



ISCP

**Islington Safeguarding
Children Partnership**

Annual Report

September 2022- March 2024

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This report highlights the dedicated efforts of our three statutory partners – the Metropolitan Police, NCL Integrated Care Board and Islington Local Authority and the wider partnership.

We are delighted to present the annual report for the Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership (ISCP) covering the period from September 2022 to March 2024; this 18-month reporting period supports us to align our future reports with the timeframes set out in the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 guidelines.

We are hugely proud of the work that we as a partnership undertake, the challenge and support we provide to each other, and our commitment to keeping children and young people first and foremost in everything that we do. The annual report is an opportunity to reflect on the progress made over the last period, the achievements and impact as a partnership, as well as looking ahead to the challenges of the future.

One of our ongoing priorities is to tackle structural inequalities across the services and as a workforce. We will continue to reflect on where progress has been made, whilst highlighting and proactively addressing where we still need to improve. For the coming year, a greater focus on the data is required to support one of the partnerships key functions, this will support addressing underrepresentation across services and support our priority objectives.

The ongoing and presenting challenge of neglect and parental factors is highlighted in our new priorities. Our commitment to addressing domestic abuse continues as a focus, supported by the successful daily safeguarding meeting, that provides a well embedded approach to ensure a quick and joined up multi-agency response to the needs of women and girls who are subject to violence and abuse.

One of our greatest challenges in Islington are the low attendance figures across primary and secondary sectors, as well as the disproportionality that exists in the rate of exclusions and suspensions. We will respond this coming year with a set of actions to work with schools and partners in improving rates of attendance, however this is a complex and worrying issue, which needs a partnership and public health response to ensure all children and young people remain visible.

In February 2023, Department for Education published Stable Homes, Built on Love, an implementation strategy and consultation, where the strategy sets out a vision to rebalance children’s social care away from costly crisis intervention to more meaningful and effective early support. Part of the reform was linked to Working Together 2023, where partnerships are looking to design and test reforms to children’s services from family help, through to the edge of care. We in Islington and with our partners are focusing on ensuring families can access the right support at the right time, through a multi-agency co-located referral process and locally based, multi-disciplinary family help services providing welcoming, seamless and effective support that is tailored to the needs of children and families.

As the three statutory partners of the Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership, we are committed to establishing a system-wide, ‘families first’ culture. This overarching system reform is supported by clear and shared multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (MASA) and effective information-sharing. We are also strengthening the role of education at a strategic level. Additionally, we are making greater use of family networks, promoting earlier family group decision-making throughout family help and child protection. Targeted funding is facilitating these efforts, enabling more children to live safely at home or transition into kinship care.

We would like to thank all our partners, practitioners and volunteers for their commitment to safeguarding, with a special thanks to the work, due diligence and wisdom of our independent scrutineer, Alan Caton.

Jon Abbey
Corporate Director of Children Services
London Borough of Islington

David Pennington
Director of Safeguarding & Looked After Children
NHS North Central London Integrated Care Board

Emma Barker
Detective Superintendent, Head of Public Protection
Central North Borough Command Unit



The Islington Safeguarding Children Partners, as part of their arrangements to safeguard children and promote their welfare, are required to demonstrate that they are open to independent scrutiny. According to *Working Together 2023*, independent scrutiny should drive continuous improvement, add value and provide assurance that arrangements are working effectively for children, families, and practitioners. It should also consider learning from local child safeguarding practice reviews, national reviews, and thematic reports.

I have been appointed as the independent chair and scrutineer to offer independent scrutiny of the Islington safeguarding arrangements. This is my review of the annual report and assessment of how effective these arrangements have been over the past 18 months, highlighting areas of success and those needing further development.

There are many strengths to the safeguarding children arrangements across Islington. The partnership is open to scrutiny and challenge, striving to continually learn and improve practice. There is strong leadership and a clear sense of joint and equal responsibility from the three safeguarding partners. The partnership is built on high support, high challenge, and encourages difficult conversations.

I am highlighting two areas of partnership functions which require attention, review and progress. Firstly, *Working Together 2023* outlines that the Lead Safeguarding Partners should agree on the level of funding needed to deliver effective multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. This includes business and analytical support, independent scrutiny, infrastructure, and core functions such as CSPPs, multi-agency training, and learning events. Funding contributions from statutory safeguarding partners should be 'equitable', however, in Islington, funding arrangements have not been reviewed and fall disproportionately on the local authority, with consistently low contributions from the police; this needs urgent review to ensure joint and equitable funding contributions.

Secondly, to fulfil its functions, the Islington Safeguarding Children's Partnership should use data to assess the effectiveness of services offered to children and families. Data needs to be multi-agency,

and it is incumbent on the local authority, statutory partners, and relevant agencies to provide the necessary data. Currently, the partnership lacks a sufficient multi-agency data set. There needs to be a greater emphasis on obtaining multi-agency data, particularly from police and health, along with sufficient commentary and analysis to monitor the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding and practice. I am aware this issue is being progressed.

This detailed report highlights the commendable work carried out by the partnership, reflecting its unwavering commitment to the safety, well-being, and development of children and young people in the borough.

The Disproportionality and Inequality Task and Finish Group (page 9) has carried out excellent work in tackling disparities and promoting equity across the borough. Their efforts have played a crucial role in creating a more inclusive and supportive environment for all children. The partnership has successfully prioritised the voice of children, actively involving them in decision-making processes and leveraging their insights to improve coordinated service delivery.

Tackling domestic abuse has been a long-term priority for the ISCP. The partnership has taken steps to address the impact of parental factors such as domestic abuse and violence, particularly through the restructuring of services, like implementing the Daily Safeguarding Meeting (DSM) to replace the monthly MARAC (Page 25). The positive impact of the DSM cannot be overstated, facilitating excellent multi-agency working and enabling swift identification and response to emerging concerns.

The annual report from the Missing Children and Exploitation Subgroup showcases the partnership's determination to protect children from harm and support those affected by these experiences (pages 27 and 28). While there has been improvement in the routine offer and completion of return home interviews (RHIs) by the Exploitation and Missing Team, more work is needed by the partnership to address and support those missing and those with repeat missing episodes.

The partnership in Islington has shown real vigour in learning from serious cases (pages 41-45). Reviews of serious child safeguarding cases aim to identify improvements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Islington Safeguarding Partners have a well-organised group of multi-agency professionals overseeing reviews and ensuring a culture of learning and continuous improvement. The group is keen to see that recommendations from reviews improve outcomes for children and that lessons learned are embedded into practice. A robust audit regime ensures that learning is revisited and embedded.

Neglect continues to be the most common form of child abuse across the UK, reflecting the position in Islington. It is vital that there is early recognition of neglect to ensure a consistent and timely response. The partnership has adopted the ISCP Neglect Toolkit, but it is not yet well embedded or used consistently across all agencies. I will continue to challenge agencies to use the ISCP Neglect Toolkit to identify children at risk of neglect and hope to see further increases in returns and early intervention.

The partnership's safeguarding training is well-received and effective in fostering collaboration among professionals, empowering them with the knowledge and tools needed to safeguard children.

In conclusion, this annual report showcases the outstanding work carried out by the Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership over the last eighteen months. Their dedication, collaborative spirit, and consistency in safeguarding have yielded remarkable results. I am confident they will continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of the children and young people they serve.

Finally, I thank all the organisations and individuals in the public, voluntary, and private sectors who work tirelessly across Islington to improve the safety and quality of life for our children, young people, and families.



Alan C Caton OBE
ISCP Independent Chair/Scrutineer

Islington Statutory Safeguarding Partners Report to Local Scrutiny and Assurance Frameworks.
Integrated Care Board, Safeguarding Accountability Meeting and Children’s Scrutiny, MPS Public Protection Delivery Group

Islington Statutory Safeguarding Partners

London Borough of Islington

NHS North Central London Integrated Care Board

Metropolitan Police Service

Local and Sub-Regional Strategic Partnership with other Boards and Groups

London Safeguarding Children Partnership

Islington Children’s Trust Partnership Board

Islington Safeguarding Adults Board

Youth Justice Services Management Board

Health and Wellbeing Board

Islington Safeguarding Children’s Partnership Executive

Islington Safeguarding Children’s Partnership (ISCP)

Disproportionality and Inequality Task and Finish Group

Transitions Task and Finish Group (ended Jan 2023)

Quality Assurance Subgroup

Education Subgroup

Missing Child and Adolescent Subgroup

Training and workforce Development Subgroup

Case Review Subgroup

Early Help Subgroup

Purpose of this report

Legislation requires local safeguarding arrangements to ensure that local children are safe, and that agencies work together to promote children's welfare. The statutory safeguarding partners must publish an annual report at the end of September. Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership previously reported on activities from September to August, however, changes to Working together to safeguarding children 2023 state the reporting period should be April to March. This report will be an 18-month report, spanning from September 2022 to March 2024. The report must set out what the Partnership have done because of the arrangements, including information on child safeguarding practice reviews, and how effective these arrangements have been in practice.

The report will also include:

- Evidence of multi-agency collaboration in safeguarding children, detailing how partners have worked together to improve outcomes across early help, looked after children, and care-experienced young people.
- Progress on agreed priorities, highlighting both successes and areas requiring improvement, supported by key performance indicators and case studies.
- Evaluation of training programs and their impact on frontline practice, demonstrating how staff development has enhanced safeguarding outcomes.
- Learning from serious case reviews and the implementation of local and national recommendations, with a focus on measurable improvements and

sustained change.

- Feedback from children and families on safeguarding services, including how this input has shaped decisions and influenced service delivery.

Audience of this report

The report will be submitted to:

- The Local Authority's Chief Executive Officer and Leader of the Council
- Integrated Care Board
- The local Police and Crime Commissioner / MPS Borough Commander.
- The Health and Wellbeing Board.
- Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel.
- What Works for Children Social Care.
- All practitioners and senior leaders from relevant agencies and statutory services outlined by the Lead Safeguarding Partners
- Children, Young People & Families.

Individuals and Boards are asked to note the findings of this report, and to inform the Independent Chair / Scrutineer and statutory partners of the actions they intend to take in relation to those findings.

Remit of this report

This report follows the ISCP Annual Report 2021/22 and covers the period from 1st September 2022 to 31st March 2024.

Publication

The report will be published as an electronic document on the Partnership's website.

Methodology

In writing this report, contributions were sought directly from Partnership members, chairs of sub-groups and other relevant partnerships. The report draws heavily on numerous monitoring reports presented to the Partnership and its sub-groups during the year, such as Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Report, Private Fostering Report, Corporate Parenting Board report, update to the SEMH Review, the VAWG and Youth Safety Strategy and impact of Islington Trauma Informed Practice in schools.

The report also demonstrates work done by partners pertaining to the ISCP's core functions, such as, learning from local child safeguarding practice reviews, quality assuring partners in the form of audits and developing and delivering multi agency learning events.



Address the impact of inequality and structural racism on vulnerable children and to create a better understanding of data across all of Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership.

The **Disproportionality and Inequality Task and Finish Group** has made significant strides in tackling inequality and racism within the borough, focusing on both **service delivery** and **workforce diversity**.

Key achievements include improvements in **ethnicity data collection** and targeted actions to reduce disparities, particularly with groups under-represented in services like CAMHS.

However, the report does identify inconsistencies in ethnicity data collection across agencies, showing that while progress has been made, there is still a need for improved tracking and transparency.

The ISCP's commitment to tackling disproportionality remains strong, with action plans in place to review and adjust efforts moving forward. The action plan from relevant agencies will be reviewed in January 2025 to ensure that continuous work occurs to embed a culture where services work towards understanding cultural competence to provide an equitable intervention.

Address the impact of neglect on children and to help them become more resilient

Neglect remains one of the most challenging and persistent issues faced by safeguarding partnerships across the country. Despite being a longstanding priority for the **Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership (ISCP)**, neglect has continued to present significant challenges, both locally and nationally. During the **ISCP Development Day in June 2023**, neglect was described as the "elephant in the room", highlighting the need for renewed focus and action across the partnership.

In **January 2024**, the **ISCP Neglect Toolkit** was revised to better equip professionals with structured guidance on identifying and addressing neglect (particularly in complex cases). However, ISCP acknowledges that more work is needed to embed these tools and processes consistently across agencies. As such, neglect remains a priority for the partnership, with further initiatives planned, including a **multi-agency audit on neglect**, scheduled for **November 2024**. This audit aims to critically assess the partnership's approach, ensuring that there is an effective response to neglect across all services.

The Child Safeguarding Practice Review for Child B also highlighted how easily neglect can drift which is often masked by other presenting risks and concerns that require constant reacting interventions, allowing neglect to permeate. The learning and subsequent recommendations calls for more specialist consultations with the professional network to avoid drift.

Address the consequences of harm suffered by children because of domestic violence, parental mental ill health, and substance abuse, including helping children who have suffered harm to become more resilient

The ISCP has taken steps to address the impact of parental factors such as **domestic violence**, especially through the restructuring of services like the **Daily Safeguarding Meetings (DSM)** to replace the **monthly MARAC** meetings. This approach has resulted in a more dynamic, responsive process that addresses high-risk cases more efficiently. The report highlights positive feedback from service users, with 83% of survivors feeling safer and 94% recognising abusive behavior. However, there is room for improving **multi-agency working**, especially around follow-ups and long-term intervention, to ensure better outcomes for children affected by these issues.

Regarding the correlating **parental mental ill health** and **parental substance misuse**, we observe that both add to the complexity of intervention. Like neglect these require further focus as parental mental health is becoming a significant barrier to intervention with restraints on available services. The ISCP is informed by the learning reviews and Child X thematic review (pg45) demonstrated a need for a comprehensive 'Think Family' approach from adult facing services to support early identification and intervention. This priority has adjoined to neglect for the next reporting period of 2024/2025.

Identify and help children who are vulnerable to sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and gangs.

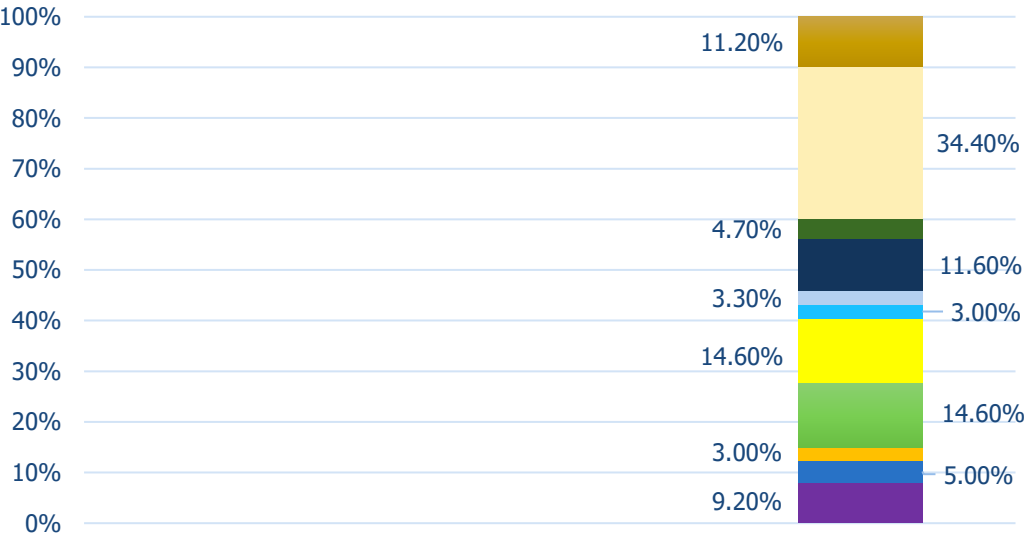
The **MCAE Annual Report** highlights progress in managing **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)** and **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**, particularly through the work of the **MACE panel**. There have been improvements in the collaboration between the **police, youth services**, and **London Borough Islington children social care** to address the overlap between missing children and exploitation risks.

The report also emphasises the need for a stronger focus on **girls**, who are becoming more involved in missing episodes and violence (pg 28). The ISCP has initiated a **targeted action plan** to improve responses to these challenges, but more work is needed to address gaps in **return home interviews** (RHIs) and early identification.

Based on the ISCP development day we saw the MCAE become disbanded in March 2024 and subsumed into the MACE panel where the governance structure is aligned with the London Operating Protocol (MPS).

Islington is a small, densely populated inner London borough with a total population of 223,000, which is estimated to decrease by 2.9% by 2040. The borough is the second smallest in London in terms of area (after the City) and has the second highest population density. The population age profile is on average younger than those for London and England, with 45% being young adults aged between 20 and 39 years. There are approximately 38,320 children and young people aged 0-18 living in Islington, and around 67,600 0–25-year-olds. The proportion of children from the global majority is relatively high at 54.4% and a significant proportion of children live in households where English is not the first language.

Ethnic Breakdown of Islington Under 18s, 2021 Census

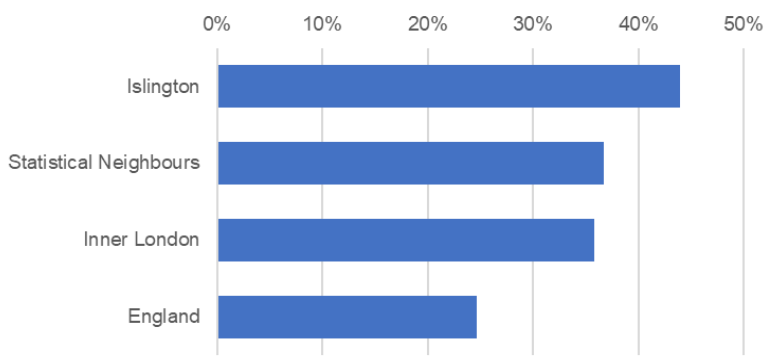


- Any other ethnic group
- Asian - Bangladeshi
- Asian - Other
- Black - African
- Black - Caribbean
- Black - Other
- Black - Other
- Black - Other
- Mixed - Other
- Mixed - White and Black Caribbean
- White - British
- White - Other

In terms of relative deprivation, Islington has been identified as one of the most deprived boroughs in London, with higher levels of poverty, unemployment, and inequality compared to other areas of the city. According to the latest Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) published by the UK government in 2019, Islington is ranked as the 16th most deprived local authority area in England, out of a total of 317 local authorities.

The IMD considers a range of factors, including income, employment, health, education, crime, and housing, to provide a comprehensive picture of overall deprivation. While Islington is home to some affluent areas, such as Angel and Canonbury, there are also significant pockets of deprivation and inequality, particularly in parts of Holloway and Finsbury Park. An example of the deprivation can be illustrated by the percentage of Islington pupils eligible for free school meals and comparison to statistical neighbours and England:

% eligible for Free School Meals, January 2024



Effectiveness of Islington’s Children Services Contact Team. Islington **received 13,807 contacts** requesting a service for children in 2023/24, a **12% increase** from numbers in 2022/23.

The most common source of contacts was from the police - 26.2%, followed by schools - 16.1%, Family members/ Relative and Carer - 7% and Education Welfare Service - 5%.

Contact Reason	#	%
Information Requests (Other Agencies)	1783	12.9
Domestic Violence (Physical/Emotional/Financial/Sexual)	1715	12.4
Parenting Capacity	1407	10.2
Child Mental Health	1344	9.7
Parental Mental Health	717	5.2
Physical Abuse	717	5.2
Neglect	699	5.1



- 6,351 (45.9%) of contacts were progressed to receive an early help service, 2,169 (15.7%) received a statutory social care service, 4080 (29.5%) received no further action, following oversight by Children’s Services Contact Team and 1203 (8.7%) received information and advice.
- Islington had the 19th highest rate of children assessed as Children in Need (at any point during the year) in the country in 2022/23.
- Compared with statistical neighbours, Islington had a marginally higher rate of children subject to a child protection plan (at any point during the year): the rate for 2022/23 was 90 per 10,000 for Islington, versus 89 per 10,000 for the statistical neighbours.
- Islington also had the same rate of Section 47 investigations as statistical neighbours: the rate per 10,000 children was 213 for Islington, mirroring our statistical neighbours.
- Islington had a higher proportion of repeat child protection plans (24%) compared to statistical neighbours (22%).
- Overall, the length of child protection plans was the same in both 2022/23 and 2021/22 at 58%.
- Islington continues to have more children looked after per 10,000 than its statistical neighbours – 90 children per 10,000, compared with 68 per 10,000. However, there is also a noticeable drop for Islington since 2021-22, when the rate was 105 per 10,000. This is likely attributed to a larger cohort of CIN children, however the number of UASC children has fallen which may explain the drop in the Islington rate of looked after children.
- Islington’s proportion of looked after children with three or more placements during a year is equal to the proportion for statistical neighbours at 10%.

Since August 2021, the Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership (ISCP) has prioritised tackling inequality and structural racism, with a specific focus on vulnerable children. The establishment of the Disproportionality and Inequality Task and Finish Group chaired by the Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children with the Assistant Director of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance (London Borough Islington) was a key milestone in achieving this objective. The group's mission has been to identify and address disproportionalities in both service delivery and workforce composition across partner agencies, ensuring an equitable system for all children and families in Islington.

To achieve these findings, the group adopted a structured methodology between November 2022 and March 2023. Each relevant agency was asked to complete a summary report outlining their current data and responses to disproportionality through the lens of service delivery and workforce diversity. This data was then analysed to identify trends, strengths, and areas for development, providing a comprehensive understanding of both service provision and workforce disparities across the partnership. The methodology ensured that the voices of underrepresented groups were considered, and provided a foundation for the group's recommendations. This produced a report in October 2023 and presented to the ISCP board, with an expectation that all agencies create an action plan to present March 2024 ISCP board meeting demonstrating how they plan to understand their data better and methods make services more equitable.

Key Actions and Findings:

1. Data Collection and Categorisation:

A significant challenge identified by the group is the inconsistency in how agencies collect and categorise ethnicity data. This has limited the ability to perform coherent analyses across the partnership. Agencies often use different categories, and the frequent use of the "unknown ethnicity" category hampers efforts to accurately track and address disproportionality.

To address this, the ISCP has called on all relevant agencies to improve their data collection processes and adopt more standardised approaches. A specific focus has been placed on reducing the use of the "unknown ethnicity" category, ensuring that ethnicity is properly recorded so that disparities can be better understood and acted upon.

2. Service Delivery Disparities:

The review revealed that certain ethnic groups disproportionately access services, raising concerns about potential barriers or biases in service provision. Some agencies, like the Youth Justice Service (YJS), are already taking steps to address these issues. For example, the YJS has developed a *Disproportionality Needs Analysis* to better understand referral patterns and service uptake, particularly regarding access to CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services).

Agencies are now expected to implement systems that track disproportionality in their service delivery and in the referrals they make to other services. This includes understanding whether certain groups face challenges in accessing support and monitoring the effectiveness of actions taken to address these issues.

3. Workforce Disparities and Recruitment Practices:

The review also highlighted disproportionality within the workforce, particularly at senior management levels. Many agencies already have systems in place to analyse staff ethnicity data, including comparisons of hierarchical positions and salary. However, disparities remain in leadership roles, where the global majority is underrepresented.

To address this, agencies are implementing more equitable recruitment practices. These include actions such as reducing recruitment bias, ensuring diverse representation on interview panels, and providing cultural competence training. The goal is to create a workforce that better reflects the diversity of the Islington community and offers equitable opportunities for career advancement.

Moving Forward:

The ISCP anticipates that these actions will lead to a deeper understanding of, and more effective responses to, disproportionality within the partnership. Improving data accuracy, addressing disparities in service delivery, and creating a more inclusive workforce are critical steps toward ensuring that all children and families in Islington receive equitable support.

To ensure accountability and progress, agencies will monitor the impact of these initiatives, with findings presented at future ISCP board meetings. This ongoing process of review and collaboration across the partnership will help to drive.



Highlights of Good Practice in Addressing Disproportionality and Inequality

1. London Borough of Islington Children Services: Bright Start and Bright Futures:

Targeted Outreach: These services have effectively used data to identify underserved groups within their localities. By taking a locality-based approach, they have implemented targeted outreach efforts, such as engaging the Somali community in the north and the Bangladeshi community in the south. This includes setting up workshops and drop-ins at community locations like the Muslim Welfare House and Finsbury Park Mosque, ensuring that these groups receive the support they need.

2. CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services):

Data-Driven Improvement: CAMHS has utilised data to improve service accessibility for ethnic minority groups, particularly addressing the underrepresentation of Black African young people in Social and Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) services. By conducting a health equity audit and planning a focused dive into SEMH disproportionality, CAMHS is developing a detailed action plan to ensure that services are more equitable and accessible to all.

3. Youth Justice Service (YJS):

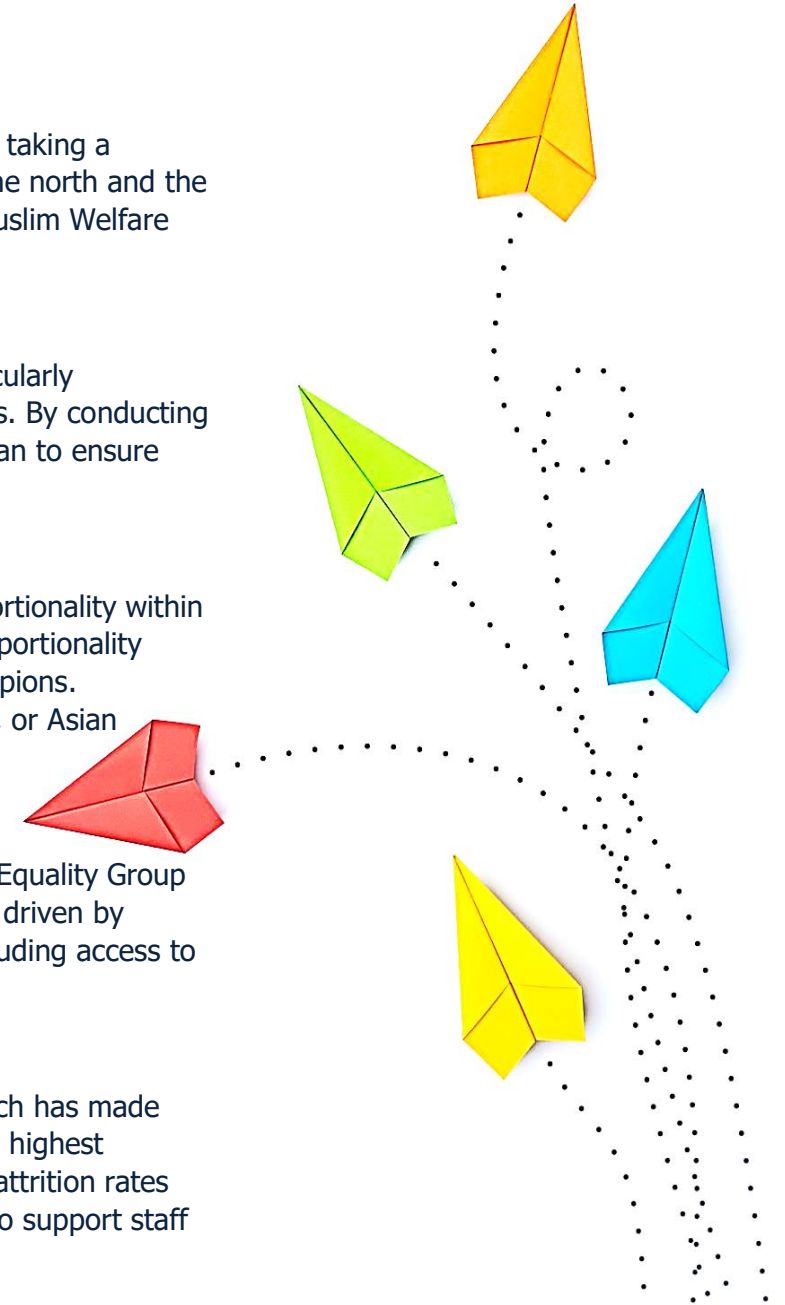
Proactive Measures to Address Disproportionality: The YJS has implemented several strategies to reduce disproportionality within their service. These include the use of pre-sentence report statistics to highlight inequality in sentencing, monthly Disproportionality Forums to engage staff on relevant topics, and training sessions for police officers led by young people and parent champions. Additionally, the YJS commissions the 'Ether Group,' a targeted intervention for young males from Black, Mixed Heritage, or Asian backgrounds, which has contributed to a reduction in reoffending rates among these groups.

