

2019-2020



South Gloucestershire Children's Partnership

Annual Report



2019-2020

From LSCB to Children's Partnership

2019-2020 was a transition year in South Gloucestershire. [Working Together 2018](#) set out changes in the way agencies are required to work together to safeguard children and young people. The new arrangements were published in June, the Safeguarding Children board ended on 29th September and the new Children's Partnership was launched. The details of the new arrangements can be accessed [here](#). Amy Weir remained Independent chair until the end of September. The new Partnership is overseen by an Executive consisting of senior representatives from the three statutory partners; the local authority, the police and the clinical commissioning group.

In line with statutory requirements and best practice this annual report and will be shared with:

- Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel
- The What Works Centre for Children's Social Care
- The Chief Executive, South Gloucestershire Council
- The Police and Crime Commissioner
- The Partnership Against Domestic Abuse
- The Health and Wellbeing Board
- The Safer and Stronger Communities Strategic Partnership
- The Safeguarding Adults Board

This report has been authored by Sarah Taylor, Safeguarding Boards Business Manager.

The report was approved by the Children's Partnership Executive on 18th August 2020 and published on the Partnership website on 21st August 2020

Should you require the report in any other format to support accessibility please contact [Sarah Taylor](#)

Establishing the South Gloucestershire Children's Partnership

2019-2020 has been a transition year in South Gloucestershire. Partners agreed final sign off of the completed LSCB business plan for 2018-19 with no actions to carry forward in September 2019. The new partnership launched on 29th September, however the two partnerships had been working in tandem for the months leading up to this date to ensure a smooth transition. All boards and sub groups completed 'Safe Transitions Templates' to ensure ongoing work was not lost with the creation of the new partnership.



Multi agency consultation workshops were held in April 2019 to gather the views of all partners and these were led by the Executive of the Children's partnership.

At the start of September the three new workstreams held a full day workshop to engage professionals from across South Gloucestershire organisations. This day was attended by over 40 key professionals, who worked together to form the three workstreams.

- Best Start for children with Complex Needs – CCG Chair
- Best Start for Vulnerable Children – Police Chair
- Best Start in Life – LA Chair

These workstreams meet quarterly and report directly to the Senior Officers Group, and onward to the Executive.

Structure of the partnership:



The Stakeholder Network was initially named as the Engagement Forum when the new arrangements were published in June 2019. This network met in October 2019 and was attended by 80 stakeholders, the executive sought feedback on the new arrangements and agreed the name change and the process of engaging partners. Members of the Stakeholder Network receive a fortnightly bulletin and twice a year an event to attend. The first of these is to share learning about South Gloucestershire Serious Case Reviews.

The first six months of the Children's Partnership



First 6 months

Changeover of staff has impacted the effectiveness of the first six months covered in the timescale of this annual report. The Executive has experienced changes in both Police and CCG representative, impacting continuity. Two of the three workstreams have experienced a change of chair within this period and the third workstream will also have a new chair by the summer of 2020. All of these changes were unforeseen and unavoidable. Despite this, the workstreams have all established terms of reference and priorities for this 2020-21 period.

Best Start for Children with Complex Needs

This workstream has been the most challenging to establish, there have been two changes of chair. The aim when the partnership formed was to integrate the former SEND Partnership board and its priorities within this workstream, and initially this did not happen. This will be formalised by September 2020. The workstream oversees all work in the partnership relating to children with complex needs and its key challenge is not to lose sight of other areas of work outside of SEND.

Priorities include:

- ✓ Integration of SEND continuing improvement plan into workstream
- ✓ Engagement with parents and children to hear their views
- ✓ Ensuring correct membership is in place following changeover of chair
- ✓ Inclusion of transitions and mental health into workstream

Best Start for Vulnerable Children

This workstream has remained stable throughout his transition process with one chair and a stable membership. The workstream encompasses the former MASH and MARAC steering groups. Statutory reporting of Vinney Green Secure Children's Home falls within the remit of this workstream and this happens 6 monthly. The biannual exploitation audit also reports in to this workstream, and is responsible for dissemination of learning from these audits.

Priorities include:

- ✓ MARAC
- ✓ Vinney Green Secure Children's Home
- ✓ MASH

Best Start in Life

This workstream has experienced a change of chair and held a workshop to re-establish the workstream at the start of 2020. This is the largest of the three and encompasses early help, schools, early years and post 16 education settings. The priorities are largely drawn from the [Early Help Strategy](#)

Priorities include:

- ✓ Build capacity across partnerships – for example ensure alignment to SG Inequalities strategy group and action plan
- ✓ System level working and understand blockers/challenges
- ✓ Focus on prevention and wider determinants and associated culture change
- ✓ Link to adult services
- ✓ Refreshing threshold document

Further priorities across the whole of the Children's Partnership are local quality assurance and preparation for JTAI.

