

Summary of the NSCP Annual Report 2019/20 and Safeguarding Data

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN ARRANGEMENTS FOR NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) provides the safeguarding arrangements required under the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018'. The purpose of safeguarding arrangements is to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This report provides a summary of the work undertaken by the NSCP over the past year, the full report is available on the NSCP website.

Vision and values

The partnership has set out its vision '*That children and young people in Nottinghamshire grow up in a safe and stable environment and are supported to lead healthy, happy and fulfilling lives*'.

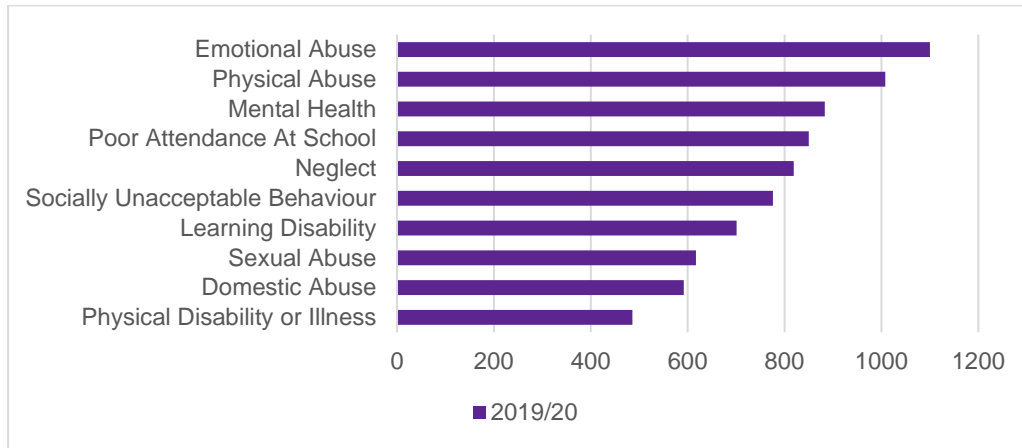
The Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership will:

- Work effectively as a partnership to protect children from harm.
- Build working relationships between partners which support constructive challenge.
- Be transparent and self-critical.
- Learn from local and national safeguarding practice and improve the way children are safeguarded.
- Listen and respond to children and young people and adult victims and survivors of child abuse to guide how services are delivered.
- Ensure services for children and families in Nottinghamshire support children and young people to stay healthy and happy.
- Ensure services for children and families in Nottinghamshire support parents and carers to provide the best possible care for their children.

Safeguarding data summary

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Enquiries – 33,428 safeguarding enquiries were dealt with by the MASH during the course of the year. Of these 13,460 were accepted as a referral for children’s social care services resulting in 10,739 child and family assessments being completed.

The top 10 issues identified through assessments

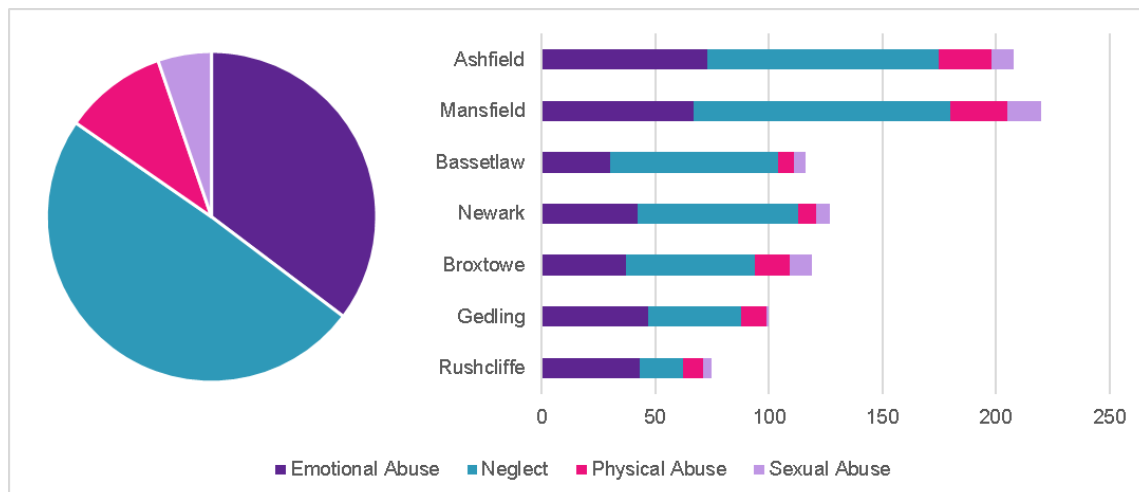


Following assessment 59% required no further action, 19% led to a Child in Need planning meeting or the writing of a Child in Need plan, 6% became subject to a Child Protection Plan, 14% were stepped down from children’s social care.

