

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Children Partnership

Bi-Annual Report

01 April 2021 – 31 March 2023

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Introduction

The Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Children Partnership (BDSCP) Annual report is an opportunity to highlight the progress that the Partnership has been made in achieving its safeguarding priorities in 2021/22. The report outlines key performance data, multi-agency quality assurance activity, Safeguarding Reviews progress updates from Subgroups and feedback from some of our partner agencies. The report also outlines the Partnership's priorities for 2023-2025.

The BD SCP has delivered many of its priorities for 2021- 23, despite facing some significant changes; adjusting after a global pandemic with unprecedented demand and backlogs, the impact of the cost-of-living crisis with rising energy prices and inflation hike will force families to make hard choices and exacerbate current challenges around poverty, health inequalities, housing and employment. As well as

The Partnership keeps a continuous focus on embedding strong foundations for collaborative working across the Statutory partners; the Local Authority, the Integrated Care System and the Police as well as our wider partners within Schools, Health, Voluntary Sector, Providers whilst continuing to build a solid base. The BD SCP is committed to leading the cultural and behavioural changes required to drive sustained improvements in services over the next three to five years, to safeguard and improve the lived experience of children and families.

Throughout the year I have been fortunate enough to see first-hand the tireless work of the Partnership and have been appreciative to all of the young people and their families/carers who have spoken to me about their experiences in the borough. 2021-23 has been incredibly busy and the next year will see the completion of 4 Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews which will have lots of learning to be disseminated and embedded throughout the partnership.

Finally, alongside the Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Executive, I want to thank the whole workforce that makes up the Safeguarding Children Partnership. Thank you, for your hard work and commitment to working together and ensuring that we effectively safeguard and improve the lives and outcomes for our Children, Young People and Families, we recognise what a challenging year this has been for you all.



Sammy Odoi
Independent Scrutineer,
Barking and Dagenham
Safeguarding Children Partnership

What is safeguarding and why does it matter for children and families?

Putting it simply, safeguarding is about the risks some children and young people may face as they grow up. These risks might come from:

- Physical harm (including deliberate harm)
- Emotional harm (including bullying)
- Neglect (in their everyday life)
- Sexual abuse (including unwanted sexual activity by others)
- Exploitation (which may include sexual, trafficking)

These risks may be faced in a child's own home caused by their family members, or from other young people or adults in the child's life and sometimes from strangers.

While many of these factors have been around for a long time there are some newer aspects of safeguarding in keeping children safe that have become more common.

This includes:

- Gangs and knife crime
- Radicalisation
- Modern day slavery
- Internet/digital abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

The key question in any of these situations is: Does this cause harm or is the child or young person at risk of harm from which they need to be protected?

The key agencies with responsibility for safeguarding are:

- **The Local Authority**
- **Police**
- **Health Services**

Many other groups or organisations have a significant part to play. This includes schools, faith groups, under 5's services, clubs, sports facilities, community groups etc. The fact is that the safety of children and young people is everybody's responsibility.

To help protect children and young people we must:

- Work together**
- Have plans for helping to protect children and young people**
- Test that what we are doing is working and makes sense**
- Look ahead to see what needs to be done**

This Annual Report looks back on progress over the last financial year and looks forward to how we work together even more effectively in the coming year and beyond. At a time of difficult resources and the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic there is an even greater need to work together, but we must work effectively and efficiently.

Difficulties in getting resources are no excuse for failures in working together and communicating well with each other.

Why does it matter?

At the end of 2022/23, 394 children and young people were on what is called a Child Protection Plan, a decrease of 5% (21 children) when compared to the 415 at the end of 2021/22. This means that after serious consideration all of those children were at risk from some of the risk areas outlined in this slide. Our rate per 10,000 children is 61- higher than the national rate of 42, London (38) and statistical neighbours (47).

In addition, 525 children and young people aged under 18 were considered to be Children in Need at 31st March 2023 (Compared to 842 as of 31st March 2022– a decrease of 38% - 317 children) These children and families require ongoing and sometimes intensive work to support and protect them. Across all assessments in 2022/23, 1821 (31%) identified Domestic Violence and 1332 (23%) identified Abuse and Neglect. The effects of neglect and abuse may live with a child or young person for a long time and affect their future lives, their relationships and the way in which they then act as a parent. They may miss out on education, the development of life skills, their mental health may be affected, and their life chances may be impaired. This report sets out some of the work that needs to happen to help protect children and young people in Barking and Dagenham now and those who will be born or move here in the next few years.

Who was involved in 2022/23 and how do we work together ?

The Barking & Dagenham Safeguarding Children Partnership is a multi-agency partnership. It is made up of senior representatives from statutory and non-statutory agencies and organisations in the Borough who have a responsibility for keeping children safe. The Safeguarding Partnership has a co-ordinating role and are responsible for ensuring that agencies work together to provide safe, effective, and efficient safeguarding arrangements for children living in our Borough. The partnership does this by:

- Outlining how it intends to tackle priority safeguarding issues, in partnership with other agencies
- Developing local policies, strategies, and ways of working, through its delivery groups
- Delivering multi agency training

There are strong links with the Health and Wellbeing Board, The Safeguarding Adults Board and the Community Safety Partnership, and we ensure the effectiveness of our local work by:

- Monitoring and scrutinising what is done by our partner agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Undertaking serious case reviews, now known as Local Learning reviews (as a result of the changes outlined in Working Together 2018) and other multi-agency learning reviews, audits and qualitative reviews and sharing learning opportunities
- Collecting and analysing information about child deaths
- Drawing evidence from the testimony of children, young people, and frontline professionals
- Publishing an Annual Report on the above.

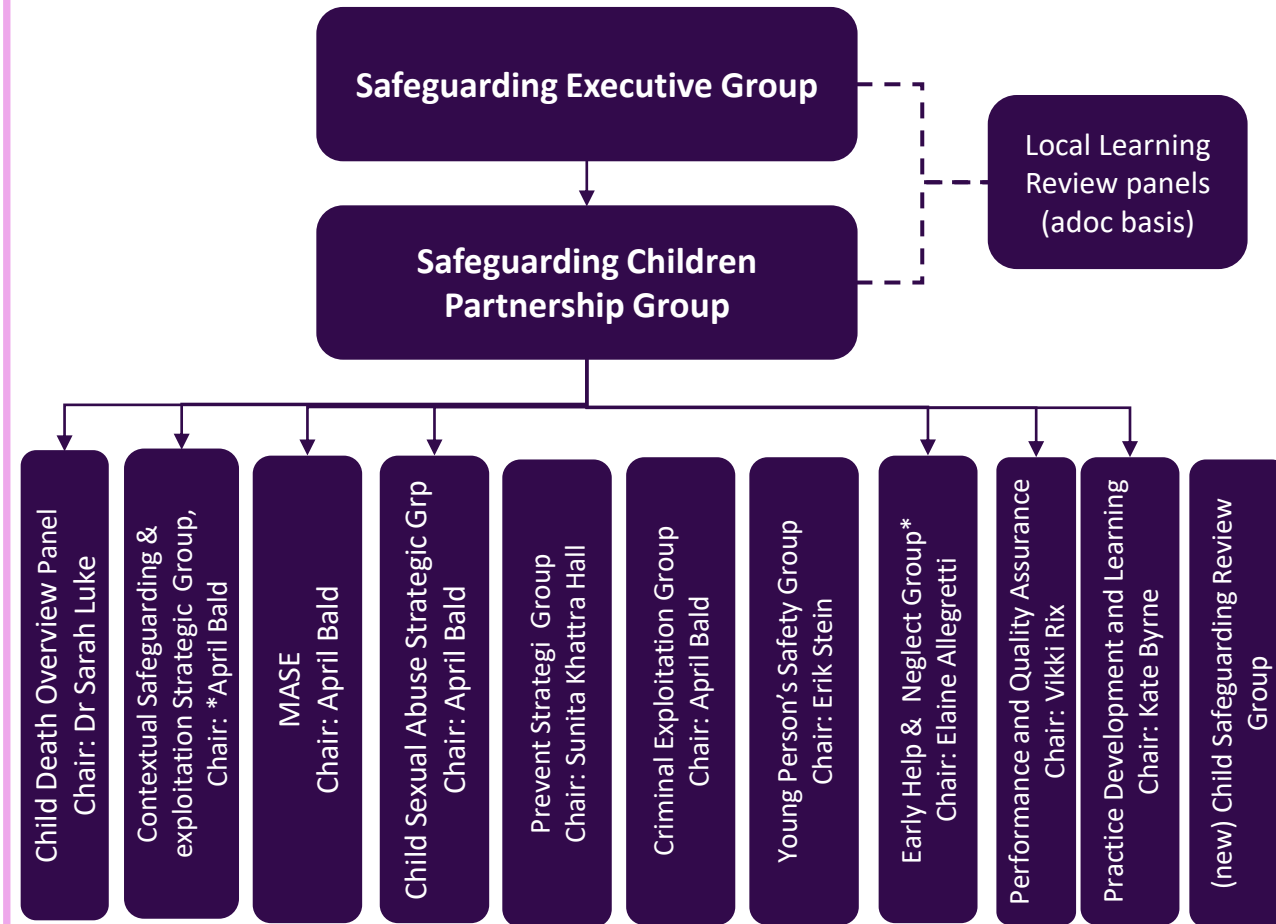
The Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Partnership has three tiers of activity:

Safeguarding Children Partnership Executive Group: is made up of representatives from the three key statutory agencies and has strategic oversight of all Safeguarding Partnership activity. Strategic Partners takes the lead on developing and driving the implementation of the partnership's work.

Safeguarding Children Partnership Delivery Group: this is made up of representatives of the partner agencies as set out in Working Together 2018. Partner members must be sufficiently senior to ensure they are able to speak confidently and have the authority to sign up to agreements on behalf of their agency.

Working Groups: these groups work on the Safeguarding Partnership's priority areas on a more targeted and thematic basis. They report to the Safeguarding Partnership.

