

2020-2021



*South Gloucestershire Children's Partnership*

Annual Report



2020-2021

## Introduction: Children's Partnership

The Children's Partnership was formed in September 2019, and has been developing and evolving since this point. The original arrangements are largely unchanged from the structure that was launched in our published arrangements and you can read this [here](#)

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 15<sup>th</sup> November 2021 and published on the Partnership website on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2021

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

# South Gloucestershire Children's Partnership

2020-2021 was the first full year of the Children's Partnership. The Executive and workstreams have been more stable during this year with less changes of chairs and members and have begun to work more effectively. There have been challenges, the biggest being the Covid-19 pandemic which impacted the whole partnership. The partnership continues to function and transitioned to online meetings. Initially there were challenges finding virtual platforms that all partners could access well, although this has quickly improved, and meetings are taking place over Microsoft Teams.

The Executive increased the frequency of meetings to ensure a better understanding of the work of the workstreams. The Executive began meeting every 6 weeks, and every other meeting is now an *Exec Plus* meeting which includes workstream chairs and the elected member for children and young people.

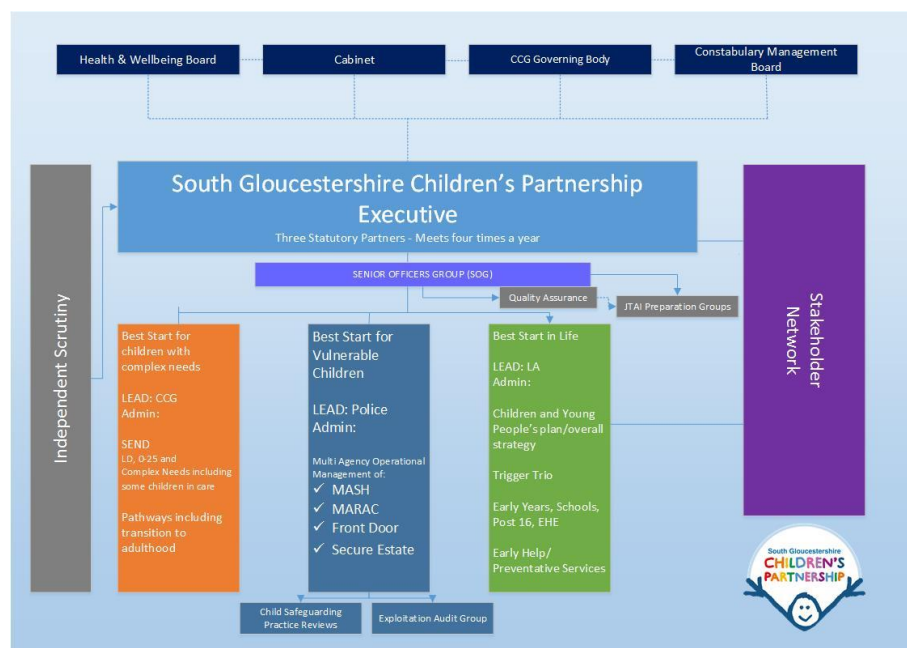
The Stakeholder Network has progressed slowly, and the planned in person events were not able to take place, however a very successful virtual session was delivered about learning from local Serious Case reviews.

The structure of the partnership has not changed:

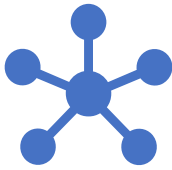
- Best Start for children with Complex Needs – CCG Chair
- Best Start for Vulnerable Children – Police Chair
- Best Start in Life – LA Chair

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

Structure of the partnership:



# The Work of the Children's Partnership



The Workstreams  
are where the multi  
agency partners  
Come together to take  
forward the priorities of  
the partnership

The chairing of the workstreams and membership of the Executive has been more stable through 2020-21. Only one of the workstreams experienced a change of chair and the handover for this was smooth and effective and did not impact on the work of the group.