4,431 strategy discussions were held and 3,486 section 47 enquiries were instigated¹.

At the end of the year 778 children were subject to a child protection plan. Over the course of the year the number of children on a plan in Nottinghamshire was 51 per 10,000, whilst figures are not available for the same year, the equivalent rate for statistical neighbours during 2018/19 was 41.73.

Proportion of child protection categories for children subject of a child protection plan - 2019/20 by district



¹ A Strategy Discussion (sometimes referred to as a Strategy Meeting) is normally held following an assessment which indicates that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer Significant Harm. They are used to agree if a s.47 enquiry is required under s.47 of the Children Act 1989 and to coordinate any immediate actions. If concerns are substantiated and the child is at continued risk of Significant Harm a Child Protection Conference should be convened.

Children may be counted multiple times in this chart where multiple categories have been specified

The Strategic Leadership Group (SLG)

Senior leaders from Nottinghamshire County Council, NHS Bassetlaw CCG, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire CCG and Nottinghamshire Police form the Strategic Leadership Group that is accountable for coordinating safeguarding services and ensuring that learning from serious safeguarding incidents is acted upon. During the year the SLG has achieved the following: -

- Effectively coordinating the Partnership response to COVID-19
- Agreeing the continuity of leadership for the arrangements which ensures that the safeguarding partners are taking equal responsibility
- Establishing a Joint SLG with Nottingham City to coordinate the safeguarding arrangements of the two partnerships
- Reviewed and updated the safeguarding arrangements
- Strengthened links to faith groups, Nottinghamshire Women's Aid, the Violence Reduction Unit and Police and Crime Commissioner's office
- Developed a new business cycle to ensure that the Partnership operates as efficiently as possible, removing duplication and appropriately delegating responsibilities
- Reviewed the funding arrangements to ensure that adequate resources continue to be in place to drive forward the work of the Partnership
- Introduced a new framework for charging agencies for multi-agency training which recognises the financial contribution that some organisations already make and provides a fair and reasonable option for others
- The Lead Representatives for the safeguarding partners approved the appointment of Dr Mark Peel, as the Independent Scrutineer for the Partnership - Dr Peel is the former Independent Chair of Leeds Safeguarding Children Board, an Associate Professor of Social Work at the University of Leicester and qualified social worker

Safeguarding assurance and improvement

The Safeguarding Assurance and Improvement Group (SAIG) oversees the performance of key safeguarding services and coordinates practice improvement activity. The group is chaired by the Service Director, Commissioning and Resources, Children and Family Services, Nottinghamshire County Council. Improvement work has concentrated on the following areas of practice:

Contextual safeguarding – including child sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation

Reducing youth violence and protecting those at risk of criminal exploitation has been a shared target for the Partnership and the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU). The VRU was established by the Office of the Policing and Crime Commissioner, following a successful funding bid, and is using a public health approach towards reducing serious youth violence. The NSCP has formed a Serious Youth Violence and Criminal Exploitation Panel to help coordinate the protection of those young people that are assessed as being at the highest risk. Nottinghamshire Police have introduced a County Lines Team that works specifically with those at risk of exploitation through County Lines utilising a vulnerability tracker and linking in with the work of the Panel. Services to develop diversionary activities have been strengthened with Nottinghamshire County Council appointing a number of Youth Worker posts to a Youth Work Intervention Team that works in partnership with other agencies

developing trusting relationships with young people at risk and providing a range of positive activities, for example the Friday Night Football Project in Arnold.

A Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) problem profile, prepared by Nottinghamshire Police, has been used to understand the risk to young people and has identified that further work is needed with hard to reach communities, including boys/young men. Over 89% of recorded victims are girls with a high proportion of those being white British. A reduction in recorded crime is probably evidence of earlier intervention which is positive. Children who go missing are vulnerable to a range of extra familial risks and it has been reassuring to see evidence of missing from home incidents being dealt with well with good communication between the police and children's social care. We have also seen recent improvements in s47 child protection enquiries being considered appropriately for CSE which is important for ensuring that the right frameworks are used for the level of risk of harm.

Safeguarding practice in relation to children who display harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) has continued to improve. Progress with the identification, assessment and planning for children who display harmful sexual behaviours has been evident and the HSB Panel has had a positive impact on the way that high risk cases are managed. The timeliness of assessments still needs to be improved and further clarity is required on when the panel is referred to.

