



Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership

Annual Report September 2024 - 2025



Derby and Derbyshire
Safeguarding Children Partnership

Contents

1. Introduction and vision	3
2. Independent Scrutiny of the Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.....	7
3. Children in Derby and Derbyshire	9
4. Quality Assurance and Impact on the outcomes for children and families	13
5. Learning and Organisational Development: driving forward local practice	22
6. Progress on agreed priorities	25
7. Decisions and actions taken by partners to implement the recommendations of local and national child safeguarding practice reviews.....	30
8. How partners have sought and utilised feedback from children and families to inform their work and influence service provision.....	34
9. Our Governance, updates to the published arrangements and progress implementing reforms.....	39

Date of Publication:	02/10/2025
Approval process:	Approved by Executive Board 18/09/2025 Approved by Chief Officer Group 02/10/2025
Copyright and reproduction:	The Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2024-2025 may not be reproduced without prior permission of the DDSCP
Availability:	www.ddscp.org.uk
Contact details:	The Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership can be contacted on Telephone: 01332 642351 or Email: ddscp@derby.gov.uk

1. Introduction and vision

Welcome to the Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report for the period covering 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025. As Statutory Safeguarding Partners we are pleased to share an overview of the work and some of the achievements of the partnership during 2024/25.

We would like to start by taking the opportunity to thank all our frontline practitioners and managers, whose dedication to their roles and partnership working keeps children safe. The work of the partnership would not be possible without the continued support of partners, chairs and members of the sub-groups, our independent scrutineer, and we would like to take the opportunity to offer our thanks for their ongoing support, hard work and dedication to safeguarding the children of Derby and Derbyshire.

The partnership has had a busy year, ensuring full implementation of the revised Government guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023). This involved the revision and publication of our multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, including the designation of Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSPs), in line with the new guidance requiring this function to be held at Chief Executive and Chief Constable levels to reflect senior accountability for safeguarding arrangements.

In addition, Education and Schools have joined our Executive Board. We are grateful to our education colleagues for their continued commitment to our safeguarding arrangements and note their important contribution to all partnership strategic safeguarding considerations.

We are particularly proud of the partnership has demonstrated many areas of achievement, including a strong learning culture, effective communication and partnership working, effective multi-agency safeguarding arrangements from operational to strategic level, and significant activity across the partnership in relation to the voice and influence of young people and families. There are always areas where improvements can be made, and we will continue to address these in the coming year.

Work has continued in relation to the priorities for the partnership and wider learning, and our annual report demonstrates only some of the work that has taken place. The

partnership is proud of everything that has been achieved and we maintain our ongoing commitment to continuous improvement.

As a partnership we are committed to the safeguarding agenda, and alongside the implementation of the Families First national reforms, we will ensure that work in the coming year continues to improve the wellbeing and safety of children and families.

Derby City Council: Paul Simpson, Chief Executive Officer

Derby and Derbyshire ICB: Dr Chris Clayton, Chief Executive Officer

Derbyshire Constabulary: Rachel Swann QPM, Chief Constable

Derbyshire County Council: Emma Alexander, Managing Director

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (DDSCP) is to support and enable organisations and agencies across Derby and Derbyshire to work together so that:

- there is a clear, shared vision for how to improve outcomes for children locally across all levels of need and all types of harm
- when a child is identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm there is a prompt, appropriate and effective response to ensure the protection and support of the child
- organisations and agencies are challenged appropriately, effectively holding one another to account
- the voice of children and families combined with the knowledge of experienced practitioners and insights from data, provides a greater understanding of the areas of strength and/or improvement within arrangements and practice
- information is sought, analysed, shared, and broken down by protected characteristics to facilitate more accurate and timely decision-making for children and families, and to understand outcomes for different communities of children

- effective collection, sharing and analysis of data, enables early identification of new safeguarding risks, issues, emerging threats, and joined-up responses across relevant agencies
- senior leaders promote and embed a learning culture which supports local services to become more reflective and implement changes to practice
- senior leaders have a good knowledge and understanding about the quality of local practice and its impact on children and families

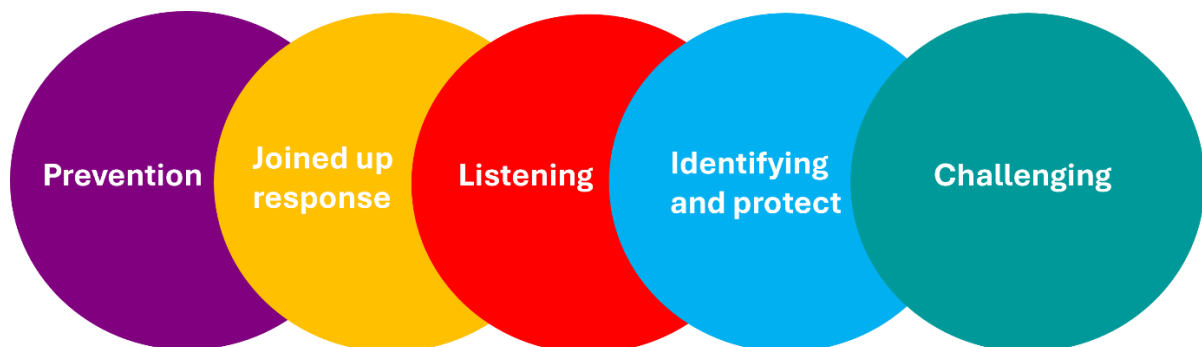
The Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership vision is that all agencies work together to keep children and young people safe.

1.2 Vision

[The Partnership looks to achieve our vision by focusing on:](#)

Prevention through early intervention – We will work together to prevent harm at the earliest opportunity.

Joined up response – We will respond bringing together the expertise of partners, strengthening protection for the most vulnerable.



Listening – We will listen to and observe children ensuring their voice is heard even when they don't or can't speak out.

Identifying and Protect – We will identify and protect those most at risk of harm by sharing information and data effectively.

Challenging – We will challenge, learn and continuously improve, providing mutual support to help each other deliver the highest standards of safeguarding practice.

1.3 Our Values

- ☐ **Tenacity** – acknowledges that there will be an element of endurance required by teams and individuals facing difficult and long-term problem solving where solutions are not immediately apparent. In the area, effective inter-agency working is vital to maintain a focus on keeping the child safe.
- ☐ **Curiosity** – it is essential that we look beyond the immediate presentation to ensure that the concerns about children are not being masked or hidden by individuals, circumstances or a lack of curiosity on the part of those responsible for safeguarding.
- ☐ **Openness** – we need to be open and empathetic to the child and the perspective of other agencies. This includes an openness and honesty to challenge and be challenged so that the best decision in the interests of the child are made.
- ☐ **Respecting difference** – we will seek the view of children and families so that we understand and respect diversity. We will promote equality and inclusion in all that we do.

1.4 Statutory Partners

The Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership four statutory partners are

- Derby City Council
- Derbyshire County Council
- Derby and Derbyshire Integrated Care Board
- Derbyshire Constabulary

1.5 Governance

The Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership delivers its work through the following groups:

- Chief Officer Group

- Executive Board
- Quality Assurance subgroup
- Child Safeguarding Practice Review subgroup
- Exploitation and Vulnerable Young People subgroup
- Education subgroups
- District Safeguarding subgroup
- Policies and Procedures subgroup
- Learning and Organisational Development subgroup

Our governance and terms of reference setting out the roles and responsibilities of each subgroup and its membership is available on the [DDSCP website](#).

2. Independent Scrutiny of the Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership

Our four statutory safeguarding partners are responsible for ensuring that there are arrangements for effective independent scrutiny in place for our local area; our approach should reflect and comply with national guidance and frameworks.

Independent Scrutiny was identified as a fundamental element in Working Together 2023 (WT2023). The Interim Independent Scrutineer for the DDSCP during 2024-25 was previously the Independent Chair of DDSCP and well placed to support our approach to independent scrutiny. In preparation for the implementation of Partnership changes as a result of WT2023, the Interim Independent Scrutineer supported the local implementation of updated government guidance and the publication of the revised [Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements](#) in December 2024. The Interim Independent Scrutineer worked alongside members of the Executive Group in considering the arrangements, priority areas and supported development of a revised threshold document within the reporting period. The Interim Scrutineer was also asked to contribute recommendations on the future structure and focus of the Scrutiny function from April 2025. Options were provided in a report to the DDSCP and a Scrutineer Strategy was developed [Independent Scrutiny Strategy](#).

Observations and scrutiny took place regarding the existing Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements of DDSCP, with advice and recommendations provided

for amended executive structures. This scrutiny included attendance at subgroups and discussion with key DDSCP members.