BDSCP Governance Structure over 202/23

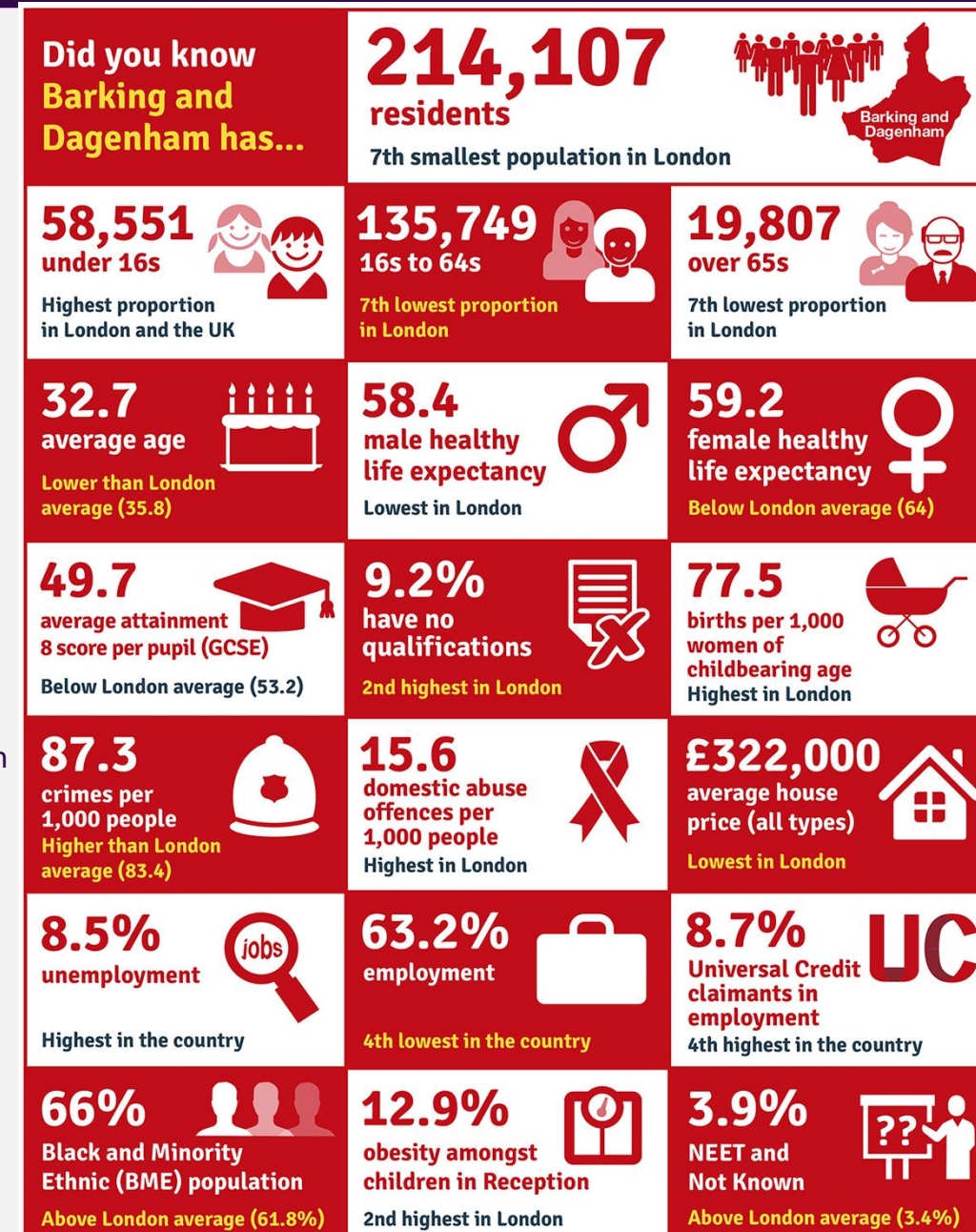


Full details of Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Partnership membership is outlined in the following slide.

BD SCP Membership	Named Representative	Role
Independent Scrutineer	Sammy Odoi	Independent Scrutineer
Local Authority	Elaine Allegretti	Strategic Director Children and Adults
	Chris Bush	Commissioning Director for Care and Support
	April Bald	Operational Director
	Erik Stein	Head of Participation, Opportunity and Wellbeing
	Vikki Rix	Head of Performance and Intelligence
	Ruth Lacey	Interim Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance
Police (Met, East Area BCU)	Lewis Basford (22/23)	Detective Chief Superintendent, Public Protection
	Daniel Thompson	Detective Chief Inspector, Public Protection (MASH & Partnership Lead)
North East London ICS (Former CCG)	Korkor Ceasar (22/23)	Director of Children’s Safeguarding
	Kate Byrne (Chair PDL)	Designated Nurse
	Dr Richard Burack	Named GP for Safeguarding Children (BD)
Barking Havering and Redbridge University Trust (BHRUT)	Gary Etheridge	Director of Nursing, Quality and Safeguarding
	Jay Brown	Named Nurse, Safeguarding Children
	Daniela Capasso	Assistant Director of Safeguarding
North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT)	Melody Williams Mohammed Mohit	Integrated Care Director Assistant Director, Children’s
	Dr Sarah Luke (CDR)	Designated Doctor
Probation	Steven Calder	Head of Probation Havering & BD
Maintained Schools	Richard Paul (Secondary) Wayne Pedro & (Primary)	Head Teachers
Non maintained special school	Cathy Stygal (PRU)	Headteacher
College	Amy DeCampos (BD College)	Safeguarding Lead
Voluntary Community and Faith	Avril McIntyre	Chief Officer, Community Resources
Lead Members	ClIr Jane Jones ClIr Elizabeth Kangethe	Councillors (participating observers)
Additional members		
London Ambulance Service	Dawn Mountier	Safeguarding Lead
CAFCASS	Cornelia Fuehrbaum	Service Manager
Fire	Narinder Dail	Borough Commander

What is happening in Barking and Dagenham and what does the data tell us?

- **Child poverty is amongst the highest in London boroughs:** 50% of children live in households on the poverty line. Poor quality of housing: Waiting list for housing are some of the largest in the country.
- **Highest under 18 years conception rate in London.**
- **Highest premature mortality in the borough in London,** with 404 deaths per 100,000 people aged below 75, compared to 299 for London overall.
- **Highest proportion of children (0–17) in the UK:** almost three in ten residents (29.8%) are under 18.
- **Highest proportion of under 5s in the UK:** 9.4%.
- **Higher than national average of young carers in B&D:** approx. 1,800 young carers in B&D; 1 in 12 secondary school aged children are young carers.
- **Highest levels of Year 6 obesity in England.**
- **High levels of domestic abuse:** there is an estimate of 75.43 per 1000, 0-4 yr. olds live in households where a parent is suffering domestic abuse and no early help offer in place to address.
- **High levels of 16–17-year-olds not in education, employment or training**
- **Increased number of children with learning disabilities** Autistic Spectrum Disorder is the most common primary need identified in EHCPs. High level of EHCP need is between 5 - 15-year-olds, above England and statistical neighbours.
- **Higher numbers of children and young people have a diagnosable mental health problems**
- **Significantly higher numbers in LBBB for youth offending** compared to national average of young people entering the criminal justice system for the first time.
- **Lowest life expectancies in London** for both women and men.
- **High demand for children’s social care:** In the last four years, there has been a significant increase in the number of CIN from 1,187 to 1,802 in 2021 – a growth rate far in excess of the population.



What is happening in Barking and Dagenham and what does the data tell us?

Targeted Early Help

The Early Help Assessment (EHA) is the primary tool for capturing Early Help work (previously known as a CAF – Common Assessment). Early Help Assessments are co-ordinated and completed by the Targeted Early Help Service. The number of EHAs being initiated for families increased in 2022.23 to 953 compared to 891 in 2021.22. The number of EHAs initiated for children therefore also increased over the past year from 2,199 in 2021.22 to 2,620 in 2022.23. As of the 2022 - 2023-year end, there were 415 families comprising of 902 children open to Targeted Early Help compared to 404 families comprising of 851 children at the 2021.22-year end.

Targeted Early Help referrals

A total of 3,066 cases which were opened during the year of 2022.23 compared to 2,395 in 2021.22. The top four referrer groups remained unchanged. Please note the table below:

Referring body	2021/22	2022/23
Community Solutions	5%	3%
MASH	37%	38%
Education	20%	26%
Health	15%	15%
Police	14%	11%

Behavioural issues was the most cited presenting need for new children entering Targeted Early Help – accounting for 1 in every 5 referrals (20%) down from 40% in 2021.22. This was followed by mental health issues at 12% which stood at 18% the previous year. Cases with domestic incident and domestic violence rose to 11% compared to 5% in 2021.22. In 2022.23, 14% of referrals into Targeted Early had been referred in the previous 12 months - a 4 percentage point increase from 10% reported in 2021.22.

Referrals to Children Social Care

The number of statutory social care referrals received decreased by 10% during the year from 6148 in 2021/22 to 5541 in 2022/23. The rate per 10,000 has decreased from 959 to 865. Despite the decrease, we remain above all comparators - similar areas (608), London (553) and the national rate (538).

The most significant number of referrals were received from the Police (1796 – 32%) and Education (1588 – 29%). Around 89% of referrals were completed within timescales during 2022/23, compared to 75% previously. At the end of 2022/23, the repeat referral rate was 26% - an increase on the 17% the year before. Performance is now above all comparators (18%-22%).

Strategy Discussions and Section 47 Investigations

The number of children that progressed to Section 47 investigations during 2022/23 was 1320 out of 2030 strategy discussions, a conversion of 65%. For the previous year this figure was 68% (1252/1853). The number of Section 47 Investigations increased during the year from a rate per 10,000 of 195 to 206. This puts us above the National (180) and London rate (174), but below similar areas (231).

In 2022/23, 39% of Section 47s progressed to Initial Child Protection Conference – this is no change on the previous year. The percentage of Section 47 investigations resulting in No Further Action increased from 6% to 8%.

Statutory Single Assessments

The number of Assessments completed in 2022/23 has decreased slightly by 2% from 6019 to 5916. 79% of those assessments were completed within 45 days compared to 87% in 2021/22 and performance remains below comparators (85%-86%).

What is happening in Barking and Dagenham and what does the data tell us

Core Groups

The number of core group meetings held in timescale for children subject to child protection plans increased to 82% at the end of March 2023, up from 69% a year earlier.

Children Subject to a Child Protection Plan

518 children were considered at Initial Child Protection Conferences during the year at a rate per 10,000 of 80, an increase on 2021/22 when the rate was 76 (487 children). This rate is slightly above the London and national averages and in line with similar areas.

At the end of 2022/23, 394 children were subject to Child Protection Plans, a decrease of 21 (5%) on the 2021/22 figure of 415. Our rate per 10,000 has decreased from 65 to 61 but we remain notably higher than national (42), London (38) and similar areas (47). The number of children coming off plans during the year increased from 359 to 453, whilst the number of children coming on to a plan fell from 448 to 425.

The number of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time in 2022/23 was 41 (10%). This compares with 63 children (14%) in 2021/22. Performance is good and lower than national, London and similar areas (18%-23%).

This year has seen an increase in the percentage of children who were on a child protection plan for two years or more when the CP plan ceased - 31 children (7%) an increase on the 18 children in 2021/22 (5%). We are now above the national, statistical neighbour and London averages (4-5%).

Child Protection Conferences

Performance on the timeliness of initial child protection case conferences within the 15-day timescale increased slightly from 70% in 2021/22 to 72% in 2022/23. Performance remains below all comparators however (76%-79%).

Child Protection Review Conferences being held in time decreased from 94% to 88% in the last year- and we are now below all comparators (89%-93%).

Child Protection Visits

The proportion of children subject to child protection plans visited 2 weekly increased to 75% at year end compared to 67% the year before. 94% of children subject to child protection plans were visited and seen within 4 weeks at the end of 2022/23, a slight decrease on the 2021/22 outturn of 92%.

Missing Children

The number of children missing from home (not in care) decreased slightly in 2022/23, whereas the numbers of episodes increased. There were 237 children reported missing with 723 episodes, compared to 243 children with 625 episodes in 2021/22. Return home interviews within the recommended 72 hours period is an area of concern with low performance, despite an increase from 49% to 54% during 2022/23.

