

Our Impact Transcript

This section of the yearly report, 2023 to 24, describes part of our impact. The presentation gives an overview of the work of the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership's (HSCP) Executive Group.

The Executive Group is a decision-making forum for the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements often described as the engine room of the partnership. It consists of the independent chair and scrutineer, the chairs of our subgroups, our safeguarding partners and the safeguarding partnership team.

The HSCP Executive Group meets quarterly during each financial year. Attendance from the safeguarding partners and subgroup chairs is mandated. This year saw a number of areas of work being shared with the safeguarding partners for their oversight, consideration and approval.

The year also included some areas of work being shared with the safeguarding partners to explore challenges and any potential impact on safeguarding children. This included assurance of any mitigating actions that were required. This was at the request of safeguarding partners or the independent chair and scrutineer, and by senior leaders of relevant agencies themselves.

This year included the safeguarding partners agreeing their strategic priorities and the resulting business plan for 2024 to 26. As part of the oversight of the safeguarding partners, each quarter includes progress and challenges relating to strategic priorities and the business plan, issues for safeguarding partners relating to multi-agency governance of the Hampshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), the HSCP budget, situational updates from partners and any agency inspections.

The Executive considered and discussed a number of multi-agency thematic reviews and audits during this reporting year. In line with our strategic priorities, safeguarding partners consider the findings of a multi-agency thematic audit, considering children with additional vulnerabilities and lowered school attendance. This audit included a range of sources including relevant local and national data learning from serious safeguarding cases, and previous audits and child safeguarding practice reviews from other areas. We also considered

national research and guidance, and a multi-agency case file ordered of the circumstances of a number of children.

Every HSCP audit or learning review delivers key messages for practitioners based on effective practice that has been highlighted or areas for improvement. Each Practitioner Briefing also gives a takeaway message called *If you do one thing*. For this thematic review, *if you do one thing*, it's important for practitioners to recognise that engagement in education is a significant protective factor for children. So please encourage attendance and engagement wherever you can.

A safeguarding adolescent thematic review was considered, and recommendations approved by the safeguarding partners at the Executive Group. This review again included a range of sources and a multi-agency case file audit. This audit took place the year after the Safeguarding Adolescents Toolkit was published. As a result of this audit, a number of recommendations have been progressed, including webinars regarding identifying and responding to young carers and a parent and carers toolkit has been developed called Supporting your Adolescent.

The key takeaway message from this audit was: Think Young Carer. The Carer's Trust and the Children's Society define a young carer as a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person. They often take on practical and/or emotional caring responsibilities that would normally be expected of an adult. Does anyone you are working with fit this definition? For more information access the HSCP Young Carers Strategy Guide.

The safeguarding partners also considered the Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) theme released in 2022-23. Considering the effectiveness of early help for local areas, safeguarding partners and relevant agencies participated in a dry run of the JTAI, gaining valuable insight, assurance and the identification of strengths and areas of improvement for the partnership within this area of work. This has led to an HSCP Early Help Toolkit for multi-agency professionals being developed. This will be published in quarter two of 2024-25.

Warm handovers between social workers to family support workers was identified as effective practice supporting engagement when families were moving from child in need plans to early help plans, and this practice was supported by a recommendation. It was also agreed to expand the HSCP multi-agency data set to strengthen the indicators, considering the effectiveness of early help.

A Safeguarding Theme Overview Pack (STOP) has been released to multi-agency colleagues highlighting effective practice regarding unidentified adults. From this piece of work, *if you do one thing*, take a family approach and consider the wider family context and connected or unidentified adults in your work with children and families.

During 2023 to 24, the safeguarding partners approved two rapid reviews following two serious incident notifications being made to the National child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel. A local child safeguarding practice review was not required to follow either rapid review as learning had been identified along with effective practice and any necessary recommendations to strengthen safeguarding practice was included. This is a critical area of work for the partnership and is reflected in the quality of the arrangements surrounding this work and the high level of engagement from partner agencies.

Where the high threshold of the serious incident notification is not met and it is identified there may be learning for multi-agency safeguarding practice, the safeguarding partners may agree a local learning event is undertaken to consider and identify learning. Recommendations arising from such events are agreed and approved by the safeguarding partners, with briefings generally shared with the multi-agency workforce and learning shared via those briefings and the HSCP training programme. The safeguarding partners agreed one local learning event in 2023-24. The rapid reviews and local learning events are all subject to the oversight of the independent chair and scrutineer.

