

LEICESTER SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP BOARD



YEARLY REPORT 2023/24



Leicester

Safeguarding Children Partnership Board

Yearly Report

2023/24

Report prepared and published in accordance with Working Together to Safeguard Children
2023

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Foreword

We welcome you to the 2023-24 yearly report of the Safeguarding Children Partnership for Leicester. Alongside the publication of our local multi-agency arrangements, this report is a mechanism for reporting on service delivery and leadership, providing a transparent account of our multi-agency work to protect local children.

Amendments made by the Children and Social Work Act 2017 to the Children Act 2004 placed shared and equal duties on police, integrated care boards, and local authorities in a local area, to make arrangements to work together, and with relevant agencies, to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children and young people.

New for our [2023-25 business plan](#) is an impact measure for each key deliverable. This includes a frontline staff survey to be carried out in 2024/25, collection of data, and understanding the experience of children, young people, and families which will all be collated in the second year of our two-year plan and reported in our 2024/25 yearly report.

At the end of 2023 a new edition of the statutory guidance '*Working together to safeguard children*' was published. During the year we have been working to implement this new guidance and this has included reviewing, revising, and updating our local multi-agency safeguarding children arrangements. The new arrangements will be published in December 2024 and will recognise the importance of close partnership working and engagement with education at a strategic and operational level.

The purpose of this report is to bring transparency to children, families and all practitioners about the safeguarding activity undertaken in Leicester during 2023/24. We want to acknowledge the work that frontline workers and managers in organisations throughout Leicester have done and continue to do in partnership to support the welfare and safety of local children. Our thanks go to you all.

Dr Amanda Boodhoo

Independent Chair

Leicester Safeguarding
Children Partnership
Board

Alison Greenhill

Chief Operating Officer

Leicester City Council

Dr Caroline Trevithick

Chief Executive

Leicester, Leicestershire
and Rutland Integrated
Care Board

Rob Nixon QPM






















Chief Constable

Leicestershire Police

The Partnership

The joint and equal duty¹ of Leicester’s three safeguarding partners – Leicestershire Police, Leicester City Council, and Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland Integrated Care Board – is to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in Leicester. This includes agreeing on ways to co-ordinate safeguarding services, acting as a strategic leadership group to engage and support others, and implementing learning from local and national serious child safeguarding incidents.

Partnership attendance at our subgroup and main board meetings is recorded in meeting minutes, which show a good level of engagement from safeguarding partners and relevant agencies. This positive engagement is mirrored by the joint funding of the partnership by safeguarding partners which is explored in more detail later in the report. Our partnership arrangements outline our vision *“for children and young people in Leicester to be safe, well and achieve their full potential”*.

LEICESTER SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP BOARD (LSCP) MEMBERSHIP		
Courts, Criminal Justice, and Blue Light Services	Leicestershire Police	
	National Probation Service (NPS)	
	Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service	
	East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS)	
	Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS)	
Education	Primary Schools	
	Secondary Schools	
	Further Education Colleges	
Health	Integrated Care Board (ICB)	 
	Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT)	 
	University Hospitals Leicester NHS Trust (UHL)	
Local Authority	Children’s Social Care and Education	  
	Adult Social Care	
	Housing	
	Lead Member	
	Public Health	
Other Partnerships	Child Death Overview Panel (C-DOP)	

¹ [Children Act 2024 Section 16E](#)

Safeguarding Children in Leicester

During 2021 Leicester's population reached nearly 370,000 and Leicester was noted as the most densely populated local authority area across the East Midlands (Office of National Statistics, 2022)². It is home to around 36 people per football pitch-sized piece of land.



The percentage of households including dependent children in Leicester rose by 1.8% from 2011 to 2021. During the same period, the percentage in the East Midlands as a whole fell by 0.9%.

According to the Office of National Statistics 'In the latest census, around 213,600 Leicester residents said they were born in England. This represented 57.9% of the local population'³. The 5 most common countries of birth for the population of Leicester in 2021 were England, India, South and Eastern Africa (other than Kenya, Somalia, South Africa and Zimbabwe), Poland, and Kenya.

In 2021, 43.4% of usual residents in Leicester identified their ethnic group as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh followed by 40.9% who identified themselves as White, 7.8% as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African, 4.1% as Other ethnic groups and 3.8% as Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups (Office of National Statistics, 2022)⁴.

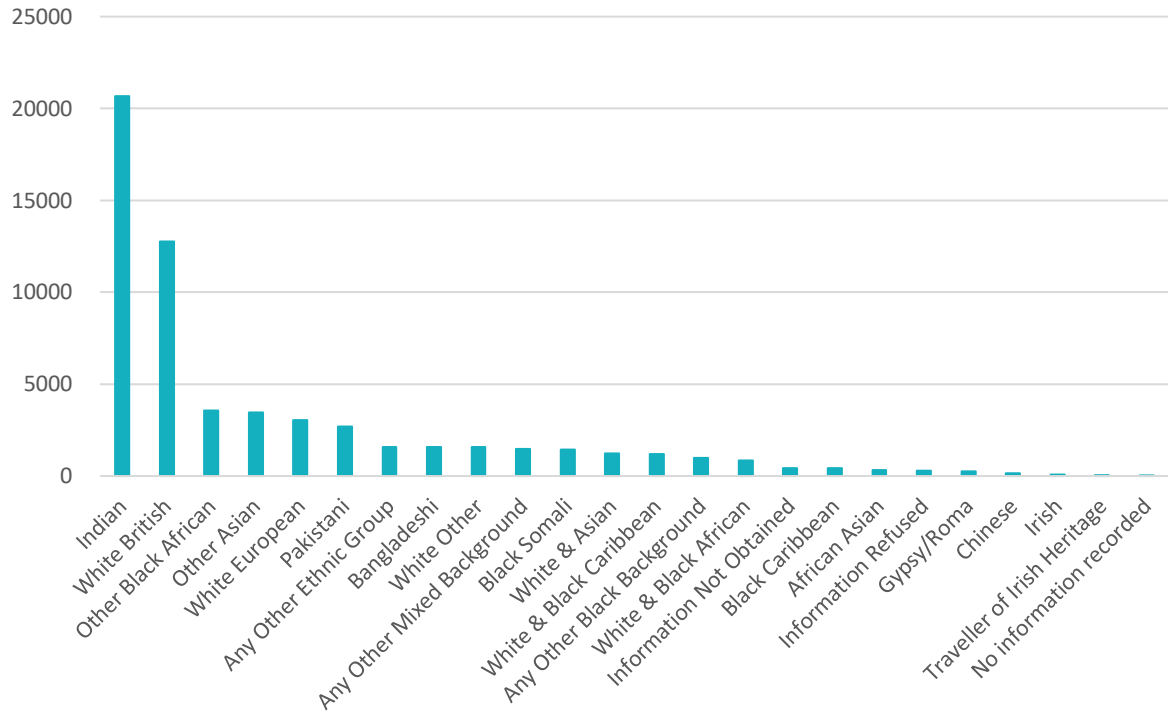
The Spring (January 2024) School Census recorded at least 182 languages spoken by children in schools across Leicester with 47.8% of school children in Leicester recorded as Asian / Asian British, 29.5% as White / White British, 10.6% as Black / Black British, and 8% as Mixed.