The number of looked after children missing has increased slightly from 44 to 62 over the last year, with the number of missing episodes increasing from 202 to 281. Return home interviews within 72 hours for looked after children remains low at 41% - no change on the previous year.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

At the end of March 2022/23, 36 young people were open in children's care and support for whom there were current CSE concerns – an increase on the 27 at the end of 2021/22.

Police Powers of Protection

The number of children coming into care as a result of emergency police protection remained at 57 in 2022/23 compared to 38 in 2021/22. As a % of all new children into care, this increased from 18% to 22%. This is above all comparators (9-13%).

Summary of Achievements

Tackling Domestic Violence and Abuse

Domestic Abuse Improvement Programme

Support to Safety

'We Believe you'

[The Barking and Dagenham Domestic Abuse Commission](#), published in 2021 highlighted 7

Outcomes which were:

1. Domestic abuse is everyone's business
2. Healthy relationships and young people
3. Trauma informed services
4. Community awareness
5. Perpetrators and those using abusive behaviours
6. Community groups and community spaces
7. Child survivors of domestic.

Following up and building on the work and outcomes of the Domestic Abuse Commission, an end-to-end review of Domestic Abuse and Services in Barking and Dagenham, undertaken in 2022 highlighted additional themes:

- Strategic oversight, systems thinking, governance
- Shared understanding of risk, thresholds and practices
- Commissioned services and getting expertise at the right points in the system, needs being met
- Improved use of council and partnership resources
- Long term change in the community, changing demand



Quality Assurance Exercise

BD SCP Practice Week, with a Domestic Abuse Focus 26 – 30 September 2022. Highlighted 8 Areas for Improvement:

1. Spreading awareness of services, thresholds, pathways and capacities
2. Increasing awareness and use of perpetrator services – holding perpetrators to account, increasing their understanding of impact and changing behaviours
3. Deploying risk assessment tools and analysis skilfully in assessments
4. Understanding and increasing awareness of the definition of domestic abuse, the difference between domestic abuse and parental conflict, its impact on victims, what children see and feel, and the overall impact on children
5. Provision of safety planning to the family (including adults identified by victims as safe) that is quickly accessible
6. Obtaining survivor feedback on impact of plans, interventions and the impacts
7. Centring the child's voice - direct and life story work with children and understanding impact
8. Triangulation of service delivery and good use of data to appreciate impact

Strategic Oversight and Governance, Where we are now

- VAWG SG re-established and meeting. Chaired by the Safeguarding Adult Board Chair. And has overarching responsibility of the DAIP.
- MARAC within statutory structures
- MARAC SG re-established and meeting and Chaired by Police and has overarching responsibility for MARAC Improvement Programme.
- Women's safety group – Operational
- Tri-borough (BHR) MARAC SG agreed, with a developed Terms of Reference.
- Tri-borough (BHR) DA leads meeting set up – focus of sharing best practice, problem solving, joint working and commissioning options.
- East Area BCU VAWG Steering Group with Police lead and Chair.

Summary of Achievements

Tackling Domestic Violence and Abuse

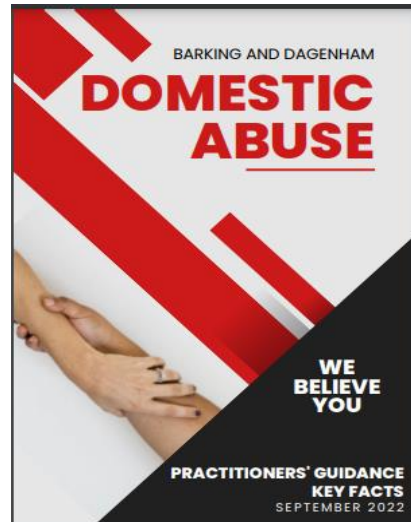
Domestic Abuse Improvement Programme

Support to Safety 'We Believe you'

Where we are now

Where we are now, Learning and development

[Toolkits](#) developed – 'at a glance' and detailed, including services and referral pathways. Available on the Partnership Website. These documents and the new content for practitioners and community have had an extensive rollout across the Partnership since their launch.



The Learning is a standing item at the Practice, Development and Learning Sub-Group and supported by a newly appointed Domestic Abuse Learning Coordinator that sits within Refuge.

Where we are now, Shared Understanding of Risk

- DA Learning and Development programme will include Domestic Abuse in Barking and Dagenham,
- Child and Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse,
- Domestic Abuse vs Parental Conflict,
- DASH RIC,
- Safety planning
- Perpetrator training offer and *Safe and Together* training embedding,
- DARAC tool roll out in 2023,
- Continuum of Need roll out in June 2023, building in risk tools and common language/approach,
- Updated MARAC protocol and related processes,
- DA objectives included within the council library.

DAIP Priorities for 2023-2024

- Successful bid to AVA for additional resources to deliver excellence in homelessness/housing services
- Housing and DA policy
- Champions scheme – workforce and community – linked to Safe Havens
- Pathways across services and interventions e.g. risk management panels, mental health service offer
- 0-19 service recommissioning project and links to new DA service offer
- Drafting the new VAWG strategy in line with Serious Violence Duty
- DHR and emerging learning

Summary of Achievements

A Robust Early Help Offer and Tackling Neglect

An ongoing programme of support and challenge has been undertaken over the last 12 months. We have revised the practice standards , developed and better monitor robust data sets , to track embedding of the practice standards within the workforce and increasing outcomes for families . We have had undertaken a comprehensive programme of workforce development and training around key areas on TAF, direct work with families GCP2 (neglect) and quality of assessments alongside support and challenge from our QA and audit team work on thematic such as Domestic abuse. The learning from the audit's feeds into the ongoing improvement work

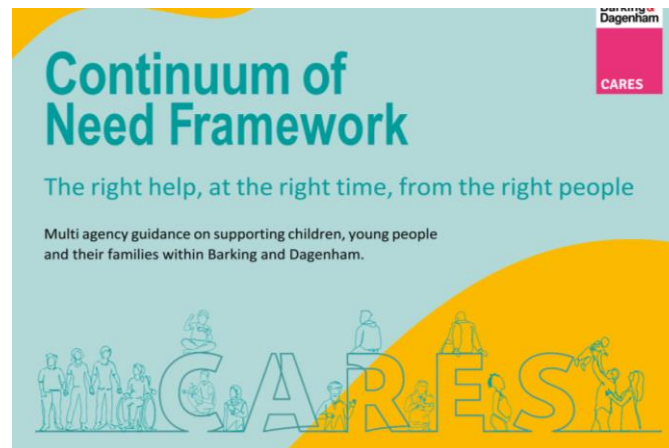
We have been working with Innovate to develop a new project of rapid response which works through Targeted Early Help Assessment Service TEHAS front door to undertake intensive work with families over a shorter period subject to criteria this has been successful and is now being transferred into the service as a permanent model from April 2023 .Streamlining of processes has been ongoing to ensure quality of work is timely and there are effective relationships with internal colleagues such as step down with Children's social care which have better timely decision making and allocation of families to access support.

The Early Help strategy has been finalised and ready to be rolled out through the development of the new operating model and the increased investment in the service through Family hubs is now in implementation phase with 3 hubs being developed and greater alignment of the strengthening families , targeted early help and community hubs is beginning alongside the development of new governance programme and sub-groups which are chaired by partners. The development of integrated partnerships across the early help continuum is a focus for the future .

As part of the Family Hubs development a parent forum has successfully been set up and which gives feedback from families on the services they receive and a series of partners in practice workshops with key internal and external partners has been running since December 2022 to devise new ways of working and partnership working models going forward . Work around children with disabilities remains a challenge area for the service in supporting staff through training e.g. autism and also knowing the referral routes for additional support , this remains a challenge also.

MASH has also undergone an intensive programme of improvement and more details can be found in the MASH Subgroup Work Section but tackling neglect remains a key priority of the BD SCP.

Click on the image for our newly refreshed Continuum of Need Framework.



Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is responsible for the management and oversight of all investigations into allegations against those working with and who volunteer with children and is responsible for preparing the annual report to the Barking & Dagenham Safeguarding Partnership and establishing processes to disseminate learning to the children's workforce. In Barking and Dagenham, the requirements of the LADO process are set out in the London Safeguarding Children Procedures and are followed by all London boroughs

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Procedures should be applied when there are concerns, or it is alleged, that an adult who works with children, either as employee of or in a voluntary capacity has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children. (KCSIE, 2022).

Analysis of the 2022/2023 period

There has been an increase of total contacts to the LADO service by approximately 16% in 2022/23 when compared to the 2021/22 period with a 31% increase in contacts deemed to meet the allegations threshold. Since the decline of contacts during the 2020/21 Covid period, there has been a continued increase in contact from the partnership with the LADO service and the level of contacts are now above the peak 2019/20 period seen pre-pandemic.

Allegations of physical harm is the largest referred cause for concern, with emotional harm the second highest referred concern. Sexual harm remains the lowest referred concern, but the second highest contact most likely to meet threshold and progress to a LADO process. Most concerns fall below the allegations threshold; however, this is not an indication that matters have been not progressed in line with employer policy and procedures, but that the threshold of harm was not deemed to have been met. Of the allegations taken through a LADO process, 76% required some level of Police oversight.

