

Notice of Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Date: Monday, 15 September 2025 at 6.00 pm

Venue: HMS Phoebe, BCP Civic Centre, Bournemouth BH2 6DY

Membership:

Chairman:

Cllr S Carr-Brown

Vice Chairman:

Cllr S Bull

Cllr O Brown
Cllr P Cooper
Cllr D Farr

Cllr E Harman
Cllr B Hitchcock
Cllr S Mackrow

Cllr D Martin
Cllr T Slade
Cllr O Walters

Parent Governor Co-opted Representatives

Peter Martin

Diocesan Co-Opted Representatives

Mark Saxby

Youth Parliament Representatives

Ryan Cornish and Elliot Prentice

All Members of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee are summoned to attend this meeting to consider the items of business set out on the agenda below.

The press and public are welcome to view the live stream of this meeting at the following link:

<https://democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Mld=6093>

If you would like any further information on the items to be considered at the meeting please contact: Democratic Services on 01202 096660 or email democratic.services@bcpCouncil.gov.uk

Press enquiries should be directed to the Press Office by email at press.office@bcpCouncil.gov.uk or tel: 01202 118686

This notice and all the papers mentioned within it are available at democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk

AIDAN DUNN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

5 September 2025

**DEBATE
NOT HATE**



Available online and
on the Mod.gov app

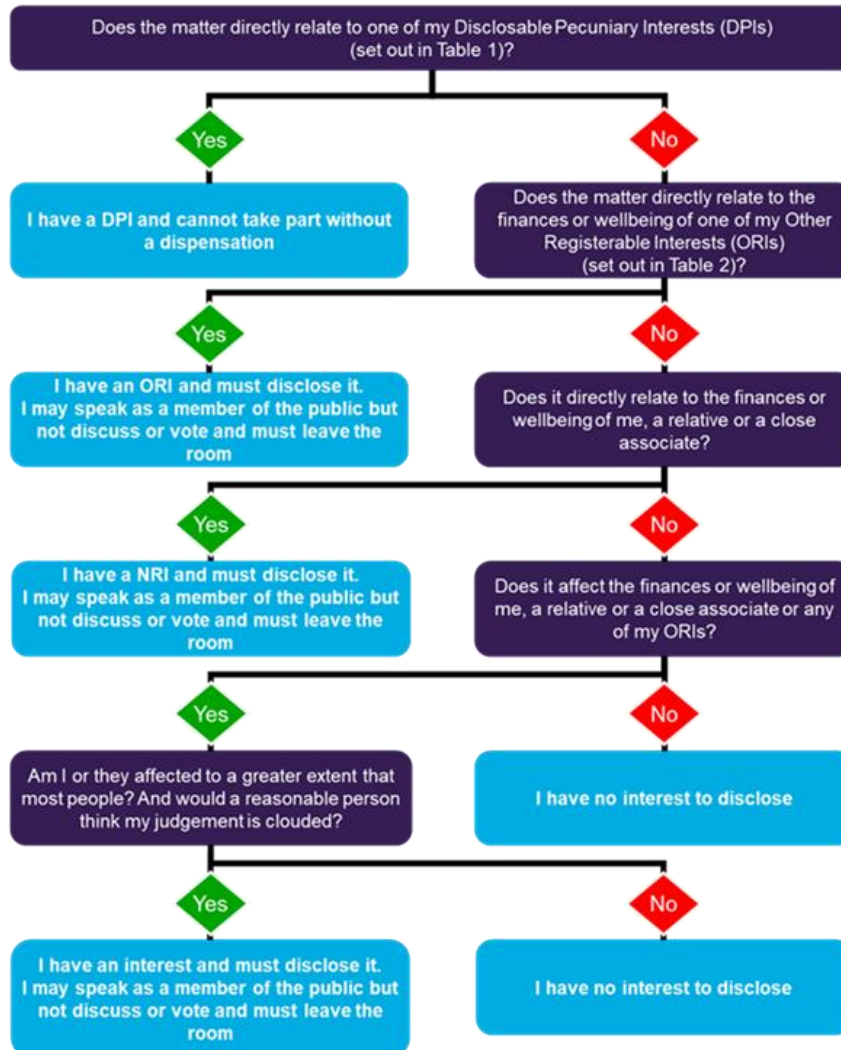


Maintaining and promoting high standards of conduct

Declaring interests at meetings

Familiarise yourself with the Councillor Code of Conduct which can be found in Part 6 of the Council's Constitution.

Before the meeting, read the agenda and reports to see if the matters to be discussed at the meeting concern your interests



What are the principles of bias and pre-determination and how do they affect my participation in the meeting?

Bias and predetermination are common law concepts. If they affect you, your participation in the meeting may call into question the decision arrived at on the item.

Bias Test

In all the circumstances, would it lead a fair minded and informed observer to conclude that there was a real possibility or a real danger that the decision maker was biased?

Predetermination Test

At the time of making the decision, did the decision maker have a closed mind?

If a councillor appears to be biased or to have predetermined their decision, they must NOT participate in the meeting.

For more information or advice please contact the Monitoring Officer

Selflessness

Councillors should act solely in terms of the public interest

Integrity

Councillors must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships

Objectivity

Councillors must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias

Accountability

Councillors are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this

Openness

Councillors should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing

Honesty & Integrity

Councillors should act with honesty and integrity and should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned

Leadership

Councillors should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs

AGENDA

Items to be considered while the meeting is open to the public

1. Apologies

To receive any apologies for absence from Councillors.

2. Substitute Members

To receive information on any changes in the membership of the Committee.

Note – When a member of a Committee is unable to attend a meeting of a Committee or Sub-Committee, the relevant Political Group Leader (or their nominated representative) may, by notice to the Monitoring Officer (or their nominated representative) prior to the meeting, appoint a substitute member from within the same Political Group. The contact details on the front of this agenda should be used for notifications.

3. Declarations of Interests

Councillors are requested to declare any interests on items included in this agenda. Please refer to the workflow on the preceding page for guidance.

Declarations received will be reported at the meeting.

4. Minutes

7 - 14

To confirm and sign as a correct record the minutes of the Meeting held on 10 June 2025.

a) Action Sheet

15 - 20

To consider any outstanding actions.

5. Public Issues

To receive any public questions, statements or petitions submitted in accordance with the Constitution. Further information on the requirements for submitting these is available to view at the following link:-

<https://democracy.bcpccouncil.gov.uk/documents/s2305/Public%20Items%20-%20Meeting%20Procedure%20Rules.pdf>

The deadline for the submission of public questions is 3 clear working days before the meeting.

The deadline for the submission of a statement is midday the working day before the meeting.

The deadline for the submission of a petition is 10 working days before the meeting.

6. Members of Youth Parliament Update

To receive a verbal update from the Members of Youth Parliament (MYPs).

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

7. Children and Young Peoples (CYP) Mental Health (MH) Transformation update	21 - 26
<p>The CYP Mental Health Transformation Programme ("Your Mind Your Say") has progressed into the Mobilisation and Implementation phase following full business case approval and Phase 1 funding. Built around the THRIVE Framework, the programme represents a strategic, co-produced model for delivering integrated mental health support across NHS Dorset, Local Authorities, VCSE partners, and schools.</p> <p>Key priorities include mobilising early help and crisis response teams, expanding community (VCSE) access, Governance has been identified to ensure oversight and alignment with BCP's Early Help Strategy and the Families First Pathfinder.</p> <p>Funding has been approved, with future investment prioritised for MHST expansion. A Population Health Management dashboard will support outcome tracking and equity monitoring.</p> <p>CYP and family voices remain central, with feedback mechanisms embedded throughout. Interdependencies such as the Neurodevelopmental Review and Tier 3.5 services are acknowledged but remain outside the programme's direct scope. Crisis alternatives are under review, with youth worker pilots informing future service design.</p> <p>This transformation marks a significant shift in how mental health services are commissioned and delivered for children and young people in BCP.</p>	
8. SEND Improvement Update	27 - 80
<p>The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Improvement programme of work has made significant progress over the past 6 months, including stabilising the workforce, improving plan quality, and continuing to implement the SEND Sufficiency Strategy. However, challenges remain in maintaining assessment timeliness and managing the growing demand for support at a statutory level. Key focus areas include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessment process and timeliness including AI solutions• Resolving disagreements including Tribunals• Complaints /Improved communication with our families• Addressing the high use of Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) and Alternative Provision (AP)• Improving Co-Production across the system	
9. Alternative Provision Improvement Plan	81 - 92
<p>This report provides an update on the Local Authority's work to improve the quality, consistency, and oversight of Alternative Provision (AP) for children and young people who are unable to access mainstream education.</p> <p>In response to national policy direction and local priorities, the Council is</p>	

developing a three-tier model of AP that promotes early intervention, targeted support, and specialist provision. The model is designed to reduce exclusions, improve outcomes, and ensure that AP is used as a short-term, purposeful intervention rather than a long-term destination.

The report outlines the rationale for change, the options considered, and the preferred approach. It also sets out the implications of the proposed model in relation to sustainability, public health, legal compliance, workforce development, and commissioning. The report is presented for information only and provides an overview of progress to date and the next steps in implementation.

Items for Information

10. **BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership Yearly Report 24/25**

93 - 138

This report for the period April 2024-March 2025 sets out that since the dissolution of the 'Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership', the new BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership has focussed on implementing new arrangements to fulfil the statutory responsibilities of the three statutory safeguarding partners who have joint responsibility and accountability for the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in the BCP geographical area. The three statutory safeguarding partners are BCP Council, NHS Dorset ICB and Dorset Police. Within this period of significant change, partners have maintained a focus on safeguarding children and through the new arrangements have gained insights on the effectiveness of how well partners work together to safeguard local children and young people, and areas to be developed. Full details of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements can be seen [here](#).

The report provides an account of:

- What we have done as part of our local arrangements, including any child safeguarding practice review
- Impact of learning from local and national reviews
- How we have applied independent scrutiny to review and challenge our safeguarding practice
- How education partners are engaged with
- Future improvements that can be made as to the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements.

This report will be submitted to the [Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel](#) by 30 September 2025 and will be published on the BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership website.

11. **Children's Services Compliments and Complaints Annual Report 2024-25**

139 - 172

To provide an update on the compliments, complaints and representations

made to BCP Council about Children's Services during 2024-25.

12. Portfolio Holder Update

To receive a verbal update from the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People.

13. Work Plan

The Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee is asked to consider and identify work priorities for publication in a Work Plan.

173 - 214

No other items of business can be considered unless the Chairman decides the matter is urgent for reasons that must be specified and recorded in the Minutes.

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 June 2025 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr S Carr-Brown – Chair

Cllr S Bull – Vice-Chair

Present: Cllr O Brown, Cllr P Cooper, Cllr E Harman, Cllr B Hitchcock,
Cllr S Mackrow, Cllr D Martin, and Cllr T Slade

Also in attendance: Elliot Prentice

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Bobbie Dove, Cllr Oliver Walters, Simon Welch, Peter Martin and Mark Saxby.

2. Substitute Members

There were no substitute members on this occasion.

3. Election of Chair

Councillor Simon Bull took the Chair for this item. Councillor Sharon Carr-Brown was proposed and seconded for Chair and there were no other nominations.

RESOLVED that Councillor Sharon Carr-Brown be elected as Chair of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2025/26 municipal year.

4. Election of Vice Chair

The newly elected Chair of Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee presided over the election of Vice-Chair. Councillor Simon Bull was proposed and seconded for Vice-Chair and there were no other nominations.

RESOLVED that Councillor Simon Bull be elected as Vice-Chair of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2025/26 municipal year.

5. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

6. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2025, were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

7. Action Sheet

RESOLVED that the Committee note the Action Sheet and agreed for the items highlighted in the Action Sheet to be removed.

8. Public Issues

There were no public issues received on this occasion.

9. Members of Youth Parliament Update

The Committee were provided with a verbal update on the work of the Members of Youth Parliament (MYPs) including an update regarding their campaigns.

The Committee considered the update and made the following comments:

- The Committee welcomed the MYPs call to action encouraging councillors to engage more actively with schools and young people in their wards.
- The Committee was advised that the MYPs were willing to support councillors in organising school-based activities to promote youth engagement in politics.
- The Committee discussed the potential for a youth-led training session for councillors, similar to a previous successful event, and the MYPs agreed to explore this with their peers.
- In response to a query regarding emerging themes from youth consultations, the Committee was advised that young people wanted schools to take a more proactive approach to mental health support, rather than relying on students to seek help themselves.
- The Committee was informed of a student finance campaign being developed by the MYPs, aimed at educating students from Year 7 onwards about university costs, maintenance loans, and alternative pathways such as apprenticeships and employment.
- The Committee expressed support for the campaign and encouraged collaboration between councillors and MYPs to promote youth voice and participation.

10. Recommendations from Portfolio Holders, Cabinet or Council

The Chair presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'A' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

The Council's constitution provides that Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committees may consider requests for work from a range of sources, including requests from Portfolio Holders, Cabinet and Council.

The O&S Committee was asked to consider a request for scrutiny recently made by Council and to determine the request in line with the associated constitution procedure rules.

Rebirth of Youth Services

At its 25 March 2025 meeting, the Council was presented with a motion and resolved to ask the Children's Overview & Scrutiny Committee for consideration. Debate at Council included the suggestion that the O&S Committee could assist in this matter by conducting a review of existing current youth provision, identifying gaps and opportunities for investment in professional youth work, detached youth work, and community-based youth services.

After discussing the request, it was agreed to include the 'Rebirth of Youth Services' motion in the work plan of the Committee. The Committee, in collaboration with Children's Services, decided that a report would be prepared to introduce the work and outline the existing services. This would enable the Committee to refine its framework.

Children's Services agreed to consider when they could provide the report and updated the Committee outside of the meeting. **ACTION**

11. Youth Justice Service Plan 2025-2026

The Youth Offending Service Team Manager presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'B' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

To present the Youth Justice Plan for 2025/26. There was a statutory requirement to publish an annual Youth Justice Plan which had to provide specified information about the local provision of youth justice services. This report summarised the Youth Justice Plan for 2025/26, with a copy of the Plan appended. The Youth Justice Plan needed to be approved by the full Council.

The Committee considered the update and made the following comments:

- The Committee commended the depth and quality of the Youth Justice Plan report and welcomed the significant reduction in first-time entrances to the youth justice system.
- In response to a query regarding the reduction, the Committee was advised that the reduction was largely due to strengthened partnerships with police, who now had greater confidence in referring young people for effective intervention.
- The Committee discussed the overrepresentation of children in care within the justice system. Officers confirmed this was a national issue and outlined ongoing work to ensure joined-up planning and early intervention for these young people.

- The Committee was informed that an annual audit was underway, focusing specifically on children in care, to ensure coherence and effectiveness in support planning.
- In response to a question about diversion options, the Committee was advised that a range of outcomes existed and that further information could be provided in writing due to the complexity of the topic. **ACTION**
- The Committee praised the integration of the child's voice throughout the service and highlighted the importance of adapting communication methods to suit individual needs. Officers confirmed that all referred children were assessed by a speech and language therapist and issued a communication passport.
- In response to a query raised regarding mental health support, the Committee was advised that the service included a dedicated health team comprising clinical psychologists and mental health nurses, enabling timely assessments and support.
- The Committee was informed that the Discover U project had previously received lottery funding and that efforts were ongoing to secure continued financial support.
- The Committee expressed strong support for the project and suggested that similar initiatives should be made available to young people before they enter the justice system.
- The Committee advised of the importance of early intervention and the role of schools and social care in preventing youth offending.
- In response to a query raised regarding the development of a data dashboard to better visualise and monitor youth justice data, the Committee was advised that it was being explored.

RESOLVED that the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee endorse the Youth Justice Plan so that Cabinet can recommend its approval to the Full Council.

12. Housing for Care Experienced Young People

The Director of Housing and Communities presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'C' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

The Council provided and commissioned a range of housing for Care Experienced Young People (CEYP) as part of their transition to independence. A variety of social and private rented accommodation provisions were offered depending on the assessed needs of the young person:

- Supported accommodation (onsite or visiting support)
- Joint Living Properties (shared houses)
- Self-contained accommodation (dispersed or clustered)

The Council held a number of powers which acted as assurance that the quality of accommodation was of the required standard and had several

additional measures in place to ensure accommodation quality was maintained alongside housing-related support for each and every setting.

A review of the housing needs of Care Experienced Young People was recently considered within a wider review of specialist and supported housing needs. A housing strategy outlining the future commissioning intentions was to be considered by Cabinet later in 2025/26.

The Committee considered the update and made the following comments:

- The Committee discussed the quality of accommodation for care-experienced young people, acknowledging improvements since the 2021 Ofsted inspection. While standards had improved, members noted that limited choice remained a key issue.
- In a query raised regarding whether the current housing provision met the standard they would expect for their own children, the Committee was advised that while accommodation met safety and quality standards, the lack of choice and flexibility was a concern.
- The Committee was advised that feedback from recent inspections of supported accommodation had been positive, particularly regarding the quality of furnishings and facilities.
- The committee raised concerns regarding the anxiety experienced by young people transitioning out of care at age 18, particularly regarding uncertainty around housing, finances, and support. Officers confirmed that earlier planning and wraparound support were being prioritised in the revised Joint Housing Protocol.
- The Committee was advised that the booklets used to support independent living was not sufficient for all young people. Officers acknowledged the need for more engaging and diverse resources, including digital tools such as apps.
- In a query raised regarding the importance of life skills education, including budgeting, cooking, and understanding tenancy responsibilities, the Committee was advised that alternative resources were being explored.
- The Committee was advised that personal advisors and housing support teams provided enhanced support, including home visits and financial guidance, particularly during the initial move-in period.
- Officers highlighted the importance of identifying and supporting the most vulnerable young people, who may not actively seek help or communicate their needs.
- The Committee raised concerns regarding the responsiveness of landlords to maintenance issues and the challenges of ensuring consistent standards across private and social housing sectors.
- Officers outlined plans to improve housing standards through education, enforcement, and a new two-year delivery plan as part of the housing strategy review.
- In response to concerns raised regarding delays in rehousing individuals in complex cases, the Committee was advised that legal processes and the necessity of maintaining tenancies could often prolong timelines. However, multi-agency collaboration would be implemented to effectively manage risks.

- The Committee was advised that a specialist housing needs assessment was underway to identify gaps in provision, particularly for high-risk young people with lower support needs.
- The Committee noted the importance of recognising care-experienced young people as a protected group and reaffirmed the Council's corporate parenting responsibilities.
- In response to a query raised regarding the use of HMOs for young people, the Committee was advised that placements with older adults were avoided unless specifically chosen by the young person. Any exceptions require director sign-off.
- The Committee was advised of the challenges of regulating the private rented sector and the need to balance tenant protections with landlord retention.
- The Committee praised the collaborative approach between housing and children's services and acknowledged the progress made since the last inspection.
- The officers agreed to share the missing document, 'Appendix X,' with the Committee after the meeting. **ACTION**

It was Proposed, Seconded and RECOMMENDED that the Committee seeks assurance that the new Joint Housing protocol has been successfully agreed and is working effectively to ensure our Care Experienced Young People are seeing an improved service and are in receipt of timely advice and safe housing that suits their individual needs and hopes for the future.

13. Virtual School Head Teacher Annual Report 2023-2024

The Committee was advised that this was an information only item and that a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'D' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

14. Portfolio Holder Update

The Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People provided a verbal update which included:

- Confirmation that the OFSTED CQC phone call for the SEND inspection had not yet been received, though it was anticipated imminently.
- A summary of the recent OFSTED annual conversation was provided. This formal discussion involved sharing self-evaluation and performance data, which informs future inspection planning.
- It was noted that a focused OFSTED visit is likely to take place in 2026, potentially focusing on care-experienced young people, as highlighted in the previous ILACS report. A further conversation with OFSTED will take place prior to this.
- The importance of the committee's role in providing challenge and support was reiterated, as this is valued by OFSTED.
- An update on the implementation of the Families First for Children reforms was shared, with current efforts focused on

governance. Although the council did not receive pathfinder funding due to its previous OFSTED rating, it is now required to implement the improvements.

- The Portfolio Holder will attend the Southwest Children's Lead Members and Directors of Children's Services meeting in Taunton, where learning from the Families First pathfinder programme will be discussed.
 - Pay and reward structures within Children's Services are under review, with particular attention to ensuring that out-of-hours social workers are not disadvantaged by new contracts, recognising the demanding nature of their roles.
 - An update from the Health and Wellbeing Board was provided, including:
 - The Children and Young People Partnership Plan, with thanks extended to the committee for their support at Council.
 - A verbal update on the Health and Wellbeing Strategy into Action and Place-Based Partnership, which includes four strategic priorities:
 - Starting Well (Children and Young People)
 - Mental Wellbeing
 - Living and Ageing Well
 - Healthy Places and Communities
- It was noted that children and young people were the top priority and featured prominently in at least two other areas.

15. Work Plan

The Committee was asked to consider and identify work priorities for publication in a Work Plan.

The Chair advised that the CAMHS paper and the SEND budget pressures paper would be brought to the September meeting, and that the School Permanent Exclusions paper was already scheduled for November.

The Committee agreed to collaborate over the summer to revise the work plan and discuss potential budget lenses for scrutiny.

A suggestion was made to consider the financial implications of alternative provision as a budget lens, which was supported by the Committee for further exploration outside of the meeting.

The Committee welcomed the successful relocation of the Mudeford Wood Playgroup to BCP Council premises in Highcliffe and expressed thanks to all involved for their support and contributions.

The meeting ended at 8.10 pm

CHAIR

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ACTION SHEET – BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE CHILDREN’S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Updated – 20 6 2025

Minute number	Item and	Action* *Items remain until action completed.	Lead officer	Progress – (when/ where/how update will be provided)	Outcome (where recommendations are made to other bodies)
	19 September 2024				
22	Work plan – CS Budget Working Group Childrens Services Budget Update.pdf	Decision Made: The Committee was advised that officers would provide a breakdown of agency staff and their positions within the service to the Committee. Action – Officers aware	Finance Manager		Figures will be provided by the end of June for the period ending May. To be reviewed under new recruitment and retention work following pay and reward.
	26 November 2024				
35	SEND Improvement update SEND Improvement Update.pdf	Decision Made: The officers are to come back with data regarding the rate of EHCP requests that are granted when the original request is submitted by a parent compared to when submitted by the school.	Send Service Manager		Presentation reviewed by LL and additional slide to be added.

		Action – Officers aware			Report completed for the September 2025 meeting.
41	Work plan – CS Budget Working Group Forward Plan cover report CS Nov 2023.pdf	<p>Decision Made: That the O&S Board recommends that Children's Services Officers:</p> <p>1. Increase awareness of school transport options through engagement and co-production with parents and carers, in order to reduce the impact on the school transport budget wherever possible.</p> <p>Action – recommendation sent to officers and update requested</p>	Tanya Smith	Could an update be shared in May?	Paper going to Cabinet in October. TBC whether report coming to CS O&S
	28 January 2025				
49	Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People Sufficiency Report Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People Sufficiency Report.pdf	<p>Decision Made: The officers agreed to share the final governance and quality assurance framework with the Committee once agreed and signed off as final.</p> <p>Action – Officers aware</p> <p>The Committee agreed to continue discussions outside the meeting regarding the best ways to address the barriers identified in the report and to reach an</p>	Head of Children's Commissioning		Work still in progress. Dates to follow.

		agreement on how the Committee will receive that information. Action – Officers aware			
50	Children's Services Capital Strategy 2025/26-2027/28 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2024-25.pdf	Decision Made: The Committee agreed to discuss the AP improvement plan outside the meeting and decide on the format for its presentation to the Committee. It was suggested that this be covered in one of the Committee's informal briefing sessions. Action – Officers aware	Head of Service Place Planning and Admissions	Agreed – will come as a committee report in September	The report has been produced for the September meeting.
	11 March 2025				
	Children and Young People's Partnership Plan 2025-2030 Children and Young Peoples Partnership Plan 2025-2030.pdf	Decision Made: It was agreed that the KPIs for this would be shared with the Committee. Action – Officers aware	Head of Performance, Governance & Systems	KPIs have not yet been agreed. The next meeting is 20 October 2025.	
	SEND Improvement Update SEND Improvement Update.pdf	Decision Made: The officers agreed to share an update on the first free school, including current enrolment figures, and to update the Committee regarding the progress of the second free school.	Director of Education and Skills Interim SEND Improvement Officer		This is coming to the September meeting .

		<p>Action – Officers aware</p> <p>The officers agreed to share the full review of the DSG finances as well as the SEND improvement board's response to the review.</p> <p>Action – Officers aware</p> <p>The Committee requested an update on the ongoing work regarding education outside of school and home education and asked that it be shared with the Committee.</p> <p>Action – Officers aware</p>			
	10 June 2025				
10	<u>Recommendations from Council - Rebirth of Youth Services</u>	<p>Decision Made: Children's Services agreed to consider when they could provide the report and updated the Committee outside of the meeting.</p> <p>Action – Officers aware</p>	Corporate Director of Children's Services	Action been sent to CS.	
11	<u>Youth Justice Service Plan 2025-2026</u>	<p>Decision Made: In response to a question about diversion options, the Committee was advised that a range of outcomes existed and that further information could be provided in writing due to the complexity of the topic.</p> <p>Action – Officers aware</p>	Head of Service, Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service		<i>Information circulated by DS to the Committee on 10/08/25</i>

12	<u>Housing for Care Experienced Young People</u>	<p>Decision Made: The officers agreed to share the missing document, 'Appendix X,' with the Committee after the meeting. Action – Officers aware</p> <p>Decision Made: It was Proposed, Seconded and RECOMMENDED that the Committee seeks assurance that the new Joint Housing protocol has been successfully agreed and is working effectively to ensure our Care Experienced Young People are seeing an improved service and are in receipt of timely advice and safe housing that suits their individual needs and hopes for the future. Action – Officers aware</p>	Director of Housing and Communities		<p>Shared via email on 20/06</p> <p>Agreed with Housing in meeting that update would come as a committee report in January</p>
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CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



Report subject	Children and Young Peoples (CYP) Mental Health (MH) Transformation update
Meeting date	15 September 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>[The CYP Mental Health Transformation Programme ("Your Mind Your Say") has progressed into the Mobilisation and Implementation phase following full business case approval and Phase 1 funding. Built around the THRIVE Framework, the programme represents a strategic, co-produced model for delivering integrated mental health support across NHS Dorset, Local Authorities, VCSE partners, and schools.</p> <p>Key priorities include mobilising early help and crisis response teams, expanding community (VCSE) access, Governance has been identified to ensure oversight and alignment with BCP's Early Help Strategy and the Families First Pathfinder.</p> <p>Funding has been approved, with future investment prioritised for MHST expansion. A Population Health Management dashboard will support outcome tracking and equity monitoring.</p> <p>CYP and family voices remain central, with feedback mechanisms embedded throughout. Interdependencies such as the Neurodevelopmental Review and Tier 3.5 services are acknowledged but remain outside the programme's direct scope. Crisis alternatives are under review, with youth worker pilots informing future service design.</p> <p>This transformation marks a significant shift in how mental health services are commissioned and delivered for children and young people in BCP</p>
Recommendations	It is recommended that members note the content of this report.
Reason for recommendations	N/A

Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr Richard Burton – Portfolio holder for Children, Young People, Education and Skills.
Corporate Director	Cathi Hadley – Corporate Director Childrens Services BCP
Report Authors	Kelly Tilbury Project Support Officer – NHS Dorset
Wards	PAN Dorset – all wards/PCNs
Classification	For Update.

Background

1. A large-scale system transformation programme known as ‘Your Mind Your Say’ has been in progress focusing on co designing and producing with system partners, alongside CYP and their families, a new model of care for improving the emotional and mental health of CYP.
- 1.2. During 2023 NHS Dorset and partners co-ordinated a series of co production modelling workshops, to shape the future of children and young people’s mental health (CYP MH) care. The outcome of these workshops was that the new model must:

- Have different entry points so no wrong door
- Be needs led not diagnostically driven
- Have no referral barriers/thresholds
- Have no family told “you are not ill enough”
- Ensure families are welcomed with enquiry and discussion as to right solution for CYP and family
- Ensure family and CYP at centre with their expertise share and combined with ours
- Ensure choice and control for families
- Be integrated and co-located where needed and where possible
- Allow families where possible only tell their story once and build on it as needed
- Be able to self-referral and can return to service as needed without referral
- Have information and guidance at entry with openness about any waiting and while waiting be able to access other types of help as part of the offer for example sport or music or activity-based support
- Respond to crisis in a timely manner and ensure following on support

- 1.3. A comprehensive business case was developed to outline the case for change, the model localised to Dorset, financial phasing, the benefits and outcomes that CYP and their families will see with these changes. The business case has now been fully ratified, supported and phase 1 of funding has now been approved.

Options Appraisal

2. NA – Business case already approved at system level.

Summary of financial implications

3. N/A funding is applied via NHS funding streams – the approval of the Business case and its attributed funding has positive connotations for system partners.

Summary of legal implications

4. NA BCP responsibilities

4.1 NHS Dorset/ICB has a legal duty to meet the health needs of Dorset's population. The Joint Forward Plan commits to improving CYP emotional wellbeing, integrating with Local Authorities, and addressing inequalities. The 2025/26 Annual Operating Plan guidance requires ICBs to ensure CYP mental health services are fit for purpose, with timely access, 24/7 crisis response, and expanded MHSTs (Mental Health in schools Teams) in schools.

Summary of human resources implications

5. It is expected that implementing the new THRIVE model will support the integration of health and social care services, with staff co located and working alongside each other. These changes will improve the way services are delivered along with the location of the services. The offer will be dispersed and integrated where possible. Teams will require a base alongside space to work in the other agreed locations. This is a crucial change because the aim of the whole programme is to ensure help at the very earliest opportunity with very few referrals or exclusion criteria. The Thrive model is 0-25, however as the Business case has been modelled on ages 0-18years, the transition element of the work, will be absorbed as part of ongoing improvement across Children's and adults' services.

Summary of sustainability impact

6. If we do not transform CYP MH services, it will further exacerbate the current challenges for CYP and their families and increase pressures on the rest of the system (admissions, Out of Area placements, A&E attendances). To ensure the benefits are realised, transforming the way CYP MH services are delivered, to a needs focused and integrated approach is key.

Summary of public health implications

7. The main benefits to CYP and their families will be better access to timely support for their mental health needs, to promote improved health and wellbeing, and life changes. The main benefits to the system are improved productivity & efficiency with integrated working and potential for a reduction in high-cost specialist care with earlier intervention.

7.1 Individual Benefits

- Improved mental health supports better physical health, relationships, and education.

- Easier access to support via multiple routes (GP, hubs, digital, localities).
- Timely, needs-matched responses, building resilience.
- CYP and families make informed choices and feel ownership of care.
- Wider support options and improved outcomes lead to better life chances and care experiences.

7.2 System Benefits

- Better inclusion and educational outcomes.
- More integrated, productive working across services.
- Improved staff experience and reduced duplication.
- Shared language and framework across partners.
- Early help reduces demand for intensive services.
- Lower need for specialist placements and MH Act interventions.
- Fewer crisis presentations, reduced inequalities, and suicide rates

Summary of equality implications

- 8 NHS Dorset has completed a System Quality and Equality Impact Assessment (SQEIA), which has been reviewed and approved at the SQEIA panel in April 2025.

Summary of risk assessment

- 9 Culture change has been highlighted as a key risk and strategic priority. Led by Dorset Healthcare with system partner support, workstreams have been exposed to support with culture change activity. The Mobilisation and Implementation Governance (MIOG) plan outlines the governance and key workstreams that will continue the development and expand the culture work required across all partners to deliver this transformation. This includes robust public facing, stakeholder and current workforce communications and engagement strategy.

KEY LINES OF ENQUIRY UPDATES

1. Questions to be Answered by This Work

KLOE	Summary
1. Is the programme on track?	Mixed progress. Successes in co-production and neighbourhood model. Future needs include integrated front door development with BCP and Early Help transformation. Test & Learn phase underway.
2. How is system integration working?	Council, VCSE, and schools are engaged. INT programme is an interdependency, not a direct workstream. Voluntary sector access expanding via ACSS, KOOTH, Discovery.

KLOE	Summary
3. Crisis alternative development (e.g. cafes)?	Initial project group formed Jan 2025. Paused to align with Phase 1 integration of Getting Help and Risk Support. Youth worker pilots in BCP/Dorset linked to Emergency Departments for preventative support.
4. ND Review progress and transition at 18?	Neurodevelopmental (ND) Review is separate with distinct governance. THRIVE model supports up to age 25 with no wrong door approach.
5. Has additional funding materialised?	Yes – Phase 1 funding approved via Business Case. Financial plan in development for mobilisation tracking.
6–10. What is included in Phase 1 funding?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Getting Help Workforce (BCP/DHC) - Getting Risk Support Workforce (BCP/DHC) - MHST Wave 11 (DHC) - Community support expansion (VCS i.e KOOTH ACSS) - Discovery project (VCS – DMHF)
11. Is the residential tier coming online?	Tier 3.5 is an interdependency, not a direct workstream of CYP MH transformation.

2. Data and Information Requests

Request	Update
Funding levels	All NHS-funded. CYP MH Full Business Case presented at Triple Lock (13 June 2025). Future MHST expansion prioritised in financial planning.
Financial breakdown	Phase 1 includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community Support & Services - Discovery Project - MHST Wave 11 - CAMHS Redesign (Getting Help, More Help, Risk Support, Leadership, Medical)

Request	Update
CYP & families feedback	“Your Mind Your Say” initiative embedded CYP/family voice. Comms plan includes dedicated feedback resource. Input informs KPIs and benefits tracking.
Gap analysis & BI support	Business intelligence resource to be allocated. Public Health Management dashboard (PowerBI) will monitor health inequalities, KPIs, outcomes, and service use feedback.

3. Governance and Assurance Framework

From August 2025, the programme moves into Mobilisation and Implementation phase. A revised governance structure will be in place to ensure oversight, assurance, and progress. This includes:

- Continued design meetings with senior leads at BCP.
- Approval of a shared visual of purpose for BCP
- Subgroup meetings focused on specific cohorts (e.g. Children in Care, Care Experienced, Preparing for Adulthood)
- Alignment of timescales with BCP Early Help Strategy to support joint working and co-location

The Families First Pathfinder (FFP) programme now intersects both BCP’s Early Help transformation and NHS Dorset’s CYP MH transformation. Joint planning is underway to align workstreams and ensure cohesive delivery

Background papers

None – Background papers are classified as confidential, containing exempt information, not suitable for the public domain.

Appendices

There are no appendices to this report.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



Report subject	SEND Improvement Update
Meeting date	15 September 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Improvement programme of work has made significant progress over the past 6 months, including stabilising the workforce, improving plan quality, and continuing to implement the SEND Sufficiency Strategy. However, challenges remain in maintaining assessment timeliness and managing the growing demand for support at a statutory level. Key focus areas include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment process and timeliness including AI solutions • Resolving disagreements including Tribunals • Complaints /Improved communication with our families • Addressing the high use of Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) and Alternative Provision (AP) • Improving Co-Production across the system
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>Members note the progress and challenges of the SEND Improvement Programme and to recommend where additional resource would be beneficial in order to deliver greater and faster impact.</p>
Reason for recommendations	To enhance the overall effectiveness of the SEND service.

Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr. Richard Burton
Corporate Director	Cathi Hadley
Report Authors	Jeanette Yorke, Head of SEND Assessment and Review Karen Chester, Interim Head of SEND Strategic Lisa Linscott, Director of Education and Skills
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Information

Background

1. The SEND Improvement Plan has been delivered collaboratively by the local area SEND partnership to address stabilising the workforce, resource allocation, and enhancing co-production, with the aim of developing a sustainable, inclusive service across Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole. Key priorities include improving statutory timeliness and quality through strengthening pathways for children and young people with SEND and promoting mainstream inclusion to reduce exclusions and reliance on alternative provision. Effective early help, strategic leadership, and a partnership approach—supported by strong communication and co-production—are recognised as essential for optimising outcomes and ensuring the lived experience of children, young people, and their families informs ongoing improvement across the SEND system.
2. The government has recognised that the SEND system needs to change, and plans are to be set out in a Schools White Paper in the autumn. These will take time to be implemented and proposals concerning how councils are to be supported in the meantime will also be set out in the autumn.
3. The impact of the Children and Families Act 2014 and associated changes to the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice is still growing, due to the statutory requirement to extend EHCP support to age 25 since that time.
4. The number of children requiring an EHCP across England has increased by 140% between 2014 and 2023, with the cost of provision going up by 59%. This rise in pupils with EHCPs has been driven by three specific types of needs: autistic spectrum condition (ASC); social, emotional and mental health needs (including ADHD); and speech, language and communication needs. This aligns with findings in BCP Council.

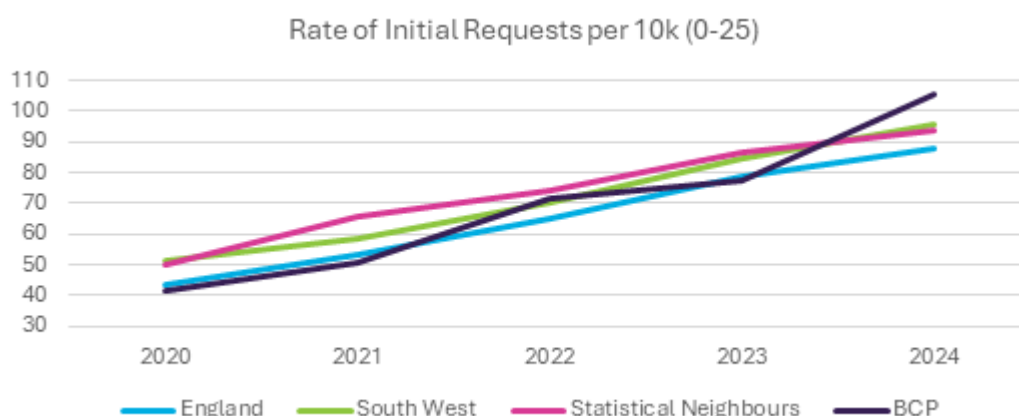
Overview and summary

Assessment process and timeliness including AI solutions:

5. The timeliness of Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments (EHCNAs) has remained a focus, with performance against the 20-week statutory timeline showing variability. Notably, compliance rates remained strong until May 2025, when they dipped

to 55.4%. June saw a further decrease to 33.8%, though this remains above the southwest average of 25.5%. For the year to the end of June 2025, overall performance stands at 68.5%, which is well above both the national average (46.4%) and the southwest average (25.5%).

6. However, rising numbers of EHCNA requests—up by more than 30% between March and June 2025—are placing considerable pressure on the service. The introduction of AI solutions is being explored to help manage these demands and improve efficiency. There has been continued growth in new and ongoing requests for EHCP assessments. The rate of initial requests increased in 2024 to 105.7 per 10,000—above the national (88.1), southwest (95.9), and Statistical Neighbour (93.4) averages—before a slight reduction to 100.5 for the 12 months up to June 2025, still outpacing comparator groups.



