



# OLDHAM SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT

**1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023**



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

Approved by Oldham Safeguarding Children Partners on

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**Date of publication: November 2023**

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# Contents

Message from the Independent Chair	4
Reflections from the Statutory Safeguarding Partners	5
Introduction	6
Profile of Safeguarding in Oldham	7
Safeguarding Priorities for 2022-2023	8
Voice of Children and Young People	9-10
Activity and Impact	11-13
Learning & Quality Assurance Activity	14-15
Training and Communications	16
Independent Scrutiny	17-18
Our plan for 2023-2024	19
Keep in Touch	20

## Message from the Independent Chair

The year 2022-23 has been a challenging one for the Oldham children's safeguarding partnership. The conclusion of the Covid pandemic did not automatically mean a resumption of business as usual and significant pressures were faced by the partnership with respect to staffing and skills shortages, the requirements of external regulators and the emergent cost of living crisis. In the context of Oldham, this latter pressure adds to that posed by the pre-established social and economic deprivation experienced by a significant number of the local residents. Despite these forces it remains the case that:

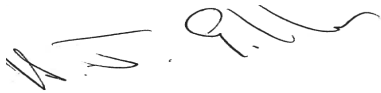
Oldham has a vibrant safeguarding children partnership with active engagement of both statutory partners and other relevant agencies.

The partnership seeks to actively embrace the contributions of key stakeholders – particularly children and young people – with respect to their perspectives on the current state of service provision and how it may be improved.

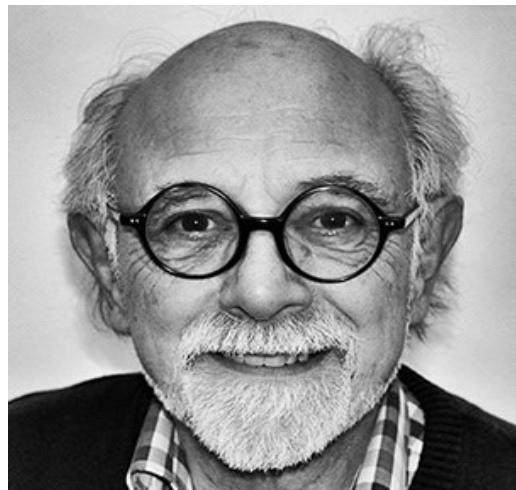
The partnership pursues a variety of safeguarding priorities underpinned by robust evidence as to their local relevance.

The partnership promotes transparency and accountability in its decision making and service delivery and is committed to change and improvement in the face of challenge.

I trust that this annual report effectively communicates the commitment of the partners in Oldham to safeguarding, their pursuit of best practice, their willingness to innovate and change and their resolution to ensuring that the children of Oldham are safe.



**Dr Henri Giller, Independent Chair of the Oldham Safeguarding  
Children Partnership**



## Reflections from our Statutory Partners

2022/23 has seen Greater Manchester Police [GMP] be reassessed by HMICFRS and the force taken out of 'Enhanced Scrutiny/Special Measures'. HMICFRS has, quite rightly, subjected the Force to a tough process and have set the bar deliberately high. And whilst we are now out of the 'Enhanced Scrutiny/Special Measures' nothing in these welcome developments implies any complacency on our part.

The force fully recognise that much remains to improve still further. It does however represent a tangible and substantial step on the journey set out by the Chief Constable in which we all "aspire to be the finest Force in our country".

The support and joint-agency working within the Oldham Safeguarding Partnership is strong and this along GMP's improved crime recording and investigations all combine towards our shared determination to make Oldham a safer place to live, work and visit.

The leadership within Oldham District remains focused on continuing to build and develop further on the excellent partnership we have already established. As a district, we continue to prioritise Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and take a pro-active approach to safeguarding victims of sexual and violent crimes.

We continue to investigate a number of serious and complex crimes within the district and through the partnership we are determined to seek justice for the victims and safeguard all victims of crime. I will continue to share these updates on investigations when the judicial process allows me to do so.

Partnership working remains one of my main priorities and with the introduction of 'Right Care, Right Person' we move towards a new era of partnership working.

2023/24 will bring many challenges for the partnership but am also excited as we work together to further develop our multi-agency offer over the coming months and years, this will be enhanced as we move some of our safeguarding team to the new co-located premises in the Spindles.

