



# **ANNUAL REPORT**

# **BRADFORD DISTRICT**

# **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN**

# **PARTNERSHIP**

**2024 - 2025**



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## 2.0 FOREWORD BY THE THREE STATUTORY PARTNERS

### Foreword from the Safeguarding Partners

As Bradford District's statutory safeguarding partners, we are pleased to present the Bradford District Safeguarding Children Partnership (BDSCP) Yearly Report for 2024-2025. This report reflects our collective commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children across our community.

We would like to start by expressing our thanks to all the frontline practitioners, managers and support staff across the district who work tirelessly to improve outcomes for children and families across our district. Without their commitment and dedication none of the improvements we have seen in our responses to children and families would be possible.

Over the past year, the Partnership has remained steadfast in its commitment to continuous improvement and the enhancement of our collective responses. In pursuit of this goal, we have initiated a series of structural changes designed to strengthen our strategic leadership and reinforce our shared accountability across agencies. These changes reflect our dedication to fostering a culture of high support and professional challenge, ensuring that decision making processes are transparent and open to scrutiny. By embedding shared ownership of outcomes, we aim to drive meaningful progress and deliver improved services to the communities we serve.

Our commitment to inclusion, equality, and partnership wide learning remains central to our approach. We recognise that only through effective collaboration can we achieve the systemic changes necessary to meet the diverse needs of our population. The structural reforms introduced this year are a testament to our resolve to work together in a way that promotes equity, responsiveness, and long-term impact.

We continue to work in a challenging environment in relation to increasing demands placing extra strains on partners delivering against the priorities of BDSCP with restricted budgets, as well as the wider societal challenges brought about by the continued impacts of poverty and the highest unemployment rate across the Yorkshire and Humber region. We understand how the impacts of poverty and employment challenges can affect the levels of concerns for children and how our responses need to be reflective of this.

As a partnership we are continuing to utilise learning from Practice Reviews both locally and nationally to inform our developments in multiagency practice. We are in the process of looking at the identified themes that we have worked on for some time and refining them to better address the work that still needs to be done to assure ourselves that we have addressed the identified learning. To that end we are utilising best practice derived from other areas around the country to enhance our audit and reviewing activity across the partnership.

We would finally like to take a moment to reflect on the support and guidance provided to us by Janice Hawkes, our departing Scrutineer. Her commitment to her role and the invaluable guidance she has provided to us during extremely challenging times has been of immeasurable benefit to us as a Partnership and we wish her well in whatever comes next for her. We would also like to welcome our new Scrutineer, Rachel Egan, to her role. Rachel brings a wealth of experience and knowledge gathered in a variety of roles including as a Scrutineer in other Districts. Her inputs, challenges and advice will be hugely significant as we continue our drive for excellence in all areas of safeguarding children.

## Lead Safeguarding Practitioners



**Lorraine O'Donnell**

Chief Executive  
Bradford Council



**John Robins**

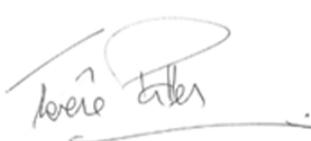
Chief Constable  
West Yorkshire Police



**Rob Webster**

Chief Executive NHS  
West Yorkshire  
Integrated Care Board

## Designated Safeguarding Practitioners



**Phillipa Hubbard**

Deputy CEO  
Bradford District  
Care Trust



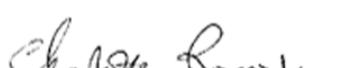
**Richard Padwell**

Chief Superintendent  
District Commander  
West Yorkshire Police



**Marrium Haque**

Strategic Director  
Children's Services  
Bradford Council



**Charlotte Ramsden**

Chief Executive  
Bradford Children and  
Families Trust



## 3.0 INDEPENDENT CHAIR FOREWORD

### 3.1 Independent Chair Foreword - Janice Hawkes

#### Foreword by Independent Chair and Scrutineer



This report covers the period April 2024 – March 2025 and the body of the report outlines the considerable work undertaken by the Bradford District Safeguarding Children Partnership through the commitment of colleagues across agencies within the District.

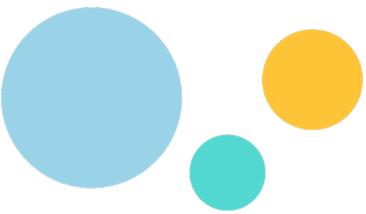
This period has seen continued work by partners to embed the changes to multi-agency safeguarding arrangements set out in Working Together 2023. One of the key expectations of the new arrangements was a greater direct involvement by the most senior leadership across statutory partners in the Safeguarding Partnership. As Scrutineer I have observed a real commitment by the Statutory Partners to find a model of engagement that is both compliant with Working Together whilst acknowledging the particular circumstances and geographical challenges faced by individual statutory partners.

The current approach by Partners in Bradford, working closely with colleagues across West Yorkshire will allow engagement by the Lead Safeguarding Partners at a strategic level, with close, active ongoing involvement by Designated Safeguarding Partners.

Significant work was undertaken during the period to revise the structures of the Partnership to facilitate that greater engagement and senior leadership “grip”. An Executive group was established, replacing the previous Strategic Leadership Group and chaired by the Co-chairs Marium Haque, Strategic Director of Children’s Services from the local authority and Charlotte Ramsden, Chief Executive Officer of Bradford’s Children and Families Trust. I have observed strong leadership from the co-chairs and an increased commitment at this level from each of the Designated Safeguarding Partners to maintain momentum in shaping and driving forward the work of the Bradford District Safeguarding Children Partnership.

