



Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership

2024/25 Yearly Report
August 2025

RBSCP Executive Reviewed: 01/09/25



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1. Welcome to the RBSCP Annual Report

During 2024-2025 Rochdale Safeguarding Children Partnership embraced the implementation of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) and was able to launch the new Children’s Safeguarding Partnership with an event at Rochdale Town Hall which was attended by a variety of partners from across the whole Borough. This was a vibrant and informative event which laid out the Mission of the Partnership but also provided an element of learning with two eminent speakers, Anna Glinski, Deputy Director (Knowledge and Practice Development) with the Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse, and Jan Howarth, Professor Emeritus Professor of Child Welfare, University of Sheffield.

The changes due to MASA meant that the Independent Chair role was replaced by an Independent Scrutineer who forms part of the partnership arrangements and who’s role puts formative challenge back into the partnership system. The chair of the Partnership and Executive transferred to one of the key partners as per MASA directives and is currently held by the Integrated Care Board representative. Education representatives are also considered a key partner in RBSCP

In April 2024 we welcomed CQC, OFSTED and HMIC into the Borough for a joint targeted inspection (JTAI) of Front Door services which really showcased how in Borough we work in partnership. The outcome of the inspection though not graded was very positive. As a partnership we are working on implementing and assessing impact of the JTAI action plan to improve outcomes for our people.

This report lays out the detail of the activity across subgroups of the Partnership. The work of such groups is only viable with the commitment of our partners to attend, contribute and disseminate within their own organisations. We hope to build on the activity of the subgroups and provide more evidence of assurance via audit in the next 12 months and welcome input from the Independent Scrutineer in this area.

In addition, the report provides a good picture of Safeguarding Children activity, partnership working and a desire via our priorities to strive to provide optimum services across an integrated system.

Myself and the other key partners are looking forward to working together to deliver best outcomes over the next 12 months.

Alison Kelly,

Locality Associate Director for Nursing,
Safeguarding & Quality. NHS GM IC (HMR)

Chair of the RBSCP on behalf of the
Designated Safeguarding Partner



2. Introducing Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership

The Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership (RBSCP) has been developed to support the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023. The RBSCP provides the framework for the safeguarding arrangements under which the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies work together to identify and respond to the needs of children, commission and publish local child safeguarding practice reviews and provide scrutiny to ensure the effectiveness of the arrangements.

The safeguarding arrangements have been designed to build on the strengths of the previous arrangements. The learning and improvement framework fosters a culture of continuous learning and improvement across the partnership. A robust local child safeguarding practice review process, effective multiagency audits and analysis of performance data and a comprehensive multi-agency training programme continue to be a core part of the arrangements.

The governance structure enables a clear line of sight to front line practice for senior leaders and facilitates an understanding of the effectiveness of arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable children.

The involvement of relevant partners has been fundamental to the effective safeguarding of children in Rochdale borough and the structure enables continued meaningful engagement through membership of groups and a multi-agency meeting forum. The commitment of our partners is highly valued, and the success of the arrangements relies on the continuation of these positive relationships.

In Rochdale, the Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSPs) are:

- **The Chief Executive of Rochdale Borough Council**
- **The Chief Executive of the Greater Manchester NHS Integrated Care Board**
- **The Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police.**

The lead safeguarding partners meet three times a year via the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Alliance. The Lead Safeguarding Partners agree on ways to co-ordinate their safeguarding services across the Greater Manchester footprint. The Safeguarding Alliance acts as a strategic leadership group in supporting and engaging others and will oversee the implementation of local, regional and national learning. In Rochdale the lead safeguarding representatives delegate their functions but remain accountable for any actions or decisions taken on behalf of the RBSCP.

RBSCP Safeguarding Partnership Executive

In Rochdale the delegated officers from each statutory agency act as designated safeguarding partners (DSPs), and they are:

- **Director of Children's Services (Rochdale Borough Council)**
- **District Commander (Greater Manchester Police)**
- **Chief Nurse (Greater Manchester NHS Integrated Care Board)**

The delegated officers are empowered to:

- **speak with authority for the safeguarding partner they represent.**
- **take decisions on behalf of their organisation or agency and commit them on policy, resourcing and practice matters,**
- **hold their own organisation or agency to account on how effectively they participate and implement the local arrangements.**

The three DSPs assume primary responsibility for implementing local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and strong leadership to ensure effective bringing together of relevant partner agencies. They meet with relevant partners bimonthly as the RBSCP Safeguarding Partnership Executive to agree the safeguarding direction, priorities, the RBSCP Annual Report, as well as developing, managing and aligning the Strategic Safeguarding Priorities to other Boards.

Membership includes, RBSCP Advisors and Children Social Care Assistant Directors and Education representatives. The meeting is chaired by one of the three nominated DSPs, on an annual rotational basis. Independent scrutiny of the arrangements is provided by the Independent Scrutineer and Peer Review.



Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership

The Safeguarding Partnership Executive is supported through the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Partnership and supporting subgroups. The RBSCP has representatives from a wide variety of organisations, detailed on

[Rochdale Safeguarding Partnership - About the Safeguarding Children's Partnership \(RBSCP\).](#)

RBC Children's Services	Neighbourhood Services	Healthwatch Rochdale
NHS GM Integrated Care System	Rochdale Safeguarding Adult Board	Early Help and Schools
Greater Manchester Police	Elected Members	National Probation Service
Adult Care	Northern Care Alliance	Hopwood Hall College
Rochdale Safer Communities Partnership	Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust	GM Fire & Rescue Service

The RBSCP members lead and facilitate challenge around safeguarding practice, learning from National and Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, considers solutions and disseminates safeguarding workforce development across the partnership and community. The associated subgroups that support Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership Forum and Executive are identified in the table below:

Learning & Development Group
This group is responsible for high quality, up to date, effective and child focused multi-agency training across the partnership to ensure skilled and effective workforces.
Child Safeguarding Practice Review Group
This group oversees serious incidents involving children, facilitates Rapid Reviews, makes recommendations to the Safeguarding Partnership Executive regarding Multi-Agency or Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review. Liaises with National Panel, facilitates Rapid Review process and oversees partnership learning from reviews.
Complex Safeguarding Group
This group oversees the multi-agency responses in relation to contextual safeguarding. This includes children who may be vulnerable and those at risk of exploitation within the district from CSE, CCE, gangs, human trafficking, being missing from home, care or school and harmful sexual behaviour.
Safeguarding Performance & Quality Assurance Group
<div>This is a new group to the Partnership, separating from a joint Adult and Children’s Quality Assurance group, under the new MASA arrangements. During 2024/25 the group’s new targets were developed around the group’s responsible for organising statutory and multi-agency audits, review of partner agencies audits, analysis of performance data & developing a multi-agency data set within the Partnership’s Quality Assurance Framework. The group also oversees multi-agency policy.</div> <div>EHASH Group A working group of Safeguarding Performance & Quality Assurance which focuses on the effectiveness and development of EHASH service.</div>
Early Help & Education Safeguarding Group
This group is responsible for ensuring education partners are informed and involved with strategic development of safeguarding and assuring RBSCP that all key stages are actively working towards guidance contained within Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working Together to Safeguard Children.

In addition to the above RBSCP Forum and Subgroups, there are also several affiliated functional groups that support the safeguarding agenda and responsibilities:

<div>Early Help Strategic Board</div> <div>Children and Young People Partnership</div> <div>Rochdale Safer Communities Partnership</div> <div>Corporate Parenting Board</div> <div>Domestic Abuse Partnership Board</div> <div>Homelessness Board</div>	<div>Rochdale Safeguarding Adult Board.</div> <div>Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB)</div> <div>Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)</div> <div>Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)</div> <div>Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP)</div>
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RBSCP Activity 2024-25

The Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Partnership Executive met five times during 2024/25. Following Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, representatives from Education were invited to attend the Executive Meetings from June 2024. The Independent Scrutineer appointed in September 2024, commenced role in November 2024 and attended the Executive Meeting from December 2024. Attendance at the Executive Meetings during 2024/25 is highlighted below:

Agency	Greater Manchester Police	Rbc Children’s Services	Integrated Care Board	Education	Independent Scrutineer
Attendance	100%	100%	100%	75% From June 2024	100% From Dec 2024

In addition to Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Partnership Executive examining current practice, assurance reports from the designated safeguarding leads and subgroups, emerging themes and learning from reviews, and safeguarding finances and resources, the table below highlights specific areas of discussion and decision making by the Executive and the intended safeguarding impact for children and families in the borough:

Date	Topics & Decision Making	Intended Impact
13/05/24	<div>New Terms of Reference & Membership of Executive</div> <div>Explore Annual Priorities for 2024/25.</div>	<div>Confirm Governance and Accountability arrangements.</div> <div>Agreement of safeguarding themes across Partnership.</div>
12/09/24	<div>Draft MASA document and RBSCP Yearly Report Approval</div> <div>Rochdale Children Partnership Multi-Agency Response to Need.</div> <div>JTAI Action Plan & Section 11 Plans</div> <div>Appointment of Independent Scrutineer</div>	<div>Solidify new MASA arrangements and processes in line with WTSC 2023.</div> <div>Practice Improvement plans for identification of risk and need. Challenge Panel assurance process for MA safeguarding activity.</div> <div>Independent Scrutiny to support effective safeguarding & impactful partner activity.</div>
10/10/24	<div>Agree MASA and explore launch of RBSCP & subgroups.</div> <div>JTAI Action Plan</div> <div>Independent Scrutineer Contract and discussion on draft workplan</div>	<div>Strengthening governance & accountability, terms of reference, activity & impact.</div> <div>Practice Improvement monitoring.</div> <div>Formulating scrutiny priorities across partnership.</div>
12/12/24	<div>Finalise RBSCP Launch, arrangements for event.</div> <div>RBSCP Strategic Business Plan</div> <div>Section 11 Report</div> <div>Operation Alpha Lemur Report</div> <div>Keeping Children safe, helping families thrive Report (Nov ‘24) proposed reform.</div>	<div>RBSCP Launch Event promoting MASA & Priorities for 2025-2027</div> <div>RBSCP & Independent Scrutineer advised of findings & next steps.</div> <div>Learning shared, local actions and training agreed to support practice.</div> <div>Consideration for future changes, service reform and impact for children of Rochdale.</div>
03/02/25	<div>Exploration of first reading of the Children Well-Being & Schools Bill</div> <div>Coroners update and Thematic Report findings explored</div> <div>Independent Scrutineer Report</div> <div>Regional Improvement</div>	<div>Assured Education and Schools already part of RBSCP & Executive.</div> <div>Supporting local learning to strengthen children’s safeguarding.</div> <div>Whole system scrutiny awareness & and develop scrutiny workplan</div> <div>Links to wider improvement work.</div>

Between April 2024 – March 2025 the wider Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children’s Partnership met 3 in June 2024, November 2024 and March 2025. The RBSCP Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements were updated in 2024, and approved [rbscp masa dec 2024. final version. pdf.](#)

In March 2025 the Partnership was relaunched introducing the above multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (MASA) under Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023. Professionals from across the partnership attended the relaunch event, including practitioners and managers from across the partnership of Rochdale.

This event also supported the new Rochdale Multi-Agency Response to Need - Guidance for families, professionals and communities.

[rochdalesafeguarding.com/assets/c31bdc8b/multi-agency_response_to_need_guidance_updated.docx](#)

Rochdale Multi-Agency Response to Need Guidance underpins the RBSCP vision to provide support for children, young people and families at the earliest opportunity to promote the wellbeing and safety of children and young people.

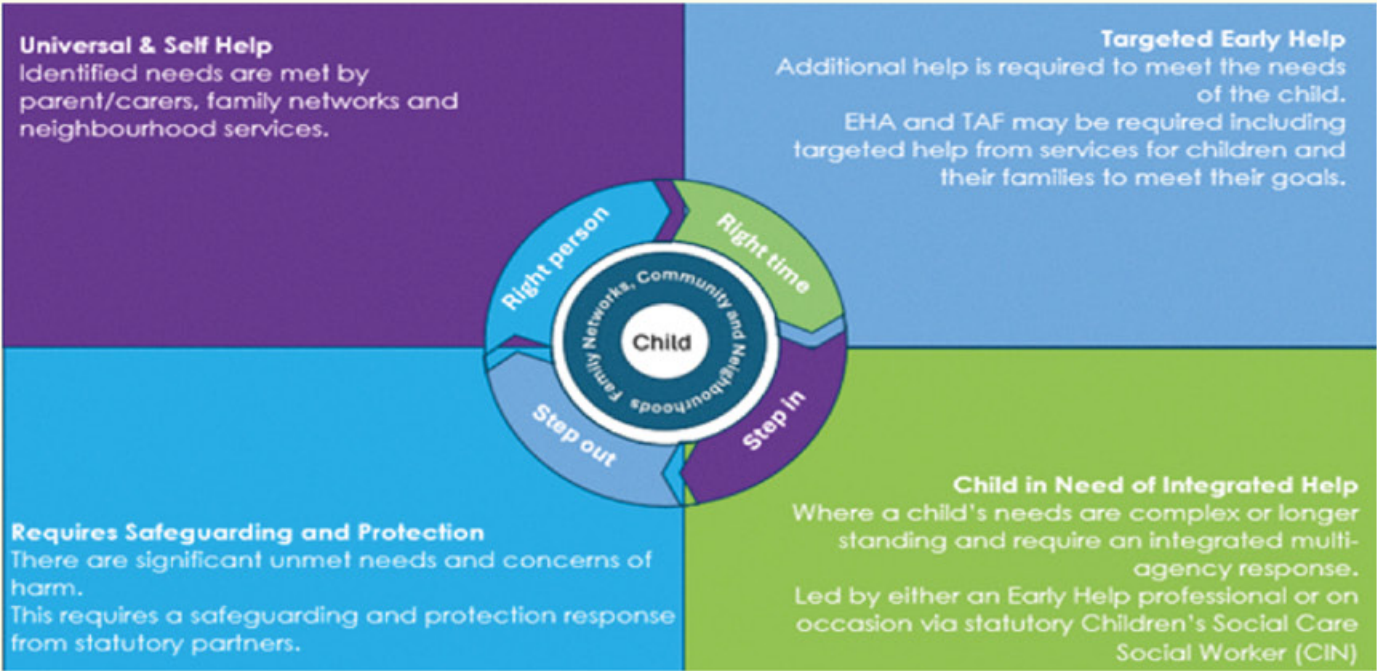


Image describes the 4 levels of support from Universal support, targeted early help, Child in need of Integrated support and child requiring safeguarding and protection. With the child at the centre they are offered the right support, by the right person, at the right time. With options to step up or step down from the different levels of support to meet their safeguarding needs.

Rochdale Multi-Agency Response to Need aims to offer clear guidance and to promote a shared awareness of how we meet children, young people and family’s needs in Rochdale and step in and step out to help and protect children, young people and their parents/families to meet their needs and achieve best outcomes.

Within the RBSCP MASA (December 2024) there is a Data Sharing Agreement (DSA) between RBSCP and safeguarding partners. The Memorandum of Understanding within the DSA sets out the principles of Information Governance that all organisations who provide, access and use information have agreed to. It provides a framework for safeguarding the processing of data and information as defined by the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Safeguarding Partner Attendance at RBCSP Forum Meetings during 2024-25

Agency	Attendance Rate
Greater Manchester Police RBC Children’s Services NHS GM ICB Pennine Care Foundation Trust Community Safety Adult Care Early Break Education Elected Members Rochdale Care Organisation	100%
Probation Service Hopwood Hall College Public Health	66.6%
Early Break Education Elected Members VCFS – Health Watch Rochdale Boroughwide Housing	133.3%

In addition, to the RBCSP Executive Meetings and Forum Meetings, partners strongly support safeguarding developments. The table below highlights partnership engagement and activity in respect of the RBCSP Subgroups:

	GPM	RBC Child	ICB	Educ	PCFT	NCA	Probation	Adult Care	Early Break	Total Meetings
Practice Review	60%	100%	100%	20%	20%	80%	100%	N/A	N/A	5
Learning & Development	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	2
Complex Safeguarding	100%	100%	100%	80%	20%	100%	60%	80%	100%	5
Early Help & Education	0%	100%	100%	100%	0%	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	1

It is anticipated that the relaunch of the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children’s Partnership - multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (MASA) and terms of reference for all associated meetings, will result in a higher level of clarity, commitment and attendance from partners for 2025/26 RBSCP Forum and Subgroup meetings.

3. Our Children & Community

Rochdale Borough

■ Sept 2023

Understanding the borough

Page 3

Statistics

Summary

In summary Rochdale borough is an ethnically diverse town which in areas is experiencing economic growth and high level investment against a backdrop of deprivation and poverty.

The wards across the borough vary characteristically from affluent rural areas on the edges of the borough to highly deprived ethnically diverse centres.

Rochdale Borough - Census 2021		2011	2021	% Diff
Population	All Persons	211,699	223,773	5.7%
	Males	103,642	109,718	5.9%
	Females	108,057	114,055	5.6%
	Young People (0-19)	56,252	59,299	5.4%
	Older People (65+)	30,816	36,867	19.6%
Households	Households	87,552	90,223	3.1%
	One person	24,183	27,641	14.3%
	One family	53,685	57,288	6.7%
	Other households	5,684	5,294	-6.9%
Ethnicity	White	172,874	165,485	-4.3%
	Mixed	3,569	5,284	48.1%
	Asian or Asian British	31,630	41,406	30.9%
	Black or Black British	2,770	7,927	186.2%
	Other	856	3,669	328.6%
Country of Birth	Born in UK	188,084	189,122	0.6%
	Born elsewhere	23,615	34,651	46.7%
Religion	Christian	128,186	104,841	-18.2%
	Muslim	29,426	42,121	43.1%
	Other	1,762	2,095	18.9%
	No religion OR religion not stated	52,325	74,715	42.8%
Housing Tenure	Owns outright/mortgage	54,149	54,377	0.4%
	Socially or privately rented	31,803	35,318	11.1%
Economic Activity	Economically Active	101,424	101,069	-0.4%
	Economically Inactive	65,492	73,878	12.8%
	Unemployed (inc. students)	10,259	6,610	-35.6%
Census 2021	Response Rate	93%	97%	4.3%

Summary

In summary Rochdale borough is an ethnically diverse town which in areas is experiencing economic growth and high level investment against a backdrop of deprivation and poverty.

The wards across the borough vary characteristically from affluent rural areas on the edges of the borough to highly deprived ethnically diverse centres.