**Best wishes, Ch Supt Phil Hutchinson, District Commander, Oldham**



Our Oldham Safeguarding Children's Partnership is the cornerstone of our mature and effective multi-agency response to safeguarding children and supporting families in Oldham. It has been a challenging year in which all agencies have seen high levels of demand as the legacy of COVID 19 has impacted on our community. We have maintained a relentless focus on improving complex and contextual safeguarding, domestic abuse, children's mental health, neglect, and transitions for children at all key points in their lives. OSCP has worked at pace to implement action plans from the learning from local reviews into practice improvement through a more effective Learning Hub sub-group, and a revised training offer to schools and colleges which better aligns with our key priorities. For these reasons we are confident but not complacent that we will rise to the challenges we will face in the coming year. We have recognised the need as a partnership to expand the scope and impact of early help to prevent harm to children and family breakdown and will continue to roll out better support to families where they live through our Family Hubs Programme.

**Gerard Jones**  
**Managing Director of Children & Young People (DCS)**



2022/23 has been a year of change within health. Integrated Care Boards were formed in July 2022, which saw the Oldham Clinical Commissioning Group merge with the other 9 localities across Greater Manchester to form the Integrated Care Board. The Safeguarding Team also experienced change in 2022 and a newly appointed Designated Children's Nurse and a newly appointed Deputy Designated Children Looked After Nurse were recruited.

2022/23 has provided challenges for the residents of Oldham following the COVID pandemic both from a health and financial perspective, this has impacted upon the safeguarding activity within health, there are significant concerns for our young people regarding neglect, criminal and sexual exploitation and children and young peoples mental health.

The Safeguarding Team within the GM ICB Oldham locality are committed to working jointly with partners both statutory and non-statutory to drive forward improvement and change for the benefit of all children in the borough. The Safeguarding Team work closely in collaboration with colleagues across all localities within the GM system to ensure that learning and lived experiences are recognised across GM and learning is embedded within Oldham to provide fair and equal opportunities and access to services and support for all children and young people.

**Andrea Edmondson**  
**Head of Quality & Safeguarding (Oldham Locality)**  
**NHS Greater Manchester**



# Introduction

## Safeguarding Partnership

The Oldham Strategic Safeguarding Partnership has been developed by Oldham Council, Greater Manchester Police, and the Oldham Clinical Commissioning Group to ensure that all children and young people in the area get the safeguarding and protection they need in order to help them to thrive.

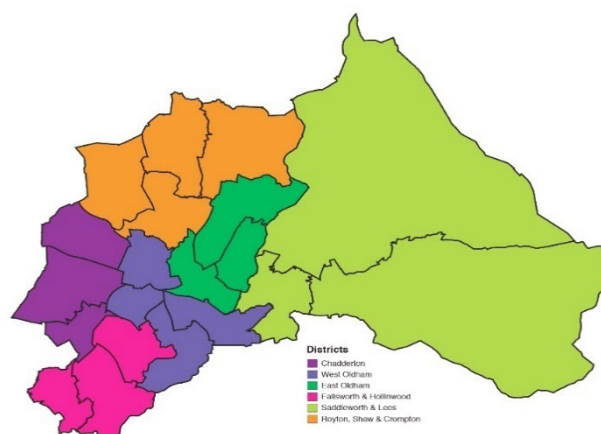
The Partnership provides leadership and accountability for the promotion of children and young peoples' well-being and the prevention and protection from harm.

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 will continuously strive to improve and challenge each other to learn the lessons from daily practice.

Safeguarding is everyone's business, and the Oldham Safeguarding Partnership will provide lead responsibility in demonstrating what this means for all people and professionals living and working in the local community.

### Our strategic aims include:

- Excellent practice is the norm across all practitioners in Oldham
- Partner agencies hold one another to account effectively
- There is early identification of new safeguarding issues
- Learning is promoted and embedded
- Information is shared effectively
- The public feel confident that children are protected



Oldham has a population of 224,900 people making it the 6<sup>th</sup> largest borough in Greater Manchester.

There is a high proportion of Oldham residents under the age of 16 years (22.7%) compared with 15.9% over the age of 65 years.

Oldham has a diverse population with 22.5% of residents and 46% of school pupils from Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds.

38% of children in Oldham are living in poverty – this is the highest figure in the UK

Oldham is ranked 19<sup>th</sup> worst out of 317 local authority areas on the indices of deprivation. Five areas within Oldham are ranked amongst the top 1% of the nation's most deprived areas.

# Profile of Safeguarding in Oldham

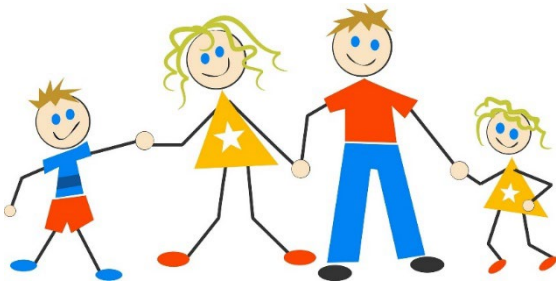
Quarterly performance continues to be monitored and scrutinised by the Partnership's Performance Management Group, before being presented by exception to the Strategic Safeguarding Partnership.