² Office of National Statistics (2022) How the population changed in Leicester: Census 2021 <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E06000016/>

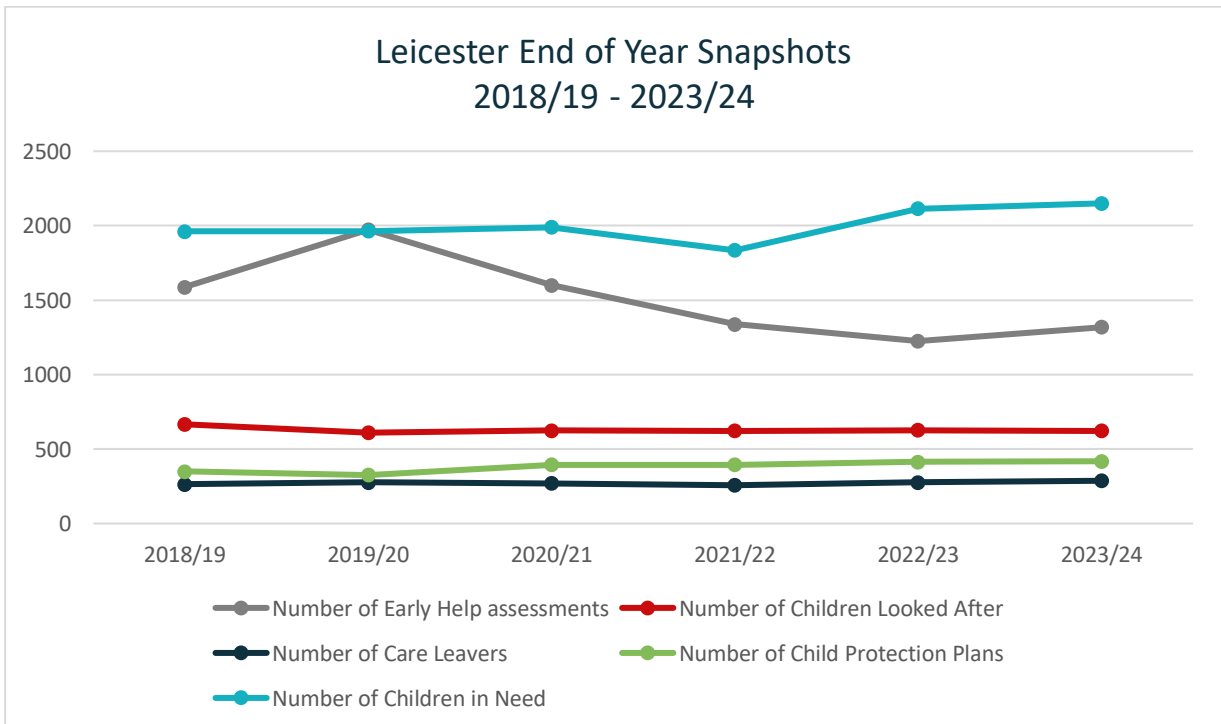
³ Ibid

⁴ Ibid

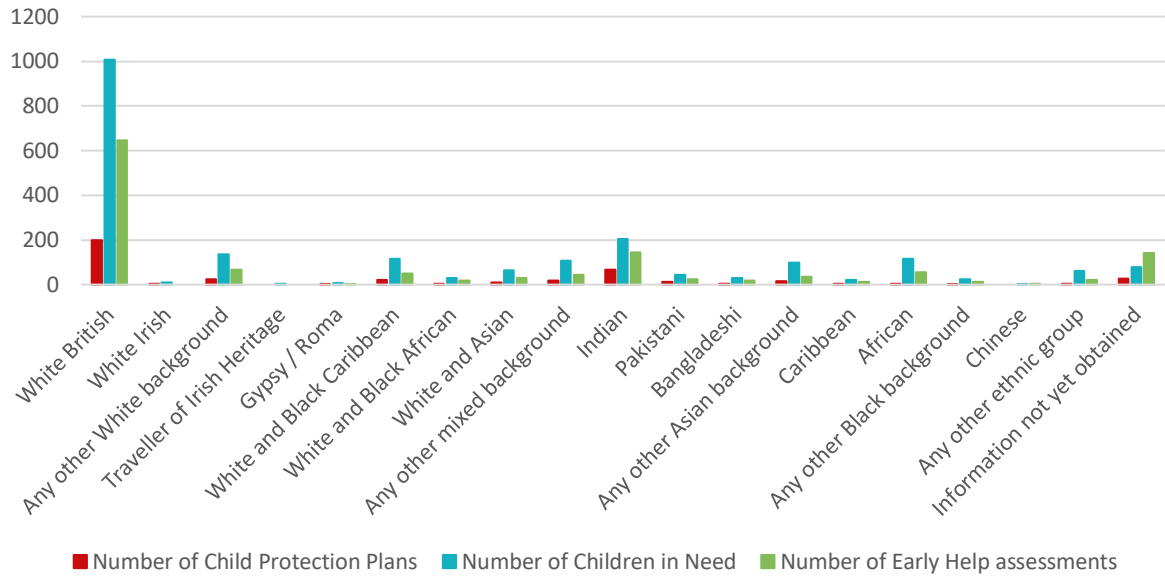
Spring School Census 2024 Ethnicity Summary - Leicester



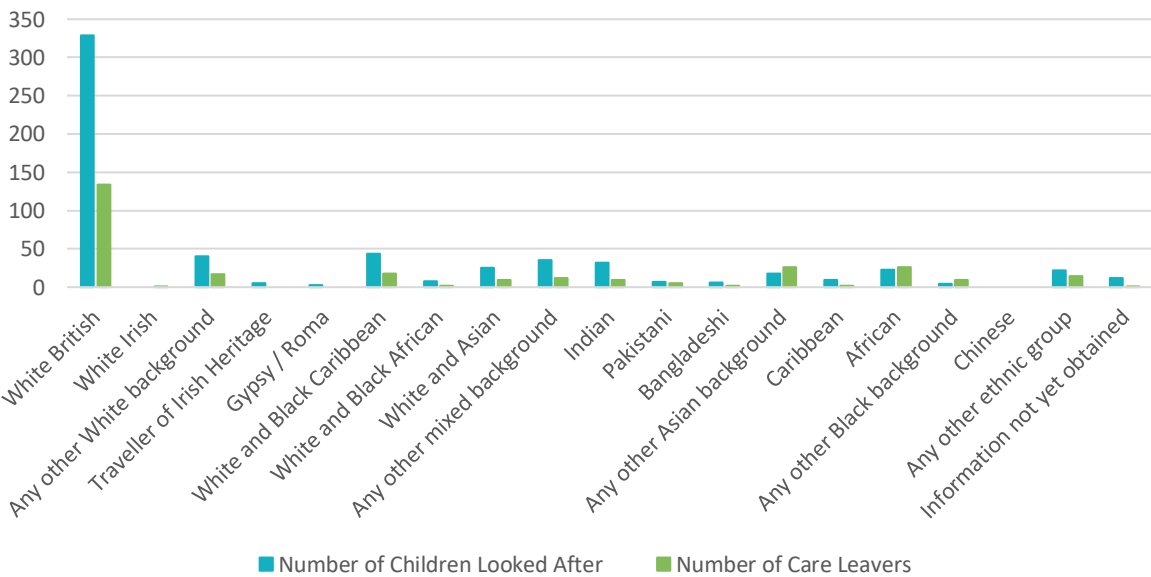
Leicester's Safeguarding Children Data 2023/24



Leicester 2023/24 End of Year Snapshot Early Help, Children in Need & Child Protection Plans



Leicester 2023/24 End of Year Snapshot Care Leavers & Children Looked After



Ongoing work continues to explore, understand, and address disproportionality identified.

