Annual Report

April 2023 – March 2024

Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

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Foreword

This annual report of the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-agency Partnership covers the period 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024. This year we have continued to strengthen our partner and stakeholder engagement to ensure that we are able to work together as a Partnership toward common goals. Our 2024-26 priorities have set a direction for the Partnership for the next two years, although we remain aware of the rapidly changing safeguarding children landscape and will be ready to adjust our plans if needed.

We have also been conscious of the national landscape and anticipated change. Gap analysis against the draft Working Together 2023 began in summer 2023, enabling us to begin considering what structural change we might need to make, and meant we were poised to respond following publication of the revised statutory guidance in December 2023. In the forthcoming year we will be focusing on ensuring we reflect the new requirements within our arrangements. The involvement of education in the Partnership is an area that we have already begun to address, recognising the challenge of being a large area with over 700 schools, rising to thousands of settings when also considering colleges and early years. Our Education Safeguarding Group has continued to build strength in providing some representation, and we have also considered how we can ensure education voices are heard within the leadership of the Partnership.

This report notes that we have continued to innovate and have not shied away from stubborn, long-standing, or complex challenges. Father inclusivity has been a long-noted area of need nationally, whilst safer eating of very young children in early years settings is impacted by a range of varying factors. Both are areas the KSCMP has acted on in this reporting year and are outlined within this report. We have also developed further styles and approaches to Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, including a new 'window on the system' format which looked at system learning in the management of conditions such as asthma and allergies for children. We also continue to ask ourselves about the impact of our work and the difference it makes to the safety and wellbeing of children in Kent.





Sarah Hammond,
Corporate Director, Children, Young People and Education, Kent County Council





Paul Lumsdon,
Chief Nursing Officer, NHS Kent & Medway





Simon Wilson,
Assistant Chief Constable, Kent Police

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Key headlines: April 2023 to March 2024

Key achievements

- Launch of 2024-26 Priorities and Strategic Plan
- Development of Partnership multi-agency data dashboard
- Completion of Elective Home Education project

Practice improvement

- 1 Serious Case Review published
- 2 Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews published
- 45 practice review recommendations considered at LIG*
- EatSafe campaign launched
- Father Inclusive Guidance launched

Learning and development

- 59 trainer-led courses
- Over 940 training attendances
- 7 recorded webinar courses launched
- 624 recorded webinar course completions
- 41,699 e-learning completions
- Lost in Plain Sight seminar held

*Learning and Improvement Group

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Kent Safeguarding Context in Numbers

Decreasing	2023/24	Comparison to 2022/23
Children with a child protection plan[11]	1,212	-9.3% from 1,336
Young people who had involvement with Early Help – CSE[12]	308	-30.9% from 446
Young people who had involvement with CSWS identified at high risk of child sexual exploitation[12]	586	-10.4% from 654
C and F Assessments where a young carer was identified[13]	590	-12.3% from 673
Privately Fostered Children[14]	26	-13.3% from 30
Domestic Abuse – Child Domestic Violence[15]	3,199	-36.4% from 5,027
Domestic Abuse – Parent Domestic Violence[15]	6,131	-6.6% from 6,566
Other Domestic Violence[15]	2,174	-0.7% from 2,189
Referrals to Family Group Conferencing – families[16]	1,228	-3.0% from 1,266
Referrals to Family Group Conferencing – individuals[16]	1,915	-8.1% from 2,084

Increasing	2023/24	Comparison to 2022/23
Ethnic minority pupils[6]	68,270	+6.6% from 64,019
Pupils with Special Education Needs[7]	42,544	+6.1% from 40,092
Looked after children (unaccompanied asylum-seeking children) [3]	500	+14.2% from 438
Children educated at home[8]	4,073	+19.0% from 3,423
Children with a child protection plan who have a disability[9]	114	+16.3% from 98
Young People in Youth Justice[10]	192	+16.4% from 165

Inline	2023/24	Comparison to 2022/23
Number of children aged 0-17 years[1]	342,400	+1.8% from 336,209
Under 16s living in poverty[2]	52,752	+0.6% from 52,453
Looked after children (Kent Citizen) [3]	1,463	-2.66% from 1,503
Missing episodes[4]	5,684	+0.7% from 5,644
Referrals to NELFT[5]	19,995	+0.2% from 19,956

Please see appendix six for a list of data references.

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Priorities

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Partnership Priorities

Over several months in 2023 the KSCMP worked to develop new priorities for the Partnership. Consultation was undertaken with partners in two phases:

- An open survey to capture suggestions and evidence on potential Partnership priorities in March & April 2023.
- Consultative workshops on a narrowed down list of potential priority themes, to refine the proposed areas of focus, seek views on which should be taken forward, and understand what action should be considered.

The 2024-26 KSCMP priorities are:

- **Mental health of children and young people**
- **Impact of parent mental health**
- **Effective multi-agency working**
- **Online safety**

The priorities and accompanying Strategic Plan, which sets out what activity the Partnership expects to undertake and how progress will be measured, were launched at the first KSCMP Partnership Forum in January 2024. The Strategic Plan has also been published on the KSCMP website.

Monitoring of delivery of the Plan is commencing via the Scrutiny & Challenge Group, with a one-year 'check in' planned in early 2025 to provide a mid-point review of progress against the priorities.

Despite the newness of the priorities and plan, activity is already underway, and had been undertaken throughout the course of the reporting period prior to the launch of the priorities. This activity is reported under each of the priority themes over the following pages.



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Mental health of children and young people: Children to be supported in their social and emotional wellbeing and attunement and receive early intervention in line with their needs.

Use of DOLs and unregulated care placements

The KSCMP's Rapid Review discussions often highlight areas of concern that are not limited to our local Partnership area, but are indicative of wider, national issues. One such discussion concerned the increased use of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLs) for children with complex needs owing to a lack of jointly commissioned suitable placements and an aligned, necessary rise in the use of unregulated care placements. This is a topic that has national significance and relevance, as it is reflective of a country-wide concern. As such the KSCMP Independent Scrutineer has written to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel asking them to consider the issue of use of DOLs and unregulated care placements for children and young people with complex needs.

Youth Mental Health First Aid

The KSCMP continues to offer Youth Mental Health First Aid courses as part of our learning and development programme. As a result of need and in response to that demand, six further courses have been delivered in 2023/24 with more than 65 people completing the training to become Youth Mental Health First Aiders in this period.

Impact of parent mental health: Children not to be unsafe due to parent mental health needs

Children being viewed as protective factors

Following consideration at the Learning & Improvement Group of an LCSPR recommendation highlighting the need to ensure that children are not being assessed or considered as protective factors for parents with mental health issues, (therefore limiting professionals' recognition of potential risks or impact on children), work has commenced to develop an awareness campaign. The campaign will be targeted at professionals and will highlight that children are not responsible for protecting the mental health of their parent. It will also stress that children should not be recorded as a protective factor for parents who experience suicidal or harmful thoughts.

Effective multi-agency working: Professionals to be courageous and confident in multi-agency working, being able to share information and risk effectively.

Op Encompass

In October 2023, an Emerging Themes Group meeting identified that there is a lack of knowledge around the Op Encompass process (whereby schools are informed by police when a child attending their school may be affected by domestic abuse) and the differences between Op Encompass and Op Encompass+ (sharing of information to schools regarding non-domestic abuse incidents where a child suffers an Adverse Childhood Experience). As a result, KSCMP worked with Kent Police to produce a factsheet which has been **viewed 452 times** and a video explainer which has been **viewed 101 times**.

Online safety: Children to be supported to be safe online and be able to access advice and support where needed.

Safer Internet Day

KSCMP produced a dedicated Safer Internet Day (SID) newsletter which contained details of the 2024 Safer Internet Day theme and signposted to relevant resources. The newsletter has been **viewed 912 times**.

AI risks

In January 2024 the Emerging Themes Group had an initial presentation and discussion regarding the potential safeguarding risks to children resulting from the increasing use and availability of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology. The discussion considered various ways in which children may be affected and led to the development of an AI technology and safeguarding risks to children factsheet.

Online Safety training

The KSCMP commissioned the delivery of Online Safeguarding training for Kent professionals. In 2023/24 4 sessions were delivered, attended by 58 professionals across Kent.

Scrutiny, Challenge and Assurance

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Independent Scrutineer Evaluation

The Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-agency Partnership has continued to improve its effectiveness over the year under review, developing its capacity to plan and work more strategically whilst embedding structural changes to streamline business and improve efficiency. New developments include strengthening of the sub-group structure; roll-out of an audit programme; development of a data dashboard; consulting widely and agreeing a new set of strategic priorities; and developing innovative approaches to learning from serious incidents and child safeguarding practice reviews.

The Partnership has continued to improve the effectiveness of its supporting infrastructure, with sub-groups being re-focussed and more purposeful. The Scrutiny and Challenge Group meets more regularly on a quarterly basis and has been able to look in more depth at several areas. These include the functioning of the sub-groups; Rapid Reviews; the status of the assurance framework; and detention of young people in police custody. It has also been able to scrutinise the refreshed Partnership audit programme which has now been implemented. There is now a greater flow of information available to the group, and a strong sense that the Partnership works well. There is also a good connectivity between the groups with update reports and reports from the Scrutineer are being provided to Scrutiny and Challenge meetings.