LADO Partnership Training

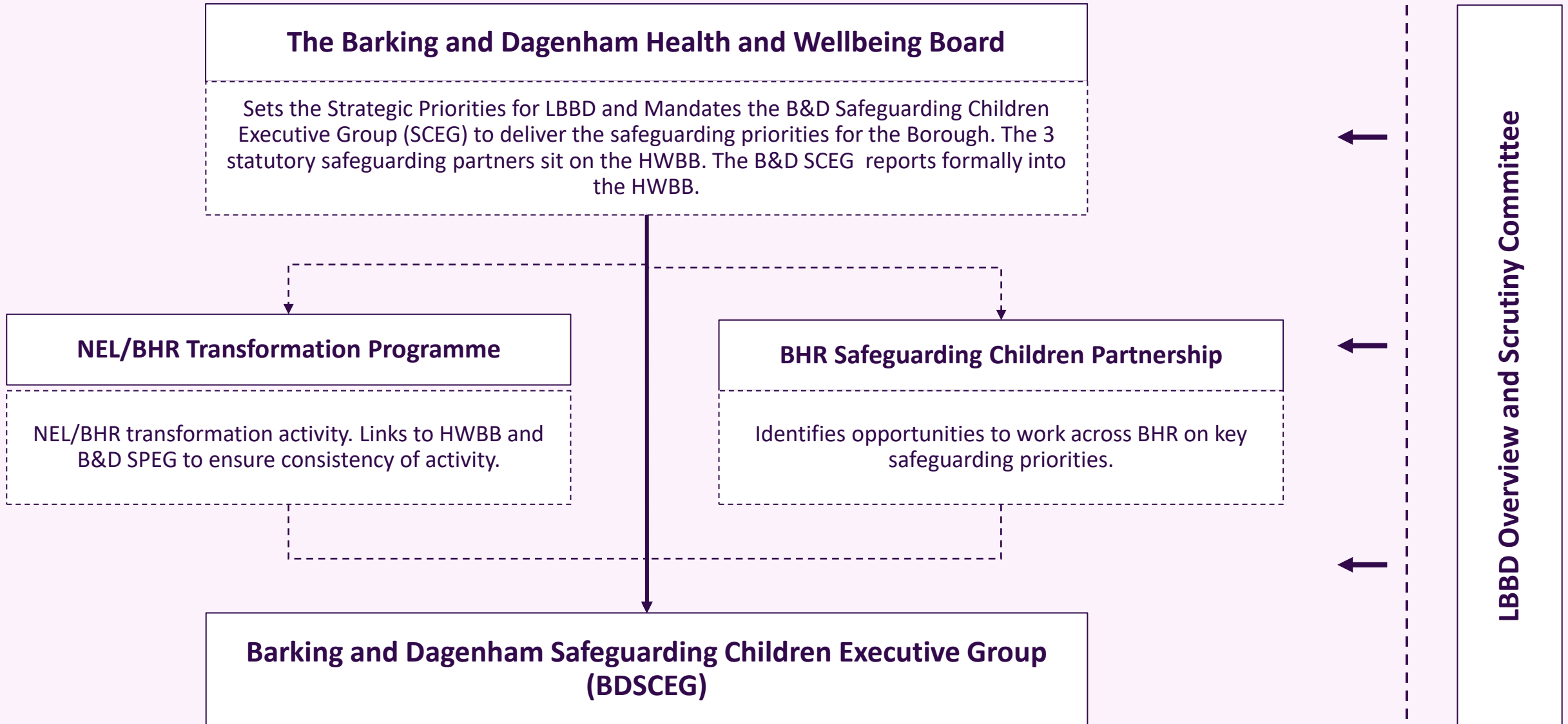
In the 2022/23 period, the LADO has provided 4 sessions of managing allegations training to Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL's) as part of a wider training offer to ensure that schools are clear about the expectations as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education and the London Safeguarding Children Procedures. In addition, there has been 2 partnership LADO training sessions run face to face. The LADO service aims to increase this offer in the 2023/24 period to 4 sessions over the financial year, offering both face to face and virtual sessions.

In March 2023, LADO met with lead GP's of the North-East London area to agree a training offer. It has been agreed that the lead GP for Barking and Dagenham will work alongside the LADO to arrange managing allegations training offer for GP's and practice leads who may not be able to access partnership training outside their mandatory training days. In the 2023/24 period, the LADO will work with the partnership training coordinator to ensure that the training offer is targeted to partners in the health, faith and voluntary sectors to ensure that thresholds and local arrangements for managing allegations is well understood.

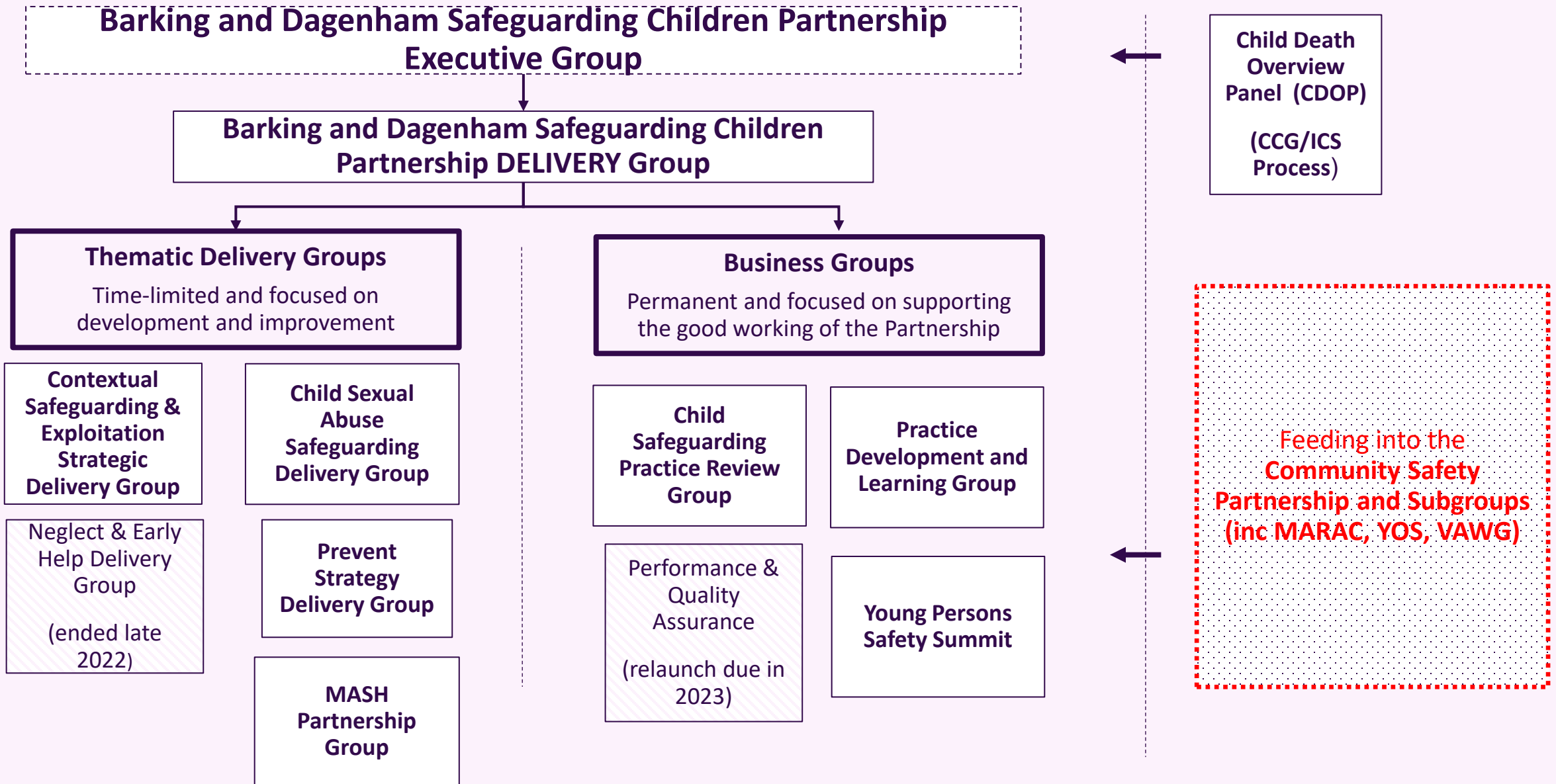
Links for Local Guidance: [Allegations Against Professionals & LADO](#) and [Keeping your Child Safe in Out of School Settings](#)

BD SCP STRUCTURE & GOVERNANCE

The Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Partnership Governance Arrangements in 2022-23



The Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Children Partnership 2022-23



Our Approach for Safeguarding Governance in 2021-23

Barking Dagenham, Havering, Redbridge (BHR) Safeguarding Children Partnership EXECUTIVE

The Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge (BHR) Safeguarding Partnership is the strategic group consisting of senior leaders from: • LB Barking and Dagenham • LB Havering • LB Redbridge • NEL (North East London) Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)/Integrated Care System (ICS) • Public Protection East Area Borough Command Unit (EA - BCU), Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) The purpose of the Partnership is to work together at a strategic level to deliver system improvements across the Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge (BHR) 'footprint' to support safeguarding children and young people. This is undertaken through sharing of information and learning, provision of mutual support, themed work streams and quality assurance activities. Scope The Partnership will have regard to the multi-agency arrangements for safeguarding children and young people, the statutory responsibility for which is held at a local Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP) level in each Borough. The Partnership provides feedback to the local SCPs and receive updates from them. Any identified issues are escalated from the BHR Safeguarding Partnership to the local SCP Independent Chair(s)/Scrutineer(s) as appropriate. In 2022 – 2023 the BHR Safeguarding Partnership undertook local audits on Child Sexual Abuse and came together as a Panel to present and discuss the findings. At the time of writing a final report is due to be submitted to the BHR Executive in June 2023 which will be followed by learning events for practitioners and managers across the BHR footprint. In 2023 – 2024 the group will repeat the same process but looking at Children who have experienced Neglect and Early Help.

Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Children Partnership EXECUTIVE Group

The Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Children Partnership Executive is the key decision-making body and consists of the executive leads of the three statutory partners. *The Director of Adult (DASS) and Childrens Services (DCS); NEL Clinical Integrated Care System Lead; Metropolitan Police Safeguarding Lead; Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance (LBBD); Partnerships and Governance Manager (LBBD). Optional: Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care and Disabilities, Cabinet Member for Education; Independent Scrutineer.*

The Executive group set out to meet a minimum of six times a year and in 2022 – 2023 the Executive group met nine times. The group and continues agree the local safeguarding arrangements; agree the independent scrutiny arrangements and delegations; set the budget; agree priorities; monitor progress mid-year and provide leadership to promote a culture of learning. This group also ensures that other local area leaders promote these arrangements. In situations that require a clear, single point of leadership, all three safeguarding partners decide who will take the lead on issues that arise and if functions or decisions are delegated, the Safeguarding Partnership Executive members remain accountable. In 2023- 2024 the Executive received regular updates and assurances from Local Partners and Providers i.e. Safeguarding Practice in Partner agencies, quarterly CDOP updates, Child Safeguarding Review updates, Inspection, Policy and publication updates, System and Workforce changes and challenges, Quality Assurance as well as targeted discussions and actions on issues such as Children in Residential Settings with complex needs, Stop and Search and tackling Domestic Abuse. This group also escalated items and issues up to BHR Executive agenda where appropriate.

Our Approach for Safeguarding Governance in 2021-23

Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Children Partnership **DELIVERY Group** *Chaired by the Independent Scrutineer*

Membership Includes: Director of Children Services; Chairs of Thematic and Operational Groups; Voluntary Sector representative; School and College representatives; Acute Health (BHRUT), NELFT, Probation Services. Other partners may be involved, receive papers or attend for specific items only.

The purpose of the Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Children Partnership is to co-ordinate, monitor, evaluate, challenge and drive improvement in the work of all agencies, separately and together, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the Borough. The Group also ensures that the Pan London and National work and learning is embedded within the partnership and through the correct sub-groups.

In 2022-23 this group met Bi-monthly as set out within its terms of reference and continues to have a focus on the delivery of the business, operational and thematic groups, receiving regular updates and assurance from Sub-Group Chairs as well as developing and embedding the Partnership Priorities. The Delivery Group received quarterly presentations of the SCP Performance Data as well as regular and rotating Subgroup updates, improvement work updates, annual reports, strategy, recommendations from reviews and publications, assurances and flagging of any issues.

Priorities areas for the next 12 months: The SCP Partnerships Strategic Priorities will cover:

- *Health and Stability of the Safeguarding Workforce,*
- *Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing of our Children and Young People,*
- *Children with SEND and Complex Needs,*
- *Neglect,*
- *Child Sexual Abuse*

In addition to this, the Delivery Group will work to ensure a more cohesive relationship with the Community Safety Partnership and the Safeguarding Adults Board SAB, ensuring strategic Partnership alignment and triangulation.