The reporting period for this annual report was a time of transition for the DDSCP, with updated arrangements being put in place including the scrutiny function being explored and organised. In addition, the DDSCP Business Manager, who had been in post for several years retired, and since January 2025 an Interim Business Manager has been in place.

The Partnership has agreed three overarching priorities from 2025 (subject to annual review and revision, should circumstances dictate). These are:

- Domestic Abuse
- Online Harms
- Neglect

Detailed development of key activities to support these priorities and measurements of success are in progress and have been subject to scrutiny in their development. They will be used to scrutinise achievement over the next three years. The Scrutiny function, acting in its 'critical friend' capacity, will seek regular evidence that these priorities remain relevant, that they are being given multi-agency priority and that there is progress in delivery against the agreed targets.

During the reporting period, a partnership decision was reached to appoint a new Independent Scrutineer for the DDSCP, who commenced in June 2025. An updated scrutiny plan will be developed, and the next annual report will include a comprehensive section on scrutiny activity throughout 2025/2026.

The statutory safeguarding partners and stakeholders extend their thanks the outgoing Interim Scrutineer for their longstanding commitment and support to DDSCP as both Independent Chair and subsequently Interim Independent Scrutineer.

3. Children in Derby and Derbyshire

Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership supports and enables organisations and agencies to work together to safeguard children living in Derby and in Derbyshire. This section sets out what is known about children living in both areas.

What do we know about the experiences of children and young people living in Derby?

There are 60,058 aged 0-17 living in Derby. Approximately 31.9% of children living in Derby live in deprived households. This is comparable to last year (31.8%). Local authority information tool (LAIT) <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics>

3.1 Early Help

Local Authority Early Help services provide a targeted whole family approach when needs are emerging so that the right service is provided at the right point and for the right amount of time with the objective of preventing escalation into care, child protection plans or entry into the criminal justice system. The service works with families using Strengths Based approaches to empower them to achieve the best outcomes they can. Services are matched to needs and the range of interventions are informed by evidence-based research which drives the quality of practice.

At the end of March 2025, there were 373 Early Help cases open to Derby City Council, with many more supported through Early Help Assessments in universal services.

In addition, our Family Hub and Start4Life offer at the 6 hubs across the city includes support for SEND, Parenting Programmes, Perinatal and Infant parent Mental Health and Infant feeding in addition there is access to support and advice. There is also an offer in the holidays for young people. Over the last year the Family Hubs have:

- Increased footfall to 45,000 (from 38,000 in 2023).
- Trained 510 professionals in 19 different evidenced based programmes (including Solihull).

- Hosted over 50 parents/carers each week at Hub Clubs. 274 sessions were delivered for SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) parents engaging 1,657 parents in 2024

We have been able to work across the city with our partners to reduce the number of families assessed as 'child in need', with the numbers of children in care also reducing over the last year. Children and Families can access support from Family Visitors and Children's Practitioners on a one-to-one basis.

Early Help Advisors within Derby City act as a point of contact for education professionals, who are assessing the needs and coordinating support for children who have emerging needs.

This role provides advice around level 2 services and the Early Help process, including professional guidance when completing an Early Help Assessment and attending a Team Around the Family meeting.

3.2 Children in Need of Help and Protection

At the end of March 2025, **for every 10,000 children living in Derby** there were:

- 62.8 being supported through targeted Early Help Services, down from 159.2 in 2024.
- 84.9 being supported as a *child in need*, down from 108.2 the previous year (2024 national average 86.2, statistical neighbours 101.9). The most prevalent category for child in need plans is 'abuse or neglect', 75% of plans.
- 42.1 children with a *child protection plan*, up from 38.4 the previous year (2024 national average 41.6, statistical neighbours 54.9). The most prevalent categories for child protection plans are neglect (67%) and emotional abuse (25%).
- 90.7 *children in the care of the local authority* down from 100.7 the previous year (2024 national average 70, statistical neighbours 97.1). The most prevalent categories for looked after children are abuse or neglect (55%) and absent parenting (26%).

- At the end of March 2024 547 children and young people were in the care of Derby City Council, a decline from 598 in 2023/24, due to ongoing work to support families to stay safely together.

In addition to children and families receiving support through Early Help or Children's social care, there were 6,729 children receiving Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Support in schools (increasing from the previous two annual figures 6375 (23/24) and 6225 (22/23)). There were 4190 children with an Education Health and Care Plan (increasing from the previous two annual figures 2435 (23/24) and 2199 (22/23)).

What do we know about the experiences of children and young people living in Derbyshire?

There are approximately 154,487 children and young people aged 0-17 living in Derbyshire. 20.8% of children in Derbyshire live in deprived households. Local authority information tool (LAIT) <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics>

3.3 Early Help

The Early Help Service in Derbyshire has recently undergone a review, the new Family Help Service fulfils statutory requirements through the delivery of parenting assessments and Family Time and supports 16 -17-year-olds who are not in education, employment or training. Working with partners, the new service offers practical support to children and families with emerging needs and provides a rolling programme of evidenced based parenting interventions, as well as a core offer of support to children aged 0-5 focussed on child development, school readiness and parenting. At the end of March 2025, there were no EHA's open with the focus being on targeted work only. At the end of March 2025, there were 30 families receiving pre-birth interventions and 47 receiving family help interventions.

Feedback from partners and parents consistently highlights the positive impact. A secondary school colleague noted that "*nothing was too much... [the practitioner] was so committed...* the weekly visits had a positive impact compared to the old way of

working,” and that improved parent-child relationships were “clearly seen by all.” A family liaison worker from a small rural school described the service as “invaluable,” commending the practitioner’s dedication and ability to uncover the root cause of a child’s behaviour, thereby building a trusted relationship with the mother. A parent mentioned staff who were “friendly, compassionate... very non-judgemental,” who established rapport with a child who typically “shies away from strangers,” provided tailored advice, and ensured daily school attendance. Within six weeks, there was a “remarkable improvement,” with reduced family anxiety and renewed confidence and hope.

Together these accounts illustrate how Derbyshire’s Family Help Service strengthens safeguarding, improves attendance and home routines, and builds local networks around families - investing in the partnership offer by training, coaching and co-visiting with schools, Health Visitors and wider partners, and embedding shared tools (EHA/TAF) and approaches so partners can deliver earlier help and with confidence - providing the right support at the right time.

3.4 Children in Need of Help and Protection

At the end of March 2025, for every 10,000 children living in Derbyshire there were:

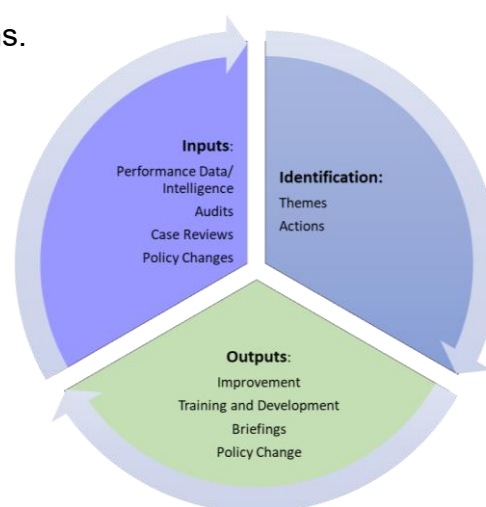
- 97 being supported as a *child in need*, down from 102 the previous year (2024 national average 86, statistical neighbours 82). The most prevalent categories for children with a child in need plan is ‘abuse or neglect’, 42% of plans followed by ‘family in acute stress’ (21%).
- 47 children with a *child protection plan*, down from 53 the previous year (2024 national average 42, statistical neighbours 37). The most prevalent categories for child protection plans are ‘neglect’ (77%) and ‘emotional abuse’ (19%).
- 66 *children in the care of the local authority* down from 69 the previous year (2024 national average 70, statistical neighbours 73).
- The most prevalent categories for child protection plans are ‘neglect’ (77%) and ‘emotional abuse’ (19%).

In addition to children and families receiving support through Early Help or Children's social care, there were 17475 children receiving SEND Support in schools¹ (increasing from the previous two annual figures 17,227 (23/24) 15,636 (22/23)), as well as 5521 with an Education Health and Care Plan (increasing from the previous two annual figures 4696 (23/24) and 3157 (22/23)).