Contacts to MASH

29,647

Contacts converted to Referrals

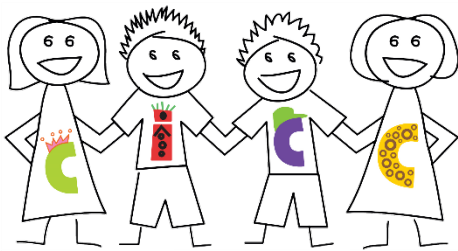
5372



3,435 referrals made to Targeted Early Help



2906 S47 enquiries initiated



543 children looked after as of March 2023



507 children on child protection plans as of March 2023



273 children electively home educated

# Safeguarding Priorities for 2022-2023

## Partnership Development Session – January 2023

### Reflection on the previous 12 months

In January 2023 Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership came together to reflect on, and review the impact of the work driven by the Partnership since April 2022.

The 9 months prior had seen significant change within some of the agencies, including changes in key roles within the Partnership governance paired with significant organisational changes e.g., the transition from Clinical Commissioning Group arrangements to the Integrated Care Board.

The Partnership's five priority areas in 2022-2023 were.

1. Neglect
2. Complex and Contextual Safeguarding
3. Domestic Abuse
4. Children's Mental Health and the impact of trauma.
5. Transitions

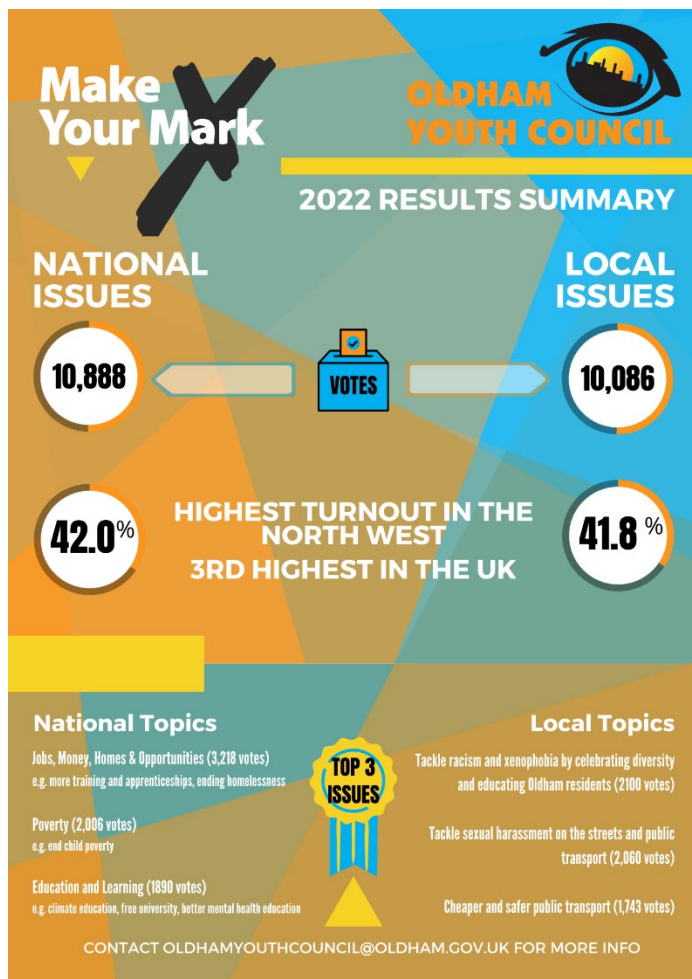


# Voice of children and young people

## Make Your Mark 2022

Every year the United Kingdom Youth Parliament (UKYP) holds a UK wide ballot called 'Make Your Mark', where all young people, 11-18, can vote on what they feel is important in their lives and what they think Members of the Youth Parliament should campaign on for the year ahead.

In 2022, young people chose 1 topic from a list of 10 topics created by Members of Youth Parliament and 1 issue from a list of 10 issues created by Oldham Youth Councillors. 10,888 young people took part in Oldham from 18 of Oldham's high schools and colleges. The top 2 topics were 'Jobs, Money, Homes & Opportunities' and 'Poverty' with the top 2 issues being 'Tackle racism and xenophobia by celebrating diversity and educating Oldham residents' and 'Tackle sexual harassment on the streets and public transport'.



## You Stand Accused

From Make Your Mark it was clear that hate crime was something that young people wanted tackling. Oldham Youth Council and Oldham Council commissioned and worked collaboratively with Oldham Theatre Workshop, who produced and immersive Theatre piece called 'You Stand Accused'. aimed to educate and inspire young people to be proactive about confronting hate crime and hate speech in their communities.