7. Alongside this, the number of children and young people the SEND Service supports rose by 18% between March 2024 and March 2025 and has since increased further to 28%. The financial implications are significant, with growing demand placing considerable strain on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budget.
8. **Resolving disagreements including Tribunals:** The service recognises the importance of resolving disagreements effectively and minimising the need for Tribunal hearings. Over the period from January 2023 to June 2025, the predominant reason for Tribunal appeals has consistently been relating to school placement of children and young people with EHCPs. The ways in which we attempt to resolve disagreements include offering Global Mediation and equipping staff with nationally recognised IPSEA training to promote legal accuracy and a child-centered approach.
9. **Complaints / Improved communication with our families:** Improving communication with families remains a key priority. The service has focused on ensuring that Education, Health and Care Co-ordinators (EHCCOs) and Appeals Team members are trained to provide high-quality, transparent, and consistent support to families throughout the assessment and review processes. Embedding Independent Provider of Special Education Advice (IPSEA) training into staff development supports this objective and aims to strengthen relationships with parents and carers. The approach is designed to address complaints proactively by promoting early resolution and maintaining a focus on the needs of children and young people.

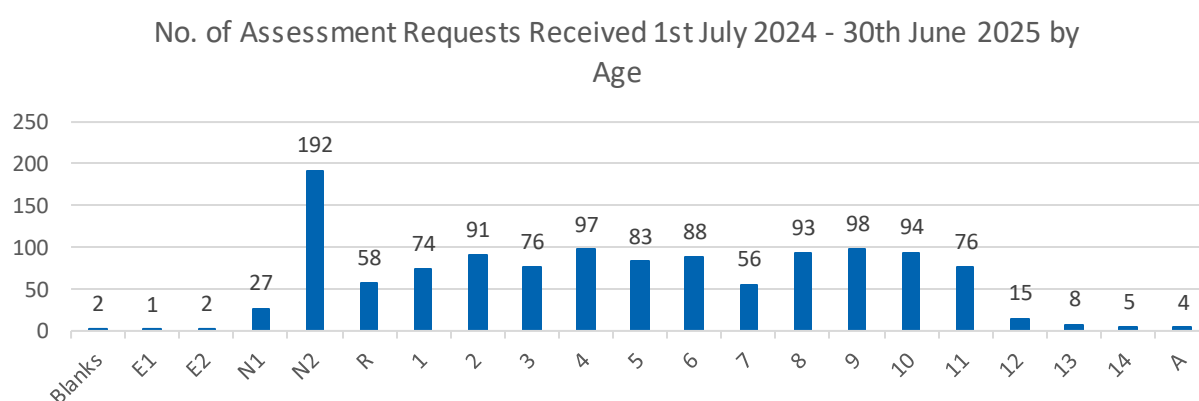
10. Addressing the high use of Alternative Provision: The high level of reliance on Alternative Provision (AP) and Education Other Than at School (EOTAS) was identified as a statistical outlier for BCP Council. This is driven largely by insufficient local specialist provision, contributing to both an increase in AP placements and higher associated costs, which are a significant factor in DSG overspend. The SEND Sufficiency Strategy, a two-year plan, is being implemented to expand specialist provision and reduce the need for alternative placements, aiming for a more sustainable and inclusive system. BCP and all comparator groups are showing an increase in pupils **educated elsewhere**. (England 7.8%, Southwest 10.1% and statistical neighbours 8.5%). At 11.8% BCP are above all other comparator groups.

Areas Of Focus

- Assessment process and timeliness including AI solutions
- Rising Demand

11. Between March 2025 and June 2025, the demand for EHCNA assessments rose by over 30%, putting pressure on the service's ability to maintain performance levels. In July 2025, 26% of assessment requests were made by parents, an increase of 3% from July 2024. The highest amount of requests from parents is within the secondary school age range.

12. The data shows continued growth in both new and ongoing requests for assessments. BCP Council is in line with the demand rates in the southwest and nationally, but there are no signs of the demand slowing down. The highest change in demand is now showing in Early Years settings. The majority of ECHNA requests in June were for children aged 3. There is also an increase in requests in Year 6 and beyond.



13. A deep dive has been undertaken to review the key drivers for this increase within the Early Years which are:

- **Securing Onward Placement**
EHCPs are increasingly being requested not to support access to current early years provision, but to secure appropriate support for school placement, particularly for children transitioning into Reception or specialist settings. There is a noticeable rise in children requiring specialist early years placements before reaching Reception age.

- **Rising Complexity of Needs**

While the overall number of children supported by Early Years Area SENCOs has reduced, the complexity of children's developmental, social, emotional, and communication needs has significantly increased, now representing most children.

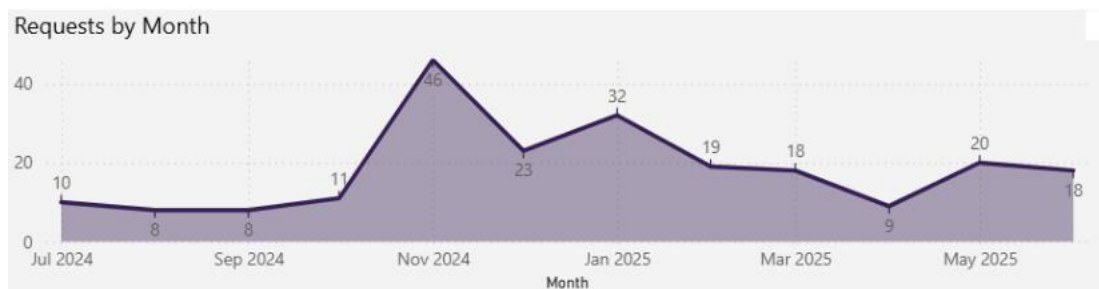
- **School-Led Pressure**

Schools are increasingly requiring EHCPs to be in place prior to a child's entry. Dingley's Promise highlights a growing trend of school deferrals, with children remaining longer in early years settings due to the absence of an EHCP.

- **Earlier Identification and Support**

Enhanced training and access to early funding streams have empowered early years providers to identify needs sooner and initiate support earlier. The Early Years Area SENCOs play a vital role in assessing children's needs and guiding providers on whether those needs can be met through SEN Support or require an EHCNA. A comprehensive training offer delivered both in-person and via recorded sessions supports settings with the graduated response and the EHCNA process. The quality and appropriateness of submitted EHCNA requests is demonstrated by the conversion rate (children who are issued EHCP after an EHCNA – 95.68% for 23-24 and 97.90% for 24-25).

14. The below graph shows EHCNA requests who are pre-statutory school age from 1st July 2024 to 30th June 2025



15. 142 children (84%) had EHCNA requests submitted during the transition to school—either in the final term of N1 year or during N2—ensuring EHCPs were in place before the statutory phase transfer deadline of 15th February.
16. Only 8 children (4.71%) had EHCNA requests submitted prior to starting early years provision. An additional 7 children had requests initiated during their E2 or N1 year while attending a setting. All 8 children in specialist provision had their EHCNA initiated in either the E2 year (5 children) or N1 year (3 children).

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, 2024

17. The importance of early assessment has ensured that children with SEND are achieving above the national Good Level of Development (GLD) in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.
- Children with SEND support achieved a GLD of 32.2%, above national SEN Support (25%).

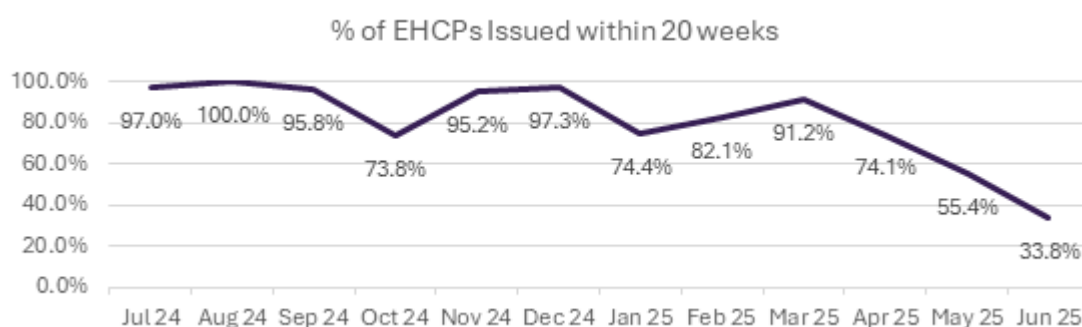
- All children with an EHCP and SEND support achieved a GLD of 32.2%, above national at 19.8%.
- Children with an EHCP achieved a GLD of 4.6%, above national of 3.9%.
- Children with no SEND GLD, 79%, above national 75.8%.
- All children had a GLD of 70.9% an increase of 0.5pp. This is above national of 67.3%.

The Resource Allocation System (RAS)

18. The RAS supports in allocating resources from the high needs block for children and young people with an EHCP. It allocates an indicative resource to support children and young people to achieve their outcomes and enable education establishments to deliver the provision set out in the plan.
19. Quarter 3 of this calendar year will realise the pilot of a new banding system RAS which was trialled in the summer term. The RAS was co-produced with schools and if successful will be rolled out for the Autumn Term 2025, enabling fairness, transparency, and sustainability of funding arrangements for schools across the area. The review aims to remodel the existing banding system and ensure that funding levels reflect the needs of children and young people with special educational needs.

20-week timeliness

1. 74 EHCNAs exceeded 20 weeks in June 2025, compared to 6 in June 2024.
2. It should be noted that the service received 136 requests for EHCNA in June 2025 and if this trend continues it will impact both the Educational Psychology and SEND Teams' ability to meet the statutory 20-week timescales.
3. Furthermore, the summer term volume now results in a real likelihood that timeliness and performance will deteriorate.



4. Careful consideration must be given to the impact of accruing backlogs in both the EPS and SEND Assessment and Review Teams. We will therefore welcome and respond to the legislative changes from central government in the Autumn.

Educational Psychology Team

5. Demand for Educational Psychology (EP) statutory advice in BCP has risen annually by 20% since 2023, matching national trends. This has resulted in growing backlogs

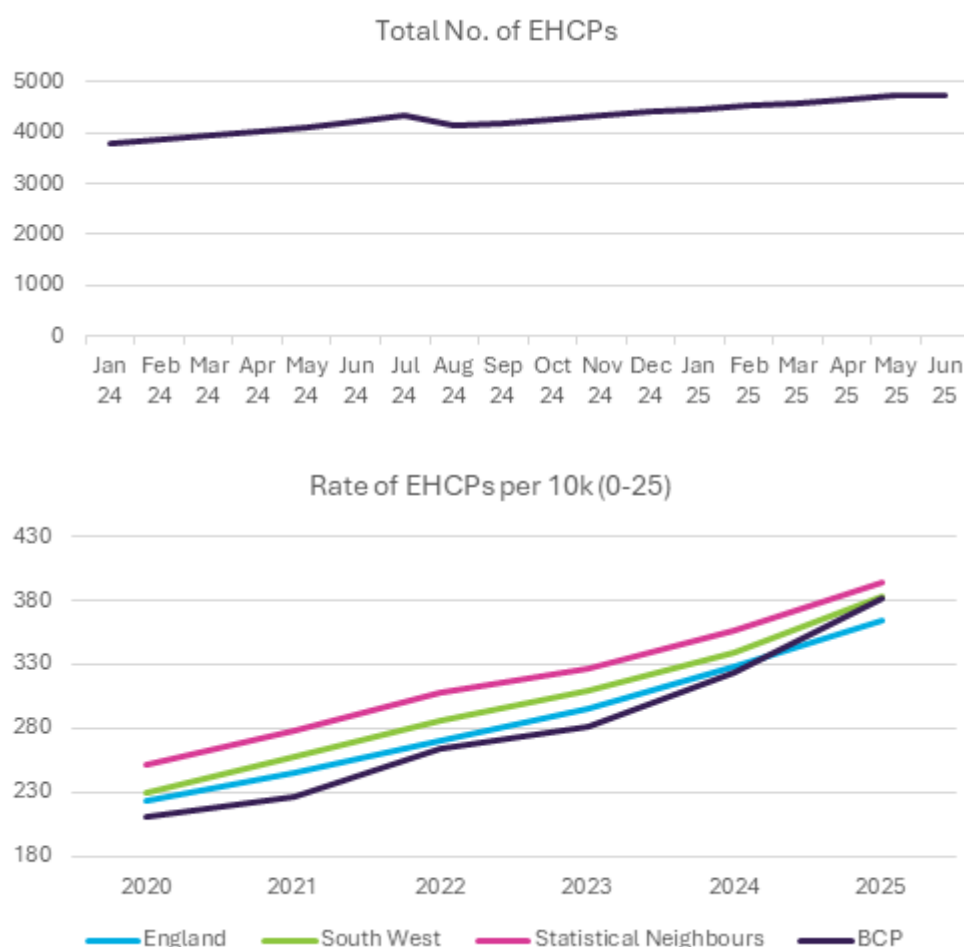
and reduced timeliness of assessments. As of 21/07/25 there are 196 assessments within a backlog. However, despite this increased demand the service has maintained an overall level of 20-week timeliness at least as good as national average.

Actions to address

6. The SEND Service will continue to work within budget to service the rising demand for EP assessments, with the aim of remaining at least in line with national average timeliness.

Number of EHCPs:

7. The number of EHCPs continues to rise, with 4746 in June 2025 compared to 4223 in June 2024, representing a 12.4% increase across the calendar year.



Actions for Further Development

8. To support the increase in demand and manage it within the current staffing budget, several actions are being implemented:
 - **Introduction of AI Solutions:** An EHCP AI writer case is being discussed at the Corporate Management Board (CMB) for permission to implement as a case project. This AI solution aims to reduce the administrative burden on EHCCOs, allowing them to maximise their time available for statutory assessment work and improve

communication with parents and carers at key stages of the process through an enhanced parent and partnership portal.

- **Improved Communication Pathways:** Enhancements in communication pathways, such as signposting and FAQ factsheets sent as auto-replies and included on the Local Offer, are being implemented to streamline the process.
 - **Increased Staffing and Training:** Following a recruitment drive, the SEND Assessment and Review Team will have increased permanency of EHCCOs to over 93%, significantly reducing the reliance on agency workers. A new workforce development program providing robust induction and training for staff has been implemented to support improved recruitment and retention.
 - **Partnership Working:** Collaboration with Social Care and Health is in place to increase the timeliness of the provision of their advice as part of the statutory assessment process.
9. The assessment process and timelines for EHCNAs and EHCPs are under significant strain due to rising demand. The integration of AI solutions, improved communication pathways, increased staffing and training, partnership working, and additional funding are critical actions needed to address these concerns and ensure timely and effective assessments.
10. By implementing these measures, services aim to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the assessment process, ultimately improving outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

The quality of EHCP's

11. There has been a gradual improvement in the number of EHCPs graded as good s seen through Practice Learning Review (PLR) audits. In quarter 4 2024 6% of audits completed were graded as good (2 out of 32). In quarter 2 2025 24% were graded as good (8 out of 33).
12. These improvements have been achieved through:
- The implementation of a revised EHCP template in the autumn term of 2024, facilitating the writing of a higher quality Plan.
 - Targeted briefing sessions for EHCCOs, based on EHCP Practice Learning Review data, to address identified weaknesses in EHCPs.
 - Focussed briefing sessions with partnership colleagues to improve the quality (including timeliness) of their advice, used in the writing of EHCP's.
 - Fortnightly drop in's for EHCCOs to get support from the Quality Assurance & Development Manager.

Resolving disagreements including Tribunals

13. With a focus on collaboration, early intervention, and continual service improvement, notable progress has been achieved in reducing the prevalence of Tribunals post-mediation and enhancing relationships with families. This section details the principal areas of progress, identifies ongoing challenges, and actions to further optimise

outcomes for all stakeholders, particularly our children, young people and their parents and carers.

14. The resolution of disagreements within the service area of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) is a critical function of the Local Authority, directly impacting the well-being of children, young people, and their families. BCP Council is committed to delivering a service founded on integrity, transparency, and mutual respect. Drawing upon data from 2023 to mid-2025 and insights from stakeholders, this section of the report explains the council's approach to SEND dispute resolution, with emphasis on both qualitative and quantitative outcomes.

Areas of Progress

15. The total numbers and year on year comparison of trends are as indicated below.

Data Subject	Jan 2023 – Dec 2023	Jan 2024 - Dec 2024	January 2025 - June 2025
Total Number of Tribunal Appeals received	78	140	60
Tribunals as % of total live numbers of families they are supporting in 2023, 2024 and first 6 months of 2025	2.09% of total active EHCP's	3.17% of total active EHCP's	1.27% of total active EHCP's

16. In 2024 the total number of tribunal appeals registered increased by 62 to 140 as compared to a total of 78 in 2023, **an increase of 46.81%**.

17. **In the first 6 months of 2025** the number of tribunal appeals registered was 60. This indicates a slowing of our rate of Tribunals as a percentage of total live EHCP's, currently running at 1.27%.

18. Tribunal Appeals and Active EHCPs

	Jan 2023 - Dec 2023	Jan 2024 - Dec 2024	Jan 2025 to June 2025
No. of EHCP's	3736	4417	4712
No. of Appeals	78	140	60

Enhanced Partnerships and Communication

19. Services have worked hard to foster positive and collaborative relationships with SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service, which provides free, confidential, and impartial information advice, and support to parents, carers and young people), and other key stakeholders, promoting a culture of proactive engagement and early problem resolution. The emphasis on direct, transparent

communication with parents and carers has contributed markedly to the reduction in formal disputes and a growth in the cultivation of mutual trust.

- Ongoing consultation with SENDIASS and families to ensure service delivery remains responsive and adaptive.
- Continuous professional development for staff, with a focus on mediation and constructive dialogue.

Adoption of Best Practice in Early Dispute Resolution

20. The SEND Tribunal Team is committed to resolving issues efficiently and equitably through Early Dispute Resolution (EDR), mediation, and where possible, Consent Orders. These measures are fully aligned with sector best practice, assisting families in achieving timely and satisfactory outcomes while minimising and managing the escalation of conflict, to keep it to a minimum. As a result there is:

- Significant reduction in the necessity for formal Tribunal hearings
- Accelerated timelines of achieving resolution, ensuring that children's needs are addressed without undue delay and their parents and carers are relieved of the anxiety that often accompanies any level of dispute with the Local Authority.

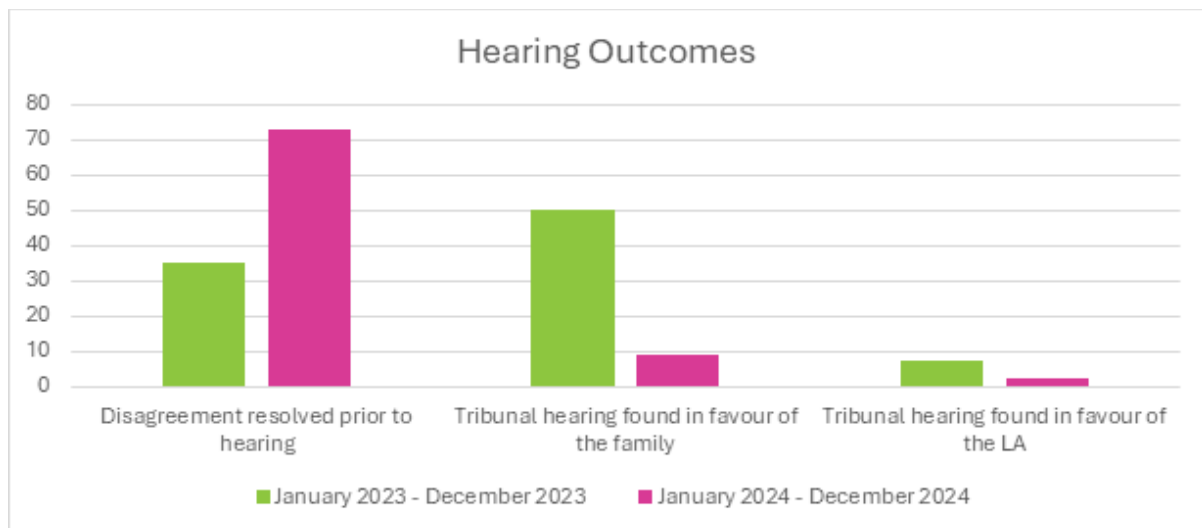
Service Development Informed by Lived Experience (see appendix 3)

21. The SEND Service values the insights and feedback provided by families, who have fed back through parent representative groups and via their conversations with SENDIASS that speedy resolution helps them as parents and carers to support their young people more effectively and, their children and young people receive suitable provision in a timely way, which have informed recent enhancements in service delivery. As an increasing proportion of disagreements are now resolved prior to final Tribunal hearings, this is evidence of the efficacy of early engagement strategies.

BCP Council's Commitment to dispute resolution through resource expansion

22. The Tribunal Team's expansion following the November 2024 SEND re-structure illustrates the Council's dedication to timely dispute resolution. These additional resources have facilitated increased capacity for personalised engagement with families.

- Recruitment of additional Tribunal Officers to support their management of the families they are supporting including mediations
- Investment in training to optimise service efficiency.



23. Resolving disagreements before and therefore avoiding a Tribunal hearing; the data shows that 38 more appeals were resolved before the Final Hearing in 2024 compared to 2023
24. In 2023, over 70% of families chose not to go through the mediation route (the LA cannot compel them to do so).
25. In 2024, despite the number of Tribunals almost doubling, a success rate of resolving around half of all disagreements before the Hearing was maintained. Similarly, during the first 6 months of 2025 mediations have been utilised in approximately half of all Tribunals and, an average of resolving roughly half of disagreements before the Hearing has been maintained.
26. In addition to the correlation between an increase in the number of disagreements resolved before Hearing and the number of mediations, the drive to improve parents' experience of disagreement resolution more widely is demonstrated and the direct work between BCP officers and parents and carers provides added value.
27. **Forty one** fewer decisions were found in favour of the parents at the Tribunal Hearing when comparing the full years of 2023 and 2024, showing that the LA is moving closer to a position of only going to Tribunal where we are confident that maintaining our original decision is the right one for the child /young person, with robust evidence to support our position.

How BCP compare regionally, nationally and with statistical neighbours

28. BCP has consistently maintained a Tribunal rate following mediation of approximately 0.3%, meaning a very low number of Tribunals are registered, following mediation, with BCP outperforming regional, national, and statistical benchmarks. This achievement is particularly significant in light of the continued growth in the total number of live EHCPs.

Tribunal After Mediation	2023	2024
England	0.7%	1.0%

Southwest	0.8%	0.8%
Statistical Neighbours	0.7%	1.1%
BCP	0.3%	0.3%

Current Challenges

29. Managing Increased Demand

The upward trajectory in EHCPs and Tribunal appeals continues to place demands on both staff and organisational resources. Proactive workforce planning is essential to maintaining high performance standards.

30. Emotional Impact on Families and staff

Despite the increased results achieved regarding early resolution, the dispute process remains emotionally taxing for all parties involved. The SEND Service recognise the necessity of providing support and clear guidance throughout the process to families as well as our colleagues.

31. Resource Allocation

Tribunals can take up to one year to progress from registration through to Hearing and place a significant financial and administrative burden on local authorities, potentially diverting resources away from other frontline services.

32. The SEND Resolutions team is experiencing a reduced but nevertheless high demand with over-reliance on third party solicitors to manage volume. The SEND Service are planning how to address this using more in-house expertise.

33. Data Completeness and Benchmarking

Incomplete regional and national data presents a challenge to robust benchmarking and continuous improvement. Enhanced data collection and transparency remain priorities.

34. Maintenance of Constructive Relationships

Sustaining positive relationships between parents, schools, and the local authority is imperative, particularly when the outcome of a Tribunal may differ from the hopes, wishes and expectations of our parents and settings. Consistent, respectful engagement is critical in such circumstances, and these values are held at the forefront of services' navigation of these situations.

Actions to address

35. Early Intervention and Professional Development

- Offer regular training in inclusive communication, conflict de-escalation, and empathetic practice for all staff

36. Support for families

- Develop comprehensive, accessible informational materials for families regarding the dispute process and available supports
- Strengthen peer-support networks for families navigating the SEND system

37. Continuous Stakeholder Feedback

- Facilitate engagement sessions to inform ongoing service refinement
- Encourage and incorporate feedback from families in service delivery and policy reviews

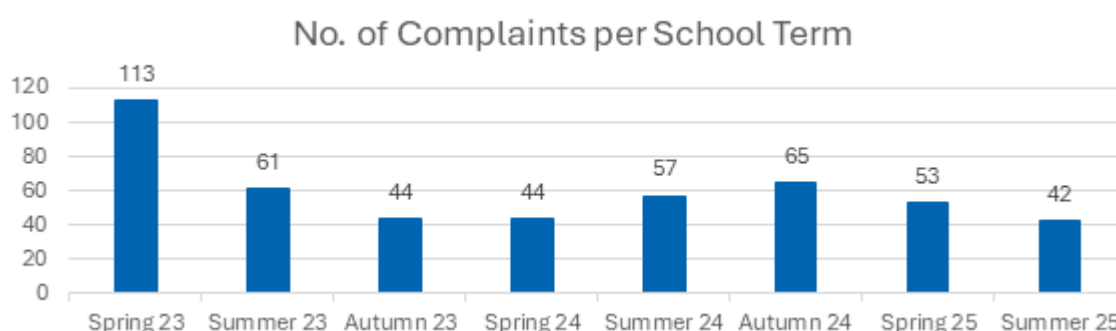
In summary

38. This approach to SEND dispute resolution exemplifies our commitment to transparency, partnership, and service excellence. Sustained low Tribunal rates, positive stakeholder relationships, and a robust early intervention strategy highlight the Council's strengths. By addressing the identified challenges and implementing the recommended actions, we can further enhance outcomes for children, families, and staff, ensuring the continued delivery of high-quality, responsive SEND services.

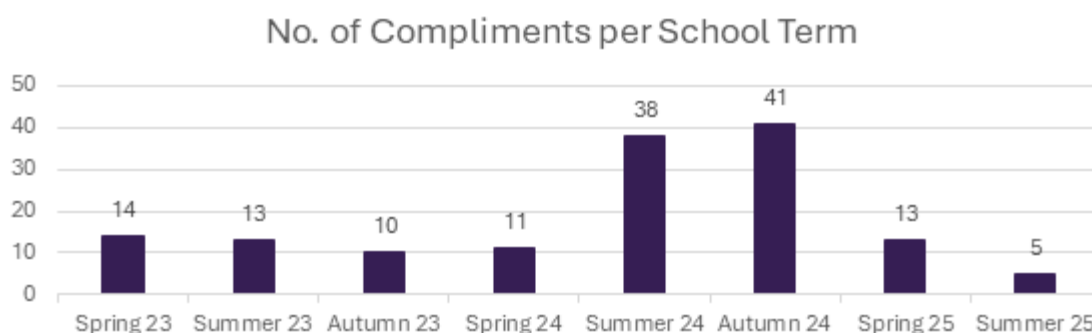
Complaints /Improved communication with our families

39. Complaints

The volume of complaints received in the term continues to fluctuate; however, the trend shows an improvement, based on the rate of complaints per EHCP cohort. This sits at 1.1% at the end of Spring 2025, compared to 3.3% at the end of Spring 2023. Please note that the Summer 2025 term is not yet showing a complete picture.



40. The number of compliments has also varied over time. The development work related to the local offer and co-production, as described below, aims to increase the volume of compliments and reduce complaints by improving communication and collaboration.



Local Offer

41. The quality of BCP Council's Local Offer website was highlighted in the previous inspection and feedback as an area needing improvement.

42. Development of the Local Offer website has now happened at pace in line with the co-produced Local Offer Improvement Plan and monitored by the SEND Improvement Board (SIB). This area of work is now being delivered at the desired pace.
43. For example, we have moved from a position of an under-developed Local Offer to a fully compliant one including these key areas:
- Accessibility
 - Awareness
 - Engagement
 - Content
 - Feedback
44. From August 2025 we also have a BCP Accessibility Strategy in place on the Local Offer.

Co-Production

45. The Co-Production Oversight Group has been reinstated to oversee plans to improve co-production across the system. There is a Co-Production Action Plan in place, led by a dedicated post of Co-Production Lead, within the Quality Assurance and Development arm of the SEND Service.
46. A series of Locality events are being held throughout this year as 'drop-in sessions for parents and carers to attend for advice, guidance and support from LA SEND Officers.
47. Earlier this year a Local Offer Live event organised by our Parent Carer Forums (PCT and PCF) and supported by all areas of the local area SEND partnership was held. The event provided advice, information and guidance to parents and carers of children and young people with SEND, which was well received. Further such events are being planned going forward.
48. Colleagues leading these two important areas of focus work collaboratively with each other and our parent carer reps and our Youth Champion.
49. The desire and drive to improve co-production with BCP children and young people remain a key focus. A recent example is the video made by children and young people on their views about 'belonging'.

Action to address

50. Significant work is being undertaken to ensure communication with children, young people and families is improved and from September there will be an increase in permanent staff, which yields higher rates of family satisfaction and a reduction in agency staff. This will ensure that communication will move to a more consistent and timelier model. There is also a Communication Plan, the development of a Portal for parents and a triage system to ensure more timely responses.

Addressing the high use of Alternative Provision

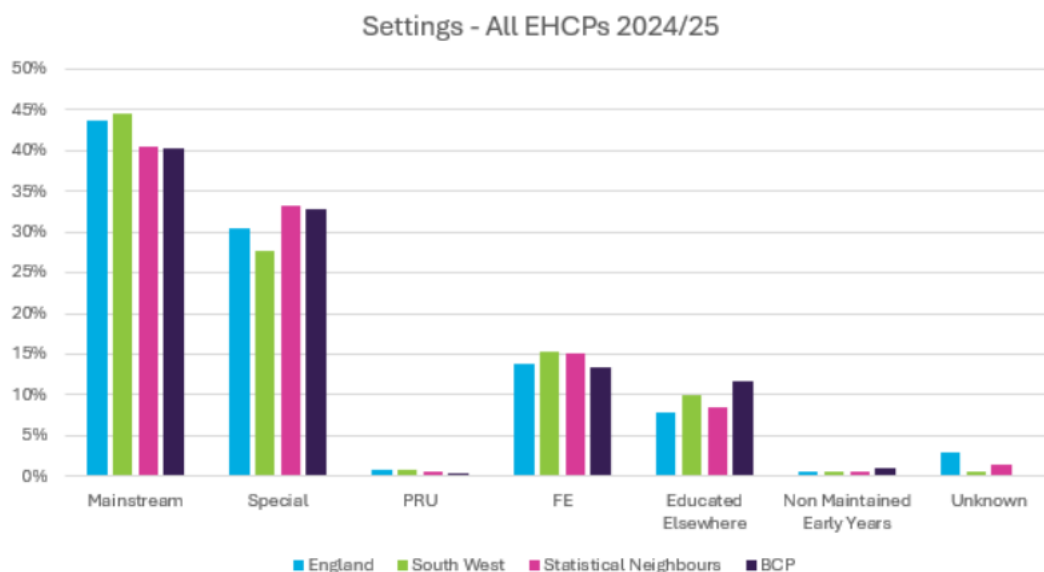
Education Provision

51. In BCP Council in 2024, pupils attending a mainstream setting has increased from 2023 from 37.1% to 40.3% whilst the comparator groups remain stable: Eng 43.3% to 43.6%, SW 43.8% to 44.6% and SN 41.2% to 40.5%. However, BCP are still below all comparator groups. The actions below will support the continued improvement seen in BCP.

Actions to address

- 52. To ensure continued progress, strengthening partnerships with our schools remains a key priority. During the Spring and Summer terms of 2025, Education Services hosted Belonging Conferences with Early Years Providers and Schools to introduce the Belonging Strategy. Both events featured distinguished BCP and national speakers who led engaging discussions on inclusive practices. The Local Authority is committed to providing appropriate support that empowers providers to address the diverse needs of children and young people. This includes adopting a graduated approach and upholding the core principles of inclusion and belonging.
- 53. BCP Council has secured funding from the Department for Education (DfE) SEND Intervention Support Fund to drive improvement and transformation within Education Services leading to development in three key areas:
- 54. The development of the BCP graduated approach and Ordinarily Available Provision toolkit will provide timely, high-quality support and services to children and young people through early intervention.
- 55. A sustainable three tier Alternative Provision model based on best practice with improved monitoring and oversight.
- 56. Inclusive whole school practice with the support of an established educational charity (The Difference).
- 57. BCP and all comparator groups are showing an increase in pupils educated elsewhere. Eng 7.8%, SW 10.1% and SN 8.5%. At 11.8% BCP are above all other comparator groups.
- 58. Pupils educated elsewhere include categories: Electively Home Educated (EHE), Other arrangements made by parents, other arrangements made by LA, Online Providers, Welsh Schools and Establishments, Other School types, other types of placements,

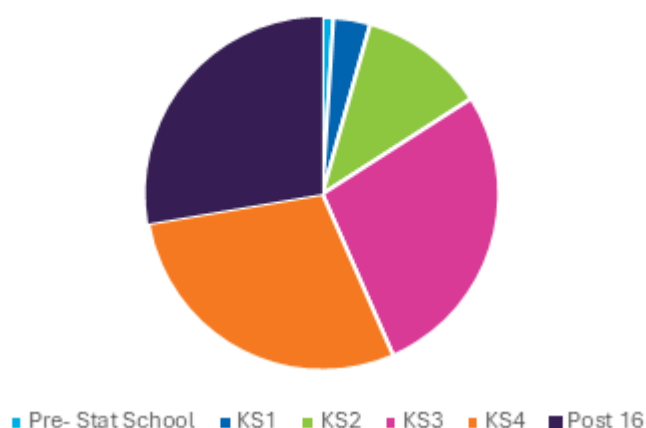
various Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).



Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) (see Appendix 4 for Lived Experience sample)

59. Education Otherwise Than At School means all forms of education that take place outside the formal school environment and meet the specific needs of children who cannot attend a mainstream or special school.
60. Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 places a legal duty on Local Authorities (LAs) to make arrangements for the provision of suitable education for children of compulsory school age who, for any reason (illness, exclusion or otherwise), cannot receive such education unless those arrangements are made. This duty is often referred to as the "s.19 duty".
61. S19 EOTAS is usually a short-term response to particular circumstances, and any arrangements made by the LA will normally be temporary. Pupil Referral Units (PRUs,) hospital schools, AP and home school tutors are all examples. This duty applies whether or not a child is on roll at a school and irrespective of the type of school they attend. It is for the LA to decide what education provision is suitable and includes all children with or without SEN.
62. Section 61 of the Children and Families Act 2014, when discussing Education Otherwise Than At School (EOTAS), allows local authorities to arrange for special educational provision for children and young people outside of traditional school or post-16 settings. This provision can only be made if the authority is satisfied that it would be inappropriate to provide education in a school or post-16 institution.
63. S 61 is often not a short term or temporary solution to a specific circumstance. It follows a decision by the LA often after an EHC Needs Assessment or annual review, based on the current and foreseeable needs of the child or young person, that special educational provision in a school would not be appropriate.
64. EOTAS 61 and 19 has risen every month for the past 7 months. This is linked to the lack of specialist placements and the wider challenges to inclusivity of the education system.

No. of C&YP in EOTAS Placements at 30th June 2025
by Key Stage



Key Stage	No. of children, young people (as of 30th June 2025)
KS1	17
KS2	58
KS3	138
KS4	145
KS5	139

65. The majority of EOTAS placements are in Key Stage 4 as there are a high number of children awaiting specialist placement.

Actions to address

66. As part of the Alternative Provision Improvement Plan, work is underway to co-produce with local providers a flexible approach to reduce the demand on EOTAS Section 19 provision. A working group has been established for this purpose focused on developing a three-tier model of alternative provision which aligns with the national plan set out in the Government's [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(SEND\) and Alternative Provision \(AP\) Plan](#).

67. At the same time, improvements to administrative and support functions will strengthen our monitoring and decision-making processes. Improvements include a new AP Panel enabling robust decision-making set against a framework and the implementation of a new system 'Welfare Call' enabling strong oversight of attendance of our children and young people accessing an AP who are not on a school roll and prompt action as necessary.

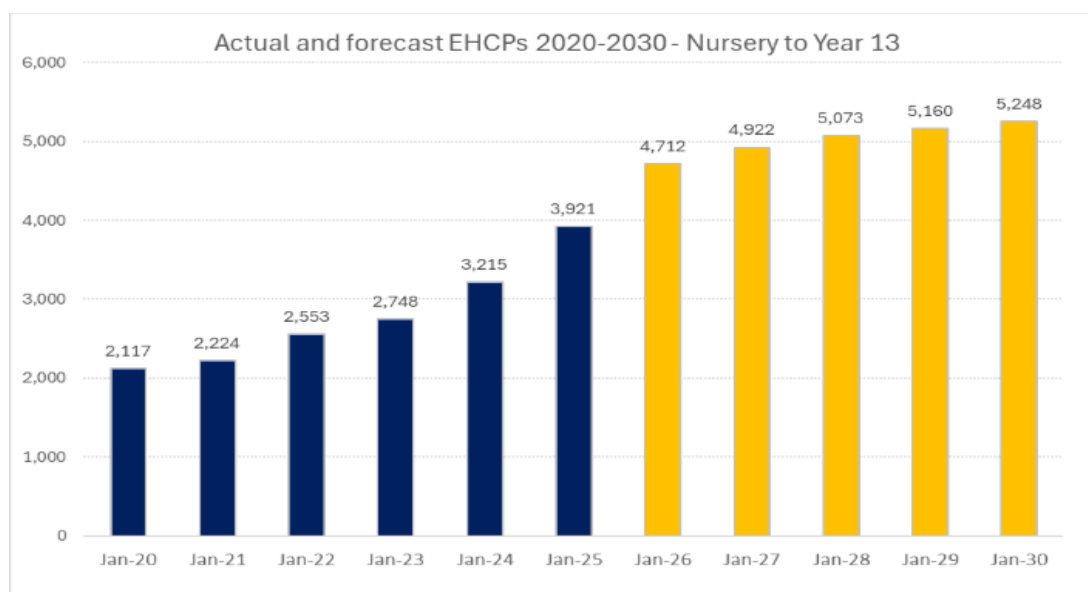
68. Supporting development in this area is a focus on commissioning activities and in April 2025, a Provider Forum was launched to develop strong working relationships across the sector and share best practice.

69. Over time, work with young people and carers will increase through the Preparation for Adulthood Engagement Officer to build our understanding of what young people wish for and how we can work locally to provide this, both in our mainstream Post 16 and Further Education (FE) settings and in opportunities for meaningful work and training.

70. The first iteration of an AP Panel has been implemented to ensure there is a child-centred, efficient and effective process for decision making for local authority Section 19 commissioned AP placements.

SEND Sufficiency

71. It is widely acknowledged that BCP Council has experienced a substantial increase in the number of children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). Since 2010, the total number of EHCPs—and previously, Statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN)—has risen annually. This growth has accelerated notably since 2015, reaching its highest rate of increase (18%) in the 2024–25 period. Actual and forecast EHCPs (from Nursery to Year 13) for BCP are presented below. Annual growth in the SEND population is a common trend across many local authorities as is rising complexity of needs across the age range.