£36,816
Median Household Income

£183,660
Average house price

67.2%
Employment Rate

6% Out of work benefit claimants

10
Green Flag Status Parks

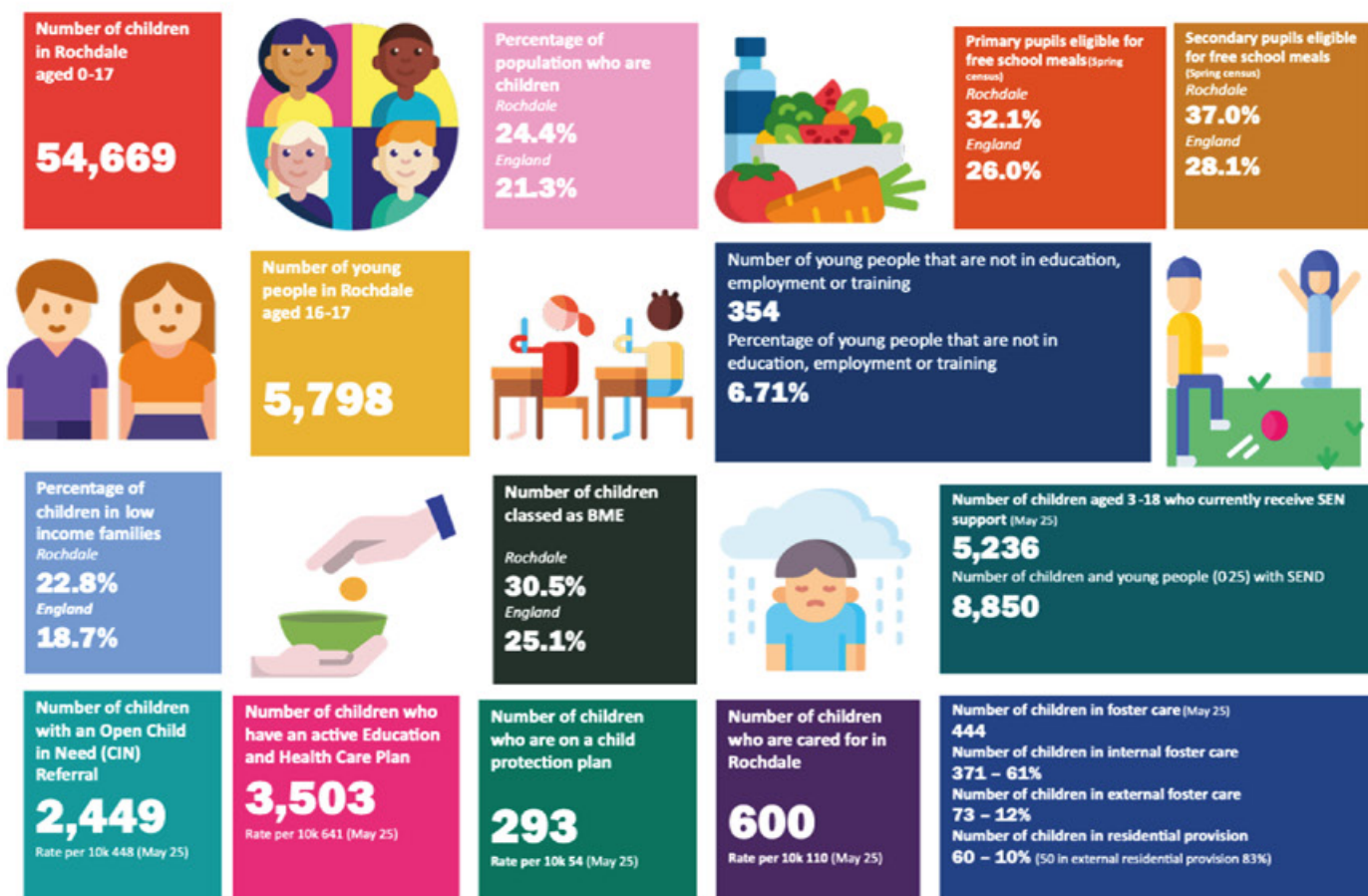
Population
20.5% - Aged 15 and below
63% - Aged 16-64
16.5% - Aged 65+

Sources:
Office of National Statistics, Census 2021, Public Health England

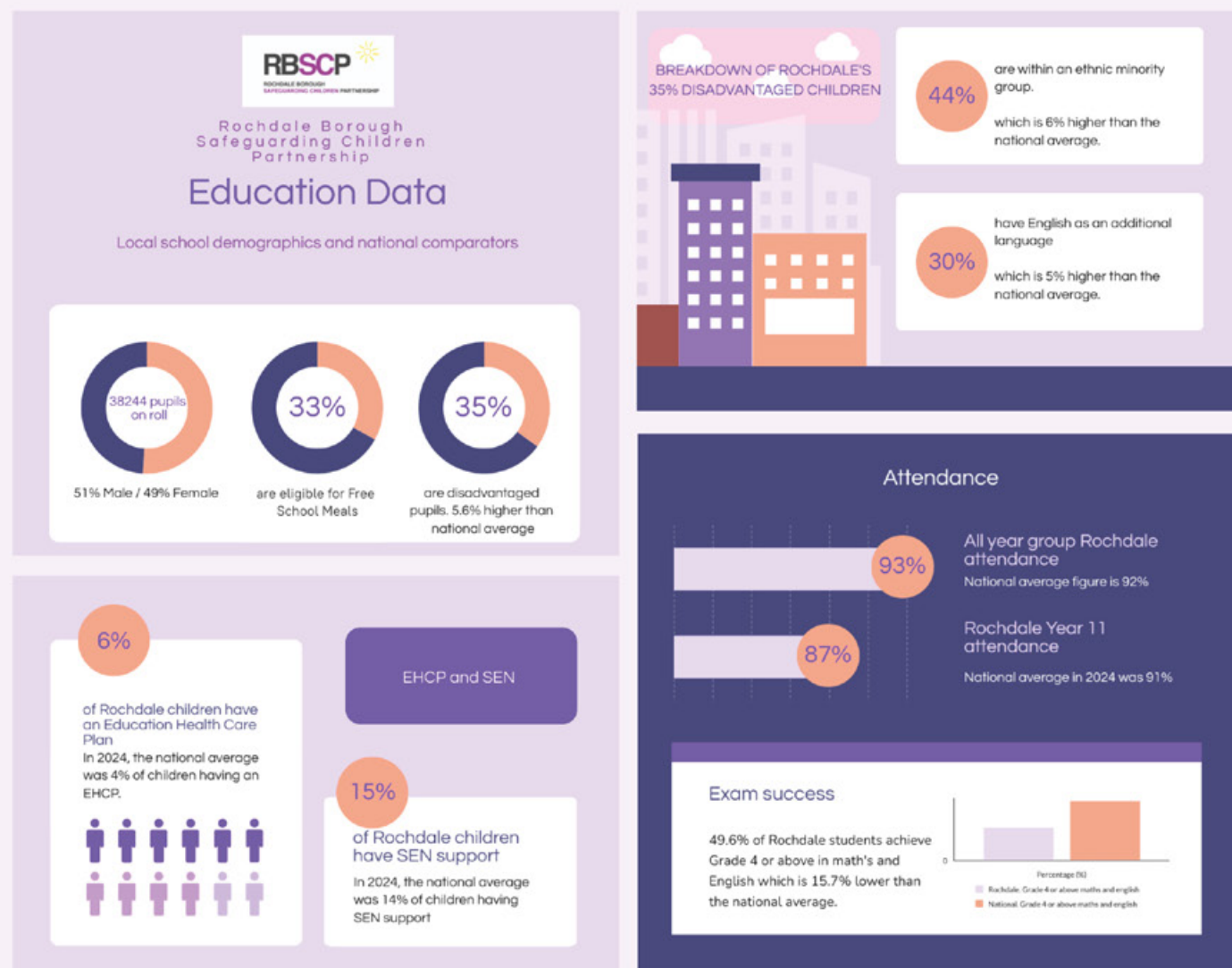
Rochdale Borough table describes Rochdale statistics broken down into Population, Households, Ethnicity, Country of Birth and Religion in reference to Census 2011 and Census 2021. The table highlights household income, employment rates, costs of average house, green spaces and population age breakdown.



Our Children

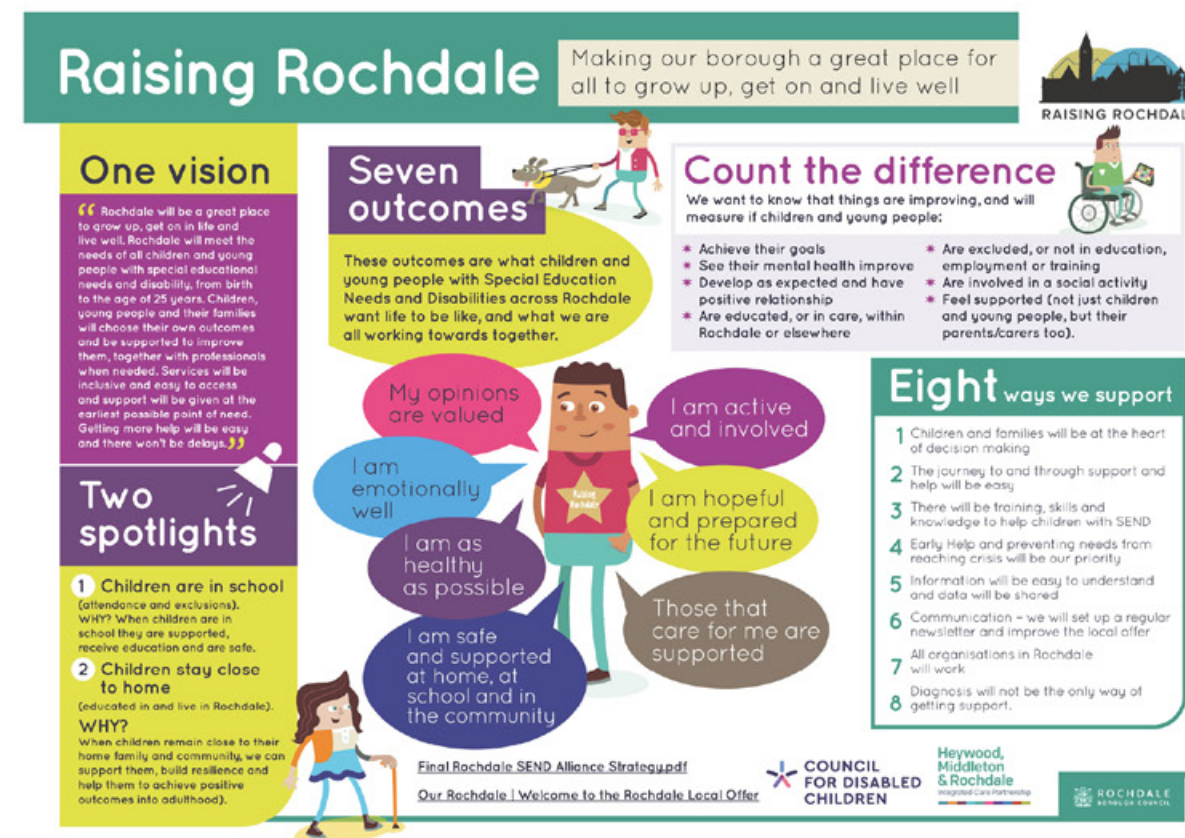


This table states there are 54,669 0-17 year olds in Rochdale and breaks these down to highlight % in Rochdale compared to % in England in respect of population who are children, children eligible for free school meals in Primary school and Secondary schools, Children not in education, training or employment, those in low income families, those classed as BME, SEND & SEN Support, those with open Child in Need referral, Education, Health Care Plan, open Child protection plan and children cared for in Rochdale broken down to residential homes or type of foster care.



The Education Data tables highlight local school demographics and national comparators examining children on role and the breakdown of gender, free meal eligibility and disadvantage. Of those disadvantaged children data explores those from ethnic minority group and English as additional language. Data examines children on EHCPO and SEN Support, both are higher than National average. In respect of attendance data shows all year group and year 11 attendance, plus exam test success.

Rochdale's multi-agency partners understand the different local factors which contribute to the benchmarking data. As such, the Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPP) developed the Raising Rochdale plan in 2024. Partners are fully engaged with this far-reaching plan which will ensure Rochdale will be a great place to grow up, get on in life and live well.



Raising Rochdale is a vision to make the borough a great place for all to grow up, get on and live well. The poster highlights how Rochdale's multi-agency partners understand the different local factors affecting children and the different ways they will support children and families to achieve and grow. The information describes the three-year strategic vision for the Children and Young people's Partnership, its purpose and objectives for the borough's children and young people: · to be safe, · to be healthy, and · to be successful.

The Children and Young People's plan sets out the three-year strategic vision for the Children and Young people's Partnership. Its purpose is to:

- Ensure the Children and Young People's Partnership anticipates and responds to changes which impact on children and young people in the borough.**
- Set out the priorities, key areas of work and success measures for the Children and Young People's Partnership in the period ahead.**
- Drive the aims and priorities for the pooling and co-ordination of the resources managed by the constituent parts of the partnership, in line with the broader articulated approach of Raising Rochdale.**

This plan is driven by the voices of Rochdale's children and young people. Almost 8 000 young people's responses in surveys and focus groups have been brought together to provide an evidence base for the production of this plan, providing a unique insight and challenge to the partnership

to triangulate with outcomes from the range of self-evaluations and peer reviews conducted by Rochdale Council and partners to the CYPP.

The partnership's vision is for Rochdale children and young people to achieve their full potential, to make our borough a great place for all to grow up, get on and live well. This vision has been spelled out in three priorities, defined by the CYPP's first conversation with young people about this plan, for the borough's children and young people:

- to be safe,
- to be healthy, and
- to be successful.

A fourth priority has emerged from consideration of the evidence base: for children and young people to be heard; to ensure the very best communication with children and young people and a continually improving attention to children and young people's voice.

4. Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Business Unit Budget 2024-2025

Total Contribution via the Income 2024-2025 for the RBSCP and RBSAB		
	Overall Joint Income	RBSCP income only for 2024-2025
RBC Children Service	-£92,105.00	-£92,105.00
RBC Adult Care	-£95,878.00	£0.00
ICB	-£79,816.00	-£39,908.00
GMCA (GMP)	-£27,064.00	-£13,532.00
Schools SLA	-£20,962.00	-£20,962.00
EH&S	-£15,500.00	-£15,500.00
Probation	-£3,000.00	£0.00
Total	-£334,325.00	-£182,007.00
Committed Carry forward from 2023-2024		
Grant Funding (One off payment March 2024 for the SCP only) captured in the committed carry forward figure)	-£137,886.00	-£92,593.00
Total	-£472,211.00	-£274,600.00
RBSCP Expenditure only 2024-2025		RBSCP expenditure only
Independent Chair	Final payment to Indep Chair (prior to the change to In Scrutineer covering April/May 2024)	£1575.00
Independent Scrutineer	Payment Nov 2024-March 2025	£5015.85
Professional Fees	CSPR's x 2	£2551.20
Subscriptions	TASP, Tri-X GM P&P and Data Protection	£1720.00
Training	Cultural Competency, and Synthesia AI	£5345.00
Rochdale Safeguarding Website	Inclusive of separation & annual review	£2367.99
Room Hire		£150.00
RBSCP Launch event	Incl speakers x 2, room & lunch	£3786.92
Total		£22,511.96

Over the previous financial years the RBSB with the support of the RBSCP and RBSAB have managed a committed carry forward (protected income due to external partner’s contributions) into the new financial years. The internal and external partners support this as it elevates the need to request further funding.

This committed carry forward is however year on year reducing due to the staffing salaries (inflationary pay increases and incremental rises within the Business Unit).

The Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Business Unit (RBSB) is a joint Business Unit overseeing the functions of the separate Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Adult Board.

The Children Service Safeguarding Unit funding of £79,212.00 ceased at the end of 2023-2024 financial year, bringing annual contributions in line with Adult Social Care.

Staff Salaries for the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Business Unit are via the contributions by RBSCP/RBSAB Partners (RBC/ ICB/GMP and other partners)

The Staff Salaries for the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Business Unit are £281,309.00 per annum, this figure is based on the current temporary arrangement, the actual contractual establishment salaries is £371,109.06 per annum.

In the interim staffing structure, the Business Unit Staff are picking up additional duties beyond job descriptions for both RBSCP and RBSAB.

This may not be sustainable in the longer term as roles are becoming very bespoke due to the skills and knowledge of existing staff.

The CSPR budget was below expected due to a smaller number of CSPR’s taking place than previous years, however an increase of in year CSPR’s would see the committed carry forward reduce quicker.

Other external Income included for the RBSCP is via the Education subscription to the RBSCP resources, however this is risk mitigated, due to more education facilities becoming academies and reluctance to sign up as they source their own safeguarding resources/training independently.

The RBSCP has agreed to develop a variety of multi-agency train the trainer courses which are available across the Partnership including Culture Competency this is following recommendations outline from the National Reviews Panel.

Concerns are highlighted regarding training as it is a cost as agreed by the MASA to provide free of charge, but attendance has been steadily declining. However, those that do attend state a skills and knowledge increase as a result. The RBSCP has invested in Synthesia an innovative AI programme to make Learning & Development more accessible.

Finally, the RBSCP launch event was a high cost to the Partnership but feedback forms were mostly that the in-person event was engaged with and allowed multi-agency leaders and workforces to share learning and provided networking opportunities.





5. Independent Scrutineer - Myra Ball

I was so pleased to be appointed as Independent Scrutineer for Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership (RBSCP – the partnership) in November 2024. The role and function of the independent scrutineer is defined within Working Together 2023, specifically page 37.

During my first meeting with the partnership chair, it was impressed on me that I have a mandate to roam and to be engaged, involved and included in local safeguarding arrangements. This was an invaluable first meeting that laid down the foundations that Rochdale has a culture of learning in which scrutiny is sought and appreciated. My reflections on the first five months as the independent scrutineer for the partnership are based on my scrutiny of:

- **Strategic documents, including the RBSCP Annual Report 2023/2024, Raising Rochdale; the children and young people's partnership plan 2024/2027 (including inclusion toolkit) and children's need and response framework.**
- **Partnership governance arrangements and priorities, Partnership executive meetings, subgroup highlight reports and peer challenge Section 11.**
- **Most partnership strategies, terms of reference, procedures, guidance, training and workforce development.**
- **One to one meeting with all sub-group chairs, business unit manager and officers. Observations at the partnership launch event 10th March 2024, EHASH strategic board, all subgroups, all statutory Child Safeguarding Review Meetings, and Joint Target Area Inspection outcomes meeting.**

It is important to acknowledge that the partnership is on an improvement journey and my reflections are that children's safeguarding arrangements are strong. This is coupled with a high level of commitment from strategic leaders, the wider children's safeguarding workforce and subgroups.

They are ambitious enough to strive for better outcomes for children and families.

The partnership wants a culture of openness and reflection, with an aspiration to embed all learning to continuously improve, equally through observations I see evidence of "getting things done." The partnership website provides practice guidance and accompanying tools for practitioners, to support communication and engagement with children and young people, as well as information regarding advocacy.

RBSCP have taken the opportunity to embrace the recommendations from a peer review and strengthen children's governance arrangements by separating from a joint children's and adult's structure. This reconfiguration has led the partnership to map out a framework that enhances its ability to accelerate improvement, monitor impact, and drive positive change. This has been a challenge and whilst it is also important to recognise the progress being made across the partnership it is equally important to recognise that this has been completed against wider single or joint agency scrutiny. Scrutiny has taken place in the form of a Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) of the multi-agency response to identification of initial need and risk (April-July 2024), Greater Manchester Police (GMP) national child protection inspection (Feb-Dec 2024), Mayor and leaders at a Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) independent CSE assurance review (June 24), and Local Government Review (LGA) corporate peer review (Feedback Oct 2024). All of this has strengthened collaboration not only with the designated safeguarding partners, but with wider partners and community – but has squeezed an ever-increasing workload on practitioners, managers and the business unit.

This is year one of a partnership programme of change, whilst "green shoot" improvements have been made, the maturity and full evidence of the effectiveness will have to be considered in year 2025/2026.

Key reflections:

1. Improvement on the quality assurance (QA) procedures that focus' on voice of the child, children's experiences, outcomes and influence on practise can be strengthened.

2. Capturing the voice of the child, young person and their families.

3. Business unit stability

There are clear safeguarding procedures and arrangements in place to share information across the partnership, coupled with published structure, safeguarding arrangements and information sharing protocols on the website.

Quality assurance green shoots have developed in the performance and quality assurance subgroup, practise review subgroup and EHASH strategic board through a scheduled programme of audit (practitioner and strategic) and multi-agency deep dives to ensure embedded learning. Complex safeguarding has evidence of improved methodology however with the emergence of the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Hub peer review mechanisms this will be reported within 2025/2026. An area that could be strengthened further, are details of single agency data and audits, multi-agency deep dives, independent scrutiny across the partnership priorities, and a scrutiny, assurance and audit report.

These must be outcome and impact focused that demonstrate the effect felt on children and the difference that the partnership is collectively making for children and young people in Rochdale. Whilst QA in Rochdale has always been completed a central repository of what scrutiny is taking place and the use of what scrutiny tools utilised would strengthen the governance. As we move forward, there is the opportunity to strengthen assurance through the various methods above, driven initially by data to underpin our understanding and then onto the qualitative work that truly evidences the impact that the partnership is making to children and families.

A data dashboard has been developed with the support of the Regional Improvement Practice Program (RIPP) and Rochdale have signed the necessary memorandum of understanding. This data dashboard has been progressed during this year and is being driven by the partnership and EHASH strategic board. As independent scrutineer I can support and assist to provide deeper assurance and maturity of the safeguarding arrangements. My 2025/2026 work plan includes a deeper dive on all partnership priorities to run alongside how we capture children's voices and experiences.

As part of all new QA activity, the voice of the child and young person is a golden thread. Whilst we have evidence of children being verbally heard, the documentation and evidence base of all children is not as developed. This will come as the new children's arrangements mature but it is safe to say that single and joint inspection activity all require documentary evidence of how children have been heard and how their voices have changed practise. Rochdale is innovative and have a family hub structure, there is opportunity to specifically hear and document children's voices through the family first change program or follow the children's commissioner approach of 100 voices for 100 days. In March 2024, Participation People finalised their strategy and it would be good evidence to demonstrate through a task and finish group how Rochdale took this forward.

Since the uncoupling from a joint children and adults board approach there has been uncertainty with the business units resourcing. Business units are the lifeblood of any partnership and Rochdale is no different.

Myra Ball,
Independent Scrutineer

The business unit heavily supports the co-ordination and minuting of most RBSCP meetings, produces documentation to a high standard and facilitates collaboration among various stakeholders. Therefore, the stability with the business units' resources is essential for partnership success.

Finally, there is no doubt that RBSCP is a committed and evolving partnership. It is absolutely focussed on ensuring its children and young people are not only seen and heard but helped by the right person at the right time. I am convinced that if the partnership continues to work at pace, it will evidence that the change made in 24/25 will have a lasting impact for Rochdale's children and families.



6. RBSCP Activities and Impact 2024/25

Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children’s Partners strongly contribute to protecting children from harm and promoting their well-being. During 2024/25 there was four RBSCP Priorities that agencies contributed to their strategic and service delivery:

Priority 1: Reducing the impact of Neglect.
1. Develop and launch revised Child Neglect Strategy 2022-25 & toolkit. 2. Increase the multi-agency use of Early Help. 3. Increase Professional Curiosity in assessment & planning.
Priority 2: Identification of Child Sexual Abuse
1. Review LSCPR training to ensure practitioners identify CSA consistently. 2. Understand the effectiveness of the local response to child sexual abuse. 3. Communicate with children, families and practitioners to raise awareness of CSA.
Priority 3: Understanding the risk of impact on children and domestic abuse
1. Ensure practitioners respond to DA when children are identified as victims 2. Understand support effectiveness when children are victims of domestic abuse.
Priority 4: Safeguarding Adolescents
1. Develop and launch Complex Safeguarding Strategy. 2. Understand effectiveness of services when children transition to adult services. 3. Assess the local response to Missing children.

