



Annual Report of Local Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people

2023/24

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Alongside our North East Lincolnshire (NEL) Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP) Local Arrangements and other key documents, all policies, procedures and resources referenced in this document are published on the website [Click Here](#)

1) Welcome and introduction

Welcome to the NEL SCP Annual Report of Local Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people 2023 / 2024.

Children, young people and families are at the centre of all we do, and we want NEL to be a place our children can grow up happy and healthy, safe in their homes and communities with people that love them. We are ambitious for a child's future with a focus on learning and aspiration so they can be the best they can be.

By being 'stronger together', we can achieve our vision of 'Our Children, Our Future'.

Our Local Arrangements places children, young people, families and communities at the heart of our early help, family help and safeguarding system. The Helping, Supporting and Protecting Children and Families in NEL Threshold Document (threshold document) sets our arrangements, underpinned by our local practice approach to ensure children and families receive the right support, at the right time by the right person. This will be achieved through services which support children, young people, and families to participate, find help online and in their networks and communities, to be resilient, stay safe and independent. Set in the context of system wide transformation, there is growing evidence that the Early Help Strategy is having an impact on the increase of families who have been supported to achieve successful outcomes, through a key focus on targeted family help and support.

As a partnership we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and families through the least and best interventions, leading to whole family turnaround. As delegated safeguarding partners, we are proud to acknowledge and celebrate the positive outcomes achieved and the strength of partnership working, and we continue to be ambitious in our approach and are committed to partnership action to improve practice leading to better outcomes.

The last year has been characterised by challenges, developments and opportunities from both a national and local perspective. Through our culture of listening, learning, reviewing and adapting, underpinned by high challenge and high support, we have built on existing arrangements which will support our families at the earliest opportunity to prevent the need for statutory intervention, empower our families to build on their own strengths and promote resilience to improve outcomes.

In 2023 / 2024, we have continued to:

- ✓ fulfil all functions across our Local Arrangements
- ✓ strengthen our governance arrangements to respond to need, including prioritising the most in need, to help, support and protect children, young people and families
- ✓ support and develop our workforce in respect of education and training
- ✓ ensured that learning from assurance activity, including rapid reviews, informs practice across the partnership and to ensure that everyone can recognise their responsibilities

We would like to thank Chris Cook for the critical challenge and support he provided in his role as independent chair of the NEL Safeguarding Executive Board, subsequently reconfigured to become the Safeguarding Children Partnership Board (SCPB), up to February 2024, at which point Ann-Marie Matson became the chair of the SCPB as one of the three delegated safeguarding partners and as required under Working Together 2023.

This report fulfils our statutory responsibility to publish a report once in every twelve-month period and sets out what we have done as a result of our Local Arrangements, including rapid, reviews, child safeguarding practice reviews, and how effective these arrangements have been in practice.

In addition, the report also includes:

- evidence that national reforms are being implemented, including key decisions and actions taken by delegated safeguarding partners in response to reforms
- evidence of the impact of the work of the delegated safeguarding partners, their respective organisations and relevant agencies, including training, on outcomes for children and families from early help to looked-after children and care leavers
- an analysis of any areas where there has been little or no evidence of progress on agreed priorities
- an analysis of key learning from serious incidents, and a record of decisions and actions taken by the delegated safeguarding partners in the report's period (or planned to be taken) to implement the recommendations of any local and national child safeguarding practice reviews, including any resulting improvements
- ways in which the partners have sought and utilised feedback from children and families to inform their work and influence service provision

Over the last year we have responded positively to new policy directions and guidance, including but not exhaustive, the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel's Review of Children with Disabilities and Complex Needs in Residential Settings, the National Panels' review of Bruising to Non-Mobile Babies and Working Together 2023 and the Children's Social Care National Framework. As we further develop our partnership approach to helping, supporting and protection children and families in North East Lincolnshire, we remain committed to a culture of listening, learning reviewing and adapting. This is demonstrated through our republished arrangements and through the partnerships commitment to supporting continual practice improvement through learning and innovation to improve outcomes for children.



Paul French
Chief Superintendent
Humberside Police



Ann Marie Matson
Director of Children's Services
North East Lincolnshire
Council



Helen Davis
Place Nurse Director
North and North East
Lincolnshire

2) Partnerships and governance

Over the last year, there has been a planned transition from the previous three safeguarding partners, to the current three delegated safeguarding partners, and there have also been a number of changes at a strategic level across wider partner agencies. During this time there has continued to be a collaborative leadership approach based on open and honest discussions, and high challenge and high support.

Significantly, the NEL SCP has responded at pace to Working Together 2023, and in starting to implement the required changes, this has been undertaken in full discussion and consultation with relevant agencies across the partnership to ensure a joined up approach.

Chris Cook, the outgoing Independent Chair represented that the NEL SCP partnership and governance arrangements that has been developed to deliver the NEL SCP priorities and functions 'was fantastic and was the right mechanism to deliver the expectations of Working Together 2023'.

The key roles and functions of the SCPB, are detailed in the Terms of Reference [and the responsibilities](#) are detailed in the Local Arrangements and underpinning [Memorandum of Understanding](#). Further information about our partnership structures can be found in the Local Arrangements which have been updated to reflect the changes in our partnership and governance arrangements.

In order to ensure that the NEL SCP are fully equipped to deliver the expectations of Working Together 2023 and the three NEL SCP priorities 'Neglect' 'Early Help' and 'Child Sexual Abuse', we have fully reviewed and revised our partnership and governance arrangements. This includes:

- We have streamlined and reduced the number of strategic partnership boards, to one key decision making board with an explicit remit and re-enforced the expectations of partner agencies, in ensuring a shared purpose
- We have reduced the number of NEL SCP subgroups and have established a Safeguarding Performance Practice and Development Group which analyses the NEL SCP performance dashboard and practice across the safeguarding system. We have also established a Safeguarding Practice Learning and Development Group responsible for the oversight and delivery of the scrutiny and assurance framework, including independent scrutiny/ audit activity, and for overseeing the quality of practice and impact of multi-agency training and education
- The transition from a Neglect Group and separate Child Sexual Abuse Group to a Safeguarding Thematic Group with a focus on both priority areas
- A Child Exploitation Strategic Group has been established and a Child Exploitation Strategy is in the process of development which will be aligned to the Neglect, Child Sexual Abuse and Early Help Strategies

The Local Arrangements are having a positive impact on providing a safe infrastructure to promote and safeguard the welfare of children and families, and this will be further strengthened by the revision of the partnership and governance arrangements.

SCP NEL performance dashboard

Taking account of the previous SCP core data set, further development on the NEL SCP performance dashboard commenced in early March 2024. Working collaboratively with key leads across the partnership, the dashboard, which was launched in June 2024, is now aligned to the NEL SCP priority areas of focus and incorporates key statutory data and partner agency data. This supports the SCPB to understand the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements and enables board members to challenge and support developments across the system. There continues to be an ongoing focus on data development to further strengthen the dashboard as we continue our transformation journey.

Use of data analysis in informing learning

Data analysis was used in identifying the current three NEL SCP priority areas of focus. The low number of referrals in respect of child sexual abuse and the low number of children subject to child protection plans in this area has informed the Child Sexual Abuse Strategy and strategic delivery plan. This includes the decision to commission child sexual abuse training as a priority and in developing the practice guidance and practice briefing.

The analysis of local data on neglect and the learning from local line of sight learning events, rapid reviews and practice reviews in respect of neglect, led to the independent report being commissioned. This led to the development and delivery of local neglect training and the Neglect Toolkit, which is supporting to practitioners to fully understand the nature of neglect and how to respond to improve outcomes for children.

