



**BARNSLEY  
SAFEGUARDING**  
CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP



# YEARLY REPORT

2024/2025

**Barnsley Safeguarding  
Children Partnership**



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# 1. WHO WE ARE

## Introduction & Welcome

Welcome to Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership's yearly report which covers our work from April 2024 to March 2025. It provides an overview of this year's multi- agency safeguarding activity and reflects the hard work and commitment of all our partner agencies in continuing to protect and safeguard children and young people at risk in Barnsley.


Our aim is to create strong relationships and a positive multi- agency environment in our shared and equal duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of Barnsley's children and young people, building a brighter future for every child. Our [Healthy Barnsley 2030](#) ambition is that everyone has the right support, with early help at the right time and place; that fewer people live in poverty and that everyone has the resources they need to look after themselves and their families; that our diverse places are welcoming, supportive and adaptable.

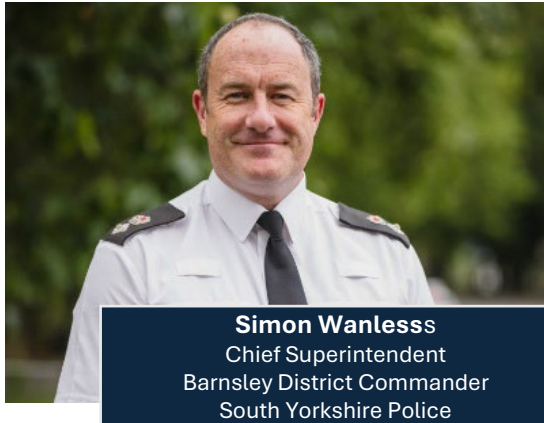
This past year we have seen increased pressures on public sector funding, alongside increasing numbers of referrals into services both in volume and complexity for our children and young people. We have refreshed our multi- agency safeguarding arrangements, in response to "[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#)", which has included strengthening our education partners in our leadership and governance model.

Our yearly report recognises the progress that has been made in working together to keep children safe from harm, the challenges that have been met and the work ahead of us. We are grateful to all of our partners and their dedicated front-line staff for their support and steadfast commitment to safeguarding children in Barnsley.



*"As Executive Director of Children's Services in Barnsley, I am pleased to introduce this year's Annual Report of the Barnsley Children's Safeguarding Partnership. This report highlights the significant progress we have made together in delivering our shared priorities and strengthening our commitment to keeping children and young people safe. Over the past year, our partnership has demonstrated strong collaboration, innovation, and resilience in the face of ongoing challenges, and we are proud of the impact this has had across our local system. Importantly, we have also successfully implemented the new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in line with the updated Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 guidance. These changes have further reinforced our collective accountability and enhanced the way we work together to respond to the needs of children and families in Barnsley. I would like to thank all our partners for their continued dedication and shared determination to improve outcomes for every child in our borough"*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Speechley', enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.



**Simon Wanless**  
Chief Superintendent  
Barnsley District Commander  
South Yorkshire Police

*"The year 2024/25 has been a really successful year for this partnership. We saw the finalisation of the development board which had overseen widespread improvements in recruitment/retention, staff development and practice and the implementation of Working together 2023 and which led to significant developments in our partnership. The effective work in safeguarding children across the borough was recognised positively by Ofsted and is a testament to the hard work and determination of staff from all agencies tasked with important work. This will be hugely important as we head into the next couple of years and prepare ourselves for further changes in this arena."*

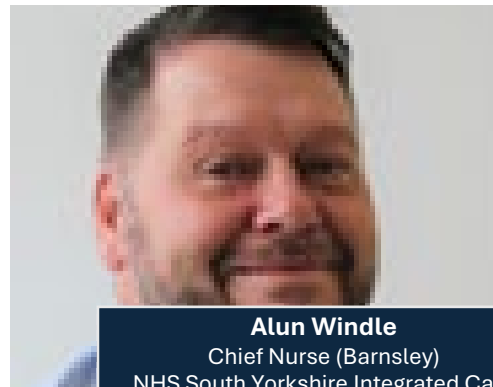
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Wanless'.

*"It's a great privilege to be one of the Executive Partners and help to drive forward services which will improve outcomes for children and families in Barnsley. The last 12 months has seen the safeguarding agenda continue to grow and the challenges of meeting the needs of children and families, with limited resources, increase. Despite this the determination, commitment, and enthusiasm of staff to achieve better outcomes has been evident and the partnership has been committed to supporting them in this endeavour."*

*The next twelve months will be equally challenging and will bring new ways of working under the Families First agenda. As public services we are experiencing significant financial pressures, and for health this means significant changes in how services are delivered. Nonetheless, our commitment to children, keeping them safe and striving to improve their outcomes will remain unchanged. The need for effective and efficient use of resources will be more important than ever, and we welcome the opportunities the Families First approach brings."*

*We will embrace the opportunity to work closer with partners and families, helping them receive the right support, in the right place, by the right person and at the right time. Together we can make a difference and improve the lives of children in Barnsley."*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alun Windle'.



**Alun Windle**  
Chief Nurse (Barnsley)  
NHS South Yorkshire Integrated Care  
Board

## **Role of the Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership (BSCP)**

Barnsley's Safeguarding Children Partnership brings together three statutory partners – Local Authority, Police and Health (South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB)- to plan and collaborate with all partner agencies who work with children and families.

This year we have published our new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in accordance with the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 principles and the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and as a partnership we are committed to:

- Keeping children and young people safe in Barnsley
- Working with our partners to continuously improve our effectiveness
- Placing learning and improvement at the centre of our shared work
- Keeping a focus on understanding the impact of our work on the outcomes for local children and young people

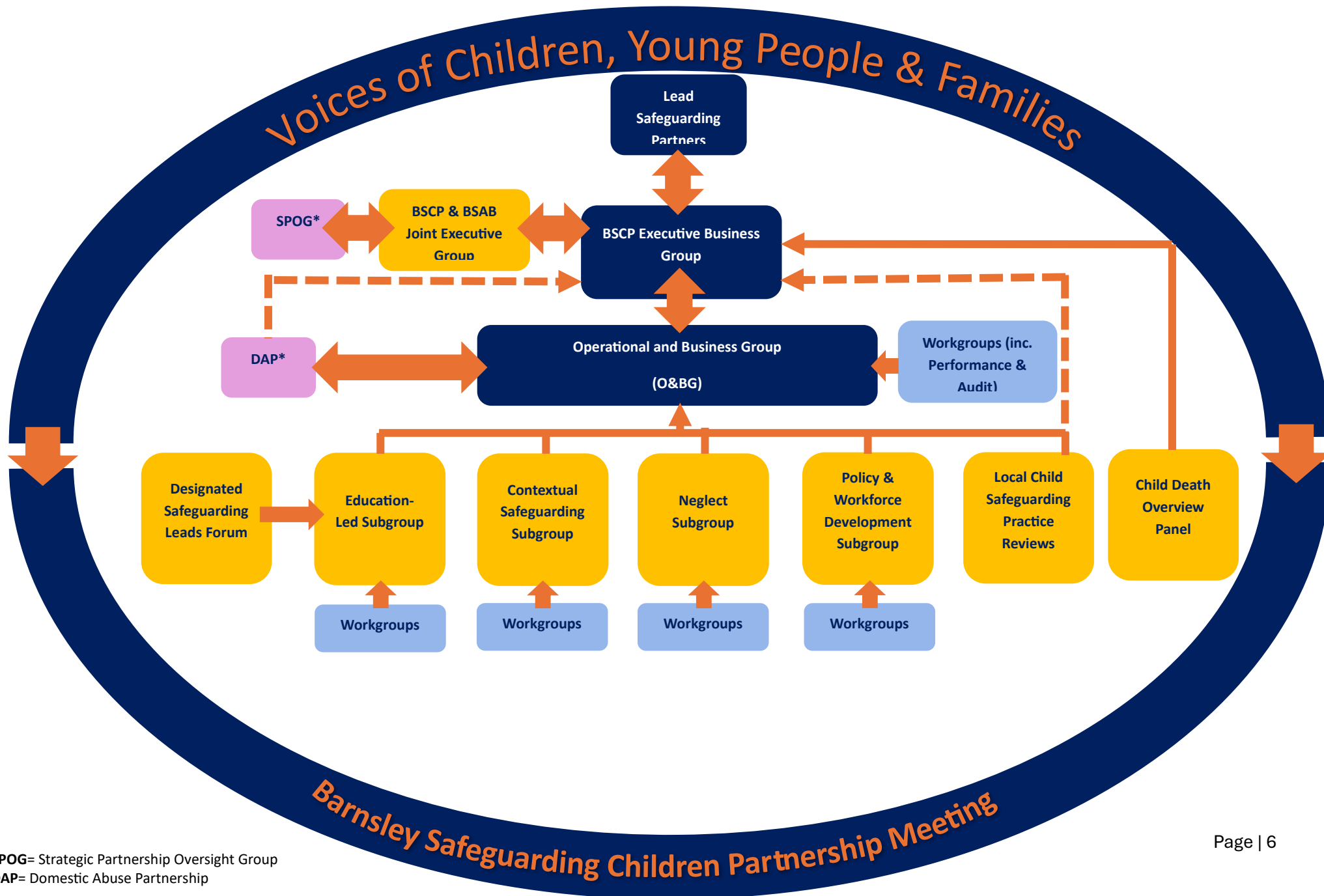
## **How the Partnership works together**

The Partnership's Executive Business Group has a strategic membership of key stakeholders and relevant agencies, including health and education representation this year. The Partnership Executive Group drives the work of the Partnership, in line with the vision and values. This group develops, delivers, and oversees the agreed yearly plan and directs the Partnership's subgroups with the implementation of our strategic priorities and business plan.

Following the publication of the new Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 the Strategic Safeguarding Partnership Manager delivered presentations to several key stakeholders and partner agencies outlining the key recommended changes and clarifying roles and responsibilities to ensure future partner engagement in the development of the local arrangements.

This has led to a change within the structure of our partnership meetings with multi- agency development sessions being introduced to review the Partnership's ambition, strategy, and priorities for the year ahead. The partnership has also widened to welcome voluntary, faith, sports and social enterprise agencies this year.

# Governance Structure



\*SPOG= Strategic Partnership Oversight Group

\*DAP= Domestic Abuse Partnership

## 2. WHAT HAVE WE DONE THIS YEAR?

### Population

In 2021, Barnsley had approx. 244,600 residents, including 67,000 children and young people (0-24). In 2021, 92.3% of the local population were born in England and 4.5% of them did not identify with a UK nationality, up from 2.2% in 2011—an increase exceeding regional and national trends.

### Employment

Employment among people aged 16 and over (excluding full-time students) rose in Barnsley from 53.7% in 2011 to 54.8% in 2021. Unemployment fell from 4.7% to 2.5%, and the percentage of retirees remained at 23.7%.

### Life Expectancy

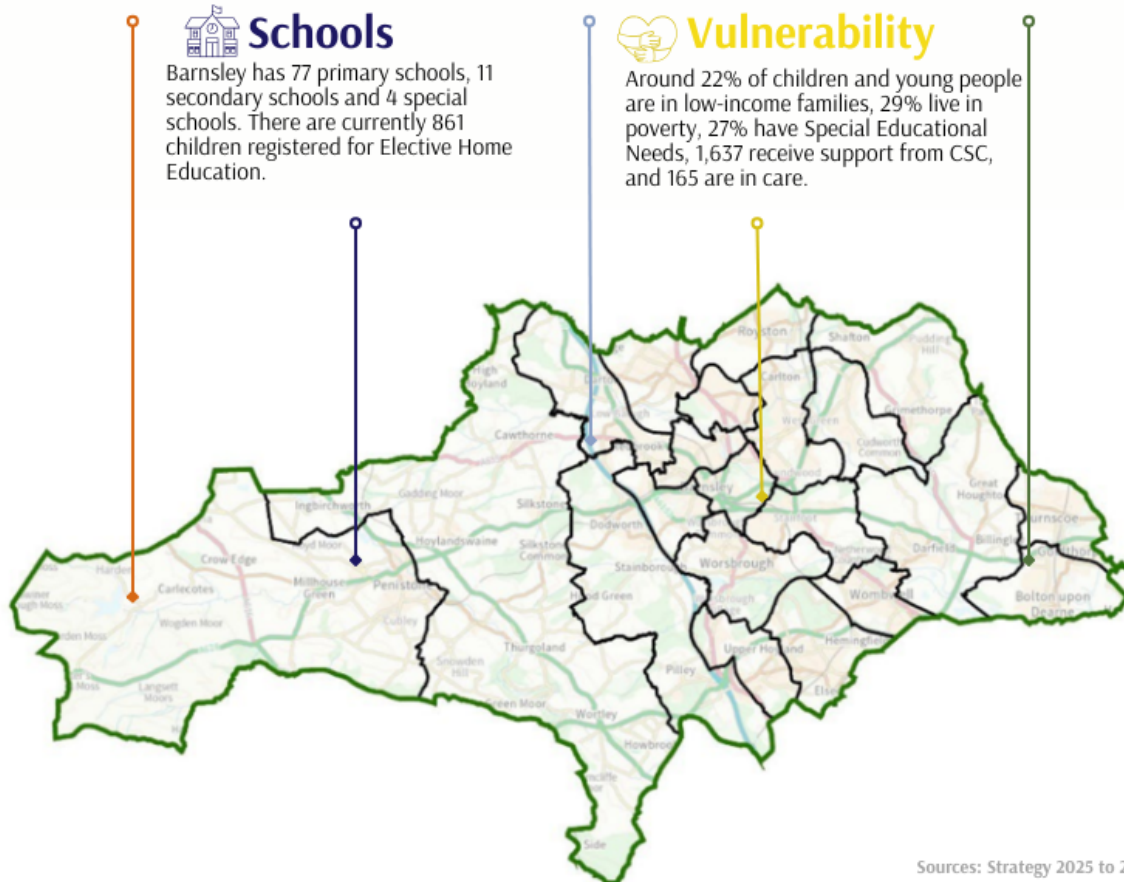
Barnsley has one of the lowest life expectancies in Yorkshire and The Humber, with 76.5 years for men and 80.5 years for women (2021-23, ONS). This is below the regional average of 78.1 years for men and 82.1 years for women.

### Schools

Barnsley has 77 primary schools, 11 secondary schools and 4 special schools. There are currently 861 children registered for Elective Home Education.

### Vulnerability

Around 22% of children and young people are in low-income families, 29% live in poverty, 27% have Special Educational Needs, 1,637 receive support from CSC, and 165 are in care.



Sources: Strategy 2025 to 2030 Barnsley's Great Childhoods Ambition, How life has changed in Barnsley: Census 2021, ONS

## Reflections from the Independent Scrutineer

### Introduction

I have worked as the independent scrutineer for Barnsley Safeguarding Childrens Partnership since July 2024. The scrutineer role provides independent oversight of the multi-agency partnership activities and ensures compliance against government statutory guidance as set out in Working Together 2023. My role provides critical challenge and support; helping the lead and delegated safeguarding partners to maintain oversight, identify areas for development, and drive continuous improvement.

I fulfil this role by attending and contributing to key safeguarding meetings and development sessions and working closely with the delegated safeguarding partners, and the partnership chair. I have established links with partners in adult safeguarding and community safety leading to greater collaboration across shared areas of work. I undertake deep dives into specific areas of practice identified by the safeguarding partners, and I ensure that learning from child safeguarding practice reviews, audit and assurance activity are analysed and used to improve practice. I benefit from belonging to the network of independent scrutineers both regionally and nationally ensuring that the Barnsley partnership is provided with regular updates on regional and national safeguarding initiatives. Most importantly, I ensure that the voice of children and families are at the centre of our safeguarding practice.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank senior leaders, safeguarding leads, and frontline professionals for being open to challenge and scrutiny, by welcoming the opportunity for reflection, by taking on board my recommendations and more importantly by acting on them.

