



Cumberland
Safeguarding
Children Partnership

Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2025/26



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Foreword from Lead Safeguarding Partners

Welcome to the Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) Annual Report, covering the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

The 2024 review of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) in Cumbria led safeguarding partners to establish two new place-based safeguarding partnerships, aligned to the footprints of the two new local authorities (Cumberland and Westmorland and Furness). This was intended to strengthen local oversight and scrutiny of safeguarding practice, improve the monitoring and measurement of impact and enable partners to identify and drive local improvement priorities more effectively. The new partnership arrangements were successfully implemented in April 2025.

As the statutory safeguarding partners for the CSCP, we are pleased to present this first annual report of the partnership.

This report provides an overview of the partnership's multi-agency safeguarding activity over this first year, highlighting the establishment and development of the new partnership alongside the learning and progress achieved across the safeguarding system.

During 2025–2026, the partnership developed and implemented its Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) and agreed its key strategic priorities. These arrangements and priorities reflect our shared ambition to ensure that every child in Cumberland is safe, supported, and able to thrive.

A key strength of the partnership is its commitment to a culture of openness, collaboration, and constructive challenge. We welcome and encourage honest discussion between partners, recognising that effective safeguarding is strengthened through both support and accountability. Over the past year, we have focused on building trust and confidence across partner agencies, creating strong relationships that enable us to work together effectively, share learning, and respond collectively to safeguarding challenges.

Working Together to Safeguard Children continues to provide the framework and direction for the development of the partnership. This report demonstrates the commitment of all partner agencies to safeguarding children and young people, evidenced by high levels of attendance, engagement and participation across the partnership and its subgroups. Through this collective effort we have continued to strengthen and embed our safeguarding arrangements.

As we look ahead our focus will be on reviewing and evaluating the first year of the MASA, building on our achievements, and continuing to work together to ensure children and young people are safe within their families, communities and wider networks.

Finally, we would like to thank all practitioners, volunteers and partner organisations who contribute every day to supporting, protecting and improving outcomes for children, young people and families across Cumberland. Their commitment and dedication are at the heart of our shared safeguarding endeavour.



Andrew Seekings
Chief Executive
Cumberland Council



Samantha Allen
Chief Executive
North East & North
Integrated Care Board



Darren Martland
Chief Constable
Cumbria Constabulary

Cumbria Context

Within Cumbria there are two unitary councils: Cumberland and Westmorland and Furness.

For Health, Cumbria is covered by two Integrated Care Boards (ICBs):

- North East and North Cumbria ICB
- Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB

The geographical footprint of the two ICBs and the two councils are not coterminous.

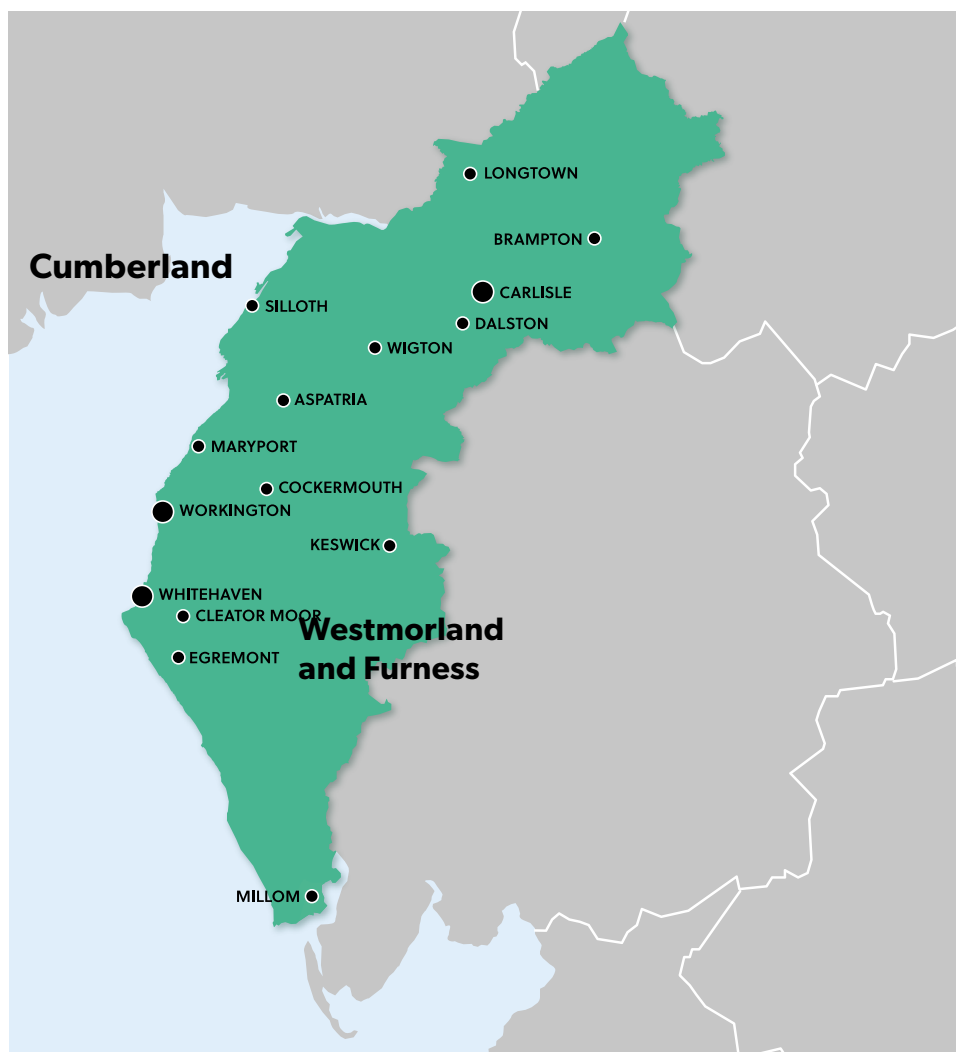
Cumbria Constabulary are the Police Force covering the whole of Cumbria.

Cumberland

Cumberland is much more sparsely populated than the national average, but it has both rural and urban centres and includes the former local government districts of Carlisle, Allerdale and Copeland.

7.9% (14 out of 177) of Cumberland's Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) sit within the most deprived 10% of LSOAs in England. These communities are located across the whole of Cumberland, with seven being in the former footprint of Allerdale District Council, four in Carlisle and three in Copeland (Source: IMD 2019 - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government 2019.)

18.1% of children in Cumberland live in relative low-income. While this is lower than the national average (19.9%) there are some wards where the levels of child poverty are much higher than the national average.



