



Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership

Annual Report 2019-2020



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FOREWORD – INDEPENDENT CHAIR



This is my final annual report as Chair. For the first half of the year I chaired the Gateshead Children’s Board; from September 2019 we became the Gateshead Safeguarding Children’s Partnership (GSCP). Just one small change of name, but larger changes in structure and purpose, in response to the Government’s legislation. The statutory responsibilities for overseeing safeguarding rest now equally between the 3 “Statutory Partners” – the Council, the Clinical Commissioning Group and the Police.

As I write, the partners are appointing an Independent Scrutineer for their work, and have made interim arrangements for chairing the Partnership, to allow time to consider options and determine a solution that is right for Gateshead in the longer term, in these changing times.

When the changes were first signposted many years ago, I committed to supporting Gateshead through the transition to the new arrangements before standing down. Four years is long enough to remain as Independent Chair – after a time I run the risk of “marking my own homework”.

Whilst the Gateshead Partnership rightly retains a clear focus on the needs of children and families within Gateshead, there is a greater concentration on shared working across the Northumbria region, to exchange best practice, support each other, and provide a continuity of service and approach across the region. As this report shows, plans have been created and implemented to develop this new way of working, with a greater attention to improving the quality of direct practice that professionals of all agencies demonstrate in their work with children and families.

During the year we made real progress in developing our new arrangements, and strengthening our shared regional work. We led on securing funding for a regional project Tackling Child Exploitation. We streamlined our work on Missing, Slavery, Exploited and Trafficked children. Our partnership working became consistently stronger and deeper.

Then out of a clear blue sky came Covid-19. Although it appeared in Gateshead at the very end of the year that this report covers, it is relevant to discuss what we learnt from it in this report. In the crisis that hit our borough and our nation, our true nature was revealed, and the partnership within Gateshead proved itself to be extremely strong.

Covid-19 hit Gateshead hard. There are high levels of deprivation within the borough, and an age profile which has a higher than the average proportion of elderly people, and these factors meant we suffered high levels of infection, and deaths. But it brought out the best in partners. Services adapted extremely rapidly to the new challenges, communications were fast and efficient, and partnership working flourished. Some of the new ways of working – using video systems for meetings, for example – have proved to be more efficient than the old ways. Schools remained open to support vulnerable children and the children of key workers.

Our young people stay at the heart of our work, so I am pleased that the report shows how much we have managed to engage directly with children and young people, whose ideas always inspire us.

GSCP Annual Report 2019-2020

As ever warm thanks are due to our Board Manager Saira Park, and the support she has received from Jon Gaines and from partners across Gateshead.

As I leave Gateshead Safeguarding Partnership this autumn, I feel confident in the strength of the partnership, the quality of the services in place, and the engagement of the wider community with our work. It has been an honour and a joy to work with you all.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Ennals', with a long, sweeping horizontal line underneath.

Sir Paul Ennals
Independent Chair
Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership

INTRODUCTION

This Annual Report covers a period of time when the Local Safeguarding Children Board transitioned to the Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership. This change was required by statute in line with the implementation of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

The three Safeguarding Partners ¹are required to publish an Annual Report that sets out what they have done as a result of the arrangements, including on child safeguarding practice reviews, and how effective these arrangements have been in practice. This should be published at least once in every 12 -month period, and include:

- evidence of the impact of the work of the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies, including training, on outcomes for children and families from early help to looked-after children and care leavers
- an analysis of any areas where there has been little or no evidence of progress on agreed priorities
- a record of decisions and actions taken by the partners in the report's period (or planned to be taken) to implement the recommendations of any local and national child safeguarding practice reviews, including any resulting improvements

The report will be published on the GSCP website – www.gatesheadsafeguarding.ork.uk



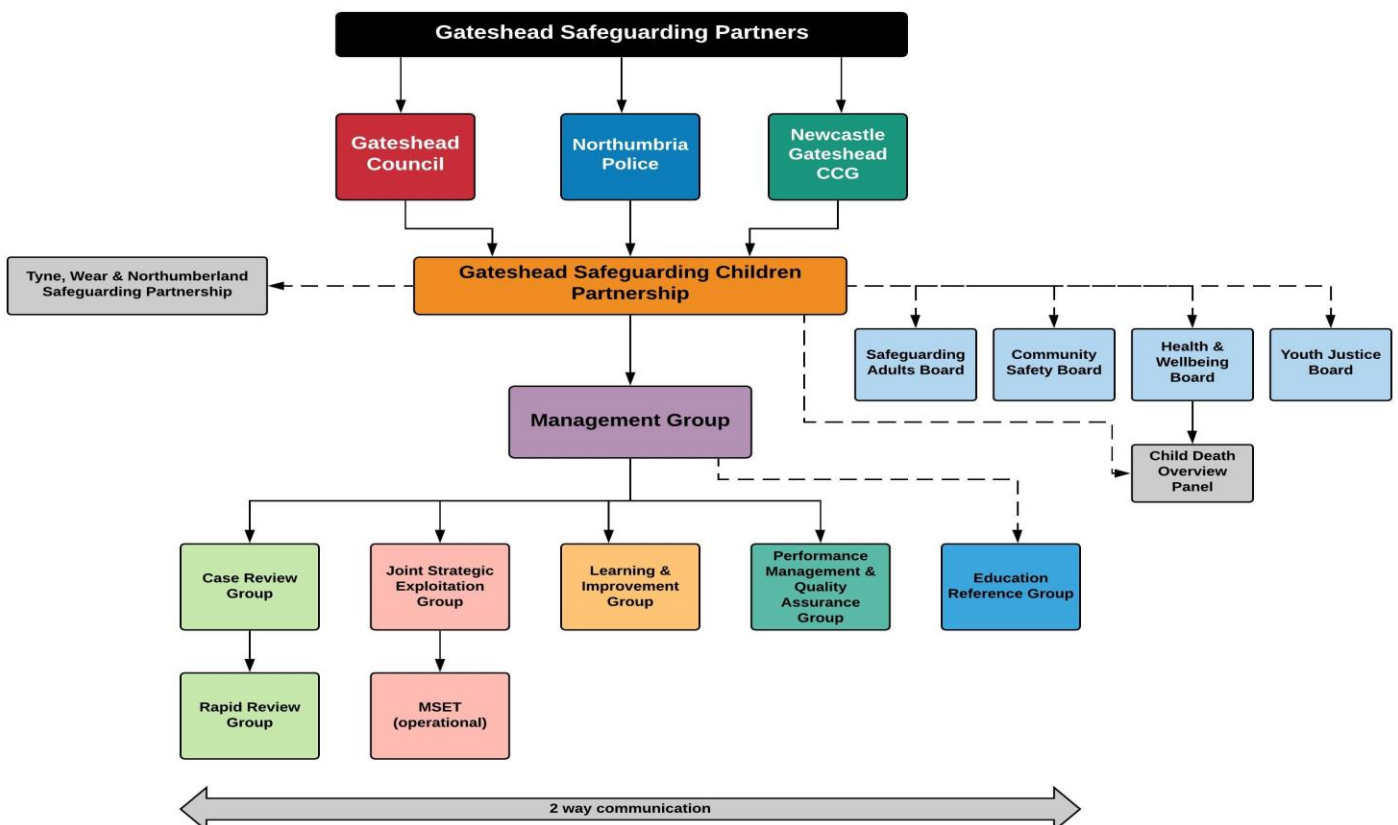
¹ The Three Safeguarding Partners for Gateshead are Gateshead Council, Newcastle Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group and Northumbria Police

MULTI AGENCY SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2020-2021

Many local organisations and agencies have a duty under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 to ensure that they consider the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children when carrying out their functions. The responsibility for this join-up locally rests with the three safeguarding partners who have a shared and equal duty to make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area. The Section 11 audit this year was undertaken sub regionally under the umbrella of the Tyne, Wear and Northumberland Safeguarding Partnership; this provided the opportunity for organisations that cover more than one Local Authority area to provide one locally adapted report and enabled some comparative work to be considered

The LSCB arrangements transitioned into the Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership (GSCP) in 2019. The new arrangements and plan can be found [here](#). This plan covers the transitional period of September 2019 – September 2020. A new plan will be published at the end of the transitional year outlining the new arrangements.

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 also removed the statutory responsibility for the Child Death Review (CDR) process from LSCBs and gave it to Local Authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups who are known as the Child Death Review Partners. It was agreed by the Child Death Review Partners that CDR would now report annually to the Health and Well-Being Board, with the annual report being provided to the GSCP for information. It was also agreed that the South of Tyne Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) would combine with the North of Tyne CDOP from April 2020 to comply with the statutory guidance to review at least 60 child deaths per year, forming The [North and South of Tyne Child Death Overview Panel](#).



WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED?

What we said we would do	How we said we would do this	How do we know we have done it
<p>Develop a Gateshead Safeguarding Plan in line with Working Together 2018</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on the strong history of multi-agency working, with robust and well-established safeguarding arrangements in place across the Partnership. • Learn from others e.g. Bexley • Agreed minimal change during the transitional phase but take the opportunity to streamline work in terms of moving towards a practice focus model • Address key requirements in Working Together 2018 re new expectations • Explore & develop scrutiny arrangements for the partnership • Continue to engage with children and young people • Continue to participate and contribute to the regional safeguarding forum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Published and circulated the Gateshead Safeguarding Plan at local and national level • Developed clear criteria outlining the Child Safeguarding Practice review process • Continued to listen to children and young people in order to influence the impact of issues that matter to them • We have maintained the commitment from multi-agency partners • New arrangements are progressing e.g. development of memorandum of understanding, scrutiny framework
<p>Strengthen regional work and maximise the use of resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the Business Manager Collaboration Plan • Implement <u>Early Adopter</u> regional work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding Partner attendance at Early Adopter work • North and South of Tyne CDOP established – in place and functioning • Shared training pack developed based on learning from regional reviews <p>Regional multi-agency scorecard, dataset and reporting templates agreed for implementation in 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training pack used to inform 2019-2020 training offer

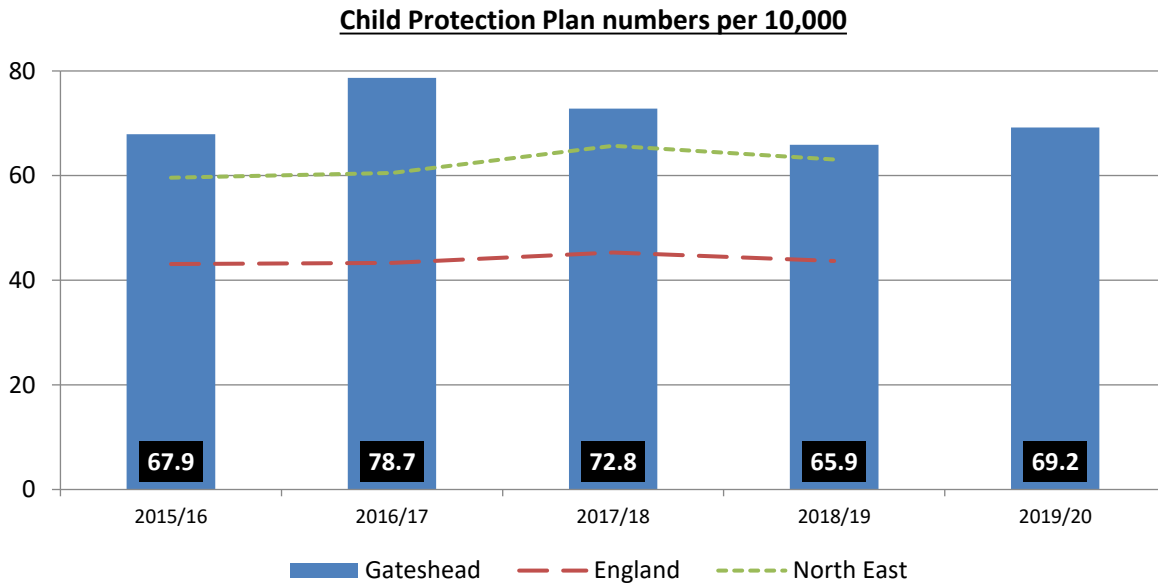
What we said we would do	How we said we would do this	How do we know we have done it
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning from practice is embedded into future training for the workforce • Shared learning undertaken across the region
<p>Seek assurance that all partner agencies are compliant with their statutory safeguarding children duties under <u>Section 11 (S11) Children Act 2004</u></p>	<p>Lead on developing and implementing sub-regional S11 audit.</p> <p>Same audit tool to be used across 6 areas. Audit tool sent out at the same time, agencies who cross LA boundaries only have to complete one audit.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gateshead Business Manager developed audit tool and guidance, and coordinated returns. • Sub-regional Section 11 report presented to the GSCP in 2020 following collation across the 6 areas. • Partners reported ease of use and findings will be tested as part of either local or sub-regional challenge events. • The report provides assurance to the GSCP that safeguarding is robust and compliant in Gateshead the three safeguarding partners and all relevant agencies responded alongside British Transport Police, CAFCASS, North East Ambulance Service who provided their own sub regional s11 reports. • CCG also sent out S11 audit to GP practices.
<p>Contribute to the development of a safeguarding children procedure manual covering the North and South of Tyne</p>	<p>Assurance provided that Partnership members who cover the North and South of Tyne practice within one shared safeguarding procedure manual. Children and their families will be subject to the same guidance and procedures across the six areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures manual is live and available online – link • The same procedures are available to all front-line staff across six LA areas, for organisations such as CNTW and the Police, this means there is one manual for the area they cover.
<p>Introduce the Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review Model</p>	<p>Develop a sub-regional model and roll this out to all partners and our sub regional partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model in place, being used within all six LA areas. • Provides robust processes for rapid review, and Information gathering, decision making and reporting.