### Compliance with Working Together 23.

One of my first actions was to complete a full review of Barnsley's compliance with Working Together 23. An action plan was developed and implemented with oversight from the delegated safeguarding partners. I identified several strengths in the partnership and have seen these further embed over the last year, meaning that the right foundations are in place to build a strong, collaborative, and effective partnership. Over the last 12 months the LSP and DSP roles have been defined, and the role of the partnership chair has been embedded. Education is recognised as an important partner and there is strong representation at both a strategic and operational level. Governance arrangements have been strengthened with clear reporting lines established between the sub-groups and executive group ensuring senior leaders have a better understanding of frontline practice. Development sessions with the wider partnership have been held to develop the values, visions, and priorities. Attendance, engagement, and participation in these sessions has been excellent with all partners showing a commitment to improve the outcomes for Barnsley children. The partnership identified four key priority areas (neglect, bullying and online harm, safeguarding children from risks outside the home and domestic abuse) and there has been active engagement from all partners on the sub-groups to drive forward actions.

Implementation of the new model has not been without its challenges and over the next 12 months there needs to be a clear focus on securing a permanent resource for data and performance within the business unit to enable further development of the data scorecard and establishment of a robust multi-agency audit framework. There needs to be a commitment from partners to review the funding and resources of the business unit to ensure it can deliver on its core functions.

The partnership is in a strong position for partners to work together on the reforms programme with this being seen not as a change to children's social care delivery but a wider partnership reform with collaboration, communication, and scrutiny at its core. The partnership will be central to a successful implementation.

### **Scrutiny of Section 11 assurance processes**

Being part of the section 11 process provided me with the opportunity to further increase my understanding and knowledge of Barnsley agencies, their strengths, and areas for development.

Engagement and participation in the process was good. Agencies provided their audits in a timely manner and attendance and contribution to the challenge events was high. There was a keen sense of partners wanting to learn from one another and share good practice in the group challenge event, especially around the themes of the child's voice and single agency audits. In individual agency sessions representatives were able to provide a good level of knowledge and understanding of their agency's structures and processes. They were transparent and honest in their discussions and welcomed the constructive challenge provided.

There was strong compliance across the standards. The majority of organisations provided evidence of well-established safeguarding structures and processes, with workers understanding who they needed to go to in their organisation with any safeguarding issues. There was a clear commitment to working in partnership and an awareness of the changing landscape introduced through Working Together 23. Evidence was provided of progress against the actions identified in the previous audit, demonstrating a commitment to continual improvement.

A midway review was held to assess the progress made against single agency action plans. This was a well-attended session demonstrating strong engagement and shared learning. A positive outcome was the dissemination of a child-friendly complaints leaflet, which many agencies have now adopted. There was also progress in safer recruitment practices, with the majority of partners now demonstrating compliance. The roll out of 'Signs of Safety' training was welcomed by partners as it introduces a shared language for families and practitioners. Over the next 12 months the partnership will explore the benefits of introducing a regional s.11 audit to provide a more efficient delivery model and increase shared learning.

### **Evaluation of the effectiveness of the multi-agency arrangements in response to wider harms outside the home**

In January 25 I undertook a deep dive of the effectiveness of the multi-agency arrangements in response to wider harms outside the home. This involved a review of the strategies, processes and procedures, performance data, and onsite case sampling, through observation of multi-agency meetings and sampling individual children alongside workers in the multi-agency BSafe team. My findings were received by the contextual safeguarding sub-group and executive group with the recommendations being fully accepted. The contextual safeguarding sub-group under the leadership of the DSPs are leading on the action plan.

The evaluation noted a number of strengths in the arrangements. Contextual safeguarding was identified as a key priority area for the partnership in 24/25. A well-attended contextual safeguarding sub-group is chaired by senior leaders from the local authority and the police which reports through the governance structure to the executive group. There is a commitment from senior leaders across the local authority and South Yorkshire police to develop an effective response and both partners have invested in a joint response through the co-location of the BSafe team. Strategies, procedures,

and processes are in place. There is a commitment in the management team of the BSafe service to develop an effective service that delivers positive outcomes for children and the response to harmful sexual behaviour is robust.

Workers in the bespoke BSafe team are committed to providing a good service, they are invested in the children they work with, speak about them with warmth and want the best for them. The family intervention practitioners work hard to develop relationships with families and have developed tailored parenting programmes to meet the needs of these parents. They show persistence and determination to work with families to implement strategies but equally recognise where risks mean escalation is required.

Areas for development were identified. Senior leaders are committed to delivering a good service, but the strategic goals need to be reviewed, clearly identified, and agreed across the three partners. Some of the children identified as being at risk of exploitation had unmet health and educational needs. As a result of these findings education and health partners are reviewing their contribution. A review of the role and remit of the BSafe team is underway to ensure the delivery model is fit for purpose and is leading to better outcomes for children. Further work is underway to streamline multi-agency meetings to ensure information and intelligence is shared ensuring the right children are being identified for intervention at the right time. A bespoke data scorecard and audit programme is in development to provide senior leaders with an improved understanding of need. Training is available to all practitioners through the BSCP training calendar, but a review is planned in 25/26 to evidence its impact of increasing the skills and confidence of the workforce.

Next steps – during 25/26 I will provide scrutiny of the progress being made against the recommendations.

#### **Evaluation of the effectiveness of initial child protection conferences.**

The partnership engagement task and finish group asked me to scrutinise the effectiveness of partner attendance, engagement and contribution to multi-agency decision making and planning for children. Phase one, to look specifically at initial child protection conferences took place in this reporting period.

This involved direct observation and remote case sampling of initial child protection conferences and consultation sessions with frontline practitioners. Findings have been fed back through the task group to the executive group.

My scrutiny noted a number of strengths in the process. Thresholds are being applied appropriately with the right children being brought to an initial child protection conference and the right children being made subject to a child protection plan. Parents are engaged and included in the process. Child protection chairs and conference participants work hard to ensure parents and others contribute and I saw some real sensitivity in the handling of complex family dynamics. When parents are not in attendance chairs follow this up to ensure they know what decisions have been made. Minutes from child protection conferences are clear and follow the structure of the meeting. They are translated into the child's/parents first language where needed. All the conferences sampled were quorate with good attendance from children's social care, health visitors, police and education and those practitioners provided a clear rationale for decisions based on risk.

Areas for development were identified and accepted by leaders. Although advocacy is available to children subject to child protection processes and reports are provided, the child's voice could be strengthened by advocates attending the meeting. The advocacy offer is now being reviewed. A wider representation of agencies in attendance should be explored at this initial stage to ensure plans are focussed on the primary presenting issues and practitioners are clear of the expectations of them as core group members. Reports to conference could be strengthened by authors providing clearer analysis of strengths and risks and by stating what they and their agency can contribute to planning. Conferences need to focus on the analysis and planning and shift away from the heavy emphasis on information gathering. The 'Signs of Safety' model is being rolled out and needs to be a priority for conference chairs. Where this is being well used the shift was starting to be seen.

The BSCP training for child protection conferences/core groups is being reviewed and re-launched with all agencies ensuring it is part of the induction process.

Next steps – during 25/26 I will provide scrutiny of multi-agency engagement in core groups and child protection planning.

### **Future planning**

The next 12 months will bring significant changes to how services are delivered through the children's social care reforms. The partnership will provide governance and oversight of the arrangements. I welcome being part of Barnsley's journey as the independent scrutineer. Funding remains a challenge, and I will work alongside the scrutineers in South Yorkshire to ensure adequate resources and funding is secured. Alongside sub-group chairs I am identifying the areas for my deep dive scrutiny and in 25/26 I will look at the multi-agency arrangements for responding to children at risk of child sexual abuse and domestic abuse. The voice of children is central to our work, and over the next 12 months I want to develop a participation strategy.

## Inspections

### Ofsted Inspecting Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) Focused Visit

In November 2024, Ofsted conducted a focused visit as part of the inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS), examining the placement and decision-making for older children aged 14 and over in Barnsley.

Since the previous ILACS inspection in September 2023, we have continued to build on the 'Good' outcome following on from Ofsted recommendations through ongoing investment, dedication, and commitment from our partnership and children's workforce. This progress was acknowledged by Ofsted during their latest visit, as they observed that senior leaders have further enhanced the quality and impact of social work practice for older children in care.

Headlines:

#### Manager Oversight and Supervision

- Manager oversight is comprehensive; the Legal Gateway process oversees the effective plans for children with clear recording and oversight; with children later understanding why decision were made.
- Supervision was found to be regularly and generally is strong with SMART actions created; most supervisions were comprehensive and thorough.
- Homeless 16–17-year-olds; managers write sensitively to young people to inform them of their plans once agreed, providing individualised support.
- Senior leaders have implemented joint reviews of Looked After Children (LAC) and Education Health Care Plans (EHCP). These reviews, when conducted, effectively address the needs of the children involved.

#### Arrangements for Unaccompanied Asylum- Seeking Children

- Interpreters are used and children's plans are translated so children understand.
- Children are well supported by social workers and personal advisors from point of arrival
- Accommodation is sought that is appropriate to the child's age.
- Those in foster homes, are in homes which are meeting their religious and cultural needs
- Children are engaged in planning and review meetings.
- Social workers are invested in supporting young people following their traumatic experiences and work to support young people's ambitions and aspirations.

#### Impact of Leaders

- Senior Leaders have a clear vision towards older children in their care.
- Corporate Parenting Panel members and partners work effectively together as strong corporate parents.
- Continued financial investment in new homes, 16+ plus provision transforming the experiences for children in care.
- Development of the workforce through the practice development hub.
- Caseloads for social workers are manageable, and social workers feel supported and recognised in their work.

### Quality Assurance and Audit

- A comprehensive approach to audit and quality assurance integrated as a whole system approach.
- Continued investment in training and development of auditors.
- Closing the learning loop is well established and includes feedback to those involved.
- More family feedback is required to better understand services, interventions and children's lived experiences.

### Decision Making and Thresholds

- Reasons for decisions were clearly recorded and written to the child explaining reasons for decisions made.
- Children's wishes and feelings are clear in plans and reviews.
- Children are supported to attend and participate in reviews.
- Placement wishes are listened to, and placements mostly meet children's needs
- Social workers complete plans with partners leading to multi- agency actions and timebound activities.
- Social workers plan for the long-term needs of children.

### Quality of Care

- Children are seen regularly by social workers.
- Social worker visits are purposeful and are well recorded with the child in mind.
- Children outside of Barnsley are visited regularly.
- Foster Carers are providing support for family time.
- The Virtual school is an advocate for children and works with other Local Authorities.
- Mockingbird provides a network of extended support which benefits everyone, not just children.
- Provision of CAMHS and dental health is a challenge for out of area residential placements.

### Care Planning, Independent Reviews, Oversight and Assessments

- Children in Care reviews are timely. Virtual School attends and children are encouraged to participate with the support of independent advocates.
- Care planning and reviews are mostly thorough with positive outcomes.
- Children in unregistered accommodation have increased levels of oversight with clear direction from managers and Independent Reviewing Officers through weekly visits and reviews.
- Assessments consider wider family members.
- Independent Reviewing Officers have a clear footprint in older children's casefiles, regular visits and checking in with social workers regarding case planning.
- Mid way reviews are timely and progressive.

Ongoing service improvement is being continuously monitored by CSC's Directorate Management Team, which collaborates with the priorities of the Partnership. Additionally, this process aligns with the governance recommendations of the Safeguarding Children's Partnership.

### Ofsted Inspecting Local Authority Family Hub Nurseries

In September 2024, two of the Local Authority Family Hub's nurseries were inspected. Central Family Hub nursery received an Outstanding grade, which they have maintained from their previous inspection and North Family Hub nursery was graded as Good.

*"The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts the children's interests first."*

Each setting has a continuous improvement plan to further develop service provision, overseen by each setting's Senior Management Team.

## Ofsted Inspecting Local Authority Children's Homes

Spring Lane has been rated 'Good' as of June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024, reinforcing our commitment to providing the highest quality of care and support to help Barnsley children and young people thrive.

## HM Inspection of Probation Services

Barnsley and Rotherham Probation Delivery Unit received an overall rating of 'Inadequate' following this year inspection and the report was published in October 2024. The inspection focused on the effectiveness of probation service work with adults and children

Whilst leadership had steered the unit to a stable position, staffing challenges were noted to impact on the quality of work to assess and manage people on probation and to keep people safe. Although reassuringly information on domestic abuse and child safeguarding was routinely requested and embedded into practice, however it was not used often enough to adequately inform risk assessments and planning.

The inspection highlighted strengths in that positive steps had been taken to improving external relationships with safeguarding partners and a clear recognition of the importance of multi-agency collaboration.

Recommendations of the Ofsted Inspection included:

### Recommendations

1. Improve the quality of work to assess, plan for manage and review risk of harm.
2. Analyse information on domestic abuse and child safeguarding sufficiently to inform the quality of assessment and management of people on probation.
3. Clearly communicate strategic priorities and ensure these are understood across the whole workforce.
4. Improve the use of interventions and services available for people on probation to manage desistance and the risk of harm.
5. Recruit a deputy head of service to reduce workloads of senior leaders and provide oversight to improve quality of the unit.

### Action Undertaken

In response to the inspection, the PDU has prioritised improvements in safeguarding children and young people through the following actions:

- Continued emphasis on mandatory safeguarding training for all staff, with a focus on child protection, thresholds, and multi-agency escalation.
- Improved quality assurance processes, including regular audits of cases involving children and families, implementation of line managers completing internal audits using (RCAT – Regional case audit tool) with this now increasing to a minimum expectation of 4 per Practitioner per year from the previous 1 per year).
- Continued emphasis on strengthening engagement with Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership, including attendance at strategy meetings and participation in multi-agency audits.

## His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary Fire Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

HMICFRS has recently concluded the latest round of PEEL inspection within South Yorkshire Police. The inspection assesses how well forces prevent crime, respond to the public, investigate offences, and protect vulnerable people. Inspectors also examine leadership, workforce development, and ethical standards within the force, through a significant process of review and evidence gathering from across the organisation. The force looks forward to receiving the report to further support its service delivery for the public of South Yorkshire and work within the partnership.

## Strategic Priorities 2024- 25

### Neglect

**Why:** Neglect is the most frequent reason for referrals to the Integrated Front Door. Over 50% of Barnsley's Child Protection plans due to neglect. We recognise there is a clear distinction between poverty and neglect and that both are major adverse childhood experiences in young people's lives that can affect their futures.

**Our aim** is for intervention to be provided at the earliest opportunity, to ensure that professionals work together positively to achieve the best outcomes for children. We aim to provide the right level of intervention to families from the right lead professionals, resulting in a reduction in referrals and re-referrals for families with a social care history.

### Activities/Deliverables/What Worked Well

- Refreshed the membership for the neglect subgroup to continue to drive forward the workplan and priorities.
- Work has focused on improving the early identification of neglect which has identified further work on developing a neglect toolkit and screening assessment/tools for the workforce to utilise and understand neglect and how to respond and signpost into appropriate services.
- A new definition of neglect has been developed through consultation with the workforce. It has been refined to be clearer and more practical for professionals, explicitly incorporating considerations for unborn babies. The definition will be included in the toolkit to ensure neglect is recognised beyond just poor home conditions.
- Efforts have been made to improve the data collection around referral and contact data leading to a revised approach, prioritising available data from partners that can contribute to neglect.
- GCP2 training is offered to all professionals working with children in Barnsley and trained over 140 practitioners across the workforce this last year.

