

Divisions Affected -

EDUCATION & YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 26th September 2025

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (OSCP) Annual Report 2024-25

Report by Director of Children's Services

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Committee is RECOMMENDED** to note the annual report of the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership strategic safeguarding partners and to consider the key messages.

Executive Summary

2. This paper highlights findings from the Partnership's annual report on the effectiveness of local arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Oxfordshire.

Background

3. Local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements are the collective responsibility of chief officers in the County Council, the Integrated Care Board and Thames Valley Police.
4. These three senior safeguarding partners agree ways to co-ordinate their safeguarding services for children; act as a strategic leadership group in supporting and engaging others; and implement local and national learning including from serious child safeguarding incidents. Under current arrangements they work with relevant partners through the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board, under the leadership of an Independent Chair. The arrangement is referred to as the "Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (OSCP)".

Key Issues

5. The OSCP Annual Report 2024-5 sets out the safeguarding challenges in Oxfordshire. The report shows the need to improve practice with respect to the themes of: (1) Neglect (2) Child exploitation/Harm outside the home and (3) Safety in Education.
6. There are key messages for system leaders to bring a collective focus to:
 - Consolidate and embed the new MASA (Multi-agency Safeguarding Arrangements).
 - Strengthen the voice of children and families within planning, scrutiny, and delivery.
 - Improve our data infrastructure to inform targeted safeguarding interventions.
 - Focus on high-impact issues—neglect, exploitation as ongoing priorities.
 - Build a culture of learning and challenge that supports continuous improvement.
7. Over the last year there were two serious incident notifications were submitted to the National Panel, resulting in Rapid Reviews. One of these reviews did not lead to a Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) and this was agreed with National Panel on the basis that all key learning had been identified as part of the Rapid Review process.
8. At present, one CSPR remains active, with the Partnership currently finalising arrangements with the national panel. Eight key recommendations, along with priority areas for partnership-wide reflection and learning, are actively being advanced across the partnership.
9. The follow safeguarding common themes have been identified in reviews last year locally and nationally:
 - Children with complex mental health/emotional needs.
 - Limited access to universal mental and physical support for children not in school (electively home educated).
 - Assessing risks and providing support for the whole family.
 - Recognising and responding to the vulnerabilities of babies and adolescents.
 - Understanding the roles of fathers/male carers and extended family members.
 - Best practices identified and implemented.

Strategic Policies and Priorities

10. The report outlines the Safeguarding Children Partnership's priorities, the learning from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, the outcomes of quality assurance work and the summarised findings with respect to the unexpected child deaths in Oxfordshire.

Financial Implications

11. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. There is no requirement for the council to commit any further financial resources towards the Partnership beyond what is currently committed.

Comments checked by:

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Legal Implications

12. There are no legal implications for the Local Authority

Comments checked by:

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Staff Implications

13. There are no additional staff resources being requested by way of this report for the work outlined in the Annual Report.

Comments checked by:

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Equality & Inclusion Implications

14. There are no additional equality & inclusion implications.

Sustainability Implications

15. The Board have moved much of its work to a virtual environment, reducing travel congestion, and no longer prints any materials for Board meetings or training sessions, instead making these available electronically. It has also reduced

printing & design costs by making more things, such as this annual report, plain text on the OSCP website.

Risk Management

16. The Partnership is made up of the partners who attend the meetings, supported by a small team in the Business Unit. If organisations do not continue to provide the level of engagement with the work of the Partnership it is likely it would fail to meet its duties laid out in statute and its accompanying guidance. As the Local Authority is one of the safeguarding partners to work together under the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act, 2017), and Working Together 2023, to ensure the Partnership is established and running well, this would represent a reputational risk. It is also likely any such failings would be highlighted under the Ofsted framework and in any resulting published report.

Lisa Lyons
Director of Children Services

Annex: OSCP Annual Report

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