Education in Cumberland

3

Nursery Schools

144

Primary Schools

19

Secondary Schools

2

Pupil Referral Units

3

Special Schools

3

Independent
Schools

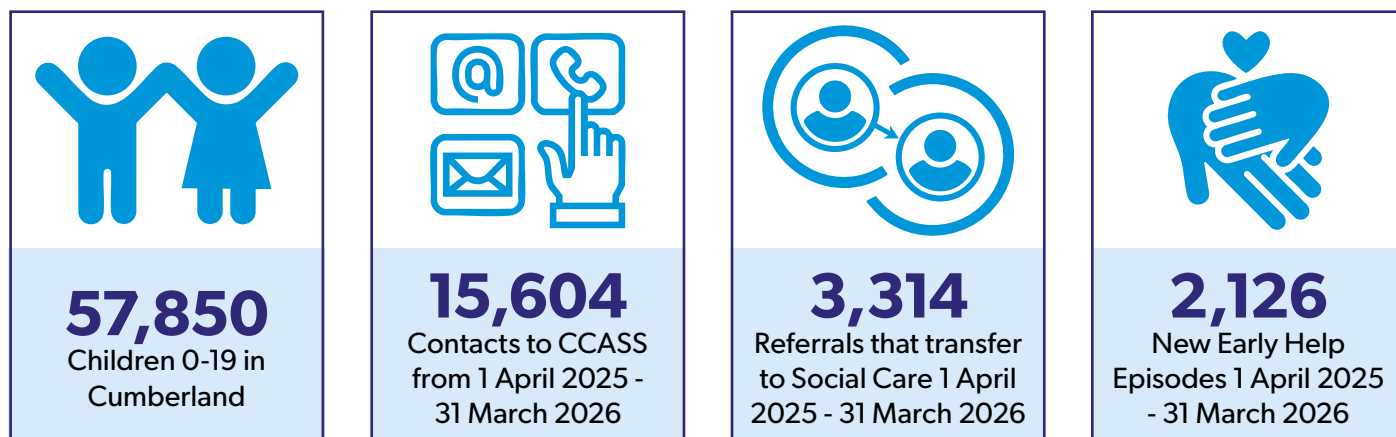
70

Private Voluntary
and Independent
Settings

59

Childminders

Children and Young People in Cumberland



If Cumberland's population of children and young people were reduced to a village of 100 children, the infographic below shows what that community would look like.



About Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership

The Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) is the statutory multi-agency partnership responsible for leading and coordinating safeguarding arrangements across the Cumberland local authority area. The partnership is supported by a dedicated business unit that facilitates and drives its work programme.

The partnership provides the framework through which safeguarding partners and relevant agencies work together to coordinate safeguarding services, identify and respond to the needs of children and young people, commission and publish Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, and provide assurance regarding the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements.

At the heart of the partnership is a commitment to ensuring that the voice, lived experience and outcomes of children and young people inform and influence all aspects of its work.

This Annual Report sets out the activity, progress and impact of work undertaken during 2025–2026 to address the partnership's key priorities:

- Safeguarding adolescents from risks and harms outside the home.
- Improving the response to neglect.
- Domestic abuse.

These priorities are underpinned by the partnership vision:

“Working together to keep Cumberland’s children safe.”

Over the past year, partners have worked collectively to establish strong foundations for the new partnership, developing trusting relationships that support effective collaboration, constructive challenge, shared accountability and a culture of continuous improvement.

The following shared values underpin all partnership activity:

- Learning is promoted, embedded and applied to improve services and outcomes for children, young people and families.
- Practitioners working with children, young people, adults and families collaborate effectively and share information appropriately to support timely and informed decision-making.
- The voices and lived experiences of children and young people are listened to, understood and acted upon.
- A whole-family approach is understood and consistently implemented across all partner agencies.

Partnership Arrangements

The partnership's safeguarding arrangements have been delivered through a Regional Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSP) Group covering both Cumberland and Westmorland and Furness. This is supported by a Cumberland Delegated Safeguarding Partners Group, a wider partnership group comprising relevant agencies and a number of thematic subgroups.

The partnership's safeguarding arrangements can be viewed on the CSCP website.

Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership Arrangements

The Lead Safeguarding Partners responsible for the safeguarding arrangements across Cumberland are the Chief Executive Officers (or equivalent senior leaders) from:

- Cumberland Council.
- Cumbria Constabulary.
- North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board.

During 2025–2026, the Lead Safeguarding Partners met across the Cumbria footprint to provide strategic leadership and oversight of safeguarding arrangements. As the partnership continues to mature, further work is being undertaken to strengthen governance arrangements and ensure that Lead Safeguarding Partners fully discharge their statutory responsibilities as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children.

Delegated Safeguarding Partners

The Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSPs) provide strategic leadership and oversight of safeguarding arrangements across Cumberland.

The Delegated Safeguarding Partners are:

- Cumberland Council – Director of Children and Family Wellbeing.
- Cumbria Constabulary – Assistant Chief Constable.
- North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board – Director of Nursing Neighbourhood Health and Safeguarding.

Meetings of the DSPs are chaired by the Director of Children and Family Wellbeing, Cumberland Council.



Cumberland's Business Priorities

In April 2025 the newly established Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership held a development session to shape and strengthen safeguarding arrangements across Cumberland and to identify local priorities based on the needs of children, young people and families.

The development session also considered how these priorities would be delivered in practice. To support this, a thematic sub-group structure was established, bringing together partners from across the safeguarding system to drive improvement activity and monitor progress.

The subgroups provide a forum for partners to explore frontline challenges, share good practice, identify emerging issues and make recommendations to strengthen multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and improve outcomes for children, young people and families.

To ensure that activity is achieving meaningful impact, the partnership's Quality Assurance and Scrutiny Framework was reviewed and is used to evaluate progress against each priority area, providing oversight of performance, identifying areas for improvement and measuring the difference that partnership activity is making to children, young people and families across Cumberland.

As a result of this work, the following partnership priorities were agreed for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026:

Priority 1: Improving the Response to Neglect

Priority 2: Safeguarding Adolescents from Risks and Harm Outside the Family Home

Priority 3: Domestic Abuse

Priority 4 : Working Effectively Together to Implement Improvements, Reforms and Multi Agency Initiatives



Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership, Partnership Meeting

The CSCP Partnership Meeting brings together the statutory safeguarding partners alongside a wide range of relevant agencies and key stakeholders. Delegated Safeguarding Partners also attend these meetings, providing strategic leadership and oversight of the partnership's work. Recognising the importance of independent challenge and assurance, the Delegated Safeguarding Partners agreed to retain the Independent Scrutineer as Chair of the partnership meeting. This has helped to foster transparency, strengthen trust between partners and ensure that safeguarding arrangements are subject to appropriate scrutiny and challenge.

Membership includes representatives from education, health, local government, criminal justice agencies and the voluntary and community sector. A full list of CSCP Partnership Meeting members can be found at **Appendix A**.

The partnership meeting provides a key forum for collaboration, challenge and accountability across the safeguarding system. During 2025–2026, the group developed, implemented and monitored the Partnership's Annual Business Plan, agreed priority actions in relation to both strategic priorities and statutory safeguarding responsibilities, and oversaw the delivery of improvement work through its thematic subgroups.

Through regular review of progress, performance, learning and emerging safeguarding issues, the partnership meeting has helped to ensure that safeguarding activity remains focused on improving outcomes for children, young people and families across Cumberland.



What we have achieved together

The partnership has undertaken a review of its first year under the new safeguarding arrangements which identified several key strengths and areas where there is evidence of positive impact. These findings demonstrate the benefits of the place-based approach in supporting effective scrutiny, collaboration and continuous improvement across the safeguarding system.

Trusted Relationships - Strong and trusted relationships between safeguarding partners continue to be a significant strength of the partnership. These relationships enable effective multi-agency working, open and honest reflection and a shared commitment to improving services and outcomes for children and young people. An example of this is the police have contacted children's social care to have open and honest escalation of concerns about young people where there have been risks. This has led to improved collaborative working to reduce the risks faced by young people.

Governance Arrangements - Clear governance arrangements and structured partnership meetings, supported by focused agendas, have strengthened accountability across agencies. This has created an expectation that partners take ownership of their responsibilities and are able to demonstrate progress against agreed actions. The partnership maintains a focus on continuous improvement, working collaboratively to strengthen safeguarding practice, respond to emerging challenges and ensure children, young people and families receive the right support at the right time. This is underpinned by a robust independent scrutiny process that triangulates evidence from multiple sources, provides constructive challenge, evaluates the effectiveness and impact of practice and supports the co-production of improvement actions across the partnership.

