



Lambeth
Safeguarding
Children
Partnership

Annual Report 2023-24



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Foreword from Jim Gamble, Independent Chair of LSCP

While it is important to acknowledge that the LSCP is on an improvement journey, it is also important to recognise the progress being made across the partnership as we work together to help make our children and their families safer.

During this reporting period, the LSCP has strengthened collaboration with and between partners in health, education, the police, and the community. Their proactive focus on early intervention is evident. The Lambeth Early Action Partnership (LEAP) and Better Start are good examples of initiatives that provide vital support to families, helping them to address challenges before they escalate.

The partnership's commitment to community engagement shines through in their "Child Friendly Borough" initiative, where children, young people, and families are actively involved in shaping services. This dedication to incorporating community feedback is essential for creating a truly child-centred approach. Moving forward, we are determined to listen and respond to the voices of our children and young people.

A more intelligent, data-driven approach is beginning to underpin our work, allowing us to better monitor progress, identify areas for improvement, and ensure accountability among partner agencies. Monitoring and investing in the health and wellbeing of our partnership workforce is now being developed as a key priority, and I am pleased to see the investment in the Lambeth Social Care Academy. This approach underscores and evidences a commitment to recruit, retain, and develop skilled social workers.

While the LSCP has made significant strides, the report acknowledges areas for continued focus. Maintaining workforce stability within Children's Social Care is crucial, as high turnover rates and reliance on agency staff can impact service consistency.

Improving the timeliness of assessments and interventions, particularly for children with disabilities and those in need of protection, remains a key priority. Addressing data gaps in training attendance and intervention effectiveness will enhance decision-making and demonstrate the impact of safeguarding efforts.

The LSCP recognises the context and ongoing challenges posed by child poverty, inequality and the prevalence of youth violence and gang activity within Lambeth. Continued efforts to address these systemic issues are essential for improving outcomes for children and young people.

Finally, at the time of writing, I can report that we have reconfigured our partnership framework to enhance our ability to accelerate improvement, monitor impact, and drive positive change.

Let there be no doubt: we are fundamentally focused on ensuring our children and young people are seen, heard, and helped. In the year ahead, we will build on what is working, focus on making progress where it is needed, and relentlessly drive our improvement journey at pace.

Jim Gamble QPM



LAMBETH CONTEXT

63,200

children live in Lambeth

43%

of Lambeth children
live in poverty, after
housing costs

322,000

people live in Lambeth

63%

of children are Black, Asian
or Multi-Ethnic (compared
with 21% nationally)

69%

of Lambeth
residents have
a religion

31%
have no
religion

It is estimated
10% of the
Lambeth population
identifies as LGBTQ+

130

languages are
spoken in Lambeth

There are **11.2**
Domestic Violence Offences
per 1,000 people in Lambeth.
The 13th highest rate in London.

There are
89 schools
in Lambeth

93.3%

of Lambeth Schools
are rated good and
outstanding

22.2%

of pupils are eligible for and
claiming free school meals

17.8%

of pupils identify
as SEN

Sources:

Lambeth State of the Borough Report (2022)

Lambeth Children, Families & Education Self-Evaluation of Social work Practice April 2024

Teach Lambeth: <https://teachlambeth.com/our-schools/>



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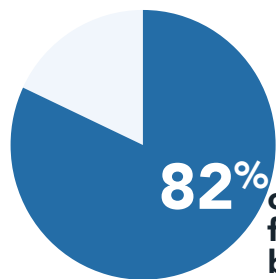
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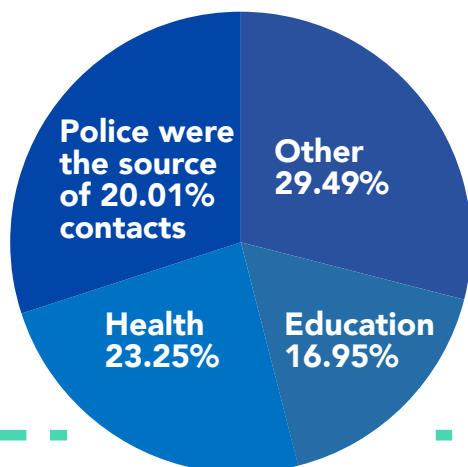
CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE NUMBERS

Source:
Power BI

Between April 2023 to March 2024,
Lambeth's Integrated Referral Hub
received **14,063** contacts relating
to children. (This is down from 15,840
for the previous year).



of contacts related to children
from Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic
backgrounds (although making up
only 63% of the population).



As of March 2024

464 children were Looked After
(compared to 404 children in March 2023)

316 children were subject to Child Protection Plans
(compared to 320 children in March 2023)

477 children were subject to Child in Need Plans
(compared to 325 children in March 2023)

22.36% of contacts
resulted in a
referral to Child
Assessment Teams

10.33% in a referral
to Early Help

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Who we are and what we do as a Partnership

Lambeth LSCP are a multi-agency with representatives from a range of sectors who work with children, young people, and families in Lambeth. We work to ensure that children, young people, and families are safe in Lambeth, and that Lambeth is the best place for our children to grow up.

Input from our multi-agency partners forms a crucial part of the work of the LSCP. We incorporate expertise, support and experience from statutory and voluntary agencies to inform our activities and make a difference. Learning from reviews and emerging themes, other initiatives and projects happening across the Borough are shared, so that messages are aligned, and work not duplicated.

Partnership & Working Arrangements

The structure of the LSCP sets out how the partnership arrangements are governed by Executive members that meet quarterly to scrutinise the activities of the subgroups and safeguarding arrangements with the 3 partner agencies.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (as reviewed and updated in October 2021) sets out in detail the arrangements for multi-agency safeguarding and the work of each Local Safeguarding Children Partnership. It identifies the lead representatives for safeguarding partners as:

- Chief Executive, Local Authority (LA)
- Accountable officer, Integrated care Services (ICS)
- Chief Officer, Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)



EXECUTIVE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



Independent Chair & Scrutineer

David Goosey

Members

Health: Strategic Director Integrated, CCG, Lambeth; Director of Nursing, GSTT; Designated Nurse Consultant; Designated Doctor.

Police: Detective Superintendent of Public Protection; DCI Public Protection ASCU.

LA: Strategic Director of Children's Services; Director for CSC, Director for Education.

