



2022-23

# ANNUAL REPORT



South Gloucestershire Children's Partnership

# INTRODUCTION

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
- The Youth Justice Board

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

The report was approved by the Children's Partnership Executive on 31st August 2023 and published on the Partnership website on 4th September 2023

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

# STRUCTURE OF THE PARTNERSHIP

The Executive and workstreams have been stable during this year with consistent chairs and members and have begun to work more effectively. The partnership continues to function using predominantly online meetings, with all partners accessing Microsoft Teams. There is a desire to hold more face to face meetings going forward.

The Executive and Exec Plus meeting which includes workstream chairs and the elected member for children and young people both meet quarterly.

The structure of the partnership has not changed:

- Best Start for children with Complex Needs – ICB 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.



# THE WORK OF THE PARTNERSHIP

## The Best Start for Vulnerable Children

The priorities for this workstream are:

- Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)
- The 'front door'
- Vinney Green Secure Children's Home & Eastwood Park Prison Mother & Baby Unit
- Exploitation of children



The Bi-Annual Regulation 45 report from Vinney Green Secure Children's Home is scrutinised by the workstream every 6 months.

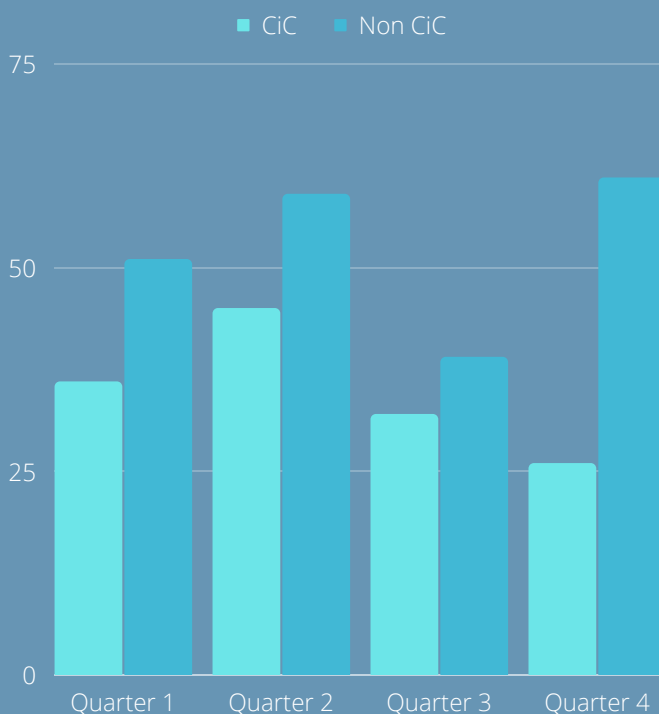
There is a quarterly report about children who are at risk of exploitation and who go missing



The number of missing episodes over this year rose by 25%



90 children had repeat missing episodes, a rise of 45%



The number of children reported missing who are not children looked after is the highest recorded.

Twice a year there are multi agency exploitation audits that are reviewed by this workstream

Click the Audit Clipboard to read Exploitation audit findings



# INDEPENDENT SCRUTINY OF MARAC

Impact of recommendations one year on:

*Trial of a new referral process*

✔ Trial was successful and referral process is embedded

*Consideration of appointment of a chair*

✔ Independent Chair has been in post since September 2022, with funding until Sept 2023 agreed

*Consistent representation from mental health service and GP information provided*

✔ Both of these recommendations are now in place

*Development of links to organisations who may identify male and young victims*

✔ Training for colleges, public health lead and funding allocated

*Development of new performance framework*

✔ Increased data provided for scrutiny, multi agency audit for 16-17 year olds at MARAC and children of adults heard at MARAC

*Work with housing providers relating to policies where victims are in joint tenancy arrangements*

✔ New tenancies have been amended. Working with housing providers.



## **Vinney Green Secure Children's Home**

Vinney Green bring bi-annual reports to the The Best Start for Vulnerable Children workstream for scrutiny.

There were 363 restraints during the year 2022-23, an increase from the previous year. This increase relates predominantly to one young person who was involved in over 300 incidents in a 6 month period, many of the incidents were to ensure safety of the young person and prevent serious harm to them. When this young person is removed from the data there is a decrease in restraints to 33 for the whole year which shows a 69% decrease. The duration of restraint has also fallen.

