



# Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Partnership

Annual Report  
2024-2025

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# Foreword from statutory partners

This annual report aims to provide our partners, community, and wider stakeholders with assurance about the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements in Wandsworth. As statutory safeguarding partners, we remain committed to open reflection, robust challenge, and continuous learning. Safeguarding is about more than systems and processes it is about people, their safety, their aspirations, and their right to be heard.

Over the past year, safeguarding partners have worked together with resilience and determination. The year has been marked by change and pressure across services, but despite these challenges, agencies have continued to prioritise the protection of children and young people. It is a testimony to the commitment of our workforce that safeguarding has remained at the heart of practice in Wandsworth, supported by strong partnership relationships.

There have been significant achievements. We have strengthened our work on anti-racist practice, ensuring that it is not simply a principle but an active and visible part of how we safeguard children. Early Help services have grown, becoming more accessible to families who need them most. Education partners have worked to ensure that children with special educational needs to receive the right support in the right place at the right time.

At the same time, the partnership has strengthened its focus on meaningful data, developing the tools needed to better understand the experiences of children and respond quickly to emerging risks.

The partnership has also maintained its focus on scrutiny and learning. Two rapid reviews and one Child Safeguarding Practice Review were undertaken, with learning shared through training, workshops, and briefings. The work of the Young Scrutineers, who continue to bring

an essential perspective to our understanding of safeguarding practice. Their reflections remind us that safeguarding is not only about protecting children from harm but also about supporting them to thrive, feel included, and trust the services that are there to help them. We do not underestimate the challenges that remain. Demand for SEND support continues to rise, placing pressure on schools and services.

Looking forward, the priorities for the year ahead will be to consolidate and build on this work. We will continue to embed anti-racist practice across all agencies; strengthen early and inclusive support for children and families; further develop accessible health pathways; and refine our use of multi-agency data to ensure that it drives improvement and accountability. Importantly, we will evaluate the impact of our interventions to ensure that change is not only implemented but sustained.

We are proud of the achievements made across the partnership, but we are also clear that safeguarding is never complete. It is a process of constant vigilance, reflection, and improvement. To achieve this, we must continue to work in strong partnership both locally and regionally, learning from one another and sharing good practice.

Finally, we would like to thank our partners across all agencies for their commitment, professionalism, and resilience. We extend particular thanks to frontline staff, who work tirelessly and often under considerable pressure to safeguard children and young people in Wandsworth.



Justin Roper  
Director of Quality,  
NHS SWL Integrated Care  
Board  
Executive Chair of the  
WSCP



Ana Popovici  
Executive Director  
Children's Services,  
Wandsworth Council



Steven Todd  
SWL BCU Head of  
Public Protection

# Our Independent Scrutineer

## Sarah Lawrence



Sarah brings a wealth of experience in safeguarding and governance, offering an impartial and informed perspective on our partnership's work. Her role is to provide independent oversight, challenge, and assurance, helping to ensure that our safeguarding arrangements are both effective and accountable. Through her reflections, Sarah supports continuous improvement by highlighting strengths, identifying areas for development, and encouraging transparency across our multi-agency safeguarding efforts.

### Reflections from our Independent Scrutineer

As Independent Scrutineer for the Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP),

I have seen encouraging progress over the past year in how the partnership is working to keep children safe, listen to their voices, and drive improvement through learning.

Working Together 2023 highlights the critical role of independent scrutiny in providing objective assessment of how effectively local safeguarding arrangements are working – particularly in improving outcomes for children. In this role, I have observed a growing maturity in the partnership's ability to self-reflect, learn, and adapt, while holding itself accountable for making meaningful change.

Children's voices have been increasingly central to the WSCP's work. The development and involvement of Young Scrutineers is a particular strength, with their contributions shaping both the Annual Conference and ongoing scrutiny. Their perspectives – including on issues such as stop and search – have added depth and authenticity to discussions, helping to ground the partnership's work in lived experience.

I have also seen Wandsworth make real efforts to broaden and deepen engagement, particularly with Education and Early Years settings, as well as Voluntary and Community Sector organisations. There is clear recognition that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and the steps taken to include these voices in subgroups and wider discussions reflect a commitment to inclusive partnership working.

Alongside this, there is a clear focus on learning from reviews and national developments with regular consideration of national evidence to inform practice locally. Practice improvements are beginning to show in WSCP training and development, and the foundation for stronger practice assurance is in place – though there is more to do to ensure this work is consistently planned and followed through. The partnership is beginning to test how well learning from reviews and national programmes – including the Families First for Children pathfinders – has been embedded in local systems.

Like many partnerships, and as is the case in safeguarding work in an evolving national landscape, stubborn challenges remain. Engagement between meetings can be variable, and there is still work to do to close persistent data gaps. However, there is a growing evidence base, and an openness to honest reflection and continuous improvement.

Looking ahead, sustaining momentum will require continued focus on multi-agency working, embedding quality assurance into routine practice, and building stronger routes for children and families to influence both strategy and practice. The partnership is well-placed to take this next step – and I look forward to continuing to support and challenge this work over the year to come.

# Independent Scrutineer Activity Summary 2024/2025

Over the course of 2024/25, scrutiny has focused on strengthening assurance, supporting learning, and testing the impact of multi-agency safeguarding work across Wandsworth.

## Key Areas of Focus

### **Autism Diagnostic Pathways**

Scrutiny was undertaken in response to concerns about lengthy waits for autism diagnosis, affecting over 1,300 children locally. While assurance was gained that children on the new pathway are receiving support, scrutiny identified gaps in information-sharing between health and safeguarding services. Partnership efforts are underway to reduce waiting times and improve communication with families, and further oversight is planned via the ICB and Health and Wellbeing Board. Findings and recommendations on this scrutiny will be reported to WSCP executive in early 2025/6. Future scrutiny activity is planned involving Young Scrutineers and local voluntary and community sector voices.

### **Group-Based Child Sexual Abuse (CSA)**

In light of national learning and heightened awareness, initial assurance was sought on how the partnership identifies and prevents organised or group-based CSA. Scrutiny focused on multi-agency coordination and learning from national inquiries, with further work planned following publication of national reviews.

### **Partnership Learning and Priority Setting**

Scrutiny activity supported WSCP priority setting and ongoing learning, including participation in the Operational Group, Learning & Practice Improvement Group, and Anti-Racist Practice Group. Engagement with Young Scrutineers has strengthened the voice of children within scrutiny and planning processes.

Independent oversight also contributed to the development of the WSCP Annual Report, ensuring compliance with Working Together 2023, and maintained links with the London and national scrutineer networks to bring in broader learning.

## Scrutiny Focus for 2025/2026

Scrutiny activity for 2025/26 will build on this foundation and continue to test how well the partnership responds to complex safeguarding challenges, applies learning, and improves outcomes. Key themes include:

### **Prevention of Organised Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation**

Scrutiny will examine the effectiveness of local partnership work in preventing group-based CSA and exploitation, with a focus on multi-agency oversight, intelligence, early identification, and response.

### **Multi-Agency Support for Children with Complex Needs**

Building on previous scrutiny findings and learning reviews, scrutiny will test how well learning has been embedded to improve support for children with complex needs—particularly how police and partners identify vulnerabilities, respond to intersectional risks, and implement ‘trigger plans’.

### **Anti-Racist Practice**

Ongoing scrutiny input into the Anti-Racist Practice Group will provide an independent view on progress and impact of anti-racist approaches across the partnership.

Supporting children and families who face barriers to accessing services.

A new area of focus will explore how the system responds to families who are repeatedly referred to services but remain disengaged, particularly where safeguarding concerns persist at Child in Need level.