In the autumn of 2023 a review of Partnership structures was conducted by the Commissioner Anthony Douglas, supported by Charlotte Ramsden. The review identified several areas where improvements could be achieved in the functioning of the subgroups supporting the work of the Partnership. This will hopefully strengthen the oversight of the Executive and ensure greater focus and more timely response to priorities for change. In the coming year further work is planned to strengthen the engagement of the Education sector at Executive level.

This period has seen continued improvements in practice at the front line, which has been recognised and welcomed within the ongoing Ofsted monitoring visits. Such improvements have been driven by strong leadership within the Bradford Children and Families Trust, with its commitment to embedding a model of practice that builds positive relationships with children, young people and families and through its success in maintaining increased stability within its workforce. Key to any improvement journey is the support of all agencies working within the sector. During this period, I have been impressed by the ongoing collaborative multi-agency work to drive forward continued improvements in practice at the front line, supported by the shared problem solving and task focused approach adopted by the Partnership’s Multi-Agency Improvement Development group. A key area of ongoing focus has been the embedding of the “conversations based” model within the Integrated Front Door, resulting in positive feedback across partnership agencies and including at the front line in experiences of referring families for support and in sharing concerns. I welcome plans for further work to include statutory and relevant partners in the process for reviewing practice and outcomes following referrals to the IFD.



The challenge for the Partnership in the coming year will be to replicate and preserve within the new Partnership structure the behaviours and focus evident within the collaborative approach which has achieved these improvements.

In the final quarter of this period, the Partnership held a workshop to discuss the revised structures and to consult on priorities for the Partnership going forward. For three years, BDSCP has had as its priority areas for action: work to establish a shared understand of neglect and a shared approach to assessing and working with families where neglect is an issue; work to reduce the number of injuries to non-mobile babies; and work to strengthen governance and leadership within the Partnership. As I have noted earlier, work to strengthen governance and leadership is ongoing and will continue to be one of the Partnership's priorities for the coming period. The neglect priority has received focus through the work of the Partnership's Neglect Sub-group. Colleagues across agencies have supported the development of tools and protocols to identify and assess the impact of neglect on children and young people. A multi-agency audit was undertaken by the Performance Monitoring Audit and Evaluation Sub-group in the summer of 2024. Whilst it identified some areas for continued focus for improvements, one significant finding was that there was a shared understanding across agencies of the indicators and impact of neglect. The Partnership Executive is confident that work will continue in this area to support improvement in responses to neglect as "business as usual" and similarly considers that work to reduce the incidence of injuries to non-mobile babies can continue to be monitored and supported through current programmes of work led by the Children and Families Trust. Plans are in place to conduct a multi-agency audit in the coming year to gain some assurance as a Partnership that this work is achieving positive outcomes for children.

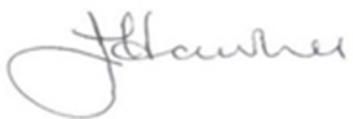
The Partnership has therefore agreed four priority areas for its work in the coming period. Learning from recent case reviews has identified three key areas of practice:

- The Partnership's multi-agency response to the exploitation of children and young people
- Supporting the work of the Domestic Abuse Board to ensure sufficient focus on children and young people
- Responding to the National Panel's 2024 review of safeguarding practice to protect children and young people subject to child sexual abuse.

The fourth priority area continues the Partnership's work to strengthen its effectiveness through its refreshed arrangements. I particularly welcome its commitment to strengthen its capacity to analyse the impact of its multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and in particular to measure the effectiveness of its work in the above key areas of practice.

This report provides an update on the work of the Case Review Sub-group, the publication of a further safeguarding children practice review and the continued work to ensure the recommendations of these reviews are progressed. A recent review identified that since February 2021, there have been 9 practice reviews published in Bradford, generating in total 100 recommendations for the Partnership to address – a complex task which has presented challenges in terms of speed of delivery. Work has been undertaken initially by the Business Unit, and latterly with support from the Children's Services Improvement Board, to rationalise these recommendations, bringing them together under 6 key practice areas. Each of these areas will have a senior responsible officer appointed to provide focus and drive forward work to achieve real impact for children and families in the District. The challenge for the Partnership in the coming year will be to create a system within its developing structure to ensure evidence is provided and scrutinised to measure impact.

This is my final foreword as Bradford's Independent Scrutineer and my successor Rachel Egan took up her role in May 2025. In the three years since I took up my position, initially as joint Independent Chair and Scrutineer, I have been privileged to witness and support Bradford's improvement journey as a Partnership. Back in 2022 the Partnership were facing considerable challenges. The tragic death of Star Hobson and the subsequent publication of Child Protection in England, was shocking for the community and for agencies, and impacted significantly on morale and capacity within the Partnership. Later that year a decision was made to transfer responsibility for the delivery of children's services from the local authority to an independent Trust, a transition which took place in April 2023. This three-year period has therefore in no way been "business as usual." It has been a period of challenge and change. However, I have witnessed colleagues at all levels across agencies demonstrating a determination to work collaboratively to meet those challenges and it is clear that multi-agency work to safeguard children in Bradford is now in a much stronger position. I am proud and privileged to have worked alongside those colleagues and thank them for their work and for their ongoing commitment to achieving change and to improving the lives of children, young people and families across Bradford.



**Janice Hawkes**  
Independent Scrutineer (outgoing)  
Bradford District Safeguarding  
Children Partnership



### 3.1 Introducing Our New Scrutineer - Rachel Egan

#### An Introducing To Our New Independent Scrutineer



Rachel's commitment to improving outcomes for children & families is at the heart of her motivation to be the BDSCP Independent Scrutineer.

Proud to have been a young carer, Rachel is passionate about ensuring that the voice of the child is at the heart of all aspects of safeguarding – front line to policy, local to national.