Role of the Independent Scrutineer

1. Listen to the experiences of children and young people and their families and ascertain how effectively the local arrangements are working for them.
2. Hearing and learning about our children, young people's and experiences from frontline staff and settings in order to strengthen communication between the partnership and frontline practitioners and contribute and provide an objective assessment of the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements.
3. Co-Chair (alongside a nominated Senior Manager from the Safeguarding Partnership) the Safeguarding Partnerships' Scrutiny Committee to bring together the pieces of independent scrutiny to form a whole view of the system.
4. Provide constructive challenge, support, and feedback as a core member of the Safeguarding Partnership Executive Group, providing safeguarding partners any recommendations from their scrutiny and/or assurance activities.

OVERARCHING PRIORITIES

VOICE OF THE CHILD, lived experience and participation

Getting the BASICS RIGHTS

Strategic and Partnership ALIGNMENT & TRIANGULATION

PRIORITIES & WORK OF THE
GROUPS IN
2022-2023

BUSINESS

Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) Group and Child Safeguarding Reviews

The Child Safeguarding Review Group is held bi-monthly and chaired by the Interim Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance. This group has partner engagement, including LA Officers from Director of Childrens Care and Support, Schools Performance & Partnership, Principal Social Worker, Legal Services, Designated and Named Professionals; Nurses, Doctors , Commissioning, Detective Chief Inspector as well as a number of professionals who will be invited as required depending on the Review being discussed.

Purpose

The core membership of this group becomes the core membership of the Rapid Review panel/group and with oversight of the Chair, members may wish to include other senior professionals/Officers where appropriate. The group will set the terms of reference of each review, appoint the independent author and commissioning arrangements, including the period covered by the review and the budget. Agreeing the panel membership proportionate to the context, methodology and monitor progress of the review to ensure that agreed terms of reference and timescales are met. The group quality assures the final report, recommendations and learning. Ensuring that there is the Executive Group's agreement on the final report and make recommendations to the Executive Group on communication of and considerations for the publication of reports. Provide oversight of the development of action plans for all published reports. Working with the Learning from Practice, Learning and Development (PDL) Subgroup to commission audits to investigate and report on improvements and impact, where necessary. Ensuring that the learning from reviews is built into the multi-agency programme of training and that learning from national and local reviews is reflected in the reviews completed by the partnership.

Priorities for 2023-2024

This newly established group held its first meeting in March 2023 with bi-monthly dates set for the rest of the financial year (23-24) . Terms of Reference including membership are now established, however, a key priority for the group will be to ensure that there is correct representation from the community or lay membership to the group and/or individual reviews where appropriate. Alongside fulfilling our duties as set out in the Terms of reference, priorities will be to roll out multi-agency learning for our two published reviews that remain embargoed to ensure the learning is continuing to reach all of our partners across the borough. A large face to face multi-agency event is scheduled to take place in Barking in June 2023. in 2023-24 the Group intends to undertake work across the partnership to ensure that all reporting templates, guidance are clear and good quality and therefore support report authors and managers to complete reports to the highest possible standard.

Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR) are undertaken to learn lessons and improve the way in which local professionals and organisations work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. These reviews were previously known as Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) but were transitioned to a new CSPR structure from July 2019 in accordance with Working Together 2018. Responsibility for learning lessons lies with the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (the National Panel) – and with local safeguarding partners. The Panel and local partners help to identify serious child safeguarding cases that may raise issues of national importance. They commission a review that involves all practitioners who may be relevant or have information that will help to provide learning for future practice.

Within the 2022-2023 financial year, three new CSPR's have commenced where the criteria has been met, in which:

- abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected
- the child has died or been seriously harmed.

All 3 CSPR's followed the Rapid Review process and at the time of writing, a new Rapid Review was scheduled to take place in early April 2023 (just outside the time scope of this report) and an older Rapid Review has been put on hold until more information becomes available (as agreed with the National Panel).

Practice Development and Learning (PDL) Group

The Practice Development & Learning Group meets quarterly and is chaired by the Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children NEL ICS and has attendees from NELFT, BHRUT, Social Care, Police, Voluntary Sector, Commissioning, Refuge, Prevent, MASH, Early Help and Education.

PURPOSE

This group comes together as a multiagency to establish where there is crossover from organisations and therefore joint learning opportunities. The Practice Development and Learning Group will work closely with the Child Safeguarding Review Group on the learning from of all reviews of practice (inc Rapid Reviews, LCSPR and national reviews) in line with our outcomes. It will link closely to the Child Death Review Group to ensure that learning from Child Death’s (where relevant) is also incorporated, and the Performance and Quality Assurance findings from audit activity. This will ensure there is a central point where quality of practice, critical analysis and learning is combined to feed into understanding safeguarding effectiveness, and into workforce development. This group will also commission, design, deliver and monitor both attendance and impact of training and development.

- After the appointment of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Children Partnership Training Coordinator in early 2022, a multi-agency training programme was rolled out from March 2022. (details on following slide) training feedback forms have also been created.
- PDL has worked with other subgroups to ensure a rollout learning in line with the priorities such as training identified through the Early Help Improvement programme strand i.e., Team around the Family (TAF) Lead Professional, Thresholds and extensive work with the Domestic Abuse Improvement Programme, the learning from ‘Practice Week’ which remains a standing item on the PDL.
- Prevent, Serious Incidents from Health, Rapid Reviews, National reviews has also had learning and training offers presented and the group has established a 4-point action plan around the myth of invisible men report/work.
- Work carried out on the Barking and Dagenham Escalation Protocol [HERE](#)

PRIORITIES FOR NEXT 12 MONTHS



Training

Domestic Abuse Awareness Training Looking at what domestic abuse is and the different forms it can take. Exploring the impact this has on survivors, the indicators this is happening and barriers to leave or disclose. Then looking at how professionals can respond effectively.	Sexual Abuse Awareness Looking at the indicators and presentations of sexual violence, such as sex trafficking and child sexual exploitation. Exploring barriers to disclose and sexual violence myths within society. How to respond to disclosures of sexual abuse	‘Honor’ Based Abuse, Forced Marriage and FGM Looking at the indicators and presentations of so-called honor based violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation. The risks professionals need to be aware of for this occurring and how they can respond.
Trauma Informed Practice Looking at the impact of trauma and specifically the impact of sexual violence and domestic abuse on survivors. Discussing how professionals can adopt a trauma informed response.	Risk Assessment and Safety Planning How professionals can accurately assess the risk of survivors and what tools they can use. Also looking at what constitutes a good safety plan and the importance of it being individual to the person.	How to identify a Victim vs. Perpetrator How professionals can respond to counter allegations from the perpetrator when they are presenting as the victim. What assessment tools and questions professionals can use to distinguish victim from perp.
Children as Victims of Domestic Abuse Looking at the impact DA has on children, either by them witnessing or experiencing the abuse themselves. How professionals can safeguard against this and work positively with the survivor parent to ensure the child is protected.	Domestic Abuse and Intersectionality Exploring the indicators and presentations of domestic abuse in all its forms and the barriers that different groups eg. LGBTQI+ have to leave or report the abuse.	Differences between Parental Conflict and Domestic Abuse How professionals can identify between DA and parental conflict and the appropriate response to both. What assessment tools they can use and what questions to ask

- A refreshed Training Needs analysis at the start of the year will see some new training commissioned in line with the priorities and also what comes from our recently commissioned safeguarding practice reviews.
- To create a synergy with the newly created Child Safeguarding Practice Review group, ensuring maximum potential for learning is rolled out and avoiding duplication.
- Working with the MASH Subgroup to ensure good rollout of the newly refreshed Continuum of Need document.
- To encourage more of a hybrid approach to multi-agency learning with a mixture of face-to-face events as well as virtual.
- To work with the Performance and Quality Assurance group to ensure learning from data and audit activity is being disseminated through the partnership.
- Oversee the agreed 4-point action plan in response to challenges raised in the Myth of Invisible men work, published by the National Panel.
- Continue to embed GCP2 across the partnership, ensuring a common language between practitioners and partners.
- To produce more 7 minute briefings and media that can be disseminated.

Multi Agency Safeguarding Children Partnership Training 2022-2023

The Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Children Partnership commissioned a total of 40 learning events throughout 2022-23.

A blend of face-to-face, virtual, E-Learning courses as well as various briefings and workshops. Commissioned through external providers and in-house senior practitioners, who all helped shape the training programme.

Staff and colleagues from various agencies such as the Local Authority, Schools, Health, Police, Charity, Voluntary, and Private sectors have all benefited from the training and learning interventions the partnership had on offer.

There are three stages to our Quality Assurance, Evaluation process which are as follows:

- Observation of learning to ensure quality of delivery
- Evaluation surveys – Pre and Post Course/Event Questionnaires
- Six-week evaluation

A snippet of the responses received:

- Fantastic methods, use the knowledge daily, absolutely love Tell Explain & Describe
- Great intro to child protection delivered at a manageable pace
- Referral procedure much clearer and consent for S17 and EHA.
- Use of the Threshold document and LBBB website
- One caring adult can make a world of difference to a child or young person
- A better understanding of the different thresholds of support

In November 2022, Barking and Dagenham launched *The Child Sexual Abuse Pathway*, a new and supportive resource that is aimed to help multi-agency professionals to identify and navigate the actions they can and should take, and the interventions they can provide, to effectively identify and respond to a child's safeguarding needs when there are concerns of child sexual abuse. It was designed to reflect and fit within the systems and services in which practitioners are currently working, while providing practical advice, guidance and links to tools and resources to ensure that responses are as effective as possible. Child Sexual Abuse continues to be a priority of the BD SCP.

100% of participants said they would recommend SCP training programmes to others
97% of participants have rated their skill level to be either good or excellent post training

Some of the Key areas covered were;

- Understanding the Signs and Indicators of Child Sexual Abuse
- Child and Adolescent Neglect
- Child Sexual Abuse Pathway Launch Event
- Children Missing from Education and Elected Home Education
- Communicating with Children
- Designated Safeguarding Lead Certificate 2-day training
- DSL Refresher
- Managing Allegations and the Role of the LADO
- Intra-familial child sexual abuse
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Introduction
- Trauma-Informed & Relationship-Based Practice
- Working with Men & Invisible Family Members
- Substance Misuse Awareness
- The Trio of Risk
- Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent

Young People's Safety Summit (YPSS)

The Young People's Safety Group (YPSG) meets annually as part of the large Young People's Safety Summit, which explores themes of contextual safeguarding, online, at school and in community settings. The 'mini-conference' with all Secondary Schools invited, acts as a consultation forum for the BDSCP, responding to need but also acts as a forum to challenge the Partnership and holds its members to account.

At the request of the Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Children's Partnership, the third Young People's Safety Summit was held at Jo Richardson Community School on the 5th May 2022. Whilst this is ordinarily an annual event, this is the first time the Summit has been held since November 2019 due to COVID.