### **WSCP Priorities and Arrangements**

Scrutiny will support the review and refresh of WSCP priorities and governance, including better alignment with local adult and children’s safeguarding boards in Wandsworth and other local geographical areas, and ensuring all relevant agencies are appropriately named and engaged.

### **Implementation of Local and National Recommendations**

Reviewing how well WSCP is responding to national reviews and research, including learning related to:

Child Sexual Abuse

Elective Home Education

Racial bias in child protection

Emerging thematic reviews (e.g. child neglect).

# Young Scrutineers

## Championing Children's Voices in Local Safeguarding

This year, the Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP) has continued to strengthen its commitment to meaningful child participation through the development of the Young Scrutineer programme. Lamees and Amelia, both aged 16–17, are our current Young Scrutineers bringing fresh insight, lived experience, and a strong sense of social responsibility to our safeguarding system. They represent a growing cohort of young people who are not only being heard but are actively helping to shape decisions that impact their lives.

## Embedding Youth Voice into Scrutiny 2024–2025

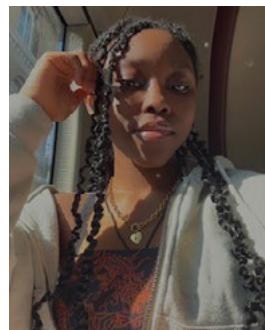
As we move into the 2025–2026 period, our Young Scrutineers will play a vital role in delivering the WSCP Scrutiny Plan alongside Independent Scrutineer Sarah Lawrence. Their contribution is firmly embedded across multiple scrutiny themes and activities, bringing the voice of young people into core assurance and quality improvement processes.



### Scrutiny of the WSCP Annual Report

Lamees and Amelia have co-developed the Children and Young Peoples Version of the WSCP Annual Report [Child's Life in Wandsworth](#)

offering a unique lens on the impact and accessibility of services. They will also scrutinise the full report and provide feedback to ensure the Partnership's work is reflected



in a way that resonates with children and young people. Their insight will strengthen system-level assurance by highlighting how safeguarding arrangements are perceived by young people themselves.

### Emerging Needs & Social Communication Disorders Pathway

In response to learning from Child D's experience, the Independent Scrutineer regarding the emerging needs pathway and the related Rapid Review, the Young Scrutineers will support a programme of research and fieldwork focused on how services support children with emerging social communication needs. They will help shape the tools, gather peer insight, and feed into the final analysis and reporting. This reflects our shared commitment to placing the voice of the child at the heart of service learning and redesign.

### Intra-Familial Child Sexual Abuse (CSA)

Young Scrutineers will participate in task-and-finish activity to co-produce a child-friendly approach to intra-familial CSA, ensuring that any proposed pathway is informed by a clear understanding of what children need in these highly sensitive situations. Their participation will ensure trauma-informed, accessible communication is prioritised in the design of local responses.

### Ongoing – Learning from Reviews and Safeguarding Assurance

Young Scrutineers will regularly review local and national learning from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs) and rapid reviews, identifying what this learning means for young people and feeding their interpretations back into practice assurance mechanisms. Their contributions will help test whether lessons learned are being understood and applied in a way that truly meets the needs of children.

### All-Year – Joint Scrutiny Development and Partnership Engagement

Lamees and Amelia will continue to meet regularly with the Independent Scrutineer and the WSCP team. Their role is integral to the co-planning of scrutiny activity and shaping how children's voices are embedded in wider accountability systems such as inspections and audit cycles. They are also key members of regional and national learning forums, bringing best practice from across the country back into the borough.

### Why this matters

Children and young people are not passive recipients of safeguarding services. They are partners in identifying what works, what doesn't, and what needs to change. The Young Scrutineer involvement in The Wandsworth Childrens Safeguarding Partnership is a testament to this principle—transforming scrutiny from a top-down process to a collaborative, multi-generational effort grounded in lived experience.

As we continue to embed the 2024–2025 scrutiny plan, our Young Scrutineers ensure that services are not only scrutinised for what they do, but how they feel to those they are designed to protect.

“Being a Young Scrutineer has shown me that change can start with us—we're not just included, we're part of the change.”

“When professionals take the time to explain decisions, we feel safer and more respected.”

“Sometimes services are hard to get into. We want it to be easier for young people to ask for help.”

This feedback has influenced service changes, including making information on support services clearer and ensuring professionals explain safeguarding processes to young people in plain language.



## About the WSCP and this Report

The Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP) brings together the local authority, health services and the police, alongside schools, voluntary organisations and community partners, to ensure that children in Wandsworth are safe, supported, and able to thrive. Our role is to provide shared leadership, hold agencies to account, and make sure safeguarding arrangements work in practice for children and families.

This annual report sets out what we have achieved together in 2024-25, the challenges we face, and the learning that is shaping our next steps. Inside, you will find:

- **Progress against our priorities** – from anti-racist practice to early help, inclusive education, and health support.
- **Key safeguarding data and trends** – what it tells us about children's lived experiences.
- **Learning and improvement** – from reviews, audits, and frontline voices.
- **Children and young people's perspectives** – through the work of our Young Scrutineers.
- **Next year's priorities** – how we will respond to challenges and strengthen safeguarding further.

The report is intended for professionals, community members, and anyone interested in how safeguarding works in Wandsworth. Above all, it is a reminder that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and that partnership is the key to making Wandsworth a safe and supportive place for all children.

# Local Context

## What Life Is Like for Children Growing Up in Wandsworth

Wandsworth is home to approximately 327,500 residents, making it the second largest borough in Inner London. Among them are 58,600 children and young people aged 0–19, representing the fourth largest child population in the region. While the borough is statistically one of the least deprived in London, there are 19 areas particularly in Roehampton, Battersea, and Tooting that rank among the 10% most deprived nationally, highlighting the need for targeted support and inclusive services.

## Diversity and Demographics

### Wandsworth's children reflect the borough's rich diversity

**52%** of school-aged children are from Black, Asian, or Mixed ethnic backgrounds.

### Education and need

**31%** of pupils are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)—the highest recorded level in Wandsworth and above both London (28%) and England (26%) averages.

### As of September 2024

**441** children are supported through Early Help.

**1053** children are on Child in Need plans.

**72** children are subject to Child Protection plans.

**242** children are looked after, and 348 care leavers are supported by the borough.

These figures show that while Wandsworth maintains lower rates of statutory intervention than national and London averages, demand for preventative and inclusive services continues to rise.

### Safeguarding and Social Care

**40%** of pupils speak a first language other than English.

The ethnic composition has shifted over time, with a rise in Mixed ethnicity pupils and a decline in Black pupils, indicating evolving community dynamics.

**7%** of pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), nearly double the number from 2016.

**14%** of pupils receive SEN support, reflecting growing complexity in educational needs.

### Young Carers and Vulnerable Groups

Over 100 children have been identified as young carers through social care assessments, with a higher proportion of girls.

24 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are currently supported, and over 160 Ukrainian families have been welcomed into the borough since the Russian invasion.

### Employment and economic context

**84%** of residents aged 16–64 are in employment—higher than both London and national averages.

However, 13% of children live in low-income families, and 51% of pupils attend schools in areas ranked among the 40% most deprived nationally.

### Population trends

The number of children aged 0–5 has declined, while the population of older children (7–18) has increased—suggesting families are staying longer in the borough but having fewer children. These shifts have implications for future planning in education, childcare, and youth services.