Students were placed in the shoes of a hate crime 'offender' and the immersive theatre experience took place in a correction centre. The young people had the opportunity to hear and absorb victim's stories (through real testimonies and experiences) and see first-hand the consequences of hate crime activity. This powerful experience helped them understand what 'hate crime' and 'hate speech' is and the impact it has on its many victims.

Secondary schools from across the Oldham Borough were invited to bring 10 pupils from years 7 - 9 to take part in the experience with a view to forming an action group in their schools which will educate their peers around the issue. This 'Community Service' was to help spread the message and encourage awareness and empathy amongst young people within Oldham.

The performance was such a success as well as a run in June 2022, it was recommissioned for the following October.

In June, 12 schools took up the offer with 288 pupils attending the performance. The following October saw 10 schools bring across 246 pupils.

Photos below, taken from twitter, show the cast and students from Royton and Crompton School.



With the results of Make Your Mark showing that young people wanted someone to tackle sexual harassment Oldham Youth Council looked into planning a campaign around raising awareness of what street harassment was, the laws associated with it and how to report it. In researching this topic, they came across an organisation named Our Streets Now who campaign demanding the right of women, girls and marginalised genders to be safe in public space. Rather than set up their own campaign Oldham Youth Council decided to join Our Streets Now campaign.

Youth Councillors were able to attend online sessions to help to discuss what the campaign would entail and how it would be promoted. They helped produce social media content and a poster campaign targeted at hot spot areas such as bus terminuses and train/tram stops. The poster will promote a text number to report instances of sexual harassment as well raising awareness of what unwanted harassment may include.



## Activity and Impact – Domestic Abuse

### Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse, and the effect it has on children and families in Oldham is sadly a repeating issue over many years of Annual Reports and plans. Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership remains committed to preventing Domestic Abuse and making sure that the correct support is available for any child affected by it.

Over 2022-2023 there were significant areas of progress:

- There is an agreed Multi-Agency Domestic Abuse Strategy informed by SafeLives review of domestic abuse in Oldham.
  - There is now an agreed Multi-Agency Domestic Abuse Policy.
  - A Domestic Abuse Directory for professionals has been produced and distributed.
  - Through investment, there was an increase in capacity in Domestic Abuse Team over the year.
  - Implemented commissioned perpetrator offer with TLC – both for adults and children who have been abusive in their family relationships.
  - Expanded provision of safe accommodation for victims of abuse and their children, through recommissioning refuge, expanded use of dispersed accommodation and buy in to men's refuge in Trafford.
  - Investment in VCFSE Women's Network.
  - White Ribbon status achieved for Oldham Council.
  - A dedicated Senior Honour Based Violence specialist in the Domestic Abuse team.
1. Strengthen the support offer to at standard and medium levels of risk.
  2. Improved communication of the support offer including increasing the availability of online self-help resources
  3. Completion of a multi-agency training audit to identify gaps, and build capacity of services to support victims of abuse and their children.
  4. Specific capacity building initiatives – CHIDVA, IRIS with GPs and Senior IDVA supporting Children's Services, seek additional funding for hospital IDVA.
  5. Extend the commissioned intervention with perpetrators of Domestic Abuse to March 2025
  6. Disruption work with the identified high harm cohort.
  7. Further improving operation of Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)
  8. Revisiting Operation Encompass to ensure that the process provides the most appropriate, timely information to schools so children affected by Domestic Abuse can be supported.
  9. There are impending changes in May 2023 to how referrals to services are processed at the 'front door' (MASH) and this presents additional opportunities for early intervention.



# Activity and Impact – Complex and Contextual Safeguarding

## Complex and contextual safeguarding

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.

Over 2022-23 the partnership continued the work from the previous year regarding the Peer Review of services in the borough, and started to progressed the learning from [The review into historic safeguarding practices in the borough of Oldham](#)

The Complex Safeguarding Hub continued to evolve become and worked with over 200 young people in 2022-2023 on a range of preventative and protective interventions.

## Complex Safeguarding Weeks of action:

2 successful weeks of action were undertaken by the Complex Safeguarding Hub team in October 2022 and March 2023. These weeks of action focused on raising awareness of child exploitation within the community and also with professionals.

Activities included:

- Training inputs were delivered to some schools within Oldham, reaching over 2000 students.
- Training inputs in relation to Complex Safeguarding and Appropriate Use of Language.
- Proactive community-based activities, including warrants.
- Social Media platforms utilised to raise awareness of child exploitation.
- Training inputs were delivered to some of the Care Homes within the Oldham Area.

## GRIP (Group Response and Early Collaborative Intervention Project)

The GRIP project commenced in November 202, ending in March 2023. The project was implemented due to an escalation of concerns around contextual.

risks, social groups and gangs in specific geographical areas in the Oldham area; Limeside and Failsworth.

