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Date: Monday, 22 September 2025

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Dear Member

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SUB-BOARD -
MONDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER 2025**

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at the Monday, 29 September 2025 meeting of the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board, the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

Agenda No	Item	Page
5.	Torbay Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report	(Pages 3 - 64)
7.	Exclusions and Absence	(Pages 65 - 70)

Yours sincerely

Governance Support
Clerk

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Meetings: Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board/Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 29 September 2025/25 September 2025

Wards affected: All

Report Title: Torbay Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2024/25

When does the decision need to be implemented? Immediately

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1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report has been prepared to provide members with the latest Torbay Safeguarding Children Partnership (TSCP) Annual Report 2024/25.

2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

2.1 Within the 2024/25 reporting period the TSCP arrangements were aligned with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (WT2023) and updated TSCP Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements were agreed and published.

2.2 The TSCP produces an annual report that has been aligned with recent guidance updates and provides information on the following:

- The current governance arrangements and structure of the partnership.
- Torbay area profile and context.
- Reviews and inspections.
- Progress against statutory guidance.
- Independent Scrutiny.
- Financial arrangements.
- Feedback from statutory partners.

- Learning and development.
- Future planning, next steps and conclusion.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

That members note and endorse the contents of the Torbay Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2024/25 as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report.

4. Appendices

Appendix 1: Torbay Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2024/25.

5. Background Documents

N/A

Supporting Information

6. Introduction

6.1 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (WT2023) arrangements, in respect of statutory safeguarding partners relating to a local authority area in England, are defined under the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act, 2017) as:

- (a) the local authority.
- (b) an integrated care board for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area.
- (c) the chief officer of police for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area.

The TSCP 2024/25 Annual Report has been written under the updated WT2023 arrangements, however the Department for Education will be issuing a national reporting template in October 2025, with future Annual Reports being envisaged to follow that format.

6.2 The attached annual report provides updates on the activity of the TSCP over a 12 month period from April 1st 2024 to March 31st 2025.

7. Options under consideration

None

8. Financial Opportunities and Implications

8.1 The final TSCP funding arrangements for 2024/25 were agreed between the safeguarding partners and are detailed in section 8 of the attached report.

8.2 It should be noted that the unequal division of partnership funding arrangements has remained an item for debate between the three statutory partners during the current and previous reporting

periods, but an agreed solution remains to be found. There is no nationally agreed funding formula to refer to, with guidance stating that Lead Safeguarding Partners should agreed local funding arrangements on an equitable basis.

9. Legal Implications

None

10. Engagement and Consultation

None

11. Procurement Implications

None

12. Protecting our naturally inspiring Bay and tackling Climate Change

None

13. Associated Risks

None

14. Equality Impact Assessment

None

15. Cumulative Council Impact

None

16. Cumulative Community Impacts

None

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Torbay Safeguarding Children Partnership

Annual Report 2024-25

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1. Introduction

Working Together 2023 (WT2023) arrangements in respect of statutory safeguarding partners in relation to a local authority area in England are defined under the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act, 2017) as:

- The local authority
- An integrated care board for any area, any part of which falls within the local authority area
- The chief officer of police for an area, any part of which falls within the local authority area

In line with guidance issued within WT2023, the Torbay Safeguarding Children Partnership (TSCP) Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSP) held their initial board meeting on 20/01/25, with subsequent TSCP board meetings being planned at six monthly intervals. In addition to the six monthly TSCP board meetings the LSP's will also meet with their Devon and Plymouth counterparts twice yearly in the form of pan-Devon board meetings, designed to enhance cross-border procedures, joint working and efficiencies. For 2025 the chair of the TSCP LSP board is Anne-Marie Bond, Chief Executive of Torbay Council.

Throughout the current reporting year, 01/04/24 to 31/03/25, Penny Smith, Nancy Meehan and Roy Linden represented their respective agencies at Delegated Safeguarding Partner (DSP) level. The three DSPs collectively form the TSCP Executive Group. Penny Smith was chair of the TSCP Executive Group for the reporting period this Annual Report is focused on.

 Penny Smith Chief Nursing Officer NHS Devon Integrated Care Board	Penny Smith is Chief Nursing Officer for the Integrated Care Board in Devon. Penny and the Chief Nursing Officers across Devon are responsible for nursing leadership and professional standards of nurses and allied health professionals employed by the NHS across the county. She has significant experience working in a number of key roles regarding clinical quality, professional leadership, and safeguarding. Penny is also Executive lead for Women's and Children's services. Penny is committed to partnership working across the county to support the health and wellbeing of the whole population of Devon.
 Nancy Meehan Director of Children's Services Torbay Council	Nancy Meehan is the Director of Children's Services for Torbay Council, having previously served as the Deputy Director. Nancy has significant experience, both as a senior manager and consultant for several local authorities across England. Beginning her career in the field of social care in 1989, Nancy has 30 years of post-qualifying social work experience and during this time has successfully led, stabilised, re-designed and launched new services across multiple council departments, always with the intention of improving outcomes for children. Nancy is committed to working in partnership, both with statutory organisations and the voluntary and community sectors, and delivering safe, high-quality services to the children and young people of Torbay.
 Roy Linden Policing Commander for South Devon Devon and Cornwall Police	Roy Linden is the Policing Commander for South Devon; an area which extends from Dawlish to Wembury, including Torbay, the South Hams and Teignbridge. Roy is responsible for the overall policing of this area, including responding to incidents, investigation, and neighbourhood policing. Roy joined Devon and Cornwall Police in 2003, and has worked in Patrol, CID, Public Protection and Major Crime, and is an experienced and accredited Senior Investigating Officer and Strategic Firearms Commander. Roy works with partners and commissioners to address key threats to the community and individuals in order to prevent crime and disorder. His aim is to provide a quality local police service by building strong community relationships across the area to keep people safe.

2. Working Together to Safeguard Children

In April 2017, the Children and Social Work Act received Royal Assent which ended the role of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB) and all sections of the Children Act 2004 that related to them. To support the updating of local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements the Department for Education (DfE) published revised Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance in July 2018 (WT2018), which set out what organisations and agencies who have functions relating to children must do to safeguard and promote their welfare in England. The major shift within WT2018 was the responsibility for safeguarding children being equally shared between the local authority, health services and the police.

In addition, further statutory guidance was published to support LSCB's, the new safeguarding and child death review partners, and the new Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel in the transition from LSCBs and Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) to a new system of multi-agency arrangements and local and national Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs). In March 2020, the transition period ended, and new safeguarding arrangements were fully implemented. For Torbay this meant stepping away from the Torbay Safeguarding Children Board (TSCB) and implementing a new multi-agency safeguarding children partnership, initially via shared arrangements with Plymouth Council, but as a Torbay only partnership, the TSCP, from September 2020.

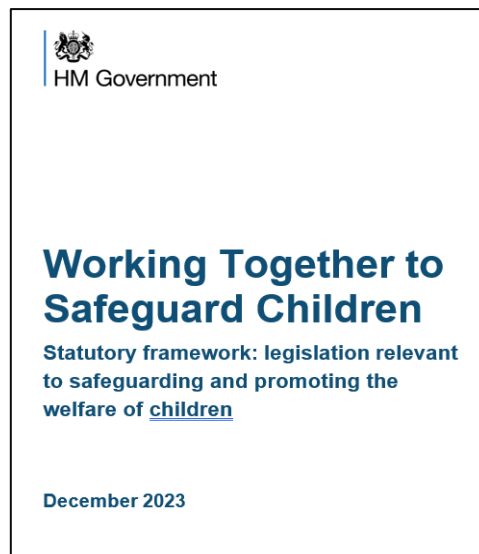
In December 2023 the DfE published updated Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (WT2023) arrangements, which became fully established by December 2024. The main changes that WT2023 provides are:

- Renewed focus on safeguarding being a shared responsibility across the whole system of help, support, and protection for children, including principles for working with and building positive, trusting relationships with families.
- Substantive changes to strengthen how local safeguarding arrangements work, including the role of relevant agencies. WT2023 also introduces the role of Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSP), who for the TSCP are the Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall Police, the Chief Executive of Torbay Council, and the Chief Executive of NHS Devon ICB. LSP's are differentiated from Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSP) within WT2023 arrangements, with the three TSCP Executive members taking on DSP roles on behalf of

their respective organisations.

- Renewed focus on how organisations and agencies provide help, safeguarding and protection for children and families. This is split into three sections: early help, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and child protection. Early help strengthens the role of education and childcare settings in supporting children and families. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children identifies a broader range of professionals who can be the lead practitioner under S17 of the Children Act 1989. Child protection introduces new multi-agency standards for improved practice and outcomes for children and clarifies expected responses where abuse and exploitation occur outside of the child's home.
- Strengthening of information sharing processes between prisons, the probation service, and children's social care.
- Clarification regarding the expectation for keeping in touch with care experienced young people over the age of 21, and the non-mandatory reporting of the deaths of those who are care experienced up to the age of 25. Both changes are designed to improve multi-agency learning and outcomes for this group of young people.

Click the following link or image below to access the full guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#).



3. Governance and Structure

Devon and Cornwall Police, NHS Devon Integrated Care Board and Torbay Council are equally responsible for oversight of the TSCP, its activities and outcomes. Under current WT2023 arrangements, ultimate oversight and final decision making within the TSCP now rests with the Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSP), with the Torbay LSPs holding their first board meeting on 20/01/2025. Torbay LSPs will meet twice yearly, with pan-Devon LSP meetings being held in-between the Torbay meetings, also on a twice yearly basis. Both the Torbay and pan-Devon LSP boards have agreed Terms of Reference and Schemes of Delegation.

Prior to final LSP arrangements being confirmed at the first Torbay LSP board meeting on 20/01/2025, the TSCP Executive Group (DSPs) held responsibility for final oversight of the work of the partnership and agreed multi-agency practice across all areas of children's local safeguarding in Torbay, via consultation with LSPs where required. The Executive Group continues to meet on a bi-monthly basis and has been chaired by the Chief Nursing Officer for NHS Devon ICB since the inception of the TSCP. Chairing arrangements across the TSCP have been reviewed in the current reporting period, with chairing of the Executive Group moving to the Devon and Cornwall Police Commander for South Devon from April 2025 to March 2027.

The TSCP Business Group, which is responsible for maintaining partnership oversight/work flow and actioning decisions made by the LSPs and DSPs, sits under the Executive Group. During the current reporting period the chairing of the Business Group moved from Devon and Cornwall Police to the Deputy Director of Safeguarding and Patient Safety for NHS Devon ICB. The new chair is envisaged to remain in this role until March 2027. In 2024/25 there were four sub-groups, one long term task and finish group and a short term project team sitting below the Business Group, with each being established to focus on the core business and priorities of the partnership. The project team are not represented on the structure chart due to the short term nature of their work finishing updates to the forthcoming TSCP Levels of Need (Threshold) document. A key project led by the Business Group in 2024/25 has been the ongoing development of the TSCP's data dashboard.

Amendments to the TSCP Learning and Development training delivery process were agreed by the Business Group in November 2023. The new model obviated the need to convene full sub-group meetings, with the identification and roll-out of TSCP multi-agency training being managed by identified training leads for each of the statutory partner agencies, with oversight being enacted

by the Quality Assurance and Business Groups. However, equity of partnership support has proven problematic with this model and new arrangements are being considered for the 2025/26 reporting period.

The Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) Panel is responsible for the oversight of TSCP learning reviews, converting all TSCP learning review recommendations into actions, and ensuring oversight of these actions through to resolution. This is undertaken with the aim of ensuring local multi-agency practice improves in line with that agreed in review reports. The CSPR Panel also reviews regional and national learning and incorporates this into the TSCP where agreed. The TSCP's Independent Scrutineer is a fixed attendee of the CSPR Panel.

The Quality Assurance (QA) Group is responsible for managing the partnership's practice oversight and audit activity, including both TSCP multi-agency audits and the implementation of findings from relevant single agency audits. The QA Group works alongside training leads in converting audit outcomes into learning, with further future audit activity being designed to ensure learning has become embedded into local safeguarding practice. TSCP learning and development leads from each of the three statutory safeguarding partners are fixed attendees of the QA Group. As per the CSPR Panel, the TSCP's Independent Scrutineer is also a fixed attendee of the QA Group.

The Child and Young Persons Exploitation Group (CYPEG) is part of Torbay's multi-agency response to child exploitation and is responsible for Torbay's multi-agency Child Exploitation Strategy. CYPEG is also the TSCP's direct link to local exploitation services. The need for a local Contextual Safeguarding strategy was identified by CYPEG and this led to an agreement for the TSCP to commission a Task and Finish Group to lead on and complete this piece of work. The Contextual Safeguarding Task and Finish Group reports to the TSCP Business Group in line with agreed TSCP process but also shares members with CYPEG to ensure continuity and shared understanding of local safeguarding concerns in respect of exploitation.

The Neglect Group is focused on identifying and understanding causes of local neglect and promoting preventative multi-agency responses. In 2024/25 the Neglect Group maintained oversight of the continuing implementation of Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2), which is the locally agreed multi-agency tool for assessing neglect in Torbay. The Neglect Group is responsible for the TSCP multi-agency Neglect Strategy.