Using Learning to Improve Multi-Agency Practice - The development session highlighted strong partnership working, commitment and collaboration across agencies, underpinned by effective leadership, governance and chairing arrangements. Partners identified the positive use of professional challenge, courageous conversations and escalation processes, which have supported improved outcomes for children, young people and families. The partnership demonstrated a strong culture of learning, accountability and continuous improvement. This is evidenced through practice reviews, audit activity and multi-agency improvement work, alongside a clear commitment to early help and prevention. This culture has also been strengthened through the effective reporting and oversight provided by partnership subgroups, the development of a new partnership website to improve communication and accessibility and the review and implementation of multi-agency policies and procedures to support consistent safeguarding practice.



Using Performance Data to Focus on Improvement and Impact - A detailed partnership performance scorecard has been developed, building on work undertaken through the North West Regional Improvement Programme and its quarterly data returns. The scorecard has strengthened the partnership's ability to scrutinise and understand safeguarding performance across agencies. Progress has also been made in incorporating police data, with further development underway to enhance the use of narrative analysis alongside performance information, providing greater insight into trends, challenges and areas for improvement. One example of this work is the identification of the need to improve risk assessment within strategy meetings, resulting in strengthened multi-agency decision-making and improved oversight of safeguarding risk.

Supporting Children Away from Crime and the Justice System - During 2025/26, the number of First Time Entrants to the youth justice system reduced from 46 to 30, a decrease of 35%. Cumberland's rate of 119 per 100,000 remains below both the North West (160) and England (145) averages. This positive performance reflects the effectiveness of diversionary approaches and strong partnership working between Youth Justice Services, Cumbria Constabulary, the Youth Courts and the CPS. Work will continue to sustain this improvement and further develop alternatives to court where appropriate.

Custody rates remained low during 2025/26, with only two children receiving custodial sentences compared to six in the previous year. This positive position reflects the Youth Justice Service's continued focus on engaging children effectively, delivering tailored interventions and working closely with sentencers to provide credible alternatives to custody. Strong partnership working and early intervention have helped reduce returns to court and support better outcomes for children.

Child First approaches have continued to be embedded across the partnership, including the successful introduction of child-friendly custody suites across Cumberland following a pilot in Carlisle. Children and young people engaged with both Cumberland and Westmorland & Furness Council's Youth Justice Services, alongside council youth groups, were actively involved in shaping the design through sharing their experiences of custody and suggesting improvements. This was complemented by research into best practice from police forces across the UK that have successfully implemented Child First approaches.

The project was developed through strong partnership working between Cumbria Constabulary's Child Centred Policing Team, both Youth Justice Services and the Youth SAFE (Substance Awareness for Everyone) team. In a demonstration of shared commitment, police and youth justice staff undertook much of the refurbishment work themselves. The initiative has contributed to a reduction in the use of force and shorter detention times for children and young people in police custody, while creating a more trauma-informed environment that helps children and young people feel safer, reduces anxiety and distress, supports neurodiverse needs and promotes more positive relationships between young people and the police.

Feedback from the young people include:

"The cell was nice, better than the usual ones. It was good to be able to read the book".

"I thought what the **, this is different. The leaflet was definitely helpful, but I had been in custody before so knew what to expect. The leaflet would be good for first timers'. I thought they asked me way more wellbeing questions. It made me feel a lot better and it was reassuring".**

"I loved the chalk board, and the fact I could draw anything I wanted as a distraction. I didn't use any of the items, but they will be good for others".

The success of the Carlisle pilot has led to Cumbria Constabulary replicating the model across Cumberland and the wider county including Workington, Barrow-in-Furness and Kendal. The wider implementation demonstrates both the effectiveness of the model and its potential to deliver sustainable, long-term improvements in safeguarding outcomes. It has been reported that this piece of work has captured the interest of other forces nationally and in the North West.



Pol- Ed - is a police-led education programme delivered in partnership with schools and local authority services to help children and young people stay safe and make informed choices. Since its launch in June 2025, all secondary schools in Cumbria have signed up to the programme. During 2025/26, 4,066 lessons and 582 assemblies were delivered, reaching over 110,000 students through lessons and more than 94,000 through assemblies. These figures reflect educational contacts rather than individual children, as some pupils may have attended more than one lesson or assembly during the reporting period.

Key topics included online safety, coercive control, harassment, and water safety. Notably, the Summer Water Safety assembly was delivered 175 times ahead of the summer holidays. Early evidence suggests a positive impact, with youth crime reducing by 4.9% compared to the previous year, alongside particularly strong reductions in areas where the programme has been most actively delivered. The reach has gone beyond primary and secondary schools with a further education college in Cumberland delivering 111 lessons on healthy relationships.

Strengthening Safeguarding Assessments Outside Normal Office Hours - Operation Veritas has been successfully implemented across Cumbria Constabulary, strengthening multi-agency safeguarding arrangements by enabling Emergency Duty Team (EDT) social workers to view live police Body-Worn Video during high-risk incidents. This allows safeguarding professionals to be involved at the earliest opportunity, supporting timely, trauma-informed and child-centred decision-making.

The impact of Operation Veritas has been significant. Children and young people benefit from faster safeguarding assessments, a more accurate understanding of their lived experience and a reduction in unnecessary interventions. For police officers, the approach promotes shared decision-making with safeguarding specialists - reducing unnecessary arrests, follow-on investigations and the need for Police Protection Orders while increasing confidence in operational decisions.

Feedback from frontline practitioners has been overwhelmingly positive, with officers reporting that the ability to share live information and make joint decisions in real time has improved communication, speed of response and clarity of action. Overall, Operation Veritas has enhanced partnership working, strengthened risk assessment processes and improved outcomes for children, young people and families through more informed and coordinated safeguarding responses.

Strengthening Safeguarding Through Reduced Missing Episodes - A new collaborative multi-agency missing children process, led by Cumbria Constabulary and supported by partner agencies, has strengthened the response to children and young people who go missing. Through improved approaches to risk assessment processes, coordinated planning and understanding of agency responsibilities, partners are better able to identify risks, intervene earlier and provide targeted support to vulnerable children and young people.

The impact of this work has been positive, with a 50% reduction in the number of children supported as repeatedly missing from home when comparing August 2026 against August 2025. Missing from home reports to Cumbria Constabulary relating specifically to cared for children have reduced from 49 reports in August 2025 to 27 reports in August 2026. The strengthened partnership approach has improved oversight of children and young people at risk of going missing, enabled more effective disruption of risks and vulnerabilities and supported better safeguarding outcomes for children, young people and families.

Strengthening Safeguarding Practice in the Voluntary Sector - By embedding safeguarding as a standing agenda item within the Voluntary Sector Reference Group (VSRG), the partnership has strengthened engagement with the voluntary sector through an active and well-led network.

This has increased safeguarding awareness, knowledge and confidence across voluntary sector organisations, improving practitioners' ability to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns and ensuring children and young people at risk are identified and supported more effectively. Targeted discussions on issues such as Private Fostering, LADO, and Prevent have enhanced understanding of key safeguarding responsibilities, with evidence that learning is being cascaded directly to staff teams. As a result, children and young people benefit from a more informed workforce, earlier identification of needs and risks, stronger links between statutory and voluntary sector services and a more effective multi-agency safeguarding response.

Independent Scrutiny

The independent scrutiny function focuses on assessing the impact of the partnership's collective work against its agreed business priorities. Central to this role is evaluating how effectively partnership activity is improving outcomes for children and young people across Cumberland, providing assurance that safeguarding arrangements are making a meaningful difference to the lives of children, young people and their families.

