

Enfield's Safeguarding Adolescents Strategy

2023-2026



www.safeguardingenfield.org



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Foreword

Our vision is for all children and young people in Enfield to be safe and feel safe.

As a Safeguarding Children Partnership, we recognise that as children get older, harms and risks can arise from outside the home and family (this external influence is often called extra-familial). This extra-familial harm can have devastating consequences for young people, their families, friends and communities. The fear of violence and exploitation causes anxiety for some of our young people and can prevent them from enjoying their childhoods.

This strategy outlines the Enfield Safeguarding Children Partnership's continued commitment to a collaborative approach to tackle all forms of extra-familial harm. We will target the contexts and environments in which extra-familial harm occurs to create safer places and spaces for children and young people. We will co-ordinate a multi-agency response to focus on prevention and early intervention work with children and young people at risk of extra-familial harm. We will provide targeted and appropriate protection and support, at the right place and the right time, to children and young people experiencing extra-familial harm to reduce the risks they face and help them to recover and rebuild their lives. Our approach will also focus on identifying, disrupting and pursuing those who seek to harm and exploit children and young people in Enfield.

The views and opinions of children and young people are central to this strategy and everything we do as a partnership. The Partnership's approach will continue to be informed by robust multi-agency intelligence and the lived experience of our children and young people, their families and the wider community.

This strategy has been developed with the input of our partners, stakeholders, young people and families. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all who have contributed and given their time.

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Introduction

Enfield has the 4th largest youth population (aged 18 and under) in London, accounting for over a quarter (26%) of the borough's population. This includes over 37,000 adolescents aged 11 to 18.¹ Understanding the context in which children and young people live their lives is an essential feature of effective multi-agency intervention.

Adolescence is a time of exploration, increasing independence and risk taking. Young people are increasingly influenced by a whole range of environments and people outside of their home (this is often referred to as extra-familial). This includes school, the local community, their peer groups and online settings. Most young people are able to negotiate this period of transition without serious consequences. However, some young people are exposed to risk and harm in these extra-familial contexts.

This includes:

- Child sexual exploitation
- Child criminal exploitation, including county lines and serious youth violence
- Child on child abuse
- Radicalisation and extremism
- Modern Slavery and trafficking
- Online harm and abuse

While some children and young people are at greater risk, including children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, all children and young people, including those with no apparent vulnerabilities, can experience exploitation and other forms of extra-familial harm.

This Safeguarding Adolescents Strategy sets out our multi-agency partnership approach to preventing and responding to the risk of children and young people experiencing extra-familial harm so that all children and young people feel safe and are safe. It outlines our priority areas for the next three years alongside core principles that will guide the work of the partnership to safeguard children and young people from extra-familial harm. It replaces the Safeguarding Adolescents from Exploitation (SAFE) Strategy 2019-2022.

This strategy is guided by the Children and Social Work Act 2017 which outlines how local authorities, the Police and NHS Integrated Care Boards work together with other local partners to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area. This includes schools and educational settings, voluntary sector organisations and faith groups. It is also guided by the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022) which set out the responsibilities of councils and partners to keep children and young people safe.

The strategy helps us to deliver the new Serious Violence Duty which requires specified authorities to work together and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence in their area. This will be further addressed by a Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment and Strategy being developed by the Enfield Safer and Stronger Communities Board (SSCB).

While working to prevent and tackle extra-familial harm of children and young people, there are often interrelated issues which need to be considered and addressed. The Enfield Safeguarding Children Partnership and the individual partners have in place a range of policies, strategies and protocols that impact on the lives of adolescents. These include:

- Children's Services Threshold Guidance
- Early Help for All Strategy
- Enfield Council Plan
- Fairer Enfield
- Empowering Young Enfield
- Looked After Children Strategy
- Missing from home, care, education and/or health protocol
- Tackling Child Neglect Strategy
- SEND Partnership Strategy
- School Inclusion Charter
- Youth Justice Plan
- Youth Participation Policy

Further information on these documents is provided in appendix 3.

¹ ONS, Census 2021

Our Strategy

Our vision is that all children and young people living in Enfield feel safe and are safe.

Our Priorities

To achieve our vision, we will work collaboratively and innovatively to deliver on the following priorities over the next three years.

Embed a contextual safeguarding approach across the partnership

We will target the contexts in which extra-familial harm occurs to create safer places and spaces for children and young people.

Deliver innovative and evidence-based prevention and early intervention activities

We will build resilience amongst children and young people and provide the right support and early help as soon as possible to prevent vulnerabilities from escalating into extra-familial harm and support children and young people to thrive.

Provide effective protection and support at the right place and the right time

We will provide children and young people who are affected by extra-familial harm with appropriate and targeted support that reduces the risks they face and helps them to recover and rebuild their lives.

Develop a multi-agency approach to identification and disruption of those who pose a risk to children and young people

We will develop an effective multi-agency approach that uses local intelligence to identify those who pose a risk to children and young people and to disrupt activity.

Our Principles

Our principles guide our actions and decisions across the Safeguarding Children Partnership and workforce to protect young people from extra familial harm.

Work collaboratively to ensure the best outcomes for children and young people

We will work together to enhance our shared understanding of extra-familial harm and identify effective and responsive measures to tackle it. Effective partnership working with a range of services and organisations including schools and educational settings, voluntary and community sector organisations and faith groups is crucial to effectively respond to extra-familial harm and keep young people safe.