A partner review of MASH was reported on in 2023-24. This particularly considered the ways of working that developed through necessity during the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact on multi-agency practice.

It also incorporated findings from the independent chair and scrutineers visit to the MASH. It has led to a drive for more meetings, in particular strategy discussions within the MASH to be face to face, strengthening, effective working relationships, information sharing, collaboration and risk assessment, a reinstating of multi-agency learning and development opportunities for MASH colleagues to learn together and a move to our senior operational leads from the MASH reporting directly to safeguarding partners via the HSCP executive arrangements. This means safeguarding partners will be fully sighted on multi-agency issues that require their support, decision or intervention, and this is in place for 2024-25.

A range of areas were considered by safeguarding partners, benchmarking and assuring local multi agency arrangements.

This included reporting against the findings and recommendations from the child safeguarding Practice Review panel phase two report, safeguarding children with disabilities and complex health needs in residential settings. While many of the recommendations need to be led nationally, the safeguarding partners considered the effectiveness of local arrangements.

The themes arising from our relevant agencies and safeguarding partners self-assessment relating to the 11 safeguarding standards as outlined in Working Together to Safeguard Children, were also considered. Each relevant agency was provided with individual feedback on that self-assessment, which is locally known as Section 11.

This year, three agencies presented their self-assessment to a panel of safeguarding partner representatives, providing an additional layer of assurance for the safeguarding partners. Effective practice was also highlighted in more detail through this panel. From this work, relevant agencies understanding of, and engagement in, our early help arrangements was identified as an area to strengthen, and this is being taken forward.

Some agencies shared plans for significant organisational change with safeguarding partners. This enabled a continued focus on safeguarding arrangements within and across agencies. The safeguarding partners offered challenge and support to new arrangements planned for the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary, seeking assurance of a continued drive to embed the child centred policing strategy. Changes across health providers were also considered in terms of the new organisation's safeguarding arrangements and consideration of any risk to our multi-agency arrangements.

The HSCP Executive maintains oversight of the risk register for the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Risks considered by the safeguarding partners included accommodation and infrastructure for our MASH colleagues. An ongoing risk, which continues to be scrutinised, is the impact of workforce challenges for public health nursing. This is a national challenge, and safeguarding partners are sighted on and supportive of mitigating actions being undertaken locally in this area.

The latter part of 2023 saw the publication of Working Together to Safeguard Children. This is the first iteration and step on the planned journey to the implementation of Stable homes built on love.

Hampshire Children's Services, as a safeguarding partner, have begun their journey towards

the vision of family help with the development of family help teams and they have included partners in developments and changes.

Safeguarding partners have an implementation plan for the required changes outlined in Working Together and have implemented a number of areas from the statutory guidance, including a shared decision-making model for submission of serious incident notifications to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel, relating to a serious safeguarding case and updating partnership arrangements to reflect the new requirements. These are being consulted on in quarter 1 of 2024-25, and this includes strengthening the role of senior leaders from education settings.

The Education Subgroup provides a critical forum for the partnership and engagement with education providers and during 2023-24 senior school leaders also represented the different educational phases on the Main Board.

The chair of the Education Subgroup provides representation of the HSCP Executive Group. The subgroup provided the mechanism for a two-way-flow of information between the different elements of the education sector and the partnership. It is a well-established subgroup and during this reporting year, facilitated work on a Child on Child Abuse Toolkit which is multi-agency and in particular, of use to education settings. The group also approved guidance on the transfer of child protection information and produced a frequently asked questions document.

The subgroup provided a consultation mechanism for the sector regarding the new use of the Escalation and Resolution of Professionals Disagreements Protocol. This led to sector-wide consultation which has informed the development and design of a revised protocol which will be shared and launched in quarter 1 of 2024-25. The main learning from the consultation was the need to keep this important protocol in the line of sight of senior leaders of education providers.

Throughout 2023 and 24 Executive members maintained connectivity across the range of strategic partnerships with a focus on HSCP priorities. Examples of this included working with the Prevent Partnership to publish a multi-agency Prevent Toolkit, working with the Violence Reduction Partnership to publish a Serious Violence Toolkit, working with the Safeguarding Adults Boards and Safeguarding Children's Partnerships across the region to update the Family Approach Toolkit.

We also share relevant learning from audits and reviews with the safeguarding adults board and in this reporting year we shared the impact of parent-oriented issues on children's school attendance and therefore the importance of professionals working with parents to be aware of this, and the impact of lowered school attendance for children with additional vulnerabilities.