How information sharing has improved practice

Information sharing practice guidance is published on the SCP website and is consistent with Department for Education information sharing advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services for children, young people, parents and carers. Information sharing is an essential element of safeguarding children on both an operational and strategic level. Locally, information sharing has been used when undertaking line of sight learning events and rapid reviews, and has enabled a holistic understanding of specific themes relating to safeguarding, what works well and areas for development. An example is the development of the strategy discussion guidance and related has impacted on practitioners from different agencies better understanding the process and their role and remit within it

Oversight of children in our care and care leavers

We have continued to have oversight of the outcomes for children in our care and care leavers, from a safeguarding perspective, through performance reporting, and going forward through the Safeguarding Performance Practice Assurance Group

Children in our care

469 children were in our care as at 31 March 2024, which is 106 children less and an 18% reduction on 575 children in our care on 31 March 2023. Despite this decrease, NEL's rate of 142 per 10,000 remains far higher than comparators (England average 71 and statistical neighbour 99). The reduction of children in our care does impact on the increase in the number of care leavers. 102 children entered care during 2023/24 which is a 33% decrease on 153 children who entered care the previous year. The Ofsted Monitoring visit report in February 2024 (from the visit in January 2024) positively found that for children who had come into care more recently, decision making was more proactive and decisive, which was leading to more timely care proceedings and more children achieving permanence within appropriate timescales.

After a period of instability for our children in our care, with an increase in placement moves, NEL has seen this stabilise over the last 6 months of the year bringing our year end rate for children with 3 or more placement moves in the last 12 months down to 8% from 12% seen in 2023/24. This is now below the last published comparator data (England average 10% and statistical neighbour 9%). Long-term stability of children in our care over 2.5 years has also increased over the last quarter with 72% in the same placement for the last 2 years. This has improved from 67% seen in 2022/23 and is now above the last published comparator data (England average 69% and statistical neighbour 67%).

Care leavers

In 2023/24, 97% of care leavers aged 17-18 were in suitable accommodation during 2023/24 which has increased from 92% the previous year. 90% of care leavers aged 19-21 were in suitable accommodation which is a slight drop from 91% reported last year. Of the care leavers deemed not to be in suitable accommodation, 14 were in custody and 4 were in emergency accommodation. NEL are performing above comparators for both age groups. During 2023/24 61% of care leavers aged 17-18 were in education, training or employment, (EET) which is a big increase from 53% in 2022/23. NEL remain below comparators (England average 66% and statistical neighbour 64%). 49.4% of care leavers aged 19-21 are in EET in 2023/24 down from 54% during 2022/23. NEL are also below comparators for this age group (England average 56% and statistical neighbour 53%).

3) Headlines and summary of performance and populations

Headlines which indicate our system is working and making a difference to children, young people and families include:

The number of early help assessments recorded has risen: This reflects the partnership commitment to meeting need early and preventing escalation. 718 early help assessments were completed during 2023/24 which was in line with 711 completed the previous year. External Team Around the Family (TAFs) were introduced in March 2023 and during 2023/24 636 TAFs were led by partners. The largest contributing agencies are pre-schools / schools / further education which account for 95% of all external TAFs.

The number of referrals has decreased. 2279 referrals to children's social care were received in 2023/24. This is a 27% decrease on the 3101 referrals received during 2022/23. This gives an end of year rate of 685 per 10,000 which is now much closer to comparators (England average 545 and statistical neighbour 638) than previous year's rate of 939 per 10,000.

Referrals to children's social care within 12 months of a previous referral have reduced to 27% during 2023/24 compared with 30% in 2022/23. This remains higher than comparators. (England 22% and statistical neighbour 21%).

The number of assessments completed has decreased over 2023/24, which is in line with decreasing referrals. 2726 assessments were completed during 2023/24 which is a 27% reduction from the 3743 assessments completed in 2022/23. This brings us closer the statistical neighbour rate of 792 per 10,000.

Assessment timeliness increased during 2023/24 to 90% from 72% in 2022/23, demonstrating there is less drift in children progressing through the system.

The overall number of open cases has increased by 4% to 1900 as at 31 March 2024 compared with 1823 the previous year. Although we have less children in care some remain open due to receiving leaving care services.

Children in need numbers have also increased during the year as more cases are held as children in need rather than child protection or children looked after.

The number of section 47 enquiries has reduced. 871 section 47 enquiries were initiated during 2023/24 which is a 28% reduction from 1213 initiated the previous year. NEL's rate of 263 per 10,000 is now below statistical neighbour rate of 278 but still above the England average rate of 192 per 10,000.

Numbers of children subject to child protection has continued to reduce. 258 children were the subject of an initial child protection conference which is a 36% reduction on the 403 children in the previous year. NEL's rate of 78 per 10,000 is now below the statistical neighbour rate of 91 but still above the England average rate of 63 per 10,000.

The number of children on a child protection plan has reduced by 16% at the end 2023/24 to 236 at 31 March 2024 from 282 at 31 March 2023. There has been a decrease in child protection starts during 2023/24 with 258 children starting on a child protection plan in year compared with 336 in 2022/23. This evidences our continued commitment to supporting children and families to reduce risk and meet need at a lower level.

Most child protection conferences were held within timescales. 98% of child protection review conferences happened in timescales during 2023/24 maintaining the high performance in this area.

Increase in children placed for adoption. 35 children were adopted during 2023/24 which accounted for 17% of all children leaving care. This is a 150% increase on the 14 children adopted during 2022/23.

The % of assessments identifying neglect as a factor after assessment has reduced slightly to 19% in 2023/24 from 20% in 2022/23 showing a reduction in cases with neglect identified. This is an area of consideration for the SCP Safeguarding Practice Thematic Strategic Group.

There was a reduction in the number of assessments where sexual harm was an identified factor. 5% of all assessments completed during 2023/24 identified sexual harm as a factor after assessment (down from 10% the previous year). 7% of children on a child protection plan as at end of 2023/24 had a child protection category of sexual harm which has also reduced from 11% the previous year

We are keeping in touch with more care leavers. During 2023/24 NEL were in touch with 97% of 17-18 year olds and 95% of 19-21s, which is an increase across both age ranges after a recent decreasing trend. NEL are now performing above comparators for both age groups.

North East Lincolnshire has continued to experience a rise in children being electively home educated (EHE). An Inclusion Officer with the remit of monitoring the EHE cohort has continued to provide information, advice and guidance to both families and schools settings surrounding EHE; and the Virtual School Head has now been allocated the responsibility of oversight of EHE in the Borough as part of an uplift to the education senior leadership team.

4) Key developments and successes

Responding to Working Together 2023

Following the publication of Working Together 2023, in December 2023, a SCP Development Group was established in order to understand the expectations and establish a plan to share and embed the expectations locally. A proposal was made to the Chief Officer of Police, Local Authority Head of Paid Service and ICB's Chief Executive that they undertake the role of the local safeguarding partners, and for the Director of Children's Services, North East Lincolnshire Council, the Place Nurse Director, North and North East Lincolnshire Health and Care Partnership and the Temporary Chief Superintendent, Humberside Police to undertake the role of delegated safeguarding partners on their behalf.

It was agreed the delegated safeguarding partners should have oversight of the quality and compliance of the delivery of agreed shared priorities, and processes in place to provide assurance that multi-agency practice is reviewed and operating well. Where this is not evident, the delegated safeguarding partners have the capacity and resource from their own agencies to engage, respond and improve operational systems and practice.