The first person in her family to earn a degree, Rachel's love for drama, led her to study Community Theatre and Performance at Nottinghamshire College of Performing Arts. After she graduated, she worked as an artist in residence and peripatetic teacher in a wide range of community settings, including Styal Prison and St Bartholomew's hospital.

Rachel's lived experience and passion for social justice were the driving forces behind her efforts to challenge inequalities and deliver transformation. Her diverse achievements, include the transfer of prison health services to the NHS and the development of digitalised social prescribing for children and families.

Throughout her career, she has been a champion of early intervention. In 2012, she led Europe's largest randomised control trial (RCT) of prevention programmes across the primary stages of child development, contributing to the Graham Allen review of early intervention and the formation of the Early Intervention Foundation, now part of Foundations – What Works, Centre for Children and Families.

In 2013, King Charles recognised Rachel's work on social impact bonds and named her an innovator in Social Finance.

Building on her work to promote evidence-based practice during her tenure as Assistant Director Early Help and Intervention for Richmond and Wandsworth Council, Rachel completed a three-year collaboration with the Early Intervention Foundation to deepen understanding of 'What works to prevent gang involvement, youth violence, and crime', developing a social and emotional learning toolkit to support schools in applying evidence-based practice in this area.

Rachel strongly advocates collaborative work with local communities to improve safeguarding, tackle inequalities, and create wider public service reform. In this context, Rachel has completed scrutiny work across health and social care and is currently the Independent Scrutineer for Medway, West Sussex and Worcestershire Safeguarding Children's Partnerships and the Independent Chair for Quality Assurance for Brighton and Hove.

Rachel is a Non-Executive Director for Greater Manchester NHS, where she chairs the Population Health Committee and champions creative health and systems leadership to create health and address health inequalities.

**Rachel Egan**  
Independent Scrutineer  
Bradford District Safeguarding  
Children Partnership

## 4.0 ABOUT BRADFORD

Bradford Metropolitan District covers an area of 366 square kilometres. In addition to the City of Bradford itself, the District comprises a mixture of diverse neighbourhoods, towns and villages. In contrast to the urban and rural settlements the remaining two thirds of the district is rural and comprises parks, farmland, woods and moorland.

Bradford is connected to the national motorway and rail networks and enjoys a close proximity to Leeds Bradford International Airport. Bradford is the fifth largest metropolitan borough council in England in terms of population after Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield and Manchester with an estimated population of 560,200 people.

27.9% of the District's population is aged under 20 and Bradford has the seventh highest percentage of young people per capita in England after the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, Slough Borough Council, Luton Borough Council, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, Oldham Borough Council and Birmingham City Council.

Bradford's median age (where 50% is older and 50% is younger) is 36.8 years. This is younger than the Regional (40.5) and England (40.4) averages. In West Yorkshire, only Leeds has a lower median age (36.3).

In total, 17% of households in Bradford experience multiple forms of deprivation. 22% of children are living below the poverty line, 15% of people are experiencing fuel poverty and the local authority district is ranked the 5th most deprived for income and 6th most deprived for employment in England. Rates of unemployment in Bradford are high – 7.1% compared to 3.8% for England. However, there are signs of improvement – there was a reduction of over 20% in levels of unemployment in the last year and self-employment in Bradford has grown 23% in the last 10 years (2021 Census data).

Bradford District was selected by the UK Government in May 2022 from a record-breaking 20 bids, following Derry/Londonderry (2013), Hull (2017) and Coventry (2021) to take on one of the most prestigious and transformative titles in UK culture, City of Culture 2025.

Bradford 2025 is taking place throughout Bradford District. It features performances, exhibitions, events and activities inspired by the extraordinary variety of this landscape, from the city's historic centre to the breathtaking countryside that surrounds it. It pays homage to Bradford's potent heritage as everything from a former industrial powerhouse to the world's first UNESCO City of Film. Most of all, it celebrates the people of Bradford, from local artists and creative organisations to the diverse communities who call Bradford home.

Bradford 2025 is seen as a key driver for regeneration of the district as well as enhancing its reputation as a place to visit, live and do business.



## 5.0 WHAT THE DATA SHOWS

Between April 2024 and the end of March 2025 there was a total of 43,616 contacts made to the Integrated Front Door of the Bradford Children and Families Trust, which was an average of 3,635 per month (an increase from an average of 3,479 in 2023/24).

These contacts resulted in 7,083 referrals into the Children's Trust (down from 8,919 in 2023/24). Where did these contacts come from?

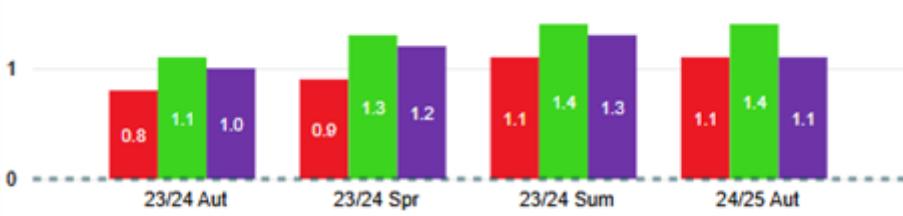


As of the end of March 2025 there were 1,061 Children subject of Child in Need Plans (down 297 from the previous year), 468 Children subject of Child Protection Plans (down 251) and 1,366 Children in Care of the Local Authority (down 119).

In relation to schools data for overall absences and for the percentage of children being electively home educated, Bradford compared to Yorkshire and Humber and to the rest of England is shown below.

