

**City of York**  
**Safeguarding Children Partnership**



City of York Safeguarding Children Partnership

# Annual Report

2020/2021



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## ■ Executive Summary

This is the second annual report of the City of York Safeguarding Children Partnership (CYSCP). This annual report covers the period from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021 and sets out the work that has been undertaken by partners and the subgroups of the CYSCP during that time including its key achievements.

During the past year, we have gone from strength to strength as a Partnership. We commissioned an external review of our partnership arrangements which has seen the implementation of a new streamlined governance structure. In addition, we were pleased to welcome Dr Maggie Atkinson in September 2020 as the new Independent Scrutineer. Dr Maggie Atkinson brings a wealth of experience to role, having served as the Children's Commissioner for England between 2010 and 2015, after having roles in teaching and local government.

At the beginning of March 2020, we faced the start of a global pandemic, which saw a new virus Covid-19. Nationally, the country was put into a lockdown and meant that people had to remain at home. As a Partnership, we responded quickly and adapted our ways of working by working remotely and virtually. During 2020/21, we have continued to work together, learn from each other and have shared best practice.

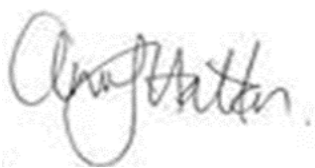
As well as maintaining our links with other Boards and Partnerships to ensure that **'Safeguarding is Everyone's Business'** (Working Together, 2018), an excellent example of where Partners, Boards and Partnerships came together virtually was during Safeguarding Week in 2020.

Our greatest asset during this challenging period has been our incredible safeguarding workforce, whom have tirelessly worked throughout these difficult times. All of our services have adapted to ensure that children, families and communities have been supported throughout.

We have ensured that schools have remained open for those children whom are vulnerable and for those children whose parent/carer is a key worker staff. Partners have also worked together to ensure that there have been bespoke support packages for those children who are vulnerable and at most risk.

We are now currently working towards our recovery phases and our ways of working will continue to adapt during the easing of lockdown restrictions.

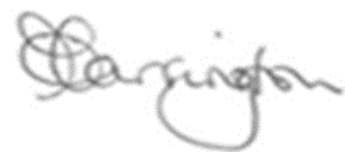
As a partnership, we recognise the progress that has been made during 2020/21 and we will continue to work together to meet our priorities during 2021/22.



**Amanda Hatton**  
Director of Children's  
Service, City of York Council



**Annette Anderson**  
Assistant Chief Constable,  
North Yorkshire Police



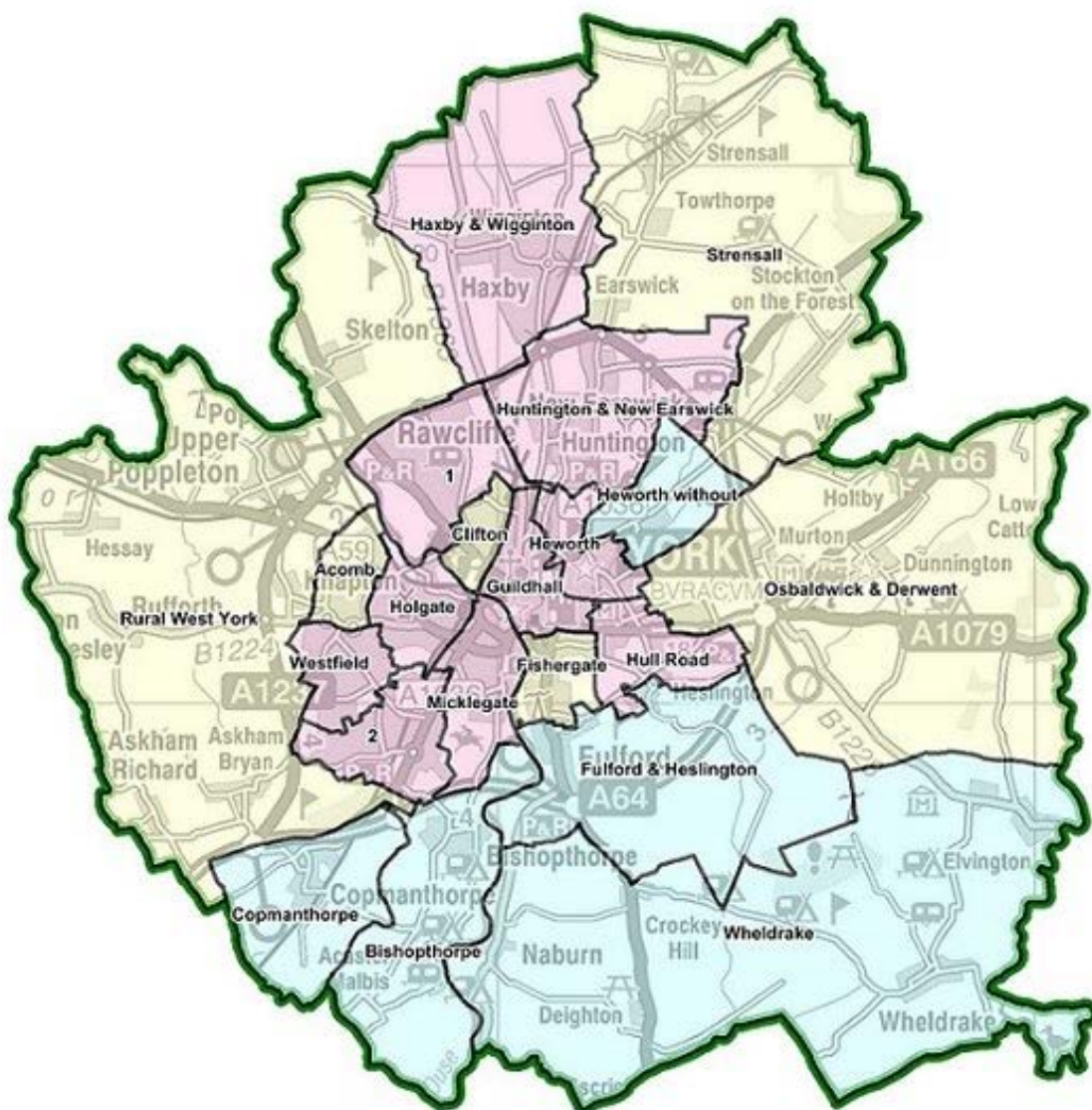
**Michelle Carrington**  
Executive Director of Quality  
and Nursing, NHS Vale of York  
Clinical Commissioning Group

## ■ Introduction

York is a cathedral city and unitary authority area in North Yorkshire. Located at the confluence of the Rivers Ouse and Foss, it is known for its famous historical landmarks such as York Minster and the city walls, as well as a variety of cultural and sporting activities, which makes it a popular tourist destination. The local authority is the City of York Council, a single tier governing body responsible for providing all local services and facilities throughout the city.

The population of the council area which includes nearby villages is 210,618 ([ONS population estimates](#)).

- Children aged 0 – 15 years = 32,822 (15.6%)
- Median age = 37.7
- Density per sq KM = 775
- Hectares = 27,201



## ■ Overview of Data

### Education

69 schools

31 academies 51 primaries 9 secondary 6 independent 2 special 1 PRU

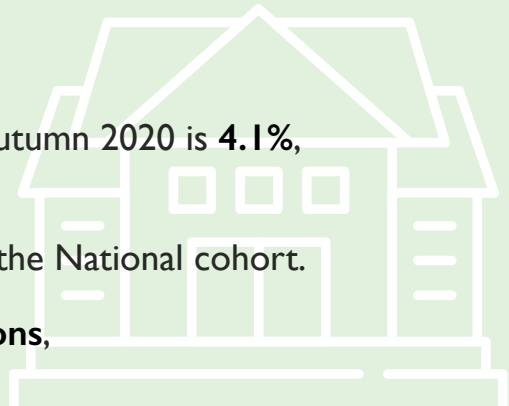
% pupils attending good or outstanding schools = **91%**

% year 12 – 13 NEETS = **1.9%**

The overall absence from the City of Yorks schools for autumn 2020 is **4.1%**, which is **0.9% lower** than the national average of **5.0%**.

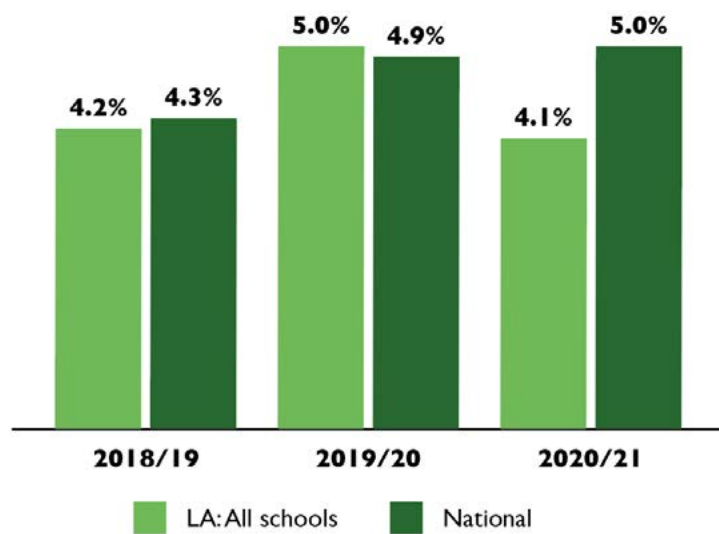
This is equivalent to **26,250 fewer** missed sessions than the National cohort.

Pupils within City of York missed an average of **5.2 sessions**, this is **1.1 fewer** than the Nationals cohort.



City of York schools have been better than the National average **2 times** in the last 3 academic year(s) for Overall Absence.

### Absence - Autumn: Overall Absence | Trend



### Safeguarding

During 2020/21 there were **7624** contacts to Children's Services via the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

2018/19 = **5523** 2019/20 = **7777** 2020/21 = **7624**

**Children subject to a Child Protection Plan per 10,000**

2017/18 = **45** 2018/19 = **43.51** 2019/20 = **64.59** 2020/21 = **33.51**

**Children in Care per 10k**

2017/18 = **53** 2018/19 = **56.22** 2019/20 = **70.81** 2020/21 = **75.68**

The impact of Covid-19 on demand has been significant throughout 2020/2021. During the initial onset of Covid-19 and subsequent lockdowns, Children's Services saw an initial decrease in referrals with subsequent spike in referrals directly after lockdown measures eased.

- During the first lockdown (from March 2020), there was a significant drop in referrals to Children's Social Care. Over the course of the first lockdown and into the autumn, the number of referrals steadily increased. The increase in referrals in this time broadly matched trajectories expected in the modelling undertaken at this time (National Performance and Information Managers Group NPIMG data). Demand for early help increased significantly during this time but this may have also reflected other forms of early help not being as available during the first lockdown period.
- During the second lockdown (Dec 2020), the number of referrals dipped slightly. The drop may have only been slight as a result of schools remaining open during this lockdown period. Referrals did increase in December 2020, as is normal for this time of year, however they were below typical levels.
- With the onset of the third national lockdown and closure of schools, the number of referrals dropped significantly again. However, the dip was not as pronounced as in the first national lockdown. As in the first lockdown, referrals increased month on month throughout the lockdown. In the most recent lock down, an increase in referrals has occurred at a faster rate. Beyond the number of referrals, there is feedback from the MASH that suggests the complexity of referrals has also increased over the course of the year.

There is no sign of demand reducing at the MASH or the complexity of some cases coming and it is felt that this could be attributed to Covid-19 as not all children and young people have been visible to all universal services.

Beyond Covid-19, we can see the impact of our continuing improvement activity. This system recalibration has seen some changes in the composition of where and how children are supported in the system. Initially, this saw a reduction in the number of children on Child in Need plans and an increase in the number of children on child protection plans. These were young people who had experienced drift and were not receiving the correct level of service at a Child in Need level and as such have had to step-up. Following this phase of our recalibration, the number of children on child protection plans has reduced and is now back within target ranges. We are currently now experiencing a higher than normal number of children and young people in our care system. This increase is attributed to our improvement activity and has now levelled out.