See children and young people as children first

We will see children and young people as children first and treat extra-familial harm as a safeguarding and child protection concern. We will ensure children and young people are not blamed or held responsible for the harm they face, paying particular attention to the language we use. We will recognise the nature of constrained choices and not expect adolescents to respond and have the capacity as if they were adults.

Respect the voice, experience and expertise of children and young people

We will ensure children and young people have the ability, power and opportunity to influence and shape services, support and safety planning in Enfield, guided by our new Youth Participation Policy. In order to truly understand and respond to young people's experiences of harm, our approaches to support and safeguarding need to be informed and shaped by children and young people.

Use a trauma informed and strengths-based approach

We will work in a trauma informed and strengths-based way with young people affected by extra-familial harm. Young people who have been exposed to adverse childhood experiences or extra-familial harm may experience emotional, physical, sexual and relational trauma.

Professionals working with young people will recognise the emotional needs underlying young people's behaviours and respond appropriately. We will ensure our services and professionals prioritise safety, trust, collaboration, choice and empowerment in their interactions with young people. For example, Enfield is using the [Attachment, Regulation and Competence \(ARC\) model](#) as a framework to support schools to develop trauma informed practice.

We will focus on the strengths and protective factors inherent in a young person and their family and see these as foundations on which growth, change and safety can develop, rather than focusing on the problem or what is not being done.

Recognise and challenge inequalities, discrimination and disproportionality

We will recognise and take into account all inequalities and discrimination which impact the lives of children and young people. This may relate to their health, socio-economic status, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, gender identity and special educational need or disability. We will develop culturally competent and anti-discriminatory practice which challenges unconscious bias and promotes self-reflection for practitioners. We will build a comprehensive picture of young people who are affected by extra-familial harm in our local area and recognise and respond to disproportionality.

Treat parents and carers as partners, whenever safe to do so

We will engage effectively with parents and caregivers in understanding the issues affecting their children and provide them with practical support in helping them manage risk outside the home and keep their child safe. While many factors associated with extra-familial harm are beyond the direct control of parents and carers, strengthening their understanding, safeguarding capacity and resilience can enhance the family as a protective factor for the young person. We will actively involve parents and carers in the safety planning for their children, whenever safe to do so.

Prevalence of extra-familial harm in Enfield

Child criminal and sexual exploitation

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) is a growing issue where children and young people are targeted by criminals and gangs to get them to engage in criminal activity, such as stealing or carrying drugs or weapons. Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of sexual abuse. When a child or young person is exploited, they are given things like gifts, drugs, money, status and affection, in exchange for performing sexual activities.

In 2022/23, 239 children and young people were identified as being at risk of, or experiencing, child criminal and/or sexual exploitation in Enfield. In line with national data, boys in Enfield are more likely to be criminally exploited and girls are more likely to be sexually exploited. The most common ages at which young people were referred for support was between the ages of 14 and 16. 61 (26%) young people identified as being at risk of, or experiencing, CCE or CSE had special educational needs and 19 (8%) had a disability.

One of the most common forms of child criminal exploitation is county lines. Organised criminal groups groom and exploit children to sell drugs. Often these children are made to travel across counties and use dedicated phone lines to move and supply drugs. Children and young people exploited in this way will often be exposed to physical, mental, and sexual abuse. The National Crime Agency estimates there are over 2,000 individual deal lines across the UK with the greatest number (15%) originating from London.²

Serious youth violence

Youth violence and crime through gang involvement is a major concern in Enfield. We have implemented a public health approach to serious youth violence that seeks to address the underlying risk factors which increase the likelihood that someone will become a victim or perpetrator of violence. In the year end to September 2022, a total of 278 serious youth violence victims were recorded in Enfield, representing a 16.7%

decrease from the previous year.³ Enfield is now ranked 6th for number of serious youth violence victims compared to the 32 London boroughs after historically recording the highest number of serious youth violence victims. Although we are seeing a decline, we continue to record a high number of victims and serious youth violence still represents a significant challenge for the borough.

Young people missing from home, education and care

Children and young people who go missing even for a short period can be vulnerable to significant harm and exploitation. Children who are looked after and go missing from their placements can be especially vulnerable. In 2022/23, 269 children and young people in Enfield were reported as missing from home or care, of whom 58 (22%) were looked after children.

Return home interviews are offered by the Contextual Safeguarding Hub within 72 hours of a young person returning from a missing episode. They are an opportunity to uncover information about why the young person went missing, what happened while they were away, including exploring whether they have come to any harm, and discuss what needs to be put in place to prevent them from going missing again.

Modern slavery and trafficking

There are growing numbers of children and young people identified as victims of modern slavery in the UK. The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is the process used to identify and support victims. Statutory agencies (including police and local authorities) have a duty to report suspected trafficking cases. In 2021, 43% of referrals to the National Referral Mechanism were for children.⁴ This includes forced labour, domestic servitude and criminal and sexual exploitation. Some children and young people are trafficked internationally into the UK from other countries. British children and young people are also targeted for exploitation and grooming and are trafficked all around the UK.

2 National Crime Agency (2018), [County Lines Drug Supply, Vulnerability and Harm](#)

3 The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime are replacing the Serious Youth Violence crime category with a new category of Teen Violence.