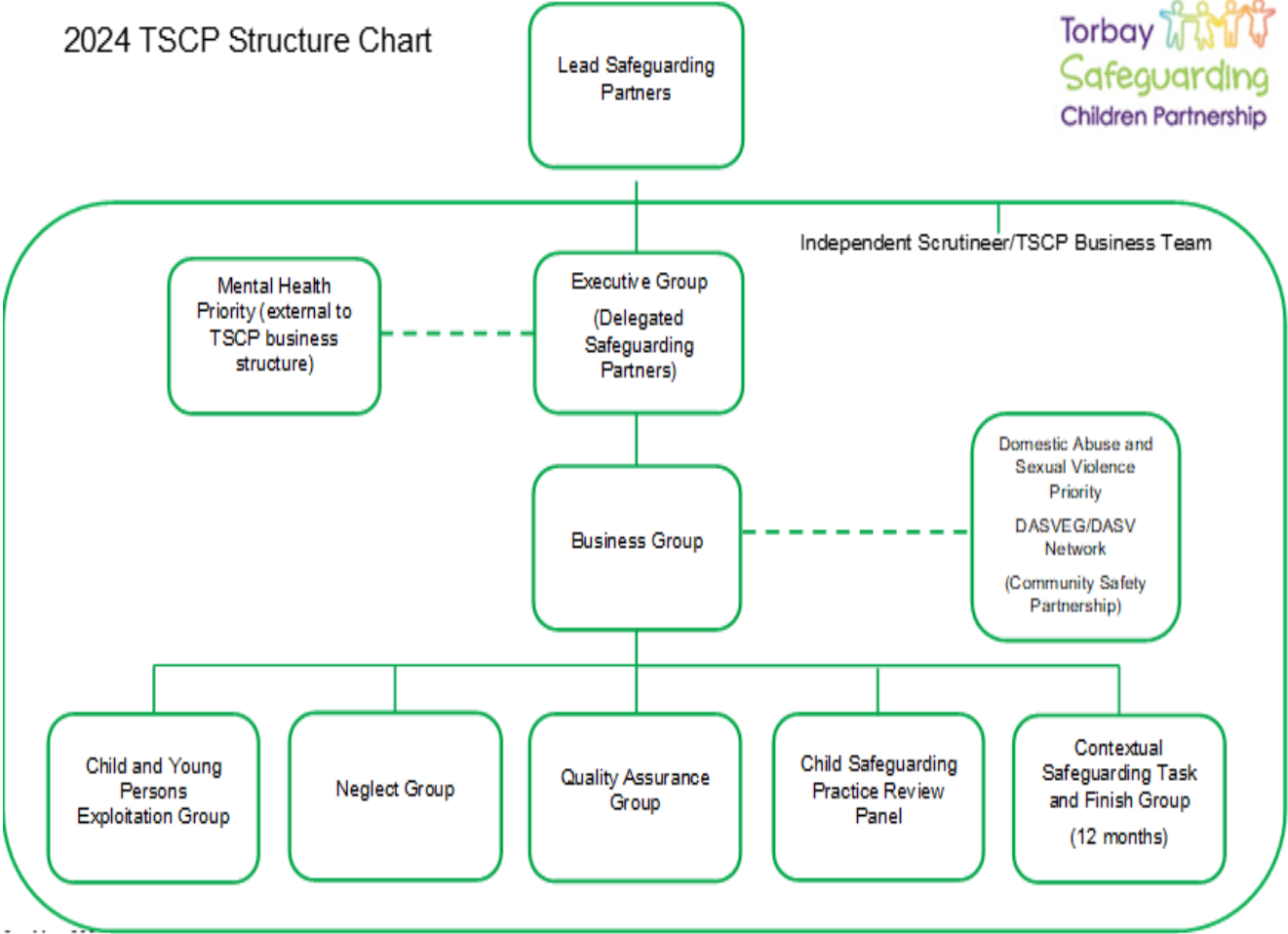
As reported in 2023/24, the TSCP's domestic abuse priority continues to be managed via joint

arrangements with Safer Torbay, which is the name given to Torbay's Community Safety Partnership (CSP). The domestic abuse lead from Safer Torbay is a fixed attendee of the TSCP Business Group to ensure effective oversight and information exchange. The domestic abuse lead from Safer Torbay also attends TSCP Executive Group meetings by invitation when oversight at a higher level is required.

Children receiving appropriate mental health and emotional wellbeing support at the correct time has been a priority of the TSCP since 2021. As per the domestic abuse priority, the partnership's agenda is intended to be managed via existing local structures, rather than a dedicated sub-group, to avoid duplication. Previously, NHS Devon ICB Head of Mental Health Commissioning has informed partners on progress in Torbay via their attendance at the TSCP Executive Group, with feedback/updates being held at that level until the Executive are assured of sufficient progress to be able to delegate that function to the Business Group. In January 2025 One Devon (an entity comprised of Devon health organisations and local authorities) convened a mental health summit designed to review and improve mental health services to children across the county, with a 'needs analysis' being completed that identified the governance and actions required. The work being undertaken by One Devon should align with the TSCP mental health priority and it is envisaged that once the TSCP Executive are assured of progress, oversight of the priority can be moved to the Business Group.

Each TSCP group is chaired by one of the statutory safeguarding partners and is attended by a broad range of agencies, including, where required, the faith, voluntary and community sectors. Attendance expectations are clearly outlined in each group's Terms of Reference and quoracy is achieved by the attendance of each of the three statutory safeguarding partners.

2024 TSCP Structure Chart



4. Area Profile and Context

Latest estimates record the population of Torbay as 139,485, an increase of 4.9% from 2013, when the population was estimated to be 132,920 [JSNA 2025](#). This was below the South West average increase during that time of 7.8% and the England average of 6.6%. Torbay had the fifth smallest population increase in the South West between 2011 and 2021, and one significantly below local areas such as East Devon at 13.8% and Exeter at 11.1%. Teignbridge and South Hams had respective increases of 8.5% and 6.6% [2021 Census](#). The Isles of Scilly was the only local authority area in the South West that had a population decrease during the ten year period covered by the latest Census. However, it's low population of approximately 2100 means that it is susceptible to significant population shifts when a relatively small number of people move into or out of the area.

Torbay has a significantly larger population of people aged 50 and over than the England average and therefore smaller proportions of those aged under 50, in particular those aged 20 to 44. Torbay's current average age of 49 years compares to 40 years for England and 44 for the wider South West. This age profile can lead to significantly higher demand for health and care services, which could potentially stretch resources in respect of the provision of services for children. Torbay's population is projected to rise to 153,088 by 2043, with the proportion of residents aged 0-17 projected to decrease from 18% to 16% within that period. The number of working age people living in Torbay is also expected to decrease by 2043, with the proportion aged 65 and over being predicted to rise from 27% to 34% (JSNA 2025). These forecasts are expected to exacerbate the already higher than average demand in Torbay for services for that age group. There has been an increase of 20.6% in people aged 65 years and over, an increase of 1.4% in people aged 15 to 64 years, and an increase of 4.2% in children aged under 15 years. The age group showing the largest increase in Torbay between 2011 and 2021 was people aged 70-74, with the increase being 43% (ONS 2021).

The rate of requests in Torbay for adult social care support for new clients aged 18 to 64 over the previous 5 years was 34% higher than the England average. Torbay's support request rate is also much higher than the South West average, but broadly similar to statistical neighbours (SN). Rates of long-term support for adults aged 18 to 64 funded by Torbay Adult Social Care have been 85% higher than the England average over the last 5 years, this is also significantly higher than the South West and SN. Among those aged 18 to 64, the largest primary support reason in Torbay over the previous 5 years is learning disability (70% higher than England average),

followed by physical personal care (149% higher than England average) and mental health (99% higher than England average). During the last 5 years, mental health and learning disability rates have increased, and physical personal care rates have slightly decreased. Rates of long-term support for those funded by Torbay Adult Social Care have also been significantly higher for those aged 65+ when compared to the England average over the previous 5 years, with rates deviating significantly from England during the previous 2 year period. Torbay rates are much higher than the South West and slightly but significantly higher than SN (JSNA 2025).

2023 ONS mid-year population data estimates show that approximately 57% of Torbay's population is aged between 16 and 64, this is significantly lower than the England average of 63%. Current projections indicate that Torbay's 16 to 64 year old population is set to fall to approximately 52% by 2043. This wider fall in the working age population could potentially exacerbate worker shortages and have an adverse effect on local tax receipts (JSNA 2025). In 2020 the ONS reported that for every person of retirement age in Torbay, there were 2.1 people of working age, compared to the England average of 3.4. The ratio of working aged people to those of retirement age in Torbay is expected to continue to decrease and is likely to lead to increased resource challenges for local services, with the older population demographic having the potential to have an adverse effect on funding for other services across Torbay. This is worsened by Torbay having an economy that is highly dependent on tourism and its associated low wage and intermittent employment, with the median full-time salary in Torbay being £30,611 compared to £36,112 in the South West and £37,617 in England (JSNA 2025).

In 2021, 92.1% of Torbay residents classified themselves as White British as opposed to 94.8% in 2011. Torbay has a higher rate of those who classify themselves as White Caucasian than the wider South West region and England. More detailed information on ethnicity within Torbay can be found in the [2021 Census](#). Regarding gender, 51.3% of Torbay's population for the 2021 Census were female, this was a slight fall from 2011 when it was 51.8%. Female to male ratios within Torbay change significantly once reporting refers to those residents aged 80 and over, with 70.5% of the 90+ population being female.

Torbay has had a high level of school children at its primary and secondary schools with diagnosed SEND (Special Education Needs and Disabilities) over the last decade compared to England's national average. For Torbay primary and secondary schools, the number of children with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) is also significantly higher than the England average (JSNA 2025). SEND has continued to be a particular focus of services within Torbay during 2024/25 following the Local Area SEND inspection in November 2021 and the subsequent

local service improvements required. Regarding school attendance, Torbay secondary schools have constantly had higher rates of persistent absenteeism than equivalents in the South West and England, with this figure also being repeated for primary schools (JSNA 2025).

Hospital admissions as a result of self-harm among 10 to 24 year olds in Torbay are consistently higher than the England average. It should be noted that because of the numbers involved (fewer than 200 admissions on average per year in Torbay), it is possible for a small number of individuals with significant levels of admissions to skew the figures. Gender data across England shows that females are 3-4 times more likely to be admitted to hospital as a result of self-harm than males. However, in Torbay this figure increases to almost five times higher within the latest five year reporting period, 2019/20 to 2023/24 (JSNA 2025). The rate of hospital admissions of under 18s for alcohol specific conditions within Torbay has also consistently been above South West and England rates (JSNA 2025).

Hospital admissions for tooth extractions caused by dental caries (tooth decay) for 0 to 17 year olds in Torbay have consistently been more than double the South West and England averages. The high rates of hospital admissions for dental caries in Torbay may indicate an issue with some children and young people being unable to access local dental services or being unable to access services quickly enough when emergencies arise, with there being a known shortage of NHS dental care in Torbay. The gap is equally pronounced among those children aged 0 to 5. Across England, there are significantly higher rates of admissions for dental caries in more deprived areas, with improving this concern locally being one of the work streams of the TSCP Neglect Group.

Poverty remains a significant concern in Torbay. In 2019, the year for which the most recent data is available, Torbay's deprivation score made it the 38th most deprived upper-tier Local Authority area in England, out of a possible 151, and the most deprived in the South West out of a possible 15 (DoPHAR 2021/22). An upper-tier local authority is either a unitary authority or a county council. Torbay has been ranked the most deprived South West upper-tier Local Authority since 2007. 24 of Torbay's 89 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are classified as being amongst the 20% most deprived in England, this was down from 28 in 2015. The 24 areas equated to approximately 27% of the 2019 population. Reducing child neglect in Torbay is a TSCP priority area that was reviewed in 2024 and retained as part of the new 2025/28 TSCP Business Plan.

In respect of housing, more than 1 in 4 (27%) of Torbay households live in privately rented accommodation, which is significantly higher than the South West and England rates of 20%. This

is combined with Torbay, at 8%, having the lowest level of socially rented accommodation in the South West (Census 2021). Roundham with Hyde (47%), Tormohun (45%) and Ellacombe (40%) are the Torbay wards that have the highest rates of households living in privately rented accommodation (JSNA 2025). On 31/03/2024, Torbay Council had 1,639 households on its housing waiting list, a reduction from the 1,674 recorded on 31/03/2023 but a significant increase compared to 31/03/2019 when there were 1,045 households on the list. However, these rates are significantly lower than those recorded for the beginning and middle of the last decade (JSNA 2025).

The average number of households in temporary accommodation in Torbay averaged over three quarters from the 3 months to 31 st December 2023 to the 3 months to 30th September 2024 (figures for the 3 months to 30th June 2024 were unavailable) was 127. Of these, on average, 50 were households with children. The most commonly used form of temporary accommodation was self-contained privately managed accommodation, which accounted for 29% of temporary accommodation, followed by local authority/housing association stock (22%) and private sector accommodation leased by the local authority or leased/managed by a registered provider (18%). For those households with children, they were most likely to be placed in local authority/housing association stock (54%), followed by self-contained privately managed accommodation (29%) and hostels (11%). None of the households with children were accommodated in bed and breakfast hotels within the period reported on. As of October 2024, Torbay had 3,135 vacant dwellings, 1,467 of these had been vacant for at least six months which is classified as long-term. Torbay Council's Tax base for October 2024 showed 68,736 dwellings on the valuation list, which indicates that 2.1% of Torbay dwellings were long-term vacant, this compares to the England average of 1.0% (JSNA 2025).

Children in Need or subject of Child Protection Enquiries and Planning

The rate of referrals per 10,000 children in Torbay in 2024/25 was 702. This is significantly higher than the statistical neighbour (SN) rate of 518, and slightly higher than the England average local authority figure of 690. (Note: all comparisons to SN and England data are compared to the previous year, 2023/24, as more recent data is yet to be published). Although the rate of referrals per 10,000 children has been reducing in Torbay since the first TSCP Annual Report in 2020/21, the pattern of Torbay's referral rate being higher than SN and the England average remains a consistent theme and has a known link to local demographics and indices of deprivation.

The proportion of referrals from schools in Torbay increased by one percentage point in 2024/25

to 17%, which is three percentage points below both the SN average and the England figures for 2023/24. The proportion of referrals from Health reduced in 2024/25 by two percentage points to 16%, which is the first reduction in health referrals since the inception of the TSCP but still remains slightly above the SN and England averages. The proportion of referrals from the Police in 2024/25 increased by three percentage points to 31%, which is a continuation of average increase rises over the previous two years. This rate is now above both the SN and England averages for 2023/24. To summarise, in 2024/25 there was an increase in the number of referrals made by schools and the police and a reduction from health. Contact rates and quality of referrals are considered through the MASH Strategic Board.

The number of Torbay Children in Need, as per the Department for Education (DfE) definition relating to all children open with any case status, as of 31/03/25 decreased to 1261 from the previous year's figure of 1275, recorded on 31/03/24, a decrease of 1% and a reduction in the rate per 10,000 from 499 to 493. SN and England comparator data continues to evidence that Torbay has a consistently higher proportion of Children in Need than many other Local Authority areas, with this being linked to known local deprivation and levels of need, although the number has declined in each of the last three years. The most recent 2023/24 data comparisons to this year show that Torbay has a Child in Need rate 10% higher than the SN figure of 448 and 48% higher than the England average of 333.

There were 149 children subject to child protection plans in Torbay on 31/03/2025, which is a rate of 59 per 10,000 children. This is 9% lower than the 2023/24 rate of 65 and 11% below the SN rate of 66 for the previous period. The number of Torbay children subject to child protection plans is 40% higher than the England average of 42 per 10,000 children, a considerable difference that has been consistent for the last four years. The number of child protection plans starting in Torbay in 2024/25 was 210. This is slightly higher than the previous year when 194 child protection plans began. The rate of child protection plans starting in Torbay in 2024/25 was 83 per 10,000 children, which is below last year's SN average of 89 but significantly above last year's England average of 52. The number of child protection plans ending in Torbay in 2024/25 was 226, an increase on the previous two years and slightly higher than the number of plans starting.