Independent Scrutineer's Evaluation of the Effectiveness and Impact of the Partnership

I have remained as the Independent Scrutineer for the new Children's Safeguarding Partnership arrangements in Cumberland to ensure continuity, focus and scrutiny during the transition from the Pan-Cumbria arrangements to the new more localised arrangements. The first year of the new partnership focussed on ensuring the necessary mechanisms are in place to support and ensure effective multi-agency practice and drive work against the agreed business priorities. This involved significant time setting up new delivery structures: subgroups with new terms of reference, reporting mechanisms, recruiting new chairs and providing clear written expectations. It has also required a new website, area specific updated policies and procedures, and an updated Quality Assurance and Scrutiny Framework and schedule. However, the importance of developing a strong bedrock that facilitates robust and effective safeguarding and facilitates a culture of "high support and high challenge" cannot be underestimated.

What is the purpose of Independent Scrutiny?

The role of Independent Scrutiny is to provide objective assurance regarding the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements and to support the continuous improvement of multi-agency practice.

The Independent Scrutineer will:

- Provide independent, rigorous, and constructive challenge to safeguarding partners and relevant agencies across all aspects of safeguarding practice.
- Offer assurance regarding the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and evaluate their impact on improving outcomes for children and young people.
- Support the partnership in identifying strengths and areas for development, helping to drive continuous improvement.
- Promote a culture of learning across the partnership, ensuring that learning from audits, reviews and practice is embedded and translated into service improvements.
- Assess the extent to which partnership activity is delivering against agreed priorities and making a positive difference to the lives of children, young people and their families.
- Support transparency, accountability and effective governance across the safeguarding system.

This independent challenge and assurance function is a key element of the partnership's commitment to strengthening multi-agency working and continuously improving safeguarding practice across Cumberland.

It is clear that the effective working relationships that were a key strength in the Pan-Cumbria multi-agency safeguarding arrangements have been maintained in the transition to the new partnership. I see open and trusting relationships but also evidence of appropriate and necessary challenge at all levels, across the partnership. The existing experienced partnership Business Manager has played a key role in facilitating this. Children and young people have remained in focus at all times and there is emerging evidence of impact on practice as outlined in this Annual Report.

However, there have also been some barriers in meeting the key requirements set out in Working Together. Most significant was the provision of adequate and accurate data to allow the partnership to understand risks and challenges and measure effectiveness against the key business priorities. This required challenge and eventually formal escalation, ultimately by myself as the independent scrutineer, to the local authority Chief Executive. Fortunately, this has resulted in significant improvements including the development of a more detailed performance scorecard, that provides robust and regular data, that is facilitating the clear identification of areas requiring further examination and improvement.

There have also been significant challenges in relation to the health input to the Cumberland Children Advice and Support Service (CCASS), the front door to services. Whilst progress has been made, there will need to be close monitoring of the contract to ensure it provides the input required and ensures connectivity to the health landscape and facilitates the collation of information to ensure effective risk assessment.

There is also good evidence that the new partnership has the necessary conditions in place for strong accountable and effective practice. The depth of single and multi-agency quality assurance and scrutiny undertaken in this first year, especially the commitment to multi-agency audits and re-audits, evidences the commitment to understand the strengths in practice and areas for improvement. Evidence of the outcomes of these audits in helping the partnership "know themselves" and understand the effectiveness of practice highlighted in this report. There are also plans in place to re-test practice linked to the business priorities, in order to better evidence impact on practice and outcomes, with planned re-evaluation of the impact of the Neglect Strategy and Toolkit on practice later in 2026.



There is also a strong culture of learning evidenced through the Workforce Learning and Development sub-group's commitment to regular learning reviews and the resharing of historic thematic learning across the new Partnership. I have also found that strategic and operational leaders have been accepting of my challenge as the independent scrutineer and fully engaged in the scrutiny process, it's findings and proactively action planning against identified improvements. I have also been asked by the DSPs to scrutinise the overall effectiveness and impact of the partnership in delivering its business objectives. This scrutiny will also inform the partnerships review of its first year, which will include reflections on assurance and impact. This evaluation will feed into the Safeguarding Partnership's planned Development Session in early June 2026.

There is also good evidence of shared and effective leadership across the partnership in tackling key safeguarding challenges as evidencing in this report. One strong example is the work led by Cumbria Constabulary, involving all partners in improving the response to missing children and young people, including those placed in the area by other local authorities. Going missing is a significant indicator and risk factor, which can increase the likelihood of young people suffering abuse and harms outside the home, especially exploitation and other contextual harms. There is evidence of demonstrable impact through the decrease in missing episodes and reduction in assessed risk for individual young people.

The Lead Partners and wider partnership agencies have also openly reflected on areas that require strengthening over the next year and these are reflected throughout this report. From my perspective while the partnership has strengthened engagement with Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) in education settings, there is more work to do to ensure education providers voices are fully integrated into the partnership at both a strategic and operational level. Equally, whilst there has been a commitment to feedback from children and young people as part of quality assurance activity, the voice and input of children and young people in all aspects of the partnership's work requires further development. There is a commitment to build on the outstanding work undertaken in the old Pan-Cumbria arrangements where young scrutineers worked alongside me and led on key pieces of scrutiny.

It is also recognised that over the next year there needs to be a real focus on impact. DSPs and LSPs have agreed the need to retest progress against the key business priorities and understand whether the desired outcomes and impact for children, young people and their families is evidenced. This will commence in summer 2026 with further scrutiny of practice focussed on children and young people at risk of neglect.

Overall, the partnership has undertaken significant work in their first year to ensure the conditions exist for effective multi-agency practice and support, that ensure that children and young people are protected from abuse and harm. There is also evidence of a real drive to ensure their needs are identified early and themselves and their families can receive the necessary support to prevent harm. The implementation of the governments Families First Partnership programme is also being embraced as an opportunity to re-evaluate, restructure and ensure the provision of effective and responsive services. The partnership will continue to seek assurance about the implementation of the reforms and will need to be focussed on measuring the impact and effectiveness in 2027.

Scrutiny Activity

Overall, I have fulfilled my scrutiny role through seeking robust assurance and evidence of effective and impactful practice. I achieve this through detailed scrutiny, observation and analysis and by questioning, support and challenge. This has included observing and providing feedback on the effectiveness of the subgroups and a full report will be provided later in 2026. I have also provided my independent opinion to assist decision making about whether specific circumstances meet the criteria for Serious Incident Notifications and Rapid Reviews or Learning Reviews. I also have input into reviews to ensure clear and robust learning.

I chair the wider Partnership Meeting with a real scrutiny and assurance lens. The quality of assurance reporting and evidence has been generally good and an open and interactive dialogue has continued, to ensure well triangulated evidence is presented that focuses on impact. I have directly reported progress and any areas of concern to DSPs and LSPs and my challenges are well received and there is a clear commitment to address areas requiring improvement.

A detailed piece scrutiny was undertaken to review the attendance and quality of strategy meetings after attendance at strategy meetings was raised as a concern from data provided on the Partners Improving Practice Scorecard. This involved triangulation of information from audits, review of admin processes, data deep dive feedback from practitioners and a detailed analysis report presented to a scrutiny event. The event focused on good practice as well as areas requiring improvement and embodied a culture of "high support" but "high challenge" and focused on developing an action plan to address key areas for improvement.

The detailed scrutiny report highlighted there is significant work to do to improve practice and ensure the effectiveness and consistency of strategy discussions/meetings and aligned work. However, there is evidence of immediate steps taken to improve practice and ensure enhanced senior oversight of decision making, improved communication with GPs and across the health landscape and using the development of Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams to strengthen practice in this area.

