

Community Select Committee Support for Young People Scrutiny Review

SARAH PATEMAN

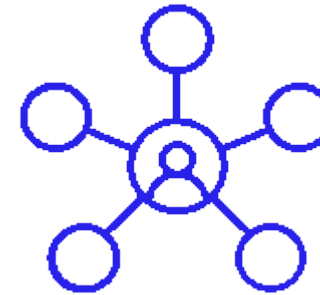
Safeguarding 25/26 at a glance...



94
Adult
Safeguarding
Referrals Raised



89
Child
Safeguarding
Referrals Raised



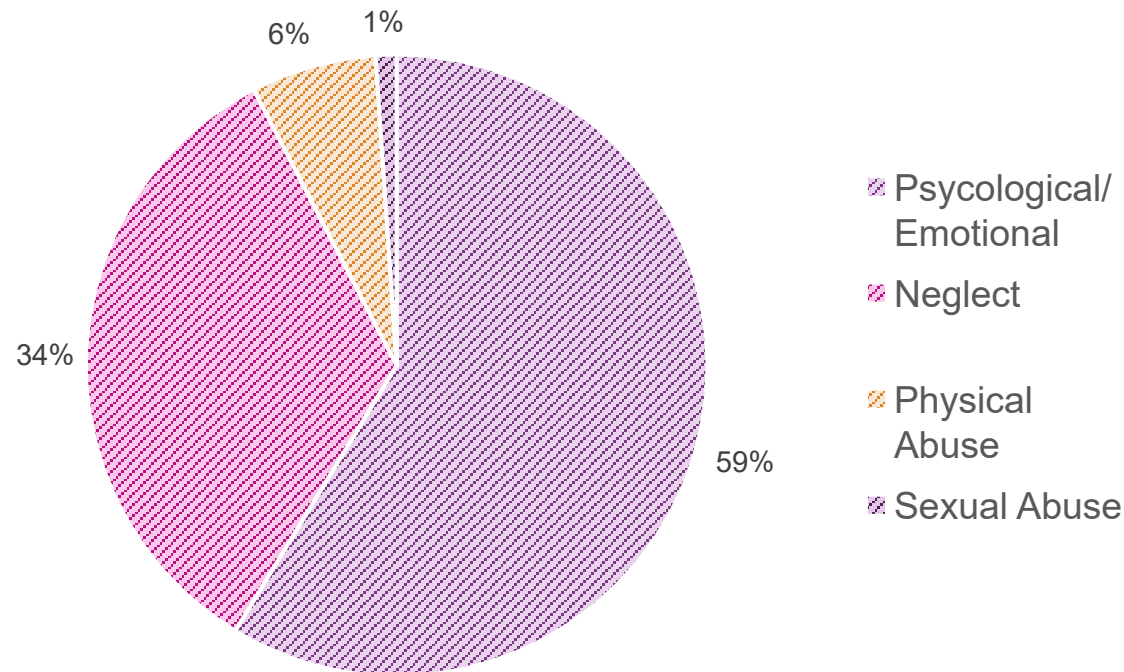
185
Information
sharing requests
completed



88
Prevent
intelligence
checks undertaken

Safeguarding Children – Key Themes

CATEGORIES OF ABUSE FROM CHILD REFERRALS



What the data tells us

Psychological/Emotional harm and neglect account for 93% of referrals, suggesting children are suffering sustained abuse rather than isolated incidents.

Domestic abuse is linked to 67% of the total number of child safeguarding referrals.

Key takeaway:

Child safeguarding concerns are primarily about cumulative harm, reinforcing the importance of early identification and timely escalation.

Addressing the Key Themes

Domestic abuse (DA)

Offer support to those experiencing DA, work with schools including art therapy, and develop and expand our training offer, including recent training delivered with the Police.



Neglect

Train teams to be aware and curious, recognise safeguarding concerns, make referrals and seek advice when needed.



Psychological/Emotional harm

Train teams to be aware and curious, encourage safeguarding referrals, work in partnership, arrange and attend professionals' meetings and Child in Need meetings, and make referrals to Family Intervention or Intensive Family Support through Children's Services.



What is Child Exploitation?

- Child exploitation is the abuse of a child for someone else's benefit, gain or gratification, taking advantage of their vulnerability or trust.
- This includes sexual, criminal, labour, online and financial exploitation.
- The Police have a specialist team dedicated to tackling child sexual exploitation, receiving an average of 10 referrals per month.
- Child Exploitation is a priority area for the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership, with multi-agency procedures in place to identify and respond to children at risk.



Child Exploitation

What we know locally

Vulnerable Adolescents Strategic (VAS) data was presented at the July SoSafe meeting, bringing together social care, Police and health information on child exploitation across Hertfordshire.

The data highlighted concerns around sexual exploitation, county lines, gangs and criminal exploitation

Work is continuing to identify children who may not currently be known to services. This is why it's important that we work with partners to identify vulnerabilities

What we are doing

A further report will be presented at the October SoSafe meeting, helping to shape and inform our ongoing safeguarding work.

We commissioned a short film, which has been shown across a number of education settings.