4. Quality Assurance and Impact on the outcomes for children and families

The DDSCP Quality Assurance subgroup uses a variety of multi-agency information to support priority setting, and to highlight key trends and emerging issues. This includes single and multi-agency quality assurance activity and data collection. This year the group has focused refocusing the performance framework, with a smaller dataset, aligned with the DDSCP priorities. The group receives reports from each local authority on the multi-agency work conducted by the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (Derby) and Starting Point (Derbyshire). The effectiveness of requests and how the quality of the responses are monitored by the MASH and Starting Point Boards, including multi-agency participation in strategy meetings and how the voice of the child is included in decision making in response to concerns.

Throughout the coming year we will be working to further streamline and improve the performance framework in line with agreed DDSCP priorities. This is intended to limit duplication between different governance forums as well as ensure that the performance framework adds value to existing processes.



4.1 Voices of parents/carers

The recent survey conducted by the 0-19 services in Derby and Derbyshire received an impressive 460 responses from parents of babies under six months old, significantly surpassing the 186 responses from the previous audit in 2022. This robust participation underscores the value of parental feedback in evaluating the

¹ Jan 2024 census

effectiveness of the Keeping Babies Safe (KBS) initiatives. The survey revealed that many parents are successfully recalling and implementing the three safer sleep messages, indicating positive embedded practices. Additionally, the audit emphasized the crucial role of antenatal visits in initiating discussions about safer sleep, handling, and managing crying, highlighting their importance in promoting these safety messages early on.

4.2 Multi-agency audit into early help (quality and impact of early help assessments in universal services)

During 2024-25, the partnership co-ordinated a multi-agency audit exploring the quality and impact of Early Help Assessments (EHAs) in universal services. Further detail of the outcomes can be found in Section 5.1.

4.3 Police powers of protection

Data around entrants into care under police powers showed that Derby City was an outlier with a larger proportion of entrants into care coming as a result of police powers of protection. As a result, work between the LA and police during 2024/25 introduced new processes including professional discussions and this was quickly seen to reduce the number of children being removed from parents' care by police. Conversely in Derbyshire very few entrants came into care under police powers and work is ongoing to understand why this is.

4.4 Child Protection Medical - Annual Report

An audit last year looking into the quality of Child Protection Medical work in Derby determined that the standard of the CP medicals was deemed to be good in most cases. Following on from this, internal learning and peer review has taken place to implement key areas of improvement, and the Designated Doctor has not been alerted to any more concerns from statutory partners. As part of this work, it was identified that not all providers were able to submit outcomes data and changes to recording have been put in place so that this is possible moving forward. The Designated Doctor is undertaking observations and quality assurance at all three providers and will continue to monitor moving forward.

4.5 Chronologies and the graded care profile

Assurance was sought following a review to look at how well embedded chronology and the graded care profile were in practice. This activity showed that:

- Processes are well embedded through policies and training.
- Chronologies are used extensively; however some could be more regularly updated.

Further work is required around embedding the graded care profile in some agencies.

4.6 Keeping Babies Safe Steering Group

The Three Steps for Baby Safety – Evaluation and Impact Report was published in 2024. [Evaluation and Impact Report on Three Steps for Baby Safety](#). The report was crafted to ensure that practitioners within the partnership understand the intrinsic vulnerability of babies and the critical importance of recognising parental vulnerabilities to safeguard babies effectively. Both the DDSCP and Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) identified the need for a consistent approach to keeping babies safe to enhance practice and improve outcomes for families with infants. Over the past two years, the partnership's work on Keeping Babies Safe (KBS) has been actively developed, showcasing the collaborative efforts and their impact on practice and support for babies and their families. The report utilised various evaluation tools, including focus groups with practitioners, leading to several recommendations aimed at further improving practices.

An audit conducted by the KBS Steering Group has assessed the current practices in Midwifery and Health Visiting records across Derby City and Derbyshire. The audit involved several agencies, including University Hospitals of Derby and Burton Foundation Trust, Chesterfield Royal Hospital Foundation Trust, Derbyshire Healthcare Foundation Trust, and Derbyshire Community Health Services Foundation Trust. A total of 197 health records for babies born between March and April 2024 were reviewed. The findings, which have been compiled into a report, provide assurance of positive practices. While some themes identified in the audit are

consistent with those from a previous audit in 2022, new themes have emerged, highlighting developments in practice.

Over 108 KBS Champions have been trained across the Partnership and are a well-established group of practitioners and regular requests from practitioners wanting to be Champions. The KBS Network Events continue to take place twice a year to support the Champions with any learning from cases, information and research associated with the care and protection of babies.

In Derby and Derbyshire an area of significant development through the KBS Steering Group has been the development a co-sleeping and bed sharing risk assessment tool. In response to findings from the Lullaby Trust survey and audit feedback, despite parents often reporting to professionals that they do not intend to co-sleep or bedshare, the survey reveals that 30-40% end up doing so, either intentionally or unintentionally. This behaviour poses an increased risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), particularly if babies are at high risk or if safer bed sharing guidelines are not followed. The discrepancy between reported intentions and actual practices highlights the need for improved education and risk assessment.

The Never Ever Shake your Baby Parent Education Programme is well embedded, and analysis suggests the recognition of vulnerability factors in Derby and Derbyshire is being clearly addressed, with families receiving consistent information from children's social care, family centres, HUBs, and family/early help practitioners. This coordinated approach demonstrates strong collaboration on key messages and practices, ensuring that families are well-informed and supported in making safe choices for their babies' sleep environments.

The KBS Steering group recognised the need to enhance support for early years practitioners in understanding and implementing KBS messages across various settings. Collaborating with the Early Years leads in the City and County and the DDSCP business unit, the team, along with practitioners from health, early years, and early help/family support, organized two interactive roadshows. Each roadshow featured stations dedicated to the key areas of KBS: Safer Sleep, Safe Handling, and Safe Space, providing a hands-on, experiential learning opportunity. The events

attracted 80 practitioners, including early years educators, child minders, and foster carers, and were met with positive feedback and noticeable improvements in practice.

4.7 Performance Framework

The performance framework has been reviewed to cut back on duplication and to focus on outcomes. Data aligned with two of the partnership's priorities, neglect and domestic abuse, has now been incorporated; work is underway to understand what data is available that would support the online harms priority and what gaps there are. The Quality Assurance subgroup also received routine updates from partner agencies on key themes so that we can monitor trends and draw out further action as needed to improve our arrangements. In 2024/25 we received reports on:

- Child protection conference processes in both areas, demonstrating compliance with our procedures.
- Arrangements for our responses to allegations against staff and volunteers across the children's sector. Individual agencies, such as health providers and the police, provided specific updates alongside the two local authorities. Although there remains curiosity around the low numbers of referrals from some agencies, through the section 11 report agencies were able to demonstrate that appropriate processes and quality assurance activity are in place.

Learning from our quality assurance activity, rapid reviews and child safeguarding practice reviews has continued to inform the work of the policy and procedures subgroup. We have completed a programme of updates and developments of the suite of policies, procedures, and guidance.

These updates are informed and prioritised by the need to ensure that learning from local case reviews drives forward the guidance provided to practitioners and their managers such as: [Local Best Practice Guidance](#) on Child in Need, Personal Health Budgets and Special Guardianship Orders, and various [Briefing Documents](#) such as a 7 minute briefing on the Early Help audit activity, Professional Visitors to Schools and Trader News developed in conjunction with the Safeguarding Adults Board

Updates and developments completed during the year (and [published on our website](#)) include updates following WT 2023 – a thoroughly revised Threshold Guidance and development of a Local Protocol of Assessment and Support.

A review of further guidance and protocols included the following: Dispute Resolution and Escalation Protocol, Child Protection Professional Dissent Process, Child Protection Medicals for Abuse and Neglect, Practice Guidance on Bruising in Babies and Children, Concealed and Denied Pregnancy Guidance, Keeping Babies Safe Strategy, Every Baby Matters Supportive Guidance, Subconjunctival Haemorrhage Guidance, Joint Missing from Home or Care Protocol.

Updates to our procedures included, Providing Early Help, Making a Referral to CSC, CP S47 Enquiries, Child Protection Conferences, Children who Present a Risk of Harm to Others, Adults who Disclose non Recent Abuse, Working with Sexually Active children under the age of 18, Children at Risk of CRE, Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse, Safeguarding Children from On-line Harms, Safeguarding children and Young People against Radicalisation and Violent Extremism.

4.8 Assurance arising from Section 11 audits

The DDSCP requests the evidence from self-assessments from partnership member agencies on the safeguarding arrangements in line with Section 11 of the Children Act 2004. We received 100% compliance from all agencies and District and Borough Councils. A summary report was considered by the Quality Assurance subgroup in September 2025. Based on the section 11 self-assessment standards, there is good evidence of safeguarding arrangements. This year's section 11 report covered two years – 2023 – 2025 to bring in line with other reporting schedules and to reduce duplication and assured:

- Across the five domains (leadership and accountability, culture of listening, information sharing and assurance, safer recruitment and supervision and oversight), compliance was good.
- Agencies were able to demonstrate that adequate policies, procedures and systems were in place, and in many cases were able to demonstrate robust quality assurance activity.