The Summit acts as a vehicle to explore contextual safeguarding with young people. All secondary schools, plus Barking and Dagenham College, were invited to have representation at the Summit. Safeguarding Partnership members were also invited to participate.

Young people were asked to identify, discuss and record safe and unsafe spaces within online, school and community domains, with reasons also being recorded. They also explored a contextual safeguarding scenario centred around peer groups, which was designed by the University of Bedfordshire as part of the borough's participation in the University's Contextual Safeguarding pilot. For the school and community domains, maps of their schools and of the wider borough were used to facilitate discussion and record young people's views. For the school domain, teachers and adults other than teachers worked separately from young people to ensure that young people felt free to express their views and so that comparisons could be made between teacher and pupil perceptions.

Presentations from Box Up Crime and Spark 2 Life discussed the risks and impacts of serious youth violence, as well as helped signpost young people to local positive activity provision. The Fearless website and TootToot reporting app (which has been funded for all schools until 2023) were also presented to inform young people of safe ways they can report concerns.

The Summit concluded with all young people recording one action they will take as a result of the session, one action they would like their school to take and one action they would like other organisations to take.

Outcomes

Online

Children gave details of spaces online that they felt were safe and unsafe. What this showed is that there is not always agreement on what is safe, and that it is very much dependent on how the platform is used and how empowered young people are to use and change privacy settings and control their experience. Therefore, many platforms are regarded as both safe and unsafe.

Peer/Friendship Group

For the first time, a contextual safeguarding activity around friendship/ peer groups was delivered as part of the 2022 Summit. The activity was designed by the University of Bedfordshire as part of their contextual safeguarding pilot programme with several Local Authorities, including Barking and Dagenham. The activity set out a hypothetical scenario centred around a character who is a friend. The name Riley was deliberately chosen to allow the scenario to apply to a female or male character. What is striking from the responses is young people's mistrust of professionals, as was also reported back by professionals who took part in the discussions.

Community

Scans of the young people's views of safe and unsafe spaces in the community by school varied considerably and an extremely wide range of locations were listed, from broad areas to specific streets

Young People's Safety Summit (YPSS)

Schools

As with the consultation around safe and unsafe spaces in the community, maps were provided to young people in their school groups to enable them to discuss and visually identify specific safe and unsafe spaces in schools. Maps were also provided to teachers and pupils and teachers were asked to identify safe and unsafe spaces separately. The reasons for this were so that pupils would feel free to comment and also that teacher perceptions could then be looked at in relation to what pupils had written. Young people's responses regarding their own schools have been captured in the same format as the community responses. However, as this information is sensitive to each school, it is not included here as part of the wider report. Instead, each participating school will receive their individualised feedback for review, follow up and action. In general, young people reported that their schools were generally safe, with surrounding streets often being identified as less safe.

Young People's Pledges

All young people were asked to record one action they will take, one action their school should take and one action they think other organisations should take to make Barking and Dagenham safer. The collated pledges have been collated and shared with the Partnerships.

A wide range of actions were cited by young people. It's interesting to note that in terms of their own action, a number of young people said they would/ should talk to someone. This is in contrast to the Riley scenario where young people were clear they were far less likely to talk to someone about a friend and is perhaps indicative of the seemingly extreme fear that 'snitches get stitches' amongst young people.

Actions for schools included the desire for more inspiring, relevant and representative guest speakers such as the likes of BoxUp and Spark2Life. Other suggestions included schools to take things more seriously and with more empathy, delving deeper into any changes observed in pupil behaviour through actively listening to young people.

A number of young people also suggested the introduction of patrols in the streets surrounding the school.

For wider organisations, young people again expressed a strong desire for more relevant and inspiring speakers/ workshops/ activities in schools. Some views were expressed around increasing the numbers of positive activities outside school, but less so than in previous summits, perhaps due to the Future Youth Zone being so well known and embedded now. One young person summed it up as the need to 'encourage even more people to participate in activities they love'

Conclusion

The Safety Summit has once again provided an important insight into the young people's specific views and perceptions of safety across a variety of domains. It also provides a glimpse into their lived experience.

There continues to be considerable work with the BAD Youth Forum (the borough's youth parliament) around safety and the Local Authority's 'Step Up Stay Safe' campaign. This work, as well as the CSP and Safeguarding Children's Partnership will be closely informed by the outcomes of the Safety Summit.

Next Steps

A report for sharing and presenting at the Safeguarding Children's Partnership, MASE, Contextual Safeguarding Strategic Group, CSP leads, the Police and relevant Member Portfolio Holder meetings. It will also to be shared with schools, with the additional school by school feedback provided. Individual agencies will follow up on the intelligence that the summit has provided e.g. increased police patrols for specific locations, improved publicity for safe online spaces and youth activities. It has been noted that issues around contextual safeguarding begin at a young age and that a session for primary school pupils is needed. A similar summit is therefore to be planned primary pupils and is scheduled for July 2023 and for Secondary Pupils, December 2023.

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MASH Partnership Group

The MASH Partnership Group is held bi-monthly and chaired by the Strategic Director for Childrens and Adults. This group has wide partner engagement, including LA officers from Education, Safeguarding, Targeted Early Help, Childrens Care and Support, including Youth Offending, Specialist Intervention Services; Head Commissioners, Community Solutions, and partners: ICS/CCG, Police, NELFT, BHRUT, Refuge, (Housing/NRPF/Adult intake) and Schools.

What is the purpose of the group?

The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Partnership Board was set up with the primary purpose to drive forward service improvements in response to the feedback from the Ofsted focus visit in June 2021, to address the following:

- Despite the improvements at the front door in practice the MASH service operates primarily as a single agency social work service and the required level of partnership working is not yet in evidence, partnership arrangements are not sufficiently strong, this is most notably with health but is relevant for all partners. Threshold decisions are mostly appropriate although there is more to do to have a collective understanding within the partnership – in particular step up and step-down decisions into Early Help. Partnerships are improving and there is still more to do to manage the impact of increasing demand.

In August 2022, the board was refocused to drive the improvements as defined by the ongoing quality assurance activity since the 2021 visit .

What was achieved in the last 12 months

- Funding for MASH Improvement lead secured driving practice improvements
- Improved partnership contribution to decision making – partnership risk management meetings, partnership operational MASH meetings,
- Improved multi-agency QA activity – dip sampling regime on quality of practice testing key lines of enquiry showing improved quality of MASH decision making and improved management oversight on the child's file
- Monthly Mutli agency auditing highlighting improved practice re consent being sought , history being reflected upon , child's lived experience considered .
- Launch of the new single MARF (Multi Agency Referral Form) for both targeted early help and children's social care
- Funding secured and recruitment underway for the MASH Education Coordinator
- Funding secured and increased health representation in MASH
- Launch of redesigned / streamlined MASH processes, supported by new system design. Improve timeliness and efficiency through re-design of the business processes so we reduce unnecessary handoffs and off-system recording
- Launch of MASH dashboard – giving improved visibility of timeliness on MASH checks and partnership input
- Launch of improved strategy meeting coordination, pre-planned meeting slots, improvements to the 87a process from social care to police
- Launch of new escalation process with police when strategy meetings fall out of timescale
- Monthly meeting with Assessment managers and MASH social work team - improving relationship , step across and single threshold ownership
- Funding secured and new Step to Safety team recruited to ensure timely partnership response to domestic abuse referrals by experts - strengthening pathway to MARAC
- Step across/down to Early help pathways strengthened

Priorities for 2022/23

1. Threshold improvement – new Continuum of need document, and training, to support partnership in determining significant harm and level of need launched [HERE](#)
2. Implementation of new contact centre and IVR solution for MASH, to redirect tasks away from MASH (eg switchboard, complaints, FOI, SAR) to other parts of the council, freeing up MASH to focus solely on safeguarding concerns
3. Appropriately reduce the number of repeat contacts and re-referrals
4. Improve the low referral rate for u5's from health visitors and GPs
5. Workforce structure that is sufficient to meet demand and drive quality improvements (including MASH partners – such as the launch of the new police safeguarding hub to replace the current CAIT model)

MASH Live Auditing (feeding in-to the MASH Sub-Group)

The MASH Live Audit Meetings have taken place monthly, except for August and December 2022. The meeting has attendance from the QA Service (at least 2 staff members), MASH Improvement Lead, two Health Representatives (Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children, Named Professional Safeguarding Children and/or Head of Children's Universal Services, LADO and Safeguarding Lead for Education (education representative) and Police (Detective Inspector). From April 2023, Refuge Domestic Abuse Service and a Service Manager from Targeted Early Help have also been invited to attend the meeting.

During 2022, children were selected by theme but since 2023, the children have been selected at random, with no specific presenting need chosen. Five children are selected for discussion and shared with the group prior to the meeting. A variety of referral sources are selected as well as a mix of social workers within the MASH.

There has been a change in the way the discussion is recorded during the meetings as the meetings have developed. There has been a gap in the minutes of the meetings in Q1 2022-23 due to staff changes. The questions asked during the meeting were revised in April 2023 with QA and the MASH Improvement Lead to improve the flow of the meeting in order to discuss more children.

Since February 2023, there has been a vast improvement in the consistency of threshold application and decision making by MASH. The quality of the recording has improved, evidencing when checks are requested and not received and when the assessments have been completed within timeframe. Social Workers are evidencing their professional curiosity and are recording their findings clearly.

Referrals from partners have also improved. The quality of the referrals audited have shown an increased amount of detail for the child or family they are referring, including documenting children's behaviour and their communication with other agencies prior to referral. Partners take back good practice and areas of improvement to their respective areas consistently. Actions that are agreed at the meeting are now followed up by the Quality Assurance Team and there has been consistent good attendance throughout the meetings with agencies providing cover when they are unable to attend.

Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) Delivery Group

The Child Sexual Abuse Safeguarding Delivery Group takes place Bi-monthly and is chaired by the Operational Director for Children's Care and Support (LBBD) and attended by a wide partnership; Police, Social Care, Education, Health, CSA Centre of Expertise Barnardo's, CAMHS, CCG, legal, Performance and Training and Development

Purpose

Sexual abuse can impact on every area of a child's development; psychological, cognitive, social, emotional, behavioural, physical, and sexual. Improving the professional response to child sexual abuse is a key priority in Barking and Dagenham, both in terms of reducing the long-term impact of sexual abuse on individuals and their families but also on public services and society as a whole. Our vision is to ensure that Barking & Dagenham children who are victims and survivors of sexual abuse receive the best possible medical, emotional, and social support, and advocacy to support them through their recovery and that they get justice for the crimes committed against them. To ensure appropriate prevention work and early identification, reducing CSA incidences by empowering children to speak out and perpetrators to seek help early on.