 Population	<b>58,342</b> children aged 0-17	<b>18%</b> aged 0-17	<b>28,878</b> children and young people aged 18-24
 Ethnicities	<b>52%</b> of pupils are from Black, Asian and mixed ethnic backgrounds	<b>18%</b> Black pupils <b>17%</b> Asian pupils	<b>16%</b> Mixed background pupils
 Free School Meals	<b>31%</b> of pupils eligible for free school meals	<b>29%</b> of free school meals are primary school	<b>31%</b> of free school meals are secondary school
 SEND	<b>7%</b> of pupils with Educational Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)		<b>15%</b> of pupils with Special Educational Needs Support
 Casework	<b>441</b> Early Help <b>1053</b> Children in Need <b>72</b> Child Protection Plans		<b>242</b> Children Looked After <b>348</b> Care Leavers

## Key indicator summary: progress and trends 2024–2025

This year's safeguarding indicators reflect both progress and emerging challenges across Wandsworth. The data highlights areas where partnership efforts have led to measurable improvements, as well as domains requiring sustained focus.

### Positive trends

- Early Help Reach Expanded:** The number of children supported through Early Help rose from 398 to 467, reflecting improved visibility and access to preventative services.
- Reduced Disproportionality in Policing:** The percentage of Black youths subject to stop and search fell from 59% to 54%, with "No Further Action" rates also decreasing from 76% to 69%. This suggests improved scrutiny and more proportionate policing practices.
- Persistent Absence Improved:** Borough-wide school absence rates decreased in 2023–24, outperforming both London and national averages.

### Areas of concern

- Rising EHCP Demand:** Pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans increased significantly from 2,314 to 3,270, indicating growing complexity in educational needs and pressure on SEND services.
- School Suspensions:** While national suspension rates continue to rise, Wandsworth's increase has been slower. Nonetheless, this remains a priority area for intervention and support.

### Other notable data

- FSM Eligibility:** Free School Meal eligibility rose slightly



## Year-on-Year indicators

Indicator	2023–24	2024–25	Trend / Note
Early Help – children open	398	467	↑ Increased reach
Police stop & search – % Black youths	59%	54%	↓ Reduced disproportionality
Stop & search – % NFA for Black youths	76%	69%	↓ Reduced NFA rate
FSM eligibility (school pupils)	30%	31%	Data due
Pupils with EHCP	2,314 (7%) in 2024	3,270	Rising trend
Persistent absence (borough overall)	Higher in 22–23	Decreased in 23–24	Better than London/England
School suspensions (trend)	Rising nationally	Rising, slower locally	Requires continued focus

A close-up photograph of a diverse group of people's hands held together in a circle, symbolizing unity and teamwork. The hands belong to people of various skin tones and ages. In the background, a young girl with a bright smile is visible, looking down at the hands. The background is slightly blurred, focusing on the hands in the foreground.

**Our key priorities**

# Priority 1 – Anti-Racist Practice

## Embedding Anti-Racist Practice, actions, behaviors, and culture across the Partnership and within all organisations.

Embedding anti-racist practice remains a core priority for safeguarding in Wandsworth. Over the past year, partners have worked hard to integrate this approach across services, and we are beginning to see clear and meaningful changes. Our commitment is to challenge racial disparities, listen to lived experiences, and ensure that safeguarding is inclusive, culturally competent, and rooted in equity.

### Context

In 2024-25, Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP) continued to focus on reducing racial disparities in safeguarding outcomes. While there has been measurable progress, disproportionality persists in areas such as stop and search, school exclusions, and the proportion of Black children subject to statutory safeguarding interventions. The priority aligns with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, which emphasises equity, inclusion, and cultural competence in all safeguarding work.

### Actions delivered

- Multi-agency anti-racist practice training delivered to 412 professionals, incorporating lived experience testimonies from young people and parents.
- Stop and search scrutiny panel established, including community representatives, which reviews anonymised police body-worn footage.
- Anti-racist practice standards co-developed with partners, embedded in all Section 11 self-assessments.
- Review of school exclusion data shared with headteachers and governors, leading to targeted support in schools with higher disproportionality.

### Impact

- 54% of stop and search instances involving young people were of Black children, down from 59% in the previous year.
- “No further action” (NFA) rates for Black young people following stop and search fell from 76% to 69%.
- Fixed-term exclusions for Black pupils reduced by 30% in one secondary school following policy review.
- Increased awareness among professionals of how bias can influence decision-making in safeguarding.
- Strengthened relationships between police, schools, and communities, with improved transparency and trust.
- More consistent recording of ethnicity and outcome data across agencies, enabling better monitoring of trends.

### Young Scrutineer voice

“It makes a difference when people admit that bias exists and then show us what they’re doing about it. We notice when nothing changes.”

# Priority 2 – Education & SEND

To deliver excellent education to children in Wandsworth with a focus on children with special educational needs, and young people who have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 restrictions, ensuring needs are assessed and that children receive the right support at the right time in the right provision to enable every child to reach their potential.

Supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is vital to ensuring every child can thrive. This year, we've focused on expanding local provision, improving attendance, and strengthening multi-agency coordination. Our aim is to ensure that children receive the right support at the right time, with education settings playing a key role in safeguarding.

## Context

The number of children with EHCPs in Wandsworth has risen steadily, with demand for specialist placements outpacing local capacity. Persistent absence remains a concern, though rates improved in 2023–24.

Educational outcomes and access to the right support for children with SEND remain a significant focus for the WSCP. Local trends show a steady increase in the number of children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), reflecting both rising demand and improved identification.

In 2024, 7% of the school-aged population (2,314 pupils) had an EHCP, above the London average. Demand for specialist placements continues to outpace local capacity, meaning some children are educated outside the borough. Persistent absence rates, although improved from 2022–23, remain higher for pupils with SEND and those eligible for Free School Meals (FSM). The Partnership also noted ongoing inequalities in exclusion rates for children with additional needs.

These issues directly relate to Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, which emphasises the role of education settings in safeguarding, the importance of multi-agency early intervention, and the duty to ensure that every child receives the right support at the right time.

## Actions delivered

- Expansion of local SEND provision through the opening of two new resource bases and planning for an additional special school.
- Attendance improvement projects in 14 schools, including targeted work with families of persistently absent pupils.
- Multi-agency complex case panel established to fast-track solutions for children at risk of missing education due to placement breakdown.
- Training for school safeguarding leads on early identification of SEND needs and making high-quality referrals.

## Impact

- Persistent absence rates improved in 2023–24 with primary schools decreasing from 16.6% to 13.9% and Secondary schools from 22.1% to 19.2% outperforming both national and london averages.
- Increase in in-borough specialist placements by 6%, reducing travel time and disruption for children and families.
- 74% of EHCP annual reviews now completed within statutory timescales, up from 65% in 2022–23.
- Improved coordination between education, health, and social care reduced delays in implementing support plans.
- Families report feeling better informed about available SEND services and support.
- Schools demonstrate increased confidence in supporting pupils with complex needs.

## Young Scrutineer voice

“We need teachers to understand that sometimes health issues make it hard to be in school every day.”

# Priority 3 – Early Help & Inclusion

To work alongside children, young people, and communities to develop and deliver accessible early help services to children and families in Wandsworth with a focus on supporting disadvantaged and marginalised families, increasing fairness and inclusivity, and improving the wellbeing of children, young people, and their families in Wandsworth.

Early Help is a cornerstone of preventative safeguarding. In Wandsworth, we've worked to make support more visible, accessible, and responsive to families' needs particularly in areas of higher deprivation. This priority reflects our belief that timely, inclusive support can reduce crisis interventions and build stronger, more resilient communities.

## Context

Early Help services in Wandsworth provide targeted support to children, young people, and families before issues escalate into statutory intervention.

Demand for Early Help has risen steadily from 398 children open to services in 2023-24 to 467 in 2024-25 representing a 17% increase. This rise reflects both increasing need and improved visibility and accessibility of services.

Local analysis shows that families in areas of higher deprivation, particularly Roehampton and parts of Battersea, are more likely to access Early Help. Common presenting issues include housing instability, parental mental health challenges, and school attendance difficulties. This priority aligns with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 by promoting early identification of need.

