



ANNUAL REPORT

April 2025 – March 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	2
Scrutiny	3
Reflections from the Independent Scrutineer	3
About the partnership	9
What we do	10
Leadership and Governance	11
Governance structure	12
Priorities 2025/27	13
The work of the safeguarding partnership sub-groups	14
Quality and Effectiveness Sub-group (QEG)	14
Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) Sub-group	16
Learning and Development Sub-group	20
Child Exploitation Subgroup	22
Cambridgeshire Education Subgroup	23
MASH Governance Subgroup	23
Additional areas of work	25
Budget	26
Cambridgeshire at a Glance	28
Contribution from the Statutory Safeguarding Partners	30
Cambridgeshire Local Authority Children Services	30
NHS Central East Integrated Care Board	32
Cambridgeshire Constabulary	35



FOREWORD

On behalf of the lead safeguarding partners and delegated safeguarding partners for the Cambridgeshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership, we are pleased to present the Annual Report for the period 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026.

In January 2025, what had been a joint partnership across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough became two: Cambridgeshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership and Peterborough Safeguarding Children's Partnership. This annual report is the first to outline the activity of the Cambridgeshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership and serves to highlight those place specific achievements and challenges which were the driving force behind that separation. The partnership agreed the priority areas for 2025-2027 with some areas specific to Cambridgeshire and some commonalities with the Peterborough Safeguarding Children's Partnership, offering continued opportunities for collaboration. There remains a commitment to shared learning across the partnerships and for this reason the subgroups of the partnership have remained joint. There have been however, opportunities for place specific learning activities from rapid reviews and child safeguarding practice reviews to ensure that where improvements are needed in practice, they are driven by those who know the needs of the children and families in Cambridgeshire best.

We have continued our work this year to respond to National changes including the Families First Partnership Programme, known locally as Families First Cambridgeshire, the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel's report on Race, racism and safeguarding and most recently, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.

We owe our thanks to the practitioners and managers throughout the partnership who continue to work tirelessly in their efforts to support children and families in our area, in the face of ongoing pressures and challenges. There will always be more to do in the area of safeguarding but it is the continued hard work, professionalism and commitment of frontline staff and managers that can make a positive difference to the population we serve.

Martin Purbrick
Executive Director for
Children, Education and
Families



Pol Toner
Director of Safeguarding



John Massey
Assistant Chief Constable



SCRUTINY

Reflections from the Independent Scrutineer

My role as Independent Scrutineer in Cambridgeshire has remained unchanged since last year. I am commissioned to provide independent scrutiny to the Cambridgeshire Safeguarding Children Partnership each financial year.

The aims of the Scrutineer role are to support and challenge statutory partner safeguarding agencies and other bodies concerned with safeguarding children in Cambridgeshire. The functions of the Independent Scrutineer are set out in Government guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children. These functions did not change when the latest version of that guidance was issued in March 2026 although there is likely to be consideration of defining the role more precisely in further revisions for consultation in 2026-27 to achieve greater consistency in how Scrutineers function across the country.

In Cambridgeshire in 2025-26, I implemented the agreed independent scrutiny plan. The main focus of my activities has been:

- Regular attendance in several multi-agency Safeguarding Partnership sub-groups including the Delegated Safeguarding Partner (DSP) group which comprises the three senior partners from the local authority, ICB and Police who are responsible for safeguarding arrangements in Cambridgeshire.
- I have also attended all meetings of the full Safeguarding Children Partnership, which is chaired by the Director of Children's Services in Cambridgeshire City Council. I have provided support and challenge to this group to enable it to become a meeting in which critical safeguarding operational and strategic issues are considered and debated and to meet on a face-to-face basis.
- Advice and challenge provided to the CSPR Subgroup and to DSPs about cases requiring reviews and proceeding in respect of type of review and recommendations further to the learning identified. The number of reviews has grown in 2025-26 (see below) and this activity has therefore taken up more of my time this year. The overall quality of review reports has improved, agencies are able to reach key points of learning more quickly following Rapid Reviews and have used the learning to inform other work in the Partnership.
- Leadership of the early phase of the Partnership's consideration of key learning and formulation of a need for a multi-agency Neglect Project group to work in 2027 to improve multi-agency learning and understand and respond to systems pressures and issues causing focus on children to drift in the many of the small number of cases considered in case review processes. I have been able to transition leadership of this work to a senior officer in Peterborough City Council and ensured that Families First reform planning has taken account of the need to achieve greater consistency in respect of responses to child neglect.
- Provision of advice to the DSPs about the key opportunities and risks arising from the Government's Families First reforms now enshrined in legislation in the Children's Well Being and Schools Act 2026. I was also able to provide clarity on the issues which required agreement of the multi-agency Safeguarding Partnership given the establishment of a specific governance function around this development led by the local authority. The Partnership needs to agree changes to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements and these are published by the



Partnership. These changes will relate to future development of new family help services and the future Multi-Agency Child Protection Team. The DSP meeting every other month and the Safeguarding Partnership meeting each quarter receive an update on progress.

- I have enabled safeguarding partners to consider other key messages arising from national reviews following the tragic deaths of Sara Sharif in Surrey and Victoria Marten in Sussex and those arising from National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel summaries of key issues in case reviews relating to intra-familial child sexual abuse and race and racism in Safeguarding. I also met with members of the Child Exploitation sub-group to consider the implications of the national report by Baroness Casey into child exploitation. As a result, the Partnership's Exploitation Strategy Co-ordinator led work with agencies to undertake a small multi-agency audit of child sexual exploitation cases given that the recorded number of assessments of sexual exploitation has fallen in Cambridgeshire as it has elsewhere albeit this is almost certainly to do with wider recognition that sexual exploitation is one form of exploitation faced by children who also experience criminal and financial exploitation.

Partnership Achievements

The Cambridgeshire Safeguarding Children Partnership has improved its ways of working and made notable achievements in 2025-26 although the latter half of this year has been more challenging for all agencies because of changes in organisational functions and leadership in the ICB and police. The Safeguarding Children Partnership has however weathered these changes and continued to make progress.

The work of the Safeguarding Children Partnership and agencies in relation to Families First reform design, child neglect, multi-agency assurance and the development of the DSP regular meetings in the Partnership structure all fulfil priority areas set out in the previous Annual Report. The Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) process is awaited to reconsider the question of what the Safeguarding Partnership does for its jurisdiction and what activities can usefully be shared across the area and there is more work to do to develop means of ensuring that children's views inform Partnership priorities.

The most significant achievements in my view have been:

- The Safeguarding Partnership agreed to adopt a relational approach to management, practice and multi-agency working in 2025. This is highly significant as this move will support the changes required in the Families First programme and is known to be associated with achieving best outcomes for vulnerable children. It is a long-term commitment and the work to provide training and to ensure that Partnership meetings follow a relational approach is only just beginning albeit each of the statutory partner agencies has undertaken work to this effect on a single agency basis already. The aim for the future is to help multi-agency case discussions and planning to move away from 'threshold-based' ones to those which understand better and act on children's lived experience. The Safeguarding Partnership meetings are now taking place on a face-to-face basis and this has been a challenge for agencies which had organised their resources and time around an assumption that activity would all be undertaken online. However, the early evidence indicates an improvement in relationship and trust between agency representatives allowing for greater challenge and support to one another.
- The Families First reforms are linked with the Safeguarding Partnership. This is important as the reforms are multi-agency reforms and need agreement and commitment from all statutory partners and others. There is a clear and direct link to the proposed future role of the Multi-Agency Child Protection Team (MACPT) as a mechanism to exercise greater quality control over child protection investigations and



other difficult cases involving neglect cases where most agency disagreements happen. This is a significant opportunity assuming that the MACPT is resourced sufficiently to achieve this end.

- The bi-monthly DSP meetings have enabled more regular, senior multi-agency consideration and agreement and the building of relationships between those partner lead officers which are crucial to effective safeguarding across the piece. These meetings were introduced in the latter part of the previous financial year but are achieving senior multi-agency leadership with support and challenge provided by my role as Independent Scrutineer.
- This launch of the multi-agency Neglect Project in December 2025 deserves credit as it is an ambitious attempt to look to unlock difficulties in practice around neglect that have dogged the safeguarding system throughout the country for fifty or more years. This project grew out of concerns about cumulative harm not being identified as safeguarding risks consistently in the limited number of cases subject to Rapid Reviews or Local Safeguarding Children Practice Reviews. The project aims to understand what it is that enables good practice, what are the key obstacles and to consider recent research and practice elsewhere to formulate recommendations for Cambridgeshire. The project seeks to go beyond the more standard approach of agreeing a multi-agency strategy in the knowledge that such strategies have not avoided continued difficulties in this area.
- The processes involved in case reviews have been improved and written guidance produced by the sub-group. The initial meeting of statutory partner agencies to consider whether a case should be subject to a Rapid Review is now more formalised and involves the Independent Scrutineer and this has resulted in improved transparency for agencies of this process being a multi-agency one. Because of this and the improved mechanisms for review learning to be shared more quickly and more effectively across agencies, there was an increase in rapid reviews undertaken from two in 2024-25 to three in 2025-26 and this trend is known to have continued into the first months of the new financial year (one other case was considered by the Safeguarding partnership but the criteria for notification were not met in that case). This should be viewed as a sign of the Partnership maturing and being able to ask tough questions of one another and learn lessons. It is noteworthy that the National Panel annual report for 2024-25 expressed concern that there had been a 21% reduction in the number of reviews conducted across the country and therefore this increase in number is a positive move to improve learning from reviews. National Panel feedback on the quality of reviews in Cambridgeshire is positive in terms of the quality of analysis undertaken in reviews and my experience is that all agencies bring a high level of honesty and reflection to practice in cases under review. It is positive that the Partnership readily agreed the need for multi-agency development work on neglect further to the evidence of learning from local case reviews and in the knowledge that there is similar learning in case reviews across the country.
- The Partnership's Quality and Effectiveness sub-group has overseen multi-agency audits around child sexual exploitation and the operation of Child Protection Conferences and its plan for the forthcoming year involves review of other aspects of the child protection system. This sub-group has also worked hard to consider how best to present a multi-agency analysis of key performance data in order that that analysis can inform further action across agencies where needed. The local authority holds and reports on much of the data relating to multi-agency safeguarding and this data will therefore now be considered in this sub-group to ensure a multi-agency lens and independent scrutiny is applied to that data.
- A new Policies, Practice and Procedures sub-group was set up in view of a gap and I provided advice on this issue. This group very quickly identified a need for an improved system of procedure development and review and this enabled the partners to agree use of Partnership funds to commission an external body to provide new multi-agency procedures and annual review in future. The Partnership has also agreed use of funding to engage a short-term post to make this happen and that process is in place at the time of writing.