The development of the Children's Partnership and of the workstreams has been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Although this annual report covers the time period only until the end of March 2020, at the time of writing it is clear that the key time for embedding the work of the workstreams and stakeholder network have been impacted by the changes brought about by the pandemic.

The effectiveness and the impact of the new arrangements will need to be reviewed at the end of the first year, and this will take into account feedback from chairs and members of the workstreams, and the wider Stakeholder network in the autumn of 2020.

Learning



The Children's Partnership have completed three Serious Case Reviews during this year. These all commenced prior to the launch of the new arrangements and were therefore completed under Working Together 2015. Going forward any new reviews will be Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR) and the sub group that considers new referrals and monitors and quality assures the work of reviews has been retained under the new Children's Partnership. Action plans to monitor implementation of recommendations are underway for these reviews. Learning from the three Serious Case Reviews is included below.

SCR Toby

In January 2018 the parents of 5 week old Toby found him very pale and icy cold in his cot. An ambulance arrived soon after this and pronounced him dead. His father had last seen him alive at

around midnight the night before. The family was spending the weekend at paternal grandmother's house where father lived. Toby and his mother were known only to maternity services, GP and health visitor. No concerns had been raised about Toby or his parents prior to his death. Full case Review [available here](#).

SCR Baby E & F

Towards the end of 2018, a six week old baby was taken to hospital, described as "pale and floppy." Examination of the baby showed that she had suffered serious head trauma considered to have been caused by violent shaking. The brain injuries are likely to have caused permanent damage and lifelong disability. This baby is known as Baby E and is twin to Baby F. During further examination both children were found to have historical healing fractures. There is an older child who was 2½ years old when the twins were born. The sibling had started nursery just before the twins' birth and the nursery staff had no concerns about his well-being or development and had not observed anything unusual in the parent/child relationship.

The family were known to health professionals, the GP, Midwifery and Health Visiting, they had not come to the attention of Children's Social Care or the police. Full Case Review [available here](#)

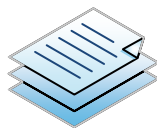
SCR Georgia

Georgia is 15 years old and a looked after child. She took an overdose, which was serious and life threatening. She had been living with her father in another local authority many miles away when this incident occurred.

There had been safeguarding concerns about Georgia since she was a baby including time on a CP plan. An independent reviewer was commissioned to work with a group of local professionals to undertake the review. Georgia, her father and the foster carers were also involved in the review. Full review not published.



[See SCR Toby
learning by clicking
here](#)



[See SCR E & F
learning by clicking
here](#)



[See SCR Georgia
learning by clicking
here](#)

Multi Agency Audits



Four multi agency audits have taken place in this year by the Quality Assurance sub group. This group have been retained under the new arrangements and continues to audit quarterly.



Click on the circles on the left to read the findings of each audit.

Learning is disseminated to practitioners from a wide variety of organisations every quarter.

Independent Scrutiny

A post has been funded across the Avon & Somerset geographical footprint to support provision of independent scrutiny. A peer reviewer workshop took place in October 2019. Key priorities were identified at this event:

- Contextualised Safeguarding
- Early Help & Relationship Building
- Transition into Young Adulthood
- Response to Domestic Abuse
- Effective Partnership Arrangements
- Placing Children out of Hours
- Missing Children
- Children Missing from Education

Within each theme, a bespoke piece of activity will be developed, in order to provide a detailed understanding of the issues facing each partnership. This will be consistent activity across all five Local Authority areas, allowing for benchmarking exercises to be completed, but still allowing for local nuances in order to be reflective of local practice. Victoria Caple holds this post and has provided a report to the partnership. The report is available [here](#)

Section 11 Audit

The audit tool was issued to organisations working with children across four local authority areas. There were a total of 37 responses, 14 of which relate to organisations working in South Gloucestershire. A number of key organisations did not respond to the audit. The questions included in the audit were based on the requirements listed in Working Together 2018.

Recommendations drawn from the responses are as follows:



[You can read the full Section 11 Audit here](#)

1. All designated safeguarding practitioners should have this made explicit in their job description and should have access to regular supervision.
2. Organisations to consider what more they can do in addition to ensuring staff attend training in order to assess competency.
3. Organisations to ensure all staff are aware of local LADO and escalation procedures.