Subgroup

Purpose

Chairs

Serious Incidents & Reviews Subgroup

6 Weekly

Oversee and formally receive reviews, agreeing action plans

Chair / Deputy Chair

Designated Nurse, SEL ICS, Assistant Director, Quality Assurance, CSC

Performance & Quality Assurance Subgroup

8 Weekly

Establish outcomes framework & monitor impact and quality

Chair / Deputy Chair

LSCP Chair & Independent Scrutineer

Contextual Safeguarding Subgroup

8 Weekly

Create & drive complex contextual safeguarding strategy to address extra-familial harm

Chair / Deputy Chair

Public Health Consultant, Lambeth Head of Contextual Safeguarding

Early Help Subgroup

8 Weekly

Implement the Lambeth Partnership Early Help Strategy

Chair / Deputy Chair

Director of Children's Services, Head of Service, Lambeth Probation

Learning & Development Subgroup

6 Weekly

Reporting L&D progress, key issues, and actions through their own governance structures

Chair / Deputy Chair

Principal Social Worker, CSC, LSCP Training & Development Manager



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There are five subgroups. Agencies represented on the subgroups are:

Lambeth Children's Social Care

Public Protection, Assurance & Regulatory Services

Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)

Lambeth Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

Lambeth Public Health

Children's Commissioning & Youth Services

Lambeth ICB & Community Safety

NHS South London and Maudsley SLAM

Kings College Hospital

Her Majesty's Prison Service

Guys & St Thomas' Hospital

National Probation Service

Lambeth Education

Blackthrive

Lambeth Schools - Head Teachers

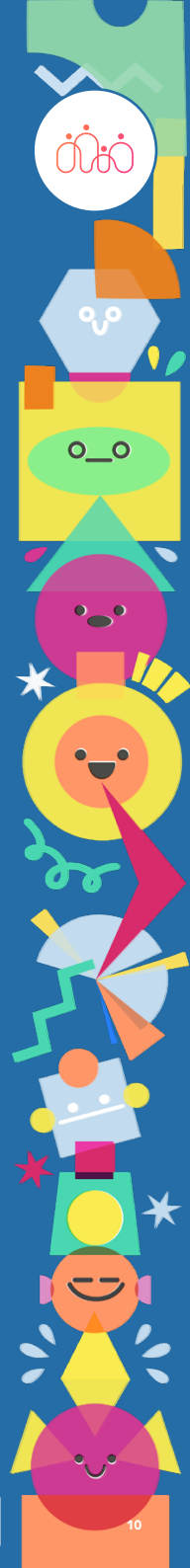
Health Watch Lambeth

Lambeth Housing

Home Start



Independent Chair and Scrutineer



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This role transitioned in January 2024 to become the Independent Children and Young Peoples Commissioner (this role encompasses the responsibilities of the Scrutineer and provides additional engagement and Independent Advocacy on behalf of Children and Young People)

INDEPENDENT SCRUTINEER

This role champions the safeguarding of children in Lambeth and Southeast London and -

- Ensures the partnership and all the subgroups operate effectively in improving the safeguarding and wellbeing outcomes of children, young people, and families.
- Provides a strong and independent leadership for the partnership executives, enabling the statutory safeguarding partners to discharge their duties effectively.
- Provides effective challenges to the statutory partners and all relevant agencies - where appropriate
- Ensures that the Partnership works effectively with all agencies, safeguarding stakeholders and platforms in and outside the organisation.
- Ensures that Partnerships play a constructive role in upholding Lambeth's safeguarding priorities as described in the Partnerships statutory working arrangements.

Executive Membership



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The Lambeth Safeguarding Children Partnership ensures that partners and all relevant agencies work together to safeguard children and families within and outside Lambeth.

In addition to the Independent Chair and Scrutineer, the other members of the Executive consist of:

- **Detective Chief Inspector** – Safeguarding Hub Central South Borough Command Unit
- **Director of Education and Learning** - Lambeth Council
- **Director of Children's Social Care** - Lambeth Council
- **Director of Nursing** - Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Hospital Trust, Lambeth ICB
- **Strategic Director Integrated Health & Care**
- **Director, Children, Families & Education**
- **Designated Nurse** – Safeguarding Children, Lambeth ICB
- **Designated Doctor and Consultant Community Paediatrician** - Lambeth ICB and Lambeth Council
- **Headteachers from local Secondary Schools**
- **Headteachers from local Primary Schools**

Subgroup Chairs

In accordance with section 11 of the Children Act 2004, the professional and personal responsibility of all subgroup members and senior operational managers of the Lambeth Safeguarding Children's Partnership is to ensure that safeguarding is given key priority within the agency that they represent.

The LSCP subgroup Chairs are appointed by the LSCP Executive.

Subgroup Chairs are Assistant Director or Divisional Director level to ensure strategic leadership to their subgroup. The Chair works with the LSCP Business Manager to sustain the engagement and momentum of their subgroup, including monitoring progress and actions in between meetings.

Each subgroup chair should have a clear understanding of the remit of their own subgroup as well as the remit of the other LSCP groups to enable effectiveness in cross working relationships and avoid duplications.

Where there are cross-cutting issues between subgroups, the chair of the subgroup from where the issue is first identified should initiate a meeting with the other subgroup chair to discuss the issues. Both chairs should feedback the outcome of such discussions to members of their respective subgroups.



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- ## TRAINING & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



The Assistant Director for Quality Assurance in Children Social Care has oversight of the work of the LSCP Business Unit (BU).

- Senior Programme Manager
- Training and Development Manager
- Projects and Improvement Officer
- Business Support Officer

Lambeth Integrated Care Services	40000.00
South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust	5000.00
Metropolitan Police via Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime	5000.00
National Probation Service	1000.00
Cafcass	550.00

Report on Organisational Progress



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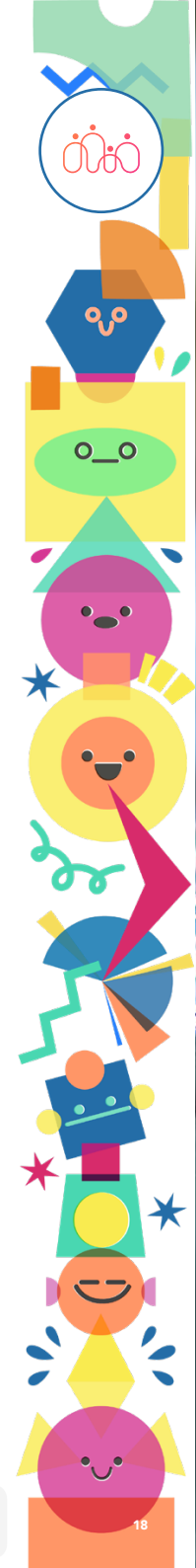
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In preparation for the move to the Local Vulnerability Hub in Feb 2025 the Missing Persons Unit have received an uplift of 10 fully trained staff, meaning that missing calls and investigations are now directed straight into the right team and removing the 48 hours triage of report. We are responding quicker and more efficiently to incidents of missing.