Over the 18 months, the GRIP project worked effectively with 22 young people aged 11-17 and played a key part in reducing instances of youth violence and anti-social behaviour in those areas.

## 2023 - 2024 Key Priorities

Continue 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.

To support the development of more in-depth analysis of local trends and themes to continue to inform and drive targeted service delivery.

Strengthen the transitional safeguarding offer.

Implementation of a contextual safeguarding approach – this will include an audit of processes, procedures, and forms to ensure that context is robustly considered and rooted in our practice; as well as practically implementing the approach.

Strengthen the prevention offer for CSE, CCE and youth violence.

Complex and contextual safeguarding to continue to be offered within the OSCB training offer, alongside training continuing to be offered within schools, colleges, faith sector, residential homes and wider partners.

Multi-agency audits to take place.

# Activity and Impact – Neglect

## Neglect

The effect of neglect on children and young people can be life long, and the early recognition and support of children experiencing neglect is a core aim for the Partnership.

The response to neglect in Oldham is underpinned by several core areas:

- Prevention of the causes that lead to child neglect rather than only responding to the symptoms by understanding the scale of neglect in Oldham and how it's affecting our families.
- Protection by ensuring 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.
- Provision of strengths-based support for families from voluntary and statutory organisations in Oldham
- Participation by providing opportunities for children, young people, and families to share their experiences in order to shape and develop our multi - agency response to neglect.

## Graded Care Profile 2

In 2022 – 2023 the partnership began to plan for the implementation of the Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2). GCP2 is an assessment tool that helps practitioners take a strengths-based approach to measuring the quality of care a child is receiving and supports them to identify neglect.

A Multi-agency group has worked together with the NSPCC to plan and deliver GCP2 training across the Childrens workforce in Oldham. Over late 2023 the training on the tool will be rolled out across Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership agencies so that the new approach can be embedded.

## 2023 - 2024 Key Priorities

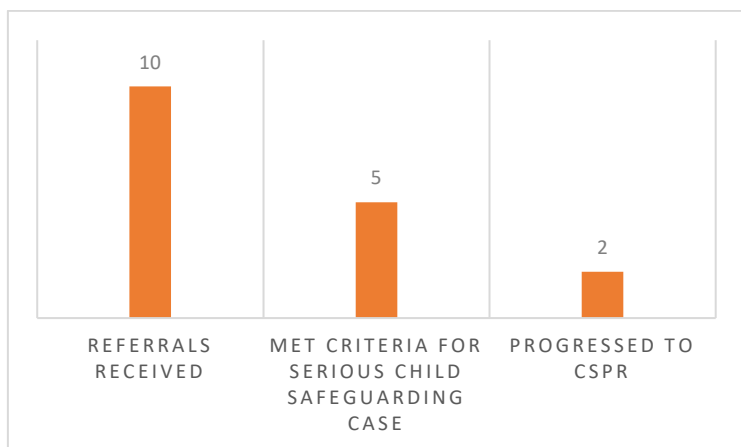
- Develop a community focus on prevention and nurturing our Children and families in Oldham
- Work in partnership to support families affected by the challenges that the increase in the cost of living present.
- Encourage a positive early help response with families by implementing and using the tools available via the Graded Care Profile 2
- Working with communities to support Children, Young People and Families to recognise their strengths and, with support, build resilience to challenges
- Ensure that those Children in need of protection are identified quickly reducing the impact of longer term harm

# 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 2018)



During the 2022-2023 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.

In the three cases that did not progress to a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review. One progressed as a Local Learning Review relating to Forced Marriage, and two to the new Brief Learning Review methodology introduced to the partnership in 2022 ; one relating to Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards on a young person going through transition between children’s and adult services, and another which led to a thematic task and finish group relating to young children living in properties which are in poor condition and where there is evidence of clutter / hoarding.

## Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

Two Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews were concluded within 2022-2023; one which originated in early 2022, and another which

started in late 2022 and completed just before the period of this annual report.

The Partnership also applied a local learning approach (called a Brief Learning Review) to several other cases where it was clear that there is learning.

### Local Learning Example: Child R

Child R is a teenage girl. A Rapid Review was completed, and whilst the case did not meet the criteria for a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review, there were issues to take forward.

Child R was taken abroad and whilst there was forced to marry an older male, and experienced abuse.

There were several key lines of learning for the Partnership from the case:

1. Professionals should be more aware of how the risks of Forced Marriage can be assessed and have greater curiosity.
2. All agencies need to increase knowledge of the legal steps that can be used to protect a young person who is at risk of a Forced Marriage.
3. The take up of training across the partnership in relation to Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage needed to be prioritised in 2022-2023.