- There were no overall concerns with agencies having plans in place to address issues raised.
- Themes included a desire to understand more about Early Help in the universal space (to be progressed through thematic working groups), and to understand the interplay between internal processes and LADO referrals, particularly for agencies that have a small number of referrals.

Areas for development for individual agencies and for our safeguarding arrangements will be monitored and progress reported on in the coming year.

4.9 Assurance arising from Section 175

The Education subgroups have updated the DDSCP safeguarding audit tool for the 2024-25 academic year. This supports local authorities in Derby and Derbyshire to check and improve schools' safeguarding policies and processes, ensuring any gaps are identified and addressed.

4.10 Assurance arising from inspection

Inspection reports are shared with the DDSCP at Executive Board and Chief Officer Group level, any recommendations for improvement or learning is monitored through the QA sub group.

Derbyshire Constabulary received a *Police Efficiency, Effectiveness and Legitimacy* (PEEL) inspection by HMICFRS and the [PEEL Inspection report](#) was published in May 2024. The inspection graded the force as GOOD for preventing crime, ADEQUATE for police powers and public treatment, managing offenders and developing a positive workplace, and REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT for investigating crime, responding to the public, protecting vulnerable people and leadership and force management.

The main findings highlighted that since the last inspection in 2022, the force had addressed many of the areas from improvement. The Inspectorate recognised the scale of change needed and that some improvements will need more time to achieve, however was assured that the force can make such improvements. It also acknowledged that the force has established a stable chief officer team.

The constabulary has significantly improved its response to missing persons, and children. The Inspectorate highlighted the constabulary's use of problem-solving methods to reduce incidents of children missing from home as innovative, which has recently highlighted as good practice by the College of Policing.

An area the force needs to improve is its domestic abuse risk assessment process to ensure consideration is given to the full range of risk and harm to identify cumulative risk. The inspection found that in some cases high risk cases were inappropriately downgraded, meaning these would be investigated outside of specialist units and missed opportunities for increased levels of support. The force took immediate action to review and respond to these findings, and since inspection has worked closely with external organisations recognised as leading in this area to improve the consistency of risk assessments.

The force also needs to consider victims experiences to inform and improve its services based on feedback. The constabulary has made progress in this area and is committed to working in partnership to further strengthen its approach.

Inspectors noted that the constabulary has addressed many of the areas for improvement in the previous inspection report and recognised that the scale of change needed means that some improvements will need more time to achieve. Notably there remain improvements to be made in how the force protects vulnerable people including make sure its domestic abuse risk assessment process considers the full range of risk and harm and the full context of previously reported incidents.

Inspectors wrote positively regarding work around the referral process, which is supported by a daily virtual 'pit stop' meeting between the police and both local authorities. This enables the police to seek feedback and offers reassurance about their decision-making on referrals. Local authority staff highlight cases that they feel shouldn't be referred meaning that a joint understanding of performance is developing which police and local authorities use to make joint improvements to the referral process. The constabulary also sends its safeguarding teams on joint training with social care staff improving relationships and leading to the creation of jointly agreed working practices.

Children's Services in Derbyshire County Council and the Derby & Derbyshire Integrated Care Board experienced an [Area SEND full inspection in September 2024](#).

The inspection found that there are widespread and/or systemic failings leading to significant concerns about the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which the local area partnership must address urgently. A monitoring inspection will be conducted within approximately 18 months. The next full reinspection will be within approximately three years. Derbyshire County Council and NHS Derby and Derbyshire Integrated Care Board are responsible for planning and commissioning services to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND in Derbyshire, as part of the Local Area Partnership. The inspection noted areas for priority action and areas for improvement that relate to safeguarding which will be monitored through the DDSCP Executive and Chief Officers sub group.

The following inspections have been concluded since March 2025.

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) conducted an inspection of every probation unit in the East Midlands. Reports published in May 25 highlight that both [Derby](#) and [Derbyshire](#) units required improvement. The inspection and feedback from the service noted that findings are consistent with the national picture, however findings included lack of analysis in Risk Management work, especially on acting and effectively using intelligence from other partners such as Domestic Abuse and Safeguarding information, or general police or prison intelligence. The service reports that this will feature heavily as part of their Quality Improvement for 2025.

[Derby City Council Early Help and Children's Social Care](#) were inspected in May 2025 (ILACS Short inspection). The inspection found:

- Overall Effectiveness: Outstanding across the board—leadership, help and protection, children in care, and care leavers all rated Outstanding.
- Children benefit from consistently high-quality social work and excellent support from skilled practitioners. The workforce is notably stable, experiencing low turnover, few vacancies, and no reliance on agency staff.

- Multi-agency working is comprehensive, proactive, and child-centred—from early help to care leavers—cultivating seamless collaboration across education, health, housing, and social care.
- Minor areas need strengthening, including management oversight of children’s experiences when children are living in the most complex circumstances and are at risk of prolonged neglect or other ongoing harm

In May 2025 [Derbyshire County Council Children's services](#) were also subject to a focussed visit. The findings were overall positive, noting timely, responsive service delivery, though with areas for improvement around partnership responsiveness and management oversight.

5. Learning and Organisational Development: driving forward local practice

Insights from local and national child safeguarding practice reviews, quality assurance activities, and partnership priorities guide the development and review of multi-agency training to meet the identified needs of practitioners across all agencies in Derby and Derbyshire. The DDSCP has an effective and far-reaching [suite of learning and development courses and activities](#) in place.

During 2024/2025, the DDSCP offered 19 training events, delivered through 68 sessions with a provision of 3,280 training places. The attendance rate remained steady, ranging from 80% to 85% with attendance for the overall year at 80%. Of the training places available, 2,371 attended training.

Course Name	Sessions	No. of Delegates
(2024) Child Protection Conferences	1	26
(2024) Early Years Sector: Keeping Babies Safe Roadshow	2	80
(2024) Impact on children of parental alcohol and drug use	1	25
(2025) Responding to Neglect	1	24
Alcohol and Substance Misuse	2	48
Child Sexual Abuse	4	90
Disclosure & Barring Service Workshop	2	35
Domestic Abuse	6	140
HOPE Box Project Webinar	1	135
Keeping Babies Safe	5	124
Managing Allegations	4	101

Course Name	Sessions	No. of Delegates
MAPPA Foundation Briefing	4	94
MAPPA Practitioner Training	2	21
Neglect and Graded Care Profile	5	110
Strengthening Family Engagement	5	112
Threshold Briefing	4	717
Child Exploitation	4	66
Working Together	13	360
Working with Parental Relationships	2	63
Grand Total	68	2371

E-learning continues to be popular with 4,202 completing courses.

Course Name	Passed
(2023) Private Fostering	81
(2024) A Positive Safeguarding Culture	139
(2024) Domestic Abuse	104
(2024) Drivers: Home to School Travel Service Safeguarding	310
(2024) Fabricated or Induced Illness and Perplexing Presentations	82
(2024) Introduction to Safeguarding	2234
(2024) Passenger Assistants: Home to School Travel Service Safeguarding	280
(2025) Parental Conflict	21
Brain Development and Adverse Childhood Experiences	187
Child Exploitation: Module 1 - Child Criminal Exploitation	165
Child Exploitation: Module 2 - Child Sexual Exploitation	163
Child Exploitation: Module 3 - Risks in the Community	151
Child Exploitation: Module 4 - Modern Slavery and Child Trafficking	92
Child Exploitation: Module 5 - Disruption Planning	63
Introduction to Safeguarding: Protecting babies from harm	130
Grand Total	4202

Evaluation is based on the Kilpatrick's Four Levels of Training Evaluation Model to capture the effectiveness and impact of the training. Stage 2 evaluations are designed to gather data from delegates to reflect the impact of training on practice and demonstrate any increase in confidence knowledge and skills. We report back on the impact of our training on practice routinely to the multi-agency subgroup and ensure that we capture feedback to show the *impact of training on practice* linked to the key priorities for the partnership such as the examples below:

'Child sexual abuse – it helped with guiding my team around supporting young people that have experienced CSE, looking beyond the behaviours and working in a trauma informed way' (Children's Residential Home).

'Child exploitation - The parents were able to understand the risk to their child, despite it not being at the more severe end of the scale. This meant the child was safeguarded before anything too traumatic for that child happened' (Family Support Worker).