The Education Safeguarding Group continues to make progress. The group has representation from further education and has sought input from the early years sector with the support of The Education People. As an example of its work, a task and finish group has been established to look at elective home education, and there has been a peer review of safeguarding files. The Partnership is now well placed to address the requirements of the revised Working Together statutory guidance which will require engagement of education leadership in the KSCMP on a strategic level.

The Learning and Improvement Group reviews all recommendations from Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (LCSPRs) and tracks completion of actions before closure. It has a vital role to play in overseeing implementation of practice review recommendations and ensuring that learning from reviews has an impact on practice. The KSCMP has successfully developed a learning and improvement culture as the best approach to extract learning from serious incidents.

The Partnership Business Team has been innovative in its approach to learning from LCSPRs and the approach has drawn both local and national recognition. For instance, the Team was instrumental in the development of the EatSafe campaign following the tragic death of a 9-month-old child who choked on their food. Campaign resources include resource packs for practitioners and guidance on safer eating in all and any early years settings. Following learning from several serious incidents where fathers had not been engaged by practitioners the Partnership has also developed and launched Father Inclusive practice guidance. A launch event in November 2023 was well attended by a range of agencies and incorporated presentations by local and national figures. Through these innovative approaches to learning, the Partnership is also able to demonstrate the impact of its work.

Independent Scrutineer Evaluation

The Partnership Business Team provides a series of high-quality policy pages, newsletters, and briefing notes as part of its engagement and communications work. They provide a rich source of information for the wider Partnership and good learning opportunities for those who take the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the content. The issues included in the Policy Page are responded to when required by the Executive. For example, when new information was published about Joint Targeted Area Inspections on Serious Youth Violence, a piece of work was commissioned to consider what actions were needed by Partnership agencies to address the inspection framework.

The Partnership has continued with themed Executive Board meetings to enable protected time to discuss strategic issues which tend to get crowded out of the Executive Board agenda by day-to-day business. Although initially there was some difficulty in securing attendance, they are now being held more regularly, enabling more in-depth discussions about the priorities for the Partnership and other areas which require more time to agree the strategic direction. This is a positive development for the Partnership enabling the Executive to devote more time to consider priorities and plans more strategically.

The Partnership now has an effective process for notifying the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel of serious incidents and undertaking rapid reviews. The rapid review process is more streamlined and robust. Improvements in the rapid review process have enabled the Partnership to draw learning from the reports provided for the rapid review meeting. This ensures the Partnership can extract learning at the earliest possible opportunity and obviate the need for an LCSPR. A positive development has been the near completion of a new data dashboard which will enable the Partnership to better understand the impact it is having. Using Power BI, the Executive and Scrutiny and Challenge Group will be able to examine more closely emerging patterns and trends and adapt strategies and actions accordingly.

Whilst the KSCMP has built strength in the involvement of children and families within the practice review processes, including their perspectives and experiences as a fundamental aspect of LCSPRs, the Partnership has not been able to develop mechanisms for hearing the views of children and their families at a strategic level. This is a requirement set out in the new Working Together guidance. The Partnership will therefore need to consider how to ensure that the voice of children and families is incorporated into the process of scrutiny, and that feedback informs the future development of policy and practice*.

The Partnership has a risk register which is reviewed regularly at the Scrutiny and Challenge Group. This has correctly identified recruitment and retention as a risk to the effectiveness of the Partnership, as all strategic partners have been impacted by financial challenges and difficulties in recruiting and retaining experienced staff, making the system overly reliant on less experienced practitioners. The Partnership should more formally consider how it can mitigate the impact of increasingly pressurised budgets and the persistent recruitment difficulties.

Rory Patterson, KSCMP Independent Scrutineer

* A comprehensive study is underway to assess the child's voice in partnership arrangement in relation to strategic service design and scrutiny. We will report on this in our next annual report.

Understanding System Performance

Dashboard development

As mentioned in previous KSCMP annual reports, it has been a longstanding ambition of the Partnership to have a performance dashboard which shows effectiveness of the safeguarding children system in Kent. In 2023/4 progress has been made in this area following a data task & finish group of statutory partners to discuss and decide upon guiding principles and data measures. In summer 2023 the group determined the three dashboards to be developed, which have now been produced by the Business Team. **Referral and notification dashboard:** This relates to serious safeguarding incidents and has several pages showing the number of referrals to the Partnership and number of notifications to the National Panel. The dashboard includes charts showing characteristics of notifications including gender, age groupings, ethnicity, outcome of rapid review, geographical area and the agencies involved. The Business Team can view the picture over a 3-year period or focus on particular years to see patterns and trends, enabling a holistic view of what is happening and comparisons to be made to previous years.

Learning themes dashboard: This dashboard relates to cases which have been notified to the national Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and where a Rapid Review has been held since August 2022. Patterns and trends can be looked at quickly, including repeated learning themes. This means the Business Team can evaluate the information as a whole or by specific characteristics e.g. themes relevant to cases where children are under 1.

Priorities dashboard: This dashboard is reliant upon data sharing from partners and has been created following agreement of the 2024-26 KSCMP priorities. Measures are aggregated level data meaning the dashboard cannot be as dynamic as the previous two dashboards, however, it does allow for triangulation of data in respect of the priorities.

The dashboards will be used to produce an overview report to be considered by Scrutiny & Challenge Group. The dashboards will also help the Business Team to measure progress and impact. Additionally, a further KSCMP training dashboard is in development to enhance understanding of use and reach of KSCMP training.

What has the impact been?

The dynamic dashboards allow filters to be applied to easily see different groupings. Trends and patterns in data can be considered promptly.

The KSCMP Business Team are successfully using the dashboards to review themes and identify possible future work or areas to consider.

As a result of the dashboard development, it was identified that there were inconsistencies and issues with the recording of agency attendance at KCC Integrated Children's Services led meetings (i.e. Strategy meetings). Prompt action was subsequently taken by KCC to issue guidance to staff on the recording of agency attendance at meetings, to enable data reporting and insight.

Multi-agency Audits

Section 11 Review

Kent and Medway have carried out a joint review of the 2022 Section 11 audit. The review focussed on what worked well, the challenges (both for the Business Teams and for partner organisations), and how the process could be improved for 2024. The review took on board feedback from individual agencies and panel members, and considered what other Partnership areas are doing. Key considerations and changes include:

- **Time:** More time has been allowed in the 2024 schedule for the S11 audits to be completed, launching earlier in the year. Panel meetings will be shortened to assist partner capacity to attend.
- **Streamlining:** The S11 audit tool has been shortened, reducing the number of questions, to focus on the most important areas.
- **Use of technology:** Following extensive research the 2024 Kent and Medway S11 will be completed through the use of an online platform. This will allow the process to be more efficient both for the Business Teams and partners completing the audit.
- **Promising practice and analysis:** Both the 'emerging themes and promising practice' document and analysis report were seen as a strength of the previous audit. The styles of these will remain unchanged in the 2024 cycle. There will be an additional analysis in the report to look at the impact from 2022 to 2024 and identify partner improvements from the previous audit.
- **Partner surveys:** In 2022 partner agencies were asked to complete staff surveys focusing on the key areas of the S11. This allowed some triangulation of the audit answers and the survey answers. The surveys will be used again in 2024 but have been improved to capture more detail and allow better links with the audit tool.

Escalation

Following the findings from the previous escalation work, 2022 S11, and practice reviews which highlighted issues around escalation procedures and lack of appropriate challenge in the system, a third successive yearly survey was undertaken to determine professionals' awareness of the Kent Professional Challenge and Escalation Policy, how it is used in practice, and barriers to its use. The most recent survey in summer 2023 showed that professionals are still unaware of the policy. In 2021 65.8% of 146 respondents were unaware of the policy, whilst in 2023 65.1% of 196 respondents stated they did not know that there is a multi-agency escalation policy.

The KSCMP Business Team have undertaken a range of activity to promote the policy since 2021, including renaming the policy and making it easier to find on the KSCMP website; promoting the policy in the KSCMP newsletters; referencing the policy in relevant KSCMP training courses; highlighting in a variety of KSCMP and external meetings; producing a video explainer which gives an overview of the policy; and including related questions in the S11 audit.

The most recent survey findings have been reviewed at several KSCMP sub-groups and it has been agreed that further work regarding escalation should continue in 2024/25, with it forming an element of the KSCMP priority of effective multi-agency working.

Multi-agency Audits

Use of Interpreters When Working With Children and Families

Multi-agency audit work has determined how interpreters are used across partner organisations, including how interpreters are used with children, how interpreters and practitioners work together, and barriers or challenges that exist in working with interpreters. Information was sought from KCC Integrated Childrens Services, Kent Police and a range of Kent health partners.

The audit revealed that it is difficult to ascertain how many children require an interpreter due to a lack of information recorded on different multi-agency systems. Whilst some partners have policies around the use of interpreters, there is little consistency in how interpreters are used across different agencies, and not all partners had experience of using interpreters with children. Barriers to the use of interpreters include availability (particularly with languages where there are a small number of speakers) and difficulty in assuring the accuracy of information being communicated via an interpreter, particularly if information is given out of context, changing its meaning.