### Our Next Steps

- A multi- agency audit is planned for Q2, where neglect has been identified for targeted early help, or where children are in need of help or protection. Findings will inform further activity and learning across the partnership.
- Develop and roll out the neglect screening tool and toolkit that provides structured guidance for professionals working in neglect-related areas, offering practical resources for referrals, assessments, and interventions across schools, children's homes, and beyond.
- Improving the data provided from partnering agencies around neglect to contribute to the data scorecard to build a more accurate picture of need across Barnsley.
- Continue to promote the use of GCP2 as a key element of Early Help practice, to be used at the earliest opportunity as a meaningful tool to identify need.
- Investigation into the category of 'neglect' for child protection plans as a primary category to assure it is not used as a 'catch all' for other concerns.

- Strengthen joint working to ensure clear pathways between services that support families coping with absolute poverty and the impact of the cost-of-living crisis - such as housing services, schools, Early Help, family hubs and welfare support.
- Address the impact of Neglect on children's health, those missing in education and risks of harm outside the home.

### **Contextual Safeguarding**

Why: National and local reports inform us of a significant increase in all areas of on Contextual Safeguarding. We identified risk of harm outside of home as a priority in Barnsley, based on local findings.

Our aim is to improve outcomes for children and young people at risk of exploitation and harm outside of home. We aim for the partnership to be assured that we have clear governance and strategies in place, and that children and their families tell us they feel safer outside of the home. This commitment is reinforced through investment by multi- agency partners into the BSafe team and vulnerable adolescents Hub which will focus on risk in relation to contextual safeguarding.

### **Activities/Deliverables/ What Worked Well:**

Independent review of the BSafe model and to the system wide response to contextual safeguarding has been undertaken to assess impact and work is ongoing to drive the implementation of recommendations through the workplan to its subgroup and wider partners

- The police have realigned resource to the Bsafe team structure with two Detective Constables added to improve investigation capacity and complexity to support Police Constables with an experienced PVP Detective sergeant been assigned to lead the team.
- Missing Person Team has expanded from one police offer to include an additional to assist and support the valuable work on the vulnerable missing children that are at risk of exploitation.
- Partnership Intelligence reporting, a guide has been created to help partners navigate intelligence reporting with training provided. Since the delivery of the training there has being a notable increase for example in the shared intelligence around ketamine supply. This has led to warrants being executed and suspects been arrested.
- The South Yorkshire Police child referral forms have been revised to include a question for the child, with officers directed to ask this question. This change is supported by training provided by staff from the Barnsley Local Referral Unit, emphasizing the importance of listening to the child's voice. The training also focused on the identification and understanding of vulnerabilities to exploitation.
- Updated the training offer for children's social care in relation to exploitation and contextualized safeguarding. This has been rolled out to partner agencies in relation to the new CE Risk Assessment, so it is completed with each referral and to enable key agencies to review and monitor CE risk levels.
- The roll out of guidance based on national police advice, for schools and colleges, to address the issue of indecent images consensually shared between older teens of a similar age ('sexting' / 'nudes'), where there are no other concerns or safeguarding risk. It has provided an appropriate, educative response with relevant guidance of how to stay safe online.
- Development of Edge of Care Service alongside the Bsafe team.

### **Our Next Steps:**

- Implement and improvement plan following the independent review

- Review capacity and develop HSB knowledge and skills across the wider workforce, to extend the training and development offer.
- Further review of referral, assessment and intervention processes, in particular the role of the integrated front door, referral partners and assessment team in accordance with the Children's Service Reforms.
- Develop practice guidance for specific partner agencies and functions e.g. IFD, Schools, Police.
- Missing from Home Task Group to establish a more structured approach for children similar to our Mace model to establish a strategic-level meeting.
- Consider Children's Reforms within the workstreams of Contextual Safeguarding .

### **Bullying, Harassment & Online Harms**

Why: Barnsley Youth Forum and BSCP s.175 school's self-assessment audit told us that Bullying and Online Harm are consistently high areas of activity and concern. Online Harms reporting has escalated as a post-pandemic safeguarding area.

Our aims are to ensure that children and young people feel safer, are confident that bullying is addressed and know how to keep themselves safe online.

#### **Activities/ Deliverables/ What worked well:**

- 'Keeping Safe Online' booklets, created based on information gathered from students in Barnsley schools, were distributed to all schools in May 2024. Some settings fed back that they have been used in CPD and given to parents, with positive comments received.
- Joint working with 'who is your neighbour' (charity working with communities in South Yorkshire): data shared with a view to schools in Barnsley accessing their service.
- Updates have been sent reactively to school DSLs relating to new online threats (new apps and changes to the settings of current apps).

#### 'Bullying in Barnsley' Survey – October 2024

To gain an insight into the current picture of bullying in Barnsley schools (and aid the future direction of the subgroup), the group facilitated a survey for all children and young people in the borough.

- A total of 1,311 children and young people in Barnsley completed the survey, either by themselves, or as a group activity facilitated by an adult. This breaks down to 231 Primary responses, 714 Secondary responses, & 366 Post-16 responses.
- 13/77 primary schools, all 11 secondaries, 4 post-16 settings & 2 specialist provisions were represented by students offering their views.
- 95% of primary-aged children completing the survey felt mostly safe from bullying at school, with 96% knowing who to talk to if they were being bullied. 27% of primary-aged children said they had been bullied at school, with 21% saying they had not been bullied. The remaining 52% of children either said 'I don't know' (20%), or missed out the question completely, suggesting that they were unable, or unwilling, to say definitively whether they have experienced bullying or not.
- In students of secondary age, over half (55%) said that they had been bullied at secondary school. 67% felt that they had someone to talk to at school about being bullied.
- 87% of young people in post-16 settings said that they had not been bullied at college
- Of secondary and post-16 students who gave additional detail about their bullying experiences, 106 mentioned bullying having a negative impact on their mental health.

In November 2024, the BSCP business unit completed the following actions:

- Safeguarding concerns were followed up with school Designated Safeguarding Leads.
- Anonymised individual copies of responses (relating to their school) were sent via email to all DSLs / Heads. Schools were asked to update the BSCP on any action plans / work undertaken as a result.
- Anonymised data was circulated across the Partnership for internal use or service development. This was facilitated by the Safeguarding in Education Subgroup and BSCP business unit.
- Compass Be has provided a detailed report of their strategic actions in response to the data from the survey.
- At the beginning of 2025 the subgroup was refreshed, owing to the completion of the previous work plan (over the past two years). New Co-Chairs for Primary and Secondary education have joined the current Post-16 Co-Chair.

#### Our Next Steps:

- Results from the 'Bullying in Barnsley' survey will help to inform the next steps of the subgroup, as it moves into its next phase.
- Bullying, harassment and online harms will continue to be part of the group's remit, including the completion of actions & recommendations carried over from previous work (including the bullying survey).

#### Domestic Abuse

**Why:** We are committed to addressing the reality that children and young people are not just secondary witnesses to domestic abuse but are direct victims in their own right. Our priority work is aligned to The Domestic Abuse Partnership (DAP).

**Our aim:** Our aim is to ensure they receive timely, tailored support that meets their unique needs fostering recovery, protecting their wellbeing, and helping them feel safe and empowered.

#### Activities/Deliverables/ What worked Well:

- **Domestic Abuse Strategic Review**  
The domestic abuse team are leading on a comprehensive strategic review of domestic abuse in Barnsley on behalf of the DAP and will continue into the next year. The review includes an evaluation of the current support structures for children and young people. The aim is to build a clearer picture of current provision, identify service overlaps and gaps, and identify opportunities for improved coordination across agencies. The review also includes a detailed needs assessment and will inform future service provision and ensure that support is targeted, responsive, and aligned with the needs of those affected.
- **Operation Encompass**  
Work has continued this past year, and discussions are taking place regarding the integration of Operation Encompass across Early Years settings, recognising the importance of safeguarding the youngest children impacted by domestic abuse.
- **Safe and Together Training**  
Commissioned Safe and Together training for professionals within children's social care. This evidence-based model promotes child-centred approaches that prioritise keeping children safely with the protective parent, while holding perpetrators accountable for their behaviour and the harm it causes.
- **Professional Training Rollout**  
Specialist domestic abuse training, delivered by IDAS, has been commissioned for frontline

professionals, strengthening their capacity to support children and families affected by domestic abuse.

- **Therapeutic Support Services**

Our ongoing partnership with IDAS ensures the continued delivery of trauma-informed therapeutic support to children and young people through both group work and tailored one-to-one sessions.

- **Behaviour Change Programmes for Young People**

Continue to commission Cranstoun Level Up, offering targeted behaviour support and intervention programmes for young people aged 11 to 15 years.

- **Education and Prevention Initiatives**

Our collaboration with the Youth Association ensures sustained delivery of education and prevention programmes focusing on domestic abuse and violence against women and girls.

- **Youth Voice and Co-Production**

We have actively engaged with the Barnsley Youth Council to explore effective ways to involve children and young people in conversations around domestic abuse, to foster meaningful co-production and the shaping of relevant support provision.

- **Domestic Abuse Performance Framework**

Development of a new performance and reporting framework for the Domestic Abuse Partnership. The new indicators are broken down into seven key areas including a specific children and families dataset.

- **Multi-agency Domestic Abuse (MADA) Pilot**

A pilot began in January 2025 to hold a daily MADA multi-agency meeting to co-ordinate information to consider the immediate safety of the victim and their children within 48 hours of a high-risk Domestic Abuse incident and put in place appropriate plans to try and increase the level of safety.

#### **Our Next Steps:**

- **Strategic Workshop**

Following the completion of Barnsley's strategic review into domestic abuse services, the DAP will convene a multi-agency workshop. This session will present key findings and recommendations, provide a space for joint reflection, and support the collaborative re-setting of Barnsley's strategic approach and priorities. The insights gathered will directly inform the development of an updated delivery plan to better meet the needs of children, young people, and families affected by domestic abuse, ensuring alignment to the Barnsley Safeguarding Children's Partnership priorities.

- **Strategic Alignment**

Ensure our domestic abuse initiatives align with Barnsley's Great Childhood Ambition, driving forward collective aspirations for safe, nurturing, and aspirational childhoods.

- **Domestic Abuse Power BI Dashboard**

DAP is currently developing a comprehensive Power BI dashboard that will feature a detailed profile of domestic abuse. This dashboard aims to provide insightful and actionable data to better understand the scope and patterns of domestic abuse cases. By integrating various data points and visualisations, we hope to offer a clearer picture to inform decision-making and enhance support services.

- **Operational Encompass**

Continue to strengthen our partnership with South Yorkshire Police and Children's Services to support the rollout of Operation Encompass across Early Years settings.

- **Youth-Led Consultation Framework**

Continue our work with Barnsley Youth Council to amplify the lived experiences of children and young people affected by domestic abuse, co-developing a consultation approach that's accessible and empowering.

- **Ask the Question project**  
DAP to continue to fund the Ask the Question project over the next year.
- **Redesign of the domestic abuse campaign**  
The redesign of our domestic abuse campaign, "Speak up," will include a dedicated focus on children and young people (CYP). This approach aims to address the unique challenges faced by younger individuals impacted by domestic abuse and providing them with targeted resources and support. By integrating elements specifically tailored to CYP, we hope to create a more inclusive campaign that raises awareness, fosters understanding, and offers practical assistance to all affected by domestic abuse.
- **MADA pilot**  
Continue forward with MADA and look to evaluate the pilot over the next year with findings alongside the strategic review embedded further into practice.

## Education

### Section 175 Self-Assessment Audits

#### Key points / findings:

- 93 out of 94 schools completed the assurance document, covering the 2023/24 academic year.
- There was great variability in how schools completed the assurance piece document. In not addressing 100% of information requested, some schools were not confirming that these measures were in place. It is therefore recommended that a full, detailed s.175 is undertaken for 2024/25, which would reduce the scope of response, and therefore reduce the omission of information.
- 86 schools were confirmed to be fully compliant with previous individual feedback or actions.
- The BSCP's Antibullying Commitment was confirmed to be in place in 93% of schools in Barnsley (increased from 78% of schools in 2022/23).
- All 93 schools confirmed that school policies and staff training (relating to safeguarding) are fully up to date, in line with previous s.175 audits.
- Schools were asked to confirm that staff had been trained in their obligations relating to the reporting of private fostering arrangements. 58 schools (62%) confirmed this in their assurance piece narratives. Remaining schools omitted this information.
- Schools were also asked to confirm that staff had been trained and made aware of the BSCP Escalation Process for Professional Disagreements. 51 schools (55%) confirmed this in their assurance piece narratives. Remaining schools omitted this information.
- It is recommended that all 94 settings complete the next s.175 audit in full, including all schools under Multi Academy Trusts and specialist educational provisions operating in Barnsley.

Examples of best practice, found in s.175 Assurance Piece returns include:

*“Feedback from the Section 175 audit is shared within half termly safeguarding meetings so that the safeguarding Governor can ensure that actions have been completed within a timely manner, to ensure safeguarding remains at a high standard.”*

– Athersley North Primary

*“This additional [GCP2] training will further enhance capability to work alongside colleagues from external agencies. The partnerships we have fostered with these agencies have been key in promoting the well-being and support of the children and families we serve, particularly in enhancing our collaborative work with TEHSP colleagues.”*

– Churchfield Primary

### Education Representation at the Integrated Front Door (IFD)

As a result of the role Designated Safeguarding Lead education representative being embedded and integrated within the IFD, it is recognized among partner agencies and educational settings for providing a clear pathway of support and providing essential education information related to safeguarding. A key role was supporting the Educational Neglect Overview in line with the DFE guidance updates in September 2024, delivering training that has been accessed by **over 600 professionals** across numerous partner agencies as well as education.

In addition, **on average, 15-20 case discussions** are held each week to support education professionals, providing a dynamic response, preventing unnecessary escalation, and ensuring appropriate support is provided in a timely manner in relation to safeguarding children.

Impact of the role can also be demonstrated through:

- Contributing to an increased efficiency of the IFD screening process, speeding up screening and enabling action to be taken in a timelier manner.
- The presence of an education representative within the IFD ensures that inter-agency communication occurs frequently throughout the day.
- There has been established and continued input and updates through strategic, subgroups and local authority meetings which has enabled further development, whilst providing continued support and a direct line of contact to Education provisions.
- The role continues to develop and sustain trusted relationships across the sector with improvements in communication and feedback. These relationships support Barnsley in placing the needs of children at the front and centre of decision making and enable us to understand the shared roles and responsibilities of all professionals involved in children's lives .

Key feedback from professionals around Education Representation in the IFD:

*“This is a really helpful resource. One that has been much needed. Swift responses with support when needed.”*

- Primary Setting

*"The role enhances communication between those in an educational setting and the IFD. We know that good communication is crucial to safeguard children effectively and good information gathering is vital in that process. We also know that good partnership working relies on good relationships and support, all of which Kirsti absolutely provides in the IFD. What Kirsti provides leads to better outcomes for children and families within Barnsley and is an important and much needed role."*

## Barnsley Schools' Alliance

Attendance, Elective Home Education and school exclusions remain a high priority of the Alliance, and work is taking place with CEO's of academy trusts, to strengthen inclusion. The Alliance and the Education Welfare Service are working together with schools to identify students that require additional support. The Early Intervention Panel wraps services around pupils with high levels of suspension, specific resources are being placed in areas of need, and data is analysed to ensure that services and challenge are directed appropriately. Pupil and family voices are collected at the point of exclusion and EHE, which is used to influence change with leaders and encourage participation in the creation of core principles for inclusion.

Barnsley Schools Alliance is also a key member of the Barnsley Partnership's Executive Business Group to support and drive forward the priorities of the partnership.