There was a short pause in the meeting of the workstreams at the start of the year due to the pandemic but the groups were quickly reestablished.

All three workstreams have made progress in developing the networks across the partnership and worked towards completing actions from the business plan. It was acknowledged that this needed to be developed and

the current business plan for 2021-22 is more focused. This was predictable as at the start of the reporting year the workstreams were still forming.

## Best Start for Children with Complex Needs

The biggest progress in this workstream has been the merging of the SEND Partnership Board into this group. The SEND Partnership Board formally closed in January 2021 and the key components of the work have been evaluated and brought together within this workstream of the partnership. 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. A vice chair has been agreed.

Priorities include:

- ✓ Integration of SEND continuing improvement plan into workstream
- ✓ Engagement with parents and children to hear their views
- ✓ Inclusion of transitions and mental health into workstream

## Best Start for Vulnerable Children

This workstream experienced a change of chair during the year, although there was a thorough handover which enabled the workstream to remain stable throughout. Statutory reporting of Vinney Green Secure Children's Home falls within the remit of this workstream and this happens 6 monthly. Engagement with Eastwood Park has improved this year, and an expectation of quarterly reports to the workstream agreed. 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 & Eastwood Park Prison
- ✓ Exploitation

## Best Start in Life

This workstream 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](#). This year the [Threshold document](#) was refreshed, which had been a key priority for the workstream. The meetings have become more focused and there has been good, shared understanding of the priorities within the group and networking to help understand the priorities for the coming year.

Priorities include:

- ✓ Focus on prevention and wider determinants and associated culture change
- ✓ Education Attainment
- ✓ Refreshing threshold document

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

## Learning



No Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews were published during this year. The CSPR sub group did undertake rapid reviews. There were two rapid reviews concerning separate incidents involving young people injured as a result of knife crime. Both rapid reviews led the Executive to recommend to the National Panel that a CSPR is required. It was agreed that these two young people would be included in a thematic cross border review looking at incidents of knife crime across Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. This review was delayed and was not completed before the end of March 2021.

A further rapid review for Family D was begun in March 2021 and this review did not lead to a CSPR. The CSPR sub group trialed a new format of undertaking rapid reviews by inviting rapid review template authors to attend the CSPR sub group.



[See Learning from Family D Rapid Review here](#)



## Impact Identified

This process led to a much richer gathering of information and learning and has now been adopted as the way any future rapid reviews will take place.

*A better understanding of the learning from the case can be gleaned by attending the meeting which can then be shared and implemented into practice.*

*I liked the fact that people were able to challenge each other and get answers straight away*



# Stakeholder Event – Learning from Serious Case Reviews



About 200 people attended

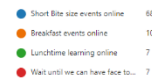
We held a virtual event in January 2021, and around 200 professionals from a wide variety of organisations attended. Learning from three local Serious Case Reviews was shared – these had all been published in the previous year and a stakeholder network conference had been planned, and had to be postponed due to the pandemic. This transferred well into a virtual event and feedback suggested that more learning events in this style would be welcomed.

1. How helpful did you find today's event  
[More Details](#)

92  
Responses

★★★★☆  
4.43 Average Rating

2. Would you like the Children's Partnership to provide more learning events?  
[More Details](#)



## Impact Identified

Refueled with confidence to keep being curious

ensure everything is logged clearly and accurately and don't be afraid to ask questions

## Multi Agency Audits

Domestic Abuse

Mental Health



Three Multi Agency Audits took place

Children Looked After

Three multi-agency audits have taken place in this year by the Quality Assurance sub group. This group audits quarterly but pressures related to the pandemic meant the June 2020 audit did not take place.



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

## Impact Identified

Learning is disseminated to practitioners from a wide variety of organisations every quarter. The Section 11 audit evidenced these are valued by organisations and shared.