The scrutiny report findings have been shared widely across the partnership and presentations made to the wider partnership meeting, DSPs and LSPs. Close oversight and monitoring of progress and improvement by the Partners Improving Practice sub-group will need to be regularly reported through the assurance reporting schedule.



Lesley Walker

Lesley Walker

Independent Scrutineer, Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership

Building the Foundations of the Partnership - Partnership Subgroups

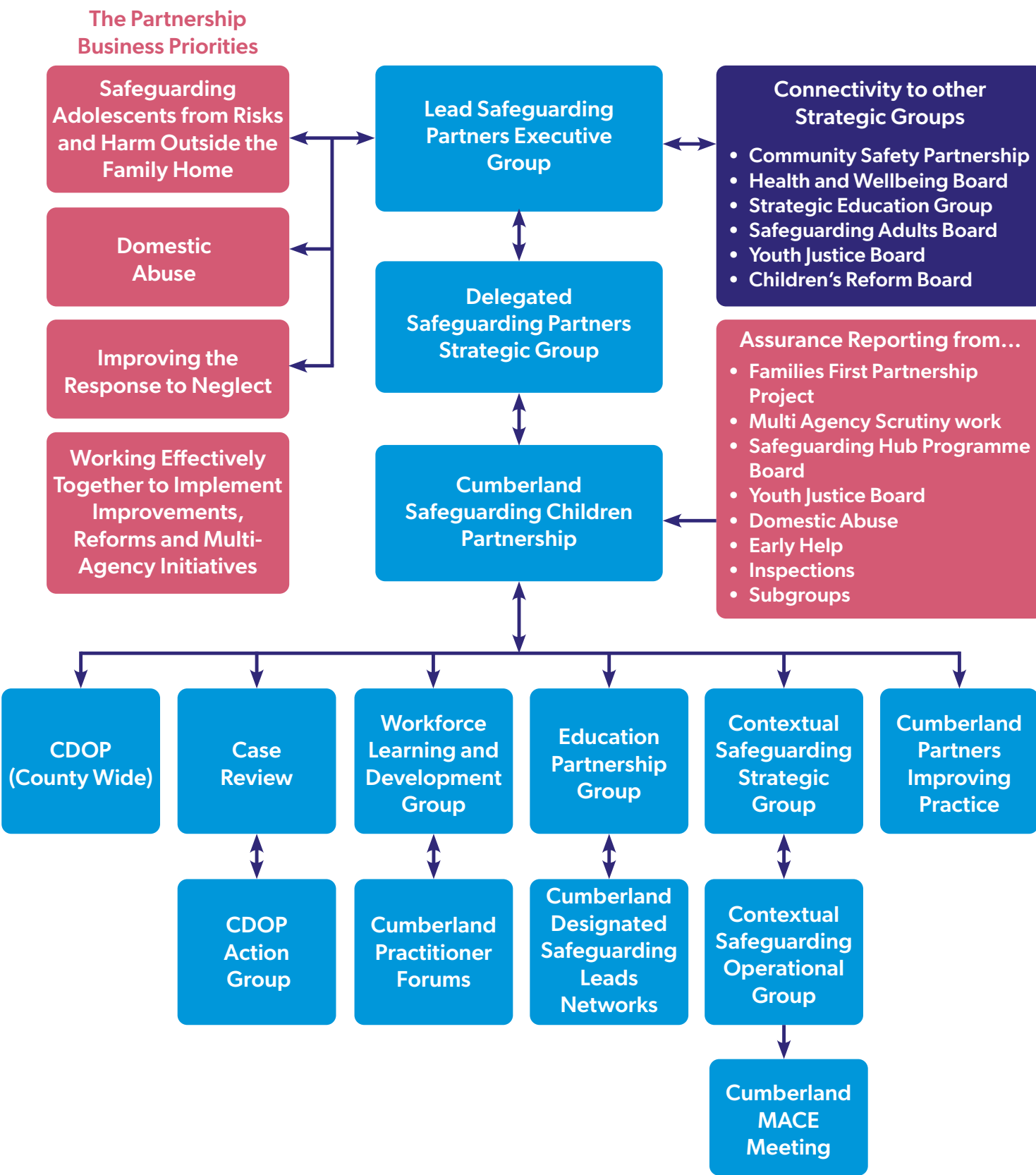
The partnership's priorities have been delivered through the dedicated work of its multi-agency subgroups, which have provided leadership, oversight and challenge to drive improvement across key areas of safeguarding after practice.

- Cumberland Partners Improving Practice.
- Workforce Learning and Development.
- Education Partnership Group.
- Case Review.
- Missing Exploited and Trafficked Children.
- Cumberland Children Advice and Support Service (CCASS) Programme Board.

The coordination of the Cumbria Child Death Overview Panel has continued to be hosted within the Cumberland partnership.



Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership Structure



Using Performance Data to Focus on Improvement and Impact

As mentioned earlier in this report, the partnership has been part of the North West Regional Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) Pilot Programme, where safeguarding partnerships across the region have worked collaboratively to develop a consistent North West MASA Dataset. Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership submitted data returns for 2025–2026, contributing to this regional approach.

To strengthen the partnership's ability to evidence impact and measure progress, a multi-agency performance scorecard has been developed during 2025–2026.

The development of a meaningful multi-agency dataset and performance framework has taken time, requiring partners to agree shared measures, improve data quality and establish consistent reporting arrangements across agencies.

This scorecard provides a framework for monitoring performance, identifying trends and evaluating the impact of safeguarding activity against the partnership's priorities. It is through this data scorecard that attendance at Strategy meetings by key partners was identified as scrutiny activity.

Next Steps

The scorecard will continue to be developed to support the partnership in the future in evidencing the difference that multi-agency safeguarding arrangements are making for children, young people and families, while informing future planning, scrutiny and improvement activity.

Improving Responses to Neglect

In the previous Pan Cumbria arrangements, a Neglect sub-group was implemented following previous detailed scrutiny of practice that evidenced real improvement and impact for children and young people. The scrutiny recognised that there was more work to do to ensure a consistent and effective response to neglect by all agencies. Within the new Cumberland arrangements, the monitoring of the response to neglect is within the Cumberland Partners Improving Practice subgroup. This group has continued to oversee agency action plans and a continued focus on developing agencies practice and has regular updates through individual agencies action plans.

Next Steps

The subgroup is currently collating evidence of impact and progress on embedding improved practice which will be tested through scrutiny in 2026.

Workforce Learning and Development Sub-group

Although not identified as one of the partnership's formal business priorities, workforce learning and development has remained a key area of focus throughout 2025–2026, supported by a dedicated Workforce Learning and Development Sub-group.

The sub-group plays a vital role in ensuring that the partnership fulfils its responsibilities under Working Together to Safeguard Children, which emphasises the importance of senior leaders promoting and embedding a learning culture that enables services to reflect on practice and implement improvement. The sub-group is responsible for the planning, coordination, commissioning, delivery and evaluation of high-quality multi-agency learning and development opportunities for the children's workforce across Cumberland.

A key focus of the sub-group has been ensuring that learning is translated into practice. Through oversight of the Workforce Learning and Development Plan, the group has continued to promote the embedding of learning from quality assurance activity, audits, safeguarding reviews and frontline practice to improve outcomes for children, young people and families.

The sub-group also reviews and strengthens multi-agency policies, procedures and practice guidance in response to learning identified through quality assurance activity, independent scrutiny and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews. This helps to ensure that lessons learned are effectively communicated, understood and applied across the partnership.

