



# **Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board**

**Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership  
Annual Report 2021-22**

# Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (CBSCB) Annual Report 2021-22

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## Independent Chair/Scrutineer Foreword

### Introduction

The Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Partners as part of their arrangements to safeguard children and promote their welfare are required to demonstrate that they are open to independent scrutiny.

I have been appointed to take on the role of independent chair and to offer independent scrutiny of the Central Bedfordshire safeguarding arrangements and this is my assessment of how effective these arrangements have been in practice over the past 12 months. I will highlight where I feel the arrangements are performing well and where I consider further development is required.

### Impact of Covid 19

Safeguarding remained challenging and complex during this reporting period because of the ongoing national pandemic and its associated restrictions and lockdowns. Covid 19 is still very significant, and the partnership has faced unprecedented challenges to support and safeguard vulnerable children and families. The partnership mobilised effectively during this uncertain time and worked tirelessly to identify and safeguard children who were at an increased risk of harm and exploitation from a range of sources. I recognised the extraordinary efforts made by all frontline practitioners to keep children safe in these unprecedented times.

### Engagement of Relevant Agencies

The safeguarding partners have set out in their published arrangements the organisations that they will be working with to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Partners have identified a wide range of agencies, as outlined their published arrangements. These other agencies, called Relevant Agencies should then act in a coordinated way to ensure the effectiveness of the local arrangements. These agencies have been actively involved during and since the development of the arrangements and have demonstrated their commitment to safeguarding by contributing across a range of meetings and activities as both attendees and chairs of various sub-groups.

The partnership has been kept up to date by agencies of any significant developments. During this reporting period we have seen regular updates from BLMK CCG outlining their change program, as they move towards the creation of an Integrated Care System and the impact this may have on the safeguarding arrangements.

In last year's report I outlined the need to further develop our work to improve the way schools, colleges and other educational settings engage with the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Since then, a lot of work has taken place between those education settings and the safeguarding partnership, which recognises schools as a key safeguarding partners. Our next phase will be to implement a Pan-Bedfordshire Education subgroup which will lead to improved engagement and communication.

During the recent ILACS inspection (January 2022) Ofsted noted that, 'key partners speak of strong, mature relationships at both strategic and operational levels. The local safeguarding partnership and Pan-Bedfordshire arrangements support cross-authority cooperation, with resources pooled effectively.'

## **Learning from Serious Case Reviews and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews**

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. Such reviews should seek to prevent or reduce the risk of recurrence of similar incidents. It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Partners to identify serious safeguarding incidents at a local level and then to review them as appropriate so that improvements can be made.

This report includes the details of one Rapid Review which, following agreement from the National Panel, has led to the commission of a LCSPR. This review was commissioned in June 2022 and at the time of writing is ongoing and is expected to be published during December 2022.

Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Partners have a well organised group of multi-agency professionals that oversee reviews and ensure there is a culture of learning and continuous improvement. The group are very keen to see that the recommendations from reviews, including national reviews, improve outcomes for children and that lessons learned are embedded into practice. Furthermore, the partners have created a robust audit regime which ensures that the learning is revisited and embedded. I closely monitor the audit process to confirm that learning is indeed embedded, and practice is improved.

## **Voice of Children, Young People and Families**

Within Central Bedfordshire there is a child centred approach which is fundamental to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The 'Voice of the Child' Subgroup has strengthened partnership mechanisms for gaining an understanding of children's experiences of the help they receive.

With limited opportunities to meet directly with children and young people, due to continued COVID safety measures, the board has invited CAMHS service users to attend our quarterly board meetings to share their experiences. This has been an excellent development for the partnership, and we look forward to face to face events with children and young people in the coming year.

## **Performance Monitoring and Analysis**

The partnership, in order to fulfil its functions, uses a wide range of data. The partnership has developed a multi-agency performance data set and uses a Dashboard to highlight emerging safeguarding issues or trends that need to be addressed. The data is continually reviewed by the Performance Subgroup and is reported on to the wider strategic board. There is a real desire by the partnership to properly understand the data and use it effectively to assess the impact of safeguarding. There is good data provided to the partnership from the local authority. The data required from the police is improving but still needs further development.

## **Evidence of Impact and Challenge**

The partnership in Central Bedfordshire is mature and well developed, partners do put energy into scrutinising and challenging practice in an appropriate and considered way which can be seen in Section 3 of the report, where non accidental injuries to very young children was a focus. Scrutiny and challenge have led the partnership to identify key areas for development in relation to improving information sharing and understanding thresholds, which is outlined in Section 4.

## **Partner Commitment to Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Arrangements**

Safeguarding is and will continue to be nuanced in complexity. More so now than at any other time. In order to be effective, the arrangements require resources and strong administration in order to function.

Working Together 2018 highlights that working in partnership means organisations and agencies should collaborate on how they will fund their arrangements. This funding for the arrangements should be equitable and proportionate across the partnership. The funding for the arrangements in Central Bedfordshire falls disproportionately on the local authority and should be reviewed.

## **Conclusion**

There are, in my view, many strengths to the safeguarding arrangements across Central Bedfordshire. I have found a strong partnership that is open to scrutiny and challenge and one which strives to continually learn and improve practice. There is excellent engagement from senior leaders who set a culture which drives improvement activity.

In my dealings with senior leaders, I have found a strong desire to understand safeguarding, promote change and deliver safeguarding improvements, this was evident following the recent ILACS inspection (January 2022) where Ofsted identified that 'multi-agency awareness has increased the identification of children who go missing from home or care and are vulnerable to exploitation. Partner agencies understand risks and their responsibilities to act and help protect children.'

Finally, may I take this opportunity to thank all the organisations and individuals in the public, voluntary, and private sectors who work tirelessly across Central Bedfordshire to improve the safety and quality of life of our children, young people, and families.



**Alan Caton OBE**

**Independent Chair and Scrutineer Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Board**

## Statutory Partners Overview

### **Sharn Basra Assistant Chief Constable, Bedfordshire Police**

*The past year has seen yet another new challenge. Previously we were faced with dealing with the national pandemic and the societal restrictions imposed, whereas this year we were faced with coming out from these unprecedented times to a new normal, but we did so as a cohesive partnership with all totally committed to keeping children safe.*

*We are committed to learning and are always seeking to improve our service both from the experiences of lockdown whereby our frontline teams continue to look at vulnerability through the eyes of children and are professionally curious as to whether the environment is right for a child to thrive, working in partnership to identify the best intervention. We have also been active in ensuring we learn from wider reviews and recent tragic events demonstrate both the strategic and operational approach to getting things right.*

*With regards to the 21-22 priorities, Bedfordshire Police continue to align its policing response to these and has dedicated teams responsible for Child Neglect, Child Exploitation and Domestic Abuse as well as a Cyber Hub and a well-established, partner supported Mental Health and Wellbeing Service from professionals housed within specialist units to a Mental Health Street Triage Team dealing with incidents at the earliest opportunity.*

### **Anne Murray Chief Nurse, Bedfordshire, Luton & Milton Keynes Clinical Commissioning Group**

*The last 12 months has continued to see the Bedfordshire, Luton & Milton Keynes Clinical Commissioning Group (BLMK CCG) supporting our system partners in its recovery and restoration programme since the COVID-19 Pandemic. We know that as professionals continue to see more Children and Young People and their families face to face, we are likely to see an increase in the level of support that is required to meet those needs.*

*BLMK CCG has remained engaged in all Central and Pan Bedfordshire workstreams at a strategic level and continue to ensure policies, procedures and pathways have been developed following learning from individual practice reviews and interagency working.*

*Neglect has remained the most common form of child abuse across the UK, with the CCG and partners working together to ensure that there is early recognition of neglect cases, and that from early help to statutory intervention, there remains appropriate, consistent and timely responses across all agencies.*

*The emotional well-being and mental health of our children and young people across BLMK continues to provide us with challenges, with increasing numbers of children and young people presenting in our acute hospitals and to specialist services. The CCG has worked with our providers and voluntary organisations to ensure that early intervention and crisis support is available, along with providing strategic safeguarding oversight for some of the more complex cases.*

*2022 will see the move from CCG's to Integrated Care Boards, offering a more detailed overview of population health management, health inequalities and system transformation for children and young people and families, where our statutory safeguarding function will maintain its strategic and place based support, through strengthening the safeguarding structure including introducing new specialist safeguarding nurse roles along with our Designated Nurse and Doctor roles to meet current demands across the CCG landscape.*

*As a Partner organisation CCG, shares and co-owns the vision for how to achieve improved outcomes for vulnerable children and will ensure that Safeguarding Children remains a top priority during the transition period from the CCG to the Integrated Care Board (ICB)*

**Sarah-Jane Smedmor Director of Children's Services, Central Bedfordshire Council**

*Covid and the cost of living crisis mean that 2022 has been a challenging year for children, families, our service and colleagues in partner agencies. The impact of these challenges has been particularly evident on emotional wellbeing of our most vulnerable children requiring us to establish new and responsive ways of working to safeguard children. Despite these challenges, the CBC Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangement (MASA) partners have retained a relentless and effective focus on the needs of our community. This report outlines the continued focus on the safety and wellbeing of children and families, with continued improved outcomes.*

*The CBC MASA has driven forward effective multi-agency practice in agreed priority areas of neglect, mental health and wellbeing, child exploitation, domestic abuse and missing children, with digital engagement and awareness as a golden thread for all priority areas. Mature multi-agency arrangements at a strategic and operational level have provided a rich offer of learning and development, and engagement on key issues such as outreach work to communities on exploitation through the TREE Project. We have seen sound and continuously improving multi-agency processes, for example in information sharing and responsiveness to children who have missing episodes resulting in a very high percentage of children receiving return home interviews to help them and their families to address risk issues promptly and effectively. Good collaborative working has resulted in a multi-agency preventative and responsive approach to non-accidental injuries in infants, informed by local and national learning and best practice. This includes a real focus engagement with the whole family including fathers and other males. We are pleased to have supported the multi-agency introduction of the ICON model in Children's Services to provide parents with safe strategies to anticipate and manage crying in infants.*

*The scrutiny and partnership of the MASA has supported us to understand our key priorities into 2023. We are excited to support the strengthening of the voice of education and children through the Pan Bedfordshire Safeguarding Adult Group. Understanding and addressing the nature and causes of neglect continues to be a priority as well as emotional wellbeing, mental health and resilience for children and their families. We continue to be committed to addressing contextual safeguarding and exploitation in our communities. Our priorities are underpinned by golden threads of early intervention and support, digital safeguarding, transitions to adulthood. We continue to adapt to working in a post pandemic context, making sure we build relationships with families through listening and centring their views and experiences so that partnership is built and sustained and children are safe, happy and healthy.*

## Section 1: Introduction

The 2021-22 Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Annual Report summarises the work of the Board throughout the year, highlighting how the safeguarding arrangements have been effective including evidence of impact. The report also identifies any areas for future development.

### Impact of COVID 19:

The Safeguarding Children Board recognises the continuing effect of COVID on the lives of children and families across Central Bedfordshire and its impact on the way our partners and wider organisations have worked and provided services throughout the year.

The Board has monitored the impact of the pandemic on our partners through regular updates and discussions at board and executive meetings. These continued to be held via virtual platforms.