The safeguarding bulletin is printed and made available to all staff

We have a standardised method for disseminating key messages and learning from the partnerships that is meaningful to all staff

## Section 11 Audit

The audit tool was issued to organisations working with children across five local authority areas for the first time. There were a total of 71 responses, 22 of which relate to organisations working in South Gloucestershire. This was a 57% rise for South Gloucestershire. There were still a number of key partners who did not submit an audit and how to address this is part of the action plan for the partnership.



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

Recommendations drawn from the responses are as follows:

1. Children's Partnership Executive to consider how to improve engagement and understanding of the new safeguarding arrangements at practitioner level.
2. Children's Partnership to ensure Stakeholder Network meetings take place regularly to ensure wider organisation involvement in the partnership
3. Consider how to improve knowledge, understanding and use of the threshold tool in South Gloucestershire.
4. Based on the good practice (73% good or outstanding) identified about hearing the voice of children and young people, consider ways that this can be used by the partnership to shape the work of the partnership across South Gloucestershire.
5. Explore with organisations how their practice has changed post pandemic and the elements of new and effective practice that is retained so that this can be shared as a good practice model.



### Impact Identified

There has already been an impact from the learning from the Section 11 audit and new bitesize workshops are now available to increase knowledge and awareness of the threshold tool.

*I found the 'What makes a good referral' page really useful*

*This whole training session has been so helpful*

*Good to see how services fit together*

*It is really helpful to understand the wider context of how referrals happen for children and families*

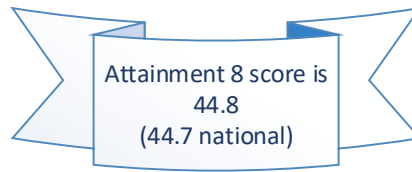
## Children in South Gloucestershire



There are  
67,070 children  
(0-19) living in South  
Gloucestershire



There are  
136 schools



Attainment 8 score is  
44.8  
(44.7 national)



431 children are  
educated at home  
(increase of 19% from last year)

## What has changed?

The number of electively home educated children has increased again this year, a rise of 19%. The Executive received a report from the EHE team, to help understand this rise. The rise is linked with parent response to the covid 19 pandemic. The visiting of families has also been impacted by the rise in numbers and the impact of the pandemic.



### Impact Identified

The team have increased working hours and recruited a new team member to help meet this need and every family is still visited.

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 44.7. The population is growing in South Gloucestershire and the number of children (0-19) has increased by 1264 this year. (ONS Mid-Year Estimate 2020)

## Safeguarding Activity in South Gloucestershire



1539 Referrals

There was a fall in the number of referrals into children's social care, in particular during the quarters when there were periods of lockdown. Re-Referrals have also decreased by 42%. These referrals led to 1137 strategy discussions, and of these 364 led to an initial child protection conference, a rise of 5% on the previous year.