Response from Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership:

A full calendar of monthly training events over 2023 is planned, facilitated by the Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership Training Consultant and the Specialist HBV Independent Domestic Violence Advocate. This includes face-to-face training, online ‘lunch and learn’ sessions and written resources.

### Good Practice:

Some key good practice themes were drawn out of Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews 2022 – 2023:

- Commitment of practitioners to engage families where there may have been some resistance.
- High levels of support provided by schools and colleges at an 'earliest help' stage.
- Decisive, timely multi-agency protective responses in situations where it was evident that harm through abuse had occurred, including the use of Police Powers of Protection and rapid progression through legal processes.

### Some key themes in case reviews 2022 – 2023

Non accidental injuries to children under 1 year old.

Transitions; especially regarding children with special educational needs or disabilities.

Neglect – specifically around carers seeking appropriate medical attention for unwell child.

Recognition of cumulative harm – when a child or family re-open to services, previous involvement and assessments should be reviewed.

## Quality Assurance

Over 2022 – 2023 Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership further embedded the MACE (Multi-Agency Case Audit) model where all partner agencies come together to jointly audit a cohort of cases around a particular theme. This is a significant commitment from all partners and is completed quarterly.

In February 2023 the Partnership focussed on the theme of Early Help; are children and young people receiving the right support and intervention at the right time.

Some of the key findings from this, which will be taken forward were:

- We identified that a lot of work is being done by schools and community organisations to prevent the needs of children and families escalating, but the volume and scope of this support is not captured in the data available to the Safeguarding Partnership.
- Some cases transitioned between Children's Social Care and Targeted Early Help services, and the audit identified areas where the processes could be improved to prevent drift and delay.
- Where, for example adults in a family are receiving support from Mental Health Services or Substance Misuse Services, there are system difficulties which make it hard for children's early help agencies to become aware of the services involvement or exchanging information unless the adults mention it.
- There are some families who experience 'start again' points when they come back into services for help and support after a previous involvement.
- Repeatedly, information known to the Early Help or Children's Social Care Services was not replicated on the School Nursing record, or in some cases not on the GP records.
- Decisions taken to close cases should result from clear progress for the child and family being evidenced on the plans; on occasion there was not sufficient evidence of progression.
- The effect of staff turnover in the Children's Services sector is a national theme but the effect of it was evident in this audit; in some cases there was multiple 'reallocations' due to staff leaving and this creates situations where children and families have to tell people about their needs multiple times.
- Some cases showed that services had missed opportunities to involve the fathers / adult carers in the families in the Early Help plans.

# Training and Communication

Safeguarding children effectively requires a knowledgeable and skilled workforce. By delivering multi agency training Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership aims to provide staff with good quality training that enhances inter agency communication, cooperation and provides a place to reflect on practice.

New research, legislation and guidance and local learning means that there is a continuous demand to update members of the workforce. An effective means to achieve this is using skilled and experienced practitioners who can share their knowledge and expertise, so a training pool of staff from across partner agencies exists.

Over 2022-2023 there were 50 training opportunities with 953 attendees across variety of blended learning approaches including face to face classroom based, briefings and webinars.

## Training in schools:

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.

Over 2022 – 2023 Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership facilitated four training sessions to designated safeguarding leads and deputies as part of the statutory requirement to update training to support their safeguarding role in school and college.

Whole school foundation safeguarding training sessions were provided to 13 primary schools and academies and 2 secondary schools.

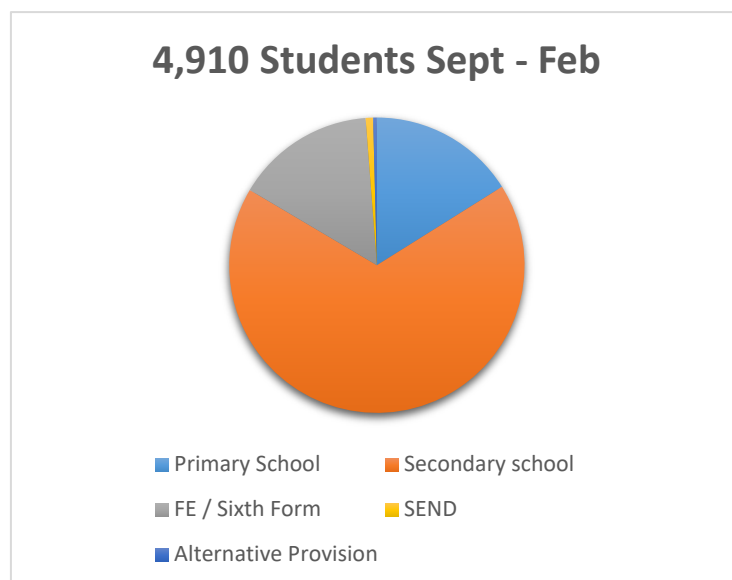
Having assurance around safeguarding is a core responsibility for any school governing body, and six training sessions were delivered to school governors over the year equipping them with the safeguarding knowledge to underpin their role.