At 58%, neglect remains by a significant margin the most common recorded category of abuse for children in receipt of a child protection plan in Torbay on 31/03/2025, despite this figure continuing to fall since 2023 when it reached a peak of 74%. Child exploitation is often recorded under the category of neglect, and this may be a factor in the high number of children with neglect recorded as their category of abuse. There is a TSCP workstream that is due to conclude in mid-

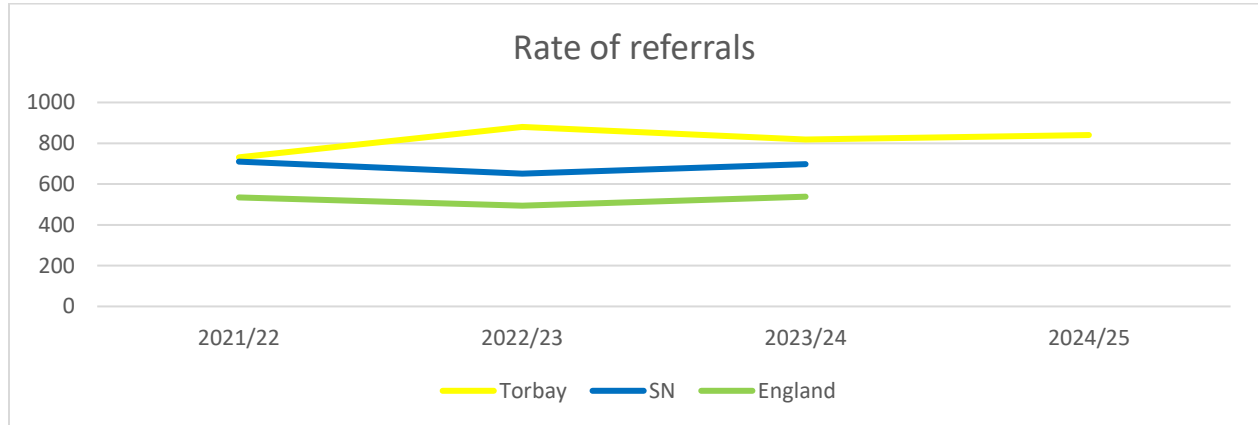
2025 focused on contextual safeguarding, with part of that work investigating the potential to create a new category of 'contextual' child protection plan which would be considered restorative for parents/carers and potentially reduce the number of child protection plans under the category of neglect. 'Multiple' was the second most common category recorded on 31/03/2025 at 25%. This is the second consecutive year that this category has been the second highest, with emotional abuse being the second highest category in years 2022 and 2023. The category of emotional abuse has roughly levelled since 2023. The other two categories of abuse, physical and sexual, remain very low in number and are therefore susceptible to the effects of sibling group size impacting on data.

There were 1389 strategy meetings held in Torbay in 2024/25, with 90% of these being quorate. This compares to 2023/24 when a total of 1206 strategy meetings were held, with a quoracy rate of 94%. Strategy meeting quoracy has been declining for each of the three years reported, reducing from 96% to 90% during this time. Further investigation is being undertaken by the Torbay Childrens Continuous Improvement Board (CCIB) regarding the causes of this as full quoracy at these meetings is mandated by WT2023. Data in respect of strategy meeting quoracy is not available for SN and England comparison but is reported on within the TSCP data dashboard to inform local practice.

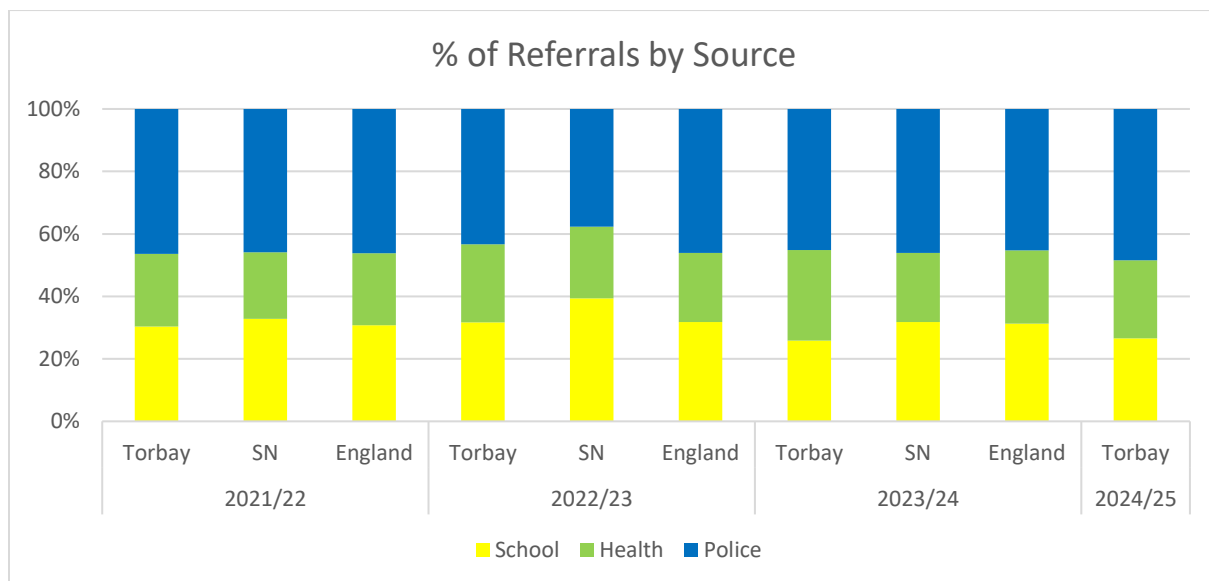
There were 707 initial and review Child Protection Conferences held in Torbay in 2024/25, an increase from 603 in 2023/24. Quoracy had decreased to 79% in 2023/24, however in 2024/25 it returned to 83%, as also recorded in 2022/23. This data is being reviewed by CCIB as quoracy is expected to be 100%, with this concern being reported on previously. Data in respect of child protection conference quoracy is not available for SN and England comparison but is reported on within the TSCP data dashboard to inform local practice.

There is no current TSCP led analysis for the data sets reported. However, further analysis of TSCP data will be possible by the Summer of 2025 once the partnership's data dashboard is fully operational, alongside a monthly analytical data report that will inform future practice and partnership decision making. All Children in Need/Child Protection data has been provided by the local authority. The police and local health agencies are currently reviewing their data systems and aim to provide data to support the TSCP data dashboard and future reports. The new improved data system used by the local authority has highlighted some small discrepancies within historic data sets, but these are not reported to be significant enough to have influenced reporting trends. Statistical Neighbour and England data sets have been checked and their accuracies confirmed.

1. Number and Rate of Referrals to Children's Social Care					
		2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Total number of referrals	Torbay	2085	2126	1899	1774
Rate of referrals per 10,000	Torbay	826	842	752	702
(SN = Statistical Neighbour)	SN	697	715	518	-
	England	538	545	690	-

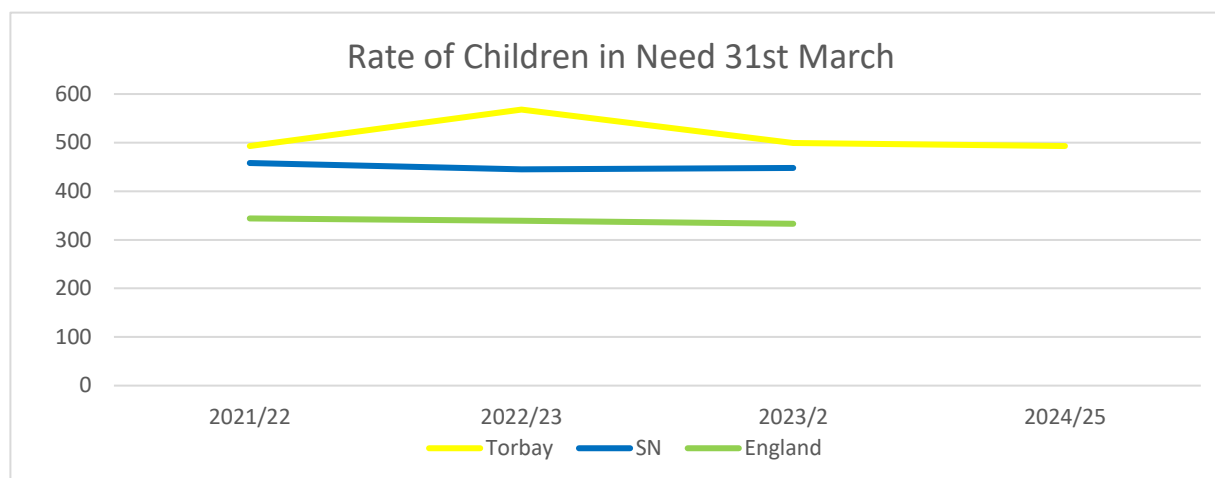


2. Referrals to Children's Social Care by Source										
	2021/22			2022/23			2023/24			2024/25
	Torbay	SN	England	Torbay	SN	England	Torbay	SN	England	Torbay
School	17%	20%	20%	19%	24%	20%	16%	20%	20%	17%
Health	13%	13%	15%	15%	14%	14%	18%	14%	15%	16%
Police	26%	28%	30%	26%	23%	29%	28%	29%	29%	31%



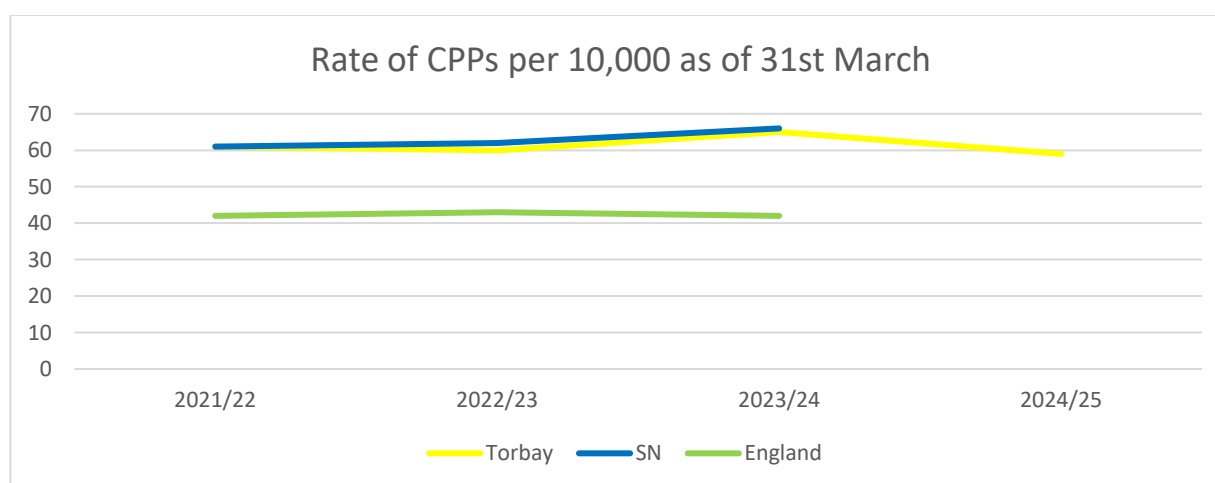
3. Number and Rate of Children in Need as of 31st March

		2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Number of Children in Need	Torbay	1260	1453	1275	1261
Rate of Children in Need per 10,000	Torbay	493	568	499	493
	SN	458	445	448	-
	England	344	339	333	-

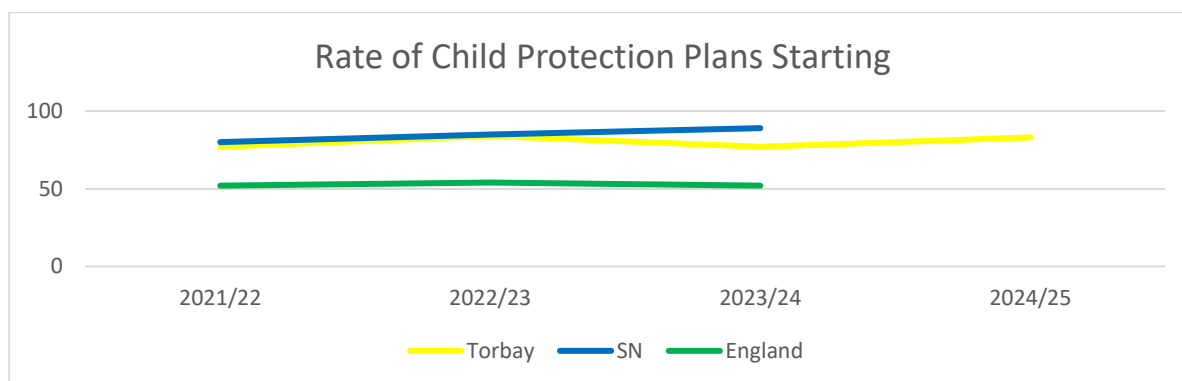


4. Number and Rate of Child Protection Plans as of 31st March

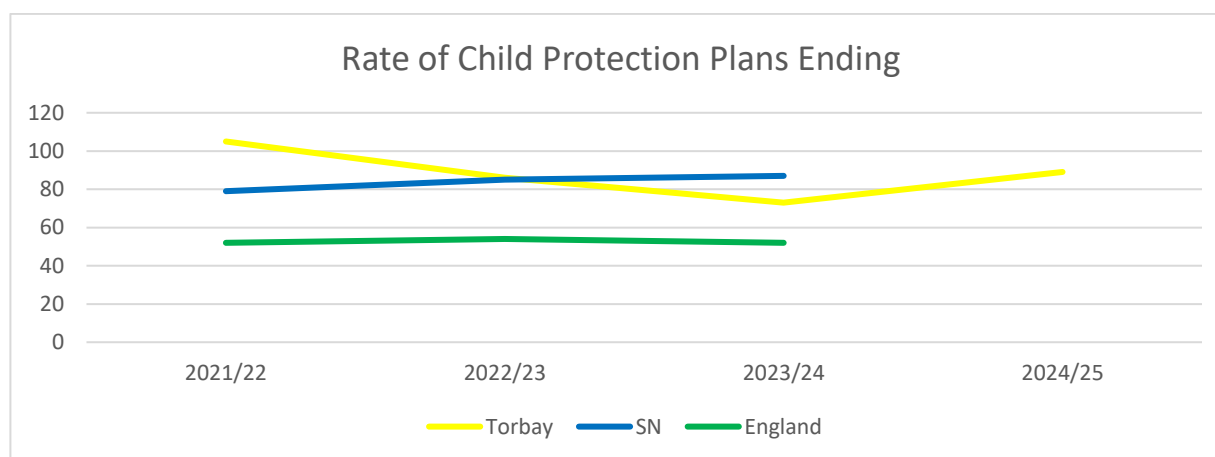
		2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Number of CP plans	Torbay	153	152	163	149
Rate of CP plans per 10,000	Torbay	61	60	65	59
	SN	61	62	66	-
	England	42	43	42	-



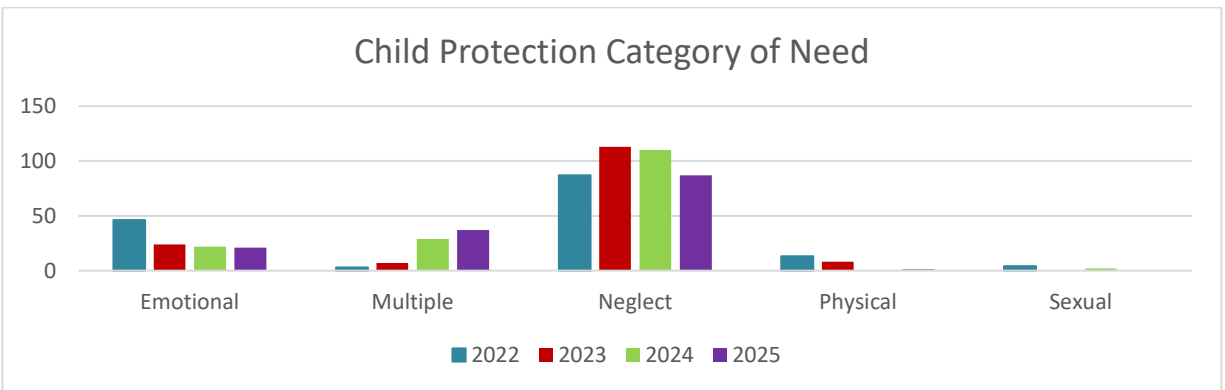
5. Number and Rate of Child Protection Plans Starting					
		2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Number of CP plans starting	Torbay	195	213	194	210
Rate of CP plans starting per 10,000	Torbay	77	84	77	83
	SN	80	85	89	-
	England	52	54	52	-