4 Home Office, 2021

In 2022/23, 75 children in Enfield were referred to the National Referral Mechanism as potential victims of modern slavery and trafficking, an increase from 57 children in 2021/22.

Radicalisation and extremism

In 2021/22, young people aged 15 to 20 accounted for the largest proportion of the 6,393 national referrals to Prevent.⁵ There is increasing understanding of radicalisation as a type of harm experienced by a young person which requires a safeguarding response. Enfield's Prevent programme is a borough-wide initiative which aims to provide interventions and safeguard people who are at risk of radicalisation. It also aims to deter extremist groups from operating in the borough.

Online abuse

While the internet is often a positive part of children's lives, some young people can experience abuse and inappropriate content through social media, online gaming and messaging apps. Children and young people may experience several types of abuse online including cyberbullying, emotional abuse, sexting, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. Children and young people can also be groomed online: perpetrators may use online platforms to build a trusting relationship with the child in order to abuse them.

It can be easier for perpetrators to initiate, maintain and escalate abuse through digital technology because it gives them easier access to children and young people, and they can create anonymous and false profiles. Children and young people may also have a false sense of safety online which means they are more likely to talk to strangers than in the offline world.



⁵ Home Office, 2023

What have young people told us about safety in Enfield?

As part of the development of this strategy, we spoke to young people in Enfield. This included our Enfield Youth Council, the Safeguarding Ambassadors⁶, young people from the Youth Justice Service and looked after children and care leavers. They told us what makes them feel unsafe in Enfield and what would make them feel safer.

What makes me feel unsafe...

Conflict between pupils at different schools	Harassment
Negative and prejudiced attitudes towards young people and racial targeting from adults	Areas with poor lighting, e.g., some parts of parks
Anti-social behaviour	Litter and fly tipping
Stabbings and fights	Catcalling

What would make me feel safer...

More lighting	Youth workers in public places
Keeping public spaces clean and welcoming	More CCTV cameras
Safeguarding training for public transport workers and businesses	More awareness of CHiPS scheme
More activities for young people, e.g. bowling/arcades	Free phone boxes
Better advertising of activities available for young people through social media	More spaces in parks for young people, e.g. basketball courts

⁶ The Enfield Safeguarding Children Partnership has supported young people to become safeguarding ambassadors. They have an important role to act as 'critical friends' for the partnership, helping us to improve how we support all young people and working with us on a range of activities including co-producing a training programme.

Risk factors

All children and young people are vulnerable to extra-familial harm. However, local and national reviews, local data and other secondary research point to the increased vulnerability of children and young people with adverse childhood experiences.

Prior experience of neglect and/or abuse

Experience of neglect and/or abuse such as parental substance misuse, domestic abuse and physical abuse in childhood can have lasting negative effects on physical health, wellbeing, the ability to form healthy relationships and lifelong opportunities such as education and employment. It can also increase a child or young person's vulnerability to extra-familial harm. Children in need are children assessed as needing health and protection as a result of risks to their development or health. In 2021/22, over half (59%) of children in need in Enfield had abuse or neglect identified as their primary need at assessment.

Socio-economic deprivation

Children and young people experiencing socio-economic deprivation may be groomed by exploiters through offers of material possessions or money for themselves or their family. We are seeing growing rates of child poverty in Enfield and the cost of living crisis is deepening existing inequalities. After accounting for housing costs, 33.7% of children in Enfield were living in poverty in 2020/21.⁷

Homelessness or insecure accommodation

Children and young people experiencing homelessness or living in insecure accommodation have increased vulnerability to extra-familial harm. In 2022/23, 29 young people aged 16 and 17 in Enfield presented as homeless. As of February 2023, 4,347 children in Enfield were living in temporary accommodation.

Young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities are more vulnerable to extra-familial harm for a variety of reasons. Children and young people with SEND may not recognise the harm and/or may not know where to find help. They may also have additional communication needs that make it more difficult for them to report concerns. Professionals and parents and carers may not recognise the signs of extra-familial harm in children and young people with SEND and/or may mistake the signs for part of a child's disability. Additionally, disabled children and young people may have less contact with other people, and this can mean they have fewer people to turn to if they need help or support. As of May 2023, 4,379 children and young people had an Education, Health and Care Plan maintained by Enfield Council. In 2022, 5,896 pupils (10.6%) were receiving SEN support at Enfield mainstream schools.

⁷ End Child Poverty, [Child Poverty Statistics](#)

Looked after children and care leavers

Looked after children and care leavers may be more vulnerable to extra-familial harm due to the situations and experiences that led to them being brought into care, and/or factors such as placement disruptions resulting in instability or being placed in a new environment away from support networks. As of March 2023, there were 419 looked after children in Enfield, of which 68% were aged 10 and over. 13% of these children were living in residential accommodation.

Exclusion and placement in alternative education provision

Education is a protective factor for many children and young people. There is strong evidence that children who are permanently excluded from mainstream education are significantly more likely to be exposed to extra-familial harm.

SWERRL (Strengthening Wellbeing, Emotional Health, Relationships and Readiness for Learning) is a multi-disciplinary primary behaviour support service that works in partnership with schools and other services in Enfield. They support the inclusion of primary school children who are experiencing social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) difficulties and help Enfield primary schools achieve a zero permanent exclusion goal.