72. There are a range of systemic issues and challenges which contribute to an overall picture where growth and demand for specialist provision exceeds the supply of places. Based on our existing pattern of provision (the proportion of children with an EHCP by provision type), growth easily supports the development of approximately 800 new and expanded places including resourced provision and specialist places. Note: Caution should be exercised when quoting these numbers since the assumptions and changes in the system can impact the trajectory.

73. The SEND Sufficiency Strategy sets out the detail. The strategy represents a two 2-year plan to support the development of specialist provision and is a key element of SEND Improvement work. The strategy sets out the Council's approach to addressing the growing demand for services and provision. It is designed to address the rising demand for specialist education placements, particularly for children with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) and Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. It aims to:

- Increase local capacity and reduce reliance on costly independent placements.
- Deliver turnkey solutions through four workstreams focused on bespoke provisions, progression pathways, prior approved provision, and new provision

- Improve systems and data reliability to support sufficiency planning

74. The strategy will help to deliver a sustainable and stable system by working collaboratively with local partners and stakeholders to ensure that the needs of children and young people are met without escalating needs and unit costs of provision. In the last year, 140 additional places have been created. Round 2 of commissioning has launched with strong engagement from schools. 18 projects across mainstream and special schools are underway, expected to deliver circa 150 places, with an additional 25–50 places from special school expansions based on progress to date.

75. Other projects in development are as follows:

- Parkfield School site is being explored for SEMH provision, with proposals for 180 places going to the DfE in September 2025.
- Post 16 satellite provision at the former Ted Webster Community Centre for 60 young people at Linwood School, providing curriculum pathways which support the preparation to adulthood and routes into employment. This will be ready for the 2025/26 academic year.
- We are in the initial stages of developing our Post 14 Curriculum offer working with local FE Colleges.
- The LA is still waiting for an update from the DfE on plans for the development of its new special free school previously announced. The LA successfully bid for one of two new special schools. The school will provide 180 specialist places for children and young people with autism aged 3-18. The school plays an important part in increasing the sufficiency of local specialist places and details are eagerly awaited.

76. A lack of sufficient local provision results in increased use of Alternative Provision and the use of Education Other Than at School (EOTAS). These areas are statistical outliers for BCP Council as detailed earlier in this report. The use of Alternative Provision is one of the key drivers of DSG overspend.

Glossary:

- EOTAS: Education Other Than at School.
- The LA has the power to provide alternative education for young people under 18 who would not otherwise receive it (**section 19** (4) Education Act 1996). In BCP Council we record this as EOTAS Section 19.
- If an Early Years setting, School or College is not suitable for a child or young person, the LA has the power to arrange for any special education provision required to be delivered elsewhere (**section 61** of the Children and Families Act 2014). In BCP Council we record this as EOTAS Section 61.

Options Appraisal

77. None

Summary of financial implications

78. None

Summary of legal implications

79. None

Summary of human resources implications

80. None

Summary of sustainability impact

81. None

Summary of public health implications

82. None

Summary of equality implications

83. None

Summary of risk assessment

84. None

Background papers

85. None

Appendices

Appendix 1 – ECHNA Timescales

Appendix 2 – SEND Improvement Board Scorecard

Appendix 3 – Lived Experience of families- SEND Assessment and Review

Appendix 4 – Lived Experience of families -EOTAS

APPENDIX 1 – ECHNA TIMESCALES

Weeks 1–6: LA reviews request and decides whether or not to initiate the statutory assessment.

By Week 6: LA informs parent/ carers and or young person of decision

Weeks 6–12: LA requests advice from the child's parent or the young person, the education provider, relevant health professionals, the educational psychologist, and social care.

Weeks 12-16 the assessment is concluded, and the LA determine whether or not to issue an EHC Plan. It does so, should the provision required be that which is over and above that which is ordinarily available.

By Week 16: LA informs parent/ carers and or young person of decision and parents can request a school of preference.

Weeks 16–20: Draft EHCP is issued and consultations with educational setting are undertaken. Parent/ carers and or young person have 15 days in which to make representations during this time

By Week 20: Final EHCP issued with educational setting

The first annual review of the EHCP must then take place within 12 months of the EHCP being finalised.

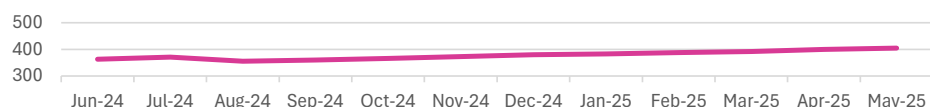
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SEND Improvement Board Scorecard

31st May 2025

Rate of EHCPs per 10k



Rate of EHCPs
Per 10k
(May 25)

404.8

No. of EHCP's
(May 25)

4712

% of BCP School
Population with
an EHCP (May 25)

4.1%

% of BCP School
Population with
SEN Support
(May 25)






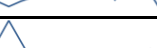








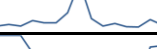

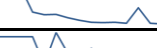
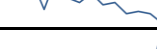
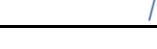
17.3%

No. of Looked
After Children
with an EHCP
(May 25)

165

PI Index	Required direction of travel	Frequency	KPIs	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Trend	Target	May-24	National Average	South West Average
Setting the Scene														
10		Monthly	Rate of BCP maintained EHCP's per 10k	379.5	382.6	388.3	392.1	400.3	404.8			351.9	380.1	399.0
12		Termly	% of BCP's School Population with an EHCP (termly data)	4.9%				4.1%	Available in July				4.8%	5.0%
14		Termly	% of BCP's School Population with SEN Support (termly data)	13.7%				17.3%	Available in July				13.6%	18.0%
24		Monthly	% children with EHCP in Independent & Non-Maintained Special School (INMSS)			11.5%	11.3%	11.2%	11.2%					
26		Monthly	% of children with EHCP in EOTAS (Section 61)			3.19%	3.24%	3.31%	3.27%				1.5%	2.3%
28		Monthly	% of children with EHCP in Other - (Section 19 / HMP / YOI)			4.12%	4.27%	4.25%	4.44%					
29		Monthly	% of children with EHCP CME (aged 5-16)			1.55%	1.73%	1.80%	1.76%				0.4%	0.4%
32		Monthly	% of pupils with an EHCP not known to be in education (16-25yrs)					0.88%	0.76%					
33		Monthly	University Hospital Dorset - Pre-school (0-5years) Waiting List 0-52 weeks						121					
37		Monthly	University Hospital Dorset - School age (5years +) Waiting List 0-52 weeks						643					
SEND Leadership, Management and Governance														
43	▼	Monthly	No. of permanent Education, Health & Care Co-ordinators or Alternative Provision Co-ordinators vacancies in the SEND Team (FTE)			0.60	0.60	0.60	4.40		0.75			
44	▼	Monthly	No. of working days lost due to sickness in the SEND Team (permanent Education, Health & Care Co-ordinators or Alternative Provision Co-ordinators only)	20	46	38	5	36	51		10	21		
46	▼	Monthly	No. of permanent vacancies in the Education Psychology Team (FTE)	7.5	7.5	7.5	4.4	4.4	4.4		0	2.6		
49	▲	Monthly	% of case audits judged as good/outstanding	0.0%	9.0%	0.0%	10.0%	27.0%	30.0%		83.0%			

PI Index	Required direction of travel	Frequency	KPIs	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Trend	Target	May-24	National Average	South West Average
Communication and Co-production														
50	▲	Monthly	% parent/carers who felt they had good communication with the Case Officer (out of 6 cases per month)	100%	50%	67%	83%	67%	100%		100%	83%		
52		Monthly	No. of mediations (12 month rolling period)	422	440	440	428	426	411				44	78
54	▼	Monthly	No. of complaints received by the LA in the month (SEND Service)	12	13	22	11	7	18		12	18		
55		Monthly	Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Information & Advice Support Service - No. of open cases at L3 and L4 (complex cases)	210	242	204	201	209	188			280		
Early Identification and Intervention														
56		Monthly	No. of 'Rising 5yr olds' with an EHCP (start Reception in Sept) - cumulative	31	36	43	60	86	99			88		
57		Monthly	No. of 'Rising 5yr olds' currently under assessment for an EHCP (start Reception in Sept)	64	77	84	78	75	71			64		
61		Monthly	Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service Mental Health Support Teams (MHST) % cyp seen within 4 weeks of referral (RTA) BCP data	98%	98%	100%	100%	100%	98%		95%	100%		
63		Monthly	Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service Gateway % cyp seen within 4 weeks of referral (RTA)	94.0%	93.0%	96.0%	89.8%	45.8%	25.0%		95.0%	76.0%		
67		Quarterly	No. of children aged 24-28 months who could be at risk or increased risk of delayed learning due to a possible SEND need	105			100							
75	▼	Monthly	Occupational Therapy average waiting time from referral to assessment	24	18	15	15	16	15					
76	▼	Monthly	Physio average waiting time from referral to assessment	18	14	12	11	10	14					
Inclusion														
80	▼	Termly	Suspensions rate for SEN support pupils	14.1					Available July		9		9.00	13.13
82	▼	Termly	Suspensions rate for EHCP pupils	18.9					Available July		10.1		10.1	14.9
84	▼	Termly	No. of Exclusions – CYPs with an EHCP (half termly)	4		3			Available July			0		
85	▼	Termly	No. of Exclusions – SEN Support (half termly)	14		7			Available July			4		
86	▼	Termly	% of SEN Support pupils persistently absent (10% or more missed)	27.0%					Available July		30.1%		30.1%	32.2%
87	▼	Termly	% of EHCP pupils persistently absent (10% or more missed)	37.8%					Available July		35.5%		35.5%	38.6%
88	▼	Termly	% of SEN Support pupils severely absent (50% or more missed)						Available July		4.4%		4.4%	11.3%
89	▼	Termly	% of EHCP pupils severely absent (50% or more missed)						Available July		6.8%		6.8%	14.0%

PI Index	Required direction of travel	Frequency	KPIs	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Trend	Target	May-24	National Average	South West Average
Pathway														
90		Monthly	Rate of requests for an Education, Health & Care needs assessment per 10k	9.9	9.2	8.1	8.9	4.2	7.6					
92		Monthly	% of Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments requests received from parents	26.0%	21.0%	31.0%	45.0%	31.0%	24.0%			26.0%		
95		Monthly	% of monthly decisions made-yes to assess	64.2%	79.0%	69.8%	81.9%	71.1%	74.0%				65.4%	62.9%
98		Monthly	No. of EHCP's issued in the month (excluding exceptions)	73	39	67	57	116	65			74		
99		Monthly	No. of EHCP's ceased or discontinued in the month	13	3	13	11	25	16			16		
100		Monthly	% of decisions to proceed with assessment of needs being made within six weeks	96.9%	96.5%	95.5%	98.3%	93.0%	97.7%		100%	100%	84.8%	79.3%
101	▲	Monthly	% of new EHCPs issued within 20 weeks (including exceptions)	87.7%	67.4%	80.9%	89.7%	74.1%	55.4%		70%	66.0%	45.9%	31.0%
102	▼	Monthly	No. of EHC plans not completed and waiting over 20 weeks (excl. Assessments after Tribunal or Appeal)	17	5	2	16	23	16		7	33		
103	▲	Monthly	% of requests for Education Psychology advice where Educational Psychologist responded within 6 wks from the date of request from the Local Authority	93.1%	87.1%	95.2%	92.1%	55.4%	25.4%		95%	91.1%		
104	▲	Monthly	% of requests for stat advice where health responded within 6 wks from the date of request from the Local Authority	95.2%	87.1%	95.2%	92.1%	90.0%	87.7%		95.0%	91.0%		
105	▲	Monthly	% of requests for Children's Social Care advice where Children's Social Care responded within 6 wks from the date of request from the Local Authority	100.0%	95.4%	93.7%	86.0%	93.2%	93.0%		95.0%	47.0%		
109	▼	Monthly	No. of annual reviews not finalised (meeting held but not processed - backlog)	738	809	1022	962	1120	1130		300	1143		
110	▼	Monthly	No. of cases awaiting completion (statutory advice backlog) - Education Psychology Service	0	0	0	0	72	105		0	3		
111		Monthly	Speech And Language Therapy - Total number discharged from the service (therapy no longer required)	81	95	96	98	97	106			98		
Sufficiency														
112	▼	Monthly	% of Young People with an EHCP that had a change of Education, Health & Care Co-ordinator this month	5.3%	9.9%	3.5%	3.1%	17.4%	7.7%		4	5.2%		
113		Monthly	% of Primary aged young people with an EHCP that are in a Mainstream setting	45.4%	45.5%	46.2%	32.4%	47.7%	48.3%			52.9%		
114		Monthly	% of Secondary aged young people with an EHCP that are in a Mainstream setting	34.1%	34.2%	33.9%	38.2%	33.9%	33.7%			44.0%		
115		Monthly	% of all CYP in Independent and Non-Maintained Special Schools (INMSS) who are aged 18 and over	4.4%	4.5%	4.0%	4.1%	4.0%	3.6%			5.4%		
116	▼	Monthly	No. of children in mainstream or Alternative Provision waiting for specialist placement					253	263					

PI Index	Required direction of travel	Frequency	KPIs	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Trend	Target	May-24	National Average	South West Average
Preparation for Adulthood (PfA)														
119		Monthly	No. of Children & Young People open to Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) team	557	556	556	556	556	556			572		
126	▲	Monthly	% of pupils with an EHCP in education (16-18yrs)	89.5%	89.2%	91.3%	91.7%	91.7%	93.5%			84.10%		
128	▲	Monthly	% of pupils with an EHCP not known to be in education (16 - 18 years)	7.1%	8.4%	8.7%	8.3%	8.2%	6.5%					
131	▼	Monthly	% of pupils with an EHCP not known to be in education (16-25yrs)				2.50%	1.80%	1.76%					
132		Monthly	% of yp aged 14yrs+ with Learning Disabilities that access their annual health check	40%	51%	60%	67%	3%	6%			10%		
Managing Resources														
133		Monthly	% of EHCPs in Other - arrangements by LA (Education Other Than At School-Section 61/19) (as main provision listed)	5.6%	6.2%	6.1%	6.2%	6.3%	6.5%			5.3%	1.5%	2.3%
134		Monthly	No. of children placed in alternative provision with an EHCP	347	433	456	478	465	496			367		
135		Monthly	No. of EHCP children in mainstream waiting for a specialist placement	171	168	167	174	176	190					
136		Monthly	No. of requests for specialist provision agreed (inc. agreement to continue specialist)				75	46	47					

Benchmarking data is taken from the latest published available - 2023/24

RAG Key:	
	Below tolerance level
	Within tolerance and target
	At or above target level

SEND-Assessment and Review Lived Experience of families

April 2025

Our Activity

Quality Assurance Officers call our families, to find out what their experience of the EHCNA process was. This is approximately 10% of new plans issued per month.

It's an opportunity for parent/carers to tell us what they think.

54

This feedback is stored anonymously, unless family gives permission for QA Officers to follow up on any queries they may have.

Their responses give us great insight into their lived experience.



What questions do we ask?

- Have you seen your EHCP
- Has it been explained to you?
- Were you offered a meeting to discuss the Summary of Assessment?
- Have you had good communication with your EHCO?
- Are you happy with the EHCP?
- Is the plan easy to understand?
- In what way were you involved or contributed to the writing of the plan?
- In what way was your child /young person involved or contributed to the writing of the plan?
- Do you feel you were listened to, and your views were included fully?
- Have you got any comments about the setting named in Section I?
- What difference has the plan made to you?
- Did you find the process easy to understand
- Are you aware of how the plan will be reviewed?
- If you have any concerns, do you know who to turn to?
- What can we do differently to make the process better?

Full year data shows improvements in the experience of (sampled) families

Question asked through Lived Experience	Average % from Jan 23 – Dec 23	Average % from Jan 24 – Dec 24	Progress	
% who have seen the EHCP	92%	94%	↑	2% increase
% who felt EHCP has been explained to them	31%	68%	↑	37% increase
% who had been offered a meeting by the LA	42%	76%	↑	34% increase
% who felt they had good communication with the CO	49%	75%	↑	26% increase
% who found the plan easy to understand	60%	77%	↑	17% increase
% parent/carers contributed a 'My Child, My Story' or other contribution	76%	94%	↑	18% increase
% of all views were put into the plan	63%	87%	↑	24% increase

The lived experience of 6 parent / carers with children or young people in EOTAS (Education Other Than at School)

⁵⁷ July 2025



Respect
and Trust



Honesty and
Transparency



Empathy and
Belonging



Clear
communication

Section 61 and section 19 refers to children and young people who the LA have made special educational provision outside of a school, post-16 institution, or relevant early years setting.

Their journey and what they told us...



Understanding and Awareness of EOTAS

'Do you understand what EOTAS is'
50% yes 50% no

'Not really, further education?'

'Not really'

This may make families feel dissatisfied with the provision as they were expecting something different.

58



Parental Involvement and Communication

'Were you involved in the decision making process' **60% yes 40% no**

'Is anyone keeping you involved in the process' **20% yes 80% no**

'Do you feel listened to' **20% yes 80% no**

'Really anxiety provoking experience, that sense of uncertainty'

'I am so frustrated by the case officer turnover- I have had so many case officers.'

'I just wish I was more involved in decisions and choices but it seems out of my hands'

Parents reported high stress and feeling unsupported.

They feel the impact through financial strain, loss of employment, and lack of respite from caring for children with SEND on a full-time basis.

Some parents feel that the onus is on them to chase processes and follow up on actions/make things happen.

Parents tell us that better communication with the SEND Service will have a huge impact on families. More stability in Case Officer allocations will build trust in the service.



Meeting the Needs of Children/Young People (CYP)

'Is the provision meeting the needs of your child or young person?'

80% yes 20% no

Most parents and carers said 'yes'

'Not meeting needs, a few hours here and there isn't enough, but it's better than nothing. '

Those who reported provision is not meeting needs told us they want their young person in a school.

Some parent/carers told us that provision can be fragmented, inconsistent, or at times, EOTAS = no provision.



Quality and Suitability of Provision

'Are you happy with the current EOTAS provision'

80% yes 20% no

Absolutely, five stars. There isn't enough out there'

'I want her to be in a setting. Trying to get her what she needs is exhausting, it's draining. She wants friends'

Some of parent/carer concerns were:

- Lack of suitable placements
- Inappropriate offers (e.g., sports for children with physical limitations)
- Fragmented or inconsistent provision
- Tutoring/mentoring not seen as a full educational experience

In general parental preference for children and young people to attend somewhere outside the home, rather than in-home mentoring/tutoring.

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Report subject	SEND Budget Pressures
Meeting date	16 July 2025
Status	Public
Executive summary	<p>This paper provides the 2024/25 outturn for the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) high needs block, budget agreed for 2025/26 and actions being undertaken to manage the budget within a challenging national framework.</p> <p>The outturn for 2024/25 was high needs expenditure of £111.9m compared with funding of £62.0m (a DSG funding gap of £49.9m) This was £5.3m more than reported to Cabinet in February 2025. There were some non-recurring payments made in the final months of the year that had not been included in the forecast but some of the increase is likely to be ongoing as more young people were being supported by the high needs budget by March 2025 than had been expected.</p> <p>The high needs budget for 2025/26 was set with the expectation that the annual funding gap would grow to £57.5m as demand growth was expected to continue to outstrip funding growth. There are initiatives in the SEND improvement plan (some being invest-to-save) that should have an impact on the high needs budget over time, and these are set out in this report.</p> <p>Work is in progress to establish the expenditure forecast outturn for 2025/26. Placements for the new academic year are in the process of being finalised for those new in the system, at transition ages, or requiring a change for other reasons. The forecast will also be updated to reflect progress on service initiatives currently underway or being developed.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:</p> <p>Note the contents of the report.</p>
Reason for recommendations	This is an information report
Portfolio Holder(s):	Richard Burton, Portfolio Holder for Children's Services
Corporate Director	Cathi Hadley, Corporate Director for Children's Services
Report Authors	<p>Lisa Linscott, Director for Education and Skills lisa.linscott@bcpcouncil.gov.uk Nicola Webb Assistant Chief Finance Officer nicola.webb@bcpcouncil.gov.uk</p>

Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Information

Background

1. Education provision for children with high needs, excluded from mainstream schools or otherwise unable to attend school are funded through the ring-fenced dedicated schools grant (DSG) high needs block. Eligibility includes for young adults up to the age of 25 with an education, health and care plan (EHCP).
2. The national shortfall in funding for high needs has been well-documented with many councils, including BCP Council, incurring significant and growing accumulated deficits.
3. The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Triennial Review November 2024 cited the system as “not working for children, families or local authorities: resources are a challenge, many organisations lack vital staff and, in many areas, suitable and affordable support does not exist.”
4. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) in February 2025 published a report ‘Reforming SEND finance: meeting need in a sustainable system’. It outlined five principles to create a simpler, fairer, and financially sustainable system that meets the needs of children and young people with SEND. The report offers a roadmap for reform that prioritises improved outcomes while addressing systemic financial challenges.
5. A Local Government Association report in July 2024 called it “an incoherent system that inadvertently perpetuates tension, creates adversity and sets everyone up to fail”.
6. The government has recognised that the SEND system needs to change, and plans are to be set out in a Schools White Paper in the autumn. These will take time to be implemented and proposals concerning how councils are to be supported in the meantime will also be set out in the autumn, as part of the local government provisional finance settlement.
7. The impact of the Children and Families Act 2014 and associated changes to the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice is still growing, due to the statutory requirement to extend EHCP support to age 25 since that time.
8. The number of children requiring an EHCP across England has increased by 140% between 2014 and 2023, with the cost of provision going up by 59%. This rise in pupils with EHCPs has been driven by three specific types of needs: autistic spectrum condition (ASC); social, emotional and mental health needs (including ADHD); and speech, language and communication needs. This aligns with findings in BCP Council.
9. In this climate of increasing numbers of requests for EHCPs and a legal framework which sets a low bar for statutory assessment being required, there has therefore also been a significant increase in tribunals, a very high percentage of which nationally are lost by local authorities. In BCP Council there has been a 46.8% increase in the number of tribunal appeals since 2023 – 24 (75 to 141). However, the national comparator is a 57% rise.

10. The government's own forecasts suggest annual spending on high needs will rise by at least £2–3 billion between 2024–25 and 2027–28, which largely reflects projected increases in EHCPs and need over the next few years.
11. The historic trajectory of expenditure growth in BCP was budgeted to be curtailed for 2024/25. This was based on the slowdown in demand being experienced over autumn 2023 and the initiatives being planned through the development of the 15-year deficit recovery plan. In the event, the slowdown in demand was short lived, and the development of the inclusion fund and wider children's services improvements took longer than expected with little financial benefit in the year.
12. A summary of the budget movements for 2024/25 reported to Cabinet is as follows:
 - a. February 2024 budgeted high need funding gap of £28.1m and accumulated deficit of £91.6m
 - b. 2 October 2024 reported increase in funding gap by £16.5m to £44.6m and an accumulated deficit of £108.1m
 - c. July 2025 outturn report includes further increase in the funding gap of £5.3m to £49.9m for the high needs block and an accumulated deficit of £113.3m (small offset of £0.1m from the other DSG funding blocks).
13. The 2 October 2024 Cabinet report considered options to restrict expenditure in breach of statutory duties, but these were rejected with reliance to reduce future spending placed instead on the SEND improvement plan, which was formulated in response to the statutory notice to improve.
14. A key aim of the improvement plan was to rapidly improve the timeliness in servicing new assessments at 20 weeks (the statutory expectation). This was achieved with 97% of plans meeting the statutory timescale noted in the November report (compared with no plans within this timescale in August 2023). A further key aim was to improve the quality of EHCPs.
15. Financial aspects of the improvement plan included:
 - a. reducing the use of costly independent specialist provision
 - b. promoting support through earlier intervention
 - c. ensuring more children with EHCPs access their education in local mainstream provision.
16. A greater proportion than previously of the new demand has been accommodated in mainstream provision in 2024/25 with payments to mainstream schools ahead of budget. However, the surge in demand also meant greater use of independent schools, alternative provision and bespoke therapies due to capacity constraints in the state sector. This undermined the key assumptions in the budget. There was some offset from low spend charged to the inclusion fund budget due to the delayed timescale of implementation.
17. As part of the SEND improvement plan, the service was restructured towards the end of 2024/25 with a permanent Director of Education in post from February 2025.

High Needs Budget 2025/26

18. The high needs budget for 2025/26 is set out in the table below alongside the outturn for 2024/25 for comparison.

Table 1: High Needs Budget 2025/26

	2024/25	2025/26	
DSG High Needs Budget	Outturn	Budget	Increase
	£000's	£000's	£000's
Place Funding	14,814	18,518	3,704
Top up Funding - State Sector	34,065	33,828	-237
Top up Funding - Independent	30,704	31,237	533
Top up Funding - Post Schools	8,004	11,982	3,978
Top up Funding - Pre schools	224	374	150
Top up Funding - Excluded Pupils/AP	5,039	4,500	-539
Commissioned Services	2,439	2,809	371
Hospital Education private providers	64	100	36
Bespoke SEN /Therapies	12,070	14,238	2,168
Support for Inclusion	144	200	56
Teachers Pay & Pension Grants	1,918	2,000	82
Inclusion Fund	464	1,237	773
Early Years Central SEN support	861	1,266	405
Sensory Impaired Service	1,095	922	-173
Total Expenditure	111,906	123,211	11,305
Funding	62,034	65,708	3,674
High Needs Funding Gap	49,872	57,502	35,716

19. The 2024/25 high needs expenditure outturn of £111.9m is 80% more than the DSG funding of £62.0m. There were some non-recurring payments made in the final months of the year that had not been included in the forecast but most of the increase is likely to be ongoing as more young people were being supported by the high needs budget by March 2025 than had been expected.
20. The original budget assumptions for 2025/26 led to an expenditure estimate of £123.2m for the high needs budget, with the other DSG blocks being balanced, the funding gap was set to grow to £57.5m.
21. The new year budget would have been 16% higher than the February forecast outturn for 2024/25. Compared with the final outturn, annual expenditure growth budgeted for 2025/26 is now only 10%. This is still a considerable increase but less than historic annual growth. Funding between years has increased by only 6%.
22. There are initiatives in the SEND improvement plan (an element being invest-to-save) that should have an impact on the high needs budget over time. These include implementing the inclusion fund, creating new state funded places in special schools and mainstream resource bases, and completing the special school banding review.
23. The budget includes increased funding by £3.7m for new specialist places created in the state sector. This reflects the full year cost of new places created over 2024/25 in mainstream schools and planned new part year

- places to be created over 2025/26. This includes places supported by the outreach plus programme which is described in Appendix 1. Capital funding has been provided by the DfE to facilitate the creation of new places. Place funding (at either £6,000 or £10,000 per commissioned place) is paid to providers whether filled or not with top up funding paid according to the needs of children as they are placed.
24. The mainstream bases being created are to free up capacity in special schools to avoid placements in higher cost independent special schools, although the growth in demand has to-date prevented any budget reduction.
 25. The bases should also reduce expenditure over time on bespoke provision and therapies where the budget has been increased for 2025/26 by over £2m (18%) compared with 2024/25 actual spend.
 26. The special school banding review is not being specifically designed as a cost saving model but to better align the funding to pupil needs, share and apply equally across the 5 special schools. Legacy arrangements have yet to be aligned, and the lack of harmonised policies can mean additional ad hoc and inconsistent funding arrangements can be agreed.
 27. Post 16 provision includes SEND top up for education in mainstream colleges (including Bournemouth and Poole college), but the most significant costs and areas of growth are in post-19 provision in independent specialist colleges and other providers for young people up to age 25. This provision, as well as extending time in education for those with EHCPs created while of school age also includes new demand in the system from those over 19. The budget has been increased by £4m reflecting recent trends. Further work is required to ensure robust options appraisals lead to strong transitions into further education, training and ambitious and meaningful employment opportunities. This includes planned growth in the use of supported internships, which currently is a strong offer but to a relatively small number of young people.
 28. The £0.4m growth within the early years high needs budget includes the creation of two new “Dingley’s Promise” centres at £0.2m each, commissioned to support children in early years settings. This makes three centres across the area with a cost of £0.6m from 2025/26. Details of the service are included in Appendix 1.
 29. The forecast outturn for 2025/26 will be considered as part of the quarter one budget monitoring report scheduled for the September meeting. Placements for the new academic year are in the process of being finalised. The SEND high-cost placement panel meets weekly throughout the year with a higher than typical caseload currently. This includes for those new in the system, at education transition ages or requiring a change in provision for other reasons. The much larger caseload for lower cost provision is considered by the SEND team only and both processes will continue throughout the summer. The outcomes will provide a good starting point for the projected 2025/26 outturn. It must be recognised, however, that placements are constantly changing and assumptions for future demand will need to be updated to reflect the latest data trends, updated cost expectations and factor in invest-to-save initiatives in progress to help manage costs going forward.
 30. The activities in progress to manage costs within the high needs budget are summarised below with more detail set out in Appendix 1:
 - a. Services to help mainstream schools support pupils with SEND through an inclusion fund.
 - b. Creation of more specialist school places in mainstream schools with outreach support provided by special schools (outreach plus).

- c. Special school banding review
- d. Early years assessment centre expansion
- e. Improved post 19 support and guidance and expand the opportunities available for those with SEND.
- f. Thematic review of services and processes for education other than at school (EOTAS) and use of alternative provision (AP)
- g. Review of funding processes to ensure appropriate contributions are received reflecting the responsibilities of partner organisations.

Next steps

- 31. The service to update data for the latest trends and budget impact from the delay in implementing service initiatives for inclusion in the budget monitoring report to Cabinet in September.
- 32. The data to be reviewed for the September projected 2025/26 outturn includes the following:
 - a. Unit cost profile of provider categories compared with budget
 - b. EHCP trends including “yes to assess” data and benchmarking
 - c. Exclusion data
 - d. The cost to the council of servicing any additional debt and increased eligibility for school transport.

Summary financial Implications

- 33. A summary of the high needs block position and accumulated deficit for the DSG since the first year of BCP Council is included in Appendix 2. The table below shows the detail of the DSG deficit for 2024/25 and budget 2025/26:

Table 2: Summary position for dedicated schools grant 2024/25 and 2025/26

Dedicated Schools Grant	2024/25 Outturn £m	2025/26 Budget £m
Accumulated deficit 1 April 2024	63.5	108.0*
Additional deficit at outturn not in 2025/26 budget		5.3
Budgeted high needs funding shortfall 2024/25	28.1	57.5
High needs overspend 2024/25	21.8	
Underspend across other areas	(0.1)	
Projected accumulated deficit 31 March 2025 / 2026	113.3	170.8

* As reported in February 2025.

- 34. The £5.3m of high needs expenditure not included in the forecast at quarter three will add to the projected accumulated deficit for March 2026. Some of this expenditure was one off in nature but an element is likely to be on-going.
- 35. The deficit is carried forward in a specific negative reserve on the council's balance sheet by a statutory override that suspends the normal accounting practice (negative reserves are normally not permitted and funding sources must be found).

36. This approach was intended to be short term while the DfE found a solution to the growing DSG deficits in many councils. The national safety valve programme, within which the council developed the deficit recovery plan, has not found a solution to the problem and is now closed to new participants. The council was unable to secure additional funding through the programme, as the recovery plan did not show the high needs block being balanced within a relatively short time scale, a typical expectation being around five years.
37. The Chancellor announced in the 11 June 2025 spending review the aim to make the system more inclusive and improve outcomes for all children and young people. The government has committed to reform the current SEND system and details of the intended approach to reform will be set out in a Schools White Paper in the autumn.
38. Government recognise that local authorities will need support during the transition to a reformed SEND system. There is to be a phased process which will include the government working with local authorities to manage their SEND system, including deficits, alongside an extension to the Dedicated Schools Grant Statutory Override, which is currently due to end in March 2026, until March 2028.
39. The government intend to provide more detail by the end of the year including a plan for supporting local authorities with both historic and accruing deficits. More details will be set out at the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement in the autumn.
40. The council's general fund is impacted by the increase in children with SEND or otherwise unable to attend school through increased eligibility for free school transport. The budget for 2025/26 provides an additional £2.1m for these costs to allow for rising demand and inflationary factors. A project is currently underway to establish how costs can be reduced through better analysis of routes and more efficient commissioning.
41. The general fund also incurs the cost of interest in providing the cashflow for the accumulating deficit with £7.5m allowed in the budget for 2025/26 and further amounts for future years of the MTFP.

Summary of legal implications

42. There is a statutory framework for providing support for pupils with high needs and limitations in how this can be funded with the council having limited legal options available to reduce expenditure.

Summary of human resources implications

43. There are human resources implications from this information report.

Summary of public health implications

44. None

Summary of equality implications

45. None

Summary of risk assessment

46. There is a risk that invest-to-save initiatives cost more than can be saved. If new state provision is created but places remain unfilled the fixed costs of either £6,000 or £10,000 per place are still incurred. Private sector places are paid for only when filled (with notice periods for withdrawals) but vacant

- periods will be built into their pricing. The cost of state provision is generally lower than that of the private sector. The volume of places required means that places are unlikely to remain unfilled, though this volume in itself creates a pressure.
47. There is a risk that children with lower needs will be placed in the new provisions because it is available or to avoid wasting the fixed place funding. Top up funding as places are filled might then be incurred that should have been avoided. If additional places are filled too early there may not be one available when needed with more costly providers being used. Robust SEND Panel decision-making mitigates this risk, as does the development of resourced provision for children who, with additional support can have their needs met in mainstream schools (as per the direction of travel of the DfE).
48. There is a risk that other initiatives will not deliver the planned benefits and may instead escalate demand further.

Background papers

49. DfE letter July 2023, the Local Area Partnership's progress against its SEND Written Statement of 2021 was reviewed by the Department for Education (DfE). This identified that insufficient progress had been made with regards to the service provision and associated outcomes for children and young people accessing this service.
- [Appendix 2 Written Statement of Action Dec 21.pdf](#) [Appendix 2a BCP Statutory Direction 8 April 2022.pdf](#)
50. A Statutory Direction 2024 issued to the Local Authority that directed the organisation to improve the quality and timeliness of its services to meet statutory expectations. A new SEND Commissioner was appointed, alongside the development of a new SEND Improvement Plan; this was signed off by the DfE in February 2024. A key thrust of this plan was to ensure that no children in Academic Year 23/24 would experience a delay and that all historic assessments or plans requiring actions would be met.
51. [Appendix 1 SEND Statutory Direction BCP Childrens Services 26 February 2024.pdf](#) [Appendix 3 SEND Improvement Plan - 25.06.24.pdf](#)
52. Cabinet report 2 October 2024 with projected year end high needs forecast for 2024/25
- [High Needs Schools Grant Expenditure Forecast.pdf](#)
53. CIPFA Report - Five key reforms to fix England's broken SEND system
- <https://www.cipfa.org/about-cipfa/press-office/latest-press-releases/five-key-reforms-to-fix-englands-broken-send-system>

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Budget Management Activities for SEND Pressures

Appendix 2 - DSG high needs block and accumulated deficit trend 2019-2029.

Budget Management Activities for SEND Pressures

Inclusion Fund 2025/26

1. The inclusion fund was included in the 15-year deficit recovery plan as a concept, with proposals to be developed in 2024/25 in consultation with headteachers.
2. A budget of £1.2m has been included for 2025/26. The amount has been finalised based on the decision of Schools Forum in January 2025 to permit the transfer to high needs of surplus school block funding. The surplus is the balance available after all mainstream schools have been allocated funding according to the national funding formula (NFF) in full and a central pupil growth fund has been provided.
3. The DfE did not permit a higher level of transfer to fully fund the inclusion fund proposals that had been drawn up in consultation with headteachers and presented to Schools Forum over the autumn. The inclusion fund has been scaled back accordingly.
4. As a result of the decreased level of funding, schools were consulted on which aspects of the inclusion fund to take forward at the Head Teacher Forum on 26 February 2025. After discussion at this event and further feedback from the online invitation, it was agreed to take the following options forward:
 - a. £550,000 for provision of additional specialist outreach support for mainstream schools.
 - b. £270,000 for a pilot of three inclusion advisor posts to work with a decided patch of mainstream schools to trial their impact over the next year.
 - c. £380,000 to deliver training and development support to mainstream schools as set out in original proposals and enabling schools to choose which option would be more impactful for them in supporting their pupils with high needs.
5. Processes are now underway to enable implementation of these elements from September 2025, with an impact review to then take place in 2026/27 to assess the difference made from these support elements being in place.

Outreach Plus

6. Outreach plus is a group of services to support mainstream schools in establishing resourced provision as part of the delivery of the SEND sufficiency programme of work. The aim of this work is to increase the availability of places for children with an EHCP.
7. The council is working with special school headteachers to agree a package of support that will enable mainstream school headteachers to establish resourced provision under the advice and guidance of specialist staff.
8. Building on round one of the sufficiency programme, which has enabled more children with an EHCP to remain in mainstream provision, round two is focused on commissioning resourced provision in mainstream primary and secondary schools for children with autism spectrum condition and social, emotional and mental health needs.
9. In applying the learning from round one, services to support our mainstream school headteachers are vital to ensure our newly commissioned resourced provision operate as inclusive models that enrich the entire school community by valuing diversity, promoting individualised learning, enhancing staff expertise, and embedding a culture of inclusion and belonging.

Service aims and objectives

10. The overall aim is to provide specialist advice and support to BCP mainstream schools to enhance their skills and expertise to effectively meet the requirements of children with additional needs.
11. The service aims to:
 - Provide specialist advice and guidance to mainstream schools
 - Provide training and guidance to mainstream schools
 - Increase opportunities for children and young people with additional needs to reach their academic potential within mainstream schools
 - Promote effective practice in meeting the needs of all children and young people
12. The service objectives are:
 - To improve provision and outcomes for children and young people with SEND enabling schools to provide the right place at the right time and with the right support
 - To improve confidence and capacity to meet special educational needs in local mainstream schools
 - Preventing schools from being SEN magnet schools, widening the distribution of provision available for children and families
 - To develop inclusive environments and develop expertise in mainstream schools
 - To provide children and young people with SEND with equitable educational opportunities alongside their peers
 - To review the data and information to inform future service planning.
 - To use collated data and information to determine the financial impact of the service.

