

SOUTHWARK

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP



ANNUAL REPORT

2019 - 2020



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Foreword from the independent chair



It is my pleasure to introduce the Southwark Safeguarding Children Partnership's annual report 2019/20. I was appointed towards the latter end of the reporting year and thus during the start of the unprecedented COVID period. This annual report is the first one of the safeguarding partnership since the disbanding of the Southwark Safeguarding Children Board in July 2019. There are strong foundations in place that I look forward to supporting in the coming year.

In addition to chairing the Safeguarding Children Partnership, I was also appointed as chair of the Safeguarding Adults Board, to ensure synergy between the areas of work.

This annual report provides information as to what has been achieved in Southwark and includes updates on priorities and learning. This is built on a robust audit programme, performance data and feedback from children and young people. It evidences good progress with regards to the safeguarding priorities identified in 2018/19, along with comprehensive partnership data that provides a positive view of the quality and consistency of safeguarding in the Borough of Southwark. This reflects the strength of the partnership and the priority given to safeguarding by Cabinet elected members, senior officers and representatives of the partnership overall.

We have made good progress against our agreed priorities this year, and have reviewed this in detail in this report.

We will continue to build on those successes to set the priorities for the future. We will also carefully consider the impact and consequences of COVID-19 to inform these priorities and build resilience for the population of Southwark. We will do this by building positive learning opportunities into practice. We will particularly listen to the voice and influence of our communities, children and young people and this will be reflected in the priorities of the partnership.

With particular thought to the impact of COVID 19, safeguarding has never been more important and we, as individuals and organisations, must remain focussed in our efforts to deliver positive outcomes for our children and young people. Finally I would like to thank the team that has supported the work of the Southwark Safeguarding Children Partnership, board members and all of the staff who work in this challenging and complex area.

Anna Berry

Anna Berry
Independent Chair
Southwark Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP)

1. The Southwark Local Safeguarding Context

Southwark Children Demographics

70,800 children and young people aged 0-19 live in Southwark.



Southwark is one of the **20%** most deprived districts/unitary authorities in England and about **23.2%** of children under 16 (**12,355**) are living in poverty.



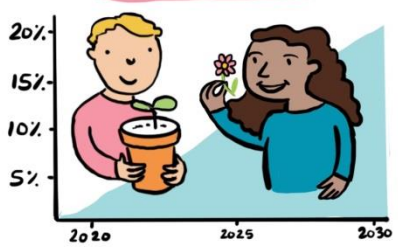
Southwark has one of the highest population turnover rates in the country. Between 2016 and 2017 approximately **29,300** people moved into Southwark from other parts of the UK, with **32,000** residents moving out.



2.6% of school pupils have social, emotional and mental health needs.



The population is projected to grow by almost **20%** by 2030



Southwark's population is very diverse, with **78.7%** of school children coming from minority ethnic groups

We ♥ Southwark



Data Sources:
[Southwark Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#)
[Office for National Statistics](#)
[Index of Multiple Deprivation](#)

Our Vision

All children in Southwark have the right to be safe and protected from harm. We will work together to protect children and young people through high quality services that enable children to reach their full potential and achieve the best possible outcomes.

Southwark Safeguarding Children Partnership's primary objective is to assure itself that local safeguarding arrangements and partners act to help and protect children.

The partnership will hold agencies to account for their key safeguarding responsibilities, so that:

- All those who work with children and young people know what to do if they are concerned about possible harm.
- When concerns about a child's welfare or concerns about harm are reported, action is taken quickly and the right support is provided at the right time. This covers the spectrum from early help when issues first arise through to emergency action needed to keep children and young people safe.
- Agencies that provide services for children and young people ensure that they are safe, and monitor service quality and impact.

Key Strategic Questions for the SSCP

- Is the help provided effective? How do we know our interventions are making a positive difference? How do we know all agencies are doing everything they can to ensure children and young people are safe? This includes early help
- Are all partner agencies meeting their statutory responsibilities as set out in Working Together?
- Do all partner agencies quality assure practice and is there evidence of learning and improving practice?
- Is training on early help and safeguarding monitored and evaluated and is there evidence of training impacting on practice? This includes multi-agency training.