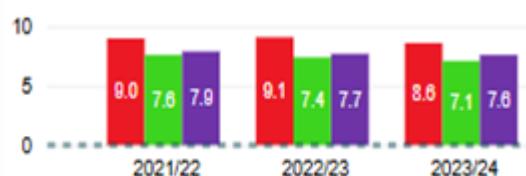
**% of EHE Children on Census Day by population**

Region ● Bradford ● England ● Y&H



**% Total Overall Absence**

Region ● Bradford ● England ● Y&H



Region	23/24 Aut	23/24 Spr	23/24 Sum	24/25 Aut	YoY Diff
Bradford	0.8	0.9	1.1	1.1	0.0
England	1.1	1.3	1.4	1.4	0.0
Y&H	1.0	1.2	1.3	1.1	-0.2

Region	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	YoY Diff
Bradford	9.0	9.1	8.6	-0.5
England	7.6	7.4	7.1	-0.3
Y&H	7.9	7.7	7.6	-0.1

Rates of EHE are circulated based on ONS mid-year population estimates for children aged 5 to 16 years. The rates for 2023/24 are based on 2022 population estimates.

### Child Exploitation data as of the end of March 2025

86 children were identified as at risk of Child Exploitation

34 were assessed as of Emerging Risk

33 were assessed as of Moderate Risk and

19 were assessed as of Significant Risk

The majority of children at risk were aged 13-16 and the ethnicity breakdown showed that the highest number were recorded as of White British ethnicity, followed by those of mixed heritage and Asian British.

All the children were open to a Social Worker and over half of them were working with Breaking the Cycle workers.

## 6.0 PRIORITIES OF THE PARTNERSHIP

The BDSCP has priorities for the Partnership for the the period of this report. These were;

### Priority One – Child Neglect

Developing strategies and tools to enable effective multi-agency responses to concerns of neglect across the Bradford District.

### Priority Two – Injuries in Young Babies

Developing multi-agency practice and process to support families at the earliest possible juncture to reduce the instances of non-accidental injuries in babies.

### Priority Three – Developing the Leadership Structure for Safeguarding

Recognising the need to continually refresh and develop the Partnership management structures to reflect changes in senior leadership. Ensuring that the vision of the Partnership is upheld.

## 6.1 Priority One – Child Neglect

### What have we done:

See *Section 7.2* entry for Neglect Subgroup.

## 6.2 Priority Two – Injuries in Young Babies

### What have we done:

Continued work was done to promote ICON. ICON stands for:

- Infant crying is normal, and it will stop.
- Comfort methods can sometimes soothe the baby, and the crying will stop.
- Okay, to walk away if you have checked the baby; it is safe, and the crying is getting to you.
- Never ever shake or hurt a baby.

The partnership has instigated a process of multiagency meetings that discuss unborn children at a stage where increased support for families can assist in reducing risk and improving outcomes for children where potential risks are identified.

## 6.3 Priority Three – Developing the Leadership Structure for Safeguarding

### What have we done:

As per the details above a review has taken place of the structures of the Partnership and key changes are taking place around this. The new priority linked to this to improve the effectiveness of the Partnership and the workings of the new subgroups.



## 7.0 WORK OF THE BDSCP SUBGROUPS

### 7.1 Oversight and Delivery Group Subgroup

#### What have we done:

This group works to coordinate the work of all the subgroups and assists with focusing work on key Partnership priorities. The group seeks to identify issues from across the Subgroups that need highlighting to the Partnership senior leaders as emerging issues that they need to consider in their strategic planning.

- The group have sought to explore issues surrounding attendance at multiagency training seeking to understand the blockages that might exist to prevent professionals attending.
- ODG have overseen the work on the Multiagency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) required by the changes in Working Together 2023 and at the same time has contributed to the work to look at the suggested changes in the report by Anthony Douglas the Children's Commissioner for Bradford.
- Following observations by the National Child Review Panel ODG contributed to the work to amend the documentation and processes undertaken for Rapid Reviews in the District.

#### Areas of more progress:

The ODG have identified that there needs to be a review of the way that the partnership addresses the themes from practice reviews. A great deal of work has been done to work through the themes raised by the practice reviews over the past few years but there needs to be a review of how we continue to progress this in the future. This work is going to be handed on to the refreshed ODG group that has been pulled together as a result of the Partnership review.

### 7.2 Neglect Subgroup

#### What have we done:

- The group has met regularly throughout this period. Work has been undertaken to review and refresh the current Neglect Strategy for the District looking to build on the work that has already been undertaken during the previous twelve months.
- The group has worked closely with the NSPCC to start the process of rolling out Graded Care Profile 2 across the Partnership. Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2) helps professionals measure the quality of care provided by a parent or carer in meeting their child's needs. The roll out plan will include staff attending "train the trainers" courses for up to twenty staff across the Partnership who will then work collectively to train staff on the tool's use in the coming months. By the close of 2025/26 it is planned for GCP2 to be fully embedded across the partnership structures to improve on consistency of assessment and response to neglect and associated concerns.
- In conjunction with the SaPP group the subgroup members have taken part in a task and finish group to review and refresh the Bradford Multiagency Continuum of Need document. This is due for relaunch later in 2025.

#### Areas of more progress:

In the last quarter of 2024/25 there has been a review of the Safeguarding Partnerships to ensure the full effectiveness of the Partnership. The Neglect subgroup will continue as a time limited group to complete areas of work that it has started and will then be folded into the new subgroup structures.

## 7.3 Learning and Improvement Subgroup

### What have we done:

The group meet quarterly to discuss an expanding and evolving multi-agency level 3 training offer.