Service Description

13. The service will provide targeted support, advice, guidance and training to mainstream primary and secondary schools seeking to develop resourced provision. The service will be allocated to schools who form part of round two of the SEND sufficiency programme of work and appropriate support will be provided following an initial audit of each school and associated proposal.
14. Accessibility: Access to the service will be through round two of the SEND sufficiency programme. The special school will audit the maintained school's proposal for the development of the Resourced Provision to assess the scope of work.
15. Population covered: The service will work with learners in mainstream education settings covering the primary and secondary age range.
16. Interdependence with other service providers: The service provider will be expected to work in collaboration with the SEND local area partnership which includes local authority officers, relevant health professionals, local schools, teaching school hubs and other local providers.
17. The service will provide a formalised package of support for a maximum period of one year and will assist mainstream school headteachers in the following areas:

- Curriculum
- Planning
- Assessment
- Environment
- Sensory
- Timetabling
- Resource advice
- Staff training
- In-reach / observations
- Consultancy

18. Year 1 Support Programme

Duration: 2 Terms

- Initial meeting following submission of request for support, what is already in place, what support the school has identified?
- Allocation of senior leader & team - mainstream school & Linwood
- Planning meeting to look at student need – EHCPs / outside agency reports / IEPs etc
- Areas of focus established & UP3 expert teachers allocated
- Support schedule drawn up, half termly review points set

Duration: 1 Term

- Planning for areas to develop further, growth & succession
- Support schedule drawn up, half termly review points set

19. Year 2 – Individual school takes responsibility for training and development of staff

20. Providers of the Service: The council will commission special schools in BCP to provide the support to local mainstream primary and secondary schools.

Financial implications of outreach plus

21. Round two is expected to deliver a total of 20 projects over at least two academic years (depending on the scale of individual projects). This could provide a total of between 160 places – 240 places depending on a range of between 8-12 place provisions.
22. The cost of a support package for each school is a maximum of £20,000 which necessitates a total budget of £0.4m over a 2-year period. This covers the costs of outreach teachers/backfilling, training, site visits, initial audit and assess, plan, do review approach. It is planned that the cost is met from the 2024/25 unused mainstream schools funding transferred to high needs. Only £0.5m has been spent of the £1.3m transfer due the delay in finalising proposals for the inclusion fund.
23. The table below sets out that the impact of the cost of the service on the cost per place in year one. It shows a year one additional cost of £2,500 based on an 8-place provision. This brings the total cost per place for resourced provision to £25,500 based on an 8-place provision. The costs per place decrease for provisions based on 10 and 12 places. The year 2 costs reduce to £22,000 per place as outreach plus is for one year only. This is a cost avoidance of £3,000 per place taking an estimated cost of a special school place of £25,000.

Year 1	Cost per place £	8 Places £	10 Places £	12 Places £
Element 1, 2 and 3 funding	22,000	176,000	220,000	264,000
Running Costs	1,000	8,000	10,000	12,000
Year 1 costs	23,000	184,000	230,000	276,000
Cost of outreach per school and per place	20,000	2,500	2,000	1,667
Cost of provision based on 8, 10, 12 places		186,500	232,000	277,667
Cost per place including the cost of outreach		25,500	25,000	24,667

Year 2	Cost per place £	8 Places £	10 Places £	12 Places £
Element 1, 2 and 3 funding	22,000	176,000	220,000	264,000
Cost per place		22,000	22,000	22,000

Special School Banding Review

24. The current funding system for special schools in BCP Council has been in place in largely the same format since the formation of the unitary authority in April 2019.
25. Up to 2022/23 there was a wider variety of funded bands across the five special schools – a mixture of legacy council agreements and BCP 'add-ons'.
26. In 2023/24, additional funding from the minimum funding guarantee was fed into the bottom of the bands to start bringing minimum funding more in line with the top up funding available in a mainstream school.
27. Ad hoc arrangements that make individual payments up to double some of the top band amounts are currently in place.
28. Special schools have maintained a dialogue with the council for a number of years that current budgets are insufficient to deliver the provision they need to support the children attending their school and that a different system is required to update and recognise current positions.
29. Financially, the five special schools are in differing positions with some holding a financial surplus, and others holding a deficit or projected to be soon in deficit.
30. A benchmarking exercise was carried out by Bath and North-East Somerset across 11 Council Areas in the southwest, based on 2023/24 banding rates paid to special schools in their areas.
31. This exercise established that based on the figures provided, BCP pay the highest banding rate for children requiring the least amount of support i.e. the minimum top up amount provided, at an average of £12,084 per child. Band values in other

councils range from £1,780 to £12,084, with the average value being £4,606 and the median at £2,538.

32. In relation to the maximum top up amount provided, BCP pay the third highest banding rate for children requiring the most amount of support at an average of £25,853 per child. For this element, values ranged from £13,265 to £29,490, with an average value of £21,845 and a median of £22,734.
33. It should be noted that for both minimum and maximum amounts this does not include any additional top up that councils may award on an ad hoc basis.
34. A meeting was held with special school headteachers and academy trust representatives in May 2025 to present the findings to date and discuss next steps to move the position forwards with a stated aim of being able to implement a new model for September 2025.
35. It was agreed to proceed with modelling the proposed new system on the split 'place' and 'child' costs and to establish a banding approach that would fit consistently across all schools. The place element establishes costs applicable to all special schools equally (such as a headteacher) and then attributes school specific elements (such as provision being across multiple locations). The result is then turned into a per place cost with reference to the number of commissioned places so each school's per place cost will be different. The child element is then differentiated for each band level depending on pupil needs and is the same across all schools. The two elements added together for each school will become the top up band funding as pupils are placed. This method means that each school will continue to have unique band funding at each level but the reasons for differentiation will be understood, which is not currently the case. It will also enable a move away from requests for additional ad hoc requests for funding.
36. This approach has recently been implemented by Dorset Council and their framework will be reviewed to determine suitability for BCP in consultation with the headteachers. If agreed the next steps will be to then map existing pupils to the new band descriptions. This will need to be completed before the summer break so the financial implications can be assessed before consultation and agreement of proposals takes place in the autumn.

Early years assessment centres - Dingley's promise - £0.6m annual fixed term investment

37. Dingley's Promise provide tailored nursery support to children under five with SEND. The children they work with have a wide range of additional needs including cognitive delay, autism, physical disabilities, genetic conditions and life-limiting conditions.
38. Dingley's Promise has a proven track record with seven centres nationally. It is a new approach within early years, with priority given to high quality inclusive practice, early intervention, and prevention. The aim is to identify and address children's needs at an early stage to reduce the need for more specialised educational settings. The first centre opened in May 2024 in Bournemouth attached to a family hub, with two further assessment centres commissioned for Christchurch and Poole to meet the escalating need. The initial proposal was shared with Schools Forum and the SEND Programme Board.
39. Dingley's Promise operates as a limited company with registered charity status. It is an established, experienced organisation with a strong, positive history for supporting early years children with SEND. The organisation has three long established Ofsted registered centres in Berkshire and more recently has been

commissioned by the Hampshire, Reading, Woking, and Gloucester Councils. Information can be found in the link [Our Centres - Dingley's Promise](#)

40. The commissioned cost is £200,000 per year, for each centre funded from the high needs block. The setting is funded for the hours children attend through the early years single funding formula in the normal way. This funding varies according to the age of the children with the £200,000 for the additional support.
41. The service has worked on a conservative estimate that 8 out of 50 pupils using each centre go on to avoid a specialist placement. This represents cost avoidance of up to £60,000 per pupil annually, the year after they move on. Payback on the initial investment should occur by year two with the potential for annual cost avoidance of £1.44m by year four and cumulative net cost avoidance over the four years of £2.3m by year four (£2.1m if the contract is extended to include that year). However, the service hope to be more impactful.
42. The financial assessment per centre at the point of commissioning the service for the first time was as follows:

Financial Assessment per centre	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Commissioned Service Cost (£000s)	200	200	200	
Pupils avoiding specialist placement*	8	16	24	
Annual cost avoidance (£000s)		(480)	(960)	(1,440)
Annual net cost/saving (£000s)	200	(280)	(760)	(1,440)
Cumulative net cost/ saving (£000's)	200	(80)	(840)	(2,280)

* Cumulative as new cohort impacted each year

Impact data presented to the SEND Programme Board

43. 80% of the children in the first cohort (16 out of 20) at the Bournemouth centre who were on a trajectory to specialist provision have successfully started reception in a mainstream school rather than specialist, with a cost avoidance of a minimum of £25,000 per child per year (based on maintained and academy specialist costing) totalling £400,000 for the 2024 – 2025 academic year. More detailed tracking of these children will take place to give a more accurate net cost avoidance figure.
44. As the confidence from parents grows the service has seen a reduction in parental EHC needs assessment requests at nursery age from an average of 13 a month before the new year, to 1 a month since January 2025.
45. Requests for support from this service are high and come via the weekly multi agency triage meetings and partners have expressed confidence with the system.
46. The original centre was commissioned to work with 50 families but within the first year they have tripled the number of families they have supported.
47. The centre in Bournemouth has already seen over 200 children and young people benefit from its support since opening in May 2024.

48. Furthermore, 98% of families supported by the Bournemouth centre also say they feel more confident and positive about the future as a result of the signposting, advice and help of our outreach service.

Post 19 Initiatives

49. Of the 4737 children and young people in BCP Council with an EHCP, 1034 are aged 16 – 25 (this breaks down to 857 16 – 19-year-olds in school year groups 12 to 14 and 182 adults aged 20 – 25 post school). If all of the young people currently in Years 12 – 14 stays on in education (therefore requiring a continued use of their EHCP) then there will be a continued growth in the number of adults being supported through their EHCP.
50. It is important for the service to have a better understanding of this cohort, their needs and whether these are being best served through continued education or not. Following this a number of service developments are required which are outlined below.
51. The service will develop strong independent advice and guidance processes to ensure that all young people in Year 11 have an options appraisal in place that effectively evaluates the different routes to ambitious and meaningful employment, rather than solely relying on continued education which may not always lead to progression into employment.
52. The service is currently working to grow its supported internships offer, which is a strong and well-run model, and needs to reach more young people.
53. The service will work closely with Bournemouth and Poole College to ensure that those learners who need a further education qualification as their next step are able to do so through the college rather than an alternative provider.
54. The service will work with local employers to develop their confidence to be able to employ young people with SEND and to understand the huge benefits that this can bring to their businesses.

Education Other Than at School (EOTAS) and Use of Alternative Provision (AP)

55. Education otherwise than at school means all forms of education that take place outside the formal school environment and meet the specific needs of children who cannot attend a mainstream or special school.
56. Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 places a legal duty on Local Authorities (LAs) to make arrangements for the provision of suitable education for children of compulsory school age who, for any reason (illness, exclusion or otherwise), cannot receive such education unless those arrangements are made. This duty is often referred to as the “s.19 duty”.
57. S19 EOTAS is usually a short-term response to particular circumstances, and any arrangements made by the LA will normally be temporary. Pupil referral units (PRUs), hospital schools, AP and home school tutors are all examples. This duty applies whether or not a child is on roll at a school and irrespective of the type of school they attend. It is for the LA to decide what education provision is suitable and includes all children with or without SEND.
58. Section 61 of the Children and Families Act 2014, when discussing EOTAS, allows local authorities to arrange for special educational provision for children and young people outside of traditional school or post-16 settings. This provision

can only be made if the authority is satisfied that it would be inappropriate to provide education in a school or post-16 institution.

59. S 61 is often not a short term or temporary solution to a specific circumstance. It follows a decision by the LA often after an EHC needs assessment or annual review, based on the current and foreseeable needs of the child or young person, that special educational provision in a school would not be appropriate.
60. The number of children and young people in EOTAS has risen considerably over the last year. S19 has risen from 63 children in May 2024 to 136 children in March 2025. S61 has risen from 49 to 81. When broken down by age range there is a significant pressure in the older age range from Year 9. The greatest primary need is social, emotional, mental health (SEMH) followed by autistic spectrum condition (ASC), which matches the two highest areas of need in the overall cohort of all children with SEND. Too many children are in S19 for too long despite this being planned as a short period of intervention.
61. The delivery of the Sufficiency Strategy aims to address the number of children in AP who are there due to a lack of spaces in special school provision. However, there are other actions that the service is taking in relation to this cohort which are detailed below.
62. EOTAS is the first area of focus for an Education Quality Assurance thematic review, with a spotlight on:
 - a. 10% each of the Section 19 and 61 children and young people receiving EOTAS
 - b. Quality of the LA decision (to agree EOTAS) and compliance with the legislation and the evidence to support why EOTAS was the only solution (rather than a setting) for each child /young person
 - c. Quality of the curriculum
 - d. Timeliness of amending the EHCP to reflect EOTAS
 - e. What arrangements are put in place to monitor /report on progress at the point EOTAS agreed
 - f. What plans are in place for re-integration into a setting
63. Furthermore, an early review of priority placements to ensure appropriateness in relation to those over 6 months and the Post 16 cohort for s19. The service has also commenced an Inclusion Panel (focus on Alternative Provision) for robust decision-making.
64. At a strategic level, the service is developing a three tier Alternative Provision model which aims to reduce the number of children in AP, and for those that require it, the length of time that they are in AP. This will be particularly important for the cohort on S19. Alongside this the service is developing plans to work with schools to reduce the number of permanent exclusions, which has the knock-on effect of children spending time in AP.

Funding Processes

65. A piece of work has taken place to explore health-related spend within the high needs block. Whilst there has been clarity about what Health cannot fund, there have not always been clear links between the EHCP process and the continuing health care process, agreeing needs and identifying who is responsible for meeting them.

66. Child level data was used to identify 58 children who have received health services, where there may be a need to recoup funding from Health that has been paid from the high needs block.
67. The next steps are to ascertain likely amount of cost recoupment relating to these children and create an effective system going forward for tripartite funding. In the meantime, the Multi-Agency Resource Panel has been re-started, with engagement from Adults and Children's Social Care and Health colleagues. This will ensure joined up decision making going forward.

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DSG financial position since LGR 2019 – 2025 actual, budget 2025/26 and existing forecast 2026 – 29

	actual	actual	actual	actual	actual	actual	budget	Forecast*	Forecast*	Forecast*
	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29
Total HNB Spend	45.930	48.616	61.134	69.874	87.779	111.906	123.211	141.974	149.150	154.697
DSG HNB Funding – note 1	(38.885)	(42.969)	(47.822)	(54.361)	(59.162)	(60.710)	(64.472)	(68.450)	(72.557)	(76.910)
Council contribution – note 2	(2.400)									
School block transfer – note 2	(2.394)	(1.046)	(1.094)			(1.324)	(1.237)			
In-year deficit	2.251	4.601	12.218	15.513	28.617	49.872	57.502	73.524	76.593	77.787
Deficit brought forward	3.605	4.644	7.853	20.317	35.844	63.512	113.256	170.758	244.282	320.875
Other DSG variances	(1.212)	(1.392)	0.246	0.014	(0.949)	(0.128)				
Deficit carried forward	4.644	7.853	20.317	35.844	63.512	113.256	170.758	244.282	320.875	398.662
Percentage increase high needs spend from previous year		6%	26%	14%	26%	27%	10%	15%	5%	4%
Percentage increase high needs funding from previous year		11%	11%	14%	9%	3%	6%	6%	6%	6%

*The current forecast was prepared for January 2025.

Notes:

1. **DSG high needs block funding** includes teacher's pay and pensions and other grants and allocations from the DfE paid directly to schools initially and then subsumed into the DSG. These legacy grants must be paid over to BCP maintained and academy special schools and alternative provision Core funding increases for growing demand and non-state provision is, therefore, well below the increased funding levels shown over 2021 to 2024.
2. **Other funding.** In 2019/20 the council was able to contribute its own funds to the DSG to prevent high needs block deficits escalating. In this year the DfE also allowed for BCP, a transfer of funding from the school block above 0.5% (regulation maximum without DfE approval) with mainstream schools NFF allocations reduced. The DfE would not agree transfers above 0.5% in future years. In 2022/23 the surplus school block funding was low, and the school's forum transferred an amount to increase funding for early years providers. In 2023/24 the small surplus was applied to the deficit. In 2024/25 and 2025/26 the school's forum agreed surplus school block funding can be transferred to high needs, but it is to be spent to the benefit of pupils with high needs remaining in mainstream schools. Note that this funding must be agreed on an annual basis and is not cumulative.

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



Report subject	Alternative Provision Improvement Plan
Meeting date	15 September 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>This report provides an update on the Local Authority's work to improve the quality, consistency, and oversight of Alternative Provision (AP) for children and young people who are unable to access mainstream education.</p> <p>In response to national policy direction and local priorities, the Council is developing a three-tier model of AP that promotes early intervention, targeted support, and specialist provision. The model is designed to reduce exclusions, improve outcomes, and ensure that AP is used as a short-term, purposeful intervention rather than a long-term destination.</p> <p>The report outlines the rationale for change, the options considered, and the preferred approach. It also sets out the implications of the proposed model in relation to sustainability, public health, legal compliance, workforce development, and commissioning. The report is presented for information only and provides an overview of progress to date and the next steps in implementation.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>Members note:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> the progress made in developing a three-tier model of AP in line with national guidance and local strategic priorities. the preferred model and the rationale for its selection, as set out in the options appraisal. the next steps in implementation, including further stakeholder engagement, development of service specifications, and alignment with wider SEND and inclusion reforms.
Reason for recommendations	<p>The recommended approach reflects the Council's statutory duty to ensure all children and young people receive suitable education, particularly those unable to attend mainstream school. The proposed three-tier model of AP supports national guidance and local priorities by promoting early intervention, targeted support, and specialist provision.</p>

Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr. Richard Burton
Corporate Director	Cathi Hadley
Report Authors	Kerry Smith, Head of Education Improvement Geraint Griffiths, Inclusion Operational Service Manager Tanya Smith, Head of School Inclusion, Places & Capital
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Information

Background

1. The Local Authority has a statutory duty under section 19 of the Education Act (1996) to arrange suitable and (normally) full-time education for children and young people of compulsory school age who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would not receive suitable education.
2. The Department for Education (DfE) defines AP as education arranged by local authorities for children of compulsory school age who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would not otherwise receive suitable education; alternative provision can also be used by schools for children on a suspension (fixed period exclusion); and for children being directed by schools to off-site provision to receive education intended to improve their behaviour ([Arranging Alternative Provision, A Guide for Local Authorities and Schools, DfE, February 2025](#)).
3. The DfE also states special educational provision otherwise than at school arranged under section 61 of the Children and Families Act 2014 (EOTAS) are not a form of alternative provision. EOTAS under section 61 is arranged for children and young people with special educational needs (SEN), typically with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, when it would be inappropriate for the provision to be made in a school, college or other educational institution; often due to the child's multiple and/or complex SEN.
4. In BCP, we include children and young people attending EOTAS as part of AP monitoring and tracking to ensure that there is robust oversight.
5. Our monitoring and tracking divides AP into three types:
 - a. State-funded AP schools, which includes pupil referral units, AP academies and AP free schools
 - b. School arranged AP
 - c. Local Authority funded AP in non-state funded provision, which includes:
 - i. Education for children and young people who because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would not otherwise receive suitable education.

- ii. Educational provision for children and young people with an EHC Plan for whom it would be inappropriate for the provision to be made in a school, college or other educational institution.
6. In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the need to strengthen the quality, consistency, and oversight of AP across the borough. The DfE's guidance [Arranging Alternative Provision, A Guide for Local Authorities and Schools, DfE, February 2025](#) states, 'commissioners responsible for arranging alternative provision should ensure that it is good quality, registered where appropriate, and delivered by high quality staff with suitable training, experience and safeguarding checks'.
7. The Government's [SEND and alternative provision improvement plan - GOV.UK](#) sets out its vision for a three-tier AP model with a focus on targeted support whilst children and young people are in mainstream school, to deal with needs early and reduce preventable exclusion. Time-limited or transitional placements into an AP setting will provide more intensive intervention or longer-term support where it is needed, before children and young people return to a new mainstream setting or progress to a sustainable post-16 destination.
8. This report provides an update on the work necessary to develop and deliver a three-tier model of AP. It outlines the rationale for change, the options considered, the progress to date, and the next steps. The model aims to improve outcomes for vulnerable learners, reduce exclusions, and ensure that AP is delivered in a way that is inclusive, effective, and aligned with the Council's strategic priorities.

Context

9. In April 2025, our Children's Commissioning Service commissioned a needs analysis of BCP's use of AP. This is because our use of AP is rising and is above both regional and national rates.

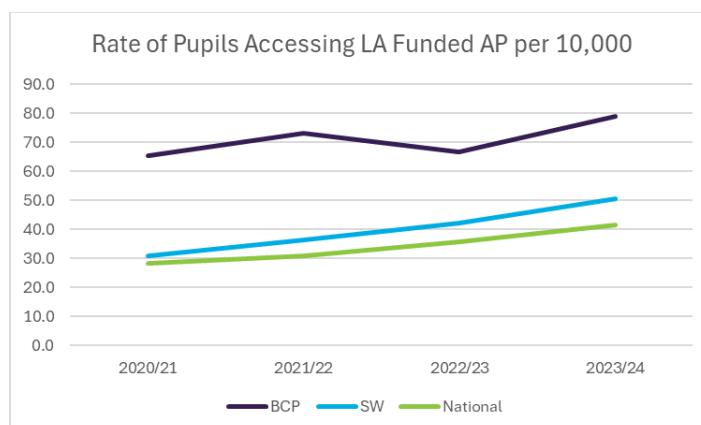
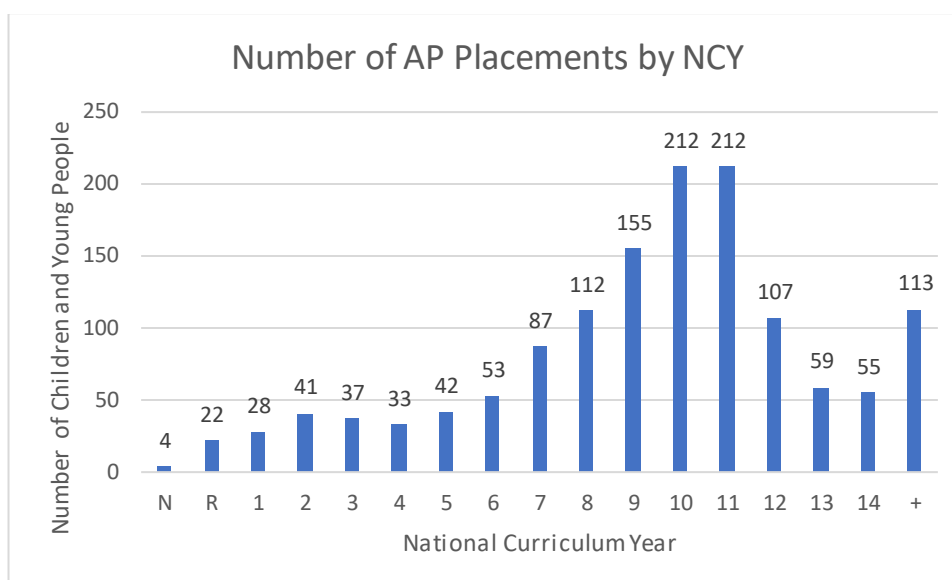


Figure 1: Rate of pupils accessing LA funded AP per 10,000

The needs analysis found:

- 95% of children and young people accessing AP have special educational needs, 86% have an EHCP and 10% have SEND Support
10. The largest areas of need are social, emotional and mental health, autism spectrum condition and speech, language and communication needs

- Around two thirds of our children and young people accessing AP placements are male
 - The peak age at which our children and young people start an AP placement is 13 to 15 years old
 - The average placement duration is 29 weeks. However, 15% of placements active in 2024/25 had been active for three or more years
11. There are key wards in BCP with higher numbers of children in AP, most significantly Kinson, Newtown and Heatherlands, Muscliff and Strouden Park, and Alderney and Bourne Valley
 12. The youngest children accessing AP were in year one
 13. At the end of May 2025, 1372 of our children and young people were accessing AP. We have used the end of May as a benchmark to give a more accurate reflection of AP usage because Year 11 children and young people would not be included in June and July due to their statutory education ending:
 14. 190 children and young people were accessing state-funded AP schools, 726 were accessing non-state funded APs and 472 were accessing placements in unregistered provisions (a small number of children and young people access more than one type).
 15. 65 children and young people were classed as EOTAS.
 16. 69 were children in our care, 32 had Children Protection (CP) Plans and 133 were Children in Need (CiN).
 17. 1114 children and young people had an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP), 41 were in the Education Health Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) process, 91 were identified as requiring SEND support and 126 had no Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
 18. 463 children and young people had an identified Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) need, 412 had a diagnosis of autism, 128 had a Speech Language and Communication Need (SLCN), 81 had a Physical Disability (PD) and 69 had Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD).
 19. 63% of the children and young people were male and 37% were female.
 20. Number of children and young people by National Curriculum Year (NCY)



21. Nationally, the percentage of pupils attending AP schools who were eligible for free school meals (FSM) was more than double the rate of the general school population (FFT Education Datalab, February 2024)

Progress

22. This academic year we have visited the majority of AP Providers to review their provision which includes safeguarding, health and safety and outcomes for children and young people.
23. The LA is in the process of establishing an AP Framework which will support the delivery of quality assured provision that meets the individual needs of our children and young people. We hosted a successful market engagement event in June 2025, ahead of the launch of the Framework tender. In April 2025, we launched a Provider Forum to develop strong working relationships and share best practice.
24. In June 2025, we set up an AP working Group which is made up of representatives from the council, parent groups, mainstream educational settings, AP providers and specialist settings. The AP Working Group will develop a three-tier AP model which aligns with the national plan set out in the Government's [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(SEND\) and Alternative Provision \(AP\) Plan](#). Tier one will focus on targeted support and early help whilst children and young people are in mainstream school. Tier two will provide short-term, time limited or transitional AP placements with an expectation that children and young people will return to their mainstream school; whilst tier three will provide more intensive and longer-term support where it is needed to support children and young people to return to a new mainstream setting or sustained post-16 destination.
25. The AP working group is being supported by '[The Difference](#)'. 'The Difference' are an educational charity who aim to reduce lost learning in schools across the country. and recently published [What-Works-Four-Tenets-of-Effective-Internal-Alternative-Provision.pdf](#). We have also commissioned 50 places for school leaders on 'The Difference's' Inclusion Leadership Programme to develop whole-school inclusion across the conurbation.

26. We are in the process of implementing 'Welfare Call' which enables us to closely monitor the attendance of our children and young people accessing an AP who are not on a school roll and take swift action when required.
27. We have implemented the first iteration of an AP Panel to ensure there is a child-centred, efficient and effective process around decision making for local authority Section 19 commissioned AP placements.

Next Steps

28. We are working with the Children's Rights and Engagement Team to capture the lived experience of children and young people to inform process, practice and delivery.
29. The AP Working Group will agree the vision for a BCP Three-Tier AP model in September and will develop a delivery plan throughout September and October.
30. The AP framework tender will launch in July, which will ensure contractual arrangements are robust and will set out clear data recording and sharing expectations, resulting in consistency of reporting.
31. The LA will continue to develop our oversight, monitoring and reporting in relation to AP with the first phase of development going live by the end of August.
32. We are working with Dorset Council Colleagues to develop an annual AP Provider safeguarding and quality of education audit and to improve reintegration rates from AP into mainstream education.
33. We are also developing a quality assurance process to monitor the reviews of individual children and young people accessing AP placements.

Options Appraisal

34. In developing a revised model for AP, the Local Authority has considered two options to ensure alignment with statutory duties and best practice as outlined in the Department for Education's updated guidance (2025). The options that have been appraised are set out below.
35. **Option 1: Maintain the Current Provision Model.** This option would retain existing commissioned services without significant reform. While familiar to schools and providers, the current model has been found to lack strategic alignment with the SEND and AP Plan and does not adequately reflect the evolving needs of the local cohort. Feedback from stakeholders during the Discovery Phase highlighted limitations in flexibility, quality assurance, and reintegration pathways. This option was not pursued due to its inability to meet the ambitions of the local SEND and Inclusion Strategy. Additionally, the current model significantly impacts the High Needs Block (HNB) of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

Advantages:	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarity for schools and providers. • No immediate disruption to existing placements. • Minimal administrative burden 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not address identified gaps in quality, consistency, and reintegration pathways.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fails to align with the DfE's vision of AP as an intervention rather than a destination. • Limited capacity to meet increasing demand or support early intervention. • There is a significant cost to the HNB of the DSG. • In 2023/24, BCP's permanent exclusion rate was 0.17, which was above national (0.13), the Southwest (0.15) and statistical neighbour (0.12) rates. • In 2023/24, BCP's suspension rate was 13.88, which was above the national (11.31) and statistical neighbour (11.65) rates.
Reason for Rejection: This option was not pursued due to its inability to deliver improved outcomes or meet the strategic objectives of the SEND and Inclusion Strategy. Stakeholder feedback indicated that the current model is reactive and lacks coherence.	

36. **Option 2: Implement a Three-Tier Model of AP** (*Recommended Option*)
 In line with [national policy direction](#), the Local Authority proposes the implementation of a three-tier model of AP, comprising:

Tier 1: Early intervention and outreach support to prevent exclusion.

Tier 2: Short-term placements with targeted therapeutic and educational support.

Tier 3: Specialist AP settings for pupils with complex needs requiring longer-term provision.

37. This model promotes inclusion, timely support, and reintegration, and is underpinned by multi-agency collaboration. It reflects best practice emerging from pilot areas and aligns with the DfE's vision of AP as an intervention rather than a destination. The model also supports improved outcomes, better use of resources, and enhanced quality assurance.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligns with national policy and DfE guidance. • Promotes early intervention, targeted support, and reintegration. • Enables a graduated response to pupil needs. • Supports multi-agency collaboration and improved outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires initial investment in system redesign and workforce development. • Implementation complexity across tiers and settings.
Reason for Recommendation: This option offers the most coherent and sustainable approach to improving AP. It reflects best practice from other local authorities and national pilots, and supports the Local Authority's ambition to deliver inclusive, high-quality education for all learners.	

Summary of financial implications

38. The expenditure on AP is funded by the high needs block of the ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and is contributing to the accumulated deficit of £113 million for 31 March 2025. The deficit is projected to continue to grow each year as expenditure will be greater than the allocated grant funding.
39. There has been a sharp rise in AP spend over the last 3 years with it budgeted to rise further in 2025/26 as summarised in the following table:

AP Expenditure	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Bespoke Packages – external providers	4,919	6,730	12,070	14,238
Place Funding – maintained and academies	2,460	2,409	2,528	2,666
Top up Funding – maintained and academies	1,210	3,359	5,039	4,500
Hospital Education – private providers	58	26	64	100
Total Alternative Provision	8,648	12,523	19,701	21,504

BCP Funded AP Places	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
(included in above table)	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Tregonwell Academy	560	467	400	400
Quay School - exclusions	614	656	684	709
Quay School - medical / hospital*	806	806	964	1,077
Christchurch Learning Centre	480	480	480	480
Total	2,460	2,409	2,528	2,666

*The Quay school medical/hospital provision includes places for BCP resident children unable to attend school for medical reasons as well as educational support in NHS hospitals in the BCP area (Poole hospital and Pebble Lodge, a specialist psychiatric unit in Bournemouth). NHS units cater for pupils across council areas and the DfE fund NHS expansions through an application process.

40. The number of pupils catered for within state funded providers has changed little over this period with the growth in demand requiring use of high-cost independent providers.
41. The impact on the DSG budget will be assessed after the specific detail of the new 3-tier model has been determined.

Summary of legal implications

42. The Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure that all children and young people receive suitable education, particularly those who are unable to attend mainstream school due to exclusion, illness, or other circumstances. The model of provision must also comply with national guidance on safeguarding, commissioning, oversight, and reintegration. The core legal frameworks that inform and support the delivery of the proposed model are summarised below.

- **Education Act 1996 – Section 19:** Requires local authorities to arrange suitable full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, due to exclusion, illness, or other reasons, would not otherwise receive it. This forms the legal basis

for the LA's duty to provide AP. The three-tier model must ensure that all tiers (especially Tier 2 and Tier 3) meet the definition of "suitable education."

- **Children and Families Act 2014 – Section 61 (EOTAS):** This allows for education otherwise than at school for children with EHC Plans where mainstream or special school is unsuitable. This ensures that Tier 3 provision for complex needs is lawful and appropriately commissioned, especially where EOTAS may be considered.
- **DfE Statutory Guidance on Alternative Provision (2025)** Sets out what LAs, schools, and providers must do to comply with the law when arranging AP. Includes expectations around safeguarding, commissioning, reintegration, and quality assurance. Provides the operational framework for designing and implementing the three-tier model. Reinforces the need for strategic planning, oversight, and alignment with wider inclusion goals.
- **SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years (2015)** Statutory guidance outlining duties for education, health, and care services to work together to support children and young people with SEND. The model must integrate with SEND systems, ensure inclusive practice, and support reintegration and progression. Applies particularly to pupils with EHC Plans in AP.
- **Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill (2025)** Strengthens duties around pupil wellbeing, reintegration, and safeguarding in AP settings. Supports the rationale for early intervention (Tier 1), therapeutic support (Tier 2), and structured reintegration planning across all tiers.
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)** Statutory safeguarding guidance for all education settings. AP settings must comply with safeguarding standards, particularly Tier 2 and Tier 3 placements. Oversight and monitoring must reflect these duties.

43. The Council's Legal Services will be engaged to ensure the proposed model aligns with these duties and does not create unintended risks and consequences. Key legal risks include ensuring appropriate oversight of placements, safeguarding responsibilities, and clarity around commissioning arrangements. These will be mitigated through robust service level agreements, clear referral pathways, and regular legal review of policy and practice. The Council will continue to ensure that all AP arrangements are lawful, transparent, and in the best interests of the child.

Summary of human resources implications

44. The implementation of a three-tier model of AP will require changes in practice and increased collaboration across schools, the Local Authority, and wider education and health partners. The model places greater emphasis on early intervention and targeted support, which will require staff across the system to develop new skills and approaches, particularly in inclusive practice, therapeutic support, and multi-agency working.
45. A coordinated programme of professional development will be essential to build capacity and ensure consistency across settings.
46. A communication and engagement plan will be developed to support staff understanding and readiness across the partnership, ensuring that the workforce is informed, supported, and equipped to deliver the new model effectively.
47. The DfE's [Arranging Alternative Provision Guidance](#) (February 2025) states there should be 'regular review dates (at least half-termly) between the commissioner and the provider should be built in to monitor the child's progress against objectives and to consider any changes that may be necessary to ensure the placement is

successful'. This has a significant impact on resource, given that in May 2025 there were 1372 children and young people accessing AP placements.

Summary of sustainability impact

48. The implementation of a three-tier model of AP supports the Council's climate emergency commitments by promoting more localised and inclusive education pathways. By strengthening early intervention and short-term support within mainstream settings (Tier 1 and Tier 2), the model reduces reliance on distant specialist placements, thereby lowering travel-related emissions, costs, and journey times for families. This approach also enables better use of existing school infrastructure, contributing to long-term sustainability in service delivery and resource allocation.

Summary of public health implications

49. The proposed three-tier model of AP is expected to have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of children and young people, particularly those experiencing disadvantage, mental health difficulties and those at risk of exclusion. By embedding early intervention (Tier 1) and targeted support (Tier 2) within mainstream settings, the model aims to reduce referrals to specialist mental health services by addressing needs earlier and offering holistic support. It also supports pupils with chronic conditions such as fatigue and anxiety by offering flexible, therapeutic environments that reduce stress and promote engagement. The model contributes to reducing health inequalities by ensuring that learners with vulnerabilities can access appropriate support locally, improving continuity of care and outcomes.

Summary of equality implications

50. The new model will have a positive impact as children and young people with SEND will receive earlier support within their school setting. In circumstances, where this is not possible, we will develop higher quality provision based on need. We will also ensure that other information we hold about children and young people accessing AP being is reflected in the support available, for example that the majority are male.

Summary of risk assessment

51. The implementation of a three-tier model of AP represents a significant strategic shift in how the Local Authority supports children and young people. While the model is designed to improve outcomes and deliver more inclusive education pathways, there are a number of risks that decision-makers should consider. These include operational, financial, and stakeholder-related risks. The table below outlines the key risks associated with the proposed model and the mitigation strategies that will be put in place to manage them effectively.

Risk	Description	Mitigation Strategy
Insufficient capacity in Tier 1 and Tier 2	Schools may lack the resources or expertise to deliver early intervention and short-term support effectively.	Provide targeted support and access to outreach services; develop clear criteria and support frameworks for Tier 1 and Tier 2 delivery.

Inconsistent implementation across schools	Variation in practice may lead to unequal access and outcomes for pupils.	Develop a standardised model with clear expectations, supported by a robust SLA and monitoring framework.
Stakeholder resistance or lack of buy-in	Schools, parents, or providers may be unclear or concerned about changes.	Engage stakeholders early through consultation and co-production; communicate benefits clearly and provide ongoing support.
Funding pressures and sustainability	Risk of underfunding or misalignment with High Needs Block priorities.	Align funding with pupil need and outcomes; ensure commissioning decisions are data-driven and linked to wider SEND strategy.
Impact on existing AP providers	Changes may destabilise current provision or reduce referrals.	Involve providers in model design; offer transitional support and clarify roles within the new tiered structure.
Data and monitoring gaps	Lack of robust data may hinder evaluation and accountability.	Establish clear data requirements and reporting cycles; invest in systems to track pupil progress and provision impact.
Legal and statutory compliance	Risk of non-compliance with SEND Code of Practice or exclusion guidance.	Ensure model is co-developed with legal oversight and aligns with DfE guidance and statutory duties.

Background papers

None

Appendices

None

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



Report subject	BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership Yearly Report 24/25
Meeting date	15 September 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>This report for the period April 2024-March 2025 sets out that since the dissolution of the 'Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership', the new BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership has focussed on implementing new arrangements to fulfil the statutory responsibilities of the three statutory safeguarding partners who have joint responsibility and accountability for the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in the BCP geographical area. The three statutory safeguarding partners are BCP Council, NHS Dorset ICB and Dorset Police. Within this period of significant change, partners have maintained a focus on safeguarding children and through the new arrangements have gained insights on the effectiveness of how well partners work together to safeguard local children and young people, and areas to be developed. Full details of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements can be seen here.</p> <p>The report provides an account of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What we have done as part of our local arrangements, including any child safeguarding practice review • Impact of learning from local and national reviews • How we have applied independent scrutiny to review and challenge our safeguarding practice • How education partners are engaged with • Future improvements that can be made as to the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements. <p>This report will be submitted to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel by 30 September 2025 and will be published on the BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership website.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>The establishment of the new BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership, the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in place, identification of its effectiveness to date and areas to be developed are to be noted by the committee.</p>

Reason for recommendations	The BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership is required to report on its progress and future improvements.

Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr Richard Burton Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People
Corporate Director	Cathi Hadley
Report Authors	Anita McGrath, BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership Manager
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For information

Background

1. Following the dissolution of the Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership in July 2024, BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership was set up in accordance with Working Together (2023) statutory guidance to fulfil the statutory responsibilities of the three statutory safeguarding partners who have joint responsibility and accountability for implementing multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole geographical area.
2. [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#), sets out that each Local Safeguarding Children Partnership is required to report on the activity undertaken in a 12month period and make the report publicly available.

Options Appraisal

3. None

Summary of financial implications

4. None

Summary of legal implications

5. None

Summary of human resources implications

6. None

Summary of sustainability impact

7. None

Summary of public health implications

8. None

Summary of equality implications

9. None

Summary of risk assessment

10. None

Background papers

None

Appendices

Appendix 1 BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership Yearly Report 2024-2025



**BCP SAFEGUARDING
CHILDREN** PARTNERSHIP

Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Safeguarding Children Partnership Yearly Report

2024/25



**BCP SAFEGUARDING
CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP**

Yearly Report 2024/25

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Introduction

Welcome to the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Safeguarding Children Partnership yearly report 2024-2025.

