



Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership

Annual Report of 2019-20

October 2020



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Foreword

We are pleased to present the first annual report of the Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership (MSCP) which covers the period April 2019 to March 2020. Whilst the predominant focus of the report is on the work of the MSCP since it was set up on 2 September 2019, the report provides a summary of activity across the whole year and includes work undertaken by the Medway Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB) in preparation for the transition to the new arrangements.

The year 2019-20 was a busy year for the new partnership which included developing a strategic plan and working with partners to set the priorities for 2020-22; embedding the new arrangements and establishing partner relations. Whilst the new partnership is between Kent Police, Medway Council and Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), the MSCP recognises the important role played by its relevant partners including schools, colleges and other education providers. There is a lot to be proud of in the year and further details about the progress made are in section four of the report.

Both Kent Police and Medway Council Children's Services were subject to inspections during the reporting year. The HM Inspectorate of Constabulary inspected child protection work in Kent Police in April 2019 and found that the force places a high priority on child protection issues and provides a good service to children. Ofsted published the findings of their inspection of Medway Council children's services in August 2019 and rated the overall effectiveness as inadequate. Whilst the outcome was disappointing, the council and partners have made good progress in addressing the areas of improvement since the inspection.

The year also saw a reorganisation across health with the creation of NHS Kent and Medway CCG in 2020 from a merger of eight smaller CCGs. Further information about the reorganisation will be included in next year's annual report.

The MSCP wants to ensure there is a culture of continuous learning and improvement across organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Medway. The Quality Assurance Framework which was published in the year sets out how we will achieve this and a key part of this is ensuring that learning from reviews is embedded in practice. Further information about the reviews undertaken are in section five of this report.

The voice of children and young people will be a key focus of the work of the MSCP going forward and we were pleased to be able to do some engagement work with children and parents and carers in August and September 2019 to feed into the development of the MSCP priorities for 2020-22.

At the end of the reporting period for this annual report, a national lockdown was introduced in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. This will be a feature of the 2020-21 annual report, however, agencies immediately responded to challenges to ensure that safeguarding children and young people was a key

priority during the pandemic. Agencies responded with new working practices, MSCP business continued with the use of virtual meetings and the MSCP played a role in sharing information and resources during the challenging period. Attendance at the Executive and sub group meetings has been good which evidences the commitment from partners.

Section One – Medway In Context

- 1.1 Medway is an emerging city set around the River Medway within the Thames Gateway Growth Area. There are 5 main towns in the area: Chatham, Gillingham, Rochester, Strood and Rainham, as well as significant rural areas.
- 1.2 In June 2019 the Office for National Statistics released the mid-2018 population estimates – these reflect the population as at 30 June 2018. The 2018 mid-year estimate indicates that the population of Medway reached 277,855 – 239 persons (+0.1%) above the 2017 mid-year figure. Medway's growth rate in 2018 was at the lowest level seen over the past fourteen years, a similar level was seen in 2004. For the fifth consecutive year Medway has a lower rate of growth than Kent, the South East and the UK. Medway's growth peaked in 2012, after the 2011 census.
- 1.3 The majority of the population (89.6%) in Medway are classified as White, with the next largest ethnic group being Asian or Asian British (5.2%) including Chinese. The proportion of the population that is White is slightly larger than in England and slightly lower than in Kent, although these differences are not significant. There are also no significant differences in ethnicity by gender. Data from the January 2017 school census show that 75.4% of pupils in Medway are White British and 23.9% of pupils are of minority ethnic origins. This may suggest a large change in the overall population distribution in Medway since the 2011 Census. Some wards are considerably more diverse than others. The three wards with the most ethnically diverse school populations are Chatham Central, Rochester East, and Gillingham North. Within these wards 53.8% to 62.9% of pupils are White British and at least 36.6% of pupils are of minority ethnic origins. Rainham South, Peninsula, and Cuxton and Halling are amongst the wards with the most homogenous school populations, as 86.7% to 89.1% of pupils are White British.
- 1.4 Medway is ranked 118th most deprived Local Authority of 326 in England in the latest index. This is a relatively worse position than in the previous index in 2010, when Medway ranked 136th most deprived of 325.
- 1.5 Medway has a younger population than nationally, with proportionally more younger people and working-age residents and fewer older people. Medway has a younger median age of population at 38.1 years against 40.1 years for the UK.
- 1.6 Overall, comparing local indicators with England averages, the health and wellbeing of children in Medway is similar to England. The infant mortality rate is similar to England with an average of 13 infants dying before age 1 each year. During 2019-20 there were 22 child deaths (age 0 – 17).
- 1.7 Public health interventions can improve child health at a local level. In Medway:

- The teenage pregnancy rate is similar to England, with 103 girls becoming pregnant in a year.
 - 15.9% of women smoke while pregnant which is worse than England.
 - 71.5% of newborns received breast milk as their first feed.
 - The MMR immunisation level does not meet recommended coverage (95%). By age 2, 91.0% of children have had one dose.
 - Dental health is similar to England. 21.7% of 5 year olds have one or more decayed, missing or filled teeth.
 - 9.9% of children in Reception and 21.6% of children in Year 6 are obese.
 - The rate of child inpatient admissions for mental health conditions at 85.4 per 100,000 is similar to England. The rate of self-harm at 389.2 per 100,000 is similar to England.
- 1.8 73.7% of children have achieved a good level of development at the end of Reception (better than England). GCSE attainment is worse than England, with an average Attainment 8 score of 45.9.
- 1.9 The level of child poverty is worse than England with 18.6% of children living in poverty. The rate of family homelessness is similar to England.
- 1.10 There were 463 children subject to a child protection plan at the end of March 2020, compared with 379 in April 2019. This equates to 75 children subject to a child protection plan per 10,000 of the child population and is higher than the national average of 55.8 children subject to a child protection plan per 10,000 of the child population. This is higher than Medway's statistical neighbours¹ which is 63.9 children subject to a child protection plan per 10,000 of the child population.
- 1.11 There were 426 Looked After Children at the end of March 2020 compared with 422 in April 2018. This equates to 67 Looked After Children per 10,000 of the under 18 population, and remains below Medway's statistical neighbours at 72.80 per 10,000.

¹ Statistical neighbour models provide one method of benchmarking progress. Each local authority is grouped with a number of other local authorities that are deemed to have similar characteristics – known as statistical neighbours. Medway's statistical neighbours are: North Lincolnshire; Telford and Wrekin; Dudley; Thurrock; Havering; Northamptonshire; Rotherham; Southend-on-sea; Kent; and Swindon.

Section Two – The Partnership

- 2.1 The Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership (MSCP) was set up on 2 September 2019 to replace the Local Safeguarding Children Board. These new arrangements were in response to the Children and Social Work Act 2017.
- 2.2 Medway Council, Kent Police and Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) are the three safeguarding partners that make up the MSCP. The purpose of the MSCP is to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together in a system where:
- Children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted
 - Partner organisations and agencies collaborate, share and co-own the vision for how to achieve improved outcomes for vulnerable children
 - Organisations and agencies challenge appropriately and hold one another to account effectively
 - There is early identification and analysis of new safeguarding issues and emerging threats
 - Learning is promoted and embedded in a way that local services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice
 - Information is shared effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families.

Relevant Agencies

- 2.3 Relevant agencies are those organisations whose involvement the safeguarding partners consider is required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Medway. Relevant agencies include the National Probation Service, Kent, Surrey and Sussex Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC), all health providers, schools, colleges, early years providers, voluntary sector organisations, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, CAF/CASS, housing providers, children's homes and faith groups. The MSCP engages with relevant agencies through its sub groups and twice yearly Leadership events. A full list of relevant agencies can be found in Appendix Two.