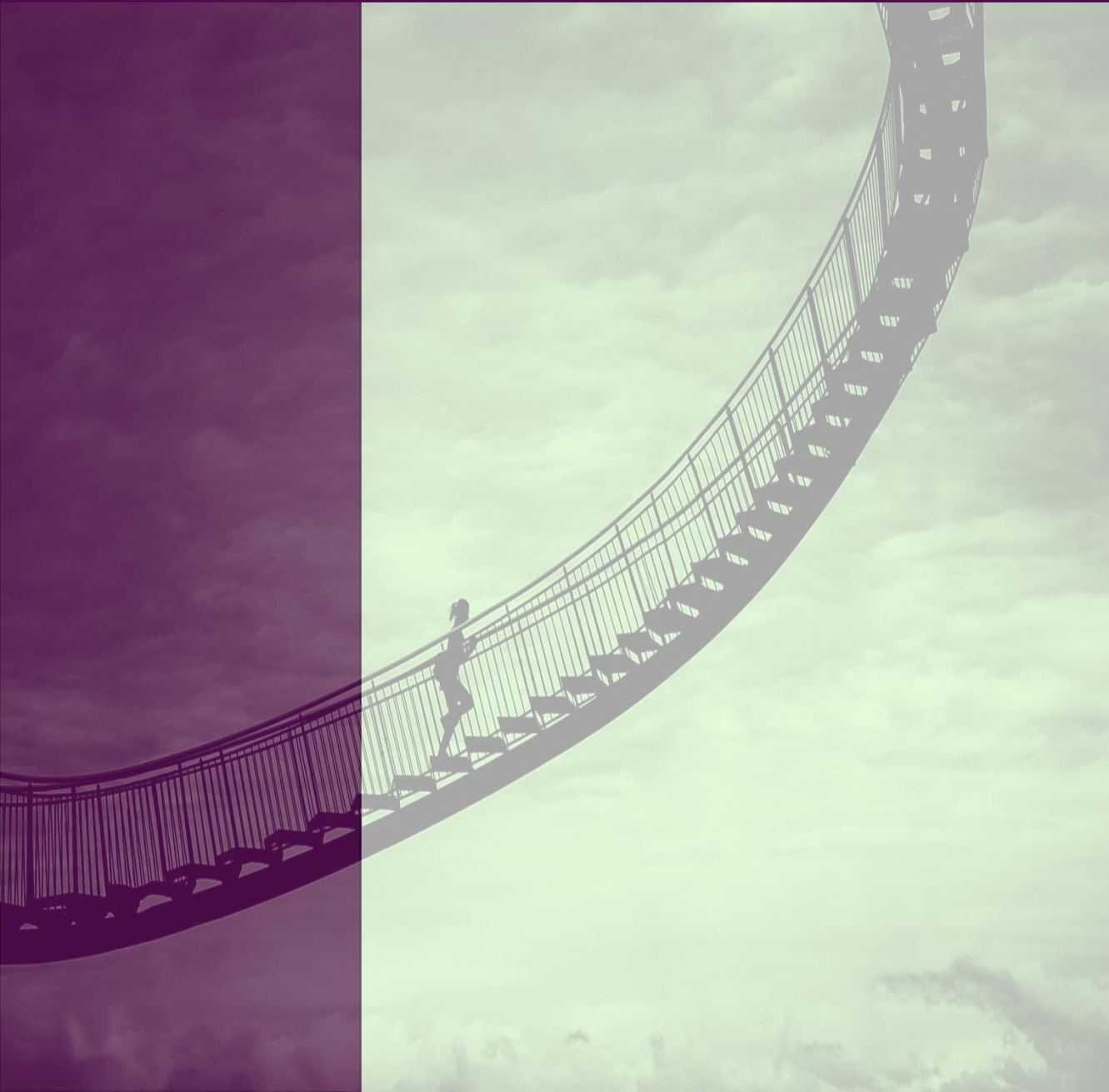
4. Public Health:

Racial Equality Initiatives: Public Health has responded to staff feedback by establishing the Public Health Race and Equality Group (PHREG), which meets monthly to oversee the department's commitment to improving racial equality. This initiative was driven by findings from a Racial Equalities survey, which highlighted the need for better opportunities for global majority staff, including access to formal training, academic funding, and career development.

5. Metropolitan Police Service (MPS):

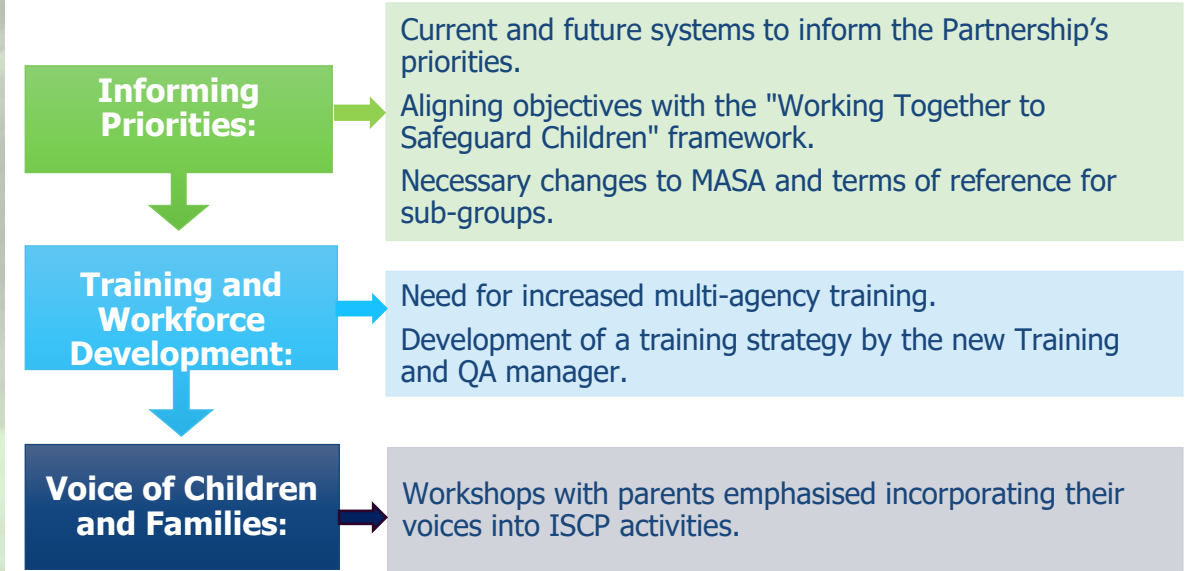
STRIDE Strategy: The MPS has developed the STRIDE (Strategy for Inclusion, Diversity, and Engagement) policy, which has made significant strides in improving internal and external perceptions of the police. Notably, the Islington BCU has the second highest number of global majority officers across London, and the MPS has launched a Staff Retention Taskforce to ensure that attrition rates for underrepresented groups are on par with their peers. Additionally, Career Development Leads have been appointed to support staff in their professional growth.





The Partnership Development Away Day on June 5th, 2023, focused on making steps to revise the ISCP's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements and set clear priorities for the ISCP Business/Delivery Plan and subsequent action plans to monitor and evaluate effectiveness.

Key Themes Discussed:



Issues raised by Young People present:

- Staff retention
- The need to be trauma informed
- Frustrations with families having to repeat their story.



Feedback highlighted issues with consistency and care in child services, lack of proper communication, and the need for more safe spaces like LIFT; and emphasised the need for better advertisement and accessibility of support services.

These emerging themes below were informed by local SEND Review published early 2022, ISCP Annual Report 2021/22 (published February 2023), the Joint Strategy Needs Assessment- Public Health (2021) and the findings from the ISCP development day (5th June 2023).

They formed the ISCP priorities for April 2024 onwards.

Emerging Themes:

Early Intervention and Prevention:

- Emphasis on early identification and proactive approaches.
- Multi-agency collaboration for early help and support.
- Promoting early conversations with parents

SEND and Socio Emotional Mental Health (SEMH):

- Focus on the rise of mental health issues and children with SEND.
- Linking mental health, online safety, domestic violence, and neglect.

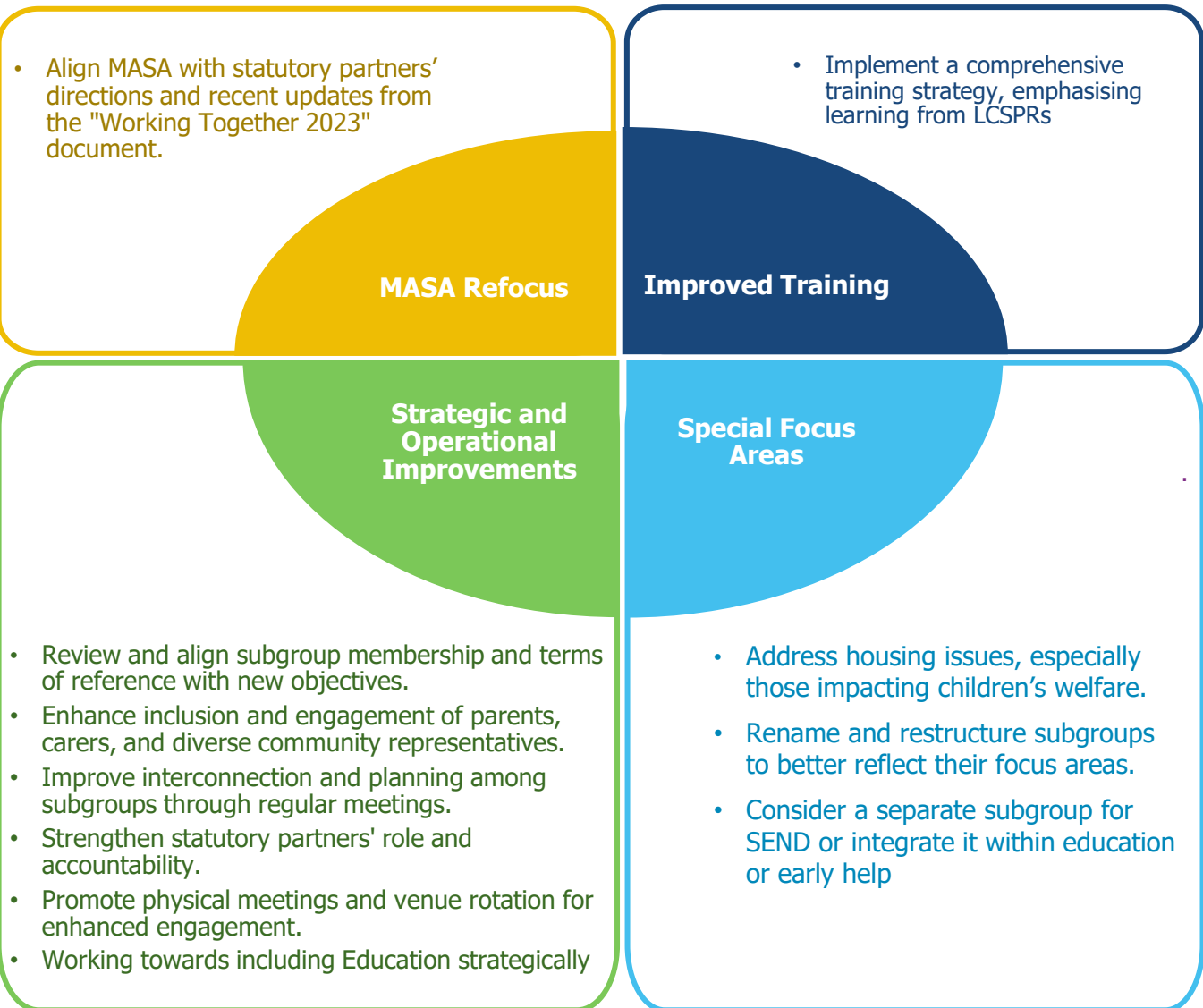
Neglect and Parental Factors:

- Addressing neglect through improved strategies and trauma-informed approaches.
- Development of a strategy and toolkit for assessing and addressing neglect.

Structural Inequalities:

- Understanding and addressing intersectionality, structural racism, and disproportionality.
- Promoting inclusive and equitable practices.

Conclusions and Recommendations



Action Items

This summary captures the key discussions and proposed actions from the away day, ensuring alignment with recent updates and strategic priorities.

Business Plan Development

- Propose a business plan with objectives for Executive Group approval.
- Ensure all activities align with ISCP objectives and include voices from children and families.

Enhanced Participation and Visibility

- Increase visibility and accessibility of training and support services.
- Promote inter-agency understanding and cooperation.

Multi-Agency Engagement

- Foster better multi-agency engagement through clear communication and accessible training programs.



The **ISCP** has initiated a comprehensive review of the **local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (MASA)**, underpinned by the key changes outlined in the **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023** guidance. The **ISCP Development Day** acted as a catalyst for this review, producing important recommendations on how the partnership could improve its systems and governance, particularly around ensuring **subgroups** provide stronger assurances and how **scrutiny** could be applied more effectively. The revised MASA arrangements will be published by **December 2024**, reflecting the ISCP's commitment to enhancing accountability and responding to national reforms. The **Working Together consultation draft** from **January 2023** has informed many of the proposed changes.

Early engagement with **Delegated Safeguarding Partners**, briefed by the **Independent Chair** and **Scrutineer**, has already ensured alignment with emerging priorities. These safeguarding partners are currently liaising with **lead safeguarding partners** to provide oversight and are nominating a chair to lead the revised arrangements. This cross-agency collaboration reflects the ISCP's proactive and integrated approach to safeguarding, ensuring that the upcoming MASA review will be grounded in collective responsibility and cohesive governance.

The **ISCP Executive Group**, from **August 2024**, will take a leading role in ratifying the MASA, while also reviewing the current governance structure and business plan to confirm the strategic priorities going forward. A key focus will be the appointment of a **Project Manager** to oversee the implementation of these changes, ensuring that the partnership maintains momentum and that the reforms are embedded effectively across all agencies. A renewed focus on ensuring **subgroup accountability** and **scrutiny mechanisms** will be central to the governance improvements, providing better clarity and transparency across the partnership's decision-making processes.

In line with **Stable Homes Built on Love** and surrounding national guidance, the ISCP has made an early commitment to **exploring how agencies** can contribute to applying a **trauma-informed lens** to practice across the partnership. While these plans are at an early stage, the ISCP has already laid a strong foundation by aligning its forthcoming **March 2024 priorities**. These priorities, which focus on prevention, early intervention, and multi-agency collaboration, will ensure that the ISCP is well-positioned to meet the needs of children, young people, and families across the borough. To support this cultural shift, the ISCP will build on existing **training strategy** to explore how professionals across social care, health, education, and the voluntary sector are equipped with the knowledge and skills to adopt trauma-informed practices. Additionally, new **monitoring and evaluation mechanisms** will be introduced to assess the impact of these practices on service delivery and child outcomes. These systems will allow the partnership to continuously review and refine its approach to safeguarding, ensuring that interventions remain timely, targeted, and effective.

By establishing these early priorities and committing to a transparent and collaborative review process, the ISCP is demonstrating its readiness to respond to the **Working Together 2023** guidance and the broader national safeguarding agenda. The partnership's ongoing efforts will not only enhance governance but will also strengthen service delivery for the most vulnerable children and families in Islington.



Key Areas of Focus for MACE Panel Moving Forward:

Data-Driven Insights: The MACE panel will broaden its scope to cover issues previously managed by MCAE, such as children missing from education, and will ensure that data-driven insights remain a priority.

Child-on-Child Abuse: To avoid overlooking peer-on-peer abuse, the MACE panel will include a focus on disrupting these incidents and ensure strategic oversight on exploitation cases, particularly those involving child perpetrators.

Trauma-Informed Approaches: Given the effectiveness of trauma-informed care, the MACE panel will integrate these approaches into its strategies, ensuring that children affected by exploitation are supported through sensitive, holistic interventions.

Strategic Oversight: Senior leaders from statutory partners will maintain a presence at MACE panel meetings to ensure high-level decision-making and strategic oversight of child exploitation concerns in Islington.

Rationale and Gap Analysis:

The key factors leading to the decision to disband the MCAE Subgroup include:

- **Repetition of Themes:** The MCAE subgroup and MACE panel have frequently addressed similar themes, with many of the same senior professionals attending both meetings.
- **Strategic Alignment:** The MACE panel's expanded role in managing multi-agency responses to exploitation means it is well-positioned to take on the strategic responsibilities of the MCAE subgroup.

However, to ensure that no critical functions are lost in the transition, a **Gap Analysis** was conducted. This analysis identified potential gaps and proposed recommendations to ensure that the critical functions of the MCAE subgroup will be fully incorporated into the MACE panel.



Following discussions at the ISCP Development Day and subsequent meetings, it has been proposed that the **Missing Children and Adolescent Exploitation (MCAE) Subgroup** will be disbanded by the end of the financial year (March 2024). This decision has been made after careful consideration of its functions and the overlap with the Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) panel.

The MCAE subgroup, established in 2019, was created to strengthen multi-agency operations concerning exploited and missing children and to identify gaps in service delivery. However, over time, the **MACE panel has grown stronger**, handling similar functions with increased efficiency. The MACE panel operates at a strategic level, addressing broader issues related to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB), gangs, serious youth violence, modern slavery, and trafficking, including County Lines.

To maximize productivity and avoid duplication, the MCAE subgroup functions will be absorbed into the MACE panel, which already includes the same senior professionals present in MCAE meetings. This merger is expected to streamline operations, provide more strategic oversight, and allow the partnership to focus resources more effectively.

Next Steps and Governance

- The **MACE Terms of Reference (ToR)** will be updated to reflect the governance changes and ensure that the panel's responsibilities align with the London Operating Protocol produced by the Metropolitan Police Service
- Stakeholders and statutory partners will be notified about the disbanding of the MCAE Subgroup and the transfer of its functions to the MACE panel, with clear communication about how these responsibilities will be absorbed.
- **Regular Reviews:** To monitor the effectiveness of this transition, the ISCP will conduct a review three months and six months after the merger. These reviews will assess whether any critical gaps remain and ensure that all key safeguarding responsibilities are being met.

If any specific policies or procedures need to be developed at the local level, the ISCP will establish **task and finish groups** to address these needs promptly and efficiently.

Assurances of effectiveness from Partner Agencies: Safer Workforce: Local Authority Designated Officer Report

There is a statutory expectation that relevant agencies recruit staff safely, however, there are occasions where allegations are made against staff or volunteers working with children. Relevant agencies should have in place clear procedures to explain what to do when allegations are raised. The LADO should be contacted when there is an allegation that any person who or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children;

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Behaved towards a child
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

These procedures are also applied when there is an allegation that staff:

- Have behaved in a way in their personal life that raises safeguarding concerns
- As a parent or carer, has become subject to child protection procedures
- Is closely associated with someone in their personal lives who may present a risk of harm to children.

The ISCP have arrangements in place for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of arrangements to manage allegations across the partnership. The ISCP received the 2022/23 LADO Annual Report for scrutiny covering the period from April 2022 to March 2023 and it concerned: **243 contacts**

The most recent LADO Annual Report April 2023 to March 2024 had an increase with: **285 contacts**

This is a noticeable increase from last year's 243 contacts and is the highest recorded contacts for Islington for a reporting year.

Sources of referrals and contacts: **Education 123**
Children Social Care 57
Early years 27

These were the top three work settings where staff were subjected to an allegation being made against them. These figures are consistent with previous years figures and are expected given education is the biggest employer in the children's workforce. There is an exponential increase in contacts from Children Social Care in comparison to the last two reporting years; this might have correlated with referral forms now being online to allow for ease and data protection.

Nature of concern with referrals: As in previous years, most contacts related to concerns about physical abuse 104 (37%) incidents, mainly in relation to use of physical intervention in schools. This is like last year's report of 102 contacts. The second and third highest number of contacts relate to other 100 (35%) and private life matters 50 (18%) respectively. Partner agencies remain dedicated to managing allegations.

Summary

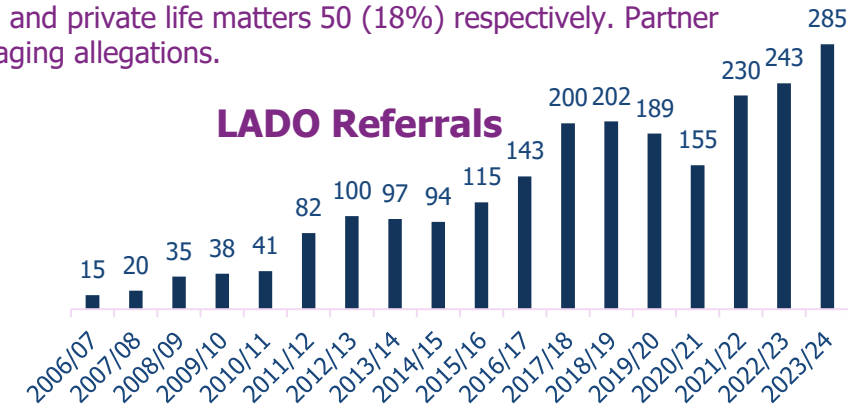
Contact with the LADO continues to rise with the majority of contacts are for advice.

Employers seek consultation for low level concerns to ensure they are making safe decisions.

Whilst this is encouraged, there are many contacts that are not connected to allegations of harm at all, so further efforts need to be made to divert such enquiries.

Contacts to the LADO are from a wide variety of sources, demonstrating a good knowledge among agencies working with children or the role of the LADO.

Partner agencies continue to provide appropriate commitment to managing allegations and attend ASV meetings, often at very short notice in the interest of resolving matters as quickly as possible.



Actions	Response
LADO to visit both residential settings in Islington to ensure they are fully aware and supported to manage allegations.	Contact made and training to be delivered to St Christopher's in May 2024
Steering group to consider referral sources, particularly from Early Years and School.	Work in progress though we have a better understanding that primary schools are the highest referrer
LADO and Principal Officer for Safeguarding in Education to continue to provide additional support to schools in terms of targeted training and agreeing strategy around low-level concerns.	Done and ongoing

Family Group Conferences (FGCs) 2022 – 2023

The **Family Group Conferences** service has seen significant developments during the reporting period, aligning with the **Stable Homes Built on Love Strategy**. This strategy emphasises the importance of family networks and aims to increase the profile and promotion of FGCs within Islington.

Reducing Parental Conflict (RPC) Funding:

In March 2023, funding was allocated to reduce parental conflict, resulting in the training of 10 FGC coordinators. These coordinators are now trained mediators and have received specific RPC training. Additionally, the Start for Life funding provided a pot of approximately £6,000 to £9,000 for mediation services, specifically targeting families with at least one child under the age of two. This initiative has been actively promoted and aligns with the ethos of strengthening family networks.

Parent Champions Training:

The training program for Parent Champions now includes a dedicated FGC workshop, delivered by two experienced FGC coordinators. This addition aims to further embed the practice of FGCs within the community, empowering parents to take an active role in facilitating family support networks.

Workforce Training and Promotion:

The promotion and training of the workforce have been key priorities. The ISCP organised workshops attended by professionals across various sectors, including the **NHS, voluntary sector, schools, Whittington Midwives, Health Visitors, and the Early Help Team**. This multi-agency approach demonstrates a collective commitment to enhancing the reach and effectiveness of FGCs.

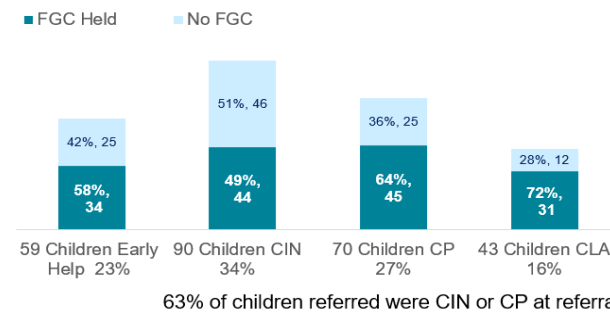
Child Protection Advocacy:

Advocacy services for children and parents have seen increased demand, reflecting the growing recognition of FGCs as a vital tool in safeguarding. Between April 2022 and March 2023, **138 families** and **262 children** were referred to FGCs, resulting in **80 conferences**. This represents a **14% increase** in referral rates compared to the previous year and a **58% conversion rate**. While the national conversion rate target for FGC services is **66%**, the data highlights Islington's dedication to connecting families and building supportive networks through facilitation.

Referrals by child status and FGCs convened.

This graph displays the breakdown of the status of these children at point of referral and the conversion rate.

262 children were referred for an FGC; of those, 154 had an FGC convened.



- 34%, 90 children were CIN at point of referral with a 49% conversion rate (44 children) – lowest conversion rate.
- 27%, 70 children were CP at point of referral with a 64% conversion rate (45 children)
- 16%, 43 children were CLA at point of referral and had the best conversion rate 72% (31 children)
- 23%, 59 children were Early Help of those 9 children were from Front Door of CSC.

Lifelong Links

The **Lifelong Links** initiative, launched between **January and March 2024**, is a key component of Islington's strategy to support care-experienced young people by connecting them with significant individuals from their past who can provide long-term support.

Initial Referrals and Implementation: From January to March 2024, **four care-experienced young people** were referred to the Lifelong Links program, with coordinators assigned to each of them. This initial phase follows a series of preparatory steps, including small-scale promotion in **December 2023** and the establishment of an **Implementation Group**. Training for Lifelong Links coordinators was conducted to ensure they are well-equipped to deliver the service effectively.

Youth Involvement: Care-experienced young people have been actively involved in designing, promoting, and implementing Lifelong Links. This includes the recruitment of young people into the **Steering Group**, with representation from a care-experienced young parent. The involvement of young people ensures that the service is tailored to their needs and perspectives.



Launch and Promotion: The official launch of Lifelong Links took place in **March 2024** at the **Arsenal football stadium**, an event designed and facilitated by young people, for young people. The launch received generous support from Arsenal Football Club, which provided free stadium tours and raffle prizes. Further promotional events have been scheduled for professionals, foster carers, and team meetings to raise awareness and encourage engagement with the Lifelong Links service.

The **Corporate Parenting Annual Report** from **April 2022 to March 2023** provides a comprehensive review of services and outcomes for **Children Looked After (CLA)** and **Care Experienced Young People (CEYP)** in **Islington**. The report highlights several key achievements, ongoing challenges, and targeted improvements, reflecting the ISCP's commitment to ensuring safe, stable, and nurturing environments for vulnerable children.

Follow-up on Previous ISCP Recommendations:

1. Preventing Unnecessary Criminalisation

Following recommendations in last year's ISCP report, the **Protocol for Unnecessary Criminalisation** was implemented across **Children Looked After** services. A **25% reduction** in remands was achieved in 2022/23, and only **3% of CLA** who had been looked after for more than a year were convicted of an offence, a notable decrease from **17 children** the previous year.

- **Outcome:** This approach has resulted in fewer CLA being criminalised, promoting restorative justice and ensuring a more supportive environment for vulnerable young people.

2. Supporting Young People's Transition to Adulthood

In line with ISCP priorities, significant work has been done to improve transitions for care leavers. **89%** of care-experienced young people are now in **suitable accommodation**, and the **House Project** continues to support young people in moving into their own homes. With **60 care leavers** securing permanent housing in 2022/23, this initiative has delivered significant positive outcomes.

- **Outcome:** Improved housing stability and access to life skills training for CEYP, enabling better long-term independence.

Future Focus Areas: The report acknowledges ongoing challenges related to the cost-of-living crisis, the mental health impact of the pandemic, and placement sufficiency. In response, Islington plans to strengthen multi-agency collaboration, particularly in tackling exploitation, improving placement stability, and ensuring care-experienced young people are supported to achieve their full potential.

Areas for Improvement

1. Long-Term Stability for Placements

Long-Term Placement Stability was recorded at **66.3%**, slightly below statistical neighbours (68.7%), but **short-term placement stability** improved from **16% to 10%**. Although significant progress has been made, the challenge remains in securing long-term placements for adolescents with complex needs.

Action: The Permanency Team continues to focus on finding the right long-term homes for CLA, particularly for those with higher risks of placement breakdowns.

2. Addressing Disproportionality

The report identified the overrepresentation of **Black** and **Mixed Heritage** children in the CLA population. Although efforts are underway to challenge this inequality through multi-agency work, more needs to be done to reduce the disproportionality seen in both care admissions and outcomes.

Action: Islington is committed to expanding trauma-informed practice and reviewing current strategies to ensure cultural competence in supporting children from diverse backgrounds.

1. Health and Well-being Improvements

Health Assessments: 96% of CLA had their **Health Assessments** completed within the reporting year, surpassing previous years and comparator boroughs. The completion rate for initial health assessments, particularly for **Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC)**, was further improved by including **mental health screening** in collaboration with a **Specialist Psychologist**.

• **Outcome:** Enhanced quality of health assessments with a focus on early identification of mental health concerns, contributing to a more holistic approach to care.

Dental Checks: Access to dental care increased significantly through the **Healthy Smiles Pilot Project**, with dental checks rising from **19.9%** in 2020/21 to **75%** in 2022/23.

• **Outcome:** Improved dental health access for CLA, a crucial component of overall health and well-being.

2. Emotional and Mental Health Support

Mental Health Screenings: 49 screenings were completed, with **34 young people** identified as requiring further support. **16 young people** received ongoing help from **CLA CAMHS**, and an **integrated mental health pathway** was established for UASC.

• **Outcome:** Swift interventions and continuous support for mental health needs, resulting in better emotional and psychological well-being for CLA.



3. Education and Employment Outcomes

Educational Attainment: At **KS4**, **85%** of CLA achieved a qualification, with **19%** achieving 5 or more GCSEs, including English and Maths, reflecting a focus on supporting academic success despite challenges. Attendance rates improved, with average attendance at **88.1%** and a **significant drop in suspensions** from **14.5%** to **9.3%**.

• **Outcome:** Targeted support programmes contributed to **higher educational attainment** and **better school attendance**, positioning young people for improved post-16 education or employment pathways.

Employment and Training: 76% of 17/18-year-olds and **72%** of 19-21-year-olds were in **Education, Employment, or Training (EET)**, placing Islington in the **top quartile** nationally. The **Youth Employment Service (YES)** programme provided targeted support, with **81%** of participants meaningfully engaged.

• **Outcome:** Stronger transitions to adulthood, with **work experience** and **employment support** ensuring CEYP are better equipped for independent living and financial stability.

In 2022/2023 the Child Protection Annual Report begins with outlining the work they have conducted in response to the previous year's annual report recommendations as follows:

1

- Hybrid model of chairing child protection conferences to move to including all core group members physically in the room by September 2022.
- All agencies apart from Police, GPs and hospital staff are now expected to physically attend CP conferences.