'Domestic abuse - helped improve outcomes by enabling earlier identification of children affected by domestic abuse, leading to timely support and intervention e.g. can now guide families toward appropriate services more effectively, helping to create a safer and more stable home environment and more confident in supporting children's emotional well-being, promoting resilience and healthy coping strategies' (0-5 Practitioner).

'Domestic abuse - helped to better identify signs of domestic abuse, understand the impact on children and young people and support with interventions. This can then significantly improve the mental health and educational outcomes for affected children and their families' (Early Help and Pupil Premium Lead).

'Graded Care - Using the graded care profile with a family showed the parent how their parenting had declined due to mental health compared to previous parenting of an older child. They were able to what was needed to do to ensure that the child's needs were met and prevented further developmental delay' (Social Worker).

'Neglect - It has made me more confident to discuss with families in the future. I have also completed a home visit with a family recently and was able to identify there was a need to support Mum as she wasn't intentionally being 'neglectful' she was struggling herself' (Pastoral Lead).

Work has been ongoing throughout the year to create training materials which allow practitioners to work at their own pace, revisit materials, and work with greater time efficiency to support engagement, staff development, and meet varied learning styles and accessibility requirements.

6. Progress on agreed priorities

In our last annual report, we set out our three priorities for the year. They were:



6.1 Promote and obtain assurance of Early Help arrangements (including responding to neglect) and response to requests for services

We agreed to continue to obtain assurance of how local services are responding to challenges and sustaining our arrangements to promote early help arrangements. We continue to find challenges across the areas in relation to reporting data for early help where it does not involve the local authorities as there is currently no central mechanism to achieve this available.

During the year the quality assurance subgroup carried out a multi-agency audit to review the quality and impact of early help assessments that are written and led by practitioners in Universal Services. The cases for review were sourced from schools and 0-19 health services across both Derby and Derbyshire.

We found that in most cases there was a clear purpose for commencing assessment and the threshold document was appropriately applied. Practitioners made detailed observations of the presenting issues, and through these observations presenting needs were clear throughout the assessments. In addition, key safety information was covered in the majority of assessments and in all assessments where a baby was present, the key safety information around infants were completed. Appropriate onward referrals and signposting were evident in many of the assessments, and in most cases there were appropriate outcomes which matched the observed needs.

As a result of the audit, we have shared the learning to promote best practice and improve:

- the involvement of fathers and other significant adults in the co-production of early help assessments

- the inclusion of the voice of the child and the language used in assessments that most helpfully describes the young person and their current difficulties
- the linking together of information in the assessment, often completed by one practitioner and one parent, with the child's voice, input from other professionals, other children within the household or the wider family network and community
- analysis of the factors that may underly the presenting issue and consideration of therapeutic and other interventions that may help improve outcomes for the children and family

An early help practice briefing was widely shared and we are aiming to bring the quality of early help assessments in line with the quality seen in single assessments to ensure that children and families receive appropriate and effective support at the earliest opportunity.

Both local authority areas reported a reduction in their involvement in the number of early help cases during the year. Currently we do not have the ability to capture data on the number of early help assessments completed by services that do not include local authority involvement.

We will continue to monitor Early Help across the footprint and during 2025 support partners to focus on a whole systems approach through the Families First Reforms. A co-location of targeted early help with locality safeguarding teams ensures a joined-up, collaborative approach, and Family Hubs collaborating with community-based organisations.

6.2 Reduce the adverse impact of Domestic Abuse and family conflict

We agreed that we needed to obtain assurance of the sustained impact of local changes to our arrangements to reduce the adverse impact of Domestic Abuse and family conflict. There has been progress to establish local triage processes to strengthen multi-agency responses and these have been embedded locally during 2024/2025. The independent chair and scrutineer-maintained oversight of progress to improve arrangements by maintaining focus on this at the Executive Board and Chief Officer Group.

Additional training and a review of our local processes against other successful practice in other partnership areas has enabled the development of agreed updated processes. These were implemented during summer 2024 and a thorough review of our threshold guidance was completed and published December 2024. We will also be assuring ourselves on our progress against the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel [multi-agency safeguarding and domestic abuse paper](#) within our Thematic Priority.

Previously it was identified that the notification processes used by the police to inform schools that an incident of domestic abuse had occurred were not wholly effective. This was because across the school sector, a variety of different notification emails were not always directing the information to the correct person and at times there was confusion between settings who had similar names.

Working with the schools, we have now successfully implemented a specific *safeguarding email* for each setting that enabled the correct people to receive the information. The police updated their system to differentiate between schools with similar names and introduced a method for alerting the two local authorities if a child was electively home educated (rather than having a school to notify). The guidance for the *Stopping Domestic Abuse Together* process was subsequently updated and promoted across the sector. Overall, this has helped us have greater confidence that schools are better able to know when an incident of domestic abuse has occurred, and children are safer with better monitoring of their welfare. In line with national Police recommendation this will follow the Operation Encompass initiative. Domestic Abuse will continue as a priority for the DDSCP over the next 3 years as outlined above.

6.3 Safeguard children at risk of exploitation reflecting additional features such as placed based risk (contextual safeguarding) and our understanding of emerging vulnerabilities

We continue to be alert to the complex nature of some of the interconnected vulnerabilities affecting young people in their communities and the risks to them of exploitation. There has been additional national research drawing our attention to the continued vulnerability of young people who are not in school. We have continued to make sure we understand our local risks and that they are being addressed effectively. During the year, the Exploitation and Vulnerable Young People Subgroup received

updates on trends and key issues impacting on young people in the following areas: serious violence; online harms; radicalization; extremism; refugee resettlement; asylum dispersal; unaccompanied asylum-seeking children; and children in custody.

We learnt, for example, that education provide the majority of Prevent referrals with high numbers for those under 18 refencing either diagnosed or undiagnosed neurodiversity concerns. Partner agencies are responding via a range of activities in schools, via mentoring projects and workshop delivery in high-risk areas. We have continued to share key resources, training opportunities and promoted the work of the local authority Prevent in Education officers.



We considered a variety of feedback from different organisations who work with children and young people to understand their views of their lived experience including serious violence, online harms and specifically in relation to their relationships and sex education. We are aiming to obtain updates as to how their feedback has shaped and influenced services in the coming year. For example, during the year feedback from children, young people and their parents continued to be received from the online

safety initiative [i-vengers](#) for primary and special schools. This informed local promotion on online safety messages from schools to “their” parents, pupils and staff.

The Exploited and Vulnerable Young People (EVYP) subgroup has undergone review to identify the best future direction of this work. Based on feedback from group members, we have developed a refreshed approach to EVYP, endorsed by the DDSCP executive board, moving from a quarterly report-based meeting format, the proposal, to themed safeguarding young people events. These events will enable key information, young peoples’ voices, good practice, and consideration of what this means for agencies, to be shared with a wider audience. The first event will focus on the theme My Community and Friendships and incorporate the topics:

- Serious Organised Crime and Exploitation (SOCEX)
- Serious violence/knife crime
- Radicalisation and extremism
- Licensing
- Online Harms

6.4 Priorities for the coming period

Keeping Babies Safe is an ongoing priority for the DDSCP and partner agencies. The [Keeping Babies Safe Strategy – Three Steps for Baby Safety](#) was re-written and published on the DDSCP website in 2024 and is the foundation and blueprint for the KBS work across the partnership. The strategy considers local CSPR's learning, national guidance and research and recognises the outstanding work already completed across the partnership.

6.5 Thematic priorities

As part of our annual review of the priorities for the coming year, we consulted with the chairs of our subgroups to reflect on how we have made effective systemic improvements and areas where we might strengthen our joint work. It is evident that the joined up thematic approach to the development and implementation of the Keeping Babies Safe strategy led to a whole system focus on improving outcomes for very vulnerable children under one.

We commenced an in-depth review of the priorities for the partnership in 2024 and it was agreed our new specific priorities from 2025 - 2028 would benefit from a thematic approach similar to the KBS work. The Core Business Group and Executive Board conducted scoping of safeguarding risks impacting on children and young people across our area and this was discussed at Chief Officers Group in October.

Evidence of the extent of harm and impact on children were considered and it was determined that the following three priorities would be an appropriate focus for multi-agency activity to prevent where possible, and reduce the impact and poor outcomes for children and families:

- Domestic Abuse
- Online Harms
- Neglect

We have already established Thematic Groups for these areas, chaired by Designated Safeguarding Partners, developed TOR's, and Actions Plans to support the delivery of key workstream in 2025. These Thematic Groups will report into the DDSCP Executive Board and respective Domestic and Sexual Abuse Board and the On-line Harms Board.