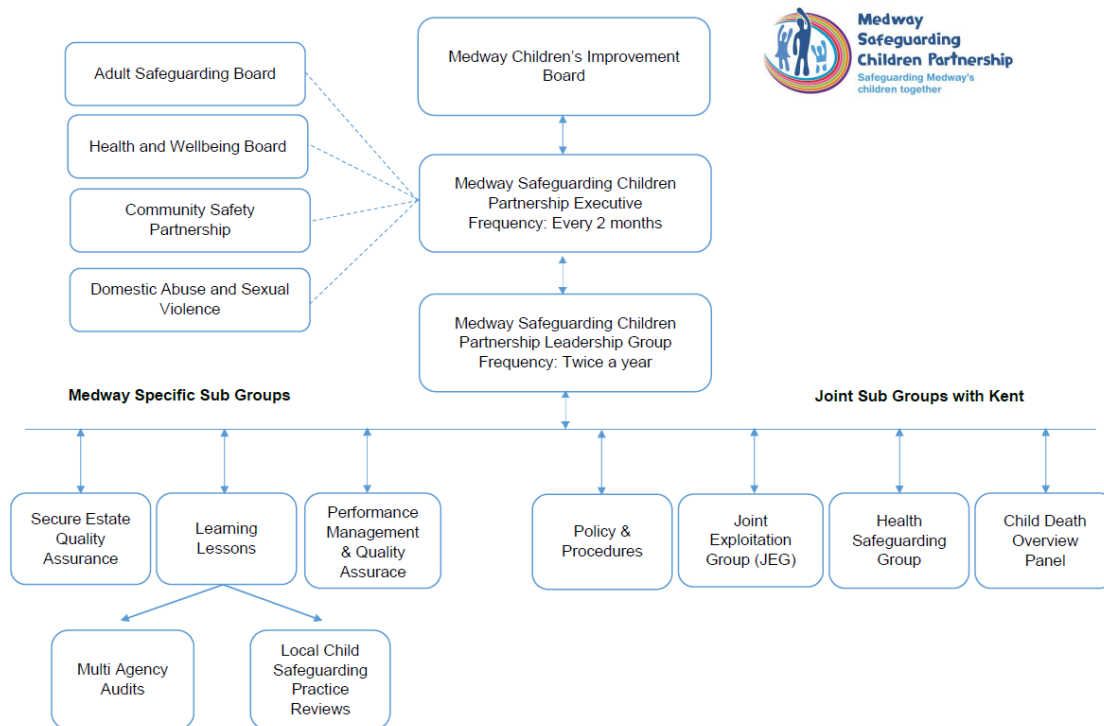
MSCP Structure

- 2.4 The MSCP comprises an Executive and a number of sub groups. The Executive is the main business forum ensuring that the partnership maintains its main focus on the strategic priorities that impact on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Medway. The Executive is led by the three safeguarding partners – Police, CCG and Local Authority. The Executive is jointly chaired by the three partners on a rotational basis and meets every two months. Ian Sutherland, Director of People – Children and Adults Services, Medway Council is the current

Chair of the MSCP Executive until September 2020 when Detective Chief Superintendent Andy Pritchard, Kent Police will take over as Chair.

- 2.5 The main objective of the MSCP Executive is to ensure that the functions of the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies are effectively discharged in accordance with the requirements set out in Working Together 2018.
- 2.6 The MSCP has seven sub groups in place, four of which are joint Kent and Medway sub groups. All sub groups have representation from the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies.

Figure 1 – MSCP Structure Chart (April 2020)



- 2.7 Secure Estate Quality Assurance Sub Group – The sub group brings together agencies with involvement in HMYOI Cookham Wood to disseminate learning to improve outcomes for young people in custody and to ensure effective safeguarding procedures are in place. The group undertakes an annual review of safeguarding and restraint in the Secure Estate in Medway.
- 2.8 Learning Lessons Sub Group – The key role of the sub group is to ensure there is a culture of continuous learning and improvement across partner agencies. The group reviews and scrutinises action plans for case reviews and disseminates learning, both as good practice and areas for improvement from local and national reviews.

- 2.9 Performance Management and Quality Assurance (PMQA) Sub Group – the key role of the group is to review and scrutinise the safeguarding children performance across all MSCP member agencies, and monitor and evaluate the quality and effectiveness of safeguarding children activities undertaken by agencies.
- 2.10 Kent and Medway Policy and Procedures Sub Group – The group has responsibility for co-ordinating the development of local multi agency policies, procedures and guidance for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children across Kent and Medway.
- 2.11 Kent and Medway Joint Exploitation Group – The group oversees the multi agency activity around: Sexual Exploitation; Gangs/ County Lines; Radicalisation/ Extremism; Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children; Modern Slavery and; Online Safeguarding.
- 2.12 Kent and Medway Health Safeguarding Group – The group is the key forum for all signatories and safeguarding leads from the health system to share and receive information, promote good practice, address concerns and system challenge and to raise matters to the MSCP Executive.
- 2.13 Kent and Medway Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) – CDOP is the multi agency panel set up to review the deaths of all children normally resident in the area, in order to learn lessons and share any findings for the prevention of future deaths.

Key Relationships

- 2.14 A joint working protocol was agreed in 2014 and subsequently revised in 2017 which set out a framework for effective joint-working between the Medway Safeguarding Children Board, the Medway Health and Wellbeing Board, Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adult Board and the Medway Community Safety Partnership. The protocol sets out the expectation that each Board will have the opportunity to see, comment on and challenge the priorities of other strategic bodies and be updated on progress on their work. The protocol is in the process of being updated to reflect the development of the MSCP. The protocol sets out the commitment that all key strategic plans whether they are formulated by individual agencies or by partnership forums should include safeguarding as a cross-cutting theme.

Independent Scrutiny

- 2.15 The role of independent scrutiny is to provide assurance, through monitoring and challenge, in judging the effectiveness and quality of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area. This is undertaken through

objective scrutiny, acting as a constructive critical friend, promoting reflection to drive improvements, and reporting how well the safeguarding partners are providing strong leadership to fulfil their safeguarding children role.

- 2.16 In January 2020, the MSCP appointed an Independent Scrutineer for the MSCP, Rory Patterson. See Section three for the Independent Scrutineers evaluation.
- 2.17 The independent scrutiny arrangements for the MSCP also include a specific function for the secure estates. In January 2020, the MSCP appointed an Independent Scrutineer for the Secure Estate, John Drew. The work of the Independent Scrutineer for the secure estate includes:
- Attending quarterly Secure Estate Quality Assurance meetings
 - Maintaining regular contact with key individuals involved in safeguarding (e.g. Local Authority Designated Officer, Head of Safeguarding in the establishments, other parties)
 - Undertaking periodic visits to Cookham Wood and Medway Secure Training Centre (STC)
 - Overseeing the production of the annual 'Review of Safeguarding and Restraint'.

Section Three – Independent Scrutineers Evaluation

- 3.1 Over the last 4 months I have met with over 20 colleagues, twice attended the MSCP Executive and attended a number of partnership subgroups. There is no doubting the openness and commitment among partners to promote partnership working and there is optimism that this will translate into a positive impact on children and families in the area. While there is considerable goodwill, this will need to translate into positive actions which will make a difference to children. Overall, partnerships seem sound and constructive although there is acknowledgement that there is still room for improvement. One area that could be strengthened is greater clarity about the wider partnership's priorities and accountability of those working below executive level.
- 3.2 Although partners have had to work under challenging circumstances during the pandemic, the local authority has worked hard to strengthen relationships with schools. Through the headteachers' reference group working relationships have improved significantly. The partnership has recognised the importance of engaging with agencies beyond the three statutory partners, particularly the vital role that schools play in safeguarding children. Consideration is now being given to how headteachers can be on the partnership Executive.
- 3.3 The recent major reorganisation of the CCG in Kent has had an impact on the continuity of relationships at a strategic level as new roles have only just been established and filled. It is not clear at this stage what impact these changes will have on partnership working and on the experiences of children and families in the area. There is also more scope for the partners to share information about how their own service level action plans impact on the functioning of the wider partnership and have and contribute to the improvement journey for children's services.
- 3.4 An integral part of the quality assurance framework in Medway is the work undertaken by the Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership. I have attended the Performance Management and Quality Assurance (PMQA) Sub-Group and the Learning Lessons Sub-Group of the MSCP. Both of these groups are well attended by partners and provide an opportunity for scrutiny, reflection and challenge. The PMQA Subgroup has a work programme which incorporates regular monitoring of the Safeguarding Partnership's Dataset; reporting of single agency audits; and annual reports on key areas of safeguarding such as missing children and private fostering. I heard about the positive work the Council was doing in relation to missing children, and witnessed constructive challenge between partners about attendance at child protection conferences.
- 3.5 The Learning Lessons sub group is responsible for the effective dissemination of learning from local and national child safeguarding practice reviews and for monitoring the implementation of recommendations from reviews. In order to support this the MSCP

arranges sessions to ensure the learning from national and Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (LCSPRs) as well as multi agency audits is accessible understood by practitioners. The subgroup has to ensure that the learning from LCSPRs widely disseminated throughout the partnership. The subgroup also advises the Safeguarding Executive on whether a Local Child Safeguarding Review should be undertaken. This is an important meeting for identifying and disseminating learning in the partnership in addition to providing effective challenge to how partners are working together to safeguard children. One of the areas the partnership may wish to reflect further upon is how learning can be embedded in the workforce so that practice errors are not repeated.