Achievements

- Barking and Dagenham was one of three boroughs chosen to work with the Centre of Expertise in CSA on two separate pilots – the first delivered a multi-agency practice leads programme for practitioners and delivery of two, one-day introductory multi-agency CSA training courses for our Safeguarding partnership. there are now 12 practice leads who support with the monthly CSA consultation clinics. A second cohort of Practice Leads training through the CSA centre has been commissioned, there will be 15 spaces to fill for the 2nd cohort and training will begin in May 2023.
- The trained Practice Leads continue offering ongoing support and expertise to the wider workforce which includes clinics, consultations (where there has been high demand) and lunch time briefing sessions.
- The second initiative involved LBBD implementing the new CSA pathway with a set of tools and practice guidance that has been developed. The Multi-Agency launch event took place in November 2022 and was well attended by all partner agencies. And received a lot of positive feedback. Ahead of the launch event in November, training and briefing sessions took place in September and October that were supported by the Centre of Expertise in Child Sexual Abuse
- The newly created Social Care Liaison Officer role was appointed to and Officer is in post. This is a result of the partnership between NEL ICS and the LA. The role is based on the Lighthouse Model.
- The Child Sexual Abuse Resource Hub has now gone live and pulls together the "offer" of services and interventions from universal through to targeted early help and statutory threshold of need .
- There has been a strengthened approach to prevention through work with schools , the LADO and Safeguarding Lead for Education is a member of this group and has a strong link with DSL's
- A CSA Bulletin has been developed that is now disseminated through the Partnership.
- Strengthened referral pathways (including a pathway for Sexually harmful behaviour) , improved multi agency attendance at strategy meetings ,and information sharing as the CSA investigations progress
- Improved data capture and reporting functions to understand prevalence and profile including data now available from Met Police.

2023/2024 Priorities

Continuing to

- Consider issues of intersectionality and how children from certain groups may be less likely to disclose the sexual abuse they are suffering - how do we provide all children a space to be heard
- Support schools in tackling young peoples perceptions, attitudes and everyday language with a zero tolerance to sexual aggression.
- Tackle and understand the complexities of technology assisted abuse (online harm).
- To improve data sharing amongst partners to understand prevalence , profile and outcomes
- Continue promoting the Implementation of the new tools and practice framework arising from the second CoE pilot programme
- Develop a CSA Strategy
- Disseminate learning and deliver improvements from the BHR CSA Audit 22-23
- Understand he child's lived experience by creating opportunities for their feedback
- CSA Medical training offered to 40 Partners from the Havens, due to take place in 2023.

Neglect & Early Help Delivery Group

This group ran for just over 18 months and came to an end at December 2022. This group had a large multi-agency attendance, excellent engagement and was chaired by the Strategic Director of Adults and Childrens and took place monthly.

More details can be found on Slide 14 for the work completed over the last year to address neglect whilst improving the Early Help offer.

This group oversaw a significant amount of change and improvements throughout it's time, including the monthly reporting and oversight of the Early Help Improvement programme which originally had two core remits: the Targeted Early Help Improvement and the testing/refining and implementation of the Early Help Target Operating Model. However, since July 2022, the programme team was expected to take forward and expanded scope of work which included the *Supporting Families* (formerly known as troubled families) and The Start for Life and Families Hub Government initiative of which are two separate but independent programmes of work.

The group's purpose was to ensure that

1. Early help is purposeful, safe, spots and manages risks, works in partnership with families and agencies, in line with meeting community needs and keeping children out of statutory support.
2. Children are safe and seen, in a timely way.
3. Children referred to Children Care and Support (MASH) get the right decision first time, and this is done in conjunction with partners, based on a good understanding of a child/family's lived experience.
4. There is a strong working interface across Early Help, MASH, Children in Need and Assessment as to stepping children up and down and consistent application of the thresholds.

Priorities from this group that were met included

- Improvement in getting the basic's right, within Targeted Early Help, ensuring children are safe and seen and ensure there is consistency in practice and improved interface across Early Help with MASH, CIN and Assessment services.
- Better integration across all partners and the wider Early Help landscape.
- Developed locality-based governance and operating arrangements for the Family Hubs, across the localities, coterminous with Schools and Primary Care networks, to enable families to receive a more co-ordinated and joined up offer, reducing the hand offs and enabling families to tell their story once.
- Roll out of a whole system practice framework with a strengthened Lead Professional, Team around the Family approach across universal and early help services, as to ensure families are receiving more consistent and coherent service delivery.
- Production of an Early Help Strategy and plan, across the multi-agency partnership
- Strengthened our whole system offer as to domestic abuse, in accordance with the recommendations arising from the Domestic Abuse commissioning.
- Establishing an Early Help offer that outlines the range of services available to children and families, across the 0-19 Early Help partnership
- The rollout of a new Thresholds document was developed via this group before it more recently moved over to the MASH Subgroup becoming the new 2023 Continuum of Need doc that aligns with the Pan London threshold document.

Prevent Strategic Group

The group meets quarterly and is chaired by the Director of Commissioning for Care and Support. There are a wide number of Partners invited to this group including health, education, social care,

The Prevent Strategy Delivery Group, that also reports into the Community Safety Partnership, shapes the development of our Prevent Strategy, and oversees the delivery. It will lead the response to the Prevent Peer Review. To do this, the group continues to bring together key individuals from across the partnership and oversee the work of the statutory Channel Panel and the delivery of Home Office commissioned partners and link in with our Prevent Account Manager from the Home Office.

Channel definition - ***To safeguard support to an individual who is vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.*** In November 2022 Channel Panel Training was delivered by the Home Office to Barking and Dagenham and spaces were offered to the Safeguarding Children Partnership and Safeguarding Adults Board.

Training in Schools has gone well through 22-23, with a number of assemblies that have been delivered and the learning is always within the safeguarding arena and looking out for the wellbeing of our young people.

Programmes continue to be delivered such as Connect Futures and a programme that sits within schools called BRAVE.

The Home Office have released an Independent review of Prevent [HERE](#) which has outlined some changes for us moving forward.

More Information on Prevent can be found on our Partnership website [HERE](#)

Our Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan has 4 Priorities, more information [HERE](#)

- 1. To work in Partnership to understand the risk of radicalisation in Barking and Dagenham*
- 2. To work with partners and residents to identify and address potential vulnerabilities related to extremism or radicalisation*
- 3. To put in place mechanisms to prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support*
- 4. To deliver a programme to limit and disrupt the activities of extremist individuals who seek to spread or incite violence for a political, ideological, racial or religious cause.*

Our Prevent duty

We are required by law to work to protect people from radicalisation. One of the ways we do this is through the government's Prevent programme.

Prevent is not about:

- spying on a specific group, or section of our community
- trying to divide faiths
- stopping debate and free speech
- censoring people
- encouraging Islamophobia or views against Islam as a religion
- focusing entirely on the threat from Islamic extremism – there are many forms of extremism, and we challenge all of them

The death of a child at any age is a devastating event for the parents, carers, siblings, friends and the communities they lived in. It is crucial that we have robust support and review systems in place to understand why a child death has occurred, provide appropriate support to the bereaved and draw learning from individual cases to prevent, where possible, future deaths.

Every child death is subject to a thorough mortality review led by clinicians in the acute hospital or primary care setting, at a Child Death Review Meeting (CDRM). The output of CDRM meetings is shared with the Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) a multi-agency panel set up to review the deaths of all children normally resident in their area. The Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge (BHR) CDOP reviews Child Deaths from across the three boroughs at monthly meetings.

Number of Child Deaths in Barking and Dagenham

Between April 2022 and March 2023, the BHR CDOP was notified of 31 deaths of children who were resident in Barking and Dagenham which is a significant increase on the previous year, when the BHR CDOP was notified of 21 deaths of children who were resident in Barking and Dagenham.

The BHR CDOP reviewed 19 child deaths of children who were resident in Barking and Dagenham.

Preventability/Modifiable Factors

Modifiable factors are defined as ‘those, where, if actions could be taken through national or local interventions, the risk of future child deaths could be reduced.

- The need to continue to work sensitively with local communities with regards to the risks associated with consanguinity. A leaflet is available, Children’s health and parents related by blood, produced by Redbridge CDOP which is available on the Redbridge Safeguarding Children Partnership website alongside information for parents and professionals.
- The need to reinforce the safe sleeping message at all contacts with parents of infants less than 1 year. Information for parents and professionals is available from the Lullaby Trust. The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel carried out a review in 2020, Out of routine: A review of sudden unexpected death in infancy (SUDI) in families where the children are considered at risk of significant harm, which highlighted learning and recommendations.
- A Themed CDOP Panel was carried out examining the learning from 6 teenage suicides. The learning from this panel will be widely shared.

PARTNER PRIORITIES



What did we do in 2021/2022?

- 2021/22 was a significant challenge due to both unification of the probation service and ongoing Covid 19 recovery.
- Mobilisation has been a challenge which has also been impacted by staff vacancies across the Probation Service. Barking, Dagenham and Havering have seen this impact on service delivery.
- Continue to improve engagement with operational and strategic boards and work has started to improve safeguarding checks.
- MASH Spocs in place and engagement in daily safeguarding calls continue.
- Attendance at Youth resettlement panels and engagement with Corporate parenting group.

What were our Priorities for 2022/2023?

- Increase staff recruitment and retention.
- Implement actions from HMIP inspection.
- Implement a thematic Learning and development plan that includes, Safeguarding and Domestic abuse as themes.
- Improve number of safeguarding checks and referrals and improve information sharing. Work has already begun on a pan-London approach to safeguarding checks.
- Improved transition from the YOS to Adult services.
- Management of Domestic abuse and Youth violence

What did we do in 2022/2023?

- 2022-23 has seen staffing stable in Barking, Dagenham and Havering Probation delivering Unit however, this still remains a challenge not least because of the timing it takes to train and upskill new staff. For the Probation service wider it remains a challenge. However, we are undertaking rolling and focus recruitment campaigns, utilising wellbeing and reward and recognition programmes to improve staff retention.
- September 2022, HMIP inspected BDH PDU as part of the London Regions inspection. The PDU was rated as requires improvement however it was also noted that there is a real consistency in safeguarding practice (albeit not all cases had checks) and partnership working both at operation and strategic level was highlighted as good practice.
- We are delivering a quality uplift programme of training for all operational frontline staff as part of the HMIP action plan which includes safeguarding work.
- MASH partnership remains a strong area of collaborative work as is the Safeguarding board, both of which were noted by the inspectors.

Our Priorities for 2023-2024?

Probation priorities for the next year remain the same as last year and we continue to learn from and build upon previous year.

- Increase staff recruitment and retention.
- Implement actions from HMIP inspection.
- Implement a thematic Learning and development plan that includes, Safeguarding and Domestic abuse as themes.
- Improve number of safeguarding checks and referrals and improve information sharing. Work has already begun on a pan-London approach to safeguarding checks.
- Improved transition from the YOS to Adult services.
- Management of Domestic abuse and Youth violence

Priorities in 2022/23

In accordance with the Trust's Safeguarding Strategy 2021 - 2025, the key safeguarding priorities identified at national and local level continue to be progressed throughout 2021/22, focusing on:

- Think Family – including family when planning care
- Service user Agreement – plan services based on patient involvement and feedback
- Responsive Workforce - ask questions and think the unthinkable
- Harmful Practices – protect adults and children at risk of harm
- Bridging the Gap – preparing young people transitioning from children to adult hospital services
- Empowerment & Advocacy – adhere to the Mental Capacity Act and empower patients to make choices
- Learning from Practice – facilitate training and share lessons learnt from safeguarding incidents
- Learning Disability and Autism – working with partners to ensure service users receive excellent care and support

Key Achievements in 2022/23

- Referrals to MARAC, have improved in frequency and quality
- Pathways for identifying patients at risk of / experiencing delirium have been well embedded across the wards
- Level 3 Safeguarding Children has returned to classroom based sessions
- Level 3 Training for Adults and Children, are taking place on the same day allowing attendees to book a whole 'Think Family' safeguarding event. These are led by children and adult safeguarding practitioners to continue the thread of 'Think Family'.
- Key relationships have been established with our housing colleagues across the Tri-Borough to improve complex discharge management.
- The Learning Disability and Autism Awareness Training has been updated and is being delivered in classroom settings.