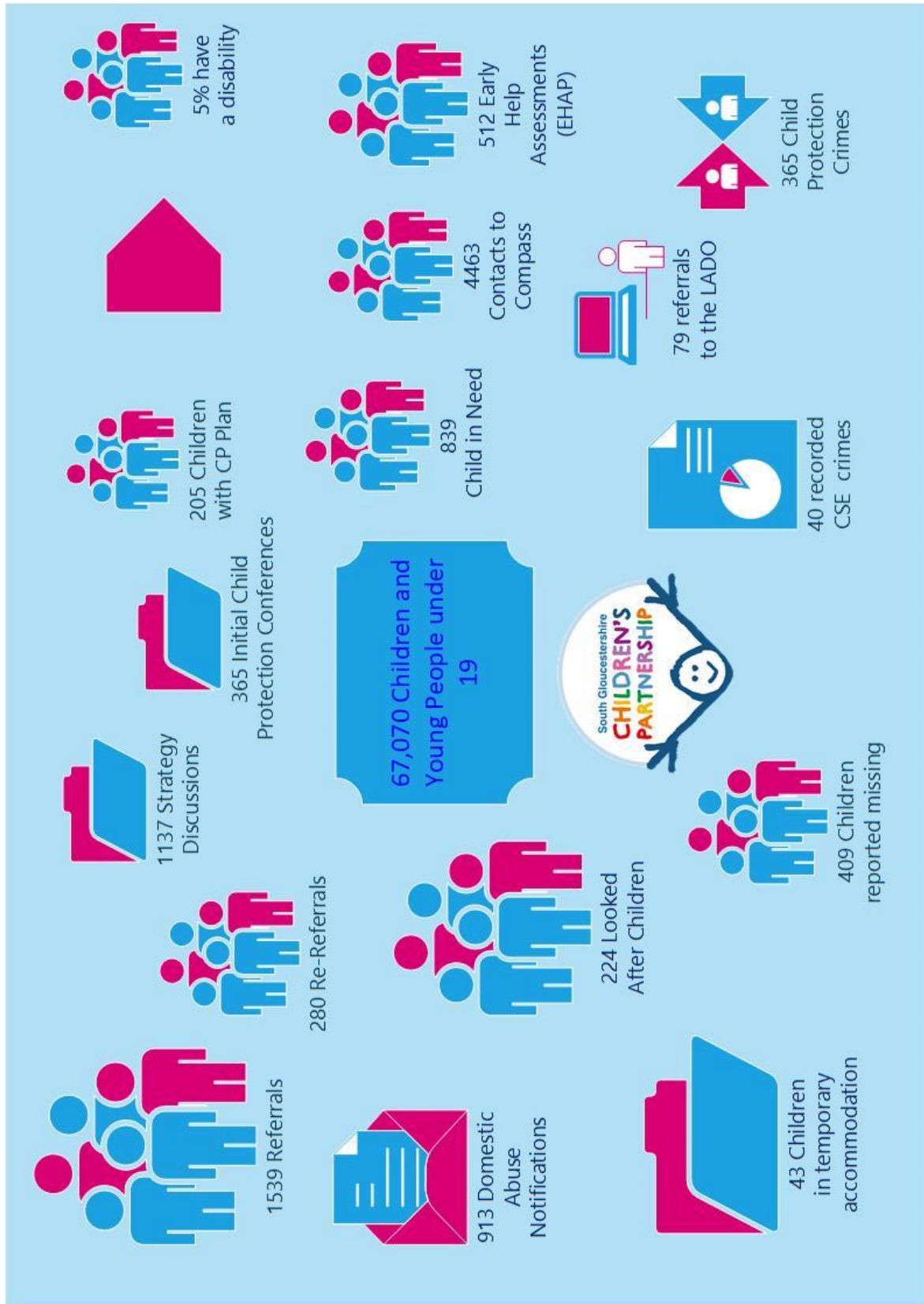
1137 Strategy  
Discussions

There has only been a very small (3%) fall 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 to 5%. The number of children who have a Child in Need plan has risen by 35%.

There are 4 more looked after children in South Gloucestershire this year, a rise of 2%.



# Safeguarding Activity in South Gloucestershire



## Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)



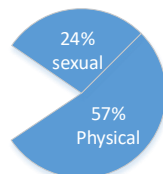
Consultations  
with LADO  
107



58%  
from  
schools  
& Early  
Years



79 LADO  
referrals



13% referrals  
are still ongoing

### Staff Groups for allegations:

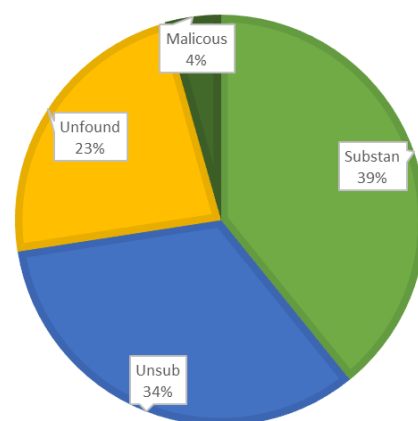
As in previous years those staff who have greatest amount of contact with children are those who experience the highest levels of allegations. Referrals against staff in

Education settings	35%
Fostering	16%
Residential Staff	10%
Early Years settings	10%
Sports Settings	9%
Others	10%

There was a rise in Education settings during this year, and a lower number of Sports settings and transport (None this year) the impact of lockdown and closures have impacted this.