2

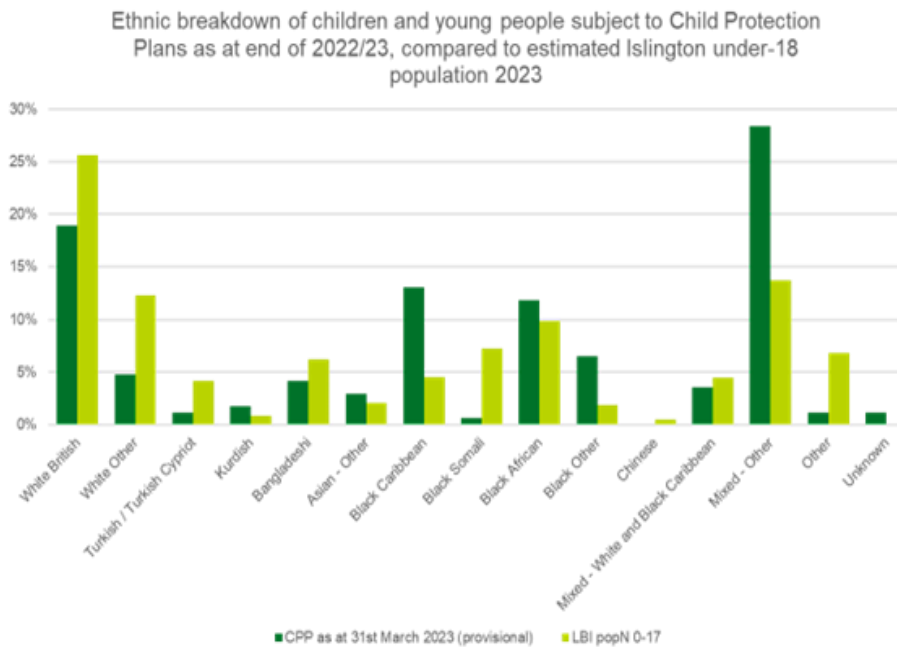
- Promotion of child and family advocacy with FGC manager reviewing up coming conferences to identify opportunities
- Advocacy is routinely offered to children and where required, parents

3

- Briefing to teams around strategies to improve Strategy to ICPC timescales
- Completed: in addition, there has been the introduction of CP workshops via the ISCP, the first of which was well attended.

4

- Briefing to teams to reduce risk of repeat child protection plans such as ensuring there is a consult prior to convening a repeat ICPC.
- Completed: Practice around seeking consults for possible repeat plans is well embedded.



Based on the ethnicity breakdown we can see that there is still an over-representation with other mixed group and Black Caribbean. This reporting period also sees a rise in over representation for Black African children with under representation in Somali and White British as an ethnicity.

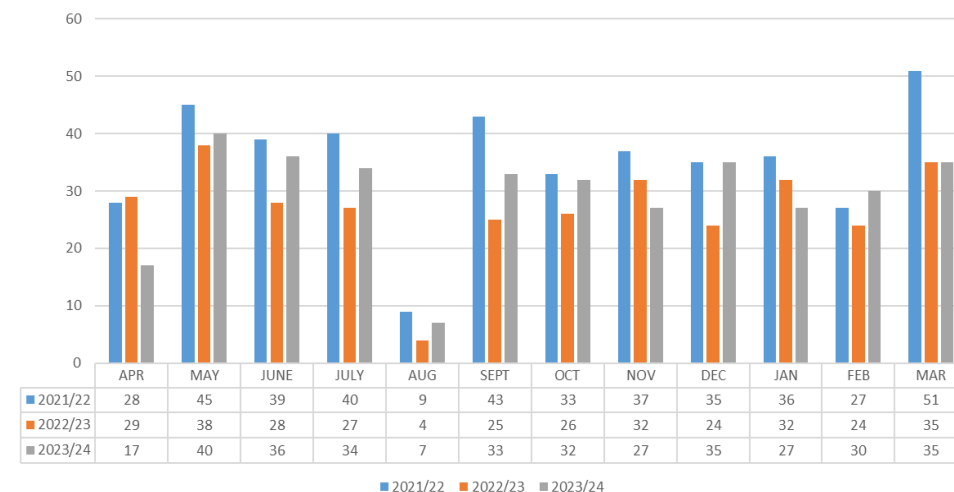


324 child protection conferences were chaired by Islington Child Protection Coordinators in the period between April 2022 and March 2023 (a decrease from 391 the previous year). In addition, 34 Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers meetings (ASV) and 14 Supervision Order meetings (SO). This means a total of 372 meetings were chaired by the child protection service.

Local Authority Child Protection Annual Report 2023 to 2024:

In our most recent Child Protection Annual Report (2023/24) we can see that the disproportionality for mixed-other ethnicity has decreased, along with Black African (now underrepresented). Contrastingly, there is still an overrepresentation of Black Caribbean children on the child protection plans compared to the population of Islington however, there has been a reduction since previous year which demonstrates the local authority commitment in reducing disproportionality as per the ISCP's priorities. It is also noteworthy that White British children are now overrepresented on the child protection plan showing they make up 34% of plans being only 25% of the child population in Islington.

The 2023/24 annual report demonstrates that 342 child protection conferences were chaired by Islington Child Protection Coordinators in the period between April 2023 and March 2024 (an increase from 324 the previous year). In addition, 44 Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers meetings (34 last year) and 20 Supervision Order meetings (14 last year). This means a total of 406 meetings were chaired by the child protection service.



Regarding Repeated Child Protection Plans:

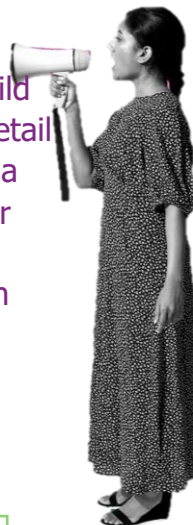
Year	% of repeated CP plans
2021/2022	23.8 %
2022/2023	24%
2023/2024	26.6%

There is usually auditing work conducted to ascertain a hypothesis for the slight increase. It has concluded with repeat plans remaining around the 25% mark. These repeat plans indicate a more concentrated group of children with chronic problems. Such children are often from the larger sibling groups which also adds to the percentage. Continued measures are required to ensure children are only supported under a repeat CP plan where necessary and if they are, parallel plans are in place to reduce the risk of drift.

Recommendations similar to those made in the last ISCP annual report were made to mitigate against the continuance of repeated child protection plans.

Parental feedback:

In both 2022/23 and 2023/24 child protection annual reports they detail feedback from parents to create a feedback loop to identify whether there were learning gaps for professionals and child protection chairs.



What could we have done differently?

Be more proactive in supporting the parent who was being physically and emotionally abused in her own home.

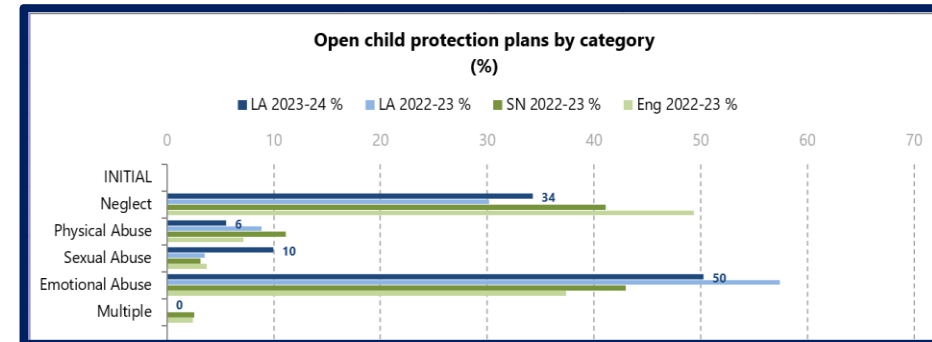
Have a structure that's achievable in place for the next time I find myself and my child in crisis.

Recommendations:

- 1 Regular phone calls to family members after ICPCs and final RCPCs to gain their feedback in addition to the feedback link sent to parents.
- 2 Promote child and parent advocacy for CP conferences and continued emphasis on FGCs within CP plans.
- 3 Explore technology options to seek improved participation with children in the conference process.
- 4 Continued QA scrutiny of repeat plans with a particular focus on children suffering neglect.
- 5 CP workshops to continue to be provided to emphasise minimum practice standards and importance of planning and participation of families in convening conferences.

Categories of abuse:

The table below demonstrates that:



Timeliness of CP Conferences:

In 2022/23, 60% of initial conferences were held within this statutory timescale, a slight decrease from 63% the previous year. However, in this years (2023/24) report 73% of initial child protection conferences were held within the statutory timescale which demonstrates improved planning by teams and multi-agency network.

The Children Act 1989 defines private fostering as a situation where a child under 16 years old (or under 18 if the child has a disability) is cared for and housed by someone who is not a close relative, guardian, or a person with parental responsibility, for a period of 28 days or more. The responsibilities of Islington's Children's Social Care (LBI CSC) in identifying, assessing, and monitoring these private fostering arrangements were detailed in their annual report, demonstrating how they have adhered to the National Minimum Standards for Private Fostering.

Evidence/Impact: LBI CSC provides proof of meeting the National Minimum Standards and offers recommendations for further improvements.

Notification Process: LBI CSC describes a well-defined notification process, ensuring that any notifications received by the Children Services Contact Team (CSCT) are swiftly forwarded to the Child in Need (CIN) Service for assessment, typically within 7 days.

Safeguarding and Welfare: The report underscores the importance of social workers carrying out thorough assessments of private fostering arrangements to confirm the suitability of the carer. These assessments are rigorously reviewed and approved by the Assistant Director or Director of Safeguarding via the Access to Care and Resources Panel (ACRP).

Advice and Support: The report assures that private foster carers, the children in their care, and the children's parents are well-informed about the process, including roles and responsibilities, financial support, and available services.

Monitoring Compliance: LBI CSC ensures that social workers visit privately fostered children in accordance with statutory requirements. The effectiveness of this process is monitored through a tracking tool managed by the LBI CSC data team.

Current Arrangements: LBI CSC acknowledges that the number of private fostering cases in Islington remains low, and therefore continues to emphasise awareness-raising through foundational and refresher safeguarding training.

Monitoring Visits: Timeliness for ongoing monitoring visits is strong, with 89% completed on time.

Initial Visits: The timeliness for initial visits has declined to 50%, indicating a need for improvement, especially given the low number of private fostering arrangements.

Recording Quality: The quality of record-keeping on LCS is inconsistent—some entries are clear and detailed, while others lack sufficient information. However, these delays did not pose any increased risk to the children involved.

Demographic Analysis: Due to the small number of cases, no significant conclusions can be drawn regarding gender, ethnicity, nationality, or the circumstances of privately fostered children.

Reasons for Private Fostering: The motivations for seeking private fostering have shifted slightly, with recent cases involving care support while parents secure accommodation and efforts to obtain UK citizenship for a child, differing from previous trends focused on educational opportunities.

Recommendations:

Increase Public Visibility: Add the Private Fostering Statement of Purpose to the fostering website.

Ensure Independent Review: Annually review long-term private fostering arrangements at ACRP.

Boost Awareness: Strengthen collaboration with Early Help and health services.

Enhance Visit Monitoring: Ensure timely and high-standard visits by Children in Need service.

Support Ukrainian Children: Maintain pathways for Ukrainian children under the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

Summary of Timeliness for Initial and Monitoring Visits



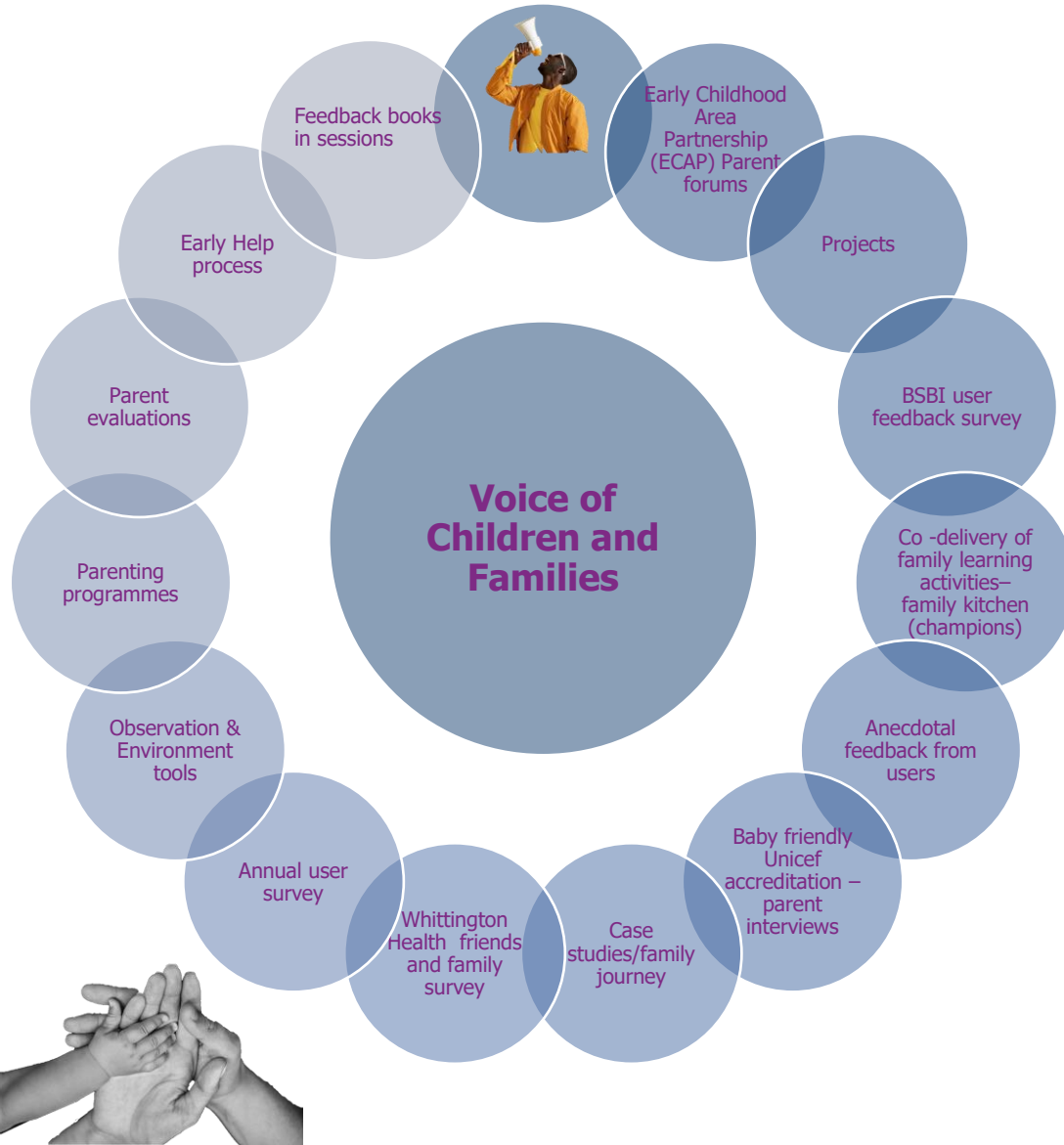
Comparison with Previous Years:

- 2021-22: 10 notifications, with only 2 confirmed as private fostering arrangements.
- 2020-21: 11 notifications.
- 2019-20: 4 notifications.

The low number of notifications and cases may be influenced by Islington's demographics and proximity to good transport links for schools, as seen in other local authorities. Continued awareness-raising is crucial to ensure that all private fostering arrangements are properly identified and monitored.



Bright Start has a range of ways in which they capture the voice of children and family.



Addressing Barriers to Service Accessibility in Bright Start

Bright Start identified a lack of knowledge about services as a key barrier to inclusivity among families, staff, and partners. This was attributed to the complexity of navigating services, unfamiliarity with UK-specific services, and assumptions that services are not free, accessible in various languages, or supportive.

Impact: To overcome these barriers, Bright Start implemented practical improvements, such as ensuring materials are available in multiple languages and widely distributed. Additionally, they increased the presence of events and activities in locations where families are already engaged, making services more accessible and visible.

Bright Start are also able to capture the voice of children and families in everyday opportunities, such as:

- **Capturing feedback from service users during activities, engagement or through case work is used to inform direct service delivery**
- **Family plans are strengths based and actions are co-developed and linked into interests of children and families**
- **Activity planning is informed by observed interests of children and feedback from parents e.g.**
- **Parent Champions informed activity deliver during COVID- outdoor opportunities/reducing isolation**



Manor Gardens Welfare Trust:

Manor Gardens Welfare Trust is dedicated to building strong communities where everyone enjoys good health, resilience, and opportunity. Their services focus on promoting mental and physical health, enhancing well-being, and increasing social inclusion. Manor Gardens provides a wide range of Wellbeing and Advocacy services, helping individuals manage their health, well-being, and independence.

Manor Gardens launched an initiative aimed at developing the skills and understanding of health and early years practitioners and management to better meet the needs of excluded populations. This initiative seeks to reduce barriers to access and improve the experiences of these groups. The programme involved research across families, practitioners, and partners, resulting in the publication of findings and models for equitable service provision. A pilot programme was implemented, followed by ongoing evaluation and "test and learn" approaches to continually refine and improve the services offered.

The Youth Council

The Youth Council is committed to ensuring that all young people, including those who attend schools outside the borough or feel their voices have been overlooked, are heard. The council seeks to understand the experiences of all young people, including those facing challenges at home, with education, or in their communities, and represents young people from all protected characteristics.

1. Safe Spaces for Young People:

recognising the need for inclusive and safe physical and online spaces, the Youth Council actively promotes Islington's youth hubs and safe spaces. They aim to ensure these spaces are welcoming for all young people, including LGBTQI communities, and are working with council members and senior managers to increase the influence young people have in shaping these spaces.

2. Youth Safety:

Youth safety is a primary concern for the Youth Council, particularly issues related to crime, gang involvement, and violence against women and girls (VAWG). The council has taken several steps to address youth safety, including:

Engaging in meetings with senior council leaders to discuss the VAWG strategy.

Visiting the borough's CCTV control room to understand surveillance operations and enhance public safety.

Hosting a Youth Forum Meeting to discuss youth safety, which involved over 20 young people, local councillors, and directors of youth services.

Safe Spaces: Their efforts in promoting and shaping youth spaces have created more inclusive environments for young people across the borough.

Youth Safety: By working closely with local leaders, participating in safety discussions, and engaging with hard-to-reach groups, the council has raised awareness of youth safety issues and contributed to initiatives like the Islington Safer Schools Protocol.

Mental Health and Well-being: The council's focus on SEMH services and promoting positive body image has helped raise awareness of mental health resources available to young people.

By aligning their efforts with the **Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership (ISCP) priorities**, the Youth Council has contributed to creating safer, healthier, and more supportive environments for all young people in the borough.

3. Supporting Youth Through the Cost-of-Living Crisis:

The Youth Council is focused on supporting young people affected by the cost-of-living crisis by promoting education, employment, and training opportunities. They are working with senior leaders to find solutions and represent the views of young people facing economic challenges.

4. Mental Health and Well-being:

In response to the social and emotional impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Youth Council is advocating for better access to mental health services and promoting positive body image. They use social media to signpost mental health and well-being services and are working with council leaders to ensure young people have the resources and knowledge to look after their mental health.

The Youth Council ensures that young people's voices are central to the decision-making process across Islington. Through their active involvement in council meetings, community safety initiatives, and youth forums, youth councillors have successfully raised awareness of safety concerns, mental health challenges, and the need for inclusive spaces. By consistently engaging with their peers, the Youth Council ensures that youth perspectives directly influence local policies and services.

Impact and Achievements:

The Youth Council has made significant strides in key areas, particularly:

- **Youth Safety:** By working closely with local leaders, participating in safety discussions, and engaging with hard-to-reach groups, the council has raised awareness of youth safety issues and contributed to initiatives like the Islington Safer Schools Protocol.
- **Safe Spaces:** Their efforts in promoting and shaping youth spaces have created more inclusive environments for young people across the borough.
- **Mental Health and Well-being:** The council's focus on SEMH services and promoting positive body image has helped raise awareness of mental health resources available to young people.
- By aligning their efforts with the **Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership (ISCP) priorities**, the Youth Council advocates for creating safer, healthier, and more supportive environments for all young people in the borough.

Youth work: Impact report

Voice of the child: Youth Justice Service. Peer advocate

The Young Islington service recruits Youth Peer Engagement Advocates to ensure young people's voices influence service delivery across the Integrated Gangs Team, Targeted Youth Support, and Youth Justice Service. These roles, requiring a 5-10 hour monthly commitment, offer young people work experience and career development while enhancing their confidence and skills.

Peer Advocates engage with young people under court orders, help review interventions and contribute to the youth participation strategy. They also participate in staff recruitment, police training, youth council activities, and governance panels, ensuring young people's voices are integral to improving services.

In August 2023, two Youth Peer Advocates took part in a community event at Lift Youth Hub, hosted by the Metropolitan Police, which featured a visit from Met Commissioner Sir Mark Rowley.

The event, part of the 'New Met for London' initiative, allowed local residents, including young people, to hear about the Police's vision for making London safer and to voice their concerns.

The Peer Advocates raised key questions to the Commissioner, particularly regarding how the Police plan to collaborate with local youth clubs to improve youth safety and help young people feel more secure. In response, Sir Mark Rowley and Jack May-Robinson (Neighbourhood Superintendent for Islington) outlined current and future plans for Police engagement with local youth services.

1. Enhancing Accessibility and Awareness of Safe Spaces:

Young people praised safe spaces like **Lift** and **Jigsaw**, but noted a lack of awareness among their peers and professionals, such as GPs, about these services.

Strategic Recommendations:

- **Increase promotion:** Use schools, social media, and community outreach to better promote safe spaces.
- **Collaborate with health services:** Ensure GPs and health professionals are aware of these spaces and can refer young people.
- **Targeted outreach:** Provide information through posters, leaflets, and digital campaigns in schools and youth hubs to raise awareness.

2. Building Trust with Young People:

A key barrier identified was the **lack of trust** in services, which often stops young people from seeking help.

Strategic Recommendations:

- **Youth involvement in service design:** Engage young people in shaping services to build trust and ensure their concerns are addressed.
- **Create feedback mechanisms:** Provide regular opportunities for young people to share their views and ensure services act on this feedback.
- **Clear communication:** Foster transparency by setting clear expectations about what services can offer and maintaining consistency in interactions.

3. Improving Opportunities for 16-18 Year-Olds:

A key barrier identified was the **lack of trust** in services, which often stops young people from seeking help.

Strategic Recommendations:

- **Expand services for 16-18 year-olds:** Develop programs focused on vocational training, career guidance, and social engagement.
- **Offer targeted support:** Provide education, employment, and transition services to address the specific needs of this age group.

4. Addressing Health Education Gaps:

Young people raised concerns about the lack of **vaping education** in schools, noting the widespread availability and appealing packaging of vaping products.

Strategic Recommendations:

- **Introduce vaping education:** Incorporate vaping awareness into school health curricula.
- **Run public health campaigns:** Create campaigns targeting young people through schools and social media, warning them about vaping risks.
- **Work with retailers:** Partner with local authorities to regulate the sale of vaping products in corner shops.

5. Using Schools and Social Media for Service Information:

Young people suggested using schools and social media more effectively to share information about available services.

Strategic Recommendations:

- **Leverage schools:** Collaborate with schools to distribute information about services directly to students.
- **Enhance social media outreach:** Develop a social media strategy that engages young people and provides up-to-date information on services.

Children's Active Involvement Service (CAIS) 2022-2024 Ensuring children and young people's views and experiences influence how we plan and deliver our services and that our young people receive help in a way that they feel listened to, loved and is accessible to them.

Islington's Children Services Practice Model: Motivational Practice

- Practice framework
- Observation of practice
- Supervision and leadership model
- Trauma Informed Practice
- Dyadic developmental psychotherapy (DDP) with CLA Service
- Clinician support
- Family feedback sought

**Child
focused**

Impact 2022-2023

- Children's wishes and feelings are actively sought.
 - In touch with **93%** of Care Experienced Young People
 - **83%** of young people participated in their pathway plans
 - **98%** of young people participated in their statutory reviews
- CAIS consult with young people, offer activities and undertake training for foster carers. This expanded to curriculum development, training, assessment and recruitment for Islington's ASYE Academy and STEP UP programme at Middlesex University.
- CAIS are involved in recruiting all staff, and this year recruited a new service Chair.
- Corporate Parenting Board is attended by CAIS who robustly represent the views of children and young people; introducing the "My Experience" for young people to share an aspect of their experience for the board to better understand their journey
- Launched the afternoon tea and monthly pizza night events to increase awareness of CAIS and encourage young people to join
- CAIS run workshop style sessions, allowing day to day issues that are very real for young people to be discussed
- A successful partnership with Virtual School groups has been formed to encourage CAIS participation.
- Young people advocated for an online presence via Instagram- accepted by the digital team this launched early 2024.

Ongoing Impact 2023-2024, alongside previous tasking.

- Ongoing involvement of young people in over 30 interview panels to support staff recruitment across Children's Services
- Young people have delivered training to multiple groups to raise awareness of their needs and promote good practice. This has included training on the themes of effective foster care, supporting transitions to independence, and involving children in LAC reviews.
- Three young people have been heavily involved in the successful launch and implementation of the new Lifelong Links service
- Four young people have worked closely with the commissioning team to inform a review of supported housing services for care experienced young people
- Several young people have contributed to meetings of the Lifelong Corporate Parenting Task and Finish group on themes including housing, health, education, training and employment.
- Young people contributed to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment of care experienced children and young people led by Public Health and met with CAMHS to provide input on their participation strategy.

Future Plans

- Involving young people in a Q&A event with Council Leaders
- Holding a "CAISfest" event later in the year to celebrate 20 years of CAIS and bring together the community supporting care experienced children and young people across Islington
- Launch of new communications plan, including a regular newsletter and scaling of Instagram activity
- Setting up a new dedicated Children in Care Council for young people aged 13-17 and a separate Leaving Care Forum for young people aged 18-25
- Creating new training resources including a video to support implementation of Islington's Motivational Practice Model
- Launch of a new specialist advocacy service for children who are neurodivergent or Disabled

National Referral Mechanism (NRM) Pilot Programme

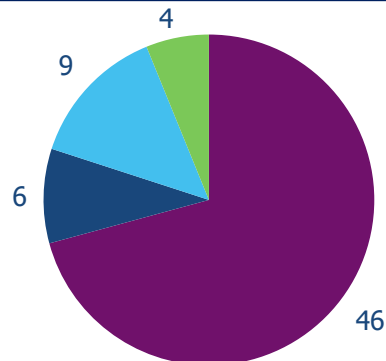
Year 3 Review: April 2023 – March 2024

The **NRM Pilot Programme**, now in its third year, continues to provide essential support to potential victims of **modern slavery** and **child exploitation**. This Home Office-led process helps identify and protect vulnerable children, ensuring they receive the care and assistance they need. The partnership between **Islington Children’s Social Care (CSC)** and the **London Borough of Camden (CSC)** remains a cornerstone of the pilot’s success, offering a structured pathway to prevent further exploitation.

Referrals and Data

During this period, **65 referrals** were allocated to the pilot. However, one referral was withdrawn due to an age dispute, leaving **64 potential victims—29** from Islington and **36** from Camden. Of these potential victims, **56 were male** and **9 were female**. The **ages** of the potential victims ranged from **11 to 17**, with the majority between ages **14 and 16**.

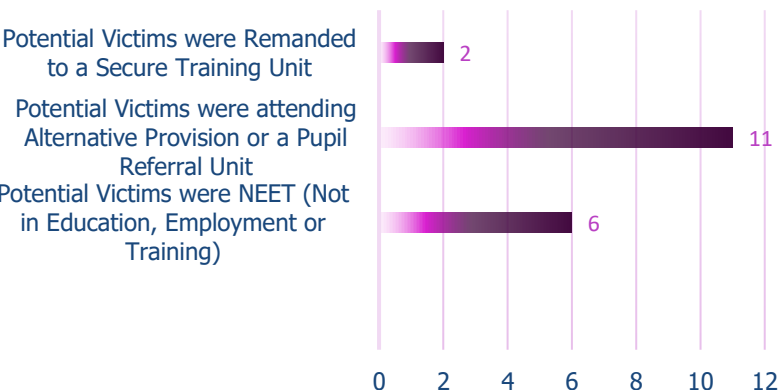
Exploitation Types and Patterns



Exploitation Type	Count
Children Identified as Child Criminal Exploitation Victims	46
Children Victims of Child Sexual Exploitation	6
Children Victims of Forced Labour	9
Children where Exploitation Remains Unknown	4

The panel observed worrying trends where previously identified victims of exploitation were later suspected of exploiting others, showing evolving patterns of grooming and peer-on-peer exploitation.

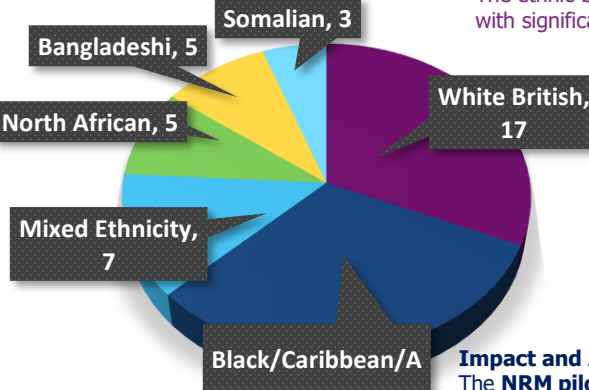
Educational Context



Educational Context	Count
Potential Victims were Remanded to a Secure Training Unit	2
Potential Victims were attending Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit	11
Potential Victims were NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training)	6

Demographic Breakdown

The ethnic background of the referrals varied with significant representation from:



Ethnicity	Count
White British	17
Black/Caribbean/A	7
Mixed Ethnicity	5
North African	5
Bangladeshi	3
Somali	3

Impact and Areas for Improvement

The **NRM pilot** has enabled early identification and intervention, providing support that has safeguarded children from further harm.

Decisions Made by the Panel

- 50 Positive Reasonable Grounds (RG)** decisions were made at the first panel meeting.
- 46 Positive Conclusive Grounds (CG)** decisions were made at the second meeting.
- 2 Negative RG** decisions were recorded, along with **3 Negative CG** decisions.

This year has seen a significant **increase in referrals**, reflecting improvements in the quality of submissions and enhanced awareness among professionals. The workforce’s increased access to **exploitation training** has contributed to more timely identification of at-risk children.