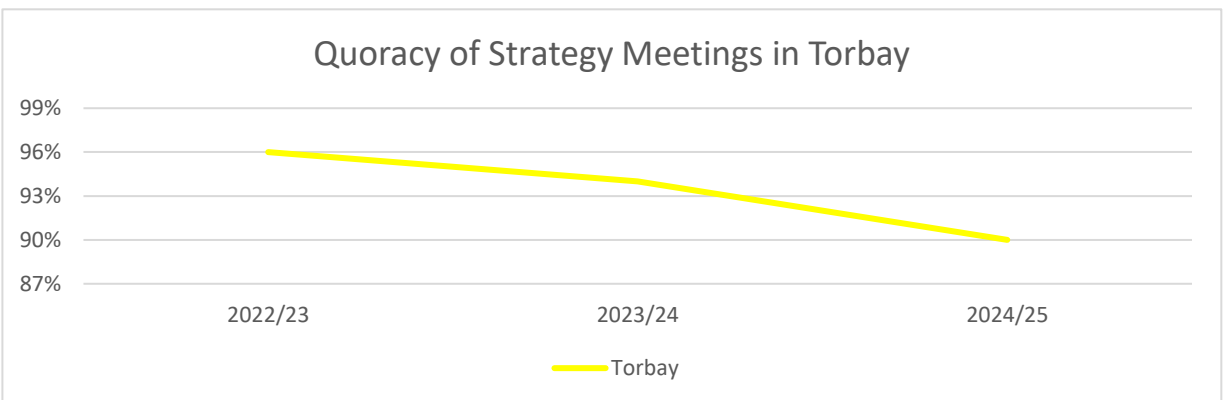
6. Number and Rate of Child Protection Plans Ending					
		2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Number of CP plans ending	Torbay	266	216	183	226
Rate of CP plans ending per 10,000	Torbay	105	86	73	89
	SN	79	85	87	-
	England	52	54	52	-



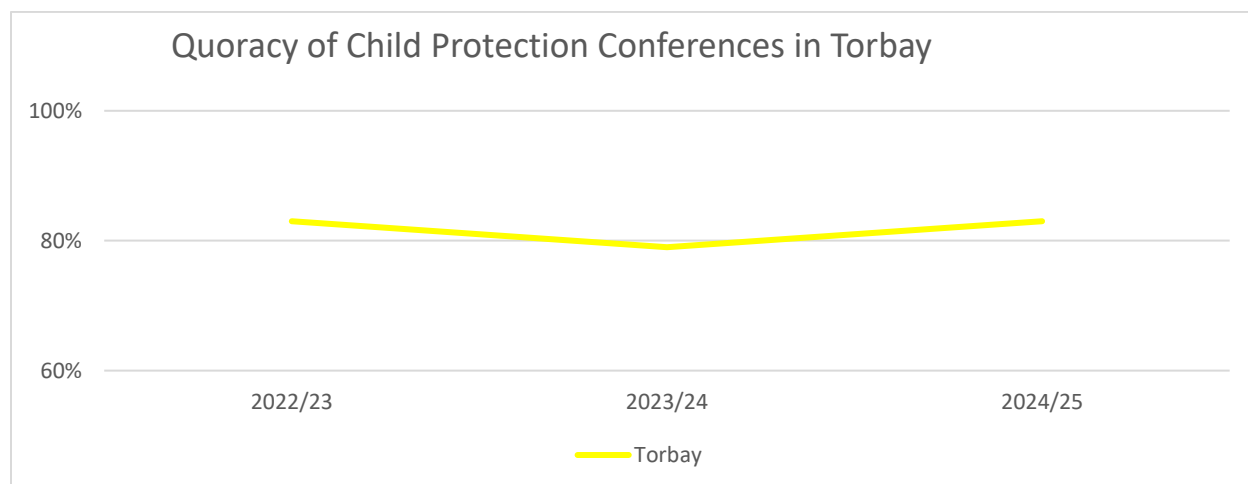
7. Child Protection Plans by Category of Need as of 31st March								
	2022		2023		2024		2025	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Emotional	46	30%	24	16%	22	13%	21	14%
Multiple	3	2%	7	5%	29	18%	37	25%
Neglect	87	57%	113	74%	110	67%	87	58%
Physical	13	8%	8	5%	0	0%	1	1%
Sexual	4	3%	0	0%	2	1%	2	1%
Blank	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%
Total	153		152		163		149	



8. Quoracy of Strategy Meetings				
		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Number of meetings	Torbay	1273	1206	1389
Percentage of quorate meetings	Torbay	96%	94%	90%
	SN	-	-	-
	England	-	-	-



9. Quoracy of Child Protection Conferences (Initial and Review)				
		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Number of meetings	Torbay	703	603	707
Percentage of quorate meetings	Torbay	83%	79%	83%
	SN	-	-	-
	England	-	-	-



5. Reviews/Inspections

Reviews

C110-C112 CSPR

SIN referral from Torbay Children's Services on 26/04/2024 following the death of C110. Concerns reported regarding apparent parental failure to follow safe sleeping advice, with this being suspected to be a contributory factor to the death of C110, and C110 and sibling C111 also having unexplained healing fractures. The father of C110 and C111 was reported to have a history of safeguarding concerns regarding another child in a neighbouring local authority area. These concerns were unknown to Torbay Children's Services at the time of the notified serious incident

Between 01/04/2024 and 31/03/2025 the TSCP received one Serious Incident Notification (SIN) referral, covering three siblings, these children being individually coded C110 to C112. SIN criteria were reviewed regarding another child, who would have been coded 'Cole' following a recommendation from National Panel to use anonymous names to identify children rather than coded numbers. However, Cole's circumstances were not deemed to meet SIN criteria, with associated learning unlikely to be identified.

The number of SIN referrals submitted in 2024/25 was a reduction from the four noted in the 2023/24 TSCP Annual Report and is a continuation in the pattern of reducing serious incidents being referred to the partnership. As reported previously, there is no suggestion that the ongoing reduction in SIN referrals indicates any form of concern, as all potential serious incidents/SIN referrals are reviewed by the TSCP, with completed SINs being reviewed via agreed multi-agency arrangements within the first five working days of the referral being submitted. However, it may be prudent for the TSCP Quality Assurance Group to undertake a review to provide assurance that SIN criteria are fully understood across the partnership as the number of reducing SIN submissions has become notable.

The Department for Education (DfE) has recently published its annual Serious Incident Notification data that shows the number of SINs reported nationally between 01/04/2024 and 31/03/2025.

There were 338 notifications, down 67 from the previous reporting year. This is split into:

- 162 SINs relating to child death.
- 167 SINs relating to serious harm.

These latest figures represent the lowest number of SINs submitted since the DfE became responsible for publishing these statistics in 2018 and mirror the pattern of reducing SIN's experienced by the TSCP. The DfE acknowledge that while one notification can cover more than one child, they are aware that not all incidents that meet the criteria are notified and report a level of caution regarding interpretation of the data. The DfE state the vital importance of further analysis and work being undertaken nationally to understand what factors may have resulted in this reduction and, most crucially, what this may tell us about both the lives of children and the effectiveness of agencies working together to safeguard children.

Aggregated Learning from Reviews

During the current reporting period the TSCP Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) Panel retained responsibility for the operational management of all TSCP learning reviews, converting review recommendations into actions, and ensuring oversight of these actions through to resolution. The CSPR Panel also continued to aggregate national and regional learning, CSPR reports provided via the NSPCC repository, and local single -agency audits, incorporating these into learning processes and events where it was felt they would support practice improvement.

Inspections

In March 2025 OFSTED and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) jointly undertook an inspection of Torbay's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) local area partnership. Although the findings of the SEND inspection were not published within the current reporting period they will be reported on, including action plan progress, in the 2025/26 TSCP Annual Report.

In November 2024 an inspection of inpatient and community children's services run by Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust was undertaken by the CQC. The inspection was carried out in response to concerns regarding children and young people with mental health needs being cared for in an inappropriate setting. The inspection focused on children and young people who were receiving treatment for eating disorders associated with mental health conditions, with the outcome of the inspection not being published within the current reporting period.

There were no relevant inspections reported by Devon and Cornwall Police within the 2024/25 reporting period.

6. Progress Against Statutory Guidance

Implementation of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

In December 2023 HM Government published revised Working Together to Safeguard Child arrangements (WT2023) that all Safeguarding Children Partnerships (SCP) were expected to be compliant with by December 2024. To ensure compliance in Torbay, the TSCP Executive Group arranged for a multi-agency task and finish group to review changes from previous WT2018 arrangements, produce a plan for the implementation of WT2023 in Torbay and use this plan to guide and support agencies towards compliance from the old to the new arrangements. Compliance with all statutory elements of WT2023 was achieved within the prescribed timescale, with the implementation plan being discharged by the TSCP Executive Group in December 2024. The new WT2023 arrangements, will embed across the TSCP during 2025, with impact being evaluated via auditing and review processes and reporting being planned for the 2025/26 TSCP Annual Report.

Updated TSCP Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements

In December 2024 the TSCP revised its [Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements \(MASA\)](#) and published new arrangements for the Torbay area to ensure alignment with local services and compliance with WT2023. The updated MASA provides clarity for local services regarding their role and expectations within Torbay's safeguarding arrangements and provides the public with details on which agencies are covered by the arrangements, both on a statutory and relevant basis, including their role within partnership arrangements. The impact of the new MASA will be evaluated during the 2025/26 reporting period and reported on in the linked TSCP Annual Report.

Updated TSCP Business Plan

During the Autumn of 2024 the TSCP Executive Group reviewed the impact of the partnership's work in respect of the four existing TSCP priority areas and decided to amend, but retain, the themes of the 2021-2024 Business Plan. The rationale for this decision was based on two key criteria. The primary criterion was based on data that evidenced the themes retaining significant relevance in respect of the safeguarding needs of children and families in Torbay. Secondly, the findings of the Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) in November 2023 reporting an agreement with the existing four TSCP priority areas. The [2025-2028 Business Plan](#) lays out and explains the partnership's strategic safeguarding priorities for the three year timescale in question, including the key principles that the partnership will be guided by to ensure its work remains restorative, child centred, relevant, and accessible to both families and practitioners across the

Bay. In the Autumn of 2025, the TSCP will complete full implementation of its data dashboard, alongside monthly analysis reports. This progress will enable the partnership to be more data informed and better able to report on the impact for children and families on the four TSCP priority areas, with any required changes/updates being fully evidence based.

Data Dashboard

Throughout the 2024/25 reporting period, development of the TSCP data dashboard continued, with data sources being developed and refined. Fully updated police and health data sets were not available within the current reporting period, however these are expected within the 2025/26 reporting period and will be added to the dashboard to improve reporting and impact once available. Unfortunately, at the point the data dashboard was due to be shared and implemented with statutory partners in March 2025, Torbay Council's Information Technology policy, specifically security elements of the policy that only allow 'live' data access to permitted Torbay Council Staff, prevented this process from being initiated. The TSCP negotiated a temporary 'work around' with the local authority's IT Board and PDF versions of the dashboard were first shared with designated officers across the partnership in April 2025. Full implementation of the dashboard, including analytical reports and subsequent elevated data informed practice, is expected to begin during the 2025/26 reporting period, with impact being evaluated by the partnership's Quality Assurance Group.

Education Sector Representation

At present, the TSCP does not have direct representation from education providers at DSP level or in any of its sub-groups. This is an identified deficit, with existing links to local school leaders being reviewed within the 2024/25 reporting period and actions to remedy this matter being planned for 2025/26. Although, helpfully, education is represented within the TSCP structure by the Torbay Education Support Service (TESS), with the Director of Childrens Services (DCS) also being responsible for education within her portfolio, neither of these mechanisms meets the current statutory guidance and will need to be resolved.

Feedback/Input from Children and Families

Although the TSCP has not made formal arrangements at this stage to directly involve children and families within its arrangements, in 2024/25 Torbay Childrens Services Relational Practice Team became permanent members of the partnerships Business and Quality Assurance Groups. This arrangement allows for the views of children and families to be fed into the work of the TSCP formally via sub-group attendance and related activities, including the provision of relevant information from views already collated. The arrangement also ensures that the relatively small

cohort of local children and young people engaged with the Relational Team do not get overloaded with requests for their views, in addition to not receiving multiple similar requests from partner agencies across the Bay.

In addition to supporting the TSCP via their attendance at sub-group meetings, the Relational Team also gave a presentation of the work they do with children and young people at a TSCP Wider Partners Forum. This forum is a quarterly event designed to showcase the work of partners to agencies across Torbay, with the aim of sharing and improving local practice. It is envisaged that the presentation and training provided by the Relational Team will support the effectiveness of restorative practice across the TSCP footprint.

Allegations Against People that Work with Children

WT2023 and [Keeping children safe in education 2025](#) (KCSIE 2025) place a responsibility on all Local Authorities in England to identify a designated officer (LADO) who is involved in the management and oversight of individual cases of allegations of abuse made against those who work with children. The role of the LADO is to give advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations and liaise with the police and other agencies to monitor the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible and are consistent, with a thorough and fair process. Torbay Council ensures effective management oversight of the LADO, including quality assurance, LADO supervision, dealing with developing areas of concern in individual professional cases and facilitating improvements in LADO practice. A more detailed overview of the work of the LADO in Torbay during this reporting period can be found within the [2024/25 LADO Annual Report](#).

Child Death Reviewing Arrangements

Child death reviewing arrangements in Torbay form part of the regional South West Peninsula Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP). This service remained commissioned to Livewell Southwest within the reporting year 2024/25, with further details being available in the [2023/24 CDOP Annual Report](#).

Child death review partners are defined in section 16Q of the Children Act 2004, which for the South West Peninsula CDOP are:

- Cornwall Council
- Council of the Isles of Scilly
- Devon County Council

- Plymouth City Council
- Torbay Council
- NHS Devon ICB
- NHS Cornwall and Isles of Scilly ICB

The child death review arrangements operate in line with the requirements of the statutory guidance, WT2023, and the Child Death Review: Statutory and Operational Guidance (England) 2018. Within these arrangements, Devon and Cornwall Police join the child death review partners to form quoracy. The child death review process is defined by four stages following the death of a child:

- Immediate decision making and notifications.
- Investigation and information gathering.
- Child Death Review Meeting (CDRM).
- Independent review of the child death by the CDOP.

Following a review of the Peninsula CDOP partnership update/learning process in late 2024, revised arrangements were agreed with CDOP and shared with safeguarding partners in January 2025. Under the new arrangements CDOP will convene collective bi-annual update meetings for Business Group chairs, CSPR Panel chairs and Partnership/Business Managers from the four Peninsula SCPs. These new arrangements are designed to promote a peninsular-wide approach to child death discussions and should improve clarity by avoiding the need to duplicate information to individual SCPs. In between the CDOP bi-annual meetings, NHS Devon ICB Designated Nurses will communicate any learning highlighted for individual SCPs at related individual partnership CSPR Panel meetings. The outcome of TSCP child death actions/interventions continue to be fed back to the CDOP by the agreed ICB or LA representative to complete the learning cycle. Assurance of the child death arrangements is a function of the TSCP Executive Group, conducted on behalf of the LSP's.

