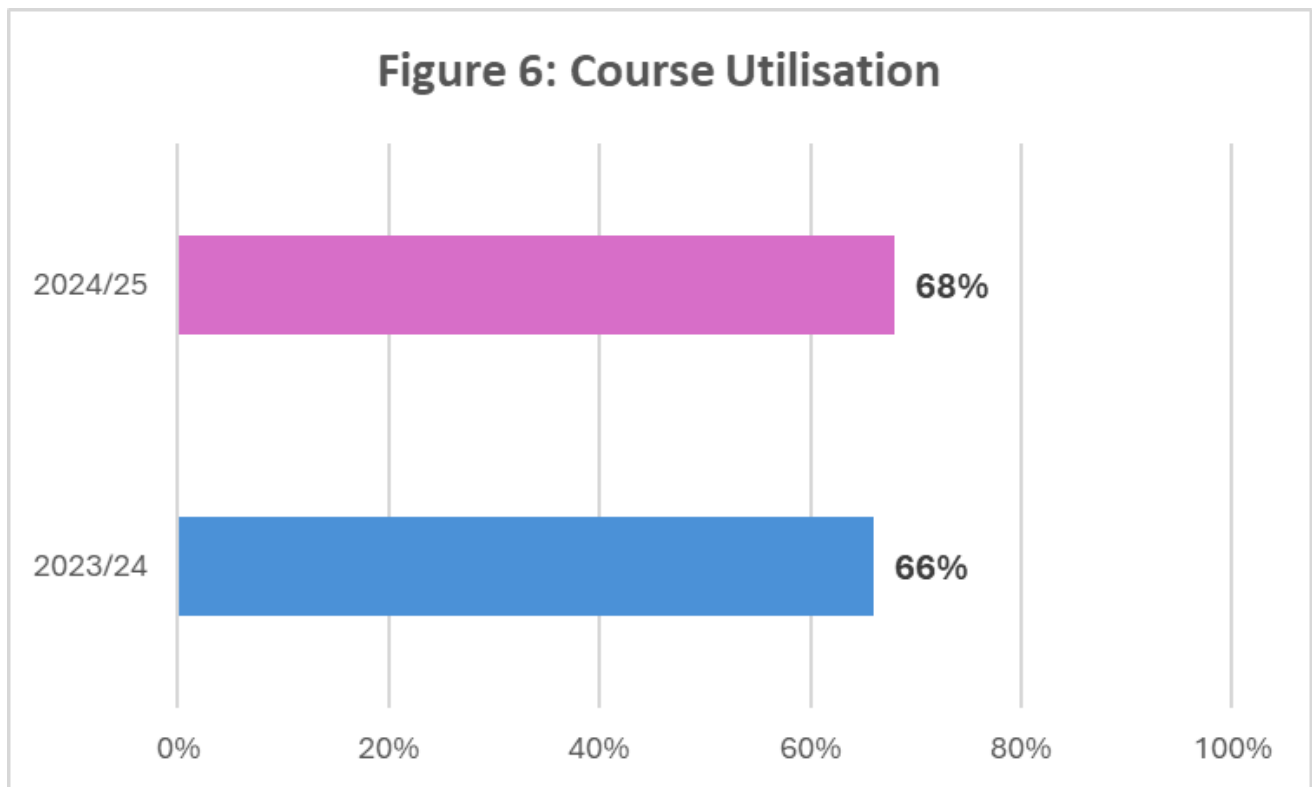
eLearning course title	Number of course completions in 2024/25
Neglect Foundations eLearning	251
Right Help, Right Time	631

The Partnership's learning management system (LMS) also provides helpful links to external eLearning courses that front-line practitioners in Birmingham can access on the following subjects:

- Forced Marriage Awareness
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- E-Learning for Health Professionals: Child Sexual Exploitation
- An introduction to Equality and Diversity
- Referral (radicalisation) awareness
- Prevent Awareness (radicalisation)
- Channel Awareness (radicalisation)

Course Utilisation

The course utilisation information represents the extent to which in-person or virtual courses and webinars were attended by partnership staff. The chart below represents a comparison of the percentage to which courses were filled between 2023/24 and 2024/25. Of the 1,905 training places offered in 2024/25, 1,291 staff and practitioners attended the training events resulting in a course utilisation rate of 68%, a 2% increase in utilisation on the previous year.



The challenges with improving course utilisation reflect the national trend in the reduction of training attendance for safeguarding partnerships across the country, due to increasing pressure on organisations and the changing nature of staff availability to attend training.

The L&D Sub-Group are working hard to reduce the number of late cancellations and improve overall take-up of training places, by better targeting and promotion of the training. The L&D Sub-Group are conducting market research to better understand the reasons for the decline in training take-up. To improve course utilisation, BSCP now routinely overbook delegate places by 10%, which trainers can manage if all delegates attend. The L&D Sub-Group are progressively improving the dissemination of training information and are booking courses further in advance to give as much notice as possible to potential delegates. A stricter non-attendance policy is being considered to help address late cancellations and no-shows. Additional capacity in the BSCP Business Support Team will enable closer monitoring of course utilisation throughout the year.

Training Event Evaluation

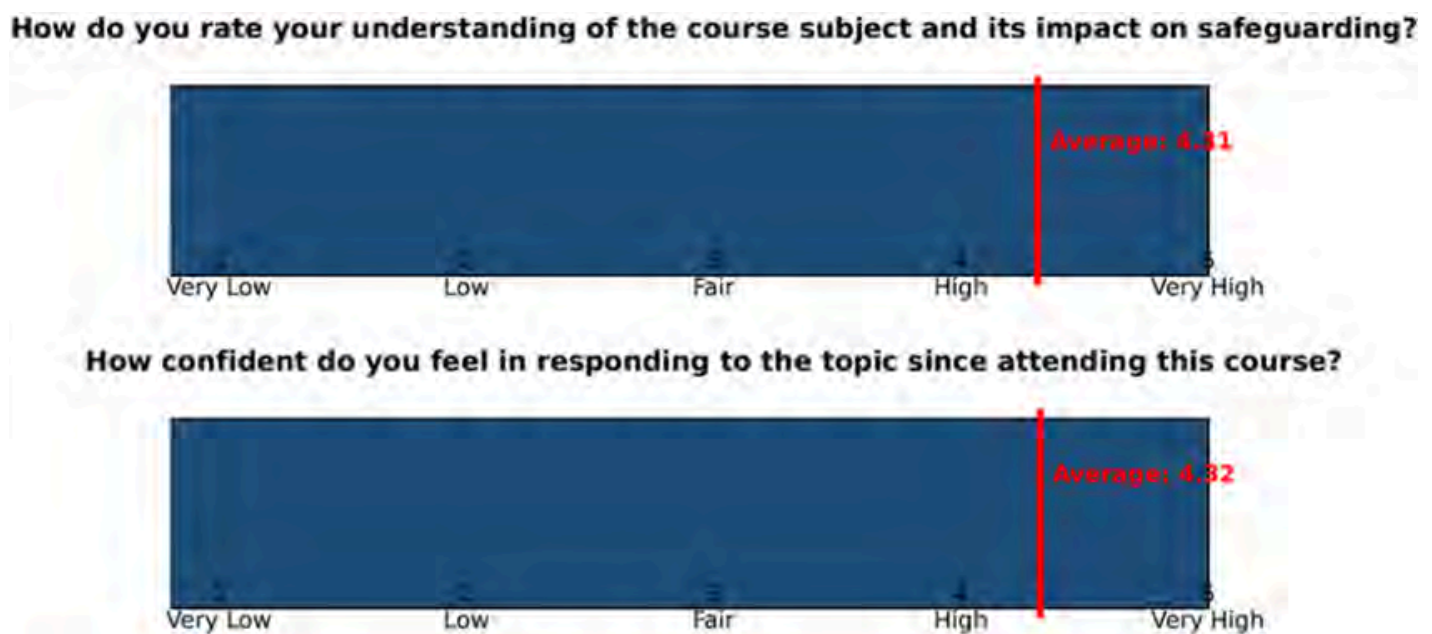
To gauge the effectiveness of the courses on the programme, delegates are required to complete an evaluation following each learning event. Delegates can now only download their training certificate on completion of the course evaluation; this provides useful feedback of delegate's views. A programme of course observations is in place, led by members of the L&D Sub-Group, which helps to triangulate evaluation data from delegates, trainers, and observations as part of the overall evaluation of training.

“Good to hear from other professionals and their experiences”

Rather than seeking a generic satisfaction rating, BSCP focus more specifically on ascertaining delegates’ understanding of the subject, how delegates appraise its usefulness for their practice, and how confident they feel in the subject area following their learning. Two key questions included in the evaluation are detailed below in Figure 7, which provides good evidence of the positive outcome and impact of the training, with consistent rating of ‘High’ and ‘Very High’.

“It emphasised the importance of multi-agency collaboration in addressing the complex needs of families”

Figure 7: Training events feedback



The evaluation process is continually being reviewed to improve and simplify the collection of data from the LMS. The L&D Sub-Group are trialling 'Level 2' evaluation (using the NSPCC GCP2 training) which aims to gather information 6-8 weeks after a learning event to ascertain impact on practice, this process will be rolled out across all multi-agency courses that the LMS allows. This process will play a key role in examining how training is being translated to practice and identifying whether there are any barriers that delegates face in doing so.

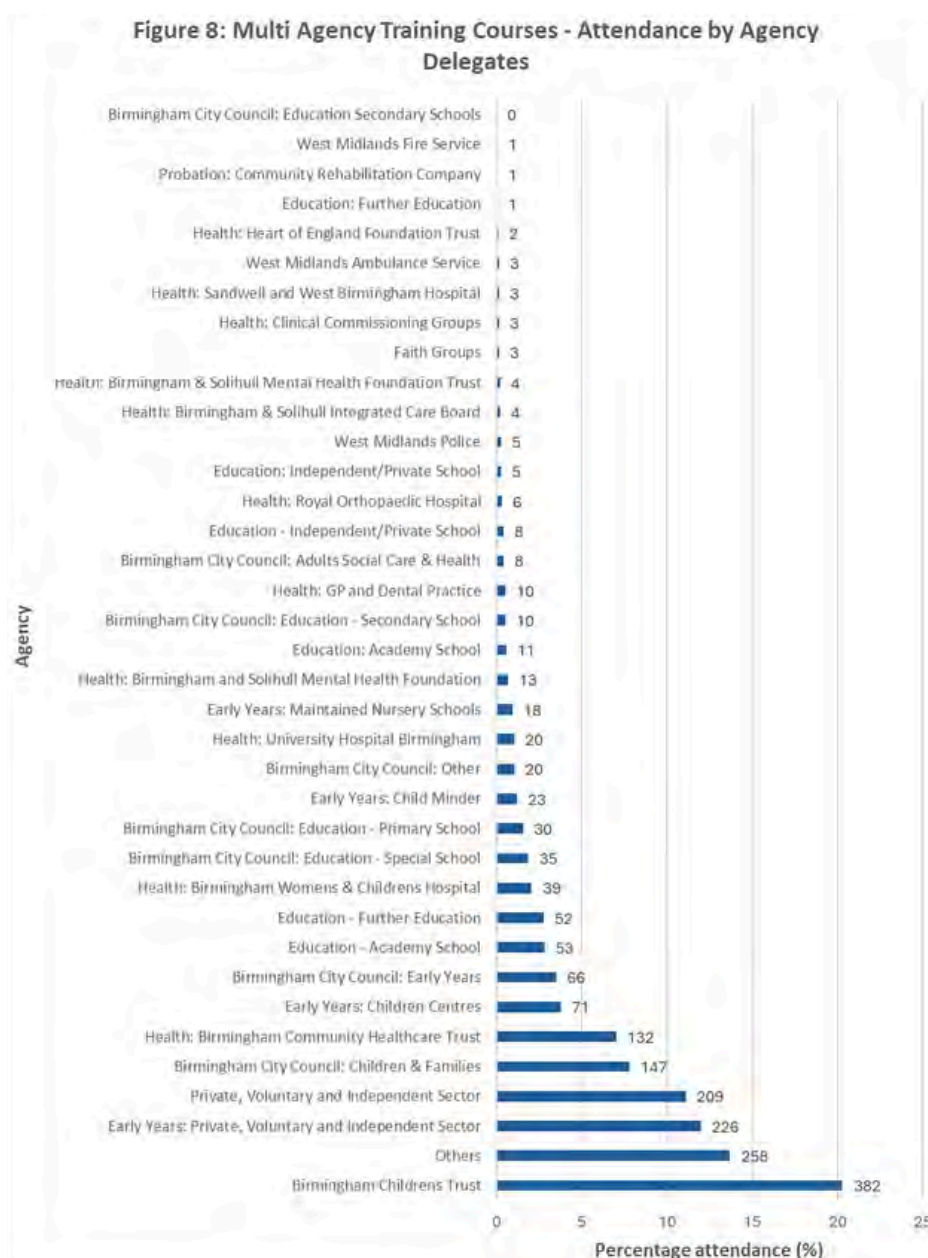
“The facilitator was great, she kept the course momentum and attendee engagement via a virtual platform”