Termly network meetings for Designated Safeguarding Leads have been coordinated and chaired by the Safeguarding Lead for Education. In the year 2022/23 attendees have received updates on DfE statutory safeguarding guidance such as Keeping Children Safe in Education, and changes to local procedures and practice. Guest speakers are invited to these network.

meetings included NSPCC, Talk Listen Change, Early Break Service, MASH and the Complex Safeguarding Team.

The work of the Partnership in reaching young people with preventative and educational input on issues of relationships and sex education over 2022-2023 was a particular area of strength and progression.

Over the first 5 months of the academic year (Sept 2022-Feb 2023) the Training Officer for Children and Young People delivered sessions to a total of 4,910 students across the borough:



Alongside the work with children and young people, this offer from the Partnership also impacts education professionals, is offered to professionals from other agencies and to parents and carers. In this same period of September to February sessions were delivered to:

245 Education Staff

250 Professionals from non-education agencies

160 Parents and Carers

The contribution that this makes to supporting children to recognise that they or a friend is experiencing harm or abuse, and in developing their knowledge for the future is an area of strength for Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership, Community Safety Partnership, Health and wellbeing strategy and more.



# SCRUTINIZING THE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP IN OLDHAM (APRIL 2022 TO MARCH 2023) – Dr Henri Giller, Independent Chair of the Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership

The new safeguarding arrangements, introduced by the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, require that they include provision for the scrutiny by an independent person of the effectiveness of the arrangements. This section of the report provides the scrutiny of the Independent Chair of the Oldham Partnership of the third working year of the new partnership arrangements. The criteria for scrutiny is that contained in the report “Six Steps for Independent Scrutiny” as updated by the national survey of what is currently being scrutinised, by who and how (Pearce, Stratton, Parker & Thorpe, 2022).

### LSCP Leadership

LSCP Partner Leads are clearly identified and accountable for LSCP activities safeguarding children. In addition to their participation in the Partnership Executive meetings, the Partner leads meet as a leadership group with the Independent Chair and the Partnership business manager, to consider on-going strategic safeguarding priorities and operational matters arising that may impact upon those priorities. During this period the leadership group met on a monthly basis, rather than fortnightly as was the practice during the Covid period. The leadership group continues to oversee the development of the agenda for quarterly Executive meetings. The Partnership leads are represented at allied partnerships (the safeguarding adult board, community safety partnership and the health and wellbeing board) and attend quarterly

accountability meetings with the local authority chief executive and key elected members. In this period the Council established an all-party member group to oversee safeguarding activity around sexual exploitation. The safeguarding leads were fully engaged in this initiative. Delegated representatives of the three statutory partners continue to actively participate in relevant sub-groups and working groups of the Partnership.

### Engagement of Relevant Agencies

All relevant agencies are engaged with the safeguarding children partnership, are aware of local information sharing protocols and training initiatives and participate in partnership development events and reviews of strategic priorities. New members to the partnership are provided with induction materials by the business manager and a safeguarding newsletter is regularly circulated to representatives of relevant agencies informing them of local and national reviews and research and training and workforce development opportunities.

Oldham, along with the other areas of the greater Manchester conurbation, continued to experience significant staffing difficulties across the partner agencies during this period. These difficulties related to both the shortage of suitable staff and the skills levels that they were able to deploy. This has had significant impacted on the quoracy of safeguarding meetings, the timeliness of case conferences and reviews and the delivery of appointments for safeguarding services. The statutory partners continued to oversee the pattern of disruption caused by staff shortages in safeguarding agencies and to initiate preventive or remedial actions as appropriate. While the partners are undoubtedly willing to redress this situation, the timelines involved in resolving staff shortage means that quick fixes are not possible.

## Outcomes for Children and Young People

Significant consultation events involving children and young people were undertaken during the course of this year providing substantial opportunities for their views to influence the development of service priorities.

Safeguarding concerns around hate crimes, bullying, sexual exploitation and other complex safeguarding needs were identified, and proposals developed for service enhancements. Presentation of the findings from this work by young people was widely shared with the partnership representatives throughout 2022-23. Work on enhancing the experience of young people transitioning from children's services to adult services was likewise progressed in the period.

## Quality Assurance & Information Sharing

Performance data on safeguarding activity continues to be gathered and shared across the partnership with initiatives ongoing to ensure a better representation of data from a wider range of relevant agencies. Quarterly data feedback is a standing item on the Partnership Executive agenda. This year the introduction of the multi-agency case audit (MACE) has been a significant development in both engaging partner agencies in quality assurance initiatives but also enabling the enhancement of good practice to be facilitated. The MACE activity around early help has led to significant changes in how this strategy will be delivered in the future.