What has the impact been?

As part of the audit KSCMP sought to understand how many in children in Kent known to KCC Integrated Children's Services required use of an interpreter. This request highlighted that there was inconsistent use of the interpreter flag within the Liberi system, prompting KCC Integrated Children's Service to undertake follow up work to ensure consistent use in future.

Elective Home Education

This audit focused on professionals' understanding of Elective Home Education (EHE) guidance, as well as acting on the recommendation from the Child R Serious Case Review about the governance of EHE. A working group was established with attendees from KCC EHE and Fair Access teams, KCC Education Safeguarding Services, and two Kent schools. A survey was undertaken to gain feedback from professionals to understand what knowledge is held about EHE, to inform the working group as to whether further information sharing and awareness raising was required. The survey ran in summer 2023 and had 331 responses from a wide range of partners.

Both the SCR and survey showed that there were misconceptions around EHE and a lack of understanding of the role and remit of the KCC EHE Team. Two key documents were subsequently produced and launched in December 2023, an EHE guidance for professionals and revised EHE factsheet. A further survey is planned in summer 2024 to understand whether there is now increased knowledge.

At the time of writing the KSCMP awaited publication of the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel's thematic learning on EHE to benchmark Kent against. Following the publication in May 2024 benchmarking work will be undertaken.

What has the impact been?

The EHE factsheet has been **viewed 419 times** and the EHE professional guidance document has been **viewed 428 times**.

The KSCMP has received feedback commending the usefulness of the documents and requests to circulate more widely.

As a result of the audit and survey work being undertaken, the KCC EHE team were contacted by some partners to find out more about the team and offer opportunities to raise awareness.

What have we been doing?

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Work of the Partnership

Working with fathers

As cited in the previous annual report, the KSCMP worked with a multi-agency group to develop father inclusive practice guidance. The Kent Father Inclusive Practice guidance was launched in November 2023 at a virtual event. To support the guidance and resources, a training programme was also put in place. Expert external training was commissioned from the Fatherhood Institute, with four sessions offered for multi-agency audiences. Recognising the limitations of the reach of the small number of workshops however, KSCMP also developed a recorded webinar which explores the guidance document and can be accessed via the KSCMP elearning portal.

What has the impact been?

The Father Inclusive Practice guidance launch event was attended by **126 people,** of which half were Kent County Council colleagues.

The Understanding Kent Father Inclusive Guidance elearning has been completed **48 times**, with **147 professionals** attending the Fatherhood Institute workshops. An audit to understand the impact of the training is planned in 2024/25.

Child-on-Child Sexual Abuse Tool Review

The KSCMP Child-on-Child Abuse Audit Tool was published in 2021 to help schools and colleges assess strengths to build upon and identify weakness to address to tackle child-on-child sexual abuse and inappropriate sexual behaviour. A review of the tool was undertaken in 2023 to consider how well the tool was being used and whether any changes were needed, including a survey to capture feedback from education settings.

The survey findings from 122 responses from a variety of establishments were considered by the Education Safeguarding Group. It was noted that almost all of those using the tool found it useful. It was also noted that any suggested changes were made by very few respondents and were in some cases incompatible with other suggestions. It was therefore agreed to only make factual updates based upon changes in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 or to the resources included in the tool. The revised tool was then published in August 2023.

What has the impact been?

Of the 41 respondents who stated they have used or are using the Child-on-Child Abuse Tool **98% stated it was useful**.

Of the 61 schools that stated they were not using the tool, the majority stated that had been unaware of the tool or had not yet had time to review. Many stated they would now use or make time to review the tool.

Learning and Improvement

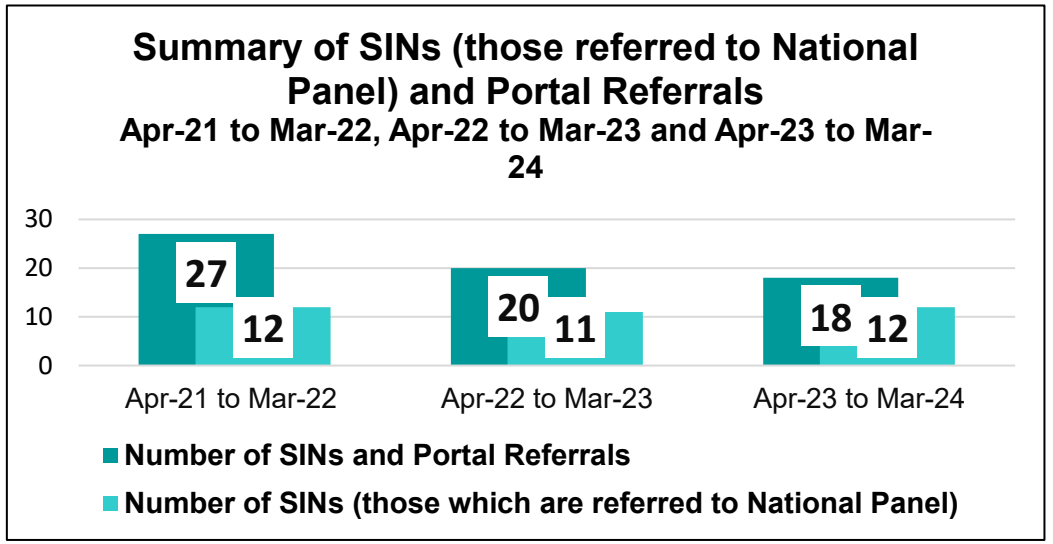
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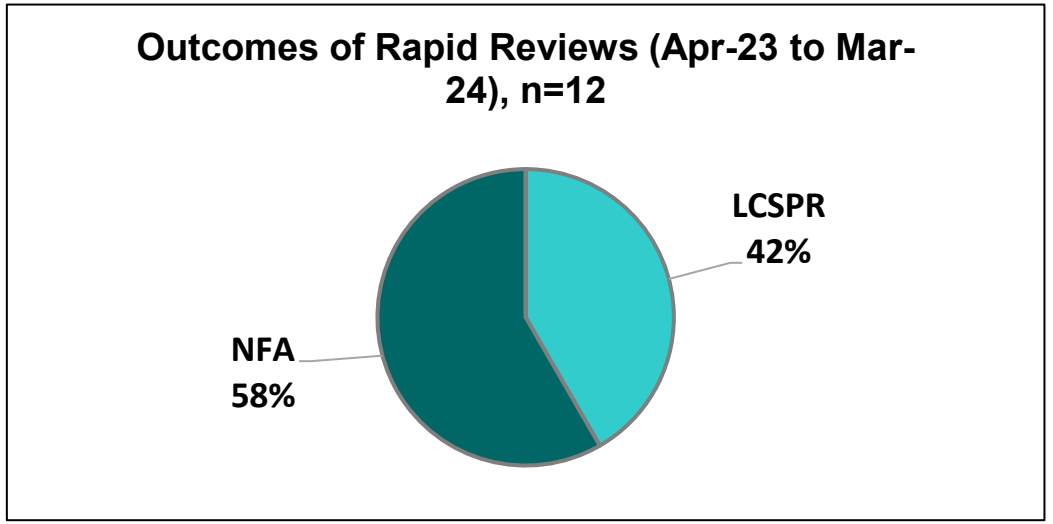
Serious Incident Notifications

The KSCMP continues to track portal referrals and Serious Incident Notifications (SINs). Portal referrals can be made by any agency wishing to highlight a serious incident for consideration of notification. SINs are those cases which are notified to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (CSPRP) and go on to have a Rapid Review. The summary chart to the right illustrates the numbers of each received. It should be noted that a SIN or portal referral may be for more than one child but will be counted as only one notification/referral.

The yearly comparisons show that the total number of referrals were down in 2023/24 compared to the previous two years (18 compared to 20 in 2022/23 and 27 in 2021/22). However, the number of SINs made to the CSPRP were very similar.

The bottom chart shows the outcomes of cases from rapid reviews for the 2023/24 reporting period. For all cases that do not progress to LCSPR (noted as 'NFA' here) an Action Plan of learning gleaned is composed and the actions are tracked to completion.