The RBSCP Business Plan 2022-2024 links directly to these priorities and was reported on in 2022/23 and 2023/24 annual report. Under the new Working Together to Safeguard Children RBSCP used this reporting period to respond to changes and realign to meet the new MASA arrangements. In doing so RBSCP will develop a new Business Plan for 2025-2027 but continued with the above priorities during the development period. It is important to note that the RBSCP Business Plan 2022-24 is supported by the RBSCP Neglect Strategy 2022-25, which will continue to support the future RBSCP Business Plans 2025-2027.

The Neglect Strategy describes neglect as one of the most prevalent forms of child abuse. It is complex, taking different forms in different families. The RBSCP Neglect Strategy sets out our commitment, vision and priorities for identifying and responding to childhood neglect. All professionals play a part in supporting and promoting the safeguarding of children and young people. The Neglect Strategy is designed to show how early identification can work alongside the breadth of our local Early Help offer.



Equity, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EEDIB).

Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership holds equity, equality, diversity, Inclusion and Belonging in high regard across the partnership. There is not a joint strategy for EDI because the partner services are very specific, and as such specific strategies are needed to ensure open, transparent and honest approaches to EDI across the safeguarding partnership service delivery and strategic oversight. This to ensures EEDIB is central to service and policy development, The following access links highlight DSL strategies and polices in respect of EDI:

• **NHS GM**

[You searched for equality | Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership](#)

[Inclusion and diversity | Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership](#)

[Including everyone | Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership](#)

• **GM Police**

[gmp-dei-strategy-and-objectives---issue-1---corporate-template.pdf](#)

• **Rochdale Borough Council**

[rochdale.gov.uk/equity-diversity-inclusion-1/policies-strategies](#)



During 2025/26 RBSCP will be working with Northwest Multi Agency Safeguarding Learning and Support Hub as part of the Regional Improvement Plan on several development areas. One of which is to increase the effectiveness of understanding and responsivity to Equity, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EEDIB).

The Hub is leading on developing an ambitious, collaborative framework and infrastructure to drive Equity, Diversity and Inclusion across the region. This workstream will support regional system enablement through strengthened EDI capacity and leadership. This will support Rochdale and associated boroughs to:

- **Better understand how EDI is featured based on available regional data and insights**
- **Develop Key EDI goals and objectives for the region over the next 2 years.**
- **Enabling Leaders to understand what EDI and belonging means to communities and individuals**

The RBSCP will work with the NW Safeguarding Hub to develop a strategic framework and will co-design and deliver tailored, practical solutions, according to the specific needs and contexts of the local area.

Overview of Subgroup Activity during 2024/25

As highlighted in Section 3, the Safeguarding Partnership Executive is supported through the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Partnership and supporting subgroups. Each subgroup has assessed their activity during 2024/25 and explored the impact this has had for children and families in Rochdale. They are as follows:

- **Early Years and Education**
- **EHASH**
- **Complex Safeguarding**

Additional subgroup reports can be found in Sections 7, 8 & 9 in respect of Performance, Quality Assurance, Practice Review and Learning & Development. In Section 11, partner agency reports also highlight single agency activities to further protect and safeguard children and families in Rochdale.

Early Years and Education Subgroup

The Early Years and Education Subgroup is a relatively newly formed group in this last year. Whilst a strategic group has existed for a number of years linking both strategic and operational working, the group was realigned in response to changes within Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023. Membership and the terms of reference for the subgroup were reviewed following consultation and the purpose of the subgroup was outlined as a means by which partners and relevant agencies can seek to understand and be assured of effective safeguarding within early years and education settings. We are working to achieve this by partnership cross agency/service working.

The voice and safeguarding experiences of schools and their students are at the heart supporting good practice and evidencing professional challenge, whilst data and intelligence is utilised to inform operational performance and quality assurance activities. All activities undertaken will have a goal of preventing and reducing the impact of abuse and neglect in our borough.

The main ED&EY priority action identified from this subgroup relates to ensuring effective responses from Education after an Operation Encompass notification is received through audit. In addition, the subgroup collates information of how members are effectively meeting the needs of children for Neglect, i.e., auditing the use of the neglect toolkit, CSA i.e., reporting on training and subsequent impact and DA as outlined in the key priority.

Key Achievements during 2024-2025

- **The group has formed and re-aligned its focus in response to Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.**
- **Attendance has been agreed across the Early Years and Education structure, including both LA provision and those within Multi-Academy Trusts**
- **1st meeting under the new structure took place in January 2025.**
- **An agreed Terms of Reference has been drafted and circulated outlining the roles and functions of the subgroup.**

- We are in the early stages of aligning the priorities within the Children & Young People's Plan (CYPP) HEARD, SAFE, HEALTHY & SUCCESSFUL to the RBSCP priorities to tackle Neglect, Domestic Abuse and Child Sexual Abuse.
- There has been an agreed data set that will be shared within the group relating to key priorities to understand our most vulnerable cohorts of children in relation to KPI's such as attendance, suspensions and exclusions.
- The subgroup has a clear membership expanded across Early Years and wraparound services, to represent this cohort of children.
- Working with the SPQA subgroup the group has overseen the Section 157 /175 Education Safeguarding Audit where learning has indicated confidence in safeguarding practice across 92 education establishments in Rochdale.
- Working with the Learning and Development Subgroup following the roll out of single agency and multi-agency training for the Education and Early Years workforce. Examples of this are: Basic Introduction to Safeguarding, a Level 3 equivalent Safeguarding Course for DSL's and evaluation of the IFCSA training.
- Began the co-ordination of a plan for schools to host student and ASYE Social Workers to embed safeguarding priorities.

What difference has this made?

- The group now has new and extended membership across the multi-agency, Early Years and for each school phase, ensuring appropriate representation.
- Subgroup members are fully aware of the purpose of the group as they have contributed to its development. Subgroup members are confident to bring relevant information to be

discussed in meetings. They also provide professional challenge to peers when required.

- The continued engagement of the S157/175 audit has allowed the process to develop into a more formalised voice platform for all education partners and the context provided within audit returns is used to inform wider strategic decisions.
- The use of formalised High-Level data within the subgroup allows our multi-agency partners to have context around patterns and trends, informing further service development, such as access to RCT, Early Break and other 3rd sector providers.
- Representation from Early Years and wraparound services is now firmly embedded and allows for a broader understanding of our cohort of children from 0-19 and with data sets yet to be approved, it is hoped that this will promote the safeguarding agenda across the whole workforce.

Next Steps

- The Working Together guidance has highlighted a requirement to ensure the direct voice of children and family is utilised within Partnership activity. Currently this is gathered from section 157 / 175 audit and the CYPP, however the findings do not offer quality and depth. A working theme will be to review and develop the audit template, to give further insight, both from education establishments and to our multi-agency partners.
- Further alignment of the data that will be used to inform the subgroup is needed, impact of gathering this data, how and why it will be utilised are agenda items as we move through to 25/26. This can be linked to colleagues within a working group with Learning and Development, moving beyond just the compliance aspect of KPI8.

- The subgroup have identified suspensions and exclusions as an area to understand further. An agreement needs to be reached in terms of what we will specifically focus on and how we will measure success.
- The subgroup will link with the Early Help subgroup to track and monitor the use of both formal and informal Early Help offers by EY & Education establishments, as they are a key partner in leading on this level of intervention.
- In line with the RBSCP priorities, the Audit of the use of Operation Encompass in schools / childcare / education & training establishments has a timescale for completion prior to April 26. The format of this has been agreed and is supported across the Learning and Development Subgroup as well as the SPQA subgroup.
- The subgroup needs to decide on a means by which we evaluate the use of the Neglect Strategy, more specifically the Neglect toolkit, and more importantly what the impact of this is - an action taken forward to 25/26.
- Access to further IFCSA training across the 0-19 services is a key priority and one that Early Years and Education can support through access to further training and guidance (with specific reference to the CSA Centre for expertise).

The subgroup will be involved in the wider plan to develop a Healthy Relationships toolkit, as the voice of our children within Education settings can inform this. The subgroup can obtain specific buy-in from our Education colleagues.

- For discussion is the possibility of an Excellence in Safeguarding award to further encourage and promote the safeguarding practice within our EY, wraparound & Education establishments.

What this means for children and families?

- The coming together of partners within this subgroup will ensure effective oversight and provide challenge to agencies, therefore allowing us to provide assurances so that our children and their families know that local safeguarding partners provide effective safeguarding protection and services have the welfare and wellbeing of children as a number one priority.
- Families will be able to contribute to the group through their EY & Education establishments and through formalised audit processes, which will all have a focus on voice of the child and family.
- The issues impacting children and families relating to Early Years, and wraparound provision, as well as within Education, have a formalised route into the strategic planning for the Borough and into the Executive Board, embedding its "crucial role in a multi-agency approach to safeguarding children and child protection".
- The aim of this subgroup is to bring depth and breadth to safeguarding practice that recognises the scope of this area and complements the other work of the subgroups in ensuring that Rochdale will achieve its vision of:

Children and young people in the Rochdale Borough will be safe and will feel safe within their homes, schools and communities.

Early Help and Safeguarding Hub (EHASH) Strategic Board

The EHASH Group is a working group of the Safeguarding Performance & Quality Assurance Subgroup. EHASH Group will oversee the delivery and development of EHASH to ensure children and families receive the right services at the right time. This will be achieved via consultation with all multi-agency stakeholders. This group will also seek the views of children and families to ensure EHASH provides the care and support required for effective outcomes.

Throughout 2024-25, the EHASH Strategic Board has provided effective strategic leadership and governance to strengthen Rochdale's multi-agency safeguarding and early help system. The Board's work has focused on ensuring children and families receive timely, coordinated support aligned with the Family Safeguarding Practice Model and more recently, the Families First reforms.

Key activities have included enhancing partnership collaboration through regular meetings with broad agency representation, driving quality and consistency in decision-making via multi-agency audits and embedding the voice of the child across all processes. The Board has overseen developments such as the launch and refinement of the EHASH referral portal, integration of new pathways like the Early Help Response and stop & search screening, and a focus on priority safeguarding themes for the Partnership including domestic abuse, child sexual abuse, and neglect.

Aligned with its aims and objectives, the Board has strengthened governance through performance oversight, accountability mechanisms, and targeted audit activity to identify and respond to emerging risks.

This has supported operational practice by standardising thresholds, promoting timely interventions, and facilitating cross-agency communication with shared decision-making.

Going forward, the Board remains committed to continuous improvement, embedding learning from national reviews and local practice, and advancing reforms that place children's lived experiences at the heart of safeguarding and early help delivery.

Key achievements during 2024-2025

- **The EHASH Board met regularly throughout the year ensuring multi-agency attendance, including education, health economy, police, probation, early help, & other key partners.**
- **The Board supported the development and planned implementation of a multi-agency JTAI preparation audit focused on priority themes such as child sexual abuse, step-down pathways, and SEND, although this was temporarily delayed due to a live JTAI notification in April 2024.**
- **Continued work on embedding the Family Safeguarding Practice Model, and updates to the threshold document, including efforts to improve the early help offer.**
- **The transition from MASH gatherings to the Early Help Response model has been embedded to better provide lower-level preventative support at an earlier point for families, with statutory intervention held for cases that need it.**
- **EHASH co-location into Number One Riverside has enhanced cross-agency collaboration and facilitated face-to-face consultations, strengthening decision-making.**

- **Data reports from children's social care were regularly shared, with plans in place to better utilise this data to drive service planning and audit activity.**
- **Introduction of the stop & search pathway enabled early screening of children stopped by police to offer early help interventions.**
- **Multi-agency monthly face-to-face audits were re-launched with focus areas including primary care referrals, police powers of protection, repeat contacts, dog safety & quality of multi-agency response, with ongoing audit work supporting CSPR learning.**
- **The JTAI action plan guided improvement work, with oversight by the PQA sub-group.**
- **The new portal for EHASH referrals was launched in Q3 with ongoing monitoring and IT issue resolution.**
- **Private fostering awareness was increased by adding it as a standing agenda item for the board with Q4 audits focusing on Voice of the Child and Private Fostering.**
- **In line with the 2024 National Review into Child Sexual Abuse, EHASH plans to audit multi-agency decision-making quality regarding CSA concerns, supporting continuous improvement.**
- **Key partner updates from GMP, CSC, Early Help, and ICB ensured the Board remained responsive to operational challenges and reform initiatives such as Families First, Right Care Right Person and NHS changes.**
- **Strategic discussions are planned to explore how EHASH can further support Families First reforms alongside JTAI improvement activity.**

What difference has this made?

The EHASH Strategic Board's leadership and governance has promoted a more cohesive, consistent multi-agency safeguarding system in Rochdale.

Strengthened partnership working and improved audit activity have enhanced early identification and response to children's needs, with a clear focus on RBSCP priorities.

Embedding the voice of the child in auditing and decision-making has ensured children's lived experiences shape service responses, improving their safety and wellbeing.

Early interventions, supported by new pathways, have enabled families to access timely support, with the aim of reducing escalation to statutory services.

The EHASH Board's commitment to responding to national recommendations and local learning from CSPRs has increased transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement.

Enhanced co-location and data sharing have improved operational effectiveness, enabling quicker, better-informed safeguarding decisions, although there is still work to undertake to strengthen this.

Overall, the Board's activity has contributed to a safeguarding system better aligned with strategic priorities, responsive to emerging challenges, and focused on positive outcomes for children and families.

Next Steps

- **Consider how the use of data can be improved and expand this to include single-agency data relevant to EHASH from across the partnership.**
- **Introduce more formal partner reporting to ensure agencies aware of their role within the strategic board and to hold the board to account.**

- Complete the planned JTAI-related audits focused on quality of triage, use of historic involvement of services, cumulative harm, and escalation processes.
- Further embed the EHASH referral portal with ongoing audits to ensure quality, timeliness, and accessibility.
- Implement audit findings into practice improvements and monitor via PQA subgroup.
- Increase partner agency awareness and response to private fostering.
- Strengthen the response to the National Review into Child Sexual Abuse recommendations through targeted auditing and practice development.
- Facilitate joint working with Families First reforms to align safeguarding and early help pathways.
- Adapt to and integrate any impacts from NHS and Social Care reforms as they arise.

What this means for children and families?

Children and families in Rochdale will benefit from a safeguarding and early help system that is better co-ordinated, timely, and responsive to their needs. Early intervention will be strengthened through improved multi-agency decision-making, ensuring children at risk are identified sooner and receive the right support.

The voice of the child will continue to be central, ensuring services respect and respond to their lived experience, promoting their safety, wellbeing, and resilience. Families will experience more consistent and accessible support, reducing the need for crisis intervention and fostering stronger, healthier family environments.

Overall, improvements led by the EHASH Board support a safer community where children can thrive and families receive the help they need when they need it.

Complex Safeguarding Group

The Complex Safeguarding Group has been established to develop, monitor and challenge the work of the Safeguarding Partnership across Rochdale in respect of Contextual Safeguarding. Examples include Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and other groups of vulnerable children Missing (Home, Education & Care); Modern Slavery (including trafficked children, domestic servitude, and labour exploitation), Radicalisation (both in terms of general religious, political or ideological extremism and those at risk of being drawn into terrorist activity as described by the PREVENT agenda), Harmful Sexual Behaviour and any other vulnerable groups.

The Complex Safeguarding Group reports directly to the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership Executive.

Key achievements during 2024-2025

- Refreshed membership and terms of reference for Complex Safeguarding Group.
- Reviewed/Revised Rochdale Complex Safeguarding Strategy

- Strengthened multiagency understanding and offer of support through better training, briefings and by taking an active role in multiagency learning opportunities.
- Worked with Partners to support local non-recent operations both securing prosecutions and supporting survivors and their families.
- Contributed to GM Mayoral CSE review and develop more effective working arrangement across GM.
- Complex Safeguarding Service was part of Care Experienced Peer Review, which resulted in positive feedback from the Peer Reviewers.
- Continue to focus on prevention work with our partners.

What difference has this made?

- Provided clarity to partners in their roles and responsibilities in CSE/CCE work and held them to account as appropriate.
- Prevention work led to children remaining in their communities safely and working toward reaching their full potentials.
- Children feel listened to, protected, supported, and understood.
- Break the cycle of harm and criminalisation
- Greater access to education, therapy, and safe relationships.
- Reduce risk of committing harmful sexual behaviour offences
- Families receive help to understand and respond to abuse.
- Develop our offer to children who are missing from home and care.

Next Steps

- Finalise and re-launch the Complex Safeguarding Strategy.
- Using the findings from the Peer Review, design partnership Improvement Plan for 2025/26.
- Continue to work with partners to develop a culture of continuous learning through quality assurance activities.
- Continue to implement the RSCP's priorities and Business Plan 2025-27.
- Continue to seek opportunities to capture children and young people's voice and their voice continues to influence service modelling and delivery.

What this means for children and families?

- Children and young people are supported to be happy, healthy and successful.
- Children and young people feel valued and listened to, and have voice in Rochdale
- Children experience greater safety and stability.
- Families are empowered to support their children and are more resilient
- Children are supported to recover from their experiences
- Children who are missing from home, and their families will understand what support they can expect and acces

7. Performance and Quality Assurance

Performance data is important for safeguarding partnerships because it helps everyone understand how well they are protecting vulnerable children and young people. It shows what is working well and what needs to improve. By looking at this data, partners can spot problems early, make better decisions, and work together more effectively. It also helps keep services accountable and ensures that people are getting the support they need to stay safe. The following tables highlight Children's Services performance activity during 2024/25:

Rochdale Children's Services - Overview of Performance - March			
KPI	2024	2025	Performance compared with previous month
1: Open cases to Children's Social Care (rate per 10k pop)	510.68	467.50	↓
2: % of contacts with decision making within 1 working days	94%	87%	↓
3: % of referrals with decision making within 1 working days	98%	100%	↑
4: Repeat referrals (within 12 months)	24%	18%	↓
5: % of C&F Assessments completed within 45 days	93%	84%	↓
6: % of CIN visits completed on time (4 weekly)	82%	90%	↑
7: Number of Strategy Discussions held in month	101	193	↑
8: Initial Child Protection Conferences held within timescale (15 days)	89%	100%	↑
9: % of Child Protection visits completed within 2 weeks	66%	85%	↑
10: % of children subject to a repeat Child Protection Plan ever	32.45%	22.68%	↓
11: Rate of New Cared for Children in month	30	31	↑
12: Number of Children in Care who have had a statutory visit held in timescale	84%	93%	↑
13: % of Children in Care statutory reviews held on time	74%	85%	↑
14: % of Children in Care who have had 3+ placement moves in 12 months	5.28%	10.33%	↑
15: % of Children in Care under 5 years with up to date health assessment	54%	58%	↑
15a: % of Children in Care 5 - 18 years with up to date health assessment	69%	80%	↑
16: % of Children in Care aged 4 - 16 years with SDQ assessment in the last 12 months	55%	62%	↑
17: % of Care Leavers not in education, employment or training (19-21yrs)	47%	48%	↑
18: % of return interviews held for Children in Care missing episodes	80%	64%	↓

Key - Performance compared with previous month

Performance is good and above/below previous month.	↑ ↓
Performance is in line with the previous month.	↔
Performance is poor and above/below previous month.	↑ ↓