#### **Percentage of Child Protection Plans due to:**

Neglect = **50%** Sexual Abuse = **12.9%** Emotional abuse = **35.48%** Physical Abuse = **7.26%**

The Partnership is aware of the high incidence of neglect being the cause of a Child Protection Plan being issued, and has engaged on a review and re-write of the multi-agency neglect strategy.

### Factors identified in single assessments - totals for year:

Other = 824	Learning disability = 91	Young carer = 12
Mental Health = 424	Physical Disability = 60	Missing = 12
Domestic Abuse = 300	Sexual Abuse = 43	Gangs = 8
Emotional Abuse = 227	Socially unacceptable behaviour = 38	UASC = 4
Physical Abuse = 180	Self-Harm = 29	Privately fostered = 3
Drug misuse = 175	Child Sexual Exploitation = 19	Abuse linked to faith or belief = 3
Alcohol misuse = 168		FGM = 1
Neglect = 139		Trafficking = 1

## ■ Key Achievements 2020/21

The CYSCP have continuously worked together throughout 2020-21 and have progressed a number of key pieces of work, including:

- Review of the Partnership
- Learning Practices from Covid-19
- Review of CYSCP communications
- Child Exploitation including the development of the [Adolescent Strategy](#)
- Trusted Relationships Programme
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Further information about our achievements can be found within this report.

## Review of the Partnership Arrangements

The Children Act 2004, as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the associated statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) replaced Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) with new local multi-agency safeguarding partnership arrangements (MASA).

The new MASA arrangements placed new duties on the three Statutory Safeguarding Partners (namely: the Local Authority, the Police and the Clinical Commissioning Group) in local areas, to make arrangements to work together and with other relevant agencies locally, to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area.

Within the City of York, the three partners were identified as:

- City of York Council
- North Yorkshire Police
- Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group

Each local area had to inform the Department of Education (DfE) of their MASA arrangements and publish these by September 2019. The City of York were part of the national Early Adopter's scheme which meant that the CYSCP was established in April 2019; the CYSCP has been in existence longer than many other Partnerships in England.

The CYSCP subsequently commissioned an Independent Consultant to undertake a review of the Partnership. The Terms of Reference for the review focussed on how well the new requirements are currently fulfilled, one full year into the Partnership's operation; and to advise on any necessary improvements and adjustments that may be required.

The final review report was presented at the Partnership Meeting in April 2020 which outlined areas of strengths and areas of improvement. Within the report, a number of recommendations were made which the Partnership agreed to take forward and implement. This included a review of the over-complex governance arrangements of the CYSCP.

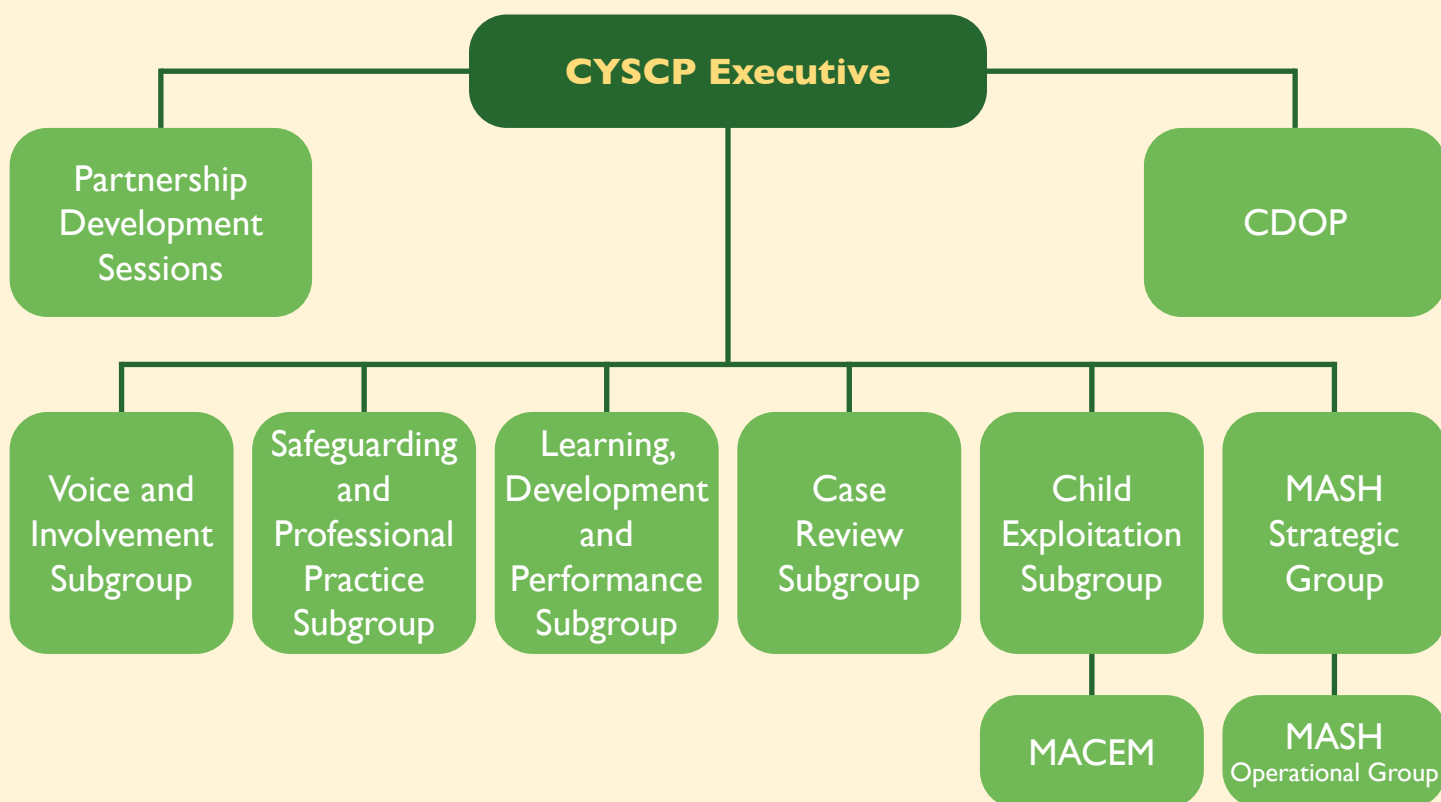
The three statutory partners agreed for the CYSCP Interim Business Manager to progress the review of the current governance structure. As part of the review of the governance structure, feedback was sought from partners about the current safeguarding arrangements and the interface between the various Boards and Partnerships within the City of York.

A consultation with partners and stakeholders took place between April 2020 and July 2020 where further feedback from partners was gained. The Interim Business Manager, CYSCP also observed a further cycle of CYSCP meetings during Quarter one and reviewed the recommendations from review of the CYSCP.

The final draft governance re-structure proposal was circulated to partners for feedback/ comments between July 2020 and August 2020 and the final report was presented at the Partnership meeting in October 2020 where it was ratified. With the addition of MASH Strategic and MASH Operational Groups aligned within the CYSCP structure in May 2021.



The new structure is outlined below:



Following agreement of the new CYSCP structure, an implementation period took place between October 2020 and December 2020 which included:

- the dis-establishment of the previous structure and ensuring any outstanding actions were transferred to the new structure
- identifying new chairs for the subgroups
- developing new terms of reference including membership
- setting up new cycle of meetings
- developing assurance templates
- updating of CYSCP documents

The first round of meetings within the new structure took place in January 2021.

## Development Days

As part of the new governance structure, the CYSCP saw the introduction of twice yearly CYSCP Development Days which provides an opportunity for all relevant agencies of the CYSCP to come together. The first Development Day was held virtually on 27th November 2020. This event was well attended and was represented by approx 45 multi-agency partners. A presentation was given by the Chair of the Care Leavers Forum and the event consisted of breakout sessions which asked attendees to discuss what had worked well as a partnership and what they envisaged the key priorities should be for the CYSCP Business Plan.

## ■ Systemic Practice

Within the City of York, it is now over 12 months since we began our journey in developing and implementing our practice framework. We chose to focus on systemic practice and on training the whole of the social work workforce in systemic theory and models by 2022 and to include our partners and the families we work with in understanding systemic practice ensuring that we are all consistently 'speaking the same language'.

Since January 2020 we have:

- developed and agreed our practice framework,
- developed a systemic pledge, which now appears in our recruitment page and in other significant documents.
- Undertaken an initial survey monkey to identify what knowledge colleagues have around systemic practice in order to support the development of our implementation plan and measure our success in the future.
- Established a multi-agency implementation group.
- Delivered a report to Children's Social Care Improvement Board with contributions from all focus group members which included the implementation timeline.
- Delivered a presentation of the implementation plan and practice framework to extended senior management team.
- Trained two cohorts of over 50 employees, including Social Workers, Managers, Independent Reviewing Officers and Senior Managers in systemic practice.
- Included systemic practice sessions into our social work academy.
- Delivered 7 systemic practice workshops to colleagues and partners.
- Shared our knowledge, systemic tools and our understanding of how systemic practice impacts positively on our work with families and importantly on outcomes.
- Developed a web page for partners sharing our knowledge of systemic practice, on the [CYSCP website](#).
- Updated Children's Social Care audit tool to ensure that it includes systemic language and prompts to identify systemic practice.
- Updated personal/professional supervision template to ensure that it captures improved outcomes as the result of systemic practice.
- We are currently updating the multi-agency referral form to include systemic thinking.
- Supported 2 POD's of student social workers in 2020/21 (10 students).
- Welcomed 5 systemically trained NQSW into the workforce and have recently secured agreement for two PODs for 2021/22.

## ■ Covid-19

At the beginning of March 2020, we faced the start of a global pandemic, which saw a new virus Covid-19. Nationally, the country was put into a lockdown and meant that people had to remain at home.

As a Partnership, we responded quickly and adapted our ways of working by working remotely and virtually. During 2020/21, we have continued to work together, learn from each other and have shared best practice.

The CYSCP meetings continued to meet as all face to face meetings were moved to be hosted on virtual platforms. The majority of our partners worked from home and continue to do so. Organisations adapted their service offer in order to ensure that children, young people and their families were continued to be supported. Examples include:

- Schools remained open to those who were deemed vulnerable and for key worker children
- Home visits still continued/practices remained the same to ensure that those most vulnerable were safeguarded
- Services explored different social media platforms to engage with children and young people such as WhatsApp and the use of telephone communication with young people increased
- Increased attendance by both professionals and families at meetings, including Child Protection Meetings, as these were being held virtually
- Some agencies reported that the implementation of telephone assessments/triage meant that this freed up capacity
- Organisations reported partnership communication, knowledge of partner's services and continuation of safeguarding arrangements as being a benefit during the pandemic

## Priority for 2021/22

As we continue to navigate through the pandemic it is important that we learn as a partnership. Therefore, it has been agreed for the CYSCP to undertake an evaluation of the impact of Covid-19, gaining the views of professional, young people and their families in order to understand the benefits, challenges and next steps. An evaluation is planned to take place between 26th April 2021 and 18th May 2021 and the findings will be shared once completed.

## ■ Young People Working Throughout the Pandemic

### Show Me That I Matter (SMTIM) and I Still Matter (ISM)

When the global Covid-19 pandemic struck in March 2020, there was concern around the safeguarding implications of children and young people being 'locked down' and hidden from the view of practitioners. There was also concern around the 'hidden harms' of the virus on children and young people – the impact on their mental health and wellbeing of both the isolation of lockdown and anxiety about living through a global pandemic.

However, our partners have found that children and young people are far more resilient than was imagined and that some positive outcomes have come out of the past year.