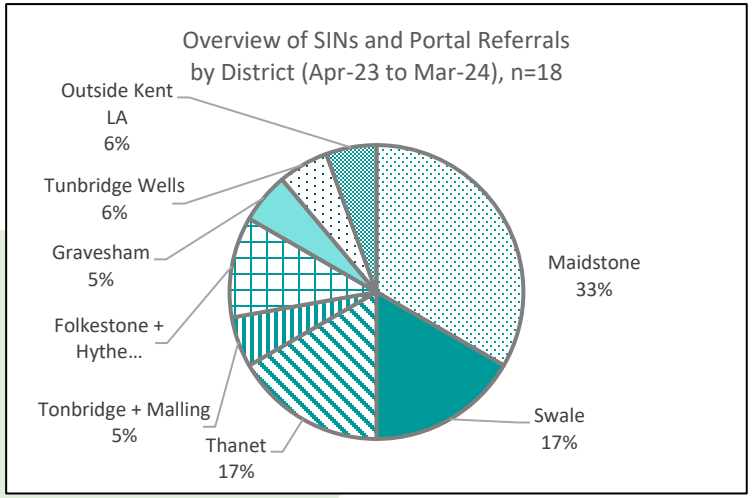
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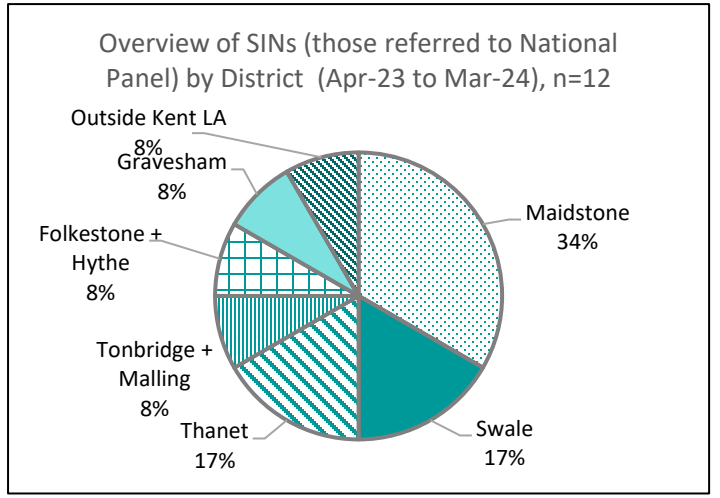
Serious Incident Notifications

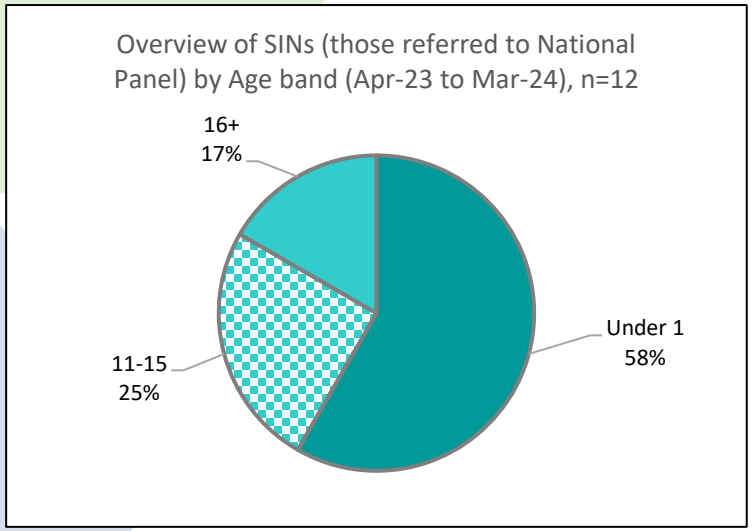
The top two charts show the geographic distribution of SINs, and overview of SINs and the portal referrals in total. Maidstone had the most SINs and portal referrals during 2023/24. The bottom two charts show the split of SINs and portal referrals by age band of the child involved. Where a SIN or portal referral had more than one child identified, the youngest age child has been represented in these charts.

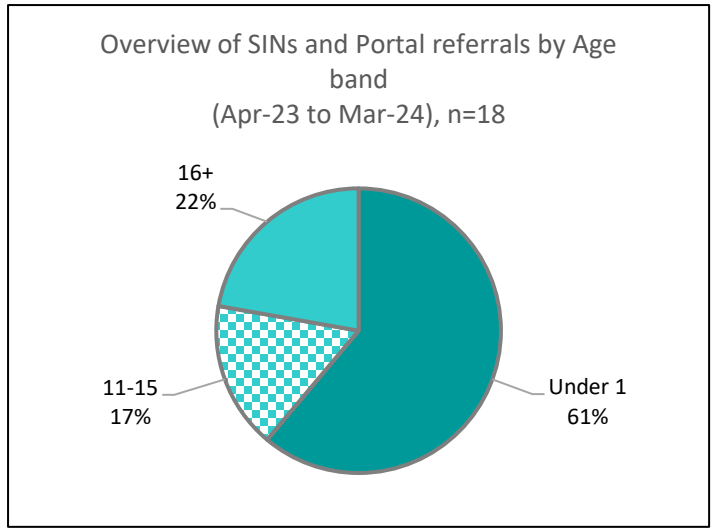
The age distribution of Kent SINs is similar to the national picture for 2023/24, with under 1s the most notified, and other notifications for 16+ and 11-15 year olds. Compared with 2022/23 there was an increase in the number of referrals for 11-15 year-olds which went on to be referred to the National Panel, with fewer referrals that did not result in a SIN. This suggests there may be better local consideration of this age group, ensuring that more appropriate referrals are being made to the Partnership.

A number of referrals in this year related to suspected teenage suicides. As a result, the KSCMP produced and circulated a learning briefing on identified learning from Rapid Reviews which has been **viewed 781 times** and have commissioned two LCSPRs for a more thorough understanding of relevant learning.









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Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

Between April 2023 and March 2024 the KSCMP published one final legacy Serious Case Review anonymously via the NSPCC and two LCSPRs. The Partnership also contributed to another area's LCSPR which was also published anonymously via the NSPCC.

Anonymous Serious Case Review

This was the final legacy Serious Case Review awaiting publication, delayed due to ongoing High Court proceedings. The review's subject is a baby who suffered a head injury and learning themes include the Early Help offer, engagement and family refusal; understanding parental learning disability; domestic abuse; substance use; impact of parental mental ill-health; response to safeguarding concerns raised anonymously; poverty and homelessness; impact of neglect on the child's lived experience; and information sharing.

Oliver Steeper

The death of Oliver Steeper led to a 'campaign' methodology LCSPR which sought to consider how safer eating of young children could be improved within early years settings. Alongside the campaign, national learning was identified regarding requirements around paediatric first aid qualifications and a requirement for safer eating to be considered for inclusion in the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

What has the impact been?

Oliver inspired the development of KSCMP's EatSafe campaign (further details on page 23).
In April 2024, the DfE published a consultation on the EYFS which includes requirements related to safer eating and clarifications regarding paediatric first aid certification, informed by this LCSPR.

David

David's experience inspired a 'window on the system' approach in drawing together specialists from different disciplines at a collaborative event to identify barriers and good practice in the effective management of asthma and allergies. Recommendations seek to improve understanding of care expectations, and identification of emerging neglect, and standardise the Kent approach to the management and review of these health conditions across health, social care and education.

What has the impact been?

Learning from the David LCSPR is informing the development of a new strand of the EatSafe campaign focused on safeguarding children with food allergies.

Anonymous out-of-area LCSPR

Though commissioned and facilitated by a different Child Safeguarding Partnership, this review was Kent's first involvement in a LCSPR relating to Serious Youth Violence. Learning considers exploitation (including the role of social media); knife crime; vulnerabilities of children with special educational needs; identity; and adverse childhood experiences.

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Learning and Improvement Group

The KSCMP Learning & Improvement Group (LIG) continues to ensure practice review learning is disseminated and embedded throughout the Partnership. Key agency representatives offer insight into how recommendations can be translated into action in a meaningful and achievable way for their organisation and commit to owning and following up implementation and measuring impact.

Updates and sign off are captured in the recently developed PowerBI tracker, providing members with a real time account of their organisation's performance against actions agreed. LIG has also developed and agreed the use of a case matrix, which assists in the prioritisation and timetabling of reviews for consideration. The matrix enables the Partnership to respond to learning of particular relevance at any given time, be it new and emerging themes, or repeat issues that previous work has not gone far enough to address.

In 2023/24 the group has focused its attention on actions which are relevant to learning themes that have emerged in recent practice, prioritising both consideration of new recommendations and seeking updates on existing recommendations on those themes. The group has also recognised the important role it has in ensuring systemic change, agreeing to increase the frequency of meetings in response to the high number of completed practice reviews awaiting consideration.

What has the impact been?

During 2023-24 LIG has considered **6 practice reviews** which between them have **45 recommendations**, generating **68 actions**. Of these, 19 actions have already been completed and signed off (28%). The remaining actions are underway, or awaiting necessary national decisions before they can be progressed. LIG maintains oversight of the delivery of actions to ensure required improvements are being made and evidenced.

Additionally, a further **45 actions** have been completed and signed off by LIG relating to activity generated by recommendations considered in the previous year.

Key outputs:

- Motivational Interviewing audit
- PLO webinar & fact sheet
- Family law legal orders
- Review of bruising protocol

Acting on learning

EatSafe

EatSafe is a campaign designed to support safer eating in early years non-familial settings. The campaign was developed following the tragic death of Oliver Steeper in September 2021. It has been designed to support early years settings' providers and management to ensure the safeguarding of mealtimes and to reduce the risk of serious harm whilst eating.

EatSafe was developed through a multi-agency working group and with input from Oliver's family. The campaign was launched in February 2024 with the launch event being attended by approximately 109 colleagues.

Ahead of the launch a small number of settings were identified to be part of the EatSafe audit group. The settings undertook a benchmarking audit prior to the launch, which will be repeated in 2024/25 to understand impact of the campaign.