Partnership Priorities

The 2023/24 priorities of the partnership are outlined in the 2023-2025 [joint business plan](#) across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. These priorities are safeguarding babies – improving how we work together with families before and after births to safeguard babies; child mental health, emotional wellbeing, and safeguarding; keeping adolescents safe / supporting safe adolescents; safeguarding children from diverse backgrounds; effective safeguarding of independent and out of school settings; transitional safeguarding.

Safeguarding Babies – Improving how we work together with families before and after births to safeguard babies.

Rationale:

- Recent local and national case reviews as well as assurance work of the partnership has highlighted safeguarding risks to babies
- National increase in number and proportion of serious safeguarding incidents that relate to baby deaths and harm to babies
- Two national reviews, three local reviews, and three further rapid reviews regarding baby deaths, exploring: shaken babies; contact and working with fathers/males; substance misuse; pre- and post-birth planning; safer sleeping; possible coercive reproduction

What we did: Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board led on a partnership project obtaining data and information to measure the impact of the implementation of [ICON](#) across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. The partnership completed a safeguarding babies (pre-birth) multi-agency audit. We also developed and published [practice principles engage fathers and male carers in effective practice](#). The safeguarding board office facilitated multi-agency training on coercive reproduction with additional sessions on coercive control including coercive reproduction that continue to be run. Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust, Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Local Authorities, University Hospitals of Leicester, the local Child Death Overview Process (CDOP) and Live Well Little Ones worked together to develop [safer sleep risk assessment tools](#) which have been launched and [disseminated across the safeguarding children partnerships via Safeguarding Matters Live](#).

Around 390 delegates attended the Safeguarding Matters Live session on safer sleep risk assessment tools with a further 39 views of the video of this session. They were also presented at the partnerships' Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) safeguarding forum, reaching further into the voluntary and community sector. Additional impact will be measured via our frontline practitioner audit which is being progressed during 2024.

Promotion of ICON via EVA Radio delivered the radio ICON messages in Urdu, Somalian and Hindi, followed by interviews to discuss the importance of ICON using interpreters to translate the questions and answers. Reach within the FM frequency would be on average

of around 85,000 people giving consideration of programme demographics and other local radio stations within Leicester. Promotion on GEM Radio reached 283,000 adults and Greatest Hits Radio Stamford & Rutland reached 13,000 adults.

Six ICON touch points were delivered by health staff across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland: touch points 1, 2, and 3 provided by midwives (touch point 1 antenatally, 2 post birth and 3 at discharge in the community). Touch points 4 and 5 delivered by health visitors at the 10-14day birth review and then by SMS text and touch point 6 by the GP at the 6-to - 8-week baby check. An audit of midwifery was undertaken with findings that 10% had evidence of ICON being discussed. At new birth visits, within a 12-month period, there were 12,574 contacts where families received both touch point 4 face to face and the touch point 5 text when their baby was 3 weeks old. In Leicester's Early Help bumps and babies group 32 parents received the ICON message. Neonatal Units delivered ICON messages through the STORK programme to 821 adults and The Home Care Team delivered ICON messages to 226 parents in their own homes. Between October 2022 and January 2024 ICON messages were given by Turning Point to 11 fathers to be and 17 mothers to be.

The ICON touch Point video was commissioned and filmed with local health staff and parents in 2022 and launched in 2023 to support ICON training. The video was initially used across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland but in 2023 became available nationally through the ICON website www.iconcope.org.uk. The total number of hits during 2022 to 2023 were 560, full ICON launch 165, Never Shake a Baby total 222, Touch Point Video total 173. Total number of hits in 2023 were 600, full launch 48, Never Shake a Baby total 163, Touch Point Video total 389.

A frontline audit is being planned for 2024/25 to determine the reach and impact of practice principles to engage fathers, coercive reproduction training and awareness raising, and safer sleep risk assessment tools.

Child Mental Health, Emotional Wellbeing, and Safeguarding:

Rationale:

- Case reviews, assurance work and work with young people have identified the following which require further work and assurance:
 - Gap in joint working when children in need of safeguarding have been referred to mental health services
 - Local collaborative response to suicidal ideation in children and young people
- Young people tell us that effective mental health support remains a high priority for them
- Continued follow up to 2021/22 and 2022/23 assurance work regarding safeguarding and CAMHS waiting list

What we did: Sought assurance that mental health and safeguarding are effectively addressed together locally. Received a monthly Child and Adolescent Mental Health service (CAMHS) highlight report. Completed a multi-agency spotlight audit focusing on children

being safeguarded and in receipt of CAMHs. Began reviewing and updating local suicide prevention procedures and guidance, taking into account local reviews and the Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) themed suicide review.

Keeping Adolescents Safe / Supporting Safe Adolescents:

Rationale:

- Work to develop a life-stage approach to safeguarding children relating to extra-familial threat/harm outside the home
- Ongoing concerns regarding a clear response to peer-on-peer sexual abuse
- Developing national approach regarding 'serious youth violence'

What we did: Received assurance from the Violence Reduction Network (VRN) about how feedback is sought from children and how children are engaged in evaluating and improving services for children affected by serious youth violence and/or exploitation.

Explored the development of links between the Adolescence Safety and Diversion Board (ASD) and the safeguarding children partnerships.

Supported the Multi-Agency Child Sexual Exploitation (MACSE) hub in undertaking a regime of audit work.

Safeguarding children from diverse backgrounds:

Rationale:

- The SCPs require more information about how agencies work together with children and their families to safeguard children in the context of intersectionality (the interaction of systems of inequality based on protected characteristics and other forms of discrimination).
- Learning from local reviews has identified a need to consider the role of immigration status, culture, faith, and parenting in safeguarding.
- Recognising the significant increase in Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) in LLR (particularly in Leicester City) and the additional needs and risks for these children and young people.

What we did: Accessed East Midlands Council's [quarterly migration briefings](#) including training and promoted it across the partnerships. Each quarter, the East Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership publish a briefing that brings together different sources of information relating to asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, as well as upcoming training and events.

In addition, the learning and development group chaired by Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust has set up a task and finish group to develop learning and training around the role of

immigration status, culture, faith, and parenting in safeguarding children. This work will continue into 2024/25.

As a result of the partnership making safeguarding children from diverse backgrounds a priority, and accessing and promoting East Midlands Council's quarterly migration briefings, training such as 'IOM [International Organisation for Migration] UK Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children Information Session' is regularly promoted across the partnerships and attended by managers and practitioners.

This enables and supports local practitioners and managers who work with children, to develop their knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children from diverse backgrounds. For example, the information session referred to focused on how unaccompanied children fit within the global context of migration, how children become unaccompanied, routes and journeys of unaccompanied children, situations in Europe, and mental health and wellbeing of unaccompanied children. This knowledge will support local safeguarding partner agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children and young people.