What we said we would do	How we said we would do this	How do we know we have done it
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Panel have provided feedback stating they like the reporting template, which they find easy to follow and understand the rationale of decisions made.
<p>Oversee multi-agency support for children and their families through MSET and Return Home Interview (RHI) arrangements.</p>	<p>Review of missing protocol, including when children are offered a RHI</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Missing protocol has been updated, all children who go missing will be offered RHI, regardless of how long they have been missing. The missing process and RHIs will be kept under regular review. Proposal being developed to strengthen approach through regional strategic group and shared local area operational MSETs
<p>Ensure that missing children interviews are being undertaken in a timely manner and that information is being used to help disrupt and prevent further exploitation.</p>	<p>Review RHI arrangements and paperwork</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RHI form was reviewed and updated, to ensure push and pull factors are considered and allows for more narrative (including any previous missing episodes). Guidance notes for completion are available. RHI are now recorded on Carefirst (children's social care case management system). Business manager and police lead for missing delivered training to workers carrying out RHIs. The police report quality of interviews has improved significantly. This will be subject to regular review to ensure information from RHIs is being used to inform disruption.
<p>Lead on the bespoke Tackling Child Exploitation (TCE) support project on behalf of the region, promote good partner engagement and facilitate discussions.</p>	<p>Submit application to TCE support programme on behalf of partners across the region and support the process.</p>	<p>The application was successful. Discussions with Research in Practice and partners to commence January to develop project specification (by March), with view to agree delivery after April 2020.</p>

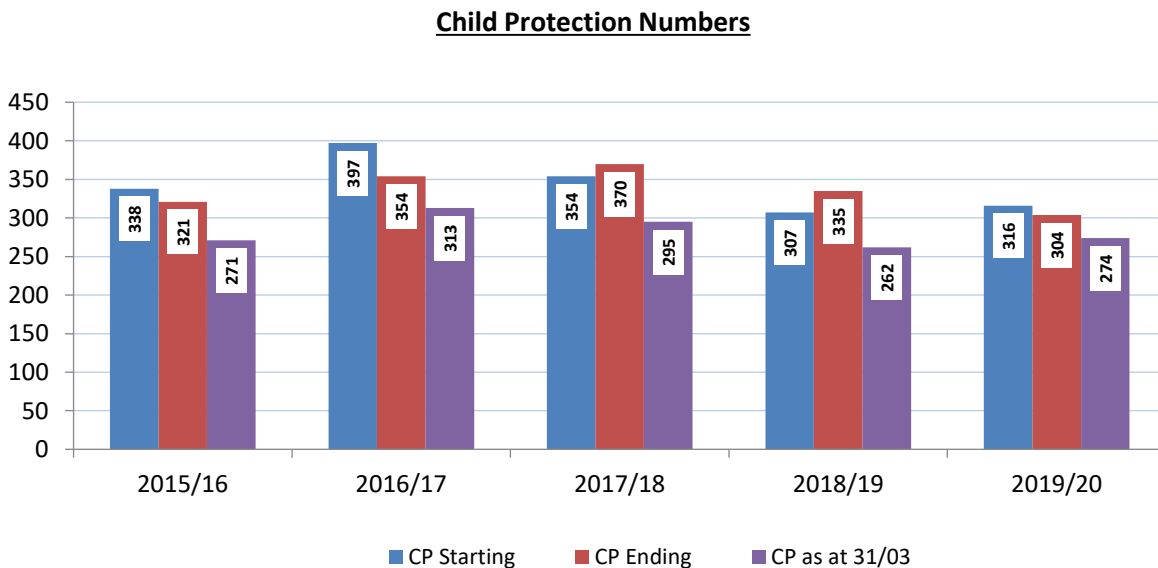
What we said we would do	How we said we would do this	How do we know we have done it
		<p>Project T&F group is being set up, will include relevant partners (across Northumbria Police force area), this will include representation from new Violence Reduction Unit.</p> <p>Discussions have taken place but delays due to COVID-19.</p>
<p>Complete a review of MSET and evaluate effectiveness and impact (regional collaboration)</p>	<p>Police-led review of MSET, including consultation of those involved – ensure learning from Northumberland’s Joint Targeted Area Inspection informs review.</p>	<p>Consultation with MSET panel members and SWs who have attended. Same survey being used with regional colleagues to allow comparison and identify any trends. Responses will be analysed and used to update the action plan.</p>

PERFORMANCE DATA AND INFORMATION

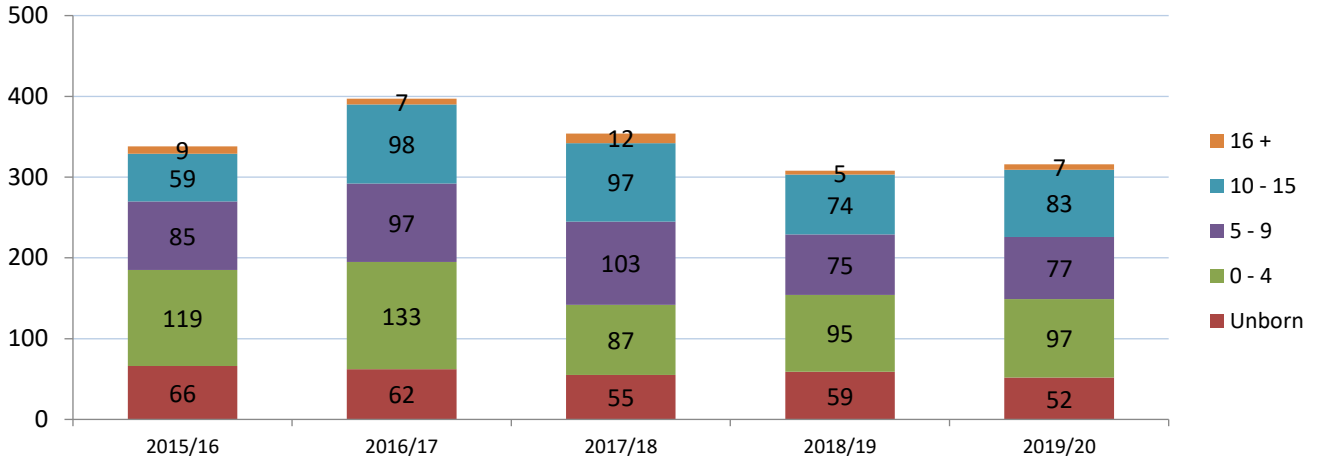
The GSCP Performance Management & Quality Assurance Group monitors performance information on behalf of the GSCP and reports regularly to the partnership against an agreed data set/performance dash board linked to priority areas.



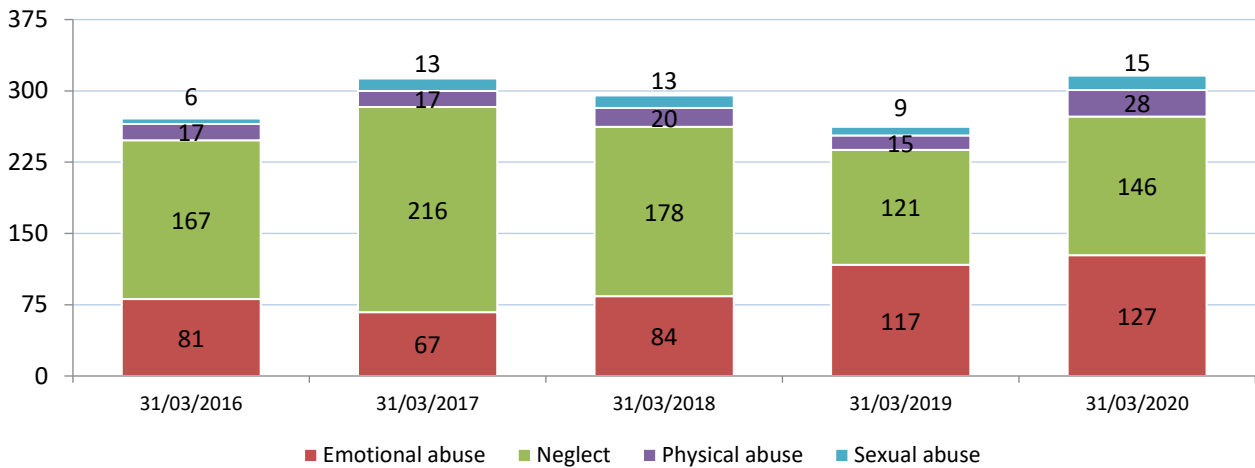
At year end there were **274** children from Gateshead subject to a Child Protection Plan, which is a rate of 69.2 per 10,000, which is higher than both the England rate of 43.7 and North East rate of 63.1 per 10,000 reported in 2018-2019. This is an increase of 12 per 10,000 on the previous year in Gateshead.