## Actions delivered

- Strengthened partnerships between housing, health visitors, and Early Help teams to tackle interconnected issues.
- Commissioned community-led parenting support programmes in high-need neighbourhoods.
- Family Hubs have opened in Battersea, Tooting and Roehampton.

## Impact

- 17% year-on-year increase in children supported through Early Help.
- 38% of families transitioned into universal services, with the majority sustaining progress without further escalation.
- Increased engagement from fathers, with male carers present in 44% of Early Help assessments (up from 31%).
- There has been an increase in the number of Children open to Early Help Services, from 298 children in 2023-24 to 467 in 2024-25 therefore building stronger relationships between practitioners and communities.
- Better coordination between agencies reduced duplication and improved continuity of support.

## Young Scrutineer voice

“Sometimes parents are scared to ask for help because they think social services will get involved.  
If people know it's about support, not punishment, more families would come forward.”

# Priority 4 – Mental & Physical Health Access

To deliver accessible and inclusive mental and physical health services to children, young people and parents and carers ensuring access pathways for services are clear and gaps in services responded to.

Access to health services is a critical part of safeguarding. We've focused on reducing waiting times, improving referral pathways, and bringing support closer to where children are, including our educational settings. Our vision is to ensure that all children, especially those with additional needs, and who are in care can access timely, high-quality care that supports both their wellbeing and safety.

## Context

Ensuring children, young people, and their families can access timely, high-quality mental and physical health services is vital for safeguarding. In Wandsworth, partners report that while some pathways are strong, families still experience delays, fragmented provision, or unclear routes to support. Children with SEND, care-experienced young people, and those living in areas of higher deprivation are more likely to face barriers to accessing health services.

Data from 2024-25 shows a moderate reduction in CAMHS waiting times and increased engagement in early intervention mental health services. However, the demand for specialist support continues to exceed capacity, and the transition from child to adult services remains a pressure point for young people with ongoing needs.

This work complies with requirement in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, to promote the welfare of all children, and in which it highlights the responsibility of health agencies to work with local safeguarding partners and others to identify need early, provide preventative services, and ensure equitable access.

## Impact

- CAMHS waiting times reduced by 18% compared with 2023-24.
- 312 young people accessed Health Hub services in the first six months.
- School nurse drop-in attendance increased by 25% in targeted schools.
- Faster access to support reduced escalation of needs, particularly for anxiety and depression.
- Integrated school-based services improved attendance and engagement for pupils with long-term health needs.
- Increased awareness of health services among families from underrepresented communities.

## Young Scrutineer voice

“It helps when health people come to us in school it's easier to talk when you're in a place you know, not a clinic you've never been to before.”

# Priority 5 – Multi-Agency Data & Assurance

To have meaningful multi agency data that enables the Leadership to understand the effectiveness of the safeguarding response to children and young people and to act quickly when there are areas of vulnerability or risk.

## Context

Effective safeguarding relies on timely, accurate, and coordinated data to identify risks and respond quickly. In 2024-25, the WSCP prioritised strengthening its multi-agency dataset to improve the ability to spot trends, identify emerging risks, and trigger targeted responses. While most of the dataset is now regularly updated, some delays remain due to differences in data systems and governance arrangements across partner agencies.

The Partnership has worked to align key measures from internal governance processes with the WSCP schedule, enabling more consistent reporting. However, challenges persist particularly in areas affected by system changes, such as the Met Police's migration to a new MIS, which has impacted reporting on Modern Slavery, S46 Police Protection, and CAIT data. Stop and search data remains accessible via the Police online portal. Due to reporting and validation processes within agencies, and limitations in the police's ability to disaggregate data from the broader SouthWest area to Wandsworth specifically, it has been challenging to extract some of the required information.

## Young Scrutineer voice

“It’s not just about collecting numbers – it’s about actually doing something when the numbers show a problem.”

## Actions delivered

- Developed a multi-agency safeguarding dashboard with 32 agreed indicators across statutory partners.
- Used local data dashboards to inform targeted training and local learning events.
- Liased with partners to improve coordination and reduce reporting delays to enable an effective multi agency dataset.

## Impact

- Time lag for quarterly safeguarding data reduced from 10 weeks to 4 weeks.
- Missing children episodes fell by 14% following targeted interventions informed by dashboard insights.
- Deep dive analysis on children missing education is underway, with early findings informing service planning.
- Stop and search data shows a continued reduction in disproportionality, with 54% of searches involving Black youths (down from 59%).
- Greater transparency and accountability across agencies.
- Strengthened data ownership and validation across the partnership, reducing duplication and improving accuracy.
- Exploited thematic safeguarding areas of practice using multi agency partnership data to better understand emerging issues and inform our approach.

## Our commitment to our Strategic Priorities

The Partnership will maintain its commitment to working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, ensuring that all actions are rooted in a multi-agency approach, with strong accountability and a clear focus on improving outcomes for the most vulnerable.

# Learning & Reviews

The WSCP uses a range of review and assurance processes to identify learning and improve safeguarding practice across Wandsworth. In 2024–25, these included Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (LCSPRs), rapid reviews, learning events, and multi-agency audits. Each process has the shared aim of strengthening systems, addressing gaps, and embedding lessons into frontline practice.

The Safeguarding Subgroup held 2 Rapid Reviews and other local learning reviews, each offering valuable learning to improve multi-agency practice. These included:

- **Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI)** involving a young baby subject to a Child Protection Plan. The case highlighted the importance of safe sleeping education, continuity of care across boroughs, and effective inter-agency communication for mobile families.
- **A young person remanded for a serious offence** later released without charge. A multi-agency learning event explored the impact of adverse childhood experiences, trauma, and system responses to serious youth violence.
- **An infant** who sustained a skull fracture following a fall from a baby carrier, prompting reflection on accident prevention and risk assessment.
- **A primary school-aged child** left without parental responsibility following maternal death, raising concerns about professional curiosity and clarity around legal guardianship and Child Sexual Abuse.
- **A case of severe neglect and abuse**, where a child was not registered in education and suffered developmental delay and non-accidental injuries. This case met the threshold for a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR).

## Key learning themes:

- **Professional Curiosity:** A recurring theme across cases, particularly in understanding family dynamics, domestic abuse, and safeguarding risks for infants and children not in education.
- **Continuity of Care:** Mobile families and those with immigration status require robust inter-agency coordination to ensure consistent safeguarding oversight.
- **Safe Sleeping and Infant Safety:** The SUDI case reinforced the need for targeted education and awareness campaigns, especially in high-risk contexts.
- **Understanding Trauma:** The subgroup is developing training on the impact of trauma in parenting informed by case reviews and practitioner feedback.



## Dissemination and impact:

Learning from these cases has been embedded into new training formats, including podcasts, Microsoft Teams discussions, and upcoming roadshows. These resources aim to make learning accessible, reflective, and rooted in lived experience.

Letters have been written to children involved in reviews to help them understand their experiences and the safeguarding response, ensuring that their voices are acknowledged and respected.

## Next steps:

In 2025–26, the subgroup will support the WSCP's delivery of safeguarding roadshows, webinars, and podcasts to disseminate learning widely. Training will focus on:

- Professional curiosity.
- Trauma and parenting.
- Effective communication strategies.
- Accident prevention for infants.
- Children missing education.
- Contextual safeguarding.

# Practice Assurance

## Context

The WSCP's assurance programme provides oversight of safeguarding practice through audits, self-assessments, and challenge sessions with agencies. In 2024-25, the WSCP Practice Assurance Subgroup delivered a comprehensive programme of assurance activity to evaluate and strengthen safeguarding practice across the partnership. This work focused on key areas of risk and learning, including domestic abuse, neglect, and the quality of multi-agency referrals. The aim was to ensure that safeguarding responses are consistent, evidence-based, and aligned with partnership priorities.