- 3.6 An area for further work which has emerged is the need to engage more fully with children, young people and families, so that they can contribute to shaping of safeguarding policies and practice. While individual agencies endeavour to capture the voices of children the partnership has not yet been able to evidence how this can be used to influence how services are delivered.
- 3.7 Working with the partnership manager I am gathering material to conduct an assessment of the current effectiveness of partnership working. This is based on a model developed by the University of Bedfordshire, and should allow the partnership to chart changes in how they are working over time. The model can be used at different levels in the partnership and is able to highlight a range of perspectives, including feedback from children and families. This should provide a common framework for partners to develop a jointly owned approach to tackling some of the existing barriers'.

Rory Patterson
Independent Scrutineer

Section Four – Progress in Medway

- 4.1 The MSCP held its first Development Day on Friday 27 September 2019. The purpose of the day was to help develop the Strategic Plan for the MSCP by identifying the key priorities for the new partnership to ensure that agencies work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Medway. The MSCP Executive met with a range of partners on the day including health providers, probation, the secure estate and education. The discussion focused on what has been working well for safeguarding children and what the key areas for improvement are. Partners heard about the findings of a recent survey with young people and parents and considered how the voice and lived experience of the child can be embedded through all its work. The group also considered recent inspections across the partnership and learning from case reviews
- 4.2 The MSCP agreed five new priorities for 2020-22 set out in the MSCP Strategic Plan. The MSCP has a Business Plan which sets out the detailed actions under each of the five priority areas. The five priorities for 2020-22 are:
- Effective Partnerships
 - Contextual Safeguarding and trauma informed practice
 - Domestic Abuse
 - Neglect
 - Effective Early Help
- 4.3 Key achievements of the MSCP during 2019-20 includes:
- The MSCP held its first Leadership Event on 24 January 2020. The MSCP Leadership Group are run as twice yearly Safeguarding Conferences, with attendance from all safeguarding partners and relevant agencies. The Leadership event was attended by over 90 professionals and focused on the Learning from the Smith Family Review; the findings from the Children's Commissioner report for Medway Children's Services and the Kent Police HMIC Inspection Report. Partners were also able to feed into the development of the MSCP Business Plan.
 - The MSCP requests schools complete an annual education safeguarding audit. During 2019-20, the MSCP developed and launched a new safeguarding audit tool for schools. The tool is used to ensure Medway schools and education establishments satisfy their safeguarding responsibilities and so that the MSCP can identify areas for support across school settings. 74% of schools completed the audit for 2018-19, an increase from 61% in the previous year. The audit identified the need for further training for schools around exploitation which will be delivered in 2019-20.
 - Between April 2019 and March 2020, the MSCP delivered 48 training sessions, attended by 970 delegates which was an increase from the

875 delegates who attended training in 2018-19. An additional 742 delegates completed online training.

- Following learning from multi agency audits that identified that the challenge and escalation policy is not being utilized, the MSCP ran a series of taster sessions on utilizing challenge and escalation, attended by 87 professionals.
- The MSCP supported the development of the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy which was launched on 6 March 2020. The strategy sets out the joint vision, priorities and commitments to reduce the levels of domestic abuse, and ensure that where domestic abuse does take place, all those affected get the right support, quickly.
- The MSCP developed a sexually active children and child sexual abuse self audit tool to assess the effectiveness of the arrangements for safeguarding children against harmful sexual behaviour and child sexual abuse. The MSCP will report on the findings of the audit in 2020-21.
- The MSCP has established the Secure Estate Quality Assurance Group chaired by the Independent Scrutineer for the secure estate. The group reviews the work of the various safeguarding protective mechanisms that operate in the secure estate which for the period of this report included HMYOI Cookham Wood and Medway Secure Training Centre (STC) up until the closure of the STC at the end of March 2020. The group has established links with additional agencies with involvement in the secure estates including Barnardos and the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) for Cookham Wood.
- The MSCP launched a multi agency 'Safeguarding Competency Framework' in December 2020. The framework sets out the minimum standards of learning/ knowledge expected from professionals or volunteers in Medway who come into contact with children whether through direct or indirect and un-regular work.
- The MSCP worked in partnership with the Medway Youth Offending Service and Public Health to develop trauma informed practice across Medway for practitioners and leaders working at the front line with children and young people. A series of half day workshops were delivered between January – March 2020 and further training will be provided in 2020-21.
- Establishing a Joint Exploitation Group (JEG) with the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi Agency Partnership and the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board to oversee multi agency activity around:
 - Sexual exploitation
 - Gangs/ county lines
 - Human trafficking/ Modern slavery
 - Online safeguarding
 - Radicalisation/ extremism
 - Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children
- The MSCP has been working with Kent County Council Children's Services to develop a Child Exploitation Assessment tool for practitioners. The tools, which will replace the current Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) tool, will help to improve how Medway disrupts

exploitation and will help agencies work together to create safety and reduce harm. The tools will be launched in 2020-21.

What Young People told us

- 4.4 In September 2019 the MSCP undertook surveys with children and parents/ carers. In total 55 children and 40 parents/ carers completed an online survey.
- 4.5 The young people reported that they felt schools were a good place for safety. Some children reported that the high streets in Medway were seen as unsafe and reported worries around lighting and gangs. Young people were more concerned about travelling on trains than on buses.
- 4.6 When asked what concerns children and young people most about staying safe in Medway they reported issues such as gangs and knife crime. Young people's perception was that the prevalence of knife crime in Medway was high. Internet Safety and cyber bullying was raised by young people as the biggest issue but is in line with national figures. Young people reported that they know how to report online abuse but are not confident in doing so.
- 4.7 The MSCP considered the findings of the surveys and used them to help develop the MSCP Strategic Plan and Business Plan. The findings have also been used to develop training for professionals around child sexual exploitation, gangs awareness and online protection.

Early Help

- 4.8 Effective early intervention can prevent the escalation of need and potentially reduce the number of children and young people entering acute services such as those in social care, accident and emergency and the criminal justice system. It is also key to ensuring a reduction in the cost to the public purse. Prevention is the focus of the Troubled Families Programme and one of its key aims is to transform services across local areas. There is still room to grow and some services have yet come on board, however moving forward with the introduction of a new Early Help Strategy in 2021, this should support improved partnership working.
- 4.9 From April 2019 – March 2020, Early Help Services worked with 905 families, family issues have included (but not limited to) domestic abuse; mental health for children and parents; debt; homelessness; No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF); inconsistent parenting; school attendance and children with complex needs. The service has responded to family needs, ensuring there is one worker for the family, as opposed to the previous process where a family would receive an assessment worker and then move to an intervention worker.
- 4.10 Over the year (April 2019- March 2020), Early Help have been part of an OFSTED and a diagnostic completed by our partner in practice (PIP),

Essex. Both the OFSTED inspection and PIP diagnostic evidenced strengths as well as areas for improvement. Improvements across the Early Help service are progressing and improvements already made include improved performance data; training and qualifications for staff; reducing drift; improving the time in which families wait for a service and improving relationships with children's social care and wider partners.

- 4.11 Early Help continue to utilise the children and family hubs in Medway (4 key hubs and 9 wellbeing provisions); families continue to access the support of multiple services from each of the family hubs including; midwifery, health visiting and broader services include Department for Work and Pensions (DWP); NELFT; Home start and the continued group offer for children aged 0 – 8. The end of the financial year saw the implementation of restrictions due to the concerns around Covid-19. The Children and Families hubs remained open to ensure children and their families continued to have a safe space; access to midwifery and health visiting and supported Early Help to continue to meet with families (safely) in the hub. During this period, hubs also enabled other more specialist support including virtual court proceedings and contact to continue, which again supports vulnerable families.
- 4.12 It is recognised that there are ongoing improvements to make in Early Help including practice improvement; improved career progression for staff and the embedding of our audit process to ensure a consistent and proportionate response to families across Early Help Services. It is positive that there is a permanent management group within Early Help to drive forward the Early Help action plan.
- 4.13 Ultimately Early Help in Medway wants to ensure families have access to early intervention and preventative services and reduce the risk of families escalating to statutory services. Early help want to support families to build resilience, confidence and utilise their own support network to prevent the need for ongoing intervention.