Peninsula Business Managers Forum

Throughout the 2024/25 reporting period, Business Managers from Torbay, Devon, Plymouth, and Cornwall have continued to collaborate on statutory functions where possible to support improvements and efficiency in safeguarding arrangements across the Peninsula. An example of this joint working is the review and amending of S11 audits to support consistency for agencies whose footprint crosses multiple SCP borders. This methodology has the support of LSPs across the Peninsula and will continue in 2025/26.

7. Independent Scrutiny

In December 2023, HM Government published the new Working Together to Safeguard Children arrangements (WT2023) which introduced significant changes to the local safeguarding of children arrangements in Torbay. The TSCP was already well placed to respond to these changes in many respects, with key roles already in place such as a Delegated Safeguarding Partner (DSP) as chair of the TSCP Executive Group and had already moved from an Independent Chair to Independent Scrutineer. In this reporting period, the Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSP) have established not only a local LSP meeting structure, but also a pan Devon LSP forum where cross boundary threats and issues can be discussed and actioned.

In my 2023/24 Independent Scrutineer report I made mention of the Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) review into Torbay's 'front door'. I am pleased to see that significant operational progress has been made, particularly in relation to professional curiosity, led by NHS partners and also strengthened supervision and audit models within the local NHS Foundation Trust. A separate task and finish group was established to monitor the progress of operational actions. For 2025/26 the focus now needs to move to how effective the strategic elements of the JTAI recommendations have been embedded.

There has also been some progress in respect of the TSCP mental health priority in that a key piece of work has been completed. The Multi-Agency Case Audit (MACA) took place in March 2025, and the findings should enable the partnership to not only refocus on areas of children's mental health that are pertinent to its key safeguarding responsibility but work with other partnerships to ensure that all aspects of a child's mental health and emotional wellbeing are included in a holistic plan.

After some challenges, the TSCP now has a multi-agency data dashboard. However, there remains a gap regarding the quality of multi-agency data and effective analysis. The dashboard now enables the partnership's Quality Assurance (QA), Business, and Executive Groups to identify emerging threats and risks as well as supporting some level of understanding regarding the effectiveness of actions in improving safeguarding practice. The dashboard has already been used in identifying how Torbay has a larger than average number of missing children than other local areas. This information is now being analysed by the Business Group. Although in its infancy, the focus for 2025/26 is the embedding of wider health and police data into the dashboard, improved analysis and the accessibility of the dashboard itself.

Through the QA Group, there is a balance between identifying new areas of audit and assessing how effective previous audits and quality assurance/scrutiny have been. A recent review, led by the Independent Scrutineer identified that further input was required for AIM based sexual harm training, The partnership, through the Children's Services Learning Academy, quickly put in place additional training, particularly for Designated Safeguarding Leads in educational settings. The QA Group has oversight of single agency audits and seeks to identify how agencies can support each other through these audits. In 2022, the TSCP introduced Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2) as the method to identify and monitor the level of child neglect in Torbay. However, since the significant effort in training this model across agencies, numbers of recorded GCP2 assessments remain low. Although this issue is common in other children's partnerships, with GCP2 as the primary indicator of neglect, the TSCP needs to understand why recording of neglect through GCP2 is at a low level, and the potential impact this may have on safeguarding of Torbay children.

In January 2025, the TSCP held its third annual conference. This year the focus was on online exploitation of children. There was an impressive lineup of presenters, who all provided informative presentations, particularly around the escalated risks for children with autism. CYPEG is now the lead mechanism within the TSCP to lead on actions from this event.

Following a Rapid Review, the DSPs and Independent Scrutineer met with the National Panel to discuss the level of reflective analysis and the effectiveness of multi-agency recommendations within the associated report. Following this meeting, there is now, via the partnership's CSPP Panel, strategic oversight from both DSPs and the Independent Scrutineer on the priority on multi-agency working and recommendations, rather than the previous approach of focusing more on single agency recommendations.

In 2024/25 Serious Incident Notification (SIN) referrals were lower than previous years. There was one referral in this reporting year, relating to three siblings. Given that numbers per local authority are low, there needs to be caution about over analysing this data and the reasons why the number has reduced. Nationally, the number of SIN referrals have also dropped. The National Panel is reviewing why there is a reduction in SIN referrals nationally, and the TSCP, through its QA Group, needs to be able to respond promptly to any learning given the potential serious harm to children from these incidents.

8. Financial Arrangements

'The Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSP) should agree on the level of funding needed to deliver the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. This includes consideration of business and analytical support, independent scrutiny, infrastructure, and core functions including local child safeguarding practice reviews, multi-agency training and learning events. It is the responsibility of the LSP to ensure that adequate funding is allocated and spent in line with agreed priorities.

Funding contributions from the statutory safeguarding partners should be equitable and agreed by the LSPs. Funding for the arrangements should be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that they can meet the financial needs of the arrangements. The funding should be transparent to children and families in the area, and the individual contributions of safeguarding partners and relevant agencies should be clearly set out in reporting. (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023)'

Contributing Agency	Value of Contribution 2024/25
Torbay Council	£113,800
NHS Devon ICB	£43,108
PCC Devon and Cornwall Police	£16,979
National Probation Service	£888
Total Funding Contributions	£174,775

The TSCP adopted the new WT2023 arrangements throughout the period covered by this annual report, with the TSCP funding arrangements for 2024/25 remaining in line with previous ratios and being agreed at DSP level in March 2025. Equity of partnership funding arrangements has been a consistent theme of debate within the TSCP for a number of years and was an agenda item at the first LSP board meeting on 20/01/2025, with discussion by the LSP's on this subject continuing into the 2025/26 reporting period. It is envisaged that the LSP's will set the 2025/26 TSCP funding arrangements as part of their current negotiations.

Expenditure Item 2024/25	Expenditure Amount 2024/25
Business Team Staffing	£121,903
Independent Scrutineer	£20,253
Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews	£7,844
Contract Costs (CDOP and tri.x)	£7,777
Other (including £3044 contribution towards Levels of Need consultant costs)	£16,998
Total	£174,775

Further to the contributions listed above in the first table, the TSCP has also been provided with additional funding ‘in kind’, since its inception, via hosting arrangements with Torbay Council. These are costs that are not charged to Devon and Cornwall Police or NHS Devon ICB. The exact cost of hosting the TSCP by Torbay Council is difficult to gauge and not currently reported on. However, additional hosting costs may become part of the wider funding agenda and are necessary to cover the following essential business functions:

- Human Resource/Payroll
- Finance
- Website development/maintenance
- IT equipment/support
- Mobile device subscriptions

In addition to essential hosting costs, Torbay Council also funds several TSCP functions that are deemed critical to the running of an effective Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP). These costs are linked to the following critical activities:

- Multi-agency safeguarding training, administered and provided by Torbay Childrens Services Learning Academy. Any identified profit from TSCP training events is moved to the Learning Academy budget to support training and learning event costs incurred by Children's Services. Training funding/costs will be reviewed in the 2025/26 reporting period as an element of a wider local training review.

- Multi-agency safeguarding learning events, managed and hosted by Torbay Childrens Services Learning Academy.
- Building, updating and maintenance of the TSCP data dashboard by Torbay Childrens Services Business Intelligence team.

Regarding value for money, the TSCP has notably lower running costs than its neighbours, despite providing a similar level of service. However, this needs to be weighed against the significant amount of benefit in kind provided by Torbay Council, which clearly increases the financial burden on the local authority in respect of TSCP costs, in addition to the local authority also being the highest contributor to TSCP annual funding.

9. Feedback and Key Priorities from Statutory Partners

Statutory Partner/Provider Impact Reports on TSCP Priorities and Activity

Torbay Childrens Services

Neglect

Currently 69% of children subject to child protection planning have a primary category of neglect, and a further 6% have multiple categories inclusive of neglect. The challenges regarding neglect have been triangulated with the work undertaken in Torbay with The Medical Research Fund and the TSCP Neglect Strategy resulting in the implementation of the Graded Care Profile 2 tool. It should also be considered that Torbay is considered to be an area with high levels of deprivation and research demonstrates a clear correlation between this factor and child neglect.

Children's Services oversee jointly, with public health, the work undertaken within the Family Hubs and the universal and targeted support provided to families in terms of cost of living surgeries and benefits advice. This work is also provided through care planning and is complimented by the work of allocated social workers in terms of enhancing parental responses and capacity, as well as work of service such as Building Futures, Torbay's edge of care provision.

Within the planned Childrens Services redesign, launching on the 1st September 2025, a therapeutic team has been introduced, which will be a non-case holding team of practitioners who will be specifically commissioned alongside allocated workers to provide intensive support for families who present with a range of needs, including neglect.

Exploitation

As identified in the JTAI inspection of November 2023, the TSCP response to the identification and response to children and young people who are missing or who are vulnerable to exploitation (criminal, sexual and also now financial) has matured. This is sustained through enhanced partnership working and data-sharing, as well as a range of operational and strategic forums where information about these children is analysed and interpreted, enabling a targeted and effective multi-agency response.

Childrens Services Exploitation team therefore forms part of a multi-agency 'core' group of

professionals who correspond daily, meet regularly and are able to provide support and professional challenge to each other (internally and externally) in relation to responses to missing and exploited children. Torbay has an exploitation toolkit which is embedded and used by professionals across the TSCP when there are concerns for any type of exploitation. Torbay has clear and embedded missing children's protocols which trigger child protection strategy meetings for repeat missing episodes and episodes which are 72 hours or longer in duration. Torbay has three distinct operational/practice forums for multi-agency discussion about any child where there are contextual safeguarding concerns: triage; CEMOG (Child Exploitation and Missing Operational Group) Practice and Process Panel; CEMOG (Children's Panel). The Missing and Child Exploitation Forum (MACE) also meets monthly.

Torbay Childrens Services have created a Power BI Dashboard in relation to missing children that allows practitioners and managers access to a live picture within a specified time period of:

- missing episodes by team;
- missing episodes by case status;
- missing duration;
- the number of children returned;
- the number of RHIs completed;
- the number of RHIs completed within three days;
- the number of RHIs declined;
- the overall number of missing episodes and children;
- the percentage of cared for children missing placed inside and outside of Torbay boundaries.

This maturing use of data enables accurate assessments of current risks.

From April 2025, the Return Home Interview Service will return 'in house' and will be more closely aligned with the exploitation and youth service. The previous provider only worked with Young People within the Devon footprint. As part of the service development, Children's Services will consider how to expand the service to young people going missing out of area.

The impact of the continued developments within the Exploitation Team and associated responses to children mean that the risk to missing and exploited children is well understood. Thorough and well-informed mapping activity leads to a partnership understanding of wider networks and those who may wish to exploit children, and places and spaces where children are

and may be vulnerable, which in turn leads to targeted disruption and plans of support for identified young people.

Missing and exploited children are always captured in Children's Services audit cohorts (due to the varied nature of their demographics). Exploitation Team management became aware of these and reviewed the learning and outcomes of these audits. Themed audits have taken place within each quarter of the audit universe for exploited children. Exploitation Team management are able to ask for a timetabled themed audit in relation to exploited or missing children if there is an arising theme/challenge or positive area of practice development.

Dip sampling activity in October and December 2024 noted significant improvements in terms of the use of assessment to inform planning with 20 of the 23 children considered (87%) found to have a comprehensive and up to date assessment in place.

There was an increase in the number of exploitation toolkits being completed in 2024/25 (288 compared to 194 in 2023-24), evidencing that the toolkit is being embedded and being used more effectively to identify risk. Similarly, there was an increase in those identify high risk (76 compared to 50 the previous year). We also saw an increase in the number of children and young people having a completed review exploitation toolkit in the period whose risk has reduced from their previous assessment (34 from 19 in 2023/24).

There is a monthly performance review and analysis of missing children (case status, age, gender, repeated missing children) and review of exploitation toolkit performance across each service, using Power BI and exploitation team trackers.

In terms of overall numbers of missing children, there was a significant increase particularly when comparing historic performance from 2022/23 (205 missing children) to 2023/24 (466) and this then levelled off in 2024/25 at 401. This links to the maturity of the exploitation response, and the increased identification of those at risk of exploitation across the partnership; appropriately and proportionately, there have been more children subject to child protection planning who have gone missing in 2024/25 (60) evidencing the use of the child protection process to manage and mitigate risk. However, there are also established local trends and patterns, for example with a particular spike in girls going missing over the July and August 2024 period (this was a small group of young people with multiple missing episodes, as opposed to a wider issue). The service is also able to provide child level data for NRM referrals and outcomes/decisions, which enables an enhanced understanding of risk for Torbay children and a point of comparison regionally and nationally.

Torbay worked jointly with neighbouring authorities towards launching the Philomena Protocol in Spring 2024 for missing children. Torbay also expanded the remit of Philomena to include children who are repeatedly missing from home, education or family settings (not only from care settings). This includes a programme of training shared with Devon Children's Services. Torbay recognises that Philomena is embedded in many other areas across the UK and that there is a need to align local practice to well evidenced improved responses to vulnerable missing children.

The joint Childrens/Adults Services Transitions Panel is facilitated by Children's Services, with adult social care as part of its membership. The panel oversees transition planning for young people with a red exploitation toolkit, or active NRM, to mitigate against the cliff edge that can be experienced in the transition to adulthood.

The Care Experienced Team has strengthened its links with the Childrens Services Exploitation Team and now attend regular safety planning meetings with colleagues. We have built strong links to the Child Exploitation Missing Operational Group and use the exploitation tool to risk-assess our young people, when we have consent to do so. However, an area for further opportunity is the wider support available to those young people who do not meet Care Act eligibility, and this will be the focus of ongoing joint work between Children's and Adults Services in 2025/26.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse remains the second most common primary contact reason when considering data from the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). The MASH Strategic Board and the Children's Continuous Improvement Board have commissioned a specific piece of partnership audit activity, considering children subject to repeat referrals, and found that every single child had experienced domestic abuse.

Childrens Services have a Reducing Parental Conflict Co-Ordinator located in Early Help, who works closely with Standing Tall. Similarly, another Early Help Practitioner completed the DAY Program in Schools, focusing on healthy relationship and identification of domestic abuse.

Childrens Services provide the following training offer:

2 day DASH Training available to internal and partnership agencies free of charge. DASH training covers:

- Working restoratively with victims of domestic abuse.
- Young Peoples DASH.
- Identifying domestic abuse and level of risk.
- Restorative safety planning with victims, children and young people.
- Sign posting for standard, medium and high risk domestic abuse.
- MARAC process.

2 day DARAC Training available to internal and partnership agencies free of charge. DARAC training covers:

- Domestic abuse law and legislation.
- Understanding the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people, including child development.
- Working restoratively and trauma informed with children and young people.
- Assessing risk for children and young people.
- Working restoratively with Victims, process from DASH to DARAC.
- Working with men who harm. Barriers to engaging people who harm/resources and support for boundary setting engagement.
- Risk identification matrix and thresholds and working collaboratively with partner agencies.
- Safety/action planning and sign posting.