As part of the awareness raising work of the Partnership a contextual safeguarding conference for over 350 delegates was arranged with support from the VRU and Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership. Expert input was given by Dr Carlene Firmin MBE and Dez Holmes, Director of Research in Practice providing an opportunity to reflect on our response to the risks from outside the family that young people face today.

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

The MASH is the single point of contact for all professionals to report safeguarding concerns and also receives reports of suspected child abuse from members of the public. Demand on MASH resources has continued to increase and the Partnership has been working to ensure that practitioners are clear as to when to contact the MASH, have an understanding of the thresholds for services set out in the Pathway to Provision and know what information is needed when making a referral. Further work is planned to develop alternatives to contacting the MASH, such as advice for professionals regarding children/young people that do not meet the threshold for children's social care intervention. Specific training on early help assessments is also planned and on-line resources to guide how to make a good referral.

Strategy discussions

A multi-agency working group has been looking in depth at how to improve the effectiveness of strategy discussions, which are essential part of the initial response to concerns about significant harm to a child. Currently strategy discussions do not always involve the right practitioners, the need for a strategy discussion is not always recognised (particularly in cases that already have social care involvement) and decision making around how agencies should jointly respond to the concerns is inconsistent. Proposals for health practitioners, based in the MASH, to contribute to strategy discussions have been developed and these have recently been implemented and are currently being evaluated. Further action is planned including; training workshops, communications and ongoing performance management.

Information sharing

A vital aspect of effective safeguarding practice is information sharing between organisations. The Partnership has introduced a new system which enables police officers attending an incident to be made aware when that a child is residing at that address who is on a child protection plan. This does not replace the expectation for any safeguarding concerns to be referred through the normal routes but does enable police officers attending

incidents to make observations informed by knowledge of existing child protection concerns that may be significant when deciding what action to take. Each day brief details of incidents at addresses where children are living who are on a child protection plan are provided to children's social care and the social worker is notified. This means social workers are now being made aware much quicker of potentially significant events and in some cases of important events which they may never have found out about.

Safeguarding pre-mobile babies

The partnership has continued its work to support practitioners to respond appropriately to bruises or suspicious marks on pre-mobile babies. The video developed by the Partnership and launched in March 2019, (<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/nscp/news/babies-that-don-t-cruise-rarely-bruise>) has been widely used at training events and seminars to promote the Bruising in Babies Pathway. The video and pathway help guide practitioners about the action they should take when they find a mark or bruise on a pre-mobile baby and when to make a referral to children's social care.

Frontline visits

A programme of Frontline Visits has been undertaken by members of the SAIG during the course of the year and these have made a significant contribution towards providing assurances around safeguarding practice. The visits are an opportunity to understand how services are meeting the needs of children and young people and to connect the Partnership with frontline practitioners. Over the course of the year the following Frontline Visits took place:

- Hopewood CAMHS In-patient Unit
- East Midlands Children and Young Peoples Sexual Assault Service (EMCYPAS)
- Emergency Department – Queens Medical Centre (QMC)
- Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass)
- Newark & Sherwood Healthy Families Team (0-19)
- NEMS
- Private Fostering

Staff working at the above locations were also asked how the Partnership could support their work and the suggestions made were taken to the SAIG for action.

Partnership Forum

The Partnership Forum met on two occasions providing the opportunity for all members of the Partnership to meet and focus on developing multi-agency work and improving safeguarding practice. The Forum includes Safeguarding Leads and Managers from across the Partnership and each Forum event is led by a member of the SLG. An update is provided on Partnership activities including improvement workstreams, case reviews and learning opportunities, before moving on to explore two areas of safeguarding practice that are either new or emerging areas of work or where challenges have been found locally.

Multi-agency training

Providing high-quality multi-agency training, linked to learning and improvement objectives, is a crucial aspect of Partnership work. Training is delivered with the support of a training pool drawn from members of the Partnership, with external providers commissioned when needed. The training programme is organised by the NSCP Training Coordinator and Administrator and the Designated Doctor for Safeguarding Children, Nottinghamshire North, leads the Learning and Workforce Development Group on behalf of the safeguarding partners.