## Elective Home Education (EHE)

The Education Welfare Service (EWS) works in partnership with schools, families and agencies to identify and understand why parents chose to electively home educate and records reasons in line with DfE guidance. They strive to ensure that all children receive a suitable education through attendance at school or otherwise and strongly believe that engagement in education provides the best possible outcomes for young people, significantly reducing their risk of harm.

Resources are focused on working with families at the earliest point of EHE to understand the reasons for choosing EHE and to swiftly remove any barriers to return to school-based learning, when this is in the best interests of the child. The service always seeks to capture the pupils voice to ensure that EHE is also their choice, and so that they understand that they can access support as they could when they were at school. Ongoing investment and continual review of practice provides oversight and understanding of those registered as EHE, with focus on the most vulnerable.

The partnership work with families and schools has resulted in **150 pupils returning to school-based education this academic year**. Continued work for the next academic year will take place in partnership with the CEO subgroup of the Barnsley School Alliance and the creation of the Every child in school Everyday plan, which has committed to reducing the number of children on the EHE register by 30% and this continue to be monitored and reported on the impact of this plan over the next academic year.

## Barnsley Virtual School

Barnsley Virtual School over this past year **has seen a 56.5% reduction in suspensions for children in care**. The use of the multi team Harms Matrix meeting, Motional and Personal Education Plan (PEP) targets, teamed with in-school support and training has enabled this. The voice of children and

young people is embedded with PEP, including statutory student voice targets. These targets are reviewed termly and where appropriate to do young people are invited into meetings to allow their voice to drive direction and change in terms of the support offered to them.

EYFS, KS1 and KS2 attendance **has improved and remains above 96%** however KS3 and KS4 attendance has declined over the last year. The Virtual School is collaborating with wider partners to address this, with a new multi team attendance workshop now in place. This allows focus on those individual students needs to be addressed with appropriate support plans and joint up working across agencies to be put in place.

The Virtual School service has also expanded the role for children with a social worker, providing in setting support for children who are subject to Child In Need and Child Protection Plans and those children who are placed within the Local Authority and in kinship care. Child voice is listened to through the work of the Learning and Engagement Mentor, who runs small group interventions, listening to the needs of students and working in collaboration with professional partners to support their wider needs in school.

## **Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Improvement Service**

The SEND improvement service continues to support children and young people across all Barnsley schools and settings.

Further investment into this service was outlined in business case and presented to cabinet.

The impact of the investment into Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) specialist teachers has been strong and positive. Data tells us where children are risk of permanent exclusion and have been supported by the SEMH specialist teachers **64% of this group are no longer at risk at the end of Spring term 2025.**

Longer term impact **shows 59% of those children and young people received no suspensions during Spring term 2025.**

Early identification continues to be a priority for the service. The percentage of SEN Support continues to rise. **13% of Children and Young People were accessing SEN Support** in Barnsley's schools at the time of the January 2025 Census. This is a **further increase from the 12.7%** reported in the October Census and well above the 10.2% reported in the 2022 Census.

This further and consistent upward rise demonstrates the important work being carried out in settings by the SEND Improvement Team. As a result of auditing more schools work has shown schools to be using quality SEN Support plans with robust SMART targets to monitor small steps and achieve progress.

As part of the local area inclusion plan priorities, the transition toolkit has been co-produced with the Barnsley community consortium and became operational in December 2024. The toolkit is available to all families, schools and settings across the borough and will support the successful transition from year group to year group and across key stages and in addition to setting transition.

Barnsley entered the Partnership for inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS project) 9 schools were selected. The schools were supported through parent carer engagement to upskill staff and ensure inclusivity of neurodiversity in their schools. The research project was hugely successful in all schools that took part.

A celebration event in March 2025 highlighted the positive impact that parent and carers had through being part of the project. As part of this project the team delivered training to over 50 lunch time

supervisors this was successful and welcomed by receiving staff and leaders. This support has been recognised regionally as best practice and was showcased at the national PINS event.

## Barnsley College

In the past year, senior leaders at Barnsley College have fostered a strong positive safeguarding culture and also being a co-chair of the Bullying, Online Harms and Harassment subgroup.

Key highlights of work over the past year include:

- Hugely successful student-focused Crime and Justice Week involving a range of external partners as keynote speakers and providing a range of workshops including Gang Prevention, Cyber Crime Escape Room, Battle of the Barristers.
- Rolling programme of Prevent focused tutorial workshops for students delivered in partnership with Barnsley Council Prevent Lead supporting students around how to stay safe from radicalisation and extremism.
- Show Racism the Red Card workshops for students.
- Participation in a multi-agency, borough-wide Safeguarding Awareness Week included daily emails from the Designated Safeguarding Lead covering key safeguarding themes such as Keeping Children Safe In Education reminders, responding to Prevent, and neglect. Additionally, Barnsley College had a market stall during the week to promote the College, including its safeguarding response
- College hosted the borough-wide BMBC and Home Office PROTECT event in January, attended by over 80 individuals representing a number of local businesses.
- Continued partnership working linked to mental and emotional wellbeing support for students with Barnsley talking Therapies, Mind, Compass, IDAS, CAMHS, BSARCS, BRV, SYEDA.
- Over 1,000 students have accessed safeguarding and/or health and wellbeing support in college including general advice, crisis support, emotional regulation support, 1:1 interventions, early help and statutory interventions.

College gathers the voice of young people through various forums and support through the pastoral team. The impact the safeguarding work has had on the lives and experiences for young people is as follows:



### 3. ARE WE MAKING PROGRESS ON PROTECTING CHILDREN?

#### Children's Social Care

The Integrated Front Door (IFD) continues to foster improved multi-agency collaboration, promotes earlier intervention, and delivers more proportionate responses to concerns about children and families, through enhanced professional dialogue.

The IFD is the gateway for children into the Children's Social Care Service and as such there is constant high demand and additional pressures associated with the required statutory timescale for screening all Contacts/Referrals and making timely outcome decisions.

The emphasis is not simply on the identification of cases where the threshold for a statutory social care intervention is met but increasingly on early intervention and prevention, aiming to identify needs and provide support before issues escalate. As a result, there is a higher number of referrals for children with emerging needs where the IFD provides advice and guidance as well as direct access to early help provision.

	2023/2024	2024/2025	% Change
<b>Contacts</b>	<b>10006</b>	<b>8498</b>	<b>-15.10%</b>
<b>Contacts advice and guidance</b>	<b>7767</b>	<b>9022</b>	<b>+16.20%</b>
<b>Total Demand</b>	<b>17773</b>	<b>17520</b>	<b>-1.40%</b>

A notable development over the past 12 months has been the further increased presence and influence of Early Help professionals within the IFD. This has further strengthened the ability to triage concerns at the earliest opportunity and to identify families that can benefit from early intervention without the need for a statutory social care response. The integration of Early Help into the IFD process ensures a more holistic understanding of each family's context and the identification of protective factors, helping to avoid unnecessary escalation and promoting the principle of the right help, at the right time.

Additional highlights over the year include:

- Demand remains consistently high, and a significant reduction is unlikely in the foreseeable future as is the nature of operating a single front door.
- Ongoing collaboration with Partners has focused on improving threshold understanding and referral quality, resulting in fewer returned requests. Referrers report feeling more supported and valued through this approach, which in turn encourages continued professional dialogue and trust in the system.
- The Triage Service emphasizes a "curious" approach at the first point of contact to limit unnecessary full screenings.
- The conversational approach continues to enhance information gathering at the initial contact stage. These conversations provide opportunities to explore appropriate thresholds and help referring professionals understand whether statutory intervention is required or if the concern is best addressed through Early Help or community-based support.
- This approach facilitates the collection of richer information from referrers, reducing delays caused by written submissions requiring clarification or follow-ups.
- Additional staff have been assigned to telephone duty to provide a more responsive service.
- Resources in the Front Door have been reconfigured, with an increased number of practitioners allocated to the Triage Service.

2024/2025	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<b>Contacts</b>	745	747	772	723	601	664	803	710	652	706	634	741
<b>Contacts advice and guidance</b>	723	752	621	773	684	651	961	799	644	953	734	727
<b>Total Demand</b>	1468	1499	1393	1496	1285	1315	1764	1509	1296	1659	1368	1468

The strengthened triage function over the last year has ensured children and families receive the right service at the right time, improving outcomes by:

- Reducing unnecessary statutory assessments.
- Preventing escalation of need.
- Building resilience through proportionate, preventative support.
- Audits continue to inform us that effective and timely management decision-making is evident on children's files leading to increased consistency in the application of thresholds.

In October 2024 the IFD moved to newly repurposed Police and Partnership building created in Wombwell Police Station. The collocating of all the partnership agencies has been a key to facilitating early conversations, sharing knowledge and expertise to make early assessments and decisions on best next steps for any child referred into the service.

## Children In Need

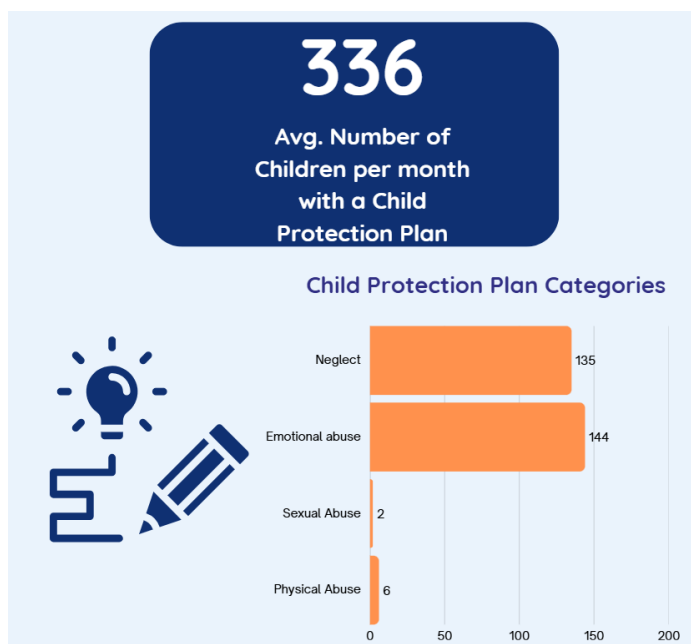
The number of children who are open to Children's Social Care has remained generally consistent over the last year.

The number of children with an open Child in Need Plan has decreased across the year. This is reflective of the work being completed in Children's Social Care and Targeted Early Help to ensure that intervention is appropriate and at the right threshold, and that escalations and de-escalations into and out of social care are robust.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>2024/2025</b>	525	472	526	471
<b>2023/2024</b>		521	456	466

## Child Protection Conferences

The number of children subject to child protection plans varies each month and is in line with national trends. On the 31 March 2025, there were **288 children subject to child protection plans compared to 365 the previous year a decrease of 24%**. This contrasts with the previous two years, which has previously seen an increase.



There has been **457 child protection plans successfully ended in 2024/2025** following a reduction of risk and increased safety for young people and **378 new protection plans have commenced.**

Neglect and emotional abuse are the primary reasons for children being placed under child protection plans. Efforts have been made across the partnership to implement the Neglect Strategy through the partnership priorities which addresses educational neglect and wider contributing factors. Focused work this year has also included work with the partnership task and finish group on improving attendance at core groups and

conferences. This approach ensures that appropriate individuals and services participate, and a balanced assessment of risk and protection is achieved to ensuring the right decisions are made for children and young people.

There is a concerted effort in the service to ensure that the child's voice is heard. Conference chairs ensure that the child's voice and their lived experience is at the centre of all conferences. Barnardo's advocacy service offers support to children in protection plans and **311 children used the service during the year.** They develop child friendly child protection plans and share these with children to ensure they understand the concerns and what support is in place to protect them.

## Children in Care (CIC), Children Looked After (CLA) & Care Leavers

- The number of Children in Care **has continued to reduce during 2024/25**, at the end of March 2025 there were **367 looked after children.** This continued reduction has been due to the continued focus on promotion of permanency planning through Special Guardianship Orders or Child Arrangement Orders and the rehabilitation homework completed when it has been assessed positively for children and young people to return to parents care.
- Greater use of the Public Law Outline process is ensuring that care proceedings are used in circumstances when only necessary and in the coming months it is hoped a further impact will be seen following the launch and growth of the edge of care service.
- The number of Care Leavers supported by Future Directions we have seen a continued growth in young people open to service, this is a combination of the timely joint allocation of young people when turning 16 and qualifying for service and the growing number of young people remaining involved with service post 18.
- Our Future Directions (Care leaving Service) have strengthened relationship with colleagues in Berneslai homes as part of the Care Leaver Accommodation project and young people are now being supported effectively across the two service to move into independence when the time is right for them. Focus remains and plans are being progressed in relation to

developing Barnsley's own 16+ semi-independent accommodation; this will enable better and more intensive support mechanisms for our more vulnerable young people in the period prior to them reaching 18 and for a period of time post turning 18, if needed.

- Our Local Offer for Care Leavers have been updated to include our increased offer of housing provision for Care Leavers and will be further revised in the next 6-9 months.
- Barnsley is part of One Adoption South Yorkshire. The numbers of children in Barnsley **adopted in 2024/25 decreased to 19 from 25 the previous year**, this demonstrates that the number of children identified as being in the adoption process as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 permanence through adoptions has been achieved.
- As of 30 April 2025, there were **16 children subject to Placement Orders**. For Barnsley in 24/25 **100% of our children subject to Adoption were placed within One Adoption South Yorkshire and there were no placement disruptions**, which demonstrates the strength of matching children with adopters who can meet all of their needs. This is a really strong overall performance and demonstrates the benefits of the regional adoption process in place.

## Fostering (Mainstream Support & Supervision, Recruitment of Foster Carers and Kinship Care)

The service maintains a strong network of **130 foster carers** who provide love and care for our children in care population at a time when they need this the most.

These families offer a range of support, including permanent (long-term) placements, short-term care, and respite care for disabled children. Additionally, Barnsley has successfully implemented **five Mockingbird hub** home carers, a model designed to deliver enhanced support and stability for fostering families, and we have 5 hub home foster carers who support these 5 constellations. The most recent of these constellations was developed in this reporting year.

As of 31st March 2025, **(74%) are thriving** in family-based care environments, demonstrating the local authority's commitment to providing nurturing homes for children.



**229 of the children in care population are placed in fostering households**, with 69.5% of these children benefiting from Fostering Barnsley provision. This demonstrates the local authority's dedication to placing children within their own communities and fostering environments that support their growth and well-being, close to their families and networks in the community they know well.

The remaining **30.5% of children are placed within Independent Foster Care Association (IFA)** provisions, highlighting Barnsley's capacity to address a wide variety of needs while maintaining strong collaborative relationships that ensures the majority of children in care experience life within family-based environments.

**In the reporting year 24/25, we assessed 64 Regulation 24**, temporary approved foster carers. Many of these carers continued to look after children outside of care through Special Guardianship Orders (SGO) or Child Arrangement Orders (CAO) when returning home was not an option.

Additionally, there has been a significant **increase in children returning to their parents, with 33% of children leaving care for this reason**. This highlights the local authority's efforts to ensure children live with their parents when it is safe to do so. If living with parents is not possible, we strive to place **children with their kin, which was achieved for 58% of the children in care during the year**.

## Recruitment

To further bolster recruitment and retention outcomes, there has been a pioneering effort to modernise and rebrand Fostering in Barnsley. Resulting in:

- Initial Inquiries: **73 inquiries** were recorded, an increase of **23 compared to the prior year**, showcasing heightened interest in fostering.
- Home Visits: **55 home visits** were conducted, reflecting **an increase of 29**, underlining significant engagement with potential foster carers.
- Applications: **31 fostering applications were submitted, a rise of 18 from the previous year**, demonstrating a growing commitment among prospective carers.
- Assessments: **20 assessments were completed**, with some ongoing into the next reporting year, ensuring a continued pipeline of foster carers.
- New Fostering Families: **15 new fostering families were approved by the foster panel**, complemented by 16 applications in assessment and 4 new enquiries to launch 2025/26.



## Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Barnsley LADOs have continued to embed effective processes to keep children safe from harm. The service has faced some challenges over the past year with internal resourcing and further changes in the way that LADO referrals and enquiries are managed by the Safeguarding service.

As a result, this has now included the implementation of a duty system supported by the Child Protection Conference Chairs and whilst this is still in the process of being embedded, this ensures that there are several practitioners who understand the LADO process rather than this being isolated to one or two individuals only.

A new LADO referral form has recently been developed and rolled out. Whilst this is still in its infancy this allows all referrals and enquiries to be recorded centrally by Business Support and mirrors the process in place with the LADO service in neighbouring authorities.

The LADO has continued to develop relationships with key partners, which has included attending the Designated Safeguarding Leads Forum and training, alongside delivering 30 minute briefings to our partners within the South Yorkshire Police, BMBC HR department and the wider partnership.

	Advice (Tier 1)	Referrals (Tier 2 and Tier 3)	Total Contacts
2024-2025	411	198 (54 tier 2 and 144 tier 3)	609
2023-2024	371	144	515
2022-2023	195	126	321

The above figures demonstrate an **increase of 18% from last year of matters referred to LADO** in total, due to greater awareness of the role and increased LADO availability.

An increase of **10% of matters from the previous year** which are recorded as **advice only** and did not meet the threshold or criteria for a referral and an **increase of 38% in matters** that meet threshold for a referral that are **managed at Tier 2 or Tier 3**.

The most significant rise in referrals is due to LADO now recording matter that fall within Tier 2 as a referral (*'incident or concern which might require logging with LADO but will be 'No Further Action'*) rather than as an advice matter (Tier 1) to ensure consistency with the LADO threshold criteria as set out in the National LADO Network.

The continued increase of (Tier 1) advice matters suggests that the awareness of the service and professional curiosity is continuing to increase, along with more cases are being brought to the attention of the LADO at an early stage.

There is a concerted effort to ensure that the child's voice is heard in the allegations management process. It is the role of the LADO to ensure that there is an accurate account provided by the child - whether this is taken by the employer of the setting where the subject works, a police officer or social worker. There is also increased focus to ensure that children and young people are given age-appropriate feedback about what action has been taken in relation to their concern.

## Family Hubs & Early Help

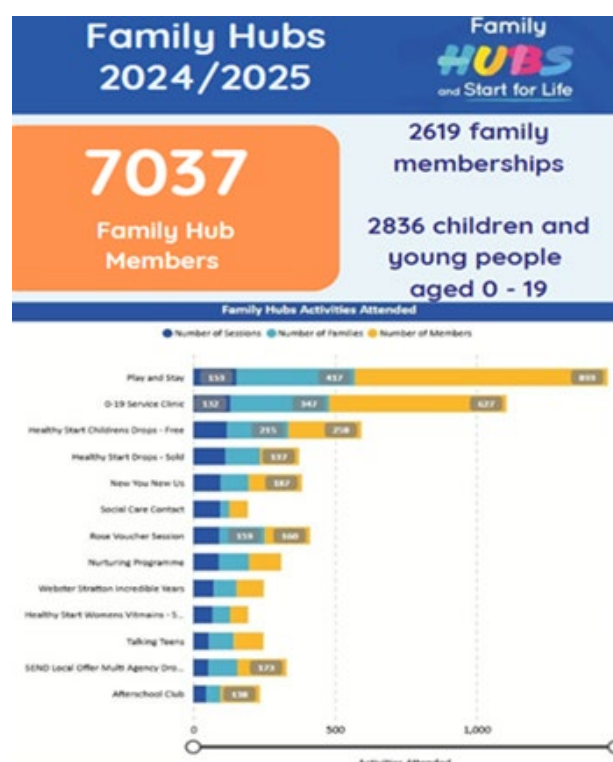
Throughout 2024/2025 BMBC has continued to make good progress on their family hubs transformation journey in line with the [Family Hub and Start for Life Programme](#). There are six designated family hubs (one located in each area council) alongside the opening of the town centre hub located in Market Kitchen and the online virtual family hub. A highlight this year is the family hubs festival, bringing together services and support. Here is a link to the highlight [video](#).

The family hubs offer continues offering evidence-based parenting interventions such as the antenatal parenting group 'Welcome to the World' with the most attended programme being 'Talking Teens'. **A total of 1977 parent education sessions** were attended by families in the year.



A total of **11, 034 sessions of family hubs and start for life activities** were attended in 2024/25. Families attending these sessions benefit from enhancing their parent-child relationship, providing opportunities for children to improve their communication and social skills. Families are also able to gain support and advice from family hubs practitioners and navigators, utilising the early help conversation tool to capture the voice of all family members including the voice of the child.

Work with partnering and commissioned agencies has continued and over the last year with the launch of a sleep helpline to support families (as of part of sleep pathway model for Barnsley) and commissioning Light Peer Support to work with parents and carers experiencing perinatal mental health challenges.



## 1001 Day Team

The 1001 Days Team consists of **5 Advanced Early Help Support Workers** within Barnsley's Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme, supporting mothers, fathers, and or primary carers who are currently pregnant, or have a child under the age of 2 years. Over the last year the team have supported **80 families to:**

- Strengthen the relationship between a parent and their baby.
- Build parenting skills and confidence.
- Improve low-level mental health and wellbeing needs throughout the perinatal period. (during pregnancy, after the birth, until the baby is 2 years old).

The 1001 day team also provides additional support to families via delivery of evidence-based programmes, including Triple P Baby to prepare parents for a positive transition to parenthood, and Video Interaction Guidance (VIG) intervention where practitioners use videos to capture moments of connection between a parent and their baby. This has been delivered to over **50 families**.

The team promotes awareness and destigmatization of perinatal mental health and parent-infant relationships through activities like the weekly 'Mums Understanding Mums' sessions, Barnsley Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Conference, ASOS Health and Wellbeing Event, and multi-agency team meetings. Future plans include developing postnatal mental health and wellbeing workshops in collaboration with Talking Therapies.



## Case study

The family were referred into the 1001 days team from the TEHSP; JM has suffered with depression and anxiety for most of her adult life and needed some support moving forward with the arrival of a new baby. She also has Fibromyalgia, which impact on her physical abilities. The birth of LM was traumatic- JM needed an emergency C-Section which meant she was very limited on what she could do after birth. JM is separated from the dad of her new baby and has said the relationship with him has been difficult.

The team delivered Triple P baby 1:1 at home with JM, signposted to New You New Us, and conducted joint home visits with the health visitor and Targeted Early Help Practitioner. JM was also signposted to parenting puzzle, nurturing programme, sleep success, and JM has signed up to 2 of the family hub programmes so far

A referral for an older child in the family was made to branching minds and the 0-19 team for further support regarding emotional regulation and anxieties.

JM was already attending Talking Therapies which was on hold, but she is now going to start back at these sessions and is also attending a pain clinic and physio for her long-term physical health conditions.

### Parent feedback:

*"I don't feel alone anymore as a parent. I feel like I know what I need to know to go for any other support or help or if I have any questions. I feel more confident in my ability to be a parent now and in the future. I feel less anxious in general. I feel more positive about getting help because I really feel like I've been listened to and understood, and the feedback and help as reflected that. I feel happier in general."*

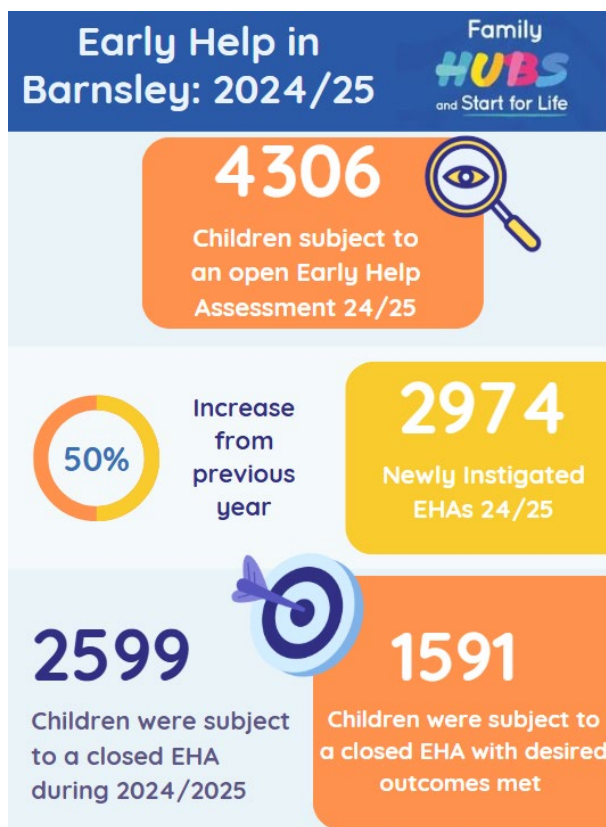
## Early Help Navigation

The Early Help Navigation team is based within Barnsley Hospital and works alongside the Hospital Healthy Lives Team, engaging with children, young people and families where it is assessed by hospital workers that they would benefit from early help support and access to services through effective signposting and referral.

The team works across different hospital departments providing early help training to upskill the hospital workforce. **In 2024/2025 the team received 140 referrals** from hospital staff requesting support for families and the team itself has had **direct contact with 909 families whilst working in the hospital**.

The impact of their work has been:

- Intervening early rather than families needing statutory support at a later stage.
- Enabling a seamless transition of support and continuity of care into the communities.
- Improving on short-term health outcomes and the need for health care services by addressing social, financial and another wide health issues for families.
- Providing ongoing support to families has reduced the chance of a child or young person returning to the emergency department.



## Early Help Assessment (EHA)

Our new Early Help Assessment was launched in December 2024, aligning with the Signs of Wellbeing and Safety model that has been integrated across children's services. By March 2025, **over 400 practitioners** have received training through an extensive support programme offered alongside updates to our online early help practitioner toolkit.

Whilst the number of children subject to an Early Help Assessment remains roughly the same as last year, **we have seen a 50% increase from last year in newly instigated** Early Help Assessments been undertaken and a high number of assessments closed with desired outcomes met.

There has been a sustained increase again this year in the number of schools initiating EHA's which accounted for **44% of all EHAs opened during the year**.

This outcome is due to the implementation of the new assessment this year, the development of new training to support practitioners, and the work conducted by the Early Help Development Officers in assisting frontline workers in various settings in improving data and support with the assessment process.

Alongside improvements made to how early help assessment activity is recorded and monitored, there has been a newly created Dashboard that includes data quality performance measures and is used across the partnership. This dashboard has been used effectively to focus efforts on undertaking a data cleansing exercise of those Early Help Assessments being opened for 2 years or more which has resulted in gaining a more accurate reflection of the number of EHA's that are still active, and the number of children having the right support in place with family network plans.

## Supporting Families

Supporting Families focuses on providing help to vulnerable families with multiple / complex needs to prevent escalation into crises.

In 2024/25, **3294 families were identified that could be attached to the programme** (through meeting 3 of the 10 key support principles for eligibility). Of these families, **735 were recorded as having positive outcomes** which exceeded the target allocated. This resulted in a £588,000 payment being claimed, which will be re-invested to help more families in future.

## Targeted Early Help

Overt the last year the Targeted Early Help Service have implemented clear step-down processes within their practice, using a conversational approach between Targeted Early Help and Social Care, this ensures that families receive the right support without delay, with clear actions identified to ensure families are able to achieve their goals.

As a result, during 2024/2025 there was **2343 contacts** into the Targeted Early Help Service and **1498 families were helped by either a Targeted Early Help Support or Targeted Youth Support**. This support offered to families **has increased by 17% this year**.

The service has also implemented a QR code for feedback upon completion of their work, requesting both adults and young people to complete it. This ensures that the work meets the needs of the family and identifies potential areas for improvement.

*Our TEHSP has been working with our family for only a short amount of time and in that time she has been the best thing that could've happened to us in terms of the support our family has needed, from the first day of meeting myself and the boys she has just understood exactly what's going on and has been there whenever I've needed her, she has supported me to make sense of how I'm feeling, given reassurance and understanding.*

*She is working with me to understand my child's emotions and needs work, and she does this in such a clear and supportive way like she is his voice, she has had visited him school and he has really enjoyed this time and looks forward to her coming in. I have spent the last 18 months in despair and getting more and more stuck in a rut trying to meet my child and my own needs but for the first time in what feels like forever with her support I finally feel like it will be ok, and a huge weight has been lifted. Her positive, bright, happy personality and all her knowledge are everything we have needed to work through this.*

## 0-19 Public Health Nursing Service (PHNS)

The Public Health Nursing Service delivers the Healthy Child Programme (HCP), offering every child, young person and family an evidence-based programme of interventions.

The service collaborates with key multi-agency partners, as well as serving as a partner within the IFD, sharing health information from various health providers. The team have provided **173 updates for children and young people** who were discussed at MACE and in March 2025, **100% of Barnsley children living in Barnsley** who were looked after received their review health assessment on time, compared to March 2024 when this was 45%.

In February the safeguarding team have worked in partnership with the local community supermarket to develop and implement hygiene packs for young people from Year 6 to Year 11, as this age group generally enters puberty.

These hygiene packs were developed in response to a hidden need identified by the partnership plus team, often where financial constraints were present, larger family households, and neglect factors which made buying hygiene products not a

*"I've always had to share with my brothers and sisters."*

priority. Since the hygiene packs were made available in March between 10-20 bags have been provided to young people and the impact has been positive. This work will continue into the next year.



## Youth Justice Service (YJS)

First Time Entrants have remained stable in 2024/2025 and comfortably within the service corporate target. Annual re-offending rate **has increased**, however challenges faced have been within this being a volatile and dynamic cohort in terms of children involved. Crucially, this year YJS have been able to make **significant progress** in developing partnership strategies to address reoffending and have celebrated the success of the Turnaround Prevention programme with a **mere 2.46% reoffending rate, based on a cohort of 122 children.**

Victim work has continued to be highly effective, ensuring we reduce risks to victims and repair harm.

Through the development of our Violence Tactical Group, we have been capturing numbers of violence offending and those that also commit further violent offences.