2. The Partnership

2.1 Our Partners:

Partnership work is vital to the successful delivery of safeguarding services and interventions in Southwark. We remain confident that safeguarding is at the heart of the services delivered by statutory and voluntary services in Southwark, and we also remain committed to maintaining an open dialogue with all our partners, and working jointly with partners to ensure the best, person-centred outcomes for children and young people.

New Partnership Arrangements

During 2019/20 the Southwark Safeguarding Children Board transitioned to become the Southwark Safeguarding Children Partnership. Our new arrangements, following the guidelines in [Working Together 2018](#), were published on 28th June 2019. Full details of our new arrangements can be read on [our website](#). We continue to review and refine these arrangements.

During the year there have been some changes to the Executive leads as originally set out in our new arrangements. The Borough Commander of the police has delegated authority to the rank of Detective Superintendent. Moving into 2020/21 the health lead will be the CCG's place-based

Director with responsibility for safeguarding.

We have also streamlined the partnership subgroups to ensure they are focussed appropriately and meet the objectives set by the partnership.

We have strong partnership commitment to our quarterly meetings- a full list of members is shown on the following page.

South East London Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) Reorganisation

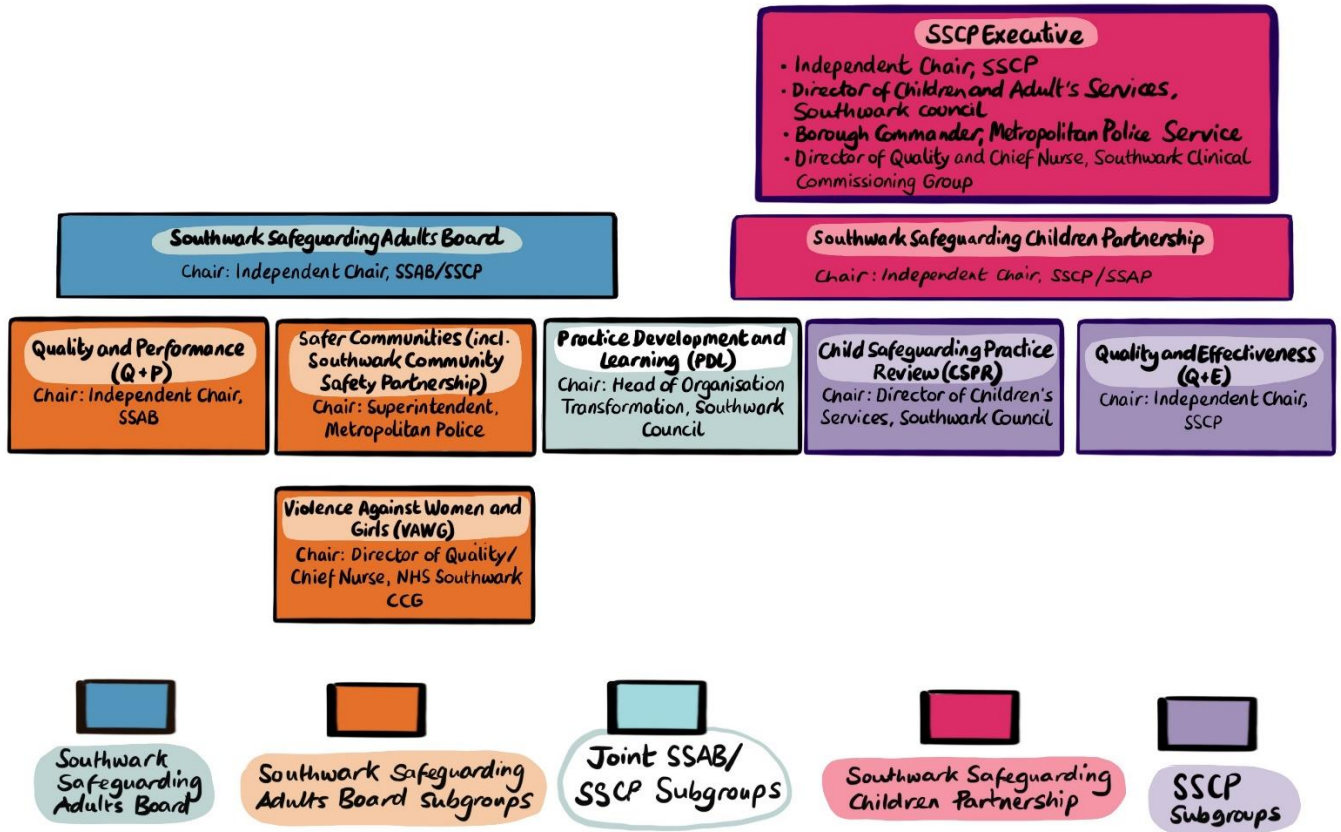
The six CCGs across South East London have designed a proposal to establish a single South East London CCG. The intended merger forms part of the local response to the NHS Long-Term Plan. Throughout 2019/20 the CCGs held engagement events, and consulted with staff, partner agencies and local residents. The intention is for the South East London CCG to go live from April 2020. At this point formal responsibility for local decision making will move to Place-Based Boards, and the Place-Based Director with responsibility for safeguarding will sit on the SSCP.

