

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY BOARD

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Agenda

Date Thursday 15 January 2026

Time 6.00 pm

Venue JR Clynes Building, Cultural Quarter, Greaves Street, (Oldham, OL1 1AL

Notes

1. Declarations of Interest- If a Member requires advice on any item involving a possible declaration of interest which could affect his/her ability to speak and/or vote he/she is advised to contact Alex Bougatef or Constitutional Services at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.
2. Contact officer for this agenda is Constitutional Services email constitutional.services@oldham.gov.uk
3. Public Questions - Any Member of the public wishing to ask a question at the above meeting can do so only if a written copy of the question is submitted to the contact officer by 12 noon on Monday 12th January 2026.
4. Filming - The Council, members of the public and the press may record / film / photograph or broadcast this meeting when the public and the press are not lawfully excluded. Any member of the public who attends a meeting and objects to being filmed should advise the Constitutional Services Officer who will instruct that they are not included in the filming.

Please note that anyone using recording equipment both audio and visual will not be permitted to leave the equipment in the room where a private meeting is held.

Membership of the CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY BOARD

Councillors Adams, Z Ali, Ball, Bishop, Byrne, Hobin (Chair), Iqbal, Malik, McLaren (Vice-Chair), Rustidge and Shuttleworth

Item No

- 1 Apologies For Absence
- 2 Urgent Business

Urgent business, if any, introduced by the Chair
- 3 Declarations of Interest

To Receive Declarations of Interest in any Contract or matter to be discussed at the meeting.
- 4 Public Question Time

To receive Questions from the Public, in accordance with the Council's Constitution.
- 5 Minutes of Previous Children and Young People Scrutiny Board Meeting (Pages 3 - 8)

The Minutes of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Board held on 27th November 2025 are attached for approval.
- 6 Participation of Young People aged 16 - 18 in Education, Employment or Training (Pages 9 - 22)

To note the current landscape and experiences of 16–18-year old's which is impacting on their participation in education, employment, or training.

To note the range of interventions currently in place to support young people into EET (education, employment and training) and prevent the incidence of NEET increasing.

To comment and discuss accordingly.
- 7 Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2024/25 (Pages 23 - 84)

To receive and consider the Board's Annual Report
- 8 Work Programme (Pages 85 - 90)

To consider and note the Children and Young People Scrutiny Board's Work Programme for 2025/26
- 9 Key Decision Document (Pages 91 - 100)
- 10 Rule 13 and 14

To consider any rule 13 or 14 decisions taken since the previous meeting.

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 5

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY BOARD

27/11/2025 at 6.00 pm



Present: Councillor Hobin (Chair)
Councillors Adams, Z Ali, Ball, Bishop, Iqbal, McLaren (Vice-Chair), Rustidge and Shuttleworth

Also in Attendance:

Jodie Barber	Service Manager - Youth Service
Michelle Bernasconi	AD for Social Work
Matthew Bulmer	Director Education Early Years and Skills
Julie Daniels	Executive Director, Children and Young People
Anthony Decrop	Children's Services - Oldham Borough Council
Sheila Garara	Childrens Services
Natassja Gollcher	Head of MASH, EDT and Complex Safeguarding
Jack Grennan	Constitutional Services
Shaid Mushtaq	Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
Gail Stott	Performance Improvement Lead

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence received from members of the Board.

Apologies were received from Councillor Mohon Ali as the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, and from Councillor Umar Nasheen as Deputy Cabinet Member for Skills.

2 URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business received.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

4 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions received.

5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY BOARD MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 30th September 2025 be approved as a correct record.

6 PERFORMANCE ASSURANCE REPORT Q1 AND Q2 2025/26

Sheila Garara presented the Performance Assurance Report, noting that the main themes around complaints were disagreements with decisions and regular communication. It was

highlighted that there were 13 live complaints, all of which were in time scale. It was noted that in regard to sickness absence and turnover, it was a challenging environment. Regarding FOIs and SARs, it was noted that there were often delays due to the complexity of cases and the agreement of the requester would be requested to deliver outside of those timescales.

Members queried the metrics for post call customer satisfaction and it was noted that this referred to satisfaction as a percentage, i.e. what percentage were satisfied with the calls. Members also noted that the overdue and completed figures didn't quite add up. It was noted that this did not contain complaints that were still within the statutory timeframe.

Members noted the sickness absence, highlighting it was twice as bad in Childrens as it was across the council at large. It was noted that this was due to stress and the nature of the work. Members queried what the percentage meant for appraisals/ Let's Talks, and it was noted that this referred to the completion rate. It was noted that queries around FOIs and SARS, and number of calls compared to number answered, would be picked up with the team to clarify the information.

Members queried whether there was any correlation with the times of year for sickness absence. It was noted that it was not comparing like for like, and social care is known for higher sickness absence, both nationally and across GM.

Matt Bulmer presented an update on the Education Performance metrics. It was noted that amongst Oldham's statistical neighbours, Oldham was top for attendance in both primary and secondary schools and had the lowest number of permanent exclusions. It was noted that levels of inclusion were very high despite the levels of deprivation.

It was noted that the metric on EHCPs was red, but there was confidence it would bounce back, and it was noted that there were over 4000+ EHCPs in Oldham. It was highlighted that £1.1m in additional SEND staffing funding would help with this. A SEND inspection had taken place and the response was due in January, although the team were pleased with how the inspection went.

It was noted that around the red metric for NEET, commissioned research was being done around this subject. It was noted that it had been indicated that Oldham punches above its weight regarding support and work around NEET. It was highlighted that it remains a priority, particularly with the Employment and Skills strategy.

Members noted that with EHCPs, around 7% of the child population has one in Oldham, which is higher than the national average. It was noted that the rate of increase had slowed and more early intervention work was taking place.

Members asked that regarding the SEND inspection, whether there had been any informal feedback given. It was noted that there had been but that the report was embargoed. It was highlighted that the previous inspections had focused on 2 areas for improvement, access to health services and governance, and the team felt that they had acted quickly where they could on this, but they were national issues too. Members noted that the officers be commended for progress as a step forward, and noted that the figures demonstrated progress.

Members queried the figure of 114% of 2 year olds from working families benefiting from a funded early education place, noting it was more than 100%. It was noted that this was the way the funding works, noting that more people were accessing the funding than were believed to be eligible by the DfE.

Members noted the movement in the figures on EHCPs, and it was highlighted that the service prioritised initial plans over annual reviews, but that reviews were prioritised for children who need it most.

Matt Bulmer noted that it would be his last meeting of the Scrutiny Board and thanked members for their work on the Board.

Tony Decrop presented the Children's Social Care metrics, noting that there had previously been nine reds and these were now mostly green, due to work and investment into resolving them, as well as a more stable workforce. It was noted that both ambers and reds are regularly monitored.

Members queried what the reasons were for care leavers not in education, employment or training. It was noted that there could be a multitude of reasons and that the service would always try to engage with them to see what support could be offered.

Members asked for clarity about what would constitute 'unsuitable accommodation'. It was noted that this could be a couple of different things, from staying with friends, property that the council would disagree with or custody.

Members noted the figures on Page 24 of the agenda pack were going in the wrong direction. It was noted that only a couple of children could skew the figures, but that there were lots of reasons for this. It was noted that the service was supporting placements through mockingbird and that other outcomes depended on stable placements.

Members noted the reflection from the cabinet member, particularly around the reduction in the use of agency staff. It was noted that this had been a big area of focus and investment, particularly the 'Choose Oldham' campaign, and this was better for children and families.

Members queried whether the Board could do more to highlight where progress had been achieved. Others members noted the

role of the Scrutiny Board was to scrutinise, not just be a backslapping exercise. Members noted the need to find a balance, including celebrating achieving progress against the odds, and the need to address problems, not just highlight them.

Jodie Barber presented the Youth Service metrics, noting that all four were on target, but that demand outweighs capacity and that the service was carrying vacancies. It was noted that the target of sessions is 2000, not 3000 as in the report.

7

ANNUAL REPORT COMPLEX SAFEGUARDING HUB 2024/25

Natassja presented the report, noting the joint vision around complex safeguarding. The structure of the team was outlined and it was highlighted that the team were also working with partner agencies. It was highlighted that a focus of the team was prevention and this was being carried out with training and student inputs in schools and care homes. It was noted that 10 VR headsets were being used to provide students with workshops on decision making on knife crime and exploitation. Over 300 students had used these so far and they had been well received.

On the issue of prosecutions, it was noted that there were 132 open investigations and 38 adults had been arrested with nine ongoing police investigations. An update on Operation Sherwood was also provided. It was noted that 1200 young people had gone missing from home in 2024/25 and that return home interviews were carried out.

It was highlighted that the Complex Safeguarding Team had undergone a peer review undertaken by GM, and areas of strength and reflection were identified. It had been noted that the feedback received from the peer review had been positive.

It was noted that on performance, there was a want to improve the figures for young people achieving a positive goal/aspiration that they had themselves set upon opening to the team, and the key priorities for 2025/26 were outlined.

Members queried whether the Councillor steering group still existed and it was noted that it did. Members also noted the work done around knives, highlighting that it was proactive, not reactive. It was highlighted that the team was linking with other LAs such as Manchester on this issue and others, such as county lines.

Members noted a need to do more on prevention and questioned whether this work was going to be extended, particularly to staff. It was noted that part of the offer was school support. It was noted that this was an area of improvement and that work was ongoing to coordinate with partners. Members also queried how homeschooled children would access these resources, and it was advised that there were provisions both for

being invited into schools to take part and for alternative offerings.



RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

8

CHILDREN'S SERVICES - UPDATE ON FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE, ACTION PLAN AND TRANSFORMATION AND SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMME

Sheila Garara and Tony Decrop presented the update, noting that it is reported to scrutiny twice a year. It was noted that the Month 6 position was £5.278m overspent, and it was highlighted that the key pressure was the high cost of external placements. It was noted that most of the underspends were in relation to vacancy management, which were not affecting frontline services.

It was noted that demand for services was down due to reduced referrals, which showed that work was starting to have an impact.

It was highlighted that there were now Red, Amber, Green (RAG) ratings on the Action Plan. It was noted that the strengths included lots of work having been done around children at risk of homelessness, young carers, multi-agency work and collaboration. It was highlighted that Oldham had the highest number of foster carers. It was noted the next children's home would open in 2027, and that the homes that were already open had been delivered cheaper and faster than in other areas of GM. It was highlighted that First Choice Homes were launching a proactive pledge the day after the Scrutiny Board meeting.

Members noted the new Childrens Homes and queried whether financial impacts were being seen already on this. It was noted that this would take time and there were hidden costs, but that the homes were keeping young people within the borough. It was noted that there were better outcomes and more control in Council-run homes as to who was being let in in regard to external visitors etc.

Members noted the pressures in continuing health care funding, and it was noted that over the years, there had been continued reductions and this had been escalated to health bodies. It was noted that there was a need for joint commitments and that there was strict criteria, but that lots don't meet that criteria.

Members queried Project Skyline and placements, noting that other authorities can undercut for placements. It was noted that Project Skyline's timescales were not any time soon. It was noted that the scheme was for 10 care homes across the 10 boroughs, and that 4 were progressing so far, and one was being looked for in Oldham. These homes would be open to all ten boroughs, whereas the three the Council already has are just for Oldham. It was noted that the first Skyline opening would be December 2026. Regarding placements, it was noted that the vast majority of children were placed within Greater Manchester.

Members queried whether when young people turn 18, does the Council continue to support them if needed. It was noted that as a legal care leaver, the Council is responsible for them and offers support up to 25. Work is also carried out when young people are 16-18 to prepare them for this transition.

Members noted the £2.852m of savings to be identified by the end of 2025/26, and queried what scope there was for this. It was noted that lots of work was being done around other options, and that there had been a focused effort. It was noted that the situation would be clearer once the government's financial settlement was released in December, and that for this year, other resolutions were being examined.

RESOLVED: That the Board note the report.

9

WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED: That the draft 2025/26 Work Programme be noted.

10

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT

The Scrutiny Board considered the Key Decision Document, which records key decisions that the authority is due to take.

RESOLVED: That the Key Decision Document be noted.

11

RULE 13 AND 14

There were no Rule 13 or 14 decisions to report.

The meeting started at 18:00 and ended at 19:40.



Report to CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY BOARD

Participation of Young People aged 16 – 18 in Education, Employment or Training

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Mohon Ali, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Officer Contact: Paul Tinsley, Interim Director of Education, Skills and Early Years

Report Author: Amanda Youlden, Post 16 Lead for Education and Skills

Ext. 07970 600128

January 2026

Purpose of the report

This annual report is the result of previous requests from the former Overview and Scrutiny Committee to present annual reports to Members to keep them informed of relevant activities and initiatives.

Executive Summary

The Annual Report is for information and opportunity for members to scrutinise and challenge activities in the preceding year. This report will update the Board on current participation and NEET (not in education, employment or training) rates together with a summary of activity during the past academic year and planned in the future to ensure that we are shaping and influencing opportunities where possible for our 16–18-year-olds.

Recommendations

The Board to note the current landscape and experiences of 16–18-year old's which is impacting on their participation in education, employment, or training.

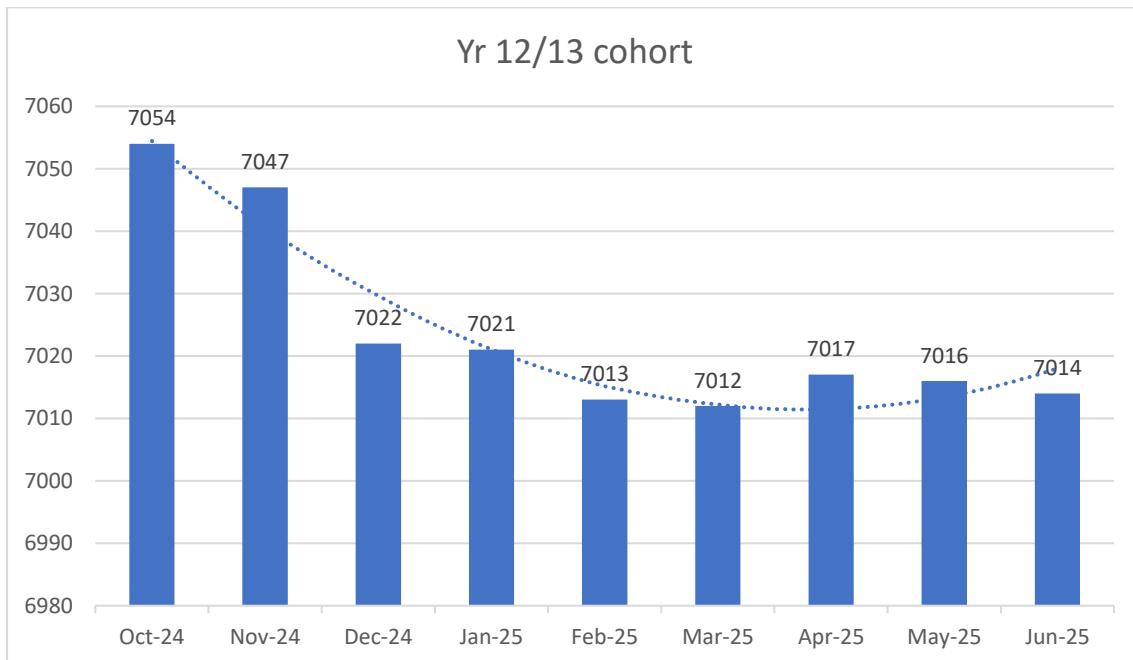
The Board is asked to note the range of interventions currently in place to support young people into EET (education, employment and training) and prevent the incidence of NEET increasing. To comment and discuss accordingly.

Participation of Young People aged 16 – 18 in Education, Employment and Training**1 Background**

1.1 The LA continues to fulfil its duties around encouraging, enabling, and assisting young people to participate in education or training and tracking those aged 16 and 17 through the commission of the targeted support offer delivered by Positive Steps. This includes a small resource for our SEND (EHC plans) and Children Looked After (CLA) cohort. An open and competitive commissioning and procurement exercise involving young people, parent/carers and service area leads was undertaken in 2024/25 with the new contract awarded from 01/04/2025.

1.2 Our approach across partners in Oldham is to ensure that young people are empowered to access the advice and support they require; that we have opportunities available and to engage with our young people to hear their voices and respond as best we can. We do this using a partnership approach engaging organisation's who work with our 16 – 18-year-olds and support them to participate.

1.3 This report will update the Board on Participation, NEET and unknown rates across the academic year 2024/2025, meaningful data months are October 2024 to June 2025, together with a summary on activity planned in the future to ensure that we are shaping and influencing where possible for our 16–18-year-olds.

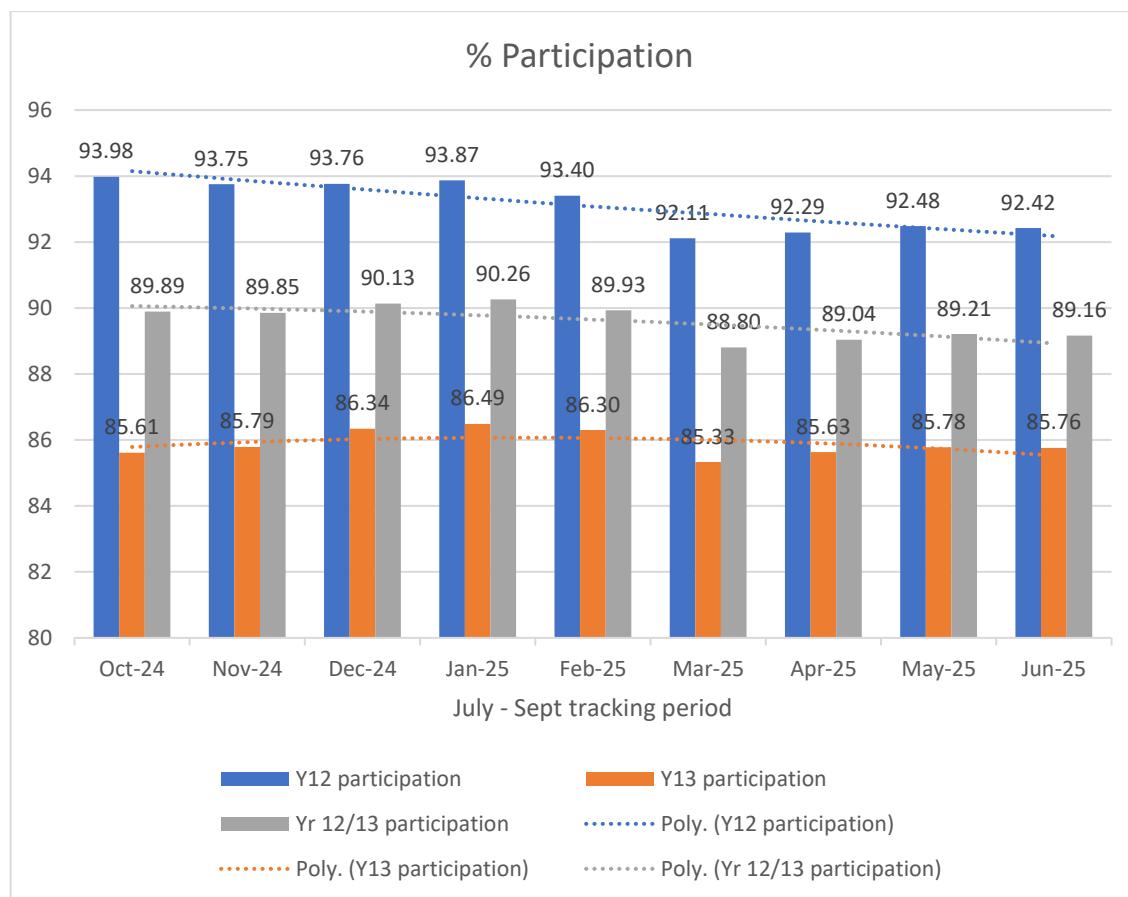
2 Current Position**2.1 Cohort numbers**

2.1.1 As in the previous academic year, we have seen another notable rise in our cohort numbers. The peak in 23/24 academic year was 6865. The peak for 24/25 academic year is 7054.

Both peaks were the October data. Average cohort figure for 23/24 was 6685, average for 2022 was 6401. 24/25 academic year average is 7024. This is an increase of 339. This further increase of young people in the cohort puts pressure on all service areas, including the LA in meeting its statutory duties, it increases competition for education placements, education providers need to offer more and differentiated places and increases caseloads for staff working to secure placements for young people.

- 2.1.2 Y12/13 cohort numbers are projected to continue to rise until the academic year 28/29.
- 2.1.3 Oldham College has been successful in securing funding from two capital bids, disseminated via GMCA. This will allow the College to increase the number of places on site over the next two years. The bids have required LA oversight to ensure the funding meets the GMCA sufficiency difficulties we are currently facing. The College have ensured places are created in priority sectors that meet future employment needs.

2.2 Y12/13 Participation Rates



- 2.2.1 Y12 average participation across the 24/25 academic year was 93.1%, which is slightly higher than last year (93.06%) and indicates that majority of year 12 students are participating in some form of EET activity. This % rate of participation has been fairly static over the last twelve months, indicating that our year 12's were relatively settled in their destination following transition from school, with only 1.56% drop in participation when comparing October 24 to June 25.
- 2.2.2 However, following a similar trajectory to previous 2 years, participation rates in our year 13 cohort are much lower. Positively, Y13 average participation for 24/25 is 85.89%, which is higher than 23/24, which averaged at 84.21%. Professionals, parents, carers and peers

demonstrate continuing concerns about wellbeing, in particular loneliness, dissatisfaction with life, stress, anxiety, boredom and concerns about the future all continue to affect young people and their levels of engagement and motivation.

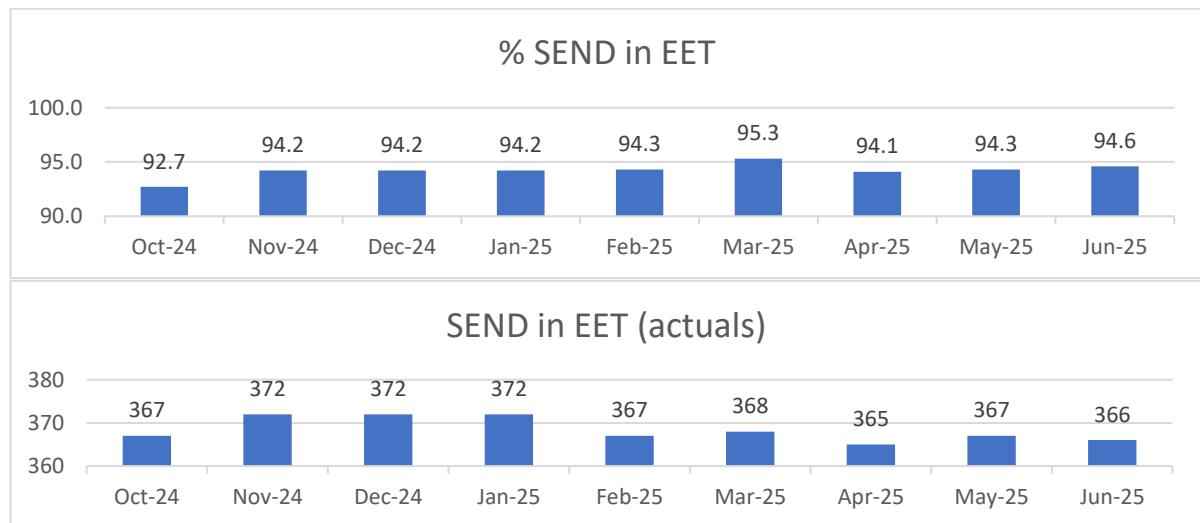
2.2.3 Y13 participation could be affected by sufficiency issues currently being experienced across Greater Manchester. This is discussed in more detail at 3.17.

2.2.4 Historically, there have always been young people that struggle with the transition from Y12 to Y13. Additional support at re-enrollment for those who need to seek an alternative course for Y13 is provided by our NEET team. Information from Colleges on who would not be offered a Y13 place is requested so that young people could be contacted and offered support, if they did not manage to access this whilst at College.

2.2.5 As part of the discovery into why young people continue to not participate in Year 13, we undertook a specific Year 13 Survey, of which the results of which were shared with our two main Colleges. The response was small (33 respondents), but those that did respond, had their voice heard by the Colleges from which they can learn and endeavour to support young people more holistically. The survey is attached at appendix 1.

2.2.7 Empower Oldham funded via GMCA have provided an additional support offer for these young people. This forms part of the commissioned service delivered by Positive Steps. Teams are able to refer young people to work with a careers coach or mentor. We have case studies of some excellent outcomes, providing us with evidence that if capacity is available to undertake the work and a young person is willing to engage and take on the practical and emotional support that a mentor can offer, they are able to re-engage in positive activity. This funding is agreed until March 26. GMCA have sought agreement to continue to fund this activity for 26/27, whilst they have acknowledged agreement of fund, level of funding is yet to be confirmed.