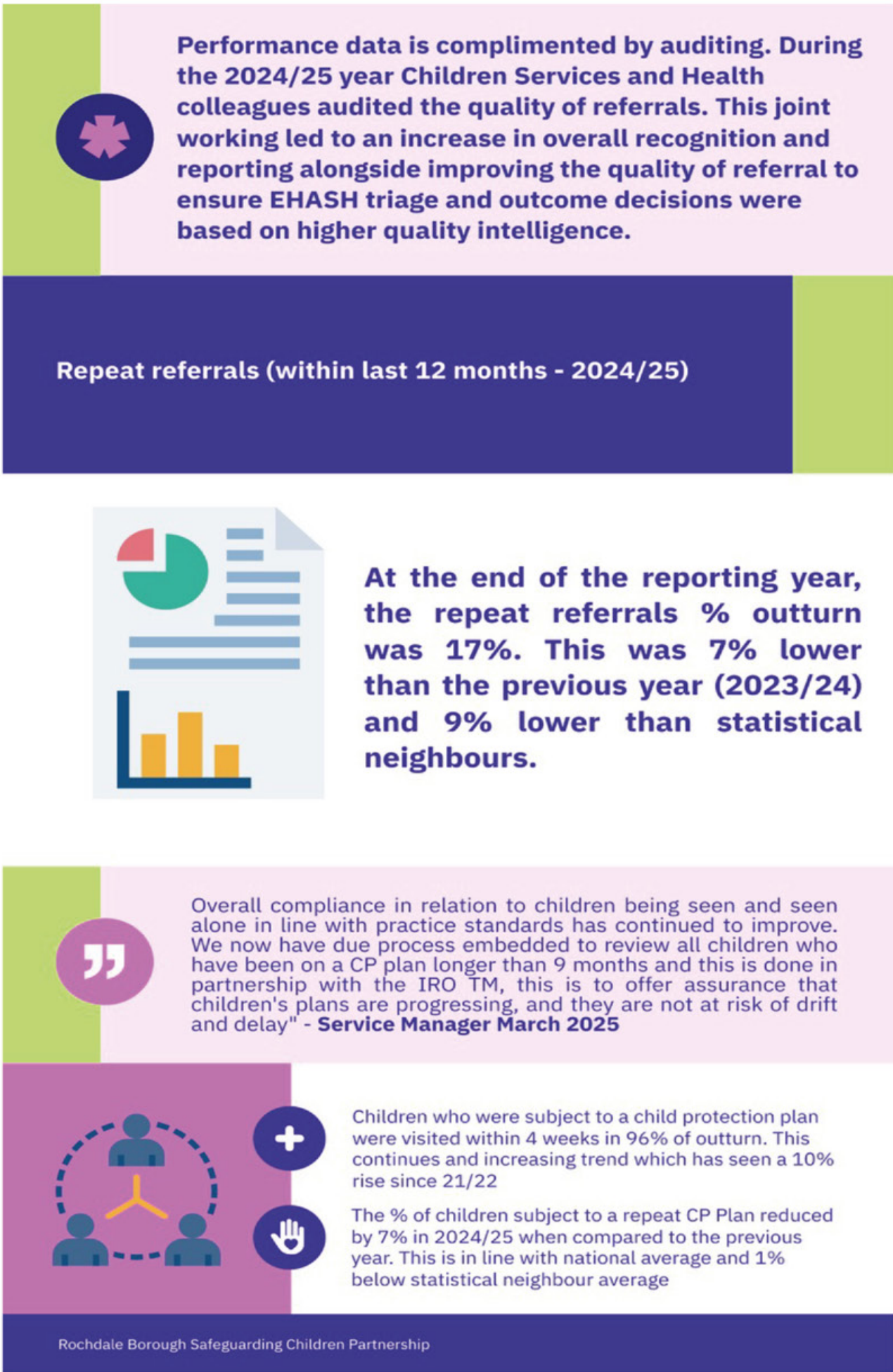
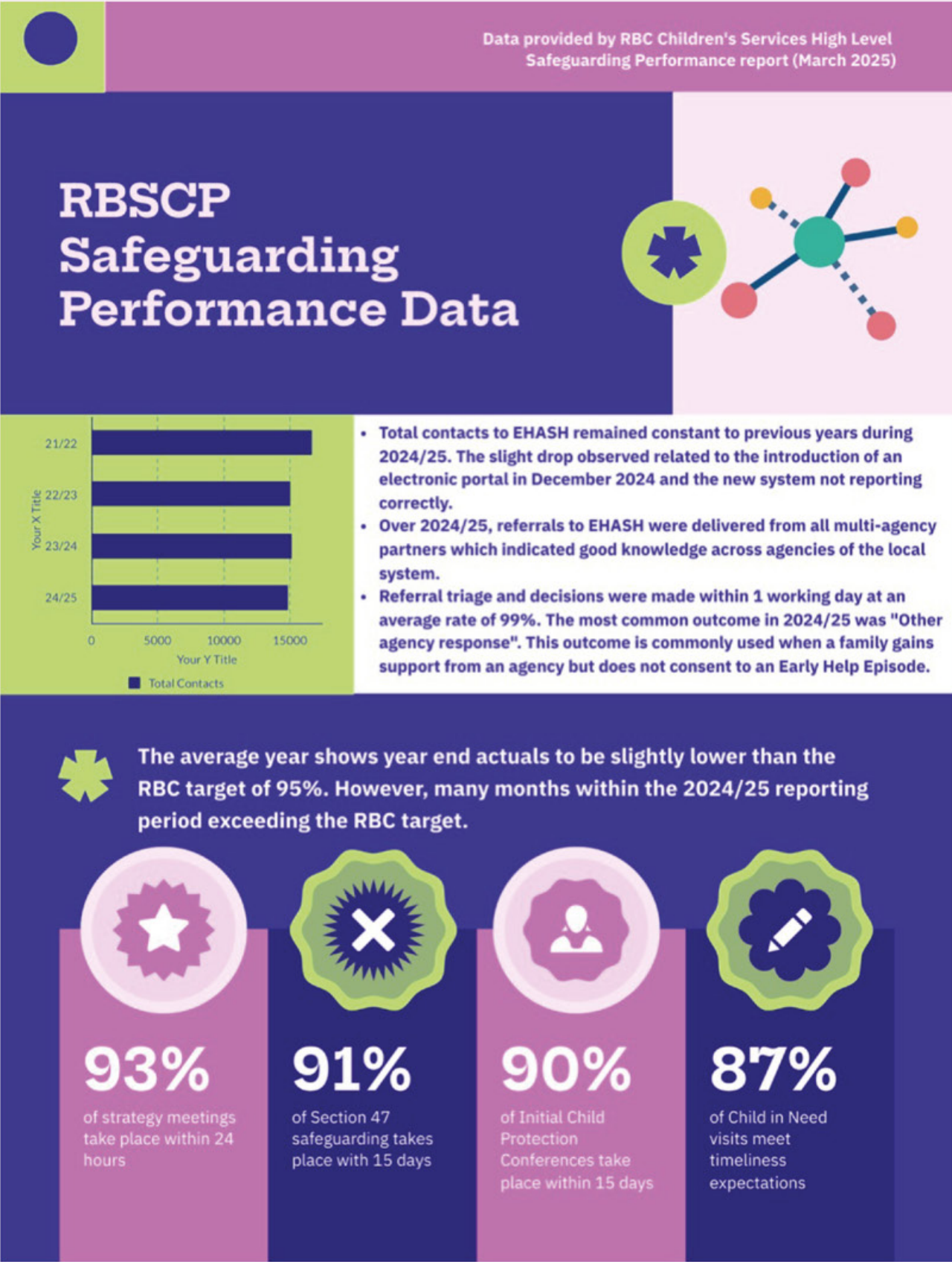
Key - Status

Performance has met or exceeded target	Green
Performance is below target but within acceptable range	Orange
Performance is below target and outside acceptable range	Red

The table highlights each of the 19 Key Performance Indicators and the performance achieved during 2024 and 2025, with direction of performance in comparison with the previous year. 13 KPI saw positive direction of performance with only 6 seeing negative movement for 2025.



The following 2 pages show visual displays of the performance highlighted on Page 27 in respect of annual performance for 2024/25 including EHASG contacts per year, and timeliness of referral triage rates in 1 day (99%), strategy meetings in 24hrs (93%), Section 47 on 15 days (91%) ICPC in 15days (90%) and CIN visits (87%). Repeat referrals was lower in 2024/25 than 23/24 at 17% with a reduction of children on repeat CP Plans at 7%. 97% of children on CP Plans were also visited within 4 weeks.



Safeguarding Performance and Quality Assurance (SPQA) Group

The Safeguarding Performance and Quality Assurance (SPQA) Group monitors the impact and outcomes of partner activity on behalf of the RBSCP, as required by Chapter 3 of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023. The group considers the performance of all agencies involved in safeguarding children using the RBSCP Priorities as a basis from which to assess the quality of safeguarding practice. The subgroup utilises audit and performance measures to assess how well RBSCP is meeting its defined targets. The SPQA Subgroup also undertakes statutory audits as defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children and related legislation such as the Education Act 2002. The SPQA Group is a new group to the Partnership, formed after the split of previously joint quality assurance MASA arrangements with the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Adults Board (RBSAB). As such, some of the group’s targets were in development stage throughout the reporting period and are described in the next steps section at the bottom of this page.

Key achievements during 2024-2025

- Developed a range of JTAI Readiness tools which included an audit handbook based on the JTAI inspection framework, a supporting audit toolkit and reporting method to ensure learning is shared widely.
- Section 11 Statutory Safeguarding audit followed a new methodology as introduced by the Independent Scrutineer. This included a peer challenge which allowed authors of Section 11 documents to provide professional challenge to each other if assurance was felt not to have been delivered.
- Section 157 /175 Education safeguarding audits indicated confident safeguarding practice across 92 education establishments in Rochdale.
- The development of two new multi-agency audit methodologies. These are called Learning Circle and Digital Audit, to support the Practice Review subgroup seek assurance of LSCPR recommendations being embedded into practice.
- Working with the Learning and Development Subgroup to produce Training Quality Standards to assess the impact and outcomes of multi-agency training. The RBSCP Priority specific training will be the first to undergo audit in 2025/26.
- Provided analysis of LSCPRs, and other local data, to inform the Executive Group in developing the 2025-2027 Safeguarding Priorities.
- Attendance and contribution to North-West Research in Practice events across several aspects of data and intelligence developments.
- Development and agree new subgroup Terms of Reference and Project Plan.

What difference has this made?

- Subgroups members are fully aware of the purpose of group as they have contributed in its development. Subgroup members are confident in attending and bring QA assurance information to be discussed in meetings. They also provide professional challenge to peers when required.

- The JTAI Inspection of April 2024 identified that Quality Assurance plans were good, however a more timely approach was required to implement them. Due to the development of new multi-agency audits, Quarter 1 of 2025/26 has seen 2 effective multi-agency audits which provide learning and assurance related to LSCPR recommendations. More multi-agency audits based on the agreed Priorities have been committed to by the Executive Group.
- The continued engagement of the S157/175 audit has allowed the process to develop into a voice platform for all education partners and context provided within audit returns is used to inform Partnership wide strategic decisions.
- The Section 11 change in process allowed for multi-agency conversations to take place in a timely manner and identify where improvements are required together. As such, the recommendation from Section 11 auditing process is that the Escalation Policy requires strengthening to a) change language used to encourage the use of policy and b) ensure a tracking process is developed in order to capture data which will assure of policy usage.
- The development of a North West data tool will allow the RBSCP to benchmark safeguarding intelligence effectively and strengthen the usage of data when making strategic decisions.
- The introduction of Training Quality Standards will evidence and inform how RBSCP knows its training is effective.

Next Steps

- The new Working Together guidance has highlighted a requirement to ensure the direct voice of children and family is utilised within Partnership activity. Currently during audit, the voice of children is delivered indirectly via the practitioner’s perception. Audit tools will be updated requesting information is evidenced to be directly from children and families.
- The local safeguarding data dashboard and associated key performance indicators requires focused activity to ensure all RBSCP members are contributing information and using information provided as an evidence base for subgroup conversations.
- Ensure the culture of quality assurance grows across all RBSCP Subgroups and all partners engage with QA activity.
- Ensure that the subgroup contributes a line of sight to front line practice across the partnership

What this means for children and families?

- By continuing to develop, and implement a culture of robust quality assurance, children and their families will know that local safeguarding partners provide effective safeguarding protection and services have the welfare and wellbeing of children as a number one priority.
- Families will be able to contribute to the findings of audits and see the evidence of good practice in data.
- Ultimately when safeguarding partners evidence excellent safeguarding practice, and children and families agree with the findings, the borough of Rochdale will achieve its vision of:

Children and young people in the Rochdale Borough will be safe and will feel safe within their homes, schools and communities.

8. RBSCP Section 11 Report 2024/25



1.0 Introduction

Safeguarding partnerships are mandated to undertake Section 11 audits to ensure that all organizations involved in the welfare of children are fulfilling their statutory duties. This is crucial for maintaining a robust safeguarding system that protects children from harm and promotes their well-being. Section 11 audits, help identify areas of strength and areas for improvement, ensuring all partners are continuously working effectively together to safeguard children.

2.0 Overview of the audit process.

RBSCP partners completed a reflective summary tool which covered key standards as described in Working Together 2023. The tool comprised 4 sections, each containing up to 5 individual standards. Partners provide descriptive evidence and RAG rate how their agencies meet the defined standards under 4 sections of the RBSCP Section 11 Self-assessment tool and allowed agencies to highlight planned or completed actions:

Section
1. A Culture of Safeguarding Children in the organisation
2. A Safe Organisation
3. Voice of the Child, Staff & Community
4. RBSCP Specific Priorities

Those services who completing the Toolkit were:

1. RBC Children’s Social Care, Early Help & Schools and Youth Justice Service.
2. NHS GM ICB, Pennine Care Foundation Trust, Northern Care Alliance, General Practitioners.
3. GM Police Rochdale District.
4. Probation Service.
5. Also, the national report of British Transport Police

There was a 100% return rate, with the caveat that Adult Social Care return will be provided as part of the RBSAB Adult Self-assessment activity in 2025. Also, Education provides Sec 175/157 returns.

Following submission, RBSCP facilitated an Author Review, allowing senior managers from

participating agencies to review submissions and provide professional challenge to fill areas they felt had missing contextual information to strengthen the assurance of the process.

The Author Review was attended by:

- GM NHS ICB Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children (HMR)
- GMP Detective Inspector – Rochdale District
- RBC CSC Interim Service Manager (Quality Assurance)
- Probation Service Assistant Chief Officer Head of PDU

3.0 Key findings and themes

The table below highlights each agency RAG rated confidence per section. None were self-reflected as red:

	Culture	Safe Organisation	Use of Voice	RBSCP Priorities
RBC Children’s Services				
Youth Justice				
ICB				
NCA				
PCFT				
GP				
GMP				
Probation				
British Transport Police				

1. A Culture of Safeguarding Children in the organisation

All participating RBSCP agencies felt they fully met Section 1, with evidence that each agency has a senior lead for safeguarding, policy and process reflected the service safeguarding responsibilities, knowledge of each services Lead Safeguarding Partner and Designated Safeguarding Partner was shared & known, with single agency safeguarding structures highlighting named individuals. Single agency training evidenced how safeguarding is embedded within culture and policies/procedures are updated within timescales and accessible for whole workforces. Technology is used via agency specific data bases to share safeguarding information both within and outside of services. Finally, Safeguarding is an item on most strategic planning agendas, and many refer to RBSCP Priorities as a foundation to planning.

2. A Safe Organisation

Some agencies felt they had made improvements to safeguarding practice and were embedding new arrangements, including Whistle Blowing procedures, safer recruitment policy reviews and safeguarding performance. Self-identified good practice included workforce safeguarding training, professional qualifications and maintenance per specific role requirements, safeguarding materials &

policies with emphasis on manager’s ensuring staff knowledge. All partners described specific safer recruitment requirements were robustly applied and many were knowledgeable about managing Allegations and the LADO process. Some agencies aim to improve safeguarding performance reviews, but where confident improvements were being embedded regarding professional capabilities of case involvement, outcomes for children and considering the welfare / wellbeing of staff working within these cases.

3. Voice of the Child, Staff & Community

The key standard of using Practitioner, Community and Child Voice effectively, provided least reflective confidence. All agencies recognised the importance of voice in safeguarding practice, utilising some level of voice input as part of organisational safeguarding design such as listening to practitioners and children to understand their welfare and wellbeing. However, most partners this can be inconsistent with little evidence of how voice is used effectively to improve outcomes. Those that were confident in this area described working with organisations such as Healthwatch as a conduit for voice intelligence, using them as an independent partner to ensure findings are used in practice. Other describe the use of technology to analyse compliments and complaints and using such information when reviewing practice.

Annual Staff surveys, reporting and colleague engagement were identified as platforms for improving the wellbeing of workforce. Recent updates to process such as mandatory fields to capture child voice and lived experience was provided, however some require improvement to expand 'listening to voice' beyond children speaking.

4. RBSCP Specific Priorities

Most partners were aware of the RBSCP Priorities, but some recognised the RBSCP Neglect toolkit is not embedded enough to identify neglect sooner, at threshold of 1 or 2, to reduce escalated need and reduce impact of harm. Some partners used Section 11 to update own single agency policies with RBSCP partner developments such as Family Safeguarding Model. The RBSCP Escalation Policy was the main item and discussion with the Author Review, recognising a need to review the policy.

Overall Summary

All partners recognised lead safeguarding individuals and responsibilities, with appropriate policies and processes in place, including such learning & development to support safeguarding practice. All partners recognised areas to improve safeguarding practice and provided actions to achieve improvements.

However, the Author Review Panel found that there was little "So what?" evidence returned on how these items ensure effective outcomes for children and young people, and if policy, process or learning equips Practitioners with the capabilities to achieve good outcomes. Good safeguarding practice occurs every day, but agencies did not evidence or showcase how they know this impacts positively on children and families.

The evidence of impact and effectiveness of safeguarding practice was also noted during the JTAI Inspection 2024. The associated improvement actions will support all agencies taking part in Section 11 2024/25 as they are members of RBSCP SPQA Group and such actions will assist partners in producing impact evidence.

- **Following Section 11 returns and the Author Review Panel, the following improvement areas were identified:**
- **Improving quality of Voice and using information to influence safeguarding service development.**
- **Review the RBSCP Escalation Policy.**
- **Embedded use of RBSCP Neglect Strategy and toolkit**
- **Improve partner data, intelligence and QA sharing with RBSCP.**
- **Strengthen effective sharing of LSCPR learning.**
- **Improve regular attendance to RBSCP meetings is inconsistent.**
- **Training is in place but little evidence how effectively training is applied in practice.**

However, many of these themes are already recognised as RBSCP development areas for 2025/26 and so form part of the existing business plan and activity forecast, with Section 11 priority action being to review the RBSCP Escalation Policy and use by the partnership workforce.

Conclusion

The 2024/25 Section 11 activity was successful, allowing agencies to reflect on key standards within Working Together 2023, to identify good practice and areas for improvement to enhance safeguarding practice. The 100% return rate and quality professional challenge during the Author Review exemplifies what the JTAI Inspection told us,

"The RBSCP is well established. Shared priorities are communicated clearly in strategic plans and in annual reports. Local and regional governance arrangements are augmented by a culture of professional accountability and respectful challenge".

Furthermore, the Section 11 activity triangulated the planned RBSCP Priorities and known improvement requirements already identified with improvement activity underway. The main corresponding Section 11 findings were to review the Escalation Policy and use of it across the partnership and improve impact analysis and evidence, strengthening outcome focused safeguarding practice. Where Partnership agencies have identified single agency actions, information on progress will be sought via SPQA Group.

9. RBSCP Section 157 / 175 Term 2 - 2024/25



Working Together 2023 places a statutory duty on Safeguarding Children Partnerships to seek assurance on safeguarding activity of children and young people within schools and ensure education are considered a strong partner who contribute to local safeguarding activity. This is covered in Section 175 for maintained schools, and Section 157 for academies. The purpose of the audit is to provide assurance to the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership regarding safeguarding activity in local schools. This report sets out the results of the Term 2 Governance and Multi-agency Safeguarding Audit completed for the 2024/25 academic year.

The audit tool required Designated Safeguarding Leads to self-assessment against 5 individual sections rating safeguarding practice. Each section contained sub-questions relevant to the overall theme of Safeguarding Foundations.

Section 1: Focus on Governor Knowledge
Section 2: Focus on Governor Process
Section 3: Focus on ICT Safeguarding
Section 4: Focus on Multi-agency Safeguarding
Section 5: Focus on Safer Recruitment

Establishments involved included encompassed Nurseries, Primary and Secondary Schools. Return rate for Safeguarding Governance & Multi-agency Term 2 Assurance was 73.29%. The return rate, specifically for Term 2 audit, has seen reducing engagement over recent years. Those who don't participate in activity are providing an organisational risk both to themselves and the local authority. This a RBSCP concern as full assurance of safeguarding effectiveness cannot be ascertained.

Alongside reducing engagement, it has been noted several schools are continuing to self-reflect as Exceeding without providing evidence or, omitting contextual information completely by bypassing form sections.

As such, data will be collated and presented to the July 2025 Education and Early Years Subgroup under the title of, "Audit Engagement". The data will highlight trends in engagement in both overall activity and individual schools who are providing a risk concern. Strengthening S157/175 audit "deep dives" is also in development for 2025/26, to seek evidence of partners who self-reflect as exceeding so good practice can be shared with peers.

The table below indicates the proportion of self-reflected confidence in safeguarding questions. The trend is one of increasing lower confidence but with a reduced return rate, over a 3year period, these figures are difficult to benchmark accurately.