4. Organisations to consider ways to ensure everyone working with children has access to equitable supervision regardless of their shift patterns or whether they are a paid member of staff or a volunteer.
5. Organisations to consider more flexible approaches and creative ways to ensure regular reviews of practice, in addition to an annual appraisal.
6. South Gloucestershire Children's Partnership to relaunch the Resolution of Professional Differences Policy to all partners with a communications campaign

Children in South Gloucestershire



There are
65,806 children
(0-19) living in South
Gloucestershire



There are
136 schools



Attainment 8 score is
44.8
(46.7 national)



361 children are
educated at home
(increase of 10% from last year)

What has changed?

The number of electively home educated children has increased again this year, a rise of 10%. The Attainment 8 score measures the achievement of a pupil across 8 qualifications including mathematics and English, averaged across the school and/or local authority, the attainment 8 score for all schools in England is 46.7. The score in South Gloucestershire has not changed this year, the score for all England schools has increased from 44.5 last year. The population is growing in South Gloucestershire and the number of children (0-19) has increased by 980 this year. (ONS Mid-Year Estimate 2019)

Safeguarding Activity in South Gloucestershire



2062 Referrals

There has been a steady increase in the number of referrals into children's social care. The increase is 6% higher than 2018-19. Re-Referrals have also increased by 23%. These referrals led to 1291 strategy discussions, and of these 347 led to an initial child protection conference, a rise of 18% on the previous year.