## Actions delivered

- **Domestic Abuse Reviews:** Conducted a two-stage review of work with families affected by domestic abuse. This included deep dives and multi-agency dip-sampling to track progress against key themes.
- **Neglect Audit:** Completed a dip-sample of cases where neglect was initially identified but not confirmed at assessment, highlighting issues in categorisation and recording.
- **MASH Contact Review:** Reviewed contacts ending in "No Further Action" (NFA) across agencies, identifying learning on referral quality and feedback processes.
- **Task & Finish Group:** Established a dedicated group on intrafamilial child sexual abuse to inform assurance activity for 2025-26.

## Impact

- **Improved Practice on Domestic Abuse:** Agencies refreshed MARAC referral criteria and strengthened recognition of high-risk indicators such as non-fatal strangulation. Children's Social Care introduced practice sessions to improve use of community resources, particularly for Global Majority families. Health partners enhanced domestic abuse screening protocols.
- **Learning on Neglect:** Findings informed new guidance on accurate categorisation and highlighted the need for better information sharing when families move between boroughs.
- **Better Referral Quality:** Feedback from the MASH review has led to improvements in referral standards and strengthened multi-agency understanding of thresholds.
- **Partnership Engagement:** Strong multi-agency participation in assurance activity, with evidence of actions being implemented across statutory and voluntary sectors.
- **Taking timely action** based on emerging safeguarding issues and analysis of practice and performance data.



## Priorities for 2025-26

- Intrafamilial child sexual abuse – assurance reviews and practice improvements.
- Children missing from education – deep dive and targeted actions.
- Embedding anti-racist practice within assurance processes.

## Key assurance activities

- **Quarterly performance dashboard** covering 32 key safeguarding indicators, including child protection plans, missing episodes, exploitation risks, attendance, exclusions, and referral trends.
- **Section 11 audits** completed by all statutory partners, with follow-up challenge sessions to address areas for improvement.
- **Multi-agency audits** focused on neglect, domestic abuse, and transition to adulthood for care-experienced young people.
- **Deep dive reviews** into specific areas of concern, such as elective home education and youth violence hotspots.

# Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The LADO is responsible for managing and overseeing allegations made against professionals and volunteers who work with children. This includes concerns about behaviour that may pose a risk to children's safety or wellbeing. The LADO ensures that allegations are handled promptly, consistently, and in line with statutory guidance, coordinating multi-agency responses and providing advice to employers and organisations.

Their role is central to maintaining safe environments for children and promoting accountability across the workforce.

The LADO service in Wandsworth continues to play a vital role in overseeing allegations against professionals and volunteers working with children, ensuring that concerns are addressed promptly, fairly, and with children's welfare at the centre.

## Service highlights & developments

- Introduction of an **online referral form** has streamlined processes and improved timeliness in recording referrals.
- A **new tracker for low-level safeguarding concerns** has enhanced oversight and enabled patterns to be identified, particularly across education and early years.
- Strong partnership working with **schools, police, health services, and safeguarding teams** has ensured that investigations are progressed effectively.
- Four LADO briefings and training sessions were delivered to staff, foster carers, and partners, increasing awareness and strengthening local safeguarding culture.

## Key statistics 2024–25

- **202 referrals** received – down from 232 in 2023–24 but higher than 2022–23 (180). Of these:
  - 106 (52%) were advice/provision of information
  - 79 (39%) were “cause for concern” cases
  - 16 (8%) met the threshold for full LADO investigation (Allegations Against Staff/Volunteers).
- **46 investigations** were overseen, 30 of which carried forward from the previous year.
- Schools remain the largest source of referrals (53%), with fewer from health and LA services compared to last year.
- Outcomes show: 49% resulted in advice/no further action, 15% were unsubstantiated, 15% substantiated, and 8% unfounded.

## Themes & learning

- A significant theme was race and disproportionality: Black and Brown staff are over-represented in referrals, especially at lower thresholds. Ethnicity data is missing for 62% of cases, highlighting the need for improved recording and analysis.
- Investigations are increasingly prolonged, with some cases open for over eight months; delays often linked to complex police/HR processes.
- Schools remain a key partner, with referrals often linked to safeguarding practice and threshold decisions.

## Impact & partnership feedback

- Police and health colleagues report **improved communication and collaboration** with the LADO service.
- Schools and early years providers value the **advice and training**, which supports safer practice and early resolution of concerns.
- The LADO continues to provide oversight for **Standards of Care** investigations in fostering, ensuring that carers are supported and practice is robust.

## Priorities for 2025–26

- Implement a **feedback mechanism** from referrers and professionals to improve service responsiveness.
- Strengthen the **tracking of race and religion data** to better understand and address disproportionality in referrals.
- Update Mosaic recording processes to improve quality assurance and monitoring of LADO enquiries.

# Workforce Development

A skilled, confident, and well-supported workforce is essential to effective safeguarding. In 2024–25, the WSCP continued to invest in multi-agency training, learning resources, and professional development to ensure practitioners are equipped to respond to the evolving safeguarding landscape. This work reflects Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 requirements for safeguarding partners to ensure professionals can recognise and respond to risk, work collaboratively, and embed learning from reviews.

## Training delivery & reach

The WSCP delivered a comprehensive programme of training to a multi-agency audience, including professionals from health, education, police, social care, and the voluntary and community sector. Training was delivered through a blended model of face-to-face sessions, online modules, and innovative formats such as podcasts and panel discussions.

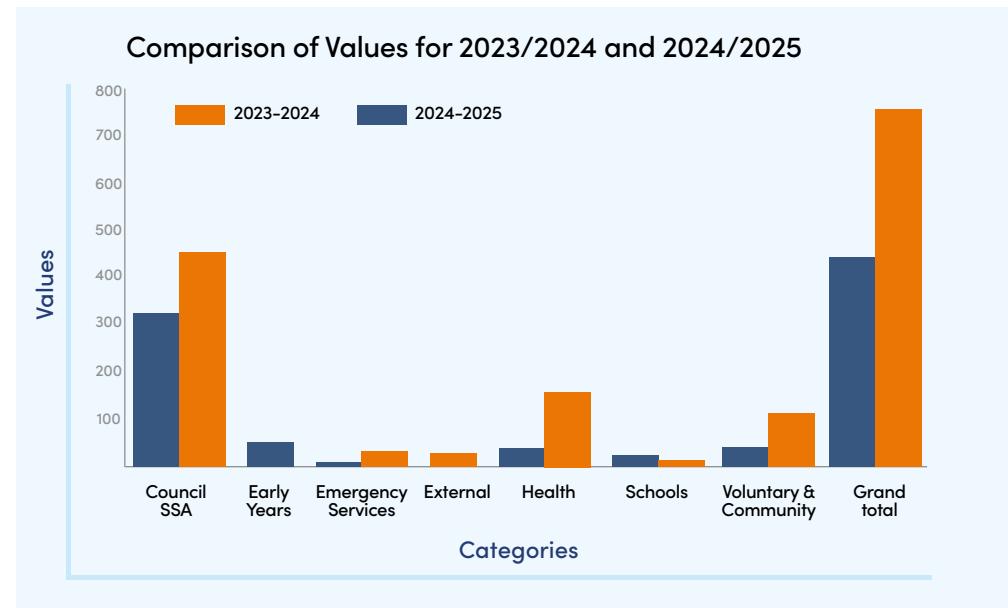
- **Total training attendees: 750\*** professionals
- **Most attended courses:** Domestic Abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation, Complex Neglect.
- **New formats:** Multi-agency podcasts (500+ views), thematic panel discussions, survivor-led video content.
- **E-learning completions:** 230 professionals have completed 24 modules, with highest uptake from Council SSA and Voluntary/Community sectors.
- **Annual Conference – Theme Neglect (Over 300 professionals in attendance).**

## Our WSCP Training Offer

The training offer for 2024–25 included a broad mix of courses covering key safeguarding topics such as MARAC, adolescent exploitation, parental misuse and mental health, adultification and domestic abuse. These sessions supported multi agency practitioners in strengthening their safeguarding knowledge and response.