This report provides an account of the work we have completed or progressed to:

- establish the BCP SCP to ensure the new partnership has strong foundations from which to lead a multi-agency approach to safeguarding children and young people and ensure all agencies fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities
- maintain safeguarding as a priority for all partners as evidenced in the quality of engagement and support to keep local children at the heart of our work
- test the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding practice and promote a culture of learning and challenge to achieve good standards.

Following the dissolution of the Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership, the new Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Safeguarding Children Partnership (BCP SCP) partnership was established in July 2024; publishing its [multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in December 2024](#).

The creation of the BCP SCP fulfils the statutory duties set out in [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#) to have three statutory safeguarding partners who have joint responsibility and accountability for implementing multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

The three statutory partners are:

- Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council
- NHS Dorset (Integrated Care Board)
- Dorset Police



Our shared vision: The shared vision of BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership is for every child and young person to be and feel safe, enjoy good physical, emotional and mental health, have pride in their unique identities, feel that they belong and have opportunities to thrive.

Our shared responsibilities: Collaborative leadership and timely decision making are crucial to the effectiveness of multi-agency working and to identify and address system issues. Protecting children from abuse, neglect and exploitation requires multi-agency join up and co-operation at all levels and local organisations and agencies who work with children and families play a significant and often statutory role when it comes to safeguarding children. This means:

- Having a clear, shared vision for how to improve outcomes for children locally across all levels of need and all types of harm
- There is a prompt, appropriate and effective response to a child who is identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm to ensure the protection and support of the child
- Organisations and agencies are challenged appropriately, effectively holding one another to account
- The voice of children and families combined with the knowledge of experienced practitioners and insights from data provides a greater understanding of the areas of strength and/or improvement within arrangements and practice
- Information is sought, analysed, shared, and broken down by protected characteristics to facilitate more accurate and timely decision-making for children and families, and to understand outcomes for different communities of children
- There is effective collection, sharing and analysis of data, enables early identification of new safeguarding risks, issues, emerging threats, and joined-up responses across relevant agencies
- Senior leaders promote and embed a learning culture which supports local services to become more reflective and implement changes to practice, and have a good knowledge and understanding about the quality of local practice and its impact on children and families.

The past year has been a period of positive change and we'd like to thank everyone involved in making those changes happen. We would also like to thank all partners and practitioners for the work they do each day to support and safeguard children, young people and their families.

Lead
Safeguarding
Partners



Graham Farrant,
CEO, BCP Council



Patricia Miller, CEO,
NHS Dorset ICB



Amanda Pearson, Chief
Constable, Dorset
Police

Delegated
Safeguarding
Partners



Cathi Hadley,
Director Children's
Services, BCP



Pam O'Shea, Chief
Nurse, NHS Dorset
ICB



Mark Callaghan, Assis-
tant Chief Constable,
Dorset Police



Implementation of the BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership

The Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Safeguarding Children Partnership implementation has developed out of the previous pan-Dorset safeguarding children partnership arrangements which allowed for continuity of business whilst also providing an opportunity to scope what was needed for the local area. We have ensured that both strategic needs and enablement of line of sight to operational practice and standards are reflected in our structure.

The main objective of the partnership arrangements is to gain assurance that the local safeguarding arrangements are working effectively; both as individual organisations and collectively in partnership, to support and safeguard children in our area.

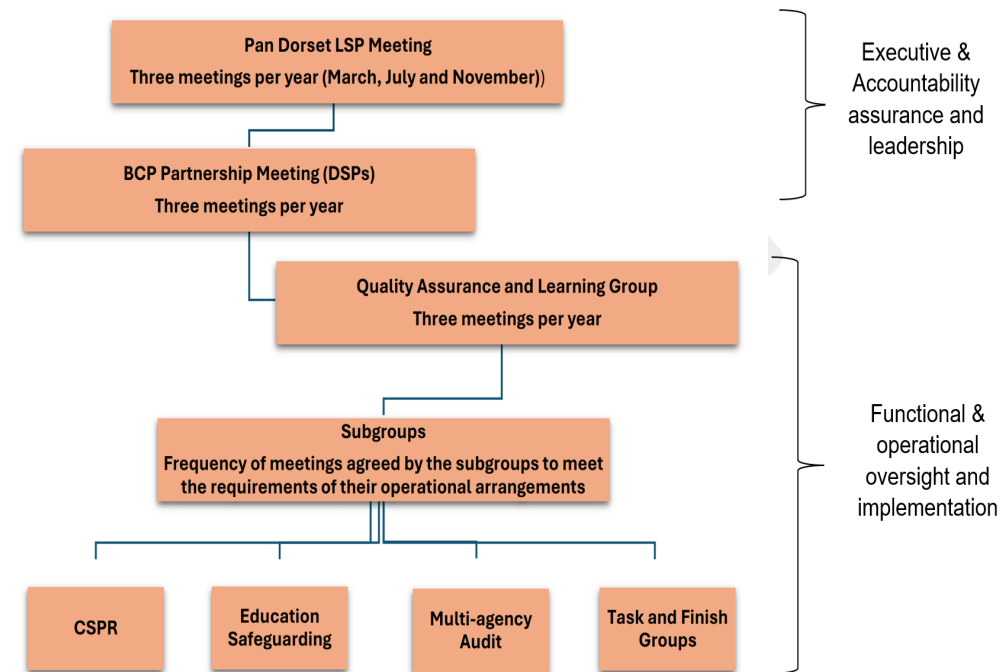
Each group has a clear purpose and terms of reference which enable us to collaborate, scrutinise, assure and drive forward improvements: details can be seen in the published multi-agency safeguarding arrangements [here](#). A focus on the identified priority areas and securing evidence of impact on the lives of children and young people using facilitative discussion and partnership insights and data is central to the work of each group.

Executive and accountability assurance and leadership

The lead safeguarding partners (LSP)

The 'Pan-Dorset' LSP meeting, brings together the executive leaders of the statutory safeguarding agencies: BCP Council, Dorset Police and NHS ICB Dorset (the latter two cover both Dorset and BCP areas). They are responsible for holding each other and their own agencies to account on safeguarding children matters and the discharge of their statutory duties. The LSP provides highest-level leadership focussing on system level effectiveness performance and demonstrating a commitment to strong partnership relationships, policy and resourcing.

Our structure and operational arrangements





The Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSP)

The DSP are appointed by the Lead Safeguarding Partners, to represent and speak on behalf of their agency and can hold their agency to account, the DSPs are -

- BCP Council, Director of Children's Services
- NHS Dorset, Integrated Care Board, Chief Nurse
- Dorset Police, Assistant Chief Constable

The BCP DSP Partnership Meeting 24/25

The BCP DSP convenes the delegated partners plus senior representative of the education sector and the relevant agencies. Accountability for the performance of the safeguarding arrangements remains with the DSPs but with partners shared responsibility for the delivery and monitoring of the effectiveness of our local arrangements sits with this group. This is achieved with -

- Setting the priorities, agreeing core policy and procedures (in line with published arrangements)
- Promote and enable close partnership engagement with the education sector and other agencies
- Ensure good information and data sharing facilitates high quality analysis of local needs and emerging trends
- Ensure delivery of high-quality local reviews, including rapid reviews
- Enable provision of scrutiny and assurance activity, including independent scrutiny and local multi-agency audit
- Provide safeguarding training and dissemination of learning and key messages – both at organisation level and through multi-agency training
- Promote and enable the voice of children and their families, and practitioners about their experiences and use this to continually assess and improve.

Delegated Safeguarding Partners Chairing arrangements 24/25

During 2024/25 (from July 2024), the DSP was chaired by the BCP Council Director of Children's Services, Cathi Hadley.

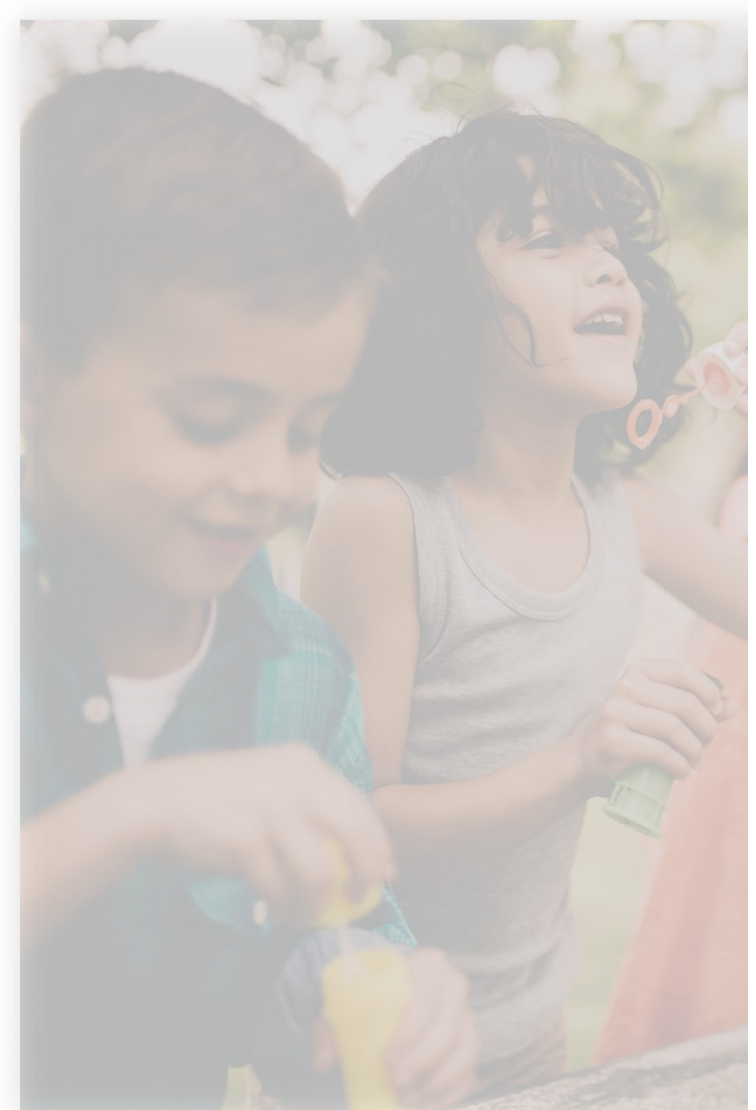
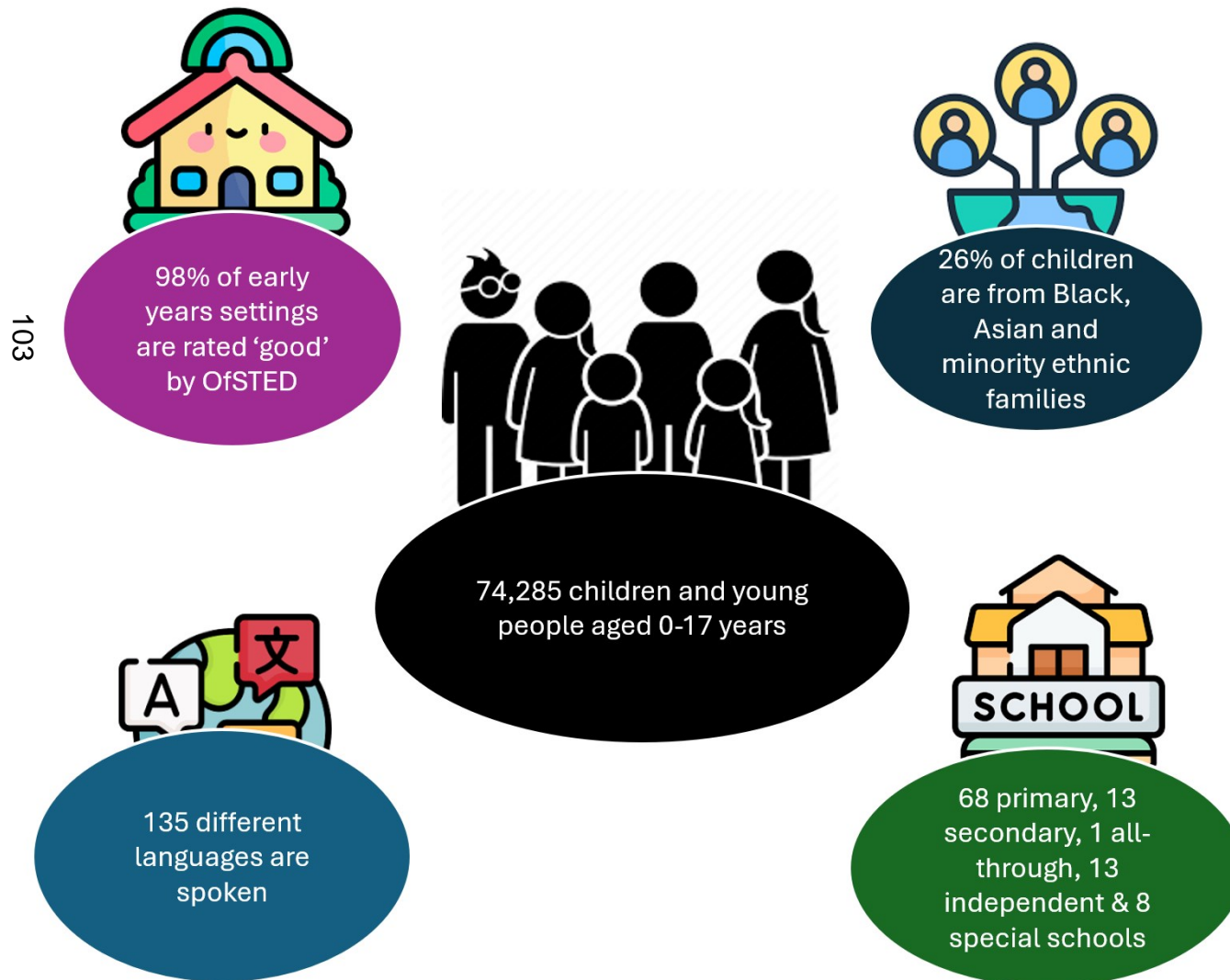
Functions of Partnership Chair role as set out in Working Together 2023

- To develop strategic links, support and hold to account all LSPs in fulfilling their safeguarding duties for children.
- Ensure that local arrangements are designed to work collaboratively and effectively by encouraging and supporting the development of partnership working between the LSPs, DSPs, independent scrutiny role and Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements sub-groups.
- Chair the meetings of the DSPs, including any additional meetings convened as a response to specific and exceptional circumstances, with the help of the business manager and independent scrutiny role.
- Offer appropriate challenge to ensure that the partners are accountable, and that the local arrangements operate effectively.



Children and young people in BCP area

In Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole -





Children and young people in BCP area

Areas of deprivation

While the BCP area is sometimes seen as a prosperous area, wealth is not evenly spread, and significant inequalities and pockets of deprivation exist. Given the strong association between deprivation and poorer outcomes, it is important to understand where these neighbourhoods lie to target services and resources effectively.

5,350 children and young people aged 0-25 in BCP (5% of the population) live in the 10% most deprived areas in England.

This increases to 15,035 (13%) when we look at the number living in the 20% most deprived areas.

Deprivation categories :

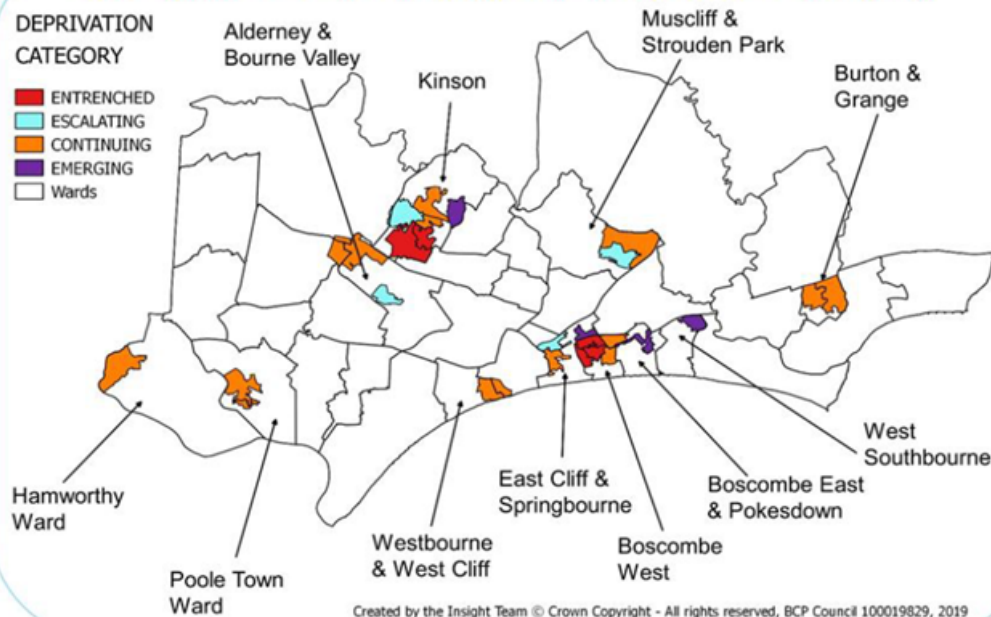
'ENTRENCHED' areas of deprivation are LSOAs whose ranking has remained in the most deprived 10% nationally, over both time periods 2015 and 2019.

'ESCALATING' areas of deprivation are LSOAs whose ranking has deteriorated and moved them into the most deprived 10% in 2019.

'CONTINUING' areas of deprivation are LSOAs in the most deprived 11-20% nationally in 2019.

'EMERGING' areas of deprivation are LSOAs whose ranking has moved them into the most deprived 11-20% during 2019.

LSOAs in the BCP area within the most deprived 20% nationally



25.2% live in poverty
(after housing costs are deducted)

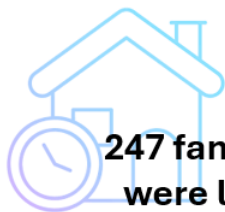


20% are eligible for free school meals



safeguarding needs

When children, young people and their families need help and support, in the period April 2024 to March 25, what we know that:



247 families / 564 children
were living in temporary
accommodation



25,426 contacts made to
children's social care, 14%
were referred for further
social work help



95% of assessments carried
out by children's services
were in line with statutory
time scales



105

4,000 children needed
an Education, Health
and Care Plan

There were 2,370 (3.2%)
of children had a social
worker



Around 300 children had a
Child in Need Plan and 494
had a Child Protection Plan



Ambulance or other emergency
contacts made to the MASH¹ on
about 2,000 occasions, with
about 8% referred for further
social work



Of the 721 cases were heard at
MARAC², 466 had children
linked to those cases (65%)
Of 5309 domestic abuse flagged
crimes, 73 were 16 years old
and 86 were 17 years old



561 were Children in Care³,
with about 800 entitled to
'care leaver' support
services

1. MASH—Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, a team of social workers, police officers and health professionals working together to decide on help needed for a child, young person and their families
2. MARAC—multi-agency risk assessment conference, a specialist panel to hear cases of domestic abuse and how to keep victims safe
3. A child in care means that a child is not living with their family, but might, for example live with a foster family and the local authority is responsible for the standard of their care



Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub - Core Data

During this reporting period, safeguarding referrals submitted to MASH shows a continued rate of need and are within expected levels across the different sectors.

The December 2024 [OfSTED inspection of the BCP area](#) MASH, noted: “*The MASH prioritises its response to new contacts and referrals effectively, ensuring prompt triage and matching most families to appropriate services. Consent to gather more information is sought from families and dispensed with only when necessary. Managers sign off contacts after ensuring a comprehensive triage is completed and provide thorough and timely review following triage. Thresholds are well understood and consistently applied. As a result, appropriate decisions are made about the right services to support children, at the right level*”.

Indicator	Area	2021/22 Q4	2024/25 Q1	2024/25 Q2	2024/25 Q3	2024/25 Q4	National	South West	Good / Outstanding
Rate of children in need (CIN)	BCP	387.3	345.3	332.6	331.8	318.8	342.7	311.9	376.4
Rate of children with child protection plans (CPP)	BCP	50.9	65.8	64.3	66.1	66.5	43.2	40.2	43.6
Rate of children in care (CIC)	BCP	65.2	72.7	72.8	76.1	75.5	71.0	63.0	71.3
Rate of referrals to CSC	BCP	172.0	113.9	128.0	135.7	107.8	136.1	123.9	139.9
Police (percentage of total volume)	BCP	22.9%	23.9%	29.0%	28.7%	24.2%	28.8%	25.9%	29.1%
Schools (percentage of total volume)	BCP	26.0%	28.6%	23.1%	27.8%	28.5%	20.1%	22.3%	20.0%
Health Services (percentage of total volume)	BCP	18.7%	16.0%	15.7%	11.9%	14.5%	14.4%	13.6%	14.3%
Individuals (percentage of total volume)	BCP	8.7%	7.6%	7.7%	9.3%	9.5%	8.3%	9.7%	7.9%
Rate section 47 investigations completed	BCP	68.8	46.2	59.5	80.2	66.6	47.9	44.0	49.6
Percentage of second or subsequent child protection plans	BCP	20.4%	19.2%	20.1%	21.8%	34.2%	23.6%	24.3%	22.7%
Percentage of CIC who are UASCs	BCP	11.4%	7.6%	7.8%	8.3%	7.0%	9.0%	9.0%	11.0%
Number of Referrals to LADO	BCP	31	177	127	163	188			

Where children’s needs require a child protection plan, the inspection noted: “*Child protection investigations are comprehensive, and reports for conferences are detailed, presenting strengths and risks, and recommending appropriate, necessary actions. Conferences are well attended.*”

As a core means of protecting children in most need of protection it is essential that the multi-agency network around the child is well engaged. For example: during 24/25 Dorset Police report

- Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT) resources are now aligned along local authority boundaries in order to allow more effective partnership working
- Increased the skill levels in the MASH staff in order to be able to respond to high demand within the different demands such as Police Protection Notices, strategy meetings and case conferences
- With 100% report submission compliance for initial child protection conferences.



Our partnership priorities 2024/25

Priority

1

Violence and exploitation experienced by children and young people : including

A) Sexual violence and abuse, online abuse and exploitation **B)** Domestic violence and abuse **C)** Physical violence and knife crime

Priority

2

Children's mental health and emotional well-being

Priority

3

Child neglect



Our partnership priorities 2024/25

It was agreed that the safeguarding priorities would stay the same during the transition from the previous pan-Dorset safeguarding partnership to the new BCP SCP. Our priorities will be reviewed in Autumn 2025.

Review of our progress

- During this period, the level of partnership working across these priority areas shows a good level of collaborative working at both strategic and operational areas
- The progress on these priorities demonstrates how core policy and practice areas have been reviewed and developed. This report acknowledges that this is an essential step towards improving the effectiveness of partnership working and achieving consistency and quality of practice across multi-agency working
- Raising awareness of these priority safeguarding areas through regular communication and dissemination, as well as learning continues to be prioritised – both within each of the three statutory partners but also at multi-agency level
- There is also good use of internal review/audit systems to check the standards being achieved – more information on multi-agency quality assurance is shown at chapters 6 and 7.

Areas to be developed

While the new partnership structures have enabled good partnership working, there are under-developed areas such as:

- Achieving evidence of impact – this report acknowledges that the evidence of impact is an area for the partnership to develop, including identifying the evidence which it has available across the partnership and the way we will then utilise this
- Data – similar to above, whilst core data related to priorities is being monitored, strengthening and systemising our data collection around the priorities and relevant associated data is likely to deepen our quality of analysis
- Feedback from children, families and professionals – it is evident from single agency activity that progress has been made to capture feedback from different interaction and engagement points with children and families and professionals, through this report we recognise the need to harness that system feedback to provide an aggregate analysis to help the partnership understand and evidence impact of its work.

Priority 1
Violence &
Exploitation

Priority 2
Children's
Mental Health
& Emotional

Priority 3
Child Neglect

Sexual violence and abuse, on-line abuse and exploitation — our work this year

- The Extra Familial Harm Strategy has been agreed
- A new MET (Missing Exploitation & Trafficked) panel has been created ensuring that we now know and agree as a multi-agency children at high risk of exploitation
- Established High Risk of Harm meetings, chaired by Head of Service for those high-risk young people
- Introduced a new exploitation tool, CERAF (Child Exploitation Risk Assessment Form) – which allows us to identify and measure risk to children of all types of exploitation, but also of any change and impact on the child whilst we are working with them
- The MET (Missing, Exploited & Trafficked) multi-agency panel enables information to be shared in relation to exploitation—though violence and knife crime sits within the Community Safety partnership
- We have used Turnaround programme funding to employ a worker into the early help space and delivered work within the YJS space to work with our young people early when they begin to become involved with criminality
- A new Harmful Sexual Behaviour Framework has been developed in consultation with local education partners and all safeguarding partners, this work has been led by the BCP Community Safety Partnership
- A new Public Protection Notice form (Police generated to share safeguarding concerns about a child) contains a mandatory voice of the child section which ensures officers/staff completing the form obtain this
- University Hospital Dorset are active partners at the MET Panel, flag high risk children at hospital system and have driven forward use of CERAF tool for use
- Dorset Police, Paedophile Online Investigation Team (POLIT) team review all referrals regarding on-line abuse to ensure safeguarding advice is required and the appropriate action taken
- Dorset Police participates with Op Hydrant the national programme that supports child protection and abuse investigation issues and is engaging with the national recommendations around group organised CSE.

What has been the impact ?

- Children's social care has driven forward the partnership approach to improve the understanding of the level of risk our CYP are at from Extra Familial harm.
- Valuable time was spent not only creating the MET (Missing Exploitation & Trafficked) panel and ensuring we know our children well, but also developing out IT systems to cater for this- the new Exploitation tool (CERAF) took a considerable period to be added to MOSAIC (child recording system).
- Once achieved training was held with partners in relation to the new tool to achieve consistency of practice.
- We have also ensured National Referral Mechanism is within the process, and this has enabled a much better response and identification of risks of exploitation.
- There is focus around our unaccompanied asylum seeking young people potential trafficking and exploitation, ensuring the new tool is completed to help consider and identify any concerns.
- Active learning events were held in partnership and attended by the children's services workforce as part of Missing Exploited & Trafficked Children month in March
- Flagged children at Hospital promotes early response and information sharing.

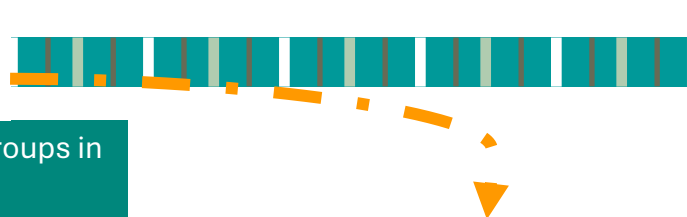
Domestic violence and abuse - our work this year

- Children's social care continues to participate and be a partner in all subgroups in relation to the Community Safety partnership.
- Domestic abuse training to all frontline police staff has included the importance of capturing the voice of the child and their wider safeguarding needs.
- Domestic abuse Scrutiny Panels review our response to domestic abuse and the Force is also a member of a Wessex domestic abuse Joint Interoperability Group with the CPS to identify good practice and areas for improvement.
- Op Encompass is now well established and is a crucial tool in alerting schools when additional support may be needed for a student
- At University Hospital Dorset, Paragon DA Advocates help support people affected by domestic abuse

110

Physical violence and knife crime - our work this year

- The Dorset Police Safeguarding Hubs incorporate knife crime and physical violence when considering exploited children. Those identified as being high-risk will be 'managed' in conjunction with the local authorities.
- A community safety partner sits on the BCP SCP delegated safeguarding partner meeting and there are close working relationships with the community safety partnership
- University Hospital Dorset contributed to the Dorset Knife Crime Awareness Campaign: **The true impact of knife crime**



**Priority 1
Violence &
Exploitation**

What has been the impact so far...

- The partnership working between children's social care and the community safety partnership has facilitated an increasing culture of challenge including the raising concerns about MARAC and the impact it makes, as well as process for re-referring (this is particularly low in BCP, but we also know we do not have a consistent approach to re-refer, as a partnership). As a result, this work will now be reviewed within the Community Safety Partnership.
- Dorset police have become more effective at using and enforcing bail conditions, civil orders and Domestic Violence Protection Notice in order to lessen the emotional impact of domestic abuse on children within the household.
- In 2024 142 requests were made under Sarah's Law legislation
- Hospital based DA advocates supported families with child victims of DA (53%), 5% of families included an unborn child and 1% involved older young people experiencing domestic abuse

What has been the impact so far...

- This approach driven forward by policing partners, will help all partners identify and understand the safeguarding needs of children including those initial presented as offenders. More work will be developed to assess the impact



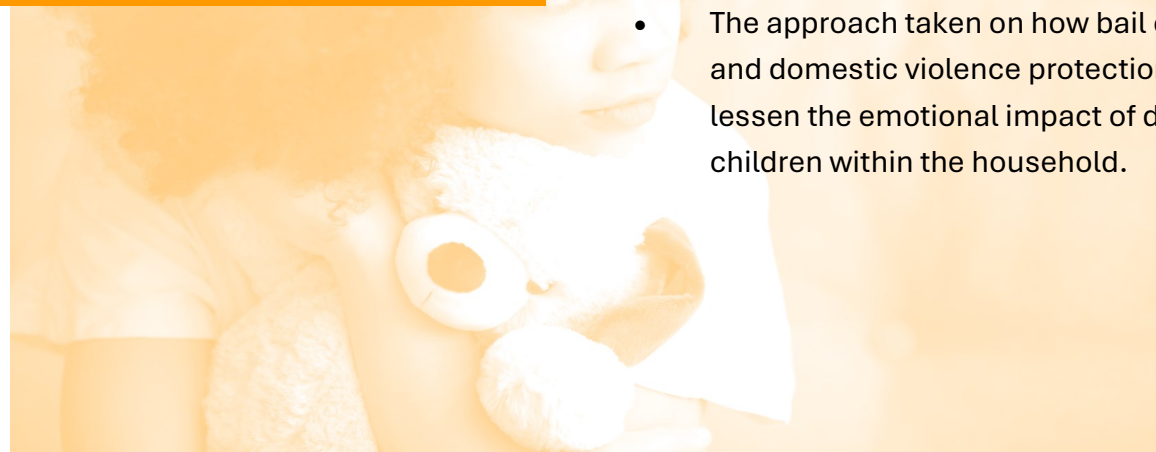
Priority 2
Children's
Mental Health &
Emotional
Wellbeing

Children's Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing — our work this year

- Children's Social care are currently working alongside NHS colleagues in relation to MH services and considering a holistic approach within Early Help initially.
- Dorset Police seek to minimise the occasions young people are arrested and taken to a custody environment and will use voluntary attendance where possible.
- The Force has kept safeguarding children central in how it uses bail conditions, civil orders and Domestic Violence Protection Notices .
- Dorset Police monitors the use of Police Protection Orders to ensure officers are making use of the power and using it appropriately and liaising with out of hours/ children's social care when used.
- Dorset Health Care University Trust is fully involved with the two commissioner led transformation programmes - *Your Mind Your Say* (Children Young People and Families Mental Health) transformation. And the *Neuro Developmental - All-Age Autism Review*.

What has been the impact

- Children's social care work with NHS colleagues has directly shaped The Trauma Informed learning programme is underway as part of the Children's Services Practice Framework.
- The police approach taken to minimise the occasions children and young people means that - if arrested, there is an increased focus to ensure they are dealt with quickly and effectively and will be screened for achieving a 'reachable moment'.
- The health provision within the BCP MASH continues to be provided to ensure an informed response to CYP mental health concerns is provided
- The approach taken on how bail conditions, civil orders and domestic violence protection notices are used helps lessen the emotional impact of domestic abuse on children within the household.





Priority 3 Child Neglect

Child Neglect — our work this year

- Independent scrutiny was completed with recommendations used to shape the neglect strategy
- The partnership agreed its child neglect strategy identifying objectives for the partnership to focus on
- The partnership held its first annual safeguarding conference on child neglect
- A focussed project group undertook a review of neglect toolkit with the aim of making this more accessible and usable for practitioners alongside families, as well as strengthening the evidence-based elements.
- A partnership neglect task and find group has been established to take the objectives forward.
- Training has been provided to police officers and police staff to inform them of what they should be looking for when in a house or engaging with young people
- Allocation of neglect cases will be discussed at the Force Tasking meeting to ensure appropriate ownership
- University Hospital Dorset host the Child Protection team, the team are involved with strategy meetings where child protection medicals are considered.

What has been the impact so far...

- A range of partners attended the neglect conference helping to raise awareness of child neglect
- Following the review of the neglect toolkit the partnership is more informed on the steps to take to introduce a partnership neglect screening tool and a neglect assessment tool.
- Dorset Police took part in the Neglect Scrutiny Panel and is now implementing the learning identified which included greater professional curiosity and helps inform allocation of cases
- Children's social care are much stronger in recognising risks within safeguarding, as outlined within the ILACs.
- Within Dorset Health Care an advice line for staff within the Trust supports early help and prevention




Safeguarding partners improvement and progress

The BCP SCP can report on how each of the three statutory safeguarding partners has improved their understanding and approach to safeguarding children:

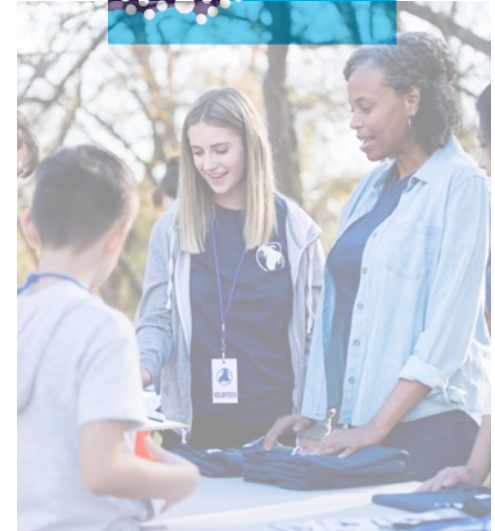
BCP Council Children's Services

Achieved 'good' from Ofsted reflecting the improvements made for outcomes for children and showing improvement in practice. We now write to the child, and our performance data is strong.

There were many positives identified within the ILACs report (published [January 2025](#)) that rated Children's Services as 'good' including safeguarding children, management oversight, and the care we show our children. Young carers and Reunification were particularly highlighted, and we know a number of things we are doing are innovative. Writing to the child was viewed positively as Ofsted could see the real difference this  made and ensured our children remain at the forefront of our thoughts and practice.

We have also:

- Established strong foundation for Early Help and partnership working, including early help strategy, Early Help Strategic Partnership, and early help assessments strengthening our community response to needs and support, as well as creating clear pathways
- We have actively participated in the BCP Community Safety Partnership, maintaining our role as lead over children's safeguarding but partnering with other work that impacts on the community and bringing curiosity around the impact we make
- We have used Turnaround programme funding to employ a worker into the early help space and delivered work within the YJS space to work with our young people early when they begin to become involved with criminality.





- **NHS Dorset Integrated Care Board**
- **Dorset Health Care University NHS Foundation Trust (DHC)**
- **University Hospital Dorset (UHD)**

NHS frontline staff, working in a wide range of professions across a wide range of organisations, play a critical role in safeguarding children and young people.

NHS Dorset Integrated Care Board is a statutory partner of the partnership. During the year, NHS Dorset continued to collaborate with partners and NHS providers to ensure that local multi-agency procedures protect children and young people from harm. NHS Dorset continued to oversee the governance arrangements for the NHS provider organisation in BCP. Safeguarding professionals at NHS Dorset chaired several Rapid Reviews and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs) during the year, helping to ensure learning reached frontline staff. Within NHS Dorset, governance of safeguarding continued to be monitored through a Safeguarding Assurance Group which reports to the Chief Nursing Officer.

Primary care GP services are provided through a range of GP practices across BCP. A team of Named GPs at NHS Dorset support the safeguarding leads in the practices, providing training, supervision and information bulletins. During the year, the Named GPs contributed to the development of a new care pathway to ensure the optimum coordination of care between maternity and primary care services for families who lose a baby at a late stage of pregnancy.





University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust provides general and specialist hospital at three hospitals in Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch.

During the year, hospital staff continued to play an active role in multi-agency procedures to protect children and young people who were at risk of being missing, exploited or trafficked. The safeguarding team continued to collaborate with a third sector provider which provides domestic abuse advocacy to patients in the hospitals, ensuring that children exposed to domestic abuse in their families are safeguarded from harm.

During the year, the Named Doctor for Safeguarding contributed to a video campaign to raise awareness of the dangers of knife crime to school-aged children. University Hospitals Dorset continued to host a child protection team, contributing to strategy meetings about children and young people who were at risk of abuse or neglect and providing medicals where required.

The Named Midwife continued to work closely with local authority colleagues to ensure safeguarding risks to unborn children were recognised and addressed. During the year, the Named Doctor for Children in Care supported work to improve the timeliness of the delivery of health assessments for children coming into care.



Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust is the main provider of NHS mental health, learning disability and community-based physical health care services in BCP.

The safeguarding team at Dorset HealthCare is responsible for safeguarding children, adults, Prevent, Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and Mental Capacity Act (MCA) improvement work. During the year, Dorset HealthCare continued to provide the health function within the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

The Named Nurse for Safeguarding Children continued to lead collaboration with the partnership, ensuring the statutory functions of 'Working Together' were met. The safeguarding team at Dorset HealthCare continued to provide an internal advice line, providing staff with advice about safeguarding concerns, early help and prevention. Dorset HealthCare continued to participate in sub-groups of the partnership and in task and finish groups making improvements to local safeguarding procedures.

During the year, Dorset HealthCare contributed to commissioner-led transformation programmes in children, young people and family's mental health and a neuro-developmental all-age autism review.



Dorset Police

A force review, supported by the HMICFRS inspection highlighted that workloads for CAIT officers were very high. This supported the recruiting of additional staff which will improve the wellbeing of the existing team, allow us to respond to incidents in a timelier manner and improve the service we deliver to victims.

Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT) resources are now aligned along local authority boundaries in order to allow more effective partnership working and has continued to see high levels of demand and is therefore investing in additional staff (4 officers/staff)

Structures have aligned to Dorset Families First Pathfinder with regular monitoring in place. Dorset Police attend national Pathfinder meetings which illustrate the progress Dorset has been able to make compared to some areas. This learning will be applied to the BCP area also.

16

The Dorset Police PEEL inspection found the MASH to be effective and identified a need to increase the multiple-skill levels in the MASH staff in order to be able to respond to high demand such as Police Protection Notices, strategy meetings and case conferences.

Other areas of progress include:

- The Force has improved links between our Intelligence Bureau and High Harm unit to ensure reports received regarding concerning behaviours of individuals can be investigated. This follows learning from an investigation of physical and sexual abuse committed by a male who health had previously reported to the Police
- On average the MASH process 1200 Child Public Protection Notices a month, sharing this information to relevant partners to support safeguarding of children
- On average the MASH is collating 110 strategy discussions a month
- For each initial child protection conference (ICPC) that has taken place in this period, Dorset Police have ensured that a police report has been available at every ICPC.