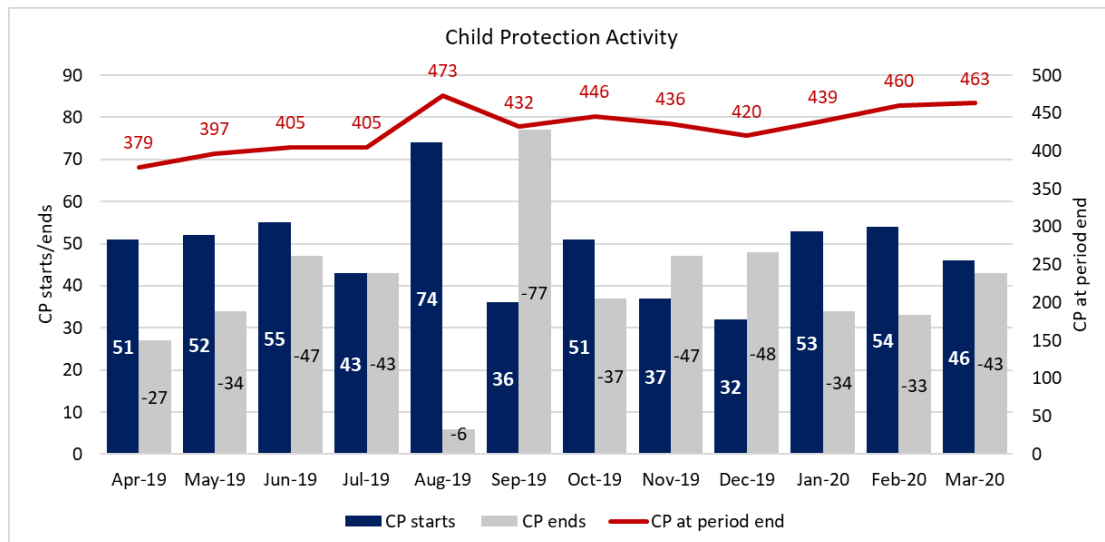
Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

- 4.14 The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) has continued to develop and grow during this year. Health have increased their representation within the service with the addition of one business support worker. In June 2019 Ofsted carried out their ILACs inspection and provided the following feedback in respect of MASH:
- Senior leaders have sustained improvements in the 'front door' single point of access (SPA) and the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) following the priority actions identified in the 2018 joint targeted area inspection.
 - Contacts and referrals for children in need or at risk are managed promptly in the MASH. All decisions are made within 24 hours. Consent is routinely sought or is overridden where this is appropriate.

- Decision-making is well informed by contributions by partner agencies and domestic abuse and exploitation coordinators. Education professionals based in the team are helping to build relationships with school staff.
 - There is evidence of management oversight at key points, and this affords additional safeguards.
- 4.15 In December 2019 a review of the MASH was undertaken by a consultant. The findings were positive and advice and recommendations were given to how the service could be improved. These recommendations have been incorporated within the service action plan which is reviewed by the Head of Service.
- 4.16 The MASH Operational meetings continue to be held monthly. All operational level staff are committed to drive positive working relationships and strengthen the MASH to ensure the right decisions are being made for children at the earliest opportunity.

Children subject to a Child Protection Plan

- 4.17 There were 463 children subject to a child protection plan at the end of March 2020 compared with 379 in April 2019. This represents 19% more child protection plans being started than ended. The rate of child protection plans at the end of the year increased to 75 children subject to a plan per 10,000 of the child population. This is higher than the national average and our statistical neighbours and an increase from 55.1 children per 10,000 in March 2019.
- 4.18 Following the Ofsted Inspection in July 2019, 74 children became subject to a child protection plan in August, the highest single month of child protection starts in the year. Throughout the year 476 children ceased to be subject of a child protection plan, whilst 585 children were placed on a child protection plan. The increased rate of open child protection cases at the end of the year, is a consequence of the increased rate of child protection starts and the consistent rate of child protection ends. 22% of these children becoming subject to a plan, had been on a plan previously, which is higher than the 18% last year, but align with our comparators. 100% of child protection plans have been reviewed in timescales, which is a slight improvement from last year, but reflective of the high performance of Medway in comparison to our comparator groups over the last 6 years.



Safeguarding Children Missing from Care and Home

4.19 The push and pull factors for children who go missing from home and care are vast and children who go missing face a range of immediate and long term risks including the risk of sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, being on the edge of care and drug trafficking. The reasons they go missing are often complex. To be able to reduce the risks for these children social care need to understand their peer relationships, where they spent time and who influences them alongside their home circumstances. Following every missing episode there is a Return Home Interview by an independent person.

4.20 In December 2019 a person was employed by First Response to undertake all Return Home Interviews, independent from any care planning for children open to Medway Children Services. They act as an advocate for children as well as exploring with them the push and pull factors that have led to their missing incident. They also work alongside the Single Point of Access and the Missing & Exploitation Lead to provide intervention to children who have been reported missing within 72hrs of them being found.

3.21 Information shared within return home interview's is reviewed fortnightly and shared with Kent Police MCET Team to ensure that should they go missing again all agencies are fully informed of the risks and needs of the child.

4.22 The Missing and Exploitation Panel continues to be held fortnightly, chaired by the Group Manager of First Response. This is a multi-agency panel where children who are considered to be at risk of exploitation, assessed as high risk missing or missing three times in 90 days are discussed. The panel also considers contextual safeguarding and agrees actions with partners to address wider concerns by sharing information/intelligence with the aim to disrupt places of concern and identify hotspots.

Children Missing Education

- 4.23 Section 436 of the Education Act 1996 requires all local authorities to make arrangements to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of children and young people residing in their area who are compulsory school age and not receiving education.
- 4.24 Suitable education is defined as full time education suitable to age, ability, and aptitude and to any special education needs the child may have.
- 4.25 The Local Authority has a full time dedicated Children Missing Education Officer (CME) who oversees and collates all information and follows up information ensuring that all CME cases reported coming into Medway or leaving Medway are followed, until a case can be fully resolved, pupil on roll at a school and the case then closed.
- 4.26 As from September 2016 the Department for Education (DfE) requested that all schools and academies including private and independent schools notify the Local Authority where a pupil is taken on or pupil removed from the school roll not including transition times. This procedure has now been fully implemented employing an additional staff member to collect and interrogate data and where there appears no outcome for the pupils this can be fully investigated to ensure pupils are on roll at a school/academy or in receipt of education at home or otherwise.
- 4.27 Medway Council Attendance Advisory Service to Schools and Academies (AASSA) fully support this responsibility and Attendance Advisory Practitioners (AAP's) working within AASSA ensure home visits are made (open cases were monitored and closed once there was clarity that the pupil was not expected to attend school due to Covid-19, all vulnerable pupils were offered provision) and work closely to sign post or work jointly with all agencies, including the police, social care and health to ensure safeguarding concerns are addressed and appropriately dealt with.
- 4.28 The AASSA team liaise fortnightly with Virtual School and the Inclusion Team, to ensure looked after children are receiving appropriate education. The AASSA attend Fair Access Panel meetings for Primary and Secondary Schools to ensure CME are placed in education in a timely manner.
- 4.29 The CME Officers are finding cases are becoming more complex. Families are often moved to Medway and are placed in temporary accommodation by other Local Authorities or are placed in Medway unaware of schools' admission process for getting children on roll. Families are often vulnerable with no friends or family support nearby and have no information on the area they are living in or even where the schools are situated. The CME Officer support and assist families

with form filling or general advice regarding schools, the process and any other concerns which could be supported. CME Officers have had to adapt due to restriction of home visits due to Covid-19 and expand their ability to communicate with parents/carers, school staff and Local Authorities working remotely, to continue to ensure children are on roll at a school. CME and Social Care teams have reassessed pathways of referrals and liaise fortnightly to ensure the safeguarding of all children that are known to the Local Authority.

- 4.30 During the period September 2019 – July 2020 there were 157 incoming cases of reported Children Missing Education to the Local Authority, we continue to work jointly with the Admission Team and other partners to assist with the process of getting children on a school roll and education to enable them to reach their full potential. Communication between the Local Authority, parents/carers and schools that manage their own admissions has been vital during Covid-19 and school closure, as imperative that children were still placed on roll at a school and received education either virtually or in school if classified as vulnerable.
- 4.31 The number has reduced compared to the following year however with Covid-19 and lockdown, this has dramatically reduced the number of families relocating. The families that have moved into the Local Authority have often been relocated due to being placed in temporary housing from other authorities or domestic violence.
- 4.32 The CME policy was reviewed and published September 2019.