Membership

| Southwark Council | CCG/NHS | Police | Other Organisations |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Adult Care | Place-Based Director, Southwark NHS SEL CCG | Borough Commander | Borough Commander, London Fire Brigade |
| Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Public Health | Designated Nurse, Safeguarding Children, NHS SEL CCG | Superintendent | Head of Service, Lewisham and Southwark Probation |
| Strategic Director of Children's and Adults' Services | Named GP for Safeguarding Children, NHS SEL CCG | | London Community Rehabilitation Company |
| Strategic Director of Housing and Modernisation | Designated Doctor for Safeguarding Children | | CEO, Community Southwark |
| Director of Children and Families | Designated Doctor for Looked-After Children | | Primary and Secondary School Heads |
| Director of Communities | Named Nurse for Looked-After Children | | Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Services (CAFCASS) |
| Director of Education | Head of Safeguarding children (GSTT) | | Faith community representatives |
| Director of Commissioning, Children's and Adults' Services | Head of Safeguarding Children (KCH) | | Lay members |
| Director of Public Health | Named Nurse for Safeguarding Children (SLAM) | | |
| Assistant Director, Family Early Help | AMH Child Safeguarding Lead (SLAM) | | |
| Assistant Director of Safeguarding and Care, Children's Social Care | | | |
| Assistant Director of Commissioning, Children, Adults and Families | | | |
| Assistant Director, Community Safety and Partnerships | | | |
| Head of QA and Practice Development, Children's Social Care | | | |
| Head of Organisation Transformation | | | |
| Head of Communications | | | |

2.2 Board Subgroups:

Southwark Safeguarding: Boards and Subgroups



Practice Development and Learning (PDL) Subgroup:



The Safeguarding Practice Development and Learning (PDL) subgroup is a joint subgroup of the Children’s and Adults’ Safeguarding Boards. It is chaired by Southwark Council’s Head of Organisation Transformation.

During the first quarter of the year the new multi-agency Safeguarding Training Programme was agreed by the PDL Subgroup and the Safeguarding Executive. It was agreed that new training contracts would run for three years, with the option to extend for an additional two years, dependent on performance. The procurement programme started at the beginning of quarter 3, with 18 providers entering bids. The procurement process was completed in quarter 4.

Also during this year a programme was started to review all safeguarding e-learning courses with subject matter experts.

From mid-March 2020 all face-to-face courses had to be suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. E-learning courses continued to be available, and the partnership quickly moved to offering virtual training sessions.

Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) Subgroup:

Responsibility for how lessons are learned locally from serious child safeguarding incidents lies with the safeguarding partners, via the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Subgroup. The terms of reference for this group have been revised to take into account the new statutory guidance.

The subgroup is responsible for identifying cases which meet the criteria for a Child Safeguarding Practice Review. For cases that fall below the threshold the group will determine if there is relevant possible learning from the case, and recommend the process and methodology for understanding the learning.

The group will identify any themes or trends within local referrals and national reviews that may further improve the quality and impact of safeguarding in Southwark.

Once a review has been completed, the implementation and impact of any multi-agency lessons to be learned are monitored to ensure that the learning from all case reviewing activity is embedded in practice.

During the year the group developed a [new rapid review template](#) to help streamline the process.

The group also developed information leaflets regarding Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, both for families affected

and for professionals who may not be familiar with the procedures.

The group considered three cases for Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews in year, of which one case was felt to meet the criteria. More information can be found in [section 4](#).

Quality and Effectiveness Subgroup:

The purpose of the Quality and Effectiveness subgroup is to build and maintain an accurate picture across the SSCP of:

- the quality and effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements
- areas of strength and good practice
- areas of risk and vulnerability
- actions related to improve outcomes for children

To ensure the measurement of the partnerships assurance processes is strengthened, the subgroup works to:

- Develop and ratify borough wide strategies, policies and guidance.
- Monitor and analyse safeguarding indicators across the partnership to identify whether safeguarding practice and arrangements have led to improved outcomes for children and young people.
- Provide challenge, evaluate and monitor action plans identified through section 11 of the Children Act 2004 audits.
- Identify and commission multi-agency audits to evaluate safeguarding practice and its impact on Children, Young People and their Families.
- Monitor the progress of action plans arising from any local or national reviews.

- Demonstrate that the voice of the child has been heard and to use this information to improve services and the effectiveness of professional practice.

The section 11 audit tool was circulated to all statutory partners. Responses will be discussed in detail during 2020/21, and the findings will be used to inform our priority discussions and shape our audit and learning programme.

2.3 SSCP accountability

Core child protection activity

| Performance Measures | 2018/19 | 2019/20 (s/n average) | Change |
|----------------------------------------------------------|---------|-----------------------|--------|
| Contact Rate (per 10,000) | 1,573 | 2,083 | 32% |
| Referral Rate | 506 | 549 (551) | 8.4 % |
| Conversion from Contact to Referral | 32% | 27% | -5% |
| Re-Referrals | 15% | 16% (15%) | 1% |
| Rate of Assessments Completed | 481 | 468 (505) | -2.7% |
| Rate of Section 47 Enquiries | 136 | 101 (160) | -25.7% |
| Rate of Initial Child Protection Conferences Held | 63.6 | 52.7 (58) | -17% |
| Number of Children Subject to a Child Protection Plan | 328 | 284 | -13.4% |
| Rate of Children Subject to a Child Protection Plan | 50.4 | 43.6 (38) | -13.5% |
| Children Subject to a Child Protection Plan for 2+ years | 4% | 7% (4%) | 3% |
| Number of Children in Our Care | 459 | 459 | 0% |
| Rate of Children in Our Care | 70 | 70 (60) | 0% |

The rate of referrals received is close to our statistical neighbour average at 549.6 per 10,000 under 18 population, showing an increase on the previous year.

The conversion rate of Section 47s to Initial Child Protection Conference increased from 2018/19 to 2019/20 from 33.5% in 2018/19 to 42.8% in 2019/20. This is in comparison with 36.3% for statistical neighbours, suggesting that section 47s were in the main completed more appropriately than last year.

Re-referrals have increased slightly (from 15.2% to 16.2%). It is possible that the increase in referral figures has had an impact on this measure- this will be monitored over the coming year.

The rate of Section 47 enquiries completed has reduced from last year (101 from 136.5) and is now significantly below our statistical neighbour average of 160.2.