## Feedback & effectiveness

Training feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with 96% of participants rating sessions as "good" or "excellent". Follow-up surveys show that 78% of attendees changed their practice as a direct result of training.



“This course is both powerful and enlightening—attendance should be mandatory for staff across Children’s Services.”

“The trainers were fantastic. They maintained a great pace and made a difficult topic accessible and engaging.”

The WSCP Annual Conference drew over 300 professionals and was praised for its emotional impact and practical relevance. 94% rated it as "excellent", and 90% said they would apply the learning in their work.

“Seeing and hearing a survivor’s story has such a big impact—you remember it more than a PowerPoint.”

### Impact on practice

The training and working sub group was established in February 2025. This group brings together training leads from across the partnership to fully understand each agency's training offer and ensuring there is less duplication which aims to lead to better training attendance. The subgroup meets quarterly with an aim to measure impact of training and practice at the end of 2025 which will determine each agency's offer for training for next year collectively to potentially offer a more collaborative approach to the training offer across the partnership.

- Training has led to measurable improvements in safeguarding practice:
- Improved referral quality from health and education sectors.
- Increased engagement from the voluntary and community sector (32% rise in attendance).
- Multi - Agency collaboration via the annual conference with agencies coming together from Health, Education, Police and Social Care colleagues from both Wandsworth and Richmond and Kingston.
- Enhanced practitioner confidence, especially in trauma-informed and anti-racist practice.

### Training delivery & reach:

- Most popular courses:
  - Child Exploitation Awareness and Disruption.
  - Neglect: Identification and Response.
  - Anti-Racist Practice in Safeguarding.
- Learning formats:
  - In-person workshops for interactive skills-based learning.
  - Online modules for flexible, self-paced study.

### Actions delivered:

- Delivery of e-learning safeguarding courses hosting 24 modules, accessible to all partners.
- Cross-borough collaboration on joint training events with neighbouring safeguarding partnerships.

### Impact:

- The impact of the Training Subgroup has led to the re-commissioning of workforce development initiatives, focusing on newly identified areas of safeguarding practice.
- 88% of post-training respondents reported increased confidence in recognising and responding to safeguarding concerns.
- Audits showed improved quality of referrals to children's social care, particularly from health and education sectors.
- Increased engagement from the voluntary and community sector, with a 32% rise in attendees from non-statutory agencies.

### Young Scrutineer Voice:

“If professionals had more training about how to talk to us, not just about us, it would make a big difference.”



# WSCP Annual Conference 2024

## Voices for Change - Child Neglect

On 27th November 2024, the Wandsworth, Kingston, and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnerships came together to host a powerful and thought-provoking Annual Conference on Child Neglect. Held at the Wandsworth Civic Suite, the event welcomed over 300 multi-agency professionals from across health, education, children social care, police, and the voluntary sector.

The theme, "Voices for Change", focused on understanding neglect through the lens of lived experience, professional practice, and multi-agency collaboration. The day was designed to challenge assumptions, deepen understanding, and inspire action.

### Programme highlights

- **Keynote by Dr Jenny Molloy:** A care-experienced author and speaker, Jenny shared her personal journey and reflections on trauma, resilience, and recovery.
- **Practice-focused presentations by Author Kanchan Jadeja:** exploring intersectionality, hidden harm, and the voice of the child in safeguarding.
- **Simon Osbourne (RSPCA)** led a session on the links between animal abuse and child neglect, highlighting cross-sector safeguarding opportunities.
- **Interactive Tabletop Exercises**
  - Morning: Exploring neglect through the lens of animal welfare.
  - Afternoon: "Piecing Together the Jigsaw of Neglect" led by Dr Peter Green and Dr Claire Taylor, using real-life reflections from children in care.

### Lived experience and youth voice

Young people played a central role in shaping the day:

- **Spoken word poetry** by Keeley Stephenson, a care-experienced young woman.
- **Musical performance** by Eileen and Devontae, expressing the emotional impact of neglect.
- **Podcast excerpt** from "Resilient Voices" featuring Cairom's story of survival.
- **Video presentation** by Tess, offering a young person's perspective on neglect.

Their contributions were deeply moving and reminded attendees of the importance of listening to and amplifying the voices of those with lived experience.

A diverse panel of professionals from education, health, police, voluntary sector, and safeguarding leadership responded to questions from the audience, exploring:

- Emotional impacts of neglect.
- Barriers to early identification.
- The role of interagency collaboration.
- Cultural competence and belief-driven decisions.
- Breaking cycles of generational neglect.

### Multi-Agency Panel and Reflections

- Attendees praised the balance of expert input and youth voice, the interactive format, and the emotional resonance of survivor stories.

“Seeing and hearing a survivor’s story has such a big impact – you remember it more than a PowerPoint.”

“This was a genuinely worthwhile day of training and collaboration.”

### Feedback and Impact

115 evaluations were submitted via QR code

94% of attendees rated the conference as "good" or "excellent"

90% said they were likely to apply the learning in their practice

# Learning and Next Steps

## The conference highlighted

- The importance of trauma-informed practice.
- The need for better inclusion of early years and under-5s sectors.
- A commitment to deeper engagement with the voluntary sector.
- The value of case reviews in understanding missed opportunities.



"I feel seeing, hearing a survivor's story has such a big impact on an audience you remember it more than a PowerPoint."

"This conference is a really good example of a genuinely worthwhile day of training and collaboration. This should be applied across boroughs. Absolutely brilliantly put together and so well thought out."

"This was a great informative and inspiring conference. The food was great."

"Seeing the impact of parental negative lived experience and how it impacts on the parents ability to parent their children. Trauma informed care would be helpful in delivering care."

"Good balance of young speakers with experts in the field. Very enjoyable and interest held throughout the base. Also enjoyed the interactive exercises."

# South West London Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) Summary 2024–2025

## Key findings

- 73 child deaths were notified across South West London in 2024–25 (down from 91 in 2023–24).
- 55 reviews were completed during the year, with over half involving infants under one year old.
- 54% of reviews identified modifiable factors, an increase from 40% in the previous year.
- Leading categories of death: Perinatal/Neonatal events (31%), Congenital & Genetic conditions (18%), Sudden Unexpected Deaths in Infancy/Childhood (14%), Trauma (10%), and Suicide/Self-harm (6%).

## Themes of concern

- Safer Sleep & Housing:** Unsafe sleep arrangements, overcrowding, and deprivation remain linked to SUDI/C, which is notably higher in South West London than London and England averages.
- Maternity & Neonatal Care:** Learning continues around escalation processes, CTG monitoring, and staff training, particularly for babies born preterm.
- Mental Health:** Delays in CAMHS access and medication monitoring were factors in adolescent suicide cases.
- Service Provision:** Some cases highlighted delays in escalation of treatment, gaps in communication, and lack of parity across boroughs in continuing care provision.

## Wandsworth-specific context

- Wandsworth accounted for a proportion of new notifications and reviews, reflecting its position as one of the boroughs with the largest child populations in London.
- Modifiable factors were identified in almost half of Wandsworth cases, with common issues including unsafe sleep environments, parental mental health, and domestic abuse.
- Coroners' delays remain a local issue, impacting the timeliness of reviews and learning dissemination.