Collaborative work between **Children’s Social Care** and the **Youth Justice Service** has strengthened responses, helping young people navigate their experiences. However, the ongoing challenge remains ensuring sustained improvements in **early detection** and **multi-agency communication**. The panel will continue to focus on improving the consistency of referrals and monitoring the growing trend of **peer exploitation**.



Daily Safeguarding Meetings (DSM):

The DSM (previously the Domestic Abuse (DA) Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)) is a multi-agency led (embedded into Islington's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)), fully integrated approach to needs management for survivors of high-risk domestic abuse aiming to reduce the risk of serious harm or domestic homicide.

The DSM fully replaced the Domestic Abuse MARAC which previously met monthly until January 2021. It was changed from monthly due to the struggle to cope with demand of hearing 35 to 55 cases with timescales causing high risk survivors a delay in intervention. The DSM currently meets each day during the working week to address the needs at the time the intervention will have the greatest impact and to maximise victim engagement. DSM provides a dynamic information sharing and needs management approach, staffed by key agency decision makers who are able to contribute and work cohesively as a multi-agency team. The DSM hears up to three being identified as high and medium risk of harm and domestic abuse.

Daily Safeguarding meetings can demonstrate multi-agency input to their daily safeguarding meetings process:

Safeguarding and Need Management

507

referrals where multi-agency input was required heard to date at the DSM (Q1: 172; Q2: 143; Q3: 92; Q4: 100)

650

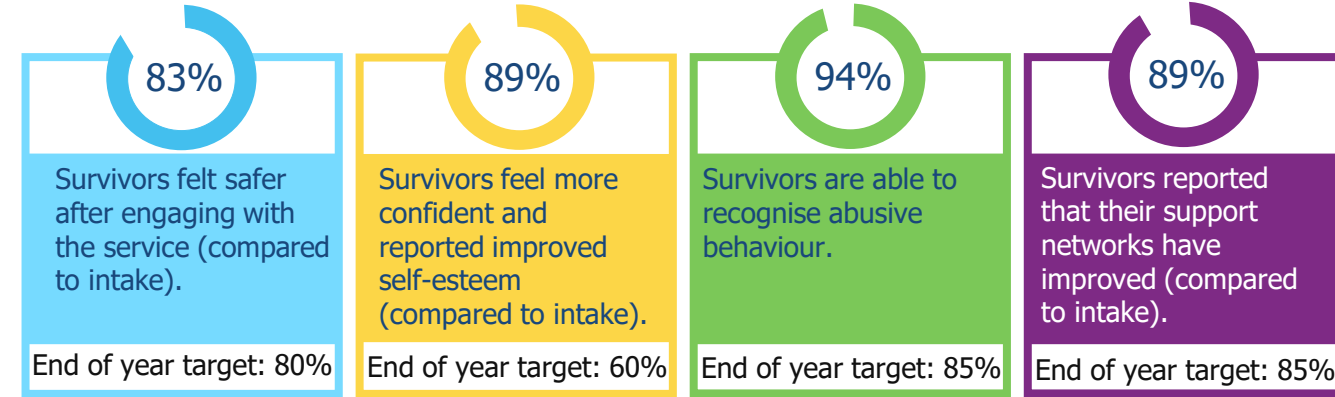
children at the households heard to date at the DSM (Q1: 201; Q2: 223; Q3: 117; Q4: 109)

138

referrals where single-agency input was required heard to date at the pre-DSM (Q1: 0; Q2: 0; Q3: 56; Q4: 82)

The DSM aims to address the needs at the time the intervention will have the greatest impact and to maximise victim engagement using service user led feedback to monitor the DSM outcomes/actions.

The following demonstrates their outcomes in measured effectiveness of multi-agency working:



Outcomes/actions

Outcomes/actions around Home safety:

- Preventing homelessness: 15%
- Obtaining Home Shelter/Repairs : 4.3%

Outcomes/actions around safeguarding children and adults and working with the whole family:

- VAWG Workforce Development consultation: 2%
- Children safeguarding referral: 2.9%
- Adult safeguarding referral: 1.2%

Outcomes/actions around managing risks from the perpetrator and safety planning including:

- Enabling arrest and updating safety planning: 55%
- Obtaining civil and legal protection orders: 5.7%
- Clare's Law right to know request and supporting 3rd party police reporting: 2.3%
- Issuing emergency mobile phones, panic alarms, and Tecso apps: 2.8%

6.1% Referral to specialist support including:

- Counselling, GP, and mental health: 5.6%
- NRFP and immigration: 0.9%
- Specialist and targeted support including multiple-disadvantage and substance use: 0.8%
- Journey to Change and perpetrator intervention: 1.6%

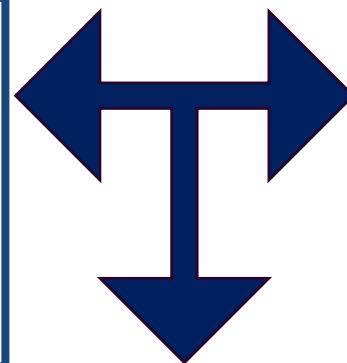
Total number of actions: 2,394

Progression to Adulthood (PtA) Board: Establishing Pathways for Transitional Safeguarding

In July 2023, the **Progression to Adulthood (PtA) Board** was formally initiated, reflecting Islington's commitment to ensuring smoother transitions for young people moving into adulthood. While the Progression to Adulthood framework does not explicitly reference **transitional safeguarding**, its approach and priorities are deeply connected to transitional safeguarding principles. The work of the Board focuses on safeguarding young people with **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**, **Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH)** issues, and other complex vulnerabilities. These young people often face additional risks as they progress from childhood into adulthood, making the need for a coordinated multi-agency approach critical.

Key Developments and Focus Areas

During the reporting period, the PtA Board has worked diligently to create pathways that support young people across various life stages. This is closely aligned with our safeguarding ambitions, ensuring that these young people continue to receive tailored services beyond their 18th birthdays. The **Theory of Change** framework initiated in **July 2023** reflects the borough's dedication to embedding a culture of **early intervention, prevention, and coordinated multi-agency action**.



Connections to Transitional Safeguarding

The PtA Board's focus on SEND and SEMH highlights the need for ongoing support for young people who may fall between the eligibility thresholds of services such as the Care Act. In particular, safeguarding concerns around **child exploitation, domestic abuse, and mental health** transition planning have been consistently considered. This includes addressing the complexities of exploitation and vulnerabilities that do not automatically qualify for adult services, creating a gap in safeguarding.

Task and Finish Groups

Supporting the Progression to Adulthood Board are several **Task and Finish Groups**, which play a pivotal role in driving action and monitoring progress:

- **SEND Transition Group:** Focuses on ensuring that young people with complex needs, especially those with SEND, are supported during their transition into adult services.
- **SEMH Pathways Task Group:** Concentrates on integrating mental health services to support young people, ensuring they do not experience a cliff-edge in care when transitioning from children's services to adult mental health services.
- **Exploitation and Vulnerability Group:** Examines young people at risk of exploitation or gang affiliation, ensuring that transition processes are in place for those identified by youth justice and social care.

While the Progression to Adulthood framework is relatively new, its early successes and alignment with **transitional safeguarding** principles demonstrate the borough's commitment to providing continuous and comprehensive support to its young people.



April 2023 to March 2024

The **Missing and Child & Adolescent Exploitation (MCAE)** section provides a comprehensive analysis of children at risk of **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**, **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**, and **Serious Youth Violence (SYV)**, with a focus on those who have been missing from **home, care, or education**. Continued analysis has demonstrated that children vulnerable to exploitation often overlap with those who go missing frequently. The ten most frequently missing children in 2023/24 were all identified as being at risk of exploitation. Our **Exploitation and Missing Team** continues to lead this critical work, collaborating closely with the **Police, Youth Justice Services (YJS)**, and **Targeted Youth Support (TYS)** to address the rising concerns and to improve responses, particularly to girls becoming more frequently missing and involved in violence.

Children Missing from Care and Home

Between **April 2023 and March 2024**, a total of **220 children** went missing, accounting for **1,136 missing episodes**. There was a **reduction in boys** missing from care, while **girls** saw an increase in both the number of missing episodes and their frequency.

- **124 girls** (56%) went missing, up from 101 in the previous year, with episodes rising from 470 to **697**.
- **93 boys** (42%) went missing, with missing episodes declining from **420 to 261**.
- Notably, the ten most frequently missing children accounted for **44% of all episodes**, similar to the previous year.

Exploitation

This year, we observed an **increase in children identified at risk of CSE, CCE, and SYV**, particularly in boys at risk of SYV and girls at risk of CSE

- 130 children were identified at risk of exploitation (62 females, 67 males, 1 transgender).
- Girls are overrepresented** in CSE risks (98%), while boys dominate CCE (100%) and SYV risks (89%).

Disproportionality

The over-representation of **Black** and **Mixed Parentage** children continues to be addressed. These groups made up **48%** of children who went missing, although the number of episodes decreased slightly.

Return Home Interviews (RHI)

A return home interview (RHI) is conducted after each missing episode. **50% of RHIs** were completed within 72 hours, a significant improvement from previous years. However, challenges persist in engaging children who go missing frequently.

In 2023-2024, **30% of RHIs** were not possible because the child went missing again before the interview could be conducted

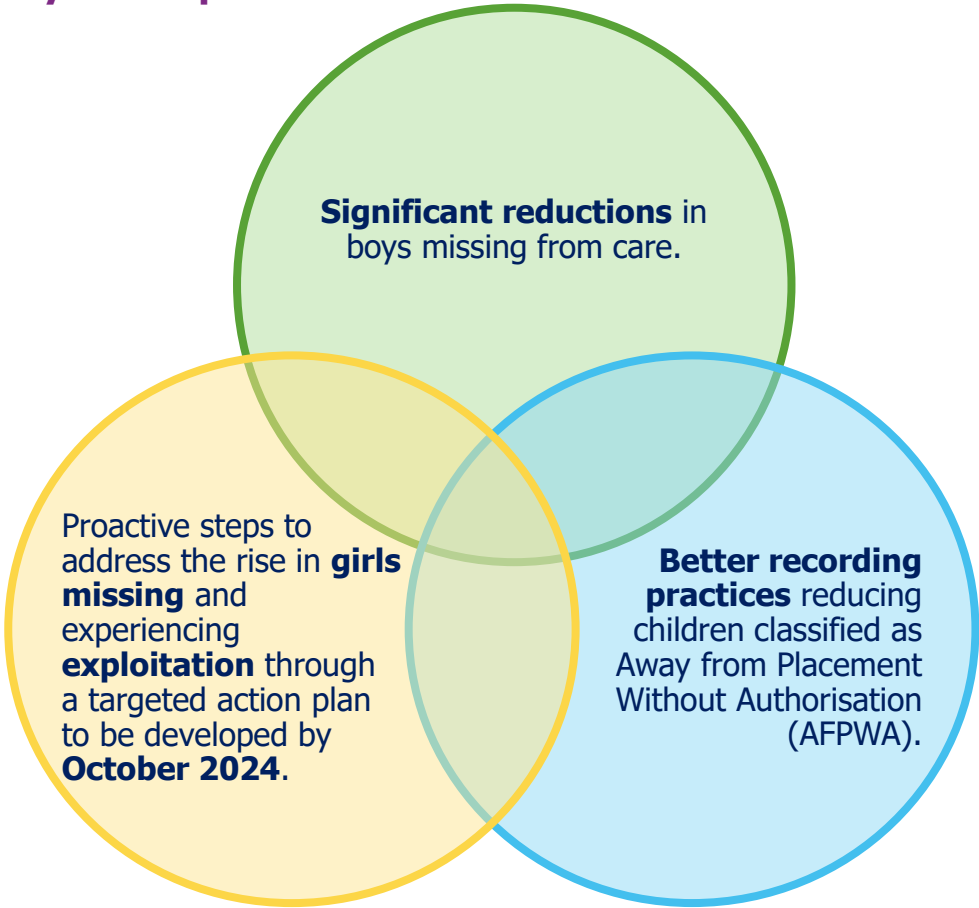
Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) Panel

The **MACE Panel** remains critical in coordinating responses to exploitation and youth violence across agencies. Information is shared and collated at a **practitioner level** through community safety briefings, **ICAN daily tasking meetings**, and safeguarding strategy meetings, which allows for quick escalation of concerns. These partnerships enable joint working to disrupt exploitation and ensure consistent safeguarding responses.

Adolescent Support Intervention Project (ASIP)

The **Adolescent Support Intervention Project (ASIP)** plays a significant role in preventing children at risk of contextual harm from entering care. This wraparound service offers trauma-informed interventions to young people and their families. Feedback from service users highlights the positive impact of **trusting relationships** with ASIP workers, enabling better engagement and safeguarding.

Key developments include:



Significant reductions in boys missing from care.

Proactive steps to address the rise in **girls missing** and experiencing **exploitation** through a targeted action plan to be developed by **October 2024**.

Better recording practices reducing children classified as Away from Placement Without Authorisation (AFPWA).

Summary

The continued increase in missing episodes for girls and the overlap between **missing children** and **exploitation** risks is a priority for 2024.

Improved collaboration with **Islington Police** has enabled more effective responses, particularly in identifying group offending and exploitation risks early on.



Assurance on Quality: Children's Social Care Motivational Practice Model and Competency of Workforce

In November 2022, the London Borough of Islington Children Social Care underwent Practice Week, which marked the 11th such event held since 2017. The primary aims were to:

- Assess the effectiveness of the Motivational Practice Model.
- Ensure the workforce's responsiveness to community needs.
- Evaluate the support provided to practitioners by their managers.
- Review the use of authority by practitioners, a previously identified area for improvement.

The audit focused on direct observations of practice, feedback from families and professionals, and a dip sample audit in the Children's Services Contact Team (CSCT) to ensure appropriate responses to referrals following earlier audit in the last ISCP annual report 2021/22..

CSCT Audit Findings:

- 79% of referrals were from family members, 21% were anonymous.
- 94% of referrals were appropriately followed up.
- 98% of auditors agreed with the referral outcomes.

Context: This high agreement rate underscores the robustness of decision-making processes within CSCT, ensuring that referrals are handled with appropriate scrutiny and care. It highlights the effectiveness of the current systems in place for safeguarding children.

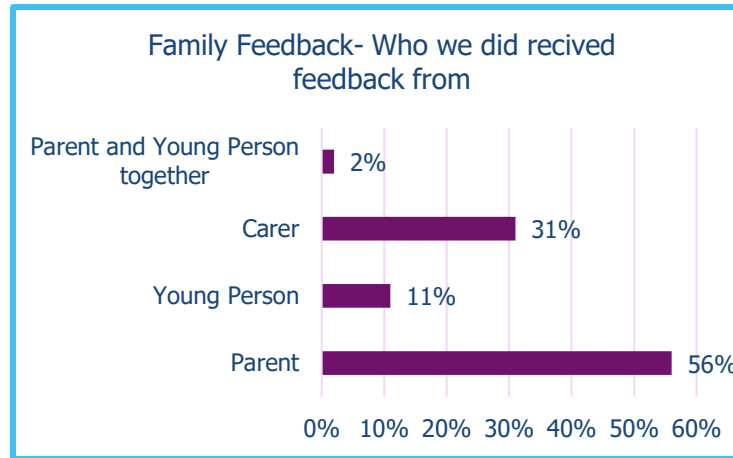
- 50% of referrals progressed to Targeted Services, 15% to Children's Social Care.

Demographics:

- White British children were the largest group referred (26%).
- Children aged 11-13 were most frequently referred.
- Children under 1 year old were the least referred group.

Observations of Practice:

- 66% of social workers were highly skilled in collaboration.
- 68% demonstrated high empathy.
- 71% were child-focused in their use of authority.



Family Feedback:

- 98% of families felt their social worker was respectful.
- 84% felt helped by their social worker.
- 69% reported positive changes due to the intervention.
- Families felt things were made safer with a social worker in 76% of the feedback and 76% also agreed that things needed to change and how things could be better for their children.
- Almost all the feedback said their social worker had strengths (96%) and when asked if the social worker could do things better this provided the most varied responses; 31% felt they could do things better; 58% said no; 25% partially felt they could do things better and 9% did not know.

Practice Week provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of Islington Children's Services. The findings indicate strong decision-making processes and effective use of the Motivational Practice Model. However, there is a need to improve engagement with families from global majority communities and ensure comprehensive data collection during audits. The recommendations aim to address these areas and further enhance the quality of service provided.

Recommendations

- Address the lower referral rates from families of global majority communities.
- Ensure audit tools are fully completed to capture all relevant data.
- Provide refresher training for senior managers on using audit tools and conducting observations.
- Review and update ISCP materials (ie websites and leaflets) to ensure cultural inclusivity.



Bangladeshi Children referred to Islington Children Services for Domestic Violence and Abuse: January - June 2023

This report examines the referrals, decision making, and assessments of all Bangladeshi families referred to Islington Children Services in the first 6 months of 2023, for concerns related to domestic violence and abuse (DVA). It considered if there is a disproportionality in how or why Bangladeshi families are referred, assessed, and subsequently supported by Children's Services. Data from the disproportionality task and finish group suggests that they were underrepresented in Children Social Care referrals and child protection plans.

Demographics:

There were 5 Families with a totally of 11 Children (7 females, 4 males); two families with three children each, two families with two children each and one family with one child.

Case Summaries:

Family A:	Three children (17, 14, 11) were referred due to a sibling altercation. Subsequent allegations led to a child and family assessment, which found no harm to the younger children.
Family B:	The mother disclosed historical and ongoing DVA. She sought support and moved to her maternal grandmother's home. No statutory support was deemed necessary.
Family C:	Already receiving Early Help, the referral involved parental assault and concerns about the father's mental health. The case was stepped back down to Early Help.
Family D:	With a significant history of Children Social Care involvement, the referral raised concerns about parental mental health. The family is now supported under a Child in Need (CIN) plan.
Family E:	The referral led to a CIN plan due to the mother retracting DVA allegations and the father returning home.

Conclusions:

Of the five Bangladeshi families referred to children services, four resulted in an Early Help referral or on-going Early Help support and one family was supported with a CIN plan as a direct result of the DVA referral.

Referral Patterns: No evidence of disproportionate service based on race or ethnicity.

Furthermore, there did not appear to be any pattern in the number of siblings impacting on the assessment or decision making for these families, nor does there appear to be any sign that these families received a disproportionate service based on their race or ethnicity.

Strategy Discussions: None of the referrals resulted in strategy discussions, which was deemed appropriate.

Under-Referral: The low number of referrals suggests possible under-referral, disproportionate to the local population.

Recommendations:

- Raise awareness across the ISCP of DVA in communities with low referral numbers.
- This audit highlights the importance of thorough case history consideration and the need for increased awareness and support for DVA in under-referred communities



The multi-agency CSCT/MASH Threshold Audit conducted in December 2022 followed the same parameters from the 2021 Multi-agency audit in the 2021/22 ISCP annual report.

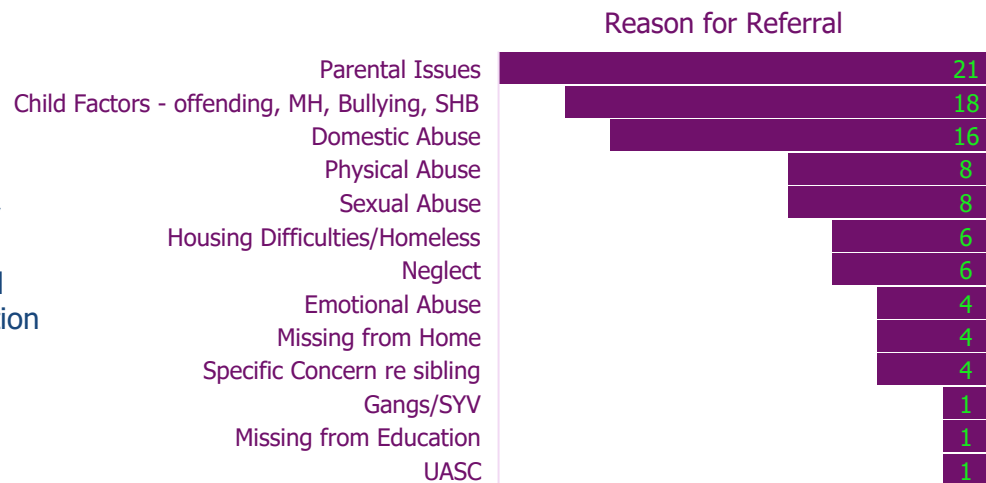
This audit was undertaken collectively by CSC, Early Help Services, Health and Education Safeguarding leads, all referred to the London Continuum of Need Threshold Document to ensure a consistent application within the audit.

The audit aimed to review the appropriateness of decisions made by the Children's Services Contact Team (CSCT) and Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). The audit focused on ensuring that contacts and referrals were handled correctly, with appropriate services offered to children and families. This review was prompted by an increase in contacts and aimed to provide assurance that thresholds were applied consistently and effectively.

93 out of 98 children had decisions agreed upon by auditors. This high agreement rate (94%) indicates that most decisions made by CSCT were appropriate and aligned with safeguarding protocols. This statistic is significant as it demonstrates the robustness of the decision-making process and the effectiveness of the multiagency approach in safeguarding children.

Demographics:

- The audit included a diverse group of children, with a significant number of referrals for children aged 11-15 years (33) and those under 5 years (27).
- Ethnicity data showed a mix of backgrounds, with White British (19) and mixed parentage (12) being the largest groups.



Referral Sources and Reasons:

- Most referrals came from the police (31), health services (22), and schools (11).
- Common reasons for referral included domestic abuse (16), parental issues (21), and child factors such as mental health and offending (18).

Decision Agreement:

- 92 out of 98 children had decisions that auditors agreed with.
- 5 decisions were not agreed upon, primarily due to the need for additional services or further investigation.
- 1 case had no finding due to recording issues.

MASH Checks:

- MASH checks were completed for 12 out of 98 children.
- Auditors believed that MASH checks should have been completed for an additional 8 children.
- As this is a small sample of 12 MASH checks, it would be worth looking generally about proportionality of MASH checks generally given there did not appear to great diversity within this sample.

Consent for Services:

- There remains the ongoing issue of consent for services as a barrier for some children in being able to receive what is assessed as the appropriate early intervention offer for their presenting need.
- Despite the small numbers in this audit (2 children, compared to 4 in the last audit), this could proportionally represent 240 to 480 children annually, highlighting the need for the partnership to find a way to better reach these children.

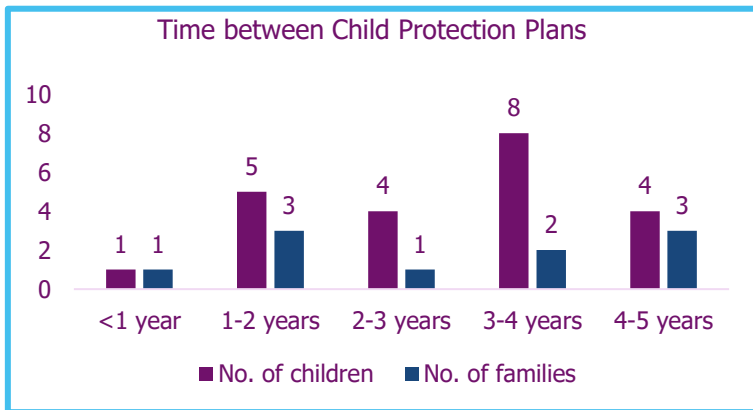
Recommendations

- Conduct another multiagency review in 12 months, focusing on cases with not agreed outcomes.
- Collaborate with Targeted Services and Early Help practitioners to develop strategies for engaging families who decline services.
- Perform a dip sample audit of MASH checks to identify any disproportionality issues.
- Include the percentage of MASH checks completed in regular reporting to monitor trends and ensure proportionality.

In the first quarter of 2023/24, out of the 54 children who were newly placed under a child protection plan, 22 were receiving such support for the second time or more. This equates to 41% of the total number of new Child Protection plans being repeat plans.

The 22 children who were supported by a repeat plan came from 10 families. Two of the sibling groups were large, one with four and the other with five children.

Repeat plans in 2019/20 were unusually low for Islington. This audit year saw a return to repeat plans around the 20% mark. This percentage needs to be seen in the context of lower Child Protection plans for Islington which may suggest that repeat plans indicate a more concentrated group of children with recurrent chronic problems.

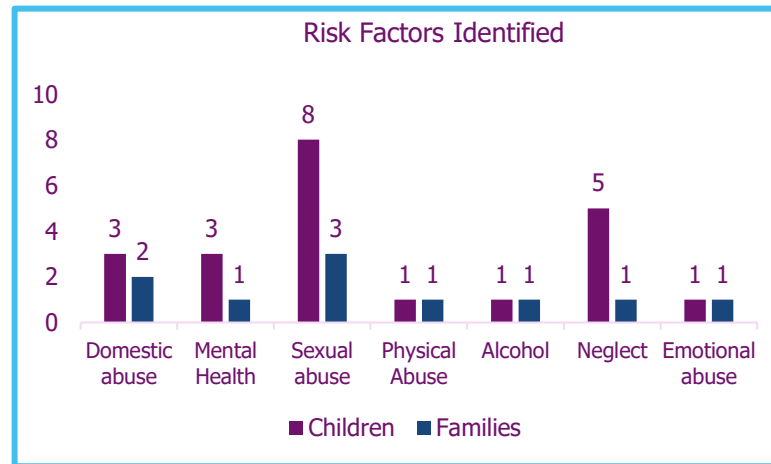


The time between repeat plans varied, with the majority (8 children) having a gap of 3-4 years, followed by 5 children with a gap of 1-2 years

In auditing the children on repeat plans, the following questions were considered:

- Did matters need to be re-escalated or could risks have been managed in some other way?
- Was the intervention under the previous Child Protection plan sufficient to reduce the risks recurring?
- Was there sufficient aftercare once the previous Child Protection plan ended?

In all cases it was felt threshold was met for a child to have a repeat Child Protection plan. 58% were escalated to a legal framework.



Reasons for Repeat Plans:

- Common reasons included domestic abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, and parental issues such as mental health problems and substance abuse.
- Specific cases highlighted issues like sexual abuse risks from new partners and the impact of parental ill-health on childcare.

Current arrangements to reduce the potential of repeat plans are as follows:

- The Chair is alerted as soon as a conference has been booked for a potential repeat plan
- The Chair reviews the file to ensure threshold is met
- A child protection consultation is offered in an effort to divert children who may not require a plan or if they do, ensure parallel plans are in place
- Chairs ensure child protection plans end only once positive change for the child has been sustained.

In view of the percentage increase in repeat plans, further measures are required to ensure children are only supported under a repeat Child Protection plan where necessary and if they are, parallel plans are in place to reduce the risk of drift.

Recommendations:

- 1. Document Oversight:** Team Managers should document the rationale for ending or seeking repeat Child Protection (CP) plans and consider alternative risk management strategies.
- 2. Pre-End Consultation:** Teams must consult before ending a CP plan to ensure changes are sustainable and prevent future repeat plans.
- 3. Pre-Conference Consultation:** Managers should seek a CP consultation before booking an Initial Child Protection Conference for potential repeat plans.
- 4. Emphasise Aftercare:** Raise awareness among social work teams about the importance of aftercare post-CP plan, especially when outcomes are limited, to maintain safety and purposefulness.

The May 2023 Practice Week aimed to provide senior managers with firsthand experience of frontline practice in Islington Children's Services.

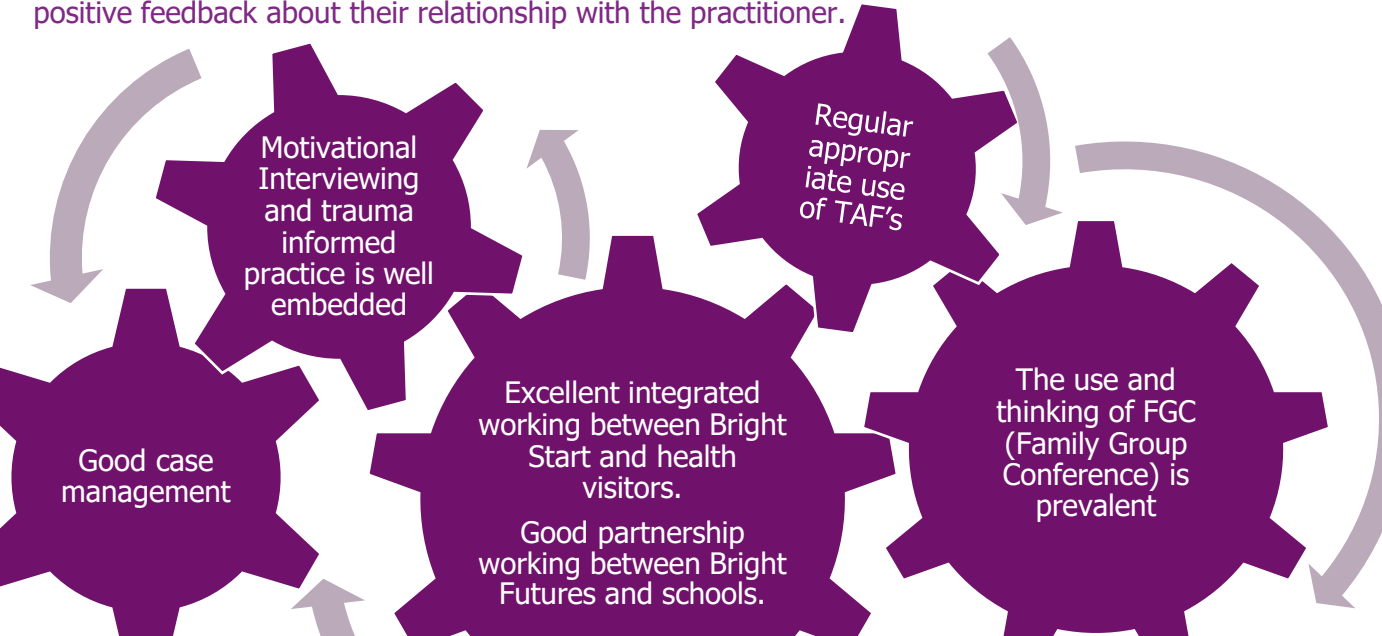
Objectives included understanding the challenges faced by practitioners, improving senior management visibility, and evaluating the effectiveness of interventions and management decisions.