Private Fostering

- 4.33 The MSCP monitors the arrangements in place for privately fostered children in Medway. The Performance Management and Quality Assurance (PMQA) sub group receives the Local Authority private fostering annual report to scrutinise the arrangements the local authority has in place to discharge its duties in relation to private fostering.
- 4.34 Medway Council has a dedicated social worker who undertakes all Private Fostering work including assessing the suitability and safety of these placements and supporting children and young people subject to these arrangements.
- 4.35 Activity and developments of the service for children and carers during 2019-20 include:
- During 2019-20, considerable work went in to the sharing of information about Private Fostering to raise awareness within Children's Services and partner agencies about what constitutes private fostering to encourage appropriate referrals. A virtual awareness raising course is being developed for partner agencies as face to face training is more challenging currently.

- All leaflets and posters were redesigned and distributed and the website was updated to include this information.
 - The Team held a “Private Fostering Awareness Raising” week in September 2019 with a focus around increasing awareness of what constitutes private fostering. This was particularly focused through social media but also included the distribution of leaflets and other publicity.
 - Major changes have been made to private fostering recording on FWi, now Mosaic. Some further changes are still needed to ensure recording of supervision and visits is more focused on private fostering regulations.
 - Some work has been completed with language schools but further work is needed to ensure all language schools have been contacted and they are knowledgeable about our requirements.
 - The cohort of language students who arrived in September 2019 returned to their home countries in January 2020, with the exception of one student who was due to stay until April 2020. Due to lockdown, the student went home in March 2020.
 - Carer views about the supervision and support they receive are canvassed annually as part of the review.
 - There is a plan in place to institute a panel to hear both private fostering and supported lodgings cases so there is increased scrutiny of these assessments before sign off by the Head of Corporate Parenting.
 - Work is being undertaken to identify how we can better capture the voice of the child in private fostering arrangements.
- 4.36 The number of notifications of new private fostering arrangements was 25 which is a drop compared to recent years. This drop would tend to suggest that we are not identifying all the private fostering arrangements in the area and we thus need to be more vigilant and more pro-active in identifying these placements to ensure cases are not remaining unknown, unassessed and unmonitored.
- 4.37 A large number of Private Fostering arrangements in Medway are made for educational reasons. The next highest figure is family breakdown and some of these children have also been subject to Child in Need and Child Protection processes in the past.

Allegations against staff

- 4.38 The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) delivers a statutory function on behalf of the Local Authority to oversee and/or manage all cases where allegations have been made against an adult who is employed or works in a voluntary role with children. Their role includes providing advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations, liaising with the Police and other agencies and monitoring the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with quickly, consistently and fairly.

- 4.39 The LADO service was subject to external review in 2019. The OFSTED inspection of Medway Children's Social Care Services was published on 27 August 2019 and positively reported;
"Allegations made against professionals and the associated risks to children are managed well by the designated officer. The response to referrals is both prompt and proportionate. Outcomes are well recorded, with detailed analysis. This is a vast improvement since the previous inspection"
- 4.40 The threshold for a LADO investigation is that an adult who works with children has:
- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
 - Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
 - Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.
- 4.41 In Medway, allegations received by the LADO are divided into three categories, 'Duty Enquiry', 'Consultation and Advice' and 'Referral' as not all of the concerns received by the LADO require the same level of investigation or advice.
- Duty Enquiry** - This is a contact with the LADO, which after consideration, is not deemed to meet the definition of an allegation.
- Consultation** - This is where the concerns raised within a referral meet threshold for LADO intervention, however are not of such concern that they require a full LADO investigation.
- Referral** - The referral to the LADO service, clearly meets the threshold for a full investigation by the LADO which is most likely to result in a Joint Evaluation Meeting.
- 4.42 Between 01 April 2018 and 31 March 2019, the LADO Service managed 636 contacts; this is an increase of 7% from the previous year (total of 596 contacts), and the highest number of contacts the service has managed over the past four years.
- 4.43 Of the 636 contacts, 108 (17%) were managed as referrals, 174 (27%) were dealt with through the Consultation and Advice pathway and the final 354 (54%) contacts were managed as Duty Enquiries.

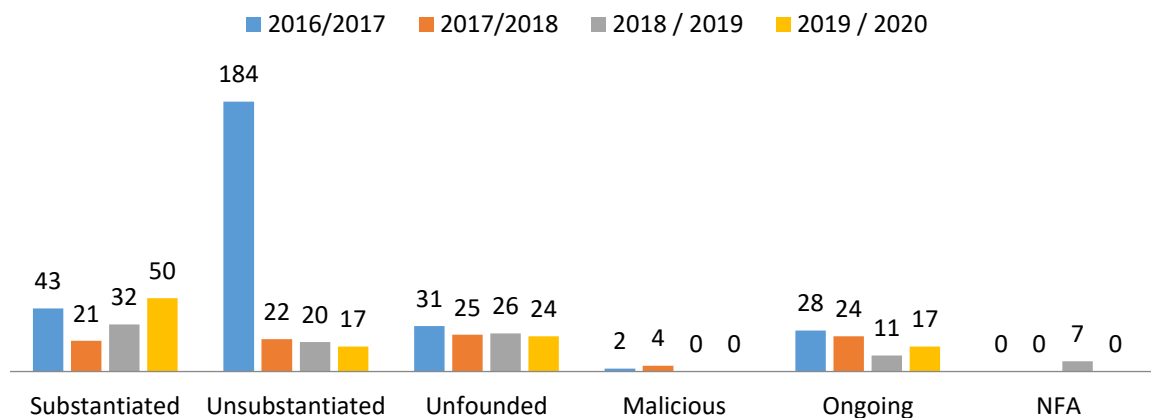
Appendix A

Breakdown of contacts by referring agency

Agency	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020
Anonymous	4	6	0
CAFCASS	1	0	0
CCG	0	0	0
Early Years (Childminders, Nursery, Children's Centre, Pre-School)	18	16	20
Faith Groups	1	1	2
Foster Carers - Independent	15	17	20
Foster Carers – Local Authority	0	9	13
Health – Other (KMPT, SECAMS; Out of Area Hospital Trusts, Insight Healthcare)			5
Medway Adult Services	1	0	1
Medway Children's Services (Social Care, Early Years, Education Safeguarding, Admissions and Transport, YOT)	33	51	56
Medway Community Health Care	4	2	0
Medway Council	10	12	1
NHS Foundation Trust	1	3	7
Ofsted	19	14	7
Other (Youth Custody Service, Oakhill STC, Ministry of Defence, Member of Public)	8	18	14
Other Local Authority	28	47	29
Parents/Carers	7	12	11
Police	42	39	37
Probation	1	0	0
Recruitment Agency	2	0	1
Residential – Local Authority	1	4	0
Residential – Private	8	19	29
Education – Alternative (e.g. NOVUS)	3	4	2
Education - Further	2	1	1
Education - Primary	62	57	72
Education - Private	5	9	12
Education – PRU	2	1	4
Education - Secondary	23	38	47
Education - Special	12	21	13
Secure Estates (Medway Secure Training Centre)	67	58	57
Secure Estates (Youth Offending Institution)	74	85	106
Sports & Leisure	6	3	6
Transport Provider	4	0	2
Voluntary/Charity	31	47	61

Referral Outcomes

Referral Outcomes



- 4.44 Of the referrals to the LADO service in 2019-20, 50 were substantiated and 17 were unsubstantiated, 24 were unfounded. No allegations were found to be malicious.
- 4.45 The LADO service has continued to offer and deliver bespoke (single and multi-agency) training to various partners. Aside from the training, the LADO service also worked with partners to identify opportunities to share briefings and invite agencies to engage with training. This supports with developing and strengthening working relationships across Medway, knowing that the LADO service can cause some agencies concerns and anxiety by the nature of the information they need to discuss and share.
- 4.46 The LADO service continue to raise awareness with partners and where necessary challenge those who do not appear to understand the severity of the concern and their responsibility in safeguarding not only the alleged person, but prioritising the safeguarding of children in the wider community.