The work of the safeguarding partnership sub-groups

During 24/25, the BCP SCP had the following principal sub-groups. Each of these groups worked around the partnership priorities (see above). It is important to also acknowledge that each of these groups have had to take time to become established and therefore the outcome of their work may not yet be evidenced. Nonetheless, during this period of transition, partners demonstrated great commitment to prioritise safeguarding as demonstrated with their engagement in forming these groups and collaborating in the work.

The principal group is the

- Quality Assurance & Learning Group (QALG)

The following groups reporting to the QALG

- Child Safeguarding Practice Review Group
- Education sub-group
- Multi-agency audit sub-group
- Task and Finish Sub-Groups:
 - Neglect
 - Harmful Sexual Behaviour





Quality Assurance & Learning Group

The purpose of the Quality Assurance and Learning Group (QALG) is to act on behalf of the BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership to oversee, monitor and provide assurance on the effectiveness of the implementation and progress of the partnership multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and strategic priorities.

The membership of the group is established and has included a representative from the education sector.

The QALG scrutinises the activities undertaken by the other sub-groups, through progress reports that are reviewed at the 3 times yearly meetings. A quality assurance report including issues to escalate is submitted to each Delegated Safeguarding Partners meeting.

What has the group worked on?

During this reporting period, the group has ensured that the learning from the reviews has been shared across the partnership and is strengthening the processes to seek assurances of the impact of the learning for children, young people and their families.

The QALG scrutiny is supported by an agreed dataset which has prompted curious questions around practice that has led to further exploration and assurance from partners, such as, the reasons for the high number of child protection registrations.

The group has been active in shaping the multi-agency learning offer, ensuring it reflects the current priorities and is accessed by partners.





Quality Assurance & Learning Group continued

How the partnership benefits from single agency audit/review activity

Children's Services have continued to build on Practice Weeks.

These highlight and explore key lines of enquiry using a variety of quality assurance methodologies as well as observations of practice, feedback from experts by lived experience and lunch and learn sessions. They are also increasingly including multi-agency partners. Being involved in quality assurance activity for a group of practitioners that might not ordinarily undertake systematic quality assurance supports professional CPD – which has the potential to influence the overall stability and confidence of the local workforce. Within these 12 months period we have held practice weeks within the following service areas: MASH and assessment, PLO and Court, Kinship Care, Children with Disabilities and the Targeted Support Service.

Alongside this activity, focused reviews are a comprehensive overview of practice within a particular area of interest. Learning from these reviews has informed process, policy and practice. Within this year focussed reviews have been delivered regarding: Children in care, Assessment and planning, Care Experience Young people (accommodation and extended offer).

Dorset police Investigative Standards Team have been commissioned to complete audited reviews of crimes, stop search forms, PPN's and other material generated in dealing with young people.

The reviews include whether the voice of the child has been captured.

Future direction for the group:

Further work is in progress to ensure that

- Data is consistently provided by partners, systematically reviewed alongside thorough and pertinent analysis to ensure that the QALG can fulfil its scrutiny and assurance functions
- The QALG will implement a new multi-agency quality assurance framework to provide guidance and direction to the work of the group, embedding the child-centred focus it has developed and strengthen evidence of impact and improvement; including how child and family feedback shapes the work of the partnership
- It will improve its multi-agency view on communications and engagement activity with children and families and frontline professionals to ensure it has a good reach to the frontline and routes for system feedback
- The group will review its role in Joint Thematic Area Inspection readiness – to ensure the partnership is well prepared should a JTAI take place, this will be done through improving the overall co-ordination of information held and regular reporting.



Child Safeguarding Practice Review Group

The purpose of the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Group (CSPRG) is to act on behalf of the BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership (the Partnership) in fulfilling its statutory responsibility to identify improvements that can be made to safeguard and promote the welfare of children through local child safeguarding practice reviews (CSPR).

This group is chaired by NHS Dorset (ICB), Designated Nurse and reports to the quality assurance group where there is scrutiny around progress of actions from any Rapid Reviews or CSPRs undertaken.

The chair provides a quarterly report highlighting positives and challenges to progressing and learning or actions. The panel is well established, and this space provides an opportunity to explore ideas and ensure learning from national reviews or wider learning from external reviews are considered in the context of BCP.

An example of this is the CSPR subgroup sought assurance from partners that the learning from the Theo review is embedded in practice in BCP. Assurance statements were sought from partners to ensure this.

What has the group worked on?

During this period the following activity related to safeguarding reviews has taken place:

- 0 CSPR commissioned
- 1 child safeguarding report was published
- 1 rapid review was completed
- 3 local reviews took place or were finalised.

Each review has identified learning points which are disseminated across the partnership and included within the multi-agency safeguarding training offer: as both specific learning events and woven into core training content. Equally learning from national reviews is disseminated



What are the future steps

- Review the SPR process ensuring it is robust and enables effective decision making around reviews, that it links well with other relevant processes such as the CDOP
- Review and update the means of assuring ourselves that learning has been applied to practice with the development and introduction of an assurance tool. This will need to be developed in partnership for each partner to complete, reflect on what they have done with aggregate insights to assess overall impact.

Child Safeguarding Practice Review Group



Reviews undertaken in this reporting period

CSPR – “Daniel & Sarah” - This review concerned the death and injuries sustained to a 7 weeks old baby and older injuries sustained by sibling ‘Sarah’ aged under two at the time of ‘Daniels’ death.

- As a result of the CSPR Daniel and Sarah, CSPR, NHS Dorset has led on implementing ICON across the NHS and introduced to children’s social care to ensure that parents and carers receive consistent messages regarding responding to crying babies.
- NHS Dorset has led on revising the Non-Mobile Baby and child protocol and the unborn baby protocol
- The review’s recommendations have been included within the neglect task and finish group; specifically relating recognition of neglect and tools to assess child neglect.

Learning from this review has been further enhanced by the completion of a multi-agency baby audit with particular focus on the presentation of non-mobile babies at emergency departments and the quality of partnership working. Learning has also been deepened through a multi-agency physical abuse audit and learning events.

The report and 7 point briefing were published.

⇒ [DANIEL-AND-SARAH-FINAL-REPORT-JULY-2024.pdf](#)

⇒ [Daniel & Sarah 7minute briefing](#)

Rapid Review – Child “Alex”

This review involved the online grooming of a (then) 13-year-old child and the subsequent sexual and physical abuse suffered by the victim by a paedophile. The report to the national safeguarding panel was submitted and the panel agreed that no CSPR was required.

Learning and recommendations have been taken forward and we will seek further assurance statements from all agencies involved to assess how the learning has been applied. Additionally

- The CSPR group will co-ordinate assurance statement responses from agencies involved and monitor progress
- The partnership has introduced a new and revised online safety training package.





Child Safeguarding Practice Review Group

Local reviews

During this reporting period, two children were referred to the child safeguarding practice review group, neither case met the requirement to issue a serious incident notification but the partnership believed there was learning to be shared. Local reviews are carried out to the same stand as child safeguarding reviews but might apply different methodologies.

Child 1,

This review concerned a child who had experienced extreme tooth decay and deterioration with the cause linked to the child's severe sensory needs. A seven-minute briefing has been prepared and a learning programme is to be developed for delivery during the next reporting period.



Young Person 2,

This review concerned a care leaver who had turned 18 prior to their death by suicide.

The local review was completed and identified a number of learning themes around access and assessment of supported housing for care leavers, quality of plans to enable greater impact for the young person, understanding needs of older children transitioning to adult safeguarding services and impact of domestic abuse as a factor for this young person suicide.

A domestic abuse related death review which is being led by a neighbouring community safety partnership. Relevant actions are in progress and learning programme to be developed.

“Amy”

This review concerned the death by suicide of an older young person who was a care leaver and young parent whose children were subject to child protection plans.

The local review was completed under the previous partnership arrangements with the learning finalised during this reporting period.

Sadly, 'Amy' was also the victim of domestic abuse and a domestic abuse related death review has been commissioned by the BCP community safety partnership. Relevant actions are in progress and learning programme to be developed.

⇒ **'Amy' 7-point briefing**



Child Safeguarding Practice Review Group



Learning themes from reviews

Each case will identify learning for the partnership. Here we look at the common themes from the reviews conducted during this reporting period. We use these insights to plan future training, inform the partnerships strategic priorities and address system issues through improvement in policy or procedure.

	Transitional Safeguarding & care leaver	Extra Familial Harm incl. online	Physical abuse or violence	Neglect	Late identification of support needs incl. SEND	Lack of Trauma informed practice	Poor information / analysis sharing	Lack of joint working	Domestic Abuse and/ or sexual violence or exploitation victim	Long term mental health needs	Poor understanding of the lived experience of the child/young person
123											
“Daniel & Sarah”											
“Alex”											
Child 1											
Young Person 2											
“Amy”											





Multi-Agency Audit Group

Multi-agency practice audits are central to the BCP SCP quality assurance and learning framework for supporting continuous improvement in safeguarding practice and systems. This group co-ordinates multi-agency audits arising from BCP Partnership strategic priorities, local and national learning reviews.

What has the group worked on?

During this period, the emphasis has been to:

- establish the group, agree terms of reference and membership
- draft a multi-agency audit programme
- finalise the learning from the multi-agency baby audit
- undertake a multi-agency audit on physical abuse (Under11 years old)
- change of chair to BCP Council Children's Services Principal Social Worker – which came into effect in August 2024.

What are the future steps

- Key learning has been identified about the audit process itself, including understanding the capacity of partners involved and the number of cases available to review and access to agency information - the group will seek to apply this learning to improve future multi-agency audits
- Ensure that there is a range of activity to assess and test multi-agency practice such as practice learning events and observations
- Continually review the timetable for audit activity over the next 12 months to be responsive to need, capacity and priorities
- Assess options to digitise Section11 audit process and general audits to improve ways to secure learning insights at both organisation and aggregate levels to inform the system level needs of the partnership.

Education Sub-Group

In partnership with local education partners and providers, the BCP SCP and the Department for Education, a development session was held to develop the aims and ambitions for the education sub-group. This session took place in summer 2024, with the first meeting held in November 2024 and as such the group is still to establish a full engagement and delivery programme which is being developed.

The purpose of the subgroup is to act on behalf of the BCP Partnership (the Partnership) to create an environment which enables local schools, (including independent schools and academy trusts), colleges, early years and other education and childcare providers to be fully engaged, involved and included in the Partnership multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. The group has a strategic purpose for contributing to the Partnership priorities and for ensuring the effectiveness of safeguarding practice and systems in education settings.

What has the group worked on?

- The development workshop brought together education sector leads to establish the local strategic needs and connection to the safeguarding partnership
- Terms of reference have been agreed and membership established
- Senior education representatives have been appointed as chair and deputy chair

What are the future steps

- Stabilise the group and establish its work plan aligned to KCSIE updates and locally identified needs as evidenced from reviews, data and audit returns
- Assess opportunities to improve S175 process and analysis.



Task & Finish Groups

Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)

NHS Dorset Integrated Care Board presented a paper, in January 2024, to inform the place-based delivery arms of the Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children's Partnership about the Harmful Sexual Behaviour progress. There was also qualitative feedback from schools and professionals working with children at a multi-agency sexual offences workshop and keeping our Young People Safer conference in Autumn/Winter 2023. BCP Safeguarding Children's Partnership continued with this work with a view to sharing the outputs with colleagues in Dorset.

What has the group worked on?

A multi-agency working group was formed in BCP to move the work on and to create a HSB framework that would provide a consistent approach on dealing with HSB, provide opportunities to keep children and young people from the criminal justice system where relevant and to provide schools and other groups working with young people support and guidance.

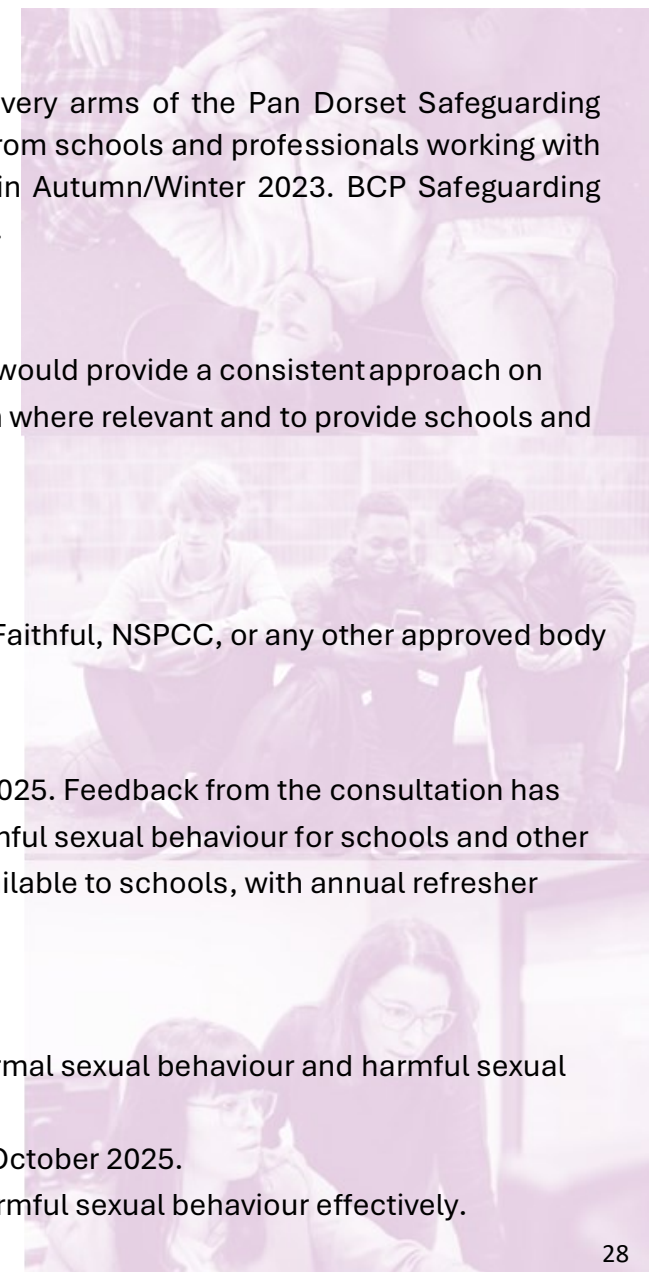
There were several aims of this work:

- The agreed definition to work from is recommended as Hackett's.
- Workforce training for all professionals working with Children and Young People, available from Lucy Faithful, NSPCC, or any other approved body that recognises Hackett's definition of HSB.
- An HSB framework and toolkit for professionals and parents/carers to be fully developed.

The framework has been developed and has been reviewed by educational providers at an event in March 2025. Feedback from the consultation has been used to refine the framework. The framework aims to provide a consistent approach to managing harmful sexual behaviour for schools and other settings working with young people. The framework will include a list of service providers and resources available to schools, with annual refresher training sessions planned.

Next steps

- Free training workshops are taking place in the summer months. Exploring the differences between normal sexual behaviour and harmful sexual behaviour, delivered by a local training provider.
- The framework is expected to be finalised and ready for implementation and circulation to schools by October 2025.
- The goal is to provide practical support and guidance to schools and other organisations to manage harmful sexual behaviour effectively.



Task & Finish Groups



Child Neglect

The Pan Dorset Neglect Scrutiny Report May 2024 suggested the following actions. A working group for each Partnership area should build on the positive work achieved through this scrutiny exercise. Develop a Neglect Strategy which adequately address the needs of children in the BCP area by formulating, and publishing, an action plan to accompany the revised Strategy. The Neglect Assessment Toolkit, assessment tools and associated guidance should be reviewed and rationalised to provide a clear set of documents that guide professionals about how to identify, assess and intervene with neglect.

What has the group worked on?

Following on from the BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership meeting in July 2024 it was agreed that a working group would be formed to review and update the neglect strategy and toolkit.

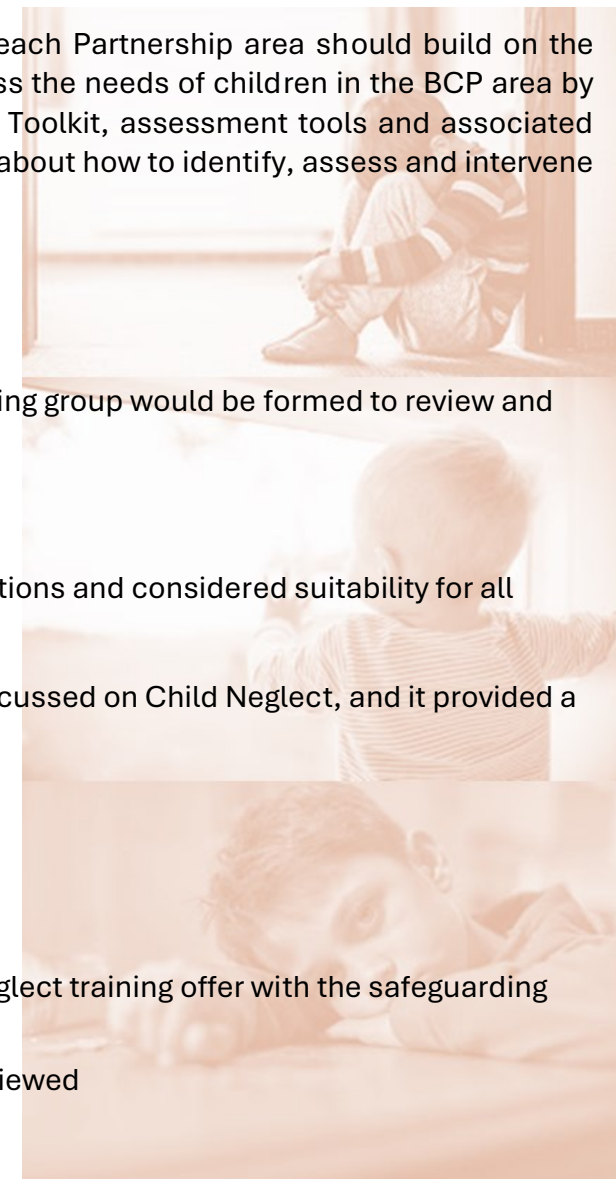
In December 2024 the [BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership Neglect Strategy](#) was agreed and published

A scoping exercise took place to research toolkits and screening tools; the working group reviewed these options and considered suitability for all multiagency professionals.

In March 2025 the annual BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership Conference took place, the conference focussed on Child Neglect, and it provided a multi-agency response to inform the Neglect Action plan for 2025 – 2027 which runs alongside the strategy

Next steps

- A proposal to select a neglect assessment tool and screening tool
- Toolkit /screening tool to be developed and agreed with the partnership and incorporated within the Neglect training offer with the safeguarding training team
- The strategy runs from March 2025 – March 2027 after which the implementation and impact will be reviewed





Independent scrutiny and assurance

This report acknowledges that because the emphasis of partnership activity has been on establishing the core structures to support our multi-agency safeguarding arrangements: including setting up new groups, terms of reference and programmes for the partnership – there has been a limited amount of multi-agency scrutiny and audit activity in this reporting period. Nonetheless the partnership has completed the following and has identified opportunities to improve.

Equally it is important to note that single agency safeguarding assurance activity has continued as usual.

Independent scrutiny – child neglect

Under auspices of the previous Pan-Dorset SCP child neglect had been identified as a priority area for the period 2023-2025.

Independent scrutiny of partnership work on child neglect was commissioned, with the final outcome applied to the BCP SCP work during this reporting period.

This was a significant piece of independent scrutiny, and it covered three primary areas:

- To examine the quality and effectiveness of the multi-agency response to child neglect when concerns have reached a threshold of actual, or likely, significant harm, and whether agencies are working together to identify and act on child neglect.
- To examine whether practitioners have the knowledge, confidence, and capacity to identify and act on neglect.
- To capture information which provides insights into children and families experiences of working with professionals, when neglect has been identified, and the impact in improving children's lives.

The methodology agreed included a focus on BCP area neglect performance data, engagement of professionals working with families in the BCP area and an audit of cases of children living in the BCP area.

Published in May 2024 the findings have been applied to our work in the following ways:

- Shaping the priorities and objectives of the BCP SCP Child Neglect Strategy (agreed in Dec 2024).
- Informing the commissioning of the multi-agency neglect training offer
- Driving the BCP SCP Neglect task and finish group's work plan.



Multi-agency audit physical abuse (children under 11 years old)

A multi-agency audit on the response to physical abuse in children under 11 years was completed.

This activity was in line with Priority 1 for the partnership and would reflect the learning raised because of the [Daniel and Sarah CSPR](#).

The aim of the audit was to gain further insight into practice across the multi-agency spectrum when physical abuse was the primary factor of concern for children under 11, providing additional insight into how policies, procedures and toolkits support multi-agency practitioners to provide effective and appropriate support to children and families.

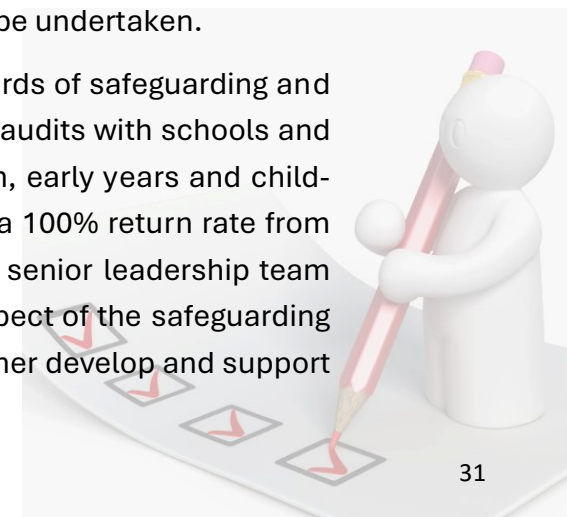
The outcomes from this audit have been disseminated to the partnership with a bitesize learning event as well a report sharing. This enabled not only for insights to be shared but also offers space for reflection with multi-agency colleagues and explore the importance of peer challenge and support. Future audits will

continue to apply this learning dissemination. 25/26 will see an increase in how independent scrutiny is employed to inform and assess the effectiveness of multi-agency practice and safeguarding arrangements. The partnership will further develop this approach in the next reporting period.

Section 11 and Section 175

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places a duty on certain organisations to assess the standard of their functions and services are discharged to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. During this reporting period, no Section 11 audit activity has been completed, however under the previous Pan-Dorset SCP, all three statutory partners completed Section 11 audit within the previous two years of this reporting period. Under the new partnership arrangements, a review of how Section 11 audit activity is completed with be undertaken.

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 sets the safeguarding duties of schools governing bodies to assess the standards of safeguarding and welfare of children within their organisation. BCP council safeguarding in education service co-ordinates Section 175 audits with schools and has secured high compliance rates for this activity. Education Safeguarding Advisers work extensively with education, early years and child-care settings. During this the service have improved the impact of the Education 175 audit process and we received a 100% return rate from schools. Advisers are in the process of analysing the 175 outcome for each school and visits to discuss this with the senior leadership team have started. The service are also now providing advice and guidance to the BCP Council Commissioning Team in respect of the safeguarding aspect of the Alternative Provider Framework and approval process. As noted above, the education sub-group will further develop and support the education sector to develop Section 175 activity and how the insights can be applied strategically.





Multi-agency safeguarding training

Pan-Dorset (covering BCP and Dorset council areas) training offers a core safeguarding training provision with focus on a multi-agency workforce accessed by a wide range of agencies. The administration and co-ordination of the training is paid by income generation. Our aim is to offer a full multi-agency experience to attendees which will build understanding of the distinct roles and frame of reference, ensuring closer working relationships with the child/ young Person at the centre.

The safeguarding training team is a trusted and dependable provider ensuring that organisations meet their safeguarding training requirements. Courses are commissioned through the Learning and Development Framework and meet the specific quality control and contract compliance.

Summary of the training offer 2024-2025

PDSCP Training offer	Number	£	
Safeguarding L2 Foundation	4 (1 on a Saturday)	£55.00	Mandatory
WT (Working Together) Initial	42 (2 on a Saturday)	£82.00	Mandatory
WT update (working Together)	50 (2 on a Saturday)	£55.00	Mandatory
Neglect	3	£82.00	Priority
Safer Recruitment	5	£82.00	Mandatory
Safer Recruitment update	4	£55.00	Mandatory
Managing Allegations	4	£55.00	Dorset Council
Online Safety	2	£55.00	Linked to YP
Missing Exploited Trafficked Children (MET)	3	£85.00	Mandatory
Child Exploitation Basic Awareness Covers IFSA/EFSA Intro for 24/25 programme	3	£55.00	Linked to CSPR
NEW TIP (trauma informed practice) Introduction	4	£55.00	T&F Group
NEW IFCSA Training programme of five course offer (1 & 5 - 2 courses. 2, 3 and 4 - 1 course)	7	£82.00/£55.00	Linked to CSPR
NEW DA	4	FREE	Linked to CSPR



Incorporated to the existing training offer:

When changes to local and national legislation or guidance is known, the information is shared to all relevant training providers to update their training content where required for example:

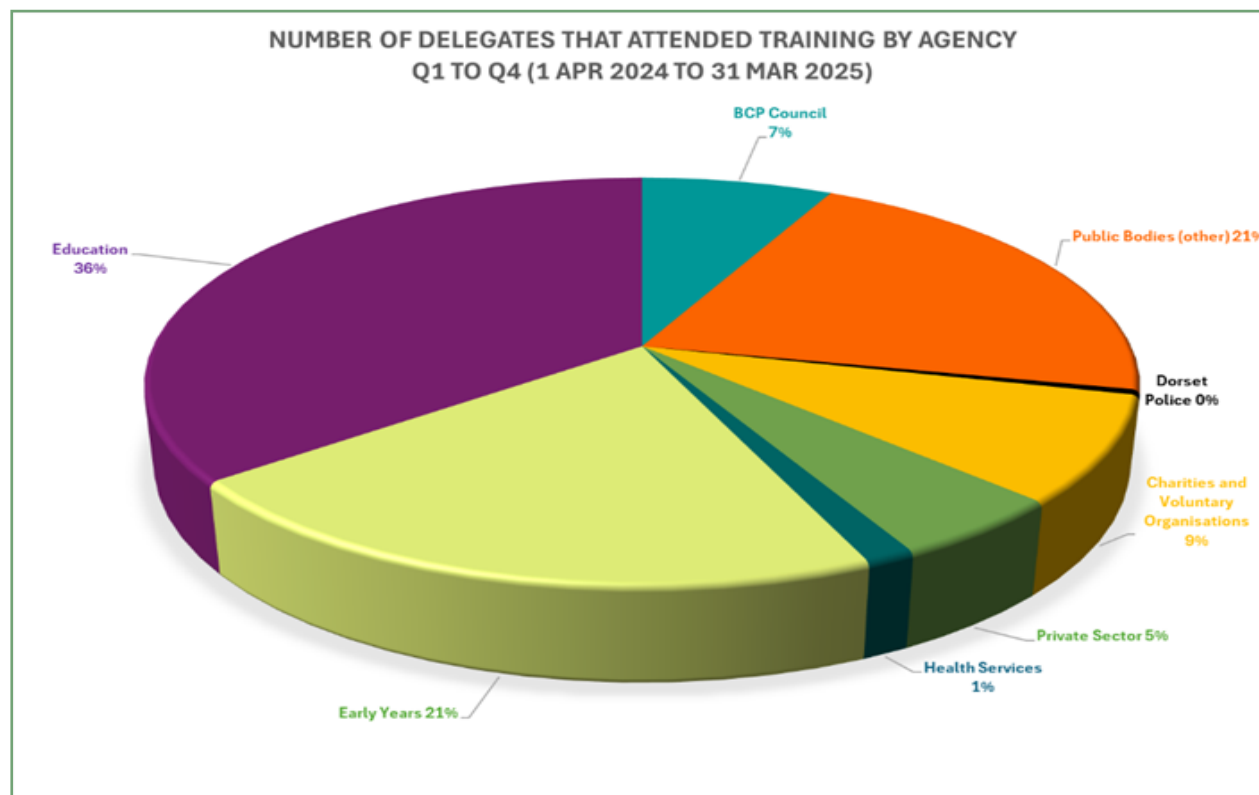
- 7-point briefing – Non-Mobile Babies
- Protocol and tool – Linked to the AS CSPR
- Neglect – Linked to Daniel & Sarah CSPR
- Working together 2023 – Changes to the Safeguarding Partnerships

Attendance

The following charts show the attendance by organisation or sector where known.

It should be noted that the multi-agency training offer is designed to complement all single agency and sector specific training.

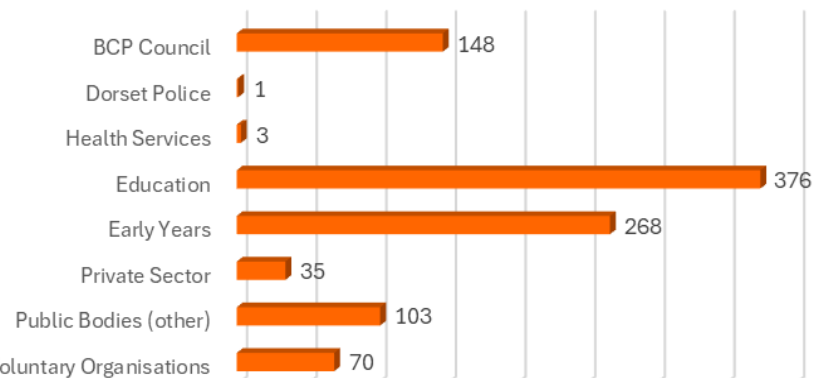
For example, each of the three accountable safeguarding partners have specific safeguarding training available to support the specialisms to roles and legislation required of them.





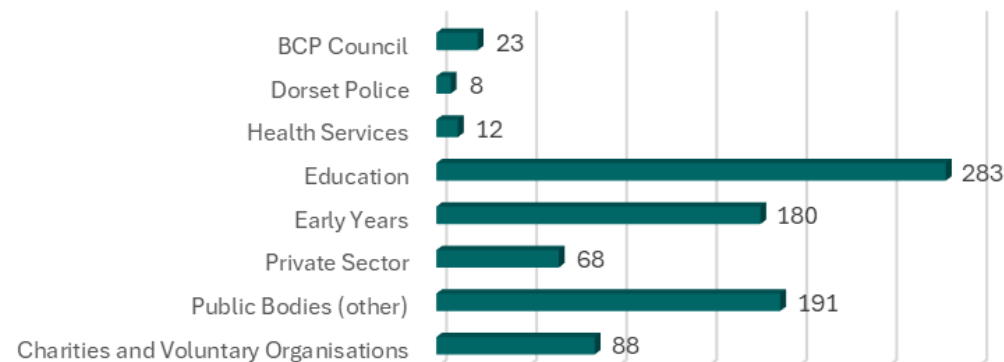
1. PDSCP - Update - Multi-Agency Working Together in Safeguarding (Level 3)

Number of attendees in 2024/25



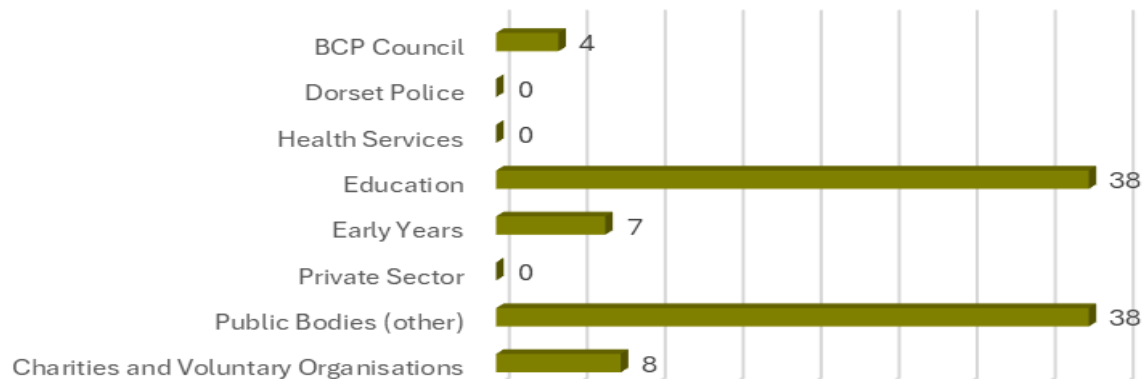
2. PDSCP - Multi-Agency Working Together in Safeguarding (Level 3)

Number of attendees in 2024/25



3. PDSCP - Safer Recruitment

Number of attendees in 2024/25





Three Month Impact Survey Summary

The use of three month impact survey has recently begun and is a useful way to track ways learning has been applied to practice, including confidence levels as well as knowledge gained.

Examples of how the learning has been applied is shown on the next page.

3 Month Impact Survey Results	
Total number of responses received for staff working in the BCP Council area:	
83	
Course Attended Around 3 Months Ago	Number of Delegates
Foundation in Safeguarding Children (former L2 course)	1
Introduction to Intrafamilial Child Sexual Abuse	2
Multi-Agency Working Together in Safeguarding	37
Safer Recruitment	1
Update - Multi-Agency Working Together in Safeguarding	42

Agency BCP Council Area	Number of Delegates
Charities and Voluntary Organisations	6
Early Years/Pre-School	14
Education	32
Local Authority	27
Police/Probationary Service	1
Private Sector	3
On the below scale how would you rate your confidence level in being able to apply what you learnt since attending this session, in your day-to-day role?	
Confident	37
Fairly Confident	10
Very Confident	36
On the below scale how would you rate your knowledge level in being able to apply what you learnt since attending this session, in your day-to-day role?	
Basic Knowledge	1
Extensive Knowledge	18
Fair Knowledge	6
Good Knowledge	58



Have you applied any changes in practice within your organisation since attending this training?

Yes	52
No	31

Examples of how the training has changed practice within the delegate's organisation:

We reviewed and updated our policy to ensure that it is in line with current legislation
When running Parenting Programmes I am more aware of what could be happening for the child in the family and some of the reasons for behaviour.
I have been more vigilant after attending the course and documented more concerns to our DSL.
Mindful of toolkits and applying them to evidence worries and strengths
Using the continuum of need for triaging concerns

Has your learning impacted the children, young people or the families you work with?

Yes	64
No	19

Examples of how the training has impacted the children, young people and/or the families the delegate works with:

For me, I am new to the area so having a good knowledge of the local agencies was very useful.
Learning about the continuum of need on the training has helped me recognise which support, agencies etc are needed to support the families I work with.
Having more knowledge has allowed me to support the students and have a much better understanding on how to support but also how to talk to them.
The update refresher course helps to remind you to keep policies and procedures up to date and to upskill staff continuously to safeguard children and families better.
Having more awareness means I can support in the best way I can and recognise potential issues in certain situations.



Are you using the toolkits?	
BCP Child Exploitation Toolkit	25
Neglect Toolkit	24
Domestic Abuse Toolkit	16
Working with Parents/Carers with Substance Mis- use Issues Toolkit	10
Mental Health Toolkit	15
None	33
Would you recommend this course to a colleague?	
Yes	83
No	0





Local Authority Designated Officer summary for 24/25

The BCP LADO service is responsible for managing allegations against adults who work with children.

In 2024/25 referrals significantly increased to 655 from 213 in 2023/24, with a 12% increase in the number of consultations also undertaken. There is stability in the situations where threshold is met, and allegation meetings are held which evidences a more confident and consistent service. The education sector remains the largest referrer to LADO, increasing year on year. Referrals from several agencies and cohorts have also increased in referrals year on year, such as NHS, early years, foster carers and police. This is partly attributable to increased awareness and training for partners as well as the improvements in the robustness and transparency of the LADO process within BCP Children's Services.

An increase in establishment to 2 permanent full-time LADOs has meant the service has been able to meet the rise in demand whilst providing a safe and good quality service. The improvements to the LADO referral process and case management system have continued to result in a safer and more robust way of working which partner agencies are familiar with. LADOs have good working relationships with partner agencies with advice and guidance given increasing from 21 (although under recorded) to 152 occasions in this last year. In August 2024, Islington, as an improvement partner to BCP local authority, undertook a thematic audit on the LADO service which concluded LADO work was safe and timely.

In June 2024, BCP's Education/Early Years Safeguarding Advisors (ESAs) moved to be overseen by the same Head of Service as the LADO team to align their work. This change has proved to be beneficial, strengthening the link between LADO, education and early years leading to stronger joined up working and information sharing. ESAs and LADOs attend DSL forums and Head Teacher briefings.





Child Death Overview Panel summary for 24/25

The child death overview panel is the joint responsibility of the local authority and the ICB covering that area. It is a multi-agency panel that reviews all deaths of children. For the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole area, there is a joint arrangement with Dorset and Somerset, with the Dorset Council hosted CDOP co-ordinator serving the BCP area.

- CDOP annual report to be published summer 2025 providing full details of the year's activity and statistics.
- Annual Report data will continue to provide local authority level comparative data which was introduced in 2023-2024.
- Successful learning event co-hosted with Somerset on 06 March 2025.
- The Pan Dorset Child Death Co-ordinator has settled well and providing support to Designated Doctors and the Panel.
- Review of strategic governance of the Pan Dorset and Somerset CDOP processes has commenced with the aim to review and highlight system opportunities, challenges and formalise future governance processes. This will progress further once new ICB structures has been formalised





Financial information

Under the previous Pan-Dorset safeguarding arrangements the budget was managed by Dorset Council on behalf of the BCP area. The budget for 24/25 shared here is a headline summary

Partner	Contribution 2024-2025 (£)
Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Council	80,800.00
NHS Dorset	37,892.50
Dorset Police	37,892.50
Dfe Working Together 2023 grant (carry over)	47,300.00
Total	203,885.00

Contact us:

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**BCP SAFEGUARDING
CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP**

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



Report subject	Children's Services Compliments and Complaints Annual Report 2024-25
Meeting date	15 September 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	To provide an update on the compliments, complaints and representations made to BCP Council about Children's Services during 2024-25.
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>1. The Committee agree that this report is published on the Council's website.</p>
Reason for recommendations	Local authorities must publish an annual report of its consideration of representations under their statutory responsibilities The Children Act (1989).
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Richard Burton, Portfolio Holder for Children & Young People, Education and Skills
Corporate Director	Cathi Hadley, Corporate Director, Children's Services
Report Authors	Teresa Salmon, Children Complaints Manager
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Decision

Background

1. Getting the Best from Complaints (DfES 2006).

Options Appraisal

2. Local authorities must publish an annual report of its consideration of representations under their statutory responsibilities The Children Act (1989).

Summary of financial implications

3. Financial payments can be made as a result of a complaint if this redress is considered appropriate. Any costs in this respect are accepted as the responsibility of the relevant service against which the complaint is made. Financial redress can be offered at any point within the process if identified or can be recommended by the Ombudsman.