Breakdown of training attendance by agency

Each agency will have its own safeguarding training programme as part of its approach to workforce development. The BSCP training programme aims to build upon single agency training by providing opportunities for multi-agency and specialist training.

The L&D Sub-Group monitors attendance by agency across the range of multi-agency training safeguarding modules delivered, the breakdown of agencies attended by course forms part of the Partnership's training needs analysis. The below table provides a breakdown of overall individual agency attendance across the courses delivered by the BSCP. The analysis found that a significant number of delegates (258) recorded their organisation as 'other'. Further work is being undertaken to better understand the use of this category and to try and enhance the LMS to provide more accurate information. Similarly, further work is being undertaken with those agencies with recorded low take-up of multi-agency safeguarding training.

The breakdown of attendance by agency below (Figure 8) also includes those who booked onto and passed the Right Help, Right Time eLearning course during 2024-25.



Looking Ahead

Led by two new co-chairs, the L&D Sub-Group is currently undergoing a comprehensive restructuring and is revitalising its membership, to bring the right experience and subject matter expertise to the multi-agency safeguarding training offer for 2025/26. There will be relentless focus on commissioning more training in 2025/26 than in the previous year.

Looking ahead the focus will be on:

- Delivering a more effective and efficient procurement process
- Improving capacity within the Business Support Team to support the commissioning of training, by filling the existing vacancies
- Improving dissemination and targeting of safeguarding training information to improve course utilisation
- Developing and implementing a stricter non-attendance policy to reduce non-attendance
- Seek assurance from agencies with low take-up rates of multi-agency training and promote the value of multi-agency training
- Improve post event evaluation take-up and analysis
- Enhancement of the LMS to provide better analysis of agency attendance
- Expanding the multi-agency virtual course/webinar offer
- Delivery of the autumn practitioners conference in 2025 on 'harm outside the home'

Communications and Public Engagement

In 2024/25, BSCP undertook a wide range of communications activity to enhance knowledge-sharing and promote good multi-agency safeguarding practice across the city.

The BSCP website, initially launched in 2023, was further developed with improvements made to content and usability to better support practitioners, families, and the wider public. In April 2024, BSCP hosted a successful [Neglect Practice Week](#), featuring a series of expert-led webinars working in close collaboration the Neglect Lead Manager, which attracted over 1,400 practitioners. The webinar recordings and relevant resources were all uploaded to the partnership website, allowing those who were unable to attend to access the resources.



The Communications Team supported the publication of four Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, delivering a programme of webinars to cascade and embed the important learning from reviews. The recordings and resources for each webinar were shared in post-event communications and uploaded to the BSCP website.

In partnership with other organisations, BSCP continued to promote important safeguarding campaigns, including Safer Sleep Week, Child Safety Week, and ICON Week. Key safety advice and resources were also shared via BSCP's social media and website, focusing on topics such as alcohol awareness, staying safe online, seasonal safety advice, mental health, neglect, and female genital mutilation.



In February 2024, BSCP supported, and presented at, the Birmingham Against Female Genital Mutilation (BAFGM) Zero Tolerance Day Conference at the University of Birmingham, which attracted over 100 delegates from a wide range of agencies and was attended by Birmingham's Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Communications Team produces quarterly safeguarding newsletters, providing updates, training opportunities, and spotlight interviews with frontline practitioners. The newsletter now has over 1,600 subscribers.



Part 5 - Learning from Quality Assurance and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

The Partnership has a dedicated Serious Cases Sub-Group, which is made up of senior representatives from the four statutory safeguarding partners and safeguarding leads from other key agencies. Together, these representatives oversee the commissioning, publication and dissemination of the learning from Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (LCSPRs).

Timeliness of submission of Serious Incident Notification (SIN) by the Local Authority

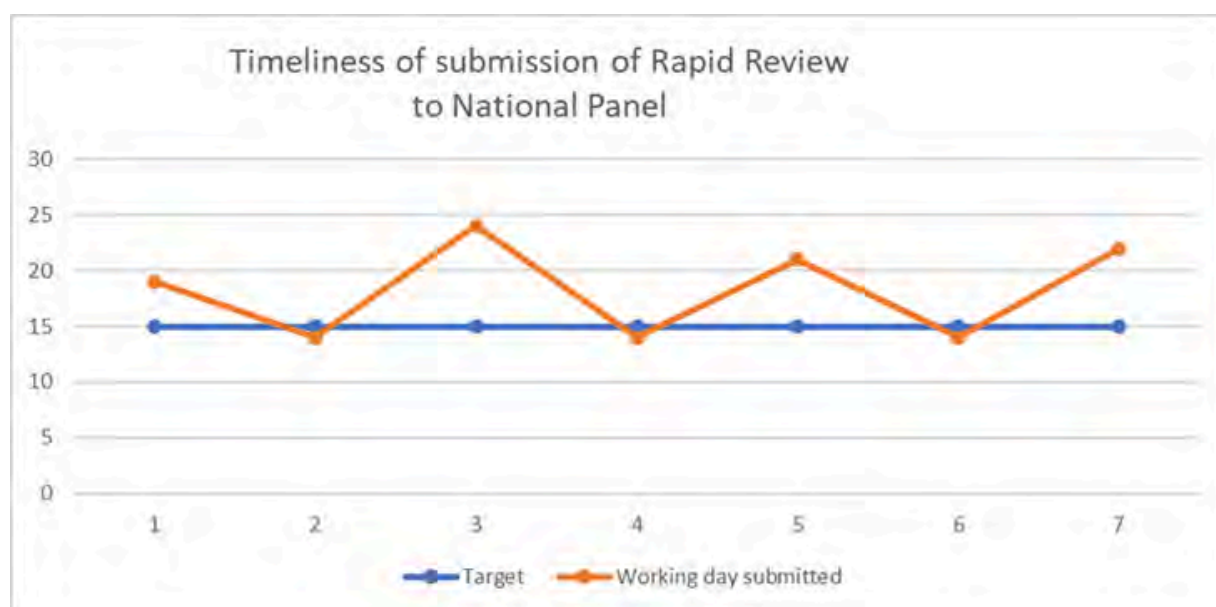
[Working Together 2023](#) defines serious child safeguarding cases as those in which abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected, and the child has died or been seriously harmed. Local Authorities are required to notify the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (the National Panel) within five working days of being made aware that a child has died or has been seriously harmed, and abuse or neglect is suspected.

From 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025, Birmingham Children's Trust submitted two notifications triggering the Rapid Review process. Both notifications were submitted within the five-day target.

Timeliness of Rapid Reviews submitted to the National Panel

Partnerships are required to complete and submit a Rapid Review within 15 working days of being notified by the National Panel. Figure 9 provides a breakdown of the timeliness of reviews submitted to the National Panel. In some of the more complex cases involving serious youth violence with child victims and perpetrators, Rapid Reviews take longer to complete.

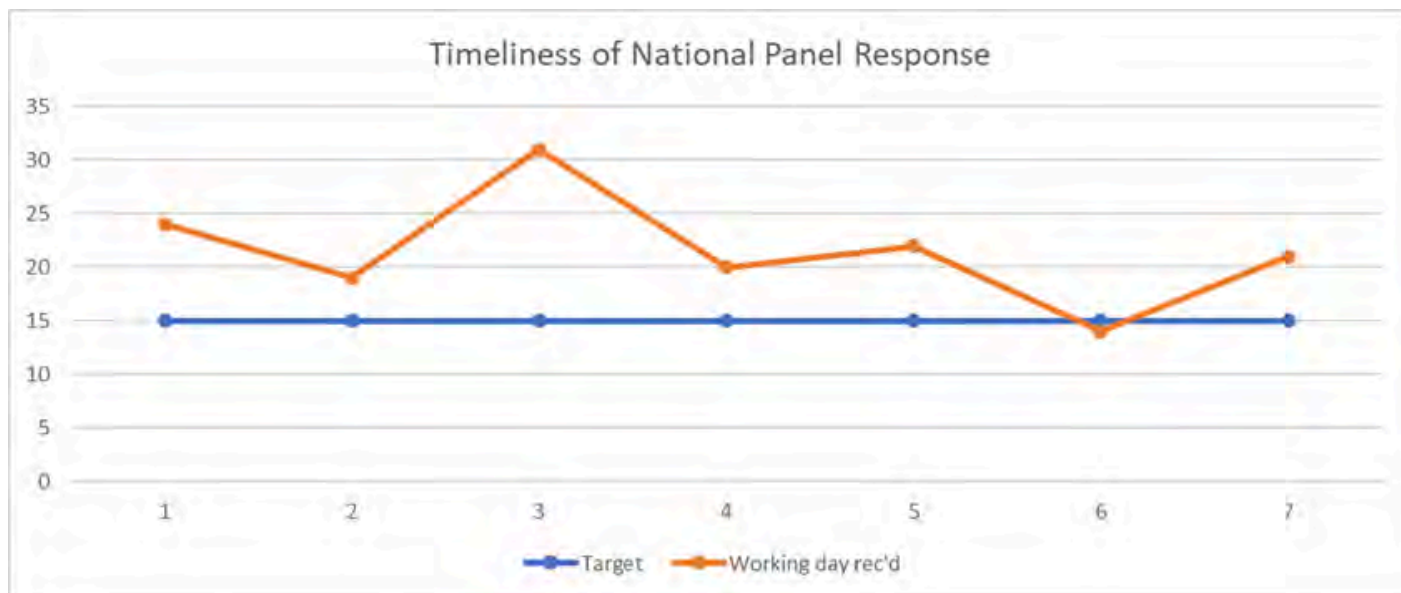
Figure 9: Timeliness of submission of Rapid Reviews to the National Panel from 1st April 2023 - 31st March 2025



Timeliness of response by National Panel to Rapid Review decision

The National Panel is required to respond to partnerships within 15 working days. There has been some fluctuation in the timeliness of feedback from the National Panel. Figure 10 provides a breakdown of National Panel performance in this area.