Partnership Challenges

There was a loss of Delegated Safeguarding Partners from the ICB and Police at the same time in December 2025. The reasons related to the structural changes in the ICB as part of the national NHS reforms and to an internal promotion for the DSP in the police. The ICB ensured that the DSP function was filled but this was initially with a temporary arrangement before a more permanent one was established in Spring 2026. The Police DSP arrangement remains temporary with a permanent appointee due later in 2026 although the current DSP in police plays a full and active part in the work of the Safeguarding Partnership and has ensured that the police's new strategic and operational lead officer for safeguarding children is well embedded in the multi-agency work of the Partnership. Nevertheless, these changes did create a need for new relationships to be formed and trust gained between the statutory partners. This change has been well handled and the DSP meeting is effective in leadership of the Partnership. There were no DSP or Partnership meetings missed and the sub-groups continued as normal. There is a question as to whether and how the three statutory agencies can avoid risk of loss of more than one DSP at a time in future albeit this might not be achievable when change is driven by national processes.

The other key challenge to the effectiveness of the Partnership going forward is that of capacity in agencies to support the Partnership's sub-groups and workstreams where the bulk of the detailed work needed takes place. This is not a new challenge but one which requires continual monitoring by the DSPs to ensure that single agency or operational responsibilities do not always take priority over multi-agency partnership requirements. The Partnership's own Business Unit has been subject to review throughout 2025-26 and there is now a formal consultation in place with the staff in that service about proposed changes. I have provided advice that the Business Unit has not had sufficient capacity to undertake the work needed or achieve timescales required when it has been working across both Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's Partnerships responsible for safeguarding children and safeguarding adults.

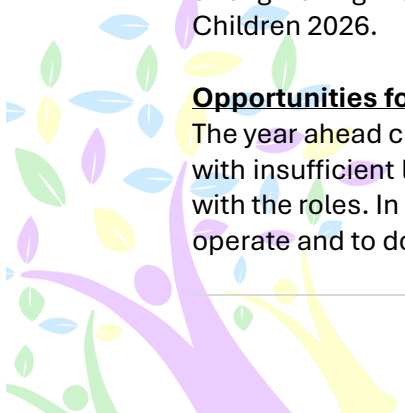
The two specific local areas which need continued priority attention are the development of a comprehensive multi-agency learning and development offer and greater attention to the voice of children.

There has been a start made in respect of learning and development through the Neglect Project providing face-to-face multi-agency learning events but these are as yet too few to make a significant impact and similar attention is required for other areas of learning. A senior member of local authority staff is helpfully now leading this work.

The Safeguarding Partnership has not been able to date to consider how it wishes to hear children's voices and how the Partnership can develop and sustain a process of regular engagement with a group or groups of children. This is important and the Government is also now consulting on strengthening the requirement in this area for all Safeguarding Partnerships as part of the consultation on revisions to Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.

Opportunities for the Safeguarding Partnership 2026-27

The year ahead contains more change still and it is right to acknowledge that all public sector agencies engaged in safeguarding children are doing so with insufficient levels of Government funding and with challenges about workforce recruitment and retention given the stress and risks associated with the roles. In 2026-27, those same public sector agencies will be asked to make significant changes to how family help and safeguarding systems operate and to do so without further workforce retention difficulties arising and without increasing risk to children during change.



The scale of changes is some of the greatest since the introduction of the Children Act 1989. Nonetheless these changes are both challenges and opportunities for the Safeguarding Partnership.

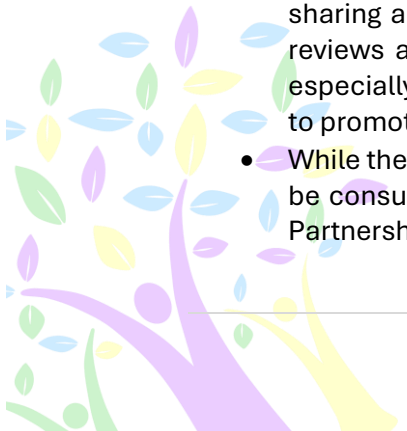
There also likely implications of further change arising from the national Local Government Review with an announcement expected in the Summer of 2026 about the nature of the geographical footprint in the local area. This is likely to mean further change for some local authority staff as they move to new local authority areas and there will be implications for other agencies, whose current work and staffing faces the two current local authorities. The future of local government in the region will also require further discussion about what is shared and what is not shared in respect of Safeguarding Partnerships. It will be important in my view to ensure that future Safeguarding Children Partnerships in the area are all able to consider performance and needs in their respective areas and to learn from their own case reviews and audits. There is scope for some of the other work of sub-groups to be undertaken on a more regionalised basis to achieve economies of scale and avoid duplication.

In this context, the greatest priority for the Safeguarding Partnership is to maintain stability in leadership and ensure that the wider group of safeguarding leads in agencies is engaged through an effective Partnership and sub-groups.

Cambridgeshire DSPs have also committed to decide in September 2026 their plans for future independent scrutiny as the current contract expires at the end of December 2026.

The key opportunities for the Safeguarding Partnership in addition to the overriding factors set out above are:

- Implementation of Family Help and Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams (MACPT) in line with the requirements of the Children's Well Being and Schools Act 2026. This needs to be in place by the end of March 2027 and will need to be the single greatest priority for the Safeguarding Partnership to influence design and lead implementation. It is important too to recognise that the MACPT is a potential positive solution to improving consistency of good practice as the MACPT role is to oversee all child protection activity and ensure that safeguarding issues being dealt with in Family Help services are quality controlled.
- Parliament has also now agreed the Crime and Policing Act in 2026. This legislation includes among other things the introduction of the legal requirement to report concerns about child sexual abuse as recommended by the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. The Government will issue statutory guidance on how this system will operate for implementation in 2026-27 and the Partnership will need to ensure effective communication of this change.
- The Government has also been clear that it intends in 2026-27 to launch the existing Information Commissioner guidance on information sharing and safeguarding children and place the need to follow this guidance on a statutory footing given the frequency with which case reviews across the country indicate problems in agencies sharing information. This will need clear communication to practitioners and especially the ICO guidance on sharing information without consent where not provided whether there are safeguarding concerns or a need to promote a child's welfare.
- While the Government issued the revised Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 guidance in March 2026, it was clear that there would be consultation in 2026-27 on a raft of further changes. These are likely to be extensive and will relate to future reporting of Safeguarding Partnerships being undertaken in a standardised fashion across the country and there will be greater expectation to demonstrate



effectiveness and outcomes and to show how planning has taken account of the views of children, how children are consulted with on a regular basis and the impact of changes made further to children expressing views.

In addition to responding to national change initiatives, legislation and guidance, the Cambridgeshire Safeguarding Partnership will also need to pay attention in 2026-27 to ensuring that there is a conclusion of the Neglect Project. There might be further work to do after 2026-27 but the key things to change and consider in terms of improving working with neglect concerns need to be reflected by January 2027 and included within planning for implementation of Family Help teams and MACPTs.

In Sum

Despite the changes made in the leadership of two of the three statutory partners in the short period of time from December 2025 to April 2026, the Cambridgeshire Safeguarding Children Partnership continued to make progress, promoting challenge and debate and its ways of working in the last year. This is significant in enabling effective multi-agency leadership of safeguarding children in Cambridgeshire.

The ease with which it was possible to link the themes from case reviews with the inspection finding to develop an ambitious multi-agency project focused on neglect is noteworthy. This project has a lot of multi-agency support and involvement.

The increase in number of case reviews and identification of learning is evidence of a mature Partnership in which agencies can analyse complex matters together and challenge one another and understand that safeguarding and case review decision making is genuinely a multi-agency one.

I will finish my section of the Annual Report 2026 with a positive reminder that Cambridgeshire is not alone in facing many of these challenges but that in my contacts with leaders, managers and staff in all agencies in Cambridgeshire, there continues to be a determination to do what is right for children and what can be achieved with families wherever possible.

David Derbyshire
Independent Scrutineer
Cambridgeshire Safeguarding Children Partnership



ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP

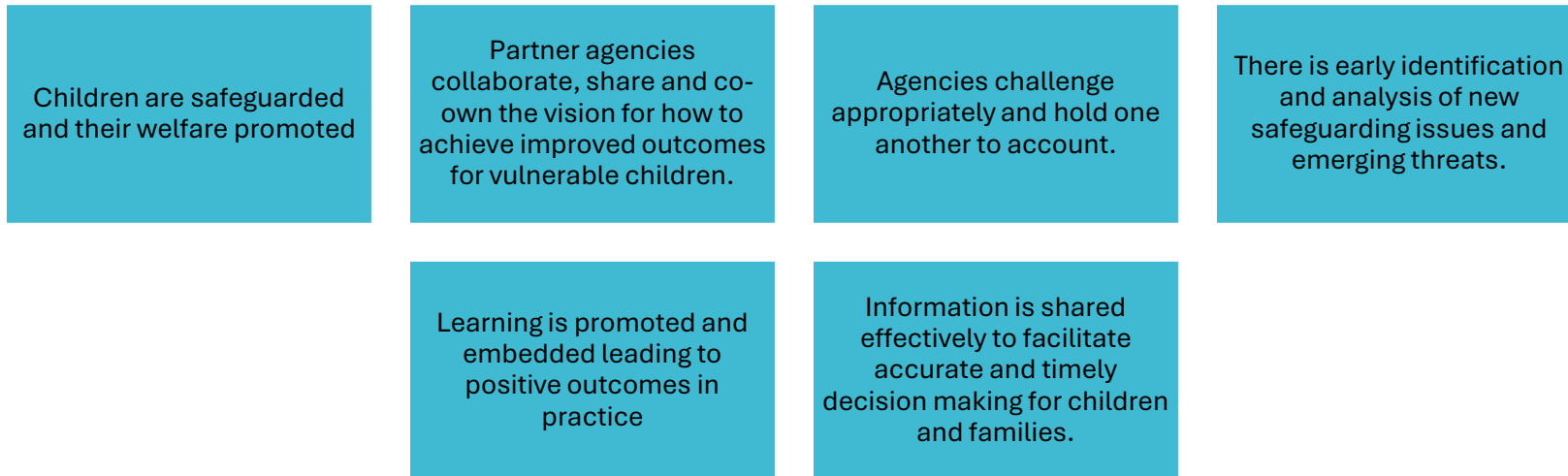
Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, set in statutory guidance that the three safeguarding partners (Local Authority, Chief Officer of Police and Integrated Care Board) must work together with relevant agencies to safeguard and protect the welfare of children in Cambridgeshire.