The percentage of assessments closed with no further action has increased this year from 45.6% to 47.3%.

The percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time increased from 16.2% to 19.4%. This is in comparison with 18% for statistical neighbours. This will be closely monitored over the coming year.

The timeliness of health checks for children in local authority care improved from 82% to 100%. Similarly, annual health assessments improved from 94% to 98%.

The number of children in our care with an absent episode remains higher than statistical neighbours both in terms of the number of children and the number of episodes. Southwark had 98 children with an absent episode during 2019/20 resulting in 862 episodes. This is in comparison with a statistical neighbour average of 51 children and 297 episodes.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

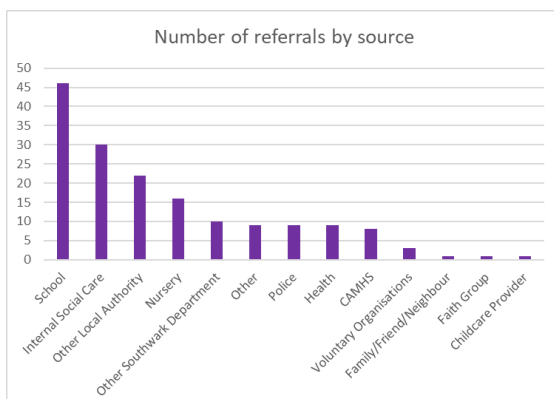
LADO responsibilities are set out in Working Together Chapter 2, the London Child Protection Procedures Chapter 7 and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

There were 165 referrals to the LADO in year, up from 146 last year. There have been no significant changes in the nature of referrals, the source of referrals or who is being referred.

For every contact the LADO receives that meets the threshold, there are also consultations that do not. Since October 2019 the LADO has started to record basic information regarding consultations- to date, a total of 81 consultations have been made, the majority relating to education and early years settings (correlating with the data for referrals). The LADO continues to work to develop an efficient and appropriate way of recording consultations, in line with data protection regulations.

The Southwark LADO hosts and chairs the quarterly London LADO meeting and had input into the revised London Child Protection Procedures.

An area for ongoing work is engaging with organisations that do not require any form of regulation such as the faith sector and sports/leisure clubs.



2.4 Financial arrangements

The SSCP receives financial contributions from a number of agencies and other forms of in-kind support. Money received in 2019-20 is detailed below:

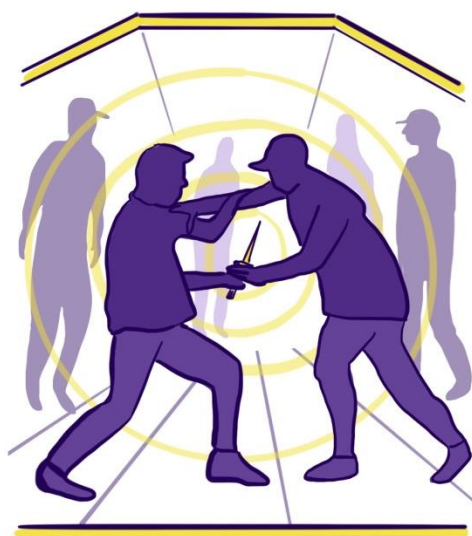
| Contribution | Total |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| Police (MOPAC) | £5,000 |
| Southwark CCG | £55,000 |
| SLAM | £5,000 |
| London Fire Brigade | £500 |
| London Borough Southwark | £63,421.50 |
| CAFCASS | £550 |
| Total from contributions | £129,471.50 |

3. Progress against 2019/20 priorities:

3.1 Exploitation (specifically Child Sexual Exploitation and Criminal Exploitation/ county lines)

Southwark's Community Harm and Exploitation Reduction Plan is discussed in detail under 3.2 below.

3.2 Knife Crime and Serious Youth Violence (joint with SSAB)



KNIFE CRIME & SERIOUS YOUTH VIOLENCE

Serious youth violence is a key focus for the SSAB and the SSCP. Serious violence and knife crime is a national problem and almost every area of London has been touched by its devastating effects. In Southwark we have seen a decrease in the number of knife crime offences, however the levels of violence remain unacceptably high and have a devastating effect on our communities.