- The introduction of the Youth Forum is underway, with key relationships and shadowing of other successful forums progressing well.
- The Child Death Review Process within BHRUT has been streamlined, with a lead nurse being identified and administration support being put into place.
- BHRUT were supported by in-house IDVA's for a trial of 12 weeks, which proved to be a success resulting in plans for this to be a permanent feature of support.
- External speakers coming to BHRUT's Safeguarding Training (i.e. Karma Nirvana, Youth Violence Practitioners and Early Help Practitioners).
- Establishment of safeguarding assessments as part of BHRUT's 'Ward Accreditation', identifying good safeguarding knowledge or areas for improvement.

Priorities for 2023/24

- Continue to implement and embed the new Safeguarding Strategy 2021 – 2025
- Deliver the Learning Disability and Autism Strategy Key Priorities
- Share learning from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews/Practice Learning Reviews/Domestic Homicide Reviews – incorporating a Think Family approach
- Launch the BHRUT Children's Youth Forum in Autumn 2023
- Continue to embed Safeguarding Children Supervision across the organisation
- Recruit Safeguarding Champions across the Trust, who will work closely with the safeguarding leads to support their peers
- The CDR process to continue to expand including the delivery of e-Learning and classroom based sessions
- Improve partnership working with our community health colleagues, including notifications of incidents (youth violence attendances, admissions for non-accidental injuries).
- Improve attendance at subgroup meetings for children at risk of exploitation.

Our Priorities and what we did 2021-23

- **IMPROVING CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH:** Nationally and locally we know there has been an increase in children and young people suffering from poor mental health, this has been exacerbated during the pandemic by schools being closed, on-line learning, lack of social contact and challenges for some young people with online consultations. NELFT want to ensure that all young people who are struggling with poor mental health are seen and assessed in a timely way, risk assessments completed, and care plans are put in place to support their journey to improved mental wellbeing. NELFT will have the Mental Health Support teams (MHST) to support CYP in schools from Jan 22. This will provide early interventions and support for CYP and will work closely with education, Universal 0-19 services, local community, social care and CAMHS to support the SEND Agenda.
- **NEGLECT AND EARLY HELP:** NELFT's commitment to identifying children and young people who are suffering from neglect continues with the additional training in using the GCP 2 assessment tool. Staff are working in a blended model (providing a range of intervention methods to meet the needs of our CYP in the community whilst balancing risks) and are now completing more face-to-face consultations which enable a more holistic assessment to be completed. Some families have struggled during the pandemic and the additional challenges with finances, social isolation reduction in support networks have increased the risk of neglect. NELFT are committed to working in partnership with safeguarding partners to strengthen the support offered to families, working jointly to improve the lives of children. The 0-19 services has also implemented a named Health Visitor for families up to the age of two. This will provide the consistency of service provision and ensure that Neglect or any deterioration can be identified sooner. For children who require Specialist Childrens Services, all children will sit under a specialist care pathway and will have a lead health professional, depending on their complexity and needs. This will ensure that CYP care is not fragmented and minimise any duplication across services. NELFT will also work with our partners to develop joint care planning.
- **COLLABORATIVE WORKING IN MASH:** Following the Barking & Dagenham Ofsted inspection in early 2021 the health offer (CYP and adults) in MASH has been strengthened by strategic support from the CCG as well as an improved understanding of the health role within MASH. Health representation improves the quality of information sharing and decision making, and this will be audited over the next year. Outcomes for children should be improved by agencies working together and bringing their expertise to the joint decision-making following referrals to MASH.
- **SERIOUS YOUTH VIOLENCE :** NELFT recognise the impact of serious youth violence on the young people in Barking & Dagenham and have completed a thematic review and held a Youth Violence Conference in 2021. Learning has been disseminated to staff through 7-minute briefings and a quarterly safeguarding newsletter. Staff will continue to be supported to work with young people affected by youth violence with recognition of the emotional impact on young people and staff. Staff continue to work together with safeguarding partners to identify, risk assess and support young people at risk from youth violence. NELFT is a core member and will continue to support NRM (National Referral Mechanism- Home Office pilot). NELFT will work closely with our partners including LBBY YOS team (providing supervision and thereby positively building resilience for the YOS and social care teams), CAMHS and third sector organisations to tackle youth re-offending through early identification and signposting of first-time entrants into the youth justice system and ensuring there is a comprehensive package of care to discourage re-offending behaviours.

BD SCP STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2023

Priorities and Pledge BD SCP 2023

OVERARCHING PRIORITIES

VOICE OF THE CHILD, lived experience and participation

Getting the BASICS RIGHTS

Strategic and Partnership ALIGNMENT & TRIANGULATION

KEY PRIORITIES

1. The Health & Stability of the Safeguarding Workforce

Without a healthy and engaged workforce no agency can fully participate in and support the work of the Partnership. The Partnership will therefore seek to develop a better understanding of the pressures staff face and the steps that can be taken (including the application of identified good practice) to mitigate them. This will include reviewing information available to us from staff surveys and feedback forums, a greater understanding of case/workloads and supervision ratios as well as the impact of issues such as organisational change and restructure, reduced resourcing levels and increased demand.

2. Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing of our Children and Young People

Everyone has experienced fluctuations in mental health and some days we are all more able to cope with what life throws at us. For children that are in contact with our services, the likelihood is that they have clinical needs that cannot be met purely by social care require support from the multidisciplinary team to ensure safe passage into adulthood. We therefore need to ensure that the issues of mental health are given prominence in all aspects of intervention, recognising the rapidly growing numbers of children and young people who are experiencing poor mental health and supporting them and their families to access the appropriate services and resources available. Working as partners with our providers and commissioned services to improve outcomes for children in this space.

3. Children with SEN-D and Complex Needs.

Ensuring that children with additional needs, such as those with learning disabilities and social, emotional and mental health issues are safeguarded and receive effective support as soon as a need is identified, especially in situations of parental non-compliance/disguised compliance with health care, or whilst children are out of school and not in regular line of sight of their school or health professional. We know that children with additional needs have vulnerabilities that need a multidisciplinary team to thoughtfully support families, so that children and young people can meet their full potential, strengthening a smooth transition into Adulthood. We want to continue to Improve links and joint working with the Voluntary and Community sector to identify vulnerable families that are not known to our services as we as continue to strengthen our Looked After Children and Care Leavers services and address the quality concerns as to unregulated provision in the borough. As well as assuring ourselves and embedding learning from the National Panel around Safeguarding children with disabilities and complex health needs in residential settings.

4. Neglect

Working together to reduce neglect (in all its forms) reduce the impact of neglect and ensure help and support is provided at the earliest opportunity. Ensuring that there is a whole system approach which includes effective integration between the front door, allowing for clear coordination with a shared focus of understanding the journey of the child and family. This will include understanding the local picture of neglect and raising awareness of the refreshed thresholds for intervention, improving recognition and assessment and promoting successful interventions which reduce neglect before statutory intervention.

5. Child Sexual Abuse

Continuing to work with the CSA Centre of Expertise and the CSA Social Care Liaison Officer and ensure consistent and good identification, assessment, intervention and health and justice outcomes for children and young people who suffer sexual abuse, including their families. Prevent children being exposed to sexual abuse through online grooming and to work with the outcomes and findings of the Online Harms Bill in this space. This continues to be a significant need in our borough, and we are developing more sophisticated interventions and work with young people who are sexually abused. Learning from Practice Learning Reviews, continuous promotion of our co-produced toolkits and upskilling of the workforce to identify signs and symptoms earlier on.

Glossary of terms

AILC	Association of Independent LSCB Chairs
BDSCP	Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Children Partnership
BHR	Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge
BHRUT	Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust
CAF	Common Assessment Framework
Cafcass	Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service
CAMHS	Child and adolescent mental health services
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CDOP	Child Death Overview Panel
CSE	Child sexual exploitation
EH&P	Early Help and Prevention (working group)
FGM	Female genital mutilation
FII	Fabricated or induced illness
FJYPB	Family Justice Young People's Board
IRO	Independent reviewing officer
LBBB	London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
LCRC	London Community Rehabilitation Company
LCSPR	Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (used to Serious Case Review/SCR)
MAPPA	Multi-agency public protection arrangements
MARAC	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference
MARF	Multi-agency referral form
MASE	Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation Meeting
MASH	Multi-agency safeguarding hub
NELFT	North East London NHS Foundation Trust
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
PDT	Practice Development and Training (working group)
PLR	Practice learning review
PQA	Performance and Quality Assurance (working group)
SCP	Safeguarding Children Partnership
YPSG	Young People's Safety Group

Population size

A large and growing young population



Highest proportion of 0-17s in UK



Highest birth rate in England and Wales



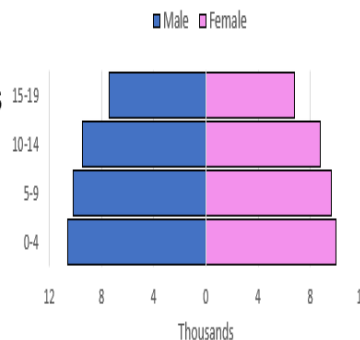
+4,300 0-17s in next 5 years (+6%)



+2,700 18-25s in the 5 years (+ 12%)

25% projected increase in 15-19s

Population by age 2021



Population, 2021-2026

Age	2021	2026	% change
0-4	20,400	21,200	+4%
5-9	19,600	20,400	+4%
10-14	18,500	19,200	+4%
15-19	14,600	18,200	+25%
All ages	221,500	239,300	+8%

Deprivation

High levels of deprivation



17th highest in England and 1st in London for income deprivation affecting children

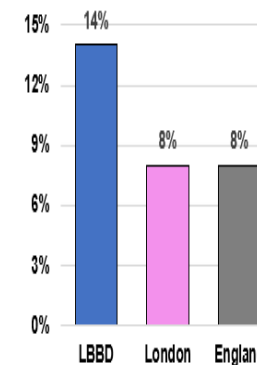


14% of dependent children live in workless households (8% in London)



15% of secondary school pupils claim free school meals, same as London

% dependent children living in workless households



Ethnicity & language

A diverse population



75% of 0-17s are ethnic minorities compared to 67% in all age groups



55% of primary school pupils do not have English as their first language, higher than London (49%)

Ethnicity, 0-17