Locally, we have established multi-agency safeguarding arrangements which span two local authority boundaries. The membership of the partnership is made up of the following organisations/agencies:

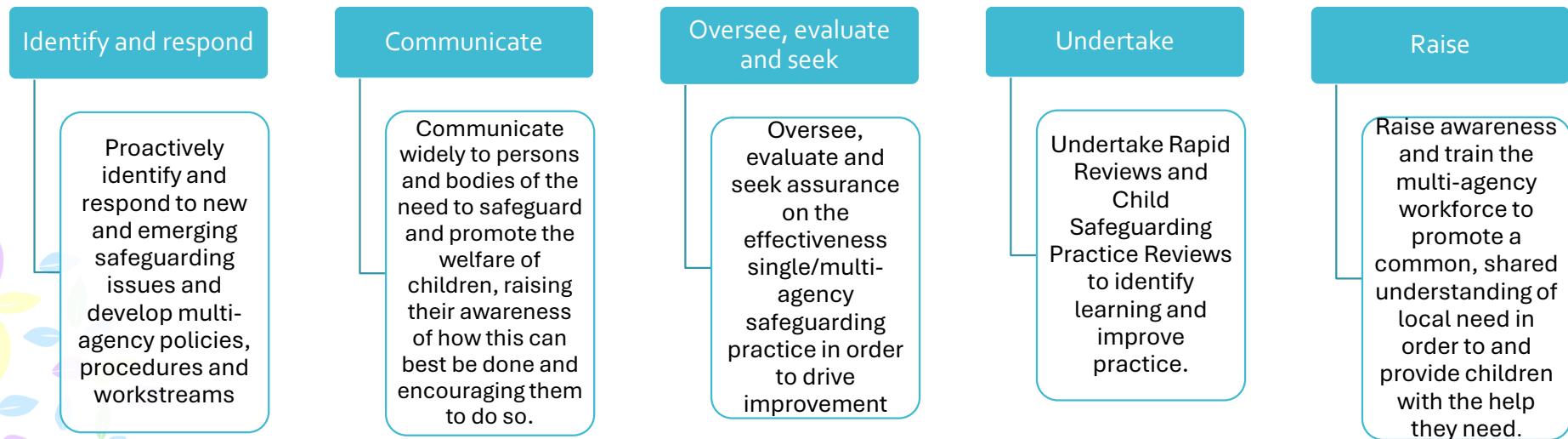


What we do

The purpose of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements are to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together in a system where:



How we do this:



LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

The local arrangements are detailed in a diagram on page 12. This diagram illustrates how the various boards and groups detailed in the paragraphs below align. The structure is designed to support the lead safeguarding partners (LSPs) and delegate safeguarding partners (DSPs) to fulfil their statutory duties as set out within Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.

Partnership Boards

Since 1st January 2025 there have been separate Children's Safeguarding Partnerships agreeing the safeguarding strategies for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. These partnerships are accountable to the single Chief Executive Safeguarding Partnership.

The Safeguarding Children's Partnership is responsible for progressing the Chief Executive Safeguarding Partnership's business priorities through a range of workplans and action plans. It authorises the policy, process, strategy and guidance required to support the Chief Executive Safeguarding Partnership priorities and effective safeguarding. This is undertaken through quality assurance activity, learning and development programmes and commissioning and overseeing rapid reviews and child safeguarding practice reviews. The Safeguarding Children's Partnership has wider partner membership to include probation, health providers, education, voluntary sector, faith communities and housing. This work is led by the delegated safeguarding partners (DSP) from the three statutory agencies: the local authority, police and health via the Integrated Care Board.

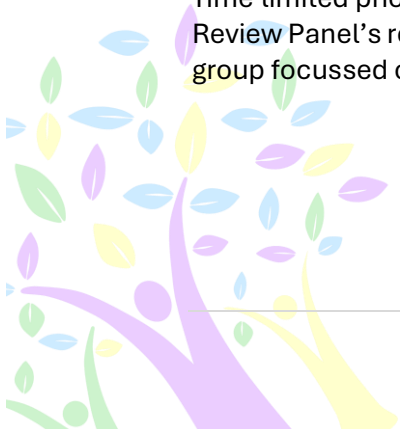
Subgroups

The work to progress the partnership priorities as well as its statutory responsibilities is undertaken by a range of subgroups, work streams and task and finish groups. These groups are responsible for progressing case review activity, policies, the priority areas, training and quality assurance.

All sub-groups of the Safeguarding Children's Partnerships for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have remained joint across the county. The aim is to ensure alignment of working, to benefit from efficiencies of scale and avoid over-commitment of partner agencies. Similarly, the structure retains one multi-agency set of safeguarding policies and procedures, being implemented across the county and hosted on a single website with the aim of ensuring consistency for practitioners and service users. However, safeguarding partners fully acknowledge and adhere to the sovereignty that the Councils for each of the two local authority has for the children and families that reside within their area.

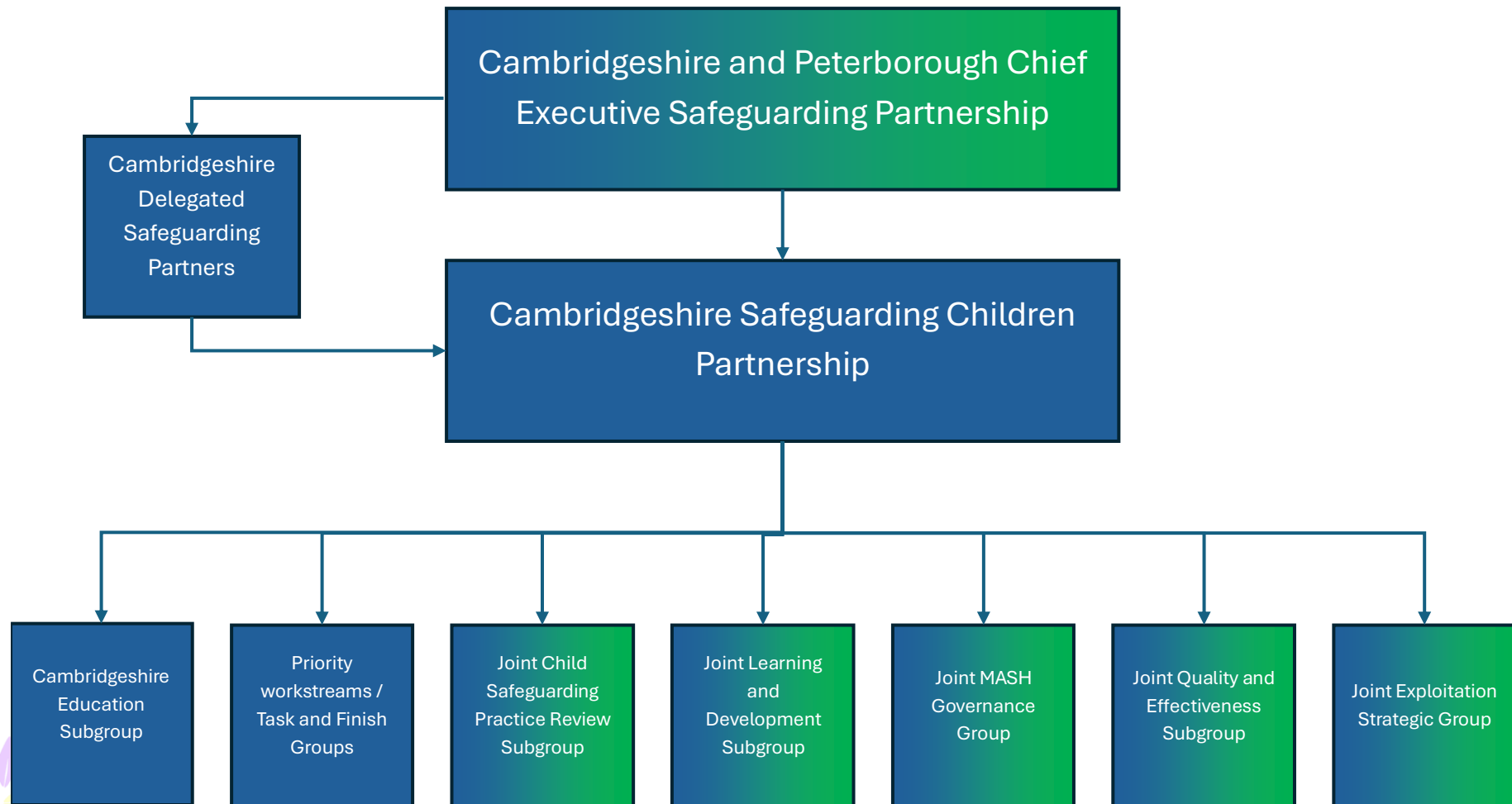
Priority workstreams

Time limited priority workstream groups have continued to progress themed areas, for example a local response to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel's reports on child sexual abuse: *'I wanted them all to notice'* and *'Its silent'*, Race, racism and safeguarding, as well as a Neglect Project group focussed on the local responses to child neglect in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.