When lockdown was introduced on 23rd March 2020, The Show Me That I Matter (SMTIM) and I Still Matter (ISM) both continued operating but remotely. Young people requested an increase in frequency of the meetings and, during the strict lockdown from March to June 2020, meetings were taking place on a weekly basis.

In June 2020, the frequency was reduced to once every 2 weeks and from September 2020 the meetings returned to once monthly.

The SMTIM and ISM forums used the pandemic as an opportunity to review the quality of support children and young people in care or care leavers receive and to share their views with decision makers.

The impact of Covid-19 has remained a standing item on the agenda for SMTIM and ISM meetings. In April 2021, the following feedback gathered between January 2021 and April 2021 was shared with decision makers:

- SMTIM feel well supported by social workers and can't think of anything they should be doing differently.
- Care leavers feel they've had good support from the Pathway Team.
- Young people in care and care leavers value the phone calls and video calls from workers.

In April 2020, SMTIM together with Speak Up, Children's Rights and Advocacy Service, launched the Hidden Heroes campaign. The purpose of the campaign was to give young people the opportunity to say thank you and raise awareness of the roles and individuals who may be were not receiving publicity during the pandemic. Young people were encouraged to create a piece of artwork for their hidden hero which was then shared on social media. The campaign was very successful and saw young people thank their families, foster carers, dance teachers, advocates, independent visitors, sixth form teachers, pathway workers and more.

## York SEN and Disability Information Advice Support Service (SENDIASS)

York SEN and Disability Information Advice Support Service (SENDIASS) listened to the voices and needs of young people to provide flexible forms of support that allowed them to also engage in ways that suit them. As a result, SENDIASS have embraced new ways of connecting with children and young people through using interactive platforms such as WhatsApp. This has proved particularly useful for harder to reach young people, who don't always feel confident with face to face conversations and discussing their emotions and this is a participation tool which will continue to be offered when the pandemic is over.

SENDIASS have learnt a number of things about engaging young people online which has helped successful engagement and found that it's important to agree with young people what they feel most comfortable with before the meeting. Some young people start with joining audio only and then video and others prefer to use the text or speech function.

Work has also been carried out to develop a selection of alternative resources and methods of communication so that the SENDIASS team can seek, value and act upon the views and wishes of children and young people with learning disabilities that are often harder to reach and excluded from consultation, so that they can contribute to decisions and processes that impact their lives.

### Mind of My Own App

Mind of My Own App is a co-designed, user-friendly app recently commissioned by City of York Council that helps children and young people express their views, wishes and feelings in a fun, interactive and digital way. The app is an innovative way to gather children and young people's views with SEND using digital questions and visual representation which helps children and young people with communication difficulties to communicate more effectively. Data can be viewed and downloaded for their My Support Plan or EHC Plan.

York SENDIASS have also joined Instagram, [@sendiassny](#) to connect with as many young people in York as possible to offer alternative methods of seeking support and advice with regards to SEN matters and to provide them with a safe, inclusive and confidential space to share their views.

## ■ Social Media

### Twitter

The CYSCP Twitter account provides regular updates on local and national news, resources, initiatives, policy and guidance which you can find by following us on Twitter [@YorkSCP](#).

The CYSCP Twitter account has over 1030 followers which includes professionals, schools, businesses, other safeguarding children partnerships and members of the public. The CYSCP's Twitter feed is used to provide important information such as changes to policies and procedures as well as links to information and resources. It also promotes campaigns and activities of partners and other safeguarding organisations. Over the past year, CYSCP tweets have been viewed over 400,000 times by users and the [@YorkSCP](#) twitter account has promoted various children's safeguarding themes.

## E-Newsletter

A new CYSCP newsletter was launched in September 2020. This electronic monthly newsletter is now sent out monthly and contains useful information for professionals with contributions from our partner agencies. Previously, the newsletter was sent out in word format on a quarterly basis.

However, due to the pandemic and current working practices, the CYSCP Business Unit reviewed the way in which we communicate and disseminate information to our partners, stakeholders and members of the public.

The aim of the newsletters is to improve our communication and engagement with our partners, professionals and stakeholders across the city of York and to keep them up to date with the latest developments in safeguarding children and young people in York. Professionals need to [sign up](#) to receive the newsletter via the CYSCP website and at the present time approximately 540 individuals have signed up to receive this.

Further information, including how to receive the CYSCP Newsletter can be found on the [CYSCP website here](#). Partners can also contact the CYSCP Business Unit for content to be included within our newsletter at: [CYSKP@york.gov.uk](mailto:CYSKP@york.gov.uk).

## CYSCP Website

During 2020/21, the CYSCP website has been updated and improved. All information on the professional's webpages have been reviewed. There is now a latest news section which is regularly updated and this information is promoted also on twitter and via the newsletter. The CYSCP website contains a wealth of information and averages approximately 25,900 hits per month. The Concerned about a Child page alone averages over 1850 hits per month. During 2010/21, the CYSCP have also continued to support a number of campaigns. Some of these include:

- MASH Awareness Week
- Partnership Information Sharing Form
- Back to School Safely
- The Children's Society Look Closer Campaign
- Modern Day Slavery Week
- NSPCC Look Sing Say Play
- Hate Crime Awareness Week
- Systemic Practice 'Every Conversation Starts with a Child'
- Adolescent Week 'My teenage years'
- Wellbeing Week

The CYSCP Business Unit have made significant progress to review and update the content on the CYSCP website. A number of pages have required a full refresh and some of the pages are still under review. New pages have been developed such as the [Coronavirus Pages](#), [Bereavement Page](#) and the [York Services for Children and Young People Page](#).

The CYSCP Business Unit have linked in with the City of York, Youth Council who have reviewed the [young person's mental health & wellbeing page](#) and the [young person's child exploitation page](#) on the CYSCP website. It has been agreed that the Youth Council will also review other pages within the children & young people's section on the website.

The CYSCP Business Unit have made improvements to the way in which we communicate with our partners, stakeholders and members of the public. Examples of the changes are below:

- A [CYSCP Latest News page](#) has been created which provides information/updates about the latest developments in safeguarding children & young people in the City of York.
- A new [CYSCP Campaigns Page](#) which provides information pertaining to various national and local campaigns the CYSCP and wider partners have supported and continue to support.

## ■ Campaigns

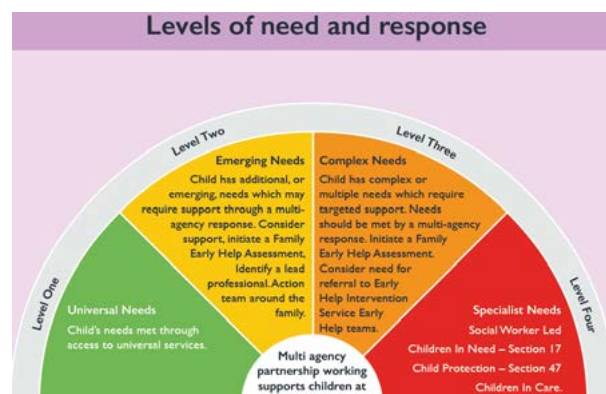
In addition to improving communications the CYSCP have supported and developed a number of campaigns during 2020/21:

### York MASH: Safeguarding Children Together Campaign (1st June – 5th June 2020)

Monday 1st June - Friday 5th June 2020 saw the virtual launch of the York MASH: Safeguarding Children Together Campaign. The partnership developed a series of key messages, a briefing pack for wider dissemination by partners and a COMMS Plan which supported the virtual launch of this campaign. The awareness campaign aimed to highlight the work of the MASH in York, the new multi-agency level of needs document (threshold document), the multi-agency referral form and the multi-agency response form.

The campaign was evaluated and following visits were made to the CYSCP webpages and twitter:

- The MASH Awareness tweets were seen on the CYSCP Twitter account by over 74,000 users visits to the landing page on the CYSCP website
- 2000 visits to the CYSCP Landing Page
- 1,400 visits to the 'concerned about a child page' on the CYSCP website
- The Threshold document has been downloaded 3892 times until the end of March 2021.
- The referral form has been downloaded 3723 and the referral response form has been downloaded 968 times until the end of March 2021.



## Safeguarding Week (22nd June – 26th June 2020)

The North Yorkshire and City of York Safeguarding Adults Boards, Safeguarding Children Partnerships and Community Safety Partnerships worked together to deliver a virtual awareness raising campaign on how to report abuse of children, young people and adults. Safeguarding Week has previously involved local events for professionals and members of the public, however this is the first year that only a virtual campaign has taken place, due to restrictions around Covid-19.

During the week (22nd - 26th June), social media was used to promote awareness to the public and professionals, to remind people that **“Safeguarding is everybody’s business”** and that concerns about abuse or neglect should continue to be reported to the respective Local Authority as normal during the Covid-19 pandemic.

A coordinated social media campaign made use of, and sign posted to, existing resources. As part of this **#TellUsYourConcerns** was used during Safeguarding Week 2020.

The weekly schedule across North Yorkshire and York had a consistent theme, *“How to report a concern”* on social media each day, and also focused on a different safeguarding area as follows:

- How to report a safeguarding concern
- Domestic Abuse
- Keeping Safe Online: Fraud/Scamming, and online abuse
- Radicalisation, Extremism and Prevent
- County Lines/ Cuckooing
- Mental health and Wellbeing

The CYSCP put out 14 tweets for Safeguarding Week with the hashtags **#TellUsYourConcerns**, **#LetsTalkAboutIt** and **#YorkMASH** on [@YorkSCP](https://twitter.com/YorkSCP)

The campaign resulted in:

- 10390 impressions (i.e. times when tweets appeared to Twitter users) during the 5-day period
- 7 links being followed, an average of 1 per day
- 13 retweets, an average of 3 retweets per day
- 3 likes, an average of 1 like per day
- An engagement rate during the week of 0.7%



## Partnership Intelligence Form Campaign (6th July – 10th July 2020)

The Partnership Intelligence Form gives professionals a safe and direct way to share information with Police. This information is critical in developing a clear picture of local issues and wider community related problems, which can inform Police and Partner actions to reduce threat, risk and harm. This form has been recently reviewed and updated and is used across North Yorkshire and City of York Children Partnerships and Adult Boards. A task and finish group across North Yorkshire and City of York Children Partnerships was established to develop a COMMS Plan around the promotion of the Intelligence Sharing Form. The virtual launch took place during Monday 6th July – Friday 10th July 2020.

## Back to School Safely (31st August – 4th September 2020)

The City of York Council ran a campaign promoting Back to School Safely week commencing 31st August 2020. The CYSCP supported this campaign during this week.

## The Children's Society Look Closer Campaign (14th September – 20th September 2020)

The Children's Society ran the #LookCloser campaign during the week 14th – 20th September 2020 to raise public awareness of child exploitation and abuse, with a particular focus on public spaces. The CYSCP supported this campaign, which raised public awareness, informed the public how to identify exploitation and how to report it.

## Modern Slavery Campaign (14th October – 20th October 2020)

Anti-Slavery Day, 18th October 2020, provided an opportunity to raise awareness of human trafficking and modern slavery, and encourage government, local authorities, companies, charities and individuals to do what they can to address the problem.

The North Yorkshire and City of York Modern Slavery Partnership ran a campaign between Wednesday 14th and Wednesday 20th October 2020 to raise awareness regarding human trafficking and modern slavery.



## NSPCC Look Say Sing Play (15th October 2020)

The NSPCC launched their Look, Say, Sing, Play Campaign on **Thursday 15 October 2020, online via Zoom.**

The campaign was aimed at parents to help them build their baby's brain and promote positive attachment. The CYSCP supported this campaign to try and reach all professionals working with babies, young children and families to share the campaign resources, to talk more about the brain science behind this initiative and to inform you as to how the campaign will be rolled out across the city.



## Hate Crime Awareness Week Campaign – #helpnothate2020 (Monday 12th October – Friday 16th October)

Hate Crime Week is a national week of action to encourage local authorities, key partners and communities affected by hate crime to work together to tackle local hate crime issues.