Effective Safeguarding in independent and out of school settings:

Rationale:

- SCP consideration of IICSA reports and local LADO and national data identify the need and opportunity for further work with religious institutions, alternative education, and other out-of-school settings to support robust safeguarding.
- Recognition of the importance to continue to engage with independent schools via the forum set up during 2022/23.
- National Child Safeguarding Practice Review [safeguarding children with disabilities and complex health needs in residential settings](#)

What we did: Developed and promoted [information leaflets for parents and carers](#) about keeping children safe in out of school settings. Continued to host the local Independent Schools Safeguarding Forum, expanding membership across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

Transitional Safeguarding:

Rationale: • Learning from local and national Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs) and Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs)

What we did: A task and finish group was set up to consider 'Are you confident that we are managing transitional safeguarding in the most appropriately effective way? What assurance do we have of this?'. The group were not assured and has since been tasked with

developing a multi-agency Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland transitional safeguarding policy or practice guidance.

The Work of the Partnership

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Procedures

Via the Leicester and [the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnerships Procedures Manual](#), the partnership has ensured that procedures are in place for multi-agency safeguarding in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023. Throughout 2023/24 the following procedures were revised in response to learning from local and national reviews and assurance processes:

- Bruising, Marks or Injury of Concern in Mobile Children: this guidance outlines patterns of bruising, marks or injury that could be indicative of physical abuse.
- Sexual Abuse: Details have been added of how to make a referral to the East Midlands Children and Young People Sexual Assault Service.
- Female Genital Mutilation and Other Harmful Practices: a new section has been added on 'other harmful practices'.
- Children of Parents who Misuse Substances: this chapter has been revised throughout.
- Child Protection Enquiries – Section 47 Children Act 1989: a new section on the national multi-agency practice standards for child protection has been added.
- Early Help Assessment: information has been added from Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 on identifying children and families who would particularly benefit from early help.
- Recognising Abuse and Neglect: definitions have been updated in line with the revised Working Together to Safeguard Children.
- Sexual Abuse: the Child Sexual Abuse in the Family Environment procedure has been updated.

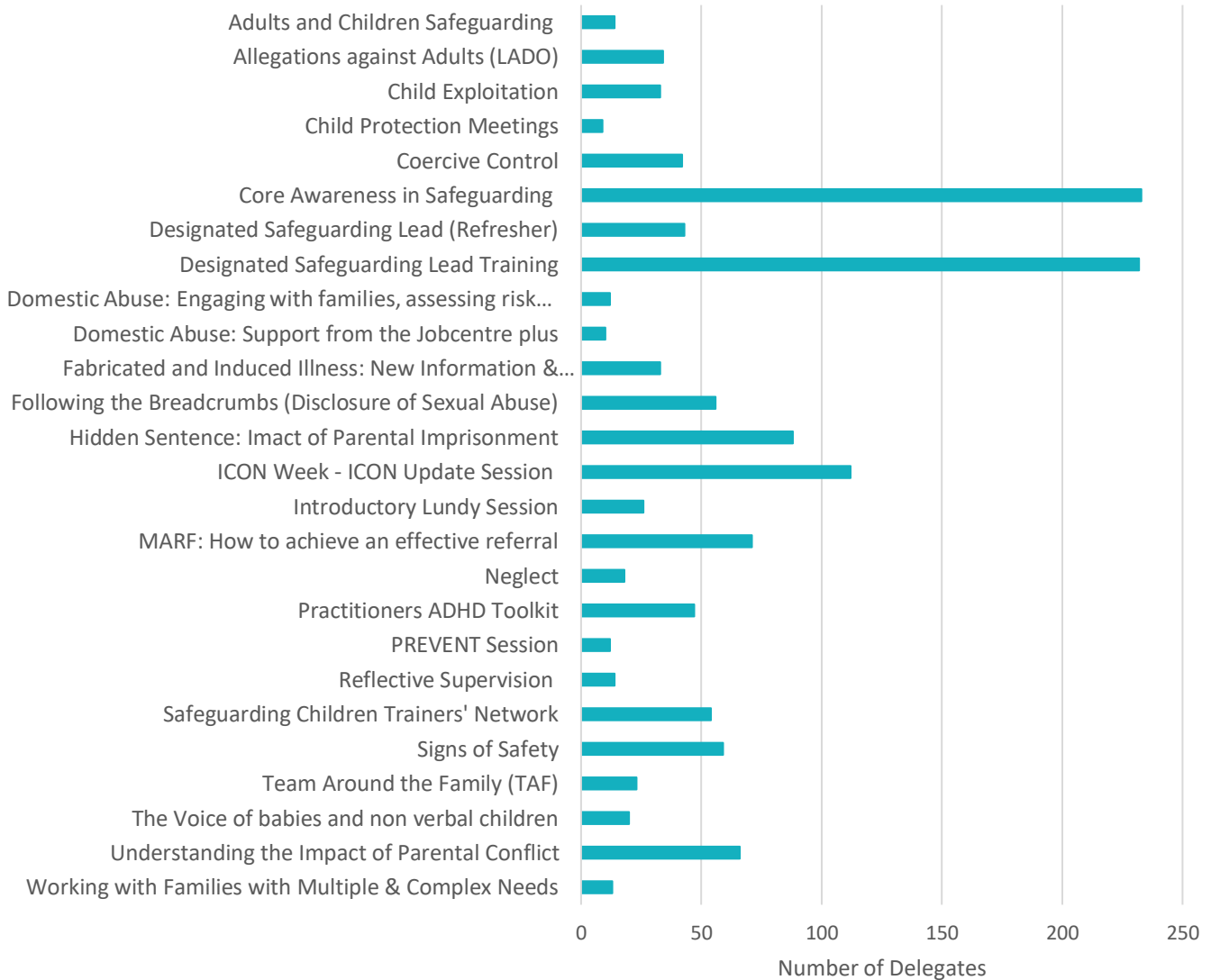
A full list of new chapters and amendments made can be found on the ['amendments' page](#) of the Leicester and the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnerships Procedures Manual.

Training

The Multi-Agency Learning and Development Group (MALDG) on behalf of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnerships, has facilitated multi-agency safeguarding children training across the locality.

During 2023/24 a total of 1,658 delegates attending a combination of our regular multi-agency safeguarding children training (attended by 1,374 delegates) and a festival of learning focusing on safeguarding babies (attended by 284 delegates).