- New face-to-face training has been added to the calendar in 2024, such as the CSE/ Missing Children, Cultural Competency, and more recently a General Drugs awareness session. Colleagues have also supported developing recording sessions, such as dental neglect and barriers to child protection, which have been added to our learning management system, enable.
- Members are continuing to work together to develop professional practice sessions to focus on CSE and cumulative harm.
- During Safeguarding Week in June 2024, a Tri-board event was hosted by BDSCP, BSAB, and DASV on learning from reviews, held at Bradford University, bringing professionals from Children and Adult services together. There were 64 people in attendance at the event, and feedback from the attendees has highlighted positive learning from SARs CSPRs and DHRs.
- In September we hosted a Neglect: Supporting Safeguarding in Practice Conference. Neglect is a key priority for the Partnership and the conference provided an important update on the approach to our collective work to better understand and respond to neglect. The event also presented the newly agreed NSPCC Graded Care Profile 2 tool and discussed how it will be used across organisations, to enable consistent assessment and intervention with our families.
- We also explored adolescent neglect and transitional safeguarding with our keynote speaker Dez Holmes (Research in Practice). The conference provided an opportunity to explore further collaboration in our approach to neglect in Bradford with 100 people in attendance.
- Work has continued in the group to look at attendance at training, and we have seen an increase in attendance following the implementation of the non-attendance charging policy. To date the charges from the non-attendance charging policy are £12,650, and £8950 has been paid. These charges are being used to fund further training and conference opportunities.

### Areas of more progress:

In the last quarter of 2024/25 there has been a review of the Safeguarding Partnerships to ensure the full effectiveness of the Partnership. 2025/26 will be focused on implementing the findings of the review which include streamlining processes and strengthening oversight of the recommendations made in Practice Reviews and Rapid Reviews.



## 7.4 All Age Exploitation Subgroup

### What have we done:

- **Communication Plan:** Developed a versatile and accessible communication strategy to enhance both existing and new campaigns targeting diverse audiences, including communities, nighttime economy venues, hotels, taxis, frontline practitioners, and strategic partnerships.
- **Awareness Campaign:** Secured funding for a new campaign aimed at encouraging public vigilance in identifying and preventing exploitation.
- **Breaking the Cycle Collaboration:** Continued partnership with Breaking the Cycle to divert young people from serious crime and exploitation.
- **Problem Profile Redesign:** Redesigned a problem profile to identify emerging risk areas, enabling a coordinated partnership response.
- **Best Practice Bank:** Developed and shared a bank of examples of best practice, including an operation in Keighley that identified and safeguarded young exploitation victims, leading to the arrest and prosecution of perpetrators.
- **MACE Support:** Continued support and development of the Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) arrangements, including the creation of a post focused on transitional safeguarding.
- **Lived Experience Collaboration:** Enhanced collaboration with individuals with lived experience to inform and guide policy and processes.
- **Training Framework:** Improved the partnership training offer, resulting in an effective, responsive training framework.
- **Community Engagement:** Strengthened community response and engagement on exploitation, particularly with faith groups and the voluntary sector.

### Areas of more progress:

- **AAE Subgroup Review:** Transform the AAE subgroup structure and terms of reference to enhance accountability, oversight, and collaboration among stakeholders.
- **Exploitation Response Improvement:** Continue to refine our response to exploitation, focusing on victims, offenders, and locations to ensure comprehensive safeguarding and targeted interventions.
- **Transitional Safeguarding:** Maintain focus on transitional safeguarding, addressing the challenges posed by differing legislation during this critical period.

In the coming year, the AAE subgroup will undergo significant changes to improve risk identification, accountability, and dedicated focus on exploitation across Bradford.

## 7.5 Performance Monitoring Audit and Evaluation Subgroup

### What have we done:

The PMAE Subgroup has been working on a number of key issues over the past 12 months that will be carried forward via the newly established Quality Assurance subgroup of the Partnership.

- Work has continued to develop a more focused multi-agency dashboard, supported by the efforts of the Business Unit's Performance Intelligence and QA Officer to build a multi-agency set of key performance indicators. In the coming year partners will need to do further work to refine and streamline this data set to ensure it supports the capacity of the Partnership to evaluate the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and the impact of its work around its priority areas.
- A multi-agency audit focusing on neglect was conducted in the summer of 2024, following significant work to agree a model of multi-agency audit and an agreed tool. Whilst further work is required to refine the tool, the approach was welcomed by colleagues and provided a vehicle for constructive discussion and analysis. The audit identified some themes that are consistent with agencies' current priorities for improvement. It also demonstrated a shared understanding across agencies of the indicators and impact of neglect on children and young people, which is encouraging.
- The PMAE are currently overseeing the Section 11 process. Bradford has been working alongside the other West Yorkshire local authorities to develop a shared self-assessment tool. The tool was welcomed by agencies inputting information as an improvement on previous models, however there have been significant technical challenges in aggregating, interpreting and utilising the data. Adjustments to the tool have now been made, and in line with the other four authorities in West Yorkshire, Bradford has opted to use the latest version of the Organisational Assessment Tool. Agencies have now submitted their self-assessments. A focus for the coming period will be analysis of the data and information provided and an agreed method for agencies to share findings and provide mutual challenge.

### Areas of more progress:

In the last quarter of 2024/25 there has been a review of the Safeguarding Partnerships to ensure the full effectiveness of the Partnership. As part of the new structures the functions of the PMAE Group will be incorporated into the new subgroup structures.

## 7.6 Education Reference Group

### What have we done:

The Education Reference Group has an open membership of education safeguarding professionals who are keen to contribute to the work of the BDSCP by ensuring that the voice of education is heard. There is representation from the local authority, academy trusts, maintained schools, special schools and independent schools. As the sector that has the most direct contact time with the majority of school-age children, the group acts as a consultative point of reference for the BDSCP enabling the consideration of how strategic partnership decisions will impact on education settings, as well as how education can contribute to the work towards the key partnership priorities. In the last 12 months we have completed:

- Production of a 7-minute briefing and guidance on Educational Neglect to raise awareness across the BDSCP and encourage a multi-agency focus on improving school attendance
- Reviewing the Early Help Assessment alongside the BCFT to ensure that it is family friendly and easier to use for professionals, leading to growing numbers of families accessing support.
- Establishing strong working relationships with colleagues in the BCFT, holding regular meetings to provide a two-way flow of information about strengths and challenges within the system at all stages.