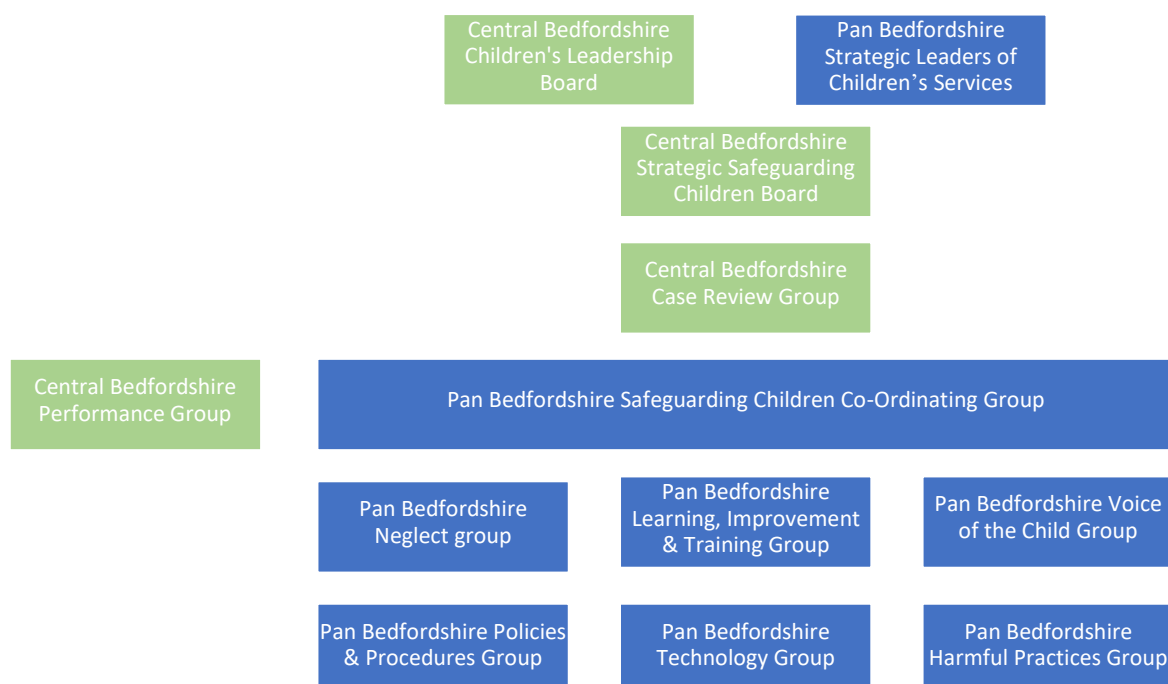
As in 2020-21, attendance of the Pan Bedfordshire multi-agency training offer was affected as COVID reducing workforce capacity to attend non-mandatory training. In response, a reduced programme of virtual classroom training was offered, with content reviewed to reflect the additional complexities COVID presents when working in safeguarding. Working Together to Safeguard Children continued to be well attended; additional courses were added to the programme to meet training needs. eLearning alternatives remained popular.

### Central Bedfordshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements:

The Central Bedfordshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements cover the Local Authority area of Central Bedfordshire. The three Safeguarding Partners are Central Bedfordshire Council, Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Bedfordshire Police

Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board work closely with neighbouring Boards in Bedford Borough and Luton. As such, our structure includes a number of Pan Bedfordshire groups. Central Bedfordshire Children's Leadership Board acts as an Executive for the arrangements. Scrutiny for the arrangements is provided by our Independent Chair, Alan Caton.

### Central Bedfordshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Structure 2021-2022:





### Central Bedfordshire Demographics:

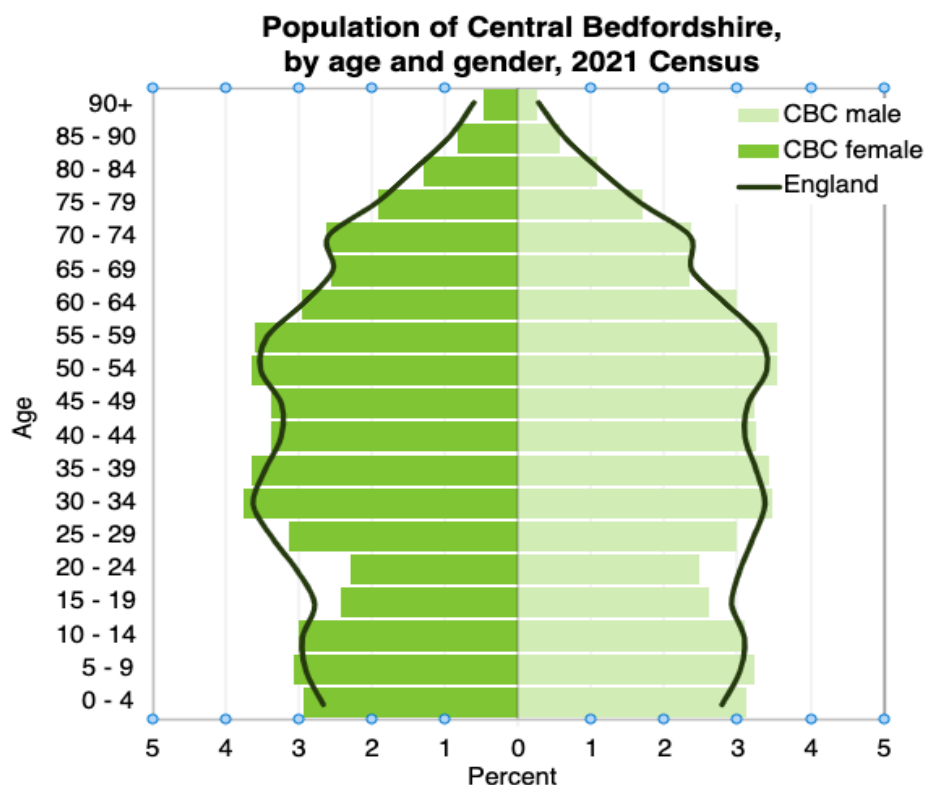
Central Bedfordshire has a growing population of 294,200. It is a largely rural area with over half the population living in the countryside and the rest in a number of market towns. The area is generally prosperous, with above average levels of employment, however there are pockets of deprivation and greater need.

Between 2011-2021, Central Bedfordshire's population rose by 15.7%, this is above the average rate for England (6.6%) and among the fastest-growing areas in the country. The Census ([2021](#)) records a 32.6% increase in people aged 65 years and over, an increase of 11.5% in people aged 15 to 64 years, and an increase of 16.7% in children aged under 15 years.

Central Bedfordshire's [Census 2011 factsheet](#) provides information on the ethnicity of residents; White British (89.7%), White- Other (2.8%), White Irish (1.2%), Indian (1%) and Black African (0.8%). Over 95% of pupils of compulsory school age speak English as a first language. However, more than 60 different first languages are recorded among the remaining children.

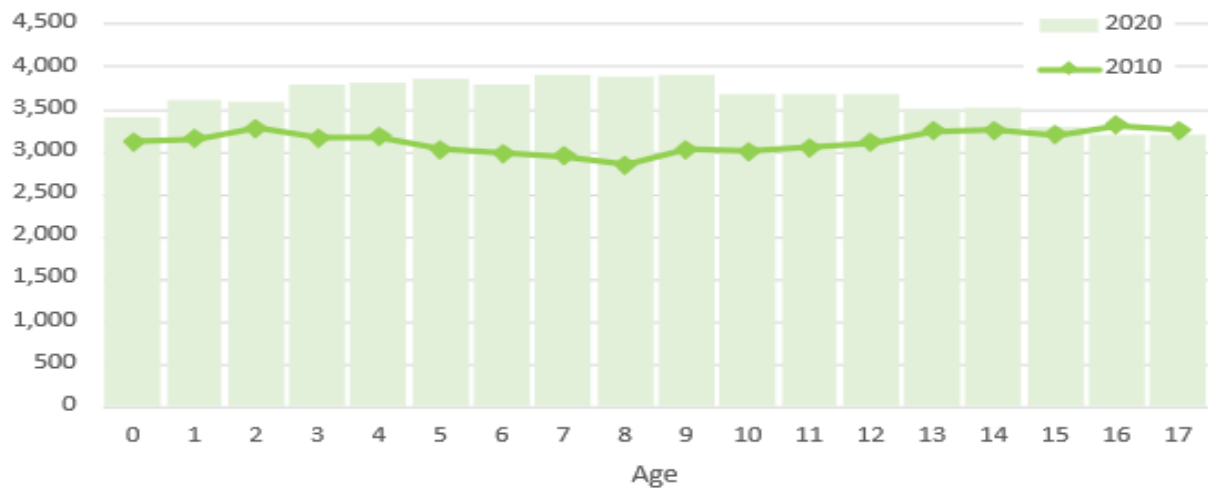
In 2021, the crime rate in Central Bedfordshire was lower than the average across similar areas. (Source: [Police UK](#)). Life expectancy and overall health are both slightly better than the national average, and children are less likely to be obese. (Source: [Central Bedfordshire Insight](#), May 2022)

### Children and Young People:



Source: Office for National Statistics, Census 2021

### 0-17 population, 2020 compared to 2010



**Source:** Office for National Statistics, Mid-Year Estimates of population by single year of age, 2010 and 2020

Percentage of children aged under 16 in Relative in low-income families	2019/20 (updated)	2020/21 (provisional)
United Kingdom	19.30%	18.70%
<b>Central Bedfordshire</b>	<b>11.40%</b>	<b>10.80%</b>
<b>Neighbouring Local Authorities</b>		
Luton	30.90%	27.80%
Milton Keynes	18.00%	18.10%
Bedford	17.10%	14.90%
Buckinghamshire	12.00%	13.00%
Huntingdonshire	12.40%	11.20%
Dacorum	11.30%	10.20%
North Hertfordshire	10.60%	10.00%
South Cambridgeshire	8.70%	7.70%
St Albans	7.50%	6.90%
<b>Central Bedfordshire highest wards</b>		
Eaton Bray	21.70%	22.00%
Dunstable Manshead	16.90%	16.90%
Dunstable Icknield	13.20%	15.50%
Tithe Farm	19.80%	15.40%
Houghton Hall	19.80%	15.40%

**Source:** DWP, Children in Low Income Families (Relative) by Local Authority (financial year 2020/21)

Education Information	
No. pupils in Central Bedfordshire schools	46896
% of Black, Asian & Minority ethnicity pupils	14.7% (England 27.4%)
No. of pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)	5752
No. of pupils receiving Free School Meals (FSM)	12.3% (England 22.5%)
No. of children with a Special Educational Need (SEN)	7481
No. of children with Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)	2034

*Source: School Census Data (January 2021)*

### Participation in Education, Employment and Training:

In 2021-22, 5,910 (95.8%) of 16-17 year olds were confirmed as having an offer of learning, continuing in education, an apprenticeship or employment with accredited training. This is higher than the national average (95.5%) and in line with the regional average. The overall percentage of Young People who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET) in Central Bedfordshire has decreased from 3.7%. There are 76 fewer young people compared to last year.

	Central Bedfordshire	Regional	National
<b>2021-2022</b>			
No. of 16 & 17 year olds engaged in Education, Employment or Training	95.8%	95.8%	95.5%
<b>3 month average (February 2022)</b>			
Engaged in Education, Employment or Training (%)	96.4	96.1	94.3
Not engaged in Education, Employment or Training (%)	2.4	2.8	2.7
Not Known (%)	1.3	1.1	2.2

*Source: Central Bedfordshire Youth Support Service Annual Report 2021-22*

### Vulnerable Children:

The majority of children and young people in Central Bedfordshire enjoy safe and healthy lives within their family networks and communities, however, there are a proportion of vulnerable children who are at risk of poorer health and well-being outcomes. This section of the Annual Report sets out those categories of children and young people in Central Bedfordshire who have been identified by the local authority and other agencies as in need of help or protection to promote their welfare.

In response to the pandemic, Bedfordshire Police updated systems to include a notification where a child/ren subject to a Child Protection Plan, allowing specialist officers to also attend in case of safeguarding concerns. This remains an effective process, giving additional information to officers, who previously would not have known before arrival at the location.

### Children's Services Front Door:

Access and Referral is the front door for anyone seeking information and/ or services for children, young people, and families, or to make a safeguarding referral. The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is based here. In 2021-22, Access and Referral received 16,291 enquiries. The high and stable percentage of referrals leading to a Social Care Service suggests that professionals know when to refer children for help and are making appropriate referrals.

Year	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17
No. of enquiries	16,291	15,212	13,858	12,319	10,859	8,789
% of referrals leading to provision of a Social Care service	99.8%	100%	99.8%	100%	99.6%	93.2%

### Early Help:

Early help for children and families involves acting as soon as possible to tackle problems that have already emerged. Central Bedfordshire's Early Help Offer identifies the need for help for children and families as soon as problems start to emerge, or when there is a strong likelihood that problems will emerge in the future. The Early Help Offer is not just for very young children as problems may also emerge at any point throughout childhood and adolescence. The Early Help Offer includes universal and targeted services designed to reduce or prevent specific problems from escalating or becoming entrenched. In other words, it is all about offering the right help at the right time.

An Early Help Assessment (EHA) is completed, and a plan is put in place to support the child and family. Where the assessment identifies support needs that cannot be met by a single agency or service, there needs to be a co-ordinated response with local agencies working together to support the family. The Team around the Child (TAC) model is used locally to bring together a range of different practitioners from across the children and young people's workforce and sometimes from adult services to support an individual child or young person and their family. The members of the TAC develop and deliver a package of solution focused support to meet the needs identified through the Early Help Assessment with a lead professional identified to co-ordinate the support and act as the key point of contact for the family and professionals/services.