What has the impact been?

Between 20th February 2024 and 31st March 2024 the Oli's Legacy video has been viewed **219 times** and the EatSafe recorded webinar completed **226 times.**

Feedback from a range of settings has been positive, with indications received that it has influenced consideration and changes within settings.

An email received from a multi-academy trust (MAT):
"We are a large Trust with 31 schools including some with Nurseries. Following this training, we have implemented the recommendations in a variety of ways which includes:

- Training for all Nursery staff
- Designated Safeguarding Lead forum agenda item with all links to the EatSafe resources
- Risk assessments completed for all children who require additional attention due to their developmental needs
- We have met with our Kitchen contractors who provide food for all of our academies and have asked them to consider how they are presenting food for all of our children, particularly Key Stage 1 and make changes to how they manage foods that are potential choking hazards. We recognise that issues raised can be expanded to all year groups."

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Acting on learning

Learning from Baby T

The Baby T LCSPR was published in 2022/23 but work has been undertaken in this year to act on the learning identified. Discussion through LIG led to the development of a Motivational Interviewing for Safer Sleep factsheet and practice resource. The KSCMP Business Team also developed a workshop to build upon the learning and explore safer sleep messaging and work with parents, running 3 sessions in this year.

What has the impact been?

The 'Learning from Baby T: Exploring Safer Sleep' workshop has been **attended by 51 professionals** and the Motivational Interviewing for Safer Sleep factsheet has been **viewed 410 times.**

Learning from the Baby T LCSPR informed the revision of the Kent Support Levels Guidance in 2023 (see page 25).

Peer review of safeguarding files in education

The quality of safeguarding files held in education settings and the transfer of those files when children move between settings has been highlighted in summaries provided to Rapid Reviews and LCSPRs as an area requiring improvement. As reported in the previous annual report, the Education Safeguarding Group took a pro-active approach to addressing this, with several members from education settings carrying out a peer review. This work has continued with 8 learning briefings being delivered at the KCC Education Safeguarding Service Designated Safeguarding Lead meetings during February and March 2024. The focus of the sessions was around the importance of good record keeping and the requirements and responsibilities around the transfer of safeguarding files. Findings from the KSCMP peer review were also shared.

What has the impact been?

Positive feedback was received from attendees at the DSL meetings. Attendees had the opportunity to ask questions and address misconceptions. Whilst it is too early to know whether this has had an impact, KSCMP will monitor whether it is a reoccurring theme within practice reviews.

Acting on learning

Bruising in non-mobile infants

In September 2023 a KSCMP Rapid Review highlighted learning regarding the bruising in non-mobile infants procedure not having been followed. A discussion was initiated about why this was the case and what could be done in future to ensure practitioners are aware of the procedure and follow it. Both Kent Community Health Foundation Trust and East Kent Hospital University Foundation Trust highlighted proactive internal training being undertaken. The KSCMP subsequently produced a video explainer regarding bruising or injury in non-mobile infants which is available to all multi-agency partners.

What has the impact been?

The video explainer has been viewed **229 times.**

Non-accidental injury (NAI) of infants has been an area of focus for the KSCMP following a surge in NAI-related SINs in 2021/22. Activities have included the NAI deep-dive, Harm to Under 2s thematic study, and the sharing of learning resources. SIN data shows the number of NAI-related notifications has significantly reduced, from **10 in 2021/22, to 6 in 2022/23, to 4 in 2023/24,** a 60% reduction over 3 years.

Support Levels Guidance

Learning has been identified in KSCMP LCSPRs regarding the Kent Support Levels Guidance (SLG). The learning indicated that there were particular indicators or concerns which could be incorporated to ensure multi-agency understanding of risk, and that awareness raising of the SLG would be beneficial. The KSCMP Business Team were involved in multi-agency working groups to update the SLG document, advising on those issues to consider including, and published the revised guidance on the KSCMP website in late 2023. KSCMP has also supported a working group to develop a new 'Understanding the Kent Support Levels Guidance' course. The course is delivered by KCC ICS, forming a part of the KSCMP Learning & Development offer.

What has the impact been?

The revised Kent SLG includes indicators regarding:
- repeated safer sleep concerns for infants, and,
- bruising in older children for which there is no explanation.

It also has reference to the clutter scale to assist professionals.

The Understanding the Kent SLG course has been delivered once in this year, attended by **16 professionals**.

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Practice Review Project

The Practice Review Project sought to embed robust and effective practice and processes in relation to Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (LCSPRs) following the shift in arrangements from Board to Partnership and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The project was delivered in two parts, the first addressing the most urgent issues to ensure the Partnership was functioning effectively and in compliance with legislation, the second updating action against part one, and exploring less urgent issues, attention to which could improve the effectiveness of the reviewing process.

Recommendations and actions were endorsed by the Executive in two stages in line with the two reports. This enabled relevant Partnership architecture to be established to support progression of the recommendations in line with findings of the KSCMP Architecture Review and Practice Review Project. Action against these recommendations developed the infrastructure necessary to respond swiftly to some requirements anticipated of Working Together 2023 when it subsequently came into force.

A status review in October 2023 found 4 of the 6 recommendations had been completed, with 2 more subject to ongoing activity. Of the 12 KSCMP Business Team identified actions, 8 were complete, 2 ongoing, and 2 not yet started. A further action was subsequently begun in this financial year.

To support the implementation of the project recommendations, to build confidence in local partners and improve the quality of the local practice review processes, the KSCMP Business Team developed a practice review training offer. Three workshops were developed for partners: Rapid Review – Agency Roles and Responsibilities; Providing Agency Reports for Practice Reviews; and Role of LCSPR Panel Members. The workshops were delivered to local partners and recorded and have been subsequently made available as an eLearning course. The course is regularly shared alongside paperwork for practice review meetings to support colleagues.

What has the impact been?

Duplication of learning in multiple LCSPRs has reduced, owing to tracked learning themes which can be considered by Rapid Review members when deciding whether to commission an LCSPR.

There is increased parity between the Safeguarding Partners and more shared responsibility for learning and practice improvement.

Other Partnerships' feedback on Rapid Reviews has been positive.

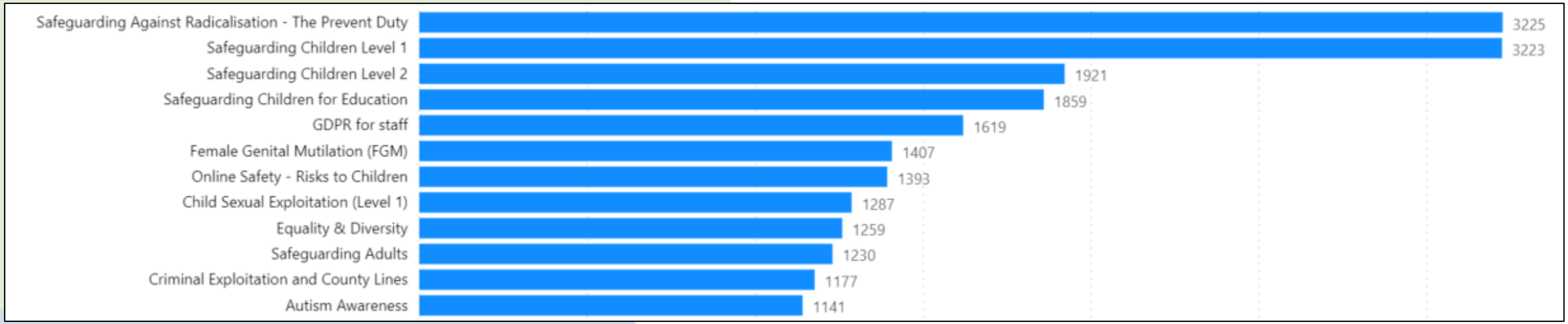
The Rapid Review course has been completed **94 times.**
The Agency Reports course has been completed **77 times**.
The LCSPR Panel course has been completed **53 times.**

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Training

E-learning

In 2023/24, **42,100 e-learning courses** were completed by learners in Kent, an 14.5% increase on the last full year reporting period in 2021-22. The below chart shows the courses which have had over 1000 completions in this reporting year.