The Secondary Behaviour Support Service works in partnership with secondary schools to prevent permanent exclusions, by supporting learners through an outreach and alternative provision service. One initiative is the [NEXUS](#) programme which has been in operation since 2019 with the aim of reducing school exclusions. The programme offers a diverse range of interventions such as mentoring, sports activities, after school diversionary activities and issue-based assemblies. It is offered to all 23 secondary schools in Enfield, including the Pupil Referral Unit.

Poor mental health and wellbeing

Children and young people with poor mental health and wellbeing may be more vulnerable to extra-familial harm. Mental health difficulties may arise from past experience of trauma, abuse or exploitation. Access to child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) can be challenging in London due to increased demand and limited resources. In 2022, 20.4% of young people aged 11 to 16 years in England and 22% of young people aged 17 to 24 had a probable mental health problem.^{8,9}

Substance misuse

Young people with substance misuse problems may have increased vulnerability to extra-familial harm. In 2021/22, 182 young people in Enfield accessed substance misuse treatment services.

Unaccompanied asylum seeking children

Unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) are children and young people who are seeking asylum in the UK but who have been separated from their parents or carers. They are cared for by the local authority and as of March 2023, there were 47 UASC being cared for in Enfield. UASC are alone, in an unfamiliar country, may be surrounded by people unable to speak their first language and may be unaware of their rights and who they can trust. They may have experienced harm and trauma in their country of birth, on their journey to the UK or in the UK.

8 NHS, [Mental Health of Children and Young People in England 2022](#)

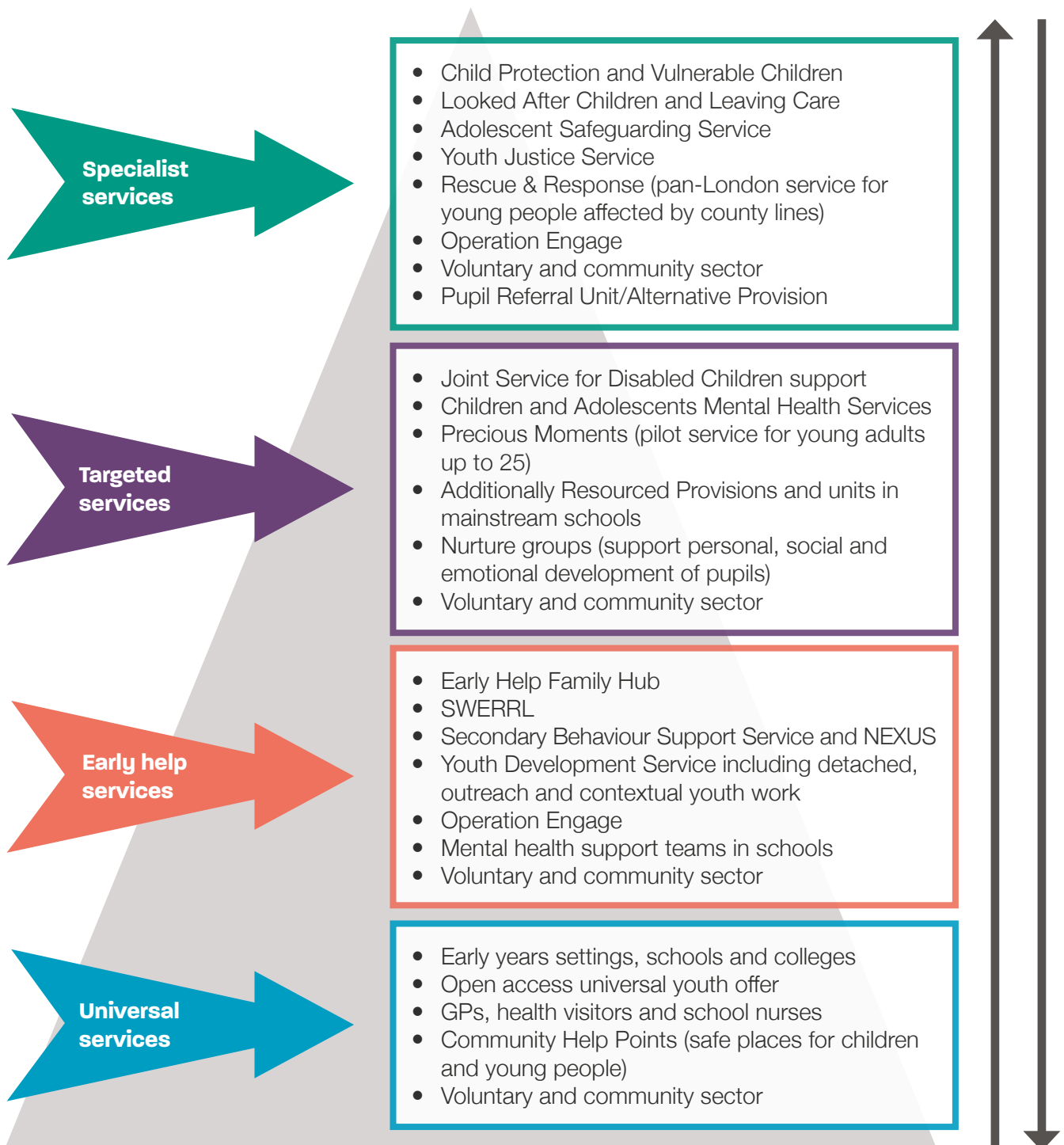
9 Awaiting Enfield specific data on referrals to CAMHS

Summary of multi-agency service offer

We offer a range of services across our partnership to meet the varying needs of children and young people. This includes universal services which aim to build the resilience of all young people and specialist services for young people who are experiencing extra-familial harm.