2.3 SEND Participation Rates



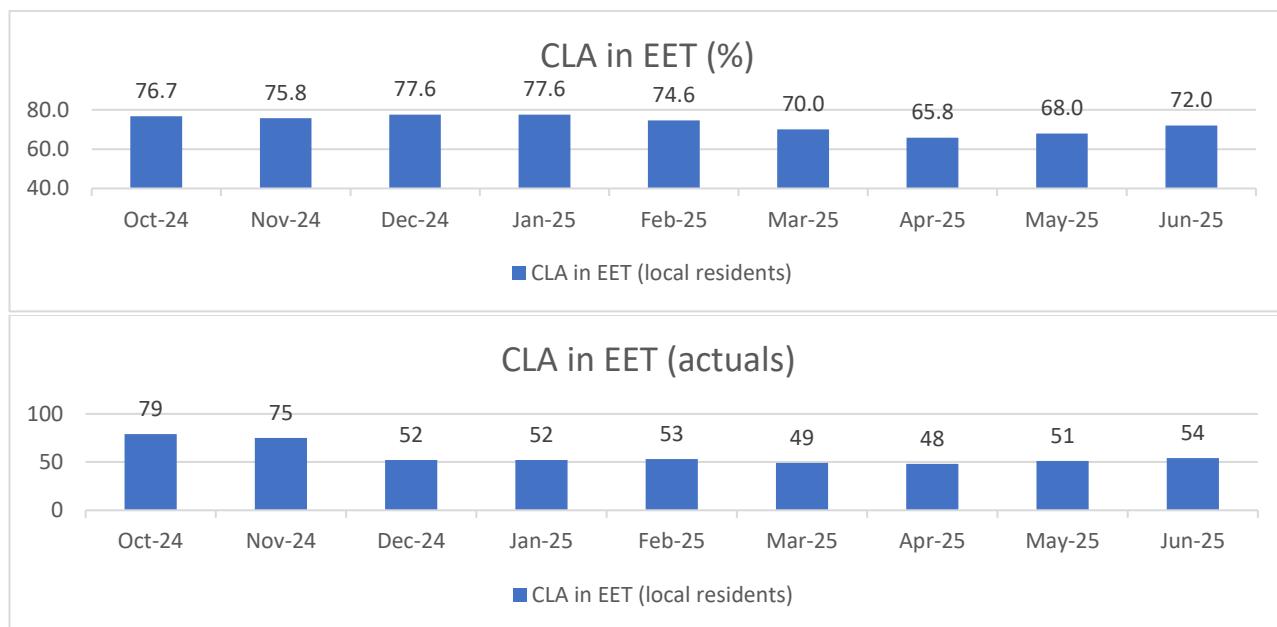
2.3.1 The actual cohort numbers fluctuate month by month across the year, but the average annual cohort number for Y12/13 SEND is 368. This is a rise in young people of 54, as average cohort numbers in 23/24 were 314, reflecting the pressures on services as identified at 2.1.1. The % participation increases across the academic year, showing a rise in participation of 1.9% across the academic year.

2.3.2 The SEND Team co-ordinates education provision for young people aged 16 – 25 with an EHC plan to ensure they are accessing an education provision that meets the educational outcomes in their EHC plan and supports them to achieve their aspirations.

2.3.4 The PfA Steering Group works in partnership with a wide variety of partners (and feeds into the SEND Programme Board) to improve outcomes for young people with SEND, including employment.

2.3.5 Oldham was successful in securing additional funding from the DfE to work on a Supported Internship program. The aims of the project are to increase the number and quality of Supported Internships available to young people in Oldham and we are currently in year 4 of the 3-year project (project was extended for a further year). Oldham Council works closely with the two local delivery providers, DfE, Oldham Youth Service and Oldham Theatre Workshop to achieve project aims. For the fourth year, we are working on an event for employers, that will encourage them to take an intern within their organisation.

2.4 CLA Participation (local residents)



2.4.1 The average annual cohort number for CLA (16 – 18) in 2023 is 57. This is an additional 12 young people included in the cohort (last year average was 45).

2.4.2 Given the additional barriers CLA young people face we understand these young people require a higher level of support and our dedicated Careers Advisor support working with social care teams and the Virtual School is essential to ensuring these young people are encouraged and supported to participate and re-engage if they become NEET. As part of the new contract, we continue to provide the additional resource dedicated to this cohort.

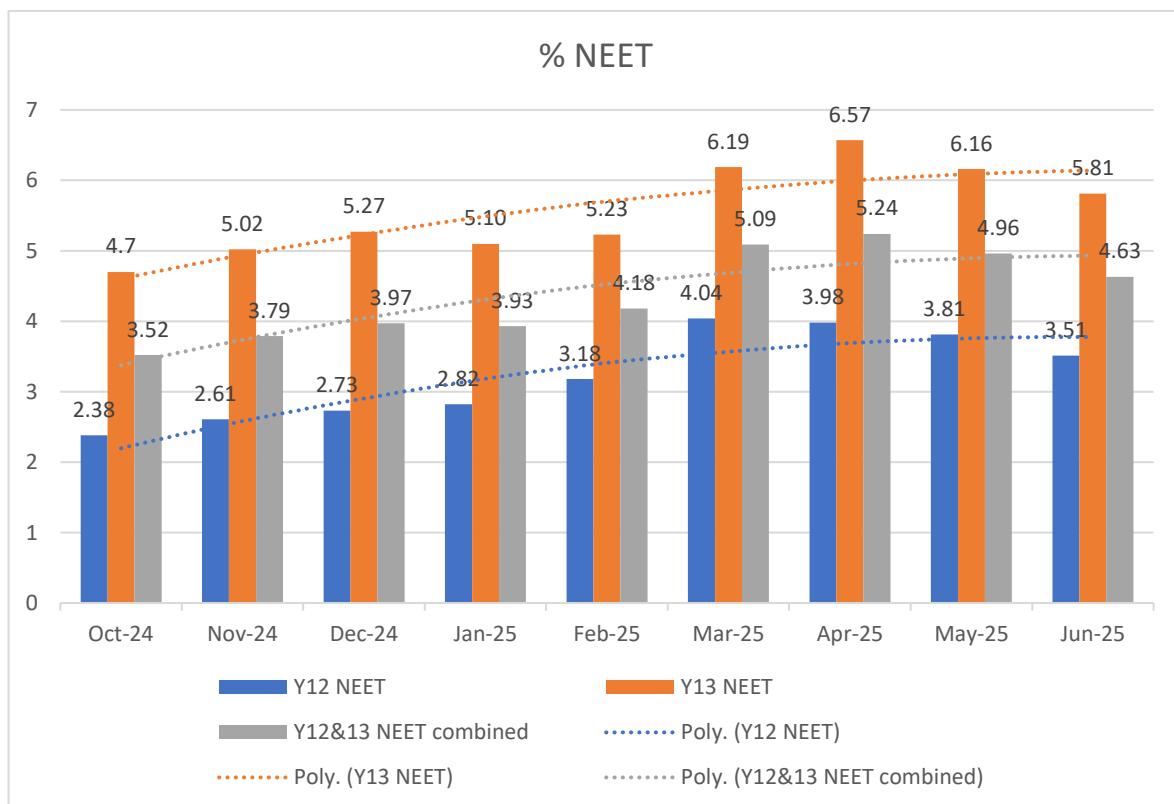
2.4.3 Our Virtual School (VS) coordinates further support for the young people in our care to assist them to transition successfully into Post 16 provision. This is provided through a dedicated Post 16 Education Officer. The VS deliver a range of targeted activities and programmes to raise aspirations and participation, utilising information/data in Personal Education Plans (PEPs) on careers advice and guidance. Ongoing liaison with the VS and Positive Steps ensures that there is oversight of Oldham CLA and the careers advice and guidance they have received or require.

2.4.5 In conjunction with the Care Leaver Team, Get Oldham Working and Workforce Development we have collaborated to refine our processes to ensure our Care Leavers get priority access to Council apprenticeship opportunities, and support to apply and secure these opportunities. Any Care Leavers wishing to access the support for an external apprenticeship can do so. This co-operative approach has secured apprenticeships for 3 Care Leavers.

2.4.6 The Oldham Youth Hub is a partnership between Job Centre Plus, Get Oldham Working and Positive Steps, that supports young people, in particular Care Leavers, to access employment support and re-engagement opportunities. Plans to expand the Youth Hub in line with the Governments new Youth Guarantee are currently being explored.

2.4.7 Our VS has now implemented a multi-agency NEET surgery for CLA and Care Leavers. The surgery meets on a monthly basis and has seen some progression for young people starting to accept support from professionals to support them from NEET to EET.

2.5 Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)



2.5.1 The average NEET rate for Y12/13 combined over the 24/25 academic year stood at 4.37%. The average for 23/24 was 4.67%. This is an improvement of 0.3% on last year. We continue to receive monthly starter leaver information from providers to ensure that an advisor can contact young people who become NEET mid-year to re-engage, reducing the amount of time potentially spent NEET.

2.5.2 In line with the participation data, the NEET data highlights the difficulties our Y13 cohort is experiencing with successfully accessing EET, with Y13's annual level 2.33% higher than our Y12 cohort (on average across 24/25).

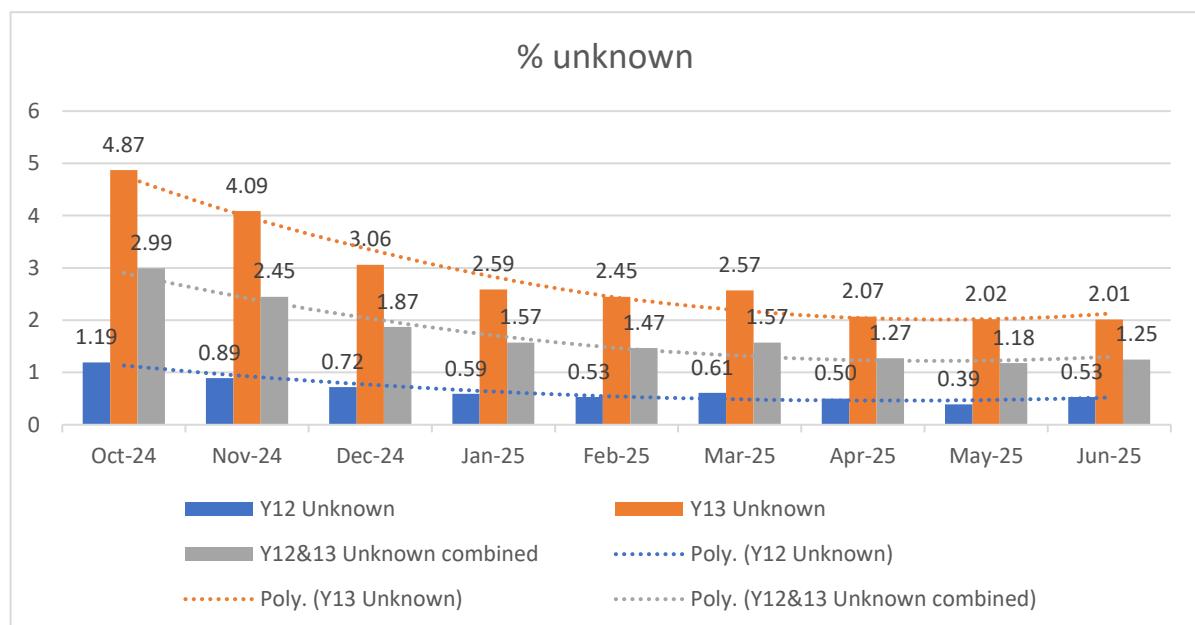
2.5.3 In June 2025, there were 325 young people recorded as NEET. Of those, 33 were not available to the labour market. Please note, the number of young people in the table below

that are NEET not ready for work and learning in comparison to those that are NEET seeking employment, education or training. This further highlights how many of our young people leave school and are not prepared for the labour market or further learning and require a different, more specialised approach to enable them to engage.

NEET Group	325
Available to labour market	292
Working not for reward	1
Not yet ready for work or learning	140
Start date agreed (other)	0
Start date agreed (RPA compliant ¹)	17
Seeking employment, education or training	134
Not available to the labour market	33
Young Carers	1
Teenage Parents	8
Illness	20
Pregnancy	4
Other reason	0

2.5.4 All the NEET young people are offered support and provided information to enable them to contact the NEET team and access the support on offer, when they are ready to do so. Our tracking requirement is another point of contact we make, to ascertain whether circumstances have changed, or whether the young person would like to discuss re-engaging with EET activity.

2.6 Unknown (or “not known”)



¹ Under Part 1 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 young people aged 16 and 17 who have not attained level 3 qualifications of sufficient size are under a duty to continue in education or training until the young person’s 18th birthday. Advice on the definitions of participation in education or training and what is RPA compliant is set out in Annex 1 to this guidance, [Participation of young people in education, employment or training](#).

2.6.1 We have seen a drop in the unknown rate across the academic year 24/25. The average rate across the year equates to 1.74%. Our Y13 average (2.86%) being higher than Y12 (0.66%). Averages, excluding our Year 13 cohort are an improvement on 23/24 academic year where our average rates were combined 1.22%, Year 12 0.80% and Year 13 1.66%.

2.6.2 This means most young people are known to us, we know they are safe and we can offer services. If we use the average cohort (7024) against the average unknown percentage rate (1.74%), this means around 122 young people were unknown across the academic year.

2.6.3 It is difficult to ascertain the many reasons for young people becoming unknown, and we continue to use lived experience, research, peer to peer shared good practice to explore the reasons and work with partners to ensure young people access support.

2.6.4 Positive Steps try several and varied attempts at continued contact but in some cases have been required to make the young person unknown as we cannot ascertain a positive EET destination. This can be in cases where we have established a family does not live in Oldham.

2.6.5 Follow-up of these young people continues, but this can become a strain on resources. Due to the guidance set out by the DfE, although we may have evidence that a young person no longer lives in Oldham, due to us being unable to obtain a positive EET destination, we are required to continue to a) keep this young person on Oldham's database and b) mark them as unknown in our data returns. Work is currently being undertaken to assess what % of young people fall into this category so we can report this.

The table below outlines the June 2025 status as an example of this:

Not known group	Year 12	Year 13	Total
Unknown – trying to contact	11	14	25
Unknown – cannot be contacted	8	55	63

The group outlined above “Unknown – cannot be contacted” are in the category outlined in 2.6.5.

3 Key activity over the last 12 months to support participation

3.1 A full, open and competitive commissioning and procurement tender was undertaken during 2024/25 with the new contact awarded to Positive Steps coming into effect from 01/04/2025 exercise was undertaken to establish and put in place a new delivery contract. The service specification and tender which went to market reflected the reduced funding envelope. Positive Steps have revised their service delivery offer to ensure we meet the statutory duties outlined and still provide as much support as possible to young people to re-engage. The new contract became operational on 1 April 2025, and is known as the Targeted Specialist Services Support (TSSS) contract. TSSS was the name for the services identified by young people

3.1.1 Whilst our commissioned service continues to meet our statutory duties in relation to participation, it is acknowledged at a regional level that this cohort requires additional support to enable them to participate successfully.

3.1.2 Engagement programs are essential for young people and provide an essential part of the pathway from NEET to EET. We currently have a number of organisation's offering provision in Oldham or GM that young people can access that will support young people to engage and obtain skills for education, employment or training.

3.1.3 Due to the number of funded projects available for young people in Oldham, it became increasingly difficult to navigate what is available for young people. Use of the padlet;

[Positive Steps \(padlet.com\)](https://positivesteps.padlet.com/) which provides a visual of what's currently available to young people to support them to become EET continues to be used widely. The padlet is continually updated and is available for young people, parents and professionals to use and has become a key tool in our NEET prevention work.

- 3.2 GMCA continue to fund activity to support NEET. The funds received by Oldham delivers our "Empower Oldham" project run by Positive Steps. The decision to link this funding to the TSSS contract ensures a cohesive offer is in place for additional support to re-engage young people into participation and activity is accessed promptly. Empower Oldham's offer is for 15 – 19-year-olds (up to 25 with SEN and 21 if care experienced) who are at risk of or NEET, and will provide bespoke enhanced support, either individually or in groups to move them into a positive EET destination. GMCA monitor the projects outputs and outcomes and all monitoring indicators are met month on month.
- 3.2.1 GMCA confirmed in October 2025 that funding for this NEET activity will be made available to Oldham until 31 March 2027, but as at the time of writing, details of funding levels or monitoring arrangements have yet to be set out.
- 3.3 As mentioned at 2.2.5, we undertook a Year 13 Survey (appendix 1) to ascertain any trends we could address with support, given the data tells us that this is the cohort that struggles the most with participation. The response was small, but the results have been shared with both Oldham College and Oldham Sixth Form College.
- 3.4 Due to our status as a Co-operative Council, we were able to be involved in a bid for some funding from the Co-operative Council Innovation Network (CCiN). Nationally, six local authorities put forward a bid for research funding to support NEET prevention work.
 - 3.4.1 The bid successfully secured £20,000. The associated funding will allow us to focus on two workstreams; firstly the LA's to undertake some peer to peer learning, with each LA highlighting an area of good practice.
 - 3.4.2 The second workstream will engage a consultancy firm that will look at standardizing a sufficiency calculation process. This will provide a standard across the co-operative LA's and provide a good practice process for other LA's to adopt.
- 3.5.1 GMCA host a Careers and Participation Meeting, which hosts the 10 LA's plus GMCA Youth Employment Team to co-ordinate activity in the post 16 participation space.
- 3.5.2 The group has taken on lead areas across priority workstreams. These include employer engagement, sufficiency, apprenticeships, find, follow, support, careers and communities of practice, young person voice and vulnerable groups.
- 3.5.3 Oldham co-leads on the sufficiency workstream, which is closely related to the CCiN project. The task and finish group has made a decision to look at post 16 enrolments to gauge the appropriateness and need for a standardised approach across GM.
- 3.6 GMCA and the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) support local schools with the duties in relation to Careers Education. They facilitate (and Post 16 Team attends and supports) Communities of Practice, to ensure the quality of careers education in Oldham is of a standard that keeps participation as high as possible.

3.6.1 The Post 16 Team continues to support schools and colleges with all of the duties relating to the delivery of careers education and supporting schools to ensure they meet their Gatsby Benchmarks².

3.7 GMCA are currently developing an all-age careers strategy for GM that responds to the local skills improvement plan and reflects the skills ambition for the city region. We facilitated a consultation session over the summer for all stakeholders to contribute, and continue to engage with the development to ensure the strategy is appropriate for residents, including young people of participation age.

3.8 The establishment of the Post 16 Reference Group has been a success. Over the last twelve months the group has enabled a new data sharing protocol that will enable post 16 providers to support young people more appropriately during transition.

3.8.1 The group also requested Oldham Council commission review of the employment and skills landscape in Oldham. The resulting Oldham Skills Plan took a three stage approach;

- Desktop review - a document and data review of key papers relating to Oldham, GM and national policy and data sets.
- Interviews with stakeholders – a round of interviews with key local employers, post 16 providers, GM Chamber, GMCA, Oldham Council (officers and cabinet member)
- Analysis and reporting, synthesizing the available data to draw down recommendations and priorities for action, focused on improving skills system function and influencing the curriculum offer so it best supports Oldham residents to access good quality employment.

3.8.2 The resulting analysis has informed the newly refreshed Employment and Skills Strategy, in which NEET and participation are a priority. The Employment and Skills Strategy is attached at appendix 2.

3.9 Oldham College introduced a new admissions process this year, namely “the Oldham Promise”. The new process intends to be equitable for students and support them to consider the Post 16 options earlier, due to more engagement points throughout Year 11. The aim is also to support transition, due to the higher level of engagement and earlier notification. The College can learn more about the incoming student and any additional transition arrangements can be made.

3.9.1 As this was the first year of the new process, issues have arisen, but refining will take place by the College this year, and schools will have more information to support their pupils with the transition and process.

3.10 We have been successful in lobbying GMCA to extend two of their employment support programmes to residents from aged 16 plus. Activity funded by the Community Grants offers and the Economic Inactivity Trailblazer projects can be accessed by Oldham residents aged 16 and over. This additional support provides wider choice for young people to re-engage, as some of the activity included may be suitable alternative offer for a young person and support their re-engagement into EET.

3.11 Oldham’s Post 16 Team, Get Oldham Working, Job Centre Plus, Care Leaver Team and Positive Steps continue to work together to deliver Oldham’s Youth Hub. The initiative works in a supportive, young person focused and positive outcome-based way that supports young people aged 16 – 25 years old to access support to enable them to participate in activity that will lead to an employment opportunity. The Youth Hub hosts our Youth Hub Collaborative,

² The Gatsby Benchmarks are a framework of eight standards that define world-class careers guidance for young people in England, aimed at improving career education and outcomes for students.

which is a network of agencies sharing information and service offerings to support young people to achieve.

- 3.11.1 Currently the Youth Hub has a focus on Care Leavers, with the new Care Leaver NEET panel proving successful. There are plans to establish a wider offer, grow Oldham's Youth Hub in line with the government's Youth Guarantee.³
- 3.12 We engaged with the recent Great Horizons Event, which saw hundreds of Oldham children and young people have the opportunity to experience STEM differently and think about careers in STEM as a future career prospect for them.
- 3.12.1 In addition to the events for children and young people, we were able to attend the Business event, where we engaged with employers in Oldham who are willing to support young people.
- 3.12.2 We have engaged with the Great Horizon's planning team, and are now able to support plans for future events moving forward.
- 3.13 The Greater Manchester Baccalaureate (MBacc) is a new educational pathway aimed at providing young people in Greater Manchester with clear routes to technical education and employment opportunities. It is a key strand in the Greater Manchester Strategy towards improving educational outcomes across the Combined Authority.
- 3.13.1 MBacc is designed to ensure that every young person in GM has access to quality education that aligns with local job markets. It emphasizes technical education as a prestigious route, connecting students with employers through seven sector gateways.
- 3.13.2 The aim is to help young people understand the skills required for in demand, local employment and how to achieve them.
- 3.13.3 The MBacc is intended for pupils starting in Year 9, as an alternative to the traditional English Baccalaureate (EBacc), which focuses more on academic subjects.
- 3.13.4 Pupils will still study essential subjects such as English, maths and sciences, but they will engage in technical subjects and vocational training.
- 3.13.5 The MBacc is designed to facilitate access to apprenticeships, T Levels and other technical qualifications (following the Curriculum Review), preparing pupils for the job market or further training by the age of 18.
- 3.14 Building on the successes of previous events, and taking new developments into account, our Young Person Careers Event has evolved, and the 2025 event will follow a different format.
- 3.14.1 We aim to be more ambitious with the 2025 event. Acknowledging the development of MBacc across the region has inspired us to base our event around the seven gateways included in the MBacc.
- 3.14.2 Each of the seven gateways, will have high quality employers in attendance, each demonstrating a small insight into their career opportunities, providing an experience into a career in their industry and inspiring pupils to follow that particular pathway.

³ The Youth Guarantee, where every eligible unemployed young person on Universal Credit for 18 months without earning or learning will be provided guaranteed paid work. Participants of the scheme will receive support to take advantage of available opportunities, with the aim of helping them transition into regular employment.

3.14.3 Our event will focus on pupils in schools, from Year 9 upwards. We have arranged for transport for each school to enable attendance.

3.14.4 The end of the day will be a quiet hour, where we invite our special schools and a small cohort of NEET young people. This ensures inclusivity.

3.15 The links with our local business community are being strengthened via a variety of opportunities, and we are working across teams both in the Council and partners to ensure our engagement with our local employers is co-ordinated, and valued by all parties.

3.15.1 This activity connects intrinsically with the work being undertaken in mission 3 of the Employment and Skills Strategy (appendix 2). The Post 16 Team will work alongside partners to achieve the outcomes in this mission.

3.16 Following a small transition pilot, Oldham College continue to offer transition places for a small group of pupils from Oldham schools who may benefit from a different approach to transition. The purpose is to introduce the College environment and keep young people engaged and empower them to thrive in their future environment.

3.17 Within the statutory guidance on duties relating to the participation of young people in EET, local authorities have broad duties to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate in education or training.

3.17.1 One of these duties is to:

- Secure sufficient suitable education and training provision for all young people in their area who are over compulsory school age but under 19 or aged 19 to 25 and for whom an Education, Health and care plan is maintained. This is a duty under the Education Action 1996. To fulfil this, local authorities need to have a strategic overview of the provision available in their area and to identify and resolve gaps in provision.

3.17.2 Oldham is experiencing a gap in its offer for 16 –18-year-olds, at Entry Level/Level 1 study programmes.

3.17.3 Work is ongoing to secure new training provision into the area, but provision is scarce across GM. We continue to support YMCA to deliver a study programme out of the Positive Steps building. This provides an education placement that is different to a college environment and may suit some learners better.

3.17.4 Oldham College also deliver a transitional opportunity at Positive Steps, engaging with learners and supporting them to make a successful transition into College.

3.17.5 Another programme developed by Oldham College is Connect to Your Future. The programme is a discreet programme of support, offering bespoke activity for learners who are at risk of “dropping out”. Using data the college hold, they are able to identify pupils who may be struggling, put in some discreet support and enable them to sustain their college place.