### Areas of more progress:

- Increasing representation to include colleagues from pre-school and further education settings.
- Engaging more families with Early Help as soon as problems emerge.
- Contributing to the launch and roll out of the Graded Care Profile 2 across the district by empowering Designated Safeguarding Leads in education settings to use the tool.

## 8.0 OTHER WORK OF THE PARTNERSHIP

### Work of the Child Exploitation Hub

The Exploitation Hub co-work provides direct support to Childrens Services and children and families supported across the district. There are several direct support strands being offered to support social workers and practitioners in helping families.

There are risk assessment meetings to support with CE risk flag identification based on a trauma informed risk assessment that the social worker submits to the CE Hub. Partners contribute to the meeting and tasks are identified to ensure that that children receive the service they deserve. The meeting also looks at supporting any identified unmet needs within education or health for example. The MACE (multi agency child exploitation) meeting shares information with the exploitation police and partners and identifies any disruption into hot spot areas or identified perpetrators. These are based on the contextual safeguarding model in terms of space, place and agencies working together to address the extra familial harm. These are multi-agency meetings which can also advise on care planning and allocation of resources to support the children and families where risk is deemed moderate-significant. The RAM (Risk Assessment Meeting) meetings review all flags within the agreed time frames; 60 days for moderate risk and every 30 days for significant risk.

## Co-work Model

While locality social workers remain the lead practitioner and responsible for the child's overall planning, children deemed to be at most risk to exploitative harms and who present to RAM/ MACE are offered a co-allocation of a CE Hub social worker. This is to provide more support for children and their caregivers.

## All Age Exploitation Social Worker

Supports transition into adulthood for children 16+ and can offer consultations re adult provisions that maybe required for young people who reach 18 and are still deemed vulnerable to exploitation or where there are still concerns and harm risks, can also offer practical support on a 1-1 basis with the consent of the young person.

## The Missing Team

Complete all the missing return home interviews for children who are new referrals, or open to Early help and children's services. For our children in our care the interviews are completed by either our missing team or breaking the cycle.

## Specialist Exploitation Health Practitioners

The Specialist Health Practitioners can assist children and young people and their caregivers (where they themselves may need health advice) with health advice. Access to health clinic is provided directly by the CE Hub nurses. The Health Hub nurses aim to provide a single person support to social workers in localities. They can assist with accessing services both locally and regionally if the child or young person lives within Bradford or outside the area for example a child in care.

## Education Safeguarding Officer (ESO)

Education is a key partner agency within the Multi Agency Child Exploitation Hub. Their role is to ensure all children who are at risk of Child Exploitation have their education needs met and school/ college is a protective factor for them.

## Ivision Trust

Ivision is our commissioned service who will support work with parents, foster carers and anyone caring for children or involved in their child's upbringing (i.e. a parent not living in the family home and having regular family time). These home-based sessions will strengthen parents and carers understanding of exploitation and upskill them to recognise it is never the child's fault when they are found to be exploited.

Feedback from parents:

*'Before you became involved, we felt lost and let down by all the professionals around us. We were crippled with guilt and completely blamed ourselves for the abuse our daughter has suffered. As a parent all you want is to be able to protect your daughter and keep her safe and we didn't do that. We are so grateful for your support; it has been invaluable. We didn't think we'd ever come back from this situation but we now feel we have our daughter back. We understand that it wasn't our fault and that makes us feel lighter. 'Thank you so much'.*



## **Breaking the Cycle**

The Breaking the Cycle youth work team support young people who are at risk of being groomed and exploited. They work within the Bradford Children and Families Trust, alongside Children's Social Care.

The team provide direct 1:1 intensive support that seeks to build trust and safeguard children from harm. This work takes place via home visits, outreach into the local community and within Accident and Emergency Departments. This is a specialist area of Youth Work that draws upon a range of skills, knowledge and experience. The Breaking the Cycle team offer training and support to other professionals via the development of the Youth Work Academy.

The CE Hub are closely aligned with the youth workers who offer this diversionary support to children and young people at risk of exploitation. The service also offers advocacy and completion of missing return home interviews for children who are in our care.

In our efforts to constantly innovate and capture best practice the hub has invited an external expert to review our processes and look at areas for improvement. In the coming months we will work on the recommendations we have received.

## **9.0 LEARNING FROM LOCAL CHILD SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE REVIEWS**

During this period the Partnership undertook four Rapid Reviews into cases that fitted the criteria for review. While learning was identified none of these cases progressed to a full practice review.

In March 2025 BDSCP published a Practice Review titled - *Bradford CSPR a Thematic Review Concerning Adrian, Henry and Sam 2025*. This review looked at child criminal exploitation within a familial setting. BDSCP is currently working on the recommendations identified in the report via the ODG subgroup.

## **10.0 LEARNING FROM NATIONAL PRACTICE REVIEWS**

In the last twelve months the National Review Panel has published two reviews looking at aspects of safeguarding of children. These are;

The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel document - *I wanted them all to notice* - which relates to children who have suffered sexual abuse within the family environment.

*"It's Silent": Race, racism and safeguarding children* – Panel Briefing 4, which relates to the impacts of race and racism on safeguarding practices across the system.

BDSCP have reviewed both of these documents and are currently reviewing how the recommendations that are contained within these reports impact on how services support children in these circumstances across the Bradford District.