The audit focused on various service areas including Children in Need, Children Looked After, Independent Futures, and the Fostering Service. Special attention was given to early risk factors for neglect and the rise in female children aged 12-15 entering care.

The audit also examined the quality of interventions, management decisions, and the impact of safety planning.

The number of children entering Care Proceedings reduced by 50% in the last year. This significant reduction suggests that more children are being supported in the community under Child Protection Plans, indicating effective early intervention and risk management strategies. It highlights the success of the efforts to keep children within their families while ensuring their safety.

Quality of Practice: 84% of Early Help Bright Start/Futures audits were graded as Good. Auditor's spoke to 13 families for feedback, including a father and young person: 100% of families gave positive feedback about their relationship with the practitioner.



Management Oversight: 98% of audits showed evidence of regular supervision and good management oversight.

Children's Voices: 83% of audits indicated that the child's voice was evident in the assessments and plans.

Cultural Competence: 63% of audits included the child's race, culture, and ethnicity in the narrative, though this remains an area for improvement.

School Attendance: 91% of audits showed that school attendance was known, but only 35% had robust plans to improve attendance.

Disproportionality: Black children were more likely to have factors such as Missing, Trafficking, and gang involvement highlighted, while white children had factors like parental substance abuse and mental health issues.

Gender Disparity: More male children were subject to longer-term Child in Need and Child Protection Plans compared to female children.

Understanding of Disability: In the audit, 14% of the children, (approx. 6), had a Disability. Auditors found that 82% of practitioners had only a partial understanding of these Disabilities. Highlighting the need for social workers to incorporate this aspect of a child's identity into their interventions and relationship-building with children and their families.

Recommendations:

- **Early Help:** Enhance training on reducing parental conflict.
- **Strengthen whole family working,** including engaging fathers and using Family Group Conferences (FGCs).
- **Cultural Competence:** Improve understanding of cultural, ethnic, and religious factors in assessments- introduce and EDT section on the system.
- **Case supervision** and regular case QA activity.
- **School Attendance:** Develop more robust intervention plans to improve school attendance.
- **Independent Futures:** Ensure purposeful work with clear goals for young people aged 22-25, and close cases where young people do not require ongoing support.

This October 2023 audit aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of joint working and case recording between Islington Youth Justice Service (YJS) and Children's Social Care (CSC).

It sought to review progress on recommendations from the 2022 audit and identify areas for further improvement.

The review focused on children open to both YJS and CSC, examining case files and conducting joint audits. It included input from social workers, youth justice practitioners, and auditing managers through focus groups.

23 cases in total were reviewed and case file audits undertaken. This represented all children open to both services at the time that the review was completed between September and October 2023.

67%

Of Islington's youth justice cohort are care experienced children (as of August 2023).

This statistic emphasises the significant overlap between care experience and involvement in the youth justice system. Highlighting the need for targeted interventions to address the vulnerabilities and trauma that contribute to offending behaviours among care experienced children.

Understanding and Addressing Needs: Practitioners demonstrated a good understanding of children's needs, risks, and lived experiences, with assessments considering diversity, culture, and identity.

Voice of the Child: The child's voice was evident in all case files, with efforts made to capture their views despite challenges.

Joint Working: In 22 cases there was good evidence of assessment and direct work with children in relation to risk of exploitation and good use of the local NRM Decision Making Panel, where applicable.

Collaborative practice was strong, with improved joint supervision and multi-agency meetings contributing to effective partnerships.

Safety Planning: There was good evidence of safety planning, though consistency in recording and using standardised formats needs improvement.

Adultification Bias and Diversity: Diversity, culture and identity was fully considered in 16 CSC assessments and in 20 YJS assessments. Good practice noted the use of social graces and reflective practice in relation to understanding the child's experiences and structural barriers in YJS assessments.

Awareness of adultification bias is growing, with training and practice workshops recommended to further embed this understanding.

Reducing Criminalisation: Efforts to reduce the criminalisation of care experienced children were evident, with trauma-informed approaches and advocacy in court settings.

Significant Trends and Insights:

- **Improved Joint Supervision:** Joint supervision has improved, with 82% of cases showing evidence of this practice, though recording consistency needs enhancement.
- **Contextual Safeguarding:** Safety planning in relation to contextual safeguarding has improved, but further standardisation is needed.
- **Diversity and Identity:** Consideration of diversity, culture, and identity in assessments was generally positive, though there is room for further development.



Recommendations:

- **Standardise Safety Planning:** Implement a consistent, evidence-based approach to safety planning across services.
- **Enhance Joint Supervision:** Ensure joint supervision meetings are held within required timescales and recorded accurately.
- **Embed Adultification Training:** Continue training on adultification and ensure it is integrated into practice.
- **Improve Recording Practices:** Ensure all relevant documents and assessments are shared and recorded on both YJS and CSC systems.

In November 2023 the Children Social Care Practice Week audit aimed to provide senior managers with a deeper understanding of frontline practice by engaging directly with practitioners, social workers, and families.

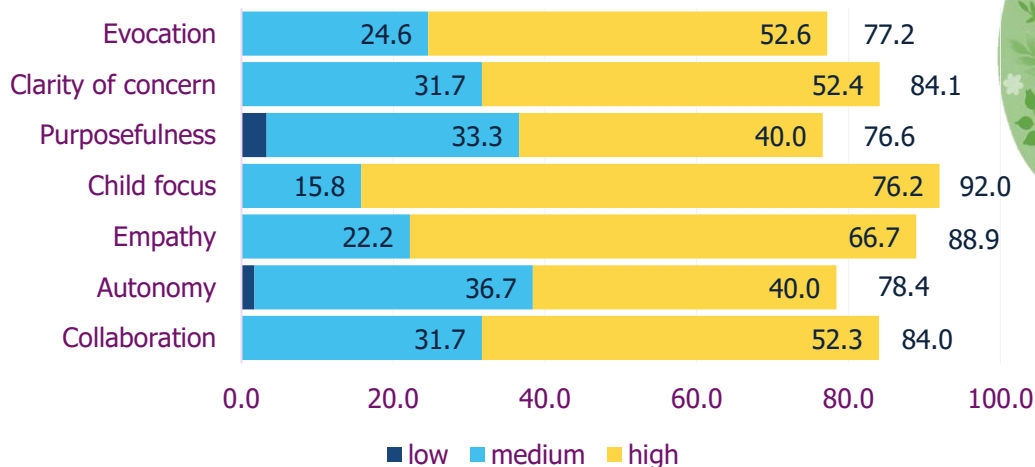
Objectives included evaluating the quality of practice, identifying areas for improvement, and enhancing the visibility and involvement of senior management in frontline activities.

The audit covered various service areas, including Children in Need (CIN), Children Looked After (CLA), Independent Futures (IF), and targeted early help services.

Key themes included safeguarding, family support, permanency planning, quality of pathway plans, and repeat contacts and child protection plans.

94% of audited cases had two or fewer social workers, with 70% of children having only one social worker; highlighting the stability and consistency in the relationship between social workers and children, which is crucial for effective support and trust-building. It reflects positively on the department's efforts to maintain continuity in case management.

Practice Skills

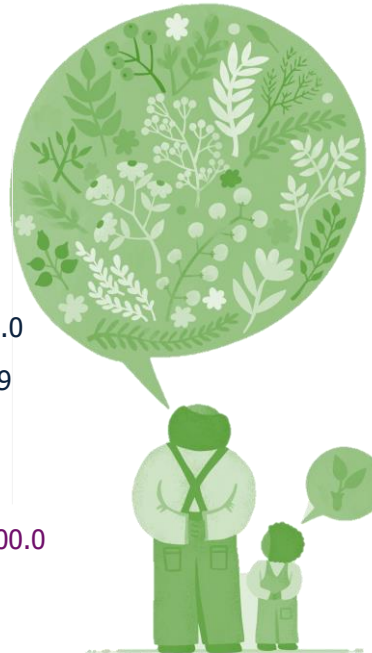


Main Findings:

- **Chronologies:** 82.5% of cases had a fully or partially completed chronology, showing an improvement from previous audits.
- **Cultural Consideration:** Nearly 70% of cases included the child's culture, race, and ethnicity in the narrative, indicating progress in culturally informed practice.
- **Disability Understanding:** 25.6% of cases involved children with disabilities, with an increased understanding of these disabilities compared to previous audits.
- **Protective Factors:** 94.87% of practitioners provided clear descriptions of protective factors and strengths in families.
- **Permanency Planning:** 78% of permanency planning meetings were held in line with protocols, but there is room for improvement in driving permanency effectively.
- **Repeat Contacts:** Black children were significantly overrepresented in re-referrals, highlighting a need to address disproportionality in referrals.
- **Pathway Plans:** All audited pathway plans were either good or outstanding, with strong evidence of identity and health considerations.

Recommendations:

- **Supervision:** Ensure supervision follows the protocol and is recorded consistently.
- **Permanency Planning:** Improve the quality and timeliness of permanency planning meetings and ensure decisions are well-documented. Service Manager to develop guidance / policy to be followed where friends and family carers consistently do not meet the fostering regulations.
- **Family Group Conferencing:** Increase the use and consideration of family group conferencing to support robust support networks.
- **Educational Needs:** Develop robust school attendance plans with the support of the virtual school.
- **EDI:** Enhance the reflection of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) impacts in assessments and planning, creating consistent practice.



Bi-Annual Safeguarding Report Summary (April 2023 to October 2023)

Aims and Objectives:

- To review and strengthen safeguarding arrangements for children and adults across Whittington Health NHS Trust.
- To ensure compliance with statutory and regulatory obligations.
- To respond to emerging safeguarding themes and improve safeguarding processes.
- The audit covered safeguarding activities and progress from April 2023 to October 2023.
- It focused on safeguarding training, case complexities, domestic abuse, mental health issues, and legislative changes impacting safeguarding practices.



Whittington Health
NHS Trust

Key Learning Points

Increased Complexity of Cases: There has been a rise in safeguarding cases involving mental health issues, substance misuse, and domestic abuse, particularly among adolescents.

Domestic Abuse: Domestic abuse remains the primary reason for referrals to social care, with an increase in cases involving men and same-sex relationships. Further recognising the new domestic abuse legislation recognises children living with domestic abuse as victims, impacting safeguarding practices.

Training and Supervision: Safeguarding training compliance has improved, and supervision sessions for staff dealing with complex cases have been effective.

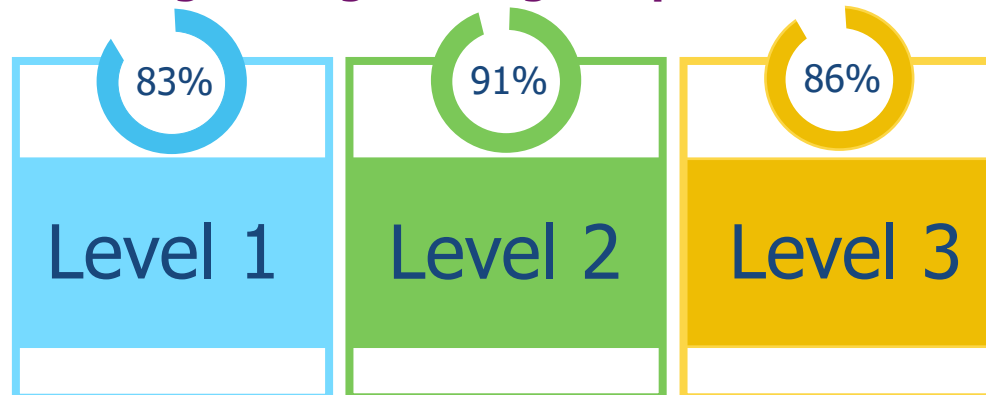
Hospital Discharges: Complex hospital discharges require careful planning and adherence to the Mental Capacity Act to ensure patient safety.

Safeguarding Adults: There has been an increase in safeguarding adult referrals, with neglect being the most common category of abuse.

Recommendations:

- **Domestic Abuse Specialist:** Recruit a dedicated Domestic Abuse Specialist for the Trust.
- **Training and Awareness:** Continue to support staff with appropriate training, supervision, and consultation.
- **Partnership Working:** Strengthen partnerships between acute hospitals and community services to address safeguarding needs.
- **Resource Allocation:** Review and potentially increase resources for safeguarding adults, MCA, DoLS, and PREVENT.

Safeguarding training compliance rates:

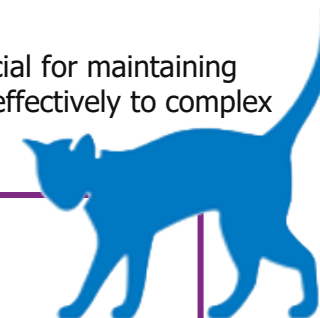


Level reference: Safeguarding Children and Young People: Roles and Competencies for Healthcare Staff

Compared to Adults safeguarding compliance, for level 1 this is higher, at 88%, but lower at 81% for Level 2

Overall these high compliance rates indicate a strong commitment to safeguarding training across the Trust, ensuring staff are well-equipped to handle safeguarding issues.

The improvement in training compliance is crucial for maintaining robust safeguarding practices and responding effectively to complex cases.



The North Central London (NCB) Integrated Care Board (ICB) collaborates with commissioned health providers to ensure service quality and improvements that cater to local needs. Robust safeguarding quality assurance processes are in place and as a result The NCL ICB has actively contributed to supporting safeguarding priorities within the Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership (ISCP). This year, several key initiatives and actions were undertaken to address systemic inequalities, improve safeguarding responses, and tackle the health-related vulnerabilities of children at risk of exploitation, neglect, and parental challenges.

1. Addressing Disproportionality and Inequality

Priority: Tackling the impact of inequality and structural racism on vulnerable children and developing a deeper understanding of data across ISCP.

- The NCL ICB Safeguarding Assurance Framework has been further strengthened, with the establishment of the Integrated Safeguarding Oversight Group. This group provides oversight, ensuring peer scrutiny and continuous improvement across safeguarding practices.
- The ICB contributed to the ISCP Disproportionality Task and Finish Group, co-chaired by the Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children. This group undertook a detailed analysis of disproportionality in both service delivery and workforce representation, leading to a set of actionable recommendations presented in March 2024.

Outcome: The strengthened safeguarding oversight and task group recommendations offer an actionable roadmap for reducing disproportionality and addressing systemic inequalities within the borough's health services.

2. Addressing Neglect and Enhancing Resilience

Priority: Address the impact of neglect on children and build resilience in those affected.

- The Safe and Well Reviews conducted across joint-funded residential placements for children with complex health needs (disabilities, mental health issues, and behavioural difficulties) revealed positive outcomes in ensuring the well-being of children.
- Regular statutory visits, health checks, and Child Looked After Health Assessments were conducted for all children involved.
- Actions stemming from the reviews include the development of a Safe and Well template to support ongoing quality reviews and the creation of a residential provider environmental assessment to ensure appropriate placements.

Outcome: Increased assurance on the safety and well-being of vulnerable children in residential placements, and ongoing improvements to service delivery based on review findings.

3. Responding to Parental Challenges: Domestic Violence, Mental Ill-Health, and Substance Abuse

Priority: Mitigate the consequences of harm caused by domestic violence, parental mental ill-health, and substance abuse.

- The NCL ICB co-led multi-agency training focused on safeguarding reviews where domestic violence, parental mental health, and substance misuse were central issues.
- The Start Well Islington programme commissioned community-based psychological interventions like Growing Together and the Youth Counselling & Substance Misuse & Alcohol Service (YCSMAS) to address these challenges. The programme also supports young people in care and those with mental health or substance misuse issues.

Outcome: Services like Growing Together and YCSMAS have contributed to improving emotional well-being and family relationships, particularly for children affected by domestic violence and parental challenges.

The focus on early intervention and mental health support has led to positive outcomes for children and families at risk.

4. Tackling Child Exploitation and Gangs

Priority: Identify and support children vulnerable to sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and gang involvement.

- The ICB's involvement in Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) panels and participation in the National Referral Mechanism for child victims of modern slavery has strengthened the local response to exploitation.
- The ICB health team co-delivered multi-agency training that highlighted lessons learned from cases of child sexual exploitation and their impact on Black and dual heritage children.
- The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) pilot in Islington, with active health representation, improved decision-making for children identified as victims of modern slavery.

Outcome: Strengthened multi-agency collaboration, timely decision-making, and improved safeguarding outcomes for children vulnerable to exploitation and serious youth violence.

Assurance on Quality ISCP Multi-Agency Audit: Decision Making for Referrals of Physical Abuse

The National Review, led by the Independent Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel, examined the 2020 deaths of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson, identifying missed intervention opportunities. In response, the Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership (ISCP) launched a multi-agency audit to evaluate decision-making effectiveness in cases of child physical abuse. This audit, involving Health, Local Authority, and Police, aims to ensure appropriate responses to safeguard children, focusing on the effectiveness and proportionality of decisions at each stage, including outcomes like no further action, assessments, strategy discussions, and Section 47 (S47) enquiries.

Hypotheses

Children that have been referred into CSCT for concerns of physical abuse will demonstrate effective decision making that safeguard, promotes the welfare of children and upholds the ISCP policy and procedure including threshold.

It examines whether multi-agency decision-making is proportionate, if information sharing aligns with statutory guidance and LSCP standards, and whether this information informs outcomes. Additionally, it assesses if the ethnicity of service users is proportionally represented in referrals compared to the Islington population.

Data

- In 2023, the Children’s Services Contact Team recorded 814 physical abuse cases, auditing 30 (3.69%). Of the 669 children involved, 4.48% were audited. Among them, 117 had two referrals, and 14 had three, with 13 of these children being audited.
- Contact record numbers differ from referral numbers because not all referrals create new contact records. This data excludes children already open to teams like Child In Need or Children Looked After.

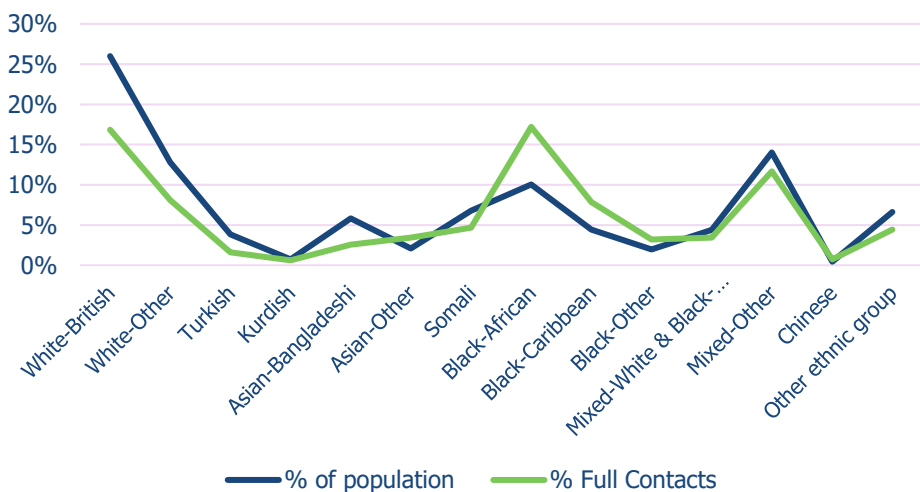
Initial Findings outside of the Terms of Reference:

80% of the 30 audited children were previously known to Children Social Care, with 30% of these children having been known for physical abuse. Of further significance, 25 children (44%) had one or more parental factors present in their case history; 60% of these children had reported domestic abuse.



We will focus on prevention, early identification and support to address parental issues impacting children’s safety and well-being. This includes ongoing prevention and support, ensuring equitable representation for all ethnic groups, and investigating the causes of disparities to develop more effective and inclusive multi-agency practices and policies.

Census Population and Physical Abuse Contact Records
January – December 2023



Initial Findings: The majority of contacts involve White British children, with “not recorded” and “unknown ethnicity” categories being the second highest at 14% in the full data set and 7% in the audited sample.

However, this data does indicate that certain ethnic groups, such as Black Caribbean and Black-African, are overrepresented in referrals with concerns of physical abuse, while others, like White-British, White-Other and Asian-Bangladeshi, are underrepresented.

This suggests potential disparities in how different ethnic groups are referred to children’s social care services in Islington.

What’s next?

The last SEMH Review outlined recommendations that were made to improve service delivery. This report will demonstrate their progress to date.

Recommendations

Improving equity of access

Ensure that all providers understand, record and monitor needs of different population groups and make sure that effective systems are in place to prioritise those at greatest risk of poor mental health outcomes.

Managing Support and Risk

Ensure that children waiting for mental health interventions can access support where needed

Co-production

Embed a consistent approach across LBI, ICB and providers

Waiting Times

Seek to maintain waits for first contact to within 4 weeks of referral

Social Prescribing Pilot

Refine, deliver and evaluate pilot and develop sustainability plans.

Progress

Equity audit gap analysis recommendations presented to SEMH Board in March 2024; the following remedial actions were agreed:

Implementation of an action plan to address the current deficits in data collection in order to enable accurate and consistent analysis of the service demographical data (ethnicity, sexual identity, disability) and equity of access and outcomes across different population groups
Develop a partnership SEMH dashboard to enable regular reporting of provider activity and performance against agreed indicators with which to monitor outcomes and trends in real time.

Additional investment secured into core Getting More Help CAMHS teams and CBT delivery to reduce waiting times. Waiting times are now starting to come down

SEMH coproduction framework developed for implementation

Additional investment secured to increase triage capacity in Central Point of Access (CPA)

Public Health have agreed to continue funding for the next two years. The evaluation report will be shared at the next SEMH partnership board in September 2024 to share best practice and learning.

Next Steps for the SEMH Review:

Develop and implement the action plan to address equity of access in terms of equality, diversity and inclusion in the Central Point of Access (CPA) and across commissioned SEMH provision:

- Ongoing development and delivery of the SEMH integrated (CPA).
- i-THRIVE workshop to develop consistent data collection and analysis processes to ensure children's journeys through the SEMH pathway are captured and evaluated to inform service development.
- Implement protocols to address the current deficits in data collection to enable accurate and consistent analysis of service demographical data, equity of access and outcomes across different population groups.
- Development of a partnership SEMH dashboard to enable regular reporting of provider activity and performance against agreed indicators with which to monitor outcomes and trends.
- Develop a prioritisation system and shared waiting list risk ('RAG') protocol to ensure young people waiting for services have access to support, are monitored and reviewed.
- Align the SEMH coproduction framework with other models in the council to deliver SEMH service improvements via coproduction (service planning, design, commissioning, delivery and review with young people with lived experience of the provision).
- Develop a shared risk management plan for those CYP completing treatment but still presenting with significant risk.

Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust: Safeguarding Children Report 2023-2024

Moorfields Eye Hospital continues to demonstrate its strong commitment to the safeguarding priorities set by the **Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership (ISCP)**. Throughout the reporting period, the Trust has actively engaged its staff in promoting the welfare of children and young people through a range of targeted activities and initiatives. Our efforts have focused on addressing key areas such as **child neglect, parental factors, and vulnerability**, aligning with the ISCP's priority themes.

1. Child Neglect

Moorfields is dedicated to addressing the impact of neglect on children and supporting their resilience. Neglect remains one of the most significant safeguarding challenges, and we have taken steps to ensure that staff are well-equipped to identify and respond to neglect cases effectively.

Training and Awareness: Trauma-informed practice has been a recurring theme in our safeguarding supervision sessions, reflecting the need for staff to understand the long-term impact of neglect on children's development and well-being. This theme is embedded in the **Level 3 mandatory safeguarding training** delivered across the Trust, which ensures that all staff have the skills to recognise and respond to neglect appropriately.

Safeguarding Briefings: Regular **safeguarding briefings** on ISCP priorities, including child neglect, are circulated throughout the organisation. These briefings link the partnership's priorities to daily practice, offering staff clear guidance on how neglect presents in healthcare settings and the importance of professional curiosity when assessing families.

Outcome: These initiatives have strengthened the hospital's approach to identifying and supporting children affected by neglect, ensuring that staff are equipped with trauma-informed skills to engage with families and mitigate the long-term impact of neglect.

2. Parental Factors

Understanding the broader **Think Family Agenda**, Moorfields remains focused on addressing the harm children may suffer as a result of **domestic violence, parental mental ill-health, and substance misuse**. Our approach ensures that the child's needs remain central, even when treating adults.

Integrated Training: Our training programmes emphasize the connection between adult behaviors and child welfare. Workshops include content on the **"child behind the adult"**, reinforcing the importance of recognising when parental issues such as domestic violence or mental health concerns might affect children. This agenda is co-delivered with the **Safeguarding Adults Team** to ensure a holistic understanding of how adult services intersect with child safeguarding.

Enhanced Domestic Violence Risk Assessment: The Trust has improved its **domestic violence and abuse (DVA) risk assessment tool**, empowering staff to better identify potential risks to children when treating adults. By enhancing professional curiosity, staff are encouraged to ask questions that bring the **voice of the child** into the decision-making process, particularly when safety planning for families affected by DVA.

Outcome: These efforts have increased staff awareness and competence in managing cases where parental issues may impact children, ensuring the child's voice and safety are considered at every stage.



3. Vulnerability

Moorfields recognises the growing challenges posed by **child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), and gang involvement**. Addressing these forms of exploitation remains central to our safeguarding strategy.

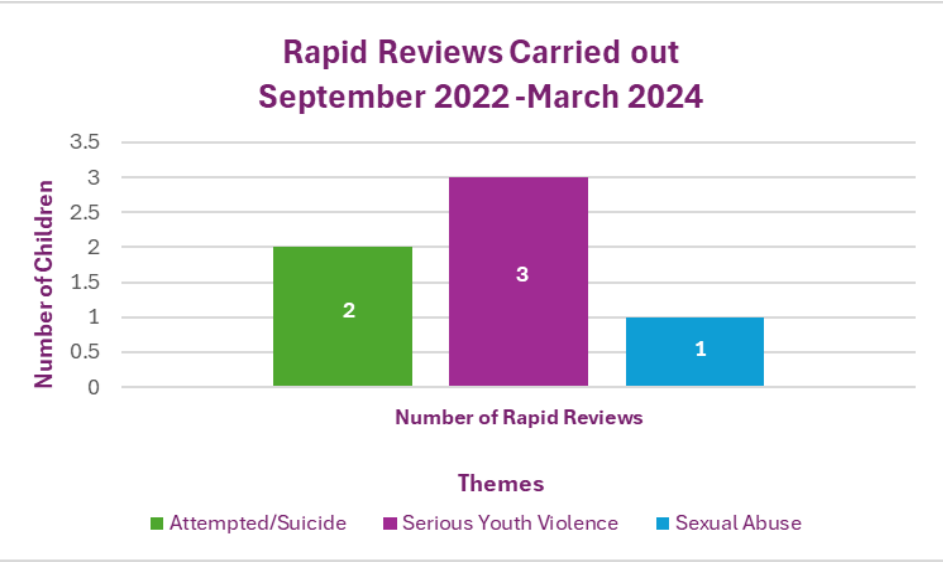
Safeguarding in the 21st Century: As part of our **multi-agency safeguarding training**, we deliver sessions that address emerging threats such as **County Lines, online radicalisation, and cyberbullying**. These sessions focus on helping staff understand how exploitation and grooming present in both online and real-world contexts, enabling them to spot warning signs early.

Trauma-Informed Practice: The continued emphasis on **trauma-informed practice** ensures that staff are prepared to engage with vulnerable children in a sensitive and supportive manner, recognising the complex trauma that exploitation can cause.

Outcome: By integrating trauma-informed principles into training and focusing on modern exploitation risks, Moorfields staff are better equipped to identify and respond to children vulnerable to CSE, CCE, and gang involvement.

During the period of September 2022 to March 2024 the Safeguarding Children Partnership undertook six Rapid Reviews for Serious Incident Notifications that were referred to the Partnership.

From the six Rapid Reviews held within this reporting timeframe, two progressed to a Local Safeguarding Practice Review.



Child B

This is currently an ongoing LCSPR for a 14-year-old child who tragically died by suicide whilst an inpatient at a Tier 4 Mental Health Unit. There have been reflective workshops with practitioners for this review and positive engagement from the family. There is much evidence of the voice of the child within this review. The LCSPR is progressing and the findings and themes for learning will be reflected on within the next annual report.

Child U

This review started before the annual reporting timeframe but concluded within the reporting period. The recommendations for this review have been embodied into an action plan. Highlighted learning for this this Local Safeguarding Practice Review stressed a learning gap in how Adult’s Social Care and Children Social Care conducted their joint supervision and planning.

Learning and Impact

Adult Social Care and Children’s Social Care have devised and completed a joint protocol to specify the frequency of joint supervision and planning when there is a case open to both services in light of the learning that was identified. Also highlighted within the findings was a recommendation to ensure that ISCP incorporates appropriate training relating to adultification, how to support young carers and training around LGBTQ. Training administered for professionals and volunteers by the ISCP ensures these areas of learning are encompassed within the training package it offers. In relation to concerns synonymous with contextual safeguarding these findings are comprised within action plans relating to preceding LCSPRs undertaken.