3.17.6 Oldham College have been successful in securing capital funds to create additional places on their college campus. Create 880 new places over the next two academic years. The places will be available in green tech automotive, construction and early years, in line with both MBacc and GM Local Skills Improvement Plan.

3.17.7 The sufficiency of places for 16 – 18 year olds is a priority for all of the 10 GM areas, who are experiencing similar issues regarding appropriate provision for this cohort. We work closely with all neighbouring LA's to seek solutions.

- 3.17.8 In addition to the moral and reputational risk our gap in provision identifies, it also highlights a potential risk to families. The lack of placements, particularly for activity that has multiple start dates during the academic year, may impact family household budgets via the ceasing of child benefit if a young person is NEET.
- 3.17.9 If a young person is NEET but engaged with services, the family can apply for a child benefit extension of 20 weeks, providing evidence the young person is working with a TIIAG provider to the DWP. If an appropriate placement is not identified, there is no mechanism we are aware of, for extending this benefit. This could impact household budgets as it would trigger the loss of child benefit and potentially associated tax credits.
- 3.17.10 The sufficiency calculation will now be undertaken on an annual basis to determine our sufficiency on a regular basis.

3.18 At the request of the Education Assurance Board (EAB), a deep dive into NEET was undertaken.

- 3.18.1 The outcome of the deep dive was a request for a full action plan to be developed, to be approved by EAB and presented at each board.
- 3.18.2 The action plan has been developed and approved and can be accessed at appendix 3.

4 Priorities over the next 12 months and plans

- 4.1 Item 3 highlights the activity we have, and will continue to work on over the next 12 months. Most of the work is ongoing and work in progress. We will continue to refine our processes where required and pursue best practice to ensure we offer the best support available for the residents of Oldham aged 16 – 18.
- 4.2 The EAB NEET Action Plan (appendix 3) and associated tasks will be a priority over the next twelve months. Progress will be monitored by EAB and updates can be provided upon request.
- 4.3 The launch of the Employment and Skills Strategy and development of the underpinning action plan will make sure our NEET work is embedded into the wider strategy focused on increased employment in Oldham and create partner buy in from all stakeholders across the partnership.
- 4.4 Embedding the recommendations from the Oldham Skills Plan commission, providing us with an evidence-based steer on what our focus should be over the next 12 months.
- 4.5 Strengthening and continuing the work of the Post 16 Steering Group. Building on the transition work already undertaken and creating a work plan with them for the next 12 months. Ensuring this group is active and a strong part of the partnership work in the development of employment and skills across Oldham in the future.
- 4.5.1 Creating a partnership of the Post 16 Steering Group working alongside Oldham Academies and Schools Headteacher Partnership (OASHP) to address the Key Stage 4 English and maths attainment.
- 4.6 The Skills White Paper, has set out the government's strategy for further education, higher education and apprenticeships. These reforms will radically re-shape our further education (FE) sector, therefore we will need to be sighted on the reforms and be in a position to support the post 16 sector as required, to ensure the LA continues to meet its statutory duties.

- 4.7 Continue to work closely with GMCA on participation and Youth Guarantee. We will continue to lobby for pilots to be undertaken in Oldham to ensure our young people are at the cutting edge of developments in the sector.
- 4.8 We will keep abreast of new employment developments that arise from local growth projects such as Atom Valley, Sports Town and Northern Roots and the Local Growth Plan. Regionally we will search for opportunities such as mayoral development zones and national projects that may benefit young people in Oldham.
- 4.9 GM's new Integrated Settlement provides opportunities for us to be more involved in the design of the skills and employment landscape for Oldham. We will continue to be involved in the conversation, be vocal in our pursuit of opportunities for the residents of Oldham, and ensure that Oldham residents and employers get their fair share and the right opportunities, that encourages growth and economic resilience.
- 4.10 We commit to working in partnership with the Government to deliver the Youth Guarantee for Oldham's residents aged 18 – 21. This will provide opportunities for young people aged 16 -18 who were possibly not ready for work or learning before this stage.

5 Co-operative Values

- 5.1 #ourbit: Working with partners to create quality work prospects - and ensuring all residents can access new skills and opportunities and be work-ready
#yourbit: Making the most of the education and skills offer and aiming to better yourself
#result: An ambitious and socially mobile borough
- 5.2 The work links closely with the Council's Corporate outcome on an inclusive economy which includes strong links via the Employments and Skills Strategy to the Economy Board.

6 Appendices

6.1 Year 13 Survey



Year 13 Survey
Results.pdf

6.2 Employment and Skills Strategy



Employment and
Skills Plan Formal Pu

6.3 NEET Action Plan



NEET Deep Dive
Action Plan v2.docx



ANNUAL REPORT

1st APRIL 2024 - 31st MARCH 2025



This report is a public document.

It can be accessed on the website of Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership:

<https://www.olscb.org/about/publications/>

Approved by Oldham Safeguarding Children Partners on **24th September 2025**

Report compiled and written by Oldham Safeguarding Partnership, Business Unit

Date of publication: 30th September 2025

Contact details:

Jayne Haigh
Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership Manager
Rock Street Resource Centre
Rock St
Oldham
OL1 3UJ

Availability and accessibility: if you would like to receive this report in any other format, please contact OSCP.group@oldham.gov.uk

Contents

Foreword	4
About Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership	5
Reflections from our Statutory Partners	6
North West Regional Improvement Plan Pilot	9
Our Vision	11
The Local Context.....	12
Profile of Safeguarding in Oldham.....	13
Partnership working	14
Key activities and decision making	15
Activity and Impact – Domestic Abuse.....	18
Activity and Impact – Transitions.....	19
Activity and Impact – Childrens Mental Health and the Impact of Trauma	21
Activity and Impact – Complex and Contextual Safeguarding	23
Activity and Impact – Neglect	27
Responding to need at the right time	29
Multi agency practice model.....	31
Voice of children, young people, and families	32
Learning & Quality Assurance Activity	38
Education	48
Training	52
Online Impact.....	57
Scrutinising the Safeguarding Children Partnership in Oldham	58
Our plan for 2025.....	60
Financial Breakdown	61
Keep in touch.....	62

Foreword

Welcome to the Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership 2024-25 annual report, which will provide a detailed overview of the activity that has taken place during the past 12 months. The Oldham partnership have enacted their multi-agency safeguarding arrangements by adopting a consistent and committed approach to the safeguarding agenda. The report demonstrates the collective responsibility of partners in our endeavour to better safeguard children and young people in Oldham and promote their welfare.

The report highlights the commitment the partnership has towards improving safeguarding practices and measuring how this impacts upon our local children, young people and families. The report reflects how the vision and values of the Safeguarding Partnership have been woven into the activity of partners and their connections to operational practices through subgroups, audit cycles and training. The report further outlines how the partnership has learnt from serious incidents, practice reviews and how national learning has been embedded.

The partnership have worked to strengthen the role of education partners in our leadership and governance model, which has enabled a full system view of safeguarding activities and potential themes and trends.

This year's annual report will outline the work which has been done to achieve the safeguarding priorities which were set out at the start of the year, and will conclude with the Oldham safeguarding priorities for 2025-2026.

About Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership

Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership (OSCP)

OSCP is a statutory, multi-agency organisation partnership coordinated by the partnership business unit. OSCP is structured to provide strong collaboration, scrutiny and assurance, and to drive and enable co-ordination of safeguarding activity. We are pleased that you are taking the time to read this report, which outlines continuing progress in the multi-agency work to protect and safeguard children and young people at risk in Oldham. The main objective of OSCP is to gain assurance that local safeguarding arrangements, comprised of partner agencies and organisations working together effectively and individually to support and safeguard children who are at risk or abuse and or neglect.

What you will find in the report and its purpose.

This annual report is a collaborative publication from our statutory safeguarding partners, providing an analysis of the partnership's activities during 2024–2025. It outlines the actions taken by safeguarding partners and relevant agencies in relation to safeguarding arrangements, and evaluates the effectiveness of these measures in practice

Our report this year is written against these priorities:

Key Priorities April 2024 – July 2024

- 1 Neglect
- 2 Complex and Contextual Safeguarding
- 3 Transitions
- 4 Domestic Abuse
- 5 Child Mental Health and the Impact of Trauma

Key Priorities July 2024 – April 2025

- 1 Neglect
- 2 Serious Youth Violence
- 3 Multi-agency practice
- 4 Responding to need at the right time

Reflections from our Statutory Partners

Oldham district of Greater Manchester Police has gone through a period of change in the last 12 months with a number of moves within the Senior Leadership Team. I was posted here permanently as the district commander in February of 2024 and I would expect that Oldham should start to see some stability from police leadership. On arrival I set three priorities for Oldham District Policing, the number one priority is child protection.

As a district we have our own internal child protection plan to ensure that we get our policing response right - That we respond to incidents quickly, that we arrest perpetrators and that investigations are allocated to the right resource and progressed as quickly as possible with successful outcomes. We have started to see improvements but now is not the time for complacency and I will continue to drive the policing response in this area.

Force wide, Greater Manchester Police continue to strive to improve in all areas and recognise child protection is a priority. Work is ongoing force wide to identify best practice and achieve consistency of response to child protection across the force, to ensure that no child GM wide is left with a substandard service.

The support and joint agency working within the Oldham Safeguarding Partnership is strong and this, along GMP's commitment to continual improvement, will make Oldham a safer place to live, work and visit.

The leadership within Oldham District remains focused on continuing to build and develop the excellent partnership we have already established. We are working hard, together, to embed the changes outlined in working together but also to embed learning from case reviews throughout our organisations. We recognise that we need to make the learning relevant to the target audience and ensure that it lands with our front line to embed the learning and result in real change.

We have made clear our commitment to provide well defined objectives and ensure that we put the right measures in place across the partnership to be able to demonstrate real change and tangible outcomes.

We continue to investigate a number of serious and complex crimes within the district and through the partnership. We are determined to seek justice and safeguard all victims of crime.

As a police force we cannot achieve the outcomes that we need without partnership working, hence it will remain a priority for me to build on these relationships and ensure that we are working as a true partnership. The introduction of 'Right Care, Right Person' in September 2024, will result in some changes but is something we have been planning for some time and Oldham will be ready to deliver.

We are looking forward to a new era for the OSCP with the new working together arrangements which should bring greater scrutiny, challenge, and performance".

Estelle Mathieson, Chief Superintendent, District Commander, Oldham



Being a Strategic Partner in the Oldham Safeguarding Children's Partnership has been a valuable opportunity to strengthen our collective ability to protect and support children and young people across Oldham. Over the past year, the partnership has demonstrated both resilience and agility in responding to increasing levels of complexity in education and safeguarding, particularly where children's needs cut across organisational boundaries. Through close collaboration, we have deepened our shared understanding of the risks faced by children in our communities, strengthened early identification and intervention, and ensured education settings are fully engaged in the safeguarding system. This has included contributing to the development of the revised Continuum of Need, embedding learning from local reviews into school practice, and aligning education's safeguarding priorities with the partnership's strategic goals. The commitment of partners to work together with openness and purpose has been central to delivering better outcomes for children, young people, and families, and we will continue to build on this strong foundation in the year ahead.

Matthew Bulmer, Director of Education, Early Years and Skills, Oldham



The Oldham Safeguarding Children's Partnership, through the three Lead Safeguarding Partners and oversight and challenge from the Independent Scrutineer, has ensured an effective multi-agency response to safeguarding children and young people and supporting families in Oldham. 2024/25 has been a busy year in Children's Services. We had an Ofsted ILACS inspection in May 2024 which judged Children's Services to be 'Good' in all areas. Demand continues to be impacted by social deprivation faced in our communities, requiring specialist and targeted support. We have maintained a relentless focus on continuously improving our response to complex and contextual safeguarding, domestic abuse, children's mental health, neglect, child protection, and being good corporate parents to the children in our care and care leavers.

OSCP has worked at pace to implement action plans from the learning from local reviews into practice improvement through the Learning Hub sub-group and strengthened performance management through the Performance sub-group. We continue to deliver a comprehensive training offer aligned with our key priorities and have revised and re-launched the Oldham Partnership Continuum of Need. We've expanded the scope and impact of early help through the Family Hubs and Integrated Children and Families service to provide better place based earlier support to children and young people and their families, as a result, early intervention and prevention support has helped reduce referrals to statutory safeguarding services by 23.8%. 2025/26 is an exciting year as we launch the Families First Partnership Programme to transform services in line with national reform, through the co-design of family help, multi-agency child protection teams and family networks, underpinned by co-production principles.

Julie Daniels - Executive Director of Children & Young People (DCS)



NHS GM have continued to fulfil their role as a joint statutory partner of the Oldham Safeguarding Children's Board, and have demonstrated commitment to the safeguarding agenda. The role of the Chair of the partnership over the past 12 months has been met by Health, with representation from multiple strands of health services being achieved at the Safeguarding Children's Partnerships, and associated subgroup meetings. This has ensured that both commissioning and statutory safeguarding responsibilities have been fulfilled and discharged.

The GM footprint has a multitude of hospitals which provide physical and mental health services to the babies, children and young people of Oldham, all of whom play a vital role in the safeguarding agenda. There is a strong focus on learning and improvement across the OSCP which is echoed across the health platform.

The GM Chief Nurse continues to hold the statutory accountability for safeguarding across the GM ICB footprint. Statutory safeguarding responsibilities are delegated to the Associate Director of Quality and Safety in each of the GM localities and delivery of the statutory functions are undertaken by the locality Designated Teams.

Across the health services we are reliant on our partnership working to ensure that we continue to keep safeguarding at the heart of practice. This approach ensures learning from local and national child death and safeguarding reviews has influenced and strengthened practice.

**Andrea Edmondson - Associate Director Quality & Safety (Oldham)
NHS Greater Manchester**



North West Regional Improvement Plan Pilot

Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership have engaged in the NW RIPP over the last 12 months. Partners have embraced the support and opportunities to access workshops and training to enhance and strengthen partnership working and effectively evaluate progress.

Emma Ford, Programme Director for The North West Multi Agency Learning and Support Hub acknowledged the commitment from OSCP. The response below outlines the involvement of partners.

*The North West Regional Improvement Plan Pilot (NW RIPP) is a collaborative initiative between the Department for Education and regional partners, designed to strengthen children's social care across the North West. The pilot focuses on testing innovative, locally led strategies to address systemic challenges across four priority areas: **Partnerships, Workforce, Sufficiency, and Social Work Innovation and Reform.***

As part of the **Partnerships workstream**, and in response to high levels of deprivation, increasing demand, and pressures on safeguarding systems, a **regional strategic safeguarding conference** was convened. At this event, safeguarding leaders—including Delegated and Lead Safeguarding Partners—committed to a shared regional approach through the development of a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)**. This MoU, co-produced with all 24 multi-agency safeguarding partnerships across the region, sets out a unified vision and principles for effective multi-agency collaboration. It also underpins the establishment of a **region-wide Safeguarding Learning and Support Hub**.

Oldham MASA has fully embraced and actively engaged with the **Partnership Workstream**. Statutory partners have shown strong and consistent participation in a broad range of regional development opportunities, including:

- **Training on Effective Assurance and Scrutiny**
- **Participation in the North West Independent Scrutineer Network**
- **Reviewing and refreshing the Voice of Education approach within the MASA**
- **Engagement in sessions focused on Evidencing Impact in MASA**
- **Involvement in training on Effective Participation and Co-production**
- **Strategic leadership in the development of the NW Child Sexual Abuse strategy**

Additionally, Oldham partners have accessed **bespoke one-to-one support** and contributed to wider regional learning by sharing effective local practice. This active involvement reflects a strong culture of **multi-agency ownership, collaboration, and learning** within Oldham's safeguarding partnership. A **tailored support plan for 2025–2026** will be agreed. The outcomes and impact of this enhanced support will be reflected in next year's annual report.

Next steps: The North West Multi-Agency Safeguarding Learning and Support Hub will serve as a dedicated regional resource, designed to strengthen and support local Multi-Agency Safeguarding Partnership Arrangements (MASAs).

OSCP have consulted and agreed that the partnership will benefit from the following bespoke package of support during 2025 – 2026:

Data Development and Quality Assurance

Consultation/ Advice and Support

- Regular meetings to review and strengthen existing datasets. Support in developing bespoke thematic datasets focussed on local priority areas.
- Review and strengthen existing QA frameworks, specifically focussing on evidencing the impact of partnership activity. Capacity from the Hub to share best practice approaches based upon evidence of “what works” across the system.

Dedicated development session for LA Business Intelligence Leads (August 2025)

- Targeted sessions as required.

Data Labs

- Bespoke data lab sessions to review and strengthen single agency contributions.
- Identifying relevant data indicators, and develop local capacity to interpret, analyse and scrutinise.
- Access to sessions focussed on developing datasets in respect of Child Sexual Abuse, Neglect, Domestic Abuse, Extra Familial Harm and Child and Parental Mental Health.

Sub Regional and Regional Safeguarding Effectiveness Reporting

- Access comparative data from across the North West and a high-level safeguarding effectiveness analysis report to understand what is working well, how we can learn from each other and to identify opportunities for collaboration.

Anticipated impact

- Improved understanding of safeguarding effectiveness and performance of the OSCP to understand local safeguarding effectiveness, and to target activity to understand local need and priorities.
- Priorities for the partnership will be evidence- based and proportionate with improved understanding of “what works” across MASA systems to enhance effectiveness, insights, performance, scrutiny and assurance.
- Have a robust safeguarding effectiveness and quality assurance framework.
- Improved shared understanding of local issues that affect children and their families

Workforce development

North West Independent Scrutineer (IS)

- IS membership to the North West Scrutineer network which will meet quarterly.

Practical Resources/ Tools and Guidance documents

- Have access to resources on the dedicated website. The website will host a repository of resources, tools and guidance documents to support local safeguarding effectiveness analysis.

Targeted Briefing Sessions

- Support with focussing on demonstrating impact with bespoke session to be developed focussing on embedding learning from practice reviews.

CPD offer for Delegated Safeguarding Partners

- Access to DSP induction training sessions to cover responsibility, overview of the partnership, role of the business manager and independent scrutineer and the importance of strategic relationships

Child Sexual Abuse- Targeted Support Offer

- Access to a North West Tackling Sexual Abuse Strategy that will be developed in partnership with the Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse. A range of resources will be available to OSCP.

Participation, Engagement and Co-Production including strengthening the role of Education in the MASA

- Support with embedding the voice and experience of babies, children and families within MASA's. All activity will be underpinned by Lundy's Model of Participation, is trauma-informed, and grounded in rights-based, relational practice.

Strategic Voice and Influence of Education Lead

- Support to embed further education as a strategic partner. Training will be offered around implementation in practice with regards to educational voice within MASA's, response to school attendance, exclusions and part time education, where families need support or safeguarding is a concern.

Increasing the effectiveness of how MASAS understand and respond to Equity, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EEDIB)

OUR VISION

“
For everyone to work together to ensure that all children and young people are safe and feel safe within their homes, schools and communities.
”

OUR STRATEGIC AIMS

- 1** Excellent practice is the norm across all practitioners in Oldham.
- 2** Partner agencies hold one another to account effectively and escalate where necessary.
- 3** Children get the right help, at the right time by the right people at the earliest opportunity.
- 4** A culture of learning and workforce development is embedded across the children's workforce
- 5** Information is shared effectively to promote the safeguarding of children.
- 6** The public feel confident that children are safeguarded and protected

The Local Context.

Oldham forms one of the ten local authority areas that comprise the Greater Manchester conurbation. Oldham will continue to work closely and collaboratively with its counterparts on both a regional and sub-regional basis. Oldham will actively participate in the initiatives of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, particularly with respect to the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Partnership.

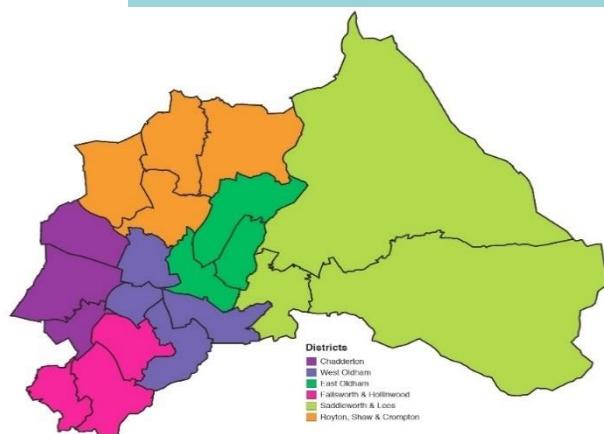
Understanding the context of life in Oldham for children, young people and their families is a fundamental point for the safeguarding partners.

82,393 Children and Young People

Aged 0-25 live in Oldham.

There are 62,995 children and young people aged 0-17 (25.6% of Oldham's population). Numbers of children and young people are projected to fall by 5% over the next decade.

Oldham has a population of 246,130 people making it the 6th largest borough in Greater Manchester.



Almost two-fifths (46.3%) of children under 16 in Oldham live in poverty. Making Oldham 2nd only to Manchester in Greater Manchester.

Oldham has a diverse population with 32% of residents from Black, Asian and Minority ethnic groups (BAME).

Profile of Safeguarding in Oldham

Contacts to MASH

24,233

Contacts converted to Referrals

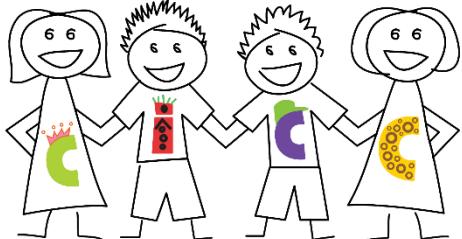
4,222



2,953 referrals made to Targeted Early Help



2059 S47 enquiries initiated



589 children looked after as of March 2025



433 children on child protection plans as of March 2025



460 children electively home educated in the spring term of 2024/25

Partnership working

Oldham Safeguarding Children Partners work together to promote a child-centred approach to safeguarding, listening to children, empowering families and, where needed, providing services that are professional, evidenced-based, and effective. The partners continuously strive to improve and challenge each other to learn the lessons from daily practice.

OSCP continue to improve how we collaborate, scrutinise, assure and drive the coordination of safeguarding activity. Working Together 23, highlights that strong, joined up leadership and clear accountability is critical to effective multi agency safeguarding, bringing together the various organisations and agencies.

Lead Statutory Partners (LSP's)

The Lead Statutory Partners lead and drive the changes that the government have set out. The Lead Safeguarding Partners for Oldham's Safeguarding Arrangements are the Chief Executive of Oldham Council, Chief Nurse NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership, and the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police.

The LSPs speak with authority, take decisions and have strategic oversight of policy, resourcing and practice matters. They jointly take responsibility for the involvement and oversight of all relevant agencies and have commitment to review working methods, building on strengths and holding agencies to account. Oldham LSP's signed and shared commitment to a North West Memorandum of Understanding that will enable Oldham and North West Partnerships to embed a strong, joined up leadership approach and clear accountability to drive effective multiagency safeguarding, bringing together various organisations and agencies from April 2025.

Delegated Safeguarding Partner (DSP'S)

Each Lead safeguarding Partner have appointed a delegated safeguarding partner. The lead safeguarding partners have opted to delegate their functions to Senior Officers: Executive Director Children and Young People (DCS), Oldham Council, Associate Director Quality, Safety & Safeguarding – Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board (Oldham) and Oldham Divisional Commander, Greater Manchester Police.

During the past year, all relevant safeguarding agencies have continued to demonstrate a clear and tangible investment in wanting to improve responses to children and young people in Oldham.

Executive and Partnership Decision Making

Strategic Safeguarding executive meetings have taken place bimonthly throughout the year. There was consistent attendance from strategic partners and relevant agencies, including education and early years. The meetings focus on the rapid and decisive partnership action required to safeguard children and young people in Oldham who are at risk of harm or abuse. The meetings also include partner agencies providing evidence regarding the effectiveness of their safeguarding arrangements, allowing the attendees to challenge, scrutinise and seek assurance around their work.

Business unit

The Business Unit undertake the management and support function of the partnership. Long standing members of the unit have ensured the partnership arrangements have remained consistent and effective. On the whole, the Business Unit staffing has been stable over the past 12 months, allowing the team to grow in their skills and confidence to support the partnership and drive improvements. The recruitment of a new Education Advisor in November has strengthened links and relationships with education settings with future plans in place to develop further. The Business Unit continues to plan and move forward with joint strategic working arrangements, making best use of some of the working practices which is now business as usual.

Key activities and decision making

During 2024 and 2025, OSCP had a number of principal groups who met on a regular basis throughout the year:

- Safeguarding Children Strategic Partnership.
- Statutory Partners Meeting.
- Safeguarding Review and Learning Hub Subgroup.
- Rapid Review panel
- Neglect subgroup
- Complex and Contextual Safeguarding Subgroup
- Performance Subgroup
- Task and finish groups

Safeguarding Children Strategic Partnership.

The Strategic Partnership in Oldham are responsible for setting the strategic aims and priorities for the Oldham safeguarding Children Partnership, agreeing, and monitoring the partnership budget to deliver on those aims and priorities, monitoring the performance of the partnership, holding partners to account and providing scrutiny and challenge.

Statutory Partners Meeting.