Response rating	2022/23 audit (T1-T3 avg.)	2023/24 audit (T1 & T3 avg.)	2023/25(T2 avg.)
Red (Requires Guidance)	0.58%	0.21%	0.50%
Amber (Emerging)	10.88%	6.48%	7.26%
Green (Exceeding/Embedded)	88.55%	93.31%	92.28%

1. Governor Knowledge

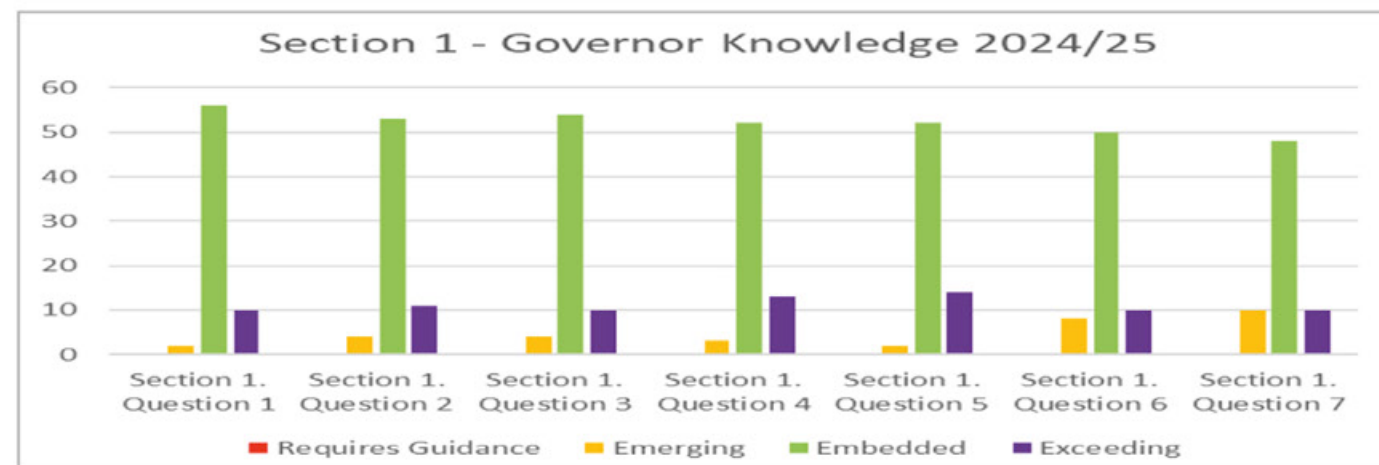


Table describes Section 1 Questions 1-7 responses, with the majority stating 'embedded' to all - as described in next paragraph.

Overall school confidence is improving year on year, in 2023/24 a response of emerging was seen 59 times and in 2024/25 the emerging response was counted to be 18. Additionally, between the comparative years of Term 2 audit, Governor Training has been improved and updated. Feedback has been positive, and evidence of embedded Governor challenge has been noted within recent Ofsted inspections.

2. Governor Process

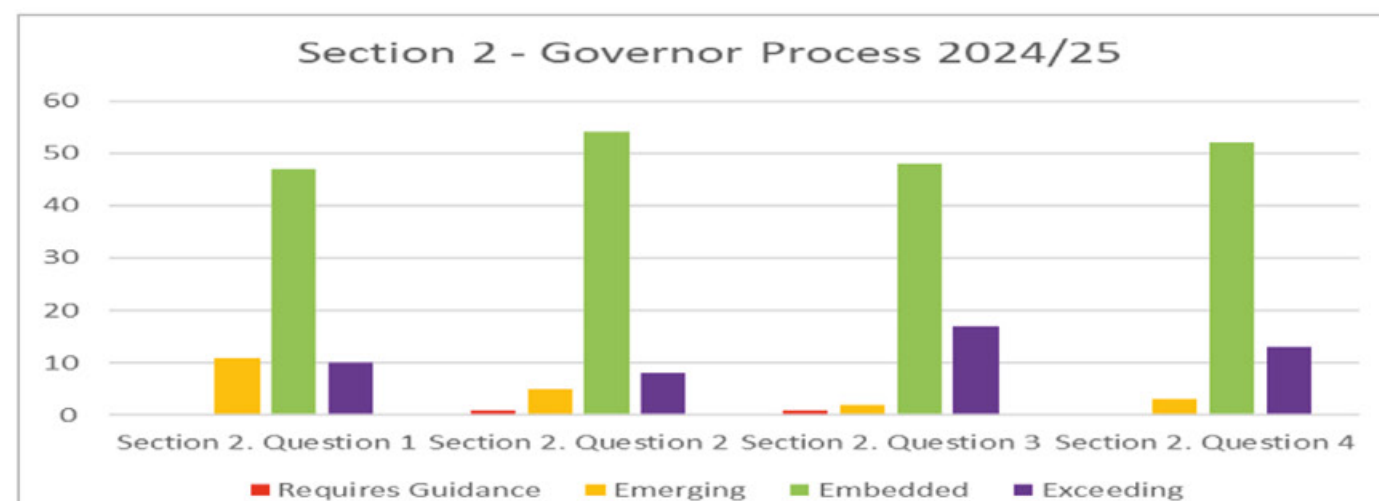


Table describes Section 2 Questions 1-4 responses, with the majority stating 'embedded' to all - as described in next paragraph.

No "Requires Guidance" was seen in the 2023/24 return, but one school utilised this option in 2024/25. Education Safeguarding Officer will provide information and guidance as requested. Question 1 relates to if training being delivered to governors on a regular basis. More education partners in 2024/25 have stated Governor Training (Question 1) has some lower confidence. However, many schools have referred to local training guidance by describing using training records as part of the single central record or are in the process of making this update. The RBSCP has agreed this points towards impactful training which could be evidenced in future audits.

3. ICT Safeguarding

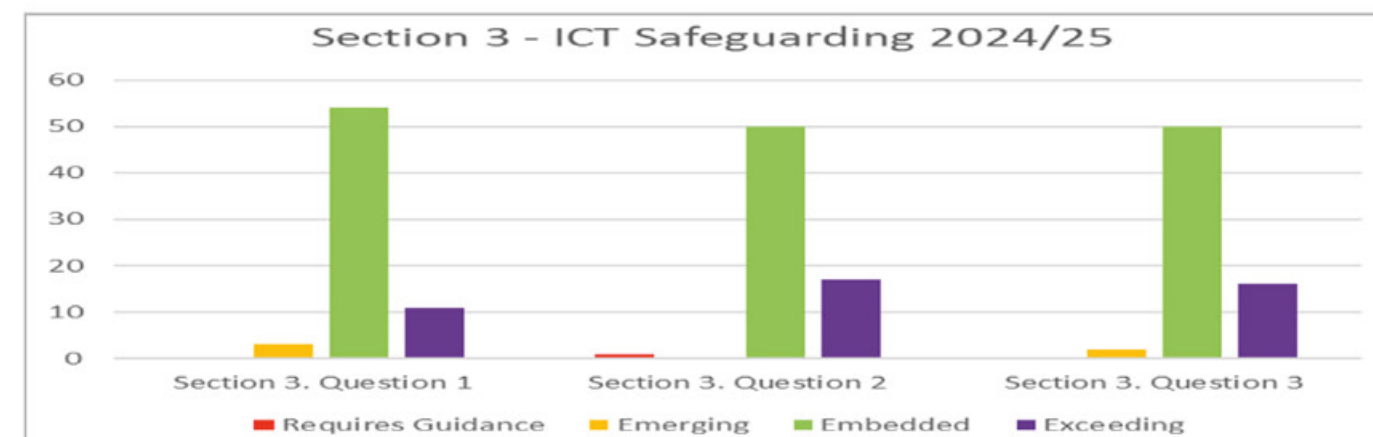


Table describes Section 3 Questions 1-3 responses, with the majority stating 'embedded' to all - as described in next paragraph.

Schools remain confident in supplying high levels of assurance in ICT safeguarding. The % of embedded practice remains near identical to the previous 2 years. Many schools are confident they have monitoring & filtering systems, they describe how staff are appropriately trained and how policies are kept up to date. In all cases, schools are aware of the need for technological items such as filtering and monitoring system, the need for online safety responsibilities to be documented in policy and process and provide online safety knowledge to pupils. Few schools provided context in how children are taught safer online practices and there was limited evidence to show informed safeguarded online experience. Online Safety, by its nature will be an area where new safeguarding threats will be seen.

4. Multi-agency Safeguarding

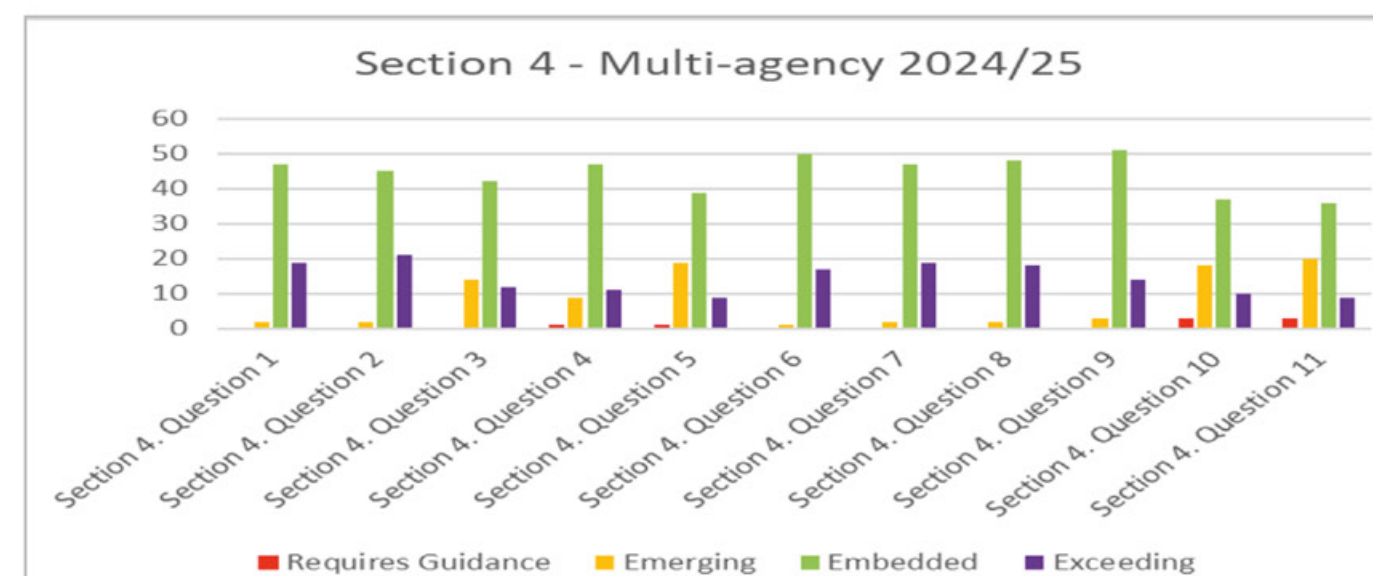


Table describes Section 4 Questions 1-11 responses, with the majority stating 'embedded' to most with 'emerging' increasing for questions 10 & 11- as described in next paragraph.

Overall education partners are confidence within the local Early Help Model, EHASH processes and Domestic Abuse tools to support children. They are confident in identifying where help is required early, using EH Assessments. 28% stated “Emerging” in using EHM system referencing high demand, dependency on one staff member, more staff to be trained, irregular use impacting on confidence etc. Thus, resource constraints affect time to complete actions within the Early Help Model.

Within EHASH systems, most schools are confident in WTSC 2023 and have 1-2 people providing consistency attendance and provision of reports.

The Domestic Abuse toolkit provided low confidence. However, during the submission extension period, 35 education partners accessed online learning session, to assist them to explore the toolkit. The next phase of this support is to quality assure its use, linked with the review of Operation Encompass next year.

5. Safer recruitment



Table describes Section 5 Questions 1-7 responses, with the majority stating ‘embedded’ to all - as described in next paragraph.

Conclusion

Confidence is high in all aspects of safer recruitment, most schools have best practice in place. Education establishments use the recruitment process to check safeguarding suitability of all prospective candidates. A culture of safeguarding is embedded within job design, adverts and all aspects of recruitment through to induction and onboarding. Most returns indicate a high confidence of maintaining the single central record.



10. Responding and Learning from Serious Incidents

The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Group considers serious incidents involving children and makes recommendations to the Safeguarding Partnership Executive whether criteria are met for undertaking a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review. It liaises with the National Panel, facilitates rapid reviews and is responsible for the process for all forms of learning reviews and oversees the completion.

Practice Review Safeguarding Group

The Practice Review Safeguarding Group (PRSG) continues to play a central role in enabling the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership (RBSCP) to meet its statutory responsibilities under Working Together 2023. The group reviews serious safeguarding incidents, oversees rapid reviews and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs), and ensures that learning is shared and embedded across the partnership.

Across 2024–2025, the PRSG considered eleven cases under Serious Incident Notification (SIN) criteria. Of these, three progressed to rapid review, and by the end of Q4, two had progressed to CSPR, inclusive of:

- **Child K1, with key themes of neglect and maternal mental health.**
- **Child L1 & L2, with key themes of intra-familial sexual abuse and neurodiversity.**

Sub-group attendance improved significantly in Q4, with all statutory partners & represented consistently, which has allowed for more robust and timely discussions.

The PRSG continues to manage a number of historic learning outcome documents, although it is acknowledged that some are now dated, with learning having evolved beyond the original review context. Recognising this, the group has agreed to implement a more robust learning review process going forward, enabling actions to be identified earlier during the review cycle and ensuring that panel members confirm their achievability. This change will help improve the impact and ownership of review recommendations moving forward.

Key achievements during 2024-2025

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eleven cases considered for SIN, three progressed to Rapid Review.• Two CSPRs commissioned in Q4 (Child K1 and Child L1 & L2) following thorough multi-agency scrutiny.• Substantial thematic learning captured, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">o Suicide and gender identityo Neglect and maternal mental healtho Intra-familial sexual abuseo Neurodiversityo Hidden adults | <ul style="list-style-type: none">o Professional challengeo Escalation processes• Improved meeting attendance and engagement across statutory partners in Q4.• Embedded learning from the National CSA Panel, thematic report into CSA and the Lancashire Child AJ CSPR.• Agreement to implement a new approach to managing learning outcomes, making recommendations more practical, SMART and trackable from the start. |
|---|--|

What difference has this made?

The PRSG's consistent oversight of serious incidents has ensured that learning is captured, reflected upon, and increasingly aligned with the realities of frontline practice, especially in relation to the RBSCP's priorities of domestic abuse, child sexual abuse (CSA), and neglect.

By commissioning two new CSPRs in Q4, the group has demonstrated a growing maturity in identifying and addressing complex systemic issues, including maternal mental health, neglect, intra-familial sexual abuse, and neurodiversity.

Improvements in attendance and agency engagement have strengthened the PRSG's role as a critical forum for multi-agency reflection and collaboration. This has enabled thorough discussions focused on embedding the voice of the child throughout the review process, ensuring children's experiences and perspectives are central to learning and improvement.

The planned refresh of the learning outcomes process for future reviews emphasises a commitment to making review recommendations more timely, actionable, and measurable - helping agencies respond more effectively to domestic abuse, CSA, and neglect.

Additionally, by engaging with national learning - particularly around CSA and the mental health challenges faced by transgender young people - Rochdale is positioning itself as a responsive, reflective safeguarding partnership that is proactive in addressing emerging safeguarding concerns aligned with its strategic priorities.

Next Steps

- **Complete CSPR processes for Child K1 and Child L1 & L2, including action planning and dissemination of learning.**
- **Identify opportunities for wider workforce development in response to the CSA thematic review, National review and on-going CSPR (Child L1 & L2).**
- **Implement the new learning outcome process, ensuring early discussion of achievable recommendations within CSPR panels.**
- **Ensure timely referral of key themes to the PQA Subgroup for system-wide scrutiny.**
- **Maintain strong attendance and representation across agencies to ensure meetings are quorate and effective.**

What this means for children and families?

The work of the Practice Review Sub-Group (PRSG) directly supports the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership's (RBSCP) strategic priorities of domestic abuse, child sexual abuse, and neglect, with the voice of the child remaining central to all discussions, reviews, and learning.

Through the commissioning of Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs) and rapid reviews, the PRSG ensures that complex issues, such as intra-familial sexual abuse, maternal mental health, and professional responses to domestic abuse, are thoroughly examined and learned from. Each review aims to improve how agencies identify, assess, and respond to risks, ensuring children are heard, protected, and supported.

By capturing and acting on the voices of children and families in safeguarding reviews, the PRSG contributes to building a system that is more responsive, empathetic, and trauma informed.

Embedding lived experience into multi-agency learning helps professionals better understand the impact of harm and how their actions can either strengthen or weaken protective networks around children.

Ultimately, the PRSG's efforts are helping to create a safer, more attentive safeguarding system where children's voices guide how services evolve and where strategic priorities are meaningfully addressed in both frontline practice and leadership oversight.



Children's Safeguarding Practice Reviews

A Child Safeguarding Practice Review takes place when a child dies or is seriously harmed in circumstances where abuse or neglect are known or suspected. CSPR's are a learning exercise and not an investigation to apportion blame. The purpose of reviews are to identify improvements which will promote the safeguarding and welfare of children, prevent or reduce risk from reoccurrence, learn multi-agency lessons and improve inter-agency working.

Working Together 2023 sets out the requirement to undertake Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews in cases which meet the defined criteria.

During 2024-25, in the Rochdale borough, there were 11 serious incident notifications that ultimately led to 3 Rapid Reviews. Two of the notifications progressed to a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review.

Reoccurring themes from 2024/25 safeguarding referrals were Sexually Harmful Behaviour/Sexual Abuse

Data Analysis – Serious Incident Notifications

There were 11 serious incident notifications in 2024/25. The number of referrals has remained consistent to the 10 received in both 2021/22 and 2022/23. This indicates a consistent application locally of serious incident notification processes.

In referrals, in 2024/25 the most common theme was Sexually Harmful Behaviour/Sexual Abuse. This was due to one incident that prompted 6 individual referrals. Other themes were neglect and intra- familial sexual abuse. When compared to the previous 3 years, neglect and child sexual abuse are the most common themes of referrals locally. [NSPCC Summary of the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel's annual report 2023/2024](#) indicates the borough of Rochdale benchmarks nationally in terms of a high prevalence of child neglect. Both neglect and sexual abuse will remain priorities for RBSCP.

In 2024/25 the range of protected characteristics of SINs was as follows:

- **Number of SIN ratio of sex: 70% Male: 30% Female. In previous years the ratio was maintained at 50:50. The data suggests being of either sex does not put a child at a higher risk of serious incident, statistically, in Rochdale. From data alone, the information does not suggest RBSCP should focus priorities on a specific sex.**
- **Age of serious incidents. RBSCP considers ages as per Key Stage of education.**

In 2024/25 most of the children referred in were aged within an adolescent range between KS3 and KS4. This coincides with the figures from 2023/24. 2022/23 saw referrals for predominantly younger children between Early Years and KS1. No pattern in data is visible however it is encouraging that local campaigns completed in previous years, such as Keep Baby Safe are continuing to produce positive results such as no SIN referrals for this in 2024/25.

The overall data analysis mostly indicates the RBSCP is well informed and has the correct priorities for local safeguarding development activity.



Not all CSPR reports are published but all learning recommendations are utilised in improving local safeguarding practice. Independently commissioned reports may also appear outside of the year they were initially commissioned in. In cases where a report is published after the initial notification, this may be due to the complexity of a case.

In 2024-25, a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review was published. A few other reports were also completed but not published due to ongoing criminal investigations. Publishing of completed reports and information will occur once criminal investigations are completed.

Child I1 – Child I1 was born in 2018, at the time his mother was 18 years old. Child I1's Mother has struggled to parent Child I1 resulting in a child protection plan being arranged for him.

Mother, is understood to be a victim of Child Sexual Abuse herself, she became a Cared for Child (looked after) and there were indications of sexual exploitation of her by friend (who is suspected of exploiting other children)

In March 2020, Mothers friend was arrested for sexual assault on 4 boys and bailed with conditions: Not to have unsupervised contact with any child under the age of 18 without their parents being present and only after being risk assessed and approved by children's services.

The friend was rearrested August 2020 for Sexual activity /Sexual assault of a child under the age of 16 and /Child abduction due to new evidence. they were bailed following this arrest and the bail conditions remained in force until December 2020. Conditions were then removed following review by the Police. However, the friend remained "under investigation".

The tables summarise specific case activities achieved in 2024/25 by members of RBSCP Practice Review Subgroup:

Child E1
Independent Report author: David Mellor Published: Yes
Learning recommendation:
That Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership obtains assurance from partner agencies that all relevant professionals:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• are aware of the circumstances which indicate an increased risk to an unborn child and therefore may require a pre-birth assessment• are aware of the requirement to make a referral to children’s social care/EHASH if circumstances indicate an increased risk to an unborn child• are aware of the need to fully document and decisions in respect of the consideration of pre-birth assessments• are aware of the need to further consider the needs of the unborn child should a decision be made not to undertake a pre-birth assessment.
Outcome:
All partner agencies provided assurance to the Practice Review Subgroup regarding this recommendation. The action was signed off on the 26th November 2024.
Pre-Birth assessments is a topic that features in multi-agency / single agency training, supervision and numerous safeguarding policies. As an action from this recommendation, each agency reviewed their policies to ensure Pre-Birth assessments was a highlighted subject.
Learning recommendation:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership obtains assurance in respect of arrangements to step down to Early Help, in particular:• Rochdale Step-Up Step-down Protocol is adhered to in all cases.• Professionals to challenge any absence of step-down arrangements.
Outcome:
All partner agencies provided assurance to the Practice Review Subgroup regarding this recommendation. The action was signed off on the 14th January 2025.
All agencies confirmed they are aware of the protocols and promote them within their agencies. They are also aware how to access the GM Tri-x procedures.