Safeguarding Children Partnership Multi-Agency Training 2023/24

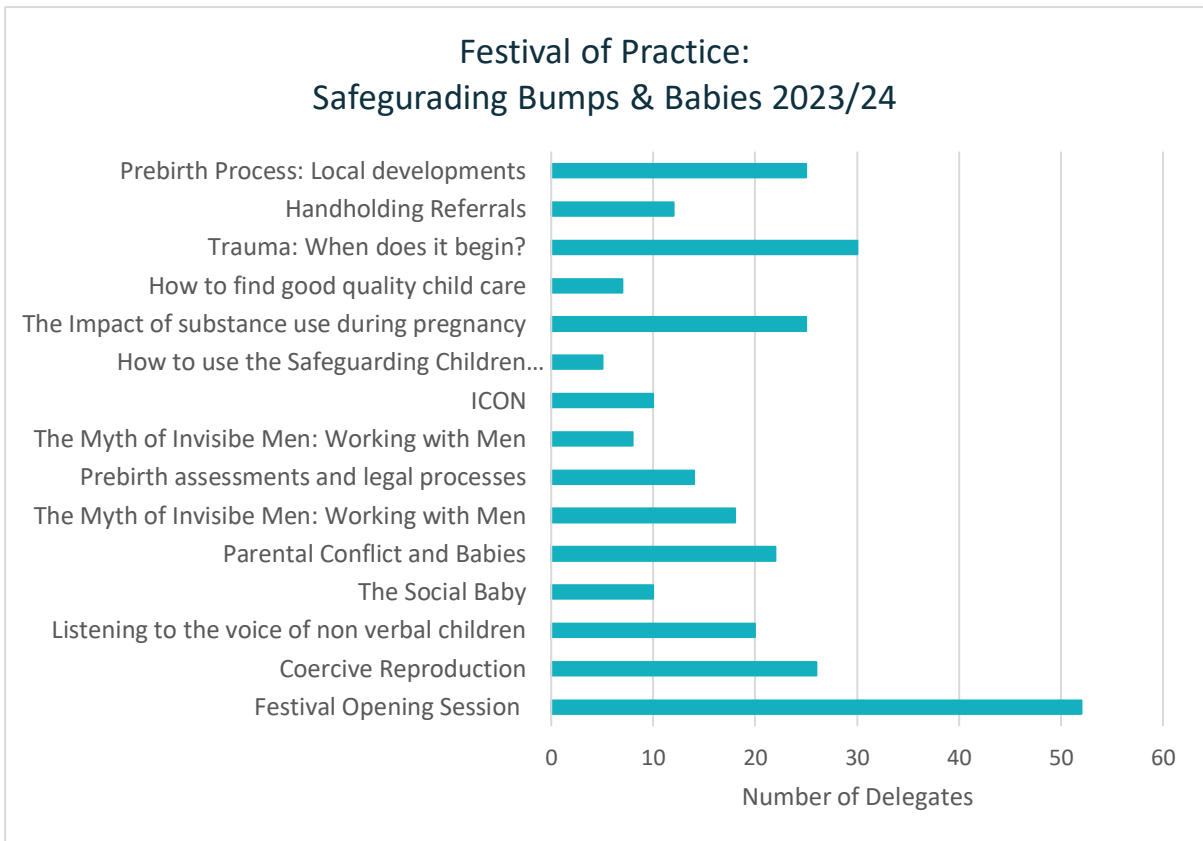


“THIS WAS A COMPLETELY NEW TOPIC OF TRAINING FOR ME AND I LIKED THE PACE AS IT WAS EASY TO FOLLOW AND NOT TOO RUSHED - THE VARIETY OF VIDEOS, VISUAL SLIDES AND VERBAL INFORMATION WAS USEFUL AND KEPT ME INTERESTED IN THE CONTENT THROUGHOUT.”

Evaluation of Fabrication or Induced Illness (FII)

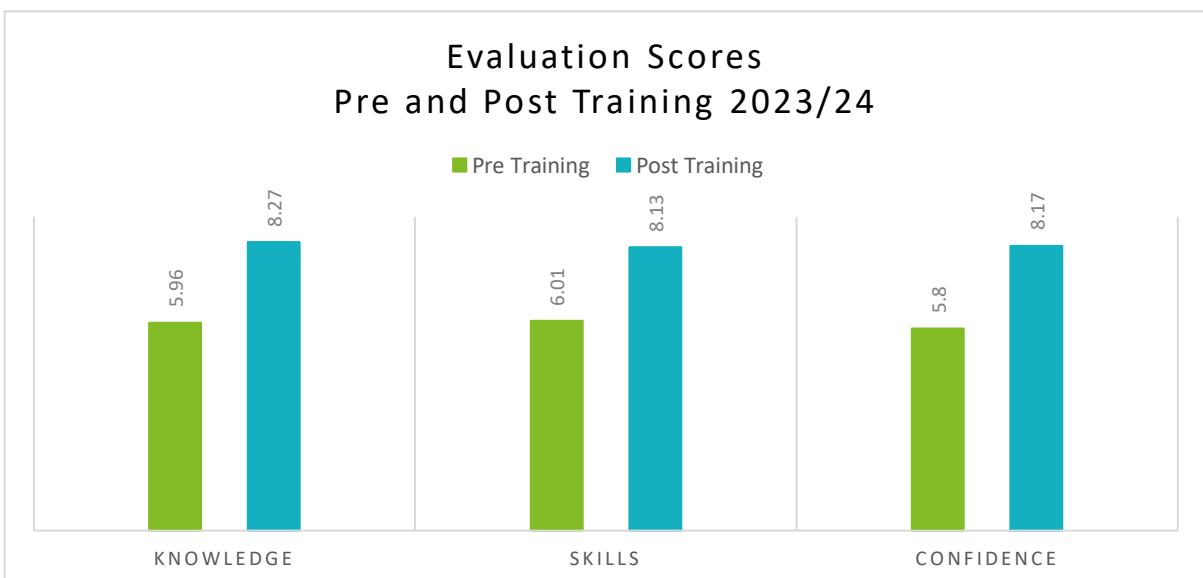
“THE TRAINERS WERE REALLY INSIGHTFUL. I THOUGHT IT WAS BRAVE AND EMPOWERING HOW THEY USED THEIR OWN EXPERIENCES TO EXPLAIN HOW WE CAN MANAGE DISCLOSURES DIFFERENTLY.”

Evaluation of Following the Breadcrumbs: Working with Disclosure of Child Sexual Abuse



Where courses were popular during the festival of learning (i.e. coercive reproduction, the myth of invisible men, safer sleep toolkit, and the voice of babies and non-verbal children) they were incorporated into the future regular training offer for 2024.

Delegates completed pre and post evaluation forms with professionals being asked to rate their own knowledge, skills, and confidence out of 10 before and after the training sessions and to set themselves three key actions which they will put into practice. Across the measurement of knowledge, skills, and confidence there has been an average improvement post training of 2.3, 2.1, and 2.4 points respectively.



The safeguarding children partnerships also facilitated 5 Safeguarding Children Trainers' Networks attended by a total of 54 delegates.

The joint Safeguarding Children Partnerships and Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Boards' [newsletter](#) for staff 'Safeguarding Matters' was published throughout 2023/24 reaching 700 people, and a regular digest was circulated throughout the year with local, regional, and national updates.

Safeguarding Matters Live (a live version of the newsletter presented via MS Teams) was run in June 2023 and December 2023 with attendance from up to 510 and 550 multi-agency delegates respectively. These sessions can be viewed on the new [YouTube channel](#) of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnerships along with videos from the festival of learning, including the [keynote speech](#), the launch of our local [safer sleeping toolkit](#), and the [closing session](#) from Research in Practice on the Pre-birth assessment Change Project.

The local Safeguarding Children Partnerships also worked with the local Safeguarding Adults Boards to develop and launch a ['building confidence in resource pack'](#) focusing on professional curiosity for managers and supervisors. It has not been possible to determine how many times this resource has been accessed, and therefore the impact, but this is something that the partnership is working towards with the long-term goal of implementing a learning management system.

Performance

The partnership has a Quality Assurance Framework is shared with the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership and the work is carried out by the Audit and Assurance Subgroup.

Self-Assessment (Section 11):

The partnership noted that the three safeguarding partner organisations (Police, Integrated Care Board, and local authority children's social care) rated themselves as 'fully effective' in all areas of the 2022 Section 11 Audit, resulting in no requirement for areas for improvement to be progressed (as there were none).