During this year, Education became the 4th member of the statutory partners meetings. Strong, joined-up leadership and clear accountability for the partnership is critical to effective multiagency safeguarding, bringing together various organisations and agencies. The DSP and LSP of each statutory safeguarding partner agency plays an active role in these arrangements.

Safeguarding Review and Learning Hub Subgroup.

The performance and learning hub monitor the impact and outcomes of partner activity on behalf of the OSCP. The hub defines what good looks like in line with Working Together 23.

Key achievements 2024-2025

The Learning hub:

- **Facilitated the effective management of Child Safeguarding Reviews.** There is oversight and challenge of all recommendations and actions from, National Reviews, Rapid Reviews and commissioned LCSPRs.
- **Supported and developed priority areas taking forward actions for multi-agency assurance.** It reviewed the output for these as part of the action planning process to ensure priority areas are moving forward making a difference to children and young people.
- **Responsible for the consideration of serious incidents and/or child deaths** which have occurred as a result of abuse or neglect, as per Working Together 2023 guidance.
- **Supported the development and drive the partnership training plan,** influenced by strategic priorities and learning from reviews.
- **Led on the learning and improvement activity of the Partnership.** This included undertaking multi-agency case evaluations, monitoring partner agency compliance with Section 11 responsibilities, collating and providing analysis of partnership performance data.
- **Oversight of audit frameworks, multi-agency and single agency.**

Rapid Review Panel

This is an agreed subset of the safeguarding and Learning review group which meet as and when required to respond to rapid review referrals. The panel follow the Practice Review Guidance 2018.

OSCP undertake Rapid Reviews within 15 working days of notification to National Panel. If OSCP are unable to initiate the Rapid Review within the timeframe, National Panel are informed at the earliest opportunity with a reasonable explanation. This group act as the co-ordination group for any local and national safeguarding practice reviews. Oldham's rapid review process is part of a Greater Manchester initiative (led by Salford as an early adopter) to ensure a consistency of approach across the GM safeguarding partnerships.

Performance Subgroup:

- **Deliver a QA performance framework** (inc. overseeing Audits) and scorecard that is focused on improving outcomes for children.
- **Develop and implement appropriate thresholds, policies and procedures** that are focused on improving outcomes for children and families.
- **Lead on continuous improvement for the Partnership, seeking data, intelligence, and audit findings** to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding services for children and young people in Oldham.
- **Analyses multi-agency safeguarding performance data and the findings from case reviews to inform the Partnership of relevant trends** in safeguarding performance, risks to the attainment of the Partners' business priorities and emergent safeguarding needs that require a response from the Partnership.
- **Instruct and conduct audits informed by the Partnership priorities, data intelligence and the findings from case reviews (local and national)**
- **Identify areas of improvement** and request at least one 'deep dive' in addition to 'dip dives.'
- **Review single agency audit reports and performance reviews and challenge their conclusions** where merited and identify any significant issues that need to be monitored and/or raised to the Strategic Partnership or Statutory Partners Meeting.
- **Identify whether practice has changed as a result of completed action plans**, using performance data or re-auditing where required.

Task and Finish groups

The purpose is to lead on time limited, task specific pieces of work as directed by subgroups and/or Strategic Partnership

Safeguarding Accountability Meetings

These quarterly meetings are to provide safeguarding assurance to the Chief Executive of Oldham Local Authority and Councillors.

School Network Designated Safeguarding Leads

Held termly with Designated Safeguarding Leads to ensure communication and discussion with schools/colleges is effective and safeguarding arrangements are effective.

Policy subgroup

Oldham Safeguarding Partnership continue to adopt Greater Manchester policies and procedures. This group is now a virtual group. The role of the local policy and procedures group is to support the maintenance and review of OSCP and Greater Manchester safeguarding policy and procedures. The aim is to review the effectiveness of policies and procedure as directed by Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and learning and improvement activity and make recommendations for modifications as required. The policy sub-group are led by guidance on information sharing, with all subgroups being mindful of the implications of information sharing, current practice, and standards and how improvement can be attained.

Conference July 2024

Strategic Priorities 2024–2027: Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership

In July 24, Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership came together to review and agree the strategic priorities for the next three years. The 2024 -2027 strategic plan outlines our key objectives, strategic aims, principles and focus areas. As a partnership, it was agreed that following activity, learning and themes identified from serious safeguarding incidents both locally and nationally and through direct work with children and families and what matters most to them, the priorities would change. The previous priorities remaining important to the Partnership.

This refreshed plan reflects the Partnership's commitment to continuous learning and improvement. Drawing on insights from serious safeguarding incidents—both locally and nationally—as well as direct engagement with children, families, and frontline practitioners, we have realigned our priorities to better reflect what matters most to those we serve.

While the previous priorities remain important and continue to underpin our work, the updated strategic direction ensures we are responsive to emerging themes, lived experiences, and the evolving safeguarding landscape.

Feedback from the ILAC OFSTED inspection in May 2024 identified emerging gaps and areas of significant improvements with regards to partnership working and recognised the progress in the existing priority areas. This also influenced the decision to review and update Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership Priorities for 2024 – 2027.



Activity and Impact – Domestic Abuse.

Priority April 2024 – July 2024

Domestic Abuse

Domestic Abuse remains important to Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership. There is commitment to preventing Domestic Abuse and making sure that the correct support is available for any child affected by it.

Activity 2024 – 2025

Statutory partners and agencies continued to:

- **Implement and deliver the Multi-Agency Domestic Abuse Strategy and policy**, informed by the Safe Lives review of domestic abuse in Oldham, including improved support for victims and their children, work with partners and capacity building with professionals.
- **Embed the Domestic Abuse Directory for professionals.**
- **Invest in increased capacity in the Domestic Abuse Team** including dedicated Domestic Violence Advisors and a specialist office who deals with cases of so-called honour-based violence (including forced marriage and FGM).
- **Expand provision of safe accommodation for victims of abuse and their children**, through recommissioning refuge, expanded use of dispersed accommodation, contributing to the men's refuge in Trafford and enabling victims to remain in their home through sanctuary schemes.
- **Invest in VCFSE Women's Network**, providing community-based support for survivors of domestic abuse as well as enabling peer support.

In addition:

- **Routine question audits** were carried out by NCA safeguarding teams and reported through the internal governance structure.
- **OSCP training consultant** has been working with pupils from Blue Coats School to create a teaching resource for their peers on gender-based violence, this was an outcome of the young people's gender-based violence conference organised the year previously, as part of our White Ribbon two weeks of action.
- **NHS Greater Manchester commissioned Dr Emma Katz** the Uks leading academic and expert on coercive control and the impacts on children and mothers to talk about coercive control in general and specifically her research findings on the impact on children and parenting. Sessions were delivered to practitioners.

What difference has it made?

- **The established team offer regular emotional and practical support** to victims and survivors, providing outreach services and support at the point of crisis.
- **Provided 374 victims of domestic abuse with 455 children to access to supported safe accommodation.**
- **Oldham have a strong workforce** and recognise and respond well to domestic abuse. Family support is coordinated and there is a whole family approach This was recognised in the May 2024 ILAC inspection. It was also recognised that robust assessment of risk level leading to the development of effective safety plans.
- **The rate of referral to Multi-Agency Risk Assessment conference increased** from 44 per 10,000 population in 2023/24 to 47 in 2024/25 but the timeliness of the multi-agency response was improved

- **Professionals participated in domestic abuse training in 2024/25**, supporting the upskilling of the workforce around domestic abuse including over 100 who have attended domestic abuse train the trainer courses.
- **Gender based violence teaching resources** are ready to be taught in school as a standard part of the PHSE curriculum. Schools in Oldham will also incorporate this into their curriculum.
- **Youth Justice Service (YJS) staff are alert to the impact of domestic abuse**, including witnessing this, and the impact it can have on individuals and families. Staff work with agencies to assess and create safety plans to ensure appropriate safeguards are in place. Staff know how to work with children and families who are experiencing, or who have experienced DA. YJS are represented at MARAC when children known to the service are discussed.
- **Oldham College have recruited Safeguarding & Welfare Officers** who are IDVA trained, with awareness of the signs of domestic abuse and the effects these can have. Learners feel seen and supported for who they are, not who other people want or are trying to make them become.
- **GM Police progressed with the establishment of a dedicated Domestic Abuse Team** to investigate high risk domestic abuse cases in the Borough. Already proving effective at securing positive outcomes for victims of abuse, improving the consistency of the safeguarding offer and pursuing protective orders in support of and as an alternative to prosecution where appropriate.

Challenges and Next Steps.

- **Police** - Introduction of the Multi Agency Tasking and Co-ordinating role with early appointment of an officer.
- **Police** -Improved compliance with Op ENCOMPASS building on the feedback received from education partners to enhance our local processes at Oldham.
- **Oldham Youth Council and the Youth Service's** MAN project are looking at being involved with the White Ribbon young ambassador's programme. MAN project will also raise awareness of DA and DV at an event in October 2025.
- **Challenges brought up by the Youth Council** included a lack of services available for young victims of domestic abuse (either directly or indirectly) that are easy to find and access.
- Youth service and Youth Voice Family have worked with the Council and White Ribbon charity.
- **Domestic Abuse remains important to OSCP.** The priority responding to need at the right time will continue to have oversight of practice, impact and next steps.

Activity and Impact – Transitions April 2024 – July 2024

Transitions April 2024 – July 2024

OSCP remain committed to planning at the earliest possible stage for the transition of children and young people who will require services in young adulthood, ensuring robust outcomes.

A transitions strategy which is founded on a principle of preventative and strengths-based practice facilitates an offer of services that from the perspective of the young person and their family is positive and seamless, aligning with their aspirations.

Safeguarding Partnership successfully focused on widening the strategy to include key partner agencies who have a role within transitions and to those areas of safeguarding that have been identified as priorities such as complex safeguarding and mental health.

The partnership will know they are making a difference in children and young people's lives when young adults tell us they are receiving the right support at the right time.

Activity April 2024 - July 2024

Statutory partners and agencies continued to:

- **Embed the first phase of the Transitions project** with the launch of a multi-agency 'Preparing for Adulthood: Oldham's Transitions Policy.'

- **Offer 'Prepare for Adulthood':** Oldham's Transition to Adult Services Process available for practitioners.
- **Establish Transitions Hub,** with supporting processes.
- **Develop Mosaic forms and workflow** to support the transitions processes improving recording.
- **Embed Practice resources and training** to increase understanding amongst ASC & CSC.
- **Consolidate datasets** with tracking mechanism in place, based on referral data in Mosaic.
- **Promote the Joint commissioning sub-group,** with representation from CSC, ASC, Education, Health & Mio Care.
- **Promote the joint commissioning strategy** for Transitions.
- **Engage in the Strategic Transitions Board** driving success and development.
- Embed the Transition Service Practice Guidance.
- **Roll out the Preparing for adulthood -co-produced guide for parents and carers of children and young people** with special educational needs and disabilities 14 years +.

What difference have we made:

Preparing for Adulthood: Oldham's Transition Approach

Resources for Families and Practitioners: 7-minute briefings and Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) flyers are available to inform families, professionals, and young people.

PfA Framework: Oldham has adopted the four national PfA domains:

- Good Health
- Employment, Education, and Training
- Independent Living
- Friends, Relationships, and Community Inclusion

Outcome-Focused Partnership Working: Partners prioritise meaningful outcomes over service-led processes.

Child and Family-Centred Approach:

- The views, wishes, and feelings of young people and their families are embedded throughout the transition process.
- Families and young people are supported to participate fully in decisions, with appropriate information and guidance.
- Support aims to foster development and improve educational and life outcomes.
- Support for Young People with EHC Plans: A holistic approach ensures education, health, and care needs are met through coordinated provision.

Youth Justice Transition Support:

- Positive Steps includes a seconded Probation Officer to aid transition from Youth Justice Services (YJS) to adult justice systems.
- Funding enables a dedicated Transitions Lead, reviewed annually.

Oldham College:

- Provides person-centred transition planning for learners with SEND.
- One-to-one support, early safeguarding referrals, and close school-college liaison promote multi-agency collaboration.

Youth Service Projects:

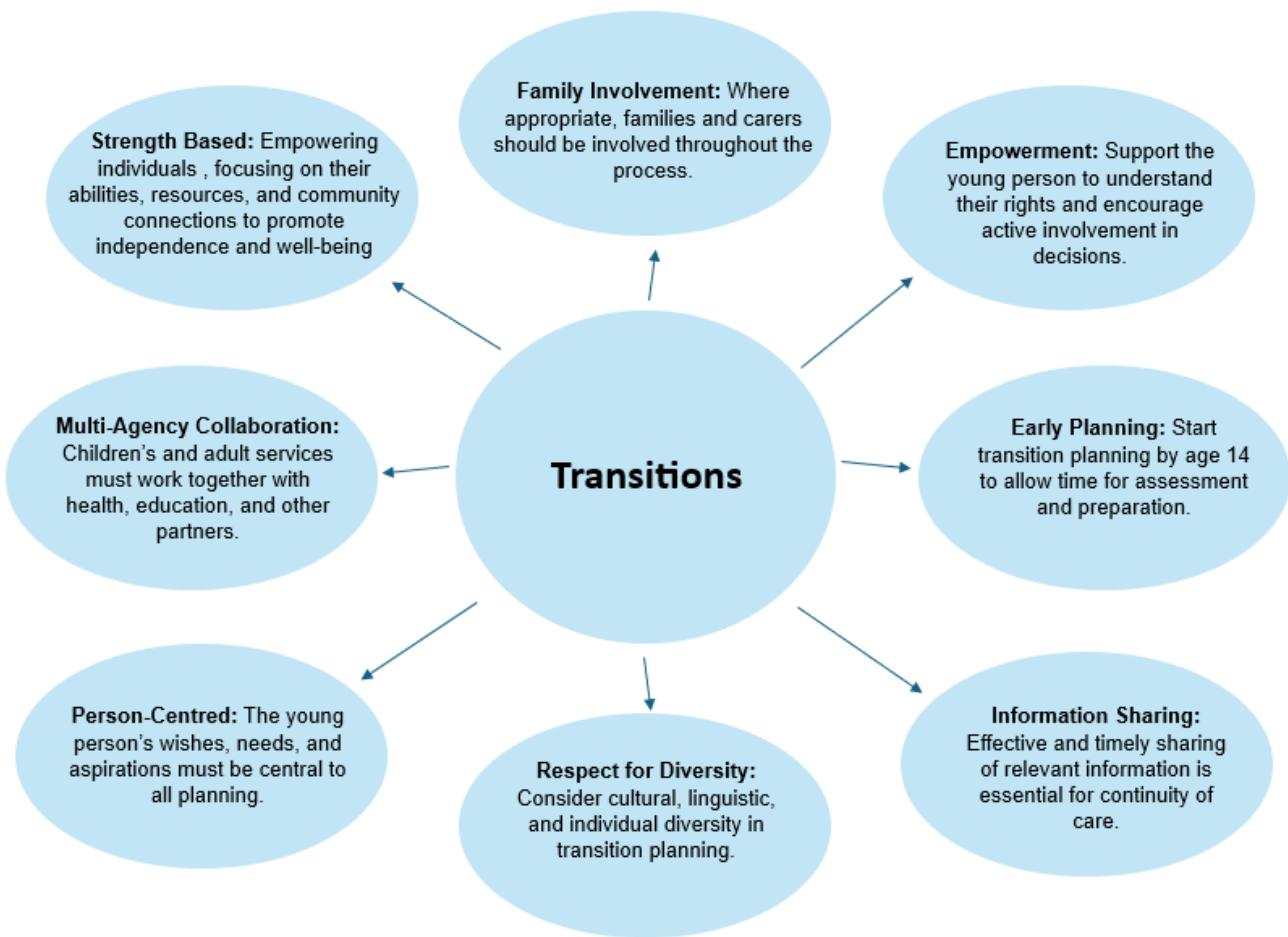
- Barrier Breakers & Flip It: In partnership with DfE and the Post-16 Education Skills Team, this initiative supports businesses to provide disability-aware supported internships.
- An upcoming event will connect businesses with young people to address employment barriers.

Youth Voice Engagement:

- Representatives participate in the GM Youth Combined Authority, contributing to the development of the Manchester Baccalaureate (MBacc)—a career-focused alternative to the EBacc.

Primary to Secondary Transitions:

- Youth Service supports Year 6 pupils in targeted schools (e.g., Waterhead) to ensure a positive transition and sustained engagement in secondary education.



Activity and Impact – Childrens Mental Health and the Impact of Trauma April 2024 – July 2024

OSCP have supported healthy emotional development and helped children and young people to become thriving adults. Our commitment is to support the right children and young people living with mental ill health and/or the impact of trauma to be able to access the right level of support at the right time. This includes caring for the most vulnerable with appropriate mental health support through services working together. This is reflected in the Mental Health Strategy. Accountability and governance for this workstream was a key priority for partners and oversees a robust partnership response to supporting the mental health and emotional wellbeing of our children and young people up to the age of 25 years.

Partnership agencies invest in the creation of a workforce which understands how to use early intervention to prevent lifelong trauma, and how to help children and families recover from the impact previous trauma has on their lives.

**Activities April 2024 – July 2024.
Statutory partners and agencies continued to:**

- **Ensure children and young people living with mental ill health and/or the impact of trauma are able to access the right level of support at the right time.**
- **Invest in the creation of a workforce which understands how to use early intervention to prevent lifelong trauma**, and how to help children and families recover from the impact previous trauma has on their lives.
- **Develop an Emotional Wellbeing Mental Health Strategy** as part of the Greater Manchester ICB (GM) commissioning strategy and Oldham Local Authority commissioning strategy.
- **Oversee the CYP MH actions** in the SEND improvement plan.
- **Embed Children Mental Health in ToR** and consider at every learning opportunity when reflecting on the journey of a child's life and the impact services have had.
- **Develop a complete system approach** linked to adult all age mental health services, including transitional arrangements to adult services.
- **Improve access to "Getting Advice," "Getting Help," "Getting More Help" and "Getting Risk Support"** as part of a graduated needs-based approach.
- **Ensure the voice of local families and lived experience are at the heart of everything.**
- **Report on progress** to the 'all age locality mental health board' and SEND Lip Exec Board.
- **Enable equity of participation** and promote collaboration between local contributors to improving Oldham child mental health outcomes.
- **Support the establishment of the Mockingbird** specialist fostering model in Oldham, through awareness raising and expansion of the model.

What difference have we made.

- **Strategic Focus:** While no longer a formal strategic priority (as of August 2024), children's mental health and trauma remain a key concern for the partnership.
- **Improved Outcomes:** Work has led to better population health, clinical outcomes, and family experiences.
- **Lived Experience:** Plans are shaped by individuals with lived experience, including the use of life stories—ensuring services are more relevant and empathetic.
- **Evidence-Based Planning:** Delivery is informed by Oldham's whole-system needs assessment, with anonymised data contributions from partners—resulting in more targeted and effective support.
- **Leadership and Alignment:** Strong leadership and alignment with national, GM, and local strategies have strengthened service coordination and delivery.
- **Youth Justice Support:** A CAMHS practitioner post was commissioned to support the Youth Justice Team—enhancing access to mental health services for young people in the justice system.
- **School-Based Support:** The Thrive in Education team now operates in 38 schools, supporting children aged 5–18 with anxiety, low mood, and wellbeing—leading to earlier intervention and improved emotional health.
- **Community Access:** The Take 5 Hub provides accessible support for low-level mental health needs—reducing barriers to help.
- **CAMHS Access:** Reduced waiting times have enabled quicker access to appropriate support—improving outcomes for children and young people.
- **iTHRIVE Directory:** Shared with partners to ensure children and young people receive the right support, at the right time, from the right service.
- **Workforce Development:** Ongoing investment has built staff capacity and confidence in responding to mental health needs.
- **Clear Pathways:** Established pathways ensure timely and appropriate responses for children needing mental health support.
- **Systemic Practice:** Training has increased awareness and competence in systemic approaches—enhancing the quality of care.

- **Youth Justice Training:** Staff are trauma-informed and apply this in practice, including through targeted programmes like the weapons intervention—resulting in more holistic support and positive change.
- **Youth Service Support:** Delivers group and one-to-one interventions that build confidence, resilience, and self-esteem—helping young people engage with services and improve wellbeing
- **Oldham College:** several members of the Safeguarding and Wellbeing team are trauma-informed practitioners with Level 5 diplomas in this area. As well as being IDVA trained and responsive to specific trauma caused by Domestic Abuse. Oldham College aim to be as responsive as possible to learners and is consistently engaging in relevant training to meet learner needs.
- **Early Break and Youth Service:** joint working took place, delivering outreach sessions to raise awareness of Key issues – Substance misuse, Relationships, Mental health support.

What next:

- **Oldham College** - Mental health and the impact of trauma—This is an ongoing piece of work focusing on and adapting to the needs of our learners. The adaptation of the wellbeing offer aims to acknowledge this. We are also in the process of working towards a trauma-aware institution.
- **NCA** - There are no specific audits of this currently, but this is an area being developed within NCA in terms of delivery of more enhanced training and also review of patient experience through audit.
- **Youth Council** raised mental health referral waiting times at full council and will be involved in a scrutiny of this in 2025. They hope that the scrutiny will then lead to an awareness campaign around the iThrive directory and where to receive help before at a level that requires high level support.
- **CAMHS** – it has been recognised that there is a concern with regards to the number of children awaiting appointments with CAMHS services in Oldham. An assurance deep dive audit is scheduled for 2024- 2025 Quarter one and Quarter two.

Activity and Impact – Complex and Contextual Safeguarding April 2024 - July 2024

Complex Safeguarding is criminal activity (often organised), or behaviour associated with criminality, involving children and young adults (often vulnerable) where there is exploitation and/or a clear or implied safeguarding concern. We continue to see a high number of children assessed as having concerns relating to child exploitation.

OSCP have embedded a Contextual Safeguarding Approach across the Partnership to ensure a consistent understanding of how to respond to emerging and changing trends.

Priority: Serious Youth Violence July 2024- March 2025.

OSCP have seen a rise in the number of serious youth violence incidents. Partners have identified the significance in tackling this as an earlier intervention approach. OSCP commissioned a Thematic Review and carried out a benchmarking exercise on Serious Youth Violence with good representation from partners; Strengthening the prevention offer for CSE, CCE and Youth Violence and focusing on the mapping and development of the community level support offer.

In addition, OSCP carried out consultation with young people and education settings to support with the voice of children and practitioners.

Oldham Youth Justice Service have a higher-than-average rate of Serious Youth Violence and have submitted five Serious Incidents Notifications to the Youth Justice Board since January 2025. These now trigger a Brief Learning Review chaired by the Safeguarding Partnership to ensure learning is taken from

there. However, multi-agency contributions to this have been low and we are continuing to embed this process. Serious Youth Violence is a priority on the Youth Justice Partnership Plan.

Activity In 2024– 2025:

Statutory partners and agencies continued to:

- **Take robust and early action** to share intelligence and challenge the operations of perpetrators of exploitation ensuring we maximise the use of all agencies and the legal powers available to us to disrupt the behaviours.
- **Support the development of more in-depth analysis** of local trends and themes to continue to inform and drive targeted service delivery.
- **Deliver sessions to up to 5000 students** covering sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, county lines, substance misuse, knife crime and healthy relationships.
- **Strengthen partnership arrangements with Youth Justice Service** in terms of learning processes. The partnership work in collaboration to engage partner agencies in Brief Learning Reviews.
- **Build capacity in areas of the statutory partnership and community partners** to be able to recognise and respond to all forms of complex and contextual safeguarding that affect the lives of children and families.
- **NHS GM provide a Specialist Safeguarding Practitioner co-located within the Complex Safeguarding Hub** who works across the health economy to ensure that the health needs of children and young people are met. Through working in collaboration with the wider multi-agency team and Partnership workforce. The locality Designated Team attend and contribute to the Complex and Contextual Safeguarding Subgroup of the Partnership to support the delivery of the complex safeguarding strategy.
- **Raise awareness, confidence, and skills** to ensure the earliest identification of complex safeguarding, by professionals, carers, and the wider community.
- **Deliver training to approximately 750 professionals**, including school staff, residential staff, and partner agencies.
- **Develop a robust prevention offer** that is led by the firsthand experiences of survivor/victims of exploitation and ensuring that community partners plan a vital role shaping and supporting Oldham's response.
- **GM Police prevention hub worked closely with Community Safety Partnership and Children Social Care** in regard to regular missing children and ensured there are trigger plans and engagement with those responsible for their care.
- **Continuation of Turnaround funding in youth justice** to prevent children becoming involved in the formal criminal justice system
- **Continuation of funding to deliver the TOG Mind/ YJS Partnership** and provide emotional wellbeing support from children at risk of becoming involved in, or for those involved in, the criminal justice system
- **YJS seconded CAMHS Practitioner** based within the service
- **YJS seconded two staff to the Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforce.** They work alongside a multi-agency team, including a Careers Advisor from Positive Steps, to reduce school exclusions and increase re-integration into mainstream education
- **Youth Service delivered a range of youth work interventions** addressing serious youth violence.

