



Isle of Wight
**Safeguarding
Children
Partnership**

Business Plan 2025–26

Cross cutting themes in strategic priorities

Voice of the child
and family

“Cost of living crisis”
and the impact of this

Equality, Diversity and
Inclusion
considerations

Domestic abuse and
parent-oriented
issues

Emotional wellbeing
and mental health

Capability and
capacity of
the workforce

Online harms and risk
outside the home

Engagement with
services, getting it
right first time

Children with
additional
needs/disabilities

Relational, assertive
safeguarding (inc.
early help) practice
with families and with
each other

Cumulative impact
of harm and extra
familial harm

Analysing data to
identify families
needing support

Strategic priorities review for 2025–26



1. Working to ensure a multi-agency family approach to safeguarding children through their engagement in education, with a focus on vulnerable learners with reduced educational engagement.
2. Promoting a multi-agency, whole-system approach to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children and young people, focused on preventing neglect and cumulative harm. To include:
 - Safeguarding children as victims of domestic abuse and working with the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board
 - Continued focus on early help (and within early years).
 - Language that cares
 - Understanding children and families experience of services where they have been closed due to lack of engagement or not meeting the criteria e.g. mental health and emotional wellbeing .
3. A multi agency approach to implementing the safeguarding changes required by the [Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill](#) (and [Families First Partnership Programme](#)).
4. Assuring the safe and effective operation of the multi agency safeguarding hub.

1. Working to ensure a multi-agency family approach to safeguarding children through their engagement in education with a focus on vulnerable learners with reduced educational engagement



Aim

- A shared understanding of who our most vulnerable and at-risk children are
- The partnership is assured of multiagency planning being in place for every child who needs it
- Increased confidence across the multiagency workforce of roles and responsibilities
- An increased engagement in Early Help for vulnerable learners in the Early Years.

Impact

- An increase in educational engagement for children at risk or with additional vulnerabilities.

1. Working to ensure a multi-agency family approach to safeguarding children through their engagement in education with a focus on vulnerable learners with reduced educational engagement

- 1) Vulnerable children and educational engagement thematic audit (Q4 2025/26)
- 2) Include reference to Early Help in the Keeping Children Safe in Education 157/175 audit and Early Years Safeguarding Audit
- 3) Gain assurance from the Early Years Service and settings regarding “school readiness” and engagement of the sector in Early Help
- 4) Relevant agencies should routinely enquire into how and where a child is educated, and their experience of education. Assurance should be provided demonstrating this is securely in place and auditable.
- 5) The Education and Inclusion service should provide assurance regarding the safeguarding training expectations of all staff working with Electively Home Educated (EHE) families. The safeguarding training pathway should be comprehensive as noted by the National Child Safeguarding Review Panel.

1. Working to ensure a multi-agency family approach to safeguarding children through their engagement in education, with a focus on vulnerable learners with reduced educational engagement

- 6) A senior school leader to be nominated from the membership of the IOWSCP Education Subgroup as approved by IOWSCP Executive and reflecting updated partnership arrangements
- 7) Request that the Early Help yearly assurance report includes commentary on the effectiveness of our early help arrangements in promoting school attendance and/or educational engagement
- 8) Round table discussion to further explore the theme of children who are or may be neurodivergent
- 9) Creation of 'young people' page on family information hub website to include diversionary services for children and young people, in relation to exploitation and extra familial harm
- 10) Agree a joint approach (schools and local partnership) for all severely absent pupils as part of the Family Help offer
- 11) Seek assurance around children in the vulnerable or at-risk category transitioning to new schools, owing to closure

1. Working to ensure a multi-agency family approach to safeguarding children through their engagement in education, with a focus on vulnerable learners with reduced educational engagement

12) Developing our understanding and response to children who have a range of vulnerabilities or risks by scoping the concept of mapping children who have overlaying vulnerabilities. e.g. reduced attendance, reduced hours provision for longer than six months, two or more suspensions, permanent exclusion, not on a school roll, electively home educated, where they are known to the Youth Justice Service, or are indicated to be at risk of child exploitation (medium or high risk), have a parent in prison, open to CAMHs or Children's Social Care, repeat referrals to Children's Social Care or on receipt of early help support.

This scoping could lead to further activity that could include mapping contextual information, characteristics of their local area, including deprivation and services and support available in the geographical area. Gaining assurance of multi agency plans in response to individual children, and how service, team and strategic planning supports.