During 2023/24 it was agreed that a frontline practitioner survey would be carried out in lieu of the Section 11 audit for 2024/25. This will allow the safeguarding children partnerships to understand how well learning and resources are reaching the frontline. This work will be progressed throughout 2024/25.

Audits & Dip Sampling

Our audits and dip samples areas of focus were chosen in line with our business plan objectives.

Dip Sampling: Contacts re Children with Mental Health Needs. Ten records were identified for a dip sample audit focused on children with mental health needs. The aim was to

understand the response to the initial contact and if this was proportionate and based on robust information sharing. It also aimed to understand how Child and Adolescent Mental health Service (CAHMS) had been involved in the referral process.

The audit highlighted that the mental health triage system following a referral is not fully understood by safeguarding partners. As a result, information was disseminated to agency leads to raise awareness with front line staff about the referral process to support a child's emotional and mental health and access to CAMHS. This information will enable front door services to ask exploratory questions when they are notified that a child has been referred to 'CAMHS' and to understand whether the child has been offered and attended Early Support Services or is waiting for or has received a CAMHS assessment.

Dip Sampling: Neglect. The aim of this audit was to see how well the Children's Social Care services follow up information that is shared and / or cross check and triangulate information across partner agencies. Ten cases were audited, four of which were from Leicester City. Audits were carried out by the following agencies:

- Leicestershire County Council (Social Care, Early Help)
- Leicester City Council (Social Care, Early Help and Leicester City Inclusion Service)
- Rutland County Council (Social Care & Rutland Inclusion Service)
- Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT)
- Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Integrated Care Board
- University Hospitals of Leicester
- Leicestershire Police
- Probation Service
- Turning Point (substance misuse support services)
- Living Without Abuse (domestic abuse and sexual violence support services)
- Harborough District Council

Leicester's areas for improvement were identified as: The local neglect toolkit was not considered or used in any of the 4 cases; on one occasion significant information held by LPT was not requested; contact with GPs was a concern in 3 out of 4 cases; in all four cases fathers were invisible and their voice was not sought.

Good practice included multi-agency procedures being applied; in all audits all children were judged to be safe; assessments were completed for all cases; the voice of the child was captured in all cases; there was evidence that health records contained good information about children and in the main good information sharing was evidenced.

Recommendations from the dip sample were:

- Raise awareness about the local [Neglect Toolkit](#) and how useful it can be.
- Strategy discussions need to be clear on child protection medicals being required for neglect and physical harm – raise awareness of this and ensure all strategy discussions consider and document the need for medicals.
- Explore how GP involvement in safeguarding concerns can be strengthened.

- Raise awareness of importance of including fathers in assessments and making fathers visible (include stepfathers and partners).
- Seek assurance on the implementation of the single digital solution for health agencies.
- Raise awareness about professional curiosity and parenting assessments.
- Ensure that health agencies are requested to attend meetings and have access to appropriate information and or reports to contribute.

The impact of this work will be measured through the frontline staff survey currently being progressed.

Pre-birth Audit. A ‘deep dive’ multiagency case file audit of a total of cases across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. Ten cases were audited, five of which were from Leicester City. Audits were carried out by the following agencies:

- Leicestershire County Council Children’s Social Care
- Leicester City Council Social Care
- Rutland County Council (Social Care)
- Leicestershire District Councils (North West Leicestershire District Council)
- Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Integrated Care Board Primary Care (ICB)
- University Hospitals of Leicester (UHL)
- Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT) 0 – 19 Healthy Together Service
- Turning Point (substance misuse support services)
- Living Without Abuse (domestic abuse and sexual violence support services)
- Probation Service

What worked well?

- ✓ In four of the five Leicester cases a clear history of risks was identified.
- ✓ Timely actions were undertaken in four out of the five Leicester cases.
- ✓ Creative work by the social worker and tenacity over the time working parents was seen in three out of the five Leicester cases.
- ✓ Two out of the five babies were able to stay with parents.
- ✓ There was good multi-agency engagement in four of the five Leicester cases.
- ✓ All Leicester cases were referred as soon as possible by midwifery and safeguarding referrals by midwives linked to [signs of safety](#) to help generate maternity safeguarding plans.
- ✓ Seven of the twelve cases were discussed at monthly GP Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meetings; in three cases these included discussions with health visitors. This reflected good knowledge of the cases and risks to the unborn were demonstrated clearly in eleven of the twelve cases.
- ✓ Where required two of the babies were seen in their foster care placements by the health visitor within the scoping period. Where relevant there were clear details recorded of foster carers in two cases.

- ✓ Where a baby became looked after, the Initial Health Assessment was timely. Where another baby was going to be adopted the adoption medical was also completed in a timely fashion.
- ✓ There was evidence of good liaison across health services by LPT in six of the twelve cases.
- ✓ The Probation Service evidenced a good awareness of the risk to the unborn / baby, good management oversight, and good multi-agency working however there was a lack of knowledge of the [multi-agency pre-birth procedures](#).
- ✓ In the one case where Living Without Abuse (LWA) had involvement, they reported good communication between their practitioner and the social worker.

What were we concerned about?

- ✗ GPs were informed late or not invited to conferences in five of the twelve cases.
- ✗ Whilst one Leicester case demonstrated good voice of the child, this was not evident in five of the twelve cases.
- ✗ Children's Social Care had good engagement and worked with fathers in three of their five cases but overall there needs to be better engagement of fathers and families / friends / support networks.
- ✗ Understanding and reflection of cultural and diversity needs.
- ✗ There were four cases where a parent or parents had a learning disability or a learning need. There needs to be better reflection in such circumstances, including ensuring an understanding of the extent of that disability or need.
- ✗ A need for Improved record keeping – this includes comprehensive chronologies and genograms to understand family networks and relationships. Improved recording of safeguarding within maternity services.
- ✗ Improved supervision and management oversight of some cases for some services. In Leicester city there was good oversight in three of the five cases.
- ✗ A need to strengthen communication between services and across services from other areas outside Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.
- ✗ Better use of resources for example: The Neglect Toolkit was only used in one case from Leicester city whereas previous historical neglect of a child or children was evidenced in three city cases.

Recommendations from this audit were:

1. Raise awareness and learning and increase skills in relation to working with parents who have a learning disability or learning difficulty and / or mental health needs.
2. Continue to monitor and seek assurance around the development and implementation of a single digital solution for access to and information sharing between Health Visiting and Midwifery.
3. Improved reflection of culture, race, and ethnicity – there is a need for increased learning in this area across agencies.
4. Continue to monitor and seek assurance around a single digital solution across health agencies to allow access to and sharing of information, including fathers and male carers/partners.

5. Strengthen cross agency presence at conferences and key meetings. It is important to recognise that no single health practitioner represents all of health.
6. Review and refresh of the pre-birth procedure and flowchart, in the light of this audit and national pre-birth assessment Change Project.
7. Consider services to parents after their baby is removed.

The review and refresh of pre-birth procedures has been completed and the re-launch was promoted via the learning and development group in June 2024.

Child Exploitation Audit. The Audit and Assurance Group supported the Multi-Agency Child Sexual Exploitation (MACSE) Hub in undertaking a new regime of audit work analysing 60 cases where child exploitation was a feature. Findings will be reported into the safeguarding children partnerships during the 2024/25 business year.