Partnership working arrangements have been reviewed to ensure we are in the best possible place to provide a holistic response to missing and not view it in isolation as a 'police problem'. New monthly governance meetings are in place as well as operational, the significant ones being:

- Monthly Children Services Improvement Group
- Contextual Safeguarding (high risk cases)
- Multi-agency Child Exploitation (MAVE)
- Multi-agency Violence and Exploitation (MACE)





CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

Governance and Leadership

- **Stable Leadership:** The appointment of a permanent Corporate Director and senior leadership team has brought stability and a clear focus on improving outcomes for children.
- **Governance Framework:** Strong governance structures, including the Children's Services Improvement Governance Board, ensure accountability and oversight of progress against the improvement plan.

Early Help and Prevention

- **Early Years and Early Help:** Enhanced early years and early help services, including the Better Start programme, have supported thousands of children and families, providing targeted support for those with additional needs.
- **Family Support:** Increased use of Family Group Conferences (FGCs) to identify family members who can support children, reducing the need for care proceedings.

Child Protection

- **Improved Response:** Significant improvements in the timeliness and quality of child protection interventions, with a focus on reducing risks and supporting families to keep children safe.
- **Contextual Safeguarding:** Development of a Contextual Safeguarding Service to address risks outside the home, such as youth violence and exploitation.



Children in Care

- **Permanency Planning:** Enhanced permanency planning processes to ensure children achieve stable, long-term placements more quickly.
- **Fostering and Adoption:** Increased recruitment of foster carers and improved support for adoptive families through the Regional Adoption Agency, Adopt London South.

Care Leavers

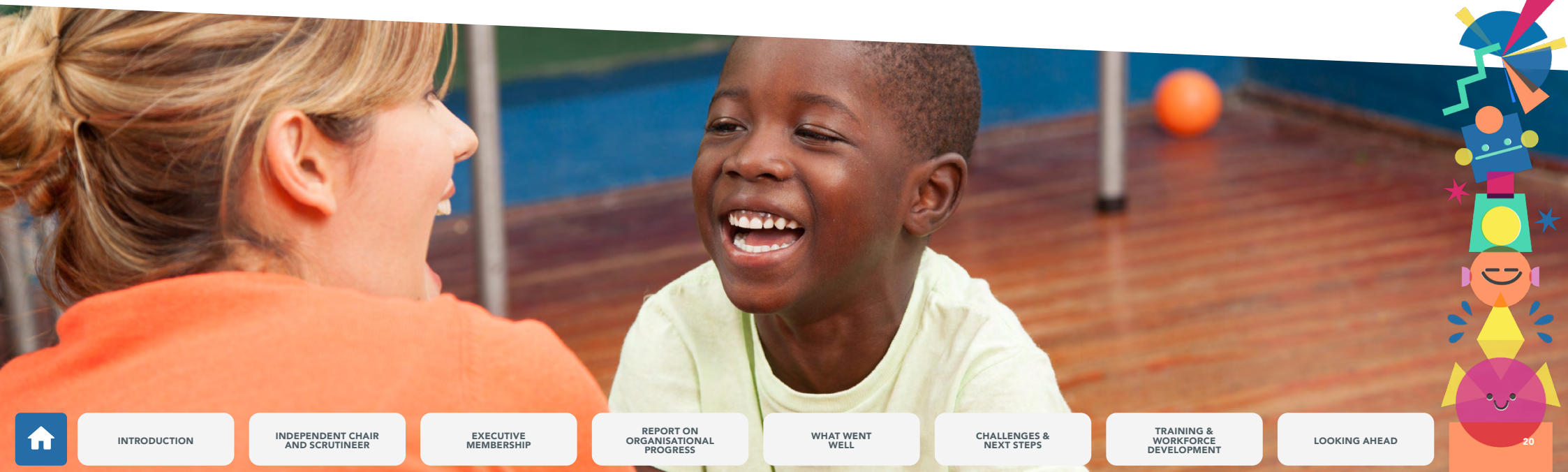
- **Support for Independence:** Strengthened support for care leavers, including improved pathway planning, housing support, and access to education, employment, and training opportunities.
- **Health and Wellbeing:** Enhanced mental health support through the Children Looked After Mental Health Service (CLAMHS) and initiatives to support care leavers' health needs.

Quality Assurance and Workforce Development

- **Quality Assurance:** Implementation of a robust quality assurance framework, including regular audits and feedback mechanisms to drive continuous improvement.
- **Workforce Development:** Launch of the Lambeth Social Care Academy to support the recruitment, retention, and development of social workers, ensuring a skilled and stable workforce.

Partnerships and Community Engagement

- **Multi-Agency Collaboration:** Strengthened partnerships with health, education, police, and voluntary sector organizations to provide a coordinated response to safeguarding issues.
- **Community Involvement:** Extensive consultation with children and young people to ensure their voices are heard and inform service development.



Lambeth Early Action Partnership (LEAP)

Over the past decade, LEAP has focused on improving outcomes for children and families in Lambeth, especially those in complex environments. LEAP presented their 10-year achievements at the September Children & Young People (CYP) Alliance Board.

- Results show a 40% improvement in early child development by age 2.5, alongside a 12% boost in parental mental health, particularly in deprived areas.
- Key successes include reducing risks in domestic abuse cases, achieving better outcomes through caseload midwifery, and fostering stronger family bonds via parenting programmes.
- Moving forward, it is recommended to expand successful initiatives, enhance community engagement, and address barriers to access for vulnerable and minoritised families.
- Youth Justice Service (YJS) was included in the His Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) remand thematic review in 2023, which highlighted areas of good practice, such as joint CSC/YJS supervision and parenting support.
- Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Review of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND): The review highlighted some outstanding practices and outcomes, as well as areas where they could develop solutions for existing challenges.
- Additionally, the report notes that the SEND Peer Review recognized the strength of Lambeth's early years offer, particularly in supporting children with communication and language delays, which was described as 'gold standard.' The review recommended extending the learning from this effective multi-agency working in early years to other areas of practice.
- SEND services are also working on further developing their offer in Early Help and Children's Social Care, considering interventions identified by the Early Intervention Foundation (EIF). This includes supporting children and families to understand the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) process and providing direct work with children around identity and making sense of their diagnosis.