The 2020-21 Early Help Annual Report was presented to the Safeguarding Children Board in June 2021.

Year	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17
No. of EHA completed	907	1,061	1,202	1,279	1,404	1,504
No. of Children in Need	1,422	1,248	1,176	1,316	1,356	1,344

### Children with a Child Protection Plan:

Children who have a child protection plan are considered to be in need of protection from either neglect, physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or a combination of one or more of these. The child protection plan sets out the main areas of concern, what action will be taken to reduce these concerns and by whom. The plan will also set out how we will know when progress is being made.

Year	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17
No. of referrals to Intake & Assessment Team (CSC)	2,118	1,565	1,776	1,556	1,811	1,876
No. of children subject to Child Protection Plans	225	147	156	189	223	161

### Children in Care:

Children in care are those looked after by the local authority. Only after exploring every possibility of protecting a child at home will the local authority seek a parent's consent or a court's decision to move a child away from his or her family. Such decisions, whilst very difficult, are made in the best interests of the child.

Year	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17
No. of children in care	327	303	310	320	314	323

Looked After Children reports were presented to the Board in 2021/22:

- Children's Social Care: Looked After Children Annual Report (September 2021)
- Health: Looked After Children Annual Report (June 2021)
- Looked After Children: Virtual School Annual Report (December 2021)

*'The council's commitment to providing effective early intervention to children and families is evident in an array of locally based community support and advice services. This, with effective partnership working, enables children and families to benefit from intensive early help and support.'*

*Key partners speak of strong, mature relationships at both strategic and operational levels. The local safeguarding partnership and pan-Bedfordshire Inspection of Central Bedfordshire local authority children's services 17 to 21 January 2022 8 arrangements support cross-authority cooperation, with resources pooled effectively.'*

**SOURCE:** *Inspection of Central Bedfordshire local authority children's services (Ofsted, January 2022)*

### **Equalities Information:**

The Equality Act 2010 puts a responsibility on public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity. This applies to the process of identification of need and risk faced by the individual child and the process of assessment. Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board is keen to ensure that no child or group of children are treated any less favourably than others in being able to access effective services which meet their particular need, as a consequence all reports received request agencies to identify any equalities implications.

The CBSCB reviews equalities information as standard practice. This includes in exploitation and missing data, case review groups, examples include CSE, Missing Children, Looked After Children, Neglect, Forced Marriage, Honour Based Abuse, FGM and youth offending data.

Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board recognises the need to strengthen practice in this area and has agreed a Pan Bedfordshire Cultural Competence Group to be added to the structure for 2022/23.

## Section 2 – Effectiveness of the Arrangements

### Progress against our priorities and other key areas of work:

#### **PRIORITY: Neglect**

The CBSCB works closely with neighbouring Safeguarding Children Boards in Bedford Borough and Luton, taking a county wide approach to raising awareness of neglect and helping frontline practitioners to identify and tackle neglect. The Pan Bedfordshire Neglect Group is guided by the [Pan Bedfordshire Neglect Strategy 2020-23](#).

The Neglect group continues to monitor an action plan based on the Neglect Strategy. Pan Bedfordshire Neglect sub-group meetings have provided an opportunity to hear directly from staff at local foodbanks; in return, we offered free eLearning to enhance volunteers understanding of neglect and safeguarding. Work is also underway to engage with schools to help offer guidance and advice when they are supporting children facing neglect, continuing to raise awareness about the Graded Care Profile and implement its use across Central Bedfordshire understanding how parental substance misuse impacts on neglect, developing the use of multi-agency chronologies, and continuing to develop and build a Neglect Profile for Bedfordshire to help target our work in the future.

#### **Development of a Neglect Profile:**

The neglect sub-group is working to agree a neglect data set and build a neglect profile. This will provide a picture of local needs and further inform the neglect strategy.

#### **Neglect Policies and Procedures:**

In collaboration with the Bedford Borough and Luton Safeguarding Boards, Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board offer [information](#) and [practice guidance](#) to support practitioners working with neglect. In March 2022, the [Chronologies and Genograms](#) guidance was updated and a new [multi-agency practice guidance](#) was produced. Our [Day in the Life resources](#) were expanded to include a tool to support curious conversations and inform assessments of the [unborn baby](#). New Stop and Review guidance and Lead Professional guidance was signed off in March 2022 by the Pan Bedfordshire Policies and Procedures Group. This will be available in May 2022.

#### **The Graded Care Profile (GCP2):**

The GCP2 is an assessment tool, developed by the NSPCC to help frontline practitioners measure the quality of care a child is receiving. Within Central Bedfordshire GCP2's are completed by Central Bedfordshire Council Children's Services staff along with colleagues from Cambridgeshire Community Services (CCS). Further work is underway to launch a neglect screening tool to support non-safeguarding professionals to recognise, articulate and share concerns about neglect.

Following a drop in GCP2 completions in 2021/22, attributed to COVID, CBSCB closely monitored the availability and uptake of GCP2 training as well as GCP2 completions this year. This has supported an increase in completions. Training attendance has also improved on year with at least 41 of the 74 accredited GCP2 staff being Central Bedfordshire based. We will continue to monitor and seek assurance around the use of GCP2.

CCS staff are aware of the use of the Graded Care Profile in practice to support the identification of neglect and enable conversations, assessments, and support for families to improve the lived experience of children. Neglect is a focus in their safeguarding supervision sessions, and this is evidenced in peer review of supervision which is now being actively rolled out across CCS.

GCP2 completions by agency	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19
Children's Services	38	12	10	16
Cambridge Community Services	37	15	59	37
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>53</b>

GCP2 training	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19
GCP2 training completed *	74	12	111	54

\* Training completed through Pan Beds multi-agency offer. This data does not reflect in house training agencies may provide.

*"I have learnt how to undertake a GCP2 assessment and how to deliver it to families in a professional supporting way to the family and how to avoid or approach barriers."*

*"This has given me the tools to be able to complete a GCP so I can assess a family's needs and support them."*

#### **Bedfordshire Police Body Worn Video (BWV) Scrutiny Panel:**

Prior to COVID, Bedfordshire Police provided opportunities for a multi-agency panel to scrutinise BWV footage of neglect cases. Its purpose was to review how Police Officers responded and act as a 'critical friend' to support practice development. Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board have welcomed the return of meetings in 2022/23.

#### **Multi-Agency Neglect Audit:**

In January 2022, Central Bedfordshire took part in a Pan Bedfordshire audit focused on Neglect cases with a good outcome. Central Bedfordshire contributed 3 cases. Further detail can be found on page 19-20.

#### **Pan Bedfordshire Neglect Training:**

Representatives from the safeguarding partners and wider agencies created a task and finish group to develop a new neglect training package, ensuring it reflects local and national learning and meets the needs of all agencies. This will be available in Autumn 2022.

#### **Private Fostering:**

Parents may make their own arrangements for their children to live away from home or with other close family members, this is known as privately fostering children. The local authority must be notified of these arrangements. As numbers remain low, CBSCB continues to raise awareness of the need to identify and report cases to Children's Services using [promotional campaign materials](#) and via newsletters.

Year	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
No. of private fostering placements identified/ in place in Central Beds	2	2	4	3	5	7	3



## PRIORITY: Child Exploitation

### Child Exploitation Strategies and Guidance:

In May 2021, all exploitation procedures were moved into one section within the online library. As part of the move, procedures were reviewed and updated where appropriate. A range of local guides and toolkits can also be found on the VERU [Frontline](#) Website.

#### [3.8 Safeguarding Children and Young People from Exploitation](#)

- 3.8.1- [Safeguarding Children who go Missing from Home and Care](#) (updated March 2022)
- 3.8.2- [Safeguarding Children Vulnerable to Gang Activity](#)
- 3.8.3- [Safeguarding Individuals Against Radicalisation or Violent Extremism](#) (update due May 2022)
- 3.8.4- [Children from Abroad, including Victims of Modern Slavery, Trafficking and Exploitation](#)
- 3.8.5- [Child Criminal Exploitation](#) (update due May 2022)
- 3.8.6- [Safeguarding Children from Sexual Exploitation](#) (update due May 2022)
- 3.8.7- [Contextual Safeguarding](#) (added November 2021)

### Tackling, Reducing and Ending Exploitation (TREE) project:

The TREE project is a new partnership effort launched in Central Bedfordshire to tackle the root causes of exploitation. The project is led by Bedfordshire Youth Offending Service (BYOS) and funded by Bedfordshire Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit (VERU). Youth workers, children's services and specialist staff team up with police officers to conduct joint outreach work across the area with the aim of engaging with young people and the wider community and signposting to support services. Between January and March 2022, patrols took place in Shefford, Biggleswade and Leighton Buzzard.

**TACKLING, REDUCING AND ENDING EXPLOITATION**

The **TREE** project is a unique partnership between different agencies in Biggleswade and Shefford with one mission: **To keep children and young people safe.**

Youth workers will be out across the towns over the coming months to engage with young people and the wider community, address any concerns and help put an end to things like violence, exploitation and organised crime.

Please speak to us if you want any help or advice, or make contact with any of the partners involved in the project.

We are all here to help and support you.

**PROUD SUPPORTERS OF THE TREE PROJECT**

Aquarius BYOS Central Bedfordshire AGAINST Bedfordshire Police FACES BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL VERU

Tackling Reducing and Ending Exploitation  
A Bedfordshire Partnership

Bedfordshire Youth Offending Service (BYOS) described how targeted intervention for children identified by agencies as at risk of gang involvement. The most appropriate agency is assigned and follow up work is reported to the panel after 3 months of interventions to ascertain whether further work should be undertaken or that the risk has become non-existence or minimised. Through VERU funding the youth offending service co-ordinates various agencies to undertake targeted outreach youth work projects in areas identified as potential areas where children could be exploited by gangs and organised criminal groups. The projects have highlighted the realities of criminal exploitation and



therefore acts as deterrent or disruption. The Serious Youth Violence Panel (SYVP) monitors and reports on the work and outcome of children to monitor any future offending.

ELFT are passionate about working with Children and Young people from the ground up and CAMHS have been pleased to support and participate in project like the TREE project, as detailed below.

*“The event was run by our CBC colleagues in Sandy, Bedfordshire – it was part of the Tackling, Reducing and Ending Exploitation (TREE) Project funded by the VERU throughout the summer. The aim of the project is to engage with young people, adults, local communities, and businesses- educating them on exploitation, gathering their voices, acting to safeguard where needed and feeding this into local disruption plans- all in turn, keep our communities a safer place for our young people. The aim of the project is to engage with young people, adults, local communities, and businesses- educating them on exploitation, gathering their voices, acting to safeguard where needed and feeding this into local disruption plans- all in turn, keep our communities a safer place for our young people”*

#### **Exploitation Communications Campaign:**

[Bedfordshire Against Violence and Exploitation](#) (BAVEX) is the countywide campaign to raise awareness and reporting on all forms of exploitation, especially those linked to organised crime. This includes county lines, modern slavery, cuckooing, human trafficking, and child sexual exploitation. Watch the award winning [awareness raising video](#).

<b>Pan Bedfordshire multi-agency training: Exploitation themes</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2020-21</b>
Child Sexual Exploitation	Virtual Classroom	18	6
Contextual Safeguarding	Virtual Classroom	32	17
Criminal Exploitation: County Lines & Serious Youth Violence	Virtual Classroom	18	15
Radicalisation, Extremism & Prevent	eLearning	605	237
Child & Adult Sexual Exploitation/ Modern Slavery	eLearning	692	135

Bedfordshire Police have continued training to ensure officers are identifying child exploitation (criminal and sexual) and associated risks to children and young people. There is a process of review for all markers, along with monitoring of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) process to enable the tracking of all NRM applications and assurance they are dealt with in a multi-agency manner. A dashboard has been created to support the monitoring of referrals in a bid to ensure they are not a tick box exercise and that they are multi-agency in approach.

Operation MakeSafe is embedded within the workings of the Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Disruption Team. This team is managed by a CSE Co-Ordinator who is also a member of the regional and national working group. Operation Innerste, is now embedded within Bedfordshire Police. This is a multi-agency response to better safeguard unaccompanied migrant children. The overall aim is to maximise the effectiveness of the initial encounter with these children, building early rapport. This is managed by the Missing Person Team. Bedfordshire Police have also provided support for joint working with the Road Policing Unit (RPU) for operations at Toddington Services.