## Learning and priorities

- Strengthen local **safer sleep promotion** through targeted campaigns that address the realities of poverty and housing.
- Ensure **equitable access to continuing care packages** across boroughs, including Wandsworth.
- Work with health partners to improve **CAMHS pathways and waiting times**, and embed learning on medication oversight.
- Maintain focus on **maternity/neonatal escalation and monitoring processes** to reduce preventable deaths.
- Improve **timeliness of reviews** and strengthen **family feedback mechanisms** to ensure learning is directly informed by lived experience.

# WSCP Neglect Strategy

## Spotlight on neglect: A Regional Strategy and Local Impact

In 2024/25, neglect was a central focus for the Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP). Alongside Croydon, Kingston & Richmond, and Merton SCPs, we launched the South West London Joint Child Neglect Strategy. This marked the first time our boroughs have come together to deliver a unified, evidence-based approach to tackling neglect.

### Why neglect matters

- Neglect is the most common form of child abuse, affecting an estimated 1 in 10 children nationally.
- Locally, neglect is a factor in around half of child protection plans and features frequently in Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews.
- Audits and assurance activity in Wandsworth highlighted challenges including, cumulative harm, and inconsistencies in referral pathways.

### What we achieved in 2024/25

- **Joint Strategy Launched** – a shared vision across South West London to identify, respond to and prevent neglect, with clear principles on child-centred practice, early intervention, and multi-agency collaboration.
- **Neglect Conference (November 2024)** – hosted with Kingston and Richmond, attracting 319 multi-agency professionals. The event combined lived experience, research, and practice, including survivor testimony, spoken word, and practitioner workshops.
- **Workforce Development** – training and podcasts focused on complex neglect and adultification. Over 750 professionals accessed WSCP training in 2024/25, with neglect a recurring theme.
- **Practice Assurance** – dip-sampling of neglect referrals, deep-dive audits, and review of MASH “no further action” contacts improved understanding of thresholds, referral quality, and cross-borough mobility of children.
- **Embedding Tools** – roll-out of neglect toolkits and strengthened domestic abuse screening helped practitioners spot risks earlier and respond more consistently.

### Impact

- Raised awareness of neglect as a multi-dimensional and cumulative harm across agencies.
- Greater alignment of practice and tools across South West London.
- Improved professional confidence in recognising neglect.
- Stronger youth and survivor voice shaping how neglect is understood and responded to.



# Wandsworth Family Hubs

Family Hubs provide a single, accessible point for children, young people, and families to receive support. They bring together services from pregnancy through to age 19 (or 25 for those with SEND), offering universal help alongside targeted interventions. The model focuses on improving access, strengthening family relationships, and ensuring families are connected to the right services at the right time.

## Battersea Family Hub

The first Wandsworth Family Hub opened in September 2023 at the Yvonne Carr Centre in Battersea. Designed with strong community input, the Hub offers a wide range of services including midwifery, youth programmes, housing advice, and lifelong learning classes. The centre features modernised facilities such as a digital sign-in system and a mural reflecting local identity, creating a welcoming space for families.



## Roehampton Family Hub

In October 2024, the Roehampton Family Hub was launched as part of the Alton Renewal Plan. Officially opened by Leader of the Council, Cllr Simon Hogg, the Hub provides families with access to services such as childcare support, birth registration, mental health services, after-school activities, and employment advice. Extensive community feedback shaped the Hub, ensuring that the design and services reflect the needs of local residents.

## Tooting Family Hub

The newest Hub opened in March 2025 in Tooting, with Sir Sadiq Khan and Dr Rosena Allin-Khan in attendance. This Hub features a social supermarket, consultation rooms, and a wide range of integrated services tailored to the local community. The engagement of schools, partners, and local residents has been central to shaping the Hub, reflecting the diverse culture and needs of the area.



## Impact and reach

Together, the Family Hubs have become a cornerstone of Wandsworth's early help and inclusion offer. Between April 2024 and April 2025, more than 5,096 sessions were delivered, attended by over 10,000 children, young people, and parents. Family Hub Connectors play a vital role in outreach, linking families to services early and preventing escalation of need.

Looking ahead, Wandsworth is undertaking a self-assessment against the Department for Education's Best Family Service guidance to ensure the Family Hub model continues to deliver a high-quality, ambitious, and inclusive offer for families across the borough.

## Family Hubs at a glance (April 2024 – April 2025)

- 3 new Family Hubs opened –  
Battersea (Sept 2023),  
Roehampton (Oct 2024),  
Tooting (Mar 2025)
- 5,096 sessions delivered across the Hubs.
- 10,000+ children, young people, and parents attended.
- Services include: midwifery, childcare support, youth programmes, housing advice, mental health support, after-school activities, employment advice, and community outreach.
- Family Hub Connectors reaching into communities, offering early help and linking families to the right support.

# WSCP Thematic Learning podcast Series

In Autumn/Winter 2024, the Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Partnership launched its first Thematic Learning Podcast Series. A dynamic new platform for professional learning, reflection, and dialogue across the safeguarding community.

Designed to be accessible, engaging, and thought-provoking, each 45 minute podcast features a mix of expert voices, lived experience, and practical insights. The series supports flexible learning for professionals across sectors, from social care and education to health and community services.

## Themes explored

The podcast dives into key safeguarding topics, including:

- **Cultivating professional curiosity.**
- **Communicating with confidence and navigating difficult conversations.**
- **Understanding neurodiversity and inclusive practice.**
- **Responding to neglect and complex safeguarding needs.**
- **Promoting safer sleep and reducing risks for infants.**

Each episode is hosted by WSCP staff and features guests such as practitioners, researchers, and community members who share their stories and strategies for improving outcomes for children and families.

## Why it matters

The podcast reflects WSCP's commitment to accessible, reflective, and inclusive learning. It complements formal training and offers a fresh way to engage with safeguarding themes – whether during a commute, a lunch break, or team learning sessions.

## How to listen

Episodes are available via the WSCP website WSCP Podcast and YouTube. We encourage professionals to tune in, share with colleagues, and join the conversation.



# Measuring impact

## Evidence of change across the WSCP

Measuring the impact of safeguarding activity is central to the WSCP's accountability framework. In 2024-25, the Partnership has moved beyond delivering actions to rigorously assessing whether those actions have led to meaningful improvements in the lives of children and families. This reflects a shift from process-led safeguarding to an outcome-driven model, in line with *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023*.

Over the past year, the WSCP has embedded impact measurement across all five priority areas—anti-racist practice, inclusive education and SEND, Early Help, health access, and multi-agency data. This has enabled the Partnership to track progress, respond to emerging risks, and ensure that interventions are not only implemented but sustained.

### Key impact highlights

- Reduction in Disproportionality:** The percentage of Black young people involved in police stop and search fell from 59% to 54%, with "no further action" rates dropping from 76% to 69%. These changes reflect improved scrutiny, community engagement, and anti-racist training delivered to over 400 professionals.
- SEND and EHCP improvements:** 74% of EHCP reviews were completed within statutory timescales, up from 65% the previous year. In-borough specialist placements increased by 6%, reducing disruption for families. Schools report greater confidence in supporting pupils with complex needs, and families feel better informed about available services.
- Early Help Expansion:** The number of children supported through Early Help rose by 17%, from 398 to 467. Importantly, 38% of cases were stepped down from statutory services, with reduced re-escalation—indicating stronger preventative work. Engagement from fathers also increased, with male carers present in 44% of assessments.
- Health Access and Responsiveness:** CAMHS waiting times reduced by 18%, and over 300 young people accessed support through new school-based Health Hubs. School nurse drop-in attendance rose by 25%, and feedback from young people highlighted the value of receiving support in familiar, accessible settings.
- Data-Driven safeguarding:** The WSCP's multi-agency dashboard now includes 32 indicators, updated quarterly. The time lag for safeguarding data reduced from 10 weeks to 4 weeks, enabling faster responses. Real-time alerts and monthly deep dives have led to targeted interventions, such as reducing missing episodes by 14%.