LEAP

Lambeth Early Action Partnership



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EDUCATION

Improvement in GCSE Performance: Lambeth saw a steady rise in GCSE results, with the percentage of students achieving grades 9-4 in English and Maths increasing by 5%. Additionally, the Attainment 8 score, which measures performance across eight subjects, improved by 4.8 points from the previous year.

Closing the Attainment Gap: The achievement gap for students eligible for free school meals (FSM) was notably reduced, particularly for African pupils, who performed better than the national average at Key Stages 1 and 2. In GCSEs, the gap between FSM and non-FSM students also narrowed across ethnic groups.

Focus on Writing and Maths: Key improvements were recorded in Writing Teacher Assessments (TA) and Maths. Writing TA scores increased by up to 13%, while Math scores saw a 6% rise in some key stages.

Progress in Disadvantaged Groups: While challenges remain, particularly for Caribbean pupils, African and Somali students showed improved outcomes in reading, writing, and mathematics.

SAFEGUARDING

The Senior Safeguarding Manager (SSM) provides guidance and promotes an understanding of the need to safeguard children's welfare.

The primary purpose is to Improve our safeguarding leads' knowledge and skill base within our educational settings and provide a communication channel between education settings and our agencies to share information about safeguarding responsibilities, making it clear this is two-way communication. The SSM shares resources, guidance, and advice, ensuring that education settings are well-equipped to handle safeguarding issues. We update the model safeguarding policy yearly and send advice on changes to other policies. We organise a training programme covering all areas of educational needs, including DSL training, manage the single central record, and manage allegations against members of staff.

Support the implementation of the revised Keeping Children Safe in Education and The Working Together government guidance and share the lessons learned from safeguarding practice reviews.



What Went Well



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HEALTH

- The Integrated Care Board (ICB) safeguarding designated and named professionals have contributed expert advice towards multiagency policy, procedure and training as well as taking a lead role in the formulation and embedding of learning from reviews.
- NHS SEL Lambeth have continued to strengthen their commitment to improve Violence against women and girls (VAWG) and primary care engagement. The role of the multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) liaison nurse and the Identification and Referral to Improve Safety (IRIS) programme have been increasingly well embedded. Most GP Practices are now linked to the IRIS programme. The MARAC Liaison Nurse role has had a significant impact on the engagement and compliance of GPs. The role allows for effective communication between MARAC and GP practices supporting practices in, identifying, tracking and monitoring high-risk domestic abuse cases notified to MARAC.
- The introduction of electronic patient record (EPIC) in Guys & St. Thomas' Trust (GSTT) and Kings College Hospital (KCH) has improved the ability of health provider acute and community services to see each other's clinical information. This has enabled health partners to strengthen their communication and information sharing and has enhanced their contributions to: MASH and multi-agency threshold discussions.
- During 2023-2024 GPs returned to face-to-face appointments. This has improved the visibility of vulnerable families.
- The Designated Children Looked after (CLA) Doctor/ GSTT health CLA provider team have mapped out a health training offer which has been presented to the Lambeth Social Work academy. This has strengthened and supported the learning to improve practice identified from the CSPRs involving CLA.
- The Designated Nurse continues to work in partnership with the LA to introduce a notification process for Lambeth CLA when the child becomes a CLA, leaves care, moves placement and changes SW.
- The Designated professionals have been working with the public health team to improve immunisations for Lambeth CLA.



METROPOLITAN POLICE – CENTRAL SOUTH (AS) (BCU))

The new Come To Notice (CTN) dashboard can identify those children who come to police attention by virtue of:

- being missing,
- vulnerable,
- suspect,
- arrested,
- whether they have had a haven referral,
- been part of a domestic abuse report
- or a new Child Protection plan has been put in place.

This means that team are now able to exploit all lines of enquiry that may not have previously been possible or acknowledged.

The BCU has strong working relationships with specialist crime. There are recent examples of high-profile investigations where these relationships have been utilised such as Operation Ball Cap.

Op Orochi, Artemis, Specialist crime regularly requests to work on investigations and identify suspects.

Officers' knowledge around tactics available to them has been an issue, however recent inputs from specialist units and the DC rotation into the teams has filled the gaps identified from review.

Locally, a closer working relationship with Safer Neighbourhood Teams have meant that tasking around intelligence received has meant that suspects have been identified and mitigated.

The Local Proactive Crime Team is active in deploying covert tactics within investigations that meet the need to do so. This has yielded several hitherto unknown suspects involved in exploitation either directly or indirectly being identified.

The multi-agency partnership arrangements and information sharing means that a holistic intelligence picture is shared and through forums such as Mave /Mace/ contextual safeguarding, associates and suspects are brought to the fore and acted upon by being fed into investigations.



POLICE

The focus in Lambeth is achieving the best outcomes for children and young people. We are dedicated to creating the right conditions for social work practice to thrive to ensure the service we offer to children and families improves their lives.

"Lambeth will be the best borough for children to grow, develop and become adults."

- Elected members are committed to prioritising children together with our partners to ensure progress continues at a pace.
- Our Early Years and Early Help offer is stronger, and this is the direction we need to take to ensure that our children and families have every opportunity to sustain their own progress in the community. Children in care and children leaving care are looked after in the main by foster carers and their health and educational needs are supported by caring professionals. Our performance is broadly in line with our comparator authorities though this has highlighted areas that are not performing so well, such as our assessment timeliness. We have focused on the practice in our Children with Disabilities service which was not as strong as we would expect, and we are focusing resource and expertise into that area to ensure that children have better outcomes. Early indications are that this is having a positive impact for children and their families.
- Our Practice Model, “Children at the Heart of Practice” Framework which included some five distinct practice models was commented on in our Focused Visit that it may be confusing for staff who were not able to clearly articulate the model. Social Care Academy have reviewed the model, and it has been agreed that “Signs of Safety” will be the practice framework. This will be rolled out to all staff from June 2024 supported by Elia.