Central Bedfordshire College shared the success of partnership work with their multi-agency approach to raise student awareness of exploitation at their Health and Wellbeing Fayre. Safeguarding teams continue to work with police to protect/ support vulnerable students associated with county lines, gangs and knife crime The workshops and awareness raising has been very positively received by students - attendance was over 150 students

**Exploitation Annual Reports:**

An exploitation update was presented to the Safeguarding Children Board in June 2021, providing the partnership with information in relation to contextual safeguarding, sexual and criminal exploitation, local support services available for young people and prevention, identification, and disruption activities. The presentation noted the 'significant and successful partnership work ongoing across Central Bedfordshire.'

Bedfordshire Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit (VERU) are currently completing an Exploitation Needs Analysis to be published later this year.

**PRIORITY: Mental Health and Wellbeing within Families**

CBSCB has shared guidance, advice, and resources from partners in relation to the mental health and wellbeing within families, in particular we have shared resources through our website, newsletters and email circulation/distribution lists. Mental Health and well-being is recognised as a concern locally (and nationally) due to rising numbers of children, young people and adults needing to access services.

In 2021, Bedfordshire, Luton, and Milton Keynes Clinical Commissioning Group (BLMK CCG) and East London Foundation Trust (ELFT), Mental Health Provider, were successful in receiving additional funding to develop more local services for Tier 4 Beds and for eating disorder services. Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Partnership will continue to be updated on the development of the Evergreen Unit, a new local 8 bed provision, and on Tier 4 Beds and eating disorder services.

BLMK CCG commissions East London Foundation Trust, to provide local Mental Health Services for adults and children. They have clear reporting arrangements in place, which includes data for key performance indicators, service quality performance and activity reports. These include compliance with standards of section 11 of the Children's Act. Information is routinely reviewed by the contract, commissioning, and quality teams in advance of the quarterly Contract Review and quality monitoring meetings to note themes, areas of concern, trends, and service improvements. Both these meetings provide the opportunity to discuss service improvement with ELFT and understand their quality improvement initiatives.

BLMK commissioning team, work in partnership with ELFT to support the CHUMS contract and service development. CHUMS provides, self-help, psychoeducation workshops and group work plus 1:1 support. CHUMS provide quarterly reports providing both a management narrative and Key Performance Indicator breakdown for delivery of these services. These reports are used to strengthen integration across patient pathways.

BLMK CCG are the commissioning lead for the [KOOOTH](#) contract in partnership with Public Health. Quarterly performance reports are provided in advance of the quarterly contract meetings. This data is monitored and reviewed by the commissioning collaborative. The contract meetings provide the opportunity to target the service to non-MHST schools. BLMK CCG work closely with ELFT and CHUMS to support the integrated pathway for children and young people with emotional well-being and mental health needs.

The Safeguarding Team in Bedford Hospitals Trust (BHT) work to engage the children & young people that are complex, or frequent attenders and build a rapport with them. CAMHS, the safeguarding children team and Paediatrics have a good working relationship and regularly review cases whereby learning has been identified. In addition, the paediatric team hold a daily meeting with CAMHS to discuss children who are admitted and also those that may present as an admission. This supports a pathway to ensure that the professional teams have a greater understanding of care planning and in

turn achieves better outcomes. These meetings include those aged 16-18 in adult areas who the ward may be able to support.

In March, Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board supported the update of the [Protocol for Multi-Agency Response to Complex Case Presentations at Acute Hospitals](#).

East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT) provides community health, mental health, and primary care services to a population of around a 1.8million people across Bedfordshire, Luton, Richmond, and East London. The Trust's vision is to make a positive difference in people's lives. ELFT are working to embed a 'Think Family' response. Safeguarding children, young people and adults cannot be done in isolation; it is only truly effective when we work collaboratively and restoratively with our partner agencies to 'Think Family' and protect all those at risk of harm, abuse, or neglect. This Trust wide approach is being embedded across all services, whilst focusing on developing evidence informed approaches to safeguarding practice that balances the rights and choices of an individual, with the Trust duties to act in their best interest to protect the patient, the public and the organisation from harm.

CAMHS Mental Health Practitioners are embedded in Upper Schools and Colleges providing specialist emotional health training to staff, case consultation and where appropriate direct assessment if required. The named lead in schools are responsible for mental health, developing closer relationships with CAMHS in support of timely and appropriate referrals to services.

#### **SHUE Survey:**

The results from the 2021 SHUE Survey will be presented to the Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Strategic Board meeting in September 2022, providing an opportunity for scrutiny of the action plan and to further inform the work of the safeguarding board in 2022-23. Headline comparisons with 2019 results are below.

A total of 8,023 pupils took part in 86 schools. This is an increase in the number of schools that participated in the previous survey in 2019 but represents a 10% decrease in the number of pupils that participated. This survey was conducted during the COVID- 19 pandemic, where there were fluctuating levels of attendance.

Comparison with 2019	
Good News	Not so Good News
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Central Bedfordshire pupils in 2021 are less likely to have used drugs or know someone who uses drugs than in 2019.</li> <li>Primary pupils in 2021 are less likely to have been bullied than in 2019.</li> <li>Primary pupils are less likely to say their parents smoke in 2021 than in 2019.</li> <li>Secondary pupils are less likely to have drunk alcohol in 2021 than in 2019.</li> <li>Secondary pupils are less likely to have experienced negative behaviour from a partner in 2021 than in 2019.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils in Central Bedfordshire are less likely to have visited the dentist in 2021 than in 2019.</li> <li>Pupils in Central Bedfordshire are less likely to say that their school had a School Nurse in 2021 than in 2019.</li> <li>Secondary pupils in Central Bedfordshire are less likely to say they know where to get free condoms in 2021 than in 2019.</li> <li>Pupils in Central Bedfordshire are less likely to have high resilience in 2021 than in 2019.</li> <li>Pupils in Central Bedfordshire are less likely to say they are happy with life in 2021 compared with pupils in 2019.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils in 2021 are less likely to talk to someone in their family if they have a problem than pupils in 2019.</li> </ul>
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The findings of the 2021 SHEU Survey will inform ongoing plans for improvement across the system; particularly within the context of the impact of Covid-19. The Central Bedfordshire Children Leadership Board will have oversight of the impact of follow up actions and services provision to support the findings of the survey across the system, ensuring a commitment from all key partners.

Central Bedfordshire College gave an example of recruiting a mental health counsellor to support students amidst growing demand and limited capacity of external agencies. The college also purchased a wellbeing app for all students which promotes support and daily routine and exercises, actions, and activities to improve mental health.

Pan Bedfordshire multi-agency training: Mental Health themes	Format	2021-22	2020-21
Self-Harm & Suicidal Thoughts	eLearning	124	102
Talking to children about emotional resilience & self-harm	eLearning	67	n/a

Bedfordshire Hospitals shared reflection on practice development with adults attending hospital in mental health crisis; identifying that it tends to be easier to record if a female is a parent/ carer as hospital records are usually linked if the child/ ren was born in the UK. Male attendees may not be asked if they have children as a matter of routine and may be unwilling or too unwell to provide the information.

[ChatHealth](#) is a confidential texting service manned by School Nursing team Support and advice available for children and young people. 80% ChatHealth activity is associated with emotional health and wellbeing. 80% of referrals/self-referrals into the school nurse referral clinics/drop-in clinics are related to emotional health and wellbeing.

Support and advice for parents available on [Parentline](#): confidential texting service for parents manned by Health Visiting team.

### **PRIORITY: Domestic Abuse**

Domestic abuse has been a priority for the Council, both the Children and Adult Safeguarding Boards, the Community Safety Partnership, and our partners for a number of years. The Domestic Abuse Annual Report was presented to the CBSCB in March 2022 outlining progress on the local authority duties under the new Domestic Abuse Bill and providing an overview of the action plan.

The Central Bedfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2022 – 2025 was published in January 2022. In developing this Strategy, a range of consultations, engagements, and research, including an Equality Impact Assessment, were undertaken to ensure the Strategy is robust and fit for purpose:

- Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment was used to provide evidence of our residents needs
- use of the research paper from Galop regards to needs of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender communities
- stakeholder partner meetings to gather views, evidence, and provider feedback
- evidence from commissioned services

- views of service users in what their thoughts and feelings were
- a draft Strategy which was shared with stakeholder, partners, and service users for views
- public consultation on the draft Strategy
- Members were asked for their views on the draft Strategy
- agreement of the Strategy at the Local Partnership Board and sign off at Council Executive

The Strategy has five strategic aims:

Aim	Summary of Aim
<b>Prevention and Early Intervention</b>	By preventing domestic abuse from occurring in the first place. Prevention and early intervention for adults, children and young people is a priority
<b>Partnership</b>	By collaborating with others, we will learn together and understand a fuller picture of domestic abuse in Central Bedfordshire
<b>Protection</b>	To significantly impact the prevalence of domestic abuse within Central Bedfordshire a robust response to those perpetrating must be a priority
<b>Progression</b>	In order to better understand what works we need high quality quantitative and qualitative data that can be linked together to create a meaningful story
<b>Provision</b>	Central Bedfordshire is inclusive and welcoming of the different characteristics individuals have and aims to understand their needs and provide appropriate responses

A draft action plan detailing how the strategic aims will be achieved is currently being developed by the Local Partnership Board. The action plan will look at a three-year time space, with actions in year one, two and three.

- **Domestic Abuse Responders:** in December 2019 we started a new Domestic Abuse Responders initiative for any Council officer or partner agency who works with residents of Central Bedfordshire.
- **Perpetrator Awareness and Coaching:** Working with a national specialist worker in 2021, a group of 20 Children's Services and Adult Service's professionals were offered in-depth training in how to work with and challenge perpetrators of abuse and hold them to account in family work and assessment.
- **DA Safe Spaces:** A new scheme has been developed for anyone seeking support and who needs a safe space to go to within their community to make a telephone call or use the internet.
- **Freedom Programme:** The 12-week Freedom programme is run from our Children's Centres for women aged 16 years and over who have suffered with or are currently suffering with abuse.
- **DA Service for young people:** We work closely with Embrace, a charity, who provide support for children and young people affected by abuse, with advocacy, Counselling, and trauma support. Referring children who need support to Embrace for this bespoke intervention has been really positive for those receiving the service. Due to the high number of children and young people heard at Central Bedfordshire MARAC, Embrace have supported a KIDVA to attend monthly MARAC meetings providing a voice for the children and young people being heard and lending their insight and expertise to safety planning. Embrace have also supported KIDVA's to obtain the views of children and young people for feedback on key pieces of work, such as the Freedom Review and the development of the Domestic Abuse Strategy and Action plan.
- **Domestic Abuse Deep Dive:** In February 2021, the CBCSB undertook a Pan Bedfordshire Multi-agency Domestic Abuse Audit looking at the outcomes for six family's living with high-risk domestic abuse across Bedfordshire. The outcome of the audits highlighting what went well and what could be improved were shared in April 2021. The areas for improvement and themes highlighted in the outcomes of the audits have informed the development of the Domestic Abuse

Strategy, Domestic Abuse Action Plan and the provision of services commissioned by Central Bedfordshire Council to support families experiencing domestic abuse.

- **Consent project:** Young people from Central Bedfordshire College are supporting our work, by developing a media piece on consent. Young people have mapped how they would like to do this, and filming has started. The media piece will be an engagement and awareness tool shared across education settings and youth groups, with an aim to increase knowledge of consent and where young people can go if they have any concerns or questions.

Pan Bedfordshire multi-agency training: Domestic Abuse themes	Format	2021-22	2020-21
Domestic Abuse Awareness	Virtual Classroom	34	15
Domestic Abuse: MARAC & DASH Risk Assessment	Virtual Classroom	35	21
Awareness of Domestic Abuse & Violence	eLearning	313	42
Domestic Abuse & the Impact on Children & Young People	Virtual Classroom	18	11
Teen Relationship Abuse	Virtual Classroom	26	9
FGM & Breast Ironing	Virtual Classroom	5	n/a
Forced Marriage & 'Honour' Based Abuse	Virtual Classroom	9	n/a
FGM (Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief)	eLearning	1	323
Awareness of Forced Marriage	eLearning	59	n/a

### PRIORITY: Digital Safeguarding

The Pan Bedfordshire Digital Safeguarding Group regularly reviews, updates and shares guidance available locally to professionals, parents, and young people in relation to digital safeguarding and online safety. An updated [E-Safety: Children Exposed to Abuse through the Digital Media](#) will be available in May 2022.