What difference have we made:

Protecting and Supporting Young People

- 62 young people are receiving targeted support for exploitation risks.
- Tailored interventions for both Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) 30% have an identified SEND need. 34% are supported by Youth Justice or Probation, ensuring multi-

agency wraparound care.

Effective Referral and Intervention Pathways

- 113 referrals received since January 2025
- 71% (80 cases) progressed to direct intervention
- Remaining cases appropriately signposted to services like Keeping Our Girls Safe and Catch 22
- Demonstrates strong triage and partnership working to ensure no young person is left unsupported

Positive Outcomes on Case Closure

- 92% of young people received ongoing support after case closure
- 68% re-engaged with education, employment, or training
- 83% secured stable accommodation
- These outcomes reflect the Hub's success in reducing vulnerability and promoting long-term stability

Tackling Exploitation Through Enforcement

- 132 active crime investigations led by the police team
- 9 major operations underway, addressing serious exploitation including, non-recent CSE, familial sexual abuse, online grooming, and care home-related concerns

Historic Justice – Operation Sherwood

- Supporting a borough-wide investigation into historic CSE
- 17 arrests made
- Ongoing efforts to identify survivors and perpetrators, showing commitment to justice and accountability

Innovative Engagement and Prevention

- Over 90 young people engaged in decision-making sessions using virtual reality headsets
- Positive feedback received
- Expansion planned across schools and residential settings
- Demonstrates creative approaches to empower young people and build resilience

Building Capacity Through Training

- Regular training delivered to education staff and young people. Delivered in partnership with Early Break, Youth Justice, and Keeping Our Girls Safe
- Strengthens frontline understanding of exploitation and improves early identification and response.

Education and Prevention Initiatives

- Pol-Ed programme adopted by several secondary schools
- One school engaged in the CELLS Project, promoting awareness of youth violence and exploitation
- Oldham College supports at-risk learners through referrals and collaboration with the Violence Reduction Unit to improve campus safety

Disruption of Exploitation

- Early intelligence sharing enabled swift multi-agency and legal interventions
- Operation ARMADA resulted in multiple offender charges
- Operation Venture deployed to tackle youth-related violent crime involving known groups

Strategic and Integrated Working

- Co-location of NHS GM Complex Safeguarding Team with Children's Social Care and Health enhances integrated support

Youth Empowerment and Influence

- Youth Service sessions amplify voices of young people with lived safeguarding experience, shaping policy and training
- Young people actively participate in GMP's Independent Advisory Group and Youth Scrutiny Panel, fostering trust and transparency
- Action Together consultations with young people led to increased awareness among partners

Creative and Targeted Interventions

- Detached Youth Work Team delivers early street-level interventions to prevent escalation
- Collaborative sessions at King Street Tram Stop used creative arts to engage students in violence prevention
- Additional funding enabled targeted youth work and support for prevention and diversion panels

Positive Individual Outcomes

- A young care leaver was successfully supported into employment, reducing their risk of criminal exploitation

Next Steps for 2025–2026

Serious Incident Notifications & Learning Process

- Continue timely submission of Serious Incident Notifications to Youth Justice Board and Oldham Safeguarding Children's Partnership.
- Strengthen the local learning process to safeguard children and identify areas for improvement across agencies.

Address NHS Recruitment Freeze & Health Gap

- Explore interim solutions to cover the vacancy of the Specialist Nurse for Complex Safeguarding.
- Engage with NHS/ICB to expedite recruitment post freeze or find temporary cover to support the safeguarding hub.

NCA Complex and Contextual Safeguarding

- Maintain delivery of mandatory and advanced training packages for staff on complex safeguarding.
- Support and monitor impact of vacant CSE nurse post; liaise with ICB for clarity and potential fill.
- Participate in GM-led peer review audits and contribute to local safeguarding improvements.

Serious Youth Violence & Navigator Programme

- Launch and embed the Navigator Programme at Royal Oldham ED to identify and support youth involved or at risk of serious violence.
- Use data and reviews from the Navigator Programme to inform future youth violence prevention strategies.

Prevent Strategy Implementation

- Finalise and embed the multi-agency Prevent Strategy within all relevant organisations and teams during 2025–26.

Violent Crime Reduction & Habitual Knife Carriers

- Support GMP Oldham Prevention Hub initiatives targeting habitual knife carriers.
- Co-ordinate multi-agency efforts to reduce violent crime, with a focus on youth involvement.

Oldham College

- Improve information sharing protocols with Greater Manchester Police, particularly regarding bail conditions and ongoing investigations affecting learners.
- Develop clear communication pathways to prevent inadvertent breaches of bail conditions by the college.

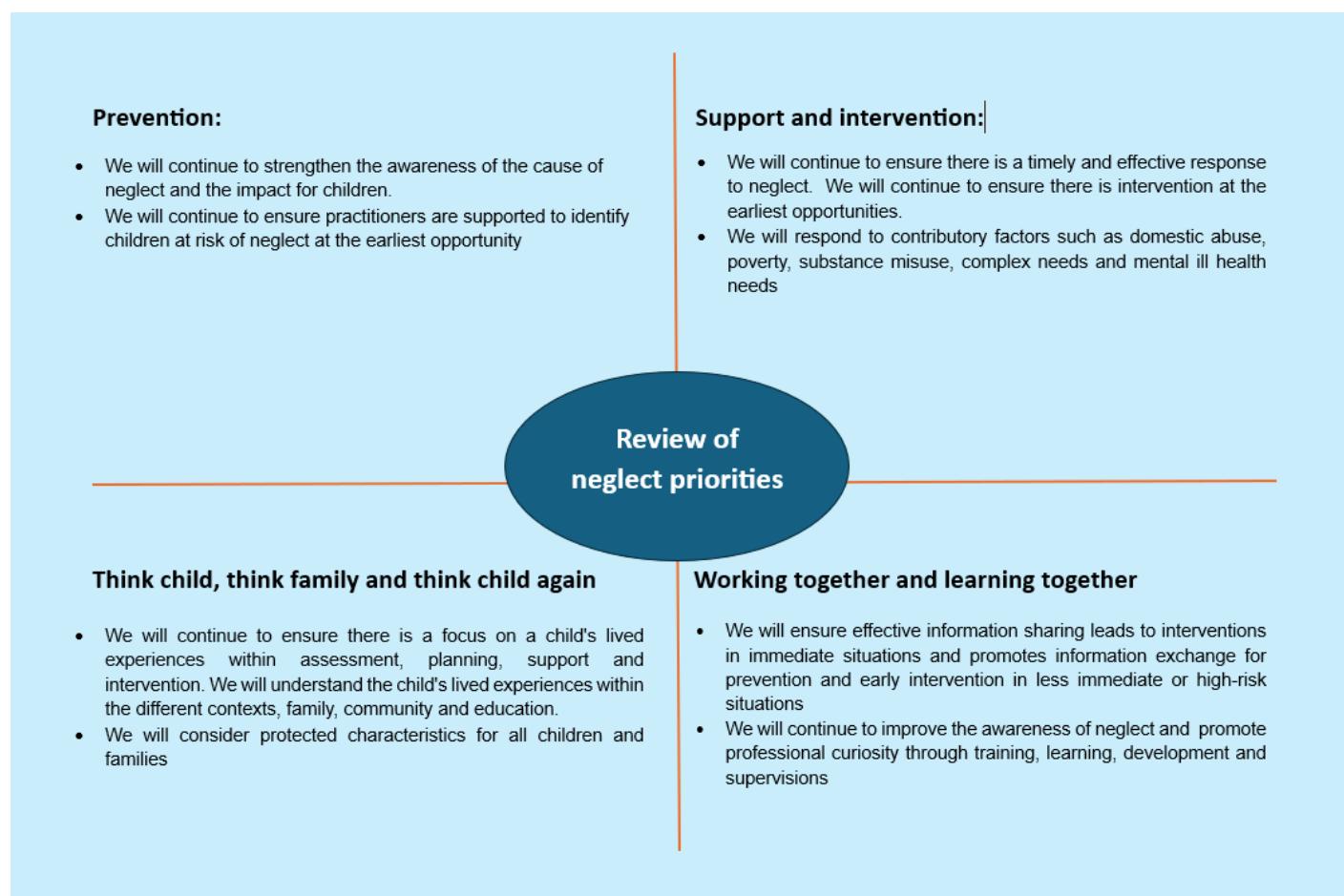
Youth Work & Safer Summer Initiative

- Continue partnership work to provide youth work support in Oldham town centre during the summer.
- Focus on keeping young people safe, supported, and engaged in positive activities to reduce risk and involvement in crime.

Activity and Impact – Neglect April 2024 – March 2025

Neglect has remained a priority for OSCP. The causes of neglect are manifold, and it has the potential to impact on many aspects of a child's development – physical, emotional, behavioural and educational. Neglect Subgroup have reflected and contributed to the updated Oldham Neglect Strategy. Young people have been encouraged to contribute to the strategy with a consultation session being delivered by Youth Services. Young people have also devised a child friendly version of the strategy outlining what that means to them. The strategy recognises the multi-faceted origins of neglect and alerts all partner agencies to ensure that they are engaged in the recognition and response to its occurrence and impact.

We want Oldham to be a borough where the conditions are right for children to be able to thrive. Neglect is an important issue and experiencing neglect can significantly compromise a child's development. Therefore, early identification and timely intervention are extremely important to ensure the safety, wellbeing and development of children and young people. Oldham is committed to effectively tackling the issue of neglect.



Activity 2024 – 2025

Statutory partners and agencies continued to:

- Work in partnership** with families and communities to overcome factors which prevent parents/carers from meeting the needs of their children.
- Improve awareness, understanding and early identification** of neglect through workforce development and communications.
- Improve the quality of the multi-agency response** to children and families living with neglect captured through case reviews, audit and voice of children and families.
- Identify opportunities for children, young people, and families** to share their experiences in order to shape and develop our multi-agency response to neglect. Showcased in case studies.
- Rollout GCP2 training** to wider partners with a commitment from partner agencies to move to

single agency training to develop the wider workforce.

- **Offer support surgeries for GCP2** trained practitioners who are working with neglect tools.
- **Ensure there is a strong partnership response** with a common understanding of the spectrum of neglect and a recognition of the need to work with families at the earliest opportunity to prevent harm.
- **Offer strengths-based support to families** from voluntary and statutory organisations in Oldham.
- **Offer foundation training course** (Neglect Matters)
- **Review and updated the neglect strategy and strategic plan.** Partners were involved and plans are in place to capture the voice of children and encourage young people to help shape the strategy.
- **Develop a draft data set** surrounding neglect to identify key themes and trends with health and other relevant partners.
- **Reflect on lessons learnt from Serious Case Reviews** in relation to neglect at the Neglect Subgroup. Both Local and National reviews are considered.
- **Develop a parenting offer.**
- **Embed the educational neglect strategy** designed and shared with settings.
- **Police raise awareness of neglect with officers and staff**, ensuring that “hidden” neglect crimes (such as parental assaults on children) are correctly reclassified.
- **CCAT sergeants intervene at early stages** of officer attendance and crime investigation to provide relevant investigative advice to non-specialist officers.
- **Oldham College Safeguarding and Wellbeing staff** were fully trained on the signs of neglect, especially in relation to Vulnerable Adults or Care-Experienced learners. They attempted to overcome self-neglect through avenues such as free breakfast, free sanitary products, access and support to career appointments, etc.

What difference have we made:

- **Strengthened Workforce Capacity:**
104 staff across the partnership have been trained in the Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2), equipping them with tools to recognise and respond to signs of neglect. All Positive Steps staff and Youth Justice Service practitioners are now confidently using GCP2 to identify early indicators of neglect.

MASH have started to record at the time of contact whether a Graded Care Profile 2 has been completed. This will provide data to assist the partnership in targeting awareness raising and training about neglect.
- **Better Identification and Early Intervention:**
Practitioners are actively applying GCP2 in their practice, leading to earlier identification of neglect. This has resulted in families being signposted to relevant universal services and support—ensuring needs are met before they escalate.
- **Tangible Impact on Families:**
 - A noticeable increase in GCP2 assessments has occurred within the Targeted Early Help Team—9 cases were open, 7 families received direct support, and 2 cases were escalated for further intervention.
 - Of these, **4 Early Help cases showed clear, positive outcomes**, including improved home environments, implementation of safety plans, and housing authorities being held accountable for repairs.
 - In one case, GCP2 findings led to a referral to specialist services (Tidy Home Tidy Mind) for hoarding and mental health support—demonstrating the tool's power in driving targeted interventions.
- **Evidence of Emerging Change:**
In 3 additional Early Help cases, practitioners observed emerging improvements, such as fluctuating but overall better home conditions and progress, albeit slow, in care plans. This points to growing engagement and early signs of sustained change.
- **Cultural Shift Toward Prevention:**
Feedback from GCP2 training highlights a significant mindset shift—from reactive to preventative.

Staff now report a deeper understanding of the **root causes** of neglect and its prevalence across Oldham, leading to more informed and proactive interventions.

- **Amplifying the Voice of Children and Young People:**

Action Together has established a steering group dedicated to gathering and analysing the lived experiences of children and young people. This group will meet regularly to identify key themes and ensure that young voices inform strategic decisions and service delivery.

- **Wider Reach into Education and Welfare:**

Oldham College's Safeguarding and Welfare team have received specialist training on identifying neglect—particularly for care-experienced learners and vulnerable adults. Their practical support (e.g., free breakfast, sanitary products, access to careers advice) directly targets barriers linked to self-neglect, promoting dignity and engagement.

What next:

- **Youth services** developed a youth voice session plan for young people to explore the theme of neglect and to enable their voices to help shape Oldham's Neglect Strategy. The session will be delivered by a range of professionals working with young people.
- **An Operational Manager from Early Intervention and Prevention and YJS** are part of the partnership training pool for this topic. We are currently completing an audit of cases in YJS where neglect has been assessed to look further into the implementation of the tool across the service and improve the completion of this to support intervention and agency involvement.
- **Progress the reviewed Neglect Strategic Plan** ensuring agencies are accountable in driving forward their actions.
- **Ensure children have their say in the reviewed Strategy 2025 – 2027.**
- **Continue to ensure GCP2 tools are impactful and those trained are utilising them. Consider the roll out of GCP2 E-Learning opportunities.**
- **Roll out the early years identifying tools and develop a neglect matters handbook.**
- **Ensure data drives performance and challenge.**
- **Agencies to provide case studies to the neglect subgroup, which include the voice of children young people and families.**
- **Ensure all practitioners working with children and families use restorative practice and have a strength-based approaches.**
- **Seek evidence of how learning is being embedded, closing the loop on actions from Rapid Reviews and actions linked to neglect.**

Responding to need at the right time **July 2024 – March 2025**

In Oldham we have recognised that early intervention is vital to ensure we provide targeted support services at the earliest opportunity for all children and their families who live in Oldham. We aim to ensure Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership offer a clear framework and have common understanding of support levels of need for practitioners within all agencies. All partners will fully understand their roles and responsibilities. Agencies will identify a child's need and respond with the approach of 'the right support at the right time'.

In Oldham we have recognised a rise in the number of sexual abuse cases. Children and young people who have access to local services and the right help at the right time will have opportunities to disclose whilst services will be alert to signs of abuse.

Our approach so far has been rooted in collaboration, bringing families together, communities, and professionals across sectors to provide timely and effective support.

Activity 2024 – 2025

Statutory partners and agencies continued to:

- **Assess families** to make sure their general needs are met and assist families to access appropriate services locally.
- **Provide effective help and support** as early as possible.
- **Have conversations** with families and children and listen, understanding their experience in a non-judgmental way.
- **Work collaboratively** to improve children's life experiences.
- **Recognise strengths and weaknesses in practice** and ensured learning is a golden thread through subgroup and learning activities.
- **Be open, honest and transparent** with families in our approach.
- **Aim to empower families** by working with them at the earliest opportunity.
- **Train practitioners** to ensure they are aware of universal and targeted services to ensure families have access to the right support at the right time.
- **Recognise the needs and vulnerabilities** within the family and work in a way that builds on the families strengths.
- **Support and encourage children and young people to access education** to reduce the number of young people not in education, training or employment.
- **Conduct Brief Learning Reviews and learning circles** to consider single and multi-agency learning opportunities and reflect on what interventions are appropriate and what should or could have been made available to families.
- **Carried out Key Lines of Enquiry** with regards to Sexual Abuse

What next.

Family First Partnership Programme.

The Families First Partnership (FFP) programme is a national initiative launched by the Department for Education aimed at transforming family support systems. It emphasises early intervention to prevent crises and ensures that every family can access the right help when needed. The programme is designed for statutory safeguarding partners and relevant agencies, including education and childcare settings, to improve the delivery of family support and child protection services. The partnership with support from the innovation unit will be invested in the Family First Partnership Programme.

To ensure families are receiving support at the right time the partnership will work collaboratively and support Workstream One: Family Help.

We will participate and engage in subgroup arrangements to:

- Enable children to thrive and families to remain together
- Promote multi-agency and multi-disciplinary working to achieve better outcomes for children, young people and families
- Wrap support around the whole family at the earliest opportunity (right help when they need it with emphasis on early intervention)
- Ensure consistency of relationships between children, families and their lead practitioner
- Support with adopting one plan that will stay with families but adapt as needs change

Sexual abuse

There are currently 417 children subject to a child protection plan, 15 under the category of Sexual Abuse (3.6%). No children progressed to ICPC under the category of Sexual Abuse in February and March 2025. Through Rapid reviews and LCSPR processes we have recognised that sexual abuse needs to be considered by all agencies. A Key Line of Enquiry has led to actions that the partnership are taking forward. In March 2025, 31 children were subject to strategy discussions and 32 assessments were completed where sexual abuse was identified as a factor. Familial history was not always considered, including previous incidents of sexual abuse, or parents experience of sexual abuse which lacked exploration. Intrafamilial sexual abuse was also not always explored, despite being present in case chronologies. There was a lack of professional curiosity and analysis of the information available, which in turn impacted upon the workers understanding of the case.

Actions include:

- Ensure all agencies utilise the Resource Pathway developed by the Centre of Expertise.
- Training offer in relation to child sexual abuse to be reviewed, with practitioners being offered relevant training and guidance to improve confidence within their practice. Ensure training opportunities are delivered to agencies including education and voluntary sectors.
- Plan and deliver Child Sexual Abuse Practice Week in October 2025.
- Continue to reflect on previous learning from local and national reviews and consider the 'I wanted them all to notice' published document.
- Take forward all actions identified in the key line of enquiry

Multi agency practice model July 2024 – March 2025

In Oldham we aim to offer a safe place for children to grow up happy, healthy, confident and ambitious. We want children to grow up in a loving and caring environment and be able to have the very best start in life. We want families to be supported where necessary.

All agencies working with children and families play an integral role in achieving this. The multi-agency practice will strengthen the way we work with families to ensure all families in our communities' access advice, support and protection.

The practice model ensures agencies and professionals working with children and families understand the role they play in ensuring children and families receive the right level of advice support and response at their time of need. It will also focus on families' needs and provides support to parents, helping them to identify and make changes where their behaviours may have contributed to the impairment of their child's health or development or caused them actual or likely significant harm.

Activity 2024 – 2025

Through task and finish groups statutory partners and agencies continued to:

- **Integrate multi-agency working** and improve information sharing
- **Recognise that early intervention is vital** to ensure we provide targeted support services at the earliest opportunity for all children, young people and their families
- **Develop communication** to ensure the voice of children, young people and families are heard and influence decision making to ensure they receive the right support at the right time.
- **Have a shared approach** to embed strong relationships across agencies, so everyone can engage constructively in delivering effective services.
- **Create a greater role for education** at strategic level, spanning early years and childcare to further education and learning from existing practice at an operational level.
- **Deliver vital services** to children and families across the end- to- end system of support and protection, building on existing best practice and relationships
- **Ensure Children and families have access to local services** and have opportunities to disclose whilst services will be alert to the signs of abuse.
- **Embed young people prevention panel** identifying multi-agency risk management
- **Align transformation initiatives**
- **Develop good working relationships** e.g. IDVA/Police DA team.
- **Promote Family Hubs** that are district based; each hub has a Family Hub Manager.

What next

- **Build on support networks** – embedded in fostering practice

- **Share understanding in relation to thresholds** to ensure referrals into the front door service and relevant
- **Ensure the practice model considers the impact on parents** e.g. removing children where adults with substance misuse/MH issues, thinking about the family as a whole.
- **Continue to encourage and embed the voice of Education**
- **Consider Oldham's approach to language barriers**
- **Fully integrate multi-agency working** and improve information sharing
- **Have a bespoke child protection response** for all harm types including EFH, domestic abuse and child sexual abuse.
- **Develop a culture of continuous learning and improvement** across the Partnership to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, promote early help and intervention, identify opportunities to draw on what works and promote good practice, ensuring all partners fully understand their role and responsibilities.
- **Actively engage children and young people** in learning and improvement activity and challenge.
- **Systems to be forensic and decisive**, focused on protecting children from significant harm, inside and outside of their home, including online
- **Focus on demographic issues** specific to Oldham e.g. poverty.

Voice of children, young people, and families

Oldham has a strong formal golden thread of participatory practice with children and young people. This is an area of strength, and our ambition is to celebrate this and ensure the ideas and experiences of children and young people influence service design and delivery. We will involve children and families wherever possible in our learning. We believe families are a good source of information about how our services in Oldham are experienced whether that is by an individual case or by providing information about services in general. We will consider how children and families with diverse backgrounds and characteristics will be given opportunities to participate in Practice Reviews and auditing and more general feedback.

Oldham Youth Service

Oldham Youth Service builds positive, trusting relationships with young people and, where appropriate, their families. The services they offer are shaped by the identified needs of the young people they support, with their voices at the heart of everything they do.

They lead on youth voice work across Oldham through the Youth Voice Family, which includes the Oldham Youth Council, Barrier Breakers (a forum for young people with SEND), and the Children in Care Council. They ensure that these forums are inclusive, accessible, and representative of the diverse young population in Oldham. There is also a strong link between the Youth Voice Family and the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LCSP), helping to ensure young people's voices are heard in shaping safeguarding priorities and actions.

Youth voice is embedded across all areas of work — from universal youth provision and targeted interventions to work delivered in partnership with schools and other agencies.

The collaborative approach includes placing youth workers in key meetings and multi-agency groups, where they provide insight into risks and concerns from a young person's perspective. This input is crucial in informing decisions and procedures aimed at keeping young people safe.

Through the youth voice programmes, there is support to a safeguarding model that is based on working with young people, empowering them to be part of the solution.

The team also supports initiatives such as Safer Summer – Town Centre Initiative, working in partnership to offer on-the-ground youth work support to young people in the town centre. This presence helps ensure young people are safe, supported, and encouraged to engage in positive activities.

In addition, they contribute to the Safe4Summer campaign, promoting water safety during the summer months. Youth workers attend key water-based sites to engage with young people, raise awareness about water safety, and respond to potential risks.

Youth voice

“Attending meetings with the Police is brilliant. We get to tell decisions-makers what young people in Oldham truly need, and they actually listen” - Tom

“I’ve really enjoyed telling businesses what they need to do to help young people with disabilities get jobs. So far they have listened and I feel really proud of what we’ve done.” – Kyra

“Ella has helped me to make friends today. I think I’ll be able to do when I go to school in September” – Jacob

Oldham have embedded an Engagement and Participation strategy.

OSCP recognises the Youth Council as one of our Partners. Annual meetings with the Youth Voice Family take place. They discuss the priorities of our Strategic Plan and Annual Report. This includes the Barrier Breakers, Children in Care Council and Youth Council. Within the annual ‘Make your Mark Ballot’, local priorities will be set by children and young people and shared with the Partnership in the Spring of every year – this should be reflected in the OSCP Annual Reporting cycle. Where appropriate the Partnership will convene focus groups and workshops on thematic areas of concern to them. OSCP will contribute to the Children and Young Peoples Participation Strategy and be held accountable to what it sets out as deliverables. Once a year the young people will be invited to the Safeguarding Partnership joint development day to review the years’ activity and plan.

Professional feedback will be sought through all layers of system learning on our safeguarding effectiveness. This means when we undertake Learning Reviews, we don’t limit Practitioner Events simply to those Practitioners who were involved in the case, we test out system thematic learning for the case with a wider Practitioner set. We are committed to shaping Practice Reviews with families’ feedback.

Similarly, within Multi Agency audits, we will triangulate all audits with a set of Practitioners and a selection of families usually in which the Case Audit is about. Auditors will undertake that commitment to engage families as part of the triangulation process.

Neglect

Engagement sessions took place with groups of young people from youth service, early break and positive steps with a focus on children’s needs and to ensure that child voice is throughout the neglect strategy. The foreword of the 2025 – 2030 strategy will include a statement from our children in care council.

Barrier Breakers

Barrier breaker is a youth forum for young people with additional needs and disabilities in Oldham. Members meet weekly to raise issues and develop projects to bring about change for themselves and their peers through

creative activity. Barrier Breakers undertake consultation work for local services to ensure they are effective for young people with disabilities.

Barrier Breakers have co-produced 'Flip It' which has included engagement with local businesses and development of a toolkit for young people with SEND undertaking supported internships.