## Learning from Local & National Reviews & Research

Local reviews of critical cases were undertaken in the period, both on an individual case-specific basis and thematically. Significant findings on the need for improved cross-agency case management information sharing and case co-ordination were identified by both methods. These requirements continue to be monitored and followed up into 2022-23

The period also saw follow-on work arising from the independent review of cases of non-recent child sexual exploitation (CSE) and a continuing focus on current practice in CSE and complex safeguarding to ensure that the lessons from the past are clearly learned. Evaluation of the extent of change reflected in current

practice will be the subject of a further GMCA review in 2023-24.

National research findings continue to be circulated and promoted through the partnership newsletter and inform the content of the partnership training programme.

## Multi-Agency Safeguarding Training & Workforce Development

The commitment to a multi-agency training strategy continues to be a strength of the Oldham partnership. A substantial number of staff from across relevant agencies have engaged with the training opportunities available in the period. The availability of a variety of training delivery mechanisms was sustained in the period 2022-23.

The training programme continues to be closely linked to the priority safeguarding concerns identified in the partnership annual business plan. This year the programme reflects the themes of complex safeguarding, domestic abuse and the assessment of neglect.

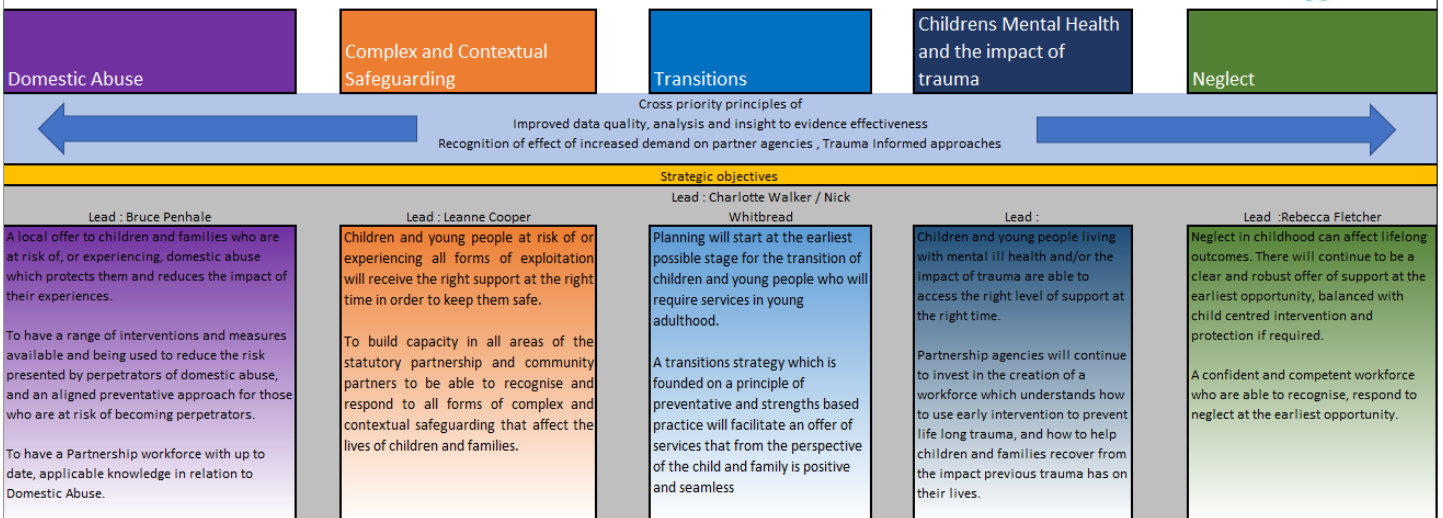
The challenge of having an adequate workforce to undertake safeguarding activities continues across all relevant agencies, and Oldham inevitably competes with the nine other GM boroughs to fill staffing vacancies. Initiatives to "grow one's own" skilled workforce continue to be forcefully progressed.

The engagement of local schools in safeguarding training initiatives continues to be a hallmark of the Oldham partnership with substantial numbers of pupils and students being engaged by dedicated staff from the partnership business unit.

## *Dr Henri Giller – Independent Chair*

# Our plan for 2023-2024

OSCP Business Plan on a Page 2023 - 24



## Appendix 1 - Statements from Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership agencies.

In addition to the Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership's Annual Report setting out information on safeguarding trends locally, the actions of the Partnership over the last year, and priorities for the coming year, agencies are invited to provide highlights of their own safeguarding work for publication as Single-Agency Statements.



Single Agency  
Report final 22-23.d

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