Safeguarding Keep in Touch Meetings

The Audit and Assurance Group considers updates from the monthly Keep in Touch (Kit) meetings which provides opportunities to reflect on safeguarding issues emerging for partners at a strategic level.

Information shared at the meetings throughout 2023/24 has enabled senior managers to inform their frontline practitioners about new staffing initiatives by partner agencies who have designed specialist roles to focus on children and parents at risk, and for staff to be aware of any anticipated workforce shortage and mitigation in their area of work.

At the start of 2023/24 a data set was agreed with the three Local Authorities to be presented to these meetings to track changes in contacts and referrals into Children's Social Care from different staff groups. The data supports early recognition of areas of the workforce that may benefit from enhanced support from agency safeguarding leads.

Regional data is also regularly considered at these meetings.

Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

This report should include *'a record of key decisions and actions taken by the safeguarding partners in the yearly cycle, including in relation to implementing the recommendations from any local and national child safeguarding practice reviews and the impact this has had'* (Working Together, 2023, p.41).

Local Rapid Reviews and Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (LCSPRs)

In line with Working Together 2023, safeguarding partners must identify serious child safeguarding cases that raise issues of importance in relation to their area and commission and oversee the review of those cases if they consider a review to be appropriate.

All serious child safeguarding incidents must be reported⁵ by the local authority to the national Child Safeguarding Review Panel (established under the Children and Social Work Act 2017). Following notification, safeguarding partners are required to undertake a rapid review (a review of multi-agency records to assemble the facts and identify any immediate learning). Upon completion of a rapid review, partners must then consider whether the circumstances meet the criteria and guidance for a local child safeguarding practice review⁶.

Meeting the criteria does not mean that safeguarding partners must automatically carry out a local child safeguarding practice review and it is for safeguarding partners to determine whether a review is appropriate, given that the purpose of a review is to identify improvements to practice (Working Together 2023, p.135). Independent scrutiny of safeguarding partner decision making related to reviews is provided locally by the partnership's Independent Chair.

At the start of 2023/24 one local child safeguarding practice review remained in progress. This review was concluded during 2023/24. The completed report did not make recommendations but instead provided findings and questions for the safeguarding children partnership to consider. These findings and resulting assurance and action undertaken can be found in the [briefing published](#) on our website.

During 2023/24, Leicester safeguarding partners completed seven rapid reviews which led to learning being identified, with resulting action plans being monitored by the partnership. In addition, and in agreement with the [Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel](#), one local child safeguarding practice review was commissioned in January 2024.

National Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

In April 2023 the [Phase 2](#) report from the national safeguarding practice review into 'safeguarding children with disabilities and complex needs in residential settings' was published by the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel. The Phase 1 report was published during 2022/23 and reported upon during that business year. Further evidence from the investigation in Doncaster, including additional national learning, was incorporated into the Phase 2 report. On 02 May 2024 Leicester safeguarding partners attended the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel Webinar: Safeguarding children with disabilities and complex health needs in residential settings and fed learning back into their organisations.



⁵ [Guidance: Report a serious child safeguarding incident \(June 2018\)](#)

⁶ [Children Act 2004 Section 16F](#)

In response to the publication of [Working Together 2023](#) safeguarding partners undertook a review of the safeguarding children partnership arrangements in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. The Independent Chair adopted the approach of “constructive critical friend” to promote reflection to drive continuous improvement within the partnerships. Updates to local multi-agency arrangements are in development and new arrangements will be published in line with the statutory timeframe of December 2024.

The Voice of Children and Improving Professional Curiosity

Safeguarding partner organisations and relevant agencies have detailed, for this yearly report, how they hear the voice of children in their work:

Leicester City Council Contribution:

“**Adult social Care (ASC)** continues to interface with children’s safeguarding in the context of working with families this is reinforced through safeguarding adults training and safeguarding competence framework. ASC practitioners have a specific role in identifying and reporting concerns in their work with adults who have care and support needs. Work has already been undertaken to support early identification and timely reporting of children who require safeguarding intervention through embedding practitioner understanding of the trilogy of risk and through training delivered internally to all staff. Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Social Care held a Festival of Practice in October 2023 which was open to both Children’s and Adults Social Care staff there are a number of sessions running throughout the week including Exploring Rights, Diversity & Inclusion through a Trauma informed Lens and Relational Engagement through a Trauma Lens.”

“Children’s Social Care

Signs of Safety and the LUNDY model of participation are embedded across all work reiterating the voice and experience of the child, their family and network, ensuring they are central in all interventions with families, including collaborative working on safety / wellbeing / success goals and plans. Collaborative audits include feedback from families wherever possible.

All assessment and planning forms include children and families views across all aspects of the progressing plan to ensure their understanding and views. This is monitored and reviews by managers within supervision and Independent Chairs / Independent reviewing Officers for children subject to Child Protection plans or looked after.

Feedback from children and families is requested at all review meetings and across the work of Family Therapy teams. There are specific Quality Assurance activities to gather feedback and collaborative case file audits routinely include views of family.

Complaints and commendations are monitored and reported on allowing any emerging themes to be responded to.

We complete sessional evaluations for children attending our children in care council, care experienced consultants and young people's council. Young people attend and engage in Scrutiny commissions – Overview Select, Health and Children and Young People. Young people regularly attend Corporate Parenting Board.

Our Children's Rights and Participation Service have supported young people to feedback their views around improving services for all young people – including taking part in the National Policing consultation, consultation of NHS vaccines, consultation of Libraries service development with research partners, Activist and consultation on the SEND transitions strategy.

Within this year we have trained care experienced young people to quality assure our independent children's homes.

Young people have Coproduced the Leicester Asks consultation/questionnaire which will be undertaken in the coming year with all looked after children."

Leicestershire Police Contribution:

"DASH (Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harassment and Honour Based Violence) risk assessments capture child impact during domestic abuse deployments

Public protection notices – these are completed by officers and staff for a broad range of circumstances when the police encounter children. Within the template of this report there is dedicated space for the voice of the child to be captured (amongst other elements) to sign post officers

Case conference reports – the voice of the child is captured from existing police interactions and features within this space

Dedicated specialist investigation teams – the child abuse investigation unit and Child Exploitation Team have additional specialist training to capture the voice of the child during investigations

Specific templates within our case recording systems are embedded to sign post and remind responders and investigators to capture child's voice at relevant junctures.

Operation Encompass – this is a national programme that takes the reports of Domestic Abuse (and broader child protection matters) and shared this information with schools proactively. This process captures the child's voice (with processes detailed above) and shared with professionals to offer proactive silent support to children.

Leicestershire Police is supported by an excellent CHISVA (Children and Young People's Independent Sexual Violence Advocate) service. Feedback on cases is received by them to direct and tailor how we provide our service to children.

Victims needs assessments – each report involving a crime with a child involved have a tailored victim needs assessment.

Multi-agency Child Exploitation Audit regime captures child voice.

Internal Police audit regime has specific focus on child's voice.

All of this narrative and feedback then form individual plans for how to respond or tailor the investigation/report on a case-by-case basis.

Core member of the Violence Reduction Network which includes a workstream on child/youth voice from children/young people most affected by violence.

Police representation at the Leicestershire Hope Hack and the Policing Hope Hack wherein children/ young people generated insights on violence and solutions to preventing violence and vulnerability locally.