It was proposed and agreed that, as a minimum, that there be an annual meeting between the local safeguarding partners and the delegated safeguarding partners as part of the annual review process, to ensure local safeguarding partners are well cited on their delegated responsibilities. It was also proposed and agreed that a quarterly update would be provided to the local safeguarding partners to provide assurance regarding the progress and implementation of the Local Arrangements, and that local safeguarding partners have the option to 'call in' the delegated safeguarding partners for additional meetings in year as required.

A new SCP partnership and governance structure was developed to deliver the NEL SCP priority areas of focus (neglect, child sexual abuse and early help) and the expectations of Working Together 2023. Full consultation took place with relevant agencies and on early March 2024 through to May 2024, a planned transition to the new partnership and governance arrangements took place. Chairs for the groups were identified from the three safeguarding partner organisations based on areas of expertise, demonstrating the commitment and contribution of each of the three safeguarding partners, and membership on the subgroups is across the relevant agencies. The partnership and governance arrangements are supported by the NEL SCP performance dashboard and scrutiny and assurance framework.

The DSP's gave full consideration to how education was represented in the Local Arrangements and education representatives input at both an operational and strategic level, aligned to the requirements of Working Together 2023. The Director for Education Inclusion and Integration is a member of the SCPB, and the Head of Pupil Support is a member of the Safeguarding Performance Practice Improvement Group and the Safeguarding Practice Learning and Development Group. In addition, a number of local educational establishments are represented on the wider SCP sub groups. The SCP team provide a quarterly update to the schools Child Protection Co-ordinators meeting on learning from practice and key messages are weaved through routine communications to schools and settings. Schools and educational establishments are also actively involved in SCP scrutiny and assurance activity.

Group	Function
SCPB	Oversight of quality, compliance, shared priorities, systems and processes across the scope of the arrangements to provide assurance of effective practice and outcomes
Safeguarding Performance Practice Assurance Group	Analysis of dashboard, and practice across the safeguarding system, agency intelligence, agency reports
Safeguarding Practice Learning and Development Group	Oversight and delivery of scrutiny and assurance framework, oversees quality practice, audit activity, dashboard, agency intelligence, benchmarking, overseeing training.
Child Safeguarding Practice Review Group	Undertakes rapid reviews / practice reviews, develops action plans
Safeguarding Practice Thematic Strategic Group	Undertake work at a strategic level in respect of key safeguarding themes which are currently Neglect and Child Sexual Abuse
Child Exploitation Strategic Group	The group is responsible for the development, implementation and oversight of the Child Exploitation Strategy and underpinning delivery plan and associated work streams.
Early Help Strategic Group	To ensure strategic governance to better understand and implement the collective impact of Early Help across the system.

Helping, Supporting and Protecting Children and Families in NEL Threshold Document 2024 / 28

The review of the threshold document commenced in early March 2024 which involved full consultation with relevant partner agencies. It was fully informed by the Children's Social Care National Framework 2023 and meets the requirements of Working Together 2023 by setting out the levels of need (thresholds) in NEL in the context of our system for early help, support and protection and fulfils the safeguarding partners' responsibility to publish a threshold document.

In NEL, we want all children to be safe from harm and enjoy growing up in loving homes, have the best start in life and a happy, healthy, fun childhood. We want them to, start school ready to learn, do well at all levels of learning and have the skills and opportunities they need to enjoy a bright future. We want children be part of an inclusive, compassionate, and thriving community, be listened to, involved in the decisions on their future and respected. In the context of the Children's Social Care National Framework 2023, we are also committed to ensuring that:

- Children, young people and families stay together and get the help they need
- Children and young people are supported by their family network
- Children and young people are safe in and outside of their homes
- Children in care and care leavers have stable, loving homes

The threshold document was launched at a partnership event on the 5 June 2024 alongside the Neglect Strategy and Child Sexual Abuse Strategy. The SCP Safeguarding Performance Practice and Assurance Group are responsible, on behalf of the SCPB, for overseeing the impact of the implementation of the threshold document in practice.

5) Voice and stakeholder engagement

Strategic

The 'Your Voice Matters' Voice and Influence Strategy has ensured that the child's voice and lived experience is at the forefront of practice. Its purpose is to assure the SCPB that services have a process for and are hearing the voice of the child, listening and making improvements to service delivery and practice as a result.

The key actions from the strategy are:

- ✓ Promote and deliver a range of opportunities for children and young people to feel and be heard
- ✓ Ensure there is a clear understanding across the partnership of 'lived experience' and how to best capture this
- ✓ All partners to consistently share feedback of the difference made with children and through to strategic boards

Thematic

Some of the things that have contributed to this are:

Youth Action the local social action group for young people aged 11-21 years led on the Your Voice Your Vote consultation of the priority issues for young people in our area. This received 1945 votes from 8 of our secondary academies, two of the further education colleges and through 4 local youth groups. The priority issues as voted for by young people this year with 26% of all votes the top issue is 'more things to do and places to go' This is up 5% on last year's proportion of the vote. The second highest is 'reducing knife and violent crime' with 17% of the vote up from 13% and third place in the last vote at the end of 2022. The third highest topic 'feeling safe on the streets' received 12% of the votes. This fell from second place last year with 16% of the votes.

Engage and Empower

Since the vote Youth Action members engaged other young people with local and national decision makers through their Big Conversation event which allowed creative conversations about the topics as well as receiving feedback about the opening of the Haven Hub in the town centre following previous conversations and hearing the voices of young people. It also included working with the Office of the Childrens Commissioner to inform the Big Ambition campaign. A further event to discuss and understand young people's safety and help improve our services took place called the 'Hope Hack'

Consultation and education has taken place this year with over 600 students through Franklin College via surveys and focus groups, the feedback from this identified some of the issues that make women and girls feel safe and unsafe, attitudes to this issue, as well as what is seen as acceptable and normalised language and behaviour. The feedback from young people informed and influenced a range of educational sessions called ASPIRE delivered by the Community Safety Partnership.

Influencing Strategic Development

The information from Your Voice Your Vote and Hope Hack event has also been shared as part of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the SCPB for consideration and use when planning as part of their wider intelligence.

Local children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) meet regularly as an advisory group linking to the SEND local offer and this team of young people helped plan and deliver their annual awards recognising and celebrating the amazing achievements of the children and young people in our area.

The children in care council, 'Our Voice Listen Up' continue to work with the Corporate Parenting Board members and senior leadership through regular events to discuss arising issues and review the corporate parenting promise together. They also have regular meetings where they are developing skills around creative subjects and cooking together. They have also influenced and hosted the YOUUnique awards celebrating children in our care and those who support them.

Independent Support for Children

Independent advocacy is contracted through National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) and this contract ensures children and young people in our care (in and out of our area) and those subject to child protection plans can have face to face advocacy or virtual if they choose. We also have regular visits to children's homes to build relationships, and to increase awareness of the service and build their confidence to use the service to be heard should they want to. The numbers of children in our care accessing this service has increased this year though children subject to child protection has decreased and the reasons for this are being explored and solutions being put in place to increase these numbers in the coming year.

Independent visitors (Buddies) continue to support children and young people in care to have a consistent and positive relationship with an adult who is not paid to be there or make assessments of them. This year we have 6 young people matched with 7 buddies. Humberside Police have a range of opportunities to engage young people to share their voices in relation to their services including their Youth Independent Advisory Group and Cadets.

There are a range of opportunities across the Health Care Partnership and Integrated care board including local groups with a focus on inclusion, experts by experience co-producing the mental health strategy and implementation and regional work bring young people together around the delivery and priorities of mental health services called 'Nothing About Me Without Me' watch a video about this here [Nothing About Us Without Us \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

6) Priority areas of focus

Early help

What have we done?

- The Early Help Strategy has been developed through collaboration and engagement with a variety of partner agencies. It reflects our collective commitment as partners to working together and ensuring that children, young people and their families receive the appropriate support at the right time
- We have launched the TAF in order to support children, young people and families at the earliest opportunity. This model brings together all support and services in the local area to promote a whole family approach to working and prevent escalation
- We have launched the revised early help assessment co-produced with our partners which is being used as an early conversation tool between families and professionals
- We have developed a comprehensive Start for Life offer focusing on conception to 2 years old understanding that the first 1001 days are critical, this includes advice, guidance, support and services in four family hubs with a plan to extend the offer to a further three hubs by Autumn 2024. This includes universal and accessible support for families
- We have opened a new birth registration service operating out of four NEL family hubs providing parents with convenience within their communities alongside the opportunity to learn more about the support on offer as part of the start for life offer. We reached over 100 birth registrations within 5 months of the service opening
- We have seen an increase in performance for our payment by result supporting families claims and have trained the workforce to ensure they understand the programme and their role in evidencing the impact they are making through whole family working. The revised 10 headlines have been embedded into the Family Help recording system and relevant documents to support reporting via Sentinel
- We have worked with partners at a regional and local level to cascade multi agency training, develop a web-based resource for professionals and families and developed a 'Reducing Parental Conflict' pathway which aims to provide help and resources to parents to enable them to manage family conflict
- We have refurbished all seven Family Hubs and continue to consult with our families about what they would like to have available within their local community. We are committed to 'Family Hubs as part of the community, serving the community'
- In the context of our NEL SCP arrangements, subgroups, including the Early Help Strategic Group have been strengthened to ensure robust monitoring and governance arrangements of our early help system
- Following the publication of Working Together 2023, we have strengthened our approach to 'harm outside the home' inclusive of integrating our exploitation and missing teams within our targeted family help offer
- Family Help policies and procedures are being reviewed alongside updated quality practice standards
- We have strengthened our quality assurance processes, aligned to our Children's Service's Quality Assurance Framework
- There has been an increased focus on strengthening our professional relationships and integration to ensure safe systems are in place for children and families at all levels, this has included developing our systemic approach to leadership across Children's Services creating a shared vision and increased collaboration across the system

- We have collaborated with partners to complete and submit the Early Help System Guide providing a self-evaluation of our early help system in NEL and our plans to strengthen this further
- We have developed our data and performance introducing a new Power BI dashboard to support robust oversight of the family help populations, quality practice standards and identification of themes and trends

Impact and Outcomes

The number of children and families accessing family hubs continues to increase.

Between April 2023 and March 2024, we have registered 638 children and 566 parents / carers to the Start for Life programme. This programme supports parents and carers so they are able to nurture their babies and children and ensure they have the best start in life leading to improved health and education outcomes.

The number of TAF continues to increase demonstrating the changing culture across the partnership to ensure children and families are receiving the right support, by the right person, at the right time.

Between April 2023 and March 2024, there were 675 TAF's being led by external partners. 644 (95%) of all TAF's were held by education. Out of the 182 TAF's completed 35 have gone onto have a family help episode within 6 months of the TAF ending (19%).

There has been a reduction in the number of children stepping up to children's social care

Less children who have been supported by targeted family help services are being stepped up suggesting that the help and support provided for families is effective in helping them to resolve their difficulties. As of 31 March 2024, 129 children (80 families) stepped up to children's social care in the previous 12 months. This accounts for (8%) of the 1518 of cases closing to targeted family help in the 12 month period.

Children in NEL are less likely, when compared to the England average, to become involved in the criminal justice system.

The percentage of programmes starting that are for diversion and out of court disposals remains at a high level. Overall, 187 programmes started in 2023/24, 82% (154) of programmes starting were diversion and out of court.

While it is recognised that significant progress has been made in respect of early help arrangements, there continues to be a focus on ensuring help and support at the earliest point and as such, it has been agreed that early help will continue to be a priority area of focus for the coming year, and therefore, it will continue to be reported through the NEL SCP partnership and governance arrangements as appropriate.

Child sexual abuse

What have we done?

- Child sexual abuse was identified as a priority by the SCPB and a task and finish group was established which developed a local Child Sexual Abuse Strategy in full consultation with relevant agencies

- A Child Sexual Abuse Strategic Delivery Plan has been developed and was initially overseen by the Child Sexual Abuse Task and Finish Group and latterly by the Safeguarding Practice Thematic Strategic Group which has a focus on both child sexual abuse and neglect
- The Child Sexual Abuse Strategy was launched in June 2024 alongside the threshold document (and the Neglect Strategy)
- The child sexual abuse health pathway has been revised and strengthened
- A child sexual abuse practice briefing has been developed and disseminated to all agencies, which provides the pathway to respond to child sexual abuse
- Child Sexual Abuse Practice Guidance has been developed and published

Impact and Outcomes

- The Child Sexual Abuse Practice Guidance and briefing have raised awareness amongst practitioners how to recognise and respond to child sexual abuse
- The link between child sexual abuse and neglect has been identified through findings from some local reviews and has been a core element of the Jane Wiffin neglect training
- All partner agencies are aware of and have signed up to embedding the child sexual abuse pathway. Child sexual abuse data is part of the NEL SCP performance dashboard quarterly reporting
- Child sexual abuse training will be commissioned and delivered to partner agencies during 2024/25, in raising awareness
- A child sexual abuse risk assessment tool will be developed based on national good practice

It is recognised that there has been progress made in year to develop the Child Sexual Abuse Strategy and to create the conditions to drive forward partnership action through the reconfiguration of the partnership and governance arrangements. That said, there remains a need for an ongoing amplified focus to ensure that the strategy is implemented and that we better understand the impact for our children and young people. As such, it has been agreed that child sexual abuse will continue to be a priority area of focus for the coming year, and therefore it will continue to be reported through the NEL SCP partnership and governance arrangements as appropriate.

Neglect

What have we done?

- The Neglect Strategy was ratified by both the Neglect Strategic Delivery Group and the SCPB at the beginning of this reporting period. This strengthened the direction of travel and co-development of a delivery plan
- Within the delivery plan the group established the key high priority areas for 2023/2024, which included the development of practitioner guidance and toolkit, the commissioning of a thematic audit of neglect in NEL, and core neglect awareness training

- The NEL SCP identified and commissioned Jane Wiffin, a leading expert in neglect, to complete a thematic analysis of 11 local reviews. The subsequent guidelines and toolkit were amended to reflect the themes drawn from the audit. Further scoping continued regarding neglect evidence base with a focus on local demographics and the NEL Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. This scoping included stakeholder feedback plus wider liaison with Safeguarding Children Partnerships nationally to critically analyse their implementation journey
- Throughout this period a neglect briefing was disseminated to maintain awareness and momentum within the borough. The strategic group has ensured workstreams have dovetailed with the ethos of the Early Help Strategy and wider SCP priority areas of focus, working closely with sub group chairs
- A NEL SCP neglect toolkit has been developed locally based on good practice and from the learning from the neglect thematic review and has been published for use by practitioners. The toolkit and guidance recognises the multifaceted nature of neglect and the intergenerational barriers to change. There remains a focus on impact and the relationship between love and meeting the care needs for a child

Impact and Outcomes

- Neglect training was developed by Jane Wiffin, in partnership with the NEL SCP, in March 2024, based on the learning from the review. The neglect training was delivered by Jane Wiffin locally from May 2024 will continue to be delivered throughout 2024 and 2025. Feedback on the training from partner agencies has been excellent as demonstrated by two example quotes below.

An example of how the training informed understanding of neglect

“As a foster carer, we care for the children that have been removed from neglect. Although this course is designed for professionals who work with children and parents, it gives a good insight to what happens before children come to us.”

An example of how the learning will impact on practice

“I am required to write reports from a health perspective where there may be safeguarding concerns relating to neglect. I have changed the way I analyse the health information with a much stronger emphasis on impact on the child. I am hopeful that this will inform the early support offered to families.”

- The successful implementation of the Early Help Strategy has provided the system structure that the Neglect Strategy required in order to springboard to a successful embedment. This has provided confidence that implementation journey ahead is in a strong position for success
- Updated neglect guidance has been published on SaferNEL website. Throughout this reporting period neglect awareness and strategy updates have been incorporated to SCP safeguarding training and regularly reported to senior leaders via NEL SCP sub groups to allow two-way communication and feedback streams

7) Multi-agency education and training

SCP Education and Training has continued to be offered both virtually and face to face. Child protection training at both level one (introduction) and level two (intermediary) has continued to be offered and delivered throughout the year and is well attended and in high demand. All of the SCP training courses have been reviewed and updated in line with Working Together 2023. Strategy training was developed and delivered in response to learning from line of sight learning events and rapid reviews. In addition to the training and education opportunities listed below a number of multi-agency lite bite sessions have been delivered directly aligned to learning from assurance activity and learning from practice, which has included professional curiosity, voice of the child and lived experience and escalation and disagreement policy.

73 courses were held during the year, with 1262 learners attending face to face training and 1271 completions of e-learning, totalling 2533 training completions during the year.

The data below shows courses delivered and attendance by agency:

Course Name	Number Trained	Number of Courses Held
Level 1 Introduction to Safeguarding Children	511	20
Level 2 Safeguarding Children	188	6
Level 2 Child Exploitation	45	3
Level 1 Domestic Abuse Awareness – Part 1 – What is Domestic Abuse?	29	2
Level 1 Domestic Abuse Awareness – Part 2 – Practitioner Updates	19	2
Coercive Control Workshop	33	2
Domestic Abuse from a Child's Perspective	39	2
Domestic Abuse and Online Safety	19	2
Harmful Sexualised Behaviour Workshop	60	5
Harmful Sexualised Behaviour: Goodlives Workshop	12	2
Sharing the Science	47	5
Developing Effective Relationships Using Restorative Principles	61	6
Relationship Matters (Reducing Parental Conflict)	84	9
Strategy Discussions	61	5
Training for Trainers	10	1
Training for Trainers Presentation Session	9	1
Total Face to Face Training Completed	1262	73
E-Learning Training Completions (suite of courses)	1271	N/A

The data below shows attendance by agency and across all face to face and e-learning events:

Organisation/Department	Number of Training Completions
Schools/Academies and Other Learning Providers	629
Voluntary/Community Organisations and Charities	218
North East Lincolnshire Council:	
• Children's Social Care (including Foster Carers)	771
• Resources and Governance (Business Support)	40
• Family Hubs and Children's Health Provision	129
• Environment, Economy and Housing	19
• Education Services/Skills	68
• Strengthening Families and Young and Safe	45
• Safer and Stronger/Community Safety	3
• Other Services	16
We Are With You (Drug Service)	17
Health Organisations*	29
Early Years Providers and Childminders	507
Police	42
Total	2533

* Includes Northern Lincolnshire & Goole Hospitals NHS Trust, NAVIGO, Primary Care and Public Health

Evidence of Impact

Examples of feedback and evaluation from our courses:

Benefitted from 'having face to face chats in a group with people that work in the front door. To listen to real life experiences, ask questions, being in a group with people from different roles i.e teachers, childminders, directors etc' (Level 1 Introduction to Safeguarding Children)

'More aware of the signs of abuse and how to recognise patterns of behaviour' (Level 1 Introduction to Safeguarding Children)

'Nice to get a different perspective of safeguarding issues from different professionals and how they deal with these, interesting how different professionals also assess and scale safeguarding concerns differently, depending on their profession' (Level 2 Safeguarding Children)

'I have already considered CCE as a possible cause of a family's issues which I might have overlooked before' (Level 2 Child Exploitation)

8) Communications

There is a commitment to communicating across the safeguarding partner organisations and other agencies. The NEL SCP website (SaferNEL) is central to our communications strategy and is regularly refreshed to include a variety of resources, tools and learning from local and national reviews for professionals to access.

NEL SCP news updates are used to communicate information and messages relating to the Local Arrangements to key stakeholders.

Regular email communications via the NEL SCP communications list alert practitioners to what is new and available both locally and nationally. This has been an important mechanism to increase the reach of key messages across the partnership and there continues to be high levels of engagement with the information circulated. There are further opportunities to target communications i.e. with the voluntary charity and social enterprise sector to raise awareness of and engagement in our Local Arrangements.

Examples of communication activity include:

- Regular communications in respect of safeguarding training and practice lite bite sessions
- Dissemination of the summary of Working Together 2023 and the Children's Social Care National Framework and the implications for practice and for partners
- Delivery of a practice lite bite session in March 2023 relating to professional curiosity in practice and the learning from local line of sight learning events
- Delivery of a practice lite bite session on the use of the Professional Resolution and Disagreement Procedure in practice on October 2023
- The children's vision event 'Our Children Our Future' was held in December 2023 where the vision and outcomes for children and young people was launched
- Changes to the local referral process and use of the early help assessment was communicated to partner agencies
- Delivery of a practice lite bite session on the revised Bruising in Non Mobile Baby Policy in April 2024
- Seven minute briefings from line of sight learning events and any rapid reviews have continued to be published on the NEL SCP website
- The Voice and Influence Strategy was re launched and shared with partner agencies in September 2023

9) Funding

Safeguarding partners have a shared ownership of funding responsibilities and have agreed equitable and proportionate contributions to ensure the implementation of the Local Arrangements. These consist of actual funding and in-kind resources, for example representatives from safeguarding partner organisations contribute to the development and delivery of the Education and Training programme. In addition, each of the safeguarding partners have identified relevant system leaders from their organisations to chair the NEL SCP sub groups, in order to deliver and embed the Local Arrangements, the key areas of focus, associated strategies and delivery plans.

In the event of a Child Safeguarding Practice Review, it has been agreed that funding will be met by the three safeguarding partner organisations and where necessary, each partner organisation will contribute equitable and proportionate funding over and above the normal allocation in order to fulfil the costs of any review.

Contributions	2023/24 (£)
North East Lincolnshire Council	71,179
Humberside Police	23,904
Integrated Care Board	23,400
National Probation Service	2,184
Ear Mark Reserve Increase	-15,436
Total	113,231

Budget Allocation	2023/24
Staffing Costs	83,044
Independent Scrutiny	24,650
Other expenses, policies, subscriptions	537
Total	113,231

10) Learning from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews / Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel / National Reviews

Rapid reviews / practice reviews

The process and procedure for undertaking rapid reviews and consideration of practice reviews following identification of cases meeting the serious harm criteria is embedded and effective.

The Safeguarding Practice Review Group, (reconfigured to become the Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) Group from April 2024) has been responsible for overseeing the undertaking of rapid reviews where the serious harm criteria is met, and for overseeing practice reviews on behalf of the SCPB, and for the implementation and embedding of learning. Learning from all reviews undertaken is shared within the multi-agency arena to develop and inform working practices and improve services to children, young people and their families who need support.

From April 2024, the CSPR Group will continue to have responsibilities for overseeing the rapid review process, and CSPR process (as and when required), though the Safeguarding Practice Learning and Assurance Group will take on the responsibility for monitoring progress against all rapid review and practice review action plans and for the overseeing the implementation and embedding of learning.

There was one serious incident notification to the then safeguarding partners and to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel during the year. A rapid review was undertaken, and a decision made that sufficient learning had been identified to enable an action plan to be developed and progressed in order to inform practice.

Key learning from the rapid review included

- Interpreters to be used for all contacts when English is not a person's first language – children and family members not to be used as interpreters
- All staff to consider dental neglect and signpost / refer families to dental services when children present with decay. Information will be provided to agencies relating to the appropriate pathways
- Agencies to review their did not attend/was not brought policies to ensure children with emerging neglect concerns are captured

The impact of the learning and actions from the rapid review

- The learning was disseminated to partner agencies through a seven-minute briefing
- The local neglect strategy was revised and relaunched and a neglect practice briefing has been shared with all relevant and partner agencies
- Neglect training delivered by Jane Wiffin has raised awareness and led to a better understanding of neglect and the impact on children as evidence by feedback from practitioners

Key learning from the local practice review

A local practice review was undertaken in 2022, following a rapid review being undertaken in 2022. The report was published in early 2023 following the conclusion of criminal proceedings. An action plan was developed, and progress overseen by the NEL SCPB Safeguarding Review Group.

The key learning included:

- The importance of keeping a focus on individual children within larger sibling groups in gaining their individual wishes and feelings.
- The importance of assessing and understanding the lived experience and understanding the child's presenting behaviour in the context of their care environment.
- The importance of inter-agency chronologies and holistic assessments in fully understanding the family history that takes into account the child's developmental needs, family and environmental factors
- Ensuring that assessments reflect the analysis of agencies that have day to day contact with children and have a good understanding of their lived experience and impact of risk and need.
- The importance of having a clear strategy for responding to neglect that is owned and understood by all the respective organisations

The impact of the learning and actions from the practice review

- The learning from the local practice review was shared with partner agencies and the multi-agency action plan delivered and overseen by the Safeguarding Practice Review Group
- The NEL SCP Escalation and Disagreement Procedure has been revised and a lite bites session delivered to partner agencies on its use
- Voice of the Child and Lived Experience Guidance has been published, findings from line of sight learning events have evidenced that practice in gaining the voice of the child and understanding the lived experience is improving
- The SCP Neglect Strategy has been revised and published, a high number of practitioners have accessed the SCP Neglect Training

11) Scrutiny and assurance (including independent scrutiny)

The NEL SCP Scrutiny and Assurance Framework was published alongside the Local Arrangements. Scrutiny and assurance have been undertaken in relation to multi-agency case audit practice learning line of sight learning events, rapid reviews as evidenced above, independent review of learning from local reviews, challenge and support from the Independent Chair, annual Section 11 audit and annual education establishment safeguarding audit, leading to local learning, partnership action, changes in practice and outcomes.

Following the publication of Working Together 2023, a decision was made by the SCPB to develop independent scrutiny arrangements and to cease the role of the Independent Chair and for one of the DSP's to chair the SCPB. A job description was developed for the independent scrutineers, and four Independent Scrutiny Officers were commissioned / recruited to, who are representative from across the three statutory safeguarding partner organisations. They will undertake assurance activity aligned to the scrutiny and assurance framework and SCP priority areas of focus (for 2024/25 and beyond).

Independent Chair

Chris Cook was appointed as the Independent Chair of the SCP Executive Board in September 2022 by the then three safeguarding partners. The role provided a high level of challenge and support and enabled open and honest relationships which enabled existing relationships with partner agencies to build upon and strengthened. Following the publication of Working Together 2023, the independent chair fully supported the redevelopment of the SCP partnership and governance arrangements which were designed to deliver the SCP priority areas of focus and the expectations of Working Together 2023.

Line of sight learning events process

The purpose of the line of sight learning events process is to identify specific safeguarding themes and potential practice issues and good practice. Cases are identified where there were specific themes and one line of sight learning event was undertaken during 2023/24. Action plans were identified from the review and a seven-minute briefing developed and shared with partner agencies in order to embed the wider learning and improve practice. At a strategic level, the learning from the case and similar cases has directly informed the review and commissioning of trauma informed services locally and the provision of trauma informed training.

Themes	Findings
Voice of child/ lived experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where the child's voice cannot influence decision making this should be recorded and a rationale given and the reason explained to the child in age appropriate language. Services worked hard not to criminalise the child and recognised presenting behaviour was trauma related.
Expert assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The psychological and psychiatric assessments identified assessed the child needs well. The action from expert assessments should be actioned in a timely manner.
Understanding of developmental trauma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The importance of early intervention in reducing the impact of development trauma through a coordinated and trauma informed approach. Trauma training needs to be accessible to workers to support a trauma informed workforce.
Care planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placement matching not fully based on child's assessed needs. The Matching process for placing children needs to be based on assessed needs and informed by expert assessments. Where Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards are in place, the details should be part of the care plan.

Section 11 Audit

The audit was undertaken jointly between the NEL SCPB and NEL Safeguarding Adult Board (SAB). In addition to the self-assessment a number of agencies attended a challenge event.

Key findings included:

- Overall, the audits evidenced that all agencies had clear safeguarding processes in place
- All agencies were aware of and had clear processes in place for responding to allegations in respect of people who work with children
- There was evidence across partner agencies of how feedback from children and families had informed planning and service provision
- An area for development across most agencies was ensuring that there was an understanding and awareness of the Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty

The following recommendations were agreed and are overseen by the NEL SCP Safeguarding Practice Learning and Development Group:

- The SCP Section 11 audit to be a key element of the revised scrutiny and assurance framework and to be cross referenced when undertaking broader assurance activity
- The Section 11 process and challenge event element to be reviewed
- The Section 11 audit will be undertaken on an annual basis

- Consideration needs to be given whether the audit should continue to be undertaken jointly with the SAB

Annual Safeguarding in Education Audit

The annual Safeguarding in Education Audit of Primary, Secondary Schools and Colleges 2022/23 was commenced in the spring term, and the findings, which were generally positive, have been reported to the SCPB. There was a slight dip in the number of returns due to some schools having their own audit processes, which will be explored going forward. 98% of establishments who completed the audit answered yes to over 70% of questions which shows that most institutions are compliant with the majority of safeguarding criteria. The two main areas highlighted as requiring improvement are; lack of supervision and training needs. These issues will be an area of focus going forward.

The remit of the Child Protection Co-ordinators Forum has remained stable following review in the previous year. The format of meetings continues to provide the opportunity to share key messages, for practice development to take place linked to thematic analysis of referrals, to relay information around changes in legislation, and to address specific calls for information and requests from designated leads. Half-termly meetings where designated safeguarding leads can meet staff with children's social care allows school staff to understand the broad remit and scope of Children's Services in the local authority. Following the re-launch of the threshold document, the Service Director Safeguarding, Family Help and Youth Justice joined the meeting for a Q&A session to understand the practices and concerns of school leaders in the child protection arena.

Independent scrutiny (Neglect)

The NEL SCPB commissioned Jane Wiffin, a leading expert in neglect, to undertake a review of the key findings from local line of sight learning events, rapid reviews and practice reviews in respect of neglect. This was following a number of events/reviews where the same themes were identified. The purpose of the Jane Wiffin review was to seek independent expertise in this area in order to inform practice, local arrangements in responding to neglect and the re-development of the neglect strategy. The review identified a number of key themes and recommendations which were endorsed by NEL SCP Executive in February 2024 (as per matrix below). The recommendations have been weaved through the Neglect Strategy delivery plan which is overseen by the Safeguarding Practice Thematic Strategic Group during 2024/25.

Theme	Recommendation
Recognition, identification and understanding of neglect by practitioners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi agency neglect training to be delivered across partner agencies on indicators of neglect, the impact on children, roles and responsibilities of agencies • A group of neglect champions to be developed locally
Responding to the early signs of neglect, focused interventions and consideration of sustained change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A neglect screening tool to be developed and associated guidance. This will focus on early identification. The guidance will give some thought to relationship-based interventions which will focus on vulnerabilities and indicators of neglect and addressing the impact this has on the child

Theme	Recommendation
<p>Consistent use of a structured judgement tool such as the Graded Care Profile 2 to be used when analysing concerns and understanding the child's circumstances and the capacity of their parents to meet their needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A partnership agreed tool such as the Graded Care Profile 2 to be embedded and used consistently across North East Lincolnshire. This will be through clear pathways to improve uniformity in neglect cases across the partnership • The introduction of neglect champions across agencies to support a culture of consistency in cases where there are indicators of neglect • A structured judgement tool to improve contribution of practitioner analysis leading to meaningful intervention and consistent review
<p>Holistic multi agency assessments of the child circumstances and impact of neglect</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A neglect toolkit to be developed to support practitioners in assessing neglect which is aligned to the early help assessment and the revised local threshold document. This will include guidance linking the toolkit to the assessment framework, highlighting core principles, including that these are multi-agency and will draw on the knowledge of those professionals who know the child best
<p>Child protection chair's role</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child protection chairs to be reminded to ensure that screening tools/analysis tools are being used and making a difference • Child protection chairs to challenge the lack of progress of child protection plans or evidence of children's poor outcomes • Child protection chairs to ensure focus in child protection plans are on observable difference for a child. Create a change of language from "direct work with the child" to impact and what that change means for the child

12) Record of key decisions and actions taken by DSP's and impact

The DSP's have made a number of key decisions and taken actions relating to the expectations of Working Together 2023, delivering the Local Arrangements, including the priority areas of focus and in implementing recommendations from local and National Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, which are demonstrated throughout the report. Key strategic decisions include:

Date	Decision	Actions Taken	Impact
April 2023	In response to a rapid review in March 2023, where neglect was a feature, and based on previous local reviews featuring neglect, a decision was made to commission a thematic review of all local cases featuring neglect	Jane Wiffin an expert in neglect was commissioned to undertake a thematic neglect review to inform how best to respond to neglect locally based on research, practice and local practice analysis	The review has led to the development of a local neglect toolkit, the recommissioning of the Graded Care Profile 2 and the delivery of neglect training
July 2023	The revised Neglect Strategy and revised Early Help Strategy and early help assessment were agreed by the then safeguarding partners	Agreed to the proposal for the multi-agency risk assessment referral form to be replaced by the early help assessment. SCPB endorsement and adoption of Children's Services vision 'Our Children, Our Future'	The Early Help Strategy impacted on the number of early help assessments increasing, resulting in children being supported earlier. The Neglect Strategy and training has increased practitioners awareness of neglect and the impact on children
December 2023	Decision to revise the structure of the SCP partnership and governance arrangements to meet the requirements of Working Together 2023 and to deliver the priority areas of focus	New partnership and governance arrangements developed and agreed by the SCPB in February 2024. Transition to new arrangements during March and in place by April 2024	The number of sub groups have reduced. Partner agencies are much clearer on the remit and functions of the new sub groups and their responsibility. The new partnership and governance arrangements ensure the SCPB meet its independent scrutiny requirements under Working Together 2023
January 2024	Proposal to the three LSP's, that the three DSP's deliver safeguarding arrangements on their behalf	Letter written to the LSP's outlining the expectation of Working together 2023.	The Local Arrangements have been delivered as agreed. There are clear arrangements in place for the safeguarding partners to have oversight of the progress and impact of Local Arrangements

January 2024	To stand down the Independent Chair and develop independent scrutiny arrangements aligned to the scrutiny and assurance framework	Director of Children's Services agreed as the chair of the SCPB, to rotate on an annual basis. Independent scrutiny arrangements developed, role advertised, and four Independent Scrutiny Officers commissioned / recruited	The three DSP's are contributing fully to the functioning and structure of local safeguarding arrangements. The chair of the SCPB and other two DSP's, supported by relevant agencies, are driving the Local Arrangements
February 2023	The SCPB endorsed the revised SCPB performance dashboard set in principle	Actions made for additional analytical resources to be identified to support the delivery of the performance dashboard	The performance dashboard alongside the scrutiny and assurance framework provides the SCP with data analysis on the effectiveness and impact of the Local Arrangements on safeguarding children and improving outcomes
February 2024	As part of the working group in response to Working Together 2023, the SCPB made a decision to increase the resources available to the SCP team in order to support the delivery of the Local Arrangements	As part of the redesign within Children's Services, the SCP Business Team became part of the Children's Assurance Partnerships and Evaluation (CAPE) Team	This has increased available resources, including but not exhaustive leadership oversight, strategy development, horizon scanning and supporting the implementation of delivery plans
March 2024	To revise the current threshold document to meet the requirements of Working Together 2023	Working group established and threshold document developed in consultation with partner agencies. Threshold document aligned to the Early Help Strategy. Launched in June 2024	The threshold document provides clear guidance on the local arrangements for responding to need and risk and is currently being used by practitioners

13) Priority areas of focus for 2024 / 25

The priority areas of focus have been identified through performance analysis, local practice, learning from local reviews including the Childs lived experience and experience of practitioners and on national research.

Priority areas of focus			
Priority area of focus	Lead partnership	Governance	Anticipated action and system change
Embed the NEL SCP Neglect Strategy to respond to children at risk of and experiencing neglect, with a focus on the impact of the neglect training and tool	Safeguarding Practice Thematic Strategic Group	NEL SCPB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement and oversee the impact and effectiveness of the Neglect Strategy delivery plan Graded Care Profile 2 to be embedded and used consistently across North East Lincolnshire. This will be through clear pathways to improve uniformity in neglect cases across the partnership The introduction of neglect champions across agencies to support a culture of consistency in cases where there are indicators of neglect Multi-agency neglect training to continue to be delivered across partner agencies on indicators of neglect, the impact on children, roles and responsibilities of agencies Hold a multi-agency thematic assurance event, led by an Independent Scrutiny Officer, to include case audit/review of child neglect cases
Embed the Child Sexual Abuse Strategy to respond to children at risk of and experiencing child sexual abuse, with a focus on awareness raising and assessment of risk and need	Safeguarding Practice Thematic Strategic Group	NEL SCPB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement and oversee the impact and effectiveness of the Child Sexual Abuse Strategy delivery plan Commission and deliver multi agency Child Sexual Abuse Training Develop a Child Sexual Abuse Risk Assessment tool, aligned to the threshold document and SCP Child Sexual Abuse Training Hold a multi-agency thematic assurance event, led by an Independent Scrutiny Officer, to include case audit/review of child

Priority areas of focus			
Priority area of focus	Lead partnership	Governance	Anticipated action and system change
Embed the Early Help Strategy to further embed the focus on helping and supporting children and families at the earliest point, and to reduce the need for statutory intervention	Early Help Strategic Group	SCPB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refresh the Early Help Strategy and implement and oversee the impact and effectiveness of the Early Help Strategy delivery plan • To explore, develop and implement a new approach to family solutions and family networks • Further enhance the early help training offer, including (but not exhaustive) the development of early help training and working with resistant families also the impact of domestic abuse and neglect on families
Further develop the multi-agency approach to Child Exploitation, including Sexual Exploitation with a focus on transitions	Child Exploitation Strategic Group	NEL SCPB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop, implement and review the Child Exploitation Strategy and delivery plan to maximise opportunities to prepare, prevent, protect and pursue leading to better experiences and outcomes • Review the current child exploitation practice guidance and local multi agency child exploitation training • Develop a local child exploitation profile • Hold a multi-agency thematic assurance event, led by an Independent Scrutiny Officer, to include case audit/review of child criminal and sexual exploitation cases focussed on transition to adulthood, observation of a MACE meeting/MACE triage and a desktop review on the impact of MACE/MACE triage

14) Local Arrangements delivery plan 2024 / 25

As DSP's and their respective safeguarding partner organisations, and with relevant agencies, we will continue to listen, learn, review and adapt in order to ensure our Local Arrangements best meet the needs of the children, young people and families in NEL, so they grow up happy and healthy, safe in their homes and communities with people that love them

As well as the priority areas of focus and associated actions, our Local Arrangements are underpinned by a delivery plan, which is built around the following areas:

- Actions carried forward from the previous development plan, where progress has been made, but where a further focus is required
- Recommendations from independent scrutiny of the Local Arrangements
- Actions associated with key policy drivers

Development Plan		
Priority Area Focus	Lead Partnership	Anticipated Action and System Change
Scrutiny and Assurance (including independent scrutiny)	Safeguarding Practice Learning and Development Group	<p>Develop and implement our scrutiny and assurance programme which will contribute to improved practice and outcomes for children</p> <p>In addition to the independent scrutiny in association with the priority areas of focus, as a minimum, there will also be independent scrutiny in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the child protection process • consider if partner agencies understand and document family composition • annual review of the Local Arrangements
Data Intelligence and Performance	SCPB	<p>Further develop the performance framework across the partnership to underpin our Local Arrangements</p> <p>Hold a development working group to continue to shape and influence the scope of the performance dashboard</p>
Child and Family Engagement	Safeguarding Practice Learning and Development Group	<p>Further develop ways in which the partners seek and use feedback from children and families to inform their work and influence decision making</p> <p>Commit to ensuring that voice and engagement will feature as a standing agenda item at SCPB meetings</p>
Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews	Safeguarding Practice Learning and Development Group	Implement the annual independent scrutiny of the identification and notification process for serious child safeguarding cases to seek assurance of our local decision making and partnership processes
Education and Training	Safeguarding Practice Learning and Development Group	<p>Review and refresh the Education and Training Programme.</p> <p>Review training resources against the YHMAST standards, to review the subject matter and the connectivity to NEL SCP local arrangements</p> <p>Develop a survey to be disseminated across the partnership to generate understanding regarding the impact of training</p>
Funding	SCPB	Review the safeguarding partners contributions to the NEL SCP, and continue to be creative in the way in which we deploy the funding, and available capacity, to ensure we continue to develop and deliver our Local Arrangements

Development Plan		
Priority Area Focus	Lead Partnership	Anticipated Action and System Change
Stakeholder engagement	SCPB	<p>Hold an event to share the key messages from the NEL SCP Annual Report 2023/24</p> <p>Hold an event to acknowledge and celebrate the partnership contributions to the Local Arrangements</p> <p>Explore, develop and implement a standalone NEL SCP website</p>

15) Glossary

Annual Safeguarding in Education Audit: The purpose of the audit is to both assist establishments in ensuring they remain up to date with legislation, guidance and good practice and assure the SCP that safeguarding procedures are in place and are effective. The audit comprises of 14 'yes' or 'no' questions which gives clear criteria on the procedures required by establishments in order to answer 'yes'. There was also an opportunity to make any extra comments relating to the IFD, Early Help, Channel referrals, areas of achievement in relation to safeguarding, inter-agency working, suggestions for future audits and any training providers which are used.

Child Criminal Exploitation: As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

[Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines)

Child Sexual Exploitation: Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) 230 Serious Violence Strategy 155 in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

[Child sexual exploitation: definition and guide for practitioners - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-sexual-exploitation-definition-and-guide-for-practitioners)

Early Help: Early Help is not an individual service, but a wider system of support delivered by local authorities and their partners, who, by sharing resources and taking a collective responsibility, we can use the knowledge, skills and expertise of all our partners to ensure the right help is available at the right time. This collaborative model that is underpinned by the Working Together 2023 enhances the quality and effectiveness of services by ensuring that early conversations, interventions and support drawn from our universal provision afford children the right to support at the earliest opportunity which is tailored to their specific circumstances

Helping, Supporting and Protecting Children and Families in NEL Threshold Document 2024 / 28:

The threshold document sets out how services support children, young people, and families to participate, find help online and in their networks and communities, to be resilient, stay safe and independent.

It is set in the context of our NEL SCP that includes the three statutory safeguarding partner organisations, the Police, Integrated Care Board and Council, and other relevant partners. Specifically, it sets out the levels of need and the local criteria for action.

Integrated Front Door: The Integrated Front Door is our initial point of contact for professionals and the public if they are worried or concerned that a child may be suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm in North East Lincolnshire. The Integrated Front Door is a multi-agency team consisting of Children's Services, Police, Health and Education who share information to consider next steps on all contacts and referrals. Where it is assessed that a child is in need, in need of protection or becomes a child in our care, children and families are supported through a statutory plan.

Neglect: The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- provide suitable education

Practice Review: The purpose of serious child safeguarding case reviews, at local and national level, is to identify improvements that can be made to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Learning is relevant locally but has a wider importance for all practitioners working with children and families and for the government and policymakers. Understanding whether there are systemic issues, and whether and how policy and practice need to change, is critical to the system being dynamic and self-improving.

Rapid Review: When a serious incident becomes known to safeguarding partners, they must consider whether the case meets the criteria and guidance for a local review. If the safeguarding partners determine that the criteria are met to undertake a local child safeguarding practice review, then a serious incident notification and rapid review must take place. The aim of this review is to enable them to:

- gather the facts about the case, as far as they can be readily established
- discuss whether any immediate action is needed to ensure children's safety and share any learning appropriately
- consider the potential for identifying improvements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- decide what steps they should take next, including whether to undertake a child safeguarding practice review

Scrutiny and Assurance Framework: The North East Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Board (NEL SCPB) arrangements have been developed to create an arena conducive to robust scrutiny and constructive challenge that aims to improve outcomes and experience for children and families, support staff to strive for excellence in practice, and to hold a mirror up to ourselves through a lens of transparency. The arrangements include opportunities to proactively support local agencies and organisations to grow and improve, as well as a partnership approach to learning and multi-agency safeguarding system growth and development.

Team Around the Family: The Team Around the Family (TAF) aims to support your child and family at the earliest opportunity. TAF refers to different people and services that will work together to prevent or reduce difficulties for children and their families before they become too difficult.

Section 11: Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places a statutory duty on key persons and bodies to make arrangements to ensure that in discharging its functions, they have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and that the services they contact out to others are also having regard to need. The main objective of the NEL Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) is to ensure that in line with the Care Act 2014, local safeguarding arrangements and partners act to help and protect adults in NEL who have care or support needs and are experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect *and* are unable to protect themselves from abuse or neglect as a result of their care needs.

16) Contact us

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