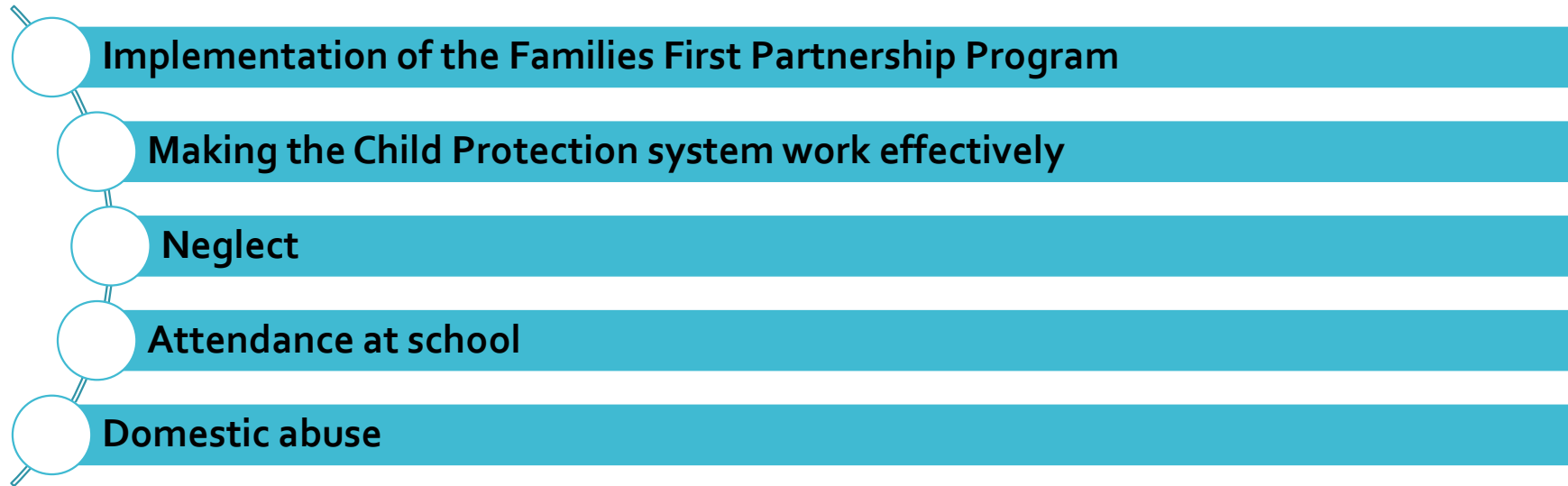
Governance structure

The diagram below details the current safeguarding partnership governance structure.



PRIORITIES 2025/27

In March 2025, following the separation of the partnerships, priority areas for the Cambridgeshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership Board were discussed with the delegated safeguarding partners and the following priority areas were agreed:



Further discussion in February 2026 reviewed these priority areas and determined that whilst any ongoing work under each of the priority areas should continue through 2026/27, the main focus for the partnership should be the implementation of the Families First Partnership Program.



THE WORK OF THE SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP SUB-GROUPS

During 25-26, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children partnership had the following principal sub-groups.

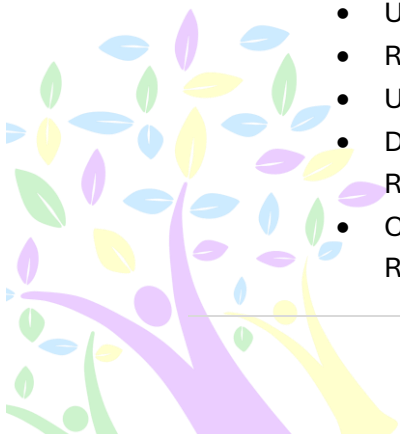
- Quality and Effectiveness group (QEG)
- Child Safeguarding Practice Review Sub-group
- Learning and Development Sub-group
- Child Exploitation Sub-group
- MASH Governance group
- Cambridgeshire Education Sub-group

Quality and Effectiveness Sub-group (QEG)

The Quality and Effectiveness Group is constituted to ensure that the Safeguarding Partnership Boards have a detailed overview of the quality and effectiveness of agency's practice and performance in relation to the safeguarding of children across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. During 2025-2026, the group was chaired by the Service Director Quality Assurance and Practice Improvement, Children, Education and Families, Cambridgeshire County Council. The Quality and Effectiveness Group is authorised by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children's Partnership Boards to investigate any activity within its terms of reference and to report and escalate to the Boards as appropriate.

During 2025-2026 the Quality and Effectiveness subgroup has:

- Undertaken the Section 11 audit and professionals' survey December 2025 – April 2026. Report of findings and analysis are due in July 2026 and will feature in next year's Annual report
- Developed and agreed a quality assurance framework and multi-agency audit timetable for 2025 – 2026 to include the partnership's priority areas
- Updated and shared the Resolving Professional Differences policy.
- Reviewed and progressed audit actions taken from local rapid reviews and child safeguarding practice reviews
- Undertaken extensive work to develop a multi-agency safeguarding dataset.
- Domestic Abuse JTAI Audit completed - multi-agency audit day held in January 2025. Cases reviewed face-to-face. Recommendations developed and taken forward in a joint action plan overseen by the QEG.
- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough child sexual exploitation audits completed. Reports circulated and findings presented. Recommendations developed relating to:



- Professional language.
- Information sharing.
- Missing children processes.
- Tier 2 Risk Outside the Home pathway.

Multi Agency Quality Assurance Activity 2025- 2026

Child Sexual Exploitation

In October 2025 an audit took place in Cambridgeshire which focused on the multi-agency response to those children deemed to be at “Moderate” risk of Child Sexual Exploitation. The audit took the opportunity to look at highlighted recommendations from the report by Baroness Casey, as well as asking the question “What difference has been made to the child’s safeguarding?”

Representatives from partner agencies were then invited to attend an audit day where cases could be reviewed in response to the question set within the audit tool. Themes noted within the exercise:

- Information sharing was positive and effective in most cases but as previously stated, partners need to ensure that information is shared in a timely manner. It is not appropriate to wait and share information in bulk especially if that information concerns vulnerable locations etc.
- Police are effective at looking at interventions to reduce risk and safeguard children, but this could be detrimental if they do not continue to progress investigations due to the fact the perpetrator has been dealt with for other non-connected matters.
- There is clear evidence that the Tier 2 Risk Outside of The Home (ROTH) pathway is being utilised effectively in Cambridgeshire with involvement from additional partners such as Problem-solving Groups (PSG) and local authority.
- There feels a real positive change to how children feel and what difference has been made to their safeguarding with numerous comments throughout about positive relationships, being seen and being heard.

Child Sexual Abuse

A workshop took place in September 2025 where over sixty multi-agency practitioners and managers benchmarked the recommendations from the National Panel’s “*I wanted them all to notice report*” against the services and support available for children in the Cambridgeshire area. The findings from the workshop were correlated and shared at the children’s quality effectiveness group to support future auditing activity on child sexual abuse.

Section 11 Audit

The biennial Section 11 audit commenced in December 2025. An audit tool was developed and sent to partner agency leads for completion and the professionals survey was launched. The audit closed in April 2026 and the findings will be reported in next year’s annual report.

Child Protection System Audit

In July 2025 Cambridgeshire Local Authority presented a report on their audit of multi-agency attendance at child protection conferences for quarter 1 covering from April 2025 – June 2025. Recommendations included promoting consistent multi-agency attendance at reviews and the submission of timely reports. In line with a recommendation from a rapid review members of QEG wanted oversight of qualitative data on attendance at child protection and child review meetings. This oversight would include the standard of all agency reports, attendance of relevant partners and inclusion of the lived experience of the child within reports and recording. To capture this information an audit tool was developed and agreed by QEG partners and agencies used the tool to benchmark against their reports and contributions to the meetings. The findings from this audit will be shared in next year's report.

Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) Sub-group

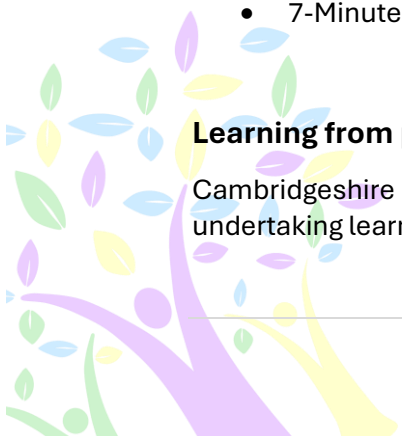
The CSPR subgroup acts with delegated responsibility from the lead safeguarding partners (LSPs) and delegated safeguarding partners (DSPs). Its main purpose is to monitor the delivery of its statutory duties with regards to carrying out rapid reviews and CSPRs where there are lessons to be learnt around how relevant agencies may have acted differently to prevent harm or death and advising the Safeguarding Children Partnerships on the lessons to be learnt. The CSPR subgroup will be chaired by the Service Director for Safeguarding and Quality Assurance, Peterborough Children's Services for a period of 12 months and then rotated between the members of the group.