### Voices of children, families, and practitioners

Feedback from children and families has been central to understanding impact. Young Scrutineers have played a vital role in scrutinising services, co-developing child-friendly resources, and shaping responses to complex issues such as intra-familial abuse and neurodiversity. Their reflections have helped ensure that safeguarding is not only effective but also felt and understood by those it serves.

Practitioners report increased confidence in identifying and responding to risk, particularly following training on neglect, anti-racist practice, and trauma-informed approaches. Post-training surveys show that 88% of participants felt more equipped to safeguard children, and audits revealed improved referral quality across sectors.

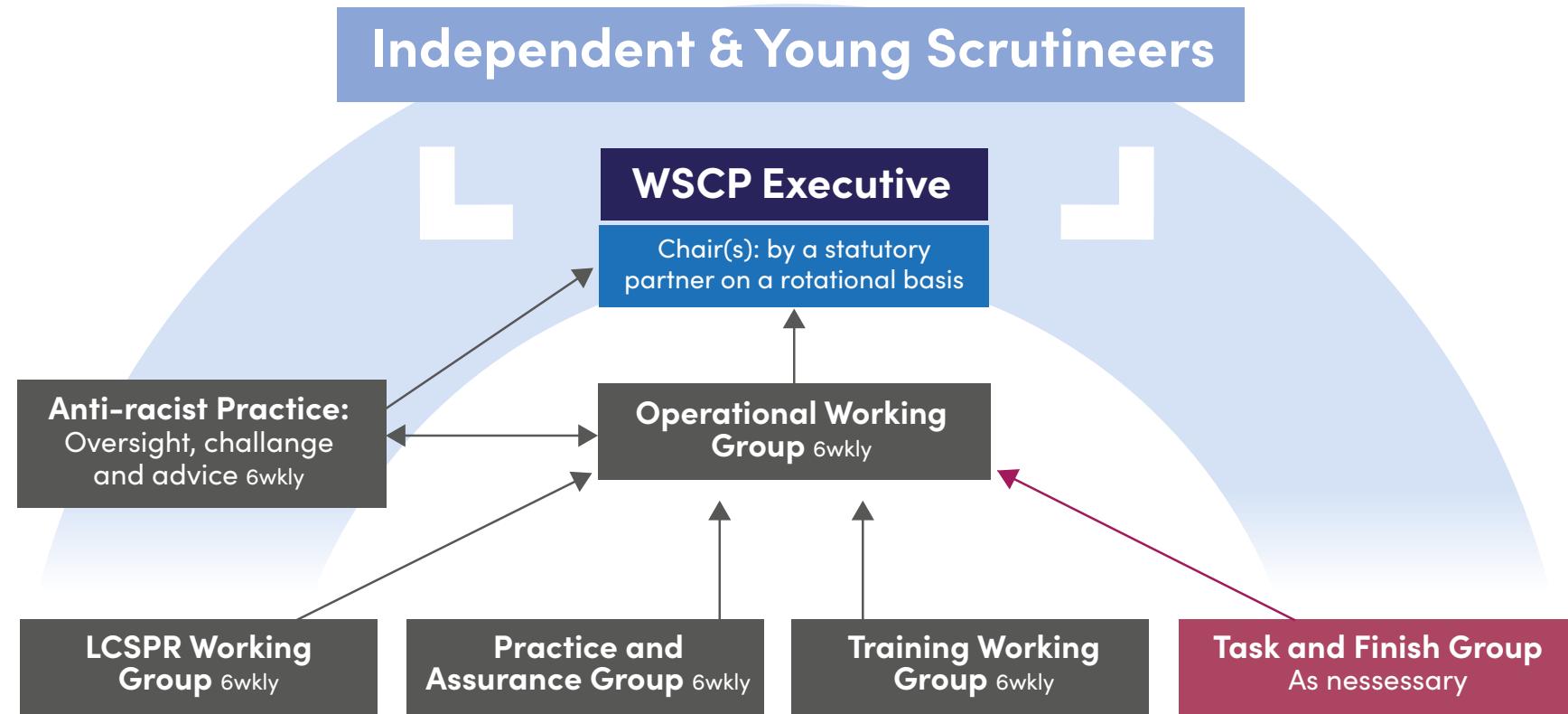
### Challenges and next steps

Despite these gains, challenges remain. Rising demand for SEND support continues to place pressure on schools and services. Exclusion rates, while improving in some areas, still show disparities. Data completeness—particularly around ethnicity and disability—requires further attention to ensure equitable outcomes.

The WSCP is committed to addressing these issues through continued scrutiny, learning, and collaboration. Priorities for 2025-26 include embedding the Families First agenda, reducing children missing from education, and deepening engagement with fathers and male carers.

The impact-focused approach adopted by the WSCP in 2024-25 demonstrates that safeguarding is most effective when it is collaborative, transparent, and rooted in lived experience. By measuring what matters and listening to those most affected the Partnership is building a system that not only protects children but empowers them to thrive.

# WSCP Partnership Arrangements



# Partnership Funding

WCSP Income:	2024 - 2025
London Borough of Wandsworth	138,500
Integrated Care Board	54,160
MOPAC – Met Police	5,000
Expenditure	
LBW staffing costs	126,089
Independent scrutiny and independent LCSPR reviewer costs	17,063
Training costs (training system, e-learning and taught courses, room hire, annual conference)	40,000
Miscellaneous (licenses, website costs etc)	14,137

# Forward Look – 2025–26

The safeguarding landscape in Wandsworth continues to evolve, shaped by changes in national policy, local demographics, and emerging risks to children and young people. Building on the progress made in 2024–25, the WSCP has agreed a refreshed set of priorities for 2025–26. These priorities are informed by performance data, findings from audits and reviews, and the voices of children, young people, and communities.

## Priorities for 2025–26

### 1 Anti-Racist Practice, Actions, Behaviour, and Culture across the Partnership and within all organizations

This priority focuses on embedding anti-racist values across all levels of safeguarding work. It aims to challenge discriminatory practices, improve cultural competence, and ensure that children, families, and staff experience equitable treatment and outcomes regardless of race or ethnicity.

### 2 Children not in school

This priority addresses the growing concern around children who are missing education, including those not on a school roll, persistently absent, or in unregistered settings. It seeks to improve identification, tracking, and coordinated multi-agency responses to safeguard this vulnerable group.

### 3 Families First Transformation/Social Care Reforms

This priority aligns with the national children's social care reforms and the local Families First transformation programme. It supports a rebalancing towards early intervention, relationship-based practice, and a whole-family approach to preventing harm and reducing the need for statutory intervention.

### Impact Aims for 2025–26:

- More children and families receive the right support at the right time, reducing escalation to crisis.
- Disproportionality in safeguarding outcomes is reduced across key indicators.
- Earlier identification and disruption of exploitation and abuse, both online and offline.

### 4 Thematic focus (6–9 months per theme)

A flexible, rotating priority that allows the partnership to deep-dive into specific areas of concern based on emerging need or learning from reviews. Each theme will run for 6–9 months to explore challenges, practice improvements, and system responses.

- Child Sexual Abuse - This theme focuses on strengthening the multi-agency response to CSA, improving identification, disclosure, support, and trauma-informed interventions. It also includes raising practitioner confidence and addressing the findings from national and local reviews.
- Online harms - This theme tackles the safeguarding risks children face in the digital world, including exploitation, abuse, radicalisation, and harmful content. It supports coordinated prevention, education, and intervention strategies across agencies and with families.
- Working with fathers - This priority promotes inclusive practice by improving how agencies engage, assess, and work with fathers and father figures. It aims to address unconscious bias, support stronger father-child relationships, and reduce safeguarding risks linked to father invisibility in casework.