During the year, a range of face-to-face and virtual learning opportunities were delivered. This enabled practitioners from different agencies to learn together, strengthen professional relationships and develop a shared understanding of safeguarding responsibilities. This collaborative approach has contributed to more consistent practice across the partnership and supported the development of a strong culture of continuous learning and improvement.

The partnership recognises that a confident, skilled, and knowledgeable workforce is fundamental to effective safeguarding. Continued investment in workforce development remains an important enabler in achieving the partnership's vision of working together to keep Cumberland's children safe.



The partnership offers a range of learning opportunities. eLearning has continued to remain a popular medium for providing basic level safeguarding training. There are currently five eLearning courses available for practitioners to undertake. The impact of having this provision has been that there is significant access to basic safeguarding eLearning, including services such as taxi companies who provide transport to children and young people. This provides a consistent delivery across Cumberland to a wide range of practitioners.

During 2025/26 there have been:



44

Learning events, either virtual or face to face



4,071

eLearning courses completed



2,443

Practitioners/staff completed
Safeguarding eLearning



573

Practitioners completed
Radicalisation and Extremism eLearning



534

Practitioners completed Child Exploitation
and Extra Familial Harm eLearning



19

Designated Leads Networks

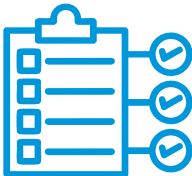
Following feedback from practitioners who identified a need for training that bridges the gap between the eLearning Safeguarding course and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Level 3 training, a Further Awareness of the Safeguarding Environment (Level 2) course has been developed. While the DSL Level 3 programme is a specialist course designed to provide DSLs with a detailed understanding of the Cumberland Levels of Need and child protection processes, the Level 2 course offers practitioners a broader understanding of the safeguarding environment and strengthens their knowledge and confidence in safeguarding practice.

A Multi-Agency Training Pool was developed through the pan Cumbria partnership. Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership has continued to deliver training using this model, which remains a key strength of the partnership, supporting the development and delivery of high-quality, multi-agency safeguarding training across the local area.

This year, the CSCP Business Team has piloted a process to “close the loop” on training evaluation and better understand the impact of learning on practice. Below are some examples of practitioner feedback that demonstrate the positive impact the training has had on their safeguarding work.

As part of this process, the partnership business team contacts participants by telephone approximately three months after they have attended training to explore how the learning has influenced and informed their safeguarding practice. This follow-up enables the partnership to assess the longer-term impact of training and identify examples of improved knowledge, confidence and professional practice. When the overall quality of training was explored, 85% awarded a score of 4 or above out of 5.

Where there was a lower score, this was primarily due to training being delivered online. The following reflects some of the feedback received.

 Implemented a tracker for information and incidents	 I understand what needs to be in a chronology	 Improved recording skills	 Confirmed my knowledge and understanding of what was needed
 I always ensure the voice of children is gathered from parents during calls	 Better communication with services	 Went away thinking – I know what to do if a parent tells me about Domestic Abuse	 Started using new paperwork and helped form the meetings more consistently
 I ensure I always get the pupils voices to see if things are changing	 Been able to get a better understanding of the family	 I have reviewed policies in line with the training	 More confidence amongst staff

During the feedback participants were asked what the partnership could improve and share any additional reflections.

Participants expressed a clear preference for in-person, face-to-face training and provided positive feedback on the overall quality of the training delivered. Comments included, “keep up the good work”, “good training and good to keep updating your knowledge”, and “approachable and knowledgeable trainers who made participants feel comfortable asking questions.” Participants also highlighted that facilitators were welcoming, supportive and created a positive learning environment.

Feedback further emphasised the value of learning within a multi-agency setting, with several participants identifying this as a key benefit of the training. The opportunity to learn alongside colleagues and trainers from different organisations was seen as enhancing understanding, strengthening professional networks and promoting a shared approach to safeguarding practice.

Participants also identified areas for future consideration. Some felt that training opportunities could be promoted more frequently, despite training being a regular feature within the partnership’s monthly newsletter. In addition, a perceived gap was identified in the support available to parents and carers of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), particularly in helping them to respond confidently and effectively to situations where children and young people may display aggressive or violent behaviours.

Next Steps

This pilot has provided valuable insight into the longer-term impact of training and the views of practitioners. As a result, the Business Team will now incorporate this approach into its ongoing quality assurance and evaluation cycle, ensuring that the impact of training on practice continues to be monitored and used to inform future service development.

Practitioner Forums, which are open to anyone who works with children and young people, provide an opportunity to develop common practice across Cumberland. The forums support practitioners to learn from each other and understand each other’s roles and responsibilities and what local provision is available in Cumberland. During the year, 6 forum meetings were held in Cumberland. Feedback has been positive with practitioners saying when they attend the forum meetings, they value the opportunity to hear relevant and up to date safeguarding advice, along with services available to support the children, young people and families they work with.

The dissemination of safeguarding information through monthly **newsletters and 5-minute briefings** has remained a key priority for the CSCP. During the last year, 30 newsletters/5-minute briefings were published, covering a wide range of safeguarding topics and emerging issues relevant to practitioners.

These briefings have been used to share local learning and promote awareness of key safeguarding concerns. For example, learning relating to drowning prevention, both within the home and in open water environments, was developed and disseminated jointly with the Westmorland and Furness Safeguarding Partnership to ensure a consistent approach and clear messaging across Cumbria.

The monthly newsletters continue to provide practitioners with timely information, including an ‘In the News’ section that highlights relevant local and national safeguarding developments. Publications also ensure that practitioners are kept informed of any changes in legislation, policy, guidance and safeguarding practice, supporting a knowledgeable and well-informed workforce across the partnership.

Evidence has been seen of partner agencies using CSCP communications to further cascade safeguarding messages through their own internal communication channels, extending the reach of learning and key safeguarding information across the workforce, an example of this is the North East North Cumbria Integrated Care Board Futures Workspace regularly shares the partnership information. This demonstrates the value of the partnership's communications approach and the role it plays in supporting a shared understanding of safeguarding issues.

Next Steps

More work is needed to ensure that all practitioners consistently access and engage with these learning opportunities. Increasing awareness and encouraging greater utilisation of newsletters, 5-minute briefings and other communication products will continue to be a focus for the partnership, helping to ensure that practitioners remain informed of local learning, emerging safeguarding issues, changes in legislation and best practice developments.

Missing, Exploited and Trafficked

The CSCP's Missing, Exploited and Trafficked (MET) sub-group has multi-agency strategic oversight of Child Exploitation (CE) in Cumberland. This group is being chaired by the representatives of Cumbria Constabulary; it meets on a quarterly basis and has representation from across a range of agencies and has continued to progress the support for children and young people who are experiencing child exploitation. Following a scrutiny review of CSCP's Missing, Exploited and Trafficked (MET) sub-group an operational group has been set up to ensure the progress on actions and closer monitoring of risk reduction, impact and effectiveness.

As Cumbria Constabulary covers the whole of Cumbria, partners have worked together on a pan Cumbria basis to improve the response to children and young people who go missing. This work has focused on strengthening safeguarding and improving outcomes by helping agencies work more effectively together to identify, assess and manage risk. It has included reviewing existing processes, such as police involvement and Return Home Interviews to ensure responses are appropriate, consistent and effective. The work also aimed to provide clearer guidance and responsibilities for staff working in schools, residential care and other care settings, to develop a shared understanding of what constitutes a missing episode and establish clear escalation routes when concerns arise. Ultimately, the programme sought to reduce repeat missing episodes, improve safety planning, prevent harm to children and young people and reduce unnecessary demand on police services. Training was provided by the police on a pan Cumbria footprint for schools and care settings which was supported by both partnerships.