During 2025-26, the group has:

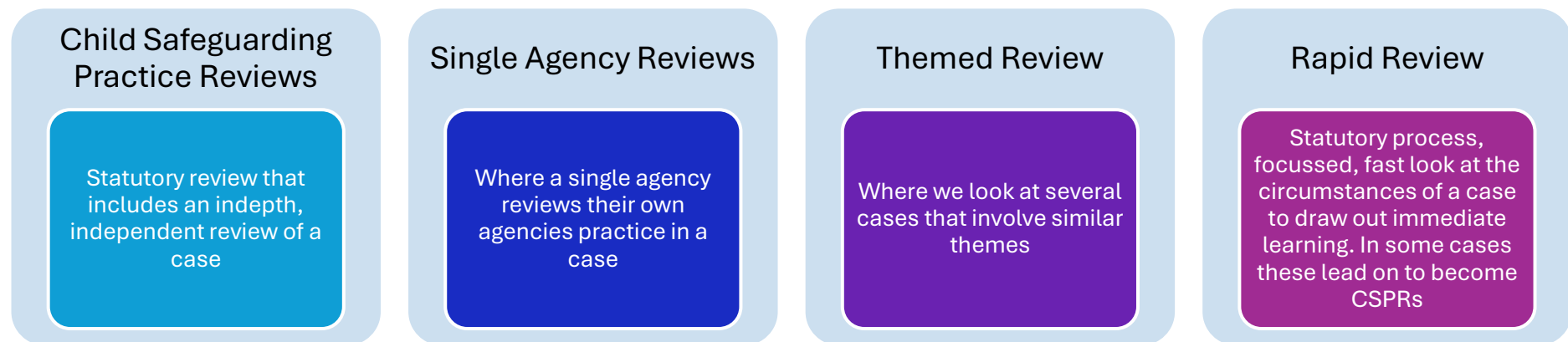
- In September 2025 completed a thematic review of all local CSPR's exploring practice themes and what works in safeguarding.
- Presentation from Dr Russell Wate (report author) on the findings from the Sara Sharif CSPR.
- Agencies shared internal audits and updates on outstanding actions taken from CSPRs and RRs.
- Action Planner of outstanding actions from child reviews shared alongside the CSPR/RR tracker of pending and completed reviews.
- Themes from our local reviews of being curious and father figures in a child's life and being confident to work with race, racism and ethnicity feature throughout the year.
- Updates to national guidance on CSPRs/RRs shared and discussed enabling changes to our local guidance and referral forms.
- 7-Minute briefings from local child reviews continue to be agreed, shared and cascaded across agencies through attendees of this group.

Learning from practice Reviews

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have a strong culture of wanting to learn lessons from practice, evidenced through our local approach to undertaking learning from a range of cases. This includes looking at those cases that meet the statutory criteria for a local Child Safeguarding Practice



Review (CSPR) but also having the flexibility to consider cases that do not meet the statutory criteria but involve systems learning. Within the partnership we undertake;



The safeguarding partners (Local Authority, Police, ICB) need to agree whether to notify the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel of any safeguarding incidents where a child dies or is seriously harmed in the local authority's area and abuse or neglect is known or suspected.

Following notification to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel, a rapid review is undertaken to enable safeguarding partners to:

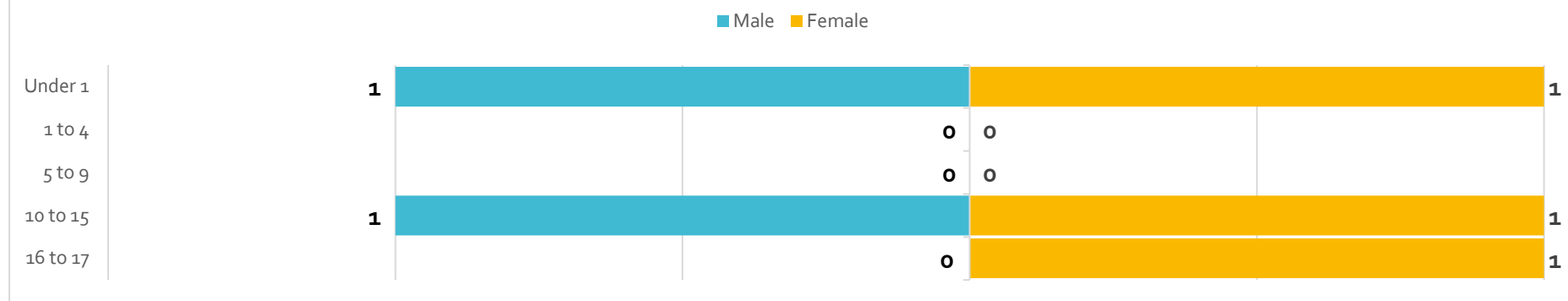
- Gather the facts about the case, as far as they can be readily established at the time.
- Discuss whether there is any immediate action needed to ensure children's safety and share any learning appropriately
- Consider the potential for identifying improvements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Decide what steps should be taken, including whether or not to undertake a child safeguarding practice review.

Rapid Reviews

During 2025 – 2026 there were five rapid reviews completed involving children in their teenager years and babies under one year old. One child whose circumstances were subject to review was a child in care living out of the area. Risk factors including neglect, exploitation, missing episodes, not being in education, offending behaviours, mental health issues, expressing suicidal ideation and self-harming were all noted through these reviews.

Following the conclusion of the rapid reviews, it was agreed three would progress to local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

breakdown of number of Rapid Reviews by age and gender



Identified Practice Improvement Areas

Curiosity about ...

- Father figures / family structure
- What medical conditions mean
- Life history / cultural background
- Parents care history and impact
- Smell of cannabis

Sharing Information ...

- People who breach their position of trust
- when children change schools / care homes
- promptly across agencies / borders

Assessments ...

- include fathers / Risk factors
- Use of assessment tool to support
- Do not just focus on what the child wants - what are the risks
- See children as children not as adults

Cultural Humility ...

- Speaking different languages should not be a barrier to support
- Family members are not interpreters
- What does their cultural identity mean to them?

Identified Good Areas of Practice

Curiosity about ...

- The child's situation with her teacher
- Child's possible sexual health issues
- What was going on in the home

Sharing Information ...

- Good information sharing between police, health, education and social care in relation to the child

Lived Experience of the Child

- Thoughts and wishes recorded
- Child's voice clearly heard by agencies

Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

Between April 2025 and March 2026, one CSPR was published. This case involved the death of Joanne, a two year old female, who suffered a traumatic head injury. The injury occurred whilst Joanne was in the care of her mother and mother's partner. Joanne had significant complex physical and medical needs from birth. Joanne's mother had formed a relationship with an adult male, who had recently separated from his own partner. At the time of her death, Joanne's household consisted of mother, mother's partner, an older sibling, plus two other children from the adult male's previous relationship. His children were subject to child protection plans and both families had moved across local authority boundaries at a time when they were known to services.

Recommendations

1. Senior leaders and the partnership should consider the reflective questions set out in the Joanne CSPR report, and take forward any actions arising
2. The Partnership should promote resources and training about assessing men in households, and in doing so urge the use of genograms, ecomaps and other assessment tools which can be used to encourage discussion and curiosity. This should include assessing, where proportionate, relevant, and safe to do so, absent fathers who still maintain some level of contact with their children.
3. The partnership should disseminate and promote awareness of the professional curiosity guidance currently on the website, plus provide support about how to improve critical thinking skills for frontline practitioners and managers in their day-to-day work which recognises the context and complexity of the work they undertake. This should include guidance about how personal and professional experience, and unconscious bias can inform judgements, decision making and actions.
4. The Partnership should promote the Resolving Professional Differences (Escalation) Policy to all agencies
5. Review the Partnership's Threshold document to align and provide greater synergy with the local authority 0 – 25 Disability Social Care webpages (particularly tiers/level descriptors).
6. The Partnership to review and strengthen the collective approach to responding to children with disabilities, notably in respect of workforce assessment skills for children with disabilities, eligibility for access to services criteria, and legal frameworks. Areas to focus on include assessing risk in the household and close family network, developing a shared understanding of safety and risk through the multi-agency lens, and gaining the voice/or understanding the day-to-day experiences of children with disabilities.
7. Both Suffolk Children's Services and Cambridgeshire Children's Services should undertake an assurance exercise examining local practice when children and families move to other local authority areas, whether temporarily or permanently, to test whether practice reflects policy and procedure, and whether opportunities exist to strengthen expectations. In completing this exercise, consideration should be given to whether the lessons learnt are applicable to the wider region, given the status of the joint protocol on children subject to Child Protection Plan moving between local authority boundaries guidance, being regional.
8. Cafcass should ensure that safeguarding interviews with parties should ideally be undertaken by the same Family Court Adviser; where this is not possible the records should be thoroughly read at each stage of the work. Family Court Advisers need to remain curious about the child's lived experience, including in the home in which they reside. Where a party has a partner/ other children, full details (including spelling) should be sought and agency checks considered.

These recommendations were translated into actions for the relevant members of the partnership, monitored via a multi-agency action plan and overseen by the subgroup.

Learning and Development Sub-group

The Learning and Development Sub-group provides oversight of countywide multi-agency safeguarding children learning and development. Its role includes identifying lessons from child safeguarding practice reviews and ensuring appropriate learning opportunities are available, monitoring agencies' ability to meet statutory safeguarding training requirements and overseeing the multi-agency training programme. The group also conducts training needs analyses to identify gaps in learning provision and produces an annual report for the Safeguarding Children Partnership Board on training attendance, quality, impact, and practitioner feedback. In addition, the Chair provides regular Learning and Development update reports to each Partnership Board meeting.

During 2025-2026 the Learning and Development subgroup has:

- Put together a training pool for the delivery of Neglect face to face training for practitioners.
- Established an implementation group for the Graded Care Profile 2 tool.
- Carried out a training needs analysis to identify which training is missing from the training programme from all agency's available training.

The Learning and Development subgroup also oversees the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Safeguarding Partnerships' Multi-Agency Training Programme and in 2025-2026, we offered training in multiple formats, including a programme of training courses delivered via Microsoft Teams, a suite of virtual briefings (Sways) and live, in-person training in a conference. We also contributed to partners' training programmes, both in person and virtual, as needed. Overall participation across the scope of different training events that we offer, including the virtual training programme, the conference, and individual virtual and face-to-face workshops that we contributed to for partners.

See table below for our training activity for 2025-2026:

Training Activity in 2025-2026	2025-2026
Safeguarding Partnership Board Conferences	1 conference/124 participants
Courses Available	31 courses
Participants on Training	1026 participants
Practitioners Trained Via Partners and Community	870 practitioners
Sways Available	38 Sways
Sway Views	181,977 views

31 courses were offered in our training programme for 2025-2026. The safeguarding training topics continued to focus on either the partnerships' priority areas or identified high risk areas from partners. Within all the PowerPoint presentations are links to multi-agency policies and procedures, safeguarding assessment tools, practice briefings and other useful internal and external information resources. Across the programme, we provided training to 1026 participants through our programme of multi-agency safeguarding courses. There remains the on-going challenge of professionals booking on to on-line training and then failing to attend or cancel their place. In 2025-2026, there were 206 people who booked a training place and then did not attend.