Figure 10: Timeliness of National Panel response following submission of Rapid Reviews from 1st April 2023 - 31st March 2025



Effectiveness of Decision-Making

Whilst the two Rapid Reviews undertaken in 2024/25 identified important learning to further enhance safeguarding practice in Birmingham, only one Rapid Review met the criteria for commissioning a LCSPR. The National Panel endorsed both decisions made by the Delegated Safeguarding Partners.

Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

As of 31st March 2025, the Partnership had seven ongoing LCSPRs. During 2024/25, the Partnership also finalised and published four LCSPRs.

Implementation of Learning from Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

The Serious Cases Sub-Group oversees the implementation of learning from LCSPRs. A RAG rating system is used to assess the effectiveness and timeliness of action to embed the learning.

In relation to seven ongoing and/or published LCSPRs, of the 123 learning points, 81% (100) were completed, and 19% (23) remain ongoing. Appendix 3 provides a breakdown of outstanding actions by agency.

Publication of Dissemination of Learning from Serious Case Reviews and Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

Below is a case overview of the four LCSPRs that have been published during 2024/25.

- [BSCP 2022-23-02](#) – published in June 2024. This review, entitled ‘Serious Youth Violence – Breaking the Cycle’, examines the lives of ten boys in the city; some were victims of fatal stabbings, and some were responsible for fatal attacks. All the boys were believed to have been involved with inner-city urban street gangs. Most of the boys had suffered significant childhood trauma and adverse childhood experiences.
- [BSCP 2019-20-01](#) – published in July 2024. This review focuses on parental substance misuse and neglect, which led to the death of a three-month-old baby. The family was known to agencies in Birmingham, predominantly due to drug and alcohol abuse. In the two years prior to the baby’s death there was a deterioration in the family’s circumstances and home conditions, and there were numerous opportunities where practitioners could have intervened earlier to safeguard the children.
- [BSCP 2021-22-01](#) – published in September 2024. This review focuses on a family in which systematic physical assaults were carried out by the parents against their eldest children over a seven-year period. The family are of the Islamic faith and are of Ghanaian heritage and culture. The parents removed their children from mainstream schooling, to provide home and tuition centre education. Approximately three years later the eldest child disclosed longstanding physical assaults by the parents; medical examinations found scars consistent with regular beatings.
- [BSCP 2020-21-01](#) – published in December 2024. This review focuses on a one-month-old baby who sustained non-accidental injuries in August 2020 whilst in his parent’s care. After domestic abuse was witnessed by health professionals, incorrect information within the referral led to professionals stepping down their response. Despite information about the father’s history having been shared, this was also not considered. Furthermore, the mother’s denial of the witnessed domestic abuse was accepted and attempts by the referring agencies to escalate the concerns took too long.

Key Themes

This section is drawn from the analysis of learning from all serious incidents, including those which led to a Rapid Review and LCSPR. The key themes and messages for frontline practitioners and managers working with and supporting children and families were:

The importance of understanding a family’s culture, religion and customs:

- When working and supporting families, consider their culture, religion, and customs, but never lose sight of the children and your safeguarding responsibilities.

Safeguarding children from serious youth violence:

- Practitioners need to make sure they have a comprehensive knowledge of what pathways and resources are in place when working with children affected by serious youth violence.
- It is crucial to recognise a 'reachable moment' for a child involved in serious youth violence and how to start those difficult conversations. Practitioners need to make sure they understand what adverse childhood experiences are to deal with the consequences of them in a trauma informed way.
- There is a need to learn what 'place' means to a child and how that influences their life.
- Practitioners must try to prevent school exclusion where possible, as education is seen as a safe place for young people.
- Children should be educated early on about the dangers of knives, gangs, and serious youth violence, to help prevent future exploitation.

Information sharing:

- Practitioners should never assume that other agencies know what they know, it's essential that practitioners share vital information, so everybody understands the child's lived experience, to help coordinate partnership intervention and support.
- In more complex cases, it's really important to identify a lead professional to help coordinate partnership intervention, early help, and support.

The child was not brought to an appointment:

- When working with families, practitioners should not take explanations for non-attendance and cancellation of appointments at face value. Professional curiosity is vital – always ask the "why" and the "so what" questions.

When working with families where domestic violence and parental drug misuse is a factor:

- There is a need to ensure that parental denials and explanations of malicious information balance against practitioner reports of witnessed abuse.
- When submitting a [Request for Support form](#), practitioners should consider all factors, including parental factors, to help identify the level of risk and vulnerability as set out in [Right Help, Right Time](#) guidance. This will help inform strategy discussions.
- Practitioners working with children and their families need to have some understanding of drug misuse and the impact this can have on parenting capacity and the children.

Developing a 'Think Family' approach:

- Practitioners need to make sure they work with a 'Think Family' approach and that assessments consider the needs of parents with identified learning disabilities or neurodiversity.

Families placed in temporary accommodation:

- It is important when placing families in temporary accommodation that consideration is given to the quality of the provision and its suitability on a case-by-case basis.

Use of the escalation protocol:

- When sending a concern to a partner agency, practitioners should confirm it has been received and acted upon. If this has not happened, the information must be re-sent or any concerns escalated using the [BSCP Resolution and Escalation Protocol](#).

Elective Home Education:

- When a parent decides their child is going to be home educated, it's important that safeguarding information is shared with the Local Authority Home Education Team.

Stepping down from a Child Protection or Child in Need Plan:

- At the point of stepping down from Child Protection or Child in Need Plans it is critical that practitioners are satisfied that sustainable change has been demonstrated to ensure that children are safeguarded.

Child protection medicals:

- Practitioners need to understand and follow the [Child Protection Medical Assessment pathway](#) so that Child protection medical examinations are undertaken in a timely manner when required, especially if injuries could be hidden by clothing.

Dissemination of learning

To maximise the opportunity to learn from LCSPRs, a Learning Lessons Briefing Note and Training Resources pack is produced. Following publication, the BSCP host a webinar to cascade the learning to front-line practitioners and managers. During 2024/25 the Partnership delivered four webinars, entitled 'Serious Youth Violence – Breaking the Cycle', 'Never Assume', 'I was too frightened to tell anyone': Recognising and responding to allegations of Physical Child Abuse' and 'Never, Ever Shake a Baby'. The webinars included an overview of the emerging learning from LCSPRs, presented by the Lead Reviewers, and included input from subject matter experts from Birmingham Children's Trust, the EmpowerU Hub, Change Grow Live, and AFRUCA.

A total of 668 delegates attended the four webinars. The webinars are recorded and uploaded to the BSCP website to enable practitioners to access and watch, there has been over 9,000 visits to these resources. All the LCSPRs and resources are accessible via the [BSCP website](#).

The Serious Cases Sub-Group hosted a development session on the 12th of December 2024, aimed at individuals who are involved in Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review process. 59 delegates attended from 18 different agencies attend the session, with attendees rating the session 4.43 out of 5. 100% of professionals indicated that the training had improved their knowledge and understanding of the review process and their particular role.

Looking Ahead

Implementation of learning from 'It's Silent: Race, racism and safeguarding children'

The Serious Cases Sub-Group will contribute to the task and finish group to embed the learning from the National Panel Briefing 4 – ['It's Silent: Race, racism and safeguarding children'](#) - particularly recommendations 1–5, which appertain to the commissioning of LCSPRs.

Enhancing the Partnership's analytical capability in early identification of learning from Rapid Reviews and Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

The Serious Cases Sub-Group will be exploring the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to identify learning and emerging themes for individual agencies and recurring themes for health and criminal justice organisations.

Themed analysis of learning

In collaboration with the Quality, Impacts and Outcomes (QIO) Sub-Group, the Serious Cases Sub-Group will be undertaking a themed analysis of learning from audits, Rapid Reviews, and LCSPRs to identify systemic improvements which can enhance safeguarding practice.

Learning from Quality Assurance

The QIO Sub-Group oversees an annual programme of quality assurance, data analysis, and audit activity linked to the strategic priorities set out in the [Business Improvement Plan 2023-25](#). The Quality Assurance Framework (Figure 11) was updated in spring 2025 to provide a holistic picture of safeguarding performance and practice through the triangulation of qualitative, quantitative, and experiential data to help evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding children and families across the city.

Figure 11: The Quality Assurance Framework



During 2024/25 the QIO Sub-Group established the Child Protection Development Group (CPDG) to concentrate on strengthening the effectiveness of child protection investigations, assessment and safety planning, and enhancing the engagement of children and families within these processes. The work has included extensive consultation with practitioners, parents and carers, examining feedback from 155 professionals and 26 parents/carers in respect of multi-agency child protection conferences. The emerging key themes from parents and professionals has helped improved child protection conferences. A summary of their feedback is detailed below:

Parent feedback[3]

- Most parents received the social worker's report ahead of the meeting, but fewer said someone had gone through the report before the meeting to help them understand it.
- The majority feel they understood the report, although some said there were parts they didn't fully understand.
- Most had met the chair before the meeting. They felt the chair explained the format of the meeting well and prepared them for the meeting.
- Most felt able to participate in the meeting, although not all were invited to speak first.
- Most felt they understood the plan, what would happen next, and felt they'd had input into the plan.
- There were lots of positive comments, mainly about staff who were helpful and helped explain things. Parents said they felt listened to and that their strengths were captured in planning. A number mentioned that the conference experience has positively influenced their view of social care.
- Some felt things could have gone better if:
 - The scaling matrix was used differently
 - Parent/carer views taken more seriously/given more discussion time
 - Parents/carers were better prepared for the meeting with more contact from the social worker/chair prior to the meeting
 - Relationships were better with more cooperation from all partners
 - Conference venue was more welcoming
 - Support was provided earlier

Professional feedback

- Most of the feedback received was from education staff (53%). 19% was from colleagues within BCT, 7% from health visitors, with the remaining feedback from partners across health, the voluntary sector and a small amount from the police.
- Professionals reported that meetings are chaired well; that timing is managed well (99%) and that everyone had a chance to speak (98%).
- Almost all said that the focus of the meeting was the needs, safety, and concerns for the child (99%) and that children's individual voices were heard at the meeting (90%).
- Professionals felt they had the opportunity to give their views in the meeting (99%) and

[3] Figures are not provided for the parent feedback as the results draw on both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, with the sample size being quite low.

almost all felt that their concerns were taken seriously (97%) – just 3 professionals reported that more could have been done in this respect.

- Following the meeting, professionals were satisfied that they understood: the outcome (99%), the plan going forward (92%), and action expected of them (92%).
- The key things professionals feel work well with conferences are:
 - The supporting atmosphere where parents feel comfortable opening up and talking to professionals
 - The opportunity it gives for all parties to share views
 - That they are well structured, efficient meetings
- Not many areas for improvement were suggested, but a small number suggested improvement could be made in relation to:
 - Time management (ensuring meetings start on time and are not rushed)
 - A room layout which offers the right degree of formality
 - Technical and sound issues (for conferences with an online component)
 - Appropriate translation arrangements

This work is supported by the Family Advisory Board (FAB) – established in 2024, this is a facilitated group of around 8-10 parents/carers who meet monthly to share and discuss their experience of the safeguarding system and support improvement work within BCT, notably in respect of child protection conference practices.