Enfield also has a well-established and diverse voluntary and community sector, which takes an active role in providing a range of early intervention, targeted and specialist services within communities.

The diagram below highlights some of our key services.



Universal services

Universal services are available to all children, young people and their families. Universal services promote and build resilience in children, young people and their families and create an approach aimed at reducing risk factors, addressing early indicators and preventing problems from occurring.

Targeted services

Some children and young people, defined as Children in Need (CiN) may be facing complex problems which require an integrated and co-ordinated response. They may require longer term intervention from specialist services for them to achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development or to prevent significant impairment of their health and development. Young people may be at risk of permanent exclusion, they may have presented at A&E due to injuries experienced in extra-familial settings and there may be increasing numbers of missing episodes.

Early help services

Some children, young people and families require coordinated early help and intervention from targeted services to prevent problems from escalating and becoming more difficult to resolve. Young people may be displaying risk factors for extra-familial harm such as non-attendance at school, low level substance misuse and exposure to violence within their peer groups.

Specialist services

Children and young people are experiencing significant harm and may be subject to child protection enquiries, taken into the care of the local authority or need specialist mental health intervention. This includes young people experiencing extra-familial harm. Children who are at serious risk of, or are experiencing, extra-familial harm require multi-agency involvement and will need regular reviews to monitor their needs and level of risk. They also need support to enable their recovery and prevent further harm.

Embed a contextual safeguarding approach across the partnership

We will target the contexts in which extra-familial harm occurs to create safer places and spaces for children and young people.

Contextual safeguarding is an approach to understanding and responding to young people's experiences of harm outside the home which considers wider factors such as peer groups and the places young people spend time both in-person and online. A contextual safeguarding system seeks to intervene in the contexts where young people are coming to harm to create safer places and spaces for young people.

We are developing a contextual safeguarding approach in Enfield across our partnership. In 2022, we updated our Children's Services threshold guidance to include risk factors linked to extra-familial harm. Previously, our threshold document predominantly focused on individual risk factors to assess the needs of children, young people and their families. Our new threshold guidance supports practitioners to consider and identify extra-familial harm. We also set up our Contextual Safeguarding Hub in 2021 to provide additional support to social workers through case consultations.

In line with a contextual safeguarding approach, we have introduced targeted interventions in places where young people spend time and areas that are identified as potentially unsafe. By meeting young people in community spaces, listening to their concerns and building trusted relationships with them, we can help to create environments in which they feel safer.

Contextual safeguarding youth workers

Our Contextual Safeguarding Hub undertakes mapping of contextual intelligence and deploys contextual safeguarding youth workers in identified hot spot areas, working with young people after school, during the evening and at weekends with a focus on disrupting hot spots and improving the safety of young people outside their family home. The contextual youth workers also deliver workshops in schools on a range of relevant themes, including healthy relationships, peer to peer abuse, keeping safe on social media, and keeping safe in your neighbourhood. We also recently launched the mobile youth bus that can be deployed to hot spots (informed by crime data), offering a safe place for young people to gather with friends and engage in activities.



Community Help Points (CHiPs)

Pioneered by the Enfield Children and Young Persons' Service (ECYPS), CHiPs are a network of 'safe havens' across Enfield. Young people who are lost or feel at risk or vulnerable can go into any place marked with the CHiPs sticker to ask for help and assistance from the community. This includes local businesses, restaurants, Council buildings and leisure centres. A list of CHiPs location can be found [here](#).

Safer Spaces project

In 2022, we installed new CCTV cameras in three locations in Enfield as part of a London Violence Reduction Unit funded scheme to make young people feel safer. The Metropolitan Police asked young people in the borough their thoughts about crime and where in Enfield they felt safe and unsafe. In response to this feedback, we installed cameras in Chase Gardens, London Road and Lincoln Road to improve young people's feelings of safety. The project was co-produced with young people who were involved from the design stages through to evaluation.

Moving forward, we will gather information about a range of contexts including the family, peer groups, places, spaces and communities outside the home when safeguarding young people. This will enable us to have a full picture of a young person's life including risks and protective factors, contributing to effective safety planning.

We will also seek to address the wider environmental factors and extra-familial contexts that are threatening the safety of our young people at a borough-level, working in partnership with individuals and organisations who can influence these contexts such as community safety, planning, housing services, local businesses and voluntary and community sector organisations. We will be informed by feedback from young people about what makes them feel safer.

During adolescence, peers become progressively more important because young people spend more time with them and because their relationships with parents and carers change as they develop greater autonomy and independence. With peers, adolescents can find security and a sense of belonging. Peer groups and relationships can play a significant role during adolescence in shaping young people's social norms and the decisions they make. For some, peer influence is another distinct risk faced by young people in adolescence and peer groups can become settings in which abuse and exploitation occur.

We need to understand a young person's peer group to better understand a young person and more effectively safeguard them in the long term – this may include direct work with peer groups.

How will we achieve this?