Evidence of Impact

Practitioners tell us they are using tools, sharing information, referring back to resources, and feel more aware and able to respond to concerns. It would be preferable to have more examples to draw on. This is an area for development; we need to consider other mechanisms for determining if training is having the intended impact on practice on a wider scale.

Course Evaluation comments from practitioners

I enjoyed the learning from this course and have been able to use this within my day to day working.

The course was informative, helping me reflect on previous cases I have managed and how I would approach them differently in the future

Course was brilliant and perfectly combined research methodology with steps to implement in daily practice

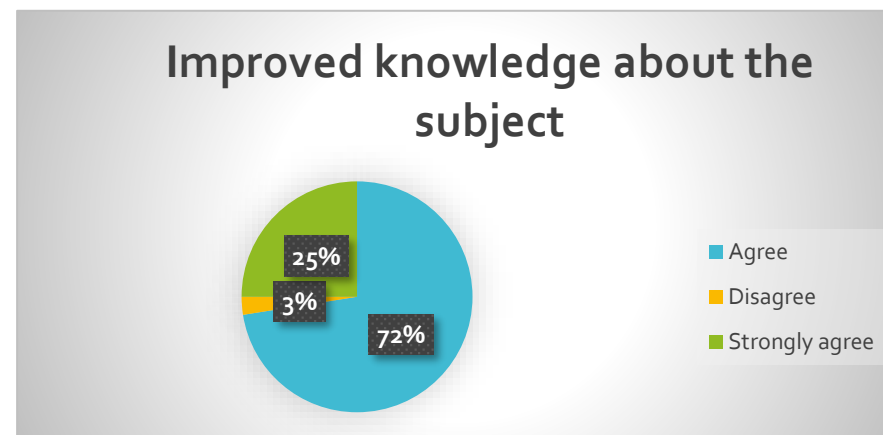
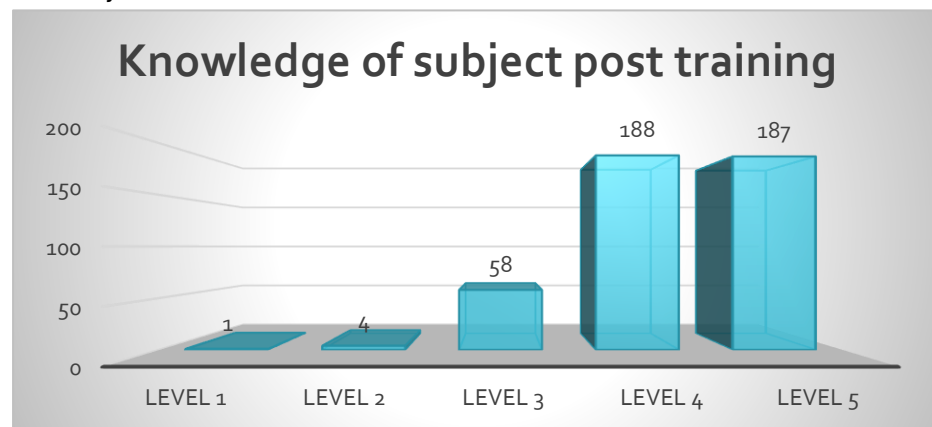
This study session was very informative and as I had a basic knowledge of the subject, I felt that I learnt a lot.

The knowledge of the trainer was exemplary and very well delivered. The visual materials were also of a high standard.

Expert Knowledge Ratings



These graphs reflect responses of self-assessed knowledge levels after training and how delegates have rated their improvement of knowledge on the subject



Child Exploitation Subgroup

The Child Exploitation Subgroup provides multi-agency leadership, coordination, and oversight of the response to all forms of child exploitation across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Reporting to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board and chaired by the Head of Protecting Vulnerable People at Cambridgeshire Constabulary, the subgroup works to improve safeguarding practice, information sharing, early intervention, and disruption of exploitation. Its key responsibilities include monitoring the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements, promoting learning from reviews and research, analysing performance data and emerging risks, strengthening responses to protect children and disrupt perpetrators, raising awareness within communities and professional networks, and ensuring that the views and experiences of children, young people, and families inform service development and delivery.

During 2025-2026, as part of the work of the Child Exploitation Subgroup there have been the following activities:

- Supported Education leads with DSL training.
- Delivered face to face and online training to GP's and Integrated Care Board.
- Supported Ivison Trust to deliver parent webinars to over 600 parents across the county.
- Carried out an audit of Child Sexual Exploitation cases and made recommendations to enhance the service provided;
- Supported Anglia Ruskin University in delivering their Social Work degree course
- Contributed to national guidance in support of the Crime and Policing Bill 2026

Cambridgeshire Education Subgroup

The Education Safeguarding Group provides a forum for educational providers, including early years settings, to contribute to and strengthen safeguarding arrangements for children and young people. The group identifies and addresses strategic and operational safeguarding issues within education, represents the education sector's views at the Safeguarding Children Partnership Board and supports the development of effective safeguarding practice. Its key functions include sharing best practice, providing mutual support across organisations, acting as a communication network for safeguarding professionals, monitoring the implementation of recommendations from inspections and reviews, identifying gaps in services for vulnerable children, promoting service improvements, and receiving and disseminating new or updated safeguarding policies from the Partnership Board.

During 2025-2026 the Education Subgroup:

- was initiated in January 2025 and meets quarterly.
- To allow the group to develop, people from different agencies have been invited to present what their agency does to safeguard children and how educational colleagues can support this and vice versa.
- This has included presentations from local authority's school attendance service, elective home provision, domestic abuse associates and children social care to update on the Families First programme
- Engagement with this new group has been positive and the development of this group will continue into 2026/27

MASH Governance Subgroup

The MASH Governance Group provides strategic oversight of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Children's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASHs) on behalf of the Safeguarding Children Partnership Boards. Its role is to ensure the effectiveness of safeguarding processes through scrutiny of performance, quality assurance and audit activity, while identifying and managing risks and opportunities. The group oversees the development and review of MASH policies and procedures, monitors multi-agency performance and risk registers and supports continuous improvement through horizon scanning and partnership working. It also escalates significant issues to the Partnership Boards and provides regular governance update reports on MASH activity, performance, and emerging concerns.

During 2025-2026 the group has:

- Developed and implemented MASH information sharing agreements (Tier 2) for Cambridgeshire MASH and Peterborough MASH.
- Shared updates from each agency in relations to risks by exception.
- Created a risk register to allowing for the oversee of key multi-agency risks relating to this area of work, with reporting to the Safeguarding Partnership as necessary.



- Agreement of quarterly multi-agency audits being completed on dip samples of MASH cases lead by local authorities. Findings presented back to MASH governance.
- Undertaken MASH Operations Audits and feedback key area of learning to the group for oversight and action as necessary.



ADDITIONAL AREAS OF WORK

Impact of Partnership work undertaken in 2025/26

Threshold Documents which span the county to ensure consistency of practice, have had a light refresh in terms of changes made to the language used. This is to reflect a relational approach to working with children and families and the commencement of the implementation of the Families First Programmes for Peterborough and Cambridgeshire.

Measuring the impact of the Professional Curiosity training programme.

Learning from the professional curiosity doctoral research on everyday safeguarding practice, has been cascaded to over 850 professionals (practitioners and managers) across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire. This took place through multi-agency face to face workshops and conferences. The feedback and evaluation of the training was overwhelmingly positive with attendees, managers and agencies noting how they have embedded changes into their front-line safeguarding practice, supervision, policies/procedures and training.

- *The professional curiosity training has been superb. As a direct result of this we have changed our processes around referrals, where we are following up the referral and if there is a waiting list, we contact the client in the interim. We are also changing how we ask questions so that they are more open and give the client the opportunity to open up more. Thank you so much*
- *Amazing and empowering workshop. Provided us with useful knowledge + tools to improve our practice/ Very thought provoking for practice - thank you! (everyone should go)*
- *Being more aware of what the outcome I wish to achieve is and how professional curiosity enables this. Also be more aware of what I feel is usual behaviour and notice the small changes.*

The training programme is set to continue and has been facilitated and shared with other partnership boards and their agencies across the Eastern Region



BUDGET

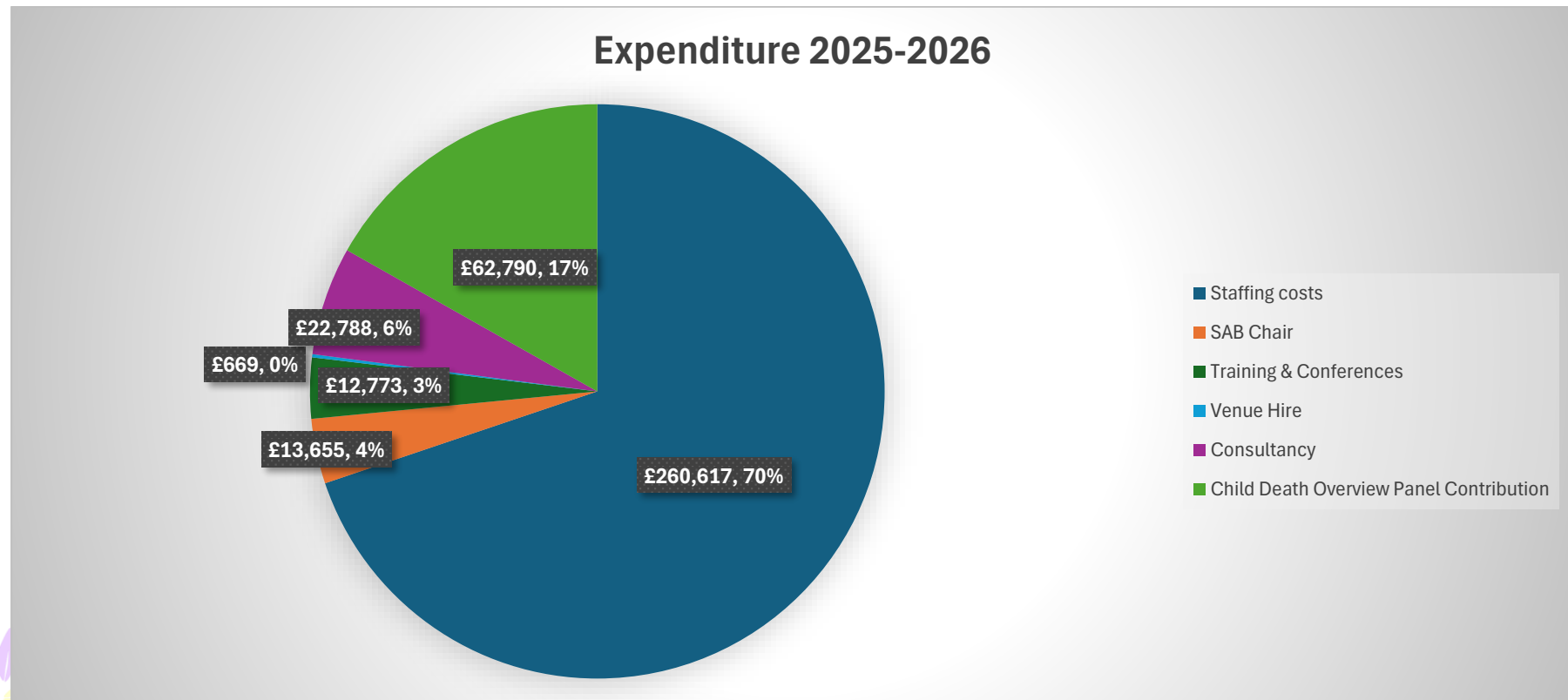
Funding for the Children's Safeguarding Partnerships is made up of contributions from, Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridgeshire Police, NHS Centra East Integrated Care Board, NHS England, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Foundation Trust, East of England Community Health and Care NHS Trust, North West Anglia Foundation Trust, Royal Papworth Hospital, Cambridge University Hospital and the National Probation Service.