In the process of setting up a child-focused ASB meeting to strengthen partnership working between the Police and our ASB team.

Working in partnership with Police, Children's Services, schools and other key partners.

Home Educated Children



What we know

Across Hertfordshire, home education has increased significantly in recent years.

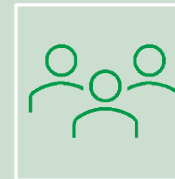


At the end of December 2025 2,112 children were registered as “Home Schooled” with around two thirds being secondary school age.



What we have done

SoSafe requested reports containing data on temporary and permanent exclusions in Stevenage.



Hertfordshire County Council has a dedicated Elective Home Education (EHE) Team, which has recently been expanded to strengthen support and safeguarding oversight.

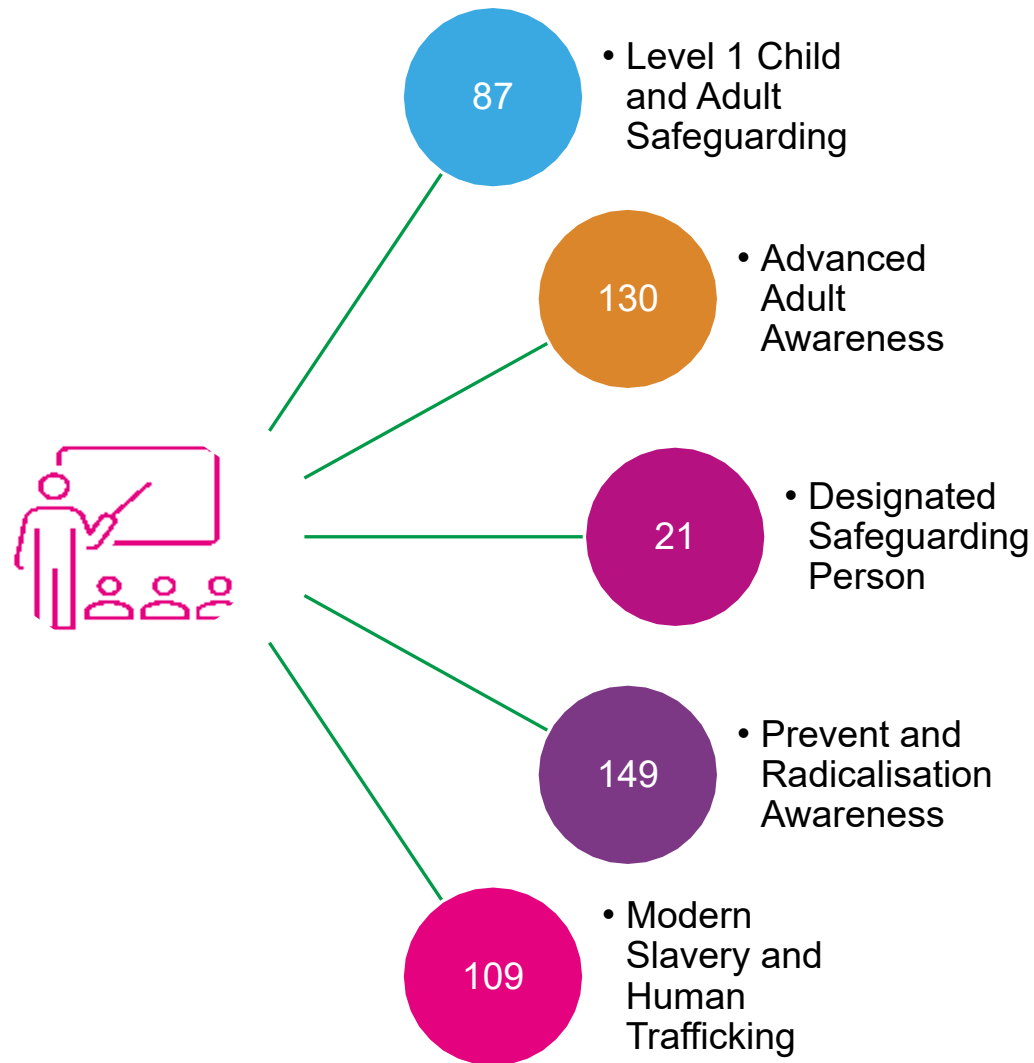
Partnership Working

51 Child Safeguarding cases were closed between April 2025 – March 2026 following successful intervention.

185 information requests from Hertfordshire County Council have been completed, demonstrating SBC's commitment to information sharing and partnership working with Children's Social Care.

SBC has a strong culture of cross-service and multi-agency partnership working, with groups such as the Family Intervention supporting information sharing and collaborative approaches to safeguarding risks and complex needs.

Training Overview 2025-26



- Training coverage shows that we have a strong baseline of safeguarding awareness, with targeted development for higher risk roles.
- The number of staff trained at advanced and DSP levels supports adequately distributed safeguarding support across the council.
- Training levels reflect the reality of safeguarding demand within services and their complexity.
- Ongoing and refresher training is essential due to the increasing complexities and nature of safeguarding risks.
- Safeguarding training and awareness sessions delivered to councillors, Youth Mayor and parents.