ISCP assurances for embedding the learning from action plans:

Comparing to when operating as a Children’s Safeguarding Board, the ISCP has seen an overall increase its reviewing cases where threshold has been met for a rapid review or LCSPR, as a result the ISCP has a plethora of action plans stemming from Rapid Reviews, Internal management reviews and LCSPRs. As such, partners have discussed in the case review subgroup on developing and placing an emphasis on reviewing how action plans have impacted services and how partners have measured this impact based on effectiveness. This work has started in this reporting period and will continue into the next reporting cycle. The case review subgroup has acknowledged that creating action plans and assigning tasks to respective services and agencies to complete can be tasking. Additionally, the ability to measure the effectiveness of practice from an action plan can also be tasking.

Child W

This LCSPR has concluded. Child W was the victim of a stabbing in early 2022. In the attack he sustained life changing injuries. Child W was wearing a stab vest at the time of the attack, this was the second time in 3 months that he had been a victim of stabbing.

Learning and Impact

The review undertook a rigorous and objective analysis of what occurred and identified systematic issues where policy and practice needed to change. The review highlights the critical need to address the systemic biases and challenges faced by Black adolescent boys, particularly in the context of extra-familial harm. To better safeguard these young people, the ISCP should develop a shared agreement on how Black boys will be protected, ensuring that their vulnerabilities are recognised and addressed rather than viewing them solely as potential perpetrators. This approach must be supported by flexible mental health services that adapt to the individual needs of these children, as well as by regular updates on mental health initiatives to ensure a shared understanding of their needs.

In addition, there must be a focus on creating safer environments for these boys, especially in areas where gang activity is prevalent. Collaboration between Islington and Hackney authorities is essential to ensure safe passage for children across borough boundaries. The Metropolitan Police Service should prioritise safeguarding Black boys and work closely with the local Black community to address issues of discrimination and safety. Furthermore, the gap in bereavement support for children affected by peer deaths due to serious youth violence needs urgent attention, with a call for comprehensive, trauma-informed support for grieving adolescents.

Findings included intersectionality, transitional safeguarding, contextual safeguarding and the impact of bereavement on adolescent boys. There were nine recommendations in total. An action plan of the recommendations and individual actions to be addressed has been developed for partners and relevant agencies and its governance for completion will be overseen at the Case Review Subgroup.

An example of this would be reflected in the SEMH review in this annual review where it outlines plans to ensure young people waiting for services have access to support, are monitored and reviewed and that improvements are made to the central point of access to increase flexibility of services informed by co-production of services, i.e. taking onboard the children's voice and influence

Care Leaver C

Under the New Working Together published in December 2023 and the new requirement for the local authority to notify the Secretary of State for Education and Ofsted of the death of a care leaver up to and including the age of 24, the ISCP undertook a Rapid Review on Care Leaver C who was 18 years old and open to Independent Futures Service.

Care Leaver C took his own life whilst living in a semi-independent provision. Care Leaver C arrived in Islington as an Unaccompanied and Separated Child. Detailed scrutiny of chronologies that were submitted by relevant agencies to the Rapid Review, extracted that a Rapid Review report was not required as learning had been identified from the chronologies. There was evidence of some strong social work practice and a robust and coordinated response from a range of services based within the Child Looked After service. There had been an appropriate wraparound of support including mental health support.

Learning and Impact

Consideration for this review explored how care experienced young people aged over 18 years old with no family support can be identified by first responders? In this particular case emergency services were unaware the young person had been looked after. To avoid delays in knowing about these young people with no available direct family, the Local Authority and Borough Police reached a resolution in that Police would notify the Local Authority of all deaths of young people 24 years of age and under so they could immediately identify any young person that had been Looked After.

There will be a link-up with Child B LSCPR in terms of considering learning from this review.

Action Plan updates of each review and LCSPR are continually evaluated through the governance of the Case Review Subgroup to gain assurance that recommendations and actions are being embedded within agencies and services.

Joint Protocol for More Thorough Intimate Parts Searches (MTIPS) and Safeguarding Children (January 2024)

Introduction: Following the **Child Q case** in Hackney, where a Black female student was subjected to a distressing strip search, Islington implemented a joint protocol to safeguard children during **More Thorough Intimate Parts Searches (MTIPS)**. Developed in collaboration with the **Metropolitan Police Service, Children’s Social Care, and Youth Justice Services (YJS)**, the protocol ensures that searches are conducted ethically, proportionately, and with full oversight to prevent harm.

The protocol reflects a commitment to **trauma-informed** and **anti-racist practices**, aiming to protect the rights and dignity of children during these highly sensitive searches.

Key Learnings from Child Q:

The **Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR)** of Child Q highlighted systemic failings related to **racial bias** and **adultification** in safeguarding Black children. Child Q’s experience exposed how harmful such searches can be, leading to Islington’s stronger safeguarding approach for MTIPS.

Protocol Objectives:

- **Safeguarding First:** Ensuring the physical and emotional safety of the child, with MTIPS carried out only when necessary and with the involvement of an **appropriate adult**.
- **Challenging Bias:** The protocol addresses **racial disproportionality**, with ongoing reviews to ensure stop-and-search decisions are unbiased and proportionate.
- **Ethical Oversight:** MTIPS require **written consent** in certain cases, and all searches undergo monthly audits to ensure safeguarding standards are met.

Multi-Agency Collaboration:

- **Metropolitan Police Service:** MTIPS must be authorised by a **BCU Inspector** and follow **PACE Code C** guidelines. A **Vulnerable Person Notice (Connect report)** is filed after each search.

- **Children’s Social Care:** Provides immediate safeguarding support, whether or not the child is known to services, and ensures follow-up care.
- **Youth Justice Services (YJS):** Coordinates the presence of appropriate adults during MTIPS and offers ongoing support post-search.
- **Education Providers:** Schools must adopt a **safeguarding-first approach**, informing parents and offering support after any police search involvement.

Key Actions and Safeguarding Measures:

- **Training and Awareness:** Frontline staff receive ongoing training on the emotional impact of MTIPS, racial bias, trauma-informed care, and appropriate language.
- **Monthly Oversight Meetings:** Regular reviews between the **Metropolitan Police, YJS, and Islington Council** ensure MTIPS are justified and proportionate, with opportunities for feedback.
- **Child Feedback and Monitoring:** Children’s feedback after an MTIPS is collected and shared with safeguarding boards to ensure the protocol’s effectiveness.
- **Anti-Racist Commitment:** The protocol integrates Islington’s anti-racist strategy, challenging bias and ensuring **racial equality** is central to decisions.

Impact and Outcomes:

Since the protocol’s introduction, Islington has:

- Reduced unnecessary or inappropriate searches.
- Provided support for all children subjected to MTIPS.
- Increased agency accountability, with regular reviews and a focus on reducing the **disproportionate impact on Black and minority ethnic children**.

Conclusion: The MTIPS protocol represents a crucial step in protecting children from invasive and harmful practices. By embedding **trauma-informed** and **anti-racist practices** in this multi-agency approach, Islington demonstrates its commitment to safeguarding vulnerable children and ensuring searches are conducted with care and respect.

Thematic Review

Child X was a looked after child who tragically died from a stabbing in December 2022 aged nearly 17. The Rapid Review met the threshold for conducting a Child Safeguarding Practice Review which was agreed by the National Panel. The ISCP wanted the review to be thematic due to the amount of serious youth violence reviews they have commissioned over the past 5 years. The thematic review focuses on the experiences of specific children, primarily black and dual heritage boys, who are more prevalent in serious youth violence in the borough.

By examining these cases, the review aimed to identify ways to improve early identification and intervention to prevent their involvement in serious youth violence and reduce their vulnerability to extra-familial safeguarding risks. The review outlined the three phases in which the review would be conducted:

- **Phase One: What was?** - patterns and experiences in children’s journeys
- **Phase Two: What is now?** Explore and capture how the borough’s strategic thinking and how operational multi-agency delivery
- **Phase Three: What is good now and going forward, what might be?** Look for the evidence of the success in addressing these experiences in safeguarding practice, especially at the point of early intervention and before the transition.

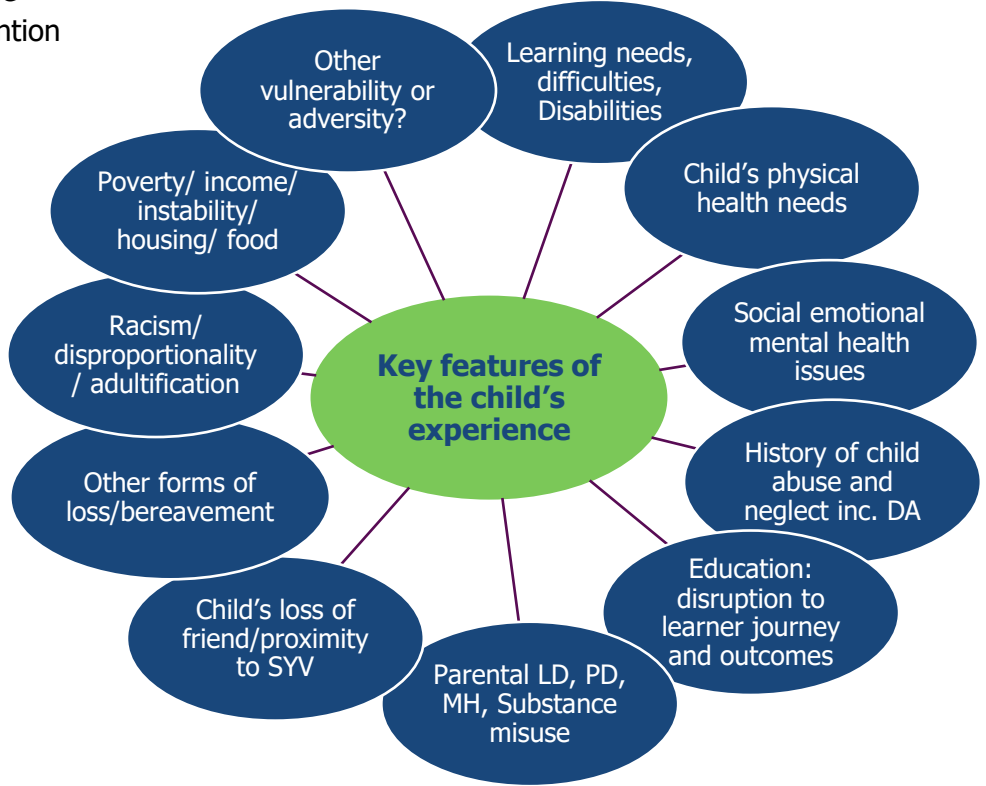
Source of information: Child X but also previous children subject to review. Children K, P, S, W (basis for audit questions)

Learning and Impact

Recommendations and consideration for this review gave a focus to strengthening safeguarding practices. The review emphasises the need for improved multi-agency collaboration, particularly in integrating housing and mental health services into early help frameworks. A consistent, trauma-informed approach across agencies is recommended to better support children and families. Additionally, the review highlights the importance of making help accessible and acceptable to those in need, with a focus on proactive information sharing and the inclusion of universal settings like youth centres. Addressing online safety risks and ensuring robust responses to issues of racism and disproportionality are also crucial for safeguarding vulnerable children effectively.

The Missing and Exploitation team will be reviewing all current guidance and policies relating to Child Criminal Exploitation, Child Sexual Exploitation and Serious Youth Violence and will combine to create a clear pathway protocol for statutory responses to contextual safeguarding and in addition will design a website to be utilised as an educational tool and resource for practitioners from across the partnership.

An action plan of the recommendations to be addressed has been developed for partners and relevant agencies and its governance for completion will be overseen at the Case Review Subgroup. Link to review on our website.



Multi-agency audit of five children considered high-risk of Serious Youth Violence and Child Criminal Exploitation and learning from Child X's experience

From recent learning reviews of Islington children and from recent research by the Greater London Authority, to date this has identified a range of experiences or features common to children who are significantly harmed or died as result of SYV or CCE (see figure 1). A recent overview of 35 Rapid Reviews regarding children at risk of EFH, conducted in London between Sept 2021-March 2023 also described all of these features as evident in those children's lives Islington children subject to previous SCRs, LCSPRs and Rapid Reviews conducted or contributed to by ISCP.

The audit, part of **Phase One** of the thematic Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR), aimed to examine the journeys of five high-risk children known for their involvement in Serious Youth Violence (SYV) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE). The audit also included reflections on Child X, whose death in December 2022 prompted this review.

The primary objective was to identify opportunities for early intervention by analysing the children's experiences and the multi-agency responses to their needs.

Demographics

- All aged between 14-17 at the time of the audit and Child X.
- All 6 children reviewed are male.
- 5 of 6 are of black or mixed heritage, 1 is white British.
- All were or are looked after or for one, there was agreement for them to be looked after at the time of the audit. All are open to the Youth Justice Service in Islington, but also have input from YJS in the authorities in which they are placed.
- None of the children are in full time education and all have significantly disrupted learner journeys, although all have had intervention from the Virtual School.

84% of children in a related study experienced parental separation and loss, and 75% had experienced emotional or physical abuse; demonstrating the prevalence of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) among high-risk children. It highlights the critical need for early intervention and support systems to address these underlying issues, which are significant drivers of SYV and CCE.

Missed Learning Needs: Many children had undiagnosed or poorly understood learning difficulties, which compounded their risks. For example, Child X had recognised learning needs but did not receive timely formal diagnosis or support.

Impact of Parental Separation: All six children experienced significant parental separation or loss, which is a key adverse childhood experience contributing to their vulnerability.

Racism and Disproportionality: Five of the six children were of black or mixed heritage and reported being treated differently due to their race. This included experiences of adultification and disproportionate responses from authorities.

Placement Instability: Four children faced significant placement instability, undermining multi-agency care planning and risk management efforts.

Covid-19 Impact: The pandemic exacerbated existing challenges, such as disrupted education and delayed assessments, further distancing children from support systems.

Recommendations 1: Although already understood and known, it is essential that the details of the impact of the lack of suitable placements for 4 of these children undermines the impact of multi-agency care planning and risk management with these children.

Recommendation 2: It is recommended that the ISCP flag the lack of continuity in health care for children looked-after who are placed in different boroughs to the National Panel. This leads to delay in meeting need and can be connected to increase risks, both of extra-familial harm and risk of offending.

Recommendation 3: It is recommended that ISCP partners ensure there are contingency plans in place to ensure that any 18+ year old who is a care leaver and has not received a diagnostic assessment is assessed in a timely way.

Phase Two: exploring the opportunities to intervene effectively – points to address arising from this audit.

To consider:

- How do similar children and families access early help and preventative interventions?
- How does the multi-agency system identify and respond to need early in the journeys of similar children?
- What supported good practice in identifying and responding to learning needs/ difficulties, SEND, SEMH and preventing disrupted learner journeys?
- How does early help preventing the type of abuse and neglect as seen in this audit of children?
- What does good practice in responding after a tragic or traumatic event?

Damp and Mould Response: Collaborative Actions and Progress

Key Actions and Collaboration. Following the tragic death of **Awaab Ishaak** in **December 2020**, which was attributed to poor living conditions involving damp and mould in his family's council flat, **Islington Council** initiated significant changes to improve housing standards. In the aftermath of Ayub's death, the **Housing Ombudsman** conducted a thorough investigation, issuing a series of recommendations for local authorities, including better identification of vulnerable families and improvements in how housing conditions are addressed. In response, the **government** placed an expectation on local authorities to prioritise families affected by damp and mould, ensuring that those living in hazardous conditions received immediate attention.

Islington Council's framework for addressing damp and mould, developed as part of this response, emphasized collaboration between **housing, children's services, and health** to safeguard vulnerable families and prevent future tragedies.

The **Damp, Condensation, and Mould Programme**, launched in 2022, focused on vulnerable families, particularly those with health conditions exacerbated by damp. The **Housing Ombudsman's recommendations** and the **government response** shaped this proactive approach, with a focus on ensuring prompt intervention and support for at-risk families.

From **January 2023**, the **High Profile Damp Case Taskforce** was established to address cases involving severe damp and mould across council properties. The taskforce was assigned **131 cases** where conditions were deemed particularly hazardous, with a focus on homes where children or vulnerable residents lived. By **November 2023**, the taskforce had successfully resolved **90 cases**, reducing risks from high to low, through urgent repairs and follow-up visits.

Proactive and Preventative Measures

A shift towards **preventative action** has been central to the council's response. The number of damp and mould inspections has risen dramatically, from **133 in October 2019 (145 Oct 2020, 178 Oct 2021, 276 Oct 2022)** to **557 in October 2023**. By mid-November 2023, **304 surveys** had been completed, with an expected total of **621** by the end of the month. This marked increase reflects the council's commitment to identifying and addressing issues before they escalate.

The council introduced a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rating system to categorize the urgency of cases, prioritising families at greatest risk. High-priority repairs, categorized as DAM24, were to be completed within 24 hours, while less urgent cases, flagged as DAM20, required action within 20 working days.

To support this, a dashboard was created using the One View system, enabling data sharing across health, social care, and housing. This dashboard allows housing teams to identify at-risk residents, ensuring interventions are prioritised for those with health conditions or young children.

Collaborative Approach with Health and Children's Services

A crucial part of the programme involved partnerships with GPs and Children's Services to ensure vulnerable families were identified swiftly. GPs were able to directly refer cases of damp and mould to the housing team if health conditions were being exacerbated by poor living conditions. Although the pilot with GPs saw a modest start, with just three referrals by November 2023, plans are in place to expand the scheme.

The taskforce also worked closely with Children's Services, ensuring that families with children experiencing health complications due to damp were prioritised. The council's proactive stance, combined with improved cross-agency data sharing, has led to faster response times and more targeted support for the most vulnerable residents.



One Year from when the Damp, Condensation and Mould programme began.

Damp and mould inspections	Improved policy and processes	Recording and understanding data	Housing Ombudsman Investigation	Proactive interventions	Awareness and risk mitigation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Oct 2019: 133 •Oct 2020: 145 •Oct 2021: 178 •Oct 2022: 276 •Oct 2023: 557 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •We currently have November 2023 surveys raised so far this month: 304 (16 days in). Forecast of 621 for November 2023 •We are also in the process of increasing our surveying pool. In addition we have brought on another contractor to support the treatment works. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Working on improving the information provided at online reporting form stage •updated repairs policy (due Jan 2024) •updated major works transfer procedure •enhanced and clarified damp and mould process by putting in place a process that ensures all completed D&C work is subjected to a formal review to establish how successful the intervention has been (336 cases have been reviewed and closed down) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •One View dashboard has influenced a new operational dashboard, it allowed us to communicate to a wide audience the overview of damp and mould in Islington bringing together the power of joining datasets, enabled prioritising risk and highlighted gaps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The Housing Ombudsman has recognised the programme and the dedicated work of all involved: "The landlord's actions to improve its response to damp and mould should result in improvement in residents' experience, and some should also have wider impact, improving the response to repairs more generally." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Tenancy and property visits pilot was one of three response categories. In relation to damp and mould so far 343 homes have been visited and 50 have visible damp and mould present. •Winter preparedness: testing boilers, testing communal heating and remote monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •An extensive training programme is in place, with damp and mould awareness briefings and updates included in inductions and meetings •Since January 2023 the High Profile Damp Case Taskforce has worked on 131 cases, closed 90 cases and has significantly reduced the risk of these cases from high to low.

Ongoing and completed projects

Damp and mould Partnership form	Humidity Monitors	Data pilot	New priorities for Damp surveys and inspections	Damp and mould admin team	Contractors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Pilot in place where working with local GP surgery to enable GPs to refer Islington Council residents that have highlighted, damp and mould issues within their property. •So far, not much take up, since launch had 3 referrals exploring options with this. Been talking to colleagues in public health. •Exploring expanding the project with colleagues in Children's services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Working closely with two different companies who are installing damp and mould monitors within properties. •Initially went to blocks that appeared high on our data and offered them the opportunity to join the pilot – not much take up. •Working closely with our damp and mould surveying team who are recommending properties. •Installing when properties become voids 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Working with NHS data to understand our housing stock and tenants •Develop a robust dataset that proactively identifies vulnerable residents in our housing stock •Using data to prioritise housing repairs related to damp and mould according to resident needs as well as severity of disrepair •NHS data will potentially identify vulnerable people at an earlier stage to enable preventative action for targeted support in the housing system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Using alerts on system and through ongoing inspections two new priorities have been made by the Repairs Team. •DAM24 – When damp and mould treatment works are identified as a risk to the resident or the resident is vulnerable treatment works are expected to take place within 24 hours. •DAM20 – Work orders are to be completed within 20 working days. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Team specifically set up that oversee and manage damp and mould works to completion. •Follow up calls made to residents 12 weeks after completion of works to check no further on going issues. •Have weekly call over meetings with senior team to ensure work orders are completed within priority timeframe. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Extensive work with our contractors to ensure they are following Islington Council damp and mould processes. •Monthly operational meetings with contractors to discuss works in progress. •Working towards contractors providing their teams with mobile devices so live updates and notes are available for council staff.



Learning from the Cumbria Child Safeguarding Practice Review

Adopt London North Response and Implementation:

The tragic case of **Leiland-James Michael Corkill** in **Cumbria** prompted a detailed **Child Safeguarding Practice Review**, which was published in **July 2022**. Leiland-James was placed with prospective adopters, **Laura and Scott Castle**, at seven months old, and after five months in their care, he tragically died of a catastrophic head injury inflicted by the female adopter. The case exposed significant gaps in information sharing, health assessments, and the monitoring of adopter's post-placement.

The review led to both **local** and **national recommendations**, which aim to address these issues and prevent future tragedies. These recommendations had a direct impact on **Adopt London North (Haringey, Hackney, Enfield, Islington, Barnet & Camden)** and the broader adoption sector, requiring changes in practice, particularly regarding health information, the financial assessment of adopters, and the need for a more robust approach to ongoing monitoring and support for adoptive families.

Key Findings and Learning from the Review

The Cumbria review highlighted several critical areas of concern:

Inadequate sharing of health information: The female adopter failed to disclose her ongoing mental health and alcohol issues during the adoption process. While her **GP** held relevant information, it was not communicated to the adoption agency, leading to missed opportunities for further assessment.

Limited financial assessment: The financial pressures faced by the couple were not fully understood, as the focus was on monthly outgoings rather than the overall debt load.

Minimal post-placement visits: Statutory visits occurred at the minimum required frequency, missing critical warning signs in the placement.

Lack of triangulation of evidence: Key information from health services, financial records, and personal references was either incomplete or not cross-referenced effectively.

These findings underscore a perennial issue within safeguarding—the failure to share essential information across agencies in a timely and effective manner. This is not unique to Cumbria; it is a broader challenge that persists in adoption and safeguarding systems nationally.

Adopt London North: Response and Actions

Following the recommendations, **Adopt London North** implemented several key changes to address the gaps identified in the review:

1. Strengthening Health Information Sharing:

Adopt London North revised its processes to ensure that health information is updated and shared at all key stages in the adoption process—particularly during matching and post-placement. **GP flags** are now placed on prospective adopters' medical records, ensuring that any significant changes in health are communicated to the adoption team. Additionally, **historic counselling services** are now contacted as part of the assessment process, addressing the gaps in mental health history that were overlooked in the Cumbria case.

2. Outcome: Improved coordination between health professionals and the adoption team ensures that adopters' health is comprehensively assessed and monitored throughout the adoption process.

3. Enhanced Financial Assessments:

Financial assessments now require a complete picture of adopters' debt and financial obligations, rather than focusing solely on monthly repayments. This change allows adoption panels to better understand the financial stability of prospective adopters.

4. Outcome: Adoption agencies have a clearer understanding of the financial pressures that adopters may face, leading to more informed decision-making.

5. Increased Post-Placement Support and Visits:

The frequency of post-placement visits has been increased, with social workers required to maintain regular contact beyond the statutory minimum. The **voice of the child** is also prioritised, with social workers encouraged to engage with all children in the household to understand their experiences.

6. Outcome: Increased support and oversight for adoptive families reduce the risk of placement breakdowns and improve the overall well-being of children in the care system.

Moving Forward: Learning and Implementation

The Cumbria case serves as a stark reminder of the importance of information sharing and comprehensive assessments in safeguarding children. Adopt London North has taken significant steps to ensure that the lessons from this review are embedded in its practice, focusing on improved health assessments, financial scrutiny, and enhanced post-placement support. However, ongoing evaluation and training are required to ensure these changes lead to better outcomes for children and families in the future.



Family Hubs Initiative Overview:

The Family Hubs initiative, launched by the Department for Education, is a key component of the government’s vision to provide every family with timely support and essential information to positively care for and interact with their children. The initiative, which began around 2021-2022, establishes a system-wide, joined-up model for delivering high-quality, whole-family support services from pregnancy through early adulthood (up to 19 years, or 25 for those with special educational needs and disabilities).

Family Hubs serve as a universal front door, offering a one-stop shop for family support services across social care, education, mental health, and physical health needs. By centralising these services, the initiative aims to reduce fragmentation, improve access, and enhance outcomes for children and families, particularly those in vulnerable or disadvantaged situations. Selected local authorities were chosen to pilot this model, with the goal of creating replicable examples that ensure all families can access coordinated, relationship-focused support, both virtually and physically, within their communities.

Family Hubs Update:

Islington was one of 75 local authorities funded to deliver Family Hubs, which are part of a broader model designed to provide a system-wide approach to working with families. This model ensures that families receive high-quality, coordinated support across various services. The funding provided supports the hubs themselves, the development of the model, and the delivery of "Start for Life" services specifically aimed at families with children and babies aged 0-2.

The Family Hubs initiative in Islington, introduced at the Early Help Subgroup in October 2022, focuses on creating a clear, accessible and family-centred system for delivering services. The key principles guiding Family Hubs include:

- **Access:** Providing a simple, well-branded point of access through physical hubs, virtual services, and outreach.
- **Connection:** Integrating services through partnerships, co-location, data sharing, and governance, focusing on families with children of all ages.
- **Relationships:** Strengthening family relationships through a strengths-based approach.

Services are delivered in three ways: face-to-face at hubs, through the hub network (e.g. community settings), or virtually. The hubs offer core services such as activities for children under 5, health visiting, perinatal mental health, parenting programmes, and safeguarding support.

Progress in Islington (March 2024 Update):

Since October 2022, Islington has made significant progress, including:

- Enhancing the conception-to-age-2 offer, with a focus on SEND, maternity integration, and extended service provision.
- Establishing Family Hubs in 3 localities.
- Appointing dedicated roles like Parenting Programmes Coordinator and Family Hub Navigators.
- Further integrating and co-locating services to ensure streamlined delivery.



Family Hub Initiative Overview continued



Priorities for Year 3 (2024): As this is the final confirmed year of funding, priorities include:

- Developing a comprehensive Family Hub Network across localities, integrating services such as SEMH, CAMHS, children's centres, SEND support, and housing services.
- Creating a seamless 0-19 (25 for SEND) offer to better support families, with a focus on reducing duplication of services.
- Developing a system-wide approach to capturing and using family and child voices to influence service design.

Family Voice and Influence: Islington has prioritised developing a systematic approach to capturing family voices. A Family Voice and Influence Lead is working with a Parent/Carer Panel to involve families in service development. Plans for 2024 include expanding engagement with LGBTQIA+ families and adapting approaches to ensure that family input influences services beyond the scope of the Family Hubs programme.

Outcomes and Impact: The outcomes and impact of the Family Hubs programme will be monitored through:

- Local programme delivery outcomes and case studies.
- Collaboration with Evidence Islington to measure the programme's impact on inequalities, disadvantaged groups, and school-aged children (5-19).

This systematic approach is designed to inform future planning and demonstrate the programme's long-term benefits, both for children and their families, including potential impacts later in life.

Youth Voice and Service Impact

Youth voice has been at the heart of Islington's youth work services, informing service delivery and shaping the experiences offered to young people. Young people across Islington have shared their experiences through structured activities and informal discussions with youth workers. This consistent engagement has directly influenced how services are delivered, ensuring they remain responsive and relevant to young people's needs, especially those transitioning between primary and secondary education.

Youth work centres such as, **Soapbox**, and **Rosebowl** have been key to supporting young people, providing a safe environment where they can explore their identities and build life skills.

Over **4,400 young people** engaged with these services in 2023-24, with a significant proportion (84%) from the most deprived wards in the borough, demonstrating the wide-reaching impact of these provisions. Services such as the **Enhanced Detached Youth Work** offer have also successfully engaged vulnerable and hard-to-reach young people, including those reluctant to attend formal youth centres.

Role in Early Help and Intervention

The youth services in Islington not only provide recreational and developmental opportunities but also act as crucial early intervention platforms. In line with the **Child X thematic review**, these youth centres operate as key touchpoints for identifying safeguarding concerns and potential abuse at an early stage..

Youth workers play a pivotal role in building trusting relationships with young people, enabling them to spot signs of distress, disengagement, or abuse that might otherwise go unnoticed in more formal settings. The presence of youth clubs offers a non-intrusive way for young people to access support and guidance

Sustaining Youth Work in Challenging Times

While youth services across the country have faced significant cuts, Islington continues to prioritise the delivery of these essential services. The borough's commitment to **youth work** highlights its role in enhancing **community cohesion**, improving **emotional wellbeing**, and fostering **social and life skills** for young people. Activities such as sports, arts, and leadership development have contributed to building young people's resilience and empowering them to take ownership of their personal growth.

Voice of the child

The feedback from young people across Islington has directly shaped the delivery and evolution of youth services. Their voices have led to:

- The creation of safe, inclusive spaces where young people can freely express themselves.
- An increased focus on emotional support and mental health awareness among youth workers.
- The introduction of practical skill-building activities that cater to personal growth and independence.
- A youth-led approach where young people take an active role in shaping the services they engage with.

Mental Health and Emotional Support:

"Because it's sorta in a way like therapy... there are no negative comments passed around and you don't have to worry about being yourself." – Young person, Angel Shed



Impact on Services:

Mental health support is a growing need, and young people's feedback has pushed youth services to adapt their environments to be more therapeutic and emotionally supportive. Spaces like Angel Shed have created inclusive environments where young people feel listened to and supported, ensuring they can express themselves freely without fear of judgment.