- ## INTRODUCTION



- In our quality assurance and in feedback from Ofsted, we have seen consistent direct work with children completed over multiple visits to home and school. Families are consistently connected to services such as housing, education, mental health support as part of the assessment intervention. The impact of this work was noted in our recent inspection, with inspectors commenting positively on assessments and risks and needs are identified and understood and strategy meetings take place.
- Quality Assurance activity in relation to conferences shows us that there is good attendance from partners. We report agency participation in child protection conferences to enable us to address any emerging themes with the partner agencies. While agency participation is good, agencies that are providing reports in advance of ICPC is an area that we are working to improve. This has been addressed with respective safeguarding leads to ensure that in addition to attendance, reports are also provided to the conference. We have escalated this to the LSCP and Children's Services Improvement Governance Board to challenge and support partners in this area.
- The LADO reports allegations made by children in care to the lead member and senior officers on a fortnightly basis to ensure there is senior leadership oversight. The LADO also provides an annual report to the LSCP which shows that all allegations are investigated promptly, and judgements are applied correctly in an evidenced based way.
- A peer review of the LADO service was undertaken by our former Partners in Practice Islington was reported in April 2023. There were several recommendations including an increase in the capacity of the LADO service, improvement to data and information management and setting up of a steering group, all are in the process of being implemented. implemented. A multi-agency LADO Stakeholders group has been established to ensure key partners can feedback on experiences of the LADO process and support ongoing improvement. Additional resource has expanded the capacity of the LADO service with a Deputy LADO and dedicated Project Officer to support further enhancing the service.

- Protecting and supporting children and adolescents at risk of harm in the community is a priority for Lambeth. There are borough wide strategies to reduce levels of serious youth violence, 'Lambeth Made Safer' and to make the borough a great place for families 'Child Friendly Lambeth' The authority is one of many seeking to improve the safeguarding response to harm outside the home by developing a Contextual Safeguarding (CxS) approach. Lambeth has consistently had some of the highest levels of knife crime and youth violence in London. The Metropolitan Police recognise that this is in part due to at least 8 organised criminal groups rated as 'high harm' operating within the borough boundaries. These 'gangs' have a model of operation that relies heavily on the criminal and sexual exploitation of children. This creates a significant risk to young people and their families and a challenge to professionals across safeguarding partnership.
- Safer Youth operate a daily duty service that tracks young people at risk of extra-familial harm from referral the multiple agency daily intelligence briefing (DIB) attending strategy meetings and supporting sign posting or referral to the service as required. The one form referral to CxS service also serves as access to the operational and problem-solving multi-agency violence and exploitation (MAVE) panel. Sitting above the MAVE panel is the strategic multi-agency child exploitation panel (MACE).
- The service has already launched much innovative practice including service to 18-25-year-olds, partnerships with businesses, and is growing community networks. The service is also coordinating three task and finish groups looking at improving the disruption of criminal exploitation, the coordination of services to families fleeing from serious youth violence and a borough wide marketplace event to bring youth facing service together. There is an intention behind the early stages of development is to create systems and structures that are not dependent on any individual professional but will provide the basis for continued improvement in that are resistant.



- Working with a specialist organisation and partners across the borough, we have introduced Healthy London, Healthy Relationships which aims to prevent VAWG by embedding a Whole School Approach (WSA) to tackle attitudes and beliefs that cause VAWG, strengthening schools' responses to gender-based violence. The VAWG team are also working in partnership with Prevent, Education, SAFE Taskforce, Contextual Safeguarding Team and Lambeth Made to carry out a 'Resilience in schools mapping initiative'. The aim is having a better understanding of provision and gaps in our schools. Outcome is to achieve coordinated delivery of workshops consistent across Lambeth schools with VAWG Team's aim to ensure children and young people access high-quality healthy relationships work in schools. We are currently recruiting to an 'experts by experience' panel for people who have experienced gender-based violence.
- We have commissioned services (mediation, family support, psychology partnership) and engaging small, specialist housing-related support provision to strengthen services offered. Weekly review meetings involving CSC, Lambeth Housing and Supported Accommodation providers supports timely services for young people presenting homeless and considering safeguarding issues such as young people who go missing. We have an effective joint protocol in place between CSC and Lambeth's Housing Service to jointly assess young people presenting as homeless to identify any additional needs. Young people are now classified as children looked after unless they opt out to choose part 7 of the Housing Act. We are moving towards placing young people who opt out to be accommodated under s20 in smaller units from April 2023 instead of the big hostel which we consider to be too big to meet young people's individual needs. We ensure that young people are made aware that they can always change their mind and opt in for s20 if that will meet their needs better. The Joint Children's Services and Housing Pathway for 16- and 17-year-olds was refreshed in 2023 and re-launched in November 2023.

- The CPC and IRO service have been focussing on robust quality assurance and decision making in the following key areas:
 - Midway CPC and IRO checks on progress of plans including permanency.
 - 9-month check by TM for CPC on progression of plans
 - Review all young people aged 16 plus subject to a CP plan.
 - Reports on themes arising from alerts by the TM for CPC and IROs
 - Reports on multi-agency attendance at Core Groups and CP conferences.
 - Enhance links between IROs/CPCs and social work teams.
- The public health team recently completed a review of the young people's sexual health and substance misuse service. This found that large numbers of young people were accessing NHS Trust sexual health services, the condom distribution scheme and the e-service (those aged 16 and over) as well as other local support. Very small numbers were accessing the specifically commissioned young person's service. As a result, we are undertaking consultation with young people to inform decisions about support for young people, ensuring that vulnerable young people including care leavers and children looked after can access the support they need to meet their sexual and reproductive health needs. A new outreach service is currently being developed and will be in place by October 2024. The proposed new specification for the NHS Trusts also stipulates young people as a priority group and there will be young people specific clinics. The specific young person's substance misuse support service has remained operational to meet the needs of young people particularly care leavers, children looked after and those involved with the Youth Justice Service who may need specialist support.



Challenges & Next Steps



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HEALTH

Staffing Vacancies:

- Active recruitment is underway for the impending vacancy of the Named GP safeguarding children. The role of the Named GP safeguarding children is one of the mandated vital posts in safeguarding clinical leadership. The role provides clinical advice and professional judgement on child safeguarding issues to primary care teams. The post promotes the care of vulnerable children within all commissioned services and within general practice.
- Recruitment to the 0.5 Wte designated nurse safeguarding children post vacancy. Recruitment to this post is suspended awaiting the independent review of SEL ICB safeguarding governance and accountability arrangements.
- NHS ICS Lambeth ongoing commitment to VAWG. Recruitment of MARAC liaison nurse and recommissioning/ main streaming of the primary care IRIS Program and MARAC LN post (commissioned until March 2025).
- Developing and strengthening further the 'Think Family Agenda' across our health and social care partners recognising the importance of a whole-family approach. This is built on the principles of; no wrong door to services, looking at the whole family - adults and children and building on family strengths.
- Awaiting the agreed LSCP executive strategic priorities in order to work proactively with health partners to ensure they have are robust safeguarding arrangements in place which align with LSCP sub working groups and identified priorities: domestic violence, child sexual abuse, criminal exploitation, neglect, and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of CLA.