We will:

- Undertake an audit review of our approach to contextual safeguarding and response to extra-familial harm to identify best practice and areas for improvement to ensure a contextual safeguarding approach is adopted
- Contextualise our safeguarding systems to ensure that assessment frameworks record contextual information including peer groups, places, spaces and communities outside the home
- Engage a broad range of services and organisations in the protection of young people in extra-familial settings. This includes local authority services such as housing and community safety alongside educational settings, businesses, community organisations and faith groups
- Map out all available peer group, school and neighbourhood-based interventions relating to extra-familial harm
- Explore new opportunities to work more closely with young people's peer groups as part of our safeguarding response
- Improve awareness amongst young people of the Community Help Points (CHiPs) scheme
- Play our part in the London-wide conversation on safe public transport
- Build contextual safeguarding considerations into the design of public spaces, working in partnership with the Planning Service and Housing Services



Deliver innovative and evidence-based prevention and early intervention activities

We will build resilience amongst children and young people and provide the right support and early help as soon as possible to prevent vulnerabilities from escalating into extra-familial harm and to support children and young people to thrive.

We know that the first 1,001 days of a child's life (from conception up until the age of 2), can have a significant impact on their development and their life chances; including how well they build relationships, achieve at school and their future job prospects, to their overall health and wellbeing.¹⁰ However, a child's development and their life chances can also be impacted by lots of different factors, such as their early relationships and childhood experiences, the care they receive, living in poverty or becoming looked after.¹¹ Research also shows that children with adverse childhood experiences can be more vulnerable to extra-familial harm.

In the early years, we are helping families to access the right information, advice and support for their children through our work with partners to deliver our Children's Centre Programme, which supports children and their families from conception to the age of 5. We are also improving the take-up of funded high-quality early years education.

As a partnership, we need to identify when young people are placed at increased risk by their family and community environments; their experiences of learning; and their mental health. Multi-agency information and intelligence must be gathered and shared to identify young people who may be at increased risk of extra-familial harm. We will work with young people and their families through innovative and evidence-based services that develop resilience and reduce the risk of extra-familial harm, supporting young people to thrive.

Early Help Family Hub

The Enfield Early Help Family Hub works with the whole family to improve wellbeing, relationships, behaviour and communication by offering tailored advice, support and direct interventions at any point in a child or young person's life.

Virtual reality programme

In 2022, we partnered with the London boroughs of Redbridge and Waltham Forest and technology company Antser to deliver an innovative virtual reality programme. Young people identified as being vulnerable to exploitation and at significant risk of extra familial harm experienced virtual reality. This improved their awareness of harmful behaviour and exploitative relationships and opened up conversations about their risk of extra familial harm. The project also helped to support parents and professionals working with children at risk to better understand and empathise with the young people.

We will equip and empower children and young people with the knowledge and resources about how they can keep themselves safe online, in their homes, schools and communities. This includes enabling them to understand risk in their communities, how to engage in healthy relationships and where to access support when they need it. Schools play the leading role in providing information to children, delivering key messages through statutory sex and relationships education (RSE), personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) classes and targeted workshops.

10 HM Government (2021) The Best Start for Life: The Early Years Healthy Development Review Report (A Vision for the 1,001 Critical Days)

11 Ibid

National research demonstrates the positive impact of community awareness about exploitation and other forms of extra-familial harm. A community that can identify this problem and that knows what to do about it will help protect children and young people. We will make sure that there is a shared understanding of extra-familial harm, including early signs that it may be happening and how to report concerns through publicly shared safety information that reaches all parts of our community.

Positive activities enable young people to learn new skills, build resilience and healthy relationships, stay safe and boost their physical and mental health and wellbeing. We will continue to provide a range of opportunities for young people to be involved in positive activities, including at weekends and during the school holidays. This includes opportunities to engage and work with young people in their own communities and in areas identified as potential hot spots through our detached and outreach youth work offer. We continue to take steps to develop the range of play, leisure and social opportunities for our children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, including launching a new SEND Youth Club at Bell Lane Youth Centre.

Youth services

Our Youth Services deliver a strong youth offer in the borough which includes universal services from five youth centres, Summer University, Holiday Activities and Food programme (HAF), a SEND Youth Club, mentoring, detached youth work and outreach youth support in schools. We recently launched the mobile youth bus that can be deployed to hot spots (informed by crime data), offering a safe place for young people to gather with friends and engage in activities.

Further information on the range of opportunities and positive activities available for young people in Enfield can be found on our [Youth Portal](#).

Research shows that young people with poor mental health and wellbeing may have increased vulnerability to extra-familial harm. We are developing a new approach to emotional health and wellbeing services for children and young people in Enfield. The THRIVE framework¹² supports children and young people to maintain mental wellbeing through effective prevention and promotion strategies and getting the right help according to their needs. Further information on our approach can be found [here](#).

My Young Mind Enfield (Mental health support teams)

My Young Mind Enfield is a NHS-funded project and partnership between Enfield CAMHs and the Educational Psychology Team. The mental health support teams are currently funded to reach 47 educational settings in Enfield and are part of the broader offer of support in schools. They are engaged in a range of activities including delivering evidence-based interventions with children and young people; supporting senior mental health leads in education settings to develop a whole school approach to mental health and emotional wellbeing; and providing timely advice to staff so that children and young people can get the right support and remain in education.

¹² Wolpert et al, THRIVE Framework for system change, 2019

How will we achieve this?