Children with Additional Needs

During 2024 and into 2025 partners have come together with Parent / Carer groups to co-design the Preparation for Adulthood toolkit which is being utilised across children with additional needs to support their transition.

Children in Care Council

The Children in Care Council – self rebranded as 'The Thursday Thing' – are a strong group of children in care who have grown in strength and numbers in recent months. The group provides a summary presentation of the work they have undertaken to each Corporate Parenting Panel and have progressed to co-chairing the meeting with the Lead Member.

The CICC have participated in delivering Total Respect training, attended a residential, worked with partners in Health and Greater Manchester Youth Network and worked with a national initiative on the motion to make care experienced individuals a protected characteristic.

Survey – Your Life, Your Care 2024 – 2025

The views of children in care aged 4 -17yrs in Oldham on their well being

Between September and January, the service surveyed all their Children in Care. Although the response rate could have been stronger, we were able to see areas working well such as children having trusted adults they can talk to and feeling positive about their future. To balance, children and young people fed back that their understanding of their care history could be stronger and reported that they did not have a 'good friend'. The findings have been shared at Corporate Parenting Panel.

Key response to the survey to date has been the progress of the Life Story Work initiative with a practice guidance tool for staff, changes in Mosaic, training programme scheduled and engagement from a group of Care Leavers to influence the work.

All children in care aged 4 -17yrs were asked to take part in an online survey to find out how they felt about their lives.

Positive Steps

Collaboration is one of the values of Positive Steps, reflected in the new Strategic Plan 2025 – 2028. They work alongside people, respecting their experience and expertise, which includes staff and service users. "People" is one of the four strategic pillars which serve as the guiding framework to deliver on their vision.

Significant progress has been made in embedding parent voice and young people into Early Help. Throughout the year Early Help has worked closely with Oldham Parenting Partnership to expand the delivery of evidence-based parenting support.

Child voice is at the heart of the delivery within youth justice service. Practitioners go above and beyond to engage young people. The greatest achievement within youth justice is that despite the challenging demographic in which they deliver, they consistently have a significantly low re- offending rate. This sits below all comparative family groups. This is due to the dedicated and stable staff team who deliver trauma informed, child first practice alongside a strong multi- agency partnership, allowing children to develop a pro- social identity and achieve positive change.

Voice of practitioners, families and young people

Partnership feedback for Parent Voice worker and Engagement workers; *Kym has been very present within the community on a regular basis over the last 14 months of working in my role, building positive relationships with the general public and offering parents the opportunity to have their voices heard respectfully. She has been as welcoming and inclusive as possible, thought about how to facilitate these sessions she has offered in sensitive and considerate ways, and has been making herself known to various services to encourage the input from parents in order to shape the family hub experiences. I believe the skills which Kym has developed during her time are excellent and, without her integrity and passion for community support, would have been difficult to make the role successful. I think the parents who Kym has been approaching and speaking with have benefitted from having share their experiences and felt heard and appreciated.*

Senior Practitioner feedback for an Engagement worker who was completing her first GCP2 with a parent who had been difficult to engage in the first instance; *just wanted to take this opportunity to say that it was a pleasure this morning to attend the visit with Tehsin around reviewing the GCP2 with the family. Tehsin managed the session well and addressed the concerns in a way where mum felt really comfortable and understood the ask. Tehsin acknowledged the improvements that mum has made with home conditions since the first visit and worked with her to make positive changes and a further action plan.*

Feedback from family as part of closing to Early Help; *'Emma was very helpful, any problem I had she came up with really good ideas and activities to try. It has definitely improved mine and my son's relationship and how we communicate with each other.'*

Feedback from the Manager at Oldham Foodbank where a child was completing their Giving Back; *Hi, Just wanted to pass on a message from our volunteers -, but the child and support worker who came today did a brilliant job! Our team was really impressed and grateful for the help! Thanks*

YJS complete “Your Opinions Matter” with children and parents/ carers every three months:

Children said that they want to have access to more positive activities rather than “work” and so we have sourced ARIS, VRU and CSP funding to deliver “Broadening Horizons” where children can visit places they may not have been able to before such as National Trust, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, English Heritage, as well as take part in different sports

Children said they don't like too many workers coming to see them. We have updated our Allocations Guidance to reflect this, ensured consistent workers are allocated for children who go regularly missing from home and developed a protocol with Complex Safeguarding so roles are clear and there is no duplication

Feedback from children and families:

"I have really enjoyed my time here as it has helped me to learn things that I didn't think I needed as well as look back at the past mistakes I have made and teach me not to make stupid decisions"

"Hi Joe. Just wanted to follow up on the back of your email and to reiterate our appreciation for all your help and support (at court to ensure things were dealt with correctly), both yourself and your colleague were fantastic"

"thank you to YJS for supporting K to obtain his CSC Card, gain employment and helping him with speech and language".

Positive Steps. Social Prescribing – Children and Young People Link Workers

Working in partnership with Action Together our Children and Young People's Link Workers provide access into activities and support in local communities.

What is Social Prescribing?

Many things that affect our health and wellbeing cannot be treated by doctors or medicine alone, like loneliness, isolation or stress. Through an allocated Link Worker, Social Prescribing connects young people to non-medical support to improve health, wellbeing and social connections through groups, activities and organisations.

Here's feedback from some of the young people who have benefited from the service:

"Oldham Social Prescribing connected me to a local boxing gym. I have found a new sense of purpose and a reason to get up in the mornings. My confidence has grown and I feel more connected to the community."

"The Oldham Social Prescribing team are amazing! They help me in any way, shape or form they can, for myself and my family. I've been with a few agencies for family help and the Oldham Social Prescribing team is the best I have had. Couldn't appreciate them more."

NHS GM

Engagement with and listening to children and young people and families remains an NHS GM priority and this year the child's voice strategy has included:

The 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.

NHS GM continues their work with Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership, Adult Board 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.

Greater Manchester Police

GMP continue to actively promote use of the Voice of the Child across the district with posters and regular reminders. This features also in crime and information recording with supervisors including this in investigative plans. GMP have upskilled further officers to undertake specialist video interviews with vulnerable children who are victims of crime.

Operation ENCOMPASS is embedded in the district with recent local amendments to processes ensuring 100% compliance. GMP will be working with the Safeguarding Education Advisor and settings to strengthen this further.

Effective information sharing and joint action to safeguard children remains a priority.

GMP will continue to promote the voice of the child and look to how we further improve our capture and use of this within the policing and partnership context.

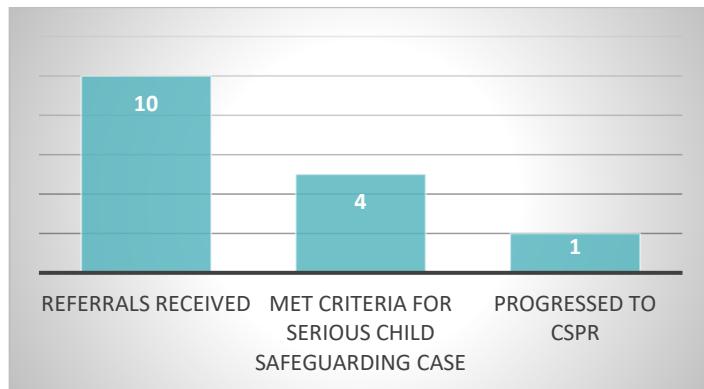
Pol-Ed has been launched in GMP but uptake by Oldham education establishments has been limited which will reduce its impact on protecting our children. This has been raised at the OSCB and the OSCP and requests made at a strategic level to encourage education sign up.

Learning & Quality Assurance Activity

Case Reviews

The Safeguarding Partnership has a statutory duty to review serious child safeguarding cases with the aim of identifying learning, improvements in practice and protecting children from harm.

A serious child safeguarding case is one in which, “abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected, and the child has died or been seriously harmed.” (WT 2023)



During the 2024-25 period the partnership received 10 referrals for consideration of whether they met the criteria to notify to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and therefore progress to a Rapid Review process.

Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

Four progressed to Rapid Review. One case progressed to LCSPR and three cases did not progress to a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review. Two concluded that no further review process was required as the Rapid review process had allowed a full evaluation of the case and identification of learning. One concluded that no further review process was required as there was no new learning as the learning from the review collates with actions being taken from other review processes which will support in addressing learning points.

Four Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews were concluded within 2024-25.

Learning and Themes from Rapid reviews 2024 – 2025

- Interfamilial Sexual Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect
- Vulnerable babies
- Cumulative Harm
- Serious youth violence

Learning and Themes from Child Safeguarding Practice reviews which concluded in 2024 – 2025

- Sexual Abuse and Disclosure
- Family time planned and conducted safely.
- Transition planning
- Professional curiosity
- Information Sharing
- Delivery of ICON
- Gender/Identity and how services work with the parents

Learning from Reviews – ‘Alpha’

Alpha at the time of the incident was aged 13.

Alpha went missing from her residential school and care home (which was over 70 miles away from her home). She was located by Police nine days later with one of her sisters at an address in her home area and taken back to her residential placement. There was an adult male in the property where Alpha was located, who was arrested and has subsequently been convicted of the rape of Alpha. On her immediate return to her placement, she disclosed she had sex with multiple men and that she had been taking drugs.

Information also came to light by Alpha's sister that both she, Alpha and their older sisters had all been trafficked by their father to various men since they were younger and had experienced significant sexual abuse when they lived with their parents.

At the conclusion of the review, the areas of learning identified were:

- The impact of displacement and separation for Alpha from her family, community and local area was hugely significant
- Confident cultural competences across the workforce would have benefited the delivery of services
- Creating an enhanced model of working together to balance risk management alongside holistic care planning will benefit children.

This review identified many aspects of good practice:

- Robust multi agency risk management, which was overseen, when necessary, at the highest level within agencies
- Evidence of continuous trusted professionals relations built with Alpha by police officers and the complex safeguarding social worker in particular
- Tenacious actions taken by professional to work within the means of placement options for Alpha, particularly in emergencies
- Consistent IRO oversight with some escalation in place
- Creative and persistent work by professionals
- Positive disruption work by the Police and to those who posed a risk to Alpha

Key outcomes and Impact

- **Improved Cultural Competence:**
The “*Breaking the Silence*” forum enhanced practitioner understanding of race, culture, and safeguarding for the Global Majority. Targeted promotion of services improved support for the Roma community.
- **Enhanced Child-Centred Care:**
Corporate Parent Panel mapped the child’s journey and introduced life story books. Feedback from children in care directly shaped services
- **Trauma-Informed Practice Strengthened:**
A multi-agency supervision pilot supported more effective, trauma-informed service delivery.
- **Policy and Practice Improvements:**
Family time policies were reviewed to address displacement impacts. Revised escalation policy encourages professional challenge and improves decision-making transparency.

Partner agency Involvement and Learning from Serious Incidents

Children's Social Care/Early Help

- During 2024/25 involved with 4 rapid reviews and ongoing CSPR's
- Held two themed practice weeks to improve practice based on learning from reviews and quality assurance.
Held quarterly practitioner forums to support learning and reflection from case reviews
- Delivered a core training programme based on learning from reviews and quality assurance focused on Direct work and the child's voice, assessment and impact analysis, Impact chronologies, effective planning and intervention

Positive Steps

- During 2024/25 Involved in thematic reviews: Serious Youth Violence and CSPR, Alpha, and Lisa.
- Developed a learning process with OSCP after notifying the Youth Justice Board (YJB) of serious incidents (e.g., murder, manslaughter, serious wounding, rape, or child death while under Youth Justice Service). Brief Learning Reviews.

NHS GM

- Established systems to learn from Adult and Child Safeguarding Reviews and Domestic Homicide Reviews.
- Focus for 2025/26: embedding learning and evidencing its impact.
- Extra-familial harm and exploitation remain priorities.

Police (GMP)

- Learning from serious case reviews continues (e.g., knife assault case led to DI training on timely investigations).
- GMP actively participates in SCR's, managed centrally for consistency.
- Local involvement includes BLRs and transparent sharing of learning.
- Ongoing reviews of complex CSE cases to ensure best practice.

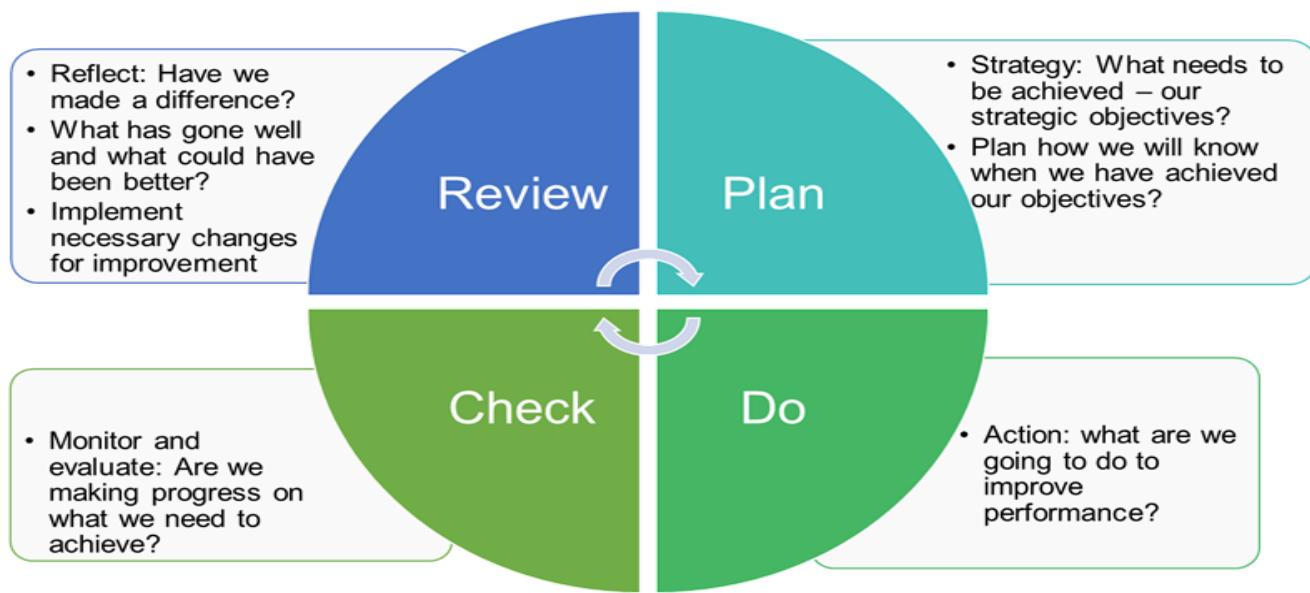
Oldham College

- During 2024/25 participated in several LCSPR's, RR's, BLR's and SAR's.
- Shared learning via CPD, updated safeguarding protocols

Northern Care Alliance NHS

- Learning from national and local reviews shared through training, governance meetings, and action plans.
- Internal incident reporting includes investigation, action, and sign-off. Example: improved processes for follow-up skeletal surveys after an LCSPR highlighted risks.

Quality Assurance



Section 11 Audit

The OSCP Section 11 2024 – 2025 was developed in consultation with partners and consists of a self-assessment template and standard guidance tool to assist in the completion of the audit.

Undertaken July 2024 and November 2024.

The section11 audit provides sufficient evidence of safeguarding compliance with Section 11 standards and, therefore the OSCP can be assured that the key agencies who completed the self- assessment are fulfilling their duties. Dip sample exercises with some returns who score 3 or 4 will provided further reassurance that agencies are ensuring their safeguarding arrangements are effective. Further dip dives and further investigation of those scoring 1 or 2 will provide the partnership with reasons why safeguarding may not be effective and ensure robust action plans and timeframes are in place.

28 agencies, both statutory and relevant agencies were asked to complete the audit. 72% returned. (17 out of 18 statutory partners returned completed audits with one providing their internal audit that provides the assurance needed for the purpose of the audit)

The findings highlight good practice across the partnership and finds areas for further improvement. Each agency as part of the self-assessment were tasked to moderate their findings with peers and agree their own improvement plan.

Leadership and Accountability

Assurance	Challenge, outcome and impact.
95% recognised the following strengths: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Effective recruitment and selection procedures for all personnel, including volunteers in line with OSCP safer recruitment guidance.• All staff on recruitment panel have accessed appropriate training.• All staff working with children and adults have an advanced DBS clearance.	Dip dives provided further reassurance that staff are recruited and inducted effectively and includes appropriate challenge on their practice and training needs. Some agencies confirmed that internal audits are carried out on a regular basis and reporting to directors and head of service. Recruitment and selection processes are robust.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are made clear about their role and line management responsibilities and are challenged as part of their probation on their knowledge and understanding of their own role. • Practice concerns are escalated appropriately. 	
--	--

Staff, Induction, Training and Development

Assurance	Challenge, outcome and impact.
<p>95% recognised the following strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They have an induction process for all staff and volunteers that includes familiarisation with safeguarding policies and procedures. Corporate induction programmes ensure all staff are aware of contact points for safeguarding concerns. • Line managers challenge staff teams on their knowledge and understanding of safeguarding and ensure training is included in induction programmes. • Training in place is linked to practice, supervision, and appraisals. • Staff receive in house training and have access to OSCP multi agency training opportunities. • New employees undertake a specified induction and review period during which they are supported and assessed as to their suitability for the role. 	<p>Dip dives with some agencies provided evidence in terms of safe induction processes, training calendars, evidence of the impact of training and staff challenge on policy and procedure. Further assurance activities will take place by the Independent Scrutineer and will include appraisal processes.</p>

Complaints, allegations and Whistleblowing

Assurance	Challenge, outcome and impact.
<p>96% recognised the following strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widely disseminated policy available to professionals and service users, process demonstrated to work with logs, actions and recorded • Their policy forms wider parts of culture asking for positive and negative feedback. Outcomes and lessons are fed back into practice for improvements. • Named senior officers oversee and handles allegations with effective policies, procedures and systems in place to manage concerns and complaints well. • Outcomes and lessons are fed back into practice and service plans for improvements, there is also evidence of liaison with LADO/ Allegation Management Lead when an allegation occurs. 	<p>For those agencies that were unable to confirm all staff were aware of the whistleblowing policy and procedure, including residential homes, the LADO team have successfully delivered training. This has led to an increase in the number of enquiries and referrals to the team.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaint and allegation procedures are family and child orientated and adapted to their needs. • Audits in place which monitor effectiveness 	
--	--

Information Sharing, Communication and Confidentiality

Assurance	Challenge, outcome and impact.
96% recognised the following strengths: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong communication between members of the organisation about children and adults at risk for whom there are concerns and where relevant, a system for flagging these children and adults at risk. • ICT systems allow members to share information regarding children and adults at risk whom there are concerns with. • Evidence from records that information is shared successfully between members. • ICT systems allow children/ adults at risk to be flagged where there is a safeguarding concern. Files have minutes which illustrate that staff have participated in multi- agency meetings and have multi- agency plans that illustrate the contribution of organisation to improve outcome for children and adults at risk • There is effective multi agency information sharing across the partnership with partners aware of OSCP and GM policies and procedures. • Confidentiality is a priority when communicating and sharing information 	<p>Some front-line staff had not yet involved in multi-agency meetings and forums. Opportunities were made available for staff to attend learning circles, multi-agency forums and training. This has ensured there is wider involvement and significant understanding with regarding to confidentiality and information sharing. The partnership reviewed their information sharing protocol and it was shared with all agencies. This clearly outlines protocols around what can and can't be shared and highlights the importance of sharing information securely. The MASA practice standards were reviewed and include effective partnership working, information sharing, communication and confidentiality.</p>

Equality of Opportunity

Assurance	Challenge, outcome and impact.
88% recognised the following strengths: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion • Policy and procedures are in place and all services are accessible. • Staff understand the value of the policy in contributing to improved outcomes for all adults at risk and children. • Information provided is in a format and language that can be easily understood by all service users • Monitor the extent to which it provides fair and equal access to services and has strategies to tackle discrimination. Staff and other service users are challenged effectively to tackle discrimination. 	<p>The learning hub addressed the importance of Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. (EEDI) Some of Oldham Local Reviews also highlighted the importance of staff being trained and having immediate access to resources including translators and interpreters. Oldham have progressed and help a multi-agency learning opportunity in relation to the importance of and the understanding of EEDI. Oldham SCP plan to roll out further learning opportunities and audits, making consideration to the published "Its Silent" Report. (March 2025)</p>

Neglect and Partnership Learning Audit

A partnership audit was carried out between July 2024 and November 2024.

The following key standards were audited.

Practitioners are supported with the skills, awareness and tools they need to effectively intervene in cases where neglect is a factor.	Challenge, outcome and impact.
67% confirmed that practitioners are supported	For those who did not provide assurance, a dip dive exercise was carried out with an expectation that agencies provided an action plan and training plan. The Neglect subgroup members have provided single agency opportunities for practitioners to access GCP2 training and access to Early Help assessment tools. In 2025 -2026, the partnership is considering investing in the online training offer from NSPCC for online GCP2 training. This is ensuring more practitioners are able to carry out the graded care profile with families. Professional curiosity has been a golden thread in single and multi-agency training. A 7-minute briefing has been produced.
Frontline staff have knowledge of where to access professional advice with neglect cases.	Challenge, outcome and impact.
76% of agency frontline staff have knowledge of where to access advice with 2 agencies identified that staff have experience and exceptional knowledge	A request was made to those agencies who are exceeding to share resource and good practice. Case studies were presented to the Neglect Subgroup and tools have been disseminated. The Neglect toolkit will support staff in understanding where to access professional advice with neglect cases. For those staff who have accessed GCP2 training, they all have access to resources and tools.
Support is provided to children and families at the earliest opportunity to address neglect.	Challenges, outcome and impact.
53% confirmed that support is provided by their agency at the earliest opportunity to address neglect	The Deep dive challenged agencies on what further advice, training and support is required to ensure children and families are offered interventions at the earliest opportunity. The partnership have promoted all the training opportunities available. Agencies who are not in a position to carry out a GCP2, for example police during emergency calls have assured the partnership that they understand referral processes and staff are trained to identify signs of neglect and refer families in a timely manner. Police have also provided data to the performance group regarding the number of Police powers of Protection (PPP)

The organisation encourages and supports staff to demonstrate professional curiosity.	Challenge, outcome and impact.
74% provided reassurance the staff are encouraged to demonstrate professional curiosity	Professional curiosity is a priority for the partnership. The partnership has consulted with agencies and ensure professional curiosity forms part of practitioner training opportunities. The learning hub have requested that agencies provide examples where professional curiosity has had a positive outcome for children in Oldham.

Information from rapid reviews and LCSPR is disseminated and available for staff to access Action plans and learning from the reviews is cascaded to relevant member of staff to enable and promote a culture of learning and improvement.	Challenge, outcome and impact.
68% provided reassurance that information and learning from RR and LCSPRS are shared and available. 68% ensure actions and learning is cascaded to relevant staff to promote a culture of learning and improvement	OSCP have recently published reviews on their website. When published all partners have been informed and encourage to share their learning. The business manager has been attending team meetings with relevant agencies and presented findings, learning themes and actions from reviews. A tracker is in place to capture all learning, recommendations and actions from the point of the serious incident notification. Learning is tracked with ongoing challenge through the learning hub. The partnership is continuing to collate evidence where agencies inform staff that the learning impacts and ensure children in Oldham are safe and feel safe in their home. Single agency and multi-agency practice weeks include learning from reviews. Subgroups have review action plans as a standing item. This ensures that although actions may be completed, they are continually reviewed and challenged to try and avoid re referrals.

Serious Youth Violence

Benchmarking Exercise

Oldham Safeguarding partnership carried out a benchmarking exercise in October 2024.

Benchmarking aims:

- Measure performance in Oldham against Manchester JTAI inspection
- Improve processes and procedures.
- Gauge the effectiveness of past and present performance.
- Identify best practices to increase performance.
- Improve quality and better outcomes for young people.
- Consider learning through Rapid Review and Local Safeguarding Practice Reviews
- Consider recommendations from the Thematic Review – Serious Youth Violence.

Measured performance:

Evaluated the effectiveness of the multi-agency response to children aged 10 and over who are at risk of or affected by serious youth violence and/or criminal exploitation.

- Recognised the complexities for agencies in intervening to address serious youth violence when risk and harm occur outside of the family home.
- Highlighted some of the significant challenges to partnerships in improving practice
- Identified learning for all agencies and will contribute to the debate about what 'good practice' looks like in relation to the multi-agency response to serious youth violence.
- Considered where children had also experienced other forms of abuse, which reflects the complexity of the needs and risks for children.

Agency involvement.

Agencies including, children social care, health, police, positive steps, CAMHS and education contributed to the exercise identifying good practice, improvements and actions.

Serious Youth Violence Thematic Review

OSCP commissioned an author to carry out a review on 3 young people who had been involved in knife related incidents.

The review focused on:

- Early intervention and prevention.
- How agencies understood trauma and loss
- Education system
- Identity and pro criminality
- Neurodiversity

The recommendations are being driven by the complex and contextual safeguarding subgroup. The outcome of the review will be presented to partners in May 2025.

Outcome and learning from Benchmarking Exercise and Thematic Review

There is a lot of good practice in Oldham, however the number of young people becoming known to YJS is rising due to young people being drawn into criminality. All agencies agreed that Oldham would benefit from a SYV strategy, led by Complex Safeguarding, OSCP, education and YJS. The strategy will be available in 2025- 2026.