Throughout the year, the group have made progress against their workplan, however, for 2022-23 it has been decided that digital safeguarding should become a golden thread across all subgroups, to reflect that the online world is embedded into all aspects of children and young people's experiences. A task and finish group will focus on key activities such as Safer Internet Day. Central Bedfordshire will continue to raise awareness promote useful resources to the workforce via our newsletter.

In response to shared learning from our neighbours in Luton, we came together to offer a free 'Dark Web' webinar in December. This bitesize session, open to Pan Bedfordshire practitioners, was delivered by Bedfordshire Police Cyber Crime Team and designed to raise practitioners' understanding of what the 'Dark Web' is, how it is used and the risks that it can present to young people. 38 delegates attended, and feedback shows that participants gained knowledge of how to access the Dark Web and improved understanding of the risks.

Central Bedfordshire Councils Safeguarding Education team are working with [Young Gamers and Gamblers Trust](#) (YGAM) to offer a free awareness raising webinar in the new academic year. YGAM is a national charity with a social purpose to inform, educate, safeguard, and build digital resilience amongst young and vulnerable people; helping them to make informed decisions and understand the consequences around gambling and gaming.

CAMHS Mental Health Schools teams work closely with Public Health and Education to promote safe use of the internet and social media.



<b>Pan Bedfordshire multi-agency training: Online Safety themes</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2020-21</b>
eSafety	eLearning	892	302
Safeguarding in a Digital World	Virtual Classroom	21	17
Dark Web	Virtual Classroom	38	n/a
Digital Safeguarding & Young Children	Virtual Classroom	12	n/a

Bedfordshire Police Education and Diversion Team delivers safeguarding inputs to local schools (students, parents/ carers, and professionals). This includes messaging around screentime, mental health and cyberbullying. Internal training to new Police Constables, Police Community Support Officers, and Force Control Room staff to raise awareness of online safety and harms. The Cyber Crime protect team also deliver teacher training and has built up a strong connection with schools across the county, delivering online safety 'Coffee mornings' with schools and parents as a means of education and reaching the target audience.

The Cyber Crime protect team deliver 'Protect' messaging around social media and the sharing of images, hate crime and malicious communications, along with outreach and management of the young people within the Cyber choices programme which aids in the diversion of those who are on the cusp of committing cybercrime. The remit includes engagement with schools, colleges, universities, code clubs, youth justice & DSL forums providing advice, resources, and a referral route to identify young people in the region at risk.

### **Children Missing from Home, School and Care**

Awareness and a reminder about the procedures and the Essential Information form continues to be raised at the local residential provider forums and also through the CBSCB Newsletters.

Elective Home Education Annual Report (September 2021) and Children Missing from Education Annual Report (December 2021) was presented to the Safeguarding Children Board; recognising an increasing number of professionals from the local authority and other agencies are alerting the Children Missing Education (CME)/ Elective Home Education (EHE) officers when they became aware of children who are believed to be CME. Focus areas included increasing the number of children supported to return to school, following parental decisions to electively home educate, enhancing the joint work being undertaken with CBC's Gypsy and Traveller Service, ensuring that the CME/EHE Officers engage in the Sexual Exploitation/County Lines agenda, and that professionals working in this area understand the importance of the role of these officers.

Children Missing from Home Annual Report was presented in December 2021; audits are showing that the majority of responses to children missing from home are either 'good' or 'outstanding' with strong partnership working to tackle exploitation. A case study demonstrated how a multi-agency approach, and strong relationship with a social worker has helped reduce missing episodes. The report highlighted the need for the board to ensure that our partners continue to support the ongoing work and focus, identify new themes and trends for young people that are reported missing and adapt our multi-agency response as required.

Bedfordshire Police and Local Authorities colleagues across Bedfordshire have continued to work together to raise concerns with Central Government that residential accommodation for young people aged 16 and over is currently unregulated and therefore some vulnerable young people may be placed in unsuitable accommodation, this work continues to be a key focus for partners. Ofsted will begin registering provision from Autumn 2023. Central Bedfordshire continue to offer provider forums to share good practice partnering with colleagues across Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes.

## Pan Bedfordshire Training Unit

The annual summary (Appendix C) from the Pan Bedfordshire Training Unit (Safeguarding Bedfordshire) reflects agency attendance our training offer. Agencies will also provide their own safeguarding children training programmes, to ensure staff are trained according to the need of their individual roles. Therefore, the training report will only reflect attendance of multi-agency events.

Safeguarding Bedfordshire provide a multi-agency programme to meet the priorities of the three local safeguarding boards (Bedford, Central Bedfordshire, and Luton). Whilst training attendance remains lower than pre-pandemic levels, overall attendance is up by 44% (from 439 to 780 attendees) with 60% of those attendees (474) being Central Bedfordshire based, or from a service serving the county.

Safeguarding Bedfordshire recognise the impact of COVID continuing to be felt by organisations and individuals who do not have the capacity to attend CPD opportunities as often as they have previously done. A workforce survey is in development to further understand how learning and development can be shaped for 2022-23.

For assurance, our Section 11, planned for later in 2022 will include Standard 5; providing an opportunity to understand how effective safeguarding training is available to all staff in contact with children, young people, and their families.

## Multi-Agency Audits

Two Pan Bedfordshire multi-agency audits were completed in 2021-22.

### **Under 2's and risk of Non-Accidental Injuries (NAI), April 2021**

This audit was completed as part of a series of auditing activity which sought to explore risk factors relating to Non-Accidental Injuries (NAI) and the assessment of these risks within the context of the covid-19 pandemic. A cohort of 43 children were audited, who had been open to the intake and assessment, early help or family support teams during March-November 2020. The audit considered a number of risk factors which have been heightened by COVID-19. These included but were not limited to; social isolation, less frequent access to agencies which may provide early warnings to social care services, financial insecurity, limited access to health care services and parents under increased pressure, which may be particularly challenging for those with fragile mental health, previous or current substance misuse or those experiencing domestic abuse.

Findings		
Good Practice	Development Areas	Domestic Abuse
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The majority of cases (61%) were graded overall as good.</li><li>There were good assessments in the majority of cases (67%) that demonstrated a clear understanding of the issues that needed to be explored, historical information was taken into consideration and wider family members were</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In the cases that did require improvement, in relation to the assessments, there was only a little evidence of previous involvement being considered and the risks being fully explored and analysed. In particular, there were some cases that did not follow the pre-birth protocol.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Analysis of the assessments completed raised some concerns around the impact of virtual working during lockdown.</li><li>There were examples of the workers speaking to both parents</li></ul>



<p>sometimes involved in the assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of good case closures which involved signposting families to appropriate support. Agencies were advised of the next steps should any further concerns be raised.</li> <li>• Strong exit plans were clear and measurable, and responsible agencies were informed of these.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where parents were absent, they were not always included in assessments.</li> <li>• In some cases, a clear exit plan with the involvement of partners was required.</li> <li>• Contingency Planning was often missed.</li> <li>• Some cases identified support for parents but did not consider what support would be beneficial for the child</li> </ul>	<p>together in virtual visits to discuss domestic abuse incidents, but little evidence of reflection on how this may have impacted parental responses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where assessments were good, there was evidence of speaking to each parent, or trying to contact each parent individually and analysing the level of risk.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendations.</b> In order to reduce the risk of NAI, it is important that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In all assessments, exit planning needs to involve our multi-agency partners with clear expectations of how the situation will be monitored.</li> <li>• There are robust contingency plans in the conclusion of all assessments, to outline what will happen should further concerns be raised.</li> <li>• Both parents are contacted and have input into the assessment unless there is good reason not to. (Eg: concern that doing so would increase risk of Domestic Abuse, reveal the location of a family that has recently fled Domestic Abuse.)</li> <li>• The pre-birth protocol is considered in all unborn cases and the reasons recorded if following this protocol is not deemed necessary.</li> <li>• When multiple contact/ referrals are being received, to ensure that recent Child &amp; Families Act recommendations are considered and explored with the family and external partners.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Pan Bedfordshire Pathway and Protocol Summary for Injuries in Immobile Babies and Children</a> (update due May 2022)</li> <li>• New Pan Bedfordshire Engaging with Fathers, Male Partners or Carers Guidance was signed off in March and will be available in May 2022.</li> </ul>		

### **Neglect cases judged to have a good outcome, January 2022**

Central Bedfordshire Council contributed 3 cases to this Pan Bedfordshire multi-agency audit. The virtual audit session was facilitated by the Chair of the Pan Bedfordshire Neglect group (who had no involvement in any of the cases). Members of the Neglect Group attended along with some of the practitioners involved in the cases. All participants were invited to ask questions, and to reflect on the elements of good practice and gaps at a practice, organisational or system level.

Findings	
Good Practice	Development Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good information sharing, and delivery of the voice of child and parents (resident/ non- resident parents.)</li> <li>• Practitioners found creative ways to engage with children and young people.</li> <li>• Tenaciousness in referrals where concerns continue</li> <li>• Use of Interpreters</li> <li>• Evidence of theory within assessments.</li> <li>• Appropriate referrals to support services, eg: freedom programme.</li> <li>• Good transfer/ information sharing between local authorities.</li> <li>• Identified support networks added an extra level of protection in some cases.</li> <li>• Positive feedback from extended family members in one case; Children's Services were always there, kept them informed and a positive attitude from the Social Worker.</li> <li>• Advocates were being used appropriately for parents and children.</li> <li>• In the majority of cases practitioners had a good understanding of the child/ family dynamics with appropriate responses, escalation, and management oversight.</li> <li>• Joined up working between agencies.</li> <li>• Involvement of 0-19 team/ school nurse and constant support in some cases.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completing (and revisiting) GCP2 was not standard practice in many cases.</li> <li>• The role of the birth father was a common theme with limited information on them, although one case there was a good assessment of the father.</li> <li>• In 50% of the Pan Bedfordshire cases domestic abuse was a factor and whilst this was acknowledged there was not enough information as to how it impacted on the child's and adults' parenting of the child.</li> <li>• Need to be more focus on ethnicity, culture, faith, and religion in case work.</li> <li>• Further understanding of adult mental health/ substance misuse, its impact on children and how agencies measure change.</li> <li>• Information sharing with GPs was not as robust as it could have been but in two cases GP records had good communication.</li> <li>• The use of chronologies was not evident on many of the cases and therefore not used as part of an assessment.</li> <li>• Some cases would have benefitted from further professional curiosity, challenge, and escalation.</li> <li>• What should be the response to parents who do not engage?</li> <li>• No clear evidence of the children's lived experience in the majority of the cases.</li> <li>• Early intervention to address educational needs; this needs to be looked at as a whole partnership.</li> </ul>
<b>Recommendations.</b> The following actions have been allocated to partners to report on to the Pan Beds Neglect Group:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Emphasise the importance, and use of, GCP2. The Pan Bedfordshire Neglect group will monitor the use of GCP2.</li> <li>2. Consider the length of time neglect cases remain in Public Law Outline (PLO).</li> <li>3. In neglect cases practitioners need to include and analysis the impact of adult mental health/ wellbeing on children's welfare.</li> <li>4. Ensure there is effective exchange of health information where a child/ young person lives in one area and attends school in another.</li> <li>5. All partners to think about how they we are assessing relevant milestones in a child's life and their lived experiences.</li> </ol>	

6. Each Local Authority to reassure itself that GPs have access to information about Children's Services interventions, and that GPs and relevant health colleagues are invited to key meetings.
7. All partners to promote the use of chronologies and genograms in all cases of Neglect.
8. All agencies to address recording of ethnicity, identity and cultural differences in all assessments and interventions.

## Section 11 Audits

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places duties on a range of organisations, agencies, and individuals to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. These duties are also outlined in the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 guidance.

Each year the partner agencies within Bedfordshire self-assess themselves against all or some of the following 8 Standards:

- Standard 1 – Senior management have commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare.
- Standard 2 – There is a clear statement of the agency's responsibility towards children, and this is available to all staff.
- Standard 3 – There is a clear line of accountability within the organisation for work on safeguarding and promoting welfare.
- Standard 4 – Service development takes into account the need to safeguard and promote welfare and is informed, where appropriate, by the views of children and families
- Standard 5 – There is effective training on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children for all staff working with or, depending on the agency's primary functions, in contact with children and families.
- Standard 6 – Safer recruitment procedures including vetting procedures and those for managing allegations are in place.
- Standard 7 – There is effective inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Standard 8 – There is effective information sharing.

The 2021 Section 11 Audit focused on Standard 8, providing an opportunity to further explore information sharing practice. Following a thorough discussion at the Section 11 virtual event (January 2022), each agency identified a number of key areas within their organisation which needed further development. These areas of development have been collated into an action plan which is being monitored through the board.