Childrens Services are a core member of DASVEG and contribute to strategic plans in relation to Torbay's domestic abuse response.

Mental Health

Childrens Services have reviewed their Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) process, to ensure the maximization of the intelligence this provides in relation to the emotional health of our cared for children. This enables earlier intervention to prevent escalation into mental health crisis and the wider implications this has for the child, including its impact on placement stability. The SDQ process has now been aligned with the Personal Education Plan (PEP) process to maximise engagement. Training has subsequently been rolled out to education professionals involved in that process. Torbay Council is seeing an increase in the number of SDQ's completed, and the impact these assessments can have in terms of identifying and meeting need. It is also planned that the SDQ will be used as a tool to measure impact when other services and interventions are provided to cared for children. This includes children who are being supported

home to parents and/or carers and those that are being supported to have a greater sense of stability in their placement.

In addition, Torbay Childrens Services continue to spot purchase packages of therapeutic support, for example Non-Violence Resistance and Dyadic Development training, to support fostering families and the children they care for. This is in recognition of the impact of children's early experiences of trauma, abuse and neglect on their wider sense of wellbeing, and the need to ensure therapeutic intervention early, to prevent placement instability or breakdown.

The Director of Children's Services (DCS) now co-chairs the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Group, and the Divisional Director for Safeguarding is also a core member. The aim of this group is to:

- Prevent and meet need earlier, with specific offers and trauma informed approaches whether that be in a school setting or outside of that and the impact of neurodiversity.
- Reach out to the most vulnerable, including those who may find it hard to engage.
- Create and communicate accessible information about the current offer, linking this to Family Hubs.
- Undertake asset mapping and gap analysis.
- Undertake Torbay focused needs assessment, to include vulnerability and intersectionality.
- Co-ordinating through trusted navigators.
- Develop voluntary sector involvement, including through the mobilisation of emotional well-being procurement.
- Ensure we address health inequalities.
- Ensure responsive services.

Childrens Services have also been involved in an Appreciative Inquiry approach to considering children with individual commissioning arrangements and complex needs, jointly with colleagues in health, to consider learning in regard to joint working, improvements to family experiences, levels of need, gaps and difficulties in provision access and identification of good practice. This has led to the decision to undertake deep dives into two young people's specific circumstances in Autumn 2025.

Training

The TSCP Learning and Development Lead for Children's Services under the Learning Academy,

and in 2024/25 led on the wider partnership learning and development priorities. Safeguarding training forms a fundamental foundation for all partners to understand the legislation, good practice and signs and symptoms, which are critical to a shared understanding of identification of risk as well as the appropriate response and underpins the fact that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Learning from Serious Incidents/Learning Reviews

Upon receipt of the NSPCC CSPR repository, specific CSPRs or National Reviews are highlighted to key service leads, or TSCP leads, within Childrens Services for consideration within their services/groups. Specific pieces of work have arisen from CSPRs or National Reviews, for example an assurance activity relating to children who experienced SEND placed in residential settings following the National Panel report, and joint work with Torbay Council's Housing department regarding safer sleeping considerations at accommodation transition points.

Childrens Services have led on the implementation of a number of Best Practice Forums based on the learning from CSPR's. These multi-agency events have enabled joint learning and reflection that has fed directly into the practice improvements tracked by the CSPR Panel.

Childrens Services Practice Improvement Forum is a space in which all Team Managers are able to reflect on possible service improvements required following Rapid Reviews/CSPRs; similarly, the learning from CDOP is considered within this forum.

The Voice of Children, Young People and Families

A significant focus of Childrens Services work over the last twelve months has been on seeking, listening to and acting on the voice of our children, their parents and carers and their wider families and we have created mechanisms for doing so. We are also developing the ways in which we seek the views of more vulnerable or marginalized children and families, for example the relational approach to joint working in partnership with our special schools. We have also strengthened quality assurance through capturing the voice of children and families as part of an audit and widening participation and feedback through the development of a Participation Officer role.

Torbay Childrens Services have established a Children and Young People's Panel, which meets monthly and consists of a diverse group of young people that can represent all children within Torbay. The panel includes 11 core representatives from different educational providers, children and young people with SEND, cared for children and care experienced young people. It provides a means of bringing together the existing participation groups as a way of centralising feedback

from children and young people, and supporting the expansion of representation within these groups, thereby reflecting the voice of a wider range of children and young people. It reflects an aspiration to create a sense of community and collaboration for our young people as they unite to advocate for themselves and their peers and have their voices heard.

The Cared for Council, a mixture of cared for, and care experienced children, with some of the young people not currently living within Torbay. The group currently meets once a month, with meetings being held both face to face and virtually to support young people's attendance. The group have voted on their top priorities for projects that they would like to be involved in, and what they would like to see improved in Torbay Children's Services. They are now planning questions to be sent to all young people that are cared for by Torbay, to find out what their priorities are. Once they have this information, the group will begin to project plan. We are also about to consult all cared for and care experienced young people as part of the update to our Corporate Parenting Strategy.

Children's Services also has a SEND Youth Forum, which focuses on capturing the views of children with additional needs; this forum is being consulted currently as part of a review of our SEND Pledge and how meaningful this is for children and young people. We also continue to run a Point of View service, which children and young people can use to raise any positive feedback, concerns or other issues; these are then received by the Participation Team and redirected where appropriate to the best person to respond/resolve.

Difference Made by the TSCP

The TSCP enables effective partnership working, which in turn enhances our safeguarding response to risk. It encourages collaboration across the core statutory partners, but also wider partners, for example Adopt South West, sports clubs, and the voluntary sector to name but a few. This in turn leads to a holistic approach to protecting children, and meeting the diverse range of needs of children identified in our local community based on evidence and data.

The TSCP contributes to effective information sharing and leads to improvement of communication which in turn leads to better outcomes. In addition, there is more of a sense of a unified approach, that ensures that children receive the right support at the right time from the right service. The partnership also creates a space for shared responsibility and accountability for the outcomes of children, and our role in keeping them safe through working together. It also creates platforms for partners to share good practice, and for reflective joint analysis when the outcomes intended have not been realised. It also allows for a pooling of expertise, resources

and knowledge, which in turn means that a think family approach is fostered, taking into account every aspect of a child's needs and the needs of those who care for them or who are important to them.

Challenges/Barriers

- There remain at times challenges in terms of partnership understanding of s47, child protection and legal thresholds. The Safeguarding and Reviewing Service will be undertaking focused partnership work to support a more effective shared understanding.
- There is variability across the partnership in terms of Professional Difference Policy and how well this is understood and applied.
- There remain gaps in terms of our understanding of how emotional and mental wellbeing is being addressed at a strategic level; there remains a lack of understanding in regard to what resources and services are available at an early intervention level, to prevent crisis escalation.
- There is variability in terms of understanding across the partnership in relation to good practice when supporting a young person at risk of exploitation (for example, professional anxiety driving escalations to social care in terms of requests to accommodate or relocate).
- Placement sufficiency remains a local as well as national challenge.
- Capacity issues have meant that the implementation of tools such as GCP2 are not consistently seen in contacts and referrals from partners.
- Domestic abuse remains a prevalent factor for children in Torbay and there is still no behaviour change programme commissioned for perpetrators in the area.

Devon and Cornwall Police

Neglect

There were several Rapid Reviews and CSPRs across Devon and Cornwall where neglect was identified as a key factor. These led to several recommendations for Devon and Cornwall (D+C) Police. Following a thematic review, a paper was submitted proposing investing in child neglect training for front line staff with a view to improving victim satisfaction, enhancing outcomes for children, and supporting the partnerships response to the recommendations from the CSPR of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson. The training commenced in February 2024. 1050 police

frontline staff were trained, plus an additional 160 Special Constables.

The RESPOND (Respond/React, Engage, Speak, Protect, Obscure, Nutrition/Health, Development) tool has been developed by D+C Police for frontline officers to assist them to spot signs of abuse and neglect in response to the National Independent Review of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson. This tool, that is accessible on officers' personal devices, encourages professional curiosity outlining how to spot the signs of neglect and identify risk factors and ensuring officers consider the child's voice when attending all calls for service where there are children present. RESPOND will assist officers to think and look beyond the obvious, enabling a comprehensive risk assessment. The purpose of RESPOND is to focus on 3 key areas;

- Voice of the child/victim
- Professional curiosity
- Disguised compliance

D+C Police have reviewed the GCP2 alongside its current risk identification tool, Public Protection Notice (PPN), and chosen not to adopt this assessment in place of the PPN. However, there is an awareness that GCP2 is a tool used by other agencies, particularly by those staff working in conjunction with the MASH. Mandatory neglect training for frontline staff has been developed and delivered and seeks to emphasise the need for professional curiosity and capturing the voice of the child.

The Central Safeguarding Team (CST) identifies any child that has had 3 Public Protection Notices (PPN) in 3 months, and this data is shared with the Dedicated Decision Maker (DDM). The circumstances as a whole are then further reviewed and where appropriate re submitted to MASH for assessment. 27% of PPNs submitted in Torbay between Nov 24 and April 25 were reporting concerns of neglect.

Exploitation

South Devon Basic Command Unit (BCU) introduced a Child Centred Policing Team in April 2025 in recognition of the need to deliver Child First Strategy within youth justice, and to reduce the harm of exploitation seen in cases of children who are reported as repeatedly missing from their home or place of safety. This team is currently piloting increasing the timeliness and effectiveness of police interventions with children missing from home in order to provide enhanced support and protect them from harm.

D+C Police have produced a Child Abduction Warning Notice (CAWN) information sheet that will

be circulated to partners to educate and raise awareness about the use of Child Abduction Warning Notices, especially within our local authority areas children's care homes as we know raising awareness of these helps to safeguard young people and a high percentage of repeat missing are looked after children. The higher the number of missing episodes the higher the likelihood of some form of exploitation.

Domestic Abuse

Operation Encompass is the mechanism to share information with school Designated Safeguarding Leads to ensure the right support can be given to children exposed to domestic abuse. An Operation Encompass notification is only triggered when a Child Concern risk assessment is completed on a PPN relating to a domestic abuse incident. This assists children's social services in promptly assessing the overall risk in the household and flags an Operation Encompass notification. A PPN must be submitted for every domestic incident graded medium risk or above, if there is a child resident in the household, regardless of whether the child was present or involved in the incident. This is not optional as there is a statutory obligation on police forces nationally to share Operation Encompass notifications with schools. In Torbay the Operation Encompass scheme includes early years settings as well as schools. Operation Encompass notifications have increased since amendments were made to the PPN. For every domestic abuse PPN the child at risk question set is a default, meaning the submitting officer is required to opt out rather than opt in. These changes have resulted in an 81% rise in Operation Encompass notifications between 2023 and 2024. This equates to an average of 36 notifications per day in 2024 compared with 20 per day in 2023. The first two months of 2025 indicated this upward trend will continue. The partnership team in Torbay has recently been nominated for an award for their work initiating Early Years Operation Encompass.

A new initiative is being introduced by DOC Police to support children who pass through police care. Buddy Bags are backpacks that contain essentials for children, including toiletries, pyjamas, and comfort items such as a book and teddy bear. Individual bags are tailored to different ages and genders so that children receive appropriate items. The Buddy Bags are available for ages 0-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12 and 13-16. They cater for both boys and girls. Once issued, the bags are the child's to keep. The [Buddy Bag Foundation](#) was founded in 2015 to help make a difference to children entering emergency care. Devon and Cornwall are the first police force in the UK to partner with the charity with the hope that this will give much-needed comfort to children in emergency care.

D+C Police domestic abuse teams have recently received training on the Voice of the Child,

particularly when taking statements via video call.

Mental Health

With the implementation of Right Care, Right Person (RCRP) there have been concerns around policing 'stepping away'. Whilst this misconception may persist, there is to be reiteration that under the Children Act 1989 we retain a statutory duty (as a public body) to act in the best interests of any child and take appropriate action where risk is identified. This has not changed and continues to be our mandate.

Training

The Child Centred Policing Team attended the 2025 TSCP Conference. All officers working on the Child Centred Policing Team have attended or are enrolled on Level 3 Safeguarding Training provided by the TSCP. This ensures police interaction with children is appropriate and trauma informed. The Annual TSCP conference also assists in the development of staff working in the child protection arena. The in-person event also assists in developing working relationships with all agencies, which in turn supports joined up working in the child protection arena and an improved service delivery to victims and their families.

All police staff working in public protection attend the level 3 safeguarding course that is available via the TSCP and supports the development specialist officers in roles investigating child protection and involved in the child protection processes require, this is mandated to our MASH staff too.

Learning from Serious Incidents/Learning Reviews

All learning reviews result in actions for agencies, these are adopted by the relevant agency and for police these are then added to the force recommendation database and linked to relevant business plans. This ensures the actions are tracked and monitored. This can include changes to policy and staff training and awareness organisation-wide and/or where appropriate on a specific team basis.

The Public Protection Unit are exploring the ability to establish a learning repository to ensure cross Peninsula learning and appending relevant reports to annual accreditations SCAIDP (Specialist Child Abuse Investigations Development Programme) and PIP2 to support ongoing development of staff. This will improve the knowledge of staff and their ability to deliver a high level of service to victims and their families, enhancing professional accreditations as specialist investigators.

Officers have also been provided with access to free online training in 'Basic Safer Sleep: Having Opportunistic Conversations' provided by the Cornwall Safeguarding Children Partnership. Whilst not mandatory, this encourages officers interacting with families to promote and support safer sleep messages and increases awareness of risk in this area.

The Voice of Children, Young People and Families

Officers and staff are aware that following recent child protection legislation and outcomes/recommendations from CSPRs, there is now an expectation on officers to capture the 'voice of the child' as part of their investigations. Guidance has been provided to help officers and staff consider the child's voice within their investigations.

The voice of the child is captured in the PPN using the RESPOND tool and this is quality assured. Where the lived experience of the child is missing, this will feed back to the submitting officer and their line manager. The PPN end to end review also recommends that the PPN training is revised and delivered to front line staff, we await the confirmation that this recommendation has been accepted. Ensuring the lived experience of the child will assist in partners making the right decision for that child whilst appreciating their needs.

Difference Made by the TSCP

An increase in referrals linked to better understanding at the front line and quality assurance processes to ensure children are correctly linked to PPNs.

The use of MACAs and After Action Reviews support the reflective learning and onward improvement as a partnership and better quality of service delivery for children and families.

Challenges/Barriers

We need to ensure that the Families First Partnership Programme delivers consistency for children across the Peninsular which will be a challenge with four local authorities but will be key to our organisation to deliver the best service to children and their families.

The quality assurance work completed in relation to PPNs has resulted in an increase of PPN submissions, but many of these were hidden demand especially considering those children who are exposed to domestic abuse who were not routinely being linked to the PPN but now are.

D+C Police is committed to the Child First Justice Pathway and Working Together 2023. To that

end, South Devon have established a Child Centred Policing Team (CCPT). This team will focus on early interventions, working with partners within the TSCP to ensure that young people are not unnecessarily criminalised, and every opportunity is taken to divert them away from offending and that reachable and teachable moments are maximised.

Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust

Neglect

Neglect training is delivered to staff by one of the Safeguarding Nurse Specialists in the Safeguarding Children Team and one Paediatric Therapist from Children and Family Health Devon (CFHD), both are approved GCP2 trainers.

Supervision prompts staff to consider neglect and supports professional curiosity. This results in the improved quality of referrals (evidenced in MASH dip sampling), identifying drift for families where there is little or no improvement for children, and supports professional escalation processes.

The identification of a rise in the number of children harmed due to dog bites led to a discussion at partnership level and resulted in the development of a Trust policy for safeguarding actions when a child or adult presents with a dog bite injury. The Trust have now embedded dog bite standard operating procedures and produced an advice leaflet for parents. An audit of children presenting with injuries has evidenced positive outcomes for children and families.

There has been a review of, and improvement to injuries, relating to the non-mobile children policy. MASH dip sampling evidenced improvements in practice. An audit completed monthly by the Trust for 12 months evidenced practice improvements and improved safeguarding outcomes for infants.

A review by the National Child Mortality Database (NCMD) regarding child deaths from asthma resulted in a change in process for the Trust regarding asthma admissions and care planning. This led to an improved consideration of the neglect of health needs.

As part of the TSCP Safer Sleeping and ICON work, Torbay 0 to 19 service now directly view a baby's sleep space. The Trust's Maternity and Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU) teams are aligned to process improvements.

Exploitation

Exploitation alerts have been added to young people's records for unscheduled care and Torbay's 0 to 19 service. Enhanced contextual safeguarding awareness and professional curiosity has led to the escalation of concerns and professional challenge to single and multi-agency case decisions, enabling shared consideration of the child's voice.

There have been improvements in awareness of the impact of neurodiversity on young people's mental health and vulnerabilities in contextual safeguarding.

Information sharing of local themes and intelligence is shared by the Trust's safeguarding team. The team attends MACE, Triage, CEMOG and CYPEG meetings and this enables a variety of different avenues for learning and information sharing, supporting targeted service improvements and staff practice.

Police PPN information sharing processes are now captured in a standard operating procedure. Liaison with MASH to support safety planning and interventions has improved, with information sharing to practitioners supporting young people including Torbay 0 to 19 service, CAMHS and Paediatricians.

Domestic Abuse

Hospital Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) enables oversight of all DASH completed in Torbay Emergency Department (ED) and supports contacts from across acute hospital settings where practitioners raise concerns, or are curious about potential domestic abuse, resulting in seamless support from hospital to community.

Safeguarding children nurse practitioners attend Torbay's Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). This supports information sharing and safety planning for children. Intervention and contacts from Torbay 0 to 19 practitioners are then informed of the risk and safety plan, resulting in professional curiosity, referrals, restorative practice with families and supporting the child's voice to be heard in assessments.

Torbay 0 to 19 service support Operation Encompass meetings.

Midwifery and Torbay 0 to 19 service attend vulnerable baby meetings, supporting safety plans and enabling multiagency awareness with child focus.

Mental Health

The use of a mental health assessment tool has improved mental health referrals from ED and alerts on patient records have supported awareness of mental health safety planning for young people.

The discharge planning meeting process ensures multiagency oversight. For complex situations this is managed in person with the child and parent present to ensure restorative practice is supported.

Training

Attendance at TSCP safeguarding level 3 refresher and foundation courses is required for Trust staff. Medical and Nursing staff are identified for this training and supported in clinical time to attend courses.

There has been training for staff in Torbay Hospital Emergency Department (ED) resulting in improved practice and awareness of concerns, greater professional curiosity and confidence in practice. To improve access to informal supervision and to support safeguarding practice, there are plans to locate a member of the safeguarding team into Paediatric ED from June 2025.

Learning from Serious Incidents/Learning Reviews

Since January 2025 the Trust has been able to monitor MASH referrals and specifically identify referrals completed by ED.

There have been collaborative improvements to the child protection medical process, including the development of parent and child information leaflets.

A review of indicators for consideration of information sharing (Paediatric Liaison) and safeguarding (MASH) for paediatric staff in ED has resulted in improved practice for child and parent presentations, consistent actions taken, and embedded improved contextual safeguarding awareness. This has been evidenced from internal audit as per the JTAI action plan.

C101 CSPR, action plan completed for the Trust. Adult alcohol/substance service led on a whole service training day on the learning from the review to support the linked Best Practice Forum (BPF) held in June 2024.

The Voice of Children, Young People and Families

Increased awareness and use of HEADSSS psychosocial tool/assessments provides a holistic view that is utilised for young people over the age of 12. HEADSSS covers; home, education and employment, activities, drugs and drinking, sex, self-harm, depression, and suicide, and safety, and improves understanding of contextual safeguarding risks and strengths.

Safeguarding supervision encourages the documentation of child's voice and impact on a child of concerns. Evidenced by MASH dip sampling as improved referral information from health staff.

Difference Made by the TSCP

Health attendance at all TSCP sub groups; Neglect, CYPEG, QA Group, and CSPR Panel has been evidenced.

Challenges/Barriers

Impact of wider health reforms, in particular for the Integrated Care Board (ICB), have at times been destabilising to the TSCP processes and business, multi-agency networking and awareness of local issues. TSCP may consider inclusion of individual health partner strategic representation to enable meaningful progress on TSCP priorities, especially mental health.

TSCP Training Offer

Information on training for the TSCP can be found on the [Training - Torbay Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) website page. The training offer available to support practitioners' continuous professional development, with current courses and e-learning, is listed here: Torbay Safeguarding Children Partnership Training Flyer, with iLearn booking links for all TSCP courses and signposting to other relevant courses. It is also promoted for partners on the [Torbay Family Hub](#) website, in the practitioner area (login required). Links to further training opportunities for practitioners working with children and young people are also available from the same TSCP training page, including practitioner training around young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Further supporting resources are available on the TSCP learning and development resources page.

Key Performance Indicators

Overall, 1844 TSCP training places were available this year to partners and practitioners working with children and young people across Torbay (an increase of 36% compared to available course

places in the previous year) and 1370 places were attended. The percentage uptake (total places booked compared to total places available) has increased from 58% to 82% since the previous year.

Excluding one-off best practice forums, the average number of places attended compared to the number of places booked (due to late cancellations or no-shows) varies greatly depending on the cancellation charge:

- for externally commissioned courses charged at full price, the average attendance rate per course is 92%;
- for those with the lower TSCP cancellation charge, the average is only 75% attendance – with some courses experiencing as low as 60% average turnout, compared to booked numbers.

2024-25 Learning and Development Overview

Continuity for Torbay's exceptional Level 3 Safeguarding training

To ensure that continuity for Torbay's Level 3 Safeguarding training could be successfully achieved, Children's Services commissioned a bespoke playscript, building on the previous partnership developed with actors by our former provider, through considered networking from Children's Services Learning Academy. A new contract was awarded to ASC Ltd from June 2024, who have incorporated the playscript scenarios into the training. The courses remain well attended and delegate feedback continues to evidence the exceptional quality of this course. Feedback on the pre-course e-learning also remains high, with 99% stating it has supported the trainer-led sessions.

TSCP Conference 2025

The third year of the TSCP Conference has again proved highly successful and well-received by all partners on the topic of 'Safeguarding Children in a Digital World' – attendance increased by 52% this year. Immediate feedback was enabled via QR code so that evaluation forms were open to all, including both live online and in-person attendees – which enabled a significant increase in responses. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, stating that this was 'arguably the best TSCP conference to date'.

Specialist Exploitation Training

After a difficult start for the specialist exploitation courses commissioned in 2022, for which initial dates were cancelled due to poor uptake, statutory agencies have worked together to successfully

support attendance and remove financial barriers – which is evidenced in the attendance and evaluation data for 2024-25. These courses have also been opened up for free to education partners and voluntary sector organisations.

Improved features in iLearn

The Children's Services Learning Academy have employed a new LMS Officer role in its Learning & Development Hub to support and improve both capacity and quality for learning content creation, which has benefited the TSCP. Accessibility and user-friendly features of iLearn, the TSCP's current learning platform, have already been improved – with a visually user-friendly dashboard and the introduction of one multi-agency training button which takes users to where all of the different topic categories are, so there is no longer a need to scroll down to search. Feedback has already been positive, stating that it's 'so much easier to navigate'. This has also enabled much-needed capacity for three new courses and six course updates to the TSCP's e-learning provision.

Essential learning for Safeguarding Leads

After consultation with the TSCP Business Group, the Children's Services Learning & Development Hub have created a new programme of learning in iLearn for Safeguarding Leads – to reflect the list of essential learning which is also published in the TSCP training flyer. It is anticipated that this will better support safeguarding practitioners with accessing the right training and improve attendance for multi-agency partners. The programme includes all the training that the Torbay Safeguarding Children Partnership deems essential for Torbay's safeguarding leads working with children and young people – and it is expected that safeguarding leads would complete this training within 2 years. The AIM Project Checklist has also been included in Essential Learning for Safeguarding Leads.

Restorative Practice

As One Children's Services, Torbay Children's Services and Local Area continue to work to adopt Restorative Practice, a strength-based approach that recognises that building a positive relationship with children, young people and families who need support is important – acknowledging that listening to children, young people and families and working 'with' rather than doing things 'for' or 'to' people is the best way we can help support. Further details can be found here: Restorative Practice - Torbay Safeguarding Children Partnership. Torbay Children Services have continued to offer free Restorative Practice training to all partner agencies, which includes:

- Restorative Practice Awareness

- Restorative Language Workshop

E-learning

In addition to the in-person courses detailed under 'Attendance Data' below, the following e-learning is also available. The Children's Services LMS Officer has enabled updates across the past year to six of the courses provided to the TSCP, as well as the creation of three new courses, as noted – 'iLearn' links for these courses are included below. External partner feedback on the updated Level 2 Safeguarding module, for example, stated 'how valuable the local case examples were for making it meaningful and engaging on a Torbay level'.

- Level 1 Induction into Safeguarding Children and Adults **Updated**
- Level 2 Safeguarding: Introduction to Child Protection **Updated**
- Level 3 Safeguarding Children: pre-course e-learning **Updated**
- Cared for Children Practitioner Training **New**

- Early Help Module – e-learning option **Updated**
- Reducing Parental Conflict (e-learning) **New**
- Youth Homeless Prevention Training (e-Learning) **New**

- Course: Introduction to Domestic Abuse **Updated**
- Course: Introduction to Sexual Violence **Updated**
- Introduction to Sexual Violence Disclosures
- MAPPA Awareness V3
- Introduction to MARAC

- 'PREVENT' training:
 - Level 1 Awareness
 - Level 1 Awareness Refresher
 - Level 2 (WRAP)
 - Level 2 (WRAP) Refresher

- Online Safety Whistle-blowing with confidence
- Drug & Alcohol Awareness
- Self-Harm Awareness
- Honour Based Violence: Forced Marriage

- Introduction to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- County Lines Awareness
- Introduction to Modern Slavery
- An Introduction to Trans Awareness
- LGBTQI Awareness
- Cuckooing

Attendance Data

Course	Number of Courses delivered	Places Available	Booked	Attended	Attendance Rate	Places Booked Vs Available
Best Practice Forum: TSCP Conference 2025	1	160	174	157	98%	109%
Best Practice Forum: C101	1	NA	65	62	95%	NA
Level 3 Safeguarding Children – Foundation New provider	13	272	259	244	94%	95%
Level 3 Safeguarding Children – Refresher New provider	26	364	352	321	91%	97%
Child Exploitation in Torbay	4	64	65	52	80%	102%
Project M Exploitation Courses:	17	408	226	191	85%	55%
• CSE	6	144	67	60	90%	47%
• CCE	5	120	60	52	87%	50%
• Slavery & NRM	3	72	48	41	85%	67%
• CYP who go missing	3	72	51	38	75%	71%
DASH Risk Assessment	3	76	62	37	60%	82%
DARAC Training	1	18	12	9	75%	67%
GCP2 Training	4	72	68	47	69%	94%
Restorative Practice Awareness	11	154	140	85	61%	91%

Restorative Language Workshop	9	126	117	86	74%	93%
Early Help Module (also offered as e-learning)	3	66	37	37	100%	56%
Introduction to Family Group Conferences	4	64	63	42	67%	98%

10. Future Planning/Next Steps

Although the TSCP implemented the statutory requirements of WT2023 within the prescribed timescale, the changes made will need reviewing during the 2025/26 reporting period to ensure they have become embedded in local multi-agency safeguarding practice. Alongside this, improvements to practice identified via TSCP and single-agency quality assurance processes, and improved use of data, will also drive future planning and will be included in 2025/26 partnership work streams.

In addition to the aforementioned items, there are a number of areas where the need for further improvements and/or the management of changes have been identified by the TSCP during the current reporting period, with these being:

- Implementation of the national multidisciplinary Families First Partnership (FFP) reforms, including the formation of Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams (MACPT).
- Improved data analysis, including data from the TSCP dashboard, JSNA, and any other identified relevant sources, designed to better inform practice and improve the effectiveness of TSCP work streams, via the employment of a dedicated TSCP Data Analyst.
- Re-focus on the TSCP mental health priority to ensure effectiveness matches other priority areas. Workstream to be led by NHS One Devon.
- Addition of education providers into the TSCP group structure/work streams, including at DSP and possibly LSP level.
- Improved integration of the voices of children and families into partnership working.
- Introduction and implementation of a revised TSCP 'Levels of Need' (Threshold) document.
- Funding review of the TSCP to ensure compliance with WT2023, effective use of existing resources, and improved cross-border collaboration with neighbouring Peninsula SCPs.
- Introduction and implementation of a new TSCP contextual safeguarding policy/process to support improved multi-agency practice.
- Review the understanding of Serious Incident Notification (SIN) threshold across the TSCP to ensure improved understanding and compliance by all partner agencies.

The TSCP Executive Group (DSP) will ensure oversight of future plans, with delegated work streams being managed via the TSCP Business Group.

11. Conclusion

During the 2024/25 reporting period the TSCP retained its focus on the safeguarding of children in Torbay, both via work streams linked to existing priorities and any new risks or challenges identified. In line with national government expectations, the TSCP introduced reforms mandated by WT2023 within the expected timescale, including the introduction of updated Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) and a revised 2025-28 Business Plan.

The partnership also focussed on the delivery of a local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) and developed learning from further audits and national reviews. During 2024/25 the TSCP continued to use a locally agreed process of After Action Reviews (AAR), to identify learning where threshold for Serious Incident Notification (SIN) was not deemed met but learning regarding safeguarding procedures felt likely to be identified. Additionally, the TSCP, via the local authority's learning academy, provided a significant level of multi-agency safeguarding training to ensure appropriate professional development across services working with children and families in Torbay. The third TSCP Annual Conference was held in January 2025, with the conference theme being online risk. The conference was very well attended, with 'in-person' attendance being fully booked and further delegates attending via video link. On-line safety, although not a prescribed TSCP priority, is now a thread throughout the work of the partnership.

Agencies across the TSCP have continued to develop and nurture good working relationships, with the comparatively small footprint of Torbay ensuring familiarity across services but also meaning that the partnership relies on a relatively small cohort of professionals to drive its work. This is a known risk and one that has to be considered on a regular basis when organising new work streams. In addition to work streams within Torbay, the four Business Managers from across the Peninsula meet on a monthly basis. These meetings are designed to support collaboration regarding streamlining and improving local and regional safeguarding practice and are fully supported by LSPs and DSPs.