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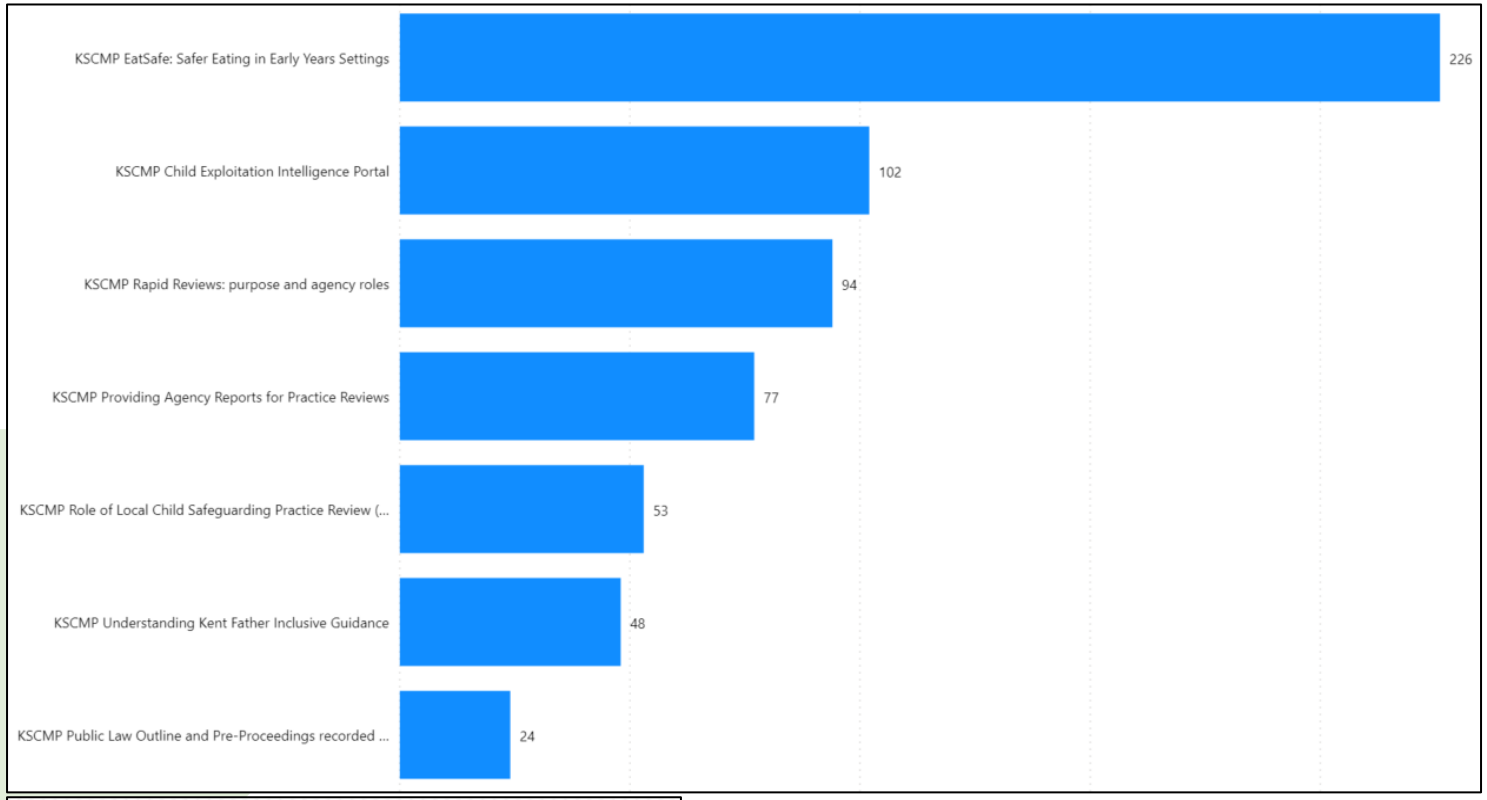
Training

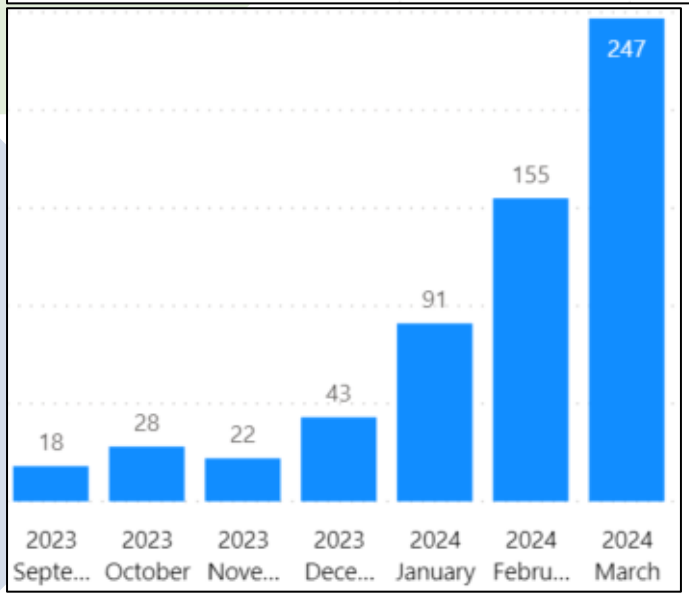
Recorded webinars

Recognising the size of the Kent multi-agency workforce and challenges in offering delivered courses which can reach across it, the KSCMP has developed the capability to host local remote content, such as recorded webinars, within the KSCMP training portal which can be accessed alongside eLearning. This capacity enables local content which responds to local learning and need to be made accessible to the widest audience of professionals in Kent.

In 2023/24, **7 courses** have been recorded and made available in this way which have been completed **624 times** in the year.

The chart at the top right shows completions by course. The chart bottom right shows completion of remote courses over the months since September 2023 when the capability became available. Access of the remote content has increased overtime, as further courses have been made available.





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Training

Delivered training

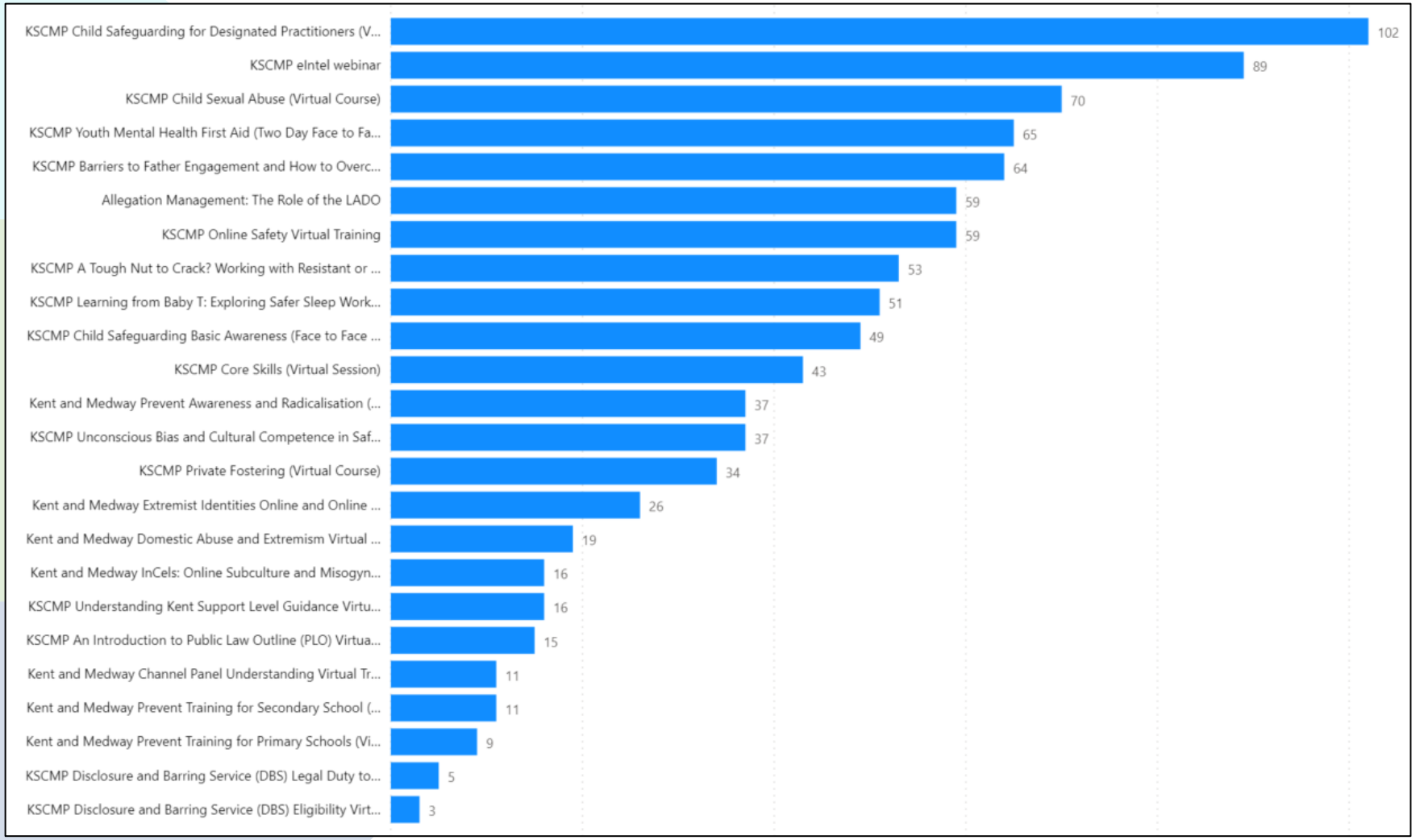
Delivered courses continue to form a core part of KSCMP's learning and development programme, with further expansion in 2023/24. New courses made available in this year include:

- eIntel webinar,
- Introduction to the Public Law Outline webinar,
- Disclosure and Barring Service webinars.

In this year, KSCMP delivered courses have been attended more than **940 times.**

The chart to the right shows attendance breakdown by course.