Age of Children when placed on a Child Protection Plan (Apr-Mar)

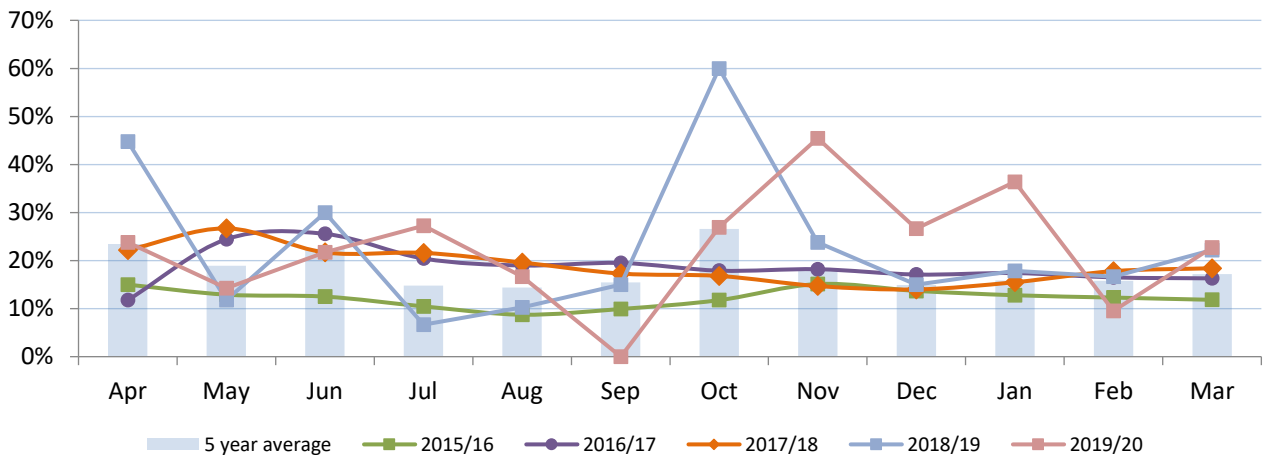


Child Protection Category at month end



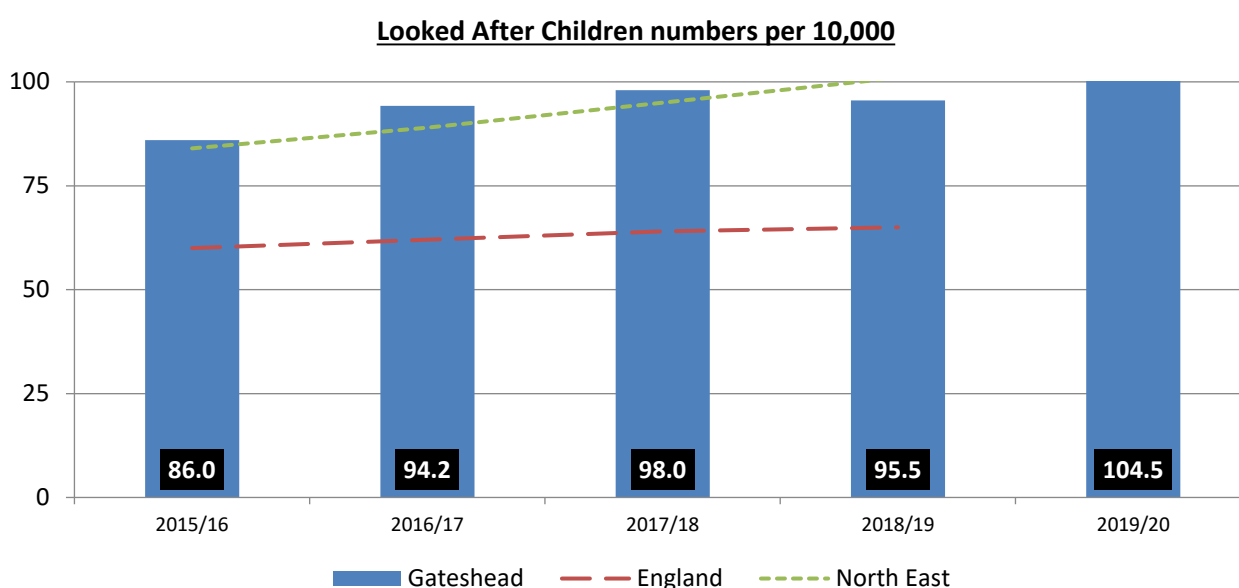
The category of neglect continues to remain the highest at 46.2% of all plans; as it was 46.2% reported at the end of March 2019. Neglect was followed by emotional abuse which accounts for 40.2% of plans, and a drop of about four percentage points from plans listed under emotional abuse in March 2019.

Performance Indicator: Percentage of children becoming the subject of Child Protection Plan for a 2nd or subsequent time



A continued, but steady increase, has been noted in the numbers of children who became subject to a plan for a second or subsequent time (74 of 316 plans that started in 2019-2020 or 23.4%) and work has been undertaken to understand more about the factors involved in these cases.

This reporting period saw an increase in the number of children who are Looked After by Gateshead Council. At year end the rate showed a 9% increase from the previous year end, and the rate continues to be higher than both the England rate of 65 and North East rate of 101, having reduced last year. The Looked After Children performance information indicates good placement stability and timely permanence planning. This data and information on outcomes is monitored regularly by Gateshead Council Children’s Social Care Performance Clinic, the Corporate Parenting Partnership, the Looked After Children Overview and Scrutiny Committee and a number of other partner agency forums.



Other data to note included:

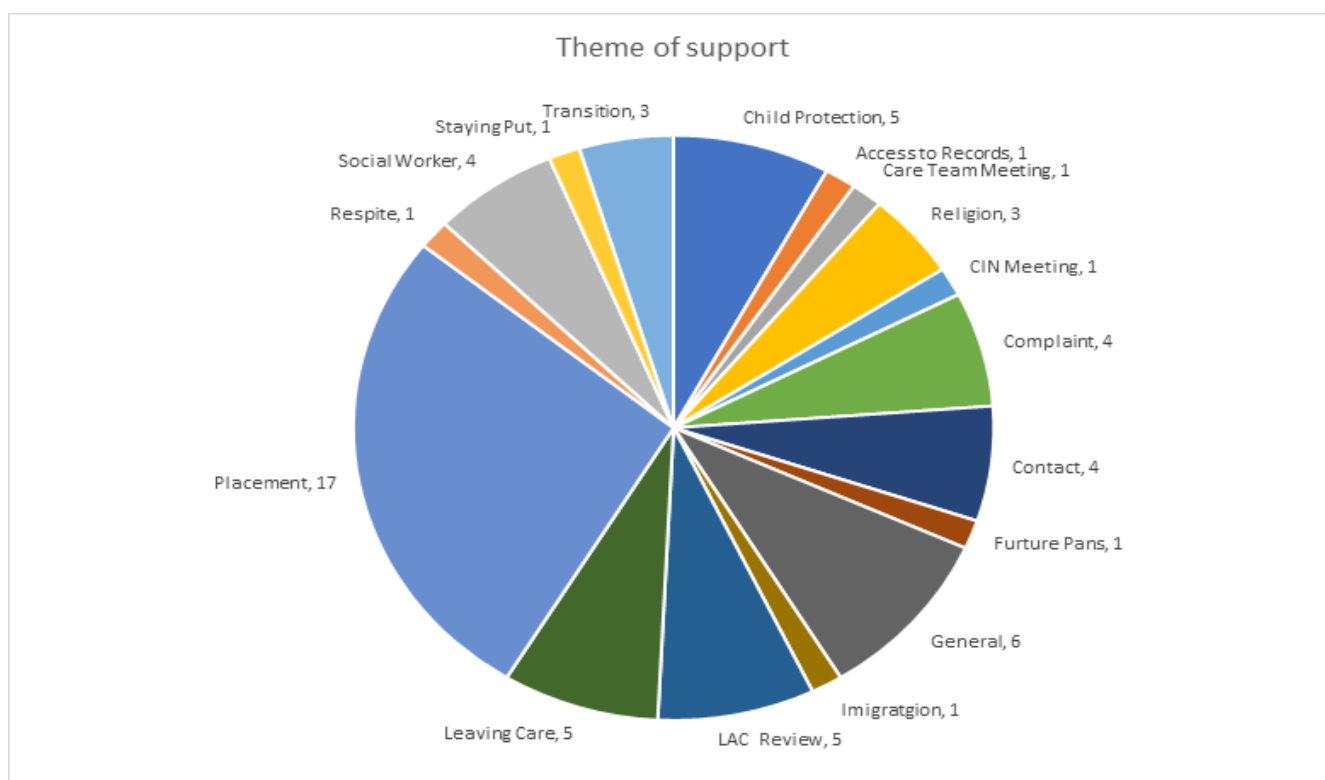
- Child Concern Notifications and contacts to Children’s Social Care decreased from previous year’s level by about 9% - this decrease follows on a significant decrease of about 38% the previous year; the number of referrals also decreased by just over 14%.
- In 2019-20, a high number of assessments undertaken by Children’s Social Care identified mental health (47.2%) and domestic abuse (59.2%) as a factor. Other common factors included alcohol or drug misuse, socially unacceptable behaviour, neglect and emotional abuse. And the numbers of cases where domestic abuse is a factor is higher than the England average (50.6%). The socially unacceptable behaviour rate (17.6%) is also higher than England (8.2%).
- There was a 6.5% decrease in Child in Need (CIN) Assessments being completed in 2019-2020 from 2018-2019 level, whilst there was also a decrease in CIN assessments being authorised within timescales. The % of CIN assessments completed in timescales (87.9%) is higher than the latest reported national average (83.1%) and regional average (79.8%). There has been a 7.5% increase in Section 47 investigations over previous period, and in terms of number of children for whom the Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) was held, an 8.4% increase has

been observed. Of those cases going to ICPC, 79.2% went on to require a Child Protection Plan, which indicates multi-agency agreement on the way to progress these cases

- 96.2% of ICPCs were held within the 15-day timescale (well above the regional average of 82% and national average of 78.7%). Attendance and contribution to CP conferences is monitored and remains strong overall, particularly for some partners e.g. Police. Work is ongoing to improve the contribution of some agencies to the process and also ensure sustained improvement against timescales for distribution of minutes

Advocacy

Advocacy is a fixed agenda item in both Looked After Children (LAC) reviews and Child Protection (CP) conferences, with Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) asking if referrals have been considered, if not already ongoing.



Between 1st April 2019 and 18th April 2020 **63** children and young people have been supported to share their views and be heard in a variety of formats by the Children’s Rights Officer or a formal advocate. In the same time period, there were also **129** Mind of My Own statements.

In Gateshead children and young people can opt to receive support from an advocate from an internal service or commissioned provider. Children and young people are informed of the advocacy offer by social workers or IROs and information is included in publicity which is shared with children and young people. Advocacy is also included in complaint leaflets for children and young people.

The Children's Rights Officer (CRO) attends team meetings and service briefings to remind staff of the offer available to children and young people. Information about advocacy can be found on the council's website; This information includes a short animation, created by children and young people.

SUMMARY OF THEMATIC INFORMATION

Missing children

The Missing, Slavery, Exploitation and Trafficking Operational Group (MSET) monitors and coordinates multi-agency activity for children who are reported missing from home or care.

In total, there were **1,043 episodes** in 2019-2020 where a young person from Gateshead was reported missing or absent to police. **715 (68.6%) of these episodes were children/young people looked after by Gateshead Council**. This represents a **13.7% increase over previous year** on the total episodes and a **17.2% increase in missing from care**.

During 2019-2020 all children who went missing or absent were offered an Independent Return Home Interview (RHI). This differs from a Police Safe and Well Check (which all missing people receive on return) and is carried out by skilled and experienced youth workers to determine underlying reasons for the missing episode and wider risks and vulnerability factors. The interviews are also used to identify broader trends, including "Child Sexual Exploitation hotspots" and there are clear links into MSET meetings and intelligence sharing with police.