Ensuring children in secure units are safe

- 4.47 During the period 2019-20, Medway was unique in having both a Young Offenders Institution and a Secure Training Centre within its area with HMYOI Cookham Wood and Medway Secure Training Centre. Medway Secure Training Centre closed on 23 March 2020.
- 4.48 The MSCP set up a Secure Estate Quality Assurance Group in September 2019 and the group met twice in the reporting year in October 2019 and February 2020. The Secure Estate Independent Scrutineer, John Drew, took over chairing the group in February 2020. The primary focus of each meeting has been to review the work of the various safeguarding protective mechanisms (Including those operated by the custodial institutions themselves) that operate in the secure estate, which, since the closure of Medway Secure Training Centre (STC) at the end of this period, has consisted exclusively of HMP Young Offenders

Institution (YOI) Cookham Wood. The group also oversees the production of the Annual Review of Safeguarding and Restraint in the Secure Estate.

Communications

- 4.49 The MSCP has a website which it uses to promote safeguarding messages and raise awareness with professionals and members of the public. During 2019-20 the MSCP has published regular bulletins to ensure professionals are kept up to date with relevant policy, news and training events alongside the MSCP fact sheets.
- 4.50 The MSCP has made use of social media through its twitter account. Twitter provides an opportunity to raise awareness amongst children and young people and members of the community, as well as professionals. Since the start of the year we have increased the number of followers to 711. During the year we have used twitter to announce the publication of SCR's, published links to the MSCB Bulletin, raise awareness of learning at events such as our Leadership Event as well as general announcements.
- 4.51 During 2020-21, the MSCP will develop a Communication Strategy which will help to support the effective delivery of information to professionals, parents/ carers, children and young people and the public. Through our communication strategy, we want to ensure that people who live, work, or visit Medway are aware of what 'safeguarding' means and have access to information that will help them make the right decisions. The whole community needs to understand what abuse, exploitation and neglect looks like as well as the roles they play in keeping people safe and promoting welfare.

Section Five – Learning and Improvement

- 5.1 The MSCP is a learning organisation where ‘Learning is a habit not a goal’ and supports the development of Medway professionals. In September 2019, the MSCP published a Quality Assurance Framework. The framework sets out how the MSCP monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of multi agency work to safeguard children.
- 5.2 The model includes:
- Use of performance data
 - Multi agency audits
 - Single agency audit reporting
 - Section 11 audits
 - Learning from case reviews
 - Independent scrutiny

Section 11 Audits

- 5.3 Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places a statutory responsibility on key agencies and organisations to make arrangements to ensure that in discharging their functions, they have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The Section 11 audit is a self audit and repeated by the MSCP in full every two years.
- 5.4 The MSCP Executive has approved proposals developed by the Performance Management and Quality Assurance (PMQA) sub group for the 2020-22 cycle of section 11 audits. The Section 11 tool was launched in February 2020 at a launch event and agencies are in the process of completing the self assessment audits. Each agency will be expected to present their Section 11 audit to a multi agency challenge panel who will scrutinise the findings. Following this, a multi agency staff survey will be launched for staff to test the findings of the Section 11 audits.

Multi agency dataset

- 5.5 The MSCP has in place a multi agency data set. Partner agencies submit on a quarterly basis their agency data to the Performance Management and Quality Assurance (PMQA) sub group. Below is a summary of some of the key issues highlighted over the year:
- There were 2460 families referred to early help in 2019-20. 897 early help assessments were started during the period. Between quarter 3 and quarter 4 there was a 25% rise in early help assessments started by primary schools which is believed to be down to the improving relationships with schools.
 - Police are the biggest contact referrer to children’s social care. The proportion meeting threshold for intervention is around 40%.

Work is going on to explore how the number of contacts not reaching threshold can be reduced.

- The % response in timescales to partner engagement requests for MASH increased from 78% in quarter 1 to 88% in quarter 4.
- In 2019-20 there were 1,685 domestic abuse incidents with children and young people in the household resulting in Domestic Abuse Notifications (DANs).
- During quarter 4 there were 342 incidents of missing by 132 children which was an increase on the previous quarter. Of the 132 children that went missing, for 49 of these children it was their first reported incident. 48 of the children are looked after to Medway.

5.6 Monitoring of the data set by the PMQA sub group has led to the following issue being escalated to the MSCP Executive:

- Low attendance during one quarter by a health provider at Initial and Review Child Protection Conferences. This issue was escalated to commissioners and an action plan put in place to improve attendance.

Serious Case Reviews/ Learning Lessons Reviews

5.7 Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (formerly Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) are undertaken when children die or are seriously injured, and abuse and/or neglect are suspected or known to be a factor, and/or there are concerns about how local agencies worked together. Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships may decide to conduct a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR) if a child has been seriously harmed and in accordance with the guidance in Working Together to Safeguarding Children (2018). The purpose of reviews of serious child safeguarding cases, at both local and national level, is to identify improvements to be made to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

5.8 Since September 2019, the MSCP has not commissioned any Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews. Two Serious Case Reviews (SCR's) which were commissioned by the Medway Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB) have been published this year.

5.9 In March 2020 SCR George was published following the death of three year old George. The Ambulance Service was called to a street in London to attend to an unresponsive three year old George. George had suffered a cardiac arrest and was taken to hospital where he died. Following a criminal investigation it was found that mother's then partner had twice pushed his car seat back and crushed George. The recommendations from the review were:

- Seek confirmation from Kent Children's Social Care that in circumstances when it receives Police notification of an incident

involving a child, it reliably captures and responds to all relevant information

- Monitor progress made in implementing all recommendations in agencies' submitted reports or which were identified during the course of the George SCR.
- Seek confirmation that all members agencies' training and development programmes address current lawful definitions and required understanding of 'coercive and controlling conduct'

5.10 The MSCP Learning Lesson Sub-group is monitoring the implementation of the above, as well as additional operational recommendations identified by agencies involved in this SCR.

5.11 In January 2020 SCR Faith was published. This SCR was commissioned following a retrospective health review which identified that as a child Faith had been seen by health practitioners with symptoms that may have been indicative of sexual abuse and that there appeared to have been a failure of multi-agency responses to indicators of risk throughout Faith's childhood. The recommendations from the review were:

- Partner agencies in Medway should review their staff development activities in relation to child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation to ensure that all practitioners have the required knowledge, skills and confidence to recognise and respond to child sexual abuse within the family including hearing the "voice" and lived experience of the child.
- Consideration should be given by Medway Hospital to pre-pubescent girls being jointly seen by a gynaecologist and a paediatrician (or a relevant specialist children's practitioner). Best practice would be a joint paediatric/gynaecologist clinic for these patients.
- All partner agencies should promote the use of the sexual abuse pathway in cases of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, emphasising the use of the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC), and make sure that the pathway is embedded into day to day practice.
- All partner agencies should work together to consider the effectiveness of recognition and response in situations where criminal exploitation may feature in a young person's life.
- Partner agencies should work together to develop an agreed multi-agency whole family approach to work with complex families. This approach should include expectations regarding information sharing and understanding and working with the root causes of adult issues that are affecting parenting capacity.
- Medway Safeguarding Children Board should seek evidence from Children's Services that legal planning is used at an early enough stage and that this provides the framework for thorough assessments and ongoing work with the child and their family.
- Medway Safeguarding Children Board should seek evidence from Children's Services that the cause of placement breakdown is analysed via disruption meetings and that findings are incorporated into ongoing planning for the child.

- Partner agencies should establish a multi-agency approach to the provision of therapeutic services to children and young people and that this approach should clarify roles and responsibilities and at a minimum involves schools, health and social work services.
 - NHS England should review the system for accessing both electronic paper and archived primary care records in order to ensure that it is fit for purpose in assisting GPs in their current practice and also any required statutory reviews.
- 5.12 In January 2020, the MSCP published the findings of the Smith family learning review. Local learning reviews are undertaken on cases where partners feel there is multi agency learning that can be identified in the case. The purpose of such reviews is to learn lessons to improve practice. The Smith family review was undertaken following the Police attending an address and removing five children under police protection. The children were taken to hospital where a child protection medical confirmed evidence of neglect and development delay.
- 5.13 The review identified the following areas for service improvement:
- MSCP to provide training in respect of roles of father/male partners in families and establishing paternity and taking into account childhood experiences in undertaking assessments.
 - MSCP to provide training to highlight the need for professional curiosity and provide managers with guidance on how to explore professional curiosity in supervision; and how this can be evidenced through management oversight.
 - MSCP develop protocols for repeat referrals, repeat assessments without interventions and missed appointments.
 - The CCG make representations to NHSE regarding access to GP records for case reviews.
 - The CCG and GP Local Management Committee, devise and implement a mechanism to enable clinical electronic recording systems to link to the records of parents' children and siblings so that records can highlight the wider family circumstances.
 - MSCP consider making representations to the Department of Health and Social Care and the Department for Education in respect of a statutory requirement for all children to be registered with a General Practitioner and to receive basic health and developmental checks up to the age of five.
- 5.14 The action plan that has been developed as a result of these recommendations is monitored by the MSCP Learning Lesson Subgroup.
- 5.15 Agencies involved in this review identified additional recommendations for their services. Actions from these are monitored by the MSCP Learning Lesson Subgroup.