Summary of legal implications

4. The Statutory foundation for the Children's Social Care Services Complaints Procedures are The Local Authority Social Services Act (1970), The Children Act (1989), The Children Act (2004), The Human Rights Act (1998), The Adoption and Children Act (2002) and The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (2006). Local authorities must publish an annual report of its consideration of representations under that framework. Alongside this, government guidance is also relevant including Getting the Best from Complaints (DfES 2006), Get It Sorted (DfES 2004) and the Children Act 1989 Guidance and Page 2 of 26 Regulations Vol 2: Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (2010).

Summary of human resources implications

5. None.

Summary of sustainability impact

6. None

Summary of public health implications

7. None

Summary of equality implications

8. No equalities implications, as the processes followed by the Complaints Team ensure that service users are treated equally. Many of the service users of children's services will be vulnerable, or from potentially disadvantaged groups. The complaints process is a vital part of the council's quality assurance function to ensure all service users receive fair treatment and reasonable adjustments. The Complaints and Compliments Service ensures complainant's individual requirements are supported, for example through interpreting services or by appointing an independent investigator with a specialist background or knowledge.

Summary of risk assessment

9. The Complaints and Compliments Service manages complex, high-risk complaints which if not effectively managed could result in scrutiny by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, Central Government, Ofsted, or through the courts via judicial review. The implications of this scrutiny could negatively affect the Council's reputation and result in major financial costs. Practice issue complaints can include elements of safeguarding which require effective management and proactive action. The Complaints and Compliments Service must be able to recognise these issues when they arise within a complaint context and action them appropriately.

Background papers

10. None

Appendices

Appendix A - Children Services Annual Report on Compliments and Complaints 2024-25

Appendix B – Infographics Children’s Services Compliments & Complaints

Appendix C – Infographics Children’s Services Compliments

Children Services

Annual Report on Compliments and Complaints

2024 - 2025

1. Purpose

Every Local Authority with a responsibility for Social Care Services is required to provide an annual report into the operation of the complaints and representations procedures. This report provides information relating to all compliments, representations and statutory and non-statutory complaints received in respect of Children's Services during the period 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025.

This annual report complies with the statutory requirement for Children's Social Care complaints. It is produced in accordance with the DfES guidance 'Getting the Best from Complaints' which reflects the Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006.

2. Overview of Complaints Procedure

The procedures for Children's complaints are determined by legislation, predominantly involving the: -

- Children Act 1989, Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006
- The Children & Adoption Act 2002 and Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000.

However, some complaints fall outside the statutory process. This is where the complainant does not meet the requirements to be considered under the statutory process, e.g. a grandparent who does not have parental responsibility makes a complaint about contact arrangements, someone is unhappy with regard to the conduct of an officer not directly connected to their child. In these cases, the complaint is dealt with under the two stage corporate complaint process. All complaints received are included in this report.

Children's Services is committed to a positive and proactive approach to complaints handling. Complaints are a mechanism for ensuring that the service area remains receptive to the need to make improvements to its practice standards and the quality of the services that it provides.

The key objective in the management of all complaints is to achieve appropriate and effective resolution within the shortest possible timescales, enabling the Directorate to:-

- Learn from complaints, comments and compliments, and to change, review or maintain practice and services accordingly.
- Ensuring that complaints and comments are properly recorded and acted upon, and that where necessary things that have gone wrong are put right promptly.

- Ensuring that staff and service users understand their rights, and responsibilities within the complaints process.
- Ensure that senior managers have a 'line of sight' into the quality of frontline practice.

Complaints are defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet in relation to an individual child or young person, which requires a response'. The statutory complaints procedure, which applies to complaints about social work, has 3 stages:

Stage 1 - Local Resolution

These complaints are responded to by the manager who is as close to the point of service delivery as possible.

Stage 2 - Formal investigation

At this stage a full and formal investigation is undertaken by an investigating officer (usually an external person) and an independent person. The investigations are adjudicated upon and are responded to by a senior manager within the Service.

Stage 3 - Review

A review panel meeting is held to review the processes conducted under Stages 1 and 2, with independent people sitting on the panel. The review is adjudicated and responded to by a Service Director within Children's Services.

If complainants remain dissatisfied at the end of Stage 3, or at any point if they feel that the complaint has not been dealt with correctly, they may refer the matter to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

Complaints that are regarding the services provided outside of Children Social Care, or that do not qualify for the statutory complaints process, follow the Council's corporate process with 2 stages and then progression to the Ombudsman.

3. The Children Services Complaints and Compliments Team

The Children's Services Complaints and Compliments Team was part of the Quality, Performance Improvement and Governance Service within Children Services during this reporting period. The team are responsible for the day-to-day operation and management of all complaints and compliments for Children's Services.

A substantial proportion of the complaints received can reasonably be described as complex, requiring significant time and effort from the area of service involved. The Complaints and Compliments Team works in partnership with Children's Services managers and offer support and guidance to try to provide a satisfactory resolution to the complainant. These efforts can, as appropriate, resolve complaints negating the need for escalation to Stage 2 of the complaints procedures.

4 Complaints and Representations Information

Stage One complaints decreased overall by 4% compared to the previous reporting year. SEND related complaints increased by 21% and Children Social Care complaints decreased by 21% compared to the previous reporting year. There was an increase of 17% in the number of compliments recorded compared to the previous reporting year.

	Social Care	Quality Performance Improvement and Governance	SEND	Other Education and Skills	Cross Services	Other	TOTAL
Compliments	120	42	91	6	3	0	262
Complaints	143	4	161	28	25	6	367

During the year, 367 distinct complaint requests to the Council were made that were progressed through either the Statutory or Corporate complaints process. There were also 90 MP enquiries processed by the Complaints Team, an increase of 36% compared to the previous reporting year. In addition to this the Complaints Team have received a further 316 contacts where the issues raised were either resolved as a concern, another appeals process applied e.g. Court, Tribunal etc or the Council was not able to consider through the complaints process. This represented a decrease of 50% compared to the previous reporting year.

Compliments

Compliments are received from children and young people, parents, family members and other professionals both inside and outside of the Council.

Below is a sample of some of the compliments received for Children's Services:

From a Children's Guardian to the PLO & Court Team

Following my comments in X's LAC review today, I wanted to formally share my feedback.

I have been impressed with Andrew's work on this case. He has involved me in all meetings and decisions made along the way. I feel when he consults with me as X's Children's Guardian, he really listens to and takes on board my comments. It has been enormously helpful for my own enquiries to have such good communication with X's social worker.

From what I have seen, Andrew has put in a great deal of effort to engaging with the family network to create a safety plan for X that gives reunification the best possible chance of success. This has been a complex case and one that has at the outset presented a very concerning picture as to both parents' capacity to meet X's needs. To be in a position whereby we have a much more positive outlook is to Andrew's credit and the hard work he has put in.

From an adopted adult to Aspire Adoption

My experience with Aspire in regards of searching for my adoption records was exemplary throughout. Jayne was absolutely fantastic at keeping me informed and guiding me through every stage of the process. Her clear understanding and empathy was greatly appreciated. She is an absolute credit to your team. Thanks again for all your help, especially to Jayne.

From a kinship carer to the Fostering Team

X advised that Sam was brilliant, they could speak freely to her, and she was very supportive and helped them along the way. She looked forward to her visits and it was a positive experience.

From a school to the Targeted Family Support Team

Just a quick email to say thank you for all the support you are giving to our families. I have been really impressed with the meetings I have attended and the plans in place for them. It's so refreshing to have someone who really cares and puts the families at the heart of what they do!

From a parent to the SEND service

My daughter has Julie as her case worker. She is doing a great job. She is really helpful and she is responding the same day. We are very happy to have her as our case worker.

From a parent to Early Help

I am writing to you regarding one of your Early Help Support workers - Charlotte.

I would like to convey my deepest gratitude and appreciation for her support throughout her time with me. She was professional at all times and she made my children trust her and feel that they could open up to her about their thoughts and feelings. Because of Charlotte my children now have much greater enthusiasm in their school life. She provided sound advice as well as excellent reports that are more than sufficient for any future use in court proceedings. She was very efficient in her dealings with other professional organizations.

I would be good to have Charlotte with us and we felt very well looked after. I would like Charlotte to be used as an example for all social workers.

From a parent to the Inclusion Team

I just wanted to thank you, for your visit last week. My Husband and I could see ourselves, what great progress both X and Y had made with all aspects of their learning, especially in terms of confidence, engagement and most importantly enjoying their learning! I feel very validated by your comments, that my approach in supporting our children is working.

Thank you, for making the visit a comfortable one for X and Y. They both said how nice you were and they told my mum yesterday, how lovely the visit was and how proud they both felt, to show you all of their learning and creative work.

From a family to Assessment Team 1

Hi Bex, I hope you are okay. Just to let you know we have finished read the assessment. It was huge, I'm just messaging to thank you so much for everything you done for us, meeting you was lovely, you are a really good human ♥ once again a BIG thank you



From a young person and carer to the CHAD Team

I just wanted to say thank you from me and X for all your hard work with young people you support and X looks after. We feel that you have young people's best interest in your heart; you are a great support to them, their families, but also my foster carer; you keep everyone updated with any changes in the young person's life and their circumstances; your responses are prompt; you involve all professionals (including my foster carer!) in the young person's plans; you listen to X's worries and concerns and act upon them.

We would like to simply say that we value your professional attitude, support, and input.

From a parent to CFF 1

Thank you everyone for your hard work, determination and support. L/L have really been a life saver for us as a family.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

From a professional to the SEND service

I have just received X's EHCP and just wanted to leave you a compliment as it was written so well, you really took my points from the advice template and made them so much clearer than I was able to- thank you so much for that and I hope you're having a lovely half term 😊

From a parent to the Children's Occupational Therapy Team

I'm sorry for the delay to this email but I really wanted to sit down properly and make sure I thank you all properly for the various parts you played in our house extension & new added bedroom.

Starting with lovely Hayley from our 1st call and meeting to our last you were always so kind and helpful with your ideas and suggestion.

You were the 1st person to get the ball rolling for this project and pushing it through for us.

I know it wasn't easy and I cannot thank you enough.

From a young person to the CEYP 1 Team

The young person shared that Sasha is easy to get in contact with and he is very happy with the support that she is providing. He said that she really helped him with getting his visa, getting into college and playing football. He did not think that there was anything that she could do better than she already is.

From a professional to the IRO service

Sam, you were an excellent Social worker when we worked alongside previously and as an IRO your young people are very lucky to have you as their IRO.

You are caring and kind in your practice and advocate for your young people to get the best out of their care experience.

It is a pleasure to work alongside someone who has the same passion for what we do.

From a parent to the SEND service:

I honestly, just so grateful for you all helping L and helping our family progress forward knowing we are doing our best.... you should be so proud of your professionalism and hard work. People like you change young people's lives, and I feel very blessed to be asking for help while there is such an immense team there happy to support.

From a residential home manager to the CIC 4 Team:

Following a visit to a child this morning I spent time with manager of the residential home and she shared that Chris's communication with them has been brilliant, she said that Chris was really responsive, even outside of office hours and that they have found him an outstanding social worker to work alongside.

The manager said they felt supported by Chris and that they have seen the young person build a relationship with Chris and they think he has trust in Chris and will also reach out to Chris.

From Foster carers to the CHAD Team:

I just wanted to let you know that I've received a compliment regarding your practice from A's Foster Carers. I met them yesterday during the Fostering Coffee Morning (for Carers who look after children with disabilities) and heard that you are an amazing Social Worker!

From an adopter to the Aspire Adoption Family Finding, Matching and Placement Team:

I saw R today and she very kindly brought over the life story book.

Thank you so much- it's perfect, really appreciated! Such a lovely thing for her to flick through when she's abit older.

From a parent to the CFF 3 Team:

Just wanted to pass along some positive feedback for Chelsea after a discussion with Ms M this morning.

Your Mum praised your social worker Chelsea for working so openly and transparently. Your Mum also praised Chelsea for being honest if she doesn't have the answer and will quickly signpost your Mum to the right support.

From a foster carer to the IRO Service:

I also would say that that was one of the nicest CLA reviews I have attended in a long time. You were friendly and made the girls feel relaxed. I particularly liked the way you explained the process without overcomplicating it for them, also your understanding that the length of some of these meetings can be challenging particularly when they are new to the whole system and not letting it drag on.

From a school to the SEND Service:

I wanted to say thank you for all your help, support and guidance this year. It is a pleasure working with you.

From a Foster Group to the PLO & Court Team 1:

Jamie has been one of the most attentive, reliable and resourceful social workers I've worked alongside and his care, commitment and dedication to the siblings has been evident in his practice. Despite the challenges that have arisen, Jamie has remained professional and has always been focussed on the best interests of the children, working with me to find solutions.

From another Local Authority to the SEND service:

May I thank you for all your hard work and constant communication whilst working on this case with us. There are usually difficulties working across teams in different counties, but in this case it has been an absolute pleasure working with you. I hope to work with Bournemouth SEND and in particular you, in the future.

From a parent and IRO to CFF 5:

Parent said that she appreciates Justice being open, honest and up front with her. I also found him to be completely upfront with the significant concerns of this case and still retain this relationship with the parent, with an assessment that did well to balance the risk and protective factors.

From a shadowing student to the Private Fostering Team:

It is lovely to see a team so passionate about getting it right and about outcomes from children and young people, I hope this is something I can keep in my toolbox as I become a social worker.

From a parent to the Contact Service:

Thank you so much for everything Nikki, your the first person in forever that has made me feel like a half decent mum and that I'm not a complete failure and I had no faith in anyone

until I met you and you have given me hope that there is still good people out there so thank you very much 😊 we will actually miss you lol.

From a school to the Assessment Team 1:

Rose has recently finished working with one of our pupils at (school) and has gone above and beyond always with her wonderful approachable nurturing nature and the way she interacts with us as a school and with our pupil has been second to none!

From a young person to the CIC 1 Team:

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for everything you have done for me. Your help has made a huge difference in my life. You have always been there to listen to my concerns and support me when I needed it most. I appreciate the time you took to understand my situation and offer guidance. Your kindness and patience have helped me feel more confident in myself. Thank you for teaching me important skills and helping me through challenges. I feel so lucky to have you as a social worker.

From parents for the SEND Service:

X and I would like to take this chance to profoundly thank Kay, case officer for our twins. She was always available to answer our questions and kept us updated. She was a very honest person, however, she communicated even the difficult messages to us with a lot of empathy and we always felt at ease communicating with her.

The support, help and communication that Katie has given us, has been brilliant and has helped make this part of the process so much more easier to understand and to go through.

We would like to tell you that it's very important in your life to find a person who loves and knows his job. In our case it's you Alex because of you our kid got that we have been dreaming for her. We want to say thank you for your professionalism, help, time and reliability. We hope that parents with special needs kids will find more people like you Alex. Thank you very much.

Katie and Susan have been really great throughout. Proactive, empathetic, understanding and knowledgeable.

Louise has been extremely helpful and always answered my emails promptly. She delivers empathy within her mannerisms and makes me as a parent feel heard and considered.

The SEN case worker Natalie took time to listen to our views on our daughter's strengths and difficulties and feedback from the school SENCo. She was respectful, professional and courteous throughout and explained the next steps carefully to us and we felt that our views were listened to and we felt included and respected in this process.

Emily was really lovely, I was nervous about the meeting but Emily made me feel really relaxed and she helped me get all the information required into the plan and I feel happy and confident about it going to panel now.

From family to the IRO Service:

We are grateful to all who attended the Conference, and particularly Kelly who chaired the Conference in a very professional manner. As a result of her input at the outset we feel the Conference proceeded in a respectful and courteous way - which might not have been easy bearing in mind the sensitive, and potentially contentious matter being discussed. I am mindful that the outcome of the Conference was what we had been seeking, but my comments would equally apply if decisions had gone the other way. So again, thanks to everyone and particularly Kelly.

From mum to the Child Health and Disability Team:

Ali is an amazing social worker. She goes above and beyond and is very helpful.

From young person to the Care Experienced Young People Team2:

She has been nothing but brilliant, been advocating for me at college, fighting my case no matter what, taking the time to talk to me and fully understand each and every situation, and made my transition to adulthood so much easier. She is extremely kind, caring and understanding of each and every situation, and calls to catch up if there's an issue, and always communicates all the details and is honest with me, even if I've done something wrong, she would give me a telling off, not to demotivate me, but to put me back on the right direction if anything I did was wrong. She is an asset to the team at CEYP, and I wish her all the best for the future and I can't wait to continue working with her.

From a colleague to the MASH service:

I wanted to pay a compliment to Jake. I have just been triaging a difficult case and when I looked through his assessment he completed in the MASH I was very impressed how he got his point across to a difficult father who was obstructing support for his child but in a professional manner. I thought it was clear and precise without being prejudice towards the father. Well done Jake! I will use this as a template for good voice of the child work when parent is placing barriers in the way.

From a parent for a worker in the Children and Families First Team:

I'd like to write my sincere gratitude for Gemma that has recently attended a very complex court proceedings.

Gemma went beyond my expectations and they're hard to meet.

Her professionalism, knowledge, intuition and decision making are undoubtedly on a very high level.

Not everyone can see the truth in complex cases where the social worker could be manipulated by the perpetrators- just like I was in the past.

I'll be forever grateful to Gemma because she helped us win the freedom from violence, manipulations, fear and all other types of abuse.

Thank you so much. I wish her best for the future.

From a professional to the IRO service:

I have not been to a CP conference for a number of years now but I would like to say that I thought Caren was an excellent Chair at this conference. I thought that she struck a very good balance with the parents of being supportive but also challenging appropriately. I thought she led the conference very well, in what could have been a very difficult meeting. I also felt listened to and that my contribution was valid.

From a parent (via a colleague) to the Children in Care Team 2:

I have just spoken with x's father to inform a PLR I am completing and I wanted to share how highly he spoke of Emma, scoring her 9/10 of how satisfied he was and he said he feels very listened too.

I said I would like to share this praise to which he agreed.

From a placement manager to Assessment Team 1:

Apologies I couldn't be there in person today,

Did want to pass on a huge thank you to yourself, this has been one of our smoothest welcomes / transitions for a long time and that's largely down to your efforts with Y.

From a Judge via a colleague to the PLO & Court Team 1:

The Judge was very complimentary of you as a social worker. He said that he was very grateful to you and there has been some great social work with this case.

From parents to the SEND Secondary Team:

I just wanted to advise you that during a Mediation Meeting earlier this week the parent made a very specific point of praising the Education Health Care Co-ordinator (EHCCO), Monika, who works with their family.

They stated that Monika is always friendly and approachable with a lovely manner. That she is always able to provide excellent advice and guidance whilst remaining professional and not making promises she cannot keep, that everything is explained clearly to the family with patience, empathy and understanding.

From a colleague to the SEND BSO Team:

We just wanted to make a point of thanking Declan for the care and detail he takes when handing calls and emails that are on their way to our Appeals and Resolutions Team. Declan always takes the time to put the enquirers at ease and find out the best course of action and person to talk to in our team by checking in with us if he is uncertain. This never goes un-noticed and we feel is worthy of praise as in our seriously busy days this small additional detail can make a big difference. Thank you to Declan!

From a Foster Carer to Aspire Adoption Family Finding, Matching and Placement Team:

I would like to say thank you to Annie who has been an amazing inspiration to me always putting the needs of N first.

From a BCP Solicitor to the PLO and Court Team One:

You may be aware that this matter concluded last week with care and placement orders.

I feel it appropriate to highlight the excellent level of social work brought to this case by Jamie. There is no doubt in my view that his forward thinking for X has meant that every avenue of an appropriate long term placement has been explored and that fortunately for X her next move is likely to be to her forever home.

The final evidence drafted by Jamie was executed with thought and logic and made it an easy read for myself, the parties and most importantly the Judge. This was a complex case that Jamie managed to present in a digestible way. This will have contributed to us securing final orders without the need for a fact find.

From a parent to the Child Health & Disability Team:

Hi Charlotte

aww.so happy for x and so pleased you were able to see him..

I really do appreciate all the hard work and battles you undertake in x's and my interests. You are a top social worker..just saying..

Many thanks

From a Foster Carer to the IRO Service:

We could not have done the transition without you. You have listened to my frustrations and given me hope each time. All that is left to say is that you have gone above and beyond.

From an adoptee to Aspire Adoption & SG Support Team:

Dear Clare

This is just a quick note to thank you sincerely for the time and effort that you put into the file about my adoption. There's so much detail in the file and the 12 page summary is fantastic. It was a fascinating read and filled an awful lot of gaps for me. It's been quite a journey!

From a parent to the Children & Families First Team3:

I wanted to share the views of a parent in today's conference, she shared that the support from CSC and wider professionals has been excellent. She has felt listened too and supported. She spoke highly of Mahles practice in terms of building a rapport with her and the boys, ensuring the right services are in place, communicating well and advocating for the boys individually. She has found the child protection plan a helpful process and feels that it has really changed the trajectory for X in particular. She said lots more positive things but that is a summary.

From a care leaver to the Care Experience Young People Team 2:

I'd like to start this email by saying Paula has been personable, someone I can talk to about the current state of affairs that interest me and my life. This is the crux of what a support care worker is and should be... truly caring and supportive of all their young people from their interests to their qualms. She in fact has to chase me up to organise

meetings (of which, I am so sorry Paula!). In the past with many of my care leaver support PA's (calling them PA's feels diminishing, they're a support network in and of themselves) - I would chase them up for queries about all aspects of my life and the support I could receive without much avail. Paula? She's all over it, in fact she will somehow be one step ahead. She ensures I am aware of what I'm entitled to but is also just such an incredible person to chat to - she makes sure I am ok, whilst also letting me ramble on about anything and everything. I have never felt so comfortable, understood and just all round eager to actually chat to a social worker.

I am so grateful to have had Paula as my care leaver support, she is brilliant in so many senses of the word and has truly made me feel understood - giving a sense of normalcy, humanity and treating me as a person and not a checkbox. She truly cares about young people, and she is human just like us! She is very down to earth, kind and I absolutely love when we do finally call (due to my own negligence) as time flies.

Thank you Paula, and I hope this compliment email is received well.

From young people regarding the Children in Care Team 2:

I wanted to email to share feedback from my last visit with 2 children.

Both children told me that they 'really liked Dannii and that she is the best social worker they have had', they both said, 'she is a person who does what she says she will do, and they hope she remains their social worker.'

At the start of the children's review the foster carer also shared that she hoped 'Dannii doesn't go anywhere because she is brilliant'.

From a family to the SEND service:

Holly of BCP SEND has been nothing short of amazing & I can't praise her enough. Not only has she tweaked the EHCP (in agreement with us & consultation with the College & presumably yourselves too) to get it to the point where College have agreed that they can meet need. But she has also sought and gained EHCP funding for x's continued OT support post 16.

Stage 1 - Who Complained?

	Social Care	Quality Performance Improvement and Governance	SEND	Other Education and Skills	Cross Services
Parent	68%	0%	90%	86%	88%
Self (young person)	15%	50%	3%	0%	8%
Other family/friend	7%	0%	1%	3.5%	0%
Grandparents	5%	0%	1%	3.5%	0%
Carer	3%	25%	2.5%	0%	4%
Other (not connected to a child)	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Other agency	0%	25%	2.5%	7%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

It is usual for the majority of complaints to be received from parents. However, young people also complain on their own behalf and the contracted independent advocacy service, Coram Voice, is available to support any young person receiving a social work service who wishes to make a complaint. This is a legislative requirement under the Children Act.

In relation to diversity and protected characteristics (where this data is recorded):

Complainants		Social Care	Quality Performance Improvement and Governance	SEND	Other Education and Skills	Cross Services
Recognised as having a disability		8%	0%	2%	0%	8%
Gave their ethnicity as other than White British		12%	0%	4%	0%	8%
Gender	Female	60%	50%	88%	78.5%	52%
	Male	36%	50%	8%	18%	36%
	Couple	4%	0%	4%	3.5%	12%
	Other	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Timescales at Stage 1

The Children Act Legislation states that the authority should respond to complaints within 10 working days but can extend this to 20 days if necessary. If the authority fails to respond to the complainant within this timeframe, the complainant has the right to progress to Stage 2 of the procedure should they wish to do so.

Complaints following the corporate procedure should be responded to within 20 working days at Stage 1.

Some complaints are assessed as having more than one aspect to them – for example service delay alongside a data protection issue. These are recorded separately to enable more accurate analysis. Therefore, the following table shows both number of complaints received, along with detailed analysis by category of complaint by team.

Complaints raised regarding Children's Services are often emotive and reflect the complexity of the, often statutory, intervention undertaken. Complaints are managed sensitively with a view to resolving as many as possible in the early stages. However, it is inevitable that sometimes it can take longer to resolve the difficult issues raised and managers are expected to keep the complainant informed of progress and expected timescales.

55.85% of complainants received a response to their complaints within the 20-working day timescale.

Service	No of Complaints	%age share	No of complaint categories	%age share of categories	% answered on time	% fully upheld	% partially upheld
Admissions	1	0.27%	1	0.12%	100%	0%	0%
Aspire Adoption - Adoption & SG Support Team	3	0.82%	7	0.87%	57.14%	28.57%	14.29%
Aspire Adoption - Recruitment & Assessment Team	1	0.27%	4	0.5%	0%	0%	25%
Aspire Adoption - SGO Assessment Team	1	0.27%	2	0.25%	0%	50%	0%

Assessment 1	2	0.54%	5	0.62%	40%	80%	0%
Assessment 2	4	1.09%	10	1.24%	90%	30%	20%
Assessment 3	8	2.18%	21	2.61%	85.71%	28.57%	9.52%
Assessment 4	4	1.09%	10	1.24%	100%	60%	10%
Business Support (Children's)	1	0.27%	1	0.12%	100%	100%	0%
Care Experience Young People Team 1	4	1.09%	6	0.75%	100%	33.33%	0%
Care Experience Young People Team 2	3	0.82%	6	0.75%	100%	66.67%	33.33%
Child Health & Disability Team	5	1.36%	18	2.24%	100%	16.67%	5.56%
Children & Families First 1	7	1.92%	11	1.37%	72.73%	0%	9.09%
Children & Families First 2	2	0.54%	2	0.25%	0%	50%	0%
Children & Families First 3	7	1.92%	18	2.24%	100%	38.89%	5.56%
Children & Families First 4	11	3.00%	27	3.36%	66.67%	25.93%	11.11%
Children & Families First 5	7	1.92%	10	1.24%	60%	40%	0%
Children & Families First 6	7	1.92%	20	2.49%	95%	25%	20%
Children & Families First 7	1	0.27%	2	0.25%	0%	0%	50%
Children in Care 1	10	2.72%	19	2.36%	68.42%	26.32%	21.05%
Children in Care 2	7	1.92%	15	1.87%	40%	53.33%	0%
Children in Care 3	20	5.45%	48	5.97%	75%	35.42%	10.42%

Children in Care 4	4	1.09%	8	1.00%	100%	62.50%	12.5%
Children in Care 5	1	0.27%	1	0.12%	0%	100%	0%
Children's Safeguarding & Quality Assurance (Non-IRO)	1	0.27%	3	0.37%	0%	100%	0%
Compliance Team (Childrens)	4	1.09%	8	1.00%	100%	87.50%	0%
Targeted Family Support	1	0.27%	4	0.5%	100%	25%	50%
Fostering Parent and Child Pod	1	0.27%	1	0.12%	100%	100%	0%
Inclusion 1	5	1.36%	9	1.12%	66.67%	22.22%	22.22%
IRO Service	2	0.54%	6	0.75%	100%	0%	66.67%
MASH	6	1.63%	8	1.00%	75%	12.50%	0%
Participation Team	1	0.27%	1	0.12%	100%	0%	100%
PLO and Court 1	6	1.63%	18	2.24%	66.67%	27.78%	11.11%
PLO and Court 2	3	0.82%	4	0.5%	25%	25%	25%
School Transport	2	0.54%	4	0.5%	100%	75%	25%
SEND	90	24.52%	185	23.01%	54.59%	61.62%	8.11%
SEND Primary	29	7.90%	53	6.59%	9.43%	56.60%	18.87%
SEND Secondary	30	8.17%	67	8.33%	32.84%	58.21%	4.48%
SEND Post 16	12	3.27%	29	3.61%	0%	62.07%	17.24%
CROSS TEAMS (same service area)	28	7.63%	67	8.33%	50.75%	43.28%	14.93%

CROSS SERVICES	25	6.81%	65	8.08%	47.69%	26.15%	15.38
OVERALL	367	100%	804	100%	55.85%	45.15%	11.94%

Categories of complaints and their outcomes.

Each individual bringing a complaint may have raised more than one complaint issue. Each complaint is therefore categorised to ensure that outcomes are clear, and any learning is taken forward.

Category	Categories of Complaints	%age share	% answered on time	% fully upheld	% partially upheld
Assessment process	4	0.5%	75%	0%	25%
Breach of confidentiality e.g. available to public	19	2.26%	42.11%	57.89%	5.26%
Care / welfare concerns notified but not acted on	7	0.87%	85.71%	0%	14.29%
CIC placement	3	0.37%	33.3%	0%	33.33%
Contact issues	19	2.36%	84.21%	36.84%	5.26%
Content of report	22	2.74%	63.64%	9.09%	13.64%
CP conference process	1	0.12%	100%	0%	0%
Delay / lack of agreed action	182	22.7%	44.51%	54.95%	13.19%
Disproportionate intervention	17	2.11%	70.59%	5.88%	5.88%
Disputing decision	41	5.1%	63.41%	9.76%	2.44%
Finance inc loss/theft of property	19	2.36%	42.11%	42.11%	5.26%
Inaccurate recording / info on file	9	1.12%	66.67%	44.44%	11.11%
Lack of available services	43	5.35%	48.84%	58.14%	11.63%
Lack of involvement / being kept informed / listened to	74	9.2%	72.97%	43.24%	13.51%
Practice issues	44	5.47%	59.09%	38.64%	11.36%

Safeguarding / welfare of child	19	2.36%	68.42%	15.79%	10.53%
Subject Access Request	4	0.5%	50%	50%	0%
Attitude / conduct	55	6.84%	72.73%	23.64%	12.73%
Communication	204	25.43%	49.02%	64.71%	14.22%
Discriminatory behaviour	18	2.24%	61.11%	11.11%	11.11%
OVERALL	804	100%	55.85%	45.15%	11.94%

Communication and delay / lack of agreed action were the most common categories of complaints brought at Stage One.

Numbers progressed to Stage 2.

The vast majority of the complaints that are received are managed and resolved at Stage 1. Social Care saw an increase of 8% in complaints moving to Stage 2 within the year. SEND saw a decrease of 4% compared to the previous reporting year in complaints moving to Stage 2.

	Social Care	Quality Performance Improvement and Governance	SEND	Other Education and Skills	Cross Services	Other	Overall
Percentage of complaints that did not progress to Stage 2	68%	50%	74%	75%	84%	100%	72%

Categories and outcomes at Stage 2

As at Stage 1, complainants can raise a number of issues within their complaints at Stage 2. These are categorised separately to ensure that outcomes are clear and any learning is taken forward.

Whilst 101 Stage 2 complaints were requested during the year, 94 complaints with 279 separate issues of complaint were investigated and responded to within the year.

Category	Number of Complaint Categories	%age share	% answered on time	% fully upheld	% partially upheld
Communication	41	14.68%	36.59%	46.34%	24.39%
Delay / lack of agreed action	69	24.71%	42.03%	52.17%	10.14%
Assessment Process	9	3.23%	55.56%	22.22%	11.11%
Lack of Involvement being kept informed / listened to	19	6.81%	21.05%	26.32%	26.32%
Safeguarding / welfare of child	15	5.38%	20%	33.33%	13.33%
Practise Issues	15	5.38%	40%	53.33%	6.67%
Attitude / conduct	14	5.02%	35.71%	28.57%	14.29%
Transition to Adult Services	3	1.08%	33.33%	33.33%	33.33%
Finance including loss/theft of property	3	1.08%	100%	33.33%	0%
Lack of available services	34	12.19%	23.53%	38.24%	23.53%
Breach of confidentiality / Data Breach	3	1.08%	33.33%	0%	0%
Content of report	18	6.45%	22.22%	44.44%	16.67%
Discriminatory Behaviour	2	0.72%	50%	0%	50%
Disputing Decision	12	4.3%	16.67%	58.33%	8.33%
Policy	2	0.72%	100%	0%	0%
Child in Care Review Process	4	1.43%	0%	75%	0%
Care / Welfare concerns notified but not acted on	6	2.15%	0%	0%	0%
Inaccurate recording / info on file	2	0.72%	50%	0%	50%
Disproportionate Intervention	5	1.79%	40%	40%	0%
Subject Access Requests	2	0.72%	50%	0%	0%

Child in Care Placement	1	0.36%	100%	100%	0%
OVERALL	279	100%	33.69%	41.22%	15.41%

Delay and communication were the most common categories of complaints brought at Stage Two.

Timescales at Stage 2

Complaints managed under the Children Act legislation (Social Care) should complete the Stage 2 process within 25 working days (roughly 1 month). However, guidance allows for an extension of up to 65 working days (roughly 3 months). The Stage 2 process begins with the Terms of Complaint being agreed and concludes with the response to the investigation report by the Adjudication Officer. Complaints managed under the Corporate Stage 2 process (Quality Performance, Improvement and Governance, SEND, Early Help and Education Support) should be completed within 15 working days. However, complaints can cross services and where they do so with social work, the legislative process is applied.

Children's Services' complaints are managed to ensure that a robust, evidence-based investigation is carried out and a considered response to the complaint issues is given. We strive to keep within timescales, but the complexity of issues can sometimes lead to revised timings. Complainants are kept informed of delays and the reasons for them.

Stage 3

Stage 3 Review Panel numbers and outcomes (Children Act process only) for Children Social Care. Whilst eight Stage 3 Review Panels were requested during the year, eight were held during the year and they considered 27 elements of complaint. The outcomes of these panels are set out below.

Category	Number of Complaint Categories	%age share	% answered on time	% fully upheld	% partially upheld
Communication	5	18%	100%	20%	0%
Lack of Involvement being kept informed / listened to	1	4%	100%	0%	0%
Safeguarding / welfare of child	3	11%	100%	0%	0%
Practise Issues	1	4%	100%	0%	0%
Attitude / conduct	3	11%	100%	0%	33%
Delay / Lack of Agreed Action	2	7%	100%	0%	0%
Child Protection Conference Process	1	4%	100%	0%	0%
Contact Issues	1	4%	100%	0%	0%
Child in Care Review Process	2	7%	100%	100%	50%
Care / Welfare concerns notified but not acted upon	1	4%	100%	0%	0%
Disproportionate Intervention	1	4%	100%	0%	100%
Lack of available services	6	22%	100%	0%	17%
OVERALL	27	100%	100%	11%	15%

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) numbers and outcomes.

During the reporting year, 36 referrals were made by complainants to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, an increase of 12.5% compared to the previous reporting year.

The Ombudsman issued 29 final decisions regarding BCP Children's Services within the complaint's year, 8 for Children Social Care, 3 for cross service complaints and 18 for Education and Skills. Fault was found by the Ombudsman in 12.5% of Children Social Care complaints, 33.33% of cross service complaints and 44.44% of Education and Skills complaints.

5 Learning from complaints and service improvements

One of the key objectives in the management of complaints is to identify and learn from complaints, comments and compliments, and to change, review or maintain practices and services accordingly.

Some examples of service actions that have been implemented as a result of learning from complaints are detailed below:

The **SEND Service** are aware of the need to improve communication and are implementing a Service Charter which covers communication commitments.

The **SEND Service** has been restructured internally during the year to ensure greater oversight on children and families, placements and where alternative provision needs to be put in place to avoid delays.

The **SEND Service** are continuing to develop training for officers through the new Quality Assurance Framework. This will include further training on Section F of EHCPs and regular audits.

The **Compliance Team** are increasing their workforce and investigating the use of new technology to speed up redaction work in the Subject Access Request process.

Children Social Care undertook a review of all processes and procedures relating to unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people and children and this formed part of the revised Local Offer for care experienced young people which was published in January 2025. The revised Local Offer also clarified housing options available to Care Experienced Young People.

Children Social Care undertook a review of learning and development available to social workers and other alternatively qualified social care colleagues. This included a review of learning specifically in regard to supporting unaccompanied asylum seeking young people and children.

Children Social Care have produced new practice standards which support staff to understand their responsibilities, including timeliness and quality of case note recording to minimise any miscommunication, in particular where there is unplanned staff absence or a change in the allocated worker.

Children Social Care have started developing a robust policy regarding savings for children in care. This policy will provide clarity and specifically set out the process for ensuring any accrued savings follow a child or young person if they should move home. The issue of Junior Individual savings account (ISA) will also be covered in this policy, considering those children that did not qualify for the Child Trust Fund.

The **Inclusion Service** now arranges online education provision for excluded pupils while they are waiting for a place at an alternative provision school or independent alternative provision to be commissioned.

Advocacy

BCP Council contracts with Coram Voice to provide an advocacy service for young people involved with Social Care services. The contract with Coram Voice fulfils the council's

obligations under the Children Act '89 and the Advocacy Services and Representations Procedure (Children) (Amendment) Regulations 2004. The service follows the DfES guidance 'Get it Sorted' 2004. The legislation and its guidance state that independent advocacy must be available and offered to all children and young people who may wish to make a complaint.

Training and Support

The Complaints Team provide support for teams, individuals and managers across Children's Services as necessary, ensuring that practice is compliant with legislation, guidance, procedures and best practice. They can check responses, guide with the process and expectations and support with keeping complainants updated.

The objectives of the training for managers are:

- To clarify the different stages of the procedure.
- To consider good practice in the first stage investigations.
- To look at resolution and redress issues.
- To consider good practice in first stage responses.
- To consider how the service learns from complaints.

During this operating year, three Complaint Training for Managers courses were run by the Complaints and Compliments Manager with a total of seventeen team managers and service managers attending from across Children's services.

Southern Region Complaints Managers Group (SRCMG).

BCP Council is represented on the SRCMG by Complaints personnel. This group contributes to the development of guidance and best practice in complaint management which feeds into the National Complaints Managers' Group, the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS), the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) and relevant government bodies.

Attendance also ensures that the Council is up to date with developing practice in complaint management whilst affording the opportunity to consider particular practice issues with others and to share best practice and learning.

Complaint Recording Systems

All complaint records are held on the system electronically with essential data i.e. complaints and outcomes to be held in a secure area of MOSAIC. This allows for records to be retained alongside other records in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Financial Costs

Financial payments can be made as a result of a complaint if this redress is considered appropriate. Any costs in this respect are accepted as the responsibility of the relevant service against which the complaint is made. Financial redress can be offered at any point within the process if identified or can be recommended by the Ombudsman.

Financial consequences – Remedy and Redress

There is no formal remedy and redress policy for Children's services; therefore, guidance continues to be taken from publications by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

	Quarter 1 Apr - Jun	Quarter 2 Jul - Sep	Quarter 3 Oct - Dec	Quarter 4 Jan - Mar
LGSCO directed Financial Remedies	£3,750.00	£4,000	£200	£13,900
Non-LGSCO Financial Remedies	£5,351.43	£6,400	£9,632	£15,200
Total	£9,101.43	£10,400	£9,832	£29,100

Financial consequences – Complaint Investigations

There are costs of employing stage two external investigators and independent people and stage three review panels which fluctuate with demand, alongside interpretation and translation costs at all stages in the complaints process.