### Youth Justice Service 2024/25

103 victims of youth crime were contacted and there was engagement rate of 92%



40 direct (face-to-face meetings between victim and young person) benefitting 34 victims and 28 children

142 indirect restorative processes supported 81 victims and 71 young people

**728**

hours of reparation have been attended for young people to make amends

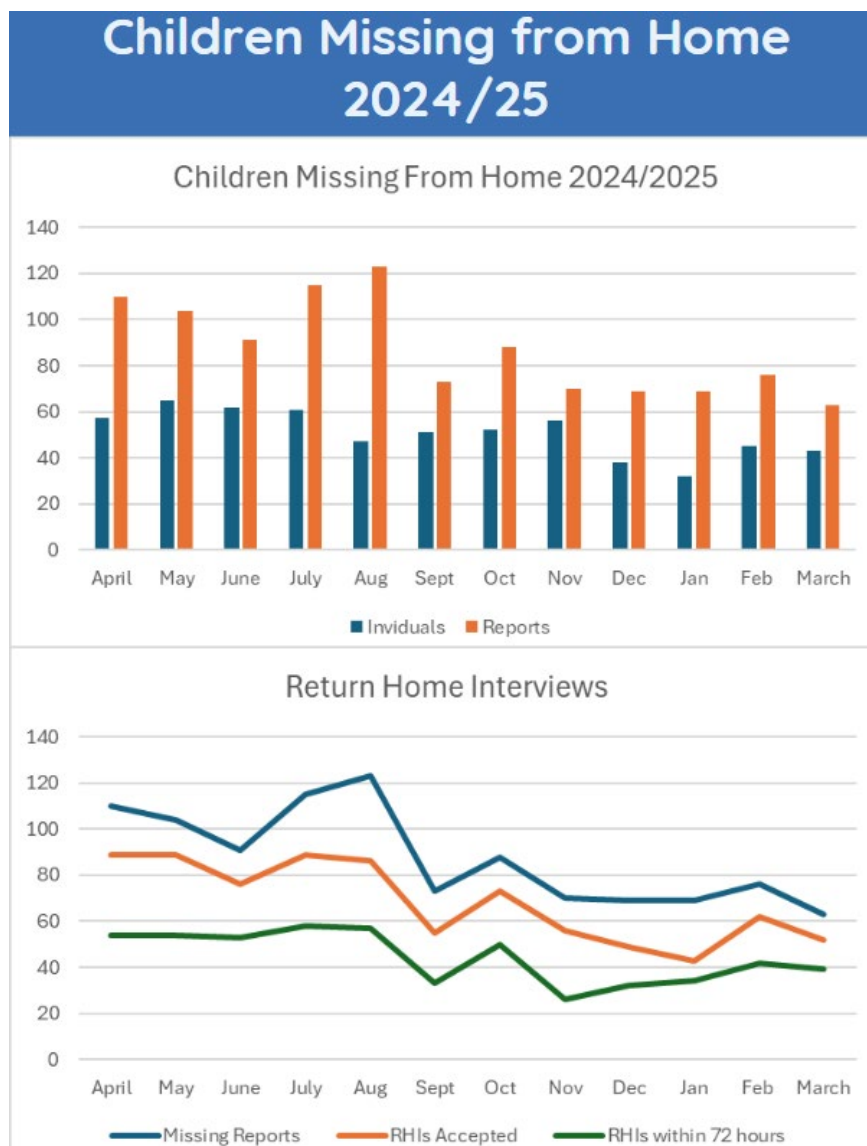
52 victims were signposted to on-going support after direct intervention

## Missing from Home (MFH) & Return Home Interviews (RHI)

The Targeted Youth Support Service offers an impartial Return Home Interview to young people who go missing from home.

The number of young people reported missing remains relatively consistent with some seasonal variation. **80 % of young people accepted a RHI** and **64% of these were completed within 72 hours**. Factors affecting the 72-hour window can be where a child/young person being in custody at the time or delayed availability of the young person.

The RHI Team work closely with SYP in multi- agency daily briefings, multi- agency child exploitation (MACE) and contextual safeguarding meetings to identify local themes around missing children and support tactical responses based on intelligence and information.



# Barnsley's Safeguarding Landscape 2024-2025



Children Missing from Home

April- June: 148  
July - Sept: 136  
Oct - Dec: 133  
Jan - March: 116

408



Child Victims of Incidents with an 'Online Indicator' (April - March)



## South Yorkshire Police (SYP)

SYP and BSCP have established a quarterly report aligned with this year's strategic priorities. The report provides data on children and young people in Barnsley affected by child exploitation, sexual abuse, online harm, and domestic abuse. It aims to create an accurate overview of children at risk in the borough and guides the efforts of schools and multi-agency teams, including the Integrated Front Door, and the BSafe Team, who assist children at risk of harm outside the home.

### Police Data: Online Harms

Data provided for child victims of online harm has shown a decrease from the previous year, **with 408 'cyber-enabled' crime incidents** recorded against individuals under 18 years old for the period of April 2024 to March 2025. It is important to treat this data with caution due to potential duplication of incidents. This suggests that the use of

technology in crimes against young people may be greater than the bar chart indicates. Efforts are underway to enhance the overall robustness of the data.

	April-June	July-Sept	Oct-Dec	Jan-March
Exploitation	2	0	7	3
Sexual Abuse	139	102	121	113
Sexual Exploitation	10	10	6	2

Incidents with Child Victims Reported to SYP April-March

### Police Data: Domestic Abuse

The average monthly number of domestic abuse investigations involving at least one child in the household has decreased from 235 in 2023/2024 to **142 in 2024/2025**. While this improvement is positive, it still indicates that many children and young people are potentially exposed to domestic abuse and continues to be a strategic priority for the partnership.

### Police Data: Exploitation & Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse and child exploitation remain important safeguarding issues. Most victims of child sexual exploitation are girls, while boys are more often victims of criminal exploitation, such as county lines. An audit in August 2024 identified incorrect recording of CSE keywords in police

142 per month:

Average Number of Domestic Abuse Investigations with a Child in the Household (2024/2025)

10 per month:

Average Number of Child Neglect Investigations

data. Since then, weekly monitoring has led to a reduction seen in quarter 3 due to the close and more accurate reporting.

DSL Forum, Barnsley MBC and South Yorkshire Police are trialling a joint protocol to ensure a consistent and child-centred approach to reported incidents of children and young people who have shared nude or semi-nude images with peers. This has included the roll out of guidance based on national police advice, for schools and colleges, to address the issue of indecent images consensually shared between older teens of a similar age ('sexting' / 'nudes'), where there are no other concerns or safeguarding risk. It has provided an appropriate, educative response with relevant guidance of how to stay safe online.

### Police Data: Neglect

Police data shows an average number of **10 investigations per month**. Following internal SYP training for recording neglect, the police report numbers are now a more accurate picture within Barnsley. Neglect remains one of the main reasons that children in Barnsley are placed on child protection plans and triangulation of shared data helps the Partnership to understand the breadth and impact of one of its main strategic priorities in the year ahead.

### South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue (SYFR)

In the year 2024/25, South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue (SYFR) **received 24 referrals under the 'Think Family' initiative**. This process addresses children and young people who exhibit a fascination with fire. SYFR conducts a home fire safety visit as part of this initiative, providing comprehensive fire safety advice. Subsequently, a Community Safety Officer engages with the child or young person at their school to educate them about the dangers associated with fire.

Work has continued within schools with the SYFR visiting 24 primary schools since September 2024 offering interventions across all year groups around fire safety and keeping children safe.

Information is shared with families, and they are encouraged to make use of the school portal via the National Fire Chief Council around fire safety intervention

Over the past year, the SYFR Community Safety Watch Manager has sent out water safety video links, PowerPoints and communications for parents to all schools, with the aim of making parents aware of the dangers when children and young people enter open water.

Illustrated feedback



SYFR have also completed **4563 Home Safety visits** within Barnsley with a good proportion referred from partnering agencies and this has continued with providing partnership training to **184 practitioners** on Home Fire Safety Awareness

## 4. VOICE OF CHILDREN

### Youth Voice and Participate (YVP)

Barnsley has several well-established youth voice groups that support young people to have their voices heard. The Barnsley Youth Council, Care4Us Council and Inclusive Youth Voice (IYV) groups engage and consult with their peers in schools, college and the community to bring their voices to the Partnership

Over the past year:

- The YVP team have led Barnsley Council Childrens Services response to informing the emerging National Youth Strategy and have been involved across the region and nationally in consultation mechanisms to ensure that Barnsley's views are represented and heard.
- The Youth Council has supported Barnsley Community Safety Partnership to involve young people in contributing to the Joint Strategic Intelligence Assessment (JSIA) to gather young people's views on crime and anti-social behaviour. These views will then be used to inform the development of Barnsley's strategic plan for safer communities and may generate further targeted conversations around specific localities which young people can support.
- Young people's feedback has been used to construct the ten-year vision and the three-year action plan that was submitted to Government in 2024. Updates have been fed through the Barnsley Town Board meetings to encourage consideration of the actions and how these can be taken forward within the community.
- Barnsley's Youth Council have been actively involved in gathering views around the Anti Bullying survey which has been shared with education settings and partners on behalf of the Safeguarding Partnership. Partners have been encouraged to adopt the Anti Bullying charter developed by young people as part of the ongoing campaign work.



### Young SEND Commissioners

In November 2024, Barnsley launched its first cohort of young SEND Commissioners. This work was a result of a partnership between SEND Commissioning and Youth Voice teams with the aim of developing a group of young people who represent SEND need who would be used in an 'expert group' to help shape and inform future SEND systems, policies and capital schemes. Young people were able to access procurement training and learned about inspection priorities and process to help them to contribute to future work. A celebration event was held late 2024 to recognise their achievements at the Town Hall and mark the start of their journey as young commissioners.

### Barnsley's Independent Visitor service

Received additional investment through the Edge of Care programme. This service matches young people who are care experienced to adult volunteers who provide a befriending service to help support them on their care journey independently from statutory services.

The increase in the capacity of the Independent Visitor service will allow for more care experienced young people to access adult volunteer mentors. We are also exploring the concept of independent volunteers may help to reduce young people entering care as part of a wider package of proposals within the Edge of Care

### Care 4 Us Council

Have been involved in refreshing Barnsley's Local Offer for Care Leavers with a particular focus on transition support as young people approach independence.

As a result, for the young people of Barnsley this has helped to clarify their rights and responsibilities and the role of the Local Authority in a more transparent manner. Entitlements are now clear with less ambiguity to ensure that a consistent approach is applied to accessing the Local Offer.

Some direct examples of this work have included working with Berneslai Homes and Barnsley College to provide life skills (with accreditation recognition) to become successful tenants and to feel connected to their properties as their own home.

## Targeted Youth Support (TYS) In Communities

Over this last year Targeted Youth Support Service have facilitated the development of Barnsley Youth Alliance which will act in the capacity as a voice for young people and champion youth work locally. Alongside TYS, other partners include YMCA, Youth Association, Chilypep and Barnsley Football Club who will act as a 'anchor organisation' in helping to create more opportunities to foster and develop youth work provision across the Borough.



The Communities Team successfully secured further funding from the Violence Reduction Unit to target work with girls to tackle the issue of violence against women. This initiative is in its second year of funding and works in partnership with Safer Communities and Adult Services providing issue-based group and one to one work in schools and communities to promote healthy relationships and provide direct support to young women who may be vulnerable to violence.

In November 2024, the service hosted a second International Men's Day event which brought together **over**

**100 young men from across each of the secondary schools to participate in a range of activities and workshops around the theme of 'Positive Masculinity'.** Those who participated took part in discussion topics, physical activity, visited the information marketplace and took away techniques to help manage their own emotional health and wellbeing.

TYS have continued to provide support to schools where there are identified needs or issues emerging and also provide 1:1 support to young people.

*"Ceri has been working alongside a significant safeguarding case and a complex family network, and we have had numerous meetings with professionals and family meetings.*

*Ceri has been incredibly responsive and very dedicated to her case. Her communications have been comprehensive, timely and professional. In addition, Ceri has a very strong rapport with the family and has been a huge support to them"*

*"I just wanted to let you know what a fantastic job Lee is doing with E and building a relationship. I was needing to complete a CE screening tool and Lee yesterday made sure it was his priority to speak with E and gather everything we needed to make an accurate and informed decision which was then the reason we were actually able to meet threshold and get a social worker. Without him we would have had to close this down. E has spoken and shared his views on how Lee listens to him and really cares".*

As part of Barnsley's Great Childhood Ambition over the next year TYS will be leading a 'Youth Work in Schools' pilot programme in two secondary schools. This additional investment will be used to test and learn how dedicated and additional youth support can impact on young people's attendance, behaviours and how youth work practice can help to shape young people's development personally and socially, providing strong transitions and building blocks to help them realise their own potential.

### **Family Group Conferencing (FGC)**

Family Group Conferencing (FGC) Service is committed to empowering families through collaborative planning and supportive intervention. Facilitating structured meetings in a safe environment, they work alongside families and professionals to devise solutions that prioritise the wellbeing of children and the stability of family units.

The service has been established in Barnsley for the past two years, initially operating as a pilot project.

Due to increased demand and supported by edge of care funding, the team will be expanding from three to six FGC practitioners, in addition to appointing an FGC Coordinator. This expansion will take effect from September 2025 and will further strengthen capacity to deliver effective support to families across Barnsley.



### Feedback from Families

- *"Brilliant service, really helpful for the family to support concerns."*
- *"Clear and concise process, providing a healthy space for honest and open discussions."*
- *"The practitioner was wonderful; they explained everything clearly and ensured everyone felt comfortable. Highly recommended."*



### Feedback from Professionals

- *"The FGC was really clear, and everyone had the opportunity to participate and contribute their ideas. The FGC provided a network to support the family moving forward. Parents felt confident and empowered."*
- *"A very helpful service that allows families to have a voice and control over planning. The team is friendly, dynamic, and focused on the needs of children."*
- *"Another excellent FGC—practitioner was, as always, focused on the needs of the family."*

## South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SWYPFT)

The SWYPFT safeguarding team are well-represented in BSCP subgroups, where they have contributed to policy and guidance. The team shares learning from reviews with managers, link practitioners, and the wider trust through safeguarding operational and strategic meetings, advice, and supervision. As a result, the team was nominated for award from the National Safeguarding Adults Board "We See You, We Hear You"

Over the past year, the team has developed and implemented a Think Family Tool Kit to help practitioners identify wider safeguarding concerns and consider their impact on children, young people, or adults with care needs.

Children and young people have been actively involved in the design, development and delivery of SWYPFT services. Over the past year children and young people and their families have collaborated on the new CAMHS service specification. In addition, children and young people accessing CAMHS or who live in the borough have been actively involved in the recruitment process of new members of the CAMHS team.

### **Barnsley Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (BHNFT)**

'Young Carers Passport' has been co produced with a young peoples' focus group. The passport was used to plan the admission of an adult for whom a young carer provided care, to ensure the voice of the young carer was Included in admission and future care plans. The Young Carers Passport officially launched In March 2025 and was nominated within the Picker Experience Network Awards (PENA) and came in second place within its category. Future work across the year is planned to focus on young carers and those in need to ensure they have a passport in place to allow staff and wider professions to have an understanding of the level of Intervention and support young carers offer.

BHNFT have been part of the Care Quality Commission (CQC)'s Children and Young People's Survey during 2024. This asked patients, and their parents or carers, receiving care during March, April and May 2024 about their experience received. Key areas where patients and carers reported their experience was the best was providing activities for children during their stay, taking time to listen to children's fears or worries and children not feeling bothered by anything in waiting areas. BHNFT has been listening carefully to what its youngest patients and families have said about the quality of care they receive from services and their views have been taken forward as a Trust for wider Implementation.

In January 2025, the Safeguarding Team were approached by South Yorkshire Police (SYP) Dangerous Dogs Legislation Team as it was Identified SYP receive less referrals from BHNFT In relation to dangerous dogs and dog bites across acute health settings In South Yorkshire. To combat this, the team have worked with SYP to arrange training sessions across the trust Including the Emergency Department (ED), and a flowchart has been devised In order to help guide practitioners in caring for a child with a dog bite or injury relating to a dangerous dog. This work remains within its infancy and continues to be a focus within the safeguarding team over the next year.

### **0-19 Public Health Nursing Service (PHNS)**

The Children In Care nurses have attended Care4Us council meetings to discuss proposed changes to Return Home Assessment paperwork and movement in letters. These documents were provided to children and young people in care, who then offered feedback before the documents were implemented.

In addition, the team consulted with residential units in Barnsley to strengthen connections and gather input from children, young people, and staff. Based on the feedback received, the team is developing an information booklet for each unit to improve communication with partner agencies and address gaps in knowledge about available resources for children and young people in Barnsley.