## 11.0 VOICE OF THE CHILD AND YOUNG PEOPLE

**Bradford Children and Families Trust** remains committed to providing an outstanding service which strives to improve the lives of children and their families. The Trust has continued with understanding the voice of the child through children having access to Mind of My Own, which is a programme that allows children to provide their views for a variety of meetings or just a general means of gaining insight into how they feel. Mind of My Own also enables communication with children with complex health needs. The Trust also gathers the views of children and their parents/carers through audits, responding to complaints and receiving compliments. There has been the development of a new assessment tool which is child centred to understand the lived experience of our children.

Of the 3,483 Child in Care reviews undertaken in 2024/25, 19 were held where the child did not contribute any views on their care plan. The Trust provides advocacy for children in care and care leavers and for children aged over 8 who have an Initial Child Protection Conference; reflection on the strengths and learning is discussed in quarterly meetings to help improve services. Additionally, the Trust has a Participation Service who support children to run 4 Corporate Parenting Panels a year. The group meets weekly and participates in service development including recruitment of staff. As part of 2025/26 priorities the Trust is developing the Voice and Influence strategy and is seeking to expand on the engagement of children, parents and carers to improve on service delivery.

### **Bradford Youth Voice Partnership**

The Child Friendly Bradford District Programme has created a local community of practice for the Bradford District workforce who are in roles that relate to giving children and young people a voice and influence. Through this 8-weekly meeting, colleagues are able to support each other's work, share best practice and be sighted on local, regional and national opportunities around youth voice.

### **Children's Rights and Voice and Influence Training (October 2024 - February 2025)**

As part of our work to embed the voice of the child within our working practices, Child Friendly Bradford District have been delivering a series of 90-minute learning workshops on the topic of "Children's Rights and Voice & Influence". The workshop gives an overview of our statutory duties around children and young people's voice and influence and their right to be heard. It spotlights the various youth boards and forums we have in the district, including our Children in Care/Care Leavers Council. Adam Glennon, participation coordinator in the Children and Families Trust, has co-delivered many of these workshops.

In total, 8 sessions were delivered during this period which included a specific session for elected members with 137 colleagues attending/participating.

### **Children, Young People and Families Executive Board: Youth Takeover 6th November 2024**

In November 2024 26 young people from 8 different youth voice forums across the district met with 41 decision makers from local governance boards as part of the Youth Takeover of the Children, Young People and Families Executive Board. The meeting was planned and led by the Bradford Youth Ambassadors and other groups involved included our local SEND Youth Forum (BradStarz), our Children in Care and Care Leavers' Councils as well as our local NHS Youth Forum.

The outcomes from the event were also shared with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport as part of their National Youth Strategy consultation and review. A “you said, we’re doing” report has been shared with all of the youth groups and young people who participated.

The **SEND** Youth Participation workshop in Bradford empowers young people with special educational needs, disabilities, or neurodiversity by promoting their right to be listened to and taken seriously (UNCRC Article 12).

In the past 5 months:

- The workshop has reached 45 young people across five settings.
- These groups have contributed to developing the Local Offer website.
- They are also involved in co-producing a new WhatsApp Channel for SEND CYP and some online safety guidance to support the channel. So far, 12 young people have worked on defining the channel’s purpose and content.

**West Yorkshire Police** are committed to ensuring the voice of the child is heard within any interactions that officers and staff have through the course of their duties. It is vital that children can speak and to have their perspective heard and, for this to form part of ongoing decision making around their life. As an organisation, the police train officers in recognising the voice of the child, listening to them, and recording correctly using the Public Protection Notices (PPN’s) which ensure effective information sharing with partners. Through our commitment to protecting the vulnerable we are co-located with partners to ensure that the information which is collected and submitted does inform ongoing plans for how a child is supported in the future.

**Barnardo’s** recently completed an in-depth research project exploring the impact of child exploitation on Roma communities living in Bradford. The study also aimed to identify how services can better support Roma children and families who may be at risk. Over a nine-month period, we engaged with 25 Roma young people, along with Roma adults, educators, and other key stakeholders. Through interviews and video contributions, these young people confidently shared their experiences and perspectives, helping professionals gain a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by the Roma community.

By listening to their voices, the research highlighted several critical challenges within the Roma community:

- Limited awareness of child exploitation, often linked to language barriers, cultural practices, and past experiences of discrimination—both in the UK and in countries of origin.
- Mistrust of statutory services, which prevents families from seeking help or engaging fully with available support.
- A lack of understanding around the benefits of identifying as Roma, which can hinder access to culturally appropriate services.

To build trust and improve outcomes, Roma individuals must feel empowered to identify with their ethnicity and be educated on how this enables services to tailor support effectively—especially in terms of language access and identifying professionals best placed to support their needs.

**Based on the voices and experiences shared, the following actions have been recommended:**

Introduce 'Roma' as a distinct ethnicity option across services and data collection systems.

Provide Roma Cultural Awareness Training to frontline staff and professionals.

Offer education for Roma families around life in the UK, including the role and expectations of statutory services.

- Create Roma-specific spaces where young people can safely explore topics such as child exploitation and healthy relationships.
- Collaborate with Roma professionals and community-led services to strengthen engagement and cultural understanding.

## **12.0 SAFEGUARDING EVENTS AND TRAINING PROGRAMME**

The BDSCP Training Coordinator assisted by the Learning and Improvement subgroup have continued to offer a wide range of training courses for professionals in Bradford District. These include:

- Working with Disguised Compliance.
- Hidden Men; who has contact with this child?
- Understanding Sexual Abuse.
- Your Role in the Child Protection Process.
- CSE/Missing children.
- Poverty and Child Neglect.
- Cultural Competency and Humility Training.
- Allegations Management.
- Child Criminal Exploitation and County Lines Workshops.
- Trauma-Informed And Relationship-based Practice.
- General Drugs Awareness session.
- Recognising and Responding to Dental Neglect.
- Barriers to Child Protection.