Key themes arising from the FAB have included:

- Positive feedback from those parents who have been through the Family Drug and Alcohol Court (FDAC) and the intensity of support made available to them from FDAC services.
- The need for more support at an earlier stage to empower them as parents and divert them from their children needing to be escalated to child protection.
- The negative experience relating to professional discussions about 'categories of abuse' at the end of the conference.
- The need for more formality for Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPCs) and less formality for Review Child Protection Conferences (RCPCs) and some recognition of progress made towards this with the use of soft furnishings within some conference rooms.
- The negative impact of multiple changes of social worker and how professionals can sometime re-traumatise them.
- Positivity about receiving the Safety/Child Protection Plan at the end of the conference.

The QIO Sub-Group examines outstanding practice, both regionally and nationally, to identify transferable learning that can be embedded in safeguarding practice. This work incorporates the review of the findings from statutory inspections of partners in Birmingham, to identify trends and themes and seek assurance from strategic leaders that the learning has been implemented. The QIO Sub-Group oversees Section 11 and Section 175 audits undertaken by partners and schools respectively, and considers good practice and areas for improvement arising from processes.

Multi-agency audits

The QIO Sub-Group has undertaken four themed multi agency audits during 2024/2025. The audits focused on evaluation of safeguarding partnership practice and the impact of intervention for children, young people, and families.

The audits looked at:

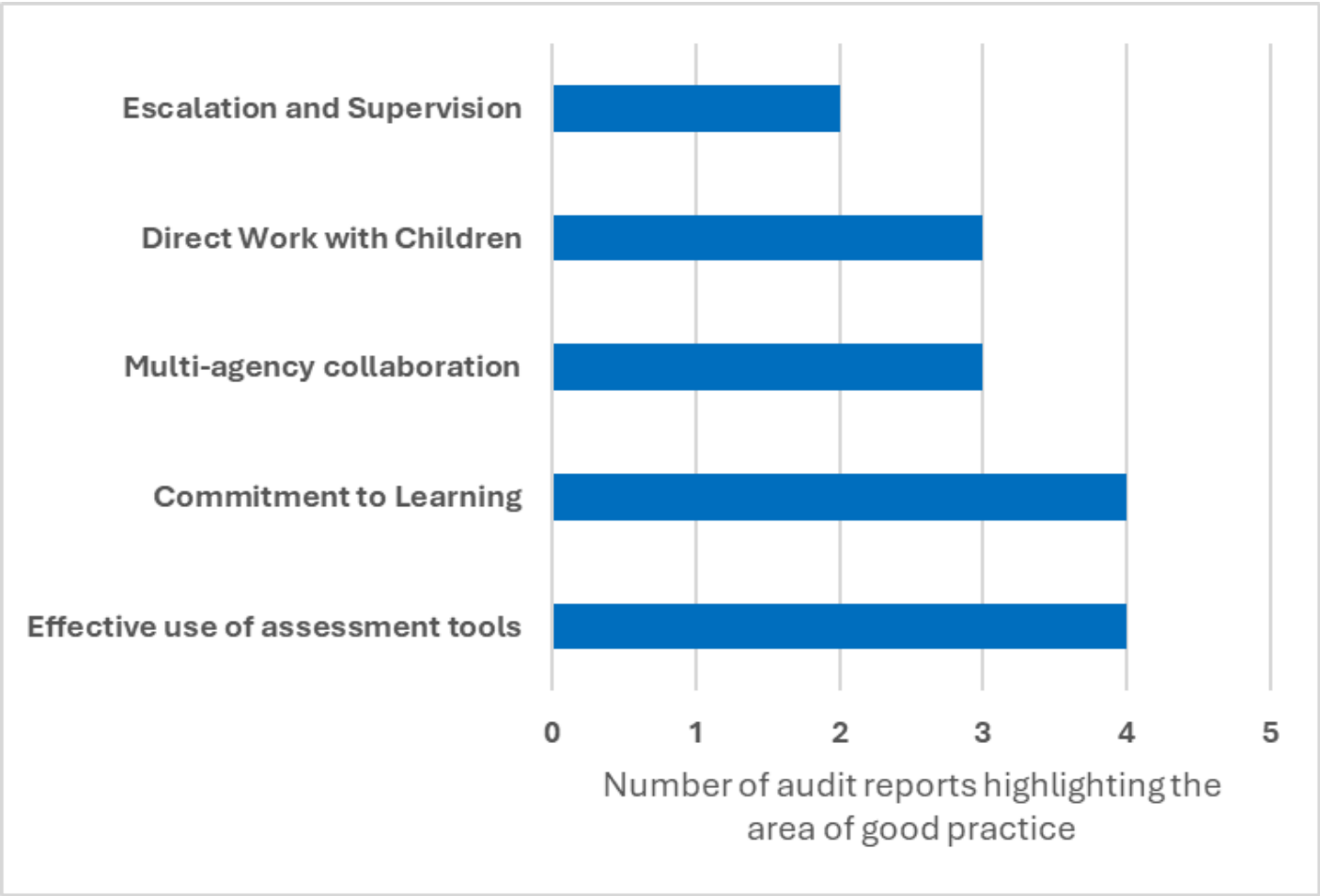
- Neglect GCP2 - 20th February 2024
- Children living in temporary accommodation - 13th March 2024
- Intrafamilial Child Sexual Abuse - 22nd October 2024
- Child Protection Medical Assessment - 31st March 2025

The frequency of the positive and negative issues outlined above, across all four audits, is shown below in Figures 12 and 13.

Figure 12: Frequency of recurring issues requiring improvement across all four audits



Figure 13: Frequency of recurring areas of good practice across all four audits



Key themes identified through audits

Analysis of the emerging themes from the four multi-agency audits identified six cross-cutting areas for improvement, and five areas of good practice:

Areas for improvement:

- 1.Information Sharing: Key safeguarding details and meeting outcomes are not consistently shared across agencies.
- 2.Professional Curiosity: Practitioners often rely on disclosures and miss early indicators of risk or disguised compliance.
- 3.Safety Planning: Plans are sometimes incomplete, not reviewed, or fail to consider risks to siblings and wider family.
- 4.Child’s Voice: Children are not always seen alone or meaningfully engaged, and their lived experiences are inconsistently captured.
- 5.Parental Needs: The impact of mental health, substance misuse, and neurodiversity on parenting is not always well understood or addressed.
- 6.Tool Usage: Safeguarding tools (e.g. GCP2, Child Protection Medical Assessment (CPMA), Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) indicators) are underused or treated as one-off exercises.

Areas of good practice:

1. Use of Assessment Tools: GCP2, CPMA, and CSA tools have supported planning and decision-making when used effectively.
2. Commitment to Learning: Audits have led to clear recommendations, training needs, and plans to improve safeguarding practice.
3. Multi-Agency Collaboration: Examples of strong joint working and inclusion of fathers and extended family in assessments.
4. Direct Work with Children: Good use of tools and one-to-one sessions to capture children's voices and wishes.
5. Escalation and Supervision: Escalation pathways and supervision discussions have supported timely responses.

Capturing the Lived Experience of Children and Families

All learning reviews and multi-agency audits specifically examine whether the voice and lived experience of children and their families has been considered, recorded, and acted upon. The safeguarding partners engage children and families in practice and service improvement activity, and use a variety of methods to capture the lived experiences of children, young people, and their parents/carers.

During the year, the BSCP has undertaken mapping of existing children and young people's engagement across the city to support the development of the Young Scrutineers Project. Young people identified several key themes regarding their safety and wellbeing which will help and inform the development of services:

- Emotional wellbeing and mental health and the impact of social media including bullying and harassment online
- Feeling and being safe from harm in physical spaces such as being in the streets, in parks, and on public transport
- Transitions from child-related to adult-related services for young people with special/additional needs, disabilities, and care experience

Data and Information-Sharing

The BSCP continues to focus on developing its use of data to inform practice within specific areas of multi-agency working. Significant progress has been made in developing the dataset for the Children's Advice and Support Service and Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub ('front-door'), children who are missing or at risk of child exploitation, and children who are potentially 'out of sight' to universal services as a result of being missing in education or electively home educated. Further work to develop an over-arching multi-agency dashboard to support safeguarding partners in their understanding of the effectiveness of multi-agency working is ongoing. This work will include partnership working in respect of the development of a platform to provide a 'single view of the child' as part of Birmingham Families First programme.

Safeguarding partners have committed to developing a more systemic understanding of the data where it shows disproportionality by different protected characteristics. This data will be used to inform the quality of practice and consider which additional responses are required in respect of service provision for children and their families.

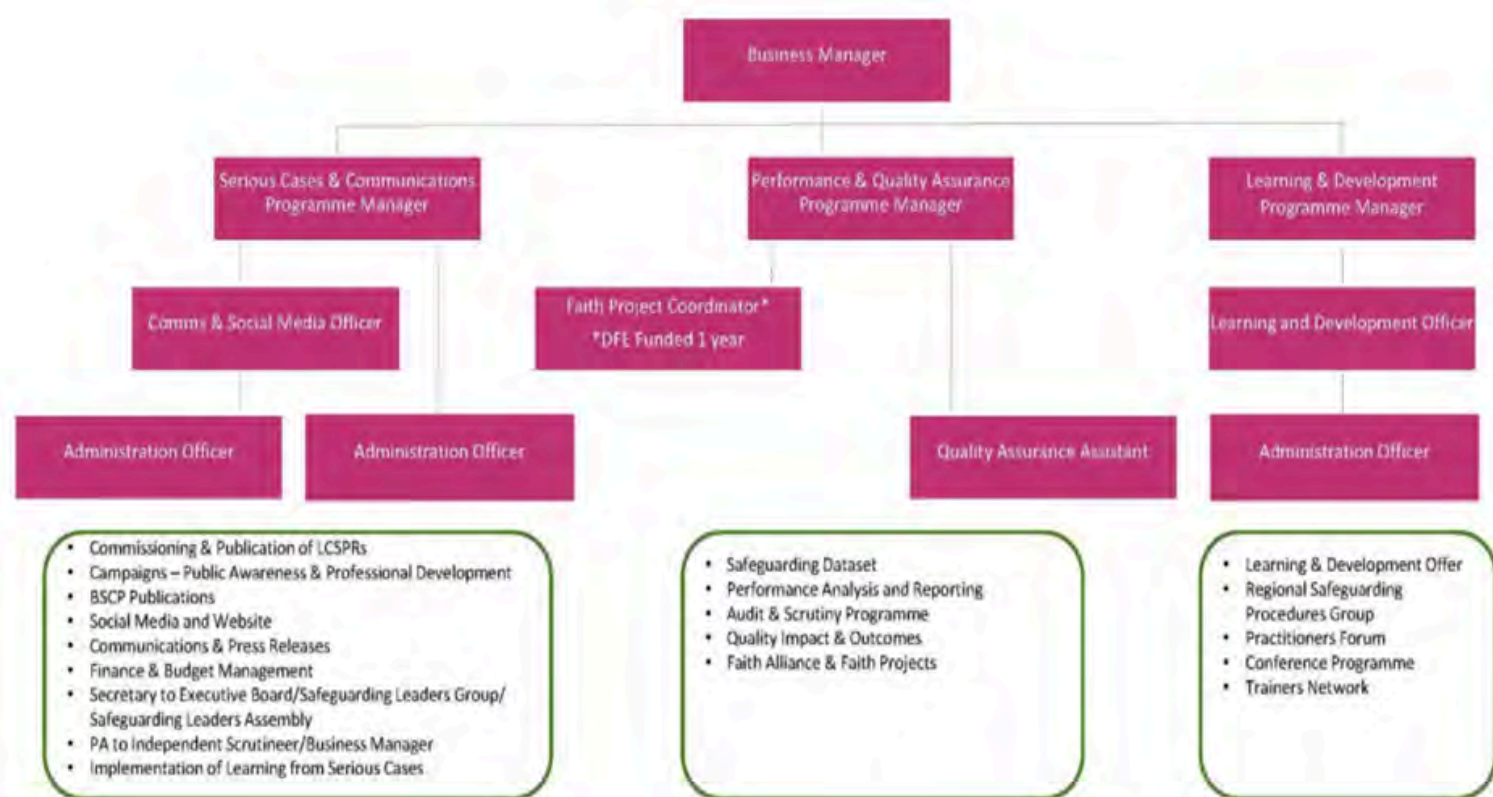
Information-sharing is a common theme arising from learning reviews and quality assurance processes. BSCP has revised its threshold guidance, [Right Help, Right Time](#) in March 2025 to provide additional clarity to frontline practitioners and managers in respect of consent and information-sharing when there are concerns about the safety and welfare of a child.