7. Decisions and actions taken by partners to implement the recommendations of local and national child safeguarding practice reviews

During 2024/2025 the work of the Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) and Action Planning Subgroup and its associated partners has continued to evolve. There is an increasing emphasis on developing useable resources to help embed key learning from reviews into the practice of front-line teams. To support this, a set of local practice standards have been developed based on themes emerging from local reviews to enhance the multi-agency practice standards outlined in [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 \(December 2023\)](#). Combining the national and local multi-agency practice standards will provide clarity to practitioners and their managers about expected practice, it will form the basis for quality assurance and audit activity and will help to develop functional learning resources. It is anticipated that recommendations and actions from Rapid Reviews and Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

(LCSPRs) can be written in best practice style plain language to better support agencies to implement changes to practice and to evaluate the impact of those changes.

The CSPR and Action Planning Subgroup and its associated partners continue to refine the approach taken to reviews that attract media attention and where a multi-agency response to this is required.

The success of the strategic arrangements in recent cases supported by communications colleagues across the partnership evidence the commitment of the DDSCP to contributing to and managing formal processes surrounding complex cases where there is media and public interest and where it is essential that the needs and views of children and families are kept at the forefront of those arrangements.

The CSPR and Action Planning Subgroup are reviewing the [Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel Learning Support and Capability Project \(May 2025\)](#) where there is emphasis on continuous learning to help address the systemic and repetitive themes that arise in reviews. In this context, a framework is being developed to capture and progress learning and to emphasise good practice (beyond expected practice) arising from incidents that do not meet the statutory criteria for a Rapid Review. This framework will help to enhance the suite of learning resources available to practitioners and their managers to further support their work with children and families.

[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 \(December 2023\)](#) emphasises that although the responsibility to notify the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel about serious incidents continues to rest with the local authority, it is for all three safeguarding partners to agree which incidents should be notified. In response, the CSPR and Action Planning Subgroup developed a referral form for use by the statutory partners of the local authority which has helped to facilitate two serious incident discussions in 2024/2025 with the additional support of the DDSCP Business Team.

During 2024/2025 the DDSCP published one [LCSPR](#) with an accompanying [Summary of Progress](#) which highlighted developments made by agencies following the serious incident. Agency actions related to the recommendations from this review were

monitored by the CSPR and Action Planning Subgroup and are now completed. A [7 Minute Learning](#) was produced following the completion of the LCSPR which draws on the findings of the [National Panel Briefing 3: Safeguarding Children in Elective Home Education \(May 2024\)](#) and sets out several best practice principles to help support practitioners and their managers across the partnership when they are working with children and their families where elective home education is a feature.

In 2024/2025, the DDSCP has completed one Rapid Review in line with the updated guidance produced by the [National Panel: Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel: Guidance for Safeguarding Partners \(June 2025\)](#). This review highlighted missed opportunities and learning areas related to early help assessments and the routine delivery of domestic abuse enquiries. It was considered that these features were already known to the partnership as ones which pose recurring challenges and therefore require improvement at a systemic level to impact positively on local safeguarding practice. Safeguarding leads from organisations across the partnership have met to examine the factors and barriers which impact on and influence front line practice and are developing an action plan to strengthen local arrangements. The intention is to achieve meaningful and sustainable improvement across the safeguarding system by ensuring that vulnerabilities within families are identified and acted upon at the earliest possible stage with the support and implementation of established policy, protocols and guidance. A further aim of this approach is to increase potential for improving practice at a system level which can then be more effectively evaluated.

The DDSCP considers that taking a whole system and strategic approach to the findings of this Rapid Review is in line with the developing activity associated with meeting the delivery expectations of the Families First Partnership Programme. The [Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel Learning Support and Capability Project \(May 2025\)](#) introduces the concept of "system stewardship" where responsibility should be taken for creating healthy systems to achieve quality outcomes for children and their families. This concept is acknowledged by the DDSCP as key to nurturing the safeguarding system across Derby and Derbyshire to help prompt learning and improvement and is underpinning the response to the findings of the Rapid Review.

A LCSPR which was published in March 2024 recommended that DDSCP should undertake a multi-agency audit of cases where children had been reunified with their parents in pre-proceedings or during care proceedings. Over fifty front line practitioners and their managers from several agencies across Derby and Derbyshire participated in the audit to help identify areas for practice development and areas of good practice. A summary of audit findings will be published with an accompanying best practice guide which references eight overarching areas of reunification work which were identified in the audit and which align to the expected outcomes for children as referenced in the [Children's Social Care National Framework \(December 2023\)](#).

During 2024/2025, the DDSCP have contributed to two LCSPRs commissioned by other Safeguarding Children Partnerships, the learning and recommendations from which will be embedded into the work of both the CSPR and Action Planning Subgroup and into the Domestic Abuse and Neglect Thematic Groups to ensure that there is sufficient monitoring and implementation of necessary changes to practice.

Several overlapping themes have been identified in reviews that the DDSCP have been involved in recently. They include:

- The quality of assessments and planning.
- Engaging children and their parents including asking challenging questions.
- Recognising children's vulnerabilities (including identifying and responding to child neglect and harm) and gaining their voice.
- Intervening at the earliest possible stage.
- Understanding the impact of parental vulnerabilities on safeguarding children.
- Children living away from their parents.
- Recognising and responding to cumulative harm including the response to injuries.

An interactive video will be developed in 2025 for use by practitioners and their managers which explores the key learning areas arising from the reviews with pointers and principles for improving practice. The video will be supported by an e-learning course to further develop the workforce's practice with children and their families.

8. How partners have sought and utilised feedback from children and families to inform their work and influence service provision

One lay member continues to represent local communities and participate within the work of the partnership by attending the Education and Policies and Procedure subgroups. Partner agencies continue to use feedback from children and young people to ensure that a meaningful difference is being made to improve our collective arrangements. Examples of arrangements are set out below:

8.1 Derby City Council

Derby City Council has a [partnership participation strategy](#), to embed co-production both with the individual and collective voice of children and young people in decision, so that co-production and consultation become part of everyday practice in all aspects from policies and strategies, recruitment, service development, evaluation through to supporting individual children and young people.

Derby City Council has signed up to the Lundy Model of Participation as part of the wider East Midlands RIIA (Regional Improvement and Innovation Alliance) to help embed the voice of children and young people in local decision-making processes. The annual participation report highlights that Derby City council listen to the voice of the child which is informing daily interactions and decisions. There is also evidence that the collective voice has informed service development and evaluation processes. Examples include:

- The youth justice service, who as a result of feedback from participants have developed a one-page introduction for young people new to the service to introduce the role of their support worker, sourcing alternative mentoring opportunities and supported 5 young people to successfully apply to independent police scrutiny panels.
- Young people Leaving care fed back that they didn't understand the legal jargon in some of the documents relating to their tenancy. The team worked with Derby homes to produce an information leaflet to support young people in understanding legal terminology around their tenancy, and 'staying close' tenancies have been rewritten.

8.2 Chesterfield Royal Hospital

Chesterfield Royal Hospital report that following feedback from service users they have:

- updated safeguarding CP medical leaflet which includes information on supervision
- Information on family rights group within handouts
- Provision of comfort pack for parents

8.3 Derbyshire County Council

Derbyshire County Council report that listening to the child's voice and understanding their lived experience, as well as the quality of trusting relationships and direct work with children, remain a key focus of quality assurance activity. Reflective case reviews have generated evidence of high-quality direct work and effective relationship building alongside clear recording of the voice of the child. The use of the Mind of My Own application helps to further embed the voice of the child and allow children more opportunities to get their views and wishes heard. In addition, Derbyshire Youth Network has become embedded as a vehicle for youth participation at a strategic level. Working in partnership with school councils and community groups, surveys have been undertaken and the findings fed back to senior leaders and other stakeholders.

8.4 Derbyshire Police

Derbyshire Police report that vulnerability training was undertaken within the force between 2021 – 2023 which included voice of the child inputs. This saw significant improvements to the capturing of Voice of the Child. Further training is currently underway across the force as part of ongoing CPD.

8.5 Forums supporting participation and engagement

There are a number of regular forums that support participation and engagement, including:

- Voices in Action, Voices in Action (ViA) a youth council for young people aged 11 to 19 years old representing their school, support group or youth project chaired by the Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor,
- Our Voice, Our Success is for all children and young people (aged 10 to 17) with care experience; members influence the delivery and design of services to improve outcomes for looked after children and care leavers. There is also a standing agenda item at the Corporate Parenting Committee which young people are encouraged to attend if they wish.