As of March 2022, partners had made progress on their action plans including beginning a review of Central Bedfordshire Threshold document, creation of a Pan Bedfordshire Transitions Group to explore experiences when moving between children and adult services and development of Pan Bedfordshire guidance documents on consent, expected to be available in May 2022.

### Local Rapid Reviews:

Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board completed one Rapid Review in relation to the death of a baby under the age of one with suspected non accidental injuries. Following consultation with the National Panel, this will be taken forward as a Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR).

Key learning from the Rapid Review focused on **information sharing, professional curiosity, and transient/ mobile families**, it also explored how **race and ethnicity** may have been a factor, and the impact of **COVID**. The case review group reflected on links to national reviews including 'Non-Accidental Injury in under 1s' and 'The Myth of Invisible Men' in that the baby was under 12 months when they died, and Father had a complex history including social care involvement and Domestic Abuse allegations. In 2020-21, CB SCB completed two Rapid Reviews in relation to the non-accidental Injuries to babies, alongside reviews completed in a neighbouring authority area.

Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board are leading on the development of a Pan Bedfordshire learning event bringing themes from this review along with Baby E and Baby A (2020-21).

The Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) review the deaths of children from across Central Bedfordshire, continuing use of technology to discharge the duties of the panel, in a safe and appropriate way, giving due consideration to each child and their family and carers, so that any lessons learned, and recommendations may contribute to mitigating risks to children where possible. The CDOP Annual Report 2022 is shared with CBSCB to inform wider learning, it is expected Autumn 2022.

## Section 3: Evidence of Impact

### Non-Accidental Injury (NAI) and under 2-year-olds

CB SCB co-produced a briefing highlighting key learning from national and local reviews. It aimed to challenge professionals thinking and practice, aiding professional development. A further learning event is currently in development for 2022-23.

### Tubes of Life 'train the trainer'

Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Boards have co-funded 15 places on a ['train the trainer'](#) course taking place in May 2022.

### ICON (Babies Cry, You Can Cope)

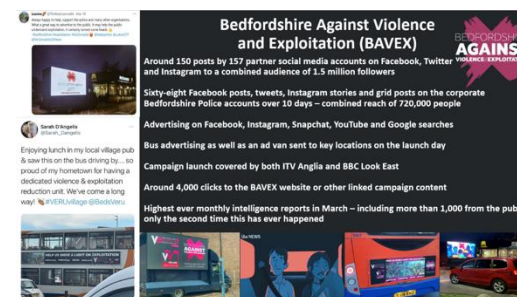
A range of awareness raising materials have been purchased for children's centres to help prompt discussions with parents/ carers about the [ICON](#), a national programme to reduce the numbers of babies suffering head trauma as a result of being shaken. Implementation of the ICON programme commenced in 2021 with a report on its effectiveness expected in Autumn 2022.

Impact of the Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board during 2021-22														
Issue & Actions		Impact												
<b>Intelligence Forms</b> The CBSCB has continually raised awareness with partners with regards to completing and submitting the local multi-agency information/intelligence forms to the police in relation to safeguarding concerns and in particular CSE information.		The number of forms being submitted each year, whilst Central Bedfordshire Council submissions have dropped, they remain the highest information provider. Central Bedfordshire schools have also increased.												
			CBC	BBC	LBC	NHS	Beds YOS	Luton YOS	School CBC	School BBC	School LBC	Link to Change	Other	Total
		21-22	1064	154	302	67	79	62	274	103	161	116	728	3110
		20-21	1482	268	392	89	53	140	267	46	64	113	545	3459
		19-20	805	288	478	104	59	211	242	129	161	27	256	2760
		18-19	627	310	320	78	102	89	142	108	137	-	-	1913
		17-18	227	231	288	13	90	176	0	0	0	-	-	1025
<b>Domestic Abuse Referrals</b> Throughout the year the CBCSB has continued to work with the Domestic Abuse Team to promote the reporting of domestic abuse incidents.														
				2021-22	2020-21	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018						
		No. of Domestic Abuse Incidents reported	3340*	2815*	4838	4408	3722							
		* Data shows reports where victim is a resident of Central Bedfordshire, and the incident has taken place in Bedfordshire.												
<b>Radicalisation/ PREVENT Training</b> CB SCB has supported the training unit to promote free eLearning on this topic.														
		Pan Bedfordshire multi-agency training:									2021-22	2020-21		
		No. of completions									605	692		
<b>Evaluation from conferences and training</b> No large scale learning events have been held this year in response to workforce feedback about capacity to attend non-statutory training.		No large scale learning events held in 2021-22, however Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board, along with neighbouring Bedford and Luton Boards are working closely with the training unit to shape a programme of class based and virtual learning and development. We continue to promote the offer to partner agencies and seek assurance of minimum annual training requirements being met. We are currently planning threshold awareness raising sessions, NAI in Under 2's learning event, Child Protection Medicals awareness raising sessions.												

## Exploitation Communications

The CBSCB and multi-agency partners work closely with the Exploitation Communication group and Bedfordshire Against Violence & Exploitation (BAVEX) to raise awareness of exploitation.

## Campaign materials and outcomes:



## On-going CBSCB Challenge of Key Performance Indicators:

Indicator, Issue and Challenge	Outcome/Impact							
<b>Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC's) conducted within 15 working days of a Section 47 starting.</b> Monitoring ICPC's conducted within 15 days is part of the CBSCB Performance Framework – following poor performance during 2015/16 (at one-point performance was only 70%) the CBSCB challenged this performance and has continued to closely monitor and challenge this performance on a quarterly basis year on year. As timescales continue to fluctuate, we will maintain monitoring activity.	Year	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
	Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC's) conducted within 15 working days of a Section 47 starting. %	85.9%	82.7%	95.9%	88.8%	96.4%	96.4%	82%
<b>The percentage of care leavers in education, employment, or training.</b> Since 2018/19, performance has been below the 65% target. CBSCB monitor and challenge performance and outcomes on a quarterly basis. This year	Year	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
	Care leavers in education, employment, or training. %	67.7%	61.6%	61.7%	64.1%	66.7%	70.2%	70%

the target was exceeded, and monitoring continues.																							
<b>Percentage of referrals leading to a provision of a Social Care Service.</b> CBSCB challenges and monitors the use of Thresholds within Central Bedfordshire on a quarterly basis. For 5yrs, this has consistently been above 99% suggesting that professionals know when to refer children for help and are making appropriate referrals.	<table> <tr> <th>Year</th><th>2021/22</th><th>2020/21</th><th>2019/20</th><th>2018/19</th><th>2017/18</th><th>2016/17</th><th>2015/16</th></tr> <tr> <td>% of referrals leading to provision of a Social Care service</td><td>99.8%</td><td>100%</td><td>99.8%</td><td>100%</td><td>99.6%</td><td>93.2%</td><td>85.9%</td></tr> </table>							Year	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16	% of referrals leading to provision of a Social Care service	99.8%	100%	99.8%	100%	99.6%	93.2%	85.9%
Year	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16																
% of referrals leading to provision of a Social Care service	99.8%	100%	99.8%	100%	99.6%	93.2%	85.9%																
<b>Initial Health Assessments for Looked after Children completed within 28 working days.</b>	<table> <tr> <th>Year</th><th>2021/22</th><th>2020/21</th><th>2019/20</th><th>2018/19</th><th>2017/18</th><th>2016/17</th><th>2015/16</th></tr> <tr> <td>Initial Health Assessments for Looked after Children completed within 28 working days. %</td><td>67.6% *</td><td>81.4%</td><td>80.4%</td><td>52.5%</td><td>76.5%</td><td>79.3%</td><td>61.1%</td></tr> </table> <p><i>* In Bedfordshire, Initial Health Assessments (IHA) for Looked After Children are completed by Paediatricians. In 2021-22, 69 out of 102 (67.6%) assessments were completed within 28 days. Reasons for assessments completed out of timeframe include; an increase in demand, paediatrician capacity, reliance on other health teams where children placed out of area. On occasion, delayed consent from birth parents, or missed appointments by Foster Carers has been a factor. Where there are delays, BLMK CCG and social care have taken action including exception meetings to investigate reasons for delay and escalation with out of area health teams via the Designated Nurse. Remedial action includes cover for annual leave and foster carers training by health to include importance of IHA.</i></p>							Year	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16	Initial Health Assessments for Looked after Children completed within 28 working days. %	67.6% *	81.4%	80.4%	52.5%	76.5%	79.3%	61.1%
Year	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16																
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<b>Percentage of assessments completed within 45 days.</b> The percentage of assessments completed within 45 days is routinely monitored by the CBSCB as part of its Performance Framework and performance is good,	<table> <tr> <th>Year</th><th>2021/22</th><th>2020/21</th><th>2019/20</th><th>2018/19</th><th>2017/18</th><th>2016/17</th><th>2015/16</th></tr> <tr> <td>Assessments completed within 45 days. %</td><td>97.5%</td><td>97.1%</td><td>96.2%</td><td>95.8%</td><td>93.8%</td><td>92%</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>							Year	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16	Assessments completed within 45 days. %	97.5%	97.1%	96.2%	95.8%	93.8%	92%	-
Year	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16																
Assessments completed within 45 days. %	97.5%	97.1%	96.2%	95.8%	93.8%	92%	-																



maintaining at least a 96% achievement despite COVID.																																																																																							
<b>Number of FGM Risk Assessments completed – monitoring of low referral rates.</b> Figures/referrals had fallen to 2019/20, however, data now shows an increase in referrals to CSC. Monitoring continues.	<table><tr><th>Year</th><th>2021/22</th><th>2020/21</th><th>2019/20</th><th>2018/19</th><th>2017/18</th></tr><tr><td>No. of FGM referrals to CSC</td><td>11</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>7</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>No. of FGM risk assessments completed in hospitals</td><td>8</td><td>1</td><td>29</td><td>16</td><td>14</td></tr></table>	Year	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	No. of FGM referrals to CSC	11	0	1	7		No. of FGM risk assessments completed in hospitals	8	1	29	16	14																																																																				
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<b>Missing children.</b> Between 2019-2021, missing children and number of episodes reduced; this is likely to be due to COVID restricting young people’s movements. This year figures have sadly returned to pre-pandemic levels with number of missing episodes having increased substantially.	<table><tr><th rowspan="2"></th><th colspan="5">2021-2022</th><th colspan="5">2020-2021</th></tr><tr><th>TOTAL</th><th>Q1</th><th>Q2</th><th>Q3</th><th>Q4</th><th>TOTAL</th><th>Q1</th><th>Q2</th><th>Q3</th><th>Q4</th></tr><tr><td>No. of missing children (episodes)</td><td>356 (828)</td><td>95 (217)</td><td>92 (248)</td><td>77 (171)</td><td>92 (192)</td><td>67 (266)</td><td>22 (70)</td><td>22 (111)</td><td>13 (54)</td><td>10 (31)</td></tr><tr><td>No. of missing Looked After Children (episodes)</td><td>63 (302)</td><td>16 (54)</td><td>18 (112)</td><td>18 (66)</td><td>21 (70)</td><td>27 (152)</td><td>6 (36)</td><td>8 (57)</td><td>7 (37)</td><td>6 (22)</td></tr></table> <table><tr><th rowspan="2"></th><th colspan="5">2019-20</th><th colspan="5">2018-19</th></tr><tr><th>TOTAL</th><th>Q1</th><th>Q2</th><th>Q3</th><th>Q4</th><th>TOTAL</th><th>Q1</th><th>Q2</th><th>Q3</th><th>Q4</th></tr><tr><td>No. of missing children (episodes)</td><td>268 (398)</td><td>70 (174)</td><td>82 (139)</td><td>64 (105)</td><td>52 (80)</td><td>351 (593)</td><td>100 (23)</td><td>89 (247)</td><td>83 (175)</td><td>79 (148)</td></tr><tr><td>No. of missing Looked After Children (episodes)</td><td>78 (161)</td><td>21 (58)</td><td>26 (49)</td><td>19 (32)</td><td>12 (22)</td><td>65 (309)</td><td>20 (90)</td><td>18 (119)</td><td>15 (47)</td><td>12 (53)</td></tr></table>		2021-2022					2020-2021					TOTAL	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	No. of missing children (episodes)	356 (828)	95 (217)	92 (248)	77 (171)	92 (192)	67 (266)	22 (70)	22 (111)	13 (54)	10 (31)	No. of missing Looked After Children (episodes)	63 (302)	16 (54)	18 (112)	18 (66)	21 (70)	27 (152)	6 (36)	8 (57)	7 (37)	6 (22)		2019-20					2018-19					TOTAL	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	No. of missing children (episodes)	268 (398)	70 (174)	82 (139)	64 (105)	52 (80)	351 (593)	100 (23)	89 (247)	83 (175)	79 (148)	No. of missing Looked After Children (episodes)	78 (161)	21 (58)	26 (49)	19 (32)	12 (22)	65 (309)	20 (90)	18 (119)	15 (47)	12 (53)
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## Section 4: Areas for Development

Overall, the Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board is working well, with a strong commitment from its partners.