In conclusion, although the TSCP has made good progress towards improved safeguarding arrangements for children in Torbay during the 2024/25 reporting period, we are also aware of the further improvements required to ensure known deficits are remedied and change managed effectively. The identified improvements/changes required are listed in section 10 of this report and will be actioned in 2025/26, alongside any other concerns that may arise during that reporting period.

12. Glossary

Acronym	Full Name
AAR	After Action Review
BCU	Basic Command Unit
BPF	Best Practice Forum
CCIB	Children's Continuous Improvement Board
CDOP	Child Death Overview Panel
CDRM	Child Death Review Meeting
CEMOG	Child Exploitation and Missing Operational Group
CFHD	Children and Family Health Devon
CNO	Chief Nursing Officer
CQC	Care Quality Commission
CSP	Community Safety Partnership
CSPR	Child Safeguarding Practice Review
CYPEG	Children and Young People Exploitation Group
DARAC	Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment for Children
DASH	Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment
DASVEG	Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Executive Group
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
DCS	Director of Children's Services
DfE	Department for Education
DDM	Dedicated Decision Maker
DoPHAR	Torbay Director of Public Health Annual Report
DSP	Delegated Safeguarding Partner
ED	Emergency Department
EHCP	Education, Health, and Care Plan
FFP	Families First Partnership
GCP2	Graded Care Profile 2
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulations
HSB	Harmful Sexual Behaviour
ICB	Integrated Care Board
IDVA	Independent Domestic Abuse Advisor
IT	Information Technology
IS	Independent Scrutineer
JSNA	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
JTAI	Joint Targeted Area Inspection
KCSIE	Keeping Children Safe in Education
LA	Local Authority
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Board
LSOA	Lower Super Output Area
LSP	Lead Safeguarding Partner

MACA	Multi-Agency Case Audit
MACE	Missing and Child Exploitation forum
MACPT	Multi-Agency Child Protection Team
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
MARAC	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference
MASA	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements
MASH	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
NCMD	National Child Mortality Database
NHS	National Health Service
NRM	National Referral Mechanism
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner
PEP	Personal Education Plan
PPN	Public Protection Notice
QA	Quality Assurance
RCRP	Right Care Right Person
SCBU	Special Care Baby Unit
SCP	Safeguarding Children Partnership
SCR	Serious Case Review
SDQ	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SIN	Serious Incident Notification
SN	Statistical Neighbour
TESS	Torbay Education Support Service
TNA	Training Needs Analysis
TSCB	Torbay Safeguarding Children Board
TSCP	Torbay Safeguarding Children Partnership
TCSP	Torbay Community Safety Partnership
THRIVE	Therapeutic, Habit, Relational, Individual, Values and Emotional factors
WT2018	Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
WT2023	Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

Meeting: Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board

Date: 29 September 2025

Wards affected: All

Report Title: Absence from Education 2024/2025

Compiled by: Hannah Baker, Divisional Director Education and Daniel Hamer, Head of Service for Vulnerable Pupils.

Director Contact Details: Nancy Meehan, DCS, nancy.meehan@torbay.gov.uk

1. Purpose of Report

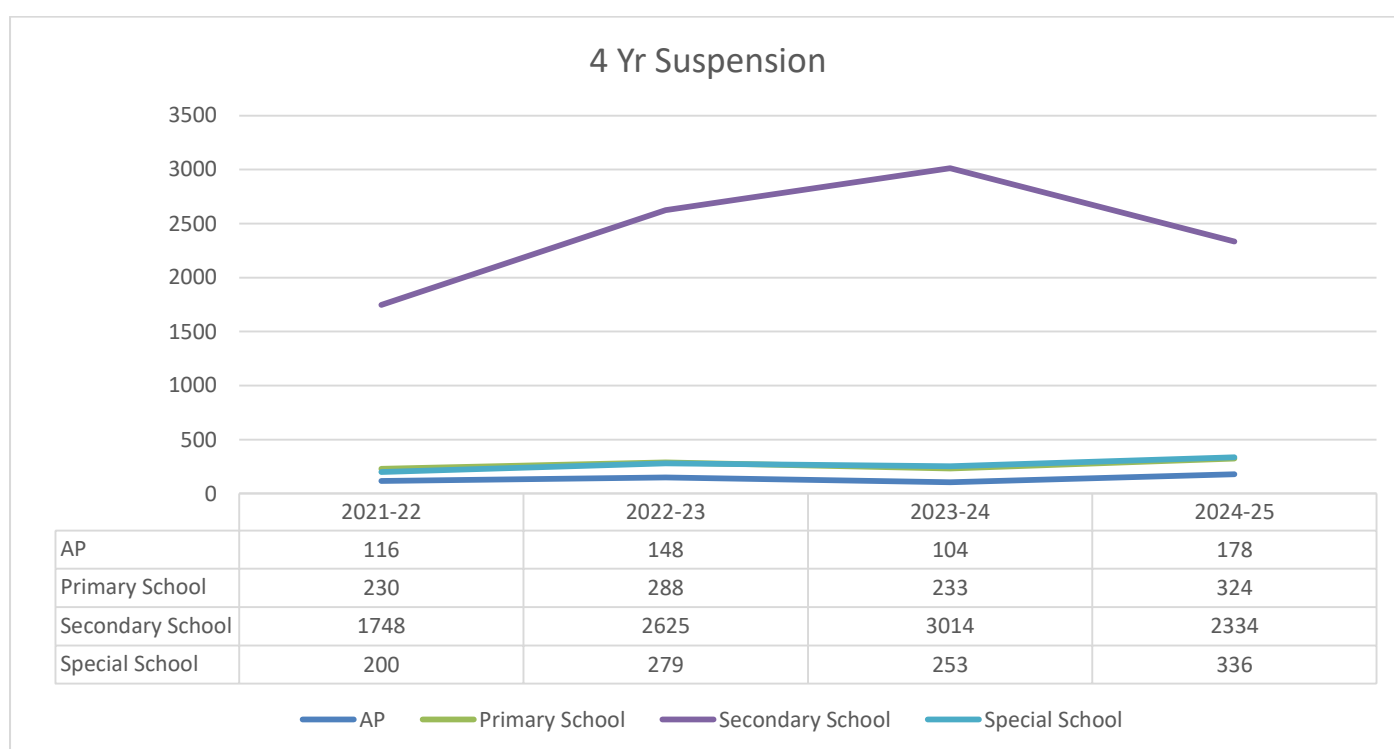
1. To receive the latest qualified exclusion data and the views of those children who have been excluded
2. To receive an update on the new Local Authority Attendance Duties and Home Education
3. To receive an update on children on a part time timetable (including the numbers coming off a part time timetable) or on roll but not attending, children educated other than at school (EOTAS) and children educated through alternative provision
4. What is the reason for young people being NEET?
5. How well do careers services work in Torbay to help advise young people of their options for employment, education and training?
6. How do we support our young people when they reach 16, 17, 18 etc. to help them understand and access appropriate education, employment or training?
7. How many of our young people are going into apprenticeships or supported internships?
8. How many apprenticeships and/or supported internships are available in Torbay through Torbay Council?
9. To receive an update on an analysis of the 500 home elected young people to understand the reasons why and if there are any children missing from the list of home educated or attending school and what action is being taken to identify and support these young people and their families
10. To receive an Update on the SEND Locality Model.

2. Exclusion and Suspension

2.1 The number of children excluded from school reduced considerably compared to 2023/24.

Phase	2023/24	2024/25	% of 2023/4
Alternative Provision	1	1	0%
Primary	21	14	66%
Secondary	40	19	47.5%
Special	3	1	33%
Total	65	35	-30

2.2 There is still more demand than capacity for places in schools after exclusion in the Primary Phase.



2.3 Suspension levels in all phases are still high but there is a significant (23%) drop in suspension at secondary phase.

2.4 Of concern is the 39% increase at primary phase after a reduction in the year before. This may be linked to an increased reluctance to exclude and sustained attempts to avoid this.

2.5 There is no statistically significant change in the number of days missed for each suspension as the figures mirror the reduction in instances.

3. Elective Home Education (EHE)

3.1 There are 501 children registered with the local authority as Electively Home Educated. The families represented in this group prefer the term Home Educated as they do not feel they have all elected to do so. This formal report uses the legal terminology.

3.2 In 2024-25 215 children and young people of statutory school age moved into Elective Home Education. 17 of these have an EHCP and 33 have SEND needs that could be met with in school SEN Support.

3.3 It is of concern that 68 of these CYP were in Year 11 and a total of 183 were of secondary age. Where a reason was given (it is still not a statutory requirement that parents inform the LA) the most common reasons were mental health or dissatisfaction with school.

3.4 Mental health concerns are six times more likely than a dissatisfaction with SEND. General dissatisfaction with school is five times more likely.

	Y12- Y13 NEET	Y12 NEET	Y13 NEET	Y12- Y13 NK	Y12 NK	Y13 NK	Y12-13 In Learning	Y12 In Learning	Y13 In Learning	Y12- Y13 NEET + NK	Y12 NEET + NK	Y13 NEET + NK
Torbay	3.80%	2.90%	4.70%	1.90%	1.70%	2.20%	90.90%	94.10%	87.70%	5.70%	4.60%	6.90%
S/N	4.70%	4.20%	5.30%	1.80%	1.10%	2.50%	89.50%	92.40%	86.50%	6.50%	5.30%	7.80%

4. Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) or Not Known (NK)

Torbay vs statistical neighbours as at August 2025

4.1 Torbay has a good performance for the whole cohort when compared to statistical neighbours. Our NEET figure is within 0.1% of the national and 0.9% better than statistical neighbours (S/N).

4.2 We also have a high number of young people in employment without training in the service and care sectors. Whilst this impacts on our participation figures these young people are engaged in our community and economy.

4.3 Since the closure of CSW Group in March 2025, Devon and Torbay have worked together to create a 16+ Learning Pathways Team from the staff transferred to Devon County Council.

4.4 The work of the previous organisation has been reviewed and a new expectation of contact and proactive work with young people developed. We will work with all the groups previously identified as at risk of NEET but have also added groups such as those not on a school roll and those too unwell to attend school.

4.5 To ensure consistency, the two LAs will share the names of children at risk of NEET with schools rather than the previous system of requesting names from schools. The core duty for careers information advice and guidance sits with the on-roll school. Torbay's schools have all followed the Gatsby Benchmarks to provide unbiased advice to children and young people.

4.6 At 16+ young people can access advice through the 16+ Learning pathways team if NEET or on request. They also receive advice from the on roll Further Education setting.

5. Part time and Educated Other Than At School (EOTAS)

5.1 For the last academic year (1st Sept 2024 – 31st July 25) there were 185 Part-time Timetable (PTTT) requests received and “opened”. This is 185 PTTT's for 94 children as some were “repeat part-time timetables” with some ending and then resubmitted as extensions.

5.2 The Local Authority is looking into methods of measuring Part-time timetables more robustly for the new academic year as part of the Improvement plan for SEND as the current system relies on schools informing the LA when this happens. We hope governing bodies will support and take ownership of this oversight.

5.3 For SEND Education Other Than At School Programmes, historically, we've arranged education provision for these children on a spot-purchase basis, often influenced by provider availability rather than tailored to individual needs. This has led to significant variation in the packages offered. We wanted to ensure the packages of education were aspirational, met assessed need and we were able to evidence positive outcomes so we looked to change the way we award contracts.

As part of this change, last autumn we invited families accessing EOTAS provision to share their experiences and suggestions through a combination of in-person, virtual, and one-to-one discussions. Their feedback showed a strong desire for more inclusive and aspirational education packages. They also wanted provision that reduces isolation and better supports both educational outcomes and personal development.

These insights helped us to shape the service specification, ensuring the voice of children and their experiences were central to the process. The Cabinet approved the plans in December 2024. We have since carried out a full procurement process and awarded contracts to high-quality providers who we believe will deliver impactful, personalised education packages that support children to thrive. The transition to these new programmes has started from September 2025.

5.4 In the last academic year (24/5) 72 young people were EOTAS (with an EHCP). Due to the increases and enhancements of specialist provision almost half of these young people have been

able to move back into specialist settings or provision. For this academic year (25/6) 36 young people are registered as EOTAS currently.

5.5 There are no children registered as EOTAS with the Vulnerable Pupils Team (without an EHCP). There are 28 children being supported under section 19 with most of their education via alternative provision. A further 19 children being educated via an online learning platform as they are too unwell to attend a setting.

6. Supported Internships and Apprenticeships

6.1 With an NTDI Grant the Local Authority has been able to accelerate progress with Supported Internships over the last year.

This has resulted in a huge growth of Supported Internship opportunities for our young people:

- In 2024/5 There were a total of 3 SIs across Torbay.
- In Sep 2025 there are 22 planned SIs (1 South Devon College*, 11 Special Partnership Trust, 10 individual Supported Internships).

The Local Authority and the Special Partnership Trust have worked together to create a bespoke SI offer for Brunel young people. This is to enable this cohort of young people a highly supported route into the employment pathway.

*South Devon College SIs usually increase throughout the academic year as learners find the right pathways for them.

The Council are recruiting five Supported Interns across the Council to start this Autumn and a Graduate Management Trainee Apprentice planned start for November. The Recruitment team are also planning a care experienced work experience pilot week in October.

6.2 Last year the council recruited 4 apprentices to work across areas within the Council. The Council plan to take on 2 apprentices this year. The council is also currently funding 2 apprentices at our maintained school (Sherwell Valley).

7. Local Authority Attendance Duties

The Authority and partners have further developed the team to provide attendance support to schools and families. This includes:

1. Restructuring the team to provide one Lead Attendance Improvement Officer and two full time Attendance Improvement Officers
2. These colleagues have an Attendance Youth Worker in support for direct work.
3. The School Nursing Service has recruited a nurse with specific responsibility for supporting school attendance.
4. Working with the District Clinical Officer to identify ways in which we can work with GPs and their teams to advise and guide families who may be struggling with attendance on medical grounds.

Attendance is improving compared to other Local Authorities. This is due to the hard work of school staff alongside effective early help and impactful meetings held with each school each term by the AIOs.

7. Update on the Primary Locality Pilot for SLCN

7.1 The Pilot to date has 29 out of 31 schools engaged.

7.2 All schools completed an evaluation of their needs in SLCN in June and a multi-stakeholder group of parents and professionals came together in July to review these evaluations, create clusters of schools with the same needs and create an offer of support for the Autumn term.

7.3 This offer is published to schools and includes:

- A named Linked Speech Therapist to each school provided by the ICB.
- Champion schools who will share good practice with others.
- Training delivered by the LA Educational Psychology Team on Adaptive Teaching for SLCN.
- Further training and support for EaL, Developmental Language Disorder and other identified specific training needs.
- Social Care “Surgeries” for schools and parents in the three towns.

7.4 The Pilot runs through the Autumn term with monthly feedback on its benefits and drawbacks. We hope to have support from Plymouth University to help us evaluate the success of the programme in readiness to make recommendations for future ways of working in 2026.