An action plan is now in place that pulls together the actions from the thematic review and the benchmarking exercise. Complex and contextual Safeguarding partnership working group have oversight of the action plan. There are single agency and multi-agency actions. In summary actions included:

- Oldham SCP to work in collaboration with OSCP to develop and implement an Oldham Serious Youth Violence Strategy and seek assurance relevant agencies are involved
- Systemic approach across the partnership and consider screening processes
- A need to be better at understanding around vulnerabilities and trauma, linked to risk and consider the whole family
- Ensure there is an understanding of education needs and barriers to learning.
- Single agencies to recruit specialist
- Consider what local data and intelligence is telling us.
- Capture the voice of young people

There is now an alternative provision specialist taskforce, led by Kingsland PRU. They are ensuring coordinated intervention and a reduction in youth violence from youth justice, social care, attendance and behaviour. The taskforce will be presenting to partners during 2025 – 2026. Kingland PRU are established member of the Statutory Partner meetings.

Consultation took place with local schools. Staff had their say as to what is happening in and around their setting and what the partnership can do to help prevent incidents and improve the safety and confidence of young people. The outcome has been shared with partners and OSCP. The next step is to carry out consultation with young people in schools, those involved with YJS and youth service.

CAMHS have recruited a youth justice practitioner (specialist nurse)

PCFT developed a trust wide action plan in relation to complex safeguarding and SYV. This will be overseen by PCFT but links with the OSCP action plan and thematic review recommendations.

Next steps:

Development of Serious Youth Violence Strategy -Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership (OSCP), in collaboration with the Oldham Safeguarding Community Partnership, is progressing the development and implementation of the Oldham Serious Youth Violence Strategy, with input from relevant partner agencies.

Analysis of School Attendance and Part-Time Timetables- Partners are currently analysing attendance data and part-time education timetables. Plans are in place to conduct a deep dive to explore potential links between educational disengagement and young people's activities in the community. Findings will be shared with the Learning Hub and the Performance Group.

Training and Development for Partners -The partnership is exploring appropriate training opportunities to support practitioners in responding effectively to issues related to serious youth violence and safeguarding.

Prevent Policy Development -Following a request from education partners, a draft Prevent Policy has been created by the Education Advisor, ensuring key partners were involved throughout the drafting process.

Youth Endowment Fund Research Project (2025–2026) -OSCP will participate in a national research study led by the Youth Endowment Fund. The project will review local responses to child criminal exploitation and extra-familial harm (EFH), assessing alignment with statutory roles and expectations. This offers a valuable opportunity to reflect on local practice and benefit from early insights and learning.

Young People's Consultation-OSCP will conduct a consultation with young people in education settings, including those in alternative provisions, to ensure their voices inform the strategy and related interventions.

Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust Engagement - Pennine Care will continue to lead the implementation of its Trust-wide Serious Youth Violence Action Plan and will actively support Brief Learning Reviews led by the Youth Justice Service.

Data-Driven Planning and Intervention -The Performance Group and Statutory Partners have requested that all agencies carry out further deep dives into their datasets to examine offender age, ward-level data, themes, and trends. These insights will inform planning and be presented for discussion and challenge from Quarter 1 onwards in performance group meetings.

Resource Development – 7-Minute Briefing -PCFT (Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust) is in the process of developing a 7-minute briefing to support knowledge dissemination and awareness among partners.

Internal Scrutiny

Robust scrutiny and constructive challenge comes from all areas to assess impact. The culture of professional challenge within the partnership is always present. This runs as a golden thread throughout the partnership

business in 'everything we do'. Partners report Inspection outcomes into the Partnership or any other peer scrutiny assurance relevant for the partnership such as HMI, Ofsted, CQC, or YJB inspections.

Learning outcomes are shared to continually improve partnership multi agency working

Education

Impact of Education within the safeguarding arrangements.

Following the retirement of the long-standing Education Safeguarding Advisor in July 2024, OSCP successfully recruited an advisor with excellent experience of partnership working with education settings. She also brought a breadth of experience from her role of a primary school headteacher. Since November 2024, the Safeguarding Advisor has actively engaged with education settings, building positive relationship and offering support and guidance to support settings in safeguarding all children and families effectively. The role of the Education Safeguarding Advisor also ensures that key multi-agency safeguarding learning is shared with schools' designated safeguarding leads (which includes schools, colleges and alternative providers) and designated teachers for looked-after-children.

As the education landscape has changed, the Education Safeguarding Advisor has developed the way training has been delivered for Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs). Traditionally, DSL training has been delivered by the Partnership at Rock Street. However, she has adapted training by working in collaboration with academy trusts so that training could be delivered to the DSLs across individual trusts to ensure that key messages on safeguarding were consistent. By working in partnership with the trusts, she was also able to incorporate key safeguarding themes identified by each trust and facilitate professional dialogue to ensure that everybody knows their roles, responsibilities and the correct protocols to follow.

Since starting in post, the Safeguarding Advisor has:

- **In collaboration with school colleagues developed the Section 175** to ensure governing bodies carry out an annual review of the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding and to provide information to the Local Authority about how the duties set out in the guidance have been discharged.
- **Devised an educational neglect policy** with the attendance and inclusion team and the Virtual School
- **Held DSL Networks every term.** Headteachers requested that DSL networks were split into primary and secondary, this happened from January 2025.
- **Offered advice and guidance** following complaints from parents and complaints escalated to Ofsted. Delivered training on having successful difficult conversations, whole staff safeguarding training, CPOMS and online safety.
- **Worked in partnership with the education department** within the Council to carry out safeguarding audits where appropriate to evaluate a setting's safeguarding arrangements, policies and procedures and presented these in comprehensive reports.
- **Supported the education department** by supporting governing bodies to strengthen the quality assurance required to improve standards and to support with safeguarding.
- **Successfully commissioned safeguarding training** and support for wraparound care providers.

To strengthen education in the partnership arrangements, OSCP partners including representatives from school settings engaged in Northwest RIPP workshop titled 'The voice of education in safeguarding partnerships-getting it right and evidencing impact'. This influenced the strength and participation from education settings in the governance arrangements.

The partnership now includes the participation of the Director of Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning, Assistant Director for Education and Early Years, Virtual Head and Strategic Lead for SEND. In addition, the business team attend strategic partnership meetings including headteacher forums and Early years partnership.

Schools are engaged in Rapid Reviews and Brief Learning Reviews, so that their voice is included in the review of serious incidents. The partnership plan to

Next Steps

Education Safeguarding Advisor

- Roll out the section 175, encouraging all schools and colleges to complete.
- Lead on a Prevent working group in the development of a handbook for education as requested by DSLs. The handbook will be a valuable resource for professionals covering terms and definitions, ideologies, myths and facts, processes for referral and much more.
- Roll out Safeguarding training for wraparound care providers in autumn/spring 2025.
- Deliver safeguarding training to the SEND and Inclusion team in Oldham.
- Develop and publish a template policy for safeguarding for education for the new academic year.
- Complete the NSPCC train the trainer course and use this to help get the DSL training accredited
- Revise the DSL training for any staff in education who are new to role or who need a refresher.
- Deliver DSL networks for primary and secondary education every term online and face to face.
- Work with colleagues in educational settings and the council to develop more materials to help strengthen the evidence gathering needed when safeguarding children and young people e.g. voice of the child to ensure that the loved experience of a child is fully represented and considered when making decisions

Children Social Care

- **The Safeguarding Advisor for Education works in partnership with colleagues in Children's Social Care** when there needs to be learning from referrals made into Duty and Advice. The Safeguarding Advisors will liaise with DSLs and Headteachers to feedback information from Children's Social Care as well as any further information gathered from the setting that may be appropriate to case discussions.
- **Representatives from Children's Social Care were involved in the quality assurance of the template policy** for safeguarding for education. There are also plans to build on this so that schools have reference materials that can be used and displayed to support other staff in schools.
- **Children's Social Care attend DSL networks to provide key information** regarding areas of safeguarding.

Youth Justice Service

Positive steps funding has been agreed to second a School Nurse into the Youth Justice Service. However, the Youth Justice Partnership Management Board have been made aware of difficulties recruiting into wider school nurse roles and the impact this may have on the position.

Police

Police continue to engage in schools with dedicated Schools officers and have started a 'Mini Police' programme. All helps identify early signs and educate children on risks.

Pol-Ed has been launched in GMP but uptake by Oldham education establishments has been limited which will reduce its impact on protecting our children. This has been raised at the OSCB and the OSCP and requests made at a strategic level to encourage education sign up. Both the Safeguarding Advisor and the Training consultant have met with Lee Collins to explore how we can support with the delivery of materials, as well as how data can be collated to understand the areas of safeguarding that schools are accessing across Oldham and how this reflects the local context for crime and all areas of safeguarding including complex.

Oldham College

Expansion of educational offer to learners to cover different learning styles. Wellbeing weeks focused on topics of tutorials, inviting external agencies into Oldham College to meet with learners and create positive multi-agency working

Working with the VRU- they have acquired funding for £5000, and are waiting for feedback from the link as to where to spend this

Expansion of the Wellbeing Offer- to offer ongoing goal-oriented sessions to learners, with the aim of empowering learners with a self-created 'Toolkit' to reduce pressures on specialist agencies such as CAMHS via early intervention.

Oldham College is also proud to be working in partnership with NHS Multi Systemic Therapies to offer Low-Level CBT intervention to learners aged 16-18. In addition to an on-site counselling provision, we offer talking therapies to all learners.

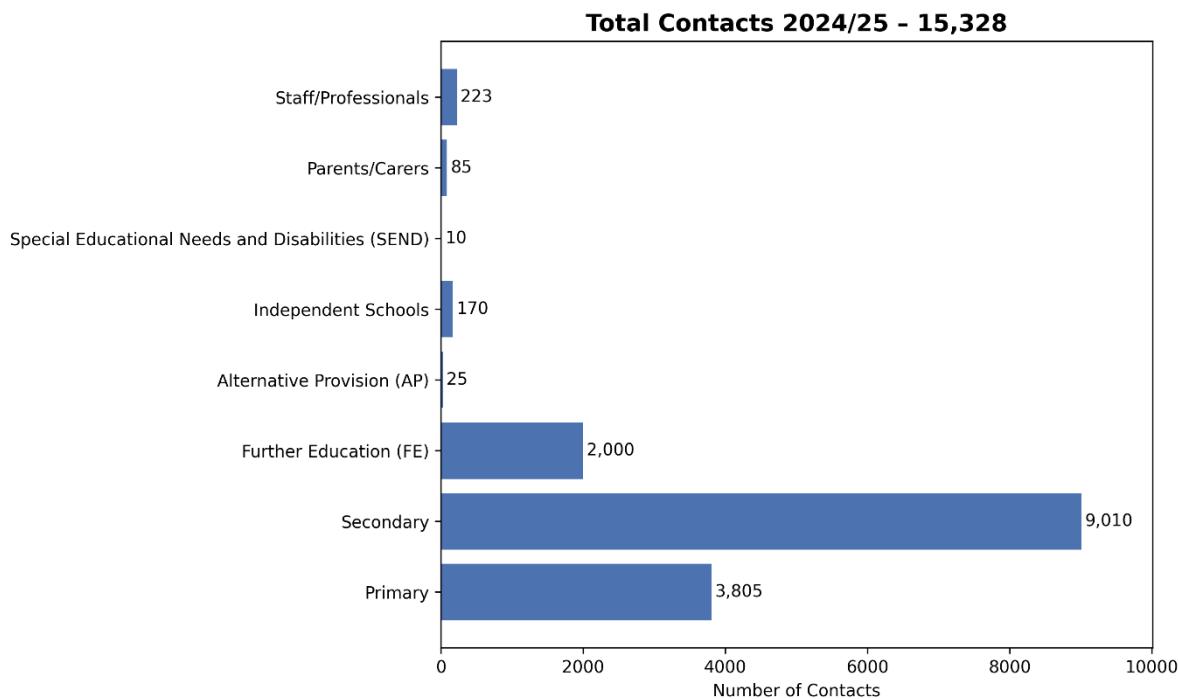
Community Safety

The Safeguarding Advisor for Education has liaised with colleagues from Community Safety on issues in schools e.g. hate crime so that appropriate support can be put in place to prevent further incidents from occurring.

Colleagues in Community Safety have been involved in reviewing the Prevent handbook to ensure that it complements the Prevent training that will be delivered in the new academic year. The Safeguarding Advisor for Education will be part of the training pool to support the new Prevent co-ordinator (when they are in post) in delivering this to staff in schools, colleges and other education settings.

Training Officer for Children and Young People

Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership provide three core services to schools: Training, professional advice / support, and direct delivery of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and health education in schools.



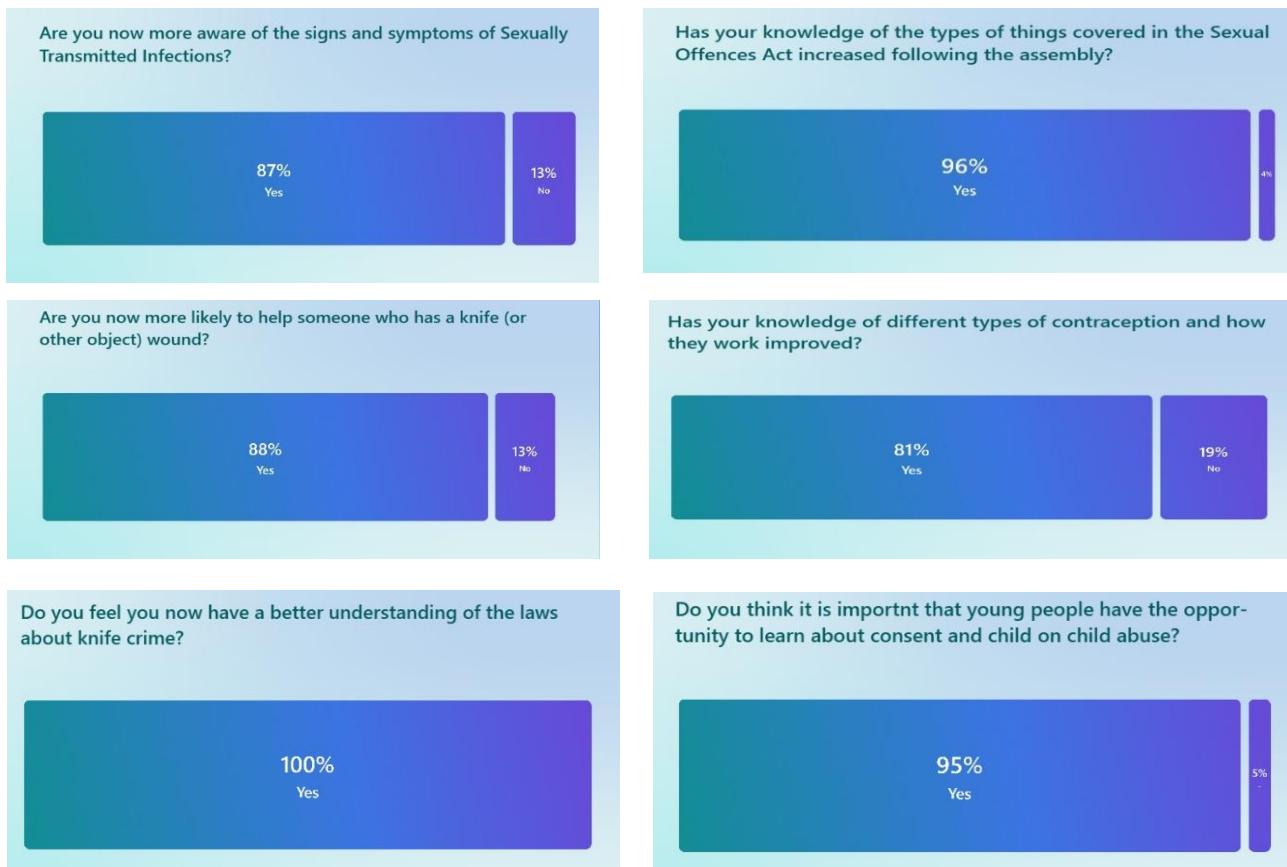
Pupil voice

We asked young people what safeguarding topics they feel would be helpful for them to learn more about. This is what they said:



Impact

Capturing impact and evaluation was a priority for the training officer role this academic year. This was gathered through MS Forms. Pupils were asked for their feedback following sessions and some examples are shown below:



Next Steps for 2025-26

Training Officer for Children

- **Continue to develop and deliver educational sessions** to young people – based on feedback from pupil voice and the partnership priorities.
- **STORM** (suicide and self-harm prevention) – develop an offer to professionals.
- **Develop and deliver a school offer on serious youth violence** – linked with the Pol-Ed curriculum resource and in partnership with the school engagement officers.

Training

What are we doing?

Effective safeguarding depends on staff and volunteers across all agencies having a clear understanding of their individual roles and responsibilities. This includes the ability to recognise when a child is at risk as well as the knowledge and skills to respond effectively.

Learning from Safeguarding Practice Reviews, Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) and Multi Agency Audits shows that the key to successful safeguarding is the ability to work effectively in multi-disciplinary and multi-agency settings.

The objective of our multi -agency training is to ensure everyone working with children, young people and families in Oldham have the right skills and knowledge, are competent in the work they undertake to provide timely support and interventions and to protect them from abuse and neglect.

The training programme continues to be closely linked to the priority safeguarding concerns identified in the partnership annual business plan. The training offer aims to deliver effective and cohesive training activity and continuous professional development for our workforce to ensure that all children and young people are safe and feel safe within their homes, schools, and communities.

It is important we have robust links between the OSCP Quality Assurance Framework at all levels and with our Workforce and Development Plan. We link our Workforce and Development Plan to our strategic priorities with dedicated training pathways particularly for complex and contextual Safeguarding, sexual abuse, domestic abuse and neglect. This means we can equip and support the workforce, to deliver high quality services and develop resilient practitioners.

Our website has been redesigned, and a new safeguarding topics facility will enable us to house a variety of information including videos from professionals that will enhance learning.

Who is doing this?

The training consultant has oversight of multi -agency training opportunities. The training pool continues to be the core delivery system for training which enables us to be Oldham centric in our work. All evaluation forms tend to reference the benefit of receiving local knowledge from local staff/services. We have devised a comprehensive person specification for training pool members and offer a train the trainer course to all our pool members. We are in the process of reviewing training courses and recruiting to the training pool.

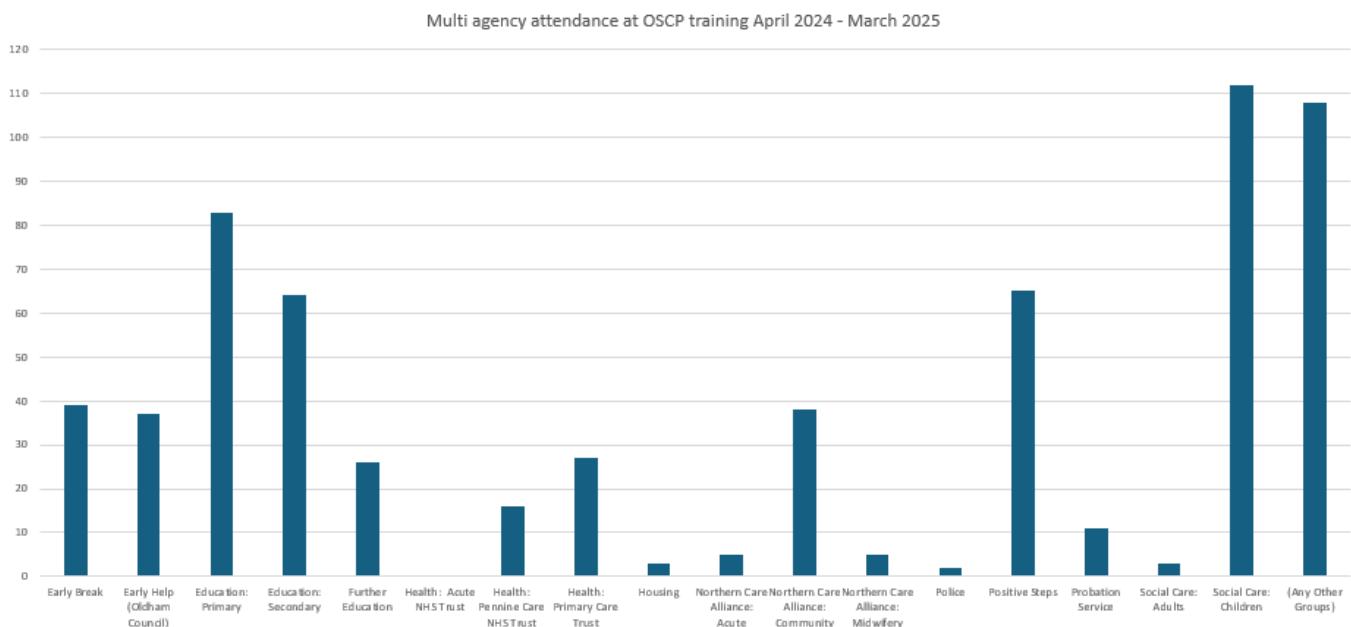
In 2024 – 2025, OSCP had a training pool of staff totalling 23. This included trainers from our statutory partners and relevant agencies. We also commission training when identified as a multi-agency learning priority.

As part of our commitment to professional development this year, we were proud to commission a webinar led by Dr Emma Katz, a leading academic in the field of coercive control. Dr Katz shared her research on the impact of coercive control on children and mothers, offering a deeper insight into how abuse affects family dynamics, emotional wellbeing, and long-term outcomes.

Attendance so far

There have been 55 training opportunities so far with 827 attendees. We offer a variety of blended learning including face to face classroom based, briefings and webinars. An agency breakdown of attendees is provided to the Strategic Learning and Review Hub on a regular basis to monitor attendance. The importance of multi-agency training as both a vehicle to deliver learning from local and national safeguarding reviews and as a platform to enhance multi agency working practices has remained a priority for OSCP.

OSCP Multi-Agency Training Programme offer an extensive and well utilised training programme. 827 practitioners and members of staff completed OSCP multi-agency training in 2024/25. Children's Social Care were the majority user followed by practitioners from the third/voluntary sector however, delegates came from a wide range of organisations.



Feedback from attendees

Lots of interactive tasks that provoked conversations, the trainer had extensive knowledge & shared it well

Wide range of content, active discussions

Lots of information, facts and examples all of which were education, offered insight and knowledge which helped me understand the topic

Really engaging, great pace and coverage

Increased knowledge by other professionals sharing experiences

Supplied with lots of knowledge/worksheets & group discussions made things simpler

Training Safeguarding Spotlight

We have retained the quarterly training offer (safeguarding spotlight) in place of an annual plan as this enables us to be flexible to any emerging needs or trends as identified via Safeguarding Reviews and the Strategic Learning Hub. Currently we have three training pathways relating to **domestic abuse, complex and contextual safeguarding, and neglect**. Along with the training levels, these pathways suggest the appropriate level of training that may be required from different staff dependent on their responsibilities and job role.

Confidence questions

Our original rollout of confidence questions which focused on complex safeguarding and child exploitation provided us with feedback which enable us to direct our training offer to specific areas of self-identified learning needs. We will continue to use confidence question surveys related to our priorities and any emerging themes and trends going forward, to ensure we are offering training the workforce identifies.



Evaluation

A range of approaches are used to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of our training programmes.

The Evaluation Form: All course participants are required to complete a pre/post learning scale (Likert scale) and evaluation form, which are reviewed by the OSCP Training Consultant.

The Pledge and Action Planning: A selection of courses will be identified in which participants pledge one action/a variety of actions as the result of training they will carry within one month, pledges are returned to the OSCP Training Consultant for review and follow up.

The Deep Dive: A selection of courses will be identified to undertake a deep dive three months after training. This will take the form of a telephone or Teams interview in which a set of pre-selected questions will be submitted to the participant and their manager. This will also be supported and scrutinised by our Independent Scrutineer.

Deep Dive Evaluation – Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference Training

Strategic Learning Hub agreed to the MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) course to be evaluated three months after the training.

Findings

Participants displayed they understood the purpose and rationale of the DASH- RIC and MARAC process. This is important as there are gradients of risk associated to domestic abuse and coercive control which require different interventions to protect victims and by nature protecting any children.

- **Staff were aware that domestic abuse is dynamic**, this is important as we move away from the incident model when assessing risk.
- **Staff were aware of significant risk factors and completed the DASH RIC as appropriate.** Of equal importance is when threshold was not met, a referral to MARAC was not made and advise was provided.