The North Yorkshire and the City of York Hate Crime Working Group (HCWG) utilised this week, Monday 12th October – Friday 16th October, to promote and raise awareness on how to report Hate Crime/Mate Crime incidents, along with supporting projects and services available to those who may suffer incidents of Hate Crime/Mate Crime in North Yorkshire and the City of York.



## Systemic Practice “Every Conversation starts with the Child” (Monday 2nd November – Friday 6th November)

Monday 2nd November 2020 – Friday 6th November saw the virtual launch of the Systemic Practice Framework Document. The awareness campaign aimed to highlight Systemic Practice and the newly developed practice framework guidance.

Although this is a City of York Council Children's Social Care document, it was developed with Multi-Agency Partners and envisaged that partners will adopt the framework and embed the principles to ensure the best outcomes for children and young people in the City.

Regular Systemic Practice blogs are added to the CYSCP website for all professionals and front line workers to access.



## Adolescent Week “My Teenage Years” (Monday 23rd November – Friday 27th November 2020)

The CYSCP ran a campaign for Adolescent Week during Monday 23rd November 2020 – Friday 27th November 2020. This campaign also launched the newly developed Adolescent Strategy.

In addition, during that week safeguarding partners held a series of workshops/briefings for professionals working with teenagers including:

- A Young Person presenting ‘What makes a difference to young people, communication and relationships from their lived experience’
- Working with teenagers with autism
- Teenagers impacted by drug and alcohol use
- Young people who go missing
- Adolescent Strategy
- Working with Adopted Teenagers
- Preparing for Adulthood for young people with additional needs including Q&A
- Graded Care Profile Training, including new resources for working with adolescents
- Supporting Young people to reduce sexually transmitted infection risk.
- Contextual Safeguarding with Teenagers - What does it mean in reality?
- The Adolescent Brain and an overview of the School Nursing Service
- Young People and Pregnancy
- A Q&A on Independent Visitors and The Trusted Relationships Programme



Dez Holmes from Research in Practice also provided a key note speech on Adolescent Safeguarding.

All the workshops/events were free and open to all our multi-agency partners within the City of York.

## Wellbeing Week (Monday 18th January – Friday 22nd January 2021)

City of York Council promoted the importance of wellbeing for staff, week commencing Monday 18th January 2021.

To coincide with this, sessions took place which were also available and open for partners. These included:

- Physiological Wellbeing – The Biology behind too much stress which was delivered by North Yorkshire Police
- Mindfulness delivered by City of York Council
- Thinking about wellbeing when working with families delivered by Institute of Family Therapy

## ■ Voice of the Child

### Every Conversation Starts with the Child

During 2020/21 the Voice and Involvement group focussed on:

- Adapting existing voice mechanisms to operate in line with Covid-19 restrictions.
- Reviewing collectively how the Voice and Involvement Group should operate in line with Covid-19 restrictions.
- Developing work to ensure children and young people are involved and have a voice any Covid-19 recovery work

Many partners adapted existing groups to meet successfully virtually. There was a mixed picture from partners about the tools available to them to enable this happen and it was also reported that some families had challenges of ensuring equipment for remote engagement was available.

In some cases, engagement work had not been able to be adapted to virtual delivery and work continued as to how these could be adapted or safely reintroduced in line with updated Covid-19 guidance.

Work progressed to fully roll out use of remote engagement through the Mind of My Own app, to enhance the remote engagement of children and young people at an early help and social care level.

A task and finish group was established to review delivery of the current strategy and to draft a refreshed strategy.

Members of the Voice and Involvement group examined how individually and collectively we understood if children and young people felt safe. There was a mixed picture of how different services and agencies approached this issue.

In some cases, it was clearly part of individual direct work with children and young people and, in some service areas, not directly providing safeguarding interventions individual assessments did not explore children's perceptions of safety.

The group agreed to develop a city wide set of principles to help develop a more common approach to gathering views on children and young people's perceptions of being 'safe'.

## CYSCP Voice and Involvement Strategy Task and Finish Group

A Voice and Involvement Strategy task and finish group was established in September 2020 to review and update the existing City of York Voice and Involvement Strategy 2017 – 2020, which sets out a commitment to ensuring that children and young people have a voice and are involved in decision-making, planning, commissioning, design and delivery of services.

It was agreed that partners, children and young people be given the opportunity to evaluate the existing Voice Strategy and that this feedback would aid the development of the new Strategy and that the new Voice Strategy should be developed using a rights based approach.

A Survey Monkey tool was developed to evaluate how well partners across the city have delivered against the priorities set out in the current strategy. Partners are asked to rate progress against commitments made at the beginning of the strategy. A simplified Survey Monkey tool was developed for Children and Young People to feedback on the headlines of the strategy and was circulated to youth groups and schools including Early Years settings.

Work is ongoing to get support from the CYSCP Executive to progress a three year programme of work across the partnership to deliver this strategy and realise a shared rights respecting approach for York.

## Priorities for Voice 2021/22

### Pre and Non-verbal Resources Task Group

Engaging with pre and non-verbal children and young people has been identified as an area of weakness from feedback and audit and so the CYSCP Voice and Involvement Group tasked the CYSCP Business Unit with establishing a Pre and Non-verbal Resources Task Group.

This group was established in March 2021 and included representation from the Deaf and Hearing Support Team, Special Educational Needs Service, Children's Rights and Advocacy Service, Early Years, Local Area teams, the Speech and Language Therapy Service and the CYSCP Business Unit.

This group over the next few months aims to:

- Identify where the gaps in pre and non-verbal expertise currently exist;
- Understand where our experts in this are and how we can share their expertise or resources across the partnership;
- Ultimately develop a toolbox on the CYSCP website of resources to engage pre/non-verbal children or jointly develop a training package using some identified experts;
- Promote those resources or development sessions across the Partnership, to change mind set and culture around pre and non-verbal children and young people.

## ■ Child Exploitation

The Child Exploitation (CE) Sub Group is responsible to the Safeguarding Children Partnership for overview of inter-agency working in all areas of CE including Contextual Safeguarding and County Lines. The Group is also responsible for the development and implementation of the Safeguarding Children Partnership CE and Adolescent Strategy Work Plan.

### What we did

In 2019 – 20, the Exploitation team was set up within Children Social Care, to ensure those at risk of exploitation receive a targeted response with a high level of support and intervention. We updated the Strategy and Work Plan, the CE Group received regular reports and updates from the MACEM meeting, which considers some of our most at risk children and young people and reports from the risk management Missing Panel, that meets weekly to consider children and young people who go missing from home, the reasons why they go missing and what we can do to try and keep them safe. We continue to pilot the HMO Trusted Relationship Mentor support scheme and have been successful in a new bid to work with the Home office around the NRM multi-agency process.

### What we will do

In 2020/21, we will continue to conduct regular audits of cases where children and young people have been exposed to or at risk of CE. We will continue to assess the local risks that our children and young people are facing, including Harmful Sexual Behaviour and we will make sure all our partners and people that work for them are aware of what CE is and for them to be constantly vigilant so that we can keep our children and young people as safe as possible.

## North Yorkshire and City of York Trusted Relationships Project

### Emerging Outcomes and Achievements:

Over the course of 2020/21, there has been the emergence of some outstanding outcomes, good practice examples and the project has attracted both local and national acclaim:

**Independent Evaluation:** An overarching aim of local Trusted Relationships projects is to strengthen the evidence base on what works to protect young people from exploitation and abuse to improve services over the course of the programme and beyond.

A key finding from the independent evaluation report (published autumn 2020) states:

*“The key outcome of engagement in the intervention was the development of the trusted relationship, which was described as young people having someone they trust with whom they can talk to about their day and any challenges they are facing, while receiving advice and support. Despite it being still too early to know definitively about the long-term impact on the young person’s risk of sexual or criminal exploitation, staff and young people reported a range of positive intermediary outcomes on one or more areas in the young person’s general personal development, relationships, education and employment”.*

Alongside the evaluation, a catalogue of good practice case studies has been compiled that illustrate how the project has made a real difference in the lives children and young people at risk of or subject to CCE.

**Risk Reduction:** Although it is still relatively early to report on longer-term outcomes and/or benefits realised through the project, local data reporting indicates that in 49.25% of closed episodes, the Trusted Relationships service has supported a reduction in the child exploitation risk level associated with the case, illustrating the impact of the service. In addition, in 47.76% of cases the exploitation risk has remained at the same level, indicating that support through Trusted Relationships has helped prevent increased exposure to child exploitation risk.

**Local Government Association (LGA) – Case Study:** We are delighted that the North Yorkshire and City of York Trusted Relationships project was identified and included as a case study within the LGA’s ‘taking a public health approach to tackling serious violent crime’ publication. Within the publication, the LGA have pulled together a series of case studies to highlight some examples of best practice across local government. The case studies also highlight how councils have been working in partnership to deliver early interventions that help to prevent children and young people from becoming involved in serious violent crime.

**Government Tackling Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) Strategy:** This strategy, published in January 2021, is the first of its kind in setting out the government’s vision for preventing, tackling and responding to CSA in all its forms. The Tackling CSA Strategy is centred around 3 objectives:

1. Tackling all forms of child sexual abuse and bringing offenders to justice;
2. Preventing offending and re-offending; and
3. Protecting and safeguarding children, and supporting all victims and survivors.

Relationships projects are included within the strategy as a positive example of targeted support to children and young people who are at-risk of child sexual exploitation or abuse, as well as criminal exploitation and peer-on-peer abuse. The case study included within this section of the strategy relates to a case from the North Yorkshire and York project, recognising the excellent practice delivered by local Trusted Relationships services.

## ■ Harmful Sexual Behaviour

During 2020, a Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) Task Group was established to progress work around Harmful Sexual Behaviour. To date the group have:

- Rewritten the [HSB procedure](#)
- The [HSB webpage](#) was reviewed and rewritten.
- Successfully secured funding from North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Community Safety Fund for the Youth Justice Service to receive NSPCC 'Train the Trainer' training.
- The City of York was the first local authority to receive this training and this was held virtually. The training was delivered to Youth Justice Service staff, including seconded staff from North Yorkshire Police, National Probation Service, Children's Social Care including the Exploitation Team Manager.
- Developed a HSB action plan following an NSPCC audit. The CYSCP Business Unit coordinated a multi-agency virtual event which enabled attendees to discuss the audit findings and to identify any barriers, issues etc. they wanted feeding into the HSB Action Plan. The HSB Action Plan was produced as a result of this multi-agency engagement.

### AIM 3 Training

In addition, the Youth Justice Service have funded 16 members of staff within YJS and the Exploitation Team and a social worker from the Permanence team to receive AIM 3 Intervention Training. Additionally a member of the YSJ team has secured a place on the digital assisted technology course with the Aim project. A new CAMHS practitioner has also started in post and to deliver clinical supervision around HSB to the YJS.

### Child P LLR Training

Multi-agency training workshops, on learning from the Child P case, were held virtually in early 2021. A 7 point briefing has also been developed on the case which will complement these workshops and be available for practitioners via the CYSCP website. Further information regarding these is within the Training section.

### Brook Traffic Light Tool

Whilst preparing for Child LLR Training, it was highlighted that Brook are no longer permitting organisations to use the latest version of the Brook Traffic Light Tool for free. The task group met to address the issue in February 2021 where it was agreed to remove the tool from the website. The CYSCP multi-agency documents including the HSB procedure was updated. The CYSCP are advising professionals to use the Hackett Continuum until a longer term solution is agreed.

The HSB Task Group is continuing to meet to ensure the remaining actions from the HSB Action Plan are achieved.

It is envisaged for this training to be rolled out across the Local Authority and wider partnership.



## ■ **CYSCP Private Fostering Steering Group**

The CYSCP Private Fostering Steering Group was formed in July 2020, and its function is to ensure that Privately Fostered children are safeguarded and that their welfare is promoted. The group is responsible for raising awareness of the notification requirements which will be promoted by all agencies and in the wider local community within the City of York.