Part 6 - Funding and Business Support

In January 2025, the Partnership's co-chairs hosted a strategic development session to review the current multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and resources, and to determine the operating budget for the next financial year. The statutory partners have an equal and joint responsibility to ensure there are sufficient and effective resources to support the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. The work of the BSCP is supported by a dedicated Business Support Unit, which is hosted by BCT.

Figure 14: Structure of the BSCP Business Support Unit



The LSPs are committed to equitable and proportionate funding of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements to enable targeting of resources on delivery of the safeguarding priorities set out in the [Business Improvement Plan 2025-27](#). The BSCP had an operating budget of £929,371 for 2024/25, including a carry-forward of £207,786 from 2023/24.

Figure 15 provides a breakdown of agencies contributions during 2024/25.

Figure 15: Agency contributions 2024/25

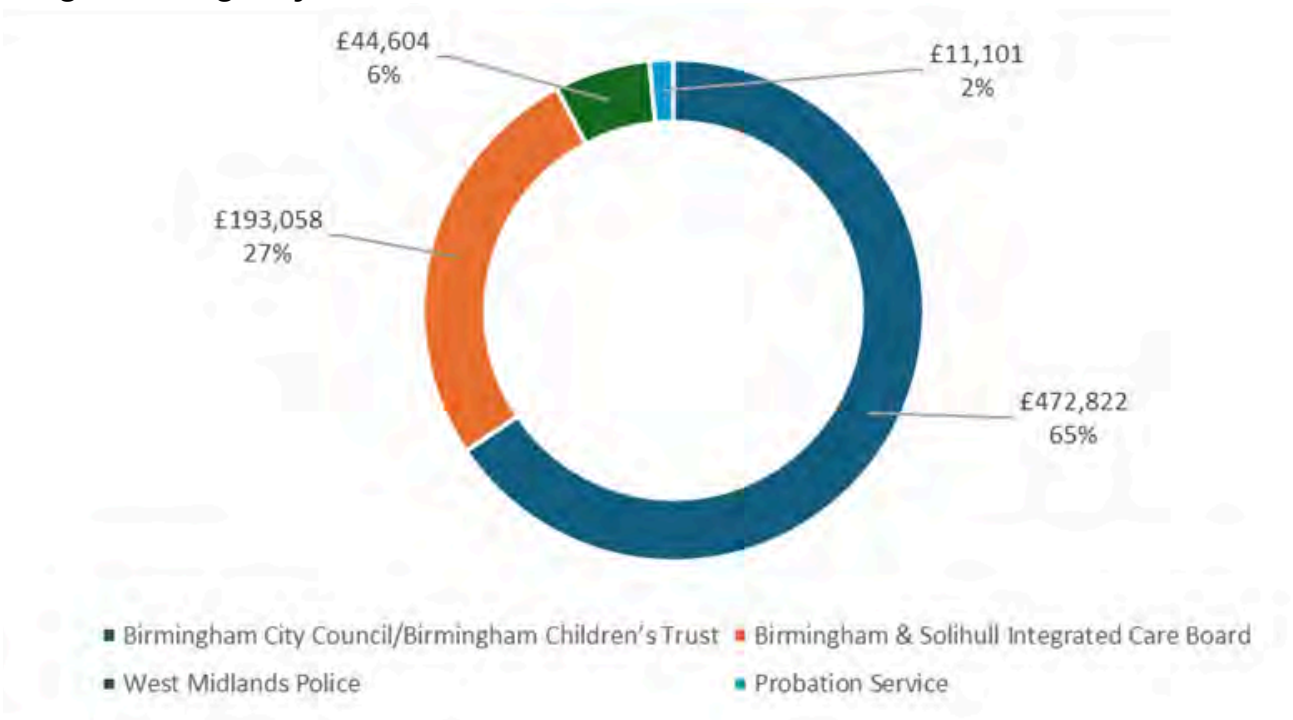
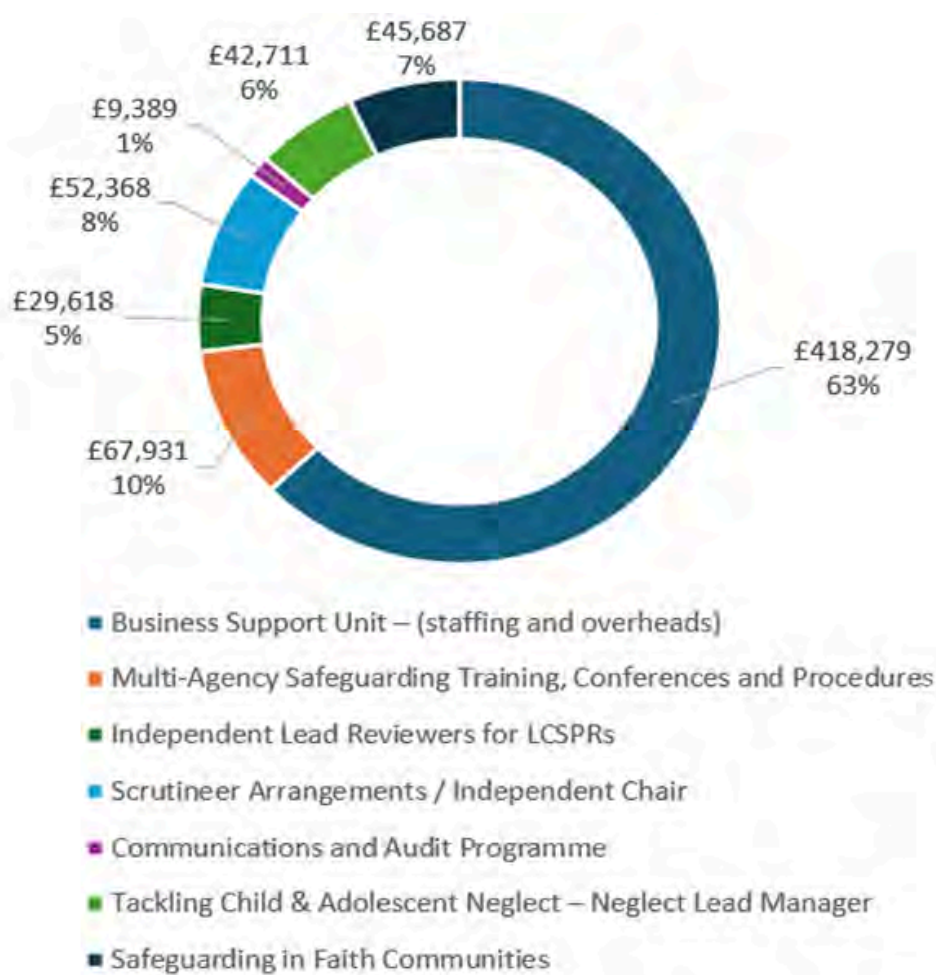


Figure 16 provides a breakdown of expenditure during 2024/25, which concentrated on seven core business areas.

Figure 16: BSCP Expenditure 2024/25



Part 7 - Conclusions and Looking Forward

During the last 12 months, safeguarding partners have actively sought to continue to improve the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, whilst ensuring the effective implementation of the outstanding actions set out in the final year of the two-year [Business Improvement Plan 2023-25](#). The BSCP has made significant progress, completing 96% of the planned actions. Safeguarding partners have also sought independent verification of progress on the effectiveness of the arrangements, through Penny Thompson's former role as Independent Chair and through our new independent scrutiny arrangements which we introduced in October 2024.

Safeguarding partners have acted quickly to embed the new governance, leadership, and accountability arrangements, as prescribed in the latest national guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#). Which has ensured a smooth transition to the new arrangements and achieving the key milestones set for 2024/25:

- Commencement of new co-chairing arrangements in October 2024, replacing the former Independent Chair role
- Establishing interim independent scrutiny arrangements, supported by an independent scrutiny framework and two-year programme 2024-26
- Appointment of an Independent Scrutineer in January 2025, although the role has had to be re-advertised with a new appointment anticipated in September 2025
- LSPs continue to explore a more equitable funding model for the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in 2026/27
- LSPs have established a Regional Lead Safeguarding Partners Group from the 1st of October 2025 to enhance cross-border collaboration and the sharing of good practice
- The new multi-agency arrangements are scheduled for evaluation in October 2025

Looking ahead - Safeguarding Priorities 2025-26

A development session was held in January to enable safeguarding partners to consider the impact of their work to progress the four existing priorities and progress in respect of the respective work programmes of each of the sub-groups with a view to agreeing their priorities for the coming two years.

Partners considered a range of developments at a national level as well as local information in relation to the following:

- Learning from rapid reviews and LCSPRs
- Learning from local multi-agency audits
- Performance data including the Joint Strategic Needs Analysis in respect of vulnerable children and young people
- Key issues identified from children and families and those professionals who work directly with them

Following the event in January 2025 involving safeguarding leaders from across the city, the Lead and Delegated Safeguarding Partners have collectively agreed that the BSCP will focus on four new strategic safeguarding priorities. At the Executive Board in March 2025 strategic safeguarding leads endorsed the new [Business Improvement Plan 2025-27](#), which sets out the shared ambition, purpose, principles, values and priorities for the next two years. The Executive Board will oversee the effective implementation of the [Business Improvement Plan 2025/2027](#).

Our Shared Priorities for 2025/27:

Priority 1: Working together more effectively - Implementing national reforms to strengthen multi-agency practice to support families and safeguard children.

Priority 2: Voice of the Child and Family - Ensuring children and parents/carers views are central to our multi-agency practice and engaging children and families with lived experience to improve our multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

Priority 3: Children Out of Sight - Developing multi-agency pathways to better support and safeguard children who are at risk of, or who have become, out of sight to services.

Priority 4: Harm Outside the Home - Improving earlier identification and responses to children at risk of, or who are engaged in, serious youth violence or who are being criminally and/or sexually exploited.

Safeguarding partners have also identified areas for further improvement in our multi-agency safeguarding arrangements during the next year. These include:

- The continued development of the Young Scrutineers project, which will see the establishment of a group of young advisors to act as independent scrutineers, will be supported by two dedicated youth workers in the autumn 2025.
- Hosting of a practitioners conference in November 2025, focusing on harm outside the home and partnership intervention to tackle child exploitation. The conference brings together experts, practitioners, supervisors, and managers from across the city to promote and share good safeguarding practice.
- Launching new safeguarding guidance and a toolkit in autumn 2025 in collaboration with the Birmingham Council of Faiths. The bespoke guidance has been developed and designed with Faith Leaders and DSLs from faith-based organisations across the West Midlands and West Yorkshire.
- Establishing Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams (MACPT) in accordance with the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill. In July 2025 the BSCP established a strategic project board to work collaboratively with regional partners, to learn from the existing Pathfinder programme to inform the development of MACPT in Birmingham.
- Supporting the implementation of Birmingham Families First programme which includes the development of a platform to enable a 'single view of the child' across a number of partner agencies' databases.