### OUTCOMES

■ Substan ■ Unsub ■ Unfound ■ Malicious



## Training and Development



983  
people  
trained



101 attended  
Exploitation  
Training



## Impact Identified

This has given me more  
confidence when dealing  
with safeguarding calls

I am now aware of  
the possible warning  
signs is a risk of FGM

I know more about early help and  
signs of safety and am more  
confident to make decisions

As to be expected there has been significant disruption to all training courses through 2020. Courses were switched to remote learning the interagency programme continued to be delivered in a new format to accommodate the changes brought about by the pandemic. No show levels have improved since moving to remote learning. As we move forward we need to give serious consideration as to what blend of face to face and remote training we adopt with any decision based on the best method for delivering the

associated learning outcomes rather than any individual preferences. 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.



103 attended  
Domestic Abuse  
Training

# Vinney Green Secure Children's Home

Vinney Green Secure Children's Home is a 24 bedded Secure Children's Home offering places to young people of all genders between the ages of 10 and 18 years old.

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 CHILDREN'S HOME

Over the 12-month period April 1st 2020 to March 31st 2021, 128 incidents involved the use of restraint, a reduction of 249 restraints from the previous year. All the incidents that take place 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 footage of restraint incidents was viewed monthly 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.



128  
incidents  
involving  
use of  
restraint



## Impact Identified

We have attributed the reduction in restraints to a selection of positive practice changes.

- 2:1 activities – Activities with two young people greatly reduces the opportunity for conflict between young people, removes the impact that an audience of other young people has and enables staff to more easily build a positive relationship with the young people.
- 2:1 in Education – with smaller class groups, distractions are reduced, and the education team can build relationships and are better able to assess the young person's capability.
- Staff training – AMBIT, Team Teach and Restorative Approaches have all strengthened the staff team's ability to be able to understand the young people's emotions, be aware of their own body language and the language they use to communicate with the young person and they have further developed de-escalation skills.
- RPI training – There is a greater emphasis on restraint being used as a last resort and the measure of restraint being proportionate and with no more force than is necessary being used. Techniques are taught using scenario-based situations
- Reduction in occupancy – Due to the pandemic our occupancy has been reduced, therefore you would expect our numbers of restraint to be slightly reduced.

- More activities – we have significantly increased the number of activities available to the young people, this has been made possible because more activities can be enjoyed and be risk assessed as appropriate if a member of staff has two as opposed to 4 young people to supervise.
- Safety Assurance Manager – When a member of staff has been involved in a restraint, they are able to watch it on CCTV with the Safety Assurance Manager to analyse good practice and where they could have done used a different strategy. This has greatly helped staff to self-evaluate their own practice and for the Safety Assurance Manager to collate themes and share them in the RPEye bulletin.
- Formulations – Formulations help staff to understand the young person’s experiences and respond to them in a way that is helpful.
- Health Link Worker, Intervention Worker, Care Mentor and Education Mentor – The young person has a team of professionals around them that they have easy access too, whether to do specific targeted work or to offer time and holistic nurturing.

In June 2021, Ofsted recognised the improvements we had made and the positive impact it has on the young people’s lives that we care for. The Home received a ‘Good’ rating from Ofsted which reflects the continued development of positive practice at the Home.

## Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)

South Gloucestershire Children’s Partnership is a member of the West of England CDOP. In the year 2020-21 87 child deaths were considered by the panel and 12 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