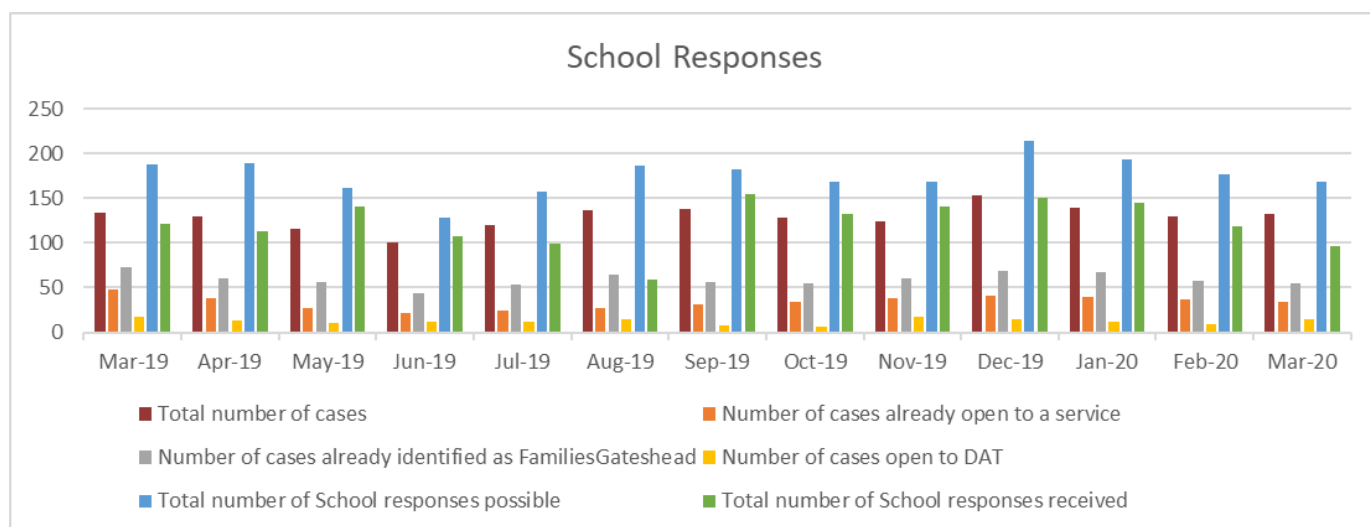
In total there were **720** return interviews offered in 2019-2020 - as 188 missing episodes relate to a smaller number of individuals (32) as a small cohort of young people were reported missing more than once. **314** return interviews were accepted (43.6%), 92 young people refused (45%) and 1 interview was no longer required or not appropriate (0.5%).

Operation Endeavour

Operation Endeavour is an innovative project which started as a pilot in Northumberland in 2018. It builds on the established Operation Encompass process where Police Child Concern Notifications (CCN) regarding domestic violence are shared with Children's Social Care and schools and colleges.

Operation Endeavour aims to support children and young people who go missing from home. Children who go missing from home are at risk of significant harm and they may be vulnerable to sexual exploitation, violent crime, gang exploitation, or to drug and alcohol misuse.

Operation Endeavour was rolled out in Gateshead in November 2019. During September & October 2019 4 briefing sessions were held for schools within in Gateshead.



In total there were **274** notifications relating to **54** young people. Only 101 have been sent to school as 173 notifications related to young people who had been reported were non-school attenders.

Child Exploitation

The MSET Operational Group also has oversight of cases where there are concerns about child exploitation. There were **21 cases** discussed at MSET due to concerns about them in 2019-2020, **6** of which were discussed on more than one occasion. This is a **54% decrease** from 2018-2019 when there were 46 cases discussed.

It is not possible to separate how many of those cases were discussed due to missing episodes and how many due to sexual exploitation or criminal exploitation due to the overlap between the concerns, but an MSET risk assessment was carried out for each case that was discussed and disruption plans put in place.

It is thought that this decrease represents improved screening and assessment of risk, rather than decreased incidence of exploitation. Police CCNs are picked up as part of the Police Triage and Integrated Referral Team Process. The Police MASH officers advise of concerns regarding exploitation and missing, during triage, and invite the worker to consider MSET referrals and risk assessment. This has led to more appropriate referrals to MSET, focussing on high risk cases. It has also meant that lower risk cases that do not meet criteria for MSET can be managed appropriately to manage risks and work done to disrupt exploitation and try to prevent concerns escalating.

It is not possible to provide case studies on how the work of the group improved outcomes as they may lead to the young people being identified.

Child Deaths

In 2019-2020 the GSCP was notified of the deaths of **14** children from Gateshead. There were no significant safeguarding issues in any of the deaths. Detailed information is not presented in this report so that the children cannot be identified but it should be noted that the majority of deaths were premature babies or babies born with life limiting conditions who died within a short period of their birth – [link to South of Tyne CDOP Annual Report 2019-2020](#)

Pupil Exclusions

This year there were a total of 39 secondary permanent exclusions until schools closed on the 23rd March 2020 due to the pandemic. There were no permanent exclusions from primary schools or from the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU). Whilst this was not a complete two terms the figures were better than the previous year which had 36 in the Autumn term and 22 in the Spring term with a full year total of 69 secondary and 1 primary permanent exclusion.

There were also 5 permanent exclusions withdrawn in 2019/20 prior to the governors meeting to discuss the cases with the students returning to school. The highest number of permanent exclusions was 16 for disruptive behaviour, followed by 6 for drug and alcohol offences.

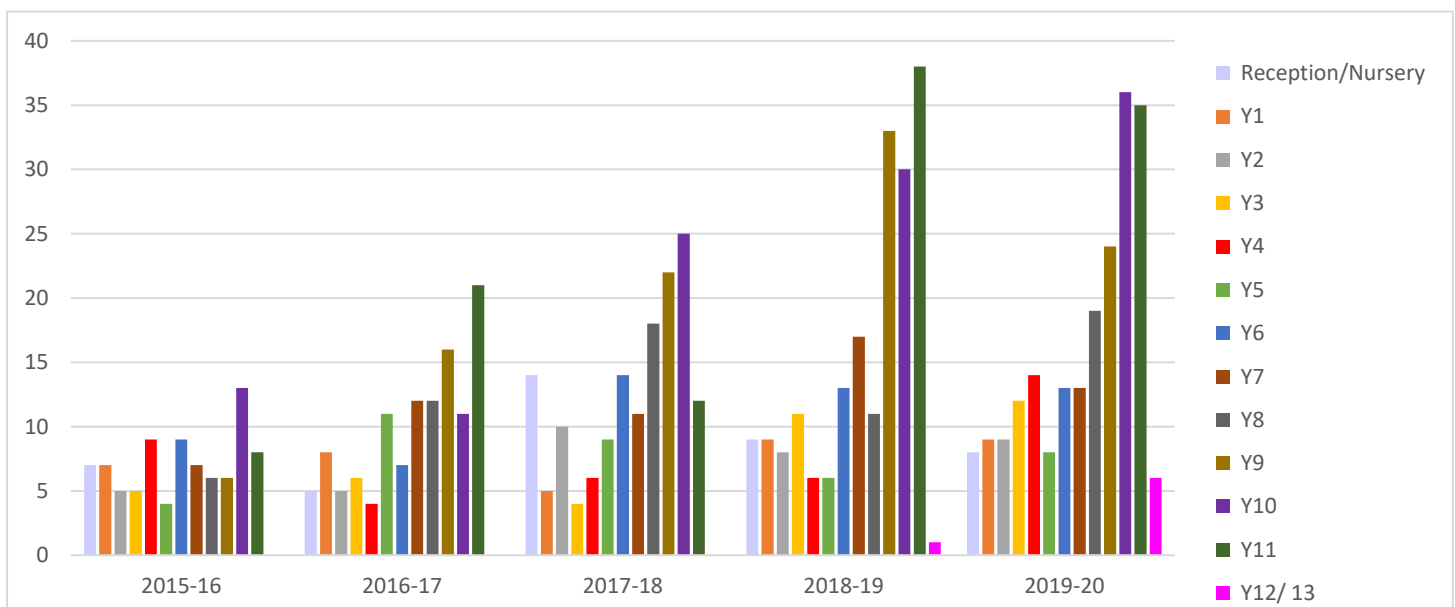
The government issued additional exclusion guidance during the pandemic to allow governors to meet virtually between the 1st June and 24th September to consider the reinstatement of any students permanently excluded prior to schools closing. In Gateshead we had two cases considered under these conditions, both of which were upheld and neither parents chose to participate.

There was only one fixed period exclusion issued to the children of critical workers or vulnerable children accessing school between the 23rd March to the end of term on the 17th July. The general feedback was that all students behaved well and observed all the social distancing measures that were in place.

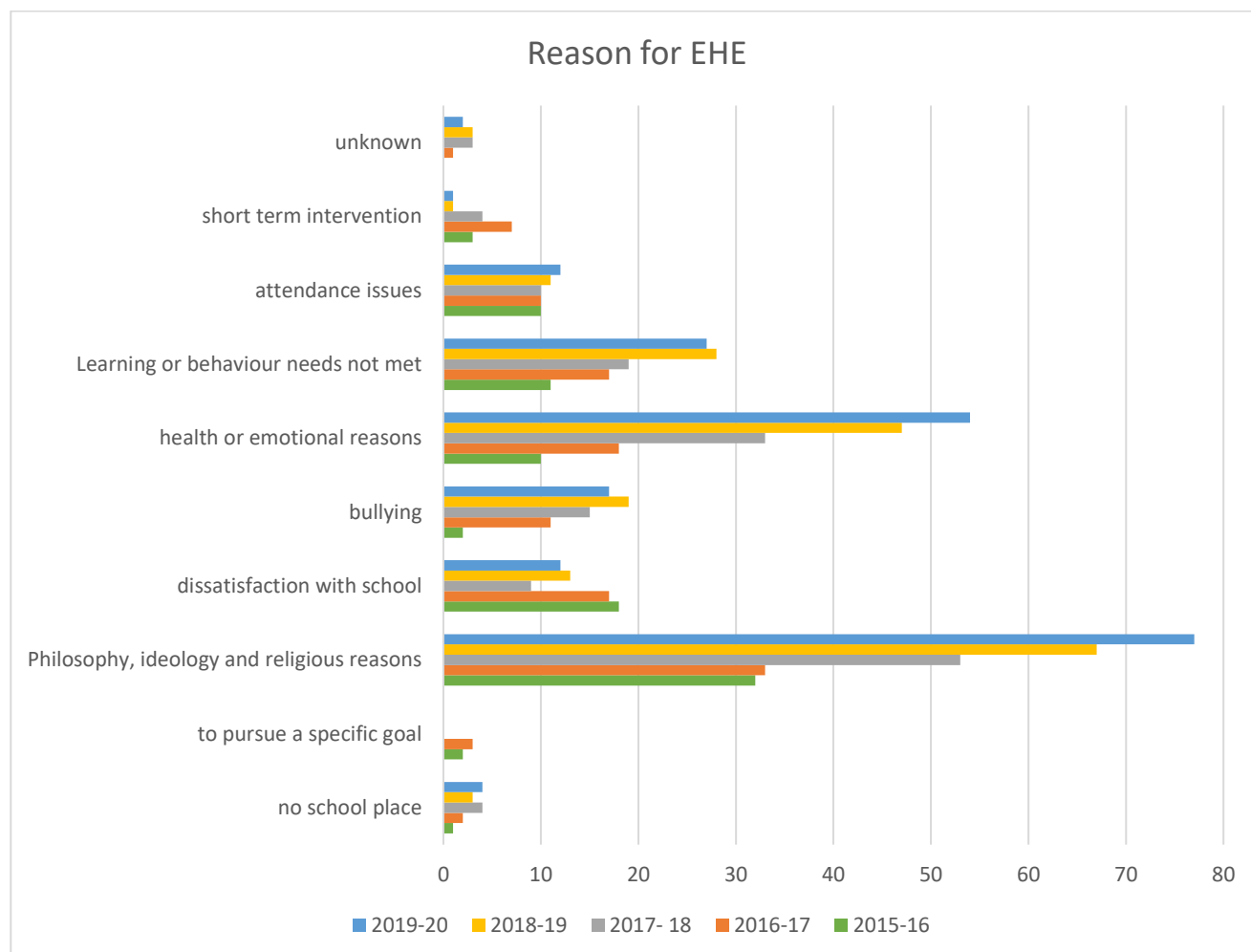
Schools have been advised by the government to amend their behaviour policies for the new academic year. This is to reflect the social distancing measures that will be in place and to outline what their responses will be to any student contravening any of these measures. Schools have also been advised to take account of the heightened sense of anxiety some children and families may be experiencing because of the pandemic and social isolation.

Elective Home Education

The numbers of students in EHE (elective home education) throughout each of last 5 years



The number of children home educated in Gateshead continued to increase in 2019-20; throughout 2019-20 there were 206 young people home educated in Gateshead. This is an increase of 14 young people from 2018-19. There were very few referrals after schools closed due to Covid-19, as most children were being educated remotely at home; it is likely the numbers would have been greater if schools had remained open.