Community Harm and Exploitation Reduction Plan

Every London borough is required by the Violence Reduction Unit within the London Mayor's Office to have a proactive plan for tackling knife crime and serious violence.

Southwark's Community Harm and Exploitation Reduction Plan sets out what partners, council departments, Police, health, schools and others are doing to tackle the immediate threat and divert young people away from a life impacted by crime. The plan brings together the recommendations of the [Cross-Party Panel on Serious Youth Violence](#), the [Southwark Extended Learning Review](#) carried out by the Violence & Vulnerability Unit and the [Southwark Youth Violence Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\)](#) setting out how we will support and work with our communities in standing up against knife crime, violence and community harm.

Community Harm and Exploitation Hub

A central part of the Community Harm and Exploitation Reduction Plan is the creation of a Community Harm and Exploitation Hub (CHEH), a multiagency team that will incorporate and build upon the existing Southwark Anti Violence Unit (SAVU) team. The CHEH will hold casework and provide comprehensive and bespoke support to individuals and their families who are vulnerable to being exploited and getting involved in gangs, county lines, the drugs market, violence, human trafficking, modern slavery and other forms of exploitation.

The first stage of the CHEH rollout focuses on individuals aged 16-25, and on developing information, advice and guidance for parents, carers, and communities.

In subsequent stages and subject to resources the hub will be aligned with and take referrals from voluntary sector organisations, with particular emphasis on vulnerable adults. This work has started through the [Southwark Cuckooing Forum](#).

While working with the CHEH will be voluntary for the cohort, the CHEH will use a range of partnership-wide enforcement tools to deal with those who are supported but continue to engage in criminality whilst on the programme.

In September 2019, Southwark Council organised a conference for faith leaders from across the borough to discuss how they could support work on the youth violence agenda. Members of the partnership helped to support and facilitate this event.



3.3 Vulnerable Parents

In December 2019 the SSCP received a presentation about the new 'Families First' initiative being piloted in Southwark. The Families First Model embeds the two fundamental Family Group Conference values of 'preparation' and 'private family time' within the child protection conference.

During a child protection inquiry, social workers intensely work with the parents to identify the support network and who the parents would like to have formally invited and attend to the conference. The chair speaks with the parents and support network 2- 3 days prior to conference to encourage family participation, with a focus on making a plan to support the safety of the children

All professionals in the network (with the exception of the police) are expected to share their report with both parents prior to the conference.

During the conference, professionals give the family 15-20 minutes of private time to discuss what has been said and develop a plan of support, which they then present to the professionals in attendance.

Advantages of this approach:

- By having the professionals listen to the family network plans for safety, it is likely that this will reduce professional anxiety within the network
- Provides a more open framework of transparency within the professional network which will ensure that families can come to conference fully informed
- Helps reduce the likelihood of children and families entering the legal area
- Based on a whole family approach where safety is robustly tested. Where concerns continue or escalate it will provide a framework of critical analysis of a family's ability, reducing delay in pre-proceedings and care proceedings

"I feel that it's a very good idea to give families time to talk things through".

- Parent involved in the Southwark pilot.

3.4 Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

During 2018-19, Children's and Adults' Services in Southwark developed an All Ages Disability service. The operational model of the service focusses on age up to

25 years and a reshaping of the Learning Disabilities 25+ Service (LD25+) to create a seamless care assessment pathway. These developments were subject to a period of staff engagement and consultation between March and July 2019 to review and make any changes. Since June 2019 these have begun to be implemented.