Staff provided examples of learning and practice improvement, including:

- **Understanding the importance of initial safety issues** when supporting victim/survivors and accessing advise from other professionals.
- The example that follows shows good professional curiosity and was linked to increased confidence and knowledge from the training – *“Staff A gave a recent example of how she had received a referral/contact from a father who reported that his wife was experiencing suicidal thoughts. When they looked into the case further the mother (partner) had reported DA to the Police that weekend. The mother reported that he had taken all her money and devices, changed her passwords so she wasn’t able to report this to anyone. Staff A reported that the DASH had already been completed for the mother when she received the referral/contact. She did say that the mother had ‘done all the right things’ generated new passwords, taken out a molestation order against him, reported him to the Police and ensured the children were safeguarded appropriately. The family where already known to Early Help so the support continued for the family.”*
- All cases were supported at the correct threshold

The Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2)

Oldham has adopted the GCP2, an evidence-based assessment tool that helps practitioners measure the quality of care provided by a parent or carer in meeting their child’s needs, particularly where there are concerns about neglect.

Staff who make up the training pool, train within their own agencies. This initially proved to be successful in relation to how many people were been trained. However, the physical training pool has significantly depleted. To ensure as many staff as possible are trained in using the tool the neglect subgroup will be discussing the purchase of the NSPCCs new GCP2 E- Learning module. This will potentially run alongside the limited face to face training now available and enable us to reach a much larger audience.

The number of Graded Care Profile 2 assessments completed has increased but does not reflect the level of local need. To date 93 practitioners are trained with 22 assessments being completed. The neglect subgroup is focusing on evaluating the use of the tool and the outcomes for children and families as a priority for 2025/26 as part of our ongoing implementation plan. The agreed reality for whole scale of implementation is several years.

Co Production

We have undertaken work with pupils at Blue Coats school creating an awareness raising lesson on gendered based violence, devised by young people for young people. We are working with a group of domestic abuse survivors to develop literature for friends and family, this being an action from a local DHR.

Next Steps

Our next training pathway will focus on intra familial child sexual abuse, linking into our already established complex safeguarding training pathway.

Northwest RIPP have secured funding between April 25 and March 26. Partners have access to a range of training and development opportunities in line with the NW priorities. The Response Pathway from the Centre of Excellence sets out how to respond to concerns of child sexual abuse: from first concerns and early help safeguarding through to child protection and criminal justice responses.

We will be implementing two multi agency practice weeks and one multi agency practice session per annum. The first focuses on intra familial child sexual abuse and will be running from 13-17 October 2025.

We have developed a multi-agency workforce development document which is due to be signed off at the next strategic learning and review group by partners that aims to ensure we:

- Have a robust system for embedding learning of local and national reviews
- Effectively respond to the learning and development needs of the workforce
- Promote critical analysis
- Support professional accountability and responsibility across the workforce
- Support a culture of best practice
- Encourage professional curiosity and challenge
- Work effectively with partner agencies to ensure multi agency and single agency training support the delivery of quality services
- Develop a skills-based offer of multi- agency learning

Online Impact

OSCP Website Engagement Summary

1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025



30,458

views from 8,952 users

↑ 30% from previous year



81,450

interactions

↑ 30% from previous year

Top pages:

- Training
- Policies
- LADO
- Referrals

During 2024-25

@SafeguardingOldham tweets have been seen more than **9000** times

There are now more than **1,500** subscribers to the fortnightly Oldham Safeguarding Bulletin



MENU ☰

Oldham
Safeguarding Children Partnership



Scrutinising the Safeguarding Children Partnership in Oldham

The role of Independent Scrutiny

I am pleased to introduce myself as the Independent Scrutineer for the Oldham Safeguarding Partnership. I joined the partnership towards the end of January 2025 and therefore my reflections are based on my findings to date.

My role as the Independent Scrutineer is to provide independent assurance by reflecting and reporting on the effectiveness of multi -agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in Oldham. I act as a critical friend to the partnership and challenge through ongoing appraisal of the partnerships in line with Working Together 2023. I look forward to sharing with you in the next annual report the findings and recommendations from the scrutiny work I undertake.

Reflections on the Annual Report

This report covers the period between April 2024 and March 2025. It reflects the safeguarding commitments of all partners, as we work to achieve our intentions as set out in our strategic plan.

This report was prepared by the OSCP Business Support Unit on behalf of the Partnership and recognises the progress the OSCP has made throughout the year and the challenges that remain that we will continue to address in 2025/26. I have reviewed the contents, and, as the Independent Scrutineer and based on my experience of the partnership to date, including meetings with Delegated Safeguarding partners, attendance at partnership meetings, observation of subgroups and access to robust analysis of the multi -agency data set, I can confidently say that the contents are an accurate reflection of the activities of the Partnership and its Subgroups. It highlights the areas where progress has been made and what we need to focus on in 2025/26 and beyond.

I can confirm that there is a strong commitment from the partnership to strengthening our approach to safeguarding and this is evidenced by the support and challenge that is evidenced in partnership meetings and the strategic leadership from the Delegated Safeguarding Partners and the willingness to work together to address challenges. It is also pleasing to note the strengthening of the role and representation from schools and education settings in our partnership.

What's Next for the Partnership? Issues of Note and Risks to be Dealt with Over the next 12 months.

Over the next 12 months the partnership will be responding to the Children's Wellbeing and School Bill, (<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3909>) this is a national programme of reform which will support the partnership in reviewing and enhancing how services are delivered to children and their families through the Family First Partnership Programme. The OSCP has a key role in supporting delivery of the reforms and I can confirm that the partnership is working to collaboratively to ensure that the reform is delivered and focussed on the needs of children and families in Oldham.

I am pleased to note the breadth of work that is undertaken to hear directly from children and families about the work the partnership undertakes. We know there is more to do to ensure that the voice and influence of Children and their families is strengthened in the work of partnership, and we will be exploring opportunities to strengthen this moving forward including opportunities for 'young scrutineers' to work alongside me in holding the partnership to account and to evidence the impact of the work they do.

Learning from Local Safeguarding Practice Reviews remains a key focus for the partnership and moving forward we are looking at how we can strengthen our approach to multi -agency audit and understanding of best practice to ensure that actions we take really do make a difference for children and young people.

Whilst there is always much to do to ensure we continuously improve our safeguarding practice I am confident that Oldham's Safeguarding Partnership will rise to the challenge, and our practitioners will continue to work tirelessly to ensure our children are safeguarded.

V. Buchanan .

Vicky Buchanan
Independent Safeguarding Scrutineer

Our plan for 2025

The Oldham Safeguarding Children Strategic Plan for 2024-27 has been developed to ensure it is compliant with Working Together 2023, and The National Framework for Children's Social Care and to reflect the changing strategic needs within Oldham.

OSCP Service Achieving Excellence Plan 2025



Service Priorities and Actions

OSCP Priority 1:
*Support and intervention
Responding to need at the right time*

Aim: Children and families will receive the earliest of help with agencies working together collaboratively with the earliest support and help available.

Key Actions:

- All agencies work in collaboration and alongside families with a coordinated approach to service delivery.
- Use approaches such as motivational interviewing and encourage children, young people, and families to have full use of safeguarding services (access to specialist/statutory services for children and young people).
- Ensure practitioners and agencies are trained to ensure they are responding to need at the right time.
- Provide help and support at the earliest opportunity and at the lowest level to prevent the escalation of need and prevent impairment to a child's health and development

OSCP Priority 2:
*Think child, think family, think child again
Multi-agency practice*

Aim: The child's lived experience will be central to multi agency practice and working together

Key Actions:

- Ensure children and families are thriving by making the best use of universal services such as health, childcare and education and are making good overall progress in all areas of their development.
- Ensure there is more help available with appropriate support plans and interventions in place.
- Share information effectively to understand the full context of a child's situation and take appropriate action.
- Follow best practice, such as empowerment, protection, prevention, partnership and accountability
- Value the voice of families and children at their time of need

OSCP Priority 3:
*Listening and learning
Reduce the impact of neglect*

Aim: Child's lived experience will be central with professionals being curious and critical thinking in practice.

Key Actions:

- Have a clear and robust offer of support at the earliest opportunity, balanced with child centred intervention and protection if required.
- Have a confident and competent workforce who are able to recognise, respond to neglect at the earliest opportunity, with a shared understanding of thresholds of neglect across the partnership.
- Consolidate GCP 2 implementation across the partnership workforce via growing the pool of trainers, training more staff and ensuring the right children and families are accessing the assessment tool to support interventions.
- The partnership to build community and voluntary sector links to spot, support and respond to issues of neglect. Particular activity to be targeted at being inclusive of Oldham's diverse community.

OSCP Priority 4:
Prevention & Serious Youth Violence

Aim:

Key Actions:

- Conduct a thematic review with accountability for actions.
- Hold a prevention conference in Oldham involving practitioners working with children from across the borough
- Offer support at the right time and in the right way reducing barriers and providing signposting
- Work with partners and develop relationship to improve information sharing.
- Complete a benchmarking exercise to look at current strengths and weaknesses

Financial Breakdown

Working in partnership means organisations and agencies should collaborate on how they will fund their arrangements.

The table below shows the partnership's income and key expenses over the past 12 months. Staff costs include:

- Business Manager (FT)
- Business Coordinator (FT)
- Partnership Support Officer (FT)
- Training Consultant (PT)
- Training Officer for Education (PT)
- Safeguarding Advisor for Education (FT)
- Lead for Child Employment and Entertainment (PT)

The Partnership Business Unit, is now fully staffed, provides logistical, administrative, and development support. A summary of other costs is provided in the table

The OSCP budget is agreed annually and funded by partner contributions, which have remained static for some years. Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) manages the budget for Greater Manchester Police (GMP) and determine GMP contribution to Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership. Positively it has been proposed a 2.6% inflationary increase for the 2025/26 financial year.

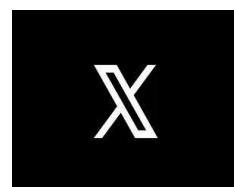
In 2024/25, OSCP faced significant costs due to five ongoing Local Safeguarding Children Practice Reviews (LCSPRs). Despite this financial pressure, careful budget management ensured sufficient funding to support all key elements of the arrangements, including the LCSPRs.

Income 2024/25		Expenditure 2024/25	
Local Authority	162,092.89	Business Unit Salaries	316,649.20
Integrated Care Board (ICB Oldham)	71,366.93	Local Safeguarding Children Practice Reviews (LCSPR)	35,263.30
Police	14,367.00	Website	1,675.00
Service Level Agreements (Academies and Independent schools)	80,497.12	Meetings and Events	1,215.00
Probation	3,149.50	Independent Scrutiny	7,660.00
Dedicated schools grant (DSG)	110,000.00	Subscriptions/Memberships	53.66
		Overheads	78,042.28
		Procedures	915.00
Total Income 24/25	441,473.44	Total Expenditure 24/25	441,473.44

Appendix 1 - Statements from Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership agencies.

In addition to the Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership's Annual Report—which outlines local safeguarding trends, partnership actions over the past year, and priorities for the year ahead—individual agencies are invited to contribute highlights of their own safeguarding activity. These contributions are published as **Single Agency Reports** providing further insight into the breadth and depth of safeguarding work across Oldham

Keep in touch



Follow us on X.

[@SafeguardOldham](https://twitter.com/SafeguardOldham)



Visit our website: <https://www.olscb.org/>

Email: OSCP.Group@oldham.gov.uk



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY BOARD

WORK PROGRAMME 2025/26

Agenda item	Purpose	Portfolio lead & officer lead	Method of scrutiny	Additional information
Tuesday 17th June 2025				
Corporate Performance Report – 2024/25 Q4	To receive and consider the quarter 4 performance report	Portfolio – Children and Young People and Education and Skills Attendees: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Julie Daniels- Tony Decrop- Matt Bulmer	Report	
Family Hubs Programme	To receive an annual update report on the Family Hubs Programme	Portfolio – Children and Young People. Attendees: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Tony Decrop- Bruce Penhale	Report	
Children's Services - update on financial performance, Action Plan and Childrens Transformation and Sustainability Programme	To receive a periodic 6 month update report and to scrutinise the performance in respect of financial performance in Children's Services and delivery of the Achieving Excellence Action Plan and Transformation and Sustainability programme.	Portfolio – Children and Young People. Attendees: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Tony Decrop- Sheila Garara- Andy Cooper	Report	Agreed in 2024/25 to move from March to June reporting to cover previous year outturn position
Tuesday 22nd July 2025				

Youth Council annual report	Annual Report on events and activities commissioned by the Youth Council	Portfolio – Children and Young People. Attendees: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Jodie Barber- Member of the youth council	Report	Moved from March meeting as annual report isn't available until May
Youth Justice Plan 2025/26	To scrutinise the Youth Justice Plan for 2025/26	Portfolio - Children and Young People. Attendees: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Julie Daniels.- Paul Axon, Chief Executive Positive Steps.- Claire Griffiths, Head of Youth Justice, Positive Steps	Plan	
Tuesday 30th September 2025				
SEND update	To receive and consider the SEND priority action plan and improvement programme update report	Portfolio – Education and Skills. Attendees: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Matt Bulmer- Katie Charlton	Report	
Children, Young People and Families Plan 2025/26	To scrutinise the Children, Young People and Families Plan 2025/26	Portfolio – Children and Young People. Attendees: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Julie Daniels- Sheila Garara	Plan	
Thursday 27th November 2025				

Performance Assurance Report – 2025/26 Q1 and Q2	To receive and consider the quarter 1 and 2 performance report	Portfolio – Children and Young People and Education and Skills Attendees: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Julie Daniels- Tony Decrop- Matt Bulmer	Report	
CSE Steering Group Annual Report	To receive and consider the annual report	Portfolio – Children and Young People. Attendees: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Tony Decrop- Michelle Bernasconi- Natassja Gollcher	Report	
Children's Services - update on financial performance, Action Plan and Childrens Transformation and Sustainability Programme	To receive a periodic 6 month update report and to scrutinise the performance in respect of financial performance in Children's Services and delivery of the Achieving Excellence Action Plan and Transformation and Sustainability programme.	Portfolio – Children and Young People. Attendees: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Tony Decrop- Sheila Garara- Andy Cooper	Report	Agreed in 2024/25 to move from March to June reporting to cover previous year outturn position. This will be the 6 month update from then.
Thursday 15th January 2026				
Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report	To receive and consider the Board's Annual Report	Portfolio – Children and Young People. Attendees: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Tony Decrop,- Jayne Haigh	Report	
Primary and Secondary School Outcomes	To receive and consider the annual update report	Portfolio – Education and Skills	Report	Deferred until March meeting.

		<p>Attendees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Matt Bulmer - Tony Shepherd 		
Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)	To receive an update report on participation and NEET rates and on activities looking to ensure appropriate opportunities for 16-18 year olds.	<p>Portfolio – Education and Skills.</p> <p>Attendees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Matt Bulmer - Amanda Youlden 	Report	
Thursday 12th March 2026				
Performance Assurance Report – 2025/26 Q3	To receive and consider the quarter 3 performance report	<p>Portfolio – Children and Young People and Education and Skills</p> <p>Attendees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Julie Daniels - Tony Decrop - Matt Bulmer 	Report	
Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) Annual Report Oldham 2025/26.	To receive and consider the annual report	<p>Portfolio – Education and Skills</p> <p>Attendees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Matt Bulmer - Tony Shepherd 	Report	
Mental Health Services Wait Times Task and Finish Group report	To consider the report of the task and finish group	<p>Portfolio – Children and Young People and Adults, Health and Wellbeing</p>	Report of the task and finish group	

Task and finish group deep dives:

Deep dive area:	Expanded proposal:
Issues impacting children and young people	Workshop to include lived experience from children and young people.
Corporate parenting responsibilities	Workshop with the Corporate Parenting Board to understand corporate parenting responsibilities and to seek assurance that the role is effectively being carried out, to include feedback from children and young people.
Mental Health Service Wait Times	Task and Finish Group to look at issues related to waiting times and the action being undertaken to reduce these.

Note: papers to be submitted to constitutional services no later than 8 days before the meeting to be published on the council website.

This page is intentionally left blank

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 1 JANUARY 2026

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
FCR-11-25	Budget 2026/27 – Determination of the Tax Bases for Council Tax Setting and for Business Rates Income Purposes	Director of Finance	19 th January 2026	Cabinet
<p>Description:</p> <p>The Determination of the Tax Bases for Council Tax Setting and for Business Rates Income for use in 2026/27 budget deliberations</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: Report Title:</p> <p>Budget 2026/27 – Determination of the Tax Bases for Council Tax Setting and for Business Rates Income Purposes</p>				
<p>Background Documents: Appendices - Various</p> <p>–Report to be considered in Public</p>				
NEI-09-25	United Utilities Plc Partnership Agreement	Director of Environment	19 th January 2026	Cabinet
<p>Description:</p> <p>This report seeks approval from Cabinet to approve the proposed updates to the Partnership Agreement between Oldham Council and United Utilities Plc.</p> <p>Report Title: United Utilities Plc Partnership Agreement</p> <p>Appendices - Various</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: Public</p>				

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 1 JANUARY 2026

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
NEI-11-25	School Backlog Maintenance	Executive Director for Place & Economic Growth/Deputy Chief Executive	19 th January 2026	Cabinet
Description: To update and for Cabinet to authorise maintenance work at the Borough's schools				
Report Title: School Backlog Maintenance Background Documents:				
Appendices - Various				
Report to be considered in public or private: Public				
EDS-07-25	Speech, Language and Communication Needs Business Case	Director of Education, Skills & Early Years	19 th January 2026	Cabinet
Description: To update the Cabinet on the Speech, Language and Communication Needs Business Case				
Report Title: Speech, Language and Communication Needs Business Case				
Appendices - Various				
Report to be considered in public or private: Public				
RBO-16-25	Oldham Local Plan: Publication Plan for Public Consultation	Executive Director for Place & Economic Growth/Deputy Chief Executive	19 th January 2026	Cabinet

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 1 JANUARY 2026

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
<p>Description: A report seeking approval for the publication of, and consultation on, the Oldham Local Plan: Publication Plan (Regulation 19).</p> <p>Report Title: Oldham Local Plan: Publication Plan for Public Consultation</p> <p>Appendices - Various</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: public</p>				
RBO-17-25 New!	Preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents for Oldham allocations in Places for Everyone	Executive Director for Place & Economic Growth/Deputy Chief Executive	19 th January 2026	Cabinet
<p>Description: This report sets out the process for preparing Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) for allocations in Oldham that require a masterplan and design code in Places for Everyone, specifically the timeline for the consultation on, and adoption of, the Beal Valley and Broadbent Moss Masterplan and Design Code SPD.</p> <p>Report title: Preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents for Oldham allocations in Places for Everyone</p> <p>Appendices - various</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: public</p>				
HSC-13-25 New!	Yew Tree Community School - Capital Works	Executive Director of Children's Services	19 th January 2026	Cabinet

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 1 JANUARY 2026

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
	<p>Description: To update the Cabinet on the capital works required at Yew Tree Community School</p> <p>Report Title: Yew Tree Community School - Capital Works</p> <p>Appendices - Various</p> <p>Report to be considered in public or private: Public</p>			
FCR-19-25 New!	Revenue Monitor and Capital Investment Programme 2025/26 Quarter 3	Director of Finance	9 th February 2026	Cabinet
	<p>Description:</p> <p>The report provides an update on the Council's 2025/26 forecast revenue budget position and the financial position of the capital programme as at the period ending 31 December 2025 (Quarter 3)</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: Report Title:</p> <p>Revenue Monitor and Capital Investment Programme 2025/26 Quarter 3</p> <p>Background Documents: Appendices – Various</p> <p>Report to be considered in Public</p>			
FCR-18-25 New!	Revenue Budget 2026/27 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2026/27 to 2030/31	Director of Finance	9 th February 2026	Cabinet

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 1 JANUARY 2026

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
<p>Description: To consider the Administration's detailed revenue budget for 2026/27 and budget reduction proposals, together with the Medium-Term Financial Strategy for 2026/27 to 2030/31, incorporating the current policy landscape and Local Government Finance Settlement.</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: Report Title: Revenue Budget 2026/27 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2026/27 to 2030/31</p>				
<p>Background Documents: Various appendices</p> <p>Report to be considered in Public</p>				
FCR-17-25 New!	Capital Programme & Capital Strategy for 2026/27 to 2030/31	Director of Finance	9 th February 2026	Cabinet
<p>Description: To consider the Council's Capital programme and capital strategy</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: Report Title: Capital Programme & Capital Strategy for 2026/27 to 2030/31</p>				
<p>Background Documents: Appendices</p> <p>–Report to be considered in Public</p>				
FCR-16-25 New!	Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2026/27	Director of Finance	9 th February 2026	Cabinet

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 1 JANUARY 2026

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
<p>Description: To consider the Council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2026/27 - including Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement, Annual Investment Strategy and Prudential Indicators</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: Report Title: Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2026/27</p>				
<p>Background Documents: Appendices</p> <p>–Report to be considered in Public</p>				
FCR-15-25 New!	Housing Revenue Account Estimates for 2026/27 to 2030/31 and Projected Outturn for 2025/26	Director of Finance and Executive Director for Place & Economic Growth/Deputy Chief Executive	9 th February 2026	Cabinet
<p>Description: The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Outturn Estimates for 2025/26, the detailed budget for 2026/27 and the Strategic HRA Estimates for the four years 2027/28 to 2030/31.</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: Proposed Report Title: Housing Revenue Account Estimates for 2026/27 to 2030/31 and Projected Outturn for 2025/26.</p> <p>Background Documents: Appendices</p> <p>–Report to be considered in Public</p>				

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 1 JANUARY 2026

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
HSC-16-25	Retender of Integrated Community Equipment Services (ICEs)	Director of Adult Social Care/DASS	23 rd February 2026	Cabinet
Description: To update the Cabinet on a proposed retendering process for Integrated Community Equipment Services				
Report Title: Retender of Integrated Community Equipment Services (ICEs)				
Appendices - Various				
Report to be considered in public or private: Public				
HSC-17-25 New!	OHID Funding Allocation for Core Adult Substance Misuse Treatment Services for 2026/27	Director of Public Health	23 rd February 2026	Cabinet
Description: To update the Cabinet on the proposed funding allocations for adult care substance misuse treatment services.				
Report Title: OHID Funding Allocation for Core Adult Substance Misuse Treatment Services for 2026/27				
Appendices - Various				
Report to be considered in public or private: Public				
RBO-19-25 New!	Biodiversity Duty Report	Executive Director for Place & Economic Growth/Deputy Chief Executive	23 rd February 2026	Cabinet

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 1 JANUARY 2026

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
<p>Description: This report seeks approval to publish the Biodiversity Duty Report (2026) in line with section 40A of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.</p> <p>Report Title: Biodiversity Duty Report</p> <p>Appendices - Various</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private:</p>				
NEI-13-25 New!	Award of LEVI CRSTS Contract to Preferred Supplier	Director of Environment	23 rd February 2026	Cabinet
<p>Description: Decision to award the Contract for Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) project. To be funded by TfGM's LEVI grant funding plus a contribution from Oldham's CRSTS funding of electric vehicle infrastructure</p> <p>Report Title: Award of LEVI CRSTS Contract to Preferred Supplier</p> <p>Appendices - Various</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: Private - commercially sensitive information (paragraph 3)</p>				
CHS-04-25	Oldham Strategy - Giving every child the best start in life	Executive Director of Children's Services	23 rd February 2026	Cabinet

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 1 JANUARY 2026

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
<p>Description: This report seeks approval from Cabinet to approve, develop and publish the Oldham Borough's Strategy entitled: "Giving every child the best start in life".</p> <p>Report Title: Oldham Strategy - Giving every child the best start in life</p> <p>Appendices - Various</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: public</p>				
FCR-20-25 New!	Revenue Monitor and Capital Investment Programme 2025/26 Month 10	Director of Finance	23 rd March 2026	Cabinet
<p>Description: The report provides an update on the Council's 2025/26 forecast revenue budget position and the financial position of the capital programme as at the period ending 31 January 2026 (Month 10)</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: Report Title:</p> <p>Revenue Monitor and Capital Investment Programme 2025/26 Month 10</p> <p>Background Documents: Appendices – Various</p> <p>Report to be considered in Public</p>				
RBO-18-25 New!	Princes Gate	Executive Director for Place & Economic Growth/Deputy Chief Executive	23 rd March 2026	Cabinet

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 1 JANUARY 2026

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
<p>Description: This report seeks approval from Cabinet to approve proposed developments at Princes Gate, Oldham.</p> <p>Report Title: Princes Gate</p> <p>Appendices - Various</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: Private - commercially sensitive information (paragraph 3)</p>				

Key:

New! - indicates an item that has been added this month

Notes:

1. The procedure for requesting details of documents listed to be submitted to decision takers for consideration is to contact the Contact Officer contained within the Key Decision Sheet for that item. The contact address for documents is Oldham Council, Civic Centre, West Street, Oldham, OL1 1UH. Other documents relevant to those matters may be submitted to the decision maker.
2. Where on a Key Decision Sheet the Decision Taker is Cabinet, the list of its members are as follows: Councillors Arooj Shah (Chair of Cabinet and Leader of the Council), Elaine Taylor, Abdul Jabbar MBE, Shaid Mushtaq, Barbara Brownridge, Mohon Ali, Peter Dean, Fida Hussain and Chris Goodwin.
3. Full Key Decision details (including documents to be submitted to the decision maker for consideration, specific contact officer details and notification on if a report is likely to be considered in private) can be found via the online published plan at:
<http://committees.oldham.gov.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RPlId=144&RD=0>