There is a weekly multi-disciplinary review for all restraints in place. A full inspection by Ofsted and CQC in April 2023 judged Vinney Green to be Good in all areas.

# THE WORK OF THE PARTNERSHIP

## The Best Start for Children with Complex Needs

The priorities for this workstream are:

- Integration of SEND continuing improvement plan into workstream
- Improve mental health services for children with complex needs
- Preparation for adulthood
- Reduction of waiting times for ASD diagnosis and assessment



From January 2023 the group agreed to meet more regularly to prepare for a future SEND inspection under the new framework.

The Council for Disabled Children undertook a piece of independent scrutiny of South Gloucestershire's Transition to Independence Pathway for children with complex needs.

The scrutinised policies and relevant protocols and also held focus groups with families and practitioners.

Very clear information and planning is needed about what happens when a young person finishes education in terms of moving into adulthood, supported living and work options

There were 8 recommendations which form part of the plan for 2023-24 for this workstream:

- Improve accessible information and advice for young people and families about transition
- Undertake a review of available provision to help prevent escalation of need
- Review the pathway for young people who do not meet the threshold for adult services
- Update the strategy with a focus on improving co-ordination and information sharing
- Review the training offer to strengthen understanding of the mental capacity act
- Conduct a review of timeliness and quality of transition assessments
- Introduce a DSCO (Designated Social Care Officer)
- Develop a co-production charter

Some services end at 18 and no equivalent is available

# THE WORK OF THE PARTNERSHIP

## The Best Start in Life

The priorities for this workstream are:

- Development of Family Hub model
- Reducing the Education Achievement Gap
- Promote Good Mental Health and Resilience
- Framework to upskill the workforce in Early Help and prevention



### Hearing the Voice of the Child - Independent Scrutiny

Included a review of strategy documents and conversations with members of Best Start in Life workstream.

#### Strengths Identified:

- Partnership Work with parent carer forum
- EPIC group of Care experienced young people
- Young Ambassadors
- Joint work and reach of CYP Needs Assessment
- Voice of child embedded in Serious Violence Strategy
- Co-design in activity clubs

#### Recommendations include:

- Improved co-ordination between participation team and children's partnership
- Youth Council should sit at the heart of young people's participation and provide co-ordination
- Make use of Participation strategy created by youth council
- Develop parent involvement
- Embed ideas from young ambassadors to promote better future engagement with children
- Participation needs to be built into the design of services

These recommendations have been incorporated into an Early Help Strategy Action Plan co-ordinated through the workstream



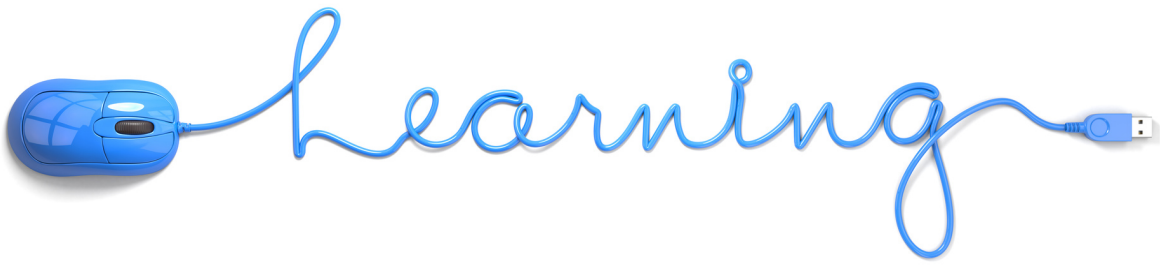
In January 2023 the Best Start in Life workstream held its first face to face meeting since March 2020.

This allowed for a development session with rich conversation to help plan the 23-24 priorities. There is agreement that more face to face meetings will take place going forward. The workstream has built momentum since this meeting.