In 2020/21, Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Board completed a Self-Assessment which highlighted areas for focus/development to help further develop and strengthen the Central Bedfordshire (and possibly Pan Bedfordshire) Multi-agency Safeguarding Arrangements.

Identified development opportunity 2020-21	2021-22 update
Further work to engage with schools and develop stronger links between the Multi-agency Safeguarding Arrangements and all schools	<b>In Progress:</b> A Pan Bedfordshire project group presented a strategy to bring an education subgroup into our safeguarding structures. The subgroup will be supported by local Designated Safeguarding Lead cluster meetings open to all education providers in Central Bedfordshire.
Further development and work to re-assure the arrangements that our thresholds are understood by multi-agency front line staff across the partnership	<b>In Progress:</b> In 2021-22, the threshold document was reviewed and updated by a project group. This will now be shared for consultation.
Further work to monitor information sharing and multi-agency decision making	<b>In Progress:</b> The board monitors agencies progress on the 2021 Section 11 audit on information sharing. Audits and case reviews expect consideration of decision making and information sharing. New consent guidance will be available in May 2022.
Continuing to try and understand the impact of COVID-19 and the impact it is having on young people, their families, and the services we provide to them.	<b>In Progress:</b> All meetings, audits and case review groups consider the impact of COVID. Our Voice of the Child Conference (5 <sup>th</sup> July 2022) will focus on 'feeling safe' with a question relating to COVID. The 2021 SHUE survey offers insight in to how COVID has affected the lives of children and young people.

Priorities moving forward	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploitation – including, CSE, Gangs and knife crime</li> <li>• Mental Health and wellbeing within families</li> <li>• Internet Safety and the use of social media</li> <li>• Neglect</li> </ul>	<p><b>Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board will review its current priorities at a development session on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2022.</b></p>

## Section 5: Voice of Children, Young People and Families

### **Ongoing work to develop our knowledge in relation to the Voice of Children:**

The Pan Bedfordshire Voice of the Child subgroup has planned a face to face conference for young people taking place on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022. The focus will be 'feeling safe' with questions focused on what safe means to young people, the behaviours of adults around them that help them feel safe and what those adults could do better. It will also cover feeling safe in home, school, and the community. We will also ask young people about the impact of COVID. The information young people share will feed into the Boards development session on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2022.

Bedfordshire Police Public Protection Unit safeguarding hub are ensuring that the voice of the child/ young person is captured in their referral process, enabling partners to have a full picture when sharing information. Frontline staff will record and convey emotional well-being as part of the referral process. A 'Voice of the Child' training package has been commissioned for all frontline officers, Force Control Room, and Specialist Detectives to further enhance this important area.

Bedfordshire Police have enhanced how they seek and respond to the voice of the child, introducing feedback postcards. This is informing changes in the response to child victims of crimes, with a tailored approach based on feedback obtained from some of the replies received. This has been shared with 9 other Force areas who have replicated the approach. Bedfordshire Police are seeking to particularly strengthen the partnership working in relation to children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

In line with our continuing commitment to hear the voice of children, young people, and their families, the 2022 Section 11 audit will include Standard 4, requiring agencies to evaluate how service development takes into account the need to safeguard and promote welfare and is informed, where appropriate, by the views of children, young people & families.

## Section 6: Conclusion

Our aim year on year is to make sure that children in Central Bedfordshire are best protected from harm. This can only be achieved through ensuring the right systems are in place, that agencies work well together for each individual child and family, and we develop our learning culture. We need to be constantly reflecting whether children in the area are safe and, if not, what more can be done to reduce incidents of child maltreatment and intervene when children are at risk of suffering significant harm. We will continue to raise awareness within our local community that safeguarding children is everybody's business.

## Appendices

### Appendix A: Funding Contributions and 2021-22 CBSCB Business Unit Budget information:

Funding contributions and expenditure by Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Business Unit in 2021-22. Partners have agreed for the surplus of £83,632.87 to be carried forward to fund future Case Reviews, learning events.

INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
Agency	Amount	Expenditure	Amount
Bedfordshire Police	£16,373.13	Staffing	£100,999.48
BLMK CCG	£44,905.64	Travel	£0.00
Central Bedfordshire Council	£94,222.45	Independent Chair	£22,200.00
Carry forward 20-21	£61,799.46	Subscriptions	£960.00
<b>Income</b>	<b>£217,300.68</b>	Recharges	£5,000.00
		Venue Hire	£0.00
<b>Funding</b>		Printing/Postage	£9.58
DfE Funding (Pan Beds) *	£30,000.00	Website Hosting & Computer Costs	£2,988.75
Project spend 2021-22	-£8,748.64	Conference Expenses	£210.00
<b>Funding carried forward</b>	<b>£21,251.36</b>	Training	£300.00
* Ringfenced for School Engagement Project		Advert & Publicity	£1,000.00
		<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£133,667.81</b>

Safeguarding partners also make a financial contribution to the multi-agency Pan Bedfordshire Training Unit. A further £6,712 was contributed towards the annual Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) costs by the local authority.

#### Training Unit funding:

- Bedfordshire Police £3,618.48
- Central Bedfordshire Council £36,620.49
- BLMK CCG £9,924.20

### Appendix B: Board Membership/Relevant Agencies

- Independent Chair/Scrutineer
- Bedfordshire Luton & Milton Keynes Clinical Commissioning Group
- Bedford Hospital NHS Trust
- Bedfordshire Police
- Bedfordshire Youth Offending Service
- BeNCH
- CAFCASS (Children and Family Courts Advisory and Support Service)
- Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust
- East London Foundation Trust
- Education, including schools and the local college
- Lay Members (2)
- Local Authority, including Adult Services, Children's Services and Public Health
- National Probation Service
- NHS England
- Representation from the Voluntary Sector (Voluntary Organisations for Children, young people & families, VOCypf and Central Bedfordshire Home-start)

## Appendix C: Pan Bedfordshire Training Annual Report

Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire, and Luton Safeguarding Children Boards co-fund a Pan Bedfordshire multi-agency safeguarding training offer.

### 2021-22 Headlines:

- There was an increase in the number of courses delivered this year compared to last year from 45 to 69 and the number of practitioners accessing training increased by 78%. Whilst the impact of Covid-19 and the effect on services was no doubt a factor the previous year, this is still a significant increase. Satisfaction in the courses delivered also remained high at 98%.
- There has been a reduction in the number of people completing e-learning this year, however it should be noted that during the Covid-19 lockdowns of the previous year, the numbers increased so this is perhaps to be expected. The top 5 courses over the year were Safeguarding Children level 2, Safeguarding Children Level 1, E-safety, Safeguarding in Education and Gang Related Issues and County Lines.
- A free 'Dark Web' webinar was delivered on 10<sup>th</sup> December. This bitesize session, delivered by Beds Police Cyber Crime Team was designed to raise practitioners' understanding of what the 'Dark Web' is, how it is used and the risks that it can present to young people. 38 delegates attended, and feedback shows that participants gained knowledge of how to access the Dark Web and improved understanding of the risks.
- We have supported with the delivery of a series of 'Mind your Language: Exploitation and Victim Blaming' webinars delivered by NWG and funded by Bedfordshire Police. The sessions promoted discussion on the language we use when working with and reporting about Children and Young People who are victims of exploitation and the impact this can have, for example if records were used as evidence in a court case or if an adult were to access their records from their childhood. One attendee said, 'Excellent professional presenter, great pace, and so much interesting points and food for thought - thank you.' Another said, 'Thank you-that was really good, hard hitting at times which is essential to make us think about our practice, we will be thinking about training and the language we use.'

### Plans for the year ahead

- A survey is being carried out to gain feedback from practitioners which will inform the development of the training programme going forward. This should be completed by the end of Quarter 1.
- We will be reviewing the E-learning offer to ensure that what is available is relevant and easy to locate.
- We will be holding our first in-person training sessions since the pandemic. We will use uptake for these courses to inform what proportion of our programme is delivered in person rather than virtually.
- Given the changing financial position of the training unit and a reduction in staffing, we will be reviewing how we report on the service to try to provide the data required by partners whilst ensuring that reporting requirements are achievable.
- We will be looking at new ways to evaluate our courses, in particular the impact of training on practice.

### Pan Bedfordshire Attendance Overview 2021-22

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL 2021/ 22	Total 2020/21
Courses delivered	16	7	22	24	69	45

<b>Delegates booked</b>	138	78	268	296	<b>780</b>	<b>439</b>
<b>Places Filled %</b>	72%	93%	99%	100%	<b>91%</b>	<b>84%</b>
<b>Satisfaction %</b>	97%	100%	99%	97%	<b>98%</b>	<b>99%</b>

	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	<b>TOTAL 2021/ 22</b>	<b>Total 2020/21</b>
<b>Learners registered</b>	1218	2092	2261	2722	<b>8,293</b>	<b>15,793</b>
<b>Learners completed</b>	1171	2023	2218	1974	<b>7,386</b>	<b>14,191</b>
<b>Pass rate %</b>	96%	97%	98%	73%	<b>89%</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>Satisfaction %</b>	76%	94%	94%	95%	<b>90%</b>	<b>95%</b>

<b>Training Uptake by Agencies <i>within or serving Central Bedfordshire</i></b>	<b>Q1</b>		<b>Q2</b>		<b>Q3</b>		<b>Q4</b>		<b>Total 2021/22</b>		<b>Total 2020/21</b>	
	<b>CI</b>	<b>eL</b>	<b>CI</b>	<b>eL</b>	<b>CI</b>	<b>eL</b>	<b>CI</b>	<b>eL</b>	<b>CI</b>	<b>eL</b>	<b>CI</b>	<b>eL</b>
Central Bedfordshire Council- Other	2	0	4	0	4	0	8	143	18	143	14	447
Central Bedfordshire Council- CSC	14	84	9	101	38	81	31	0	92	266	46	146
Central Bedfordshire Council- ASC	0	0	1	0	6	0	3	0	10	0	3	191
Central Bedfordshire Schools	34	151	18	274	52	339	55	178	159	942	124	2443
Central Bedfordshire Early Years	5	174	1	181	8	183	18	232	32	770	13	758
Central Bedfordshire Foster/ Adopter	0	19	0	22	0	24	0	45	0	110	0	100
Alternative Learning Provision- Central	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	33
Bedford Hospitals Trust	0	0	0	0	2	0	5	0	7	0	1	6
Bedfordshire Police	2	3	5	1	4	1	4	2	15	7	21	34
Bedfordshire Youth Offending Service	1	0	0	0	3	0	2	0	6	0	0	0
CCS (Bedfordshire)	1	0	1	0	1	0	3	0	6	0	0	13
CCG (Bedfordshire)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Dentists- Central	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
ELFT	0	0	0	0	11	0	3	0	14	0	9	9

Emergency Services	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	6
Faith	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	4	1	7	0	0
FE /Colleges	0	1	0	623	3	511	0	62	3	1197	4	49
Health	0	10	0	21	1	19	0	31	1	81	3	71
Independent Learners	0	0	0	5	1	2	0	0	1	7	0	1165
NHS Bedfordshire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	26
Other	0	26	0	0	0	0	1	265	1	291	0	381
Parents	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Private/ Independent Organisations	8	224	1	254	6	229	21	267	36	974	15	2072
Probation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
School Governors- Central	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	17
Voluntary/ Charitable Organisations	14	96	6	127	30	189	21	222	71	634	21	692
<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>792</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>1609</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>1580</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>1451</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>5432</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>8678</b>

CI- Virtual Classroom eL- eLearning

### Impact of learning events

#### eLearning

*Highly interactive and was beneficial in giving resources and wider research. (Safeguarding Children Level 1, out of School Club Assistant, Pre-School, CBC)*

*I found this course very detailed, and it has really helped me, furthering my safeguarding knowledge. (Safeguarding Children Level 3, Pre-school practitioner, CBC)*