2. Promoting a multi-agency, whole-system approach to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children, focused on preventing neglect and cumulative harm.

Aim

- More families with children in their early years engaged in Early Help
- To increase confidence across the multi-agency workforce in their response to children as victims of domestic abuse
- To maintain a focus on critical areas such as Child Sexual Abuse, Child Exploitation and Early Help
- To better understand the rereferral rate for children to children's social care and collectively take actions in response to supporting the prevention of neglect and wider cumulative harm (get it right first time)
- Developing a shared approach of language that cares in our work with children, families and each other

Impact

- An increase engagement in effective early help (right help, right time)
- Uplift in children accessing support as victims of domestic abuse
- To see the green shoots of an appropriate reduction in the rereferral rate which ensures that children get the right help and the right time
- Language that cares supporting children and families' engagement with services

2. Promoting a multi-agency, whole-system approach to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children, focused on preventing neglect and cumulative harm.

- 1) Multi-agency thematic audit that considers the multi-agency response to children who are re-referred to children's social care (Q1 25/26)
- 2) Create Domestic Abuse Referral pathway for children as victims of domestic abuse
- 3) Audit of the response to children as victims of domestic abuse (Q3 25/26)
- 4) Assurance and oversight of actions agencies and the partnership are taking in response to the presentation of findings from the benchmarking exercise against the Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) of the multi-agency response to children who are victims of domestic abuse evaluation criteria
- 5) Promoting language that cares and restorative practice approach to working with children and families

2. Promoting a multi-agency, whole-system approach to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children, focused on preventing neglect and cumulative harm.

- 6) Joint IOWSCP and Safeguarding Adult Board conference with the theme of family approach and domestic abuse
- 7) Child Sexual Abuse practice week (June 2025)
- 8) Child Exploitation practice week (October 2025)
- 9) Early Help and prevention practice week (March 2026)
- 10) Ensuring the continued provision of Domestic Abuse training through working with the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board

3. A multi agency approach to implementing the safeguarding changes required by the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill (and Families First Partnership Programme)

Aim

- Safeguarding partners maintain oversight and assurance of the implementation of the Families First Partnership Programme and the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill when enacted.

Impact

- Successful implementation of Families First Partnership Programme, including key elements of family help, family group decision making, multi-agency child protection teams with a focus on early help and prevention

3. A multi agency approach to implementing the safeguarding changes required by the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill (and Families First Partnership Programme)

- 1) For safeguarding partners to lead the development and implementation of family help, family group decision making and establish a model of a multi-agency child protection team
- 2) Support the development of a multi-agency approach to contextual safeguarding and risk outside the home
- 3) Assurance of a continued focus on early help and prevention across relevant agencies via the PQA data set and associated scrutiny work.
- 4) Review and align Threshold and Indicator chart (by March 26)
- 5) Align the IOWSCP Learning Needs Analysis to family help
- 6) Move to one assessment across Family Help
- 7) Ensure our local support offer to parents/carers and family networks is aligned to family help model

4. Assuring the safe and effective operation of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Aim

- Safeguarding partners are assured of the safe and effective operation of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Impact

- Children and families are effectively identified and responded to when they are in need of family help (support and protection)

4. Assuring the safe and effective operation of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

1) MASH audit August 2025

- practitioner survey
- structured observations of multi-agency activity in MASH including strategy discussions
- individual interviews with senior operational leads of MASH agencies
- Review of weekly quality assurance process
- Review a sample of Inter Agency Referral Forms (IARFs), that include examples of children where the outcomes are:
 - 'No Further Action' at the front door
 - Early Help
 - A child and family assessment both Section 17 and Section 47
 - to include children who have been subject to a rereferral in the last 5 months

4. Assuring the safe and effective operation of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)



- 2) Creation of Threshold guidance document to support the current Hampshire and IOW Threshold and Indicator Chart
- 3) MASH webinars
- 4) Threshold and Indicator Chart review – multi agency task and finish group, considering families first partnership programme requirements and learning from audits and reviews (by March 2026)
- 5) Partner engagement with the MASH Operational and Strategic Board
 - Ensure the continued development and expansion of the data set
 - Ensure the continued focus on and scrutiny of the regular auditing within the MASH
 - Assurance around the transition from ICS to MOSAIC (risks and contingency planning)
- 6) Continue MASH Governance reporting and scrutiny to the IOWSCP Executive
- 7) Safeguarding Partner oversight of the Health MASH specification