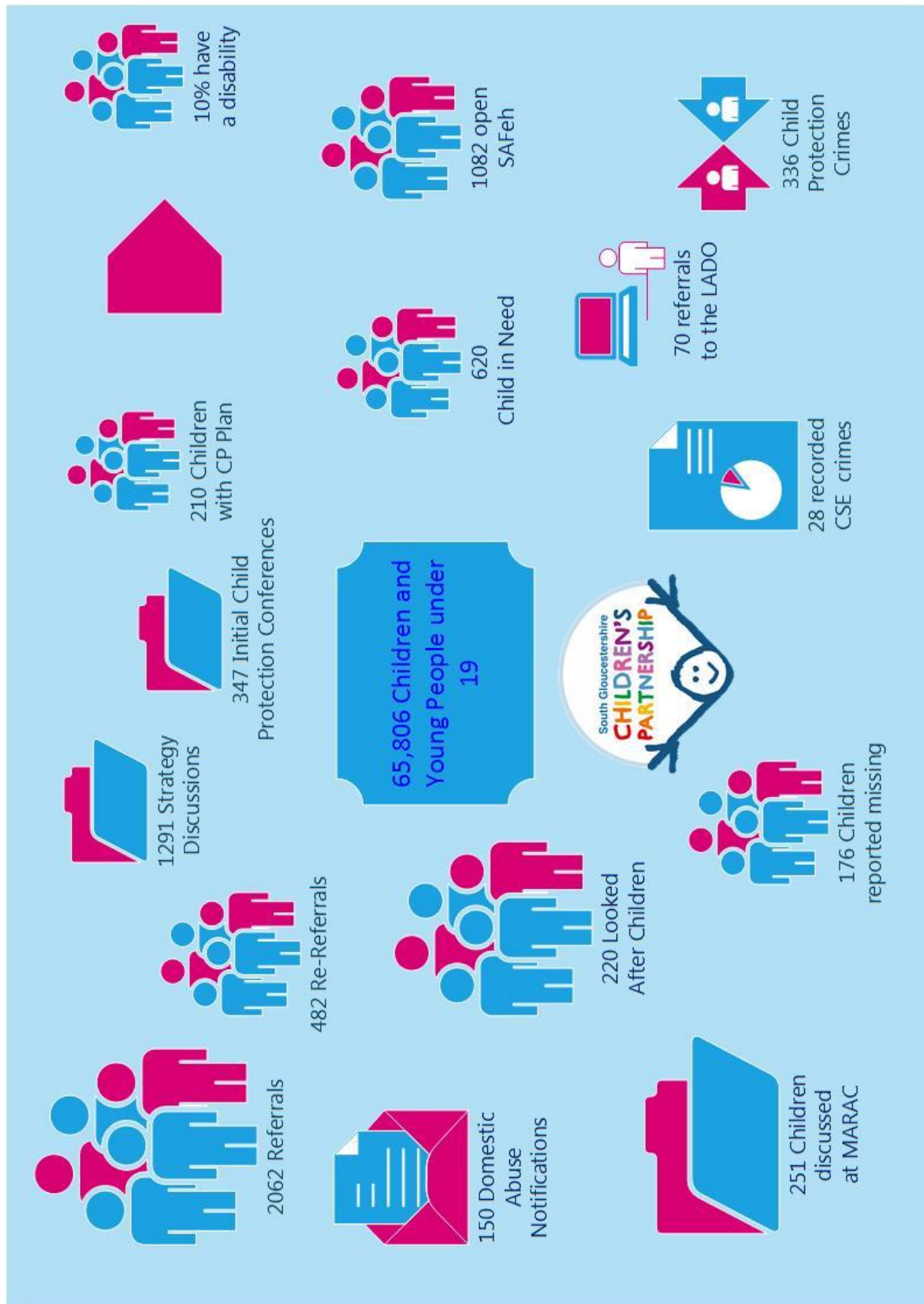


1291 Strategy
Discussions

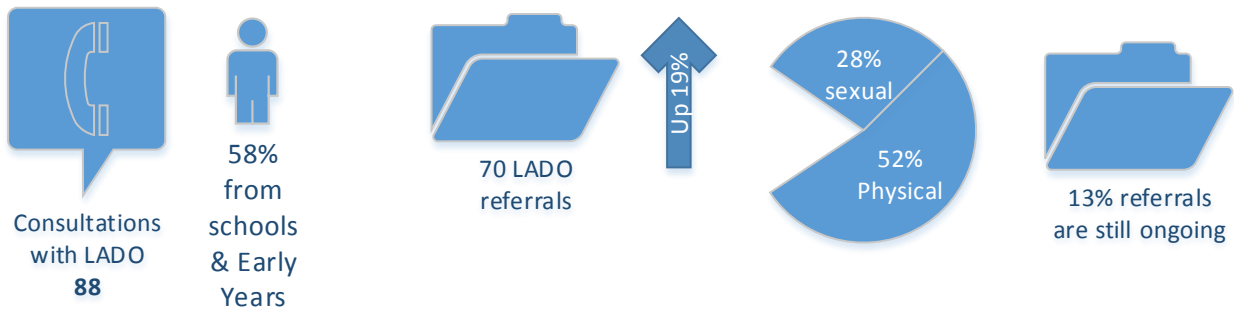
There has only been a very small (4%) rise in the number of children subject of a child protection plan. The number of children with a disability who are subject of a child protection plan has fallen by 6.5%. The number of children who have a Child in Need plan has fallen by 40%.

There are 28 more looked after children in South Gloucestershire this year, a rise of 14.5%.

Safeguarding Activity in South Gloucestershire



Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

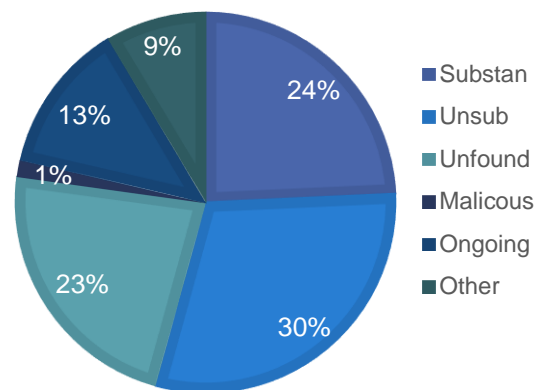


Staff Groups for allegations:

As in previous years those staff who have greatest amount of contact with children are those who experience the highest levels of allegations. Referrals against staff in