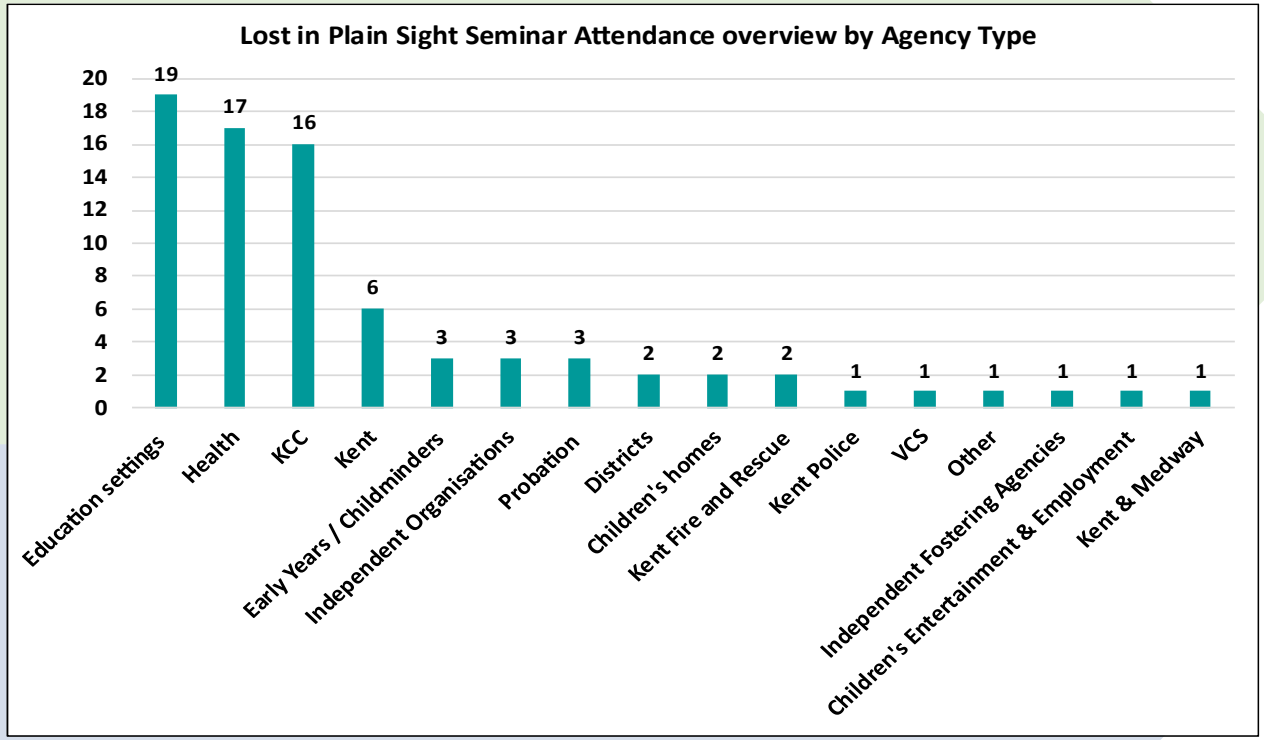
Please note: there are a small number of attendance registers which have not been received, so those attendances are not included in the data represented here.

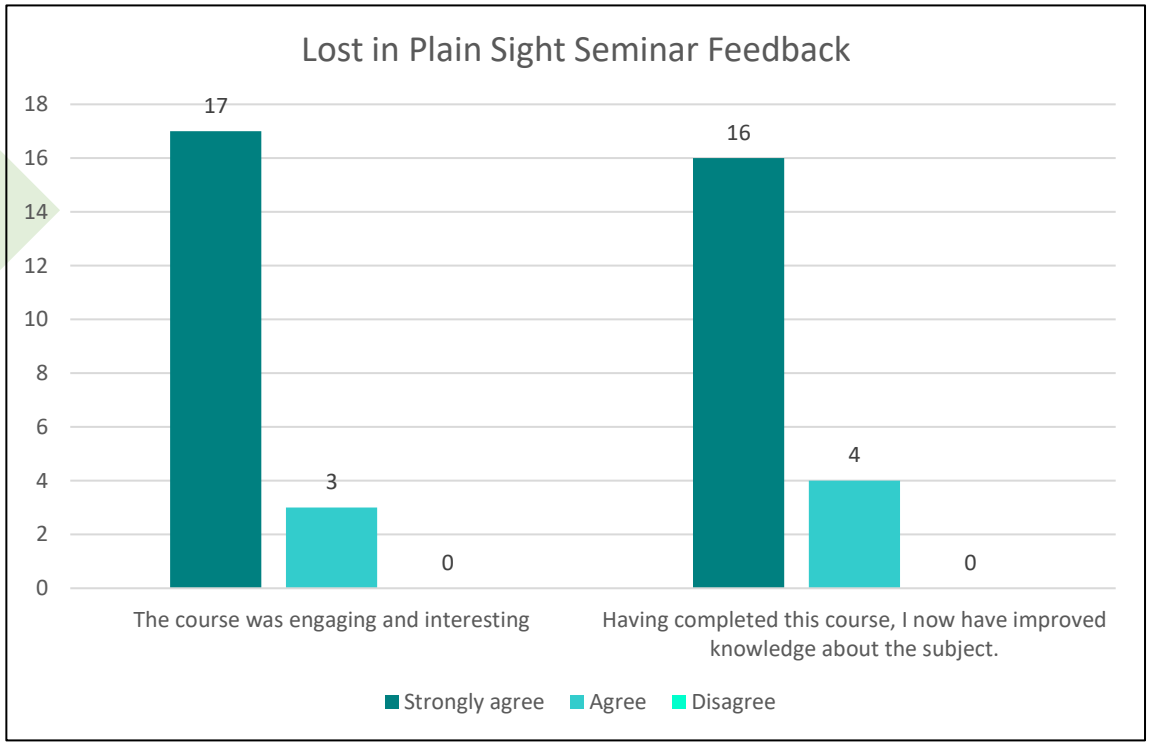


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Lost in Plain Sight: Safeguarding Children with Disabilities Seminar

On Friday 30th June 2023 the KSCMP hosted a virtual seminar which shared learning identified in the Lost in Plain Sight LCSPR, as well as other practice reviews, and good practice on engaging and supporting children with disabilities. The event was attended by 79 professionals and whilst feedback was only received from a limited number of attendees, it was entirely positive.



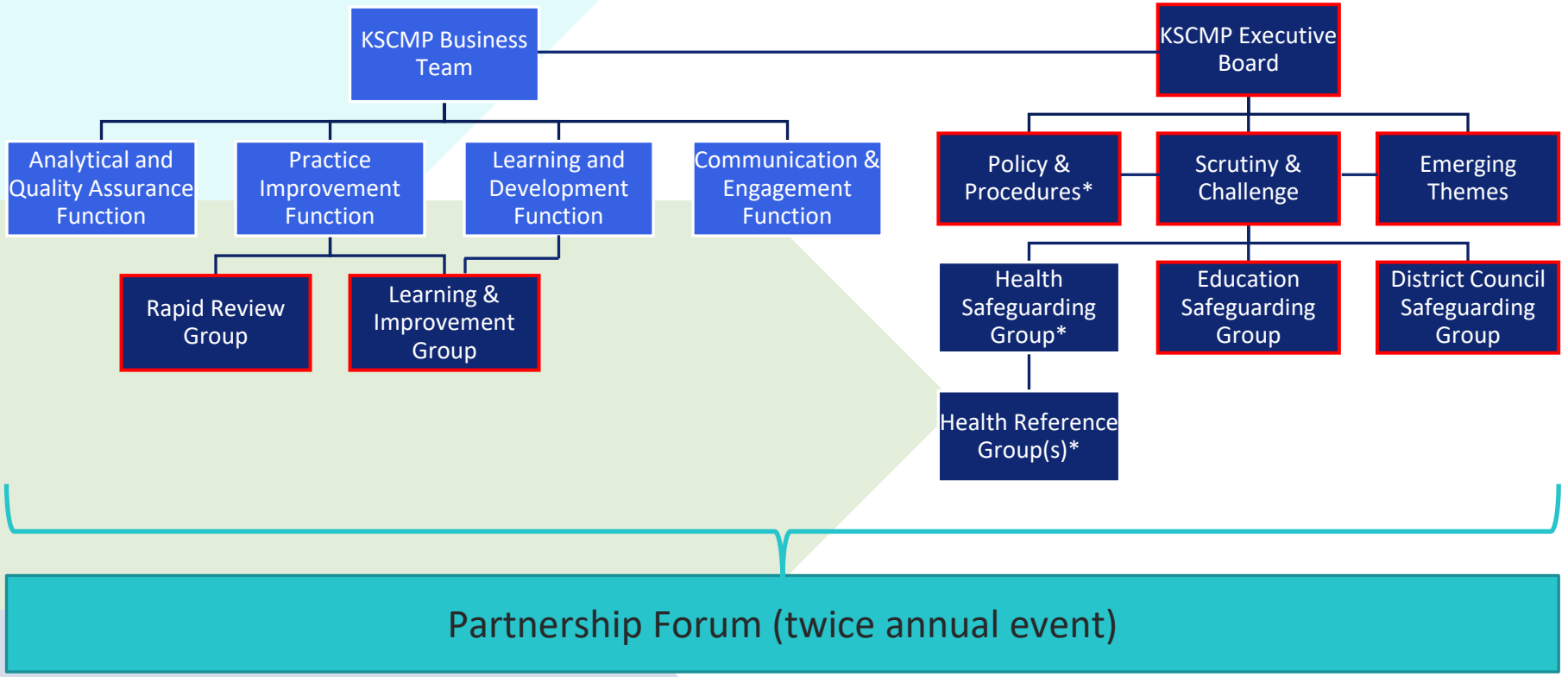


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Appendices

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Appendix One – KSCMP Structure