Headlines (pp.4-8) Young people in Derbyshire are generally content with their lives and making choices that support their health and well-being. However, a minority of young people are reporting lower well-being, feeling unhappy with their health, or feeling dis-empowered. This group is more likely to engage in risky or unhealthy behaviours that could negatively impact their physical or mental health.

Key findings have been selected from the complete set of figures; all figures are from the whole sample unless stated otherwise.

In addition to direct consultation, 'voice of the child' is now embedded within the Single Assessment. This means not only is the child's voice evident in their own case but this is also collated to inform service design. This year's annual participation report summarises the categories where children and young people requested support within the single assessment with the top three reasons being 'relationships with family' (13%), 'family life' (11%) and 'home life' (10%). The responses indicate that individual needs and values are recognised and change approaches to practices as well as the way services are delivered.

Derbyshire County Council consult with young people through a variety of methods. In 2024 the *My Life My View* survey was completed by over 5000 young people across 13 different schools and some young people who are home educated, aged 8-11 years

old. These survey findings can be found [here](#) and have been discussed with partners to shape future service delivery. Some of the highlights from the report include:

Extremism

- 283 pupils (6%) said they have been approached to support extremist activity (e.g. violent terrorist ideas, groups including far-right movements etc.), while 751 pupils (17%) said they 'don't know' if they have been.

Trusted adults

- 2381 pupils (50%) find it easy to talk to their parents/carers/ trusted adults (incl. teachers) about things that bother them, while 1428 pupils (30%) said they don't find it easy.
- 1548 boys (69%) and 1374 girls (59%) said they usually talk to their parents about things which bother them, while 1181 boys (53%) and 1508 girls (65%) said they usually talk to friends and 650 boys (29%) and 854 girls (37%) would keep things to themselves.

School work

- 812 pupils (17%) find their school work 'good' and they 'can complete everything' at the moment, while 1070 pupils (22%) find it 'OK'.
- 743 pupils (16%) said they struggle to manage their school work at the moment; 1897 pupils (40%) said it's OK but they 'sometimes' struggle.
- 256 pupils (5%) said they are not bothering to do much school work at the moment.

Feeling safe

- 2596 pupils (58%) agreed that they feel safe at school, while 1390 pupils (31%) said the same of being out in their local area at night.
- 1564 pupils (35%) disagreed that they feel safe when out in their local area at night.

In Derbyshire, a digital app “*Mind of my own*” has been introduced to give children and young people who are receiving children’s services support an opportunity to share their wishes and feelings at a time and place that is convenient for them. Children and young people have given positive feedback about the app and explained it gives them a direct way of participating in their reviews and to share their views.

The Derbyshire Youth Network has expanded during the year to now include colleges such as Chesterfield College along with increased numbers of community groups such as the Belper LGBTQ+ group. This has helped the Derbyshire Youth Network identify young people who are able to offer a particular perspective and/or insight around a specific topic where their views help inform the development of services such as:

- the annual consultation project which focused on planning and council spending and included pupils from 7 secondary schools who attended a series of workshops, allowing their views to be considered
- a consultation activity for the Police and Crime Commissioner involving obtaining the views of females aged 16+ about violence against women and girls and the support they felt is needed for them to feel safe.

8.6 Derbyshire Healthcare Foundation Trust (DHCFT)

DHCFT seeks feedback from children and families following contact with 0-19 services. Parents have reported how they have found the speed and easy access of the Chat Health (a text messaging service where young people and parents and carers living in Derby city can get confidential health advice and support) very helpful and reassuring.

The *Children in Care Nursing Service* similarly seeks and receives feedback for example illustrating the impact on welfare of young people: “Since your session with a young person on sexual health we have seen a huge improvement! They are responding well and clearly listened and took your information on board because they share what they learnt with staff members.” Deputy Homes Manager

The Designated Nurse (for Children in Care) has developed with the assistance of young people some animated videos on initial and review health assessments. [*What*](#)

[will happen at my NHS Health Assessment?](#) is available for teenagers and [Children in Care Health Assessment](#) is available for younger children in care.

The DHCFT CAMHS Service line has developed a CAMHS Advisory Board (CAB) chaired by the *Expert by Experience* young person. The advisory board includes the participation team to hold managers to account for decisions that are being made, and to ensure the voice of young people is heard.

8.7 Exploitation and Vulnerable Young People subgroup (EVYP)

The EVYP subgroup also receives reports from voluntary and independent sector organisations working with young people, such as Safe and Sound. The DDSCP receives good information about the direct work and influence young people are able to make in the way that they receive direct services.

9. Our Governance, updates to the published arrangements and progress implementing reforms

The Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership extends beyond the four key statutory partners and welcomes partnership working, contributions and challenge from a wide range of agencies and providers from all sectors. Partners contribute to active work plans across all the subgroups and the effectiveness of our arrangements is overseen by the Executive Board and Chief Officer Group.

9.1 Partnership funding arrangements

The [DDSCP has an inter-agency agreement](#) that sets out the detail of our arrangements between the four statutory safeguarding partners. Each partner contributes an equal share of the funding for the partnership and financial reports are provided on a quarterly basis to ensure there is scrutiny of financial arrangements.

Partner	Contribution
Derby City Council	£129,575
Derbyshire County Council	£129,575
Derby and Derbyshire Integrated Care Board	£129,575
Derbyshire Constabulary	£129,575

Derbyshire Probation	£7,476
----------------------	--------

9.2 DDSCP business team

The DDSCP is supported by a business team to enhance our work with partner agencies. In addition to the partnership manager there are the following posts:

- a child safeguarding practice review manager and business services officer who drive forward activity in respect of rapid reviews, child safeguarding practice reviews, the CSPR subgroup and partnership working linked to domestic abuse related death reviews
- a policy, procedure and regulation officer who drives forward the work of the policy and procedures subgroup and the completion of section 11 audits
- a vulnerable children and young people development officer who drives forward the work of the exploitation and vulnerable young people subgroup and the work of the two education subgroups
- a strategic performance and quality assurance officer who drives forward the work of the quality assurance subgroup
- a senior learning and organisational development officer, learning and organisational development officer and business services officer who drive forward activity in respect of the development and delivery of multi-agency safeguarding learning and development courses, conferences and the subgroup
- a business services officer who is the minute taker for most of our meetings and works with fellow team members on projects linked to subgroup workplans.

The statutory safeguarding partners have agreed to review the structure of the business team during 2025/26.

9.3 Education

Across our area there are 574 schools from all sectors. There are two education subgroups covering each area of Derby and Derbyshire. The Chairs of each subgroup or their deputies attend all Executive Board meetings, report twice per year on the

work of the subgroups and attend Chief Officer Group. They report annually on pressures and progress across the sector following consultation with subgroups.

The education subgroups have been reviewed to transition to a strategic operational model focusing on DDSCP strategic priorities and emerging issues for the education sector. Membership, terms of reference and meeting arrangements have all been reviewed and updated. Each group will now hold 2 virtual and 2 face to face meetings an academic year.

We have made progress facilitating representation from the Education sector at various strategic groups within other partnership arrangements such as the Online Harms Board, Derbyshire Starting Point Board, Derby Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub Board and Polices & Procedure subgroup. Achieving representation on behalf of a diverse sector continues to be challenging and we are committed to continuing to promote engagement wherever possible.

Derbyshire County Council have now successfully appointed to the post of lead practitioner for safeguarding in education. The post will strengthen and support education providers with their safeguarding policies and processes and ensure the voice of providers is heard within the local authority.

Both local authorities facilitate Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) networks to help keep schools up to date with safeguarding issues, training opportunities and to seek feedback from education providers to inform future networks and the work of partner agencies.

Operationally we have:

- Provided education and partner agencies with regular safeguarding updates containing local and national information, guidance and resources. This process has been strengthened by the use of a secure email system GOVUKNotify.
- Published a 'Key routes for safeguarding communications to schools' document has been developed and circulated to partner agencies to assist communication with the sector.