There were 81 children who left a Gateshead school to be home educated this year; 49 left secondary schools. The largest number of children being home educated were in Y10 and Y11 as in 2018-19, and the greatest increase in young people being home educated since last year was in Y8. There were 25 young people at SEN support and 7 young people with Education Health Care plans home educated this year.

To address concerns regarding children who are home educated, an Elective Home Education Multi Agency Group (EHE MAG) was set up in 2018 and met monthly until March 2020. There were 8 EHE Multi Agency meetings held in 2019-20. Young people were referred to the EHE MAG when:

- There were safeguarding concerns
- Children already had involvement from Children’s services and were new to home education
- There was no evidence of home education after attempts had been made to gather this information

- The education provision was unsuitable; parent unwilling to cooperate with the local authority in returning the children to school
- Parents raised a concern regarding their child and gave consent for the child to be discussed at the Panel

Children may also be discussed if they appear to have left the authority and were home educated in Gateshead.

There were 3 young people who were on a CP plan, 5 with an open Children in Need plan; there were 32 other young people who had previously had involvement from Children's Services. One young person moved into care; inadequate education provision was a key aspect of the decision to move to care proceedings. There were 34 young people discussed at the EHE MAG in 2019-20. There were a number of positive outcomes from the EHE MAG including

- Sharing of information between health, children's services and the police to ensure the best support was provided for young people
- A number of children who had left the local authority or moved within the local authority being "found". The new local authority was then notified when living outside Gateshead
- Support for robust educational expectations to be a key part of a CP Plan
- Increase in the number of School Attendance Orders issued with the support of the Panel

Throughout the year, 14 children returned to mainstream education, usually supported via the Fair Access Process and 2 children moved into the Hospital and Home Tuition Service supported by the Education Inclusion Panel. There were 9 referrals to the Legal Intervention Team to start the School Attendance Order process and a further 9 parents were being challenged regarding the education they were providing for their child. Twelve young people left Gateshead in 2019-20.

The restrictions brought in as part of the Covid-19 measures have affected the monitoring and challenge of home educated young people. All parents would usually be offered an initial home visit to discuss the reason for home education, to explain expectations regarding home education and to look at support and resources available. Since March 2020 this has taken place via email and telephone communication; this limits the opportunity to see the child and gain the views of the child and also assess the home conditions in regard to the likelihood of a good level of education being provided. School Attendance Orders were suspended due to the closure of courts and also no schools being open to admit children. The challenge process was also suspended as the final outcome of this process is to return a young person to the school system. These processes will recommence in September 2020. The Home Education Officer has continued to contact all parents requesting evidence that they are providing an efficient and suitable education for their children; the majority of parents have cooperated with this request.

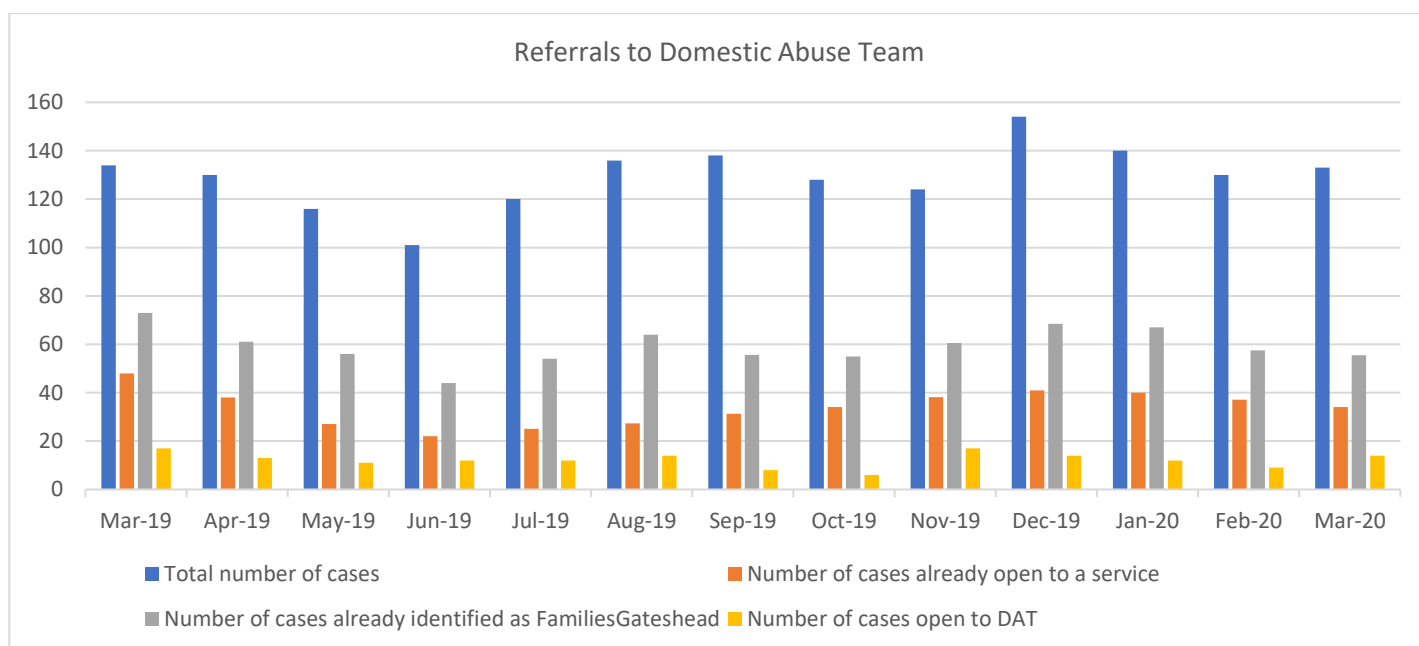
It is likely that during 2020-21 the numbers of children and young people who are home educated will continue to rise; monitoring whether the concerns regarding Covid-19 lead to an increase in parents electing to home educate will be undertaken. The Home Education Officer will continue to work with other services and schools within Gateshead to ensure all children and young people are safeguarded and receive a good education. [Link to Elective Home Education Strategy 2020-2025](#)

Domestic Abuse

Domestic Abuse Service update

Domestic abuse (DA) and violence is a significant challenge, it is extremely complex issue that is associated with many factors relating to gender inequality, deprivation and poverty. The impact of DA is a whole system challenge, meaning partnership working is key to reducing the prevalence of DA in our local area.

Gateshead Domestic Abuse Team continue to offer support to individuals referred to the service via existing internal routes e.g. Early Help Service, Safeguarding and Care Planning Team, Integrated Referral Team, self-referrals and external agencies such as the Police, Health and Probation.



There are currently **10 Domestic Abuse Workers** within the team each holding a **case load of around 20-25** per FTE. An assessment framework supports the tailoring of effective support to clients who are referred into the service.

Within the team there is a dedicated Domestic Abuse Worker (DAW) who works directly with children who have witnessed the impact of DA. Creative Interventions are used to support the child as a means of improving understanding of DA, providing an opportunity to share their wishes and feelings, and creating a safe space to rebuild relationships with the non-abusive parent. Approaches are delivered at a pace and stage of the child.

Anecdotal evidence such as letters, drawings and comments from parents confirm the positive outcomes of this specialist work.

Behaviour Change Programme

Two Behaviour Change Workers have been recruited to the team to work predominately with abusive partners to address directly the controlling and abusive behaviours some individuals use within relationships.

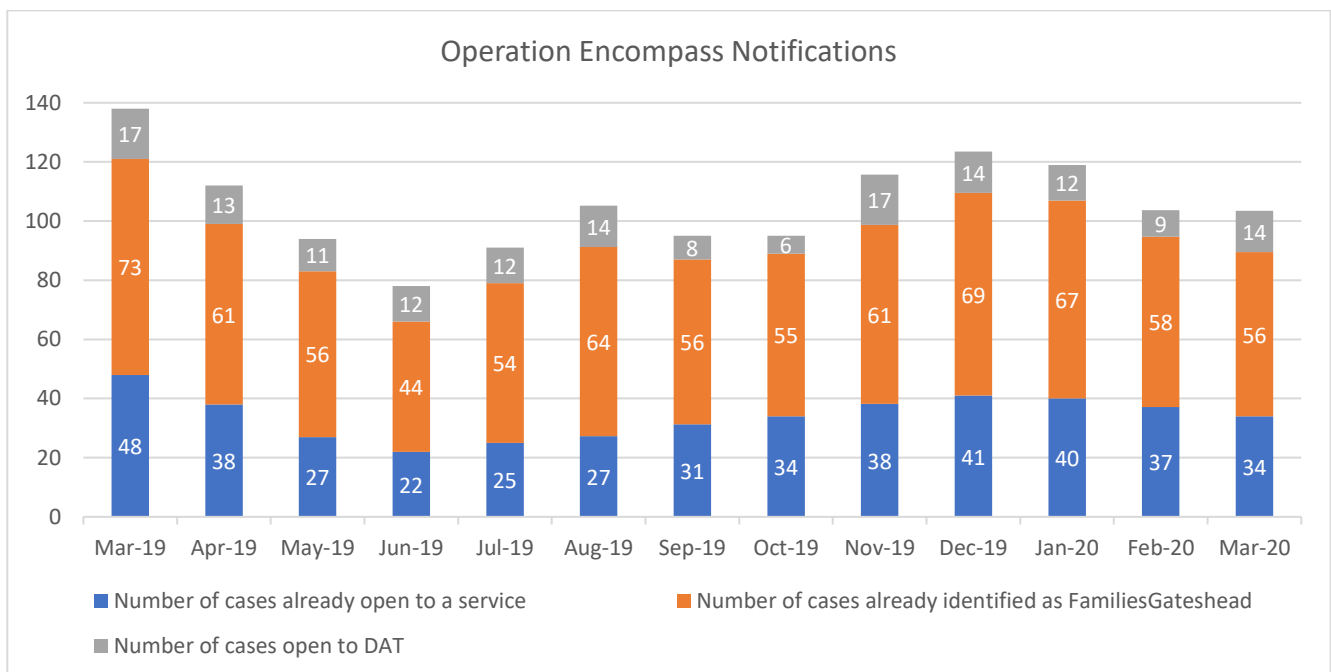
A timeline was developed to support the process to implementation and start-up of the programme with a view to going live from September 2020. The programme content will offer bespoke sessions to behaviour change clients referred through the agreed pathway.

It is proposed that the sessions will cover a range of subjects including: Power and Control; Coercive Control; denial and blame; beliefs and gender roles; feelings and emotions; Impact; Accountability and Empathy.

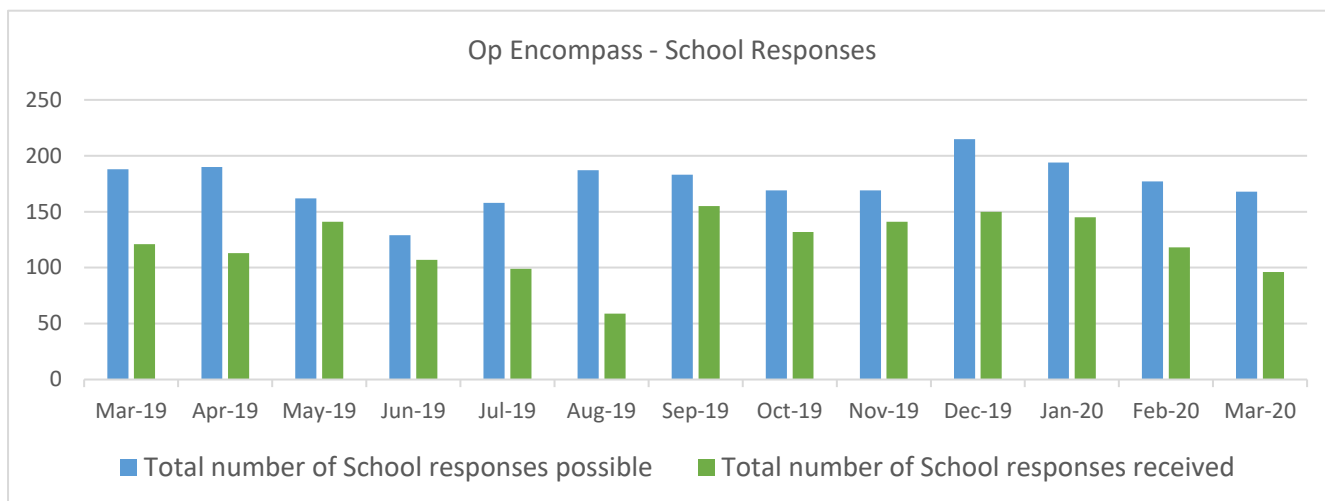
Central to the programme will be the aim of supporting individuals to recognise and take responsibility for their abusive behaviour, be accountable for the impact of that behaviour, and to develop alternative strategies and behaviours to more appropriately deal with their beliefs, feelings and emotions in future relationships.