Multi Agency Audits

- 5.16 The MSCP has in place a Multi Agency Audit Group, the Case File Audit Group (CFAG) whose role it is to undertake audits to identify good practice and multi agency learning.
- 5.17 Each meeting the CFAG focuses on a theme and spends the day reviewing cases. The theme of the audits is agreed by the MSCP Executive. Cases are selected at random from a list that meets the criteria of the theme of the audit. Partner agencies are asked to audit their case files and populate the MSCP case file audit tool. Within the audit meeting partners present the reasons why the child came to their attention and the work that was done with the children and family. The audit panel then scrutinise the case on the quality of work overall from a multi-agency perspective.
- 5.18 An overview report is completed to provide a key summary of the lessons from the audits and recommendations from the group. These recommendations are built into the MSCP Action and Improvement plan which is managed and implemented by the MSCP Learning Lessons sub group. Since September 2019, the MSCP has undertaken two multi agency audits.

Themed audit: Children on Child in Need Plans

- 5.19 In this audit 1 of the 6 cases looked at in the themed audit of children on a child in need plan, was identified as good, 4 as requiring improvement and 1 as inadequate. The following key themes were identified:
- There was evidence of relevant services not being invited into the ChIN process but also examples of agencies knowing that the process was in place but not engaging.
 - Where there is non-engagement from a professional/service the MSCP escalation policy should be put into place and adhered to.
 - The interventions seemed process driven and lacked purpose or focus on the children.
 - Self-reported accounts from parents were taken at face value and some risk factors identified that were associated with parent's needs were not addressed. This meant that their impact on parenting was not considered.

Themed audit: Pre-Birth Assessments

- 5.20 1 of the 6 cases looked at in the themed audit of pre birth assessments was identified as good, 3 as requiring improvement and 2 as inadequate. The following key themes were identified:
- Referrals concerning unborn children are generally timely but the response to concerns and subsequent planning is mixed.

- There were examples of where the procedures were not followed and there was a lack on any challenge when this happened. This was mainly in terms of circumstances that should trigger an assessment or at least where an assessment should be considered. As a result, the MSCP has reviewed and relaunched the Pre birth assessment procedures.

MSCP Training

- 5.21 One of the most immediate ways in which the MSCP influences the effectiveness of safeguarding in Medway is through running a range of multi agency safeguarding training sessions for professionals including courses on basic and intermediate child protection, child sexual exploitation, domestic abuse and Prevent. These have included half and full day training courses as well as shorter specialist workshops, usually 2 hours and online training.
- 5.22 Between April 2019 and March 2020, the MSCP provided 48 multi-agency training sessions across Medway attended by 970 delegates. There has been an increase of professionals attending training in comparison to 2018-19 when 875 delegates attended training. During the year a total of 13 taster sessions were held. This style of workshops is very popular with professionals, attracting 299 delegates across 13 workshops.

Training Session	Attendance 2018-2019	Attendance 2019-2020	Occurrences 2018-2019	Occurrences 2019-2020
Basic Child Protection	46	62	3	3
Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)	154	64	12	4
Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment (DASH)	26	63	2	3
Domestic Abuse	40	65	2	3
Graded Care Profile	17	44	1	3
Intermediate Child Protection	136	80	7	4
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Awareness	108	51	5	3
Safer Recruitment	30	11	3	1
Think U Know - CEOP	N/A	19	N/A	1
Learning lessons from multi agency reviews and Serious Case Reviews	34	47	2	2
Making referrals, understanding and applying thresholds in Medway	218	39	7	2
Taster: Learning for organisation arising from incidents at Medway Secure Training Centre	N/A	83	N/A	1

Appendix A

Taster: Substance Misuse	N/A	26	N/A	1
Taster: Disclosure and Barring Service	N/A	49	N/A	2
Taster: Utilising Challenge and Escalation in Medway	N/A	87	N/A	3
Taster: Gambling Harm Amongst Young People	N/A	9	N/A	1
Taster: Trauma Informed Practise	N/A	81	N/A	5
Taster: Looking out for Lottie	N/A	21	N/A	3
Taster: Behind Closed Doors	N/A	24	N/A	3
Total	875	970	52	48

5.23 The MSCP also supported the following conference sessions throughout the year.

Conference Training Session	Attendance 2019 - 2020
Medway Domestic Abuse Forum (MDAF)	188
Total	188

5.24 During the year, the MSCP trained 45 professionals as trained trainers to help deliver multi agency training but to also deliver safeguarding training within their own agency.

5.25 The MSCP has worked with the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP) to commission 30 e-learning packages to professionals working across Medway. The commissioning includes unlimited licences and through the packages professionals are able to access the training free of charge. The MSCP has specifically focussed on the promotion of the e-learning packages during this year. This has had a positive impact on the number of professionals completing the e-learning with 742 delegates completing courses between April 2019-March 2020. This is more than double the number who completed e-learning in the previous year where 364 delegates completed e-learning.

5.26 Evaluations continue to be completed at the end of each training session and post course evaluation are sent to delegates, if a response is not received managers are also emailed. The MSCP training officer now also attends Learning Lessons sub group meetings to ensure the learning from audits is immediately embedded in training.

5.27 In addition, during the year the following activity has been undertaken:

- Basic Child Protection training has been updated and signed off by the Learning and Development sub group.

- Intermediate Child Protection and Child Protection Refresher training has been updated and is currently going through quality assurance.
- Child Sexual Exploitation Training has been updated and quality assured
- Gangs and Youth Violence Training for professionals has been developed and is waiting to be quality assured
- Harmful sexual behaviour training has been developed and is currently being quality assured

Child Deaths

- 5.28 The objective of the child death review process is to learn lessons and apply the learning to help prevent future deaths. Medway’s Child Death Overview Panel was established in April 2008. In line with statutory guidance, it reviews every child death in Medway. The purpose is to identify trends and any matters of concern, where remedial action could be taken in similar situations to positively influence outcomes for children and young people.
- 5.29 The new CDOP and Child Death Review arrangements were published in June 2019 with a plan for roll out later in the year. Unfortunately roll out was delayed by difficulties in identifying governance and support for the process in Kent amongst the child death review partners. In Medway the governance and the shared administration of death reviews will remain a role of the MSCP.
- 5.30 From April 2019 the MSCP has utilised the online reporting and management mechanism ECDOP. All deaths have been notified using the system.
- 5.31 The Director of Medway Council Public Health has continued to chair the Medway CDOP this year. Going into 2020-2021 chairing will be split proportionately between the Kent and Medway Directors of public health. The chair reports directly to the MSCP Executive meetings.
- 5.32 Across Kent and Medway there were 100 child deaths reported to the ECDOP system in 2019-20. Of these, 22 children were usually resident in Medway. Under the new Kent and Medway CDOP all deaths from April 2019 will be reviewed by the joint panel. 11 children usually resident in Medway died out of area. These children in the main had died in either a hospice or London hospital having been transferred or conveyed there from Medway.

Table 1: Overview of child deaths reported to MSCP in 2019-20

	Number of deaths
Total deaths of resident children reported to MSCP in 2019-20	22
Medway resident children who died in Medway	11
Medway resident children who died out of area	11

- 5.33 During 2019-20 Medway CDOP reviewed 9 cases – 5 expected and 4 unexpected deaths.
- 5.34 At the end of March 2020 there were 23 outstanding cases due for review. 22 from 2019-2020 due to the delays related to the establishment of the Kent and Medway CDOPs and one from 2017-18 which was subject to the Serious Case Review. Cases may not be reviewed in the year of death where not all the relevant information is available to CDOP. The CDOP aims to review cases as soon as possible, however other processes for example post mortems, inquests and serious case reviews, delay cases being heard at CDOP. CDOP actively pursues outstanding information in order to review cases in a timely manner. Details of outstanding cases are not included in this report.
- 5.35 The majority of the deaths reviewed during 2008-09 – 2019-20 were caused by a perinatal/neonatal event (41% of cases). In 3 of the 3 perinatal/neonatal event cases reviewed in 2019-20, prematurity² or preterm labour was cited as the/one of the causes of death. The second most common cause was chromosomal, genetic and congenital anomalies (16% of cases).