We will continue to:

- Develop resilience of young people by providing talks, workshops and supporting PSHE lessons in schools
- Work with schools and educational settings to support robust inclusion practices in line with the Enfield Inclusion Charter aiming to keep young people in mainstream education wherever possible
- Support children and young people to get involved in positive activities, be involved in their communities and have somewhere to go and something to do through our universal youth offer
- Provide clear and accessible information on relevant services for young people, families and professionals through the [Children's Portal](#) and [Youth Bubble](#)
- Support the provision and development of substance misuse treatment services for young people
- Support the mental health and emotional wellbeing of young people by embedding the THRIVE Framework across our services

What more can we do?

- Strengthen our outreach and detached youth work provision so that we engage and work with young people in their communities
- Increase local play and leisure opportunities for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities in line with our [SEND Partnership Strategy](#)
- Adopt the Enfield Inclusion Charter within our Youth Development Service, making sure all our young people feel included across our wider youth offer
- Develop and agree a comprehensive multi-agency data set that allows the partnership to develop a profile of young people most at risk
- Improve the use of communication channels to promote awareness, understanding and recognition of extra-familial harm within the partnership and wider community
- Launch contextual safeguarding film 'Save Me' and associated educational resources



Provide effective protection and support at the right place and the right time

We will provide young people who are affected by extra-familial harm with appropriate and targeted support that reduces the risks they face and helps them to recover and rebuild their lives.

Extra-familial harm can have devastating and lifelong consequences for young people and can negatively impact on their social, emotional and cognitive development. Without effective support, affected young people may experience mental health issues, substance misuse and difficulties accessing education and employment.

Adolescent Safeguarding Teams

We launched our Adolescent Safeguarding Teams in 2021 to strengthen our safeguarding and multi-agency response to young people aged 10 to 17 affected by extra-familial harm. The team worked with 281 young people during 2021/22. Out of these, 245 young people were supported to remain at home, 16 young people came into the care of the local authority and 20 young people were assisted to access supported accommodation.

The partnership recognises that to be effective in improving outcomes for young people affected by extra-familial harm, practitioners need to continue to develop their knowledge and skills and be aware of new and emerging threats. We support a culture of continuous improvement and have a learning and improvement framework in place to support this work. This includes learning from local and national reviews and national research, as well as expertise from the lived experience of our young people and families.

Safeguarding practice reviews and research have highlighted the concept of 'adulthoodification'. This is a form of bias where children from Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities are perceived as being more adult-like, less innocent and less vulnerable than other children. This can negatively impact on how children are safeguarded and protected. As part of our learning and improvement programme, we will ensure that our multi-agency workforce has access to training opportunities that prevent and tackle this bias and embed anti-discriminatory practice across the workforce.

Particular life experiences and transition points can exacerbate existing vulnerabilities and cause risk levels to rise rapidly. This includes changes in family circumstances, exclusion from mainstream school, being arrested or experiencing violence. Our approach to protection and support will include a focus on reachable moments, making sure that the right support is available for families and young people whenever it is needed.

Operation Engage

Operation Engage places outreach youth workers in Wood Green custody suite who provide support, signposting and mentoring to young people who come into custody at a time when they are most inclined to receiving support. In 2022/23, 634 young people were seen by trained practitioners within 48 hours of being arrested and taken into Wood Green Custody Suite. 381 young people consented to engaging with specialist outreach youth work.

Extra-familial harm does not stop when children reach their 18th birthday. For young people transitioning to adulthood, there can be a cliff edge where services and support fall away at 18 years which can leave young people unprepared for adulthood. We will seek to develop pathways for young people aged over 18 to access safeguarding and relevant support which empowers them to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives as independent adults.

Transitional safeguarding pilot

It has been recognised locally and nationally that there is currently a gap in provision for young adults who may have been known to Children's Services or are known to Adult Social Care but are not eligible for ongoing support under the Care Act 2014. We have commissioned a pilot service, initially for up to 40 young adults, aged 17 years and 9 months up to 25 years old. The service will provide early help and support and signposting to other organisations to prevent these young adults from going into crisis, help them to achieve better outcomes and maximum independence.

Extra-familial risks and harms can involve young people perpetrating, as well as experiencing, harm. We have implemented a child-first approach in our Youth Justice Service. This means that we see children as children, recognise their particular needs and vulnerabilities and help them build on their strengths and capabilities to build resilience and empower them to fulfil their potential. This also means that we prevent as many children coming into contact with the youth justice system as possible, prioritising prevention and diversion.

We introduced our YouthXtra programme in June 2021, with the aim of reducing reoffending in children known to Enfield Youth Justice Service, in particular young people who are being criminally exploited. The programme ensures a holistic and personalised approach to the provision of support to young people and their families, working with them to build resilience. The programme also takes a contextual safeguarding approach, mapping areas, locations of concerns and potential exploiters.

How will we achieve this?

We will continue to:

- Adopt a 'Child First' approach in our Youth Justice Service and treat children entering the Youth Justice System as children rather than 'offenders' or 'criminals'
- Roll out trauma informed practice across the partnership including in early years settings, schools and colleges through our Enfield Trauma Informed Practice in Schools and Settings (E-TIPSS) initiative

What more can we do?