The Private Fostering Steering Group has:

- Consulted with York Youth Council on what private fostering resources children or young people felt would be useful, as well as how they felt these could be disseminated.
- Amended Private Fostering information/resources on the CYSCP website.
- Created a Private Fostering for Professionals webpage on the CYSCP website
- Created a Looking After Someones Else's Child webpage for Parents and Carers on the CYSCP website
- Created a Private Fostering for Children and Young People on the CYSCP website
- Developed a narrated powerpoint training resource
- Review a thematic audit of case records of children privately fostered undertaken by Children's Social Care
- Updated Practice Guidance which included multi-agency input and the Statement of Purpose
- Created a Private Fostering Checklist
- Created a One Minute Guide for professionals in regard to Private Fostering

During September 2021, this group will also be running a Private Fostering Awareness Week over social media to publicise the new resources, training and webpages.

## ■ **Safeguarding in Education**

During the period covered by this report, schools in the city have worked collaboratively with partners to address the many challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic. The York Schools and Academies Board (YSAB) has met on a regular basis throughout to find solutions and agreed approaches, which have enabled schools to continue to deliver education and support to their pupils and families safely. A keen focus has been placed on meeting the needs of vulnerable pupils throughout. The School Safeguarding Advisor has continued to provide advice and support to schools in implementing and reviewing their policies and procedures, in line with updated guidance, and in responding to the circumstances created by the pandemic.

The School Safeguarding Advisor and colleagues from schools have continued to work in partnership with and have actively contributed to, a number of multi- agency activities undertaken by the CYSCP over the period. These include:

- development of the Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) guidance and the participation in the NSPCC HSB audit
- development of the Multi- Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and contribution to multi- agency audits
- development of the Adolescent Strategy
- work supporting prevention of Child Exploitation by attending the MACEM meetings and regular risk assessment meetings with partners

The Young People’s Social Media Project has been completed. The aim of the project was for it to be led by young people and their views, in order to develop a Young People’s Guide to Safe Social Media Use, together with teaching resources, to help young people navigate their social media interactions safely and protect their wellbeing. The project, a collaboration between safeguarding partners and the University of York St John, worked with young people across the city to develop the guide and resources. The resources can be used in schools to form part of their on-line safety and relationships education provision. These resources are due to be launched during Safeguarding Week in June 2021.

Further information can be found on the CYSCP website: [www.saferchildrenyork.org.uk/young-persons-social-media-guide.htm](http://www.saferchildrenyork.org.uk/young-persons-social-media-guide.htm)

## ■ Case Review Group (CRG)

The purpose of the Case Review Group (CRG) is to carry out the functions of the City of York Safeguarding Children Partnership (CYSCP) as described in Chapter 4 of Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2018 for improving child protection and safeguarding practice.

In January 2021, as part of the restructure of the CYSCP the CRG ceased to take responsibility for the undertaking of multi-agency audits which are now in the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the CYSCP Learning, Development and Performance Group. The TOR for the CRG were updated in 2021 to reflect the restructure of the City of York Safeguarding Partnership, changes in Working Together 2018 and the guidance from the National Panel. One of the key aspects of the new TOR is the addition of consideration of the ‘Child’s Voice/ lived experience’ which the group considers to be an essential addition to ensure that the group remains focused on children and improving outcomes for them.

## Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

The CRG reviews serious child safeguarding cases, at both local and national level to identify improvements to be made to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The CRG is the means by which the CYSCP makes arrangements for commissioning and publishing local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews.

The CRG undertook three Rapid Reviews over the period 2020-21, one of which it was recommended that the child's placing authority undertake a Local Safeguarding Child Practice Review and two of which a LSCPR has been commissioned locally.

The themes from these reviews included:

- Self-Harm / Children in Care particularly those from out of area
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Injuries to non-mobile babies.

During 2020-21 the group reviewed progress against the actions plans from a Learning lessons review and Single Agency review.

The themes from these reviews included:

- Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)
- Sudden unexpected death in infancy

## Learning / Actions from Reviews by CYSCP

Recommendations and actions from the LSCPR, LLR and Single Agency Reviews will be monitored through 2021-22. Actions include:

- Raising awareness of the need for holistic assessment of families where there are or have been safeguarding concerns and where there is a new baby in the family.
- Development of new pathways for information share particularly in relation to fathers.
- Reiteration of messages about prevention of SUDI.
- Reiteration of ICON messages about coping with crying.
- Review of Child exploitation processes including 'sticking with' young people who may be subject to forms of exploitation, support for their siblings and parents and professionals being alert to forms of grooming.
- Raising awareness of Escalation procedures for professional disagreement and complex case procedures.
- HSB strategy launched, training, delivered and seven point briefing developed.
- Partner training on referrals to Children social care which clearly describe the impact of the concerns on the child or young person.
- Training across the partnership outlining the importance of consideration of child voice and lived experience including importance of seeing young people by themselves is included in all referrals, assessments and plans.
- **Need for PROFESSIONAL CURIOSITY!**

## ■ Multi Agency Audit up to December 2020

(prior to CYSCP restructure)

During 2020, the sub-group undertook a multi-agency audit relating to Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC) and Core Group (CG). Key areas of learning from this audit include concerns:

- membership of both ICPC and CG
- child voice and plans and assessments
- analysis assessment and planning to address risk

### Learning / Actions by partnership

The actions from this audit are being monitored by the Learning Development and Improvement. Actions include:

- Review of processes to ensure that all relevant agencies are invited to ICPC and Core Group meetings
- Training across the partnership to ensure that consideration of child voice (including pre verbal/ non-verbal child) and lived experience is included in all referrals, assessments and plans
- Group and the audit will be repeated in 2021

### Key Priorities for 2021-22

An immediate priority for the Case Review sub-group is to review the case review process and accompanying paperwork to ensure it is fit for purpose and to enable the Partnership to collate information effectively.

Another key priority is for the Case Review sub-group to proactively disseminate learning from cases working together with the Learning, Development and Performance Sub-group.

The Partnership plan to hold a termly CYSCP Learning Masterclass event to share learning which practitioners will be invited to attend. A focus for the Partnership is also to produce One Minute Guides and 7 point briefings for professionals which will be available on the CYSCP website and to promote learning via the CYSCP Twitter account and the CYSCP Newsletter.

## ■ CYSCP Training and Development

### Multi-Agency Training, Learning and Development

#### Online training

During 2020/21, the City of York Safeguarding Children (CYSCP) E-Learning Awareness course has continued to be available to any practitioners and volunteers working with children and young people via the City of York Council's MyLO Learning Management System. During 2020/21, 3666 learners have passed the course, the majority of the users of this training are from Education and Early Years/Childcare.

#### Virtual training

During 2020/21, the CYSCP's training offer had to adapt and change rapidly due to Covid-19. The Workforce Development Advisor (CYSCP Business Unit) worked with training providers to change how all CYSCP courses were being delivered. Thus meaning that all our previous face to face courses were reviewed and updated to virtual delivery. By September 2020, all CYSCP's courses were being delivered virtually through live Zoom sessions. This still provided trainers and delegates the opportunity to interact with each other ensuring multi-agency discussion, which is so valuable, could still take place. The majority of learners on these courses were from City of York Council, followed by Education and Early Years/Childcare.

CYSCP Multi-Agency courses delivered in 2020/21	Sessions	Attendees
Safeguarding Children: Working Together A	7	138
Safeguarding Children: Shared Responsibilities and Procedures - Working Together B	8	162
Safeguarding Children: Awareness of Neglect in Children and Young People	3	35
Safeguarding Disabled Children	5	51
Safeguarding Children: Understanding Domestic Abuse and Children	3	33
Introduction to Child Protection Conferences and Core Groups	2	21
Safeguarding Children: Harmful Sexual Behaviour and Learning Disabilities - Sharing Learning from a Learning Lessons Review	6	97
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>537</b>

## Workshops on Child P Learning Lessons Review (LLR)

Workshops sharing the lessons learnt from Child P LLR case were delayed due to Covid-19 and had to be reworked to be delivered virtually. Overall six workshops were delivered by a range of partners from Health, Youth Justice Service, City of York Schools Safeguarding, Children's Social Care and North Yorkshire Police and was well attended by over 90 practitioners from a range of organisations. The feedback from these workshops will be carried forward into future training on Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB).

## Partner training

During this challenging year, there has been an important emphasis on the availability of virtual and e-learning training. At the start of the pandemic the CYSCP [Learning and Development Pages](#) on the CYSCP website was reviewed and updated to ensure that information pertaining to training was up to date and relevant. In addition, links to other free e-learning provision and virtual training opportunities available through partners were also promoted to practitioners and volunteers via the CYSCP through partners, twitter, CYSCP newsletter and Newsfeed. This included training on:

- PAMIC tool
- Learning from Child P case
- ICON campaign and resources
- Suicide Awareness
- Systemic Practice
- Child Death Review training
- Early Help and Family Early Help Assessment (FEHA) training

## Staff Wellbeing

In response to the continuing Covid-19 situation, wellbeing sessions were delivered to partners.

In January a wellbeing week campaign was held which included sessions for practitioners covering physiological wellbeing and stress delivered by North Yorkshire Police, mindfulness sessions delivered by the City of York Council chaplain and wellbeing when working with families delivered by the Institute of Family Therapy.

All sessions proved popular and in March 2021, three more sessions covering physiological wellbeing and stress were again delivered by North Yorkshire Police. 114 practitioners attended these sessions and the feedback was very positive.

## Evaluation of training, learning and development

### E-learning evaluation Learners' ratings of e-learning

Evaluation data from 2753 learners shows that 99.5% of learners stated the course either fulfilled or exceeded their expectations and 99.5% stated they would be able to apply what they learnt in their work. Ratings of the specific course elements also score highly.

### Virtual training evaluation

Evaluation returns show that the majority of attendees highly rate the quality of various course aspects. Evaluation returns also show that 86% of learners were “likely” to “very likely” to change the way they do things in the future as a result of the training commissioned by the Partnership.

### Impact of training, learning and development

During 2020/21, a short survey has been used to capture examples from course attendees about the impact of training on their working practices 3-6 months after training has taken place. The data for 2020/21 collected to date only covers quarters 1 and 2 which covers the initial lockdown period due to the pandemic and the main training taking place was the e-learning, and therefore the responses are limited.

31% of respondents said they had changed something in their working practice as a result of the learning they undertook through CYSCP. This included being more aware of safeguarding and safeguarding responsibilities, being more aware of what action to take, understanding children's needs better, observing children's behaviour more and review safeguarding policies and practices.

Whilst this leaves a majority of respondents not changing anything in their working practice, the reasons provided below give assurance that the training still offers value and impact by ensuring learners are receiving relevant and up to date information:

- Many respondents undertake the course as refresher learning
- Due to their role or the pandemic they have not had opportunity to apply the learning
- Respondents' working practices and processes are already reflecting the content of the training.

### Impact on children and young people

Practitioners were also asked to provide examples of where their learning had directly and positively impacted on a child or young person. Several responses include generic examples about increased staff awareness of safeguarding issues, what to action to take and more confidence. One practitioner identified a particular example where they supported a young person who made a disclosure and sought further help for them from appropriate professionals.

## Training developments for 2021/22

- Virtual training is expected to continue in place of face to face training.
- Virtual Private Fostering training resources have been developed for delivery.
- The Safeguarding Children E-Learning Awareness course will be moved to a new platform during the year to enable learners to be charged to cover the cost of providing this course.
- The Partnership's Training, Learning and Development Strategy will be reviewed and updated.