*I found this course useful and highly informative, especially with links between human domestic abuse and towards animals within the households too. (Understanding Animal Welfare in Violent Homes, IL Officer, Housing, CBC)*

#### Virtual Classroom courses

*First-hand experience and a clear passion to improve the lives of vulnerable children made the presenters extremely engaging. The content was really informative, and my perceptions were challenged giving me a greater understanding of the risks. (Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Practice Development Workshop, Assistant Head Teacher, Primary School BBC)*

*I enjoyed this course – thought provoking. Made me evaluate my practice and actions for extending my involvement of children's voice in TAC meetings etc. (Hearing the Voice of the Child: Recording, Reporting & Care Planning, DSL, Primary School, CBC)*

*I was really useful to gain an understanding of the responsibilities of myself and other agencies and how we can work effectively together to safeguard children. Looking at a real scenario and considering the risk/protective factors was an extremely valuable exercise and will support me in considering different factors. (Working Together to Safeguard Children, Teacher, Academy, CBC)*

*The most useful aspects of the training were: Observation and assessment skills; understanding how to capture the voice of the child during the observation and discussion with the child; pre-verbal communication. I work with early years, and we have a high percentage of children with SEND and EAL. Using the observation and assessment skills in my practice will help me to produce a good report reflecting what I have seen and heard. (Hearing the Voice of the Child: Recording, Reporting & Care Planning, Family Worker, Nursery Luton)*

*I found the first section looking at policy and guidance highly interesting. From this, and being new to the Deputy DSL role, it supported my understanding of how a referral works: the roles and responsibilities of multi agencies. The sharing of ideas from other professionals of what it looks like at their respective settings, further supported my understanding and learning in the procedure of Safeguarding. (Working Together to Safeguard Children. Assistant Head Teacher, Primary School, Luton)*

*I will be developing a supervision policy and contract and will begin implementing safeguarding supervision sessions for my team, which we've not had before. (Safeguarding Supervision Programme (Virtual Classroom), Assistant Headteacher, Primary School, Central Bedfordshire Council)*

*We have updated current safeguarding forms to be clearer of the procedures and time scale of events and have delivered learning back to all staff during our 6 month in-house refresher training. (Working Together to Safeguard Children, Pre-school Manager, CBC)*

*We have talked about looking for the child who others find "difficult." We constantly review record keeping and will be incorporating a new record keeping system. (Working Together to Safeguard Children, Head Teacher, School, Bedford)*

*Supervision meetings are now regularly scheduled and held more formally. (Safeguarding Supervision 2-day Programme, Head Teacher, Primary School, Luton)*

*I attend ICPCs and work closely with children services and this information has enhanced my knowledge, I have also been able to understand the role of each of the different agencies with more clarity (Working Together to Safeguard Children, Victim Engagement Officer, Beds Police)*

*My manager was updating the eSafety policy and invited me to help her. She asked to be eSafety officer as I do a lot of the tech work in pre-school. I am interested in this area but needed some proper training to feel confident in the named role.*

*I really enjoyed the training- lots of info that confirmed good practice already in place. My main learning was around keeping children safe online and how to educate the children around online safety. Really interesting course- the scenarios and resources were great- I have shared these with colleagues and added links to pre-school policies. After the training, I emailed the staff after with some key learning points. (XX shared a copy of this email- it emphasised the roles of early years staff in educating and laying good foundations for online safety.)*

*I have also shared info with parents and created a display for them. I took on board the suggestion of drip-feeding info through rather than just one-off events. I decided that our newsletter will now feature a regular section about digital safety.*

*I loved that the course had a positive spin- some courses just talk about the bad side of being online. I shared the final video with staff to help them see how technology keeps us connected but also to remind them that children live in a digital age, and we have an important role in early education. I reminded staff that we need to make sure that the eSafety books are in continuous provision rather than just brought out for special days. That way we can regularly be talking about online behaviours.*

*Our pre-school staff are on board- they do have some worries because things move fast, and they don't want to make a mistake. I have identified this is a gap in staff skills as they feel quite overwhelmed by the pace of tech so I'm looking for ways to upskill them and build confidence. I am also interested in training on how, as an organisation, we can ensure we are being safe with our tech provision. EG: setting to YouTube Kids not standard YouTube. **(Early Years Practitioner, Digital Technology and Safeguarding Young Children)***

*I booked this training before I started my role as an ISVA alongside other mandatory training for the role as I had some time to undertake training before getting a caseload. I didn't have any particular aims in signing up for the course, I was just taking any opportunities to learn. Wasn't doing the job at the time so didn't have practical cases to draw on.*

*The trainer clearly had a wealth of knowledge and passion for her subject. I liked her presenting style with anecdotes and the learning style worked for me. I found that it built on previous training I had taken around how the baby's and teenager's brains develop. I didn't have a caseload at the time, so I didn't have cases to draw on, but I was able to relate it to my own life experiences. I think this training would enhance the skills of anyone who works with people who have experienced trauma.*

*It's difficult to say specifically how this training has impacted my practice because I was doing ISVA training at the same time, so the course was part of a wider package rather a standalone course. However now that I have a caseload, I am able to use the learning and knowledge from the trauma informed approach in my role, particularly when supporting parents to support their children.*

*I would definitely recommend this course to other colleagues. It was easy to access, there was good technical support, and the admin were very responsive with any issues. **(ISVA Central Bedfordshire, Understanding Sexual Trauma)***



## Appendix D: Board Attendance

Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Board Strategic Meetings 2021-22					
Member	Role/ Agency	June	Sept	Dec	Mar
Alan Caton OBE (AC)	Independent Chair/ Scrutineer, Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board	Y	Y	Y	Y
Andrew Copperwheat (ACo)	Access and Inclusion Manager, Access and Inclusion Service, Central Bedfordshire Council		P	P	
Alison Harding (AH)	Head of Service, Probation Services	TM			
Anne Murray (AM)	Chief Nurse, Bedfordshire, Luton, and Milton Keynes Clinical Commissioning Group	Y	HH	HH	HH
Angela Perry (AP)	Youth Support Service Manager, Youth Support Services, Central Bedfordshire Council	P			
Barbara Rooney (BR)	Public Health Principal, Children & Young People, Central Bedfordshire Council	Y	X	X	Y
Brian Storey (BS)	Head Teacher, Marston Moreteyne VC School	Y	Y	X	Y
David Wright (DW)	Learning Disability and Autism CAMHS Clinical Lead, NHS England, and NHS Improvement – East of England		P		
Debbie Shulver (DS)	Cambridgeshire Community Services				Y
Dee Perkins (DP)	Detective Chief Superintendent, Head of Crime and Public Protection, Bedfordshire Police	ZB	ZB	ZB	Y
Emma Inglis (EI)	Business Support Officer, Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board	Y	Y	Y	Y
Fiona Side	Head of Service 0-12 Family Services, Children's Services, Central Bedfordshire Council	P			
Gemma Reichel	Business Support Officer, Elective Home Education Team, Central Bedfordshire Council	P			
Gurinder Lall (GL)	East London Foundation Trust, Safeguarding Children	MH	Y	Y	X
Helena Hughes (HH)	Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children and Young People in Bedfordshire, Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group	Y	Y	Y	Y
Jackie Edwards (JE)	Chief SEND and Inclusion Officer, Central Bedfordshire Council			P	
Jacqui Bunker-Dare (JBD)	Head of Virtual School, Central Bedfordshire Council			P	
Jacqui Harnett (JH)	Central Bedfordshire Council, Children's Services (Social Care)	P			

Jamie Barton (JB)	Service Manager, Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service	X	X	X	X
Jay Ali (JA)	National Probation Service	TM	Y	X	TM
Joy Piper (JP)	Strategic Manager, Domestic Abuse Team, Central Bedfordshire Council				P
Kate Howard (KH)	Chief Nurse for Safeguarding, Cambridgeshire Community Services	X	Y	VP	DS
Leire Agirre (LA)	Principal Social Worker, Head of Safeguarding & Quality Improvement, Adult Social Care, Central Bedfordshire Council	Y	Y	Y	Y
Linda Bulled (LB)	Lay Member	Y	X	Y	Y
Linda Johnson (LI)	VOCypf representative, Voluntary Sector / Home-Start, Central Bedfordshire	Y	Y	Y	Y
Lisa Robinson	VERU Manager, Bedfordshire Exploitation Lead, Bedfordshire's Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit (VERU)	P			
Liz Lees (LL)	Chief Nurse, Luton and Dunstable Hospital and Director of Nursing and Patient Services, Bedford Hospital	TMD	X	X	TMD
Maura Hubbard	Named Professional for Safeguarding Children, East London NHS Foundation Trust	Y	GL	GL	X
Mia Tomlinson (MT)	Exploitation & Missing Coordinator, Children's Services, Central Bedfordshire Council			P	
Nicola Griggs (NG)	School Attendance Officer, Access and Inclusion Service, Central Bedfordshire Council	P			
Pat Jennings (PJ)	Head of Bedfordshire Youth Offending Service	Y	Y	X	Y
Phillipa Scott (PS)	Strategic Safeguarding Partnership Manager, Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board	Y	Y		
Rachel Mason (RM)	Deputy Head Teacher, Queensbury Academy	X	Y	Y	Y
Rachel Williams (RW)	Practice Manager, South Localities: Early Help, Children with Disabilities and Leaving Care, Children's Services, Central Bedfordshire Council	P			
Robert Hulatt (RH)	Bedfordshire Fire Service	X	Y	Y	Y
Ruth Coals (RC)	Head of Professional Standards and Principal Social Worker, Children's Services, Central Bedfordshire Council	SR	Y	Y	Y
Sacha Rymell (SR)	Assistant Director, Early Help and Safeguarding, Children's Services, Central Bedfordshire Council	Y	Y	Y	Y

Sally Harvey	Head of Service Locality North, Children's Services, Central Bedfordshire Council	P	P		
Sarah Ferguson (SF)	Deputy Director of Children's Services, Central Bedfordshire Council	SH	X	Y	Y
Sarah Mortimer (SM)	Vice Principal, Central Bedfordshire College	Y	Y	X	X
Sarah Pickford (SP)	Cambridgeshire Community Services			P	
Sarah Wilson (SW)	Operations Director, East London NHS Foundation Trust, East London Foundation Trust	Y	Y	Y	Y
Sophie Adams (SAd)	Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Strategic Manager (Secondment)				Y
Stephen Lagan	Allegation & Review Manager, Conference and Review Service, Children's Services, Central Bedfordshire Council	X	P	X	X
Stuart Auger (SA)	Homes, Roads and Leisure Safety Manager, Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service	X	Y	RH	RH
Cllr Sue Clarke (SC)	Executive Member for Children's Services, Central Bedfordshire Council	Y	Y	Y	X
Sue Harrison (SH)	Director of Children's Services, Central Bedfordshire Council	Y	X	SF	
Thomas Moreton (TM)	Bedfordshire Probation	Y	JA	X	Y
Timothy Bull (TB)	Associate Director for Safeguarding Children, East London Foundation Trust	MH	GL	GL	X
Toni Marie Doherty (TMD)	Head of Safeguarding, Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust	Y	X	X	Y
Vijay Patel (VP)	Cambridgeshire Community Services	X	Y	Y	DS
Zara Brown (ZB)	Detective Superintendent, Head of Public Protection Unit, Bedfordshire Police	Y	Y	Y	DP
<p>* denotes organisation is represented by an alternate colleague. Initials noted.  P- presenting agenda item.</p>					

## Appendix E: Independent scrutiny

31. The role of independent scrutiny is to provide assurance in judging the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area, including arrangements to identify and review serious child safeguarding cases. This independent scrutiny will be part of a wider system which includes the independent inspectorates' single assessment of the individual safeguarding partners and the Joint Targeted Area Inspections.

32. Whilst the decision on how best to implement a robust system of independent scrutiny is to be made locally, safeguarding partners should ensure that the scrutiny is objective, acts as a constructive critical friend and promotes reflection to drive continuous improvement.

33. The independent scrutineer should consider how effectively the arrangements are working for children and families as well as for practitioners, and how well the safeguarding partners are providing strong leadership and agree with the safeguarding partners how this will be reported.

34. The published arrangements should set out the plans for independent scrutiny; how the arrangements will be reviewed; and how any recommendations will be taken forward. This might include, for example, the process and timescales for ongoing review of the arrangements.

35. Safeguarding partners should also agree arrangements for independent scrutiny of the report they must publish at least once a year.

*(Source: Working Together 2018)*