Close working with Violence Reduction Network (VRN)-funded interventions which routinely gather insights and feedback from participants with the aim of continuously improving the service offer."

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board Contribution:

"During the 2023/24 business year the ICB has not engaged directly with children in relation to safeguarding children work. The last time we did this was when we commissioned the Barnardo's Domestic Violence report and the Was not Heard film.

However, we have led initiatives to support front line staff in consultation and discussion with children to identify abuse, sexual abuse, child exploitation and serious violence:

From the three City Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (LCSPRs) where the children were all abused in care: we have disseminated information to ensure children are given the opportunity to be seen by themselves and out of earshot of parents/carers during consultation, and to 'think the unthinkable' in terms of recognising and asking the right questions in relation to the potential for children in care to be subjected to abuse by foster carers/care homes, or for the abuse to continue if family have access to the child.

In addition: we have disseminated prompt questions to front line health staff across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland to identify through discussion with a child or young person whether they are subject to child exploitation or serious violence.

We have negotiated questions that are now included in the assessment undertaken by Barnardo's key workers when a child with Learning Disability / Autism is on the Dynamic Support Register and at risk of hospital admission, to identify whether a child is subject to child exploitation or serious violence."

East Midland Ambulance Service (EMAS) Contribution:

“The majority of EMAS attendances are to adults and as EMAS is an emergency service we do not case hold, it can at times be challenging for EMAS to gather feedback from children and to involve them in service development however there is a continual push to build on what we already have in place.

EMAS safeguarding training is delivered as think family and promotes the voice of the child. The referral form has section for the crews to document the voice of the child, in particular their wishes for the referral.

EMAS have a communication tool that has been designed with a visual pain score and body map to promote communication with younger children and non-verbal children. Education has been provided on learning disabilities and Autism to empower staff to engage with patients.

During 2022-2023 There have been no complaints raised by children that crews have not listened to them. EMAS have an easy read PALS leaflet to provide information as well as an easy read investigations form that can support the PALS team in liaising with children to gather their opinion.

EMAS policy provides clear direction around the voice of the child in relation to providing care. EMAS education is delivered from a think family perspective emphasising the importance of engaging with children.

All EMAS redesign of services must have an Equality Impact Assessment, Well Being Impact Assessment and Quality Impact Assessment completed to ensure that all individuals' needs are met.

EMAS will engage with specified patient groups as and when the need arises.

The EMAS Clinical Audit & Research Unit (CARU) are undertaking some research in which involves children and young people participation. The project is expected to run over the next 3-4 years. Please see link to a published abstract of the work completed so far.

[https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/12/Suppl_1/A2.2.](https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/12/Suppl_1/A2.2)”

Finances

LSCP B 2023/24 Contributions	
Police	£51,850
ICB	£51,850
Leicester City Council	£111,100
DfE Grant Funding	£47,300
Total	£262,100

LSCP B 2023/24 Spend	
Independent Chair	£10,391
Board Office Staffing	£166,011
Membership Fees	£914
Case Reviews	£0
Engagement and Comms	£1,000
Procedures	£3,400
Training	£5,000
Miscellaneous	£154.04
Total	£186,870

Observations from our Independent Chair and Scrutineer

This is my first opportunity to contribute to the annual report, having been in role now since July 2023. I was delighted to be appointed to the role of independent chair and scrutineer. This was a jointly appointed role, working across Leicestershire and Rutland and the Leicester Safeguarding Children Partnerships.

The role of the independent scrutineer is to act as a critical friend to promote reflection and drive continuous improvement. The independent scrutineer considers how effective our local safeguarding arrangements are and provides constructive feedback and recommendations on this to the strategic partners for their consideration. The independent scrutineer also scrutinises the partnership's annual report.

This annual report acknowledges the progress made by the partnership throughout the year and the challenges that remain, which the Partnership is committed to addressing in the coming year.

During my first year of undertaking the role I have Chaired the meetings of the Joint Leicestershire and Rutland and Leicester Safeguarding Children Partnerships Board and have attended monthly meetings with the statutory partners.

I have used the 'Six Steps to Independent Scrutiny' (now called Checklist for Independent Scrutiny), published by Vulnerability Knowledge and Practice Programme (VKPP) to develop a workplan to inform the scrutiny process.

As part of this workplan, in collaboration with the statutory partners I have undertaken in depth scrutiny as part of a review of the safeguarding arrangements, which immediately highlighted commendable strengths and practices as well as identifying areas to be taken forward in the form of developments to comply with the requirements as set out in the 2023 Working Together to Safeguard Children. Areas of scrutiny have included:

- Terms of reference and membership for the partnership and sub-groups
- The Business Plan
- Minutes of meetings
- The identified priorities
- The learning and development offer
- The quality assurance framework and data set
- The 2022-2023 annual report
- Published strategies and documents
- Structures and roles of the business team members
- Meeting with individual partners and practitioners
- Observation of subgroups

- Observation of rapid reviews and the local child safeguarding practice review process, scrutiny of the subsequent reports and observation and scrutiny of the approach to implementing and assessing the impact of learning
- Observation of training and learning and development events
- A co-production exercise to gain the views of all partners.

Future opportunities to engage with children and families is planned.

In undertaking the role of independent Chair and Scrutineer there is clear evidence of robust partnership arrangements to ensure that children in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland are safeguarded and their welfare promoted.

The safeguarding arrangements are supported by strong and committed leadership, with all statutory partners fully committed to the safeguarding ambitions of the Partnership. There is a culture of openness, respectful challenge, and a willingness to learn. There is positive collaboration and joint working with the Safeguarding Adult Board statutory partners to consider joint priorities.

The Multi-agency Safeguarding Arrangements for the Safeguarding Children Partnership continue to comply with Working Together 2018 and is well placed to take forward the changes and new arrangements in Working Together 2023 with minimal disruption.

In the coming year the need to strengthen the partnership arrangements is recognised, and significant efforts are already underway. *Strong change management, systems leadership, and systematic processes will be crucial for future developments.*

As the Independent Scrutineer, I am committed to hearing directly from children, young people, families, and frontline practitioners to understand what is working well and how multi-agency working can be improved. While challenges lie ahead, I have confidence in the ability of Leicestershire and Rutland and the Leicester Safeguarding Children Partnerships to build upon its strengths and I will continue to scrutinise and support the Partnership in navigating risks and challenges.

Dr Amanda Boodhoo

Independent Chair and Scrutineer, Leicester Safeguarding Children Partnership

Priorities 2023-25

We have identified five priority areas for us to focus our collective efforts, following the principle that we should concentrate our capacity on a small number of topics, in order to have significant impact, rather than dissipate our resources by trying to do everything. Based on our analysis of the situation across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) we have identified the following priority areas:

1. Safeguarding Babies – Improving how we work together with families before and after births to safeguard babies
2. Child Mental Health, Emotional Wellbeing, and Safeguarding
3. Keeping Adolescents Safe / Supporting Safe Adolescents
4. Safeguarding Children from Diverse Backgrounds
5. Effective Safeguarding in Independent and Out of School Settings

For each of these areas, we have set out our rationale for prioritising the topic, and presented the key deliverables, leads, activities, impact measures, and timescales. This will enable us to monitor progress and secure assurance that our actions are making a positive difference to the lived experience of our residents. Our full business plan has been [published on our website](#).

LSCPb Structure Chart 2023/24