## ■ CYSCP documentation

### Policies, Procedures and Practice Guidance

In 2020/21 the CYSCP Business Unit a review of all partnership documentation. The following procedures and guidance's were reviewed and rewritten:

- [HSB Procedure](#)
- [LADO Procedure](#)
- [Non Recent, Organised and Complex Abuse Procedure](#)
- [CYSCP Procedure for Child Protection Conferences and Core Group Meetings](#)
- [Exploitation Guidance](#)
- [CYSCP Female Genital Mutilation Guidance](#)
- [CYSCP Guidance on Resolution of Disputes or escalation of concerns](#)

### Tools and Forms

The following tools and forms were reviewed and rewritten:

- [The City of York Safeguarding Children Partnership Child Criminal Exploitation \(CE\) \(including Sexual Exploitation\) Screening Tool](#) was reviewed and updated.
- [LADO Referral Form](#)
- [North Yorkshire and City of York Partnership information Sharing Form](#)
- [Child Protection Conference Agency Report Form](#)



## One Minute Guides

During 2020/21, the CYSCP created One Minute Guide's which would capture all information on a particular topic in one useful downloadable document.

To date the following One Minute Guide's have been produced:

- [Child Protection Conference](#)
- [Child Protection Core Group](#)
- [Forensic CAMHS](#)
- [Forced Marriage and Honour Based Violence](#)
- [Harmful Sexual Behaviour \(HSB\)](#)
- [Private Fostering](#)
- [Systemic Practice](#)

Work is ongoing to identify and produce further One Minute Guide's which will be useful for professionals and frontline workers.

## 7 Point Briefings:

Two 7 point briefings have also been produced following a learning lesson review and a single agency review.

- [Child P](#)
- [Baby Thomas](#)

## CDOP

The York and North Yorkshire Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) reviews the death of every child under the age of 18 years. Fortunately, there are very few of these but every death is a tragedy. The panel is made up of professional experts from different local organisations.

The aim of the CDOP is to identify anything which might prevent something similar happening in the future. In York and North Yorkshire, the Child Death Review process is administered by the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership, on behalf of both York and North Yorkshire and the CDOP reports to the Safeguarding Children Partnerships in York and in North Yorkshire. York and North Yorkshire work closely with regional colleagues to ensure lessons are learned from any themes emerging across the region.

You will find full details of figures and priorities for the last year in the York and North Yorkshire CDOP Annual Report 2020/2021. The priorities which were around sudden and unexpected deaths in infancy (SUDI) and Suicide Prevention will continue into 2021/2022 to ensure the robust implementation of all actions identified across agencies to assist in the prevention of SUDI's and Suicides in children and young people across the region.

Further information in respect of Child Deaths and CDOP can be found on the [CYSCP website](#).

## ■ Finance 2020/21

The CYSCP budget is derived from contributions from a number of partners. As well as direct funding the CYSCP is also provided with services in kind by a number of agencies.

Expenditure	2020/21 (£)	Income	2020/21 (£)
Staffing	£184,480	Balance Brought Forward 20/21	£32,409
Training Commissioning 2020/21	£12,974	CYC Children's Services	£82,738
Training Commissioning 2019/20 Underspend	£5,491	Health	£78,991
Other	£1,739	Police	£33,011
Independent Chair	£15,525	Probation	£811
Child Death Review Grant	£16,693	CRC	£1,400
Management charges	£18,840		
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£237,276</b>	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£196,951</b>

## **Appendix A:**

# **Independent scrutineer contribution to City of York Safeguarding Children Partnership (CYSCP) Annual Report 2020-2021.**

**Maggie Atkinson, Independent Scrutineer**

### **Introduction**

This report:

1. Reflects on the content, appropriateness and quality of the CYSCP's Annual report covering the financial year 2020-2021.

and

2. Comments on what I have observed as Independent Scrutineer of the CYSCP in the same period, whilst noting that I took up the role at mid-year point in September 2020, and was both appointed in an online process and have undertaken all my work to date through the same means rather than by having a physical presence in the city.
3. Outlines issues for imminent and future close attention in 2021-2022 including, where I perceive there are any, risks to the stability and progress of CYSCP working to its maximum potential in complex and changing times.

Inevitably my Independent Scrutineer's report is influenced by work undertaken by all agencies to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people during the continuing and now-evolving Covid 19 pandemic. It concerns itself with work that has been done, in Partnership terms though not in single services, undertaken by partnership representatives working with each other largely remotely rather than face to face. It also, however, reports on non-Covid-19 related matters as CYSCP was a statutory partnership before, and will continue to be so in the years after, the pandemic.

I can confirm that as per the requirements of the statutory guidance "Working Together To Safeguard Children" 2018 and amendments to it in 2020, I am assured that broadly, City of York Council, the city's CCG, North Yorkshire Police Service, and the many relevant agencies in York have done far more than simply stand by their children and young people in 2020-2021's challenging times. They have reconfigured how CYSCP works at subgroup and Executive levels, and worked hard to keep children and young people as safe as possible – often for longer hours than normal given there was no travel to meetings involved and people have moved from meeting to meeting in an unbroken string throughout their working days. Staff and leaders are aware that gains to practice and partnership, as well as challenges, have arisen during the pandemic. They are determined to hold onto the gains of remote working and the efficiencies it brings, and determined to work on a longer-term programme that accepts ways of working need to go on developing in "hybrid" models. Covid 19 may be with us for a long time in an endemic rather than pandemic phase as 2021-2022 continues. The work services do both with each other and with children and young people must carry on regardless, however its delivery is amended to fit new circumstances.

The CYSCP's model of Partnership and its subgroups, the terms of reference for and meetings schedules of the Executive and those subgroups, are all available on the Partnership's website at [www.saferchildrenyork.org.uk](http://www.saferchildrenyork.org.uk)

In 2020, government asked Sir Alan Wood to review how well the new arrangements were working, notwithstanding that this review was launched less than a year after most MASA launch dates, and was undertaken and has now been published in the midst of a pandemic which inevitably meant that what Sir Alan was reviewing was to at least some degree not "business as usual." His report sets out his opinion on some of the lessons that have emerged. It should be considered alongside this CYSCP Annual Report. So should the Annual Report from the National Children Safeguarding Panel, hosted by the Department for Education. I consider that CYSCP's development and practice are well within the range of what both Sir Alan and the National Panel consider are good practice.

### **My work as scrutineer, set against national requirements on the CYSCP**

Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASAs) such as CYSCP are bound by statutory guidance in "Working Together the Safeguard Children" (2018, updated but not radically changed in 2020.) This is clear the MASA does not work in isolation but is part of any locality's broader, all-agency means of ensuring citizens' wellbeing. The central tenets are below.

#### **"Working Together" 2018, Chapter 3 states:**

The purpose of local arrangements is to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together in a system where:

- children are safeguarded and their welfare is promoted
- partner organisations and agencies collaborate, share and co-own the vision for how to achieve improved outcomes for vulnerable children
- organisations and agencies challenge appropriately and hold one another to account effectively
- there is early identification and analysis of new safeguarding issues and emerging threats
- learning is promoted and embedded in a way that local services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice
- information is shared effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families.

In order to work together effectively, the safeguarding statutory partners, with other local organisations and agencies, should develop processes that:

- facilitate and drive action beyond usual institutional and agency constraints and boundaries
- ensure the effective protection of children is founded on practitioners developing lasting and trusting relationships with children and their families

Effective arrangements link to other strategic partnership work locally that supports children and families, including other public boards: Health and Wellbeing Boards, PFCCs' boards and panels, Adult Safeguarding Boards, Channel Panels, Improvement Boards, Community Safety Partnerships, the Local Family Justice Board and MAPPAs. (This list is not exhaustive.)

Strong leadership is critical for arrangements to be effective in bringing together organisations and agencies. It is important that the lead representative from each of the three safeguarding partners plays an active role. The lead representatives for safeguarding partners are: the local authority chief executive, the accountable officer of a clinical commissioning group, and a chief officer of police.<sup>1</sup>

All three safeguarding partners have equal and joint responsibility for local safeguarding arrangements. In situations that require a clear, single point of leadership, all three safeguarding partners should decide who would take the lead on issues that arise.

Should the lead representatives delegate their functions they remain accountable for any actions or decisions taken on behalf of their agency. If delegated, it is the responsibility of the lead representative to identify and nominate a senior officer in their agency to have responsibility and authority for ensuring full participation with these arrangements.

The representatives, or those they delegate authority to, should be able to:

- speak with authority for the safeguarding partner they represent
- take decisions on behalf of their organisation or agency and commit them on policy, resourcing and practice matters
- hold their own organisation or agency to account on how effectively they participate and implement the local arrangements

## The CYSCP scrutiny role

Independent scrutiny provides assurance in judging the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children, including arrangements to identify and review serious child safeguarding cases. Independent scrutiny is part of a wider system which includes independent inspectorates' single assessment of individual safeguarding partners, and the programme of Joint Targeted Area Inspections. Safeguarding partners should ensure scrutiny is objective, acts as a constructive critical friend and promotes reflection to drive continuous improvement. The independent scrutineer considers how effectively arrangements are working for children and families as well as for practitioners, and how well safeguarding partners provide strong leadership and agree with the safeguarding partners how this will be reported.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Alan Wood in his recently published report remains of the opinion that Chief Executives of LAs, Chief Constables and Accountable Officers of CCGs should sit on Partnership Executives in person. It is my view that this is untenable given the breadth, depth and coverage of their respective roles; and that the levels of delegation to very senior Officers who lead the actual work is appropriate, so long as they can assure each other and me that their Chief Executive level post-holders are kept regularly and clearly informed of the CYSCP's work.

CYSCP appointed me as its Independent Scrutineer commencing in September 2020. Partners have acknowledged throughout that the independent scrutineer cannot be the sole provider of feedback or reflection. Working Together 2018 is clear that mutual holding to account, support and challenge are part of how statutory partners and relevant agencies must operate to ensure the partnership and its impacts are clear, co-owned, and contribute to progressively improving children and young people's lives. The scrutiny is a key part of judging the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

I provide critical appraisal of safeguarding arrangements, providing challenge to and ongoing, clear and evidenced appraisal of the partnership in York, by attending key meetings, meeting vital groups including children and young people, and then feeding back. I chair bi-annual all-partners and all-agencies development days, part of which also include my feedback on progress. At present all of this work is done through virtual means.

I was appointed to:

- Assess how well organisations work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to hold each other to account for effective safeguarding
- Contribute to the content of the partnership's annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements, their performance and the effectiveness of local services
- Assess the effectiveness of the help being provided to children and families including through universal and early help services
- Assess whether the three statutory safeguarding partners are fulfilling their statutory obligations
- Scrutinise the quality assurance activity (including reviewing statutory and local reviews, the results and findings of multi-agency case file auditing, and North Yorkshire's processes for identifying lessons to be learned from tragedy and crises in children's lives)
- Scrutinise the effectiveness of training, including multi-agency training, whose aim is to equip staff to safeguard and promote the wellbeing and welfare of children
- Assess the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in North Yorkshire
- Provide a rigorous, evidence based and transparent assessment of the extent to which partners and relevant agencies are fulfilling their statutory duties to keep children safe
- Evaluate arrangements for the operation of the safeguarding partnership and attend a range of meetings and activities including visits to partner and relevant agencies
- Support the implementation of findings and outcomes from safeguarding reviews
- Assess whether effective performance management, audit and quality assurance mechanisms are in place within partner organisations which will support the three safeguarding partners to fulfil their statutory objectives, and which will enable the partnership to identify and measure its success and impact
- Ensure that the voices of children, young people and their families are appropriately represented and heard in the work of the partnership.

My contribution to the CYSCP Annual Report enables CYSCP to comply with the requirement to publish such a Report on its activities, successes and continued or newly developing challenges which will go on into the 2021-2022 year which has now commenced. My section is focused on how, and how well, the work of the CYSCP is undertaken, and what the quality of the Executive's and the subcommittees' activities is as 2020-2021 is closed and attention turns to 2021-2022. This contribution reflects on the following broad themes, and captures risks or areas for attention.