Inspections

Ofsted Inspection

- 5.36 On 27 August 2019, Ofsted published the findings of their inspection of Medway Council Children's Services, carried out in July 2019. Although the inspectors recognised a number of improvements since the last Ofsted Inspection in 2015, the Council was judged overall to be inadequate
- 5.37 The Department for Education appointed a Commissioner to identify improvements and oversee the Council's improvement process, as well as review evidence that they have the capacity and capability to make those improvements. The Commissioner submitted her report to DfE in December 2019.
- 5.38 The inspection found that "...many vulnerable children who have experienced long-term neglect, and those at risk of exploitation and who go missing from home or care, live in situations of actual harm or are at risk of harm for too long. Senior leaders have sustained improvements in the 'front door' single point of access (SPA) and the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) following the priority actions identified in the 2018 joint targeted area inspection. However, they have failed to recognise or address the serious and widespread concerns identified by inspectors in the early help hubs and the assessment and longer-term

² Prematurity occurs when a baby is born before 37 weeks. Normal gestation is 40 weeks.

team 'pods'. Attempts to drive improvement in these areas have had little impact, and the pace of change has been too slow..."

- 5.39 An improvement action plan was submitted to Ofsted setting out the steps that are being taken to transform social care for children, young people and their families. We recognise the importance of having a clear delivery strategy setting out priorities and direction through which we can achieve positive changes in the lives of Medway's vulnerable children and young people.
- 5.40 A key focus of the MSCP over the coming year will be working with the Improvement Board to ensure that the changes are implemented and that sustainable improvements are made to support children and young people in Medway.
- 5.41 Key developments since the Ofsted inspection in July 2019 include:
- Increasing the establishment of social workers in the assessment service as a priority immediately following the inspection.
 - Increased focus on tracking cases subject to Public Law Outline and court proceedings to avoid drift and delay.
 - Improved arrangements for securing permanence plans for children in care.
 - The introduction of a social work practice model, 'Signs of Safety, which will be supported by a comprehensive programme of training which started in February 2020.
 - Quality Assurance framework has been revised and our approach to auditing of cases reviewed and amended.
 - A Staff Reference Group has been established which is supporting improved communication between front line staff, leaders and the Improvement Board.

HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

- 5.42 HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspected child protection work in Kent in April 2019. It found that that the force places a high priority on child protection issues and provides a good service to children in the Kent and Medway.
- 5.43 The inspection of Kent Police identified the following areas of good practice:
- Good governance and oversight of child protection work (such as the force's Protecting Vulnerable People board);
 - Increased numbers of officers and staff working in teams dedicated to addressing different aspects of vulnerability and child protection;
 - Examples of effective working arrangements with relevant partner agencies (for example, in cases involving child exploitation by criminal gangs in 'county lines' drug investigations); and
 - The placement of specialist community support officers directly into its Community Safety Units.

- 5.44 However, the Inspectorate also identified some areas which required improvement. The report raised concerns around how the force works with local authorities to transfer children from police custody to local authority accommodation, and how the force records the behaviour and demeanour of children when completing risk assessments.

Section Six – MSCP Budget

6.1 A summary of the accounts for MSCP for 2019-20:

MSCP Budget 2019-20

MSCP Income from Partner Agency Contributions 2019/20 (Outturn)

Kent & Medway NHS & Social Care Partnership	2.68%	(6,149)
NELFT	2.68%	(6,149)
Medway Community Healthcare	2.68%	(6,149)
South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust	2.68%	(6,149)
Kent Police and Crime Commissioner	6.73%	(15,434)
National Probation Service	0.83%	(1,904)
KSS Community Rehabilitation Company	1.25%	(2,855)
HMYOI Cookham Wood	1.60%	(3,677)
Medway Secure Training Centre	1.17%	(2,683)
Kent Fire & Rescue	1.12%	(2,575)
CAFCASS	0.24%	(550)
Other Income – Training	N/A	(7,080)
Contribution/Drawdown of Reserve (forecast)	N/A	0
Total Income		(236,396)

MSCP Expenditure 2019/20 (Outturn)

Expenditure	Amount (£s)
Staff (including Independent Chair/ Scrutineers fee)	168,091
SCR and LLR costs (Chair and Author)	39,864
Other Staffing Costs (including Training)	2,535
E-learning Package	5,426
Kent & Medway Safeguarding Children Procedures (Tri.x)	2,267
Printing, Stationery, general office costs (including computer equipment)	5,159
Meeting and training event costs (including refreshments for all training events and SCR Panel meetings)	640
Travel costs	787
Contribution to Reserves	11,627
Total expenditure	236,396

Appendix One – Glossary

CAF	Common Assessment Framework
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
CAN	Children’s Action Network
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CDOP	Child Death Overview Panel
CFAG	Case File Audit Group
CIN	Child in Need
CRC	Community Rehabilitation Company
CSC	Children’s Social Care
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
DANS	Domestic Abuse Notifications
DfE	Department for Education
DHR	Domestic Homicide Review
EHA	Early Help Assessment
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
HMYOI	Her Majesty’s Young Offender Institution
KMDASG	Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy Group
KSCMP	Kent Safeguarding Children Multi Agency Partnership
IRO	Independent Reviewing Officer
JTAI	Joint Targeted Area Inspection
LAC	Looked After Child
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
LGA	Local Government Association
LLR	Learning Lessons Review
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Board
LCSPR	Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review
MARAC	Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference
MASH	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
MCH	Medway Community Healthcare
MFT	Medway Foundation Trust
MSCP	Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership
MVA	Medway Voluntary Action
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PMQA	Performance Management and Quality Assurance
SAB	Safeguarding Adults Board
SCR	Serious Case Review
STC	Secure Training Centre
UASC	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children
YOT	Youth Offending Team

Appendix Two – Relevant Agencies

Relevant agencies are those organisations and agencies whose involvement the safeguarding partners consider is required to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children. The relevant agencies for Medway have been chosen as organisations and agencies that can work in a collaborative way to provide targeted support to children and families as appropriate. The Safeguarding Partners will regularly review the list of relevant agencies. The list of relevant agencies and how they will be engaged in the MSCP is set out below:

Agency	How they will be involved?
Probation	
Kent Sussex and Surrey Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC)	Leadership Group; Sub Groups
National Probation Service	Leadership Group; Sub Groups
Health	
South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLAM)	Leadership Group; Sub Groups
Kent and Medway Partnership Trust (KMPT)	Leadership Group; Sub Groups
NHS England	Leadership Group; Sub Groups
Medway NHS Foundation Trust	Leadership Group; Sub Groups
NELFT	Leadership Group; Sub Groups
Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust (KCHT)	Leadership Group; Sub Groups
Medway Community Healthcare (MCH)	Leadership Group; Sub Groups
Open Road	Leadership Group; Sub Groups
Turning Point	Leadership Group; Sub Groups
Education	
Medway Primary Schools	Leadership Group; Engagement through Medway Educational Leaders Association (MELA)
Medway Secondary Schools	Leadership Group; Engagement through Medway Secondary Heads Association (MSHA)
Mid Kent College	Leadership Group
Medway Independent Schools	Leadership Group
Early Years Providers	Leadership Group
Secure Estate	
Medway Secure Training Centre (STC)	Leadership Group; Sub Groups; Secure Estate Sub Group
HMYOI Cookham Wood	Leadership Group; Sub Groups; Secure Estate Sub Group
Voluntary Sector	
Medway Voluntary Action (MVA)	Leadership Group; Sub Groups
MY Trust	Leadership Group; Sub Groups
NSPCC	Leadership Group; Sub Groups
Other Agencies	
Medway Youth Offending Team (YOT)	Leadership Group; Sub Groups
Medway Council - Public Health	Leadership Group; Sub Groups
Kent Fire and Rescue Service	Leadership Group; Sub Groups
CAFCASS	Leadership Group; Sub Groups
British Transport Police	Leadership Group
Housing Providers	Leadership Group

Appendix A

Children's Homes	Leadership Group
Sports Groups/ Associations	Leadership Group
Faith Groups	Leadership Group