Remember - Safeguarding is **Everybody's** Responsibility!

Birmingham Safeguarding Children Partnership has published '[Right Help, Right Time](#)' Threshold Guidance to ensure that everyone understands and is able to act appropriately where there are safeguarding concerns.



If you are worried about a child may be being abused or neglected, please act.

Contact the Children's Advice and Support Service (CASS):

0121 303 1888 (Option 2, Option 2)

Mon-Thurs: 8.45am - 5.15pm

Fri: 8.45am - 4.15pm

Outside these hours, please call the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 0121 675 4806.

In an emergency where a child's safety is at immediate risk of significant harm, contact the Police on 999.

Produced by:

Simon Cross, Business Manager Birmingham Safeguarding Children Partnership

Katherine Adams, Communications Officer Birmingham Safeguarding Children Partnership

This Report can be downloaded from the BSCP website:

www.lscpbirmingham.org.uk

You can contact us at BSCP.contactus@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

or call 0121 464 2612

Appendices

Appendix 1: Summary of key activity together with an overview of progress on each of the four safeguarding priorities

Appendix 2: Multi-Agency Training Offer for 2023/24

Appendix 3: Outstanding actions by agency

Appendix 1: Business Improvement Plan 2023-25

Activity & Progress Summary - June 2025

Summary of key activity together with an overview of progress on each of the four safeguarding priorities. The first column details 'What we set out to achieve'. The second column defines the 'Key Actions and Desired Outcomes' and the third column provides a 'Summary and Evidence of Progress' over the two years of the Business Improvement Plan 2023-25.

The final column provides a RAG rating: green indicates action completed; amber shows that the action is progressing within the agreed timescale, and red indicates slippage requiring intervention.

Priority 1: Ensuring effective implementation of 'Working together to Build Strong Family Foundations' Strategy 2022-2026 (Childhood Neglect Strategy)			
Key Action (Year 1 & 2)	Desired Outcomes	Evidence of Progress 2023-25	RAG
1. The BSCP to ensure effective implementation of 'Working Together to Build Strong Family Foundations' (Birmingham Neglect Strategy 2022-2026). The strategy sets out our shared focus on children suffering, and at risk of neglect, emphasizing the importance of partnership working and early intervention. (Year 1)	Published Childhood Neglect Strategy.	The BSCP launched 'Working Together to Build Strong Family Foundations' Strategy at its annual Safeguarding Practitioners Conference in September 2022. The Neglect Operational Group oversee and coordinate the implementation of the strategy, providing regular updates to both QIO Subgroup and the Executive Board.	
2. Neglect Operational Group to co-ordinate partnership collaboration and review progress on the four-year Neglect Delivery Plan.	Leadership oversight of progress on the Neglect Delivery Plan.	Neglect Operational Group established which oversees and drives implementation of the Neglect Delivery Plan and reports directly to the Quality Impact and Outcomes Subgroup.	
3. The Neglect Operational Group to be Co-Chaired by different safeguarding agencies to provide requisite strategic leadership. (Year 1)	Co-Chairing and membership of Neglect Operational Group in place.	The Neglect Operational Group is Co-Chaired by an Assistant Director, Birmingham Children's Trust and Associate Director of Safeguarding, Birmingham Community Healthcare Trust.	
4. The BSCP Independent Chair to incorporate progress on the Neglect Strategy within the Annual Report presented to the Safeguarding Leaders Assembly in November 2023. (Year 1)	Transparent strategic accountability for progress on the Neglect Delivery Plan.	Penny Thompson CBE, former BSCP Independent Chair, presented her Annual Accountability Report 2023/24 to the Safeguarding Leaders Assembly in April 2024, detailing progress on implementation of the Neglect Strategy.	

5. L&D Sub-Group to embed the Neglect Toolkit within the multiagency training offer to enhance understanding of childhood neglect and the use of the toolkit. (Year 1)	Children's Workforce can access good quality training and practice guidance.	L&D Sub-Group have embedded the Neglect Toolkit into the BSCP Training Offer 2024/25. Front-line practitioners can access and download the toolkit from the BSCP Website. The BSCP launched a Neglect Foundations eLearning module in May 2024.	
6. L&D Sub-Group to oversee the commissioning and evaluation of NSPCC Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2) Training. (Year 1)	Effective delivery of GCP2 Training.	The Neglect Operations Group commissioned the NSPCC to deliver a programme of Graded Care Profile 2 Training. The BSCP now has a pool of GCP2 trainers. We have delivered 50 courses training more than 2000 practitioners on the use of the assessment tool in 2023/24. The training is scheduled to continue, with the NSPCC GCP2 licence refreshed in July 2025.	
7. QIO Sub-Group to evaluate the implementation of learning from multi-agency audits in respect of neglect and relevant findings from the Ofsted inspection of Children's Services. (Year 1)	Evidence of good safeguarding practice.	<p>The QIO Sub-Group have overseen several audits into childhood neglect. In September 2023 QIO Sub-Group considered the findings of a case study of six children's lives, looking back over the previous twelve months to assess impact of partnership intervention.</p> <p>A further audit was undertaken of Neglect cases where GCP2 had been utilised to evaluate the impact and cascade learning to inform the rollout of GCP2. The findings were presented to the QIO Sub-Group on 20th June 2024.</p> <p>The audit programme has shown more effective planning and use of interventions such as GCP2 where neglect has been identified. The audit activity has focused on long-term and chronic neglect, the findings have enhanced training in this area.</p>	
8. QIO Sub-Group to evaluate impact of early intervention and support for vulnerable families at risk of neglect. (Year 1)	Evidence of good safeguarding practice.	Analysis of GCP2 Data indicates the impact of early intervention with approximately 50% of all assessments are undertaken by early help practitioners. The findings evidence	

		the positive impact of early intervention in neglect cases, reducing the need for statutory intervention.	
9. Neglect Operational Group to ensure that the independent evaluation on the neglect pilots conducted by the Child Centre for Research in Early Childhood informs the development of partnership practice. (Year 1)	Learning from neglect pilots embedded.	The evaluation of the neglect pilots helped inform the development and implementation of the Neglect Strategy and Delivery Plan.	
10. Executive Board to receive a formal update on progress of Year 1 of the Neglect Delivery Plan on 21st September 2023. (Year 1 & 2)	Evidence of effective delivery of the Neglect strategy.	Overall progress on Priority 1 was considered at the Partnership Development Session on 29th January 2025, to help inform discussion between Delegate Safeguarding Partners and strategic leaders from Relevant Agencies on the future safeguarding priorities. (Year 2 Action)	
11. The BSCP to continue funding the Neglect Lead Manager for a third year. (2023/2024) (Year 1)	Evidence of effective delivery of the Neglect strategy.	The BSCP extended the funding for the Neglect Lead Manager up until 31st March 2025.	
12. BSCP to develop and launch a Childhood Neglect campaign to counteract stigma around asking for help. (Year 2)	Raise public awareness of neglect and how to access support.	The Neglect Operations Group developed the key messages and proposed methodology for a public awareness campaign in Year 2. (Year 2 Action)	
13. Neglect Operational Group to review and refresh of Neglect Toolkit and Guidance. (Year 2)	Children's Workforce can access good quality training and practice guidance.	The Neglect Operations Group have reviewed and updated the Neglect Toolkit, which is available to download from the BSCP website. (Year 2 Action)	
14. L&D Sub-Group in conjunction with Birmingham Children and Young Peoples Partnership to develop and deliver bespoke training for the 'Lead Practitioners' role in supporting 'Our Family Plans' by April 2024. (Year 2)	Children's Workforce can access good quality training and practice guidance.	The BSCP Multi-Agency Training Offer for 2025/26 incorporates a wide range of training for safeguarding practitioners, from basic safeguarding awareness raising to specialist training for practitioners, supervisors and managers. The BSCP training management system enables better targeting of training for specific roles, which enables Lead Practitioners to access the right training for their role.	
Priority 2: Assuring a coordinated and coherent inter-agency response to children impacted by domestic abuse and violence in families			
What we set out to achieve in Year 1 & 2	Key Action and Desired Outcomes	Summary and Evidence of Progress	RAG

<p>1. The BSCP to contribute to the review and consultation on the new 'Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy' being led by the Domestic Abuse Local Strategic Partnership Board in 2023, to ensure that safeguarding of children is promoted and the resourcing of services. (Year 1)</p>	<p>Evaluation of the effectiveness of partnership intervention to tackle Domestic Abuse.</p> <p>Reduction in the number of children assessed at risk of violence within the home.</p>	<p>The strategy development was led by the DA Strategy working group chaired by Graham Tilby. The draft strategy was widely consulted on with a range of partners across the city including the WMP, NHS, ICB and BCT both at an operational level and with senior leaders. The BSCP were formally consulted on development of the Strategy at the Safeguarding Leaders Assembly on 25th April 2024 by Councillor Brennan, Chair of the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership Board.</p>	
<p>2. BSCP to receive assurance from the CASS & MASH Partnership Board on the quality of request for support, assessment of risk, application of Right Help, Right Time (RHRT) and appropriateness of decision-making regarding children living in violent households. (Year 1)</p>	<p>Better assessment of risk to children living in violent households.</p>	<p>The CASS/MASH Strategic Group Partnership oversee the performance and resourcing of the Birmingham CASS and MASH arrangements, with the CASS/MASH Partnership Forum now reporting directly to Quality Impact and Outcomes Sub-Group on performance and learning from CASS/MASH Quality Assurance and Audit Programme. Providing assurance on the application threshold guidance.</p> <p>The triangulation of findings from CASS/MASH audit activity and that of Quality Impact & Outcomes Sub-Group provide a more holistic picture. In February 2024 the Quality Impact & Outcomes Sub-Group considered the findings of an audit of domestic abuse re-referrals. At that time domestic abuse accounted for 21% of all re-referrals to CASS. The audit examining the reason for initial referral and the subsequent impact of partnership intervention to support the family.</p> <p>New Right Help Right Time Guidance was launched on 20th January 2025, which will be subject of evaluation to determine practitioner understanding and effective application of the new guidance in Year-2.</p>	