Operation Encompass

A total of **85** schools in Gateshead participate in the Operation Encompass model for sharing information on domestic abuse incidents the morning after an incident where children are part of the family involved.



There were **1,684** notifications made during 2019-2020, an increase of 51% from 2018-2019 when there were 1,113 notifications.



MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference)

The Business Manager is a member of MARAC steering group tasked with reviewing current MARAC arrangements in Gateshead and implementing the daily MARAC pilot. A report about the proposed pilot was considered and endorsed by Executive Group, subject to training needs being addressed. Safe Lives delivered MARAC Chair/Co-ordinator training. Attendees were mainly police MASH managers and support officers from across Northumbria police force area but also included some non-police staff from Gateshead (team managers and the named nurse for 0-19 services from the Integrated Referral Team, and managers from Domestic Abuse Team and Early Help service).

Training was also held for agency Single Points of Contact (SPOCs) and briefings went out to front line workers. A new process flow chart and guidance has been developed; formal governance for MARAC is being considered by the steering group alongside DA executive group. A report updating progress on the pilot will come to GSCP after it has been operating for 6 months.

Gateshead Youth Justice Service (YJS)

The Gateshead Youth Justice Service works with **10-18-year olds** to prevent offending and re-offending. The service is committed to providing the highest level of support to victims of crime and also undertakes independent return interviews with children who have been reported missing.

The focus of the Youth Justice Service is to:

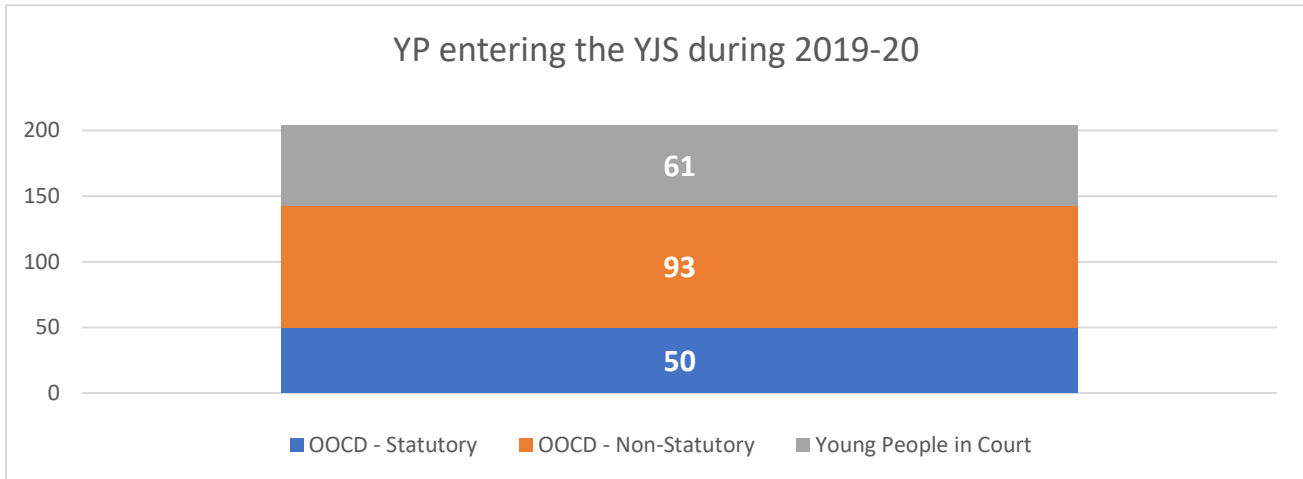
- divert young people from offending and re-offending
- address behavioural problems before they become more serious and challenging
- offer intensive support to high risk young people with complex needs

“I never thought I would be able to speak to you as openly as I can. I don't think I need to see you anymore as you have helped me to get to a better place. Thank you”

An assessment is undertaken with each young person and an intervention plan developed to meet individual needs. The service is working with an independent Children's Engagement Officer to develop a robust evaluation process to ensure the voice of the child is heard and central to future developments.

This year has seen the development of prevention work within the team to ensure young people are given the support they need at the earliest opportunity. The workforce is highly skilled and motivated with the best interests of the young people at the heart of everything they do.

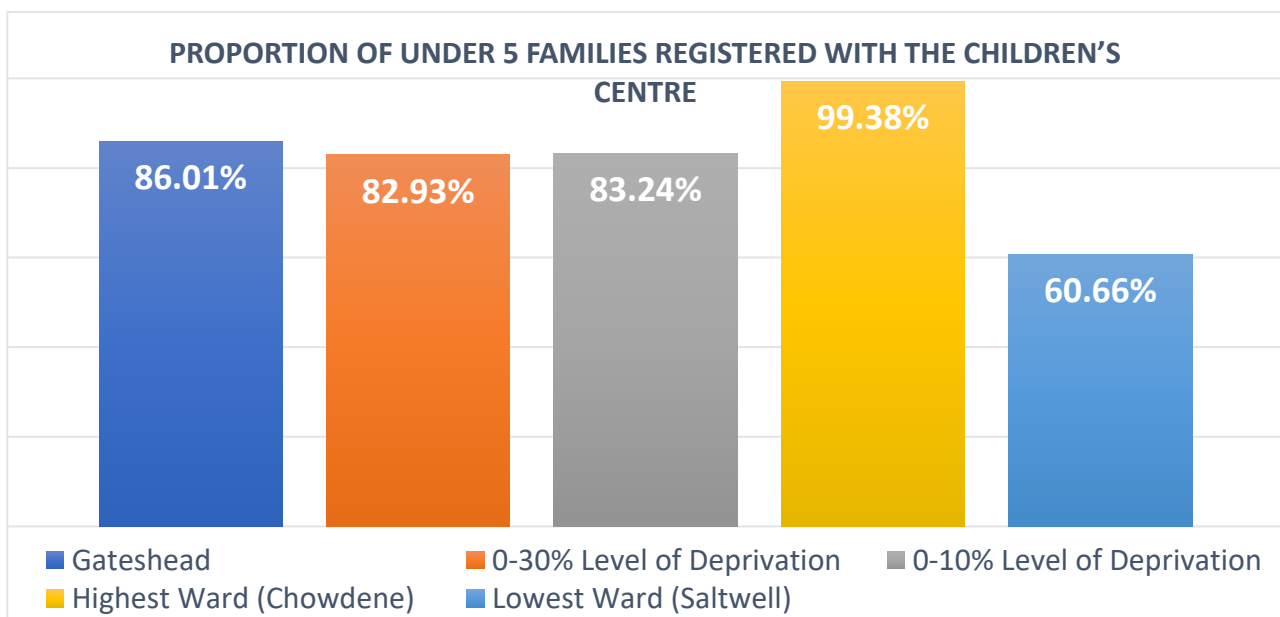
The team consists of **6 case managers, 1 probation officer (seconded), 2 police officers and 3 advocates with a Team Manager and Assistant Team Manager** providing oversight, quality assurance, supervision and support.



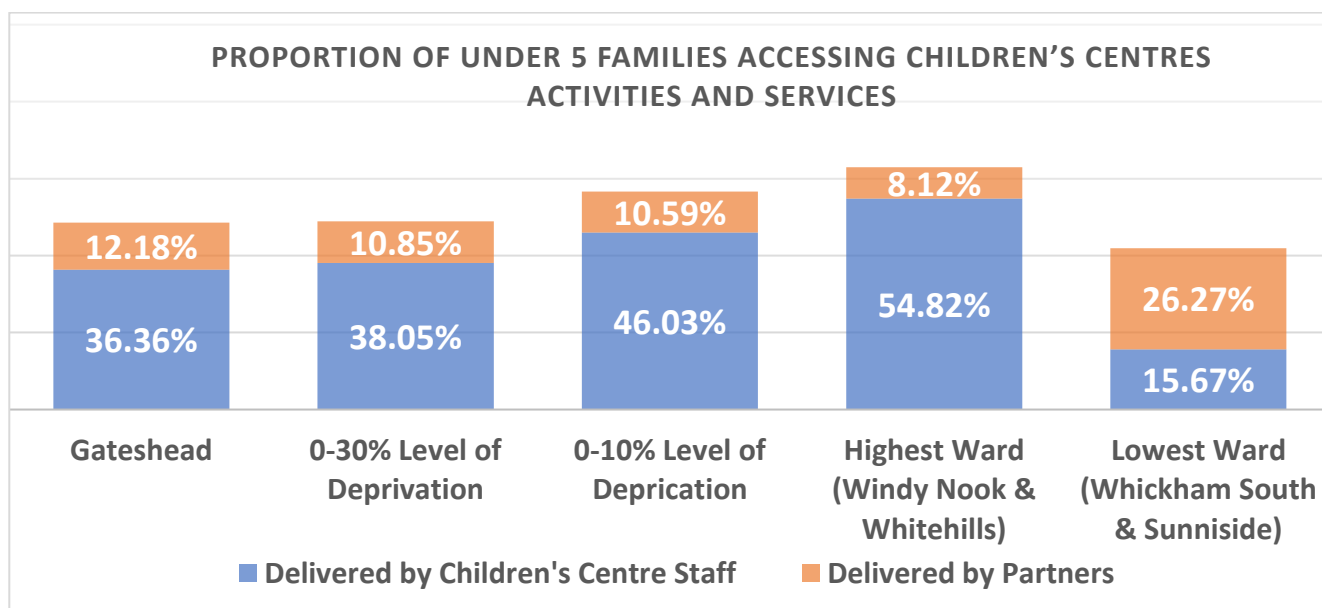
There were a total of **204** young people entering the YJS during 2019-20. 61 coming through the Court System and 143 for Out of Court Disposal.

The Gateshead Youth Justice Board provides leadership and governance to the YJS. Significant development work has taken place during 2019/20 resulting in committed and active board members from a wide range partner organisations. The Board will provide challenge, hold the service to account and take forward the strategic priorities for 2020/21. The Business Manager now attends YJB, to further strengthen links with GSCP.

Children’s Centres



Most disadvantaged neighbourhoods with a deprivation index between 0-30% had an overall registration level of 82.93%, marginally below the Gateshead average of 86.01%. The highest levels of engagement in children’s centre staff delivered services was in the areas with a deprivation index between 0-10%



38% of registered families living in the neighbourhoods with a deprivation index between 0-30% engaged in Children’s Centre delivered services. 11% families from these neighbourhoods engaged in partner delivered services.

Parent outreach workers (POWs)

Activities delivered by POWs were accessed by 539 families. 297 [55.1%] of these families were from the target groups. There was social worker involvement in 18 [3.33%] of these cases and Early Help involvement in 7 of the cases - 5 were CP, 2 CIN status and 7 LAC. These activities were accessed by 18 families with a disabled child. 284 [52.69%] of these families came from the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods, with a deprivation index between 0-30%. Out of the 2,903 families accessing children’s centre supported services 27 were CP; 38 CIN and 23 LAC.

In addition to delivering activities, POWs also provide one-to-one support.