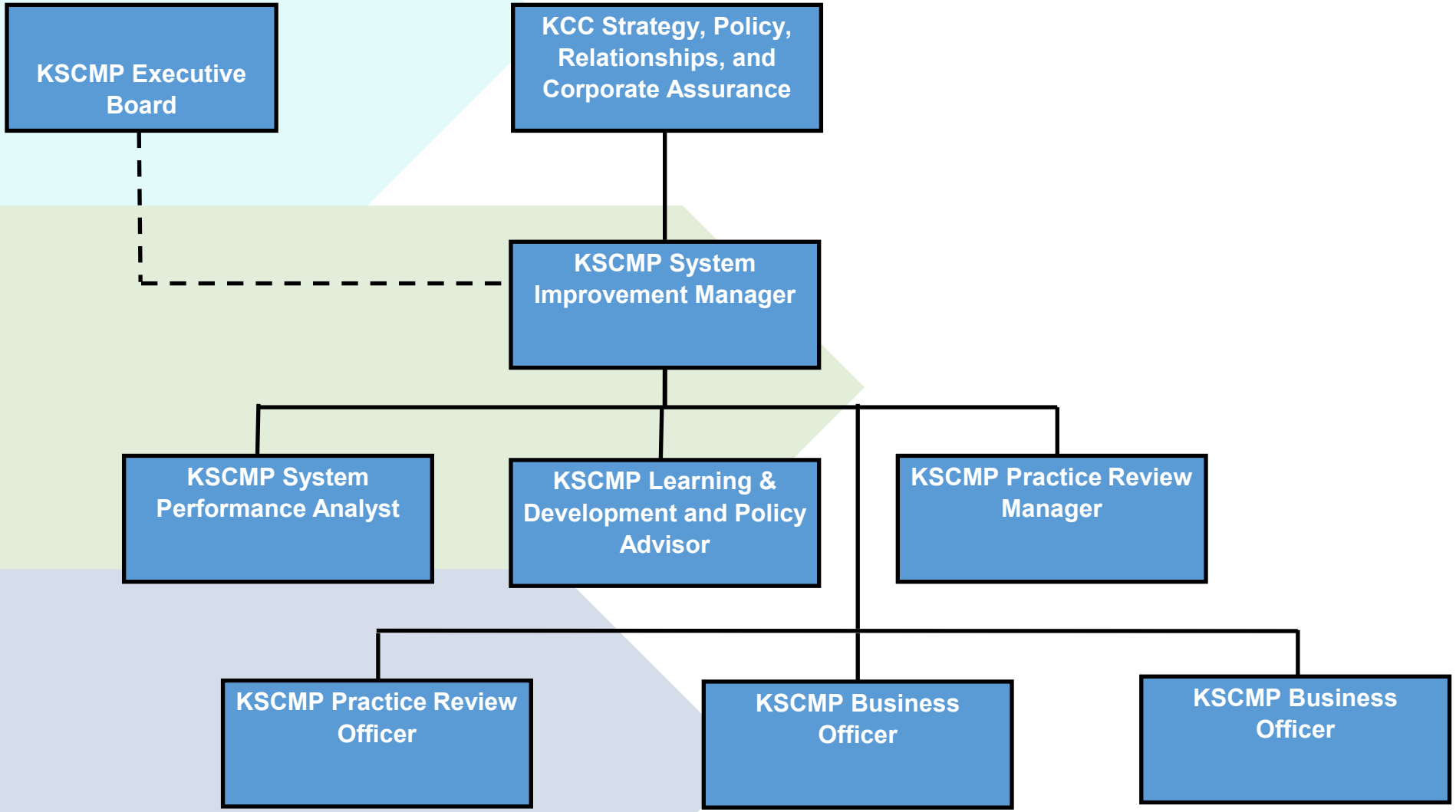


Key:

KSCMP Meeting	KSCMP administration	* Joint with Medway	KSCMP business function	KSCMP event

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Appendix Two – KSCMP Business Team Structure



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Appendix Three – KSCMP Budget

INCOME	2023-24 total contributions
KCC contributions	£242,334
External contributions	£188,218.45

EXPENDITURE	2023-24
KSCMP*	£402,806.29

* Includes staffing, training, practice reviews, Independent Scrutineer and all associated costs

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Appendix Four – Financial Contributions

Agency	Contributions 2023-24
Kent County Council	**£242,334.00**
Kent Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent	**£45,934.00**
Total Health Contributions	**£116,374.05**
Kent, Surrey and Sussex Probation Service	**£2910.40**
Kent Fire and Rescue Service	**£5000**
District/Borough Councils (each) x12	£1500.00
Total District/Borough Council Contributions	**£18,000.00**
TOTAL	**£430,552.45**

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Appendix Five – Agencies within our partnership

Safeguarding Partners
Kent County Council Kent and Medway NHS Integrated Care Board Kent Police
Education
16-19 Academies Alternative provision academies Governing bodies of maintained schools Governing bodies of maintained nursery schools Governing bodies of pupil referral units Independent educational institutions Schools approved under section 342 of the Education Act 1996(e)- SEND Special post-16 institutions Governing bodies of institutions within the further education sector Governing bodies of English higher education providers Childminders
Health provider trusts
Kent Community Health Foundation Trust (KCHFT) – community health provider Kent and Medway Partnership Trust (KMPT) – adult mental health provider North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT) – children and young people mental health provider South London and Maudsley (SLAM) – Tier 4 children and young person's mental health service provider East Kent Hospital University Foundation Trust (EKHUFT) Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust (MTWNHST) Darent Valley Hospital (DVH) South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAmbS)

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Appendix Five – Agencies within our partnership

Additional social care
Registered providers of adoption support services Registered providers of fostering services Registered providers of children's homes Registered providers of residential family centres Registered providers and residential holiday schemes for disabled children
District councils
Ashford Borough Council Canterbury City Council Dartford Borough Council Dover District Council Folkestone and Hythe District Council Gravesham Borough Council Maidstone Borough Council Sevenoaks District Council Swale Borough Council Thanet District Council Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Other agencies
Kent, Surrey and Sussex Probation Service The Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (CAFCASS) Kent Fire and Rescue Service

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Appendix Six – Kent Safeguarding Context data references

1. 2022 Mid Year Population Estimates. Source: ONS, from Kent Analytics (KCC)
2. Children living in **relative** low income families (defined as a family in low income before housing costs in the reference year Source DWP (2021/22), from Kent Analytics (KCC)
3. Source: MIU, KCC Snapshot as at 31/3/2024
4. Number of missing episodes – open to CSW, EH, OLA or not open to CSWS (totalled). Source: MIU, KCC
5. Referrals are for the NELFT single point of access and include referrals to Kent Children and Young People's mental health service and the Neurodevelopmental diagnostic assessment service. (This figure includes Crisis, Neuro and Locality together.) NELFT are one of four providers of ND assessments in Kent and provide them for 11+ in West and North Kent and 8+ in East Kent. Referral data is across Kent (excludes Medway) in the 12 months up to and including March 2024. Source: NELFT
6. Ethnic minority categories excluded are: White English, White British, Other White British, Scottish, Welsh, Cornish, Not obtained, refused and not stated. Ethnic Minority includes pupils classed as White Other. Source: January 2024 School census from MIU, KCC.
7. Source: January 2024 School Census from MIU, KCC
8. Source: MIU, KCC Snapshot as at 31/3/2024
9. Source: MIU, KCC Snapshot as at 31/3/2024
10. Number of young people at high risk of child exploitation (number of YP who have had a risk of CSE identified Apr 23 to Mar 24) split by involvement with EH or CSWS. Source MIU, KCC
11. Source: MIU, KCC Snapshot as at 31/3/2024
12. Number of young people at high risk of child exploitation (number of YP who have had a risk of CSE identified Apr 23 to Mar 24) split by involvement with EH or CSWS. Source MIU, KCC
13. Number of C&F assessments where one of the factors identified was young carers (Apr 23 – Mar 24) Source: MIU, KCC
14. Source: MIU, KCC Snapshot as at 31/3/2024
15. Number of C&F assessments where domestic abuse was identified as a factor of the assessment, broken down in to 3 categories (Domestic Violence – Child, Domestic Violence – Parent, Domestic Violence – Other) (Apr 23 – Mar 24) Source: MIU, KCC
16. Number of Referrals to Family Group Conferencing (now renamed to Social Connections Service, by families and individuals received between Apr 23 and Mar 24. Source: MIU, KCC