METROPOLITAN POLICE – CENTRAL SOUTH (AS) (BCU)

The BCU has made significant changes and improvements in how we identify, investigate, and holistically safeguard children across Lambeth and Southwark. There are clear improvements that we can still make:

- Embedding use of CTN dashboard
- Work with LA in the second stage of the CTN dashboard development.
- Embed local CYP Improvement board in accordance with Child first strategy which will govern the gaps highlighted in this review.

The MPS continue to work to improve our response to the HMIC recommendations into Child Exploitation.



CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

1. Workforce Stability and Development

- **Recruitment and Retention:** Turnover rates and reliance on agency staff need to be addressed. The focus is on creating a stable, permanent workforce through the Lambeth Social Care Academy and improved career development pathways.
- **Training and Supervision:** Ensuring consistent, high-quality training and reflective supervision to maintain and improve practice standards.

2. Service Delivery and Quality

- **Timeliness and Quality of Assessments:** Improving the timeliness and quality of assessments, particularly for children with disabilities and those in need of protection.
- **Consistency in Practice:** Embedding consistent practice standards across all teams, including purposeful visits, robust assessments, and meaningful plans.

3. Partnership and Multi-Agency Working

- **Engagement with Partners:** Strengthening multi-agency collaboration, particularly with police and health services, to ensure timely and effective information sharing and joint decision-making.
- **Contextual Safeguarding:** Fully embedding the Contextual Harm Hub to address risks of harm outside the home and ensuring robust data and systems for oversight.

4. Children with Disabilities

- **Service Improvement:** Enhancing services for children with disabilities, including short breaks, transitions, and a refreshed continuum of need.
- **Transitions to Adult Services:** Improving the transition process for children with disabilities to adult services to ensure continuity of care and support.

5. Corporate Parenting and Care Leavers

- **Permanency Planning:** Ensuring timely and effective permanency planning for children in care, including adoption and long-term fostering.
- **Support for Care Leavers:** Enhancing support for care leavers, particularly in education, employment, and housing, to ensure successful transitions to independence.

6. Performance Management and Quality Assurance

- **Data and Performance Reporting:** Improving the quality and accessibility of performance data to drive practice improvements and ensure accountability.
- **Learning from Audits and Complaints:** Using findings from audits, complaints, and service user feedback to inform practice improvements and policy development.

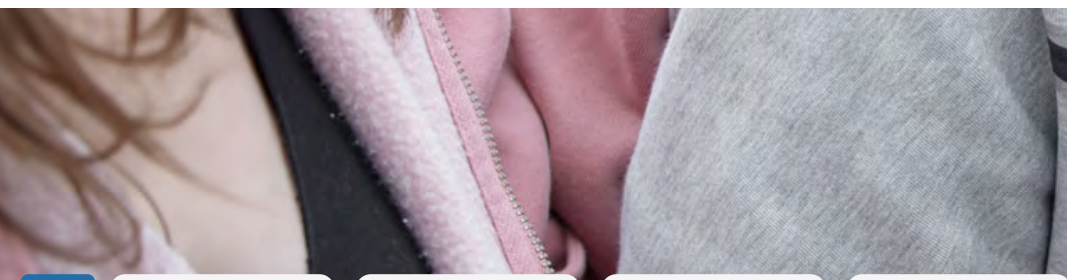



7. Financial Oversight and Commissioning

- **Sufficiency Strategy:** Developing a new sufficiency strategy to ensure the right placements are available for children in care, including local and specialist provisions.
- **Commissioning and Market Management:** Strengthening commissioning processes to secure high-quality, value-for-money placements and services for children and families.

8. Governance and Leadership

- **Strategic Oversight:** Ensuring strong governance and strategic oversight to drive the improvement agenda and hold all partners accountable for delivering better outcomes for children and families.
- **Embedding a Child-Centred Culture:** Promoting a culture that prioritizes the needs and voices of children and young people in all aspects of service delivery and decision-making.

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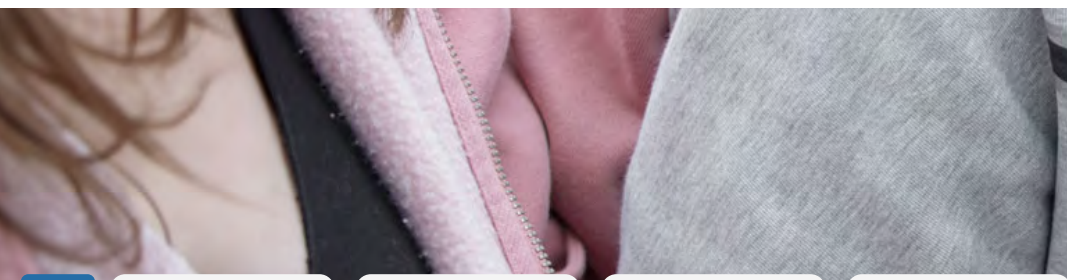
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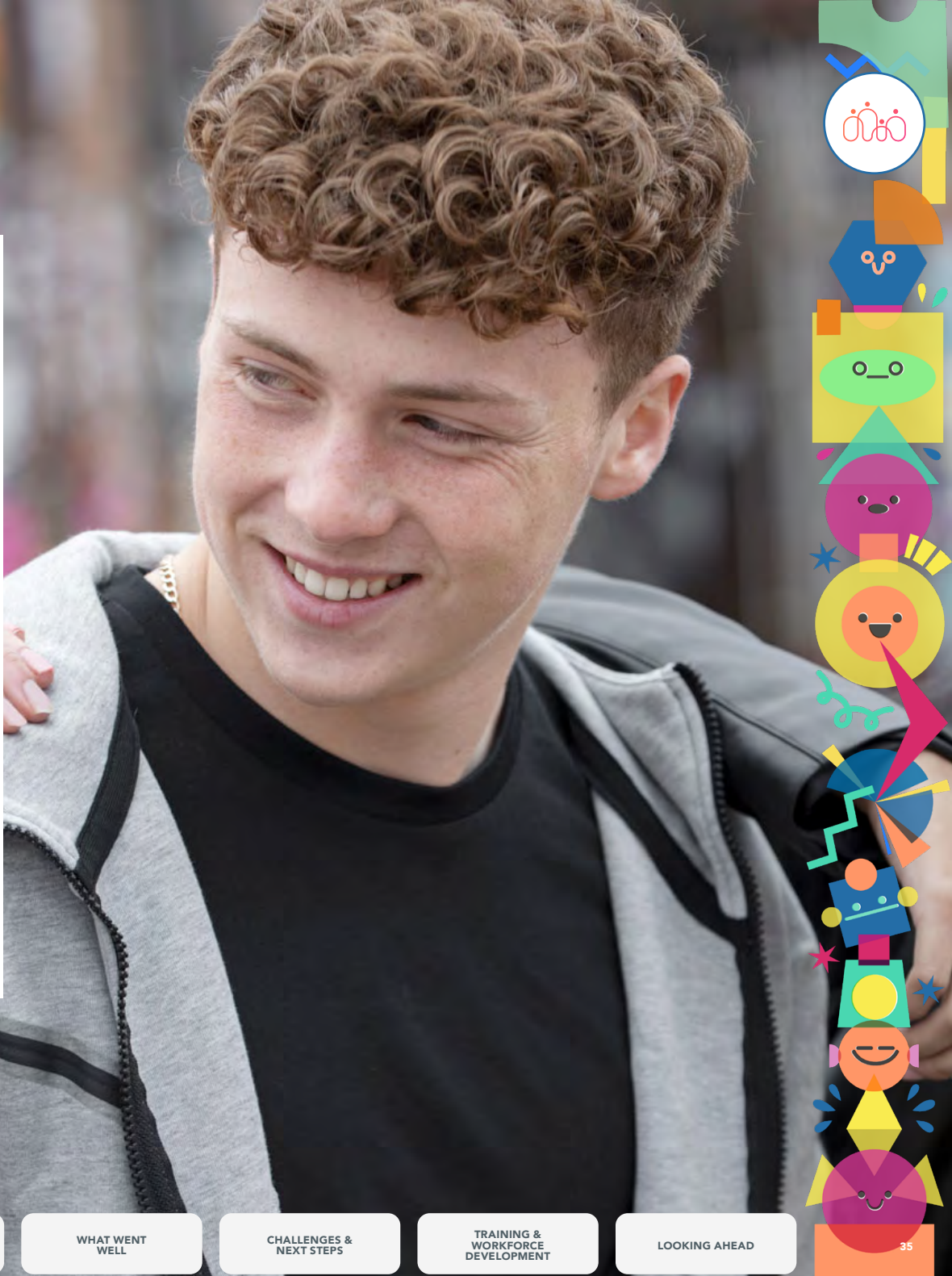
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EDUCATION