Over the course of 2024/25 over 550 people have been in attendance.



## 13.0 FINANCES

The breakdown of contributions from the three statutory partners along with a contribution from the National Probation Service is as below;

<b>Bradford Council - Original base budget</b>	<b>£249,100</b>	<b>36.22%</b>
<b>Bradford Council - Additional budget</b>	<b>£146,800</b>	<b>21.35%</b>
<b>Health</b>	<b>£241,911</b>	<b>35.18%</b>
<b>Police</b>	<b>£46,520</b>	<b>6.76%</b>
<b>National Probation Service</b>	<b>£3,377</b>	<b>0.49%</b>

In terms of expenditure the below chart indicates the breakdown of expenditure for 2024/25 compared to 2023/24.

	<b>Outturn 2023-24 (£)</b>	<b>Outturn 2024-25 (£)</b>	<b>Budget (£)</b>	<b>Variance (£)</b>
<b>Employees (including agency)</b>	<b>419,144</b>	<b>499,937</b>	<b>659,100</b>	<b>-159,163</b>
<b>Staff travel</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>6,400</b>	<b>-6,316</b>
<b>Training (including room hire and catering)</b>	<b>14,005</b>	<b>15,154</b>	<b>16,000</b>	<b>-846</b>
<b>Independent Consultants for SCRs and other case reviews</b>	<b>34,468</b>	<b>7,736</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7,736</b>
<b>Independent Chair of Board</b>	<b>51,552</b>	<b>35,958</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>35,958</b>
<b>Other expenses</b>	<b>41,033</b>	<b>8,258</b>	<b>2,100</b>	<b>6,158</b>
<b>IT and Telecoms</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20,047</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20,047</b>
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>560,202</b>	<b>587,174</b>	<b>683,600</b>	<b>-96,426</b>

## 14.0 LOOKING AHEAD

Following the recommendations from the Safeguarding Partnership Review and driven by our shared ambition to strengthen safeguarding across Bradford District there will be important changes to the governance structure of our multi-agency children's safeguarding partnership. These changes will enhance governance, accountability, and the overall effectiveness of our collective safeguarding efforts.

### Core purpose of the change

The revised governance structure aims to:

- Strengthen accountability across all safeguarding activities, including clearly defined roles and responsibilities for Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSPs) and Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSPs).
- Enhance clarity and effectiveness in decision-making processes.
- Align partnership efforts to clearly defined strategic priorities.
- Improve multi-agency coordination, ensuring impactful and responsive safeguarding interventions.

The four priority areas guiding our ongoing work for 2025/26 will be:

### **Exploitation of Children and Young People**

Our multi-agency response to exploitation will focus on continued early identification, support and protection of potential victims and early identification, plus disruption and prosecution of perpetrators. Working in the best way with the families of those who are vulnerable is important to our restorative and relational practice approach

### **Children and Young People Experiencing Domestic Abuse**

The BDSCP will actively endorse the leadership of this priority by the current Domestic Abuse Board and ensure sufficient support to that board and a sufficient focus on children and young people. A new Memorandum of Understanding is being developed for this work, together with a reporting arrangement about impact on the safeguarding of children to be shared with the BDSCP.

### **Child Sexual Abuse**

The BDSCP has committed to an independent review of current multi-agency practice in Bradford linked to the review undertaken in November 2024 by the National Safeguarding panel. This will inform necessary multi-agency actions. The review will be led by our new Independent Scrutineer.

### **Effectiveness of the Partnership**

Following the review of the partnerships functioning as outlined above, this year we will prioritise the establishment of refreshed arrangements and increase our ability to analyse the impact of our multi-agency work to safeguarding the children and young people of Bradford.

To support these new priorities there will be two new subgroups that will replace a number of the existing subgroups and pick up and enhance the responses to these. The new subgroups will be:

- Safeguarding Practice and Innovation.
- Quality Impact and Performance.

The impact of these new groups will be reported on in the next Annual Report.



## 15.0 HOW TO REPORT A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN

### Practitioners

**Talk to us about a child or young person.** We have a dedicated Practitioners Advice and Guidance telephone number to share information about any concerns you have about a child or young person within the Bradford District or to make a referral.

Before making a referral, all practitioners need to:

- Speak with their Safeguarding Lead within their own organisation.
- Ask themselves “Have you done everything you can to help and support the family?”
- Refer to the *Continuum of Need* on the *Bradford Safeguarding Partnership* website.
- Contact the allocated Social Worker directly if Children’s Services are already working with the child or young person.

#### Contact us - During office hours

Practitioners can call us on - 01274 433999

*Monday - Thursday 8.30am to 5.00pm / Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm*

#### Contact us - Out of office hours

Practitioners can share information or make a referral using our online form

If you are worried about a child and would like to make a referral out of hours or if you need some further information or advice, use our Children’s Services portal.

### Members of the Public

#### Contact us - During office hours

Call us on our freephone number - 0800 953 0966

*Monday - Thursday 8.30am to 5.00pm / Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm*

#### Contact us - Out of office hours

Practitioners can share information or make a referral using our online form

The Children’s Portal is our online system that allows members of the public to share any concerns they have about a child by completing a secure form. You do not need to leave your details.

If you are looking for information and advice, please visit our Bradford Families and Young Persons (FYI) directory.

### Emergency Duty Team

The Emergency Duty Team (for emergencies outside of office hours) will make an assessment, on the telephone, of any immediate need or risk and take appropriate action to ensure that child or young person is safe until the next working day. Call - 01274 431010

### Police

If you have reason to believe that a child is at immediate risk of harm, contact the police on 101 or 999 for emergencies.