During 2019/20, benchmarking and quantitative data has demonstrated a trend of improved service performance when compared to pre March 2018. This includes but is not limited to the following four areas:

1. Assessments completed within timescale (45 days) for Children with Disabilities and Transitions cases was at 55% for 2017/18 (94% for social care assessments across Children's). Performance for 2019/20 for All Age Disabilities at 31st December 2019 was at 77% (92% for all social care assessments).
2. As at 31st December 2019, 100% of annual health checks were completed/ reviewed in time (91% for all social care LAC).
3. There are fewer children on a Child Protection Plan with the service than there were prior to 31st March 2018, indicative of the fact that the children are being supported more proactively by the service to remain at home with support.
4. Fewer children have started to be looked after with nine during 2017/18 reducing to just three as of December 19/20. Proactive case management and management oversight has helped more children to remain at home with support.

3.5 Neglect

At the start of 2019/20, the SSCP held a follow-up session based on the neglect event organised by the CCG in 2018/19. The partnership discussed various aspects of this priority, including:

- Ways to better equip frontline staff to identify vulnerable children and families early on.
- The importance of information sharing to address concerns which do not yet meet thresholds.
- Giving focus to the role of the wider family and community rather than just professionals.

As we approached the end of the financial year, a Keeping Families Strong event was held, aimed at both professionals and parents. A screening of the documentary 'Resilience' was followed by a series of activities led by parent champions.

Furthermore, the then NHS Southwark CCG received a financial award from NHSE/I, to be spent on a workshop focussing on adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). It was agreed that this money should be managed by the partnership and used to strengthen the work already started on raising awareness of ACEs and building resilience within our communities with a trauma-informed approach. This work will be carried out as part of our priority setting exercises during the year 2020-21.

4. Learning from Case Reviews

CASE REVIEWS



During the year, the SSCP transitioned from operating under [Working Together 2015](#) to [Working Together 2018](#). The majority of cases considered for review in year were considered under Working Together 2015.

Under Working Together 2015, the SSCP must carry out a serious case review if:

- (a) abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected; *and*
- (b) either
 - (i) the child has died; *or*
 - (ii) the child has been seriously harmed and there is cause for concern as to the way in which...relevant persons have worked together to safeguard the child.

'Serious harm' includes, but is not limited to, cases where the child has sustained, as a result of abuse or neglect, any or all of the following:

- a potentially life-threatening injury
- serious and/or likely long-term impairment of physical or mental

health or physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.]

All serious case reviews will result in a report, which will be published and readily accessible on the SSCP website for a minimum of 12 months, unless there are overwhelming reasons why the report should not be published.

Reviews in 2019/20

Following the death of a Southwark young person, and the serious injury to another in 2018-19, a decision was made to appoint an independent reviewer to undertake a thematic review across these cases. The majority of this review was conducted during 2019-20, with contributions from agencies and individuals from across the partnership. The partnership took the decision to postpone publication of the report due to ongoing parallel processes, however the SSCP will ensure that 'lessons learned' and recommendations from the report are widely shared and implemented across the partnership.

Two further reviews are in progress following tragic child deaths in Southwark. We anticipate these reviews being completed and published in 2020/21, and lessons learned will be discussed in next year's annual report.

5. Looking Ahead

Our Priorities for 2020/21

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the partnership consultation on priorities, planned for March 2020, was delayed. A consultation was undertaken across the partnership and service users during the summer 2020, and the following high-level priorities were agreed:

- 1. Mental health**
- 2. Neglect, including childhood trauma/ Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)**
- 3. Domestic Abuse (joint with SSAB)**
- 4. Complex safeguarding (extra-familial abuse, exploitation, serious youth violence)**

The partnership were also clear that Black Lives Matter/[Southwark Stands Together](#) and COVID-19 should be overarching themes running through all of the agreed priority areas.

Progress against the agreed priorities will be detailed in next year's report.

Contact information

If you have any questions about the content of this report, or thoughts about what we should include in future reports, please contact sscp@southwark.gov.uk.

If you are concerned about a child at risk in the borough of Southwark you should notify us immediately on MASH@southwark.gov.uk.

If the child has been injured you should seek advice from their GP, or in an emergency call 999.

If you believe a crime has been committed you should notify the police.