Child F1
Independent Report author: Karen Perry Published: N/A
Learning recommendation:
The Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership (RBSCP) Considers how best to ensure practitioners have the knowledge skills tools and support to confidently identify and work effectively parents they have difficulty in engaging with. This could include setting up a multi-agency task and finish group.
Outcome:
All partner agencies provided assurance to the Practice Review Subgroup regarding this recommendation. The action was signed off on the 14th January 2025. Each agency provided detail of their ‘was not brought’ policies. Training to help practitioners to consider how to engage effectively with families has also been implemented across the borough by individual agencies. Effective engagement is also discussed with practitioners as part of their safeguarding supervision.
Learning recommendation:
The Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership (RBSCP) Requests the “Keep Baby Safe” group to gather and provide evidence about the impact of the recent campaign on safe sleeping. This should include both what parents have understood but also that practitioners have the knowledge, skills tools and support to confidently have conversations with parents about safe sleeping which recognise the challenges of parents’ everyday lives and focuses on harm mitigation.
Outcome:
All partner agencies provided assurance to the Practice Review Subgroup regarding this recommendation. The action was signed off on the 14th January 2025. Safe sleep advice has been shared across the partnership via multi agency training and by the Safe Sleep Champions. Information/Resources on safe sleep in available on single agency intranets and on the RBSCP website. Safe Sleep has not featured as a theme within an LSCPR since 2023.
Learning recommendation:
The Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership (RBSCP) Seeks assurance that work is being done by the health visiting service and GP practices in Rochdale and the local area where Child F1 was registered with a GP regarding their mutual information sharing responsibilities. This should be done for Rochdale by contacting the health visiting service and Local Care Organisation and for the other local area by sharing the learning from this review with the relevant Safeguarding Children Partnership.
Outcome:
All partner agencies provided assurance to the Practice Review Subgroup regarding this recommendation. The action was signed off on the 28th May 2024. In April 2024, the health economy safeguarding collaborative group led by ICB Designated Nurse was developed. The groups aim is to share information across Midwifery, GP and Health Visiting services, as well as in and out at a GM level.

Learning Recommendation:

RBSCP seeks assurance from each agency involved that learning points have been identified and action has been/or is being taken to address and disseminate them.

Outcome:

All partner agencies provided assurance to the Practice Review Subgroup regarding this recommendation. The action was signed off on the 28th May 2024.

Each agency confirmed that the 7 Minute Briefing from this review had been shared with senior managers to circulate to all staff.

Child J1

Independent Report author: **Nicki Walker-Hall** Published: **Yes**

Learning recommendation:

Explore whether the voice of J1/J1's lived experience was captured, known and understood by professionals and how it influenced practice

Outcome:

All partner agencies provided assurance to the Practice Review Subgroup regarding this recommendation. The action was signed off on the 14th January 2025.

Voice of the child is a core subject for training across the partnership. Policies have been reviewed and updated to ensure Voice of the Child/Family is captured within records for information and evidence.

Learning recommendation:

Explore whether policies, procedures and processes e.g. Did Not Attend/Was Not Brought and Responding to signs of Physical abuse/Child Protection Medicals were being followed? If not were there difficulties in doing so?

Outcome:

All partner agencies provided assurance to the Practice Review Subgroup regarding this recommendation. The action was signed off on 14th January 2025.

Each agency confirmed they are aware of the Tri-x GM guidelines on 'bruising on children/babies' and 'Signs of abuse'

Each agency provided a detailed account of their 'was not brought' policies. Training to help practitioners to think about and consider how to engage effectively with families has also been implemented across the borough by individual agencies. Effective engagement is also discussed with practitioners as part of their safeguarding supervision. (linked to the Recommendation 1 from Child F1)

Learning Recommendation:

Consider what actions were taken to understand the impact of mother's childhood trauma and her mental health issues on her ability to parent effectively.

Outcome:

All partner agencies provided assurance to the Practice Review Subgroup regarding this recommendation. The action was signed off on 14th January 2025.

The 'Think Family Approach' is being implemented across Rochdale, along with introducing trauma informed practice. A range of multi-agency training is offered across the borough to practitioners to ensure that their practice is trauma informed. The training subjects include childhood trauma and mental health.



11. Partnership Workforce Development

Learning and Development Subgroup

The Learning and Development Subgroup serves as a collaborative forum for members to share best practices and raise any concerns related to safeguarding training and development. Its core responsibility is to explore and implement the training and learning needs of partners in order to deliver a coordinated training programme which focuses on improving the outcomes for children and young people at risk of abuse and neglect in the Rochdale borough.

To fulfil this role, the group:

- Monitors, evaluates, and reviews all learning and development packages to ensure they are of a high quality and are responsive to any emerging national legislation, guidance plus local learning and priorities.
- Ensures availability and appropriateness of safeguarding children training across the partnership, promoting consistent standards and attendance.
- Quality assures all learning and development activities using the RBSCP Learning Framework and the Learning and Development QA Process.
- Maintains a strong link with the RBSCP Child Safeguarding Practice Review Subgroup to facilitate the sharing of learning and ensure that recommendations from reviews are embedded into frontline practice.
- Hosted a workshop on Child Neglect during the RBSCP launch event.
- Delivered the Prioritising Child Sexual Abuse Roadshow in collaboration with all ten Greater Manchester SCPs.

Expansion and Enhancement of Training Offer

- Launched new training courses; Parenting Principles for Practitioners, Domestic Abuse – Engaging with Those Who Harm, Substance Use Briefings
- Reintroduced & updated Bruising on Babies and Neglect & Emotional Abuse

Trainer Recruitment and Development

- Recruited new trainers for the Child Sexual Abuse course
- Developed a formal Train-the-Trainer Contract.

Innovation in Evaluation and Engagement

- Piloted Mentimeter system with QR codes to improve training evaluation rates.
- Developed a “National Days/Weeks” calendar to align training with awareness campaigns and enhance social media engagement.
- Promoted Safer Sleep Week through daily Facebook posts.

Key achievements during 2024-2025

Strategic Planning and Collaboration

- Development and agreement of new subgroup supported by a new Terms of Reference and Work Plan for 25/26.
- Completed Annual Training Needs Analysis and wrote a Training Annual Report.
- Agreed a method to assess the impact and outcomes of multi-agency training with the Quality Standards Subgroup, audit agreed for 2025/26.

Resource Development and flexible learning

- Created or updated new resources/ guidelines for; Private Fostering and Adultification, Gender Identity & Expression, Working with Resistance (Disguised Compliance), Safer Working Practices guidelines & Concealed Pregnancy.
- Introduced “Twilight” sessions for Domestic Abuse Awareness to accommodate professionals unable to attend daytime training.

What difference ?

Strategic Planning and Collaboration

- The Terms of Reference and Work Plan for 25/26 have given group clear direction and ensured actions are alignment with strategic priorities
- The training needs analysis and annual report have given the group evidence-based insights and have influenced the development of the work plan.
- Regional SCP collaboration has promoted consistency and shared learning.
- Launch events, workshops and roadshows raised awareness of key safeguarding priorities/ topics e.g. neglect.
- Collaborative working with the Quality Standards Subgroup has laid the foundation for robust evaluation of training outcomes.

Expansion and Enhancement of Training Offer

- The expanded training offer addresses emerging topics and ensured continuity of core safeguarding knowledge. This increased accessibility and relevance for a broader range of professionals, supporting their roles more effectively.

Trainer Recruitment and Development

- Trainer Recruitment has brought fresh expertise and specialised expertise.

- The policy of having two co-trainers per course, preferably from different agencies, improves consistency, professionalism, & accountability in training.

Innovation in Evaluation and Engagement

- Further developments in the evaluation framework have enhanced feedback collection and evaluation accuracy for end of year report.
- The awareness calendar and social media campaigns increased visibility and community engagement.

Resource Development and flexible learning

- New and updated resources provided practical guidance for frontline professionals. Integrating complex topics into training ensured a holistic approach to safeguarding. Flexible learning options like twilight sessions promoted inclusivity and accessibility.

Next Steps

- Monitor and progress the 2025/26 work plan so the group achieves its ambition
- Continue to develop a flexible training programme, combined face-face and ‘just in time’ learning opportunities
- Continue to embed learning from audits, evaluations of training and individual requests from agencies
- Learn from JTAI - All training packages must contain the voice of the child/ lived experience. This will be achieved in two ways;
 - o via the application of training standards reviewed annually for each package,
 - o through the collaborative audit work with the PQA subgroup.
- Review strategies to reduce ‘no shows’ for training events
- Continue to review membership to ensure multi-agency participation

What this means for children and families?

- A more skilled and knowledgeable workforce means children and families are more likely to receive timely, appropriate, and effective support.
- Flexible training formats maximizes professionals access to learning, leading to more consistent safeguarding responses across services and times of day.
Multi-Agency engagement with this work stream ensures consistent standards across agencies, fostering a more joined-up approach to safeguarding, reducing the risk of children falling through the gaps.
- The evolution of the Quality Assurance Framework ensures continuous evaluation and adaption of training and that safeguarding practice evolves with the needs of children, families, and the wider community.

In addition to the Learning and Development (L&D) Subgroup annual update above, a joint Rochdale Borough Adult Safeguarding Board and Safeguarding Children Partnership end of year training report is also produced on the shared multi-agency safeguarding offer. This references all courses offered to practitioners from across Adult and Children safeguarding, as there can often be cross over in respect of common themes, and can be found below:



12. Multi-Agency Safeguarding Training End of Year Report 2024/25



Introduction

Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Board/Partnership are responsible for agreeing how organisations in the borough will work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk of abuse or neglect. The RBSAB/RBSCP Training Strategy describes how high-quality training is provided to enable staff and volunteers to work effectively across boundaries and organisations. The multi-agency training programme would not be possible without extensive contributions and commitment of Multi Agency Safeguarding Training Pool members.

This report outlines the delivery of the Training Strategy for the financial year 2024-25, covering the attendance at multi agency training, partnership engagement, course evaluation and the impact that the training has had on practice. The findings are reported directly to both Board and Partnership.

Single Agency Training

All agencies are responsible for ensuring that their workforce is competent and confident in carrying out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children, young people and adults at risk of abuse or neglect. Employers and voluntary groups must ensure workers and volunteers are able to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns, including signs of maltreatment. This knowledge must be in place before practitioners attend multi -agency safeguarding training.

The L & D Sub-group have produced minimum standards and core areas covered within single agency training.

Each individual agency has responsibility to ensure their in-house safeguarding training meets these requirements.

Multi Agency Training Pool

The Multi Agency Training Pool is made up of experienced practitioners who work in Rochdale and are released by their agency to deliver multi agency safeguarding courses. During 2024 -25 around 35 members, from a wide range of partner services, delivered training.

The RBSB Development Officer also supported individual course development and co-ordinated update sessions with small groups of trainers. The RBSB training delivery would not be possible without the generous input of the Training Pool members.

Train the Trainer

Over the last couple of years, the training offer has adopted a Train the Trainer model, where specialist agencies are commissioned to skill up professionals from partner agencies to deliver courses on specific issues both within their own organisations and as part of the multi-agency training programme. This has enabled us to add Violence Against Women and Girls, Intra-Familial Sexual Abuse, Loneliness Reduction and Cultural Competency training to our programme.



Training Offer 2024-25

There were 35 different courses were available within the RBSB Multi Agency Training offer for 2024-25, some of which were presented multiple times. The total number of individual courses delivered was 85.

1	Allegations Management (Adults)	19	Mental Health briefing - Self Harm and Suicide Ideation
2	Allegations Management, Safer Working Practices, The work of LADO.	20	Modern Slavery and Trafficking
3	Bruising on Babies and Children	21	Motivational Interviewing
4	Children Missing from Home	22	MAPP, Duty to Co-Operate training arrangements
5	Complex Safeguarding: Responding to Child Exploitation	23	Neighbourhood Level 3 think family
6	County Lines	24	Parenting Principles
7	Cuckooing/ Home Invasion	25	Personality Disorder training
8	Cumulative Effects of Harm	26	Provider Safeguarding Responsibilities (Adult)
9	Domestic Abuse Awareness	27	Reducing Parental Conflict
10	Domestic Abuse – Engaging with those who harm	28	Safer Sleep for Babies and Coping with Infant Crying
11	Domestic Abuse – Twilight Session	29	Stalking
12	Domestic Abuse in the Deaf Community	30	Substance Use - Ketamine
13	Early Help Training	31	Substance Use – Nitrous Oxide
14	Family Safeguarding Model	32	Substance Use - Young People, THC and Synthetic Cannabinoids
15	Intra familial sexual abuse	33	The Stressed-Out Brain
16	Loneliness Reduction	34	Violence Against Women and Girls
17	Mental Capacity Act/ Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards	35	Working Together to Safeguard Children
18	Mental Capacity Act – Tri-Borough Event		

Many of these courses are provided by the Safeguarding Board/Partnership, but the list also includes a few courses that are provided by partner colleagues who use the Board/Partnership website to advertise and administer their training.

Changes from the previous year

- A new Quality Assurance and Evaluation system has been implemented, which will quality assure each course on an annual basis.
- Loneliness Reduction training has been introduced
- Cultural Competency train-the-trainer completed, for delivery in 2025-26.
- Adulthood slides added to all relevant courses, and 7-minute Briefing
- A Concealed Pregnancy factsheet was written and added to the website.
- Three new substance awareness courses added to the training offer – Briefings for Ketamine, Nitrous Oxide and Young People, THC and Synthetic Cannabinoids.
- A course on Parenting Principles for Practitioners has been added to the training offer, as has a course on Domestic Abuse - Engaging with those who harm.

- WTSC course has been augmented by a video on the Family Safeguarding Model.
- Team around the Adult resources produced and uploaded to the website.
- Domestic Abuse Awareness “Twilight” courses arranged for people who cannot attend during the day.
- Prioritising Child Sexual Abuse Roadshow in March, provided by Centre of Excellence in CSA in conjunction with all ten SCPs in Greater Manchester.
- Two new training documents have been created:
 - Gender Identity & Expression – A Guide to Terminology
 - Working with Resistance aka Disguised Compliance
- Rolling Request Log created to ensure all training requirements are acted upon.

Agency	Numbers
Adult Care RBC	38
Children's Social Care RBC	99
Early Help & Schools (includes academies / private schools)	250
Foster Carer	1
Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue	0
GM Police	1
GP Surgery	5
Hopwood Hall College	42
National Probation Service	2
Northern Care Alliance	76
Pennine Care Foundation Trust	40
Private sector (e.g. residential care, adult carer groups, child minders, nurseries)	64
Public	120
Safer Communities Partnership	1
Voluntary sector groups	99
Other (e.g. service not stated)	175
TOTAL ATTENDANCES	1013

Changes have been led by:

- The requirement to disseminate the learning and recommendations from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and Safeguarding Adult Reviews.
- National and local initiatives, research and developments.
- Consideration of the data in the Training Needs Analysis.
- Evaluations from participants.
- Evaluations from trainers.
- Requests from partner agencies.

Take-up of Training 2024/25

Total number of attendees by agency ***

RBSB training uptake per year

2017/18	1494
2018/19	1386
2019/20	** 799
2020/21	** 637
2021/22	1052
2022/23	882
2023/24	***1547
2024/5	****1013

- * Peaks in these years denote multi-agency work around raising awareness of CSE with children, young people and professionals.
- ** Dips in these years relate to the pandemic and the disruptive effect it had on safeguarding training.
- *** Based on booking figures only, as attendance figures are not available
- **** Minimum figure, as some attendance was not recorded. Real figure likely to be 100 – 200 higher.

Additional Training

Whilst not strictly training activity, reference also needs to be made to the 7-minute briefings which are produced, the newsletters which are released twice a year, the awareness raising campaigns that are run throughout the year etc. Information is also conveyed by the social media activity, on the two Facebook pages. In addition, there have been videos produced which are available on our website, and workbooks for individuals to work through in their own time.

Actions for 2025 - 26

- Quality Assurance and Evaluation process will be rolled out and each course will be evaluated annually.
- Cultural Competency training will be introduced.
- An Achieving Best Evidence Protocol will be introduced.
- A Financial Abuse pack will be created and published.
- “The Role of the Lead Professional in Early Help Assessments” to be introduced.
- The training offer will be reviewed to ensure there are an appropriate number of training opportunities which focus on the Board/ Partnership’s strategic objectives.



13. Voice of Children and Families

10 Voice of Children and Families

During 2024/25 RBSCP worked with Participating People to examine a Baby, Child, Youth and Family Voice Roadmap for Rochdale’s MASA, as part of Playful in Practice: Serious about Solutions. The aim was to transform data into child-centred and youth-informed intelligence to strengthen RBSCP approach to embedding baby, child, young person, and family voices within governance, decision-making, and strategic planning.

This initiative was to ensure that youth participation is present and effectively implemented, bridging the gap between grassroots engagement and strategic decision-making. The project aimed to refine participation strategies, improve multi-agency collaboration, and ensure meaningful, non-tokenistic engagement.

The initial phase of the project explored Rochdale MASA’s strengths, challenges, and opportunities to ensure that baby, child, young person, and family voices are actively listened to, valued, and acted upon, including:

- **Aligning engagement efforts across agencies to create a cohesive participation strategy.**
- **Ensuring feedback from young people and families is systematically captured and translated into meaningful change.**
- **Strengthening governance structures to ensure accountability in listening to, valuing, and acting upon the voices of children and families.**

This highlighted key discussion issues in respect of Culture, Structure and Feedback & Engagement. Based on the discussions, the following key areas of work were identified for Participation People to support Rochdale MASA in embedding meaningful participation practices:

1. **Capturing the Voice of the Child and Families.**
2. **Collaboration Across Groups.**
3. **Impact Measurement.**

The final stage of the project assisted RBSCP to understand the strengths in practice and areas for development, identifying short-, medium- and long-term goals. Following the project partner representatives attended Regional MASA Participation Trainings in March 2025, to support next steps and developing an implementation plan.

In respect of NHS GM, ‘engagement with and listening to children and young people and families remains an NMH GM priority and this year our child’s voice strategy has included:

- **Our Children & Young People (CYP) System Group has set out a firm commitment to actively involve children and young people in its decision making. Building on the existing practice within localities and services, the CYP System Group will support young people to develop a young person’s shadow panel. The shadow panel will work with the CYP System Group to embed the Lundy Model of participation and will amplify young people’s voices within mental, physical and public health as part of our Joint Forward Delivery Plan for Children and Young People.**
- **Building on the successes of Bee Heard and Bee Counted, NHS GM has commissioned Youth Focus Northwest to design and launch a new youth shadow board to the ICB Children & Young People (CYP) System Group. Seven young people were recruited to a co- design group, working to create the structure of the new youth shadow board. The proposal was presented to the CYP System Group for approval in February 2025, before the proposed launch of the youth shadow board in April 2025’.**

The voice of children and families is regularly conducted across partner agencies, but the development work this year will enable the RBSCP to consolidate the activities to better evidence daily lived experience and meaningful engagement.

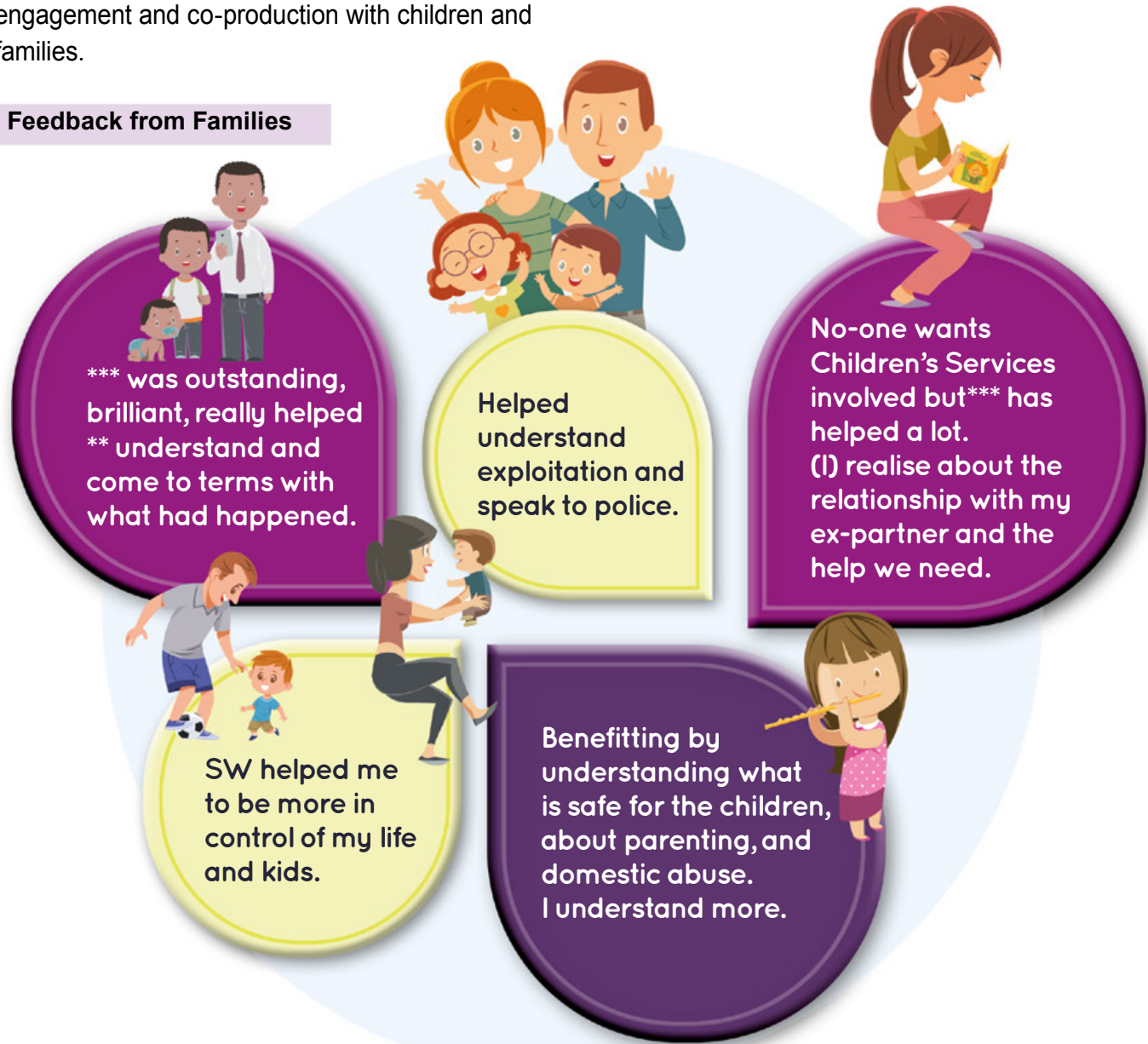
Next steps development work in 2025/26 will assist us to highlight how children and families have consistently informed us of their experiences with agency services, as well as directly influencing improvement and contributions to reform.