Education Services faces several critical challenges in its school services and safeguarding efforts as it works to support a diverse and growing population. Given their implications for child welfare, educational outcomes, and social cohesion, these challenges are critical for the local government, schools, and associated agencies.

Here are a few key challenges, along with context to highlight their importance:

1. Rising Child Poverty and Inequality

Lambeth has one of the highest rates of child poverty in London, which significantly impacts educational outcomes and safeguarding needs. Children from low-income families are more likely to experience educational underachievement, and their families may be less equipped to provide stable and supportive home environments. This creates a greater demand for safeguarding services to protect children from neglect, abuse, and exploitation.

Why it's essential

Addressing poverty is critical for improving educational outcomes and child safety. Schools in Lambeth must provide education and social support, ensuring that vulnerable children do not fall through the cracks. The local council, schools, and social services must collaborate to provide holistic support, such as free school meals, mental health services, and targeted educational interventions.

2. High Levels of Gang Activity and Youth Violence

Lambeth has historically struggled with youth violence and gang-related activities. Many young people are at risk of being groomed into gangs or exploited for criminal activities, which compromises their safety and their ability to stay in education. This poses a direct safeguarding concern, as vulnerable children may be coerced into dangerous situations.

Why it's essential

Schools, community programs, and safeguarding teams must work closely to prevent at-risk youth from falling into criminal networks. Schools are uniquely positioned to identify early warning signs of gang involvement but need adequate resources and training. It's also vital for schools to collaborate with local youth services, police, and social care agencies to provide alternative pathways for these young people, including mentoring, counselling, and extracurricular opportunities.



1

Lambeth is one of the most diverse boroughs in the UK, with a significant proportion of students from ethnic minority backgrounds and many families speaking English as a second language. This diversity presents both opportunities and challenges in delivering education and safeguarding services. For example, language barriers can make it difficult for schools to communicate effectively with parents, and cultural differences can sometimes lead to misunderstandings or conflict between schools and families.

Effective safeguarding and education require strong communication between schools and families. If parents don't understand their rights or the support services available, children may miss out on critical interventions. Schools need to invest in interpreters, culturally sensitive staff training, and engagement strategies that bring parents from all backgrounds into the conversation.

There has been a marked increase in mental health problems among children and young people in Lambeth, exacerbated by factors like social media, exam pressure, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and self-harm are becoming more prevalent, and schools are often the first place where these issues manifest.

Training & Workforce Development



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The Lambeth Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) Training & Development programme for the period 01/04/2023 to 31/03/2024 was produced based on learnings from national and local reviews & guidance, LSCP priority areas, and findings of local Child Safeguarding Practice reviews and multi-agency audits.

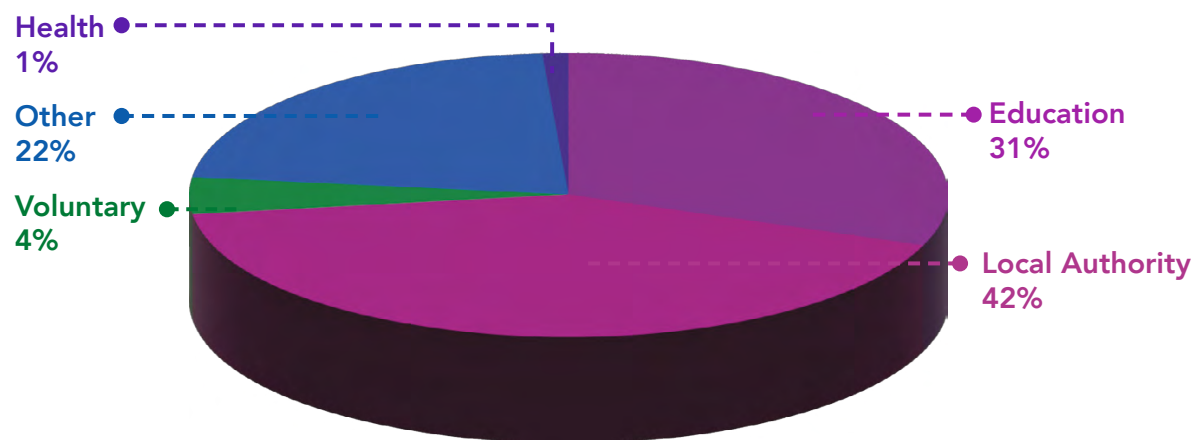
For context, there was no Training & Development Manager or Business Support Officer in post for the majority of this period. This led to some gaps in delivery, facilitation and dissemination of learning for the period. Additionally, records were not routinely updated during this time creating gaps in attendance records and evaluation. These factors have impacted on production of this report, and the forward plan outlines what has been done to address this.