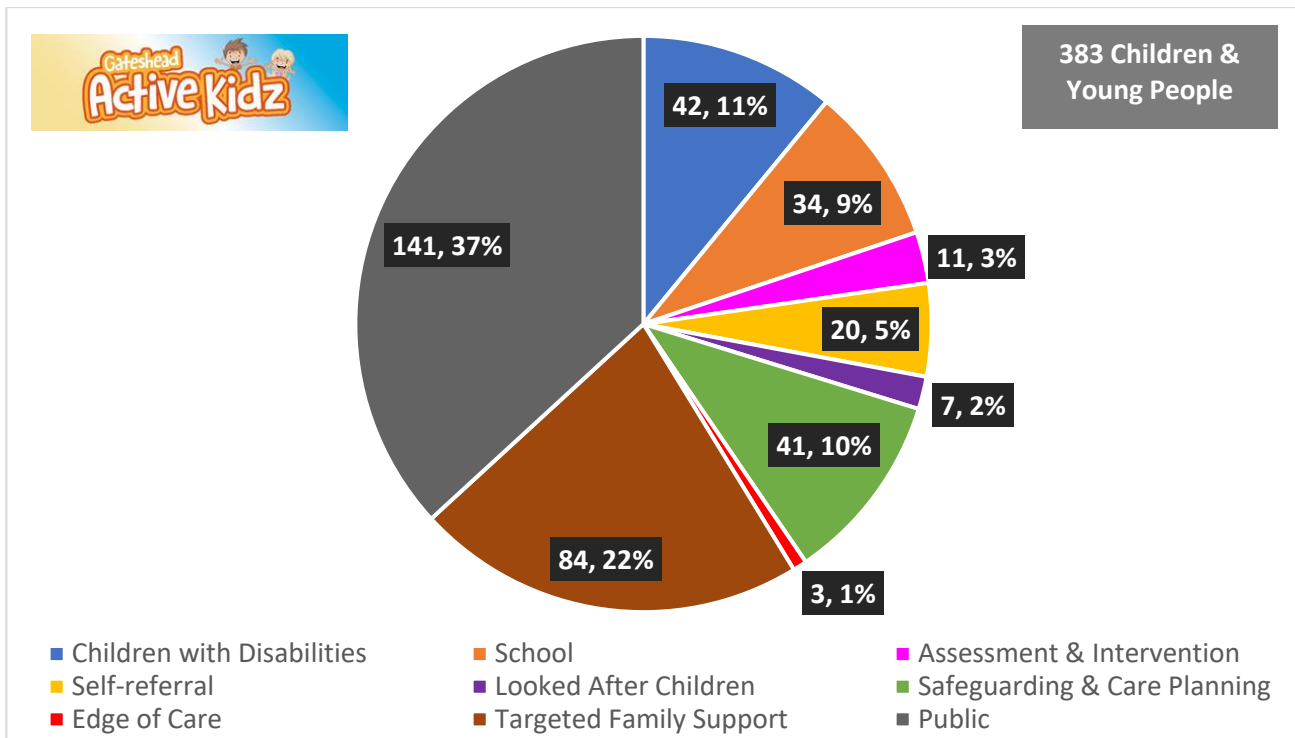
Since May 2019 (which is when we began to collate this data) **231 Families** have benefited from one-to-one support from POWs. This included:

- Additional Support to vulnerable families to encourage them to access targeted activities
- Two Year Funding Support
- Supporting and Signposting to other Children and Family Services
- Supporting Parent/Carers through Family Issues
- Transitional support provided to those Parent/Carers returning to Universal Services

It has developed my *Megan so much!
 She has Physically, Socially and Emotionally Matured!
 She is gaining so much more out of her Nursery Experience all thanks to you and your Services!!

Active Kidz holiday play schemes are available for children and young people aged 5 to 14.

383 children and young people attended Active Kidz, 242 spaces were allocated following referrals being (chart below).



SafetyWorks!

SafetyWorks! is a facility managed and operated by Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service in conjunction with partner agencies. Young people from Gateshead are invited to the centre to take part in realistic and interactive scenarios which enable practical learning in a safe and controlled environment.

Key school year groups 6 and 8 are invited to take part in initiatives every year, where all sessions are tailored to the needs of the visiting group and we ensure that the information provided is up to date and reflects current and emerging issues in our society.

The aim is that everyone who visits the centre will leave with a greater understanding of key aspects around personal safety and how to avoid or minimise risks.

Some of the important topics covered during a visit include: home fire safety, deliberate fires and antisocial behaviour, first aid, crime and consequences, personal choices, road safety, Metro safety and safer travel, water safety, exploitation, hate crime, drugs and County lines.

203	•total sessions held in 2019/2020
9326	•total number of young people who attended sessions
49	•number of sessions held for young people living in Gateshead
1561	•number of young people from Gateshead who attended sessions

All teaching staff and group leaders are asked to give feedback about their visit to SafetyWorks! which is always positive and is reflected in the repeat visits we see from schools year after year.

This was a fantastic experience which provided a wealth of age appropriate knowledge. I was particularly impressed by the pace set for the children and the slick way the session was organised.. I would not hesitate to recommend this experience to other colleagues and schools.

Students really enjoyed the interactive sessions run by excellent staff. Students (and teachers) left with new knowledge which they could use and implement in their daily lives.

The children were engrossed by excellent delivery. They learnt so much

Wow! Whilst I have been aware of SafetyWorks! I have never really understood what it offers. Now I know that this is an amazing resource for life skills. The quality of the learning environment is unbelievably high and realistic.

Emotional & Mental Wellbeing

In February 2019, several schools across Newcastle and Gateshead were selected to take part in a National Trailblazer pilot. There are plans to roll out to all schools across Newcastle and Gateshead.

The goal of the project is to work with children and young people to help them manage their emotional and mental wellbeing at an early stage. This project is supported by Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne & Wear NHS Trust and Northumbria University, along with the Local Education Authority, Public Health and the Local Authority.

The RISE team works with young people in schools across Newcastle and Gateshead to help support their emotional and mental wellbeing. The team consists of 12 Education Mental Health Practitioners, an Occupational Therapist Supervisor, a Clinical Lead, a Team Manager and 2 Admin Workers. All young people from across Newcastle and Gateshead are eligible for help and support from the RISE team.

More information about RISE and what they can help with is available on their website - www.rise-ne.co.uk – including [where to find](#) help and [resources](#)

SELF-HELP APPS

In addition to the support services available across Gateshead there are also online support services. The [Self-Help Apps](#) have been tested and reviewed by young people at [Streetwise](#).

TRAINING

The Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership, Safeguarding Adults Board and Gateshead Community Safety Board have produced a comprehensive joint training programme which is free for partner agencies operating in Gateshead. The training programme and information about courses can be accessed via the [GCSP website](#).

The 2019-2020 GSCP training programme saw the delivery of **37** training events with **874** professionals and volunteers attending classroom-based training.

This year has been phenomenally successful in raising awareness of County Lines with 156 multi-agency partners benefitting from training delivered by experts in the field of exploitation and trafficking. This training encourages agencies to develop a universal and proportionate approach to identifying and responding to child exploitation.

We have also worked with the Children's Society who received funding to work alongside local authorities in order to raise awareness of Child Exploitation and Modern-Day Slavery and to increase knowledge of the National Referral Mechanism.

There has been a rise in demand for 'Working with hostile families' and 'Disguised compliance' training. Professionals expressed the need to feel confident when addressing and speaking to families who were resistant to change.

Multi-agency safeguarding children training has been extremely well received by all multi-agency delegates. This training has raised the awareness of referral thresholds for services, with an emphasis on raising awareness of services that are available at the early help stage of intervention, to ensure families are supported before reaching crisis point.

Responses from impact evaluation questionnaires highlighted the positive impact that the training had on learners' thinking and practice.



As a Safeguarding Children Partnership we are confident that we have effective training that responds well to GSCP priorities. Despite increasing pressures on partner agency staff we have a skilled pool of trainers who deliver a lot of our sessions “in house”, but we also have the resources to commission specialist sessions when appropriate. We continue to carry out work to ensure that our training has an impact on frontline staff to ensure that the sessions lead to improved outcomes and provide the Partnership with best value for money.

Training Developments within Tyne & Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS)

TWFRS rolled out safeguarding awareness training for operational firefighters, during 2019-2020. This focused on the types and signs of abuse they may encounter, as well as internal processes for notifying local authorities. This is now an essential part of TWFRS’s internal training programme for current operational firefighters, with refreshers every two years. Trainee firefighters also have this training as part of their initial 14 week training course. Safeguarding awareness has now been included in the induction process for new corporate staff. Gaps had been identified in reporting safeguarding concerns, when it was believed that other services were capturing information and making notifications. Seminars with Flexi Duty Officers and presentations to Watch Managers Meetings by the Safeguarding Manager has already resulted in an increased number of notifications, specifically around suicidal ideation. These meetings will continue across the Service.

LEARNING FROM REVIEWS IN 2019-2020

The Learning and Improvement Group manages learning from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs) and other reviews on behalf of the Board. There have been no CSPRs initiated or published by GSCP in the past 12 months.

One Serious Case Review (SCR) commenced during 2018-19 (initiated March 2018), but a decision was made, following advice from the police and Crown Prosecution Service, to put the SCR on hold due to ongoing criminal proceedings. The National Panel and Ofsted were informed and agreed with our decision. Long delays due to court process mean this continues to be the case, although single agency learning identified as part of the initial scoping has been implemented.

In 2019-2020, 1 Serious Incident Notification was submitted to Ofsted/Department for Education and that case was subject to Rapid Review. Although the case did not meet the criteria for a CSPR, it did identify the need to further explore transitions pathways and support and how agencies work together.

The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel considered this case and based on all of the information and evidence provided they agreed with our decision not to commission a local CSPR. They also decided not to pursue a national review into this case.

Information gathered from the rapid review will inform the wider themed review to identify improvements around transition services and multi-agency working; this will be undertaken in collaboration with the Safeguarding Adults Board.

We considered CSPRs from other areas to ensure that any relevant learning was disseminated and applied to practice in Gateshead. Our [shared procedures](#) were reviewed and amended following CSPRs being carried out sub-regionally, and training was also updated.

Learning review – Leaving Care Support for Parents

The aim of the learning review was to look at the quality of leaving care support offered to parents, and the risk assessment processes undertaken around the birth of second child with a different parent.

An event for Practitioners was held in December and was well attended by all agencies involved with the family. The learning event provided an opportunity for senior managers, managers and practitioners who were involved with the family, to examine the case together from a systemic perspective.

The group were asked to consider:

- From a whole system perspective what were the aspects of good practice/ learning points. Did they influence perceptions and response to events?
- Were lived experiences of (the first child) fully understood? And if so, how did it contribute to assessment of risk, planning and decision making?
- What difference did the interventions make to reduce risk or enhance professionals' understanding of what life was like for the family?
- How were decisions and practice managed? What could have helped?

The group then discussed and recorded their analysis, setting out:

- What good would have looked like for the children
- What would good have looked like for the adults
- Good practice/learning for agencies

We discussed what we need to do next,

- As individual practitioners
- As managers
- As organisations
- As multi agency partnerships

Participants were also asked to suggest recommendations and actions to help formulate action plan.

The key messages coming out from the review are:

- The importance of assessments when circumstances change (ie when moving into independent accommodation, or pregnant with second/subsequent child.)
- Understanding of the role of those working with Care Leavers, and who has oversight when safeguarding concerns are raised around parenting.
- Lack of challenge – focus was on parent (as care leaver) not children
- Role of fathers – information was not known

The event also highlighted some areas of good practice including:

- Good support network for care leaver, trusted relationships with workers
- Early Help support
- Midwife referring to support services and raising concerns appropriately.

By looking through this case, we were able to identify a number of changes that had already been made to some services, which have strengthened processes. This provided reassurance that some of the issues identified in this case, would be dealt with differently now. This included changes to assessments to include fathers, access to specialist health services, and management oversight of safeguarding concerns.