1. CYSCP having been an Early Adopter of a new MASA model, the partnership reached a consensus that “blank sheet of paper” thinking was not necessary in moving from a LSCB to a Safeguarding Children Partnership. The former LSCB, and ongoing CYSCP activity, together provide a foundation for York agencies' future practice, not least because although the nature of the inter-agency body changed, in York's case in 2018-19, many of the people central to work undertaken by the LSCB continue to ensure the CYSCP is progressing.
2. The 3 statutory partners have created, and agencies' governance and scrutiny bodies and staff groups agreed, a model that serves the city, its many and far more varied communities than outsiders imagine, and organisations that work for and with children and young people across the schools and other universal services in early years, education, health, housing, youth organisations, Early Help teams, a wide range of statutory services, faith, community and voluntary bodies. A new Partnership structural model following consultancy in March 2020 is a model that is now operating well, reflecting a strong shared commitment to working and learning in partnership. Given early adopter funding was strongly connected to facilitating working with schools on their safeguarding practice within a CYSCP setting, the partnership is also looking again at how well connectivity between education and safeguarding works in the interests of all children and young people, including those with any of a wide range of additional and special educational needs (SEN), with or without a disability (SEN/D.)
3. The configuration, terms of reference, membership and attendance of subgroups, the work undertaken in them which is a reflection of the fact that without a Board like the LSCB, the ownership of and work done on safeguarding across all agencies has moved far closer to service front lines, where they are delivered and children and young people experience them. Those services are represented on, and report to, CYSCP subgroups and contribute to themed or project-based working, and task and finish groups. The March 2020 consultancy report which informed the change of structure and ways of working reflected on the fact that making the Partnership the single statutory accountability body for children and young people means the work is now “held” and to a high degree driven, by the subgroups, accounting to the CYSCP Executive. That the Executive's member bodies also account to each other, and hold themselves to account for their safeguarding work, is central to CYSCP's continuing success. The pledges renewed across the partnership, and by professionals from a wide range of organisations who have contributed to several partnership development sessions during 2020-2021, reflect well on what has happened during the year and help shape both strategic and operational plans for future work.

4. Two Improvement Boards (IBs) also operate in children and young people's services in York: one addresses the need for improvements in the practice models and ways of working in Children's Social Care (CSC) services identified by inspectors. The second works to answer similar challenges for development, also informed by inspection, in Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEN/D) services in education, health and social care. The work of both Boards is vital. In 2021-2022, however, formal links should be firmly established between these important but non-statutory Boards, and CYSCP as York's statutory accountability body covering all services, and all work done, for children and young people. Such links could be achieved by, for example, data and reports presented at the Improvement Boards being added to the agendas of and noted by the Partnership Executive and at CYSCP Development Days. The risks in such vital formal links not being made rest largely in the fact that services working with the two Improvement Boards may be tempted to believe that they do not account for their work to CYSCP, when in law, they do.

The main body of CYSCP's 2020-2021 Annual Report appropriately covers what has been achieved, and what remains to be done. It reads informatively and includes the three Statutory Partners' assurance of their compliance with "Working Together" (2018, minor amendments 2020.) It contains the required details on activities undertaken to fulfil the intentions captured in strategic and operational plans. It reflects on the fact that the new way of working through strong subgroups with "buy-in" and leadership from staff across agencies allows services to take ownership for getting safeguarding right. Work undertaken by CYSCP is accessibly recorded in the Annual Report, capturing a year of activity from 2020-2021 that has largely been both positive and productive.

This Annual Report, and my contribution to it, are inevitably influenced by the effects of and responses to the Covid 19 pandemic as its effects on both joint and single service working continue. The potential for threats to stability and the work done to ameliorate those threats, and the potential for positive developments in partnership working to continue even when the pandemic passes, have all, rightly, been on the minds of all involved in the Partnership. They are all now turning their thinking towards what a Recovery phase will look like given, notwithstanding the current uncertainty about further waves of the virus as a serious disruptor of society and services alike, given the success of the vaccination programme the likelihood is that it will be an endemic presence with residents being ill, but not seriously so. The corollary is that services can begin to plan for a "new normal" likely to go on involving some working from home for many staff, but a return to face to face activity for at least some of their work.

As Independent Scrutineer it is my duty to present assurances that safeguarding is proceeding as it should, or where things have changed or problems arise why that might be, what degree and what kind or risks are attached, and what lessons need to be learned. I am pleased to give this Assurance as part of this Annual Report, and to close my section of the Report with a formal statement of that assurance.



## A still-important issue for CYSCP, and me as Independent Scrutineer: Covid 19.

The effects of almost a year and a half to date of the Covid 19 virus cannot be over-stated. The results of the need to respond to an extraordinary and unprecedented, now long-lived and exhausting crisis have included at least the following for CYSCP:

- Staff both of the CYSCP and the partner bodies are largely working from home, use of office accommodation being reserved for those who either cannot do so or who strictly need occasional office time. Staff ensure regular online KiT meetings, and continue to work in efficient and facilitative business support. CYSCP leaders also contribute to regular citywide strategic discussions regarding how the response to the pandemic, and plans for the future, are coordinated and assured. Some agencies (police, emergency services, Children's Social Care, many health bodies, many schools, housing and other services) are of course, and through the pandemic have been, engaged in work in as near a "business as usual" fashion as possible albeit with virus protection and minimisation measures as part of their work.
- The CYSCP Business Manager and her small team administrator continue to keep me, and partner agencies, apprised of developments and any issues for discussion or concern, and facilitates my presence at 3-Statutory-Partner, Executive and CYSCP subgroup meetings as a participant observer, so that assurance can be stated clearly as my role requires.
- The Partnership's Executive meets six times a year, enabling it both to hold all others to account and to direct the Partnership's work both in reaction to the pandemic, and so that safeguarding work does not lose pace or focus. The Executive calls on the presence and expertise of senior staff from across agencies and relevant partners for these meetings including through taking Assurance and Activity reports as part of its agenda, so that the CYSCP can take forward what is decided and will be required of services and agencies across the city.
- There have been several whole-partnership Development Days held online during the pandemic, giving all concerned the opportunity to reflect on progress to date, what challenges Covid 19 has presented, what non-Covid challenges continue to be, how they should all be dealt with, what support children and young people continue to need, and what might happen next in the CYSCP's ongoing development. Whilst the virtual environment and technology create challenges, the attendance at these sessions is good, and colleagues clearly value the opportunity to maintain their connections with and support for each other, and thereby children, young people, families and communities. The hope for an ability to meet face to face once a "new normal" can be and is established is palpable at these sessions, and remains a driver of the partnership's continued thinking and activities.
- The Partnership's themed subgroups meet virtually to an already agreed schedule, having decided as the Covid 19 situation clearly proved to have longer life than was at first expected that suspending business and waiting for an end to it could not be justified. The work done in these groups centres on what can and should be learned, across the Partnership, about how well the work of safeguarding is proceeding and what may need to go on being developed so that practice and partnership will match the best.

- As Scrutineer I have attended all CYSCP subgroups, including the shared CDOP and CDRP that runs across North Yorkshire and York at least once during the part of 2020-2021 for which I have been Scrutineer, though I only took up my post in September 2020 so was not present at the start of the year. I am pleased to confirm that they are all well run, their agendas are clear, partners step in to chair or to lead pieces of their work appropriately so that the weight of leadership is shared across the CYSCP's agencies, and the business done is appropriate and helps to drive practice forward. Also in line with a cyclical reporting schedule, individual partners on the CYSCP also report their progress, and their challenges, to the Executive, so that awareness is raised across all parts of the Partnership and safeguarding agendas become ever more jointly owned and driven.
- Where reviews have had to be undertaken, whether at Rapid Review or Local Safeguarding Children Practice Review levels, there has been in every case a professional willingness to engage across all agencies concerned. Honest and detailed information sharing has been enabled, robust reports have been written and accepted, and agencies can evidence where learning has taken place and what changes in practice have resulted. Briefings are included in a steadily improving CYSCP website. Reviews are seen as learning opportunities by all concerned, and the work that arises from them is deliberately and professionally threaded through agencies' responses to difficult issues and sadly sometimes tragedies in the lives of vulnerable children and young people.
- Subgroups' attendance and actions lists, and the minutes of each group, illustrate that partners remain committed, attending virtually during the pandemic, finding work-arounds for technology challenges that arise from time to time. Chairs and the business support team construct agendas, ensure meetings are recorded appropriately, send out actions for completion, and ensure the Executive is kept closely informed. It is clear that the business the subgroups do continues to need to be done, and that the Partnership needs to go on developing their ability to inform and steer the work done with York's children and young people, as well as using the subgroups and the Executive to hold all concerned to account.
- The Partnership continues both its audit activity, and its learning and development activity, albeit again all online. Section 11 multi-agency and Section 175 schools' safeguarding audit cycles are agreed annually, some are done in partnership with the neighbouring LSCP in North Yorkshire to add to the shared practice that then arises, and it is clear that audits are done as a means of providing assurance on the quality of practice. The business support team sends out updates and newsletters both on Covid 19 related issues, and safeguarding more generally. Partners and relevant agencies value these updates. Examples can be found on the CYSCP website, where a wealth of other information, guidance and professional support materials, along with materials that children families and parents or carers can also use.

- The CYSCP remains keen to ensure support on safeguarding is given to schools, and that where necessary challenges and suggestions for improvement can also be provided. Throughout the pandemic and school part-closures, an adequate number remained open, at the very least to provide “hub” services, particularly for vulnerable children and children of keyworkers, of whom there are substantial numbers in some communities. When fuller opening took place, and despite some “stop-start” effects on already hard pressed and tired staff and bewildered children and families, the city has supported schools to ensure such changes have been handled in as seamless a way as possible to support families and ensure their children were safe to return. Every school has thereby been supported in their safeguarding work, despite the additional workload experienced by school staff creating “blended” learning as the pandemic continued, and since Christmas 2020 dealing with anxious children and worried families in rising numbers.
- Schools have taken a proportionate approach by sending home only immediate contacts whenever possible. Support to their work has been valued by schools, which have, like schools across the country, been less well and less clearly supported by central government and the many changes and last minute guidance and support sent out to heads and their teams. Though committed to safeguarding, schools and particularly their leaders are also struggling with tiredness, and the responses of a minority of families who will not, or consider they cannot, send their children back in. Schools will go on needing support and their issues are regularly discussed, the strength and resilience of the Assistant Director for education functions in York being a trusted and strategic adviser, aiding that support and allowing for future planning to gather pace.
- Face-to-face safeguarding training ceased after the pandemic began. CPD offers and increased amounts of guidance and professional information have all continued virtually, both at Partnership level and within individual agencies. The Partnership’s “lessons learned” and 7 minute briefing materials continue to be added to, as do other offers to ensure as many of the workforce as possible can access up to date safeguarding training, including through the City of York Council’s training platform. The upgrade and refresh of the CYSCP website have been welcomed for the high quality of support and advice it provides, and for the ease of accessing its content by professionals, parents, children and young people alike.
- The CYSCP team has contributed advice and guidance for ongoing Coronavirus planning, handling, and services’ offers to communities, given agencies across the city may still be faced with disclosures or allegations of issues regarding the wellbeing of children and young people, with which some of them may be unfamiliar. The CYSCP and its many partner bodies are also working with the strong community of volunteers and voluntary agencies in the city which need ongoing information and support - and which are Relevant Agencies in Working Together 2018 terms.