- Provided support and input on key local updates and outcomes from our reviews into the local authorities Designated Safeguarding Leads Network for schools in Derby and Derbyshire.
- Invited the Derby/Derbyshire Sexual Assault and Abuse Strategy Officer to attend education subgroup meetings and offered members the opportunity to the review and update of the sexual assault and abuse strategy and progressed an audit of the programmes in education.
- Updated the DDSCP Professional visitors to schools briefing note to support schools and partner agencies to work effectively together.
- Continued to ensure that key issues impacting on school aged children are understood and awareness promoted across partner agencies. For example, sharing the CEOP alert Financially motivated sexual extortion: alert for education settings and highlighting Derbyshire constabulary financial extortion webinars for professionals and parents.
- Achieved successful engagement from individual schools where we have needed to consider serious incidents and where participation is needed in child safeguarding practice reviews.
- Worked with education partners to provide an updated template safeguarding policy to all schools, along with a self-assessment safeguarding audit tool.
- Written formally to all schools about a range of issues that have relevance to our community such as Female genital mutilation, forced marriage and so-called honour-based abuse.
- Strengthened responses to domestic abuse notifications by supporting Derbyshire DSL training to improve input on Stopping Domestic Abuse Together/SDAT (our local version of Operation Encompass). Derbyshire Constabulary have also established a multi-agency SDAT working group; this group will also explore the Victims and Prisoners Act 2024, section 20 which introduces the requirement that police notify schools if child is suspected victim of domestic abuse, and a consideration of the extension of notification systems to childcare providers. Education and early years representatives have been secured which will ensure the voice of the sector is heard.
- Consulted with education subgroups about:

- the content of domestic abuse notifications and the support for schools to help them understand their SDAT roles and responsibilities.
- Online safety/harms to identify the 3 top online issues causing concern schools; these were engaging and communicating with parents, online bullying and nudes/ semi-nudes. To support schools to effectively respond to these issues key considerations documents are under development, along with a healthier screen time infographic.
- Helped to facilitate two successful School and General Practice (GP) communications pilots, with the aim of improving safeguarding communications between the two sectors. Developed Schools and GP communications guidance which has been reviewed by the DDSCP Policies & Procedures subgroup. Following evaluation, the initiative will be rolled out across the partnership footprint.

9.4 Multi-agency safeguarding arrangements

Following publication of the revised [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) in December 2023, we have taken steps to update our arrangements. The DDSCP have developed [Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements](#) for the Safeguarding Partners to work together to identify and respond to the needs of children in their area. These arrangements allow the Lead Safeguarding Partners and Delegated Safeguarding Partners to take on their defined responsibilities including the chair roles and for them to be maintained for our Chief Officer Group and Executive Board from September 2024 through to March 2026.

An inter-agency [Governance and Accountability Framework](#) is in place and is an agreement that has been signed by each of the statutory partners to set out the legal arrangements to ensure there is effective governance and decision making. The agreement includes the role that each statutory partner has to carry out their responsibilities so that the Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership is effective and works to keep children safe from harm.

- [DDSCP Governance Arrangements March 2025](#)

- [DDSCP Governance Arrangements Terms of Reference for Subgroups March 2025](#)

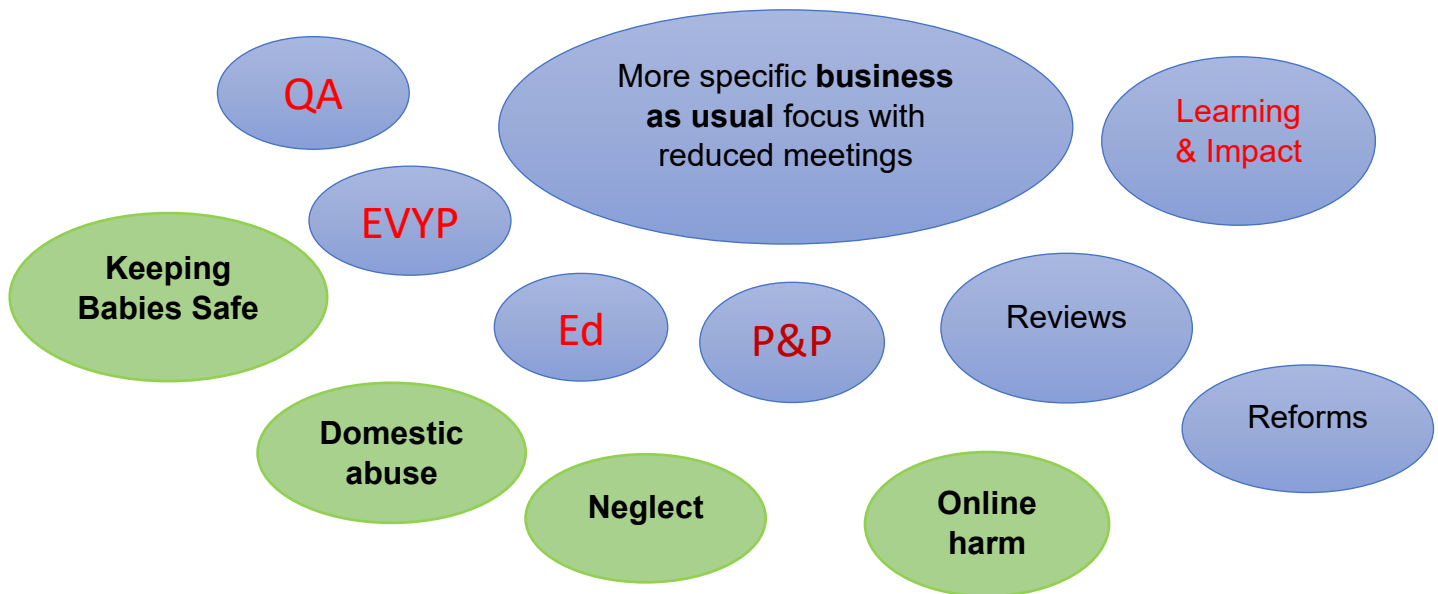
The Policy and Procedures subgroup has developed the Protocol for Assessment and Support, and the Threshold document has been thoroughly reviewed and updated in line with the requirements of the national guidance. Briefing sessions were for partners and education subgroups on the updates.

A development session was commissioned with subgroup chairs to obtain feedback on what works and what “might be possible” to strengthen our arrangements in June 2024. Reflections informed a quality assurance development session with the overarching to consider if there are approaches that could better deliver improved outcomes for children, families and our partnership work.

The development session found the focus on improving safeguarding arrangements emphasises the need for more robust evidence of the impact that the views of children and families have. Additionally, there is a call for deeper consideration of the demographics and experiences of different communities within these arrangements.

Through 2025 review will continue on the structures of the subgroups and thematic activity alongside an overall review of the business function and team that should be completed by 2026. Efforts are being made to reduce duplication of workstreams and ensure that meetings are meaningful, with a clearer focus on essential activities not covered by thematic groups, workstreams from other partnership groups, or routine operations by individual agencies. The goal is to have fewer and shorter meetings, which should lead to greater consistency in representation and a better focus on actionable steps to make a significant difference.

This led to us strengthening our arrangements with the agreement of 3 Priorities for 2025 – 2028. **Domestic Abuse, Neglect & On-line Harm.** A thematic approach to delivering our priorities and enable stronger partnership work within discrete work streams driven and endorsed by the Chief Officers Group.



9.5 Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)

The DDSCP is committed to ensuring that there is strong strategic join up with other partnership boards in our area so that our partnership arrangements can be as effective as possible. [CDOP](#) provides an annual report to ensure that learning and emerging themes are taken forward across our partnership. We have regular liaison with the local safeguarding adult boards and community safety partnerships. We have written to 14 additional partnership boards in our area to ensure that our workstream priorities and strategic needs assessments are shared to keep children safe.

9.6 Children's Social Care Reforms and Families First Partnership (FFP) Programme

In February 2023, the Department for Education published an implementation strategy on reforming children's social care in England: [Stable Homes, Built on Love](#). Following this, a proposal was made to establish a [National Framework](#) which sets out the purpose, principles and enablers of good practice in children's social care and the outcomes that should be achieved. The [National Framework was published](#) as statutory guidance in December 2023.

In November 2024, the Department for Education published '[Keeping Children Safe, Helping Families Thrive](#)'. It sets out how government will break down barriers to opportunity and deliver reforms that support all children to succeed, regardless of their background. A key enabler of the reforms is the [Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill](#)

which includes measures to introduce multi-agency child protection teams and access to family group decision-making meetings for all families with children at risk of entering the care system.

These frameworks have been shared with the partnership and from April 2025 through a Chief Officer joint governance arrangement, we will support strategic and operational leaders in Derby City and Derbyshire County with the implementation and delivery of the FFP Programme.

9.7 Looking forward to 2025-2026

Our annual report for the coming year will discuss how as a partnership we have supported implementation of the new reforms across our whole footprint and reflect any changes to our partnership arrangements including a refreshed threshold document and update to our local protocol for assessment and support by the end of the transformation year (March 2026).

We are looking forward to developing safeguarding arrangements in line with these reforms and supporting our partners in this transition across our footprint.