# IMPACT SUMMARY FOR THE PARTNERSHIP

- Practitioners told us they intend to be more curious in their practice and focus on hearing the voice of the child and those who know them after the multi agency learning event about the National Review.
- As a direct result of scrutiny of MARAC there have been improvements in process, appointment of an independent chair and more referrals to DRIVE (perpetrator programme) There is improved consistency for victims
- A new resource - Best Start in Life Knowledge and Skills toolkit - has been produced which will allow practitioners to find information in one place
- A change to advertise Partnership Bitesize sessions all in one place has led to greater engagement and increased take up of sessions, these are practical sessions with immediate learning that can increase practitioner knowledge about local processes quickly
- Active response to two scrutiny reports for Best Start in Life which is putting foundations in place to build an effective early help system.
- Joined up approach to outcomes in child protection training across Avon & Somerset has led to less duplication and supports organisations who work across more than one area.
- Impact of learning from CSPRs and multi agency audits has led to provision of a new multi agency training session about Professional Curiosity.
- Escalation to the Executive has resulted in improvements at the Asylum Hotel
- Task and finish group to look at over-representation of children from minority ethnic background identified a theme of domestic abuse which has been taken forward
- Monthly newsletter is disseminated to all agencies and feedback is consistently positive about this way of sharing key information





## Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR)

One CSPR was published during 2022-23.

This review was called 'Family A'

You can read the full review [here](#)

There is also a practitioner learning brief available [here](#)

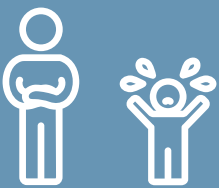
An action plan is being monitored by the CSPR sub group

Learning from this review is being included in an event taking place in September 2023.



## Multi Agency Audits

Four multi agency audits took place during the year. Click on the icons below to read the learning.



Click the picture for the Neglect Audit



Click the picture for the Emotional Abuse Audit



Click the picture for the Engagement with Fathers Audit



Click the picture for the Early Help Audit



The Section 11 Audit was undertaken with neighbouring partnerships in the Avon & Somerset Area and took the form of peer challenge. You can read the report [here](#)



**Impact of Audits:** Learning briefs are shared widely across all partner agencies. Audit summaries are referenced by partners as effective tools in their Section 11 audit returns and in multi agency meetings

## Learning & Development

The Children's Partnership commissions a range of multi agency training.

During this year there have been some sessions delivered face to face and some online - a hybrid approach is now followed.

Quarterly reports about the training and quality assurance come to the Senior Officer Group

The impact of training is measured by using immediate feedback forms and also delegates are contacted several weeks after the training to gather impact evidence of how delegates have used what they learned in practice.



In addition to the full and half day sessions the Bitesize Learning Sessions have continued to be delivered by the Partnership in 2022-23. These last just 45 minutes and are free to access for everyone who works and volunteers with children.

The themes for Bitesize sessions are Understanding Thresholds (revised session for 2023); Exploitation and new for this year is a MARAC session. These have all been delivered multiple times and are very popular



In October 2022, the partnership hosted a multi agency learning event in response to the publication of the National Review. This focussed on learning following the deaths of Arthur Labinjo Hughes and Star Hobson.



124  
professionals  
attended

Excellent presentations by all -  
I liked that it was delivered  
by staff across the partnership

A special newsletter was also published that had a focus on learning from reviews.

Read the newsletter [here](#)



The Children's Partnership also commission safeguarding training for people who volunteer in the community with Children and Young People. These are provided free of charge and in 2022-23 151 people attended one of the sessions delivered. Feedback is consistently good

# CHILDREN IN SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE



2171 Referrals



1524 Strategy Discussions



411 Initial Child Protection Conferences



406 Re-Referrals



317 Children with CP Plan



5% have a disability



497 Domestic Abuse Notifications

62,000 Children and Young People under 18



516 Child in Need



45 Domestic Abuse Notifications/referrals Where victim is 16-17



261 Children in Care



2582 Initial EHAPs



513 Child Protection Crimes



415 Children discussed at MARAC



562 Missing Children Episodes



85 referrals to the LADO

## 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



## IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR SAFEGUARDING TRAINING:

The information about the multi agency  
training offer is [here](#)



## IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO READ OUR CHILDREN'S PARTNERSHIP NEWSLETTERS:

The newsletters are published [here](#)



Scan the QR code to visit the Children's  
Partnership website [here](#)