Feedback from the learning event was positive, participants felt it was a “safe space to share information”, “open and transparent discussions with no blame”, and “in the true spirit of working together to safeguard children”.

The information and learning from this review will also inform the joint review around transitions (from care leavers perspective).

HOW SAFE ARE CHILDREN IN GATESHEAD?

Independent Chair’s Commentary

It is never possible to say categorically that all children are safe. However, external scrutiny of our services within Gateshead suggests that our services are at least as good as most other areas, and in most cases better. If we add this to the learning from our audits, from our consultations with young people, and from the performance data, we can feel optimistic of the safety of our children. This is a significant achievement, since the authority scores highly on most deprivation indices, and all the public services have continued to face very severe challenges in funding.

Gateshead **schools** remain more likely than most to be rated outstanding, and no schools in the area have been identified by Ofsted as having weaknesses relating to safeguarding. Good schools are normally safe schools, and schools play a vital role in helping children learn how to keep themselves safe, as well as providing us with a great opportunity to check on how children are doing.

External inspections continue to paint a positive picture of the quality of services operating across Gateshead. The most recent inspection of the Council’s Children’s Social Care rated them as “good” in April 2019. The most current inspection reports for the hospital trusts, the CCG, the mental health trust and the police have all been positive. Where issues have been presented, partners have responded vigorously to the challenges presented to them, and the partnership itself has been strengthened through the process.

We know too that many of the **child health** indicators in Gateshead remain worrying; our rates of child poverty are rising, though we are seeing improvement in rates of smoking in children, under 16

conceptions, smoking amongst expectant mothers, obesity, and hospital admissions for injuries and for self-harm.

The **safeguarding data** presents a mixed picture. Prior to the arrival of Covid we had a positive reduction in the number of contacts and notifications, to bring us closer to the averages. However, last year's reductions in rates of children on child protection plans and in care have increased again, and the partnership will need to watch these indicators carefully in the coming year. The timeliness of assessments and conferences remains high. I have been very pleased to see a reduction in the number of permanent exclusions, after the worrying rise in the previous year. This year, however, we are seeing a significant rise in the numbers of children being educated at home – whilst many of these children are well supported and educated by their parents, there is a significant increase in risk when such children are not regularly being observed by professionals.

The most important measure of how safe the systems are within Gateshead came, however, after the end of the year covered by this report. The pandemic brought an existential challenge to the way in which children are kept safe in the borough; the ways in which all agencies operate had to change fundamentally at a moment's notice. The performance of front-line staff, their managers and those in decision-making roles across Gateshead was nothing short of outstanding. Schools remained open to support vulnerable children and children of essential workers. Social workers developed new ways of keeping in touch with vulnerable children and their families and holding meetings – some of this learning will remain in place as the pandemic passes by. Police adapted overnight to their new responsibilities. Traditional boundaries between agencies seemed to melt away.

We can never say that all children will be safe. But we can make a judgement as to how robust, resilient, and flexible our services are to respond to crisis. Gateshead's services for children have been tested and have come through with flying colours.

Sir Paul Ennals

APPENDIX 1 – PARTICIPATION & ENGAGEMENT

Summary from Young Peoples Engagement and Participation Groups

Gateshead Young Inspectors (GYI)

GYI was formed during the summer of 2019, 8 young people attended four training sessions over the summer and six of these joined the group in September looking at venues to inspect. They were commissioned by Leisure Services to inspect Clip n Climb at Gateshead Leisure Centre and the Wave Rider at Heworth Leisure Centre. The young people designed their own criteria in collaboration with Leisure Services and completed the inspections in October half term.

As part of this inspection the young people assessed the Go Gateshead website for ease of use.

Alongside this the group began a light touch inspection of the Libraries service, first checking the website for ease of use and then popping into local libraries on a random basis to see what each library offered children and young people and how well the staff engaged with the young people.

The group had planned to inspect The Baltic as a commission from City of Dreams but this was delayed initially because of staff changes at Baltic and then Covid-19 hit, so it remains on the 'to do' list.

One Voice Youth Network (OVYN)

OVYN have a range of annual activities such as attending OSC, delivering training to elected members, senior decision makers and staff, devising training for foster carers, and potential foster carers. OVYN helped plan and deliver a fantastic summer programme for LAC and Care Leavers, including arts and crafts, music, circus skills, first aid training, barista training and cookery with Food Nation, which culminated in a Convivial Supper with invited senior decision makers enjoying a fabulous three course meal cooked from scratch by young people and served in St Marys Heritage Centre. This supper was the starting point for a number of activities which continue to be developed such as a messaging app that means simple questions can be asked of the decision makers – such as – 'anyone got a spare lawn mower for a care leaver with a big garden' or 'does anyone know the cheapest provider of electricity' this app sends all the decision makers who are signed up to it, the question and enables an answer to be quick and easy. This is alongside their own social action projects which in 2019-2020 included starting to look again at the 'suitcase issue' discussing Looked After Children moving house using bin bags. Before Covid-19 stopped play, the group were looking at raising funds to work with Madlugs and Gateshead's decision makers to ensure children and young people entering care have luggage. They were also working on a recipe book project, which, having started as part of the Regional Children in Care Council work, became a larger project. The group developed and tested recipes which are very healthy, and frugal, costing under £3 for a main meal for 4 people. This work continued at the start of Lockdown and the book will be completed by the end of 2020.

Gateshead Youth Assembly (GYA)

GYA runs from November to October annually so this report covers two distinct GYA groups. Some work carries over to the next year, but only when the young people really want to carry it on, so that each GYA has a full year to complete their identified projects.

In April 2019 GYA started a project in collaboration with Public Health to highlight the food availability across Gateshead and to look at the similarities and differences. As you might expect, in the more disadvantaged areas, food options can be limited to a chippy and a NISA, whereas in more affluent areas there is a wealth of options, including chippies and NISAs but also having supermarkets, butchers and greengrocers. This work continues and will be published late 2020.

The summer holidays saw the group finish off their 2018-2019 work – see attached annual review as well as taking part in our annual Bus Day – where young people who rarely get the bus these days get a packed lunch and an all-day ticket, and work out how to get to places they usually get lifts to. This project is a great day, but also helps young people build essential life skills. In summer 2019 they travelled to Seaburn beach, Sunderland Museum and Winter Gardens, National Glass Centre, Angel of the North, Metrocentre, Barley Mow and South Shields. The aim was to use all available forms of transport, but in the end they just managed the bus, the Shields Ferry and the metro. Next time they plan to add the train to that list.

In October 2019 GYA Executive Committee members met with Gateshead Council's Cabinet to look at their joint priorities and to see where they could all link up.

GYA annual elections were followed in November by the annual training weekend where the newly elected GYA representatives elect their Executive Committee and identify their plans and priorities for 2019-2020 (see attached plans and priority document).

GYA worked with Gateshead Council staff on the climate change agenda, attending the Climate Change conversation on a very snowy day in February at the Baltic and were about to host a school's conference at Gateshead stadium, to make sure all Gateshead's schools were involved in the climate change conversation, when COVID-19 stopped play. We hope to pick this up when the world reopens.

Fire Cadets

Fire Cadets provides young people from the local community with a programme of practical and theoretical instructions, on fire and rescue service related subjects. We currently run Fire Cadet branches in Swalwell and Low Fell.

Meeting each week, our Fire Cadets learn firefighting skills including hose-running, search techniques, vehicle extrication and first aid. This helps build the confidence, teamwork and communication skills that young people can use to support their experiences in education and beyond. Fire Cadets regularly take part in initiatives to combat anti-social behaviour fires and their actions have significantly contributed to the Service's objectives of saving lives and protecting property.

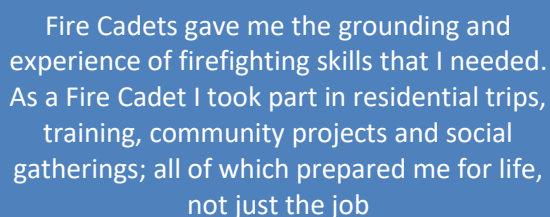
Fire Cadets engage in several social action projects to improve their local communities. For example, our Cadets have supported local care home residents by delivering gifts at Christmas and they have also delivered firefighting skills sessions to children with disabilities, leading to a presentation drill for their family and friends. Fire Cadets are offered the opportunity to represent the Service at ceremonial occasions, fire station open days, and fundraising events; as well as supporting local running events

such as the Gateshead 10k by spraying water from an appliance to cool down runners. They also take part in the annual Fire Cadet Games event, pitting their skills against the best in the country.

Our 2019 international fundraiser helped buy and send wind-up torches to Tanzania. This project, in collaboration with the Royal Victoria Infirmary Burns Unit, helped children in rural communities to read at night without using naked flames.

We recruit throughout the year and young people aged 13-17 years old are invited to join any one of our seven branches across Tyne and Wear.

A Firefighter completed his training this year as an operational member of staff, following years as a Fire Cadet and volunteer Cadet Instructor in Low Fell.



Fire Cadets gave me the grounding and experience of firefighting skills that I needed. As a Fire Cadet I took part in residential trips, training, community projects and social gatherings; all of which prepared me for life, not just the job

Police Cadets

The Police Cadets scheme has a Gateshead group of 40 Cadets at present. The Cadets normally meet each week but this has unfortunately been disrupted by the Covid regulations. We will be taking on another 20 Cadets next January. The last batch of recruits completed race and diversity training, learned about the Police Code of Ethics and Police structure and even learned to march. Sessions are currently being conducted remotely with presentations on knife crime and County Lines awareness. Future learning topics will include: drugs; health and safety; first aid; visits by traffic officers, dog handlers and firearms officers; and inputs on policing topics and the law. The recruits get to take part in Policing events such as the Great North Run, Pride events, the Sunderland Airshow, community fairs and events as well as Christmas events. The Cadets have been involved in some intelligence gathering too which led to a closure order being secured on a Gateshead address for dealing drugs.

We encourage anyone with an interest in the Police Cadets to get in touch to find out about the scheme which is open to year 10 students aged 14 years – information on how to apply has been sent to all Gateshead schools and demand is high therefore anyone interested does need to register their interest quickly.

Police Community Engagement Team

We have on-going work with Gateshead College which has been well received with inputs on hate crime, the Prevent agenda, and use of VR lessons. We have worked with the NUFC Foundation/Princes Trust and have delivered sessions to every new group each quarter. Gateshead young people are included within those taking part. We have begun a new project to develop hate crime and identity-based bullying session for primary school aged children.

We have worked with schools including Whickham Comprehensive, St Thomas Moore, and Thorpe Academy supporting citizenship programmes. Sessions have been delivered to staff at Gibside School

on Hate Crime Awareness with plans to introduce Hate Crime Champions in the future (which has been unfortunately delayed by Covid).

We continue work in the Jewish schools in Gateshead, delivering a hate crime input at the Kesa Special school and also had a Q&A session in the Jewish Boys School (Rabbi Wallace's School) with further inputs planned.

The Virtual Reality kit has been used at HMS Calliope during the knife awareness event with hundreds of young people present, and also used at celebrating achievement event at the Fed Brewery involving looked after children, with young people at the Mini Mela at Gateshead Library, and at Kingsmeadow, Whickham, and Charles Thorpe Schools.

We have delivered an input at the Thorp Academy to support their careers fair. We held a World Café event at Whickham 6th form with themes including PREVENT, CSE, Hate Crime and citizenship. We have worked with Gateshead Youth Parliament on topics including stop and search scrutiny, hate crime, holocaust memorial work and Remembering Srebrenica.

Designated Nurse Looked After Children was successful in securing funding from NHSE to undertake a project with care leavers around their experience of health services – this has been paused due to Covid, but it is hoped to continue as soon as possible.



GATESHEAD
**safeguarding
children**
partnership

www.gatesheadsafeguarding.org.uk