Partner Agency annual Contributions:	2025-2026
Cambridgeshire Local Authority	£174,944
Police	£71,182.50
NHS Central East Integrated Care Board (CEICB)	£18,247
NHS England	£15,110
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Trust Foundation Trust (CPFT)	£6,722
North West Anglia Foundation NHS Trust (NWAFT)	£3,473
East of England Community Health and Care NHS Trust (EECH&CT)	£9,914
Addenbrookes (Cambridgeshire University NHS Hospital Trust CUH)	£9,914
Royal Papworth Hospital	£1,668
National Probation Service	£2,200

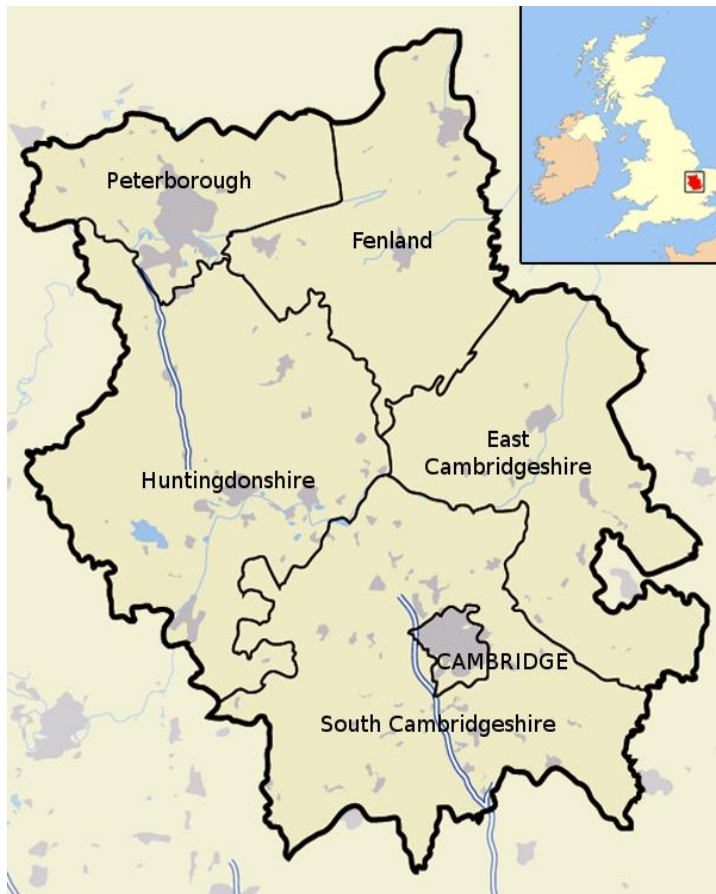


Expenditure

All costs for activity associated with the Adults Safeguarding Boards and Children's Safeguarding Partnerships across Cambridgeshire are taken from the same financial budget. After staffing costs, expenditure incurred by the partnership includes case review authors, conferences for practitioners and consultant fees covering posts such as the Independent Scrutineer. There are also support costs for training, travel and venue hire. For this financial year it has not been possible to disaggregate spending on partnership activity relating to safeguarding children and safeguarding adults. Currently the Safeguarding Partnerships Team (Business Unit) is a shared resource across all four local partnerships.



CAMBRIDGESHIRE AT A GLANCE



The county of Cambridgeshire covers an area 1,309 sq. miles in the East of England with an estimated population of 933,972.

For local government purposes, the county is divided between Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council.

Cambridgeshire County Council is an 'upper-tier' local authority responsible for services such as children's and adult social care, education, youth justice, libraries, public health and highways across the five districts, or 'lower-tier' areas of Fenland, East Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire.

The population across the Cambridgeshire County Council area is estimated to be 710,317, of which around 130,353 (22.6%) are children and young people aged 0 – 19.

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Population Profile

710,317

Total population

18%

Ages 0–15

63%

Ages 16–64

19%

Ages 65 and over

Contacts raised during the year

34,920

Up from 31,056 in 2024/25

Early Help Assessments initiated

2,303

Down from 5,426 in 2024/25

Referrals initiated

5,416

Down from 6,447 in 2024/25

% of referrals were re-referrals

25%

Down from 29% in 2024/25

Single assessments completed

4,701

Down from 5,964 in 2024/25

Single Assessments completed within timescale

70%

Up from 64% in 2024/25

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

78

Down from 100 in 2024/25

% of Section 47s led to an Initial Child Protection Conference

26%

Down from 33% in 2024/25

Children subject to a Child Protection Plan at end of March 2025

318

Down from 430 at the end of March 2025

Children in Care at the end of March 2024

719

Up from 714 at the end of March 2025

Number of missing from Care episodes

766

Up from 535 in 2024/25

Number of missing from Home episodes

833

Down from 875 in 2024/25

Section 47s completed

1,896

Down from 2,230 in 2024/25

Children on a Child Protection plan (at the end of March 2025) by category of Abuse

154

Neglect



7

Physical



12

Sexual



143

Emotional



2

Combination



318

Subject to a CP Plan

Above information received from local authority performance team via <https://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/>

CONTRIBUTION FROM THE STATUTORY SAFEGUARDING PARTNERS

Cambridgeshire Local Authority Children Services

Cambridgeshire County Council is a key partner in Safeguarding Board activity and has representation at all the sub-groups, chairing two of them. A senior manager from Children's services chaired the Rapid Reviews in 2025/26 for the partnership. The directorate includes Youth Justice Service and Education who are also represented in all relevant sub-groups and workstreams. There is a high level of involvement, support and visibility from Children, Education and Families directorate in all the work of the Safeguarding Board.

The Youth Justice Service operates as part of an integrated adolescent safeguarding model alongside the Adolescent Service and Missing & Exploitation Team all based within Children's Social Care. Education services within Cambridgeshire deliver services within an 'inclusion for all' model. Support and intervention to early years and education settings includes a developed training offer and other specific services. Children's services is a key part of the Multi Agency Quality Assurance approach and delivery against agreed action plans and workstreams.

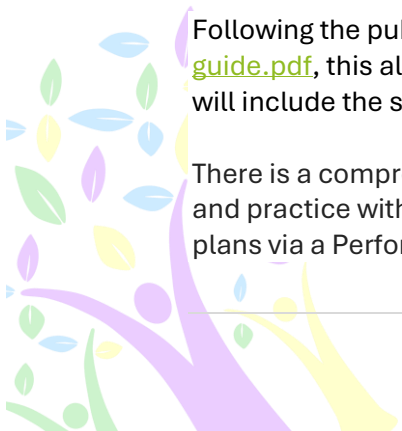
One of the subgroups of the Board is the Education Safeguarding Group now well-established ensuring there is close partnership working with education at strategic and operational level. The group has representation from all sectors in Education. The Chair of this has been part of the Department for Education working group. Cambridgeshire's Education Safeguarding Sub-Group was highlighted as an example of strong partnership practice. Positive feedback was received from DfE and Ofsted representatives, and future engagement with the group was confirmed.

During Cambridgeshire's focused visit by Ofsted to their Care Leavers Service in July 2025, Ofsted found that arrangements for Care Leavers in Cambridgeshire have strengthened. It also found that important gains have been achieved by stabilising the senior leadership team, reducing the reliance on agency workers, investing in additional personal advisor capacity and reducing caseload pressures for personal advisors.

Following the national review into the sad death of Sara Sharif Children's Services Quality Assurance team developed the [Children, Education and Families - 2025 12 CSPR Sara Sharif_QA Team Briefing.pdf - All Documents](#). CCC are also developing some joint training in relation to Elective Home Education that will roll out in Autumn 2026. These sessions will be open to partners.

Following the publication of the [Protecting all vulnerable babies better report](#) Children's services have developed a [Safeguarding Babies - pocket guide.pdf](#), this also forms part of the response to the 'Martynas' Rapid Review. A recorded workshop is being developed to launch the guide and will include the sharing of the 7-minute briefing created by the safeguarding board.

There is a comprehensive Quality Assurance and Practice framework with Children's Services which ensures a clear line of sight on performance and practice with a 'basket' of measures including quantitative data and reporting and service performance presentations and tracked action plans via a Performance, Practice and Learning Board. This also includes messages from feedback, and the voice of our children and young



people. These frameworks and processes allow for timely actions and responses to issues arising from national and local reviews as well as changes in presentation and needs to our service and partners.

Led by Children's services over the past two years the multi-agency partnership has now fully embedded its Risk Outside the Home (ROTH) and contextual safeguarding framework. Multi-agency arrangements address risks arising from peer groups, locations and social networks, as well as risks faced by individual children.