An audit of the implementation of the revised processes found that the new process has brought about enhanced decision making for the police and others. Policies and procedures have been followed, and risk assessments have been conducted by the correct people at the right time. The impact of this work is highlighted previously within the report.

Next Steps

As the audit was for a short period of time, further auditing will be undertaken to measure effectiveness and impact and review the need for any further training opportunities.

Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (LCSPRs)/Case Review

The Case Review sub-group, chaired by the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB) Designated Nurse for Safeguarding, All Age and Children Looked After, is responsible for overseeing the implementation of Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (LCSPRs), Local Learning Reviews, and any subsequent action plans. The sub-group also ensures that learning outcomes are disseminated and published across the partnership.

During 2025/26, the sub-group oversaw one Rapid Review and two Local Learning Reviews to determine whether the circumstances met the threshold for a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review and to identify opportunities for learning and service improvement. None of the cases reviewed met the criteria for an LCSPR.

In addition, agencies across the Cumberland footprint participated in an out-of-county Rapid Review. Following this review, a Local Learning Review was undertaken to ensure that all relevant learning for Cumberland was fully understood, considered and shared across partnership agencies. It should be noted that the concerns identified in relation to Cumberland were historical and that agencies had already taken action to strengthen safeguarding practice and address the issues highlighted.

Learning briefings arising from these reviews have been published on the partnership website and shared through partnership newsletters to support wider dissemination of learning.

Key themes identified through the reviews include:

- Improving the quality and effectiveness of strategy meetings.
- Ensuring robust and effective safety planning for children, young people and families.
- Embedding a “Think Family” approach across all services.
- Strengthening information sharing and improving understanding of the wider health landscape.
- Ensuring practitioners understand and effectively implement the Partnership Escalation Policy and Procedure.
- Understanding the cumulative impact of individual concerns.
- Recognising and understanding the significance of historical concerns when assessing risk and need.
- The seeking and sharing of information and understanding of the health landscape.
- Practitioners know how to implement the partnerships Escalation Policy and procedure.

Next Steps

Whilst learning from the reviews has been published through learning briefings and partnership newsletters, the partnership recognises the importance of reinforcing learning through direct engagement with practitioners and undertaking further testing of the impact and embedding of learning to improving practice.

A Lunch and Learn session is therefore planned, bringing together the learning from all three reviews to support reflection, promote good practice and ensure that key safeguarding messages are embedded across the Cumberland Partnership.

Child Death Review and Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)

Child Death Review partners, the Local Authorities and ICBs for Cumbria now hold responsibility for the delivery of the Child Death Review Process, as set out in the Children Act 2004 and as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017. The CDOP is multi-agency with differing areas of professional expertise. This process is undertaken locally for all children who are normally resident in Cumbria. The governance for CDOP in Cumbria has continued to be via the Cumberland Partnership. Child death review arrangements can be accessed [here](#).

The purpose of the Child Death Review Process is to try to ascertain why children and young people die and to put in place interventions to protect other children and young people and prevent future deaths, wherever possible.

The process intends to:

- Document, analyse and review information in relation to each child that dies, in order to confirm the cause of death, determine any contributing factors and to identify learning arising from the process that may prevent future child deaths.
- To make recommendations to all relevant organisations where actions have been identified which may prevent future deaths or promote the health, safety and wellbeing of children and young people.
- To produce an Annual Report on local patterns and trends in child death, any lessons learnt and actions taken and the effectiveness of the wider Child Death Review Process.
- To contribute to local, regional and national initiatives to improve learning from Child Death Reviews.

The Child Death Review information in this report covers the 2024/25 reporting year, as the 2025/26 report had not been signed off at the time of this Annual Report's publication.

2024/25

- In 2024/25 there were 21 child deaths.
- In looking at the child gender, 13 children were male and 8 children were female who died.
- During 2024/25, a total of 21 cases were reviewed and signed off for that reporting year. All except one case were historical cases, where the death occurred prior to April 2023. Delays in 2024/25 were due to both challenges in accessing adequate information and other statutory processes. This has been identified as an issue nationally.
- During 2024/25, 6 CDOP meetings were held, and cases were reviewed by the panel to see if there were actions that could be taken to prevent other deaths.
- In learning from child deaths, information to practitioners has been provided in the form of briefings on water safety, safer sleep and accident prevention.

A unique aspect of the safeguarding arrangements across Cumberland and Westmorland and Furness is that the Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) sits within the governance structure of the Cumberland Safeguarding Partnership. The coordination of the CDOP is managed through the Cumberland arrangements, reflecting the fact that the Child Death Coordinator is employed by Cumberland Council.

During 2025/26, a review of Child Death Review arrangements has been undertaken across Cumbria in collaboration with partners from Lancashire and South Cumbria and the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB). The review has considered future options for the administration and oversight of child death reviews, including arrangements whereby deaths of children and young people from the Cumberland area would be reviewed within a North East and North Cumbria CDOP footprint, while deaths of children and young people from Westmorland and Furness would be reviewed through the pan Lancashire CDOP.

At the time of publication, this review has been placed on hold due to the potential changes to Integrated Care Board footprints and the implementation of Local Government Reorganisation across Lancashire, Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool. These developments may have significant implications for future governance and partnership arrangements. Once there is greater clarity regarding these system changes the review will be revisited to ensure that child death review arrangements continue to provide effective scrutiny, identify opportunities for learning and support improvements in outcomes for children, young people and families across the region.

Education as part of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements

Primary, secondary and early years Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Networks continue to be well established across Cumberland. Attendance remains strong, and the networks continue to develop as an effective mechanism for ensuring a two-way flow of information between education settings and safeguarding partners. They provide an important forum for sharing updates, promoting best practice and enabling education representatives to contribute to safeguarding developments at both an operational and strategic level.

During 2025/26, a total of 15 school DSL network meetings and 4 early years DSL network meetings were delivered, providing regular opportunities for practitioners to engage with safeguarding priorities, legislative changes, emerging issues, and local learning.

A particular strength of the DSL network arrangements has been the establishment of the annual Designated Safeguarding Leads Conference. Held on 22 September 2025, the conference was attended by 120 DSLs from across Cumberland, with feedback demonstrating a high level of satisfaction and positive impact. The event covered a range of safeguarding topics, equipping DSLs with the knowledge and confidence to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities and ensuring they remained up to date with current legislation, guidance, and emerging practice issues.

The keynote speaker, Stuart Myers from The World at Your Feet, delivered an inspiring and thought-provoking presentation that reinforced the vital role DSLs play in supporting children and young people to overcome challenges, build resilience and achieve positive outcomes. The conference provided a valuable opportunity for learning, networking, and professional reflection, further strengthening safeguarding practice across education settings in Cumberland.

Below is a selection of feedback from the event

"The early support he received, along with the guidance of dedicated professionals throughout his journey, gave him the strongest foundation for future success."

"Great speaker - very inspirational."

"I liked Stewart Myers, he really brought across the ethos of strengths based practice."

"Great family hub update and the extra help offer."

"I found all of it useful, this is my first DSL conference."

"Violence against women and girls cyber prevent so useful."

"Liked the difficult but useful conversations presentation."

"Great to be able to hear updates face to face and meet with colleagues in similar roles."

DSLs were asked what they would do differently within their school and some of the feedback is that:

- Distribute information to pastoral team.
- Refer some students for additional Early Help support.
- Regularly ensure all staff have a clear overview of their responsibilities.
- Change and update our internal training.
- Ensure staff sign up to newsletters.
- Cumberland youth justice work - got some great links to support us.