- ❖ 57 training events were provided through the Partnership
- ❖ 21 different courses on a range of issues including core safeguarding and specialist topics
- ❖ 2,346 practitioners attended training events from over 38 different organisations
- ❖ Over 92% of attendees rated the course they attended as good or very good
- ❖ 21 different E learning modules were available
- ❖ 8,060 E Learning course completions
- ❖ In total 10,406 workforce training opportunities were provided through the NSCP
- ❖ In addition, a new on-line booking system was implemented making direct booking easy and over 5,000 learner accounts were set up during the year (excluding local authority staff)

Interagency safeguarding children procedures are provided through the Partnership and these have been updated twice during the year

<https://nottinghamshirescb.proceduresonline.com/amendments.html>

Case reviews

The Partnership is required by statutory guidance to undertake a Rapid Review of all serious child safeguarding cases and where necessary, in order to fully identify the learning from a case, commission a Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR). The purpose of these reviews is to identify improvements to be made to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Reviews should seek to prevent or reduce the risk of recurrence of similar incidents. They are not conducted to hold individuals, organisations or agencies to account, as there are other processes for that purpose, including through employment law and disciplinary procedures, professional regulation and, in exceptional cases, criminal proceedings. The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Group oversee this work on behalf of the Partnership. The group is led by the Detective Chief Inspector, Quality and Compliance, Nottinghamshire Police and supported by the NSCP Development Manager and Administrator.

- ❖ 7 Rapid Reviews undertaken in total:
 - 5 Rapid Reviews identified learning and concluded no further review was needed
 - 1 Rapid Review recommended that a CSPR should be undertaken and the RN19 CSPR was commissioned.
 - 1 Rapid Review recommended a CSPR should be undertaken and this is currently being scoped having been pending to allow the outcome of initial police investigations
- ❖ The National CSPR Panel has agreed with all the decisions made as a result of our local Rapid Reviews.
- ❖ 1 CSPR (RN19) completed and has now been published.
- ❖ 6 of the 13 recommendations arising from Rapid Reviews have been completed the remaining actions are in progress.
- ❖ The CSPR Group has monitored the completion of all outstanding recommendations and actions from QN17 Serious Case Review (SCR).

Details of the learning identified from case reviews and the action taken in response can be found in the Learning from Practice section of the NSCP website. CSPR reports are also published via the website once all other proceedings are completed.
<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/nscp/learning-from-practice>

Safeguarding partnership priorities – 2020/23

Preventing neglect

Neglect continues to be the most common cause for concern about significant harm to children in Nottinghamshire. At the end of 2019/20 out of a total of 798 children who were subject to a child protection plan 488 were under the category of neglect, 349 for emotional abuse, 100 for physical abuse and 52 for sexual abuse (a child may have more than one category of registration).

COVID – 19

Ensuring that we understand and respond to the impact COVID-19 has had, and continues to have, on children and young people. Monitoring the impact of any changes to service provision and supporting the retention of good practice developed during the pandemic.

Improving the initial multi-agency response to safeguarding concerns

Having completed a significant amount of work to understand how to improve strategy discussions the next steps for 2020/21 will be to implement a new pathway for engaging health professionals in the process. This should lead to a significant improvement in compliance with the requirements set out in statutory guidance. There will be three stages to this work:

- ❖ Implement proposals for the MASH Health Team to represent health at strategy discussions
- ❖ Review the impact of the new process being introduced, identify any further action needed including communications and training requirements
- ❖ Continue performance monitoring against benchmark data

Contextual safeguarding

Developing practice in relation to:

- ❖ Problem identification
- ❖ Supporting staff
- ❖ Service design and practice development
- ❖ Quality assurance

Information sharing

- ❖ Identify what information sharing systems need to be in place to support a multi-agency approach to child criminal exploitation
- ❖ Monitor CP-IS and police child protection plan flag/alert system to ensure they continue to operate effectively and
- ❖ Review the basis for checks to be undertaken by the Safeguarding Children Information Management Team (SCIMT).

Developing how the Partnership engages, listens and responds to the views of children and families

Review and update the communications and engagement strategy, particularly in relation to children, young people and their families, and strengthen arrangements for gathering their views.

Use the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) prepared by the Director of Public Health to help understand the prevalence and contexts of need, including specific needs relating to children with disabilities and those relating to abuse and neglect, to help shape services.

Providing inclusive and accessible services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

Under the safeguarding arrangements, partner agencies should provide services to children and families that are inclusive and accessible to everyone when needed. Improvement work will focus on seeking assurances that: -

- ❖ The experience of black families and implications for approach/practice are understood and responded to (black meaning black and Asian)
- ❖ The experience of other minority ethnic families and implications for approach/practice are understood and responded to
- ❖ Review the availability and sufficiency of specific training in working with children and families from abroad, FGM, forced marriage, honour -based violence, religious and ritualistic abuse and unconscious bias training



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