3. QIO Sub-Group to develop and oversee a multi-agency audit to examine the quality of assessments, management of risk, effectiveness of partnership decision making and intervention for children living in violent households to provide assurance that children are seen as victims in adherence to the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. (Year 1)	Effective identification and prioritisation of partnership intervention based on risk.	In November 2023 the Quality Impact & Outcomes Sub-Group undertook an audit of ten cases to evaluate the quality and timeliness of referrals to MARAC and quality of safety plans to protect and support victims and children living in violent households. The wider learning from audits is cascaded through ' Learning Lessons from Audit Briefing Notes '.	
4. L&D Domestic Abuse training module to promote the use of DASH/Barnardo's assessment tools as part of a holistic risk assessment. (Year 1)	Enhance safeguarding practice for children at risk of violence within the home.	The L&D Sub-Group in liaison with Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership Board have commissioned four different Domestic Abuse training modules which incorporate guidance on the understanding and assessing risk.	
5. The BSCP to receive assurance from the Domestic Abuse Board on the effective implementation of the City's 'Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy'. (Year 2)	Evaluation of the effectiveness of partnership intervention to tackle Domestic Abuse.	The Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy 2024-2029 "Working in partnership to transform lives" was launched in November 2024. At the Safeguarding Leaders Assembly on 25th April 2024 Councillor Brennan, Chair of the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership Board provided assurance on the implementation of the strategy and update on progress has been shared with the BSCP Executive Board. (Year 2 Action)	
6. BSCP to effectively embed learning and practice improvement emerging from CSPRs, DHRs and audit activity through a series of webinars and Learning Lessons Bulletins. (Year 2)	Evidence of effective implementation of Domestic Abuse Strategy and learning from case reviews.	The BSCP work in close collaboration with the Community Safety Partnership to embed the learning from LCSPRs and DHRs. On publication of a LCSPR, the BSCP hosts a webinar, facilitated by the Lead Reviewer and publish a Learning Lessons from Serious Cases Bulletin to help cascade learning to front-line practitioners to improve practice. The latest webinar was held on 9th September 2024. (Year 2 Action)	
7. QIO Sub-Group to receive assurance of the effectiveness of the new MARAC and MAPPA arrangements in reducing risk to victims and children living in violent households. (Year 2)	Effective identification and prioritisation of partnership intervention based on risk.	Delegated Safeguarding Partners had identified the need to enhance the MARAC, which was also identified by Ofsted and HMICFRS as an area for improvement. The BSCP has received assurance in September 2024 that	

		West Midlands Police were moved out of 'Engage' status in recognition that all 4 elements of concern relating to MARAC had been successfully delivered. (Year 2 Action)	
8. L&D Sub-Group to work in collaboration with the Domestic Abuse Board to develop a comprehensive Training Offer focused on children living in violent households. (Year 2)	Enhance safeguarding practice for children at risk of violence within the home.	<p>The BSCP in collaboration with the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership Board hosted a Practitioners' Conference on 16th November 2023, 'Working as Partners to Safeguarding Children from Domestic Abuse' where Nicole Jacobs, Domestic Abuse Commissioner gave keynote opening address.</p> <p>The L&D Sub-Group in liaison with Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership Board have commissioned and run two different Domestic Abuse training modules, as well as multi-agency courses jointly with Birmingham Children's Trust.</p> <p>The BSCP have also overseen the delivery of ten training session on Recognising the difference between Domestic Abuse and Parental Conflict. (Year 2 Action)</p>	
9. BSCP to seek assurance from the Domestic Abuse Board on the accountability arrangements for leadership, engagement of safeguarding partners in the effective implementation of the Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy. (Year 1)	<p>Evaluation of the effectiveness of partnership intervention to tackle Domestic Abuse.</p> <p>Reduction in the number of children assessed at risk of violence within the home.</p>	<p>The Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy 2024-2029 "Working in partnership to transform lives" was launched in November 2024. Whilst the DA Strategic Partnership board retain oversight of the implementation of the strategy, in February 2025 a partnership operational group (POG) was also set up along with a number of delivery groups. A children's and young people's delivery group, chaired by Nikki Plummer is focused on actions to support CYP as survivors of DA.</p> <p>At the Safeguarding Leaders Assembly on 25th April 2024 Councillor Brennan, Chair of the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership Board provided</p>	

		an overview and set out the timetable for the launch of the strategy. Safeguarding leaders in attendance pledged their support and engagement in the delivery plan.	
10. The Domestic Abuse Board to provide a 12-month update on implementation of the Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy (Year 2).	Evaluation of the effectiveness of partnership intervention to tackle Domestic Abuse.	The Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy was published in November 2024. An implementation update and Year 1 annual report will be shared in January 2026 with the Domestic Abuse Strategic Board, and to other boards including BSCP in February 2026.	
Priority 3: Developing a joint approach to understanding and responding to children who are, and who become, invisible to services			
What we set out to achieve in Year 1 & 2	Key Action and Desired Outcomes	Summary and Evidence of Progress	RAG
1. BSCP to establish a Children Out of Sight Group, reporting to QIO Sub-Group and Co-Chaired by Education and Health. (Year 1)	Strategic accountability for safeguarding 'invisible children.'	The BSCP have established a Children Out of Sight Group Co-Chaired by Director of Thriving Children and Families, Birmingham City Council and Director of Nursing, Safeguarding, Children in Care & CDR, NHS Birmingham and Solihull. The Group reports directly to the Quality Impact and Outcomes Sub-Group.	
2. Children Out of Sight Group to review current universal offer to develop proposals to improve the early identification and intervention for these vulnerable children. (Year 1)	<p>Enhance understanding and partnership intervention for those children invisible to universal services. Evidence that learning from audits and reviews are effectively embedded.</p> <p>Enhanced guidance for safeguarding practitioners.</p>	<p>The Children Out of Sight Group have reflected on learning from recent published Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (LCSPRs). Key learning from LCSPRs is shared with practitioners through webinars hosted by BSCP, including the session titled 'You Lost Sight of Me' on 9 July 2025, relating to the death in January 2020 of a three-year old child.</p> <p>The Children Out of Sight Subgroup have established a multi-agency Complexity Hub to review children out of sight to universal services where decision making is complex and requires an urgent, multi-agency approach. The Complexity Hub will host a development session in 2025 to refine the group's purpose and terms of reference.</p>	

3. BSCP to receive bi-monthly update from the Director of Children's Services (DCS) on the Elective Home Education Improvement Plan. (Year 1)	Robust safeguarding arrangements for children Electively Home Educated.	The BSCP receive regular updates on progress on the Elective Home Education Improvement Plan. The last progress report was received on 29th January 2025.	
4. BSCP to review and refresh 'Right Help, Right Time' threshold guidance to include invisible children. (Year 1)	Enhanced guidance for safeguarding practitioners.	The Children Out of Sight Group have helped inform the refresh of Right Help, Right Time. The new threshold guidance was launched on 20th January 2025.	
5. L&D Sub-Group to refresh RHRT eLearning Module to take account of new guidance on invisible children. (Year 1)	L&D Sub-Group to update eLearning Module.	Right Help, Right Time threshold guidance was launched on 20th January 2025, and a complementary eLearning module which will be available in Spring 2025.	
6. BSCP to effectively embed learning and practice improvement emerging from CSPRs and audit activity through a programme of webinars and Learning Lesson Bulletins focusing on children hidden from view. (Year 2)	Serious Cases Sub-Group to oversee embedding of learning and report Executive Board.	Serious Cases Subgroup provide regular updates on the implementation of learning from CSPRs to Executive Board. On completion of audits and publication of CSPRs, Learning Lessons Bulletins are produced and published and are available through the BSCP website. The BSCP published two CSPRs in June 2025, together with a Learning Lessons Bulletin: ' You lost sight of me '. Webinars to cascade learning to frontline practitioners were held on 2 nd and 9 th July 2025. (Year 2 Action)	
7. QIO Sub-Group to receive bimonthly updates on progress from the 'Children Out of Sight Group'. (Year 1 & 2)	Children Out of Sight Group report directly to QIO Sub-Group and provide regular updates on progress.	The Children Out of Sight Group provide regular reports to the QIO Sub-Group. The most recent update was 3rd February 2025. (Year 2 Action) The MASA have been enhanced from 1 st April 2025 making the Children Out of Sight Group a formal Sub-Group to drive further improvements in this important area.	
8. Children Out of Sight Group supported by QIO Sub-Group to develop and oversee a multiagency dip sampling process to examine the areas identified as areas of concern where children become invisible to universal services. To identify learning and improve practice to	Children Out of Sight Group report directly to QIO Sub-Group and provide regular updates on progress.	The Children Out of Sight Group focus in Year 1 was to map the different cohorts of children who are not accessing universal services and are at risk of not being seen by agencies. This work has expanded the health offer for school nursing offer to EHE families. Year 2 focussed on providing	

support identification and support for children who have become invisible to services. (Year 1)		further assurance of progress through target audit activity and data analysis. (Year 2 Action)	
9. West Midlands (MASA) network to explore opportunities for regional collaboration around children who go out of sight and missing. (Year 2)	BSCP to propose workstream to West Midlands MASA Network.	West Midlands MASA Network met on 18 March 2025 to share regional learning from published Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (LSCPRs), several of which focussed on children out of sight.	
10. Public Health to commission a literature review of children who become out of sight to inform the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. (Year 2)	Public Health to present the findings of the Children's Joint Strategic Need Assessment to the Executive Board.	Public Health presented the findings of the Children's Joint Strategic Need Assessment to the Executive Board on 29 th January 2025. (Year 2 Action)	
Priority 4: Enhancing anti-discriminatory practice, by improving partnership focus on the work we do, in the context of equity, equality, diversity and inclusion			
What we set out to achieve in Year 1 & 2	Key Action and Desired Outcomes	Summary and Evidence of Progress	RAG
1. Safeguarding Leaders Assembly to be convened twice yearly to focus on systemic improvement of safeguarding practice, within the context of equity, equality, diversity and inclusion. (Year 1)	<p>Effective engagement of all 'Relevant Agencies' in the City's safeguarding arrangements.</p> <p>Independent scrutiny of equity, equality, diversity and inclusion of the safeguarding arrangements.</p> <p>Enhance front-line practitioners understanding and confidence in supporting and working with families from different cultural and religious backgrounds.</p>	<p>The Safeguarding Leaders Assembly (SLA) brings together safeguarding leaders to work collaboratively on delivering the priorities set out in the Business Improvement Plan 2023/25. The SLAs have been held in the Spring and Autumn each year. In April 2024 the Safeguarding Leaders Assembly focused on Domestic Abuse and the impact on children. In November 2024 the strategic Leaders concentrated on serious youth violence and child exploitation. Equity, equality, diversity and inclusion was a golden thread running through the strategic discussions. The most recent Safeguarding Leaders Assembly (SLA) was held on 3rd April 2025.</p> <p>The BSCP published its revised Governance Arrangements on 20th December 2024, which outlines the role of the SLA, the engagement of 'Relevant Agencies' and sets out details of the strategic priorities which include equity, equality, diversity and</p>	