The project undertaken this year will support this development to align activities and assist to produce a cohesive Participation Strategy. In doing Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership will be assured of sincere and significant participation, engagement and co-production with children and families.

During 2024/25 activities across the partnership captures children and families’ voices in respect of the services they had received. A selection of these were sought by quality assurance activity in respect of feedback from multi-agency services.

The following table quotes some of the feedback gathered during the reporting period and highlights trusting relationships with children, young people and families genuinely feeling heard, supported, empowered and protected. This assures RBSCP that the frontline support and intervention given to children and families of Rochdale is making a difference to the quality of their daily lived experience.

Feedback from Families



J is grateful for the support offered by **** and stated, 'I just wish I could keep her forever'.

"I feel listened to in meetings and always feel proper special!"

** reports most help has been around her anxieties, and that *** always pushed for her to get the help she needed"

*** helps a lot with education, as I struggle with my learning. *** understands me and knows when I'm not feeling great"

*** makes me feel like I have support if required

*** is true to her word - she does what she says, she doesn't just make plans and not do anything

I have developed a really good relationship with her. She's amazing and like a 2nd mum.

*** was 'perfect, really good, she actually listened to me and understood everything I had to say...she takes me out all the time and comes to see me at home and in the community'.

"Before you I felt unsafe going out and now I feel much more secure. S helped me to let go of my worries

My mum thinks it has been the best thing and I have got more confident speaking up.

"Kind, listened, helped"

Positive working relationship with S and N (Sunrise SW and Nurse) - "they were bloody lovely. I love them. They were dead mint. S spoke to me about *** and this helped a lot"

"Open choices, positive mind-set, hopeful" Positive changes: "Yes, more motivation" "Thank you"

"Being able to talk more about my feelings"

"Good bond, cheerful, funny, free taxi!, good communication skills"; in respect of positive changes "going to live in Bury, arguing less with mum and in college now". "Let me keep you"

14. Partner Safeguarding Overview and Impact 2024/25

Whilst there is strong commitment to the RBSCP and the associated meetings and subgroups, as identified in the Section 6 - RBSCP Activities and Impact 2024/25, there has also been significant work undertaken by agencies to support the priorities and safeguarding developments for children and families in Rochdale. Each partner provided an update on how they have contributed to the RBSCP Priorities of Child Neglect, Child Sexual Abuse, Impact of Domestic Abuse on Children and Safeguarding Adolescents & Transitional Safeguarding, from their specific area of delivery. Thus offering further evidence to further strengthen the broader safeguarding impact for children and families of Rochdale. The information below highlights the 2024/25 safeguarding activities in respect of the RBSCP Priorities from the respective agencies, including service developments and future plans:

NHS Greater Manchester (GM)

NHS Greater Manchester (GM) as with all NHS Organisations, has a requirement to safely discharge its statutory duties in relation to the safeguarding of both children, young people and adults as outlined in national guidance. NHS GM has continued to discharge our statutory safeguarding duties throughout 2024-25. The responsibility for Safeguarding within the ICB is delegated to the Chief Nursing Officer supported by the Deputy Chief Nurse and Associate Director of Safeguarding supporting governance and assurance structures. Statutory safeguarding delivery is overseen via Associate Directors of Quality and Safety in each of the GM localities and undertaken by the locality Designated Teams.

The NHSE Safeguarding and Accountability and Assurance Framework (SAAF 2024) provides the strategic framework for ensuring strategic system oversight of our safeguarding priorities. Assurance and oversight of these duties is maintained via the NHS GM governance structures. The ICB Quality Committee receives regular safeguarding reports to ensure that it is fully sighted on safeguarding assurance, activity, risks, and the plans to mitigate as required.

The ICB has submitted quarterly Safeguarding Assurance Self-Assessment to provide assurance of its arrangements to NHSE, this includes our oversight of the NHSE self-assessment audits from our GM commissioned providers. In addition, NHS GM submits statutory self-assessments to the Safeguarding Children's Partnership's and Adult Safeguarding Boards. An overview of our detailed activity will be provided the Annual Safeguarding Report 2024-25 which will be published in quarter 2 financial year 2025-26.

Going forward, NHS GM will continue to address any newly acquired statutory responsibilities and reforms including those identified in subsequent iterations of Working Together to Safeguarding Children (2023) and development of our activity to continue to address the ICB duty to co-operate in line with the Serious Violence Duty (2022), the Domestic Abuse Act (2021) and the implementation of the Sexual Safety Charter in line with the Worker Protection Act 2023 (amendment of the Equality act 2010).

NHS GM safeguarding team has established infrastructures to support learning from Adult Safeguarding Reviews, Children Safeguarding Practice Reviews and Domestic Homicide reviews, this supports embedding system learning when significant incidents occur. System assurance demonstrating the impact from learning remains a key area of focus for the team in 2025/26.

Extra familiar harm and criminal and sexual exploitation of children remains a key priority area of focus both nationally and within GM. During 2024-25 (22.7%) of our GM Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs) had a theme of Child Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation and 9.1% had a theme of child criminal exploitation. Multiagency system learning events and reviews are in place during 25-26 to support practice development supported by the final report from the Greater Manchester Mayoral review around child criminal and sexual exploitation.

Safeguarding Partnerships and Boards

NHS GM has maintained their statutory duties across the GM Safeguarding Children Partnerships as one of the equal and joint statutory partners (Local Authority, ICBs and Greater Manchester Police) and as a statutory partner for the GM Adult Safeguarding Boards. NHS GM has supported the implementation of the Multi Agency Safeguarding arrangements (MASA) across out ten Safeguarding Children Partnerships as outlined within 1 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.

Our Chief Officer is the Lead Safeguarding Partner (LSP) and our Chief Nurse is the Delegated Safeguarding Partner (DSP) supported via our Associate Directors of Quality and Safety who deputise for the DSP in the locality.

The locality area Safeguarding Children Partnerships annual reports 2024-25 and MASA arrangements set out how NHS GM will work together with other agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in GM.

The safeguarding team continues to promote effective joint working across the Integrated Care System. NHS GM has representation on other statutory partnerships including Child Death Overview Panels, Corporate Parenting Boards, Channel Panels, Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements Boards, Domestic Abuse Partnership Boards and Community Safety Partnerships.

NHS GM continues their work with our Safeguarding Partnership's, Adult Boards and Corporate Parenting Boards to; support Looked after Children and Care Leavers to develop their offer to support health, wellbeing and opportunities for their future and to understand the improvements required to strengthen our safeguarding offer across our communities.

NHS GM works with wider Integrated Care System partner representatives to ensure there are representatives across the NHS GM committees and boards including, NHS providers, Healthwatch and VCSE. Our partner representatives are key to ensuring effective community and citizen participation in the work of the wider Integrated Care System to safeguarding our residents across Greater Manchester.

Greater Manchester Police

Child Neglect.

The definition of CP neglect covers several crime types and ages of offenders. In achieving the KPI, short-, medium- and long-term scrutiny and governance will be implemented and could influence localised decision making in relation to priority setting as there are a further 12 Tier 1 KPI's. The monthly CP GMP data set is provided to the business unit to satisfy the data collection request from the partnership.

Outcome 22 is a crime outcome results in Diversionary, Educational, Intervention outcomes with a prosecution prevented. The purpose of this outcome is to identify opportunities to support and divert individuals rather than taking the CJ route, this has been utilised effectively on the Rochdale district particularly regarding children and young people who come in to contact with the police. Rochdale have the fourth highest return rate which is a real positive and has been achieved through a joint approach with partners, with positive feedback from children, young people and families.

The interim guidance aims to maximise the value of the PIP1 detective sergeant role and keep children safe, while balancing the need to assess daily demand against ongoing supervision of open child protection crimes based on threat, harm and risk.

The PIP1 detective sergeant sits within the district investigation team to provide visibility and support to officers, staff and supervisors. Under the child protection policy, they are responsible for reviewing all child protection crimes within the C-CAT definition prior to closure, to ensure that all reasonable lines of enquiry have been followed and appropriate safeguarding is in place.

Child Sexual Abuse.

The HMICFRS inspection recognised GMP has child protection as a clear priority, supported by a well-trained, talented, and dedicated workforce specialising in this crucial area. Our Complex Safeguarding Teams were highlighted for their effective daily information sharing and prompt action to protect children, while our Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) arrangements were praised for facilitating quick and appropriate information sharing with partners.

Best practice and appropriate language training has been delivered across GMP to reduce the impact on the victim, who may be more reluctant to disclose abuse if they are made to feel that they are somehow at fault; and perpetrators exploit this to isolate their victims further. This training has improved the confidence in victims and the public, with more victims reporting the harm they have been subject to.

The second Operation Lytton Trial concluded with all 7 defendants convicted by jury after 3 weeks of deliberations. It was essentially a 100% conviction rate on all elements of the case (50 Guilty verdicts). There are a number of further trials listed for 25/26 in respect of Op Lytton.

Impact of Domestic Abuse on Children.

Operation Relentless was the district approach to serial repeat domestic abuse perpetrators. This consists of a cohort of 10 suspects and victims which is selected each month during a multi-agency meeting. This has now transitioned into the MATAC process, following the implemented in November 2024 of the District Operating Model (DOM).

The MATAC officer within Rochdale will use the DARAT scoring tool to identify the cohort and work alongside the Victim Services Key worker to engage with perpetrators, which a daily focus on DA where children are present.

Operation Encompass (OE) was placed into law when the Victims and Prisoners Act received Royal Assent on May 24, 2024, creating a statutory obligation for police forces to share domestic abuse incident information with schools to provide early support for children exposed to domestic abuse. The early notification to schools of children exposed to DA allow for immediate, trauma-informed support to offered to the children. The compliance with OE is measured daily by an SLT member to ensure the requisite information is shared effectively and efficiently.

The force wide implementation of the District Operating Model (DOM) introduced Domestic Abuse Teams (DAT) who focus on high-risk domestic abuse victims and suspects, providing enhanced specialism and knowledge to investigations and victims as well as providing enhanced support to district officers and departments.

The triage function will also be amalgamated into a new District Safeguarding Team (DST) where more resilience will be provided to ensure that all incidents are triaged within 24 hours across the adult and child teams, which will identify risk sooner and seek to mitigate that risk through a partnership approach.

Safeguarding Adolescents & Transitional Safeguarding.

A guidance document for police officers outlining key consideration when interacting with children and young people is being produced as it has been recognised there is a need for improved communication, timing, and trauma-informed approaches in police interactions with children.

By addressing these issues, frontline officers can foster trust, reduce harm, and better support children in challenging situations.

Single Agency Inspection Improvements during 2024/25 and impact for children & families

The recent HMIC Inspection within Greater Manchester Police, focusing on vulnerability, resulted in the implementation of a revised risk assessment process, with IT changes being implemented within child safeguarding arena to ensure compliance with internal and external referrals and notifications.

The risk for child and young person's incidents now has a RAG rating, so those most vulnerable and those who present the highest risk to children and young people can be prioritised in conjunction with partners, to mitigate any harm as soon as practicable.

Right Care Right Person (RCRP) was implemented on Monday 30th September 2024, the process, demand and impact is being measured and monitored via the force Prevention Hub team. There has been a reduction of 114 fewer daily deployments since the inception of RCRP. As a comparison, the number of reported Missing from Homes for the month of October 2023 was 2800 reports of those 1559 were Children and 1241 Adults, compared to October 2024 which had a total of 1981 reports of those 1254 were children and 727 adults.

Other Safeguarding Key developments and achievements during 2024/25 that have made a difference to the lives of children and families.

The Independent assurance review of the effectiveness of multiagency responses to child sexual exploitation in Greater Manchester, commissioned by the Mayor of Greater Manchester in 2017, published its third report in January 2024. The fourth, and final work stream of this Assurance Review will consider the current arrangements across Greater Manchester for reporting on the quality of multi-agency practice. This Report published in 2025 by the HMIC focusing on how the teams operate today identified a proven and well-researched peer review process, improving outcomes for vulnerable children are achieved through Greater Manchester partners' strong governance and oversight.

The National Child Protection Inspection highlighted two areas where GMP is performing well which are - our leadership of child protection arrangements and our work with safeguarding partners. Three other areas - responding to children at risk, assessing risk and making appropriate referrals, and investigating reports of abuse, neglect and exploitation rated as adequate.

The HMICFRS inspection recognised GMP has child protection as a clear priority, supported mby a well-trained, talented, and dedicated workforce specialising in this crucial area. Our Complex Safeguarding Teams were highlighted for their effective daily information sharing and prompt action to protect children, while our Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) arrangements were praised for facilitating quick and appropriate information sharing with partners.

Next Steps and Plans for 2025/26

Child protection continues to be a priority for the force, with the solved KPI increased to 13.3% demonstrating the absolute commitment to further safeguard children and young people, whilst bring offenders to justice, through a victim-centred, context-led and suspect focused approach.

Survivors of grooming gang crimes can now request a review of their previously closed cases, thanks to expanded criteria for the Child Sexual Abuse Review Panel (CSARP). This change means that cases where a decision was made not to prosecute, even after June 2013, can now be reconsidered, provided the Victims' Right to Review has not already been used. This will afford victims the opportunity to have their investigations re-opened, with GMP able to prosecute more offenders.



Children's Services

(including contributions from: Youth Justice Service, Complex Safeguarding Service, Family Safeguarding Model, Child Protection Conference Service)

Child Neglect.

In Rochdale Borough Council, Children's Services support children and families in respect of responding to risk and need. This involved children who require Targeted Early Help, Child in Need of Integrated Help and children who require Safeguarding and Protection. Early Help Assessments, Plans and Team Around the Family Meetings are arranged where parents feel most comfortable including at home to support ownership and co-production. In addition, as Corporate Parents Children's Services also support our children who are cared for and our care experienced young people. Throughout the service offers, Children's Services assess children and provide planned intervention and support in respect of Neglect. Our frontline practitioners and managers are fully trained and responsive to responding to Neglect and this forms part of the core children's services offer. In addition, the following specialist services also support this RBSCP priority as follows:

Our **Youth Justice Service** focus on supporting children who encounter the criminal justice system, often due to behaviours rooted in neglect, trauma, or exploitation. **Complex Safeguarding Services** tackle non-traditional forms of harm—like criminal exploitation, trafficking, and abuse that occur outside the home.

Identify Hidden Harm:
we recognize neglect that may be masked by other vulnerabilities in our assessments [Asset plus and WISE]

Child First Framework:
We follow YJB child first principles, recognising the child not the 'offender'

Early Intervention & Diversion:
We redirect children from formal processes where possible [Prevention & Diversion]

Collaboration:
we are co-located with partners and support tailored intervention plans to address issues of neglect.

Training:
we support practitioners to attend neglect training so that we can respond to need.

Trauma-Informed Care:
we support children through building trusted relationships

Impact on Children

- **Children feel listened to, supported, and understood.**
- **Children experience greater safety and stability.**
- **Families are empowered to support their children and are more resilient**
- **Break the cycle of harm and criminalisation**

Child Protection Conference Service

Role of the Child Protection Conference Facilitator in Addressing Neglect includes:

Embedding Motivational Interviewing & Family Safeguarding

- Facilitators use Motivational Interviewing to engage parents in meaningful conversations about neglect, helping them understand the impact of their actions (or inaction) on their children.
- The Family Safeguarding model ensures that plans are created with families, not for them — promoting ownership and collaboration.

Explicitly Naming and Exploring Neglect

- Areas of neglect are clearly identified and discussed during conferences.
- Facilitators ensure that neglect is not minimised and that its long-term effects are fully considered in planning.

Co-Producing the Child Protection Plan

- Parents are actively involved in writing the plan during the conference, fostering a sense of partnership and accountability.
- Plans are clear, measurable, and tailored to address neglect specifically.

Ongoing Oversight and Escalation

- Facilitators maintain regular oversight of children subject to plans via mid-point checks.
- If neglect persists or worsens, they ensure timely escalation to protect the child using the escalation process.

Using the Neglect Toolkit

- All facilitators recommend the use of the Neglect tool kit as part of planning to support assessment and intervention.

Consistent Threshold Understanding

- Having completed Threshold Training, facilitators apply a shared understanding of risk and intervention levels across the team.

Continued Professional Development

- Attendance at events like the March 2024 conference with Jan Howarth reflects a commitment to staying informed on best practices in neglect and child protection.
- Delivering the Neglect training with the partnership.

Impact on Children

- Children are more likely to receive help before neglect becomes chronic or severe.
- Parents gain a better understanding of how their actions affect their children, which can lead to sustained behavioural change.
- Children benefit from clearer, targeted support that addresses their specific needs.
- If a child's situation doesn't improve, timely action can be taken to protect them.

Child Sexual Abuse.

In Rochdale Borough Council, Children's Services support children and families in respect of responding to risk and need. This involved children who require Targeted Early Help, Child in Need of Integrated Help and children who require Safeguarding and Protection. In addition, as Corporate Parents Children's Services also support our children who are cared for and our care experienced young people. Throughout the service offers, Children's Services assess children and provide planned intervention and support in respect of Child Sexual Abuse. Our frontline practitioners and managers are fully trained and responsive to responding to Child Sexual Abuse and Harmful Sexual Behaviour and this forms part of the core children's services offer. In addition, the following specialist services also support this RBSCP priority as follows:

Youth Justice Services support children who have come into contact with the criminal justice system, including those who have experienced or displayed harmful sexual behaviour. Complex Safeguarding teams focus on non-traditional forms of abuse, including CSA that occurs outside the home.

Early Identification:

Recognising signs of child sexual abuse and / or harmful sexual behaviour through assessments like AssetPlus and AIM (Assessment, Intervention, and Moving on).

Trauma-Informed:

Deliver relational based interventions that address the emotional impact of abuse and/ or harmful sexual behaviour

Diversion from Criminalisation:

Ensuring children who have been exploited or abused are treated as victims, not offenders

Multi-Agency Collaboration:

respond swiftly create tailored safeguarding plans to address grooming, coercion, and abuse.

Building Trust:

Develop long-term relationships with children to support disclosure and recovery.

Specialist Training:

support practitioners to attend training.

Impact on children

- Children feel heard, protected, and supported.
- Reduced risk of committing harmful sexual behaviour offences
- Greater access to education, therapy, and safe relationships.
- Children are supported to recover from their experience
- Families receive help to understand and respond to abuse.

Child Protection Conference Service - Supporting Children Experiencing Sexual Abuse and Harmful Sexual Behaviour includes:

Conference Facilitators recommending the use of the Sexual Abuse Toolkit and reflective practice ensures concerns are not missed or misinterpreted.

AIM3-trained facilitators chair AIM reviews ensure independent oversight of the planning and intervention for children who display HSB

Training has been attended on CSA this has supported conference facilitators, and the wider team make better-informed decisions.

Regular reflection in team meetings, audits, and supervision ensures the correct category of abuse is used for children experiencing or at risk of sexual abuse. The Safeguarding Units oversight ensures accountability and follow-through on actions and outcomes.

Impact on children

- Use of the toolkit ensures concerns are identified in a timely manner
- Children who display HSB are assessed and supported appropriately, reducing risk and re-offending.
- Children benefit from more consistent and informed CSA responses across cases.
- Children are better protected through ongoing oversight and timely escalation of concerns

Impact of Domestic Abuse on Children.

Family Safeguarding Model:

Domestic abuse in Rochdale for families open to Children's Services receive support from a specialist section of the Family Safeguarding Model by way of 4 Domestic Abuse Practitioners (DAP workers). The 1-2-1 approach is more personalised and involves specialist support around safety planning, recognising abuse, safety support, boost self-esteem and sustainable change for the family.