Cambridgeshire Youth Justice service has implemented the national knife possession guidance through a safeguarding-led framework that recognises knife carrying as both a public safety issue and a potential indicator of vulnerability, exploitation and unmet need. Every child receives a structured assessment and tailored intervention plan.

Dedicated Speech and Language Therapy provision is responding to the high prevalence of speech, language and communication needs within the Youth Justice cohort. Children are screened and specialist support is available to children, families, education settings and care placements.

Feedback from Children and Families who receive a service from Children's services in Cambridgeshire is captured and utilised in a range of ways.

There is a revised Feedback policy which includes responses to service requests and non-statutory complaints. There is a separate statutory complaints policy which covers how responses to those who receive a service from Children's social care.

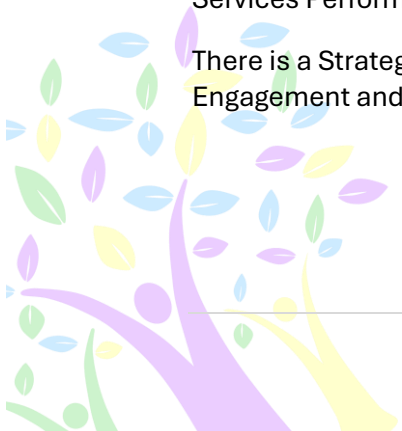
Independent advocacy services are available to children and young people and these are commissioned by the Local Authority.

Feedback is sought from children, young people and their families during service delivery or at point of ending involvement – for example Youth Justice and Targeted Support.

Direct feedback and views are part of the Quality Assurance work - in collaborative In Service Audits. Auditors are required to seek feedback as part of the audit process. Feedback received is collated in the Service specific summary report. Learning from this is used to inform the service development plan.

Reports from all areas of the service on the impact of actions taken regarding all feedback are presented on a quarterly basis to the Children's Services Performance, Practice and Learning Board.

There is a Strategic Participation Group with representation as 'champions' for engagement and feedback across the service. A new CEF Engagement and Participation Framework has been recently launched to further strengthen this important area.



NHS Central East Integrated Care Board

NHS Central East Integrated Care Board (ICB) is the statutory NHS organisation responsible for planning, commissioning and assuring health services across the Integrated Care System (ICS). The ICB works collaboratively with local authorities, NHS providers, police services, education, voluntary sector partners and people with lived experience to improve health outcomes and reduce inequalities across the population. Safeguarding is fundamental to the ICB's role in improving health and wellbeing. The ICB has a statutory responsibility to ensure that all NHS commissioned services maintain effective arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk, while ensuring that systems and processes are robust, effective and responsive to emerging risks.

The ICB remains an active statutory partner within the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Adults Boards. Executive leadership is provided through the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Nurse, supported by Designated Safeguarding Professionals and the wider safeguarding people team. Together they provide strategic leadership, assurance, expert advice and professional oversight across the health system.

Statutory Responsibilities and Assurance

During 2025/26, the safeguarding team supported the ICB to discharge its statutory responsibilities under:

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Care Act 2014
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005
- The Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- The Health and Care Act 2022
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- The NHS Safeguarding Accountability and Assurance Framework (SAAF) 2024

The revised Safeguarding Accountability and Assurance Framework (2024) provides a clear description of the safeguarding responsibilities placed upon NHS commissioners and Integrated Care Boards. Throughout the reporting period, the ICB has maintained robust governance arrangements to ensure compliance with these requirements and to provide assurance that NHS commissioned services are meeting their safeguarding obligations. Particular emphasis has been placed on safeguarding babies, children and young people, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), children in care and care leavers, recognising the specific duties introduced through the Health and Care Act 2022. This work aligns closely with the ambitions of the NHS 10-Year Plan and the ICB's commitment to reducing health inequalities and improving outcomes for the most vulnerable members of our communities.

Delivering Strategic Safeguarding Priorities

Over the past year, the safeguarding team has continued to provide strategic leadership across the Integrated Care System, supporting the delivery of priorities identified by both the Safeguarding Children Partnership and Safeguarding Adults Boards.

The team's work has focused on four key areas:

- **Providing statutory assurance and governance**
Ensuring commissioned services meet safeguarding standards through oversight, assurance processes, quality surveillance and partnership accountability.
- **Strengthening multi-agency safeguarding arrangements**
Supporting effective collaboration across health, local authority, police, education and voluntary sector partners to improve outcomes for children, young people and adults at risk.
- **Driving learning and continuous improvement**
Embedding learning from local and national reviews, audits and assurance activity to strengthen professional practice and reduce the risk of future harm.
- **Reducing inequalities and preventing harm**
Promoting early intervention, trauma-informed practice and population-based approaches that address vulnerability, adverse childhood experiences and wider determinants of health.

Multi-Agency Leadership and Partnership Working

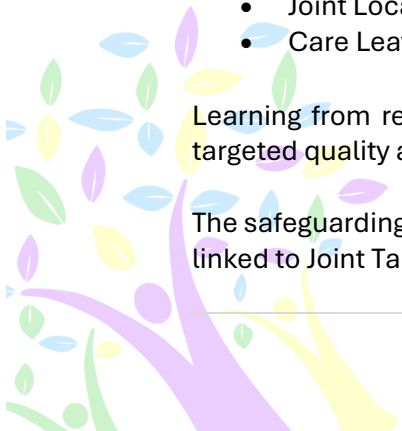
Throughout 2025/26, Designated Safeguarding Professionals provided leadership across a wide range of partnership forums, sub-groups and task-and-finish groups, ensuring that health perspectives informed strategic decision-making and service development.

The ICB actively contributed to:

- Domestic Homicide Reviews
- Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews
- Safeguarding Adult Reviews
- Child Death Reviews
- Joint Local Child Safeguarding Reviews
- Care Leaver Death Reviews

Learning from reviews has been translated into improvement activity through multi-agency action plans, workforce development initiatives and targeted quality assurance programmes.

The safeguarding team has also supported the implementation of recommendations arising from national reviews and inspections, including activity linked to Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) findings and work relating to child exploitation, contextual safeguarding and transitional safeguarding.



Quality Assurance and System Oversight

The safeguarding team continued to provide robust oversight of safeguarding quality across NHS commissioned services through:

- Maintenance of the NHS Safeguarding Integrated Data Collection Framework
- Oversight of provider Safeguarding Compliance Assurance Tool (SCAT) submissions
- Multi-agency audit programmes
- Deep-dive reviews of thematic safeguarding issues
- Safeguarding assurance meetings with providers
- Designated Professional leadership forums

Bi-monthly meetings with Named Professionals and Children in Care professionals across the ICS have strengthened consistency of practice, facilitated shared learning and supported implementation of national safeguarding priorities.

The Community of Practice programme has further strengthened collaboration across provider organisations, enabling the sharing of expertise, innovation and best practice across the health system.

Looking Forward

The safeguarding function continues to evolve in response to changing population needs, emerging safeguarding risks and the development of Integrated Care Systems.

During 2026/27, the safeguarding team will continue its transformation towards an All-Age Safeguarding Model, strengthening integration across children's and adults' safeguarding functions and supporting delivery of the emerging ICB Blueprint.

Priorities for the coming year include:

- Further embedding learning from national and local reviews.
- Strengthening approaches to child exploitation and contextual safeguarding.
- Supporting implementation of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill.
- Enhancing safeguarding assurance across commissioned services.
- Developing data-driven approaches to identifying risk and reducing inequalities.
- Supporting delivery of the NHS 10-Year Plan through prevention, early intervention and partnership working.
- Continuing to strengthen the voice and lived experience of children, young people, adults and families within safeguarding system design.



Through strong leadership, partnership working and a commitment to continuous improvement, the ICB remains dedicated to ensuring that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that children, young people and adults across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are protected from harm and supported to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Cambridgeshire Constabulary

We are represented at all key sub-groups and use these important learning environments to work towards the partnership priorities, share best practice and work towards the shared objective of safeguarding the most vulnerable members of our community.

Police have chairing responsibility for the CE subgroup, MASH Governance, and co-chair of the DASV group.

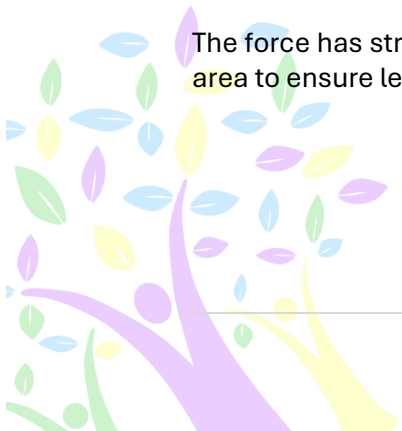
Over the previous 12 months Police have been working closely with partners across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire as part of the Families First Partnership Programme, and specifically Multi Agency Child Protection Teams (MACPT). The force have committed a Detective Inspector to this project. This will also involve changes to the force Protecting Vulnerable People (PVP) department structure, specifically MASH and the Child Abuse Investigation and Safeguarding Unit (CAISU)

The force have implemented an internal Child Protection meeting chaired by the force Head of Crime. This allows the force to review and implement feedback from across the partnership, for example CSPR learning.

Moving forward Government direction is that all Police forces will have a specialist Rape and Serious Sexual Offences investigation team (RASSO) in place by December 2027. In relation to children the most serious sexual offences and those committed by family members or those in a position of trust are already investigation by the CAISU specialist team. The new specialist RASSO team will strengthen this process bringing a wider range of offences into the specialist team, and improve links with partners, and outcomes for victims and survivors. This will also form part of the MACPT implementation. This supports our commitment to FFPP, Op Soteria and the wider VAWG agenda.

Recent changes in legislation have provided increased focus on offences involving Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) The force CE hub has built strong links with local partners, and work is underway led by the local authority to review and strengthen the ROTH and MCE processes, which the force are fully committed to supporting at operational and strategic level.

The force has strong engagement with partners, and a robust process in relation to rapid reviews and LSPR. The partnership works really well in this area to ensure learning is identified and acted upon across agencies.





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