- Early Help services continue to target work across York, and to respond to requests for early intervention and lower-level social care interventions in line with the city’s agreed and adopted Early Help Strategy. Rates of referral are monitored, especially where they may be concentrated in less affluent communities where families and their children can live challenged lives. Early Help reaches out in relevant Wards, making it clear that even in the pandemic period, services have remained available to help families avoid or avert crises. The intention is that Early Help, early intervention and prevention, should go on “keeping the heat out of the top of the system,” given social care services are answerable to an Improvement Board as well as to CYSP, and the goal is to ensure families attract and receive support that keeps them together. Intervening early and appropriately will no doubt continue to be a theme of work for children and young people, once the pandemic’s ongoing restrictions are lifted. That Early Help is not solely the province of social care teams but relies on schools, early years, youth, health and other services, is and will remain a vital part of that offer.
- The CYSCP team is also involved in work underway on Domestic Abuse/Domestic Violence which includes many Relevant Agencies in voluntary, community, and survivor-led and focused bodies. Such a focus on a vital issue for some children and young people is a marker of partners’ insistence that vital work must go on no matter what, and it is hoped that its positive effects will be felt by children and their families who may be at risk. Given Royal Assent was given to the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 in late April, the York is looking to ensure a way forward enabling it to carry its new statutory duties in its own right rather than in a single partnership across North Yorkshire and York. Discussions will then take place regarding continued joint implementation work with North Yorkshire in commissioning and providing DA/DV services. This determination to ensure a York-specific strategic drive whilst ensuring that where possible approaches to delivery are standardised, is to be commended.

## What next for the partnership?

New issues may surface as Covid 19 restrictions continue to be lifted. These issues may last for the longer term, even once future planning is implemented and its results can be seen. The Partnership is keenly aware that many staff have given a great deal since early 2020 and are now tired and stressed; that post-pandemic there may be problems that have been in the wings since march 2020 that will come to the fore and need to be addressed; and that the CYSCP needs the energy, time and resources to think and plan as far ahead as possible. Current circumstances are extraordinary, though CYSCP members are also aware they have taught services and leaders a great deal about working together and facing contingencies that could not have planned for. These challenges, and the response that have been made to them, should be used to set new patterns for and ways of working in the future.

Partners are also aware that post-pandemic times are likely to give rise to different demands, needs, challenges and opportunities, not least if the economy struggles to revive and takes a long time to enter sustained recovery – a situation which could place some families’ lives under severe challenge. The issues discussed below will undoubtedly present challenges to every agency and statutory partner.

## Post-pandemic

Once the pandemic subsides and especially in light of the success of the vaccination programme, the period of “Afterwards” is likely to present circumstances that will not be what we remember as “normal” in pre-Covid 19 days. Deciding as a Partnership what to do about what arises is accepted by CYSCP members as unlikely to be simple, quick, or cheap.

There are then several areas of potential risk or pressure to which close attention and creative solution finding will need to be applied.

- Schools are now fully and successfully open, but educational professionals are aware that circumstances in Summer 2021 are not as they were prior to March 2019. Exam and testing regimes are likely to come under continued scrutiny from here on in, placing at least some candidates and teachers into further uncertainty and stress. Schools are also aware that children from some vulnerable families have been slow to return and that some have not yet done so, and that both sporadic attendance and elective home education are on the rise. This is an ongoing issue that partners are aware will need to be addressed vigorously, potentially for the long haul. These issues are national as well as local.
- Rates of referrals into some higher-level services were initially lower than in pre-pandemic times. Trends manifested themselves in lower levels of children seen, or reported as being, caught up in County Lines activity, in lower referral and self-referral patterns in mental health services, and lower reported cases of domestic abuse and violence. However, all have now resurfaced. Partners are prepared for an expected further rise, potentially involving a greater than usual focus on higher end and crisis level safeguarding activity. There may well in York as elsewhere in England, be a rise in the need for intervention in a minority of families which did not need help before, needed help but struggled behind their own closed doors and did not ask for help during lockdowns, or turned help away using Covid 19 as an excuse.
- Reductions in some areas of work are now being matched by rises in others, including a developing trend of families coming to services’ notice with very complex needs when they were not “on the radar” of specialist teams at all pre-pandemic. The increase in family poverty likely to be caused by adults’ ongoing job loss or uncertainty as the economy makes an uneven recovery, added to some families dealing with state benefits difficulties being in still-worsening poverty, and the likely or already manifest poorer prospects for some in the workforce within a recovering economy where that recovery may take a long time to bear fruit, are all likely to affect some children’s lives more than others.
- In schools, there is an ongoing tension between confused and contradictory notions of catching up on supposedly lost learning, and re-orienting, supporting and dealing with recorded rises in both staff and student anxiety and uncertainty. There are children and young people who craved coming back to school and schools reporting a steady and happy re-settlement into routines; and those who would rather not have returned, or who did not and even longer term may not return. There are also, as national analyses also indicate, children and young people with special educational needs with or without disabilities, who need support beyond the resources available, whose situation may have been exacerbated by restrictions during the Covid 19 pandemic. There may be some whose planned appointments with medical staff were stood down whilst health services dealt with the pandemic, who will not recover as they might had services been available as they were before. It will take time for the picture to clarify, but these matters are already on the agenda of the SEN/D Improvement Board in York.

- If referrals discussed in previous sections rise as predicted, but financial resources paid by central government to fund services and agencies stay at pre-pandemic levels, there will be ever harder decisions to make and potentially a growth in unmet needs – itself a predictor of safeguarding difficulties for some children and young people. Decision makers, policy and service shapers, and workers in agencies, will need to be kept aware both of these externally driven but locally felt circumstances, and the need to shape services so that inter-agency and multi-disciplinary learning is retained and indeed built on. This will require sustained commitment across all services, and may not be easy to maintain once the post-pandemic period is properly underway. Many agencies' resources will have been depleted during 2020-2021. This includes voluntary sector bodies whose losses in funding may mean their ability to be delivery partners is curtailed. It is clear from national and international analyses that Covid 19's economic effects could be long lasting and negative, particularly if families cannot meet their financial responsibilities and seek recourse to ever more scarce and tightly regulated support.
- What will need to happen to address these many issues could be complex, and will require the input of leaders, staff and citizens. It is clear detailed planning, and a readiness to act as swiftly and in as close a partnership as has become the hallmark of Covid 19's ways of working, will be needed.

### **Additional risks or issues that will need to be dealt with include all of the following:**

Who will Chair the Executive from Summer 2021? This is a question arising from the following four key circumstances in partner bodies which oversee the CYSP's activities at all levels.

- The City Council has undergone a restructure at senior levels so that there is now one People's Directorate rather than a children's and an adults' pairing of Directorates. The new People's Directorate runs under a very senior officer who is therefore effectively doing two large, statutory, weighty and difficult jobs. There is therefore no capacity in that senior colleague's diary to step in to chair the CYSCP Executive. A Deputy Director for Safeguarding has recently been appointed, an experienced City of York Council Assistant Director (Adults) by background. He will need to immerse himself, rapidly and determinedly and possibly initially solely, in children's issues, including but not exclusively about safeguarding as such, if his remit is to be all-age. Decision making and executive powers will need to be clear given CYC is a statutory partner on both CYSCP and CYSAB. Further discussions will be necessary regarding who represents and accounts for CYC on CYSCP and to the partners who sit on it. As this report is completed, meetings between the new postholder and me as Scrutineer are being sought so that the situation of representation, leadership and schemes of delegated authority can be shared with me so I can give the required assurance on the safety of the system in York.

- Similar discussions will be needed if, as is now under consideration, a single Business Support Team is configured to support CYSAB and CYSCP. The latter Partnership has more subgroups, a good deal more data, more accountability to a wide range of inspectorates (Ofsted, CQC, HMICFRS, HMIP all of which inspect strands of activities with and for children and young people) and inspection requirements than the former, but the former deals with vulnerabilities at least as complex as those seen in children and young people. Strong schemes of accountability, governance, delegation and regulation will be needed so that neither vulnerable adults' issues nor a wider range of children's ones are lost in any merged arrangements that might result at Business Support levels. Not least, dedicated data analysts are needed if both CYSCP and CYSAB are to act from the basis of knowing enough about demographics, need and aspiration, and how services should adapt to meet them all.
- CCGs and provider networks across the Health economy in England are about to undergo a further period of radical, professionals describe it as seismic, change, as Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) over a far larger footprint than York as a City, allied to different models of delegation and decision making on both commissioning and provision, and models of accountability, all have to be developed, implemented and then delivered in the longer term. This is all being undertaken by senior professionals who are already more than fully occupied, many of whom are approaching the ends of their careers and may not be present as new ways of delivering health services to the population come about. This has already been recognised as the creator of a recordable risk on CYSCP's risk register, and will need to be taken very fully into account in at least 2021-2022, and probably in future years beyond that. At present, the senior staff trying to steer the change and involve partners so that what results is fit for purpose are not being told enough, in timely enough fashion, by NHS England to make the coming changes work. Given childhood physical and mental health are complex and there are already acknowledged gaps in provision of some services, and that ICSs will cover very large territories, the risks of matters going awry in the process are clear, and acknowledged by the Partnership. There is no capacity in the CCGs as they move towards ICSs, to chair the Executive.
- North Yorkshire Police is also undergoing considerable change. Its accountability is now to a new Police Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) elected in May 2021. Senior officers, including the ACC who has been Chair of the Executive and a strong contributor on the Chief Constable's behalf to the LSCPs in both York and neighbouring North Yorkshire, retires in July 2021 and will be replaced on an interim basis by one of the county's Area Commanders with a background and considerable strengths in safeguarding work but who will need to "learn the way in" to the Partnership at executive level. There is no capacity in North Yorkshire Police as things stand, for a senior officer to step in as Executive Chair.

## The Scrutineer's work in 2021-2022

Notwithstanding the risks and issues noted in the section immediately above, the work I am engaged in continues. A pattern of meetings was established in diaries beginning in September 2020 (the start of my contract) and has worked well to date. In 2021-2022 I will continue to attend, observe at, and note the contents of and decisions made at meetings of both the CYSCP Executive and every subgroup, on a cycle matched to busy diaries. For as long as work goes on being done on a virtual basis, there will inevitably be limits on what else could be done with the remainder of days on which the Executive or subgroups meet. Were visits and scrutineer days taking place in York face to face, there would be greater potential to undertake additional meetings in the other halves of days. Such meetings, which may be possible to replace with virtual ones if virtual working continues, could usefully take place with:

- Those at Chief Executive or equivalent decision-making levels in Statutory Partner bodies, as envisaged in Sir Alan Wood's Spring 2021 review of the new Partnership arrangements and as Working Together 2018 also envisages.
- Relevant Agencies' leaders, governance, and managerial staff: principals and head teachers, governors, leaders in community or faith organisations, those working in programme, service or team manager roles in services, and so on.
- Representatives of children and young people, particularly when they are involved in decision making.
- Others as partners and agencies deem fit.

I will continue to facilitate full CYSCP Partnership Days. These will be virtual events for the duration of Covid 19 regulations and for however long afterwards partners see fit given returns to face to face event-based or large group meetings will take time to return. They will, as they do now, consist of all-participant co-appraisals of the Partnership's progress, and Partnership members' reflections on it, plus opportunities for all attendees to be part of learning and information exchanges.

## Concluding remarks and Independent Scrutineer's assurance statement

**As Independent Scrutineer, I present this end of year report as a snapshot in time, not as a definitive document. I have attended as an active observer, through Microsoft Teams, both the Executive and every subgroup. All are running well, and the commitment to ensure they do so has not broken stride despite the pressures under which every service and team are working. I have also kept track of CYSCP website and its offers of support and guidance to all who may need it. I conclude that the Partnership and the agencies and services which belong and account to it are compliant with Working Together 2018. All concerned are aware that communications, both within and between partner bodies, need to be a focus for continuous improvement, to avoid duplication, create efficiencies, and ensure all key safeguarding themes are in the consciousness, and influence the work, of all services and agencies.**



I conclude by being able to give my assurance that the Partnership is running as it should, that people remain committed to making it work and to do so successfully. I look forward to continuing to work with and scrutinise the Partnership and help it to steer ways through the identified risks and challenges cited earlier, and express my hope that in 2021-2022, on whatever limited a basis, at least some of our work can take place face to face, given the known limitations of the virtual environment which is efficient but not conducive to real connections between people. Partnership members have expressed a similar wish, given that although online working is proving productive, there is a great deal missing when the human factor of being in the same space to tackle the same issues is lost.



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