Developing Life Skills and Resilience:

"I have learnt to cook and now people say I am an incredible cook. My personal growth and understanding of others has developed." – Young person, Rosebowl

Impact on Services:

The emphasis on life skills, such as cooking and social skills, reflects the feedback from young people. Services like Rosebowl now integrate more hands-on, practical skill-building activities that not only contribute to young people's independence but also help build their confidence and social engagement.

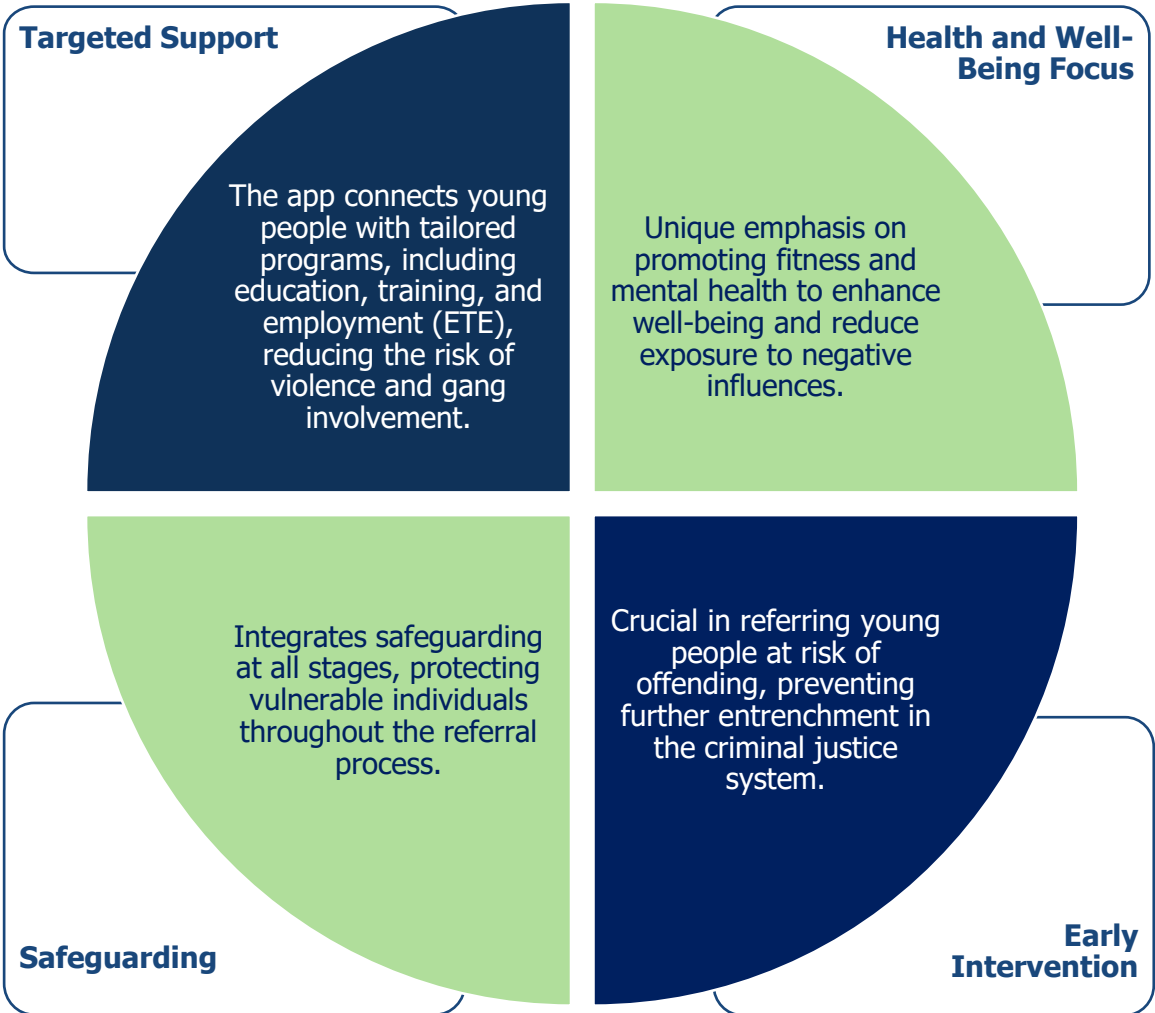
Impact on Creating Safe Spaces:

"I feel confident and safe. I feel definitely safe. So I definitely share my problems and ask how I can solve it and how they can help." – Young person, Soapbox

Impact on Services:

Young people's need for a safe, supportive environment has led to the expansion of youth work spaces like Soapbox, where youth workers prioritise emotional wellbeing and trust.

The **DIVERT App**, piloted in **Camden & Islington** during **2022/23** and funded by the **Violence Reduction Unit (VRU)**, allows police officers to directly refer young people aged **14-25** to specialist services. The app connects at-risk individuals to educational, training, and employment opportunities, diverting them from involvement in violence and crime.



2023/24 Updates:

- **Increased Engagement:** The app engaged 17 new participants, with 70% referred to support programs, and 79% of the **95 young people** reached were connected to essential resources. Three participants secured sustainable employment.
- **Commendation Award:** In **January 2024**, the **DIVERT App/Team** received a 'Commendation Award' from the Central North Metropolitan Police Command for its positive impact in reducing reoffending and fostering multi-agency collaboration.
- **Case Study:** A 15-year-old referred to the app attended a restorative justice workshop, which strengthened family stability, reduced knife crime involvement, and encouraged positive behavioural change.

Outcomes for 2023/2024

- 1 **Reduced Reoffending:** The app's interventions resulted in a significant reduction in reoffending, with only two out of the 95 participants reoffending
- 2 **Employment and Education:** The app successfully facilitated employment opportunities, including partnerships with **Pret A Manger**, leading to six participants securing jobs. Additionally, the app supported reintegration into education for youth facing barriers.
- 3 **Improved Well-Being: Community football events** and tailored support for neurodivergent participants improved self-esteem and emotional resilience, contributing to better long-term outcomes.
- 4 A specific focus was placed on engaging young women at risk, providing tailored interventions around **mental health** and **exploitation risks**, with increased referrals to support programs.

Supporting the Education of Children with a Social Worker (CWASW)

Virtual School Annual Update

Introduction and Legislative Context: The **Virtual School** in Islington promotes the education of **Children with a Social Worker (CWASW)**, a group facing significant educational challenges due to adversity, trauma, and complex family circumstances. Following the **Department for Education's (DfE) guidance in September 2021**, the Virtual School Head's role was extended to provide strategic oversight for CWASW, not just those in care. This initiative aims to reduce the gap between CWASW and their peers, working collaboratively with schools and services.



Key Objectives and Approach

The objectives are to:

- **Highlight the challenges** faced by CWASW.
- **Promote collaboration** between education settings and children's services.
- **Improve school attendance and engagement.**
- **Narrow the attainment gap** and improve outcomes.
- **Use data-driven interventions** for targeted support.

Actions Taken: 2022-2023

1. Strategic Leadership and Team Development

The Virtual School Head (VSH) established a dedicated team, led by a Deputy Virtual School Head (DVSH), responsible for consultations, resources, and engaging schools. The PowerBi system was introduced to monitor educational outcomes.

Outcome: Strong leadership and data systems improved visibility and allowed for targeted interventions.

2. Improving School Attendance and Engagement

Attendance panels and audits were introduced, reviewing attendance patterns and providing support to schools. Enrichment programmes, including summer camps, were developed in partnership with the Cultural Enrichment Team.

Outcome: Attendance improvements were noted, particularly in primary schools. Enrichment activities saw a significant increase in participation.

3. Supporting Educational Attainment

The Virtual School supported the use of Pupil Premium and School-Led Tuition in targeted schools. Pilot programmes with City of London Academy Islington (COLAI) helped track the impact of tuition and engagement.

Outcome: Initial reports showed measurable progress in CWASW's educational performance, especially in schools involved in pilot projects.

4. Enhancing Partnerships Between Schools and Social Care

Consultations and **drop-in sessions** were introduced for social workers, encouraging collaboration between schools and children's services. Audits and toolkits were piloted to assess the effectiveness of interventions.

Outcome: Improved communication and understanding between schools and children's services, supporting better educational outcomes.



Areas for Further Development

Addressing Secondary School Attendance

While primary schools saw attendance improvements, secondary schools continued to face challenges.

Next Steps: Roll out the school audit tool to all secondary schools and evaluate its impact.

Improving Data Systems

- The **PowerBi** system faced inconsistencies for children in schools outside of Islington.
- **Next Steps:** Resolve data issues for more comprehensive tracking.

Embedding National Learning

- The Virtual School continues to draw on national best practices to improve local interventions.
- **Next Steps:** Integrate national findings and refine local training for schools and social workers.

Conclusion and Future Plans

The **Virtual School** has made significant progress in promoting the education of CWASW, but there is still work to be done to ensure consistent improvement across all schools. Continued evaluation and refinement of strategies will focus on further improving attendance, attainment, and engagement for CWASW.

Elective Home Education

The statutory guidance "Working Together to Improve School Attendance," which became mandatory in September 2023, plays a crucial role in shaping local authority strategies aimed at tackling absenteeism. This report summarises the key efforts made by the **LB of Islington and education providers** during the reporting period from September 2022 to March 2024 to align with these new expectations, focusing on the importance of multi-agency collaboration to ensure the safeguarding and educational engagement of children. The guidance underlines the need for rigorous tracking of attendance data and strategic interventions, which ISCP has embraced by enhancing its School Attendance Support Team. This team has been integral in offering comprehensive services to all schools, including regular communications, targeted support meetings, and legal interventions when necessary. Such efforts are directed at addressing the root causes of absenteeism by unblocking area-wide barriers and ensuring that the most at-risk pupils are prioritised.

Islington's local authority has also recognised the importance of integrating feedback from children and families into their attendance strategies. Surveys conducted among children in the borough provided insights into their views on school attendance, which have informed the design of more responsive and supportive educational environments. This child-centric approach is essential, especially in addressing the underlying issues that contribute to chronic absenteeism. The report highlights a noticeable shift in the reasons behind elective home education (EHE) in the borough, with dissatisfaction with the last school attended now accounting for a significant portion of the cohort. This trend underscores the necessity for schools to foster a sense of belonging among students to prevent them from opting out of the formal education system.

Cohort turnover (children starting and leaving elective home education)

Academic Year	EHE Started	EHE Ended	Turnover	As a %
2015-16	75	65	10	13%
2016-17	91	87	4	4%
2017-18	115	89	26	23%
2018-19	129	99	30	23%
2019-20	107	93	14	13%
2020-21	234	162	72	31%
2021-22	136	108	28	21%
2022-23	177	173	4	2%
2023-24	194	113	81	42%

The ISCP's approach to monitoring and supporting EHE families includes a thorough risk assessment process and prioritisation of home visits for those receiving Early Help or statutory services. The strategic use of School Attendance Orders (SAOs) further exemplifies the commitment to ensuring that children receive a suitable education, even when they are not enrolled in a traditional school setting.

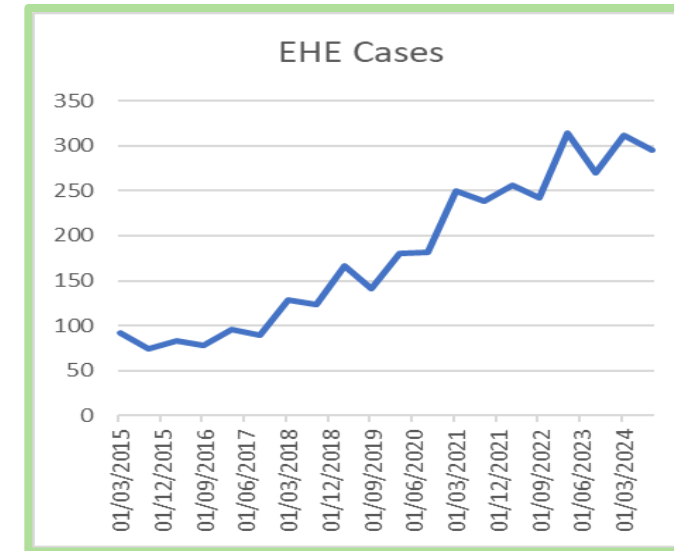
In response to the statutory guidance, Islington's School Attendance Support Team has been instrumental in delivering targeted interventions and sharing best practices across schools. The team has focused on identifying at-risk pupils, providing whole-family support, and, when necessary, enforcing parental responsibility measures.

The ISCP's multi-disciplinary approach has been critical in addressing absenteeism and improving school attendance outcomes.

The ISCP's efforts have not only aligned with national mandates but have also been tailored to local needs, with an emphasis on enhancing the strategic leadership of Virtual School Heads (VSHs). The guidance has encouraged VSHs to take a more active role in promoting the educational outcomes of children with a social worker or those who have had one.

Sample Date	# of EHE Cases	% Change
05/09/2015	75	-
05/09/2016	78	4%
05/09/2017	89	14%
05/09/2018	124	39%
05/09/2019	141	14%
05/09/2020	182	29%
05/09/2021	238	31%
05/09/2022	242	2%
05/09/2023	270	12%

This includes ensuring that these children benefit from interventions designed to recover from the impacts of COVID-19 and addressing the disadvantages they may face.



Overall, the report reflects the ISCP's proactive stance in embedding the statutory guidance into local practices. By fostering a collaborative approach among schools, local authorities, and safeguarding partners, the ISCP has made significant strides in improving school attendance and ensuring that all children in Islington have access to a suitable and supportive educational environment.



Education Subgroup: Active Row Programme – Improving Engagement and Outcomes:

In the reporting period, several strategic objectives were presented at the Education subgroup aimed at reducing risks to young people’s welfare and improving educational outcomes. A key initiative within this framework was the **Active Row Programme**, designed to engage the most vulnerable students, particularly those at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) or facing exclusion. The programme has been embedded across schools in Islington, with positive results that align with the safeguarding priorities of early intervention and preventing harm.

Targeting the Most Vulnerable including the 43% of Islington primary pupils eligible for the deprivation pupil premium. By targeting children at higher risk of disengagement due to poverty, the programme helps address potential safeguarding concerns.



Key Achievements:

Reducing Persistent Absence and Exclusions: serves as a preventative measure to reduce persistent absenteeism and exclusions. By engaging students in physical activity and fostering teamwork, focus, and resilience, the programme effectively addresses these issues.

Case Study
Child A (Samuel Rhodes School):
 Child A, a student at Samuel Rhodes School, showed significant improvement through the Active Row Programme. Previously struggling with concentration and behaviour issues, his participation led to increased focus and motivation. Teachers have observed positive changes in his attitude, aligning with the programme’s goals of building resilience and encouraging positive behaviour.

Collaboration and Multi-Agency Engagement:
 The Active Row Programme's success is strengthened by its collaboration with the **Metropolitan Police's Positive Youth Development (PYD)**, engaging at-risk youth in schools. This multi-agency approach supports efforts to reduce youth crime, improve community safety, and aligns with safeguarding priorities of preventing harm and promoting early intervention

Conclusion and Next Steps:
 The Active Row Programme demonstrates the importance of collaborative, preventative measures within education to address safeguarding risks. Moving forward, the Education Subgroup will continue to monitor the outcomes of this programme while expanding participation across additional schools. By embedding such initiatives within the safeguarding framework, the partnership can ensure that vulnerable young people are given the support they need to succeed both in and outside the classroom.

Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass is a vital early intervention safeguarding initiative, designed to provide schools with timely notifications when a child has been exposed to domestic abuse incidents. This ensures that designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) can offer immediate and appropriate support for children, mitigating potential emotional and psychological impacts.

In Islington, 64 schools are already actively participating in the programme, receiving regular notifications through secure DSL mailboxes. There remain 12 schools that are yet to set up these mailboxes, a crucial step to ensure all children across the borough can benefit from the full support offered by Operation Encompass.

Throughout the 2022-2024 period, notifications have been consistently sent, reflecting varying levels of incidents across the academic year. Peaks in reports occurred in months like January and October, while the summer holidays saw a natural decline in activity.

The consistent flow of notifications underscores the importance of swift, multi-agency collaboration in safeguarding vulnerable children. With continued efforts, Islington aims to have all schools fully equipped to respond to these incidents, ensuring no child is left unsupported.



	2022	2023	2024
September	12	15	19
October	19	13	8
November	10	17	3
December	3	10	
		12	
		4	
		19	
		0 (summer holidays)	
		13	
		14	
		17	
		5	

Online Youth Safety Initiative: Addressing Concerns and Future Plans

Introduction and Rationale

As children increasingly engage with digital platforms, parents and professionals have raised concerns about the risks posed by online activity.

The LB Islington Public Health launched the **Online Youth Safety Initiative** to address these risks, which range from online bullying to exposure to inappropriate content. This initiative aims to gather insights from children and parents to inform strategies that mitigate these risks.

The ISCP is committed to ensuring online safety remains a priority, especially from **April 2024**, as part of its wider safeguarding efforts.



Key Findings from Workshops with Parents and Children

Workshops revealed contrasting perceptions between children and adults about online safety:

- **Children** identified **bullying** as the main risk, focusing on peer-related pressures and social exclusion.
- **Parents** viewed **inappropriate content** and potential exposure to violence or exploitation as the primary concerns. This difference in perspectives highlights the need for comprehensive strategies that address both visible concerns like bullying and more abstract dangers such as exposure to harmful content.

Timeline and Approach

The initiative follows a clear timeline:

1. Workshops and Consultations (2023): Engaging parents and children to understand their views on online safety.

2. Collaboration with Schools: Schools were involved in creating educational content and training to help educators and students navigate online risks.

3. Developing Resources: Resources, including **parental guides** and **school policies**, were created to support families and professionals in managing online safety.

Objectives, Achievements and Measured Outcomes

1. Enhancing Online Safety Education in Schools The ISCP worked with local schools to strengthen online safety education, equipping students with the knowledge to safely navigate the digital space.

Outcome: Over **80%** of schools in Islington have now implemented online safety workshops. These focus on teaching students to identify online risks and respond effectively to bullying and inappropriate content.

2. Bridging the Gap Between Adult and Child Perceptions The programme sought to align the differing views of children and adults regarding online safety, facilitating conversations to improve communication.

Outcome: **65%** of parents reported feeling more confident discussing online safety with their children, while **72%** of children gained a clearer understanding of their parents' concerns.

3. Supporting Schools and Parents Alongside the workshops, the ISCP provided **training for educators** and **resources for parents** to better manage online threats such as bullying and inappropriate content.

Outcome: Schools reported a **30% decrease** in online bullying incidents, and parents noted increased confidence in using parental controls and online safety tools.

Conclusion

The **Online Youth Safety Initiative** has successfully identified key concerns from both children and parents, and has made strides in addressing these through education, training, and improved communication. With online safety becoming a core priority from **April 2024**, the ISCP will build on this foundation to better protect children in the digital world.

DSL Supervision in Early Years and Islington Schools: Key Themes and Challenges

The **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Supervision** sessions in early years and Islington schools have continued to provide vital support to DSLs managing increasingly complex safeguarding responsibilities. From **September 2022 to March 2024**, several key themes emerged, highlighting the growing pressures on DSLs in both school and early years settings.

These sessions remain highly valued, offering DSLs a safe space to share experiences and seek peer support.

<p>Increased SEND Demands</p>	<p>DSLs consistently raised concerns about the rising demands related to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Many DSLs also act as SENCOs, which has created additional pressures, particularly when balancing safeguarding duties with SEND responsibilities. This overlap is especially challenging in early years settings, where more children are presenting with complex needs earlier in their education.</p>	<p>Impact: The increased focus on SEND has stretched DSLs' capacity to manage safeguarding concerns, creating time and resource pressures. The ISCP has recognised this strain, and the filtering of these concerns to statutory partners is crucial in exploring how education can work more effectively with SEND services</p>
<p>Staff Wellbeing and Parental Pressures</p>	<p>DSLs reported feeling overwhelmed by parental expectations and the emotional toll this takes on staff. There has been a notable increase in parental complaints, particularly related to safeguarding concerns, which places additional administrative burdens on DSLs. Complaints about issues like school policies around physical contact have required schools to implement new policies, even when not legally necessary.</p>	<p>Impact: Parental pressures and the volume of complaints are creating extra work for DSLs, contributing to stress and impacting their well-being. The ISCP's Principal Officer Safeguarding in Education is able to support how schools can better manage parental complaints and clarify safeguarding policies</p>
<p>Shifting Focus to Adult Mental Health</p>	<p>There has been a shift in safeguarding discussions, with more focus on adults, particularly parents and staff. Many safeguarding issues now revolve around parental mental health, domestic violence, and substance misuse, all of which affect children's safety and well-being. This shift is partly attributed to the long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has impacted family dynamics and mental health.</p>	<p>Impact: DSLs are managing more complex family situations, where adult behaviors are significantly affecting children's safeguarding needs.</p>
<p>Staffing Shortages and Resource Strain</p>	<p>Staffing shortages remain a significant issue, with DSLs also part of Senior Leadership Teams (SLT). This has forced them to manage safeguarding while covering other school responsibilities, creating additional pressure and concerns about burnout.</p>	<p>Impact: DSLs are stretched thin, balancing safeguarding duties with leadership roles, contributing to ongoing stress and workload challenges.</p>

Looking Ahead

The ISCP is focused on strategically addressing the challenges faced by DSLs by creating a collaborative:

- Increasing Capacity:** Reviewing how schools can better support DSLs managing both safeguarding and SEND roles.
- Supporting Wellbeing:** Prioritising the mental health of DSLs to manage the growing pressures of the role.
- Managing Parental Expectations:** Strengthening communication strategies and clearer policies to address rising parental complaints.
- Continuing Supervision:** Ongoing DSL supervision sessions will remain a key support mechanism, helping DSLs manage their roles effectively.

The ISCP Business Unit has successfully filled its previous vacancy, appointing a Training and Quality Assurance Manager to support the S11 arrangements. This role, which commenced in June 2023, was filled following an interview and selection process conducted by a multi-agency panel that included representatives from the ISCP Business Unit, Local Authority, Health, and Education sectors.

An updated training strategy has been developed, and a working group is currently focused on creating a comprehensive Training Quality Assurance framework. The initial focus of the Training and Quality Assurance Manager has been on creating the strategy and developing a comprehensive and cohesive multi-agency training schedule.

Since September 2023, the ISCP Business Unit has continued to deliver its core training offer while expanding to include a broader training schedule. Feedback from evaluations provided between 2021 and 2022 alongside the partnership's priorities and training needs, led to updates in the core training, new LSCPR learning events and additional courses being developed or added to the training offer, as well as bitesize learning opportunities; which have been implemented since September 2023.

The ISCP Training Strategy 2024-2025 outlines the Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership's commitment to ensuring that all employees and volunteers working with children and families in Islington are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. The strategy emphasises a multi-agency approach, promoting collaboration and shared understanding among professionals.

It sets out the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders, including senior leaders, employers, and individuals, and details the training schedule and quality assurance measures. The strategy is underpinned by national and local contexts, focusing on continuous learning, equality, diversity, and the promotion of high standards in safeguarding practices. The ISCP priorities are included in the training focus.

The document also highlights the importance of creating an inclusive and respectful training environment that values equality and promotes anti-discriminatory practices

In January 2023, training bookings transitioned from "CsOnline" to the "My Learning" Platform, which has posed challenges for users outside the local authority; changes have been made to reduce this, but continued solutions are being sought to improve user experience. The system is now accessible to all local authority staff and volunteers, was previously limited to Children's Services staff.

However, My Learning has demonstrated some challenges, such as the inability to record management for staff and volunteers external to the Local Authority, impacting data, report and management oversight.

Despite this, the platform has created a cohesive "one-stop shop" for multi-agency training, streamlining access and consolidating previously ad-hoc training methods with limited CPD recording for such training.

Training Strategy

My Learning





Supporting Islington Trauma Informed Practices

Youth Safety Strategy Action Plan Impact Measurement 2023/2024

The audit aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the iTIPS Youth Safety Strategy Action Plan in enhancing trauma-informed practices across various settings, including schools, early years settings, voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations, and the police.

The focus was on measuring the impact of training and support provided to practitioners, assessing the quality of implementation, and identifying barriers to effective practice. The audit covered the period from 2023 to 2024.

In 2023, the iTIPS program trained approximately 335 school staff in trauma-informed practices, with 87% reporting increased confidence in applying these practices. The program expanded to include 3 new primary schools and 2 new early years settings, bringing the total to 15.

Community engagement included training for 5 VCS organisations, Safer Schools Officers, and Family Hubs, though two VCS organisations withdrew due to external factors. Staff feedback highlighted improved understanding of children’s needs and better management strategies, with reflective practice groups and network meetings being particularly valued. However, funding constraints, staffing issues, the cost of living crisis, and school closures posed significant barriers to sustaining trauma-informed environments.

Tiny Tips Evaluation and Key Findings: 2020-2023 Jan 2024

The audit aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the Tiny Tips project in embedding trauma-informed practices within early years settings. The primary objectives were to assess the impact of training on staff understanding and application of trauma-informed strategies, and to measure the subsequent effects on children’s social, emotional, and behavioural development.

The focus was on analysing feedback from training sessions, pre and post-project outcome measures, and qualitative data from focus group interviews and case studies. The audit covered the period from 2020 to 2023.

The Tiny TIPs data reveals that 92% of participants believe the training will positively impact their work.

The 37 training sessions significantly improved staff understanding of trauma and its impact on children’s behaviour, boosting their confidence in managing challenging behaviours and supporting emotional regulation. This led to case studies showing improvements in children’s social, behavioural, and emotional development, with children better able to recognise and communicate their feelings, creating a more settled environment.

Staff adopted non-judgmental, empathetic attitudes and implemented strategies like calming areas and emotional literacy tools. A cultural shift towards trauma-informed practices was evident, with enhanced communication and collaboration with parents. However, challenges such as time pressures, staffing issues, and the need for ongoing support and training were identified.

Recommendations

Sustainability Efforts:

Secure additional funding to support wider participation and sustain the program’s impact.

Address staffing challenges to ensure consistent application of trauma-informed practices.

Enhanced Collaboration:

Foster stronger links between different organisations and settings to promote shared learning and collaboration.

Continue to develop culturally sensitive training materials to meet the diverse needs of the community.



iTIPS will have a report on the 4 years of Tiny TIPs by the end of 2024, including case studies and testimonials as well as this data.

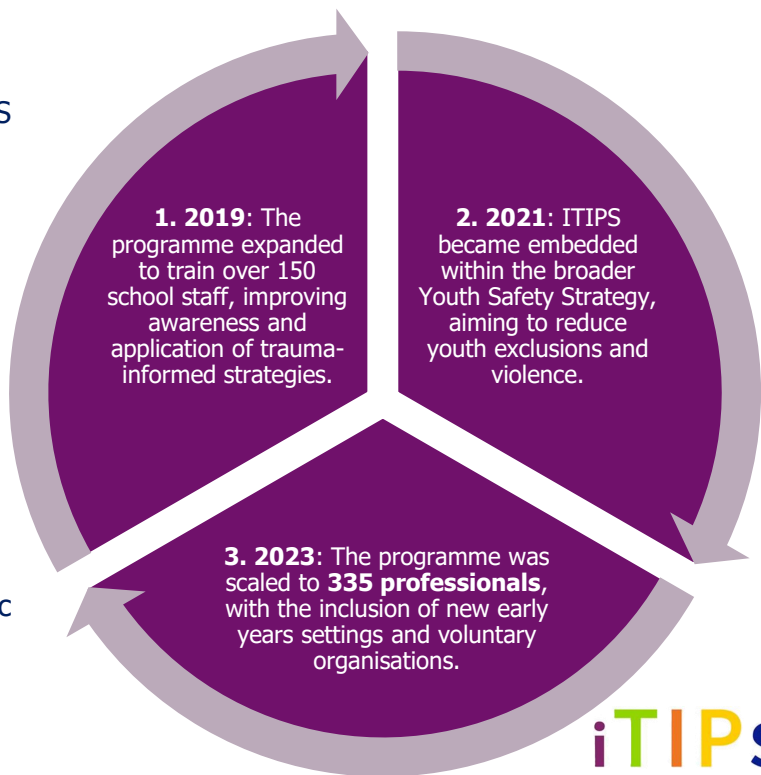
ITIPS (Islington Trauma-Informed Practice Strategy) Overview: Rationale and Effectiveness from 2017 to 2023

Historical Context and Rationale:

The **Islington Trauma-Informed Practice Strategy (ITIPS)** was developed in **2017** as a response to the increasing recognition of trauma's impact on young people's behaviour, particularly within educational settings. The primary focus was to reduce exclusions and improve outcomes for children exposed to trauma by equipping professionals across multiple disciplines with trauma-informed skills. The development was motivated by a series of high-profile incidents that revealed gaps in understanding trauma, particularly in school exclusion cases, where children's behavioural issues were often linked to unaddressed trauma.

Journey and Implementation:

Starting in 2017, ITIPS evolved into a multi-disciplinary framework, bringing together educators, social workers, health professionals, and community safety teams. The programme included trauma-informed training and reflective practice sessions designed to create a supportive, empathetic environment within schools and services. Key milestones in this journey include:



Effectiveness and Measured Outcomes:

The effectiveness of ITIPS has been measured through a variety of indicators, showcasing the tangible impact on reducing exclusions and improving outcomes for children:

- **Reduction in Exclusions:** Since its implementation, **exclusions have decreased by 12%** across Islington schools, particularly in cases related to emotional and behavioural issues. While direct causality is hard to establish, staff report that trauma-informed approaches have significantly influenced this trend, reducing the need for punitive measures.
- **Staff Feedback:** By **2023, 87% of the 335 professionals** trained expressed increased confidence in applying trauma-informed principles. This includes better management of challenging behaviours, with **93%** of participants indicating they had adopted more empathetic, non-judgmental approaches in their interactions with children.
- **Collaborative Impact:** The multi-agency nature of ITIPS was crucial. The partnership between schools, police, and health services facilitated real-time **information sharing** and collective decision-making. A **dashboard** was introduced to track trauma-affected children, allowing professionals to monitor their progress and intervene early.