Through 2024-2025 the service saw a consistent referral rate for domestic abuse practitioners. Throughout the intervention 60.3 % of cases have closed following support being offered. Positive impact has been measured by the level of movement from referral stage to closure stage and again at a 6-month review period to measure sustainability:

- Positive impact was identified in 19 cases at the point of closure to have a positive impact following the domestic abuse support, this being 21.6% of the closed cases. This is measured by the cases having stepped down by at least one level i.e., CP- CIN.
- Cases are audited as a multi-agency approach, to examine impact, outcomes and future delivery and identify any service improvements.
- A further 13 cases (14.8%) showing a consistent improvement after 6 months of closure.
- Evaluation is gathered through feedback evaluation forms. Of the 88 cases (60%) closed, positive feedback was evidenced for 45% of these. (Some cases declined intervention, so their blank feedback forms were recorded)

The requirement for support remains consistent seeing an average of 22 cases per quarter being referred for domestic abuse support. Safeguarding remains key and should safeguarding issues identified are escalated.

Impact on children

- Improved support and service to families through Family Safeguarding Model. The use of DAP workers assists to monitor referrals to enhance timing of intervention, sharing of information and professional curiosity.
- Victim Support currently lead on high-risk cases and are commissioned as part of the specialist DA service model for Rochdale Council. The joined-up approach between DA services provides better threshold identification and step up for higher risk support.
- Victim Support and Domestic Abuse Practitioners' monthly meetings strengthens oversight across services on good practice and support to families.

- Victim Support provide the perpetrator programmes locally which many of the families being supported through children's services are actively accessing. The newly implemented joined up working approach allows for information sharing for the whole family to be documented on the local authority systems and improves the information sharing process whilst evidencing a more cohesive approach.
- The progress and outcomes cases supported by Victim Support perpetrator programmes, now link in with the Family

Safeguarding Model through support from DA Lead worker in Community Safety & Resilience Service. Further strengthening the joint working approach between both services for the benefit of families.

- We commission Rochdale Women's Welfare to deliver the Freedom Programme in Urdu and Punjabi, in addition to the standard programme. Freedom is also offered termly as both a 10-week programme or 2 day condensed course to increase accessibility.

Specialist Domestic Abuse Services (SDAS):

In April 2024 we launched our specialist domestic abuse services locally, these services are for victims/survivors, children/young people and people who harm. They include outreach support, group-work and safe accommodation across the borough.

For children and young people, the offer is delivered by Victim Support and Rochdale Connections Trust (RCT) and SDAS. We commissioned Talk Listen Change to deliver 1-2-1 support for adolescents displaying harmful behaviours within their own relationships.

Within the SDAS we have 3 Children and Young People (CYP) IDVAs working with young people experiencing abuse within their own relationships or that are affected by their parents/care-givers domestic abuse. This service offers a set programme of support looking at safety planning, safety and well-being and building relationship. RCT offer therapeutic interventions for children and young people such as counselling, thera-play etc.

Impact on children

- There is one single point of access for all the services, and we can offer a more holistic support package.
- In Year 1 RCT had 110 referrals for this service with 72 children/young people being offered support.

In Year 1 The CYP IDVAs had 330 referrals and of the closed cases, over 80% of people stated that had greater awareness of how to keep safe and that their voice was heard.

Youth Justice Services work with children who have come into contact with the criminal justice system, often due to behaviours shaped by trauma, including exposure to domestic abuse.

Complex Safeguarding teams focus on non-traditional forms of harm, including domestic abuse that occurs in peer relationships, online spaces, or within families.

Early Identification:

Recognising the impact of domestic abuse on children's emotional wellbeing, behaviour, and relationships through approaches such as 'PPIED'; Turnaround, Sunrise Prevention, and completing assessments [P&D, asset plus, and WISE]

Trauma-Informed:

Therapeutic support to help children process trauma & build resilience.

Diversion from Criminalisation:

Ensuring children affected by domestic abuse are treated as victims, not offenders - especially for adolescent-to-parent violence or harmful behaviours rooted in trauma.

Family-Centered Interventions: Engaging parents and families to strengthen relationships and reduce conflict, using our review processes, and parenting worker.

Specialist Training: supporting practitioners to attend training on domestic abuse, and parental conflict and to understand safeguarding processes around this.

Impact on Children

- **Children feel safe, understood, and supported.**
- **Strengthened family relationships and stable environments.**
- **Children are protected from further harm**



Safeguarding Adolescents & Transitional Safeguarding.

In Rochdale Borough Council, Children's Services support children and families in respect of responding to risk and need. This involved children who require Targeted Early Help, Child in Need of Integrated Help and children who require Safeguarding and Protection. In addition, as Corporate Parents Children's Services also support our children who are cared for and our care experienced young people. Throughout the service offers, Children's Services assess children and provide planned intervention and support in respect of Safeguarding Adolescents & Transitional Safeguarding. Our frontline practitioners and managers are fully trained and responsive to responding to Safeguarding Adolescents & Transitional Safeguarding and this forms part of the core service offer to young people and those approaching adulthood. In addition, the following specialist services also support this RBSCP priority as follows:

Youth Justice and Complex Safeguarding Teams are increasingly embedding transitional safeguarding into their practice — through joint protocols, shared training, and relational models of support and acknowledge brain development continues into the mid 20's; Harm like exploitation does not stop at 18; and rigid service boundaries can leave young people feeling unsupported.

Supervision of court orders:
Helping young people comply with legal requirements while addressing underlying needs with safe transitions to the Probation Service.

Family support:
Engaging parents of adolescents to support them to understand teenage development.

Informal support and transition planning:
Transitional safeguarding policy and process in place that support young people beyond their 18th birthday: co-supporting with Probation/ Adult services.

Impact on young people

Young people understand adult services and feel supported beyond their 18th birthday.

Child Protection Conference Service - Child Exploitation

In March 2024, Rochdale launched the Young Person Safety Plans as a revised approach to safeguarding children and young people experiencing sexual or criminal exploitation. This initiative was developed in recognition of the limitations of traditional child protection frameworks, which often focus on harm occurring within the family home and may not adequately address the complex risks faced by adolescents in the community.

The Young Person Safety Plans provide a child protection-level response while adopting a trauma-informed, non-blaming approach. By renaming the process and reframing the language used, the model aims to reduce the stigma and judgment that families may feel when their child is being exploited, particularly in cases where parents and carers are actively working with services and doing their best to protect their child.

This approach aligns with contextual safeguarding principles, acknowledging that harm in adolescence often occurs outside the home and requires a collaborative, multi-agency response.

The Safety Plans place emphasis on partnership with families, recognising them as key allies in safeguarding, and aim to improve engagement, trust, and outcomes for both children and their carers.

Early feedback suggests that the Young Person Safety Plans have been positively received by professionals and families alike, offering a more appropriate and compassionate framework for addressing exploitation and promoting safety.

Impact on young people

- **By renaming the process and reframing the language used, the model aims to reduce the stigma and judgment that families feel when their child is being exploited, particularly in cases where parents and carers are actively working with services and doing their best to protect their child.**
- **Early feedback suggests that the Young Person Safety Plans have been positively received by professionals and families alike, offering a more appropriate and compassionate framework for addressing exploitation and promoting safety.**

Single Agency Inspection Improvements during 2024/25 and impact for children & families

This report provides updates on the Children's Services **Achieving Excellence** Plan, which was developed prior to the OFSTED ILACS Inspection (Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services) and reviewed and revised following the ILACS inspection in January 2023 and the JTAI (Joint Targeted Area of Inspection) in May 2024.

We have continued to enhance our **governance and accountability** within Children's Social Care to ensure consistent practice and a sustained focus on fostering the conditions necessary for good practice to thrive.

The **Quality Assurance Framework** is well embedded across the service. All managers and senior leaders conduct monthly audits in collaboration with the case-holding social worker. These audits also include direct engagement with other professionals involved with the child, as well as with the child and their parents or carers, to gather their feedback on the service received.

Additionally, the relevant Head of Service or Service Manager moderate audits within their area, ensuring swift action is taken where practice falls short. This approach is fostering a culture of continuous learning and improvement. This is having a positive impact on the quality of practice, as we continue to have more audits graded Good and Outstanding.

Our **workforce development plan** remains a key driver in enhancing the knowledge and skills of our staff. We have developed and launched an Early Help Lead Professional training package following our JTAI inspection. The revised offer is tailored to emerging needs and provides accessible learning and coaching opportunities to support effective practice with children and families.

Over the period we have had a range of **external scrutiny** of our children's social care services. All of those have highlighted a number of strengths, for example good quality assessments, we know our children well as we

see our children regularly, which is enabling us to develop meaningful relationships, our partnership work was a strength and complex safeguarding work, alongside our partners, was exemplary.

We have a **robust performance management system** that continues to evolve. Performance clinics are embedded at all levels, from frontline teams to a monthly clinic, chaired by the Assistant Director. In addition, monthly quality assurance meetings, also led by the Assistant Director, provide oversight of practice quality across the service. These forums offer both support and challenge to frontline managers, driving improvements toward achieving consistently good services.

We continue to align service delivery with the **neighbourhood model**, with teams and social workers increasingly based in family hubs. This strengthens connections with key stakeholders and is supported by co-location with key community services.

Our focus on **social work recruitment and retention** remains strong, ensuring a skilled and stable workforce. As at the 31st March 2025 the vacancy rate was 11%. This workforce stability is contributing to reduced average caseloads and improved service delivery.

We remain committed to improving the **quality of practice** and achieving **timely, positive outcomes** for children. A key area of focus is strengthening the effectiveness of multi-agency planning, ensuring clear professional accountability and ownership through a unified, single-plan approach.

Complex Safeguarding

At the end of the 2024-25 reporting period, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) commenced a Peer Review of Complex Safeguarding to highlighted good practice and key areas for reflection. Safeguarding partners committed to a series of multi-agency Tackling Child Exploitation (TCE) sessions, designed to evaluate collective delivery against the eight national TCE practice principles. At the end of the Peer Review learning will be consolidated and a Safeguarding Partnership Exploitation Action Plan will be designed to prioritise:

- **Workforce development: Enhanced training and joint/multi-agency supervision**
- **Education, Training & Employment (ETE): Promoting inclusion and access for vulnerable young people.**
- **Dual-status support: Tailored interventions for children who are both victims and suspects.**
- **Participation and engagement: Strengthening the voice of children, young people, parents, and carers.**
- **Information and data sharing: Improving systems for timely, secure, and effective collaboration.**



Other Safeguarding Key developments and achievements during 2024/25 that have made a difference to the lives of children and families.

- Working with GMCA, which promotes a wealth of training and enables consistent practice across Youth Justice and Complex Safeguarding
- Complex Safeguarding Weeks of Action [March & October] which raised awareness of exploitation with colleagues, partners, residents and business owners so that children are more likely to have wider support.
- Considering innovation through the community of practice forums, linking in with regional and national innovative projects to reach children digitally such as 'virtual headset' decision making programmes.
- Delivering & attending mandatory training delivered both internally & by GMCA.

Next Steps and Plans for 2025/26

- Domestic Abuse Multi agency case audits will continue with the evaluative approach being applied to ongoing reviewing and improving approach to the delivery of domestic abuse support, working relations with other domestic abuse services such as Victim Support, who lead on high risk cases open to children's services.
- Training and National Domestic Abuse legislative updates will be delivered through in house training and meetings for the domestic abuse practitioners along with service meetings and external providers to ensure practice is up to date, effective, informative for the client and impactful.
- Continued joint working with Victim Support to improve information sharing and the offer of Domestic Abuse support for the whole family approach.
- To continue strengthening the Rochdale **Young Person Safety Plans** and ensure they remain responsive to the needs of children and families, the following actions are proposed:
 1. Policy Revision and Relaunch
 2. Enhanced Engagement with Young People and Families
 3. Audit and Evaluation
- Develop the voice of babies, children and young people and families in respect of their lived experience and feedback of services. This will include Child Protection Chairs visiting children subject to Child Protection Plan to ensure they understand their Plan and encourage participation in their conferences and the development of Parent/care groups to support service review and design.
- GMCA Complex Safeguarding Peer Review will be completed by the end of Quarter 1 in 2025/26. Findings will identify good practice, positive outcomes and areas to develop into a Safeguarding Partnership Exploitation Action Plan. The implementation of these actions is expected to deliver tangible benefits including:

- A skilled and trauma-informed workforce better equipped to meet complex needs.
- Increased disruption and prosecution activity, reducing harm and holding perpetrators to account.
- Improved multi-agency collaboration, ensuring children feel heard, safe, and supported with greater stability.
- Ongoing awareness raising through Complex Safeguarding Week of Action during 2025 with colleagues, partners, residents and business owners so that children are more widely supported.

Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust (PCFT)

Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust (PCFT) has a statutory duty to promote the welfare of children and young people and to protect adults at risk of abuse. Safeguarding means protecting a citizen's health, wellbeing, and human rights; enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. It is an integral part of providing high-quality health care.

PCFT's Vision is for a happier and more hopeful life for everyone in our communities. This includes safeguarding practices and requires a 'Think Family' approach, as neither children, young people, adults, nor their families and carers exist in isolation.

The statutory accountability for safeguarding lies with the Executive Director of Quality, Nursing, and Healthcare Professionals. This annual report summarises the safeguarding activity by the Safeguarding Team within our Trust 2024/25 to provide assurance to our Executive Board and stakeholders that we are safeguarding our patients, service users and carers, meeting our statutory responsibilities, in line with the Safeguarding Accountability Framework, and the actions we are taking to improve key areas of safeguarding practice.

www.penninecare.nhs.uk/annualreports



Rochdale Adult Care.

Rochdale Adult Care have continued to strengthen relationships with Children's, health and education services through providing PFA representation at joint meetings, improving information sharing through shared ICT systems and case panels and developing streamlined referral processes.

The Preparing for Adulthood team has link workers to relevant colleges to support with early identification and monitoring of referrals for Adult Care. There is also regular Adult Care attendance at joint meetings, case panels and both the Children's and Adults Dynamic Support Register which has supported in reducing the number of delayed or late referrals resulting in a more proactive and multi-agency approach to assessment and risk management for young people.

There has been the introduction of the Right Case panel where high risk cases, particularly relating to known or suspected child exploitation are discussed and considered for Adult Care involvement and/or risk management.

In line with this, the PFA team and Front Door/ Prevention team have developed close working relationships with the Sunrise team to further embed effective communication and response to risk and safeguarding concerns.

Transitional safeguarding is a particular priority for Adult Care and there has been senior leadership engagement with Greater Manchester Combined Authority and the Complex Safeguarding Team to develop a GM wide framework to support Rochdale's approach to transitional safeguarding. In addition to this, Adult Care senior leadership has been involved and facilitated a number of transitional and complex safeguarding workshops to inform best practice and influence policies and processes.



15 Reflections and Forecasting

The required response to Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) has resulted in significant local and regional development work. During 2024/25 there has been notable progress made and a strong commitment to making a real difference for children and families in Rochdale by the safeguarding children partnership.

Planned developments, trajectory of improvement and momentum is evident from reported activity and achievements during the year, including the published RBSCP MASA, DSG Chairing the Partnership, Education as a key safeguarding partner, appointment of an Independent Scrutineer, separation of the Rochdale Children Partnership from the Rochdale Adults Board and the associated reconfiguration of the associate subgroups. However, the impetus of development was affected by the level of external scrutiny afforded to Rochdale including the following:

- **Joint Targeted Area Inspection on the Multi-Agency response to identification of initial need and risk (July 2024),**
- **Greater Manchester Police, National Child Protection Inspection (Dec 2024)**
- **Greater Manchester Combined Authority CSE Assurance Review (June 24)**
- **Local Government Association, Corporate Peer Review (Oct 2024).**

Despite the importance and benefits of external review and inspection, this has consequently slowed down progress and impacted on anticipated timescales for completing developments during 2024/25, as identified earlier, by RBSCP Subgroup and Partner Activity Reports and the Independent Scrutineer.

Reflections of achievements and continuous progress emphasise the inclusion of golden threads woven throughout RBSCP activity as we enter 2025/26, which include:

- **Cohesive engagement of children, directly impacting on meaningful change.**
- **Designing an effective Families First Model, emphasising family-centred early intervention, collaboration and support to meet the local needs in Rochdale.**
- **Working together across partnerships, boundaries and borders.**
- **Equity, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging**
- **Impactful reflection and learning from reviews to improve safeguarding practice.**

As we enter the new financial year there is renewed energy and cohesive drive to achieve the planned developments. It is evident that partners are clear on what has been achieved and what the next steps are to continue to make a positive sustained difference to the daily lived experience of the children and families of Rochdale.

Working with the North-West Multi Agency Safeguarding Learning and Support Hub- RBSCP aims to strengthen local safeguarding arrangements and accelerate progress during 2025/26. As identified and agreed in our Northwest Safeguarding Partnership Memorandum of Understanding, the vision for the region is:

To collaborate better to improve child centred, multi-agency practice; nurturing a culture of trust, accountability, and support for our children.

16. Future Priorities for 2025-2027

During 2024/25 RBSCP undertook significant development activity in response to Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023. In turn the Partnership examined the priority themes for Rochdale Children's Safeguarding activity and associated RBSCP Business Plan for 2025-2027.

When agreeing RBSCPs Priorities for 2025 - 2027, the partnership considered:

- **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023**
- **Children's Social Care: National Framework**
- **The voice of children & young people via Children & Young Peoples Partnership**
- **The voice of practitioners from subgroups, conferences and learning events.**
- **Partnership and Subgroup safeguarding data.**
- **Learning from local and National safeguarding children practice reviews**
- **JTAI Inspection Improvements (2024) and wider Inspection findings**
- **Learning from research and development.**



The RBSCP Priorities 2025 - 2027 were developed to ensure RBSCP Vision and Values are reflected throughout all that we do:

Our Vision

Children and young people in the Rochdale Borough will be safe and will feel safe within their homes, schools and communities.

RBSCP Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements 2025 – 2027

Our Values

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. For services to be effective, each person, practitioner and organisations should play their part.

A whole family approach to supporting families. For services to be effective and create long lasting, positive change we need to support the whole family, regardless of the level of need.

RBSCP Response to Need document 2025 – 2027

17 RBSCP Strategic Priorities 2025-2027

1. Neglect

by introducing the Family Help model, professionals and Family Help Lead Practitioners are enabled and supported to recognise the signs of neglect, understand the impact of neglect on children, and respond at the earliest point of identification whilst ensuring children and their families are at the centre of everything we do.

2. Child Sexual abuse

multi-agency Child Protection Teams (MACPTs) receive high quality learning & development to recognise the signs of child sexual abuse and understand the impact of child sexual abuse on individuals and the wider community. MACPTs will deliver effective support whilst providing services that ensure the welfare and wellbeing of victims of CSA.

3. Domestic Abuse

through robust quality systems, data is shared accurately, and widely, to enable effective support for children and young people impacted by Domestic Abuse. The RBSCP will seek information that children tell us they feel safer as a result. The RBSCP Business Plan 2025-27 highlights steps and will set clear timescales within each Priority, to evidence progress and impact for children and families of Rochdale during the activity period.

Throughout RBSCP activity, we will ensure the voice of children, young people, families and practitioners will contribute and be heard.

How we will know we are achieving our Priorities:

The RBSCP achievement of priorities will be directly joined with statutory safeguarding partners achieving the Families First Partnership programme by March 2026.

1. Reduce the impact of Neglect

The RBSCP Neglect Strategy defines measurable which include tracking the number of Early Help Assessments which include a completed Neglect toolkit assessment. Also, the number of successfully completed Team around the Family (TAF) is measured to indicate the overall number of successful early help episodes. RBSCP will measure these data points, and other Early Help quality assurance information from Partners to measure how successful this priority has been.

2. Increase the identification of Child Sexual Abuse

The RBSCP will seek assurance that Learning & Development materials are seen to be effective in practice. This will be evidenced via a range of L&D related quality assurance methods with include meeting defined quality standards, case file audit and seeking feedback from practitioners.

3. Effective support for victims of Domestic Abuse.

The RBSCP will use quality assurance methods via partnership working with the Rochdale Safer Communities Partnership to be informed and assured of an effective Operation Encompass system. The RBSCP will also utilise Education expertise to ensure good quality safeguarding practice is carried out by Education partners once an Operation Encompass notification has been received.

Utilising the methods discussed above, the RBSCP will also use the JTAI Improvement Plan to identify where evidenced actions help RBSCP meet its Priorities.

In addition to the above RBSCP Business Plan and associated Priorities, the partnership will continue to develop the following areas during 2025/26, to continuously improve our safeguarding responses and effectiveness:

- **Participation Strategy**
Design and launch the new Participation Strategy to strengthen the voice of children & families and evidence their experience of being heard, supported and influencing meaningful change.
- **Quality Assurance Impact**
Develop reporting mechanisms to clearly evidence improved outcomes and impact for children and families as a result of audit action implementation and practice improvement
- **Voice of Education**
further embed the role and influence of Education into the partnership.
- **Impact Evaluation**
improve mechanisms to evidence effectiveness of workforce development and impact of learning from LCSPRs, to understand practice improvements and how this has enhanced outcomes for children and families.
- **Complex Safeguarding**
Using findings from the peer review design Implementation Plan and relaunch the Complex Safeguarding Strategy in 2025/26.
- **Northwest Safeguarding Improvements**
collaboratively develop regional safeguarding vision, principles and approaches to regional safeguarding. Thus, strengthening effective collaborative working together across the region whilst, fulfilling duties set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023).