ONLINE LEARNING

Level 1 (Introductory) and Level 2 (Intermediate) Safeguarding courses are provided as an Online Learning Offer via the Me Learning Platform. Enrolment and completion rates for the learning provided are summarised below for the period 01/04/23 to 31/03/24:

Course name	Not started	In process	Completed	Total enrolled
Safeguarding Children - Level 1 - Part 1	0	4	453	457
Safeguarding Children - Level 1 - Part 2	0	1	253	254
Safeguarding Children – Level 2	0	0	95	95
Unconscious Bias	0	5	118	123
Total	0	10	919	929

The Local Authority had the highest utilisation rate of the online learning platform (42%)¹. Non-Local Authority Education Providers account for almost 1/3 of online learning users.



1. Local Authority Children's Services accounted for 54% of Local Authority completions, followed by Local Authority Adult Social Care at 20% and Local Authority Education at 18%.

It is not possible to provide exact data regarding the amount of training sessions provided and number of attendees during the period 01/04/2023 to 31/03/2024. The figures are rough calculations based on data pulled from the training calendar, Eventbrite booking system and saved attendance registers:²

The 'Trauma: Responding to a Violent Incident' offer was the only one to be provided in-person, although moving forward the LSCP intends to increase the in-person offer.

2. Calculations are made as follows: where sign-up data is available for 1 or more sessions, this is used to calculate the average sign-up (e.g. for Domestic Abuse Training, sign-up data is only available for 5 of the 6 offerings. This has been used to calculate an estimated sign-up for all 6). Where both sign-up and attendance data is available, this has been calculated to show an average of 58% actual attendance from sign-ups.

At the end of all training courses, participants are asked to complete a post evaluation form. Unfortunately, due to the staff and capacity issues outlined above it has not been possible to obtain copies of all of these forms. However, the feedback from Multi-Agency Safeguarding Training (MAST) and Harm Outside the Home Training is available and summarised as below.

- On a scale of 0 (not satisfied) to 5 (very satisfied), participants gave an average rating of 4.6.



- to a colleague. 4.7



- "I think a step by step interactive walk through of process based round a case study would help"
- "More information and guidance for safeguarding the under 5's"
- "I would have liked more information about spotting safeguarding issues and more context about what these signs might point to"
- "It was quite thorough in terms of explaining safeguarding"
- "I thought it was really good and informative"
- "Some topics required more time"
- "I would have liked to get a better understanding of negotiating difficult relationships when working with other agencies and some top tricks and tips"
- "The content was current with useful signposting links and additional information. The best L3 safeguarding training I have attended to date"
- "Maybe a section on going through the referral form"
- "The training was so useful and trainers were so knowledgeable, however, there was so much info to take in I think it should have been 2 days"

Harm outside the Home: 34 evaluations completed.

- On a scale of 0 (not satisfied) to 5 (very satisfied), participants gave an average rating of 4.8.



- On a scale of 0 (not at all likely) to 5 (very likely), participants gave an average response of 4.9 as to whether they would recommend the training to a colleague.



Qualitative feedback includes:

- "Include a short clip/voice note of a parent/guardian whose child has been exploited"
- "The quality was excellent and information was helpful and informative"
- "More information about housing and homelessness"
- "Training was excellent, it could even be longer"
- "This was one of the best training sessions I have attended"
- "It would be great to have even more practical activities we can do with young people and/or families, e.g. mum and child together"

The commissioning of a new Learning Management System is intended to address this moving forward, as this will enable mandatory returns of evaluations before issuing certificates and store these in a central database.



Staffing

Systems & Data

The LSCP Training & Development Subgroup will also be setting Key Performance Indicators (KPI) by which to measure impact of future learning offer and inform future evaluations.

Learning & Development Offer

The LSCP will provide a blend of hybrid online and in-person learning which addresses local and national learning themes. The variety of learning methods will be extended to include the following learning platforms:

- **Level 3 in person and online training** – targeted at specific persons to develop in-depth understanding and confidence to respond to key learning areas (for example, adultification, cultural competency and trauma-informed practice)
- **LSCP Briefings** – open to all multiagency partners to address thematic learning and increase knowledge and confidence in core development areas (for example, access to education, thresholds & escalations, and neglect).
- **LSCP Guidance** – written guidance outlining core principles, local and statutory process/guidance, best practice approaches and local resources available to improve practice in core areas (for example, effective engagement with strategy meetings, working with men and consent).
- **LSCP 7-minute briefings** – short written, audio and/or video summaries of key learning themes addressed within the Level 3, Briefing and Guidance offer.
- **LSCP KITs** – regular Keeping in Touch Events with the multiagency partnership to share key learning updates and address thematic learning via 'spotlight on'. Some of the identified spotlight topics include, for example, ISVA services, safer sleeping, parental responsibility and safe engagement with social media.
- **LSCP CPDs** – quarterly Continuing Professional Development Events offering all training delegates a space to reflect on how learning has been embedded, share good practice and explore challenges.

Online Offer

The LSCP will continue to offer online Level 1 Safeguarding Learning: the LSCP is currently working alongside Lambeth's Child Friendly Communities Team to target this learning at tradesmen and housing contractors who routinely access family homes.

Evaluations

The LSCP is exploring systems for more robust evaluation. By using an online platform, the intention is to issue certificates of learning only upon completion of a qualitative evaluation form in order to increase returns of this evaluation method.

Additionally, by setting KPIs the LSCP intends to use data driven activity to evaluate and measure impact against a range of key targets which data is collected on. The LSCP is working with Lambeth's Transformation Team to explore existing data sources and identify where there are data gaps in evaluation systems.

Looking Ahead



Here are some of the things we've agreed to prioritize next year:



Permanent recruitment of Training & Development Manager.



Invite the Elected Member for Children to join the LSCP Executive as an occasional Observer.



For a Young People's Scrutiny Panel (or whichever youth participation model agreed on), supported by the Independent Scrutineer to ask questions and publicise their report interim and annual report.



Refresh and rest partnership arrangements.



Replace the Independent Chair and Scrutineer role with that of an Independent Safeguarding CYP Commissioner.



Review, Refresh, and renew ToRs. Membership and frequency.



Budget to commission independent review authors.



Budget to commission specialist training.



Budget to commission specialist communications materials.

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