On exploring the impact of the conference, a number of schools reported increased confidence in recognising and responding to safeguarding concerns. Feedback highlighted that delegates valued the opportunity to hear from expert speakers, receive updates on current safeguarding issues and engage with colleagues from across the education sector.

Whilst feedback was overwhelmingly positive, attendees identified some areas for improvement. Many DSLs expressed a preference for the conference to be delivered as a full-day event to allow for greater exploration of key topics and networking opportunities. However, some participants also reflected that there was a significant amount of information to absorb in a single day.

Attendees also highlighted the importance of receiving regular updates regarding developments within Children's Services and safeguarding arrangements. This feedback reinforces the value of the DSL Networks in maintaining effective communication and ensuring education settings remain informed of local, regional and national developments.

Following the success of the conference, the CSCP has committed to delivering a further DSL Conference in September 2026.

Next Steps

Building on the success of the DSL networks, the partnership is progressing plans to establish a Strategic Education Group to provide strategic leadership, strengthen engagement with education partners, and ensure the voice of education is effectively represented within the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements.

Partners Improving Practice

The CSCP Practice Improvement Sub-Group replaced the former pan Cumbria Area Safeguarding Group. The sub-group has continued to provide robust multi-agency scrutiny of safeguarding practice across Cumberland, using audits, performance analysis, reviews and practitioner feedback to identify strengths, emerging themes and areas for improvement. This has supported the partnership to translate learning into action, monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding practice and oversee progress against key priorities, including the Neglect Action Plan and Domestic Abuse Strategy. Through multi-agency audit the sub-group reviewed how agencies worked together to support children, young people and families affected by domestic abuse in Cumberland, ensuring that responses were timely, effective and that the voice of the child was visible. The audits have highlighted both strengths and areas for improvement to ensure that the best possible domestic abuse support is offered in Cumberland. There is regular awareness through the partnership which includes training and regular input into the 17 days of activism.

It is through the work of this subgroup that scrutiny was undertaken on the Effectiveness of Strategy meetings detailed earlier in the report by the Independent Scrutineer.

The Partners Improving Practice Sub-Group will continue to monitor delivery of the improvement action plan and provide oversight of progress. However, it should be recognised that the implementation of the Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams (MACPTs) is expected to have a significant impact on strengthening the effectiveness, consistency and quality of strategy discussions and meetings across Cumberland, supporting longer-term improvements in multi-agency safeguarding practice.



Families First Partnership Programme (FFPP)

The Families First Partnership Programme is driving significant national reform of children's social care and safeguarding arrangements, with a greater emphasis on early help, family support, and integrated multi-agency working. Underpinned by Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, the programme introduces Family Help, Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams (MACPTs) and enhanced Family Group Decision Making. Across Cumberland, partners, supported by a dedicated project team are working collaboratively to implement these reforms. The project team provides regular progress updates to the Local Safeguarding Partners (LSPs), Delivery and Scrutiny Partners (DSPs) and wider partnership meetings, which ensures oversight, accountability and timely delivery of key programme milestones and implementation requirements.



Next Steps for 2026/27

Building on the progress made during the first year of the partnership, partners remain committed to strengthening safeguarding arrangements and improving outcomes for children and young people across Cumberland. Key priorities for 2026/27 include:

- Embedding learning and continuous improvement through ongoing practice reviews, multi-agency audits, independent scrutiny and performance monitoring to ensure learning translates into improved practice and outcome.
- Further developing the Partnership Performance Scorecard, including greater integration of partner agency data and enhanced use of qualitative information to better understand children's and young people's experiences and the effectiveness of interventions.
- Building on the success of innovative initiatives, including Pol-Ed, Operation Veritas, Child First approaches and the multi-agency missing children process the partnership need to continue to evaluate impact and identifying opportunities for further development and sustainability.
- Enhancing the voice of children, young people and families within partnership activity is a priority, ensuring their experiences help shape priorities, service development and quality assurance activity.
- Expanding engagement with schools, voluntary and community sector organisations, recognising their vital role in identifying need early and supporting children, young people and families.
- Maintaining strong governance, accountability and oversight arrangements, ensuring partners continue to provide effective challenge, demonstrate ownership of agreed actions and remain focused on delivering measurable improvements.
- While the partnership has achieved significant progress during its first year, partners remain ambitious for children and young people in Cumberland. This progress has been supported by the dedicated work of the partnership's subgroups, whose activity has driven improvement, strengthened safeguarding practice and provided focused oversight across key priority areas, as detailed throughout this report.

The Business Team

The partnership business team provides the operational management, coordination, and administrative support required to deliver the work of the Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Hosted within Cumberland Council, the team has played a central role in supporting the establishment and development of the new safeguarding partnership during its first year. Despite being relatively small in comparison to safeguarding partnerships across other areas of the North West and North East, the team has supported the delivery of the partnership's statutory functions and business priorities.

During 2025–2026, the team consisted of:

- A Partnership Business Manager.
- A Partnership Officer.
- A Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) Coordinator.
- A part-time Business and Planning Assistant.

The team has supported governance arrangements, coordinated partnership activity, facilitated multi-agency meetings and events, managed performance and reporting processes. The team has ensured that learning from reviews, audits, and quality assurance activity has been shared effectively across the partnership. Their work has been instrumental in embedding the new safeguarding arrangements and fostering strong collaborative relationships between partner agencies.

North West Regional Improvement Programme

The Department for Education (DfE) had funded the North West Regional Improvement Plan Pilot. The pilot is an opportunity to break down some of the barriers to improving Children's Social Care in the North West. The pilot had four workstreams, each led by a Director of Children's Services, and supported by a full-time workstream lead based within a North West council.

The workstreams were:

- Partnerships.
- Sufficiency.
- Workforce.
- Social Work Model.

The CSCP have been involved in the partnership workstream, which the objective of this workstream is to work with key regional partners to create a region-wide strategic forum to facilitate closer working and drive improvements to the broader practice system. It was to support local safeguarding partnerships to align with the new requirements in the revised Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and 2026 Guidance.

This work has now concluded following the cessation of Department for Education (DfE) funding. While the programme delivered valuable learning and contributed to improvements in multi-agency safeguarding practice, future development and oversight will be progressed through existing partnership structures and improvement activity.

Financial Arrangements

Budget Contributions 2025/26

Agency	Budget Contribution
Cumberland Council	£106,834.50
Health North East & North Cumbria ICB	£62,593
Cumbria Constabulary	£44,953
Total	£214,380.50

Appendix A – CSCP Partnership Membership

Agency	Role
Cumberland Council	Director Children and Family Wellbeing
Cumberland Council	Assistant Director - Social Care
Cumberland Council	Assistant Director – Family Help, Partnerships and Youth Justice
Cumberland Council	Assistant Director – Education, SEND and Inclusion
Cumberland Council	Assistant Director – Quality and Safeguarding
North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board	Director of Nursing, Neighbourhood Health and Safeguarding
North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board	Designated Nurse, Safeguarding, All Age and Children Looked After
North Cumbria Integrated Care (NCIC)	Head of Safeguarding
Cumbria, Northumberland Tyne & Wear Foundation Trust (CNTW)	Group Nurse Director
Public Health - Cumberland Council	Director – Public Health
Cumbria Constabulary	Assistant Chief Constable
Cumbria Constabulary	Detective Superintendent
Cumbria Probation Service	Head of Probation Service Cumbria
Voluntary Sector Representative	Joint Chair Voluntary Sector Reference Group
CAFCASS, Cumbria	Service Manager
Education Representative	Headteacher
Education Representative	Carlisle College Principle
Cumberland Council	CSCP Partnership & Improvement Manager
Cumberland Council	CSCP Business Support