	Quarter 1 Apr - Jun	Quarter 2 Jul - Sep	Quarter 3 Oct - Dec	Quarter 4 Jan - Mar
Stage 1	£168.88	£35.00	£0	£0
Stage 2	£8,077.40	£23,489.37	£12,551.46	£32,680.09
Stage 3	£1,721.25	£3,161.25	£1,467.50	£2,301.00
Total	£9,967.53	£26,685.62	£14,018.96	£34,981.09

Going Forward

The key priorities for 2025-26:

- To continue to actively promote the Complaints procedures across all teams to ensure that staff are confident in complaint handling and the relevant procedures. All staff should be aware of the complaint procedures and frontline staff should know how to capture information about things that go wrong and refer this information correctly.
- Timeliness of completing responses continues to remain a key focus for improvements and there will be a drive to ensure that managers adhere to the complaint timescales through specific complaint handling training, the complaint escalation procedure and support from senior management throughout the year.
- The Complaints and Compliments Manager will continue to report to senior management on a quarterly basis and present the key messages from complaints activity; ensuring that the learning is shared and cascaded to all operational teams for service improvement and quality assurance purposes.
- The complaints team will continue to participate in the regional complaint network to keep abreast of relevant changes to policy and procedure and related information.

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Compliments & Complaints

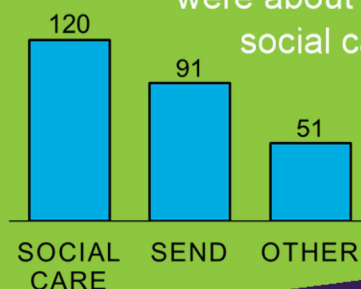
We are always trying to improve our services, and your feedback helps shape future changes. Any comment, good or bad, helps us to understand what people do and don't like about our services and how we can make them better in the future.



262 compliments received in 2024/25

Motivating
Supporting
Caring
Kind

Most compliments were about social care



17% more than last year



367 complaints received in 2024/25

39% of complaints were about social care

90 enquiries from MPs

44% of complaints were about Special Educational Needs



15%

of social care complaints are from young people

4% less than last year

56% of complainants received a response within 20 working days

Delay/lack of agreed action & Communication

were the two most listed complaint categories



Our key objective is to learn from complaints. We do this by changing and reviewing practices and services.

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COMPLIMENTS and POSITIVE FEEDBACK

Your help has made a huge difference in my life.

I have been really impressed with the meetings I have attended and the plans in place for them. It's so refreshing to have someone who really cares and puts the families at the heart of what they do!

I feel very validated by your comments, that my approach in supporting our children is working.

You are caring and kind in your practice and advocate for your young people to get the best out of their care experience.

We feel that you have young people's best interest in your heart; you are a great support to them and their families

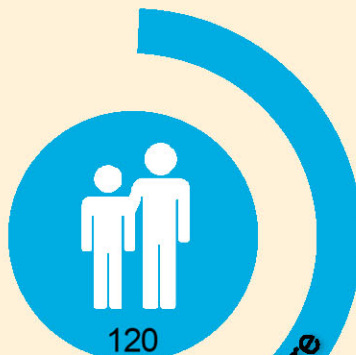
People like you change young people's lives, and I feel very blessed to be asking for help while there is such an immense team there happy to support.

I would like to convey my deepest gratitude and appreciation for her support throughout her time with me

May I thank you for all your hard work and constant communication whilst working on this case with us.

As a result of her input at the outset we feel the Conference proceeded in a respectful and courteous way

...thank you so much for everything you done for us, meeting you was lovely, you are a really good human



Social Care

I wanted to say thank you for all your help, support and guidance this year. It is a pleasure working with you.

...goes above and beyond and is very helpful

...professional and has always been focussed on the best interests of the children, working with me to find solutions.

We want to say thank you for your professionalism, help, time and reliability. We hope that parents with special needs kids will find more people like you

Thank you everyone for your hard work, determination and support.

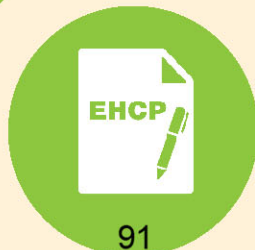
I wanted to say thank you for all your help, support and guidance this year. It is a pleasure working with you.

Proactive, empathetic, understanding and knowledgeable.

I had no faith in anyone until I met you and you have given me hope that there is still good people out there so thank you very much

You have always been there to listen to my concerns and support me when I needed it most. I appreciate the time you took to understand my situation and offer guidance. Your kindness and patience have helped me feel more confident in myself.

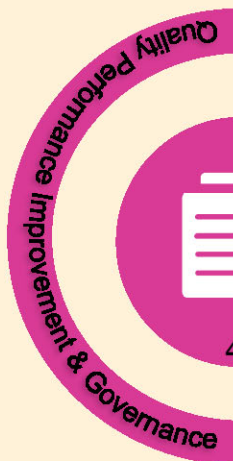
...an amazing inspiration to me



SEND



Other Education and Skills



Quality Performance Improvement & Governance

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



Report subject	Work Plan
Meeting date	15 September 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	The Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee is asked to consider and identify work priorities for publication in a Work Plan.
Recommendations	It is RECOMMENDED that: the Overview and Scrutiny Committee review, update and confirm its Work Plan.
Reason for recommendations	The Council's Constitution requires all Overview and Scrutiny Committees to set out proposed work in a Work Plan which will be published with each agenda.
Portfolio Holder(s):	N/A – Overview and Scrutiny is a non-executive function
Corporate Director	Aidan Dunn, Chief Executive
Report Authors	Lindsay Marshall, Overview and Scrutiny Specialist
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Decision

Work Plan updates

1. This report provides the latest version of the Committee's Work Plan at Appendix A and guidance on how to populate and review the Work Plan in line with the Council's Constitution. For the purposes of this report, all references to Overview and Scrutiny Committees shall also apply to the Overview and Scrutiny Board unless otherwise stated.
2. Items added to the Work Plan since the last publication are highlighted as 'NEW'. Councillors are asked to consider and confirm the latest Work Plan.
3. The most recent [Cabinet Forward Plan](#) can be viewed on the council's website. This link is included in each O&S Work Plan report for councillors to view and refer to when considering whether any items of pre-decision scrutiny will join the O&S Committee Work Plan.

Resources to support O&S Work

4. The Constitution requires that O&S committees take account of the resources available to support proposals for O&S work. Advice on maximising the resource available to O&S Committees is set out in the O&S Work Planning Guidance document referenced below.

Work programming guidance and tools

5. The [Overview and Scrutiny Committees Terms of Reference](#) document provides detail on the principles of scrutiny at BCP Council, the membership, functions and remit of each O&S committee and the variety of working methods available.
6. The [O&S Work Planning Guidance](#) document provides detail on all aspects of work planning including how to determine requests for scrutiny in line with the Council's constitution.
7. The [O&S Framework for scrutiny topic selection](#) was drawn up by O&S councillors in conjunction with the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny. The framework provides detail on the criteria for proactive, reactive and pre-decision scrutiny topics, and guidance on how these can be selected to contribute to value-added scrutiny outcomes.
8. The '[Request for consideration of an issue by Overview and Scrutiny](#)' form is an example form to be used by councillors and residents when making a new suggestion for a scrutiny topic. Word copies of the form are available from Democratic Services upon request by using the contact details on this agenda.

Options Appraisal

9. The O&S Committee is asked to review, update and confirm its Work Plan, taking account of the supporting documents provided and including the determination of any new requests for scrutiny. This will ensure member ownership of the Work Plan and that reports can be prepared in a timely way.
10. If updates to the Work Plan are not confirmed there may be an impact on timeliness of reports and other scrutiny activity.

Summary of financial implications

11. There are financial implications arising from this report.

Summary of legal implications

12. There are no legal implications arising from this report. The Council's Constitution requires that all O&S bodies set out proposed work in a Work Plan which will be published with each agenda. The recommendation proposed in this report will fulfil this requirement.

Summary of human resources implications

13. There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

Summary of sustainability impact

14. There are no sustainability resources implications arising from this report.

Summary of public health implications

15. There are no public health implications arising from this report.

Summary of equality implications

16. There are no equality implications arising from this report. Any councillor and any member of the public may make suggestions for overview and scrutiny work.

Further detail on this process is included within O&S Procedure Rules at Part 4 of the Council's Constitution.

Summary of risk assessment

17. There is a risk of challenge to the Council if the Constitutional requirement to establish and publish a Work Plan is not met.

Background papers

- [Overview and Scrutiny Committees Terms of Reference](#)
- [O&S Work Planning Guidance document](#)
- [O&S Framework for scrutiny topic selection](#)
- ['Request for consideration of an issue by Overview and Scrutiny'](#)

Further detail on these background papers is contained within the body of this report.

Appendices

Appendix A - Current O&S Work Plan

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BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD / COMMITTEES TERMS OF REFERENCE

Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) is a statutory role fulfilled by Councillors who are not members of the Cabinet in an authority operating a Leader and Cabinet model. The role of the Overview and Scrutiny Board and Committees is to help develop policy, to carry out reviews of Council and other local services, and to hold decision makers to account.

PRINCIPLES OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

The Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Overview and Scrutiny function is based upon six principles:

1. Contributes to sound decision making in a timely way by holding decision makers to account as a 'critical friend'.
2. A member led and owned function – seeks to continuously improve through self-reflection and development.
3. Enables the voice and concerns of the public to be heard and reflected in the Council's decision-making process.
4. Engages in decision making and policy development at an appropriate time to be able to have influence.
5. Contributes to and reflects the vision and priorities of the Council.
6. Agile – able to respond to changing and emerging priorities at the right time with flexible working methods.

MEETINGS

There are four Overview and Scrutiny bodies at BCP Council:

- Overview and Scrutiny Board
- Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Each Committee meets 5 times during the municipal year, except for the Overview and Scrutiny Board which meets monthly to enable the Board to make recommendations to Cabinet. The date and time of meetings will be set by full Council and may only be changed by the Chairman of the relevant Committee in consultation with the Monitoring Officer. Members will adhere to the agreed principles of the Council's Code of Conduct.

Decisions shall be taken by consensus. Where it is not possible to reach consensus, a decision will be reached by a simple majority of those present at the meeting. Where there are equal votes the Chair of the meeting will have the casting vote.

MEMBERSHIP

The Overview and Scrutiny Board and Committees are appointed by full Council. Each Committee has 11 members and the Board has 13 members. No member of the Cabinet may be a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees or Board, or any group established by them. Lead Members of the Cabinet may not be a member of Overview and Scrutiny Committees or Board. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee may not be a member of any Overview and Scrutiny Committees or Board.

The quorum of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Board shall be one third of the total membership (excluding voting and non-voting co-optees).

No member may be involved in scrutinising a decision in which they been directly involved. If a member is unable to attend a meeting their Group may arrange for a substitute to attend in their place in accordance with the procedures as set out in the Council's Constitution.

Members of the public can be invited to attend and contribute to meetings as required, to provide insight to a matter under discussion. This may include but is not limited to subject experts with relevant specialist knowledge or expertise, representatives of stakeholder groups or service users. Members of the public will not have voting rights.

Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee - The Committee must statutorily include two church and two parent governor representatives as voting members (on matters related to education) in addition to Councillor members. Parent governor membership shall extend to a maximum period of four years and no less than two years. The Committee may also co-opt one representative from the Academy Trusts within the local authority area, to attend meetings and vote on matters relating to education.

The Committee may also co-opt two representatives of The Youth Parliament and, although they will not be entitled to vote, will ensure that their significant contribution to the work of the Committee is recognised and valued.

Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee - The Committee may co-opt two independent non-voting members. The selection and recruitment process shall be determined by the Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

FUNCTIONS OF THE O&S COMMITTEES AND O&S BOARD

Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee (including the Overview and Scrutiny Board) has responsibility for:

- Scrutinising decisions of the Cabinet, offering advice or making recommendations
- Offering any views or advice to the Cabinet or Council in relation to any matter referred to the Committee for consideration
- General policy reviews, and making recommendations to the Council or the Cabinet to assist in the development of future policies and strategies
- Assisting the Council in the development of the Budget and Policy Framework by in-depth analysis of policy issues
- Monitoring the implementation of decisions to examine their effect and outcomes
- Referring to full Council, the Cabinet or appropriate Committee/Sub-Committee any matter which, following scrutiny a Committee determines should be brought to the attention of the Council, Cabinet or other appropriate Committee
- Preparation, review and monitoring of a work programme
- Establishing such commissioned work as appropriate after taking into account the availability of resources, the work programme and the matter under review

In addition, the Overview and Scrutiny Board has responsibility for:

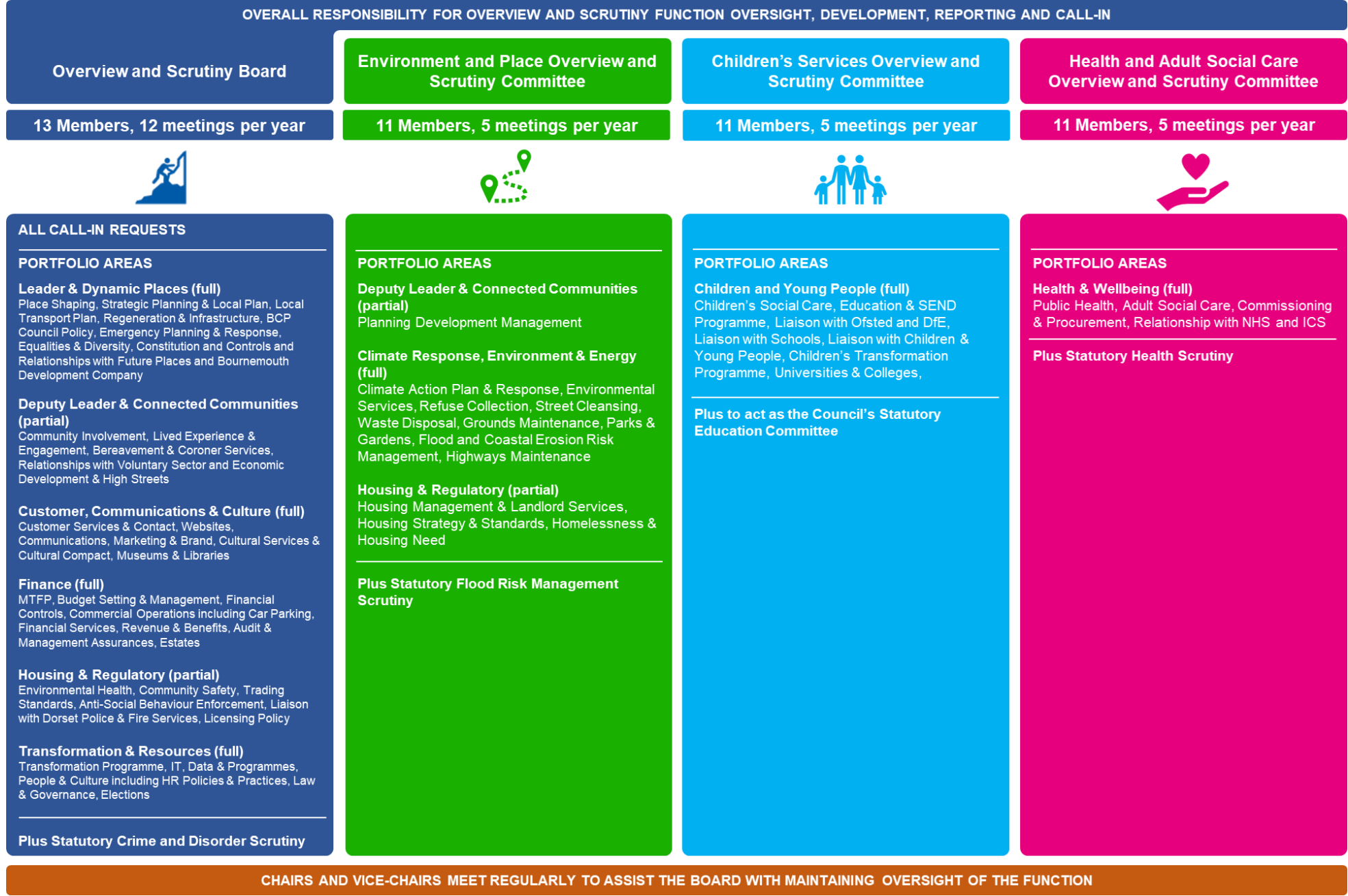
- Considering decisions that have been called-in
- Undertaking scrutiny of the Council's budget processes
- Carrying out the Council's scrutiny functions relating to crime and disorder, and discharging any other statutory duty for which the O&S function is responsible, other than those that relate to Flood Risk Management, Health, Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Education
- Overseeing the Council's overall O&S function including oversight of the work plans and use of resource across all O&S bodies
- Keeping the O&S function under review, suggesting changes as appropriate to ensure that it remains fit for purpose
- Reporting annually to Full Council on the output of the O&S function
- Maintaining oversight of the training needs of the whole O&S function.

Figure 1 below provides an outline of the responsibilities of each Committee.

The remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Board and Committees is based on the division of Portfolio Holder responsibilities. Portfolio Holders may report to more than one Overview and Scrutiny body.

Portfolio Holder responsibilities are changeable and from time to time it may be necessary to modify the designation of functions across the four Overview and Scrutiny bodies.

Figure One –Overview and Scrutiny Structure



COMMISSIONED WORK

In addition to Committee meetings, the Overview and Scrutiny Board and Committees may commission work to be undertaken as they consider necessary after taking into account the availability of resources, the work programme and the matter under review.

Each O&S body is limited to one commission at a time to ensure availability of resources.

a) **Working Groups** – a small group of Councillors and Officers gathered to consider a specific issue and report back to the full Board/ Committee, or make recommendations to Cabinet or Council within a limited timescale. Working Groups usually meet once or twice, and are often non-public;

b) **Sub-Committees** – a group of Councillors delegated a specific aspect of the main Board/ Committee's work for ongoing, in-depth monitoring. May be time limited or be required as a long-standing Committee. Sub-Committees are often well suited to considering performance-based matters that require scrutiny oversight. Sub-Committees usually meet in public;

c) **Task and finish groups** – a small group of Councillors tasked with investigating a particular issue and making recommendations on this issue, with the aim of influencing wider Council policy. The area of investigation will be carefully scoped and will culminate in a final report, usually with recommendations to Cabinet or Council. Task and finish groups may work over the course of a number of months and take account of a wide variety of evidence, which can be resource intensive. For this reason, the number of these groups must be carefully prioritised by scrutiny members to ensure the work can progress at an appropriate pace for the final outcome to have influence;

d) **Inquiry Days** – with a similar purpose to task and finish groups, inquiry days seek to understand and make recommendations on an issue by talking to a wide range of stakeholders and considering evidence relating to that issue, within one or two days. Inquiry days have similarities to the work of Government Select Committees. Inquiry days are highly resource intensive but can lead to swift, meaningful outcomes and recommendations that can make a difference to Council policy; and

e) **Rapporteurs or scrutiny member champions** - individual Councillors or pairs of Councillors tasked with investigating or maintaining oversight of a particular issue and reporting back to the main Board/ Committee on its findings. A main Committee can use these reports to facilitate its work prioritisation. Rapporteurs will undertake informal work to understand an issue – such as discussions with Officers and Portfolio Holders, research and data analysis. Rapporteur work enables scrutiny members to collectively stay informed of a wide range of Council activity. This approach to the provision of information to scrutiny members also avoids valuable

Committee time being taken up with briefings in favour of more outcome-based scrutiny taking place at Committee.

These terms of reference should be read in conjunction with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules outlined in Part 4C of the Council's Constitution.

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BCP Council Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Work Plan. Updated 17.07.25

Guidance notes:

- 2/3 items per committee meeting is the recommended maximum for effective scrutiny.
- The Children's Services O&S Committee will approach work through a lens of **TBC**
- Items requiring further scoping are identified and should be scoped using the Key Lines of Enquiry tool.



	Subject and background	How will the scrutiny be done?	Lead Officer/Portfolio Holder	Report Information
Meeting Date: 15 September 2025				
1.	Children and Young Peoples (CYP) Mental Health (MH) Transformation Update (CAMHS Transformation Update)	Committee Report	Programme Lead – Mental Health CYP MHLDA Commissioning Team	Was the second proactive priority chosen by the Committee Deferred from March and June meetings
2.	Alternative Provision Improvement Plan	Committee Report	Head of School Inclusion, Places & Capital	Was requested by the Committee in March 2025
3.	SEND Improvement Update - SEND Budget Pressures	Committee Report	Director of Education and Skills	Recurring item
	Compliments and Complaints Report	Information only		

Key: Pre-Decision Scrutiny Pro-active Scrutiny



	BCP Safeguarding Children Annual Report	Information only		
Meeting Date: 25 November 2025				
1.	HOLD FOR BUDGET SCRUTINY			
2.	Permanent Exclusions & Suspensions	Committee Report	TBC	Was agreed to come as Committee report in March 2025 meeting
3.	SEND Sufficiency Strategy – - Including verbal update from John Coughlan			
Meeting Date: 27 January 2026				
1.	Reserved for pre-decision or reactive scrutiny decision or reactive scrutiny consult Cabinet Forward Plan			
2.	Item to be selected from Pro-Active Scrutiny topic list			
3.	Item to be selected from Pro-Active Scrutiny topic list			
Items with Dates to be allocated				
	Annual report from Corporate Parenting Board to include information on Children in Care	Committee Report	TBC	Enable the Committee to maintain oversight of this issue and target scrutiny as required.

Key: Pre-Decision Scrutiny Pro-active Scrutiny

	To include details of any protected characteristics detailed within the Equalities Act			
	Children's Services Data Toolkit	TBC	TBC	To enable the Committee to have a toolkit to consider data relating to CS
	Strengthening Families, Supporting Communities Update (New Service Delivery Model)	TBC	TBC	Was suggested by Officers but was not chosen as a priority by the Committee
	Post 16 Provision	TBC	TBC	Was suggested by Officers but was not chosen as a priority by the Committee
	CS Budget Updates	TBC	TBC	Was suggested by Officers but was not chosen as a priority by the Committee
Working Groups				
	Budget Development 2025/26	2 working group sessions.	Completed in w/c 11/11/24.	Agreed for inclusion of the workplan at the 24th July 24 meeting
	Family Hubs across BCP	Proposed outline of working group included in scrutiny request	TBC	Requires full scoping Appendix E - Request for consideration of an issue by OS Family Hubs - Cllr Brown 003.pdf (bcpcouncil.gov.uk)
	Transition of mental health services from children to adults			CS O&S CAMHS.docx

Key:  Pre-Decision Scrutiny  Pro-active Scrutiny

				Was chosen by the Committee as their top priority after conclusion of Family Hubs working group
	The increased use of and funding for TAs in schools to support SEND and increase inclusion			Scrutiny request form TAs.docx Was chosen as second priority
	Child Exploitation inc knife crime – To consider and track Cabinet's response to the recommendations and how they could potentially be furthered by the Committee and whether this topic should be revisited by a working group			Discussed at the meeting of 24 July 2024. Was chosen as third priority
	Parent / Carer Forums and wider family engagement channels used by BCP Children's Services and health colleagues			Scrutiny request form Was chosen as fourth priority
	Review of the quality of food served to children at our schools			Scrutiny request form School meals.docx Was chosen as fifth priority
Item Suggestions for Briefing Sessions				
	POTENTIAL BRIEFING SESSIONS	TBC	TBC	TBC
Update Items				

Key:  Pre-Decision Scrutiny  Pro-active Scrutiny

<p>The following items of information have been requested as updates to the Committee.</p> <p>The Committee may wish to receive these in an alternative to format to Committee updates (e.g. by emailed briefing note outside of the Committee) to reserve capacity in Committee meetings for items of value-added scrutiny.</p>				
	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) To receive KPIs to include updates on CMOEs and NEETs	Committee Report	Head of Performance for Children and Young People Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People	Consideration being given to include in data tool kit
Annual Report				
•	Virtual School Head Annual Report	Committee Report	Headteacher of Virtual School and College Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People	To be received annually in January as an annual update.
•	School Admissions Arrangements for community and maintained schools	Committee Report	Director of Education	To be received annually in September/November as an annual update.
•	Youth Offending Service Annual Youth Justice Plan	Committee Report	Service Manager, Dorset YJS	To be received annually in June as an annual update.
•	Annual Report from CPB to include info on CIC	Committee Report	TBC	TBC
•	Annual Report – Complaints and Compliments	Committee Report		To note the information only report – in March

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CABINET FORWARD PLAN – 1 SEPTEMBER 2025 TO 31 DECEMBER 2025

(PUBLICATION DATE – 05 September 2025)



What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Council Budget Monitoring 2025/26 at Quarter One	To provide information on budget monitoring for 2025/26	No	Cabinet 1 Oct 2025	All Wards	n/a	n/a	Nicola Webb	Open
Community Governance Review - Final Recommendations	To consider the proposals of the Task and Finish Group and to recommend to Council the final recommendations for the review of community governance for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole	Yes	Cabinet 1 Oct 2025 Council 14 Oct 2025	All Wards	Existing parish and town councils, local representatives, local community and residents' groups, residents within the areas proposed for any new local councils	This is defined as stage 3 of the process and will include a 12 week consultation period for any interested party to respond using both online and paper forms.	Janie Berry, Richard Jones	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Corporate Performance Report - Q1	Progress update on performance against key measures in the Corporate Strategy.	No	Cabinet 1 Oct 2025	All Wards	n/a	n/a	Isla Reynolds	Open
Extension of the Term of Office of the Chair of the Management Committee of the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum	To seek approval of Cabinet for the extension of the Term of Office for the current Chair of the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery & Museum Management Committee due to the imminent change of governance.	No	Cabinet 1 Oct 2025	All Wards			Sarah Newman, Matti Raudsepp	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
AFC Bournemouth stadium expansion. Land Requirements and Disposal	To provide Cabinet with several options and a recommendation for the regearing of existing leases and disposal of land at Kings Park to AFC Bournemouth	No	Cabinet 1 Oct 2025 Council 14 Oct 2025	Boscombe East & Pokesdown; Boscombe West; East Cliff & Springbourn e; Littledown & Iford; Queen's Park			Chris Shephard	Open
BCP Council Libraries – Draft Library Strategy	To present the key elements of the new draft Library Strategy ahead of a second stage consultation process.	Yes	Overview and Scrutiny Board 22 Sep 2025 Cabinet 1 Oct 2025	All Wards			Lynda Anderson, Matti Raudsepp	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Nitrogen Mitigation for Poole Harbour Supplementary Planning Document	To consider an updated strategy for the management of nutrient mitigation.	Yes	Cabinet 1 Oct 2025	Alderney & Bourne Valley; Bearwood & Merley; Broadstone; Canford Cliffs; Canford Heath; Creekmoor; Hamworthy; Newtown & Heatherlands; Oakdale; Parkstone; Penn Hill; Poole Town; Talbot & Branksome Woods			Caroline Peach	Open
Residents Card	Approval of the Residents Card offer	Yes	Cabinet 1 Oct 2025	All Wards			Dawn Clifford, Amena Matin	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Events Framework	The Events Framework provides a documented approach to events on outdoor council land bringing together all event processes and procedures.	No	Cabinet 1 Oct 2025	All Wards			Amanda Barrie, Helen Wildman	Open
Nitrogen Mitigation for Poole Harbour Land Purchase	To consider contribution towards a land purchase to be used for nitrogen mitigation for Poole Harbour.	Yes	Cabinet 1 Oct 2025	Alderney & Bourne Valley; Bearwood & Merley; Broadstone; Canford Cliffs; Canford Heath; Creekmoor; Hamworthy; Newtown & Heatherlands; Oakdale; Parkstone; Penn Hill; Poole Town; Talbot & Branksome Woods			Caroline Peach	Fully exempt

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Designation of Lilliput Neighbourhood Forum and Area	Cabinet to assess the forum's application, consider feedback from the consultation (14/07/25 - 25/08/25) and take the decision to formally designate the Lilliput Neighbourhood Forum and Area	No	Cabinet 1 Oct 2025	Canford Cliffs; Parkstone; Penn Hill	Planning and Transport		Rebecca Landman	Open
Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy	To seek adoption of the Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy	No	Cabinet 1 Oct 2025	All Wards	Consultation included in the Strategy development	n/a	Martin Whitchurch	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Get Dorset & Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Working Plan - GDBCPWP	<p>'Get Britain Working' is a national initiative from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). All areas of England must develop local 'Get Britain Working' plans.</p> <p>This report seeks approval to agree and submit the Get Dorset & Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Working Plan - GDBCPWP to Government.</p>	No	Cabinet 1 Oct 2025	All Wards	Approval from the Stakeholders required are on these dates. DWP - tbc Dorset Skills Board 01 Sep 25 ICB - 11 Sep 25 BCP Council 01 Oct 25 Dorset Council 09 Oct 25	Consultation is not required before the decision.	Amy Walton	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
BCP Council Domestic Abuse Strategies	To gain agreement by Cabinet to publish the Prevention of Domestic Abuse Strategy, Safe Accommodation Strategy and the Perpetrator Strategy including delivery plans.	Yes	Cabinet 29 Oct 2025	All Wards	People with lived experience, Health, Social Care, Police, third sector specialist organisations, Local Providers have all been consulted prior to the Public consultation.	Public consultation 09-03-25 to 28-04-25 O&S Safe Accommodation Working Group.	m	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Plant-based and reduced meat and dairy diets: draft position statement and action plan	The Overview and Scrutiny committee on 11 September 2024 recommended that officers review the suggested draft position statement on plant-based diets and develop a set of Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound (SMART) actions to be considered by BCP Council aimed at encouraging and promoting these diets. This is what this report seeks to achieve.	No	Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee 8 Oct 2025 Cabinet 29 Oct 2025	All Wards	Councillors and heads of service related to commercial services about the economic viability of the action plan.	Review and comment on report with suggested adaptations/amendments.	Martin Gardner	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
The development of a framework of registered housing providers (RPs) to deliver affordable housing using BCP sites	To set up a framework of RPs to help deliver affordable housing within the CHNAS pipeline programme and help increase overall housing supply meeting the Housing Strategy priority of meeting future growth needs. To dispose of sites through the framework via a tender process. Sites to be agreed by council but ones that have already been identified for housing delivery and our in the pipeline CHNAS programme.	No	Cabinet 29 Oct 2025	All Wards			Kerry-Marie Ruff	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Poole Bay, Poole Harbour & Wareham FCERM Strategy Review	To seek cabinet approval to commence the project delivery and delegate authority to Director level for project delivery to the point we can bring an updated Strategy to cabinet for approval and adoption	Yes	Cabinet 29 Oct 2025	Boscombe East & Pokesdown; Boscombe West; Bournemouth Central; Canford Cliffs; Creekmoor; East Cliff & Springbourne; East Southbourne & Tuckton; Hamworthy; Oakdale; Parkstone; Penn Hill; Poole Town; West Southbourne; Westbourne & West Cliff			Alan Frampton	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
BCP Homes Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report	To provide an overview of complaint handling performance, lessons learned and compliance against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.	No	Cabinet 29 Oct 2025	All Wards	BCP Homes residents will have been provided with regular information on complaint handling performance through published information and resident panels.		Seamus Doran	Open
Housing Development at Surrey Road	Transfer of property from HRA to General fund.	No	Cabinet 29 Oct 2025 Council 9 Dec 2025	Talbot & Branksome Woods			Jonathan Thornton	Open
BCP Homes performance	To provide quarterly performance to Cabinet to provide assurance that the management of council homes is effective.	No	Cabinet 29 Oct 2025	All Wards	Council tenants and leaseholders BCP Homes Advisory Board	Through established meetings	Kelly Deane	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
BCP Homes Governance review	To consider proposals to ensure that effective governance arrangements are in place that supports councillors in ensuring that council housing is managed effectively and that the outcomes of the Regulator of Social Housing's regulatory consumer standards are delivered.	No	Cabinet 29 Oct 2025	All Wards	Council tenants and leaseholders BCP Homes Advisory Board	Informal process through meetings and away days.	Kelly Deane	Open
BCP Homes - Resident Engagement and Communications Strategy	This strategy will set out how BCP Homes will engage and communicate with council tenants and leaseholders to ensure that their views are taken into account and shape the services that are delivered to them.	No	Cabinet 29 Oct 2025		Council tenants and leaseholders.	Consultation will be through the Residents Policy Panel.	Kelly Deane, Seamus Doran	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Adult Social Care Prevention Strategy	To present and seek approval on the new Adult Social Care Prevention Strategy	Yes	Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee 23 Sep 2025 Cabinet 29 Oct 2025	All Wards	The Voluntary and Community Sector The ASC Workforce Residents of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole The local Care Market	Engagement and consultation will be completed prior to the presentation of the strategy	Emma Senior	Open
Home to School Transport	Present the findings from the in depth review completed by Edge Public Solutions on our Home to School Transport function, with a particular focus on how to transform the function to reduce costs and operate a more efficient service. Provide a recommended route forward and secure approval for next steps.	No	Cabinet 29 Oct 2025 Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee 25 Nov 2025	All Wards			Lisa Linscott	Open

What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Special School Funding	It is recommended to: - Note the contents of this report - Agree for this piece of work to proceed as noted and be further considered with financial modelling available	No	Cabinet 29 Oct 2025	All Wards			Kerrie Ainley, Chris Lee, Lisa Linscott, Shirley McGillick	Open
Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4)	To present outputs from Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) consultation and to present proposed LTP4 Policy Document complete with Implementation Plan for approval/adoption.	Yes	Overview and Scrutiny Board 17 Nov 2025 Cabinet 26 Nov 2025 Council 9 Dec 2025	All Wards	Residents (BCP and neighbouring authorities), partners, organisations and businesses that operate/exist in BCP area and are impacted by transport.	Exact dates tbc, but 6 to 8 week public consultation required, note: LTP4 engagement was facilitated in Spring 2024.	Wendy Lane, Richard Pincroft	Open

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Corporate Performance Report - Q2	Progress update on performance against key measures in the Corporate Strategy.	No	Cabinet 26 Nov 2025	All Wards	n/a	n/a	Isla Reynolds	Open
BCP Homes Asset Management and 30 year Business Plans	To set out and seek approval for an asset management plan to ensure that council homes are maintained to appropriate standards and a 30-year business plan that sets the long term funding for maintenance, new homes and services to council tenants and leaseholders.	No	Cabinet 26 Nov 2025	All Wards	Council tenants and leaseholders BCP Homes Advisory Board	Through established meetings, resident panels and feedback from tenants and leaseholders.	Kelly Deane, Matti Raudsepp	Open
Princess Road Feasibility		No	Cabinet 26 Nov 2025				Gemma Parry	

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Carters Quay Update	To update Councillors on current status and options.	Yes	Cabinet 26 Nov 2025 Council 9 Dec 2025	Hamworthy			Jonathan Thornton	Fully exempt
Waste Strategy for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole	To approve the ambitions, principles and a delivery framework to manage waste produced from homes and businesses across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole for the next 10 years.	Yes	Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee 19 Nov 2025 Cabinet 26 Nov 2025 Council 9 Dec 2025	All Wards	Residents, businesses, special interest groups,		Georgina Fry	Open

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Bus Subsidy Review	To consider the outcome of a full network review of the council's subsidised local bus services and to recommend changes to Council to support budget setting for 2026/27 as well as informing the Medium Term Financial Plan.	Yes	Cabinet 17 Dec 2025 Council 24 Feb 2026	All Wards	Bus Passengers Bus Passenger Representative Organisations (including groups representing older people and people with disabilities) Schools Bus Operators Neighbouring authorities	Public consultation 16 June to 27 July 2025. On-line plus on-bus paper surveys.	John McVey, Richard Pincroft	Open
Investment & Development Directorate - Regeneration Programme	To provide a bi-annual update on the progress of the Council's regeneration programme	No	Overview and Scrutiny Board 8 Dec 2025 Cabinet 17 Dec 2025	All Wards			Amena Matin, Jonathan Thornton	Open

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Bournemouth Development Company: Winter Gardens Site Development Plan	To present Cabinet with a new Site Development Plan for the Winter Gardens.	Yes	Overview and Scrutiny Board 8 Dec 2025 Cabinet 17 Dec 2025	Bournemouth Central			Rob Dunford	Open
Housing and Property Compliance Update (Housing Revenue Account)	To provide information on how the council is meeting its responsibilities in ensuring that all council housing is managed to ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.	No	Cabinet 17 Dec 2025	All Wards	Council tenants and leaseholders BCP Homes Advisory Board	Through established meetings and residents panels.	Matti Raudsepp	Open
Financing Nature	To recommend options for improving nature through use of mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain	No	Cabinet 17 Dec 2025	All Wards			Ruth Wharton, Martin Whitchurch	Open

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Supported & Specialist Housing Strategy 2025 to 2035	To introduce the Supported & Specialist Housing Strategy for the next 10 years	No	Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee 9 Jul 2025 Cabinet 14 Jan 2026	All Wards	Experts by experience, Adults Social Care, Childrens Social Care, Adults Commissioning, Childrens Commissioning, NHS Dorset, Dorset Healthcare, Local Registered Providers	Workshops and meetings Autumn 2025	m	Open
Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget setting 2026-27	To seek approval for rent and other charges to tenants and leaseholders for 2026-27 and proposed expenditure on the repair and maintenance of council homes.	No	Cabinet 4 Feb 2026	All Wards	Council tenants and leaseholders BCP Homes Advisory Board	Through established meetings and panels	Kelly Deane	Open

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BCP Homes Performance	To provide quarterly performance to Cabinet to provide assurance that the management of council homes is effective	No	Cabinet 4 Feb 2026	All Wards	Council tenants and leaseholders BCP Homes Advisory Board	Through established meetings	Kelly Deane	Open
Corporate Performance Report - Q3	Progress update on performance against key measures in the Corporate Strategy.	No	Cabinet 4 Mar 2026	All Wards	n/a	n/a	Isla Reynolds	Open

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Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026-2031	To inform on the impact of the Strategy since 2021, propose new Strategy and agree the related Delivery Plan	No	Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee 25 Feb 2026 Cabinet 1 Apr 2026	All Wards			Rachel Stewart	Open
BCP Homes Performance	To provide quarterly performance to Cabinet to provide assurance that the management of council homes is effective	No	Cabinet 27 May 2026	All Wards	Council tenants and leaseholders BCP Homes Advisory Board	Through established meetings	Kelly Deane	Open

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Junction Road Development	To seek approval to develop a section of green space and garage area to provide 4 new affordable rent homes as part of BCP Homes housing stock	Yes	Cabinet Council Dates to be confirmed	Hamworthy			Jonathan Thornton	Open
DfE SEND review next steps	To consider the DfE review next steps	No	Cabinet Date to be confirmed				Rachel Gravett, Shirley McGillick, Sharon Muldoon	Fully exempt
Children's Services Early Help Offer	Summary of findings and recommendations from an ongoing review of our current Early Help services	No	Cabinet Date to be confirmed	All Wards			Zafer Yilkan	Open

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