## BMBC Public Health: Emotional Health and Wellbeing (EHWB) Subgroup

The Emotional Health and Wellbeing (EHWB) group (a multi- agency group led by BMBC's Public Health Department) have achieved a number of successes in 2024/25:

- Developed and delivered whole school inset multi-agency, multi-disciplinary training around Emotional Health and Wellbeing. Young people from a number of Voluntary and Community organisations have contributed their lived experience to this training. Staff within schools found the training informative and work is continuing with schools to embed learning further over the next academic year.
- The Public Health led young peoples' group, Just Us, which is comprised of young people aged 13-18 from Chilypep, the Youth Council, the Youth Association and YMCA created an [animation](#) developed with Barnsley College to aid discussion around emotional health and wellbeing as part of the whole school inset day.
- Just Us group also were involved in a young people's takeover of the Health and Wellbeing board and presented at the CYP Alliance Conference 2024- Breaking Cycles
- A new out of hours emotional wellbeing support line has been secured for Barnsley children and young people and their parent/carers. Night Owls will be launched in the 2025/2026 financial year.
- Secondary schools have completed a survey around bullying definitions, recording of incidents and policies. More focused work with schools and young people in this area will be continuing over the next year.
- A young people's exhibition space has been secured for 25/26 at the Cooper gallery focusing on emotional wellbeing and mental health.



## Barnsley Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Services (BSARCS)

Between April 2024 and March 2025, BSARCS **received 223 referrals** for children who had experienced sexual harm and living in Barnsley across BSARCS children's provision, and **353 children and young people (under 18) accessing support across the service.**

Engagement rates have been extremely positive **at 92.5%**, which demonstrates the right support is being offered to children and young people at the point of entry and that the support delivered is flexible and dynamic to meet the needs of the young person.

Key impactful data tells us that as a result of the support children and young people receive:

- 90% of children exited support in a planned way
- 100% said that they received the support they needed when they needed it
- 90% had experienced an improvement in their emotional wellbeing
- 87% felt more able to cope with their everyday life
- 87% reported an increase in their feelings of safety
- 89% felt more empowered to make their own choices

*"Hi, today is my birthday and it had me thinking how different my life is now compared to how it was even two years ago, and I really only have you to thank for that. Two years ago, I was in the darkest place I've ever been in my life and as you can probably guess it wasn't much fun, but now everything is different. I'm in college and on the student council, and even just had my first driving lesson. I really can't ever thank you enough for everything because your help really did help so incredibly much, I'm so much happier than I thought I ever could be, thank you for everything"*

### **Barnardo's Child Protection Advocacy**

The Child Protection Advocacy service, delivered by Barnardo's on behalf of BMBC, **advocated for 311** children and young people aged 8 – 17 years in 2024/2025.

Face to Face advocacy is provided in schools, wherever possible and home visits are provided for any children who are being home educated or are not in school.

Where possible and appropriate, Child Friendly Plans are produced with children and young people, to better understand the child protection process. Feedback is also collected in a child-friendly way to continually improve their offer.

Alongside the advocacy service Barnardo's are commissioned to provide a Young Carers Service. Over the year Barnardo's have **supported 143 children** with individual sessions, group work, and the Young Carers Council. Referrals received to the Young Carers Service cover a wide range of different disabilities, illnesses, and special needs that family members are experiencing. The main contributor for referrals is education, this has remained consistent throughout the year.

### **Barnsley Children's University (BCU)**

BCU aims to improve the aspirations and attainment of pupils by providing learning activities beyond the normal school day, such as community-based clubs, visits to universities, and 'social action' opportunities.

This year BCU has seen significant growth in participation, with more schools joining the programme and registering their interest. **As of March 2025, BCU has 694 children signed up**, with a total of 10,379.9 hours of participation recorded. Children are invited to a graduation ceremony and in July 2024 saw **126 children who have participated** in BCU activities presented with awards and performances.

To read more regarding the impact of the programme and to hear from young people. Visit the [BCU webpage](#)



## Kooth

Kooth, is a digital mental health support commissioned service for Barnsley young people.

Engagement work with schools and the wider Barnsley community has been a real focus for the service with work undertaken such as providing assemblies across Year 7- 10 cohorts and delivering staff training to multi- agency services to strengthen partnership working and increase practitioners' knowledge and confidence of services.

The impact the service has had to the lives of young people of Barnsley over the year:

*"It was great to have been able to meet you today and talk to you a little today. I actually am grateful, and I enjoyed it. You were extremely supportive and helpful. Anyone you support further at Kooth are extremely lucky to have the opportunity to speak to you! You're an amazing person! Thank you so much for being so kind. You don't understand how much it meant for me to hear some encouragement today. You brought a smile to my face and made my day! Not a lot of people can do that!*

*Thank you for all the links to the resources. I love the idea of the butterfly and I'm certainly going to try it next time I have the urge to hurt myself. I will let you know how I get on.*

*Thank you again for everything tonight you honestly don't understand how it meant for me to talk to someone as supportive as you are today. It's made my day and made me smile so thank you so very much!*

Female aged 16 years

## Spectrum Community Health

Work within the school community has included delivering a comprehensive curriculum on relationships and sex education (RSE) to young people in years 9 and 10.

Targeted intervention support is offered through the RESPECT programme for those young people identified as at risk of exploitation or sexual

coercion. Over the past year the provision has been adapted to ensure inclusivity and flexibility to meet the needs of young people not in education and young people living in residential care. Resources have been adapted so that they can be delivered by parents/carers social or support workers and delivered in a way that meet the needs of the young person.

Respect Programme Feedback by Young People:

<b>What did you think about this programme?</b>
---

Great! It is a great programme for anyone to understand and become more knowledgeable.
--

<b>What is the most important thing you've learnt?</b>
--

Consent and CSE is the most important thing as it's given me a bigger insight and will help keep me safe.
---

<b>How could I improve this programme for other young people?</b>
---

Make is more accessible for everyone.
---------------------------------------

*"Having Spectrum Community Health in promotes healthy relationships. Their sessions help students understand the importance of respect, consent, and communication in relationships, which are essential life skills. By educating students on topics like boundaries, online safety, and emotional health, Spectrum Health contributes to a safer and more informed school environment. Their sessions are often praised for being engaging, interactive, and student centred, which helps young people feel comfortable and involved."*

*Penistone Grammer School*

## Independent Domestic Abuse Services (IDAS)

IDAS have delivered [the 'Helping Hands' programme](#) working with children and young people in **23 primary schools in 2024/25**, with **122 children** engaging in the programme.

The programme's value is reflected in the steady increase in referrals over the past 12 months indicating both the effectiveness of the intervention and a rising demand for this type of support work.

As a result of the demand, the delivery of the Helping Hands programme has been adapted. The number of weekly group sessions has been increased to ensure more children access intervention without delay, reflecting the commitment to providing timely and effective support where it is most needed.

The programme supports children in understanding their emotions, recognising safe and unsafe behaviours, and building strategies to manage their experiences in a safe and supportive environment. Feedback from children, their parents and schools has been extremely positive with outcomes of:



Children demonstrated improved emotional literacy, increased confidence, and a clearer understanding of safe and unsafe behaviours.



Many children expressed that they felt more confident in identifying trusted adults and knowing what to do if they felt unsafe



Schools reported positive feedback for the children who attended.



Parents and carers shared positive feedback, noting changes in their child's self esteem and openness to talk about their feelings.

IDAS also provides one-to-one support to children through the Young People's Violence Advisor.

They have worked with **134 children** throughout 2024/25. Mindful sessions have been conducted (with activities such as crafts, art and clay work) as well as direct work on strategies for managing angry, healthy relationships, sleep and coping strategies for anxiety. From this work reports show:

- 75% of the children demonstrated an increase in their happiness.
- 61% of the children felt safer
- 89% felt an increase in positive social relationships
- 79% noticed an increase in their confidence
- 82% noticed they had improved engagement with wider networks
- 71% said they were engaging in safer behaviours
- 85% said they had healthier relationships

"IDAS are exceptional in the way they support young people with their challenges and are great at supporting staff/other agencies with how to communicate with and support young people outside of their IDAS appointments."

## ChilyPep

ChilyPep (the Children and Young People's Empowerment Project) continues to provide support emotional wellbeing of young people aged between 11-25 years as HOME (Helping Our Mental 'Ealth) They are also funded by the Department of Health and Social Care as one the Early Support Hubs (one of 24 National Future Hubs for Young People's Mental Health)

From engagement within the programme, **71 young people** who completed surveys in the last quarter demonstrated an average increase of 2.5 on the SWEMWBS (Shortened Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale) from when they first started.

*"He looks forward to it every week.... [score at school] has improved, whatever you are doing it is clearer working "*

Parent of young man from BRV

The impact of ChilyPep and the groups it provides has shown an:

- Increase in positive relationships and connections with peers
- Reduction of violence within the household
- A greater sense of worth and wellbeing
- A Substantial reduction in stress
- Improved engagement with school
- Increased ability to deal with emotions at school

*"I was in a really bad place when I first started here, I had been through a lot and didn't know how to talk about it. It wasn't supposed to be like that, I didn't feel safe before.*

*I tried lots of different therapy, but they didn't work until I came to ChilyPep. Previous therapist would use big words that I didn't understand. I felt like nothing was going to help me. But coming here did help, I felt safe.*

*I want other people to feel like I do, it's so hard not having anyone to talk to, I'd recommend ChilyPep to anyone."*

Talk@HOME Young person aged 13

The voice of the young people supports the shaping and decision making of the future offer to the Young People of Barnsley. Listening to the voice of young people the service this year has:

- Created a younger Pride group for 11–15-year-olds following on from the success of the older group and as a request from young people.

## ChilyPep 2024/2025

427

Referrals received into the early support hub

17%

Self referrals from young people

24%

Referrals received from parents/carers

1146

1:1 sessions provided



544

Group work sessions provided



Young Peoples Needs Identified

- Anxiety
- Low mood
- Relationships
- School

- Young people have participated in consultations regarding the design of the building work at the YMCA through Levelling Up Funding. Their input has influenced design choices to ensure the building is accessible.
- Used feedback from young people to help break down barriers to attending one of the 12-week group programmes, through the creation of 'wellbeing warm up sessions'.

In addition, the Young Commissioners project works across South Yorkshire works to incorporate young people's voices into strategic decision-making.

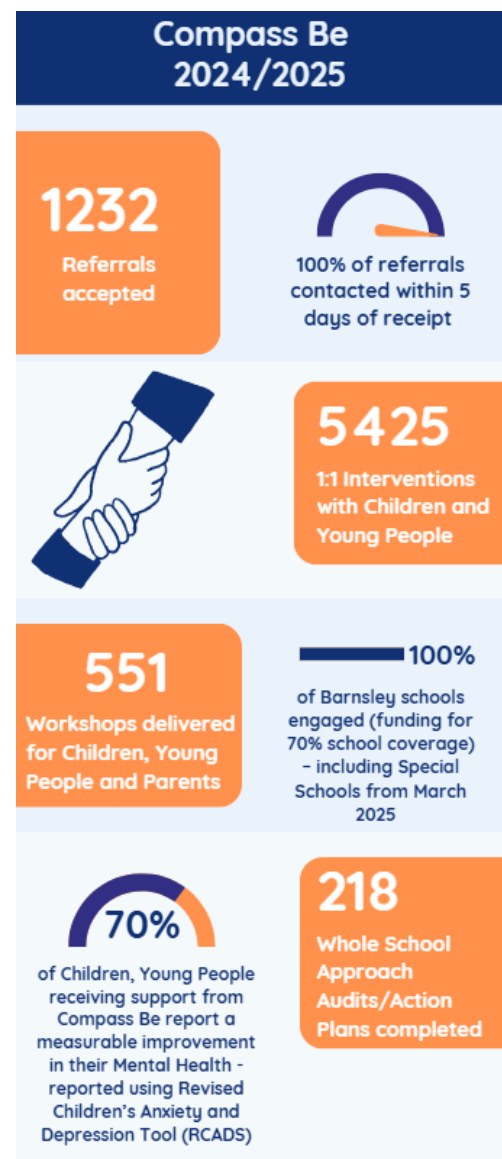
This year in collaboration with Chilypep, Barnsley Civic, and as part of the Penistone Line Partnerships' Station Adoption program. Barnsley Station has been redesigned with unique public artwork by artist Robyn Makings. The project, Talking Tarn, aims to provide a welcoming entrance to Town and highlight the value of open dialogue within the community. It is intended to direct young people in Barnsley and South Yorkshire towards essential support services, including signposting to the HOME Hub, SY Healthier Together website, and [Walk with Us toolkit](#).

## Compass Be

Over the past year, Compass Be Mental Health Support Team have been commissioned to provide support, help and advice for issues related to mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Consultation is continually sought with children young people and families, and feedback is used to inform Service Development. As a result, the service offer has developed significantly over the last 12 months to include:

- Specialist support for CYP with SEN, and CYP who have experienced multiple Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's) and Trauma, including CYP attending Special Schools and Alternative Learning Provision.
- A programme of support for parents of CYP with SEN has also been developed with a monthly SEN Peer Support Group for parents in community settings and a rolling SEN Parent-Led CBT course.



## 5. IMPLEMENTING LEARNING AND RAISING AWARENESS

### First Year of Life

#### Safe Sleep

Sadly in 2024, three babies died in Barnsley from sudden unexpected death in infancy (SUDI). This serves as a reminder that we cannot reduce our efforts to prevent the modifiable factors that lead to sudden infant death. The First Year of Life work is largely lead by the ICB, and work continues on a multi- agency basis to promote partnership guidance and training. The Partnership takes the approach that 'every contact counts', whether this be detailed information, assessment or support provided by a midwife, health visitor or contact with a substance misuse worker.

Health and Public Health colleagues have led several public health awareness campaigns this year: the most recent included talking to the public at Barnsley Markets during Safer Sleep Week (10 - 16th March 2025).

For more information on safer sleep visit:- [Safer sleep overview](#) | [The Lullaby Trust](#)



### ICON (Infant crying is normal, Comforting methods can help, it's ok to walk away, Never, ever shake a baby)

The same multi- agency approach has been taken with the roll-out of the ICON programme in 204/25, where the aim is to reduce deaths and significant disabilities caused by abusive head trauma and it is pleasing to report no deaths relating to abusive head trauma since the work began in 2020. As with safer sleep, however, there is no room for complacency.

The ICB and Public Health attended the ICON National Strategic Group Meeting to share the work they are doing in Barnsley and to obtain insight into what other areas are doing to raise awareness and continue the campaign.

The ICON Charity created a survey that supports organisations to ask questions about how staff are delivering the ICON message and how it is evaluated. This was discussed in the Safeguarding Pregnancy and The First Year of Life Working Group meeting, resulting in a Service User survey being developed, and includes questions around Safer Sleep where further work and recommendations will be shared in the partnership over the coming year



## Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)

In the last 12 months, much progress has been made with the FASD agenda. Again, it has been a multi- agency approach; a Criminal Justice Conference has been held, training promoted and online FASD training offered several times during the year, delivered by Jo Buckard (Specialist FASD trainer, Health and Social Care Lecturer and Director of Innovation at National FASD).

Work to develop more training options to raise awareness with frontline staff has been undertaken; alongside a focus on improving discussions and recording in maternity systems, and the sharing of this with primary care. The Partnership engaged with MPs to raise the profile of FASD and add messages to pregnancy / ovulation kits and Folic Acid supplement boxes.

Key messages around alcohol use and pregnancy were targeted at the night-time economy, with the support of a Champion from the Violence Reduction Unit. Posters were placed in the Safety Bus which was in Barnsley Town Centre over the Christmas period. Awareness has also been raised with licenced premises; an area difficult to engage with previously.

For more information, visit [Home - National FASD](#)

## Additional Highlights of Multi- agency Practice

- The ICB have trained staff from all agencies that interact with families, in order to promote this agenda as wide as possible and enable various workers to have conversations and raise public awareness. This is supported by Champions from these agencies who keep staff updated and keep the profile high.
- Police have incorporated safer sleep into their Vulnerable Child referral form.
- Children's Social Care have adapted their pre-birth assessment form to include the Safer Sleep Risk Assessment Tool.