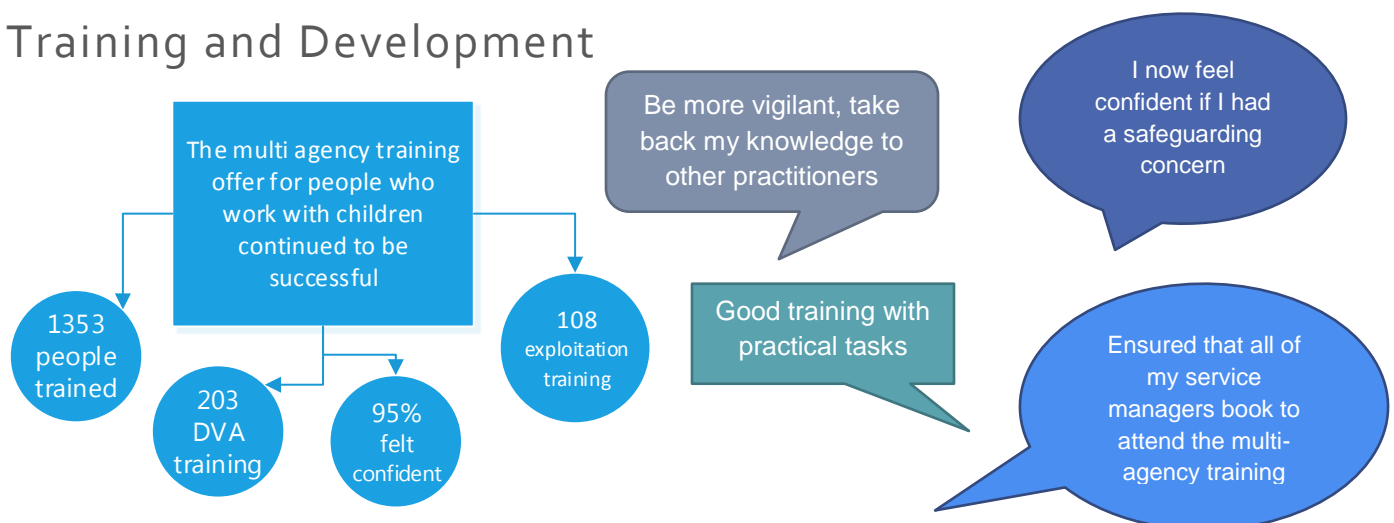
Education settings	25%
Fostering	24%
Residential Staff	12%
Early Years settings	13%
Sports Settings	13%
Transport staff	3%

OUTCOMES



The remaining 10% included allegations in churches, youth work and uniformed organisations.

Training and Development



The multi-agency training offer continues to be highly successful in South Gloucestershire, with consistently high feedback from delegates from all agencies. A selection of their comments are included here. There is an excellent system for gathering impact evaluation following attendance at training that

captures information about how people tell us their practice has changed as a result of learning. Full reports are provided to the partnership each quarter.

Vinney Green Secure Children's Home

Section 45 of the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 states that a Quality of Care Review has to take place every 6 months, these reports looking at the quality of care provided to young people who live at Vinney Green are received by the Best Start for Vulnerable Children workstream of the Children's Partnership. Vinney Green Secure Unit, is a 24 bedded Secure Children's Home offering places to young people of both genders between the ages of 10 and 18 years old.



377
incidents
involving
use of
restraint

Over the 12 month period April 1st 2019 – March 31st 2020 377 incidents involved the use of restraint. All of these incidents have been observed by the LADO or by a member of the South Gloucestershire Strategic Safeguarding Team to ensure they were necessary and proportionate. Traditionally, CCTV has been observed on a monthly basis however it was felt at the start of 2020 that weekly viewings would enable areas of learning or concern to be addressed in a timelier manner. In January 2020, the Home received a 'Requires Improvement' rating from Ofsted which increased scrutiny from South Gloucestershire Council.

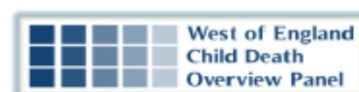
Since March 2020, CCTV has a deep dive quality assurance check from the Head of Integrated Children's Services. To aid disseminating good practice and areas of improvement, a monthly Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) briefing ('RP-Eye') is shared with all staff. Additionally, the Home have invested in a full-time Safety and Assurance Manager to quality assure all restraints and have an overview of safeguarding.

RPI data shows that throughout the year the use of RPI, the duration of RPIs and the number of higher level holds have all declined. This provides a clear reflection of the Home's ongoing work to reduce the frequency of restraints, the use of certain types of restraint and the duration of restraints. During this period the staff have received Adaptive Mentalization Based Integrative Treatment (AMBIT) training and also the support of the Health and Wellbeing Team including psychological formulation.



Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)

South Gloucestershire Children's Partnership remains a member of the West of England CDOP as it did as an LSCB. In the year 2019-20 79 child deaths were considered by the panel and 16 of these children were from South Gloucestershire.



The Annual Report for CDOP is available [here](#).

What to Do if you are Worried about a Child

If you are worried about a child contact our safeguarding team:

Monday –Friday 9am-5pm 01454 866000

Out of hours and at weekends 01454 615165



If you are deaf or hard of hearing text 'EDT' followed by your name and message to 60066

Visit the Children's Partnership [Website](#) for more information