	<p>Assurance that equity, equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded within the safeguarding partnership arrangements.</p> <p>Improved customer experience and accessibility through the new BSCP website.</p> <p>Transparent Governance and accountability arrangements for safeguarding children.</p> <p>Comprehensive Safeguarding Training Offer for front-line practitioners.</p> <p>Established DSL network for places of worship in Birmingham.</p> <p>Faith DSLs across the region have access to safeguarding guidance and training.</p> <p>BSCP representation on Birmingham Faith Covenant Partnership.</p>	<p>inclusion. The BSCP launched its new website in April 2023 following extensive consultation with users on the design, accessibility and content. BSCP regularly monitors customer experience and site usage.</p> <p>BSCP are working collaboration with the Faith Covenant Partnership and the Birmingham Council of Faiths on the Safeguarding in Faith Communities Project. The key four strands of the project, focus on the development of a faith directory, delivery of core safeguarding training for places of worship, development of DSL Faith Network and development of online Adults and Children's Safeguarding Guidance.</p> <p>The BSCP Faith Coordinator has delivered bespoke safeguarding training for places of worship in Birmingham. The directory and Guidance are scheduled to be launched in Spring 2025. The Faith DSL Network is in the early stages of development.</p> <p>BSCP are signatories to the Birmingham Faith Covenant and members of the Faith Covenant Partnership.</p> <p>The West Midlands MASA Network shares good practice and have host a regional Development Session exploring the issues of equity, equality, diversity and inclusion in safeguarding practice.</p> <p>The Birmingham Safeguarding in Faith Project have provided regular updates on progress to the West Midlands MASA Network sharing good practice and resources.</p>	
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	<p>Regional collaboration on sharing good practice on equity, equality, diversity and inclusion to improve safeguarding practice.</p> <p>Project Evaluation to be shared to help inform and develop similar Faith based projects across the region.</p>		
2. BSCP Independent Chair to act as Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Champion to provide independent scrutiny and challenge of the safeguarding arrangements. (Year 1)	The BSCP Independent Chair is the partnership Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Champion	<p>The Director Thriving Children and Families at Birmingham City Council is the BSCP Champion for Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. The Champion provides challenge and support for Delegated Safeguarding Partners and is leading the embedding of learning from the national report <i>'It's Silent': Race, racism and safeguarding children</i>, published in March 2025.</p> <p>Working Together 2023 disestablished the role of Independent Chair and provided guidance on Independent Scrutiny. The BSCP Independent Scrutiny arrangements are set out in the two-year Independent Scrutiny Programme (2025/27) where Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is a key component of the scrutiny activity.</p>	
3. BSCP Independent Chair to attend the City Board and Birmingham Children and Young People's Partnership to provide support and challenge on behalf of children and young people. (Year 1)	Independent Chair to be a member of the City Board and Birmingham Children and Young People's Partnership.	Independent Chair was a committed member of the City Board and Birmingham Children and Young People's Partnership up until 30th September 2024, when the role was disestablished. Continuity of leadership is now provided by Delegated Safeguarding Partners	

		representation on the Birmingham Children and Young People's Partnership.	
4. The BSCP in close collaboration with the national Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel to host a webinar on Anti-discriminatory Practice, Intersectionality and Adultification. (Year 1)	There should be effective liaison with regards to the commission and publication of LCSPRs.	The BSCP effectively communicates with the National Panel to ensure that Rapid Reviews and LCSPR are submitted in a timely manner and of the requisite quality. The BSCP and National Panel delivered a Webinar on Anti-discriminatory Practice, Intersectionality and Adultification on 14th November 2023 which 267 practitioners participated in.	
5. That equity, equality, diversity and inclusion are core elements of the Quality Assurance Programme (2023/24) for approval by the Executive Board in May 2023. (Year 1)	Quality Assurance Programme 2023/24 to incorporate quality assurance activity on equity, equality, diversity and inclusion.	The Executive Board endorsed the Quality Assurance Programme (2023/24) on 22nd May 2023. The QA Programme has equity, equality, diversity and inclusion as core elements of the quality assurance and audit framework.	
6. The BSCP to launch its new Website by April 2023 to improve engagement with children, families and practitioners, ensuring compliance with 'Web Content Accessibility Guidelines'. (Year 1)	BSCP to develop and launch a new website by 31st December 2023.	The BSCP new website launched in April 2023 following extensive consultation with users on the design, accessibility and content. BSCP regularly monitors customer experience and site usage.	
7. The BSCP Executive Board to present its Annual Report to the Birmingham Children and Young People Partnership, Health and Wellbeing Board and the Education and Children Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee by September 2023. (Year 1)	BSCP to produce and publish Annual Report in adherence to national guidance.	The BSCP Annual Report 2024-25 is scheduled for presentation to Executive Board in July 2025 and will be published in summer 2025. This adheres with national guidance requiring publication of annual reports by the end of September.	
8. L&D Sub-Group Training Offer 2023/24 to enhance understanding and agencies response to children, where religion and culture are a feature. (Year 1)	L&D Sub-Group to develop Training Offer 2023/24 for approval by Executive Board.	<p>The Executive Board endorsed the Learning and Development Multi-Agency Safeguarding Training Offer 2024/25 on 22nd May 2024.</p> <p>The BSCP in collaboration with the National Panel delivered a Webinar on Anti-discriminatory Practice, Intersectionality and Adultification on 14th November 2023 which involved</p>	

		<p>267 safeguarding practitioners from Birmingham.</p> <p>A webinar on Adultification was hosted by BSCP on 27 March 2025, attended by 51 practitioners from various agencies.</p> <p>A Cultural Awareness module has been developed and is incorporated in the BSCP's workforce development offer agreed for 2025-26.</p>	
9. BSCP to fund Faith Project Coordinator post for an additional period 2023/24. (Year 1)	BSCP to secure funding for Faith Project Coordinator Role	BSCP have funded the Faith Project Coordinator until 31st May 2026.	
10. BSCP to work in close collaboration with the Birmingham Council of Faiths to develop a Safeguarding Toolkit, bespoke training to support the establishment of a Designated Safeguarding Leader (DSL) Network for all places of worship in Birmingham to access safeguarding advice and support. (Year 2)	BSCP and the Birmingham Council of Faiths to establish a Project Steering Group to oversee finalisation of the Safeguarding in Faith Communities Project.	The BSCP are working in collaboration with 24 Adult's and Children's Partnerships in South Yorkshire and West Midlands to develop bespoke Safeguarding Guidance for six different faiths. The new on-line guidance will be a core resource for the Faith DSL Network in Birmingham. The Faith Directory in Birmingham and the new guidance was scheduled to be launched in Spring 2025, however there has been some slippage in finalising the five bespoke versions of the guidance. The guidance is now scheduled for completion in July 2025, which will be supported by consultation events across West Midlands and Yorkshire with faith communities over the summer.	
11. BSCP to work in collaboration with the West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership and Faith Alliance to create a regional training repository for Faith based organisations to access to safeguarding training. (Year 2)	BSCP and the Faith Alliance to explore feasibility of creating a regional repository for faith-based organisation across the West Midlands.	The project team continue to explore and evaluate potential options for the hosting of a regional training repository that can be accessed by Faith-based organisations across the West Midlands. (Year 2 Action)	
12. BSCP to become members of the Birmingham Faith Covenant	BSCP to become a signatory to the	BSCP are a signatory to the Birmingham Faith Covenant and	

Partnership to assist in delivery of the safeguarding commitments set out in the Faith Covenant. (Year 2)	Birmingham Faith Covenant.	influenced the Faith Covenant to include as a priority the safeguarding of children, young people and the vulnerable. (Year 2 Action)	
13. BSCP to Co-Chair the West Midlands MASA Network to develop, share and disseminate regional good practice around equity, equality, diversity and inclusion (Year 2) and disseminate regional good practice around equity, equality, inclusion and diversity. (Year 2)	West Midlands MASA Network to develop, share and disseminate regional good practice around equity, equality, diversity and inclusion	The National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel presented the findings from <u>"It's Silent: Race, Racism and Safeguarding Children – Panel Briefing 4"</u> (March 2025). The report focussed on the sharing of good practice on equity, equality, diversity and inclusion. As a partnership, BSCP have undertaken a benchmarking exercise against the eight recommendations in the report, which is scheduled to be presented to Executive Board in July 2025.	
14. BSCP to contribute to the continued development of the Regional Safeguarding Procedures Group consortium to deliver online safeguarding policies, procedures, and guidance where equity, equality, diversity and inclusion are central components. (Year 2)	Birmingham Continue to be active member of the Regional Safeguarding Procedure Group.	The Regional Safeguarding Procedure Group (RSPG) oversee the provision of safeguarding policy, procedures and guidance for participating partnership across the wider West Midlands Region. The RSPG are in the process of changing providers for the hosting of the regional on-line procedures. Tri-x are the new provider who will take over the hosting of the online resources in Spring 2025. (Year 2 Action)	
15. The BSCP to work in close collaboration with Birmingham Council of Faith on the delivery and evaluation of the 'Safeguarding in Faith Communities Project'. (Year 2)	BSCP and Birmingham Council of Faith to establish Project Steering Group to oversee finalisation of the Project.	The project evaluation has been deferred until six months after the publication of the Safeguarding in Faith Communities guidance and toolkit, which is scheduled for launch in summer 2025.	

Appendix 2: BSCP Multi-Agency Safeguarding Training Programme 2024/25

Training Module Title and method of delivery	Number of modules commissioned
Webinar: Adulthood: Improving Understanding and Practice	1
Virtual Training: Alcohol & Drugs - Delivering a Brief Intervention	1
Virtual & In-Person Training: Domestic Abuse Module 1: Understanding Coercive Control & Domestic Violence & Abuse (DVA), and its impact on children & adult victims.	3
Virtual & In-Person Training: Domestic Abuse Module 2: Advanced Domestic Violence & Abuse training - Knowing how to validate victims and children's disclosures (On completion of Module 1)	2
Virtual Training: Hidden Harm - Working with Substance Misusing Parents	3
In-Person Training: Identifying, Supporting and Protecting Girls and Women from FGM (CPD Advanced)	2
Virtual & In-Person Training: *NEW* Introduction to Child Exploitation	3
Virtual Training: *NEW* Child Exploitation and Youth Violence	2
Virtual Training: NSPCC Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2) training for practitioners	23
Virtual Training: Online Safety	3

Virtual & In-Person Training: Professional Curiosity & Challenge	5
Virtual Training: Safeguarding Disabled Children & Young People	5
Virtual & In-Person Training: Safeguarding for Senior Designated and Operational Managers	6
Virtual Training: Working with Resistant Families	2
Virtual Training: Child Exploitation: Tackling CE Together in Birmingham	5
Virtual & In-Person Training: Module 1. Understanding and Responding to Coercive Control and Domestic Abuse	2
TOTAL	68

Appendix 3: Outstanding actions by agency

Agency	Total Actions	Completed	Pending	Overdue
BSCP	33	29	4	0
VRP	12	10	2	0
Contextual Safeguarding Board	13	11	2	0
WMP & Empower U	1	1	0	0
BWCH & UHB	1	1	0	0
Redthread & St Giles	1	1	0	0
WMP	4	4	0	0
Gangs, Violence, and Serious Organised Crime Operational Group	2	2	0	0
BCT & YJS	1	1	0	0
BCYPP	3	3	0	0
VRU & BSCP	2	2	0	0
VRU & Empower U	1	1	0	0
Education & Contextual Safeguarding Board	1	1	0	0
Birmingham Community Safety Partnership	3	3	0	0
ODOC	1	1	0	0
Preparation for Adulthood Service	1	1	0	0
VRU & Contextual Safeguarding Board	1	1	0	0
VRU & Safeguarding in Education Group	1	1	0	0
BSOLICB	3	2	1	0
BSCP/Birmingham Community Safety Partnership	1	1	0	0

Contextual Safeguarding Board/Birmingham Community Safety Partnership	3	1	2	0
BCT/BSCP	1	1	0	0
BSCP/SAFE Birmingham	1	1	0	0
BSCP/VRP	2	1	1	0
BCT/WMP/BSOLICB/Education/BCHC/UHB HGS/CAFCASS/NSPCC/BWCH	1	0	1	0
BCT	11	10	1	0
Public Health	1	1	0	0
WM Masa Network	1	1	0	0
BCHC	1	1	0	0
UHB HGS	1	0	1	0
BCHC/UHB HGS/BWCH	1	0	1	0
RSPG	3	0	3	0
RSPG/BSCP	1	0	1	0
SWBH	2	0	2	0
Education	2	2	0	0
BCYPP/BSCP	1	0	1	0
Health Safeguarding Board	1	0	1	0
BCC	1	1	0	0
Somerset SCP	1	1	0	0
Newham SCP	1	1	0	0
Total:	123	99	24	0
%		80%	20%	0%



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