Impact on Professionals and Schools:

Participants in ITIPS have highlighted the transformational effect of the strategy on their work. Reflective practice groups allowed staff to process the emotional impact of working with traumatised children, while **network meetings** fostered collaboration between different services. Key findings include:

- **Improved School Environments:** Schools reported a **calmer, more supportive atmosphere**, with **fewer behavioural incidents** and a notable reduction in the emotional distress displayed by children. Strategies such as emotional regulation tools and designated calming spaces became standard practice.
- **Holistic Support:** The strategy's trauma-informed lens led to better engagement with families, fostering a **whole-family approach** to supporting children at risk. Schools reported that this holistic engagement helped prevent further exclusions and enhanced student participation.

Challenges and Future Directions:

Despite its success, ITIPS has faced challenges. **Funding constraints** and **staffing shortages** have impacted the consistency of training delivery and the sustainability of trauma-informed environments. Moreover, the **cost of living crisis** and **school closures** during the pandemic highlighted the need for ongoing support to maintain these practices.

Looking forward, ITIPS aims to secure **additional funding** and expand its reach to more schools and early years settings. The long-term goal is to create a **trauma-informed borough**, where all services operate within this framework to better support vulnerable children and their families.

Reducing Parental Conflict

In January 2023, we welcomed our Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for RPC, sparking a wave of initiatives to weave the RPC agenda into our services. We've been busy training staff across social work, early help, FGCs, and health, and are now forging partnerships with schools and VAWG services to further embed RPC.

Our workforce development offer is top-notch, designed to sustain the agenda and nurture a long-term vision. We're thrilled to introduce Relationship Leaders in Islington and a bespoke toolkit for our practitioners, ensuring they have resources to rely on for years. Our digital platform will also be expansive, enabling parents to engage with practitioners in discussions about healthy relationships.

With Islington's transition to family hubs, we have a golden opportunity to integrate RPC into the family hub workforce, collaborating with both internal and external partners as RPC becomes a cornerstone of our Family Hub delivery model.

A significant challenge was the absence of a SPOC for RPC due to staff changes, which slowed progress and necessitated rebuilding relationships with partners. This has been resolved with the new SPOC in place, and relationships are now re-established.

RPC is a vital component of the family hubs model and must continue to be promoted through these hubs to ensure its longevity. Key partners in the community, such as schools, voluntary and community sector (VCS), and faith organisations, will play a crucial role. We should consider dedicating space on the Islington Safeguarding Partnership Board website and the Early Help Toolkit website to make RPC accessible to all services.

From January 2023 to March 2024, our RPC SPOC has trained on RPC tools and resources to support parents in their relationships;

290 people

Social Care Early Help Health Schools VCS Organisations

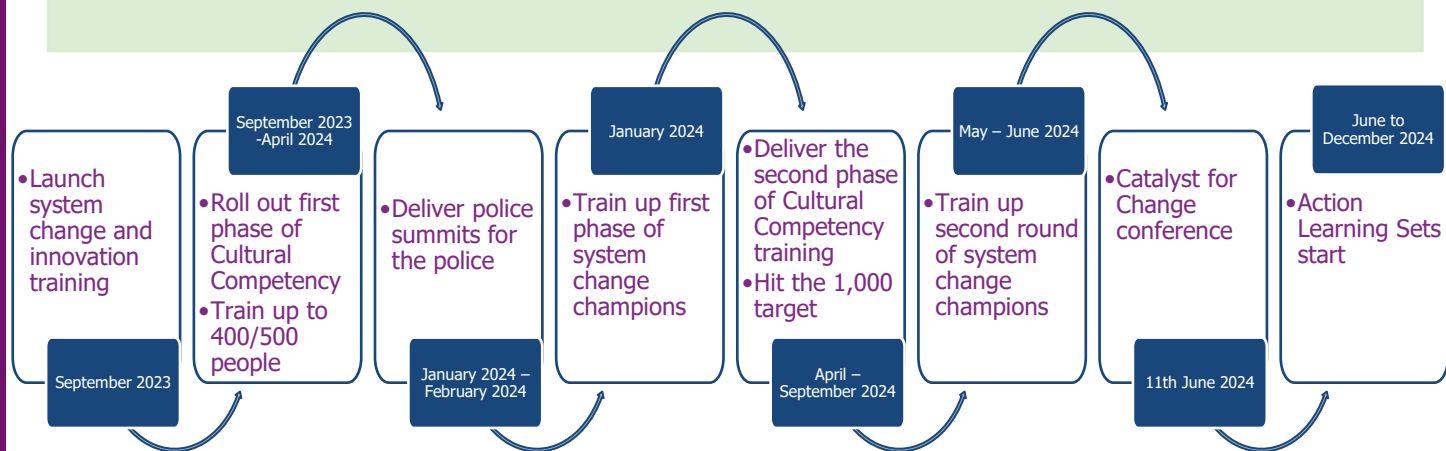
Additionally, four individuals have been trained to deliver the RPC parenting programme intervention, and funding has been allocated to the FGC service to train mediators in RPC.

Looking ahead, our focus for the next year is on delivering services to families.

Young Black Men in Mental Health: System Change and Innovation training

Aims: Year 1 Launched in Sept 2023 – September 2024

- Aim is to train up 1,000 professionals in Cultural Competency (multiagency across sectors) by September 2024
- Deliver 24 Cultural Competency training sessions
- Train up to 50 System champions
- Deliver 5 Action Learning sets
- Deliver Catalyst for Change conference
- Deliver 3 catalyst for change forums
- Deliver a suite of Police Summits



Learning and take aways so far:

- Eventbrite has some challenges – at the moment the project are unable to breakdown numbers according to services and sector - monitoring and tracking the sector of training delegates is challenging – going forward we will have to manually trail through all delegates and count via the email address to verify the organisation.
- Targeted specific communications to promote the training to ensure the there is an equal representation across sectors.
- Use a mixture of first come first serve targeting as well as targeted communications to generate engagement.
- First round of system champions recruitment – we have managed to recruit a fantastic group of committed, passionate professionals. Including in the System Change training - An additional day for the System Champions to focus upon the role of the System change as an influencer in organisation, and the development of cultural competency projects.
- Having tangible projects for the System Change Champions to lead on for first 12 months is very useful
- The project is currently reviewing the Police Summits with the police and will bring back the learning from the review to next board meeting.

Youth Offending Service: Police Recruit Training Report Overview (September 2023 - March 2024)

During this reporting period, Islington worked collaboratively with its partners, focusing on fostering stronger links between the Police, parent champions, and young people. A total of **124 police recruits** underwent safeguarding and youth engagement training, which was specifically designed to address issues around **contextual safeguarding** and **disproportionality**.

This training ensures that newly recruited officers are equipped with the knowledge and skills to handle safeguarding concerns effectively.

Collaborative Impact

The collaborative training has been lauded for its **multi-agency approach**, with representation from local authorities, health services, and education sectors, ensuring that safeguarding efforts are aligned across all key services. Feedback from the recruits indicated a **90% satisfaction rate**, with many stating that the training increased their confidence in handling **complex safeguarding cases** involving vulnerable children.

In summary, this period's training initiatives have laid the groundwork for enhanced **police-community relations** in Islington, contributing to the borough's **youth safety strategy** and improving outcomes for at-risk children and families.

Parent Champions:

Islington's Parent Champions were also involved in the training, playing a pivotal role in bridging the gap between law enforcement and the community.

22 Parent Champions delivered sessions focusing on **trauma-informed approaches**, providing first-hand insights into supporting children exposed to domestic violence or criminal exploitation.

Their participation has helped to humanise the policing process and foster trust between parents and local police units.

Young People's Involvement

A significant development in this reporting period was the inclusion of young people in the training process. Approximately **58 young people** actively participated, sharing their lived experiences with officers during role-play scenarios and focus group discussions.

This approach was instrumental in enhancing police officers' understanding of youth perspectives, particularly around issues such as **stop and search** and **gang-related interventions**.

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG): Police Training overview

VAWG Workforce Development (WFD) delivered two training sessions on non-fatal strangulation (NFS) to the police between September 2022 and March 2024.



Police officers attended the sessions: the discussions and feedback highlighted they were a success and aided the identification and planning of further training sessions

Creation:

Police were involved in the aims and direction of the training, requesting a focus of how to support the victims and to understand more clearly their direct role in supporting the victim.

Challenges:

Competing scheduling commitments in the Police service led to the cancellation of sessions. More time required to support the reflective learning experience, supporting to the move away from victim blaming behaviour and supporting a trauma informed lens.

Successes:

The training reached 50 police officers, feedback highlighted that officers said they felt more confident/ better informed when it comes to supporting victim/survivors also increased knowledge regarding medical information linked to NFS.

What's next?

VAWG WFD will be delivering domestic abuse training for emergency uniform responder officers October – December 2024. The aim is to train 600 officers during this period.

44

Core Courses delivered between September 2022- March 2024:

- Introduction to Safeguarding and Information Sharing (LSCP Level 1 and 2)
- Designated Safeguarding Professionals/Leads: Roles and Responsibilities (LSCP Level 3).
- Safeguarding Refresher and Updates to Practice (All LSCP Levels)

1887 Training Requests

79.3% Trained

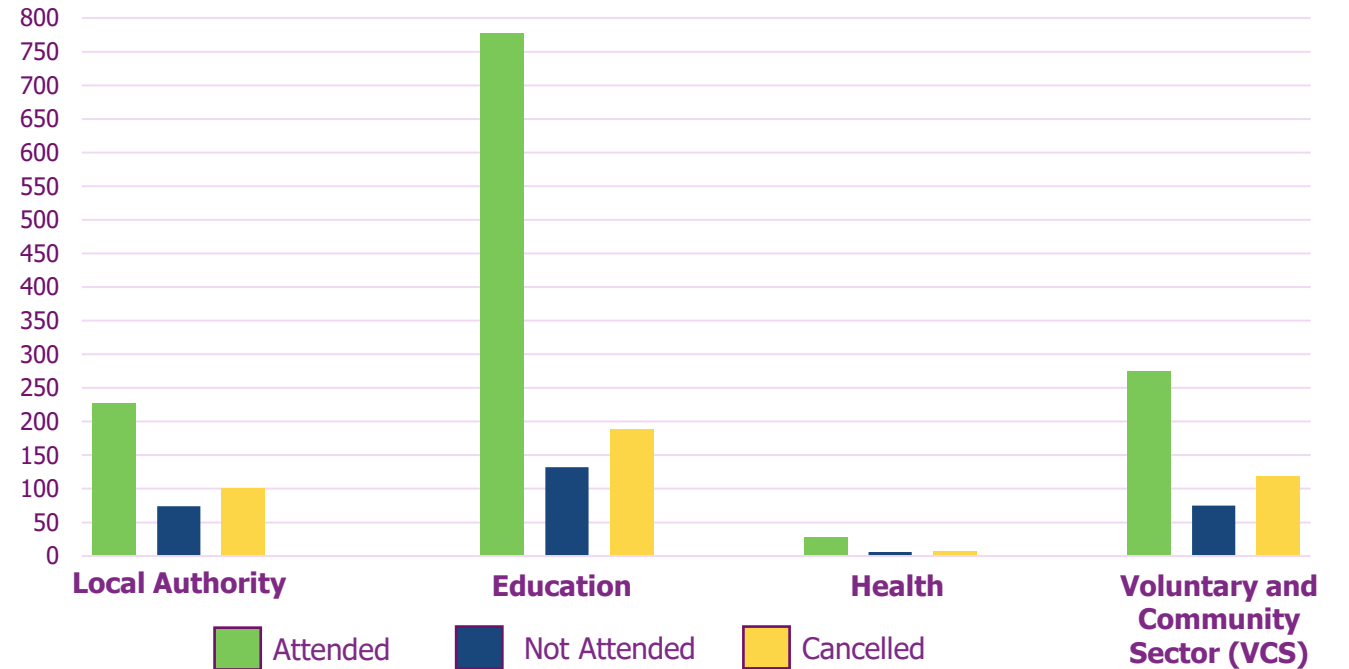
20.7% Non-attendance

This demonstrates a continued demand for multi-agency training and a robust core offer from the ISCP Business unit. Overall, we have maintained numbers trained, sitting just shy of 80%, with a slight growth in non-attendance on the day. Barriers to training attendance will remain a focus of the Training Subgroup and ISCP Training manager.

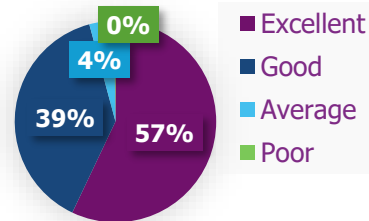
September 2022- March 2024:

Numbers trained	Number of non-attendance	Number of cancelled bookings
1496	391	399

Attendance by Service Area: January 2023 - March 2024

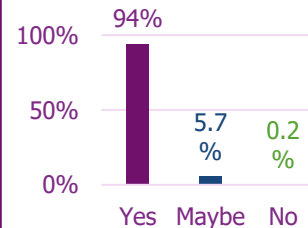


To what extent did the training course meet your learning objectives?



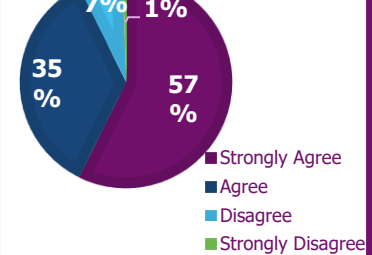
Excellent rating 13% increase and Average rating has a 3% decrease from the last year report

Would you recommend this course to a colleague?



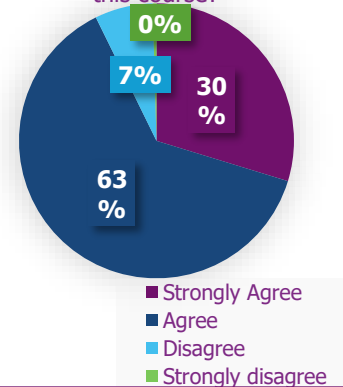
"Yes" response increased from 89% from the last year report.

The course helped your awareness of the subject area



"Strongly Agree" has increased 10% from the last year report.

I will do some things differently as a result of this course?



ISCP Learning Event: Baby V and Child R

Places offered	Number of Attendees Booked	Number fully attended	Number partially attended	Number of no shows	Number of cancelled bookings
90	86	83	3	21	13

From November 2023 - March 2024, we hosted three learning events focused on the learning from safeguarding incidents involving Baby V and Child R.

The sessions highlighted the importance of professional curiosity, trauma-informed care, and effective information sharing (inc. challenges of multiple data systems). Key lessons covered included the need for thorough assessments, understanding trauma’s impact on service engagement, and ensuring safe sleeping arrangements are explored by all services. The events also emphasised the challenges posed by COVID-19 and the necessity of robust foster care matching processes.

Recommendations focused on improving safeguarding alerts, information sharing, the role and need of Safer Caring agreements and training for foster carers to enhance child protection and support.

The training was co-developed by colleagues involved in the reviews from Health and Local Authority and was designed to be reflective and informative. The sessions highlighted the processes involved in LCSPR’s, Rapid Reviews and Management Reviews.

The sessions were very well attended by colleagues from the police, Children’s Social Care, Early Years, Health Visiting and wider health services.

What’s next?
Attendees requested sessions based on the practicality of having safe sleep discussions: the ISCP Training Subgroup will explore the development and delivery of such session.



Parent Champion Joint Event: The Impact of Trauma on YP and how we support them to recover

In this session, **35 attendees** heard the voices and authentic experiences of young people and adults who have experienced trauma, learning about how and what supported them to overcome. The session gave the opportunity to gain additional knowledge and skills around the impact of trauma, including specific issues such as knife harm and domestic abuse. The Parent Champion shared their personal journey of overcoming trauma, providing a unique and heartfelt perspective. Additionally, the audience were provided with the opportunity to ask questions and engage directly during the session.

What will you do differently as a result of this course?

- “Slowing down and being more young person focused”

- “Being more mindful of the young persons body language, the language they use”

- “Not rush young people...Relationships take time to build and trusting relationships are needed if we want to carry out meaningful work with positive outcomes”

- “Ensuring language and approach is transparent”

- “I will look at my approach and how I develop relationships with my young people as the needs of young people have become increasingly complex throughout the years”

- “To try and listen and be empathetic to another person situation”



More Feedback



ISCP Safer Internet Day 6th February 2024

The years' theme was 'Inspiring change? Making a difference, managing influence and navigating change online'. The ISCP hosted four events to draw staff and volunteers focus to this challenging and ever-changing safeguarding need.

Co-developed and delivered by the Exploitation and Missing Team and Violence Against Women and Girls Team.

This highly successful day saw over **80 attendees across the four events.**

Pornography: an opportunity to learn more about illicit and illegal content and children's access to pornography. Understand the impact on brain development, the associated risks and peer expectations that can present.

Social Media: an opportunity learn about the different online platforms are we seeing including the risks & who may pose the risks including online grooming and sexual bullying and serious youth violence.

Safety Planning: A session to explore safety planning with young people and parents. the role of parental controls and other preventative actions.

Resources sharing: A Q&A session regarding Internet Safety.



Additional Courses delivered

Between Jan 2023 and March 2024

- Protocol for Managing Child-on-Child Sexual Abuse, Violence & Harassment
- Family Group Conference
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour
- Understanding and Responding to Child Exploitation
- VAWG Introduction to Domestic Abuse
- VAWG Designated Safeguarding Professionals Domestic Abuse
- Harmful Practice and FGM Training
- Induction: the Role of Children's Services Contact Team
- Child Protection Conference Briefing and Q&A

- Disability Awareness Training DCCAT
- Attention Deficit Hyperactive (ADHD Awareness) DDCAT
- Autism Awareness Training DCCAT
- LGBTQIA+ Inclusion Training Webinar

E- Learning

- Fire Safety in the Home (for Carers and Support Workers)



Adult Social Care course now available to the ISCP

- An Introduction to Self-neglect and Hoarding (via Adult Social Care)
- Basic Awareness of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (via Adult Social Care)
- Mental Capacity Act- Basic Awareness (via Adult Social Care)

Courses available from April 2024

- Child Sexual Abuse
- VAWG Supporting Male victims of Domestic Abuse Bitesize
- Significant Harm and Working Together



Feedback from training	What we did
Access to documents and material discussed and used in the training	Post course packs are now shared as standard from September 2023. These include links to documents, toolkits and research discussed, newsletters available and local/ national policies.
Mixed feedback regarding the format: "being virtual is very helpful" and "would be better in person"	Online training remains an options however more in person courses have been offered for or Core Courses and most of our additional full length courses (due to the topics and feedback for those courses)
Mixed feedback regarding Training length: preferred whole day or half day. Wider feedback identified short courses/webinars were of interest to the partnership.	Training is now offered in full Courses, bitesize sessions and e-learning formats.
Lots of contents	Alternative and Bitesize courses have been offered to support more in-depth training in specific topics (inc. online safety, supporting males victims of DA,) and build on knowledge
Interactive sections	This remains easier for in person training due to technology limitation. However, facilitators continue to reflect on the training contents and delivery methods.

The Year ahead...

To ensure high-quality safeguarding training, the subgroup will continue to develop a Training Quality Assurance framework. This framework will incorporate training expectations and ensure that training programs are effective, consistent, and meet the needs the partnership services and learners and align with recognised standards and regulations in the Training Strategy.

The subgroup will focus on continuous improvement to maintain the integrity and effectiveness of training programs identifying measures to gather feedback from attendees, facilitators. Renewed evaluation methods will aim to measure the impact of training sessions, using these evaluations to identify areas for improvement and demonstrate the effectiveness of the training program. Attendance and engagement levels will continue to be reviewed and monitored to address barriers and support an effective learning cycle from LSCPRs to audits.

Training content, will be regularly updated to address emerging safeguarding challenges, practice updates and policies, feedback and audits.

This approach aims to foster a culture of continuous improvement within the training subgroup, ensuring our safeguarding training remains impactful and responsive to evolving challenges.

PRIORITY 1

The ISCP strives to deepen understanding of systemic issues and their diverse impacts, driving towards more inclusive and equitable practices



How will this be achieved?

Cultural Competence and Inclusivity:

Relevant agencies are required to ensure that their workforce is culturally competent and inclusive. The ISCP will support this effort by providing targeted training through the **Training Subgroup**. This training will help staff across agencies to better understand and address the needs of Islington's diverse population.

Trauma-Informed Training:

The **QA subgroup** will work collaboratively to ascertain how each agency embeds the Trauma Informed Model of practice to unify practice across agencies. This will then combine with the Training Subgroup to incorporate the agreed trauma informed training across relevant agencies at each practice level (LSCP). This initiative aims to ensure that all professionals are equipped to support children and families in a trauma-sensitive manner, furthering the ISCP's commitment to equitable service delivery.

Workforce Representation:

Agencies will be asked to report on how representative their workforce is in comparison to the Islington population and the service users they serve. This assessment, coordinated by the **Quality Assurance (QA) Subgroup**, will help identify gaps in representation and inform strategies to create a more inclusive workforce.

Understanding and Addressing Disproportionality:

Agencies must ensure they fully understand the data on **disproportionality and inequality** based on ethnicity within Islington. Once this understanding is established, they will be expected to outline steps to address and mitigate these disparities, ensuring that services are distributed equitably. The ISCP will support agencies in using data-driven approaches to address inequalities.

Quality Assurance Reports:

Agencies are required to ensure that their **QA reports** include analysis on disproportionality based on ethnicity. These reports should also outline how the agencies plan to address any identified inequalities. The **QA Subgroup** will oversee this process, ensuring that all agencies are held accountable for making progress on these critical issues.



PRIORITY 2

The ISCP is shifting focus from reactive measures to proactive, preventative strategies, emphasising the importance of multi-agency collaboration for early support.

How will this be achieved?

Developed Joined-Up Early Help Services:

The ISCP will use the recommendations from the **Child X** case, alongside the development of the **Family Hub model**, to place a stronger emphasis on **early intervention and prevention**. These recommendations highlight the critical need for timely, joined-up support for vulnerable families, which the Family Hub model will facilitate by offering a centralized, accessible point for early help services. This approach will ensure that families receive the support they need before issues escalate, aligning with the ISCP's goal of reducing the need for reactive safeguarding measures.

Upskilling the Workforce:

Once the lead practitioners have been outlined by the delegated safeguarding partners, the ISCP will focus on upskilling the workforce within relevant agencies to produce high-quality assessments as **Lead Practitioners**. This initiative, led by the **Training Subgroup**, will ensure that practitioners are equipped with the skills and knowledge to effectively assess and support families, providing early interventions that can prevent issues from escalating.

Scoping and Auditing Activities:

The **Chairs of the Early Help Subgroup** and the **ISCP Business Unit** will use the Joint Targeted Area Inspection's **Early Help Terms of Reference** as a guide to conduct scoping and auditing activities. These activities will identify gaps within the early help system, ensuring that services are comprehensive and responsive to the needs of children and families. Any identified gaps will be communicated to the **Quality Assurance (QA) Subgroup** for further analysis and action. The Early help members are also keen in learning from other well established family hubs across the country to share and gain knowledge

PRIORITY 3



Concerns over the mental health of children, especially those with SEND, are growing, especially in the context of school inclusion. The rise in mental health issues linked to factors like online safety, domestic violence, poverty, and neglect calls for a refocused approach in Transitional Safeguarding, integrating these concerns effectively within SEND and SEMH frameworks.

How will this be achieved?

Advancing the SEND Strategy:

The **Local Authority** (as a Statutory Partner) will work diligently to meet the goals set out in the **SEND strategy**. This effort will involve a thorough examination of the current state of children with SEND in the local area and a demonstration of improvements in the next reporting period. This collaborative effort will require significant strategic input from **Education** as an informal statutory partner, ensuring that the needs of children with SEND are effectively addressed.

Developing a Pledge/Statement/Plan for SEND and SEMH:

Relevant agencies and **Education providers** within the ISCP will work together to develop a pledge, statement, or plan outlining how they intend to intervene with the rising number of children and young people with SEND. This initiative, coordinated by the **Education Subgroup**, will ensure that there is a clear and committed approach to supporting these children within the educational framework.

Similarly, **Health Partners** within the ISCP will develop a pledge, statement, or plan focusing on how to address the increasing number of children and young people experiencing SEMH challenges. This will be overseen by the **Executive Group** and will guide the partnership's approach to supporting mental health within the community.

Strengthening Transitional Safeguarding:

The ISCP will liaise with the **Adults Safeguarding Board** to identify gaps in **Transitional Safeguarding** the process of ensuring continuity of care and safeguarding when children move into adulthood. This collaboration will involve creating scoping exercises, practitioner workshops, and senior leader events to address and strengthen these areas. The goal is to ensure that children and young people, particularly those with SEND and SEMH needs, receive consistent and effective support as they transition into adult services.

PRIORITY 4

With neglect and issues from parental factors such as mental health challenges, substance misuse, and domestic abuse taking centre stage, there's a clear need for better assessment tools and strategies. The ISCP is driving for a more trauma-informed approach and enhanced supervision of online activity.



How will this be achieved?

Local Actions and Future Plans:

While progress has been made in raising awareness about neglect, feedback from professionals indicates that it is not yet fully embedded in the day-to-day practice of all partner agencies. In response, the ISCP is taking the following steps:

Multi-Agency Audit on Neglect (November 2024):

This audit will evaluate the current application of the **Neglect Toolkit** and assess the quality of multi-agency responses to cases of neglect.

Targeted Training and Development:

Training sessions will focus on increasing the **confidence and competence** of frontline workers in recognising and addressing neglect.

Embedding the Neglect Toolkit:

Efforts will continue to embed the **Neglect Toolkit** into routine safeguarding practice. Additional guidance and support will be provided to ensure consistent application across all services.

Neglect has remained a priority within the **ISCP** because it affects a significant number of children in **Islington**, and its pervasive impact can be profound. The upcoming **November 2024 audit** will ensure that agencies are held accountable for their practice and will help shape future initiatives to tackle neglect more effectively.

Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2023 prescribed that the Local Safeguarding Partnership (LSP) are to determine the necessary funding to support multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. This encompasses business and analytical support, independent scrutiny, infrastructure, and core functions such as local children safeguarding practice reviews, multi-agency training, and learning events. It is imperative that the LSP ensures adequate funding is allocated and utilised in alignment with agreed priorities.

Transparency in funding is crucial. The contributions from safeguarding partners and relevant agencies are therefore outlined in this report, ensuring that children and families in the area are well-informed. For the year 2023-2024 the ISCP exceeded the working budget by £2196 and had to draw from the Partnership reserve held within the Local Authority Corporate reserve.

Equitable funding contributions from statutory safeguarding partners must be established and agreed upon; a recognised London-specific challenge to meeting the required equitable funding arrangement is the metropolitan police service budget for Partnerships being split across all London boroughs, and similarly each NHS service’s budget is split across multiple partnerships leading to a disproportionate reliance on the Islington Local Authority.

INCOME	April 2023/March 2024	
Partners	Agency contributions	£
Local Authority	London Borough of Islington	144,228.00
Education	DSG Grant	£50,000.00
Health	North Central London Integrated Care Board	£10,000.00
	Camden & Islington NHS Trust	£7,500.00
	Moorfields NHS Trust	£7,500.00
	Whittington NHS Trust	15,000.00
Police and Probation	MPS (MOPAC)	£5,000.00
	National Probation Trust	£2,500.00
	Subtotal	241,728.00

Expenditure	April 2023/March 2024
	£
Salaries	199,082
Independent Chair and Scrutineer	15,100
Part-time Training Administrator (approx.)	10,035
Training	1,364
LCSPRs and Rapid Reviews	17,568
Miscellaneous Costs	775.00
Subtotal	243,924.00

Continuous review of funding is essential to meet the financial demands of these arrangements. This year, statutory safeguarding partners plan to review the contributions to ensure these are updated and agreed upon.



ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder	ICPC	Initial Child Protection Conference
ASIP	Adolescent Support Intervention Project	IDVA	Independent Domestic Violence Advocate
ASV	Allegations against Staff/Volunteers	ISAB	Islington Safeguarding Adults Board
BCU	Basic Command Unit	IIOC	Indecent Images of Children
CAMHS	Child Adolescent Mental Health Service	IMHARS	Islington Mental Health and Resilience in Schools
CCE	Child Criminal Exploitation	LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
CIN	Children in Need	LBI	London Borough of Islington
CP	Child Protection	LCSPR	Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review
CQC	Care Quality Commission	MASH	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
CSC	Children Social Care	MPS	Metropolitan Police Service
CSCT	Children Services Contact Team	NCL	North Central London
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation	NEET	Not in Education Employment or Training
CWASW	Children With A Social Worker	NFA	No Further Action
CYP	Children and Young People	NHS	National Health Service
DCI	Detective Chief Inspector	NRM	National Referral Mechanism
DCT	Disabled Children Team	QA	Quality Assurance
DIT	Dedicated Inspection Team	RCPC	Review Child Protection Conference
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead	SEMH	Social Emotional Mental Health
DSP	Designated Safeguarding Professional	SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disability
EHE	Elective Home Education	SSO	Safety School Officer
FGC	Family Group Conference	UASC	Unaccompanied and Separated Children
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation	VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
GP	General Practitioner	VCS	Voluntary and Community Sector
HSB	Harmful Sexual Behaviour	YJSMB	Youth Justice Service Management Board
HMICFRS	His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services	YPSI	Youth Produced Sexual Imagery
ICB	Integrated Care Board		