- Family Hubs have developed a new baby programme called 'New You New Us'. It covers ICON and Safer Sleep in the programme. Practitioners are having discussions, providing links to the websites, and providing handouts, and information is on the TV screens and display boards in Family Hubs.
- Whilst it is difficult to demonstrate impact, all the above supports getting the message to families and hopefully leads to the adoption of safe practices. Since ICON was launched, we have no babies die from abusive head injuries.
- A repeat multi-agency audit was undertaken in June 2024 to seek assurance on how well the Safer Sleep, ICON and risks of drinking alcohol in pregnancy messages are being implemented by staff within Maternity Services, 0-19 Public Health Nursing Services (PHNS) and Children's Social Care. The audit demonstrated improvement in some areas in some agencies; however, it was clear all agencies needed to revisit their roll out plan to ensure all staff are discussing Safer Sleep, ICON and alcohol use in pregnancy as appropriate. A repeat audit will be carried out in 2024/25 to assess the effectiveness of the roll-out of Safer Sleep, ICON and alcohol use in pregnancy programmes.

## **Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (LCSPRs)**

The Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR) subgroup is responsible for arrangements for rapid and child practice reviews and that meet the criteria outlined in Working Together 2024. It leads the action plans from completed reviews and explores themes and learning from local, regional and national practice reviews to consider policy, practice and system changes that support the protection of children in Barnsley.

Within the last year we have refreshed the rapid review process to help support decision making around when implement the have a Child Safeguarding Practice process. Rapid reviews are now published alongside Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews.

The publication of the National Panel's annual report in December 2023, 'Patterns in Practice, Key Messages and the 2024 to 2025 Work Programme', brought direction to the subgroup's work. The report's three central themes—safeguarding children with mental health needs (including the critical issue of long CAHMS waiting times), supporting preschool children whose parents struggle with mental health, and addressing extra-familial harm—have had a tangible impact on local practice.

It also emphasised the importance of education in protecting children particularly for children excluded or not in school, who are at higher risk of going missing or being involved in exploitation. Together we reviewed the work taking pace in each agency and provided assurance within our responses.

Emphasising extra-familial harm has led to stronger information-sharing protocols and proactive intervention strategies for children at risk, including those with neurodiversity or disabilities. The recognition of the vulnerability of children excluded from education has resulted in targeted outreach and safeguarding initiatives, with agencies collectively prioritising those who are not in regular school settings.

Examples of good practice from agency assurance included feedback from Midwifery services on Sexual Exploitation training, which has been positively received. Barnsley Hospital reported that it has taken part in a pilot, led by the Centre for Excellence, as part of a nationwide programme which aims to support practitioners in feeling more confident when addressing sensitive topics like sexual abuse. The Children's Emergency Department and Children's Assessment Unit already display NSPCC PANTS information with Pantosaurus, and TV screens in outpatient areas play a catchy song to share this

information. The suggestion is to extend this practice to all children's areas to enhance public health awareness while children and their families are waiting in outpatient settings.

This work supports the recent National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel report “I wanted them all to notice”, about child sexual abuse within the family environment, published on 26 November 2024. The subgroup shared the report and the recommendations for partners have been included in an action plan to be taken forward to improve our collective response to child sexual abuse across the partnership.

Following the sad death of a baby in December 2024, we agreed a joint child practice review with Leeds was required. Child G died in Leeds but was a Barnsley child. There have been some delays in progressing this review initially due to a change in author and we currently await the final draft report. As the review has progressed agencies have been able to come together to reflect on practice, systems and process and an action plan is already in place. The progress will continue to be monitored in the subgroup and any additional learning identified addressed as part of future work plans.

## Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)

Between **April 2024 and March 2025**, **16 cases** were reviewed within Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) meetings with the objective of understanding the circumstances and causes of child deaths to inform future prevention efforts. Of these sixteen cases, seven were female (44%) and nine were male (56%). Regarding the age of death, **56% occurred within the first year of life**.

In the period **April 2024 and March 2025** there have been sadly **17 Deaths**. (This number constitutes the deaths that occurred during April 2024 and March 2025 and not the cases reviewed within Barnsley CDOP).

Age Group	Number of Cases
First year of life	7
Aged 1-4	2
Aged 5-9	4
Aged 10-14	2
Aged 15-17	2

Since the beginning of this year, we have had two deaths where initial findings suggest these will be classed as Sudden Unexpected Deaths in Infancy (SUDI). Work is continuing across the partnership to promote safeguarding in first year of life agenda.

One of the key themes from this year has unfortunately been the death of a child by suicide. There have been three reported Suicides of children in the period April 2024 and March 2025.

As a result of this there has been a wide variety of work completed to add to the already well-established collaborative work delivered within the Emotional health and wellbeing Board.

Additionally, a Thematic deep dive into ten deaths of young people ages 14-19 from 2020 - 2025 is taking place to help inform future learning and actions. This review is led by Barnsley Public Health to identify common themes and additional learnings outside of the Coronal process.

Furthermore, there has also been additional communications support provided including the You Are Not Alone Information Leaflet. The leaflet emphasises that individuals do not have to go through challenging times alone and encourages them to talk to someone they trust, or reach out to local services such as Amparo, Ask Jan, Samaritans, Kooth, Branching Minds, Childline, Chilypep, and Papyrus.

It should be recognised, however, that thankfully Barnsley numbers are low. Consequently, we are looking to strengthen our role in working with partners across South Yorkshire to identify regional trends and identify where action can be taken to prevent further deaths.

## Multi-Agency Training Programme

The BSCP Multi- agency Trainer develops and delivers a wide range of safeguarding training and learning events, available to all practitioners working with children and families in Barnsley. This year the training programme has been updated to reflect the move to Signs of Safety and Wellbeing and will continue to develop to support the new social care reforms.

We utilise a blended delivery approach, offering access via Microsoft Teams, e-learning modules and face-to-face. Many courses have benefitted from the contributions of partners (such as BHNFT, IDAS, BSARCS and Barnsley Place ICB) delivering or co-delivering training with the Multi- agency Trainer. These include

Content and priorities of the training we deliver is regularly reviewed by the Policy and Workforce Development Subgroup and Multi-agency trainer to ensure it consistently adapts to meet changing landscape and priorities. Income generated from specific training has been used to provide additional specialist training at no extra cost to the partnership, such as Understanding Neglect Conference and the Impact of Domestic Abuse Masterclass, both delivered during Safeguarding Awareness Week.

This year we have introduced **five new programmes in total:**

- Attending Case Conferences and Core Groups in Barnsley
- Educational Neglect
- Children Nude Image Sharing
- Children and Young People Who Display Harmful Sexual Behaviour
- Understanding the Dark Web

Uptake of training in 2024-2025 has been good, and a total of **50 different subjects** have been offered this year. We have seen an **increase of over 40%** in the number of practitioners attending training over the year compared to 2023/2024. This is encouraging given current pressures, for example some agencies offer their own comprehensive in-house training programmes and high workloads inhibit staff attendance which is often reported as a barrier to attending training.

	Practitioner Attendance
2023/2024	1836
2024/2025	3254

The most frequently attended courses include the Working Together To Safeguard Children, Graded Care Profile 2, Designated Safeguarding Lead, and

Understanding the Work of Our Integrated Front Door. Additionally, the Signs of Safety Briefing Sessions and Educational Neglect training have seen high participation, as well as the new Early Help Assessment sessions led by our Early Help Development Officers.

To view our full list of courses, please follow the below [link:-](#)

### Feedback from 2024/25:

*"Amazing conference. Fantastic keynote speakers. Really enjoyed today's event – best in a long time."*

From Conference: Impact on Sexual Abuse

Establishing a direct link between training and improved outcomes for children can be difficult and is an area for development over the next year. However, there is documented evidence from services that shows activities contributing to these improved outcomes on practice.

For instance:

- Our course on Understanding the Work of Our Integrated Front Door (IFD) has led to better-quality referrals. The use of the Graded Care Profile 2 Assessment Tool has increased, and Policy Workforce Development members regularly provide feedback on how training impacts their staff's front-line practice.
- Practitioners attending multi-agency training report increased knowledge and confidence. They value training with staff from other agencies and often seek additional related training to fill gaps in their knowledge.
- Staff have reported improved communication with agencies, a better understanding of the limitations faced by other organisations, and a collective willingness to collaborate in order to improve services for children and families.

I found the training very useful and informative. I have felt that, for a while, the EHA procedures/documentation have lacked some 'joining up' between services and the general pathway for support/necessary help required.

The new procedures and speaking with other workers on the training has rectified this in many ways and the day provided me with lots of answers to questions I had. The training being delivered by practitioners who have clearly had key involvement in the development of the process, and who have worked with families on the 'shop floor' made the training authentic and accurate.

From my perspective/area of work, I would recommend it to anyone working within pastoral areas of school but also Senior Leaders.

Deputy Head Teacher Primary School    Early Help Assessment Training

## Reducing Parental Conflict

The Reducing Parental Conflict initiative is grant funded from Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) focusing on helping parents raise children in an environment free from harmful conflict

In Barnsley this is delivered by Building Stronger Relationships project delivering training to practitioners and developing pathways of early help support for parents and families.

Over the last year **247 practitioners** have been trained and provided with resources to deliver support to families.



**Targeted Early Help Support** Practitioners have used online programmes and specially designed activity cards to improve parental understanding around how conflict can impact children and ways they can strengthen their relationship with their partner or co-parent for the wellbeing of their children.



**Secondary Schools** who have been part of the Emotional Health and Wellbeing training have been provided with additional resources to support working with children and young people within school including direct work with families



**Practitioners in youth support services** have adapted parental conflict resources to support young people to improve conflict resolution and communication skills to further help strengthen relationships within the family

A conference focused on Building Stronger Relationships took place in March 2025 to highlight the reducing parental conflict initiative and enhance practitioners' knowledge. **Over 90 professionals** from different services came together and listened to guest speakers from Dom Weston (head of learning and development from Triple P) and Lorna Carr (Manager of 1001 Days Team) to hear how parents can be encouraged to engage in support.



The event also had facilitated sessions from Cranstoun, Compass Be and Way Through. All practitioners reported through their evaluation that the conference improved their capability to offer relationship support to families and improved their understanding of how harmful conflict impacts children.

## Safeguarding Awareness Week 2024 (SAW)

Every November, we join local and regional partners to celebrate SAW in Barnsley. Our key themes for 2024 in safeguarding children and young people were Neglect, Domestic Abuse Children's Mental Health, Bullying and Online Harms.

Our multi-agency training programme ran courses throughout the week, with topics such as modern slavery delivered by South Yorkshire Police, Hidden Harm, Forced Marriage and Honour Based Abuse. We also launched our Core Group and Child Protection Conferences resources for children and families.

Individual agencies facilitated their own training and events: Barnsley Family Hubs held a range of sessions with children within nursery sessions and with families in their stay and play and afterschool sessions. BHNFT arranged interactive activities across the week to staff and patients with 'Reyt up your

street' explaining various safeguarding scenarios. The Exodus Project had a theme of 'Managing Your Emotions' in their Youth Groups which ran across the borough in their after schools clubs.

In collaboration with Barnsley Safeguarding Adults Board, agencies booked market stalls to provide information and promote services to the public. The 0-19 Public Health Nursing Service, Berneslai Homes, Centrepont, Humankind and Compass Be were just a few agencies who held stalls throughout the week.

A highlight of SAW were our two events: 'Understanding Neglect and The Impact on Children and Young People Conference, led by inspirational speakers Professor Jan Harworth and Andy Brierly (supported by Independent Trainers Ruth Pearson and Lynne Ryan) and The Impact of Domestic Abuse on Children and Young People Masterclass' A great attendance of over 60 professionals were trained at our Neglect conference 75 practitioners attended our Domestic Abuse Masterclass.



## Multi-Agency Quality Assurance

The development of a Quality Assurance Framework has been established for the partnership and will sit alongside the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements for Barnsley.

The partnership has been supported by BMBC Children's Service Quality Assurance service since February 2025 to support multi-agency audit and performance, with a newly established Audit and Performance group to help deliver some of the activities set out in framework: namely the multi-agency auditing programme and the partnership multi-agency performance data

An audit schedule has been developed for 2025/2026; to reflect themes identified in local and national reviews and to assure that processes are well embedded and working effectively alongside those of our priorities.

We have further strengthened and developed our performance data scorecard to provide better capturing and data analysis for the coming year aligning to our partnership priorities.

In addition, single agencies have their own quality assurance practices in place. The Practice Development Hub is responsible for the Practice Standards, including quality assurance across Children's Services to assure the partnership of the quality of practice and services delivered to children and families.

It includes 'closing the learning loop' monthly sessions highlighting audit findings with reactive targeted training, for specialist social work areas of practice, including a team manager training programme. Alongside this the programme has continued with the signs of Safety roll-out, including a 6-day leadership training programme for children's services and multi-agency partnership and systems preparations.

0-19 Public Health Nursing Service have also completed their Quality Assurance Annual Summary providing an overview of the work undertaken across the service, recommendations and actions are fed into the service Continuous Service Improvement plan (CSIP) with the purpose of assisting the service to continually identify improvement initiatives.

The CSIP is reviewed quarterly by the Quality and Governance Group and is designed using the Care Quality Commission 5 Key Line Of Enquiry's. (KLOE) Each KLOE has a set of identified actions with each action having a success criterion that allows the service to use this to measure and evaluate the success of the improvement action. Evidence is obtained to support the implementation with clear and set time frames.

## 6. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Our strategic priorities for 2025 – 26 are continuing with Neglect, Contextual Safeguarding, and Domestic Abuse. These build on the work of this years' priorities pages 15-20. We have laid firm foundations for our work; there is more to be done within our priorities that has an impact on the health, education and the risk of harm that children and young people face outside of the home.

In addition, the partnership has agreed to include two more strategic priorities for the coming year. Firstly, to include the Families First Programme (Reforms) to assist in the provision of strategic direction and implementation across the partnership.

The second priority to include Child Sexual Abuse which has been highlighted across the partnership as an area to prioritise moving forward.

We will also:

- Continue to build on our joint work this year, in response to inspections, reviews and learning, with focus on evidence, impact, improvement, assurance and learning.
- Partners will continue to improve the availability and quality of data available to the Partnership through our quarterly scorecard and hope to meet our ambition for a multi-agency dashboard over the next year.
- Continue to embed the Quality Assurance framework that measures the impact of our performance through data, audits, feedback from practitioners and the lived experiences of children and their families effectively, to assure that children and young people are helped, protected and safe from harm.
- Tailor our multi- agency training programme and evaluate results, to support our strategic priorities.
- Learn from national and local reviews and best practice. Encourage positive challenge so that commissioned child safeguarding practice reviews provide relevant learning that is embedded across the multi- agency partnership.

# 7. ACCOUNTS

## Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership Finance 2024-2025

Income & Expenditure Statement as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

Income		
South Yorkshire ICB (Barnsley)	49,000	
Police & Crime Commissioner	19,441	
National Probation Service		
DfE WT23 grant	47,300	One year grant carried forward into this year
Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council	113,773	
2023/2024 Underspend	12,672	
Total Income	242,186	

Expenditure		
Employee Salary Cost and recharge	172,304.64	
Computers	7,000	
Contracts and Subscriptions	829	
Statutory reviews	0	
Professional Fees & Consultancy	28,800	
Total Expenditure	208,933	
Underspend	33, 252.36	Request carry forward to 2025/26

# 8. OUR PARTNERS

Our sincere thanks go out to all of our partners who work tirelessly to protect and keep children and young people safe in Barnsley:

