



**Hillingdon Safeguarding  
Partnership**



## **Annual Report**

**2022-2023**



*The vision of the Safeguarding Children Partnership is for every child and young person to be and feel safe, enjoy good physical, emotional and mental health, have pride in their unique identities, feel that they belong and have opportunities to thrive.*

*The Safeguarding Adults Board's vision is for Hillingdon citizens, irrespective of age, race, gender, culture, religion, disability, or sexual orientation to be able to live with their rights protected, in safety, free from abuse and the fear of abuse.*

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## 1 Impact Statement

Hillingdon Safeguarding Partnership has continued to strive towards achieving our vision for residents to be and feel safe and to meet their full potential. This year we have focussed on understanding the impact of our strategic safeguarding arrangements on front line practice. Alan Caton OBE, our Independent Scrutineer, analysed the effectiveness of safeguarding practice in respect of extrafamilial harm for children and of the Adult Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and concluded that:

*'...there are, in my view, many strengths to the safeguarding arrangements for children and adults across Hillingdon. I have found a strong partnership that is open to scrutiny and challenge and one that strives to continually learn and improve practice. I have not come across any areas of poor practice or weaknesses in the adult MASH, or service provision for adolescents at risk of harm.*

*There is strong leadership from the Executive Leadership Group and a clear sense of joint and equal responsibility from the three safeguarding partners. The partnership is one that is built on high support, high challenge and where difficult conversations are encouraged.'*

Safeguarding practice does not take place in a vacuum, it is helpful to understand the wider context for this report. In 2022-2023 services locally, and nationally, continued to face additional pressures with a sustained increase in demand across all agencies to meet the safeguarding needs of residents. This is not a Hillingdon specific issue and is replicated nationally. The health, social and economic ramifications of the pandemic have been further exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis, with widespread strain on public, voluntary and safeguarding services.

This year there have been several high-profile safeguarding reviews published, including those in respect of Child Q, and the national reviews in respect of the tragic deaths of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson, and regarding safeguarding children with disabilities in residential settings. We have also seen the publication of independent reviews that set out systemic challenges within partner agencies. As a local partnership we continue to monitor closely the legislative response from central government and to identify address any local ramifications, ensuring that whilst any necessary difficult conversations are held that we do not overlook building on the strengths that can bolster our resilience.

To further our understanding of local practice a robust quality assurance schedule was implemented, with the support and expertise of safeguarding leads across the partnership. The schedule was designed to be broad, with topics ranging from self-assessment of agency compliance with the Children and Family Act, to targeted reviews of the Stronger Families approach, and the role of community multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC) in safeguarding adults who self-

neglect through hoarding. The purpose of multiagency audit is to provide us with important information about our areas for development, in addition to recognising our strengths in practice.

The views and experience of frontline practitioners have been sought, with their knowledge contributing directly to the development of the Safeguarding Partnership Contextual Safeguarding Strategy. As a partnership we have engaged directly with residents who have lived experience of safeguarding services, co-producing a review tool that enabled us to explore practice from the perspective of those most impacted.

We also supported our children and young people to produce their own Annual Report, a summary of which is incorporated into this report.

## 2 Hillingdon Safeguarding Partnership: Safeguarding Arrangements

This report provides an overview of the activity of Hillingdon's Safeguarding Partnership. The report seeks to provide assurance around the effectiveness of our local safeguarding arrangements, and to evidence the impact of these arrangements in ensuring the safety of Hillingdon residents irrespective of age.

The Safeguarding Partnership Implementation Unit provides support and drive to both the Adult's and Children's Partnerships. A key focus of the team is to facilitate, develop and maintain links between the Safeguarding Children Partnership and The Safeguarding Adults Board. The team also seeks to develop links and coordinate activity and delivery with the other relevant strategic boards across Hillingdon and Pan-London.

The main engine of the safeguarding arrangements for children is the Safeguarding Children Partnership Board and, for adults, the Safeguarding Adults Board. The Boards have oversight of safeguarding practice and performance, resolving issues as they arise. Where this is not possible, the issue will be escalated to the relevant organisation(s) via the Implementation Unit and if the individual organisation(s) still cannot resolve the matter, it is escalated to the Executive Leadership Group.

To ensure the success, coordination, and impact of the shared arrangements we have a joint Executive Leadership Group (ELG) that provides governance, leadership, oversight and challenge to both Boards. The ELG consists of the Local Authority's Chief Executive, the Chief Nurse of Hillingdon NHS Integrated Care Partnership, and the Metropolitan Police Service Borough Commander. This group has joint and equal responsibility for safeguarding in Hillingdon. Each partner is subject to internal scrutiny in accordance with their internal governance structures. In addition to this, the ELG has commissioned regular independent scrutiny of our safeguarding arrangements for both children and adults to provide reassurance of the effectiveness of the arrangements and independent critical challenge and appraisal that supports learning and future development.

To reflect the vision of joint and equal responsibility the Boards are chaired on a yearly rotating basis by a representative of the three statutory partners. From September 2022 responsibility for chairing the Executive Leadership Group passed to the Integrated Care Partnership, for the Children's Partnership Board to the Metropolitan Police Service, and for the Safeguarding Adults Board to the Local Authority. The Boards steer learning and development for the safeguarding environment across the London Borough of Hillingdon, and are informed by independent scrutiny, quality assurance activities, and subgroups.

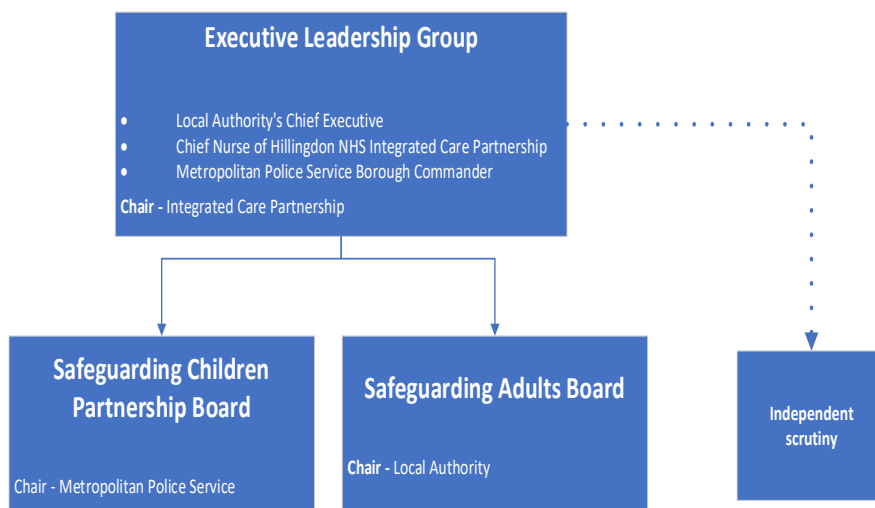


Fig 1 – Safeguarding arrangements governance structure

### 3 The Voice of the Person

In 2022 our Communication and Engagement Strategy was agreed. This document sets out how the Safeguarding Partnership interacts with individuals in receipt of services, the wider community, and professionals. One of the cornerstones of our local arrangements is an emphasis on understanding the lived experience of children, adults, their families, and carers. This ensures that we understand the impact of our work and provides a steer for future areas of priority and focus. To achieve this, we have proactively sought to recruit to the pan London Safeguarding Voices initiative, working with Healthwatch and attending the Older People’s Assembly to raise awareness of the role of the Safeguarding Partnership. We have also worked with the Local Authority Project Search team to quality assure our easy read products.



Adults and children with lived experience of safeguarding support were supported to co-produce the audit tool used for our ‘Voice of the Person Review’. Adults and children were consulted using a short, structured interview format. Overall, the findings paint a positive picture that most of the adults and children felt listened to by professionals. Most also felt they had received the support they needed to facilitate their communication with professionals. The positive accounts relate to encounters across the professional network: social care, health professionals, and police officers as well as direct providers of care and support.

Areas for further development include ensuring that the nuance of a person’s situation is reflected in written reports, and that reports are in plain language and are shared with the subject adult/child. There were some accounts of people struggling to contact professionals, and feeling unsure of which

professional should be helping with their specific situation. Some carers and adult's representatives felt that their knowledge and experience was not given sufficient weight, and they struggled to navigate the safeguarding network.

We asked children and adults what good listening means, with their responses condensed into four key aspects of practice:

- Making dedicated time and space
- Tailoring communication to individuals and families
- Relationship and rapport building
- Acting on what people say and communicating what is being done.

There is an overarching theme of care and compassion, when people felt that professionals genuinely cared about their situation, often at times of crisis in their lives, they felt more listened to. How effectively professionals conveyed this was impacted by whether they had made dedicated time and space to listen, whether they made efforts to find ways to communicate meaningfully, and whether they acted on what was said.

A member of the Safeguarding Partnership team separately met with the various children's consultation and engagement groups coordinated by the Local Authority. Thirty-six children with lived experience of safeguarding were consulted. These children are from a range of ethnicities, gender identities, cultures, religions, countries, and some had disabilities and neurodiversity needs. Their views were sought about their interactions with the wide range of professionals that have supported them, and their families and peers. With support Hillingdon's children and young people have produced an annual report, this is available as a standalone document with a summary of key points below:



**Hillingdon Safeguarding Partnership**



The Safeguarding Partnership is all the people that help and support us. Our social workers, doctors, carers, mental health workers, nurses, police officers, GPs, housing officers, mentors, support workers and many more.

# Children's Voice



"It helps me to know that other people have been through the same kind of things"

Listening to us and doing the things you say that you will do.

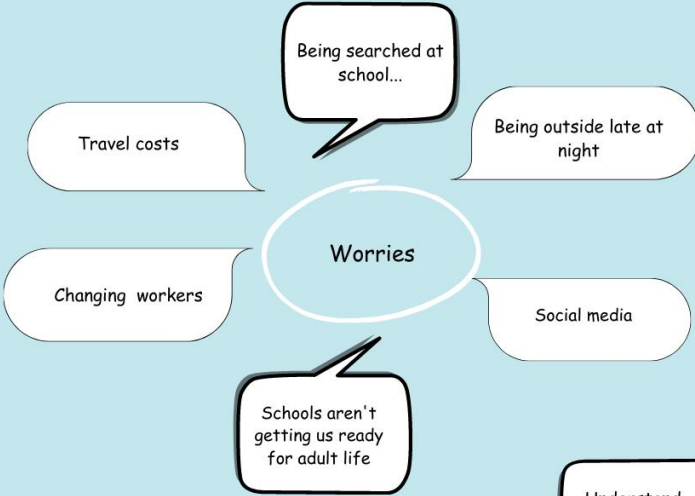
Learning about the things that matter to us!

When adults show us that they care

What is going well?

Having groups where there are fun activities, and where we can speak to other kids and adults that understand us.

- What our 6-12 year olds said about being in care:
- I feel loved
  - I feel cared for
  - I have fun
  - People are kind
  - I get the help I need



Help me understand what I'm thinking and feeling

Get to know us by listening to us and doing fun things.

What Helps?

We should meet somewhere that feels homely


Make it easier to see my social worker



## 4 Safeguarding Priorities

This section outlines the highlights of multiagency working in the last year. To reflect our ethos of shared and equal responsibility for safeguarding we have continued to encourage partner agencies to chair subgroups. This has been less successful in the last year due to increasing pressures on operational services, in consequence most subgroups are chaired by the Local Authority, or a member of the Implementation Unit. Subgroups are generally well attended across all aspects of partnership work, statutory partners are represented in all, with relevant agencies attending according to the focus of the subgroup. There have been some challenges in securing the engagement of education representatives.

Children's  
Priorities



### 4.1 Children's Priorities

The **Strategic High-Risk Panel** is usually co-chaired by the Metropolitan Police and Children and Young People's Services. Due to changes in local senior policing in practice this subgroup has largely been chaired by the Local Authority representative. The focus of the subgroup is to develop a collaborative strategic response to children at risk of extrafamilial harm. The overarching objective is to prevent, intervene and disrupt child exploitation. The panel collates and scrutinises information from a variety of sources and partners to identify trends and themes. This facilitates multiagency solution-focussed discussions to determine the best way to strategically address the identified needs and priorities.

In the last year the Panel completed a review that considered the early identification of children at risk of extrafamilial harm. This highlighted the need for the Education Inclusion Toolkit for Schools to be finalised, with agreement and publication in September 2022. The review further identified a need for increased awareness of the concept of 'adultification', which recognises that children who are from a global majority ethnic group are more likely to be treated as older than they are, and therefore less in need of protection. Most recently the Panel identified a need for year 6 children to have access to age-appropriate information about exploitation, resulting in workshops being offered to all Hillingdon primary schools by the Local Authority Adolescent Development Service.

In March 2023 the subgroup agreed the **Hillingdon Contextual Safeguarding Strategy**, with a plan to undertake a pilot of the approach in the Hayes area of the Borough.

The Contextual Safeguarding Approach recognises that children can experience harm outside of their families and provides a framework for

professionals to intervene in the contexts in which harm takes place – for example in schools, neighbourhoods and parks. The Safeguarding Partnership has made a successful bid for funding to support the pilot and developed a framework for locality assessments.

The **Child Sexual Abuse** subgroup formed in December 2021. The remit is to raise awareness of all forms of child sexual abuse in the community and across the partnership, to develop strategies that improve practitioner capacity to identify sexual abuse, increasing knowledge and confidence and to develop the partnership response where a child sexual abuse concern is identified. The subgroup considers issues of equality and diversity, including the additional risks and vulnerabilities faced by children with disabilities. Over the last year the subgroup has continued to work closely with the Centre of Expertise for Child Sexual Abuse, developing a bespoke resource for schools to improve the response to child-on-child sexual abuse. Training needs have been identified, and met, through the creation of subject specific briefings, and piloting a new course in respect of children with disabilities. A range of useful resources for practitioners have been collated and made available on the Safeguarding Partnership Website.

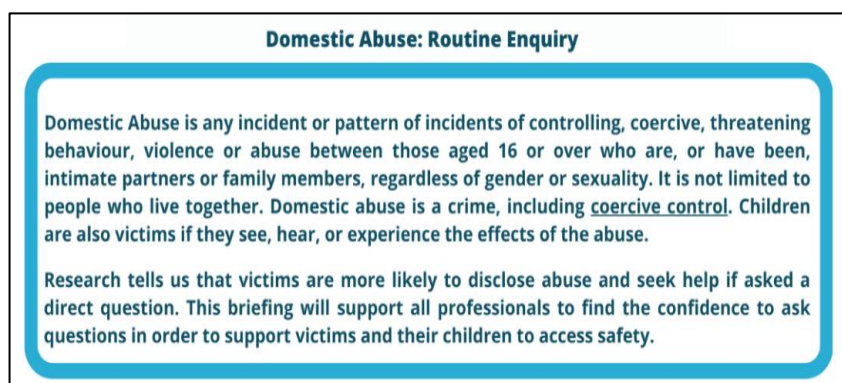
In August 2021 the Local Authority launched the **Stronger Families** approach to early help services in Hillingdon. This is a locality-based approach with three hubs, each developing networks to support children and families in the local community. In 2022-23 the subgroup has continued to provide scrutiny and strategic vision for the approach, enabling direct feedback from partners to identify and address any implementation issues, and to share information and updates about the progression of services. The subgroup concluded a multiagency review of the service highlighting strengths and opportunities for further development. The review found that the Stronger Families approach was



well embedded across the partnership, with positive feedback from families. As with any system change there were some early challenges, however these have largely been resolved within the subgroup and the focus is now on widening multiagency participation and ownership of plans for children, ensuring that support is provided by the right person, at the right time.

#### 4.2 Shared Priorities

The **Domestic Abuse** Subgroup reported to the Domestic Abuse Steering Executive in addition to the Safeguarding Adults Board and Safeguarding Children Partnership. In 2022 the subgroup concluded, with almost all identified areas of work progressed, excluding the development of a domestic abuse dataset as this is now being progressed by the Domestic Abuse Steering Executive. The impact of the subgroup was evident in disseminating the learning from the Domestic Homicide Review O, the development of, easy read guides to accessing support and practice briefings around routine enquiry in domestic abuse. The subgroup also achieved assurance around multiagency practice in respect of domestic abuse where there is a safeguarding element. Whilst the subgroup has ceased meeting there continues to be an ongoing link directly into the Domestic Abuse Steering Executive to ensure that safeguarding needs of victims, their children, and adults with care and support needs remain a priority.



The **Joint Strategic Safeguarding and Trafficking** Subgroup is a multi-agency subgroup of the Hillingdon Safeguarding Partnership. To date the group has been co-chaired by Border Force and the Safeguarding Partnership Team. The subgroup works to improve practice around the identification, prevention and response of all trafficking and safeguarding issues concerning children and adults arriving at or travelling through Heathrow Airport.

Over time significant achievements have been made in increasing and embedding awareness, understanding and partnership working around safeguarding adults and children at the airport. Ongoing police and Border Force operations are embedding and sustaining awareness of how to recognise and respond effectively to safeguarding issues, amongst all the people who work in the airport – including staff in all capacities. Modern Slavery Practice Guidance, currently in draft, will help solidify best practice across the entire professional network, including all stakeholders at Heathrow Airport. The membership and scope of the group is under review by key members, considering the extensive achievements so far, and ongoing areas of complexity.

The focus of the **Practice Development Forum (PDF)** is to ensure that learning from any statutory or non-statutory review, local or national, is disseminated across the safeguarding partnership as required. The Practice Development Forum also considers learning from audits and other statutory reviews. The group has a core membership across both partnerships, in recognition that learning from practice usually has applicability across both sectors. This year there have been four affiliated Task & Finish groups: Child Learning from Practice; Adult Learning from Practice; Female Genital Mutilation, Safeguarding and the Cost of Living.

During the year, to help disseminate and share information in different ways, we continued to publish and disseminate our Partnership Newsletter which continues to provide professionals with an accessible and practical overview of key practice developments, resources and learning from practice.

We believe that in addition to good information sharing, learning activities and good communication, quality assurance plays an important role in assessing and evaluating the impact of various activities and the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements. A coherent structure to the quality assurance activities of the partnership and an analytical approach is now being provided through the annual 2022-23 multiagency quality assurance schedule that is further explored later in this report.

The Safeguarding Partnership proactively raises awareness of **safeguarding themes and issues** throughout the year to continuously reinforce knowledge and increase alertness to issues of abuse and neglect. Through doing so it contributes to a community of residents and professionals who are well informed to prevent harm before it occurs and know how to seek help when needed.

This year the Partnership has promoted:

- Anti-Slavery Day
- Safeguarding Adults Week
- Mental Health Awareness Week
- International Men's Day
- Safer Internet Day
- Child Exploitation Awareness Day
- World Suicide Prevention Day

**Safeguarding Adults Is Everyone's Business**

Hillingdon safeguarding adults board

Frank depends on his daughter. He has to wait all day for personal care whilst she is at work. She won't allow anyone to help. She says it will cost too much.

**Neglect is a Safeguarding Concern**

Do you know a vulnerable person who may be suffering abuse, neglect or self neglect?

Report to Social Care Direct  
Call: 01895 556633  
Email: [socialcaredirect@hillington.gov.uk](mailto:socialcaredirect@hillington.gov.uk)  
Complete: [online form](#)

Scan this QR Code to complete the form



Tools and resources are developed in advance and shared across the professional network in addition to being available on our websites. Input from expert leads across the partnership is sought where required, both in the development of resources, and in ensuring that

the target audience is reached. There is evidence to support direct impact on safeguarding practice, and positive feedback from safeguarding partners about the usefulness of the resources.

#### 4.3 Adult Priorities

The **Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP)** subgroup has been operational since March 2020, concluding in December 2022. The subgroup led on the strategic development of the MSP agenda in Hillingdon, ensuring that adult safeguarding services are person-led, and outcome focused through quality assuring existing practice and procedures and raising the profile of MSP throughout safeguarding agencies. Over the course of operation, the subgroup undertook a multiagency audit of practice, with learning shared widely via webinar. In response to identified need the subgroup also produced a range of practice briefings including guidance around use of interpreters, access to justice and the promotion of best practice in safeguarding enquiries. There has been positive feedback regarding the impact of briefings on practice, with the Hillingdon Hospital reporting routine use of the access to justice briefing to support health professionals to better know when to contact the police and thereby safeguard adults with care and support needs.

##### Key Messages For Practice

###### **Timely and appropriate reporting to police promotes access to justice**

People with care and support needs can face particular challenges in accessing protection from crime, exercising their rights and accessing justice when they have been a victim of crime.

###### **Only the police can investigate crimes, NOT any other professionals or employers**

Employers and other practitioners often start investigating alleged crimes before reporting to the police. This makes successful prosecution much less likely. It is not appropriate for safeguarding enquiries or complaint responses to amount to an investigation of crimes.

###### **You do NOT need proof that a crime has taken place before you report it**

A reasonable suspicion is all you need. You do not need to be certain.

###### **Early involvement of police can increase access to justice**

This optimises the ability of the police to gather evidence and increase safety of the adult at risk

###### **Sometimes reports to police should be made without a victim's consent**

Reporting crimes to the police can protect other people, can protect life, and can prevent future crimes. There are some circumstances where you should report alleged crimes regardless of the victim's consent.

The **Mental Health and Safeguarding** subgroup formed in August 2021, with work concluding in February 2023. It has fulfilled its stated purpose:

- to identify and share local and national learning from serious cases and expert practice knowledge from subgroup members and embed that in systems and practice across the partnership to reduce the risks of abuse and neglect and self-neglect for adults with mental health problems, and

- to improve outcomes and quality of life in cases of abuse, neglect and self-neglect for adults with mental health problems.

The subgroup established links with health led strategic fora to avoid duplication and to ensure that areas of work were progressed in the most appropriate forum. The subgroup established the need for focussed practice development, delivering a multiagency webinar that continues to be available to the Partnership and producing practice briefings. The subgroup scrutinised local quality assurance processes, highlighting a need for clinical focussed auditing to incorporate the identification of and response to social care needs or safeguarding concerns. The Local Authority also introduced an AMHP (Approved Mental Health Professional) focussed quality assurance programme to address the same need. There continues to be a direct link between the Safeguarding Partnership and Suicide Prevention Steering Group and Learning from Suspected Suicides Panel.

The **self-neglect** subgroup is led by the Head of Service for Safeguarding in Adult Social Care. In the last year the subgroup has progressed through the strategic objectives to raise awareness of self-neglect, to improve practitioner knowledge, capacity and confidence and to develop the multiagency safeguarding response. One key area of work has been the quality assurance of processes where an adult is self-neglecting and there are concerns about hoarding behaviour that may also pose a risk to others, for example through clutter posing a fire hazard. This area of practice has crossover with those more focussed on community, rather than individual, safety. In consequence the audit considered the intersection between adult safeguarding and community multi-agency risk assessment conferences.

The audit considered barriers to best practice, interagency working and information sharing and identifying good practice. Actions taken in response to the audit have included raising awareness of referral pathways, increasing practitioner knowledge of the Clutter Image Rating Scale, and practice development around the implementation of the Mental Capacity Act.

## 5 Learning from Practice



It is acknowledged that learning can be gained from recognising good practice but also from those circumstances where we, as a partnership, could have responded differently to a child or adult's circumstances. Systemic learning and practice improvement is not only based on local experience but includes that which stems from regional and national research, policy, and practice. This approach seeks to ensure that safeguarding practice in Hillingdon is research informed and evidence

based and that our residents receive services that are of a high standard delivered by a partnership that strives to continuously improve.

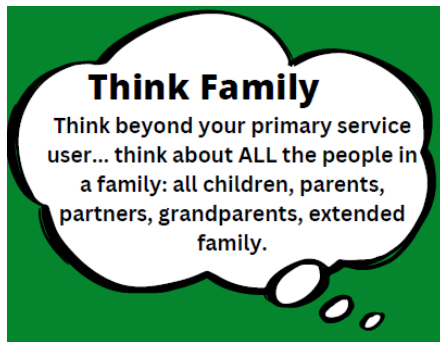
A fundamental duty of both the Safeguarding Children Partnership and Safeguarding Adults Board is to review those cases that may meet the criteria for a statutory review of practice. This review process is undertaken in line with the statutory guidance set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and the Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2014.

A notification to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (the National Panel) is made when a child has suffered serious harm, and that abuse and/or neglect is known or suspected. For each serious incident notification, a multiagency Rapid Review is convened to bring together and consider information known about the child by all agencies involved and to identify any areas of learning. The Rapid Review is held within 15 working days of the notification, with a report detailing the circumstances of the child, the actions of involved agencies, any learning identified and a decision around Local or National Child Safeguarding Practice Review. In the last year two Rapid Reviews have been convened, both concluding with recommendation for a Child Safeguarding Practice Review.

The Hillingdon Safeguarding Adult Review Panel is chaired by a Metropolitan Police Detective Superintendent with responsibility for safeguarding. It has a core membership of senior representatives from key agencies, with others mandated to attend according to the specific requirement of the case. The purpose of the Panel is to review circumstances that may meet the criteria for a Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) as specified in the Care Act 2014. In 2022-23 the Panel considered 7 referrals, concluded two Safeguarding Adults Reviews, with a third currently in progress.

**Learning from Practice Frameworks** have been implemented to promote the continuous improvement of safeguarding practice in both adult and child services. The Task and Finish Groups have a broad remit that includes undertaking non-statutory learning reviews, progressing actions, and identifying any thematic barriers to good practice.

In the last year 4 learning reviews have been completed, these provide an opportunity to proactively analyse and reflect on practice. Each learning review considers the implications of the circumstances for wider safeguarding practice with children and adults. Learning is addressed and disseminated using a variety of methods according to need. This includes direct engagement with frontline practitioners and managers, through changes to policies and procedures, and through the development of practice briefings or inclusion in the Safeguarding Partnership Newsletter that is widely circulated. Overarching themes identified in the last year include:



- The importance of a Think Family approach, ensuring that practitioners consider the needs of all family members.
- Recognising and responding to neglect of children and adults, and support for carers.
- Understanding the lived experience of children and adults and ensuring that this is central to practice.

### 5.1 Safeguarding Learning Events

Hillingdon Safeguarding Partnership delivered a webinar on the 27th of September 2022 to disseminate learning from two **Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs)**. The webinar was open to all practitioners across the safeguarding network: police, NHS staff, social care, private and voluntary sector care and support providers, housing staff and anyone else with contact with adults with care and support needs. Invitations to register for attendance were circulated via the Safeguarding Partnership Newsletter, and through distribution to members of the Safeguarding Adults Board and Safeguarding Children Partnership.



The Learning Event sought to highlight key aspects of learning from the Safeguarding Adults Reviews with a direct contribution from the family of one of the adults concerned. The event focussed on four key elements of practice:

- Understanding the lived experience of adults
- The impact of coercive and controlling behaviour
- The role of diagnostic overshadowing for adults with mental health difficulties and physical health needs
- The application of the Mental Capacity Act in safeguarding practice

In total 88 practitioners attended, with representatives from a range of services including the voluntary sector, care providers, acute and community health services, children's social care, adult social care and the Integrated Care Board.

Each attendee was asked to complete a feedback form focussed upon the impact of the Learning Event, with all rating the webinar as being good or excellent, and all finding the resources shared to be useful. Examples of impact on practice are outlined below:

*'The critical importance of using professional curiosity and critical thinking - e.g., by focusing on needs & experiences of the person rather than relying on carers views/ abusers perspectives, building*



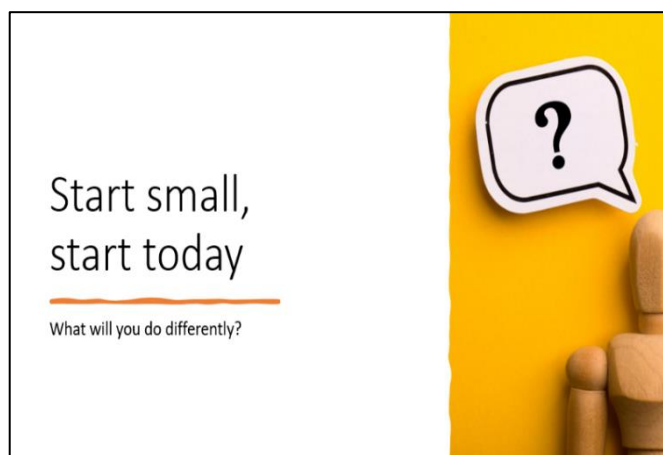
*relationships, remaining committed to ethical, legal & evidence-based practices, and being aware of disguised compliance and diagnostic overshadowing, demonstrating the sensitive and competent management of evolving risks/complexities and challenge obstructive notions/attitudes from families, LPAs or other professionals.'*

*'Even if support has been refused, this does not stop you from sharing information in order to continue to safeguard' \* A person with an LPA does not always have the last say regarding safeguarding in the best interest of the service user'.*

*'I am from Children's Services, but thinking about the adults' own needs, rather than just the needs of the child - reading and using the resources in team meetings and reflective supervision'.*

In March 2023 a Learning Event and Workshop was held to share the findings of our **Serious Youth Violence Reflective Review**, and to launch the Contextual Safeguarding Strategy. The event was aimed at practitioners, managers and strategic leads across the Safeguarding Children Partnership, with invitations extended to key individuals in the Metropolitan Police Service, Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust, The Hillingdon Hospital, Children and Young People Services, Voluntary and Community Organisations, and the Integrated Care Partnership. The event was held in person, over two sessions, with 52 professionals attending.

At each session the key findings of the review were shared, with practice themes for the Safeguarding Partnership identified and attendees supported to think critically in the application of these to their roles as individual professionals, and the contribution of their agency to reducing the risk of extrafamilial harm using the contextual safeguarding approach.



#### **Relationship Based Practice:**

- *'Promote a relationship-based approach across my schools and colleges'.*
- *'Listen and ensure the child's voice is heard to understand more about their life... and how I can support them from a health point of view'.*
- *'...taking a child first approach, listen to children's views and understand that their behaviour or actions may be triggered by a past event in their lives'*

#### **Early Help and Support:**

- *'Being more alert to risk factors and supporting practitioners to think about younger siblings – not waiting for an incident to happen'.*
- *'Identify SEN issues as early as possible'.*

- *'To take note early on when a child is struggling in terms of any undiagnosed or unmet health needs – follow up thoroughly.'*

#### **Professional Curiosity:**

- *'Be more curious and question, if in doubt, more than once! Share information'*
- *'Continue to challenge perceptions and be curious.'*
- *'Follow up regularly and in an appropriate timeframe – question!'*

#### **Practice Development:**

- *'Share knowledge from today... talk about it and how we can disseminate across the organisation'*
- *'Promote understanding of the contextual safeguarding approach and strategy across services'*
- *'Consider location more 'think context!'*

#### **Partnership Working:**

- *'Think about how therapy services are working with children's social care in collaboration to identify, assess and support harder to reach children and families'*
- *'Look at how our communities/third sector and faith groups can support the review implementation'*
- *'Have the wider conversation... think about how we can widen the links and connections... conversations!'*

## **6 Quality Assurance**

One of the core functions of the Safeguarding Partnership is to seek assurance about practice in Hillingdon. To this aim we have undertaken a wide range of auditing activity in the last year:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| - Compliance with s11 of the Children and Families Act, 2004                    | - Children's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub   |
| - Education Safeguarding (s175/157 The Education Act)                           | - Stronger Families Review   |
| - Safeguarding Adults Partnership Audit Tool (SAPAT)                            | - Children's Strategy Discussions  |
| - Community Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (Self-Neglect and Hoarding) | - Thematic Review of risk of extrafamilial harm for 11–14-year-olds                |
|   | - The impact of the Graded Care Profile Tool in safeguarding children from neglect |
|   | - The Voice of the Person  |



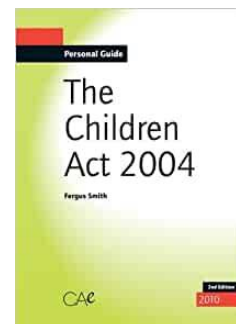
Each audit has been completed with the support and expertise of representatives across the multiagency group, with methodology adjusted according to the nature and matter under review. Methods used include self-assessment, file audits, roundtable discussions and the development of bespoke review tools.

Where reviews considered the quality of safeguarding practice the outcomes were largely positive, providing assurance about the impact of multiagency safeguarding

arrangements on practice in Hillingdon. Where a summary of the audit/review has not been provided elsewhere in this report a brief overview is provided in this section.

The findings, analysis and recommendations of each review have been communicated to the relevant subgroup and Safeguarding Board, with a standalone report produced for each area of focus. The engagement of safeguarding partners with the review process has been generally positive, however it was not possible to conclude the generic adult safeguarding audit (SAPAT) due to a low response rate. The review seeking to establish the impact of the Graded Care Profile 2 on practice with children suffering neglect found that it is the exception for the tool to be used, therefore the focus shifted to understanding the barriers to implementation, and highlighted the need for Safeguarding Partners to ensure that there is adherence to strategic approaches that have been agreed.

**Section 11 of the Children Act 2004** places duties on a range of organisations and individuals to ensure their functions, and those of any services that they contract out to others or license, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The application of this duty varies according to the nature of each agency and its functions. The audit findings provided assurance that the organisations that completed the self-assessment are, in the vast majority, discharging their duties with regards to the welfare of children. The areas of strength for the partnership are leadership and accountability, safer recruitment, information sharing, complaints and whistleblowing. There are opportunities for development around listening to the voice of the child, management of allegations against people in positions of trust relating to their conduct outside of their work, ongoing monitoring of Disclosure and Barring Service checks, and ongoing monitoring of training compliance. There is also an opportunity to enhance the child safeguarding components of local licensing processes.



The purpose of the **section 157/175 Education Audit** is to enable the Local Authority to assure themselves that providers across Hillingdon are discharging their statutory responsibilities and following guidance relating to the safeguarding of children and young people. The audit also contained questions in respect of good practice and the priorities of the Safeguarding Children's Partnership. Key findings were that, of those settings that responded, statutory safeguarding requirements appear to be met, with some evidence of excellent practice. Due to variations in application of the review tool between settings the reviewers assessed that the audit did not provide the level of assurance desired. In consequence an Education Safeguarding Subgroup will be created, and tasked with coproducing an audit tool with schools, and revisiting the findings of this audit.



The **Stronger Families: MASH Review** found that all the children's files reviewed had a clearly recorded analysis that considered the child and family history, factors that may affect parenting capacity, the child's lived experience with a clear risk assessment and rationale for the recommended outcome. The Review highlighted the need for clarity around arrangements for consent when making MASH checks, and to standardise a core group of agencies to contribute to MASH assessments, with a need to revisit the MASH Standard Operating Procedure to ensure that there is a shared and accurate understanding of processes and protocols. The Review also highlighted that, in the sample group, there was no evidence of contact with key men in the children's lives, with this issue being highlighted to frontline practitioners.

**The Strategy Discussion Review** found that thresholds for strategy discussions were consistent, with consideration of individual needs when there were varying complexities within the family. There was evidence of information sharing by the multiagency partners with positive engagement and attendance identified specifically from education services. Areas for development included that strategy discussions had been held in the absence of police representation, and the need to ensure that there is appropriate representation from Health professionals.

## 7 Training Programme

The purpose of the Safeguarding Partnership training programme is to ensure that practitioners have the most relevant and up to date opportunities for ongoing professional development. To promote accessibility training is delivered through a range of methods, including online, face to face and via webinar. Training by our children and young people is delivered in person. Over the last year we have continued to diversify the training offer, to include a greater range of subject areas with focus upon the areas of priority identified by the Safeguarding Partnership.

The Safeguarding Partnership also benefitted considerably from a comprehensive training programme undertaken as part of the **Female Genital Mutilation Project**, with 175 professionals attending sessions on Female Genital Mutilation, Breast Flattening and Child Abuse linked to Faith or Belief. The impact of this project on professional development is significant, with a programme of awareness raising workshops arranged monthly throughout the year to ensure the sustainability of the project, and a bespoke eLearning module developed.

Our informal partnership with the **Centre for Expertise in Child Sexual Abuse** enabled the following professional development opportunities across the Borough:

- 104 Education professionals attended workshops to design and pilot a guide for professionals supporting children following incidents of harmful sexual behaviour. This included an overview of the signs and indicators of Child Sexual Abuse.
- 19 practitioners attended pilot training focussed on CSA and Safeguarding for Youth Justice professionals.
- 34 practitioners attended pilot training 'Making it matter, changing our practice in response to sexual abuse of disabled children'. Attendees included LADO, GP, Education, Social Workers, and Support Workers.
- 36 practitioners attended the Pan London training: Multiagency intra-familial child sexual abuse.

In recognition of the pressures faced by frontline practitioners the Safeguarding Partnership has also implemented a programme of **webinars**. These are sharply focussed, last around 90 minutes and address a specific topic or area of practice. All webinars are made available on the Safeguarding Partnership websites and can be accessed using a password that is shared with Hillingdon Practitioners.

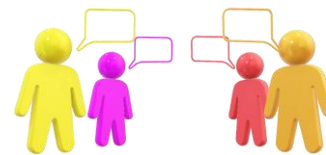
Webinar	Attendees
AXIS, Mobile and Detached Youth Services - early identification of vulnerability to exploitation	74
Safeguarding Adults with Mental Health Needs	56
Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Awareness	48
Making Safeguarding Personal	96
Safeguarding Learning Event: Learning from Safeguarding Adults Reviews	65
Total:	339

Following attendance delegates are asked to complete a feedback form, this enables the Partnership to monitor the **effectiveness and impact** of sessions.

#### Core Training Offer Feedback:

- 98% of delegates rated their understanding of the topic after training as very good to excellent.
- 96% rated the quality of the training as very good to excellent.
- 96% of delegates agreed or strongly agreed that they could apply learning from the training to their practice area.
- 98% of delegates reported that their confidence in the subject area was improved.

*Housing Officer: Learning from SARs 'I feel I have a good understanding of safeguarding, having worked in social care for over 20 years and having personal experience with a disabled relative. I have just moved into a role in housing, so the webinar reminded it me it is not just people with social care needs that can be subject to/have safeguarding needs.'*



*Adult Social Care: Self-Neglect 'I work in a locality team and often receive allocation of people who self-neglect. This was a refresher and help me to consider my practice with this service users.'*

*Early Years' Service: Contextual Safeguarding Workshop 'I work with under 5's but some of my families have siblings that may require support, I would be able to sign post them.'*

*Education: LADO, Managing Allegations 'To be more observant of colleagues with whom I work so I can identify issues that relate to safeguarding and knowing how to proceed'.*

*Education: Adultification Bias 'made me personally aware of how students may feel, and to make me question how I respond and react to incidents and ensure I am not judgemental'*

*Children and Young People's Services: Domestic Abuse 'In my role as a social worker I have worked with families that domestic abuse has deeply affected the relationship of the parents and has had a tremendous impact on the children. As a child's social worker, this... has enhanced my knowledge and makes me feel more confident in my approach'.*

1713 sessions of professional development have been facilitated by the Safeguarding Partnership in 2022-23, this is a 43% increase on 2021-22 (1191) and speaks to the impact of the webinar programme, Safeguarding Learning Events, and the positive effect of building relationships with key sector leads. This total does not include training delivered through the Local Authority's FGM Project.

## 8 London Borough of Hillingdon – Children and Young People Services

Children and Young People Services provides support to children, families, and carers where there are welfare or safeguarding concerns. There is evidence to support the effectiveness of our **Stronger Families** approach with the Hub responding to over 26,000 contacts. Out of these contacts over 11000 were received via the Early Help Assessment which can be accessed and completed anywhere and at any time by all professionals. Almost 1,500 children



have been referred to our Stronger Families Localities Teams, ensuring that their needs are assessed, and proportionate support is provided to all who need it at the earliest possible stage. This empowers our families to address their needs and utilise the resources available to them in their communities and extended networks and it also reduces the need for statutory social work intervention in the life of the family.

Where statutory assessment is required, it is provided promptly and during the year, 4000 child and family assessments were completed, with over 5000 individual children being supported and protected through statutory plans, either child in need or child protection.



During this financial year the government has mandated the National Transfer Scheme for **unaccompanied asylum-seeking children**. We welcomed this as we believe that children who seek asylum in the country will have their needs best met by a fairer distribution across the country. We work

with national and regional forums to facilitate swift moves to the other identified areas to minimise the inevitable impact further disruption would have to these children's lives through breaking links built in Hillingdon.

In Hillingdon, this new initiative had a significant impact on the numbers of children in our care with the total number at the end of the year being 364 as opposed to 463 at the end of the last financial year. The percentage of asylum-seeking children has also decreased from 34% to 27% but it remains significantly above the England average of 7%. Children and Young People's Services continue to work closely with partners in Border Force, Home Office, National Transfer Scheme and the wider professional network to safeguard children who seek asylum.

During the year another notable transformation has seen strengthened governance arrangements around education and SEND provision by reintegrating SEND and Education services within Children's Services, under the leadership of the Executive Director of Children's Services. A new Director of Education & SEND is starting in May 2023, and a Head of Virtual Schools and Vulnerable Cohorts already in place providing strong leadership, drive and vision to the service moving forward.

Our strengths-based model of practice and focus on **contextual safeguarding** has led to a reduction of need for child protection plans with sustainable change achieved through greater collaboration with children, parents and professionals. Where possible children are supported to choose their own

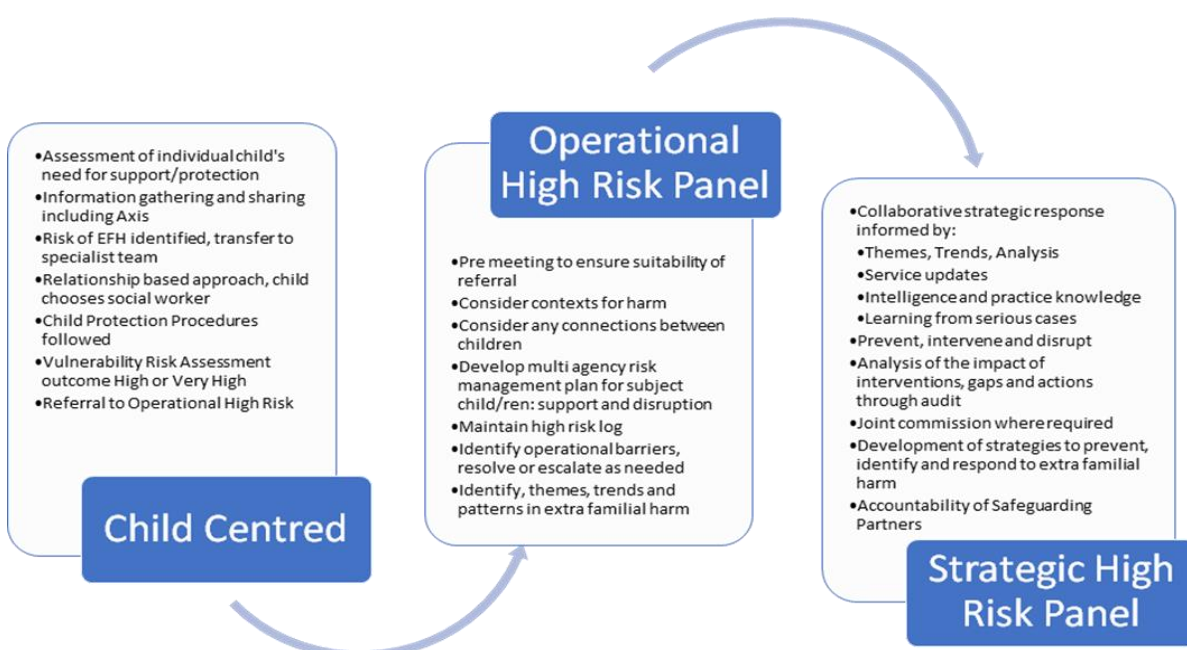
social worker, with devolved budgets enabling frontline staff to make decisions and implement support identified with families with reduction in delay and bureaucracy. There has been a positive outcome to our pilot Your Choice Programme and the progress made in Hillingdon by the program is recognised across London. This approach utilises Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) principles in engaging young people and their families, achieving measurable and sustainable change.

This year our practice in respect of extrafamilial harm was the subject of independent scrutiny. The independent scrutineer met with frontline practitioners from our social work team, youth justice service and AXIS and made positive findings in respect of safeguarding practice with vulnerable adolescents, with areas of consideration that will further develop our approach to this complex area of practice.



Whilst we know that we are meeting the needs of individual children, we recognise that where there is a risk of extrafamilial harm, there is a need for a broader approach that considers the risks faced by children in the wider social environment. To this

end we welcome the development of the Safeguarding Partnership Contextual Safeguarding Strategy. As co-chairs of the Strategic High Risk Panel we aim to develop a collaborative strategic response to children at risk of contextual risk factors outside of the family home. The overarching objectives are to prevent, intervene and disrupt child exploitation. The panel collates and scrutinises information from a variety of sources and partners to identify trends and themes. This facilitates multiagency solution-focussed discussions to determine the best way to strategically address the identified needs and priorities.





In August 2021 we launched our **stronger families** programme to promote early identification of need and to develop wrap around support in the communities before the needs of the families reach a level where statutory intervention is required. We monitor the progress of the Stronger Families implementation jointly with our safeguarding partners through the Stronger Families Partnership Group which is a sub-group of the Safeguarding Partnership Board. The group is co-chaired by a Local Authority Head of Service and by an Assistant Director in ICB. The group is well attended by police, schools (primary and secondary), Health, Social Care, CAMHS and safer communities and domestic abuse leads providing constructive scrutiny and multifaceted challenges and solutions.

The vision of Stronger Families is that “Hillingdon families are empowered to be and feel strong, safe and healthy through the provision of early and targeted support to reach their full potential”. This approach is underpinned by several components which work well together to support our children, families and communities. The services are accessed through the 24/7 Stronger Families Hub that includes an online interface, one email address, one telephone number and one online form. Locality services are provided through three locality teams which are in key areas of the borough and through our multi-agency Family Hub (Uxbridge Family Centre).

The Stronger families Hub operates 24 hours, 7 days a week to promote a timely, dynamic, and responsive service at the point of need. The 24/7 model allows practitioners to have the required time to make informed, evidenced based decisions in real time rather than being confined to office hours and ‘traditional’ working practices. Out of Hours Service continues to provide seamless cover from 17:00 – 09:00 and during these hours two



triage officers, a Senior Practitioner and a Social Worker are available to assist in addition to a senior manager on call. Additionally, there 24 hours Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP) Service works alongside the Stronger Families Hub for out of hours adult related matters. These include statutory mental health act assessments and support for people with learning disabilities, older people, and vulnerable adults. Through this approach we are ambitious in seeking to maximise access to support out of traditional office hours and we aim to be flexible and responsive to families’ needs, including parents and carers who are working as well as families who experience difficulties out of office hours.

The Stronger Families Hub and the electronic portal are accessed via the council’s website by all professionals. The referral is directly linked to the child’s electronic record and facilitates access to a wide range of support services including key working locality teams, SEND, SENDIASS, Portage, Participation Team, Adolescent Development Services as well as statutory support and protection

services. These services are accessed through the completion of an Early Help Assessment which serves the dual purpose of assessment of children with additional needs as well as referral to statutory support services for children who may require this.

Joint, locality work is at the centre of the way in which we work with then partnership to identify needs early and to support our families to identify their support networks and to build resilience without the need for statutory intervention. To make this aspiration a reality, our three locality-based key working teams cover three defined areas and provide holistic partnership working with statutory (health, education, police, children’s centres) and voluntary sector partners. In addition to working with individual families, the offer to our families in the localities also includes regular multiagency surgeries for families and professionals where they can explore, discuss, and review emerging issues and the services and support available or needed to address any emerging pressures. To address identified and emerging needs, we continue to provide a comprehensive training offer to our colleagues and all staff across the whole of the Stronger Families workforce received training in evidence-based approaches such as the Parenting Apart intervention.

To respond to the families’ needs and to support them in accessing the right universal support we are pleased to work closely with our Supporting Families Employment Advisor who is an experienced practitioner with a good understanding of the Universal services and who can bridge the gap in enabling families to have access to holistic support such as in housing, unemployment, mental health, benefits, and neglect. In addition to providing information and consultation, the Supporting Families Employment Advisor is invited, with the consent of families, to attend CIN and Core Group meetings thus enabling professionals and families to access to expert advice and to navigate the benefits system and debt management support services.

Here in Hillingdon, we opened our first multi-agency Family Hub: Uxbridge Family Centre. The modern and easily accessible hub created a unique opportunity for the co-location and coordinated delivery of a variety of services for children and families such as children’s contact, the Youth Justice Service, the Multi Agency Psychology Service and Children’s Centre services and a range of health services from antenatal care for mothers to sexual health for adolescents.



To support evaluation and development of the **Stronger Families** model following 12 months of operation three separate strands of review have been completed. The multiagency MASH review was led by the Safeguarding Partnership and considered the learning from the Solihull Joint Targeted Area Inspection, a review within the Stronger Families Subgroup, and an Internal Audit that considered the quality of information received, recording and decision making. Positively all three found that the approach is effective, and increasingly well embedded. We will triangulate areas of good practice and areas for further development in the coming year. We also routinely seek feedback from the children and families that are supported, with a sample highlighted below:

*"I really benefited from going on the Domestic Abuse and Parenting programmes and feel more empowered and confident in parenting, which has also reduced stress."*

*"She made us feel very comfortable, was non-judgemental and accepting of us and understanding/sensitive to our circumstances. Never once intrusive! So very respectful! She just knew how to strike the perfect balance. I could go on and on singing her praises. The service has now come to an end and we will miss her dearly. We would like to let you know she had such a significant and positive impact on our lives and helping us get back to normality after so much adversity. This will never be forgotten."*

*"I felt like I could say anything. I felt quite comfortable. She gave us ideas on how to bring ourselves closer in the family. I have started having a closer relationship with my Mum and I am attempting to build one with my dad. My Key Worker was very understanding, and we connected fast."*



The MASH continues to function well alongside our partners, and they screen and progress those contacts and referrals where there is a need for statutory intervention on the families. Both the SF Hub and MASH will use a BRAG (Blue/Red/Amber/Green) rating mechanism to determine the level of risk and need each contact will have. From the information and advice being provided for those contacts assessed as Blue to the immediate action and request for a strategy discussion for those who are assessed as Red, the Hub and MASH work effectively together and with all the other partners to provide the right response to the contacts received, at the right time, focussing on the families' strengths but also providing a comprehensive and accurate assessment of risk.

All **domestic abuse** referrals received are risk rated every day by a Police Sergeant in the MASH and the MASH work closely with our in-house Hillingdon Independent Domestic Abuse Advocacy Service (HIDVA). The service has direct access and communication with colleagues from various areas of the council and other agencies including children's social care, adult's social care, housing, community safety team, etc. this approach supports multiagency working and relationship-based practice which is at the centre of our wider approach.

As a service we are committed to tackling the lasting harms caused by **child sexual abuse** in all forms. Our targeted youth services have engaged with schools to raise awareness of online risks with a view to reducing the risk of children being exposed to harmful content/abuse online. Our frontline practitioners accessed specialist training delivered by the Centre of Expertise for Child Sexual Abuse. This was particularly beneficial for those practitioners working with our most vulnerable children with disabilities. The youth justice service and AXIS team assisted in the pilot of specialist training, providing feedback to the Centre of Expertise.

We know that children can also engage in sexually harmful behaviour towards their peers, this is a complex and sensitive area of safeguarding practice and necessitates the ability to balance the needs of the child, with the imperative to protect other children. The AIM2 assessment tool provides an evidence-based framework for understanding sexually harmful behaviours and assessing and managing risk. In the last year we have trained 6 social workers and youth justice service practitioners and managers in the use of the tool.

The AXIS team has continued to proactively raise awareness of the signs and symptoms of child sexual exploitation, with routine inclusion in the monthly newsletters, and a leading contribution to Child Exploitation Awareness Day, undertaking direct work with young people to increase awareness and reduce risk.

## 9 London Borough of Hillingdon Adult's Services

The significant increase in the number of Safeguarding Adult referrals reported in 2021/22 has been maintained during 2022/23 with a further increase in the overall number of referrals being made. Up to April 2023 there were a total of 14789 safeguarding adults' referrals received over the year, in contrast to 12938 in the previous year. This equates to a further 13% increase in referrals to the service. This increase has seen a significant pressure across the service in managing this volume of activity.

During the same timeframe, the total number of referrals that progressed to a Section 42 Adult Safeguarding enquiry reduced by 50% to 1793 enquiries up to April 2023. This change has occurred due to the intervention of Adult Social Care MASH in undertaking activity on a number of referrals by understanding and mitigating risk resulting in not progressing to the formal enquiry stage.

Safeguarding concerns have continued from a broad range of referrers. It is of note that referrals from Primary Health and GP's have increased over the year. There is a significant increase in the last quarter of the year of referrals from Secondary Health settings which will be monitored into next year. Police Merlin's have remained the highest source of referrals with the number remaining steady in each quarter of the year. Other referrers have remained fairly static over the year with a similar number of referrals being made each quarter.

The type of abuse identified has been recorded for all the completed section 42 enquiries. It is of note that previously the outcome of type of abuse could have been recorded multiply times if more than one issue was identified, this has now been modified to include just one. This change in recording may have affected some of the current data and trends. Neglect has been identified as the most common type of abuse recorded and significantly higher than all other categories. Self-neglect, emotional and financial abuse are also regularly identified as a confirmed type of abuse. Domestic Violence has appeared to have decreased in completed section 42 enquiries, but this may be due to the recording of a single category only. The sub-group around Domestic Violence has now concluded its work in this area.

**Adult MASH** activity continues with partners to focus on risks, to minimise the risk of abuse occurring and ensure our responses to concerns were timely, robust and effective. This approach has seen a reduction in the number of referrals resulting in section 42 enquiries and improved timeliness on outcomes and mitigation of risks following referral.

Once referrals have progressed to a section 42 safeguarding enquiry, the process for completion is led by Adult Social Care to the point of closure of the enquiry. This year has seen a focus on the improvement of the timeliness of completion of section 42 enquiries. This is monitored through identification of those enquiries which have taken more than 50 days to complete. There has been significant improvement in performance across adult social care in this area. In March 2022, 77 section 42 enquiries were ongoing beyond 50 days and the longest being open for 479 days. At the end of March 23 there were 52 enquiries ongoing with the longest open for 304 days. This is a 32% reduction in the number of enquiries taking longer than 50 days to complete.

The length of time to close a section 42 has reduced due to the MASH team undertaking some of the enquiry work. There are times where it takes longer for the s42 enquiries to be concluded once its allocated to other service areas, such as when there is ongoing police investigation, awaiting information from partners i.e., conduction of Serious Incident Investigations, provider concern process, allocation of advocates or where family members are out of the country and would like to be part of the process



The LBH safeguarding referral form has been developed for compliance purposes and is in line with Care Act 2014. It has been rolled out to all ASC and partners, this will ensure that risks are mitigated more swiftly by ensuring the welfare of vulnerable adults and family as a whole.

Adult Social Care continue to be dedicated to working collaboratively with partners around the issues in safeguarding against **self-neglect**. The self-neglect subgroup led by Adult Social Care has concluded with a range of effective actions and outcomes being completed as described earlier in this report. The learning from the SAR's on self-neglect has been shared and disseminated through the teams with the intention of imbedding the learning across the service as a whole.

The identification of **neglect** as a lead category for completed section 42 enquiries is noted from the data of completed section 42 enquiries. Following this neglect will become a key priority within the SAB and across the service in this next year. Neglect concerns are often linked to providers of services/care to individuals and groups (Table 7). The Provider Risk Panel and Care Governance processes are robust in identifying, supporting and taking action with providers when concerns are raised. The Quality Assurance service monitor and assess the safety around provisions and this monitoring is often linked to the Section 42 Enquiry for a particular individual.

This year has seen the complete end of Covid 19 restrictions which have had a significant impact on care and support at home and in the community over the previous two years. The increase in safeguarding activity across Adult Social Care attributed in part to the Covid 19 situation has been maintained across all areas of Adult Social Care in the past year. The return to normal life has not resulted in pre pandemic numbers of activity across Adult Social Care.

Independent scrutiny of the safeguarding arrangements in Hillingdon takes place annually. The report this year overall was very positive and outlines a range of activities and developments made across Adult Social Care to improve safeguarding and outcomes.

Going forward into the next year a further transformation of Adult Safeguarding services is likely to occur, currently there is active planning and preparation being undertaken to ensure that any changes are effective and enhance the current offer and activity into the next year.



Planning of work on themes and practice will continue this year with a continued focus on **domestic abuse** and understanding data on this. Work is ongoing to promote a greater alignment with police colleagues and reduce/end calls to 101. Training will remain a key feature within the service promoting and providing training both for internal staff and internal staff of partners. Finally, there will be a review of incoming concerns and information to the public on how to safeguard themselves and others with greater information being made available and shared.

## 10 NHS North West London Integrated Care Board

**Child Safeguarding:** The North West London Integrated Care Board (ICB) has worked to progress the safeguarding priorities as agreed by the Hillingdon Safeguarding Children Partnership; contextual Safeguarding, child sexual abuse, stronger families.



The ICB safeguarding team has contributed and supported the development of the **contextual safeguarding** strategy. This approach has been used to better understand the incidents of serious youth violence in the borough. The ICB safeguarding team and commissioners have been fully engaged with the work of the child sexual abuse subgroup. **CSA** services for children and young people in northwest London are in the process of a service development programme with the aim to provide a local Child Sexual Abuse Hub. Children and young people will benefit from a local service providing a multi-agency holistic approach to care.

The TigerLight (Barnardo's) services will continue to provide psychological support to children and young people who have experienced sexual abuse.

The Stronger Families model of care and access to services has been fully supported by the ICB and shared with primary care at GP Forums.

We have implemented '**learning from practice**' through a comprehensive training offer to ICB staff and the wider health workforce and bespoke training for primary care via the GP Forums. GP forums have included the learning from both local reviews and national reports. In addition, speakers from Hillingdon Local Authority have attended to outline models of care and referral pathways. The ICB

training offer has included the learning from the LCSPR Child Q and the complexities of identifying and meeting the health needs of asylum seekers – training delivered by the Helen Bamber Foundation.

The ICB has worked to deliver a consistent approach designed to consolidate and share learning from **domestic abuse** related reviews and investigations across the health network. It has disseminated key information to partners across different settings, including primary and secondary care, to ensure the issue remains on the agenda of key forums.

A challenge for the ICB has been that of vacancies which have been covered with interim staff, however both the Hillingdon designated nurse safeguarding children and the designated nurse looked after children posts have now been successfully recruited to.

The ICB has in place a comprehensive training programme for designated professionals (level 4/5) and supervision offer so meeting professional standards as outlined in both statutory and intercollegiate guidance. The ICB has extended this training offer to the wider workforce.

The ICB has worked to engage primary care with the HSCP training offer by circulating the training programme and encouraging attendance. In January 2023 two GPs took advantage of specialist training hosted by HSCP from the Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse.

Primary care services (GP Practices) took part in the HSCP Section 11 Audit. The response rate was extremely good with 29 practices submitted and the majority self-assessing as over 80% compliant with safeguarding standards.

There are several Home Office commissioned Interim Accommodation Sites, managed by an accommodation provider, housing asylum seeking individuals and families. The ICB has worked closely with primary care and health providers to understand and meet the health needs of asylum seekers placed the accommodation sites in Hillingdon which has led to the development of a model of onsite health services and co-ordination on-site rapid responses to health needs by teams such as the roving immunisation teams.

**Adult Safeguarding:** The North West London Integrated Care Board (ICB) has been making progress towards the four priority areas: making Safeguarding Personal, addressing financial and material abuse, promoting mental health, and safeguarding, and tackling self-neglect.

The ICB continues to promote a systemwide person-led approach to how partners respond to safeguarding concerns which includes a consistent approach toward the Mental Capacity Act and other relevant policy areas. The ICB has also provided joint training and learning opportunities to



promote awareness of safeguarding best practices and has also worked with partners to address financial and material abuse and improve mental health outcomes.

The ICB remains committed to driving a pilot project with the local authority learning disability service to improve annual health checks for people with learning disabilities as part of the wider **mental health** transformation workstream.

The ICB continues to participate in the multi-agency suicide prevention panel and self-neglect subgroup and ensures all relevant learning is shared across channels including informal briefings and key forums so that partners remain up-to-date on all safeguarding matters.

The ICB continues to take part in the **JSSAT** Subgroup and has ensured that vital information and learning has been disseminated across North West London. It has also increased awareness among health partners of interconnected issues like human trafficking and sexual slavery, and enhanced knowledge and awareness of partners responsibilities and options for further support.

## 11 Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)

The Public Protection service manage investigations into allegations of domestic abuse and stalking, sexual abuse and child abuse. The portfolio also has a team of Police Conference Liaison Officers, who work with children who are being supported through Child Protection plans. The strand also manages referrals into the BCU and external referrals to partners through the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and Child Abuse Investigation Team referrals desk. In addition, the Public Protection Teams have strand ownership of mental health and missing people as well as Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and online images of children. Public Protection will also contribute to statutory reviews of safeguarding practice.



In March 2022 the MPS went through His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Peel Inspection, a further review was conducted that placed the MPS into an Engage Monitoring Phase with a comprehensive action plan. This occurred in March 2023, there has also recently been a Baroness Casey report in reflection of various challenges around Public Protection. These challenges are being addressed corporately.

Further to this Operation Aegis, our central public protection inspection and improvement team, visited the BCU to complete regular checks which have varying results. The learning from this has being addressed at a local level throughout the Public Protection portfolio, the larger challenges are being picked up in Organisational Learning Governance Board.

West Area Borough Command Unit continue to support the application of **making safeguarding personal (MSP)** principles in day-to-day activity, with the core elements included in training, supervision, and continuous professional development. In almost every interaction police officers have with the public, there is a focus on engagement, inclusion, choice, and control, with the individual's views sought as to what they would like the outcome to be. Whilst this cannot always be achieved, the individual is asked, and their voice heard. Police have a variety of mechanisms to ensure MSP is at the forefront of our work, our training includes the Mental Capacity Act with officers encouraged to understand how to support people's understanding of their choices and whether they can understand these and weigh them up. There are a range of practical measures in place including provision for video recorded interviews for those in the community who may be eligible to give their accounts in this way, rather than by written statement; provision of wider special measures within the court arena; use of intermediaries for vulnerable and intimidated witnesses, use of advocates, including IDVA's, ISVA's and appropriate adults. We follow the Victim's Code of Practice, which aims to empower victims, by providing support and information they need, setting out services and information that victims are entitled to. It also sets out the level of contact they can expect from police, their entitlements and choices and gives entitlements to specialist support.

Referrals to Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) for high-risk victims of domestic abuse also play an important role in MSP. Across West Area, MARAC referrals average around 1500 - 1800 per year. MARAC is another mechanism to ensure the safety of vulnerable victims of abuse and importantly, their voice can be represented by an IDVA, who represents the victim's views and wishes and ensures the victim's safety remains the focus of the meeting. The MASH plays a key role in MSP, identifying people's views and outcomes from an early stage, achieving a clear understanding of risk and promoting a joined-up approach.

West Area are regarded as one of leading mental health teams in London, in terms of assessing and managing risks relating to vulnerability. 2021 saw the introduction of the 'Risk Management and Demand Reduction' (RMDR) protocol. This protocol allows the team to capture all risk/demand information that comes into the team; assess the risks and collaborate with internal and external partners to ensure there is an approved and proportionate joint response. In Hillingdon alone, over 522 individuals have entered the RMDR assessment process, 36 of which were considered at highest risk of causing harm to themselves or others.

In 2022, data held by the MH team shows that in Hillingdon there were 14 suicides, 169 near suicides and over 250 people were detained under s136 Mental Health Act, compared to around 300+ in 2021. In addition, 329 people were voluntarily taken to the Emergency Department by police for care, this

is up 100 since the previous year. Police used the Mental Capacity Act in over 13 cases down from 45 in 2021.

Our CAIT team continue to be one of the busiest teams in the Met, with the fourth highest volume across London. In April 2022 to May 2023, the team dealt with over 1284 offences, all of which would have been initially reviewed by our Referrals Team. Of this number, around 683 were then allocated to the Investigation team. Just over a third of all investigations concern allegations of neglect and child cruelty and around 56% concerns allegations of assault, with the remainder largely comprising of allegations of sexual abuse. This breakdown is consistent with other BCU's across the Met. Victims of child abuse are more concentrated in older children with those aged 12-17 accounting for 44% of cases, followed by those aged 6-11, who accounted for 36% of all cases. Those children aged 0-5 year accounted for 18% of cases, and the remaining cases concerned adults who had reported non-recent abuse.

CAIT officers undertake the Specialist Child Abuse Investigation Development Programme, which is an accredited course focussing on child development in the context of abuse, understanding sexual offending behaviour, investigating child abuse, multi-agency working, attachment and development, trauma and offences. In addition to this mandated training, there continues to be an investment in CPD, with training masterclasses offered for CAIT and CAIT referrals to undertake. This features topics such as NAI.

In 2022, the MPS jointly launched the revised **London Child Exploitation Protocol**. This followed on from the London Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) protocol but expanded the focus from just sexual exploitation to all forms of child exploitation. In doing so it opened the door for local authorities and partners to refer in concerns about children at risk of and being exploited in a range of ways. In West Area, the Child Exploitation Team work alongside other policing teams, including our Gangs Unit and Missing Persons, as well as working closely with external partners. The team engage with partners at the Operational High-Risk Panel which provides tactical oversight of child exploitation across the borough and all key stakeholders. Support for victims and families is an intrinsic part of every investigation strategy. In 2022 the team investigated 200 reports of exploitation up from 130 in 2021.

Of the 200 reports reviewed, 82 were referrals from Hillingdon. Of the Hillingdon reports there has been 2 Child Abduction Warning Notices served, and several interventions and visits to local hotels of concern under Operation Makesafe. The 82 referrals are broken down into 28 for CSE, 40 for where Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) is present and 4 showed an overlap of both CSE & CCE. 7 of these reports were transferred to other forces. Referral pathways for reporting child exploitation are varied and include from Children's Services, calls made to police or through police directly coming across

cases of exploitation, with the remaining referrals coming from colleagues in education and online reporting or third party reports.

2022 has continued to be a busy year from our OCSAE team (Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation), which saw nearly 250 crimes being referred to West Area, with 73 relating to Hillingdon, this was a decrease from the year before when 105 were recorded. (Crimes which involve online indecent images of children). The demands placed on the investigation team are significant, both in terms of volume, but also in terms of the impact such crime types can have on their own welfare. Despite the challenges, they face, the team have secured some excellent results.

Hillingdon, like many other London boroughs, has seen increases in recorded domestic abuse crime – a crime we know disproportionately affects women. WA BCU has continued to see the highest volume of both domestic abuse incidents and domestic abuse offences across the Met, with over 17,573 incidents /offences over the past year – which equates to 12% respectively of the Met’s total overall volume. In Hillingdon alone there has been 5235 Offences/Incidents of Domestic Abuse. Calls to domestic abuse incidents and offences accounts for 20% of total I grade (immediate response), and S grade (response within 60 minutes) calls responded to by Emergency Response Policing Team (ERPT) colleagues.

The volume of crime coming into our Community Safety Units (CSU) has brought some real challenges in recent months and we have bolstered team strengths with colleagues from other Units to ensure our operating levels remain satisfactory. The Met has recently undertaken a complete review of Public Protection and it has been recognised that additional permanent resource is required longer term to ensure our teams remain able to deliver high standards of victim care and importantly, bring offenders to justice. Supporting the work of our Emergency Response colleagues and Community Safety investigators, West Area also has a strong risk management approach, with an experienced MARAC team and Stalking Protection Order officer.

In 2022, WA BCU secured the most Stalking Protection Orders (SPO) of any other BCU thanks to the efforts of our dedicated SPO officer (31 SPO’s). We absolutely recognise the importance of these orders to keep victims safe, some of whom will have been subjected to unwanted, fixated and obsessive conduct for many months.

We also participated in the 16 Days of Activism which took place from 25th November to 10th December 2022. This was a great opportunity to amplify what goes on in WA throughout the year; to arrest perpetrators and protect victims of domestic abuse. Surge activity over the 16 days saw collaboration with the Prison Intelligence Unit, Digital Operations, Met Intelligence, and Economic

Crime Team to locate and arrest offenders. Within WA BCU, the Met's 'Engagement Bus' was also deployed, allowing officers to speak with women around under-reporting and raise awareness of domestic abuse in the community. The results of this Operation led to over 74 arrests, 20 charges, several separate Domestic Violence Protection Notices to ensure women experiencing abuse were safer within the community.

## 12 Agency Contributions

### 12.1 Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL)

CNWL provides NHS services throughout a person's life, in physical and mental health and everything in between, at GPs and hospitals to the community and in their own home. CNWL provide a wide range of adult and children services in Hillingdon, which include the 0-19 Service, Child Integrated Therapy Services, Child Development Service, Community Adult and Children Nursing, Community Physical Health Services, Addiction Support Services and Mental Health Services for Adults and Children.

CNWL has maintained its position as a core member of both the SAB and SCP, including contributions to the Independent Scrutiny Process. CNWL is a fully engaged member of the Safeguarding Partnership. Our regulator, the CQC, have not inspected any children's services this year. The CQC undertook Mental Health Act visits to all acute wards, with a positive outcome and no regulation actions identified.

CNWL responded to the Section 11 Safeguarding Partnership audit which ensures that we are discharging our functions to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. No concerns were raised for CNWL, but an area for strengthening will be capturing and recording the Voice of the Child / Lived experience of children at all contacts. Our next steps will be to discuss this with children's managers with a view to updating our recording systems.



Our **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)** have embedded safeguarding champions within services; these champions provide support and advice to mental health professionals. We have extended our Early Help offer to include Mental Health Support Teams who work with children and

families in 5 Hillingdon schools. Our services for children under the age of 5 are in development, as part of our wider commitment to early help. CAMHS seek children's views through a patient feedback group. CAMHS is represented on strategic subgroups where required, in recognition of the increased need for support for those children impacted by exploitation we have introduced a prioritisation pathway.

The Multi Agency Psychological Support Service (MAPS) works with children in care, and the professionals that support them. MAPS provides consultation for professionals, and trauma focused interventions for care experienced children. We also have a dedicated clinical nurse specialist embedded in the Youth Justice Service, offering professional consultation and assessing those children who meet the CAMHS threshold for emotional wellbeing needs.

We have launched **Year of the Child**; a programme that will celebrate and promote CNWL's large portfolio of children's services. We want to showcase our expertise in this area, working with families, carers and young people to gain insight into their experiences. This campaign will run a monthly calendar of wellbeing sessions and educational workshops, spotlighting our service lines, sharing the work and achievements in the children and young people space. Available for CNWL teams and staff, as well as parents, families, carers, schools and others, the sessions will promote a variety of specialist health topics. The programme will culminate in a conference that brings together teams from across the organisation to explore neurodiversity pathways.

CNWL recognises the importance of the multi-agency response needed to prevent children suffering **extra-familial harm**. CNWLs Safeguarding Children Team have been a core contributor to the Education Toolkit, which is now in place across Hillingdon, to assist schools in supporting children to access health services for unmet health needs that may present early on and, if left unassessed, may lead to persistent disruptive behaviour and in the long term lost education. Children out of education are at greater risk of contextual safeguarding.

CNWLs Safeguarding Children Team are core members who work in Partnership with the Local Authority and other agencies who attend the High-Risk Panel for children at risk of contextual safeguarding. CNWL are committed to supporting the **Contextual Safeguarding** strategy that has recently been launched by the Partnership, in line with the Serious Violence Duty.

The CNWL Safeguarding Children Team have provided the 0-19 service with workshops on **Child Sexual Abuse** to increase awareness and knowledge of this priority area. These staff are seeing children regularly and may observe behaviours that indicate a risk of Child Sexual Abuse. The Safeguarding Children Team attended Child Sexual Abuse Partnership subgroup meetings and shared

good practice within CNWL through training delivered to children's teams and acknowledged areas of improvement such as the voice of the child in every contact with particular relevance to Child Sexual Abuse. CNWL offer Trust wide Level 3 safeguarding children training on Child Sexual Abuse and online harm. CNWL have made Child Sexual Abuse a priority for the Trust in the coming year and will be enhancing resources for staff for identifying children at risk of Child Sexual Abuse.

CNWL attend the Safeguarding Partnership **Stronger Families** subgroup and support the Early Help model in place for families to access the right help at the right time. CNWL refer families in for Early Help assessments and the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Health Practitioner sits within Stronger Families, and works alongside a range of professionals who respond to referrals made into Stronger Families. The increasing demand from MASH is noted by the Trust.

In response to the **Making Safeguarding Personal** agenda CNWL expects that, where a safeguarding concern arises for an adult, patients are asked what they would like to happen. Gaining the patient's consent is a key aspect of Making Safeguarding Personal and therefore it is vital that this is asked on each occasion. If the patient does not give consent, a SA referral will not be made to LBH, unless there are reasons to override this consent e.g., public, or vital interest. For any patients lacking the capacity to consent to the referral, a best interest decision will be made on their behalf. Family members will be involved in the decision if the patient is happy with this. The referral form asks staff to document that the person has the mental capacity to understand and has given consent for the concern to be raised, which ensures staff have asked the question.

A representative of CNWL participated in the SAB **self-neglect** sub-group. This is the most common type of abuse raised by physical health services in 2022-23, indicating that practitioners can recognise and respond to this form of harm. We disseminated widely the self-neglect practice tool developed within the subgroup. Our Safeguarding Adults and Mental Capacity Act Specialist is available to provide advice and support as needed.

We recognise that adults with **mental health** needs are particularly vulnerable to abuse and neglect, with data highlighting domestic abuse as the most common cause of concern raised by mental health services. Where there is a safeguarding referral made by mental health services, this is copied to the Safeguarding Adults and MCA specialist to liaise with the Local Authority MASH and ensure that outcomes are understood.

CNWL held our 5th Annual **Domestic Abuse** (DA) conference in the year with the theme; "The Domestic Abuse Act – has it gone far enough?" Over 600 attended the conference, comprising of staff and a growing network of people with lived experience, who are aiding CNWLs development of service

provision. Our DA Prevention Co-ordinator supports the development of the DA Network, MARAC representatives' meetings, facilitates extensive training and supports the drive to forward our DA agenda. Advanced DA training to become an ambassador takes place every 2 months as do DA Ambassador Forums. CNWL continue to facilitate quarterly round table DA webinars, which in 2022/23 included: parent to child DA, intersectionality and sibling abuse. A DA audit has been completed over a 3-month period to assess the quality and quantity of recording around DA and the learning will be disseminated in 2023/24. Over the past 18 months we have implemented Routine Enquiry of all women entering CNWL services to record this information systemically. The CNWL DA policy has been refreshed this year and is available to all staff to support the identification and support of DA and supports recognition, response and support needed for families impacted by DA.

**Learning from practice** is shared in a variety of ways across CNWL. There is a dedicated section within the Trust's intranet site which is regularly updated with any new developments and guidance pertinent to safeguarding. Learning is also shared within supervision and training sessions. 7 minute briefings are also utilised to give professionals focussed learning from a case or incident. These are used in team meetings and supervision to embed learning and change practice. We have also introduced a Safeguarding Calendar of events for staff which provides further learning opportunities throughout the year.

The Trust also publishes a weekly 'Clinical Message of the Week', which is regularly used to disseminate information pertinent to safeguarding. Safeguarding themes in 2022/23 have covered the following: "Sexual abuse and sexual violence awareness week", "Cost of living Crisis", "Clearly documenting Safeguarding issues is essential for safe care", "Safeguarding node" (our database alert system for safeguarding concerns), "How do you determine if an injury to a child is non-accidental or neglectful" and "Child & Adult safeguarding escalation procedure". The Clinical Message of the Week is circulated to all CNWL staff.

CNWL have introduced SCARF (Safe, Compassionate, Accountable, Reflective and Fair) principles to create a workplace where we feel enabled, supported and empowered to see situations as opportunities to learn and opportunities to grow. These principles are used to underpin a responsive and respectful learning culture.

The Heads of Children and Adult Safeguarding continue to facilitate a Safeguarding Children and Adults Forum enabling both safeguarding teams to have a reflective learning space on joint safeguarding issues. Topics discussed in 2022/23 have included: Perinatal and Substance Use interface, Adult Mental Health and Children and Families interface, FGM, Domestic Homicide Reviews and Human Factors Training.



Case reviews often reflect that escalation has not been used effectively within safeguarding. We have therefore refreshed our CNWL Safeguarding Escalation procedure, and this is now an integrated document for escalating adult and child safeguarding cases.

CNWLs Safeguarding Children Team were proactive in the Hillingdon **FGM Project**. This is aligned to a CNWL annual priority to improve awareness and the identification of FGM. We have now launched and promoted the use of an FGM Screening Template and guidance. This project supported making resources available and provided training opportunities for CNWL staff. CNWL also contributed to the FGM Harmful Practices conference. CNWL staff attended the FGM Train the Trainer training for delivering multi-agency FGM training that will be co-facilitated and rolled out in 2023. Prevention of FGM remains a priority within CWNL.

CNWL recognise the importance of safeguarding supervision and training to ensure staff are equipped and supported to do their jobs. Our Safeguarding Children Supervision guidelines have been refreshed and circulated to staff. CNWL staff can access the Partnership for training as well as a range of CNWL training opportunities. Safeguarding Adult and Safeguarding Children training compliance is monitored and reported on regularly for assurance purposes.

CNWL recognise that preparing court reports and police statements can cause anxiety in the professional workforce so, in conjunction with CNWL's legal department, the team developed guidelines and a flowchart to equip practitioners with the skills they require to complete reports and potentially act as witnesses in court.

## 12.2 Local Authority's Designated Officer (LADO) and Education Safeguarding

Our team consists of four positions, the LADO, who manages all allegations against professionals who work with children, the Lead Child Protection Advisor to Schools, the Domestic Abuse Lead for Schools, and the Child Employment, Performance and Licensing Officer. The team provides an Annual Report to the Children's Safeguarding Partnership Board that details performance across the financial year.

In 2022-2023 the LADO received 218 referrals, a 10% increase on 2021-2022. Of the 202 referrals received against individuals, 12.87% (26 referrals) were substantiated. This is a decrease from last year, where 19.8% (39 referrals) were substantiated. Most referrals (93) resulted in no further action after initial consideration. In most of these cases, following a threshold discussion or meeting, there was further action required by the referrer to address a conduct matter or learning need despite the threshold of harm not being met. In these cases, the LADO would provide advice and guidance to employers on suitable action.

Since January 2023, as per London Child Protection Procedures 2022, the LADO has been recording all consultations held which have not met threshold for a formal referral but where advice and guidance have been provided around individuals conduct or concerns raised. Over the last quarter of the year (Jan- March 2023) there have been 63 recorded consultations. As this is newly captured data, it cannot be benchmarked against previous years, but it does highlight the advisory and supporting role of LADO who, in addition to the referrals processes provides ongoing advice and support to other professionals.

During the reporting year, education staff remained the largest source of referrals accounting for over 50% of the total. Almost half of these referrals relate to agency or locum staff within education settings, many having been in the setting for a short period (ranging from a few days to a few weeks). In most of these settings there has been identified learning for the education setting and employing agency about how these staff are inducted and supported within their role. This seems to be an increasing trend which will be monitored in the next year and discussed with the schools through Designated Safeguarding Leads network meetings led by the Child Protection Lead for schools. The LADO and Child Protection Lead for Schools will produce LBH guidance on working with agency staff relevant for all settings.

Referrals were relatively evenly split between other sectors with health professionals, foster carers, early years workers and children's residential home workers being the next most referred cohorts. The 'other' section (accounting for 17 referrals) mainly related to carers working with children and young people with additional needs. The least referred, with no referrals in the year 2022-23 were faith group leaders followed by members of the police force, childminders, and voluntary sector workers for which the LADO received 2 referrals per sector. Whilst this may indicate a positive trend, it could also show a reduced awareness relating to the role of LADO in these sectors, particularly within faith groups. Plans will be developed in the next year for reaching out to these settings and ensuring access to information and awareness of the LADO process.

A trend that became apparent this year was that a large percentage of the alleged victims of harm were children with a range of disabilities, including children who are non-verbal. This trend was captured through the review of individual referrals, however learning from this, we adapted the recording system to capture disability of the victims, thus allowing us better analysis and monitoring of this trend going forward.

Nationally, concerns have been raised regarding LADO oversight of concerns about settings and therefore, the LADO will continue to review LBH processes in this area, alongside national guidance as it is established. Following on from the Hesley review the DfE has requested that the LADO national

network devise a LADO handbook. We are engaging with the pan London LADO group to support this work and we will incorporate the national recommendations into our local practice and procedures.

### 12.3 Children's Rights and Participation Service

The Children's Rights & Participation team are part of the Safeguarding, Partnership and Quality Assurance Service. The remit of our team is to undertake engagement activity with children and young people who have contact with Children and Young People's Services, and to ensure that the voices of children are respected and heard. In the last year our achievements include:



- Engaging with 253 individual children through Children in Care Councils (CiCCs) and other activities.
- Supporting young people to volunteer 455 hours of their time in addition to attendance at CiCC's.
- The launch of the out of Borough virtual children in care council group 'Stepping In'.
- Developing the successful Tuesday football sessions with coaching support from Brentford football club.
- Celebrating 525 individual young people who were nominated for KICA awards.
- Delivery of a high successful KICA event with 117 winners attending the event
- Identified and supported young people to be involved in the recruitment to 21 roles within Children's Social Care, including social work apprentices, newly qualified social workers, Personal Advisors, AXIS officers, school safeguarding lead and team managers.
- Facilitated Walking in Our Shoes training to 253 professionals.



Individually, young people tell us that they benefit from a sense of community, additional professional support and from opportunities to have their voices heard. Young people have told us that *"You don't know how much I have enjoyed working with you guys, I don't even know what to say at this point saying thank you to you wouldn't be enough for helping me and trying to support every one of us. Making us think or feel you're like mother or an older sister for us. Every-time we needed help or needed*

*something you are already trying your best all I got to say is thank u for making last year on of the best years of my life” and “I really feel like you are my family.”*

#### 12.4 The Hillingdon Hospital

The Hillingdon Hospital NHS Foundation Trust provides services from both Hillingdon Hospital and Mount Vernon Hospital. The trust has a turnover of around £222 million and employs over 3,300 staff. We deliver healthcare to the residents of the London Borough of Hillingdon, and increasingly to those living in the surrounding areas of Ealing, Harrow, Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire, giving them a total catchment population of over 350,000 people.

Hillingdon Hospital is an acute and specialist services provider in North West London, close to Heathrow Airport for which it is the nearest hospital for those receiving emergency treatment. Providing most services from the trust, Hillingdon Hospital is the only acute hospital in Hillingdon with a busy Accident and Emergency, inpatients, day surgery, and outpatient clinics. The trust also provides some services at Mount Vernon Hospital, in cooperation with a neighbouring NHS Trust.

The Safeguarding Families Team is now fully established although some staff are still new in post, including the head of service who started in Q2 of 2022-23. The focus of this team remains for safeguarding to be at the forefront of our clinical care. This includes engagement of frontline staff, provision of training, engagement, and representation across local, national, and strategic partnerships. Generally, we have been facilitating training, building resilience, and providing supervision for various groups of staff across the organisation as well as within the team. We have had a focus on building the team, leadership and developing the safety net meetings to build relationships within the team and external to the hospital.

The Trust is a fully engaged member of the Hillingdon Safeguarding Partnership, attending subgroups, Boards and contributing to learning and practice improvement locally. The Trust continued to observe a notable increase in presentation of young people with mental health needs during the 2022-23 year. This is a continued trend since the pandemic commenced. There are an increased number of adults with mental health presentations where clinicians have completed a safeguarding referral. The mental health agenda led by the Mental Health lead has been progressed by implementation of various new policies and governance processes including the ligature and environmental risk assessment policy.

We have increased the frequency of Trust led multiagency meetings. These are to ensure that we have a broad spectrum of professional expertise available to consider individual cases, and we access the Partnership escalation procedures as required.

Safeguarding Children: We are also active members of the **stronger families** subgroup. Weekly multi-agency meetings occur with CAMHS, social care, Sorted, ARCH, psych liaison, HIDVA and Axis. The meetings discuss Hillingdon Hospital safeguarding children's cases of the previous 7 days. These meetings have improved collaboration and identify areas for improved partnerships. Our policy for safeguarding children is in place. Our adults at risk policy is currently being reviewed and will go to Safeguarding Committee in Q4. The Domestic Abuse policy was ratified in Q3.

We have given training and communicated around **self-neglect** and again seen an increase in referrals plus an increase in Mental Capacity assessments. Our weekly safety net meeting has helped us develop a pathway and we have escalated patients to the high-risk daily meeting to ensure multi-disciplinary discussions.

**Contextual safeguarding** is a key component of our level 3 training and has been highlighted in trust communications. We have Axis attendance at training and at the weekly safety net meeting. The safety net has helped us build relationships with the stronger families hub and helped improve communication and collaboration, as well as participating in our level 3 training.

**Domestic Abuse** and safeguarding remains a priority, we work closely with the hospital IDVA to identify and support patients who are victims. The safeguarding team train weekly in A&E and raise the profile of our service at the front door with the aim of helping practitioners identify who might be victims of trafficking or modern slavery.

There has been significant learning via section 42 enquiries. Training, communications, MDT working has all enabled learning from incidents. Significant progress has been made with self –neglect and mental capacity assessments. We have successfully addressed a backlog in s42 enquiries and have worked to build relationships with social care. The main themes of alleged unsafe discharge and pressure ulcers remain but are both Quality initiatives for the trust and remain a priority for 2023-2024.

From a children's perspective, raising the profile of 16- and 17-year-olds has been a significant piece of work that has had several strands. The focus has been on A&E and the wards predominantly, challenging staff and empowering them to take responsibility for raising concerns and following procedures.

In the last year the Learning Disability Clinical Nurse Specialist has raised awareness of the needs of people with learning disabilities, producing best practice guidance and maternity specific guidance for people with learning disabilities. We continue to monitor implementation of the Mental Capacity Act, with an increase in the number of assessments overall, and especially in relation to discharge

destination and self-neglect. Our mental health lead has continued to raise the profile of the mental health agenda, with progress made in policies and governance. We have worked to build Dementia Quality initiatives including purchase of the magic table with support from the charity, recruiting dementia companion volunteers and provide dementia activity bags. The safeguarding children clinical nurse specialist role is established and developing to support the named nurse and provide a presence on the paediatric ward and in paediatric A&E.

### 12.5 Stronger Communities and Prevent – London Borough of Hillingdon

The work of the Stronger Communities team supports the council's aim, "along with its partners, to create a strong and resilient community in Hillingdon, to counter extremism and hate in all its forms, while bringing communities together to promote cohesion and integration. To build a strong sense of belonging and pride where all people feel valued and included, whether living, working within, or visiting the borough."

The team is represented in the Stronger Families and Female Genital Mutilation groups, providing a link to voluntary and community section organisations. We ensure that any emerging safeguarding issues, learning, and training opportunities are disseminated throughout our networks.

This year we developed bespoke training, in conjunction with counter terrorism police, to raise awareness of the influence of extreme far-right ideologies. We continue to work closely with schools, focussing on building resilience and staying safe online. In respect of adult safeguarding, it is recognised that neurodiversity and mental health difficulties can increase vulnerability to radicalisation, therefore we maintain close links with voluntary and statutory services.

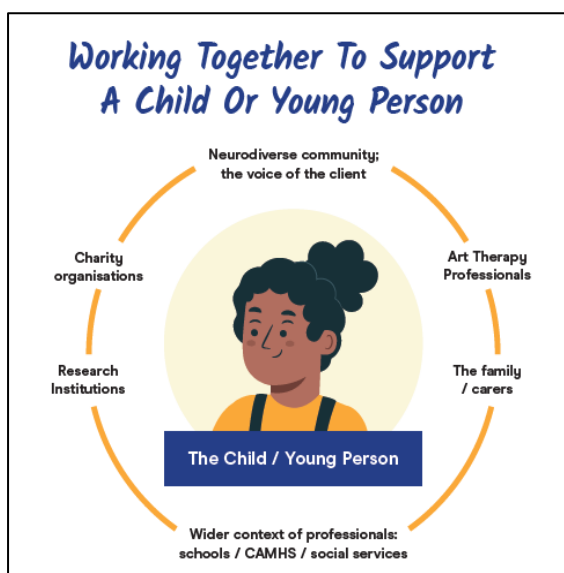
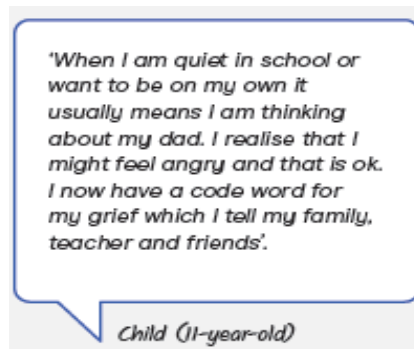
We continue to deliver our MOPAC (Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime) funded programme in collaboration with police, schools, the college, the University, and community, aimed at tackling hate crime and extremism. Workshops have been delivered in schools. With pupils discussing topics relating to promoting equality and diversity, challenging discrimination, and tackling hate. Pupils through their discussions have been able to demonstrate awareness of diversity in Britain, and understanding of core values including unity, respect, democracy, how to report concerns and more, leading to increased resilience and cohesion.

In working with our local communities, the programme has also included the recruitment and training of 124 Hate Crime Upstanders. The Hate Crime Upstanders have been recruited from across local voluntary and community organisations and council services and other partner agencies, to enable them to better understand all forms of hate crime, how to report incidents and support those from within the community who may be victims.

### 12.6 Harlington Hospice – Psychological and Emotional Support Service

Our team provides support to children, adults and their families who are affected by bereavement and loss. This year the child and adolescent service joined with adult services at Harlington Hospice transforming into the Psychological and Emotional Support Service.

We participate in multiagency safeguarding forums for individuals we are working with as required. More widely we engage with the Borough-wide transformation group, and internally with the Harlington Hospice Safeguarding Steering Group, contributing to the review and update of safeguarding policies. Where there is learning from an individual circumstance, this is disseminated throughout the team and wider organisation. The team is represented on the Safeguarding Boards, and within relevant subgroups



A key focus in the last year has been to adapt our practice approach to better reflect the needs of children and young people who are living with neurodiversity. We were successful with our research in Neurodiversity and Grief, attending the hospice UK conference in November 22 and were awarded first place in the research poster. This featured the work we do to assess risk, providing pre and post bereavement support to neurodivergent children/young people. The project now features in the Hospice UK Innovation hub.

### 13 Priorities for 2023-2024

Hillingdon Safeguarding Partnership continues to strive for excellence in practice, our commitment to continuous development of local services for children, adults, their families, and carers is fundamental to all aspects of our work. This necessitates a reflective and dynamic approach to strategic safeguarding; willingness to recognise our opportunities for development, and to build on what we do well. In the coming year the Partnership will focus on embedding the learning from quality assurance processes, and core practice challenges. Our underpinning principle of amplifying the voices of children and adults provides us with an impetus to understand and respond to the lived experiences of those individuals, and families, in need of support or protection.

The **Safeguarding Adults Board** will focus on:

- Neglect
- Learning from Practice

The **Safeguarding Children Partnership Board** will focus on:

- Contextual Safeguarding
- Child Sexual Abuse
- Stronger Families
- Education Safeguarding

The shared priorities of Practice Development, Female Genital Mutilation, and safeguarding in relation to Heathrow Airport (JSSAT) will remain. As strategic subgroups conclude an agreed workplan further areas of focused work will be identified.



## 14 Appendices

### Appendix 1: Training Programme

Training Programme	
<p><b>Core Offer:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Working Together to Safeguard Children (and Refresher)</li> <li>- Adult Safeguarding</li> <li>- Core Groups and Child Protection Plans</li> <li>- Trauma Informed Practice</li> <li>- Recognising and Working with Child Neglect</li> <li>- Safeguarding Adults from Self-Neglect and Hoarding</li> <li>- Safeguarding Disabled Children</li> <li>- Safeguarding Adults from Neglect</li> <li>- Female Genital Mutilation</li> <li>- LADO: Managing Allegations</li> </ul> <p><b>Domestic Abuse:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Impact on Children and Young People</li> <li>- Intimate Partner Violence</li> <li>- Supporting Older Survivors Affected by Domestic Abuse</li> </ul>	<p><b>Safeguarding Adolescents:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Contextual Safeguarding</li> <li>- Adulthood Bias and Safeguarding Children</li> <li>- Learning from Practice – Serious Youth Violence and Contextual Safeguarding Workshop</li> </ul> <p><b>Child Sexual Abuse:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Responding to Child Sexual Abuse Concerns</li> <li>- Pilot: CSA and Youth Justice</li> <li>- Pilot: Signs and Indicators for Schools</li> <li>- Pilot: CSA and Disabled Children</li> <li>- Sex Pressures and Social Media</li> <li>- Sexual Harassment and Responding to Incidents</li> <li>- Traffic Light Tool: Harmful Sexual Behaviour</li> <li>- CSE Boys and Young Men</li> </ul> <p><b>Lived Experience:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- True Honour: Modern Slavery</li> <li>- True Honour: Forced Marriage</li> <li>- Walking in Our Shoes Training</li> </ul>