- Pilot local decision making for trafficked children¹³
- Embed our YouthXtra programme to reduce re-offending
- Develop our ability to respond flexibly to critical and reachable moments
- Equip and support the multi-agency workforce through high-quality learning opportunities, including training on anti-discriminatory practice and adultification
- Ensure that our workforce across the Safeguarding Children Partnership is equipped with the knowledge, skills and approaches they need to provide the right help for our children and young people with SEND and their families through training and ongoing practice guidance
- Work with the Safeguarding Adults Board and Adult Social Care to develop pathways for young people aged over 18 to access relevant support, safeguarding and protection from harm. This includes support and guidance on health and wellbeing, housing, financial management, independent living skills, and employment and training. Review the pilot programme to monitor outcomes for young people.



¹³ Currently, when children are referred to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) decisions about whether or not they are a victim of trafficking are made by Home Office officials. Enfield is taking part in a Home Office pilot that will test if decision making about whether a child is a victim of trafficking is more appropriate and effective within local safeguarding partnerships.

Develop a multi-agency approach to identification and disruption of those who pose a risk to children and young people

We will develop an effective multi-agency approach that uses local intelligence to identify those who pose a risk to children and young people and to disrupt activity.

Whilst our priority is on preventing extra-familial harm from occurring and supporting children, young people and their families, it is equally important that we take responsive action against perpetrators of harm. Learning from national reviews emphasises the need for greater focus on disruption of perpetrators as part of our safeguarding response.

Working together to understand the extra-familial harm taking place in Enfield is essential to effectively target, prevent and disrupt the offending. At the monthly Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) meeting, partners from public sector and voluntary organisations share information and intelligence relating to exploitation to identify emerging trends, locations and people of concern and generate intelligence for investigations.

As well as statutory partners, other sources of information can be invaluable in building a better understanding of extra-familial harm taking place in the local area. We will seek to build and maintain relationships with a range of individuals and organisations, including local businesses, housing officers and faith groups.

Effective disruption of perpetrators involves the flexible use of both criminal and civil routes, including powers relating to licensing, health and safety, fraud and housing provision. We will take action against both locations and people of concern.

We also know that trust and confidence between agencies, communities and young people is key to encourage reporting of concerns and ensure we can take action against those who take harm. We will explore opportunities to work with young people and our communities to build trust and confidence in the Police.

How will we achieve this?

We will continue to:

- Ensure timely identification of perpetrators of extra-familial harm and pursue enforcement action against them
- Use the full range of disruption tactics available through both criminal and civil routes to protect children and young people, including powers available in relation to licensing, health and safety, fraud and housing provision
- Develop a local profile of extra-familial harm in the borough which draws on information and intelligence from a wide range of sources to aid insight and disrupt perpetrators
- Empower and support young people, families and communities to report incidents of violence and crime

What more can we do?

- Explore opportunities to work with young people and communities to build increased trust and confidence in the Police

Governance and measuring progress

Our vision is that all young people in Enfield feel safe and are safe.

The Enfield Safeguarding Children Partnership is responsible for overseeing the delivery, monitoring and review of this strategy. The progress of our strategy will be reviewed annually by the Vulnerable Young People Group, and the strategy will be updated where necessary to respond to local and national changes. This includes in response to the Department for Education’s strategy (2023) ‘Stable Homes, Built on Love’ setting out reforms to children’s social care and upcoming updates to the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children.

Our governance framework sets out our relationships and importantly, how we will work together to deliver on our Safeguarding Adolescents Strategy. This is set out in the table below.

A performance management framework will be in place to track the progress of the strategy implementation. The framework will include indicators relating to the profile of extra-familial harm; risk factors; and number of children and young people accessing our prevention and early intervention services.

Strategic Leadership:	The Enfield Safeguarding Children Partnership Executive Group are responsible for providing strategic direction and leadership to this strategy.
Supported by:	<p>The Vulnerable Young People (VYP) Group are responsible for agreeing and monitoring our annual action plan. The VYP Group maintains strategic oversight of Enfield’s response to extra-familial harm and is made up of representatives from Children’s Services, Education, Public Health, the North Central London Integrated Care Board, Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Trust, the Metropolitan Police, the Probation Service and the voluntary and community sector.</p> <p>The group will report on progress against the action plan and identified performance indicators on an annual basis to the Enfield Safeguarding Children Partnership Executive Group.</p>
Shaped by:	The annual report from the VYP Group will be shared with the Safeguarding Ambassadors and their feedback and ideas regarding how we can deliver on our priorities will be shared with the Vulnerable Young People Group prior to the annual report being presented to the Enfield Safeguarding Children Partnership Group.
Delivered by:	Our workforce across the local authority, health and social care, the Police, schools and colleges and the voluntary and community sector.

Appendix 1

How to report a concern

If you are worried about the welfare of a child or young person, please tell us about your concerns so that someone can help.

Please refer them to the Children's MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) using the [Children's Portal](#).

You can call on 020 8379 5555 (Mon-Thurs 9am-5pm; Fri 9am-4.45pm). Out of office hours call: 020 8379 1000 (select option 2 and you will be transferred to an advisor). You can also email at: ChildrensMASH@enfield.gov.uk

Remember in an emergency always call 999.

Appendix 2

Signs of extra-familial harm

There are signs that may indicate a young person is experiencing extra-familial harm, including exploitation:

- Frequently absent from school
- Frequent missing episodes and being found in a different area to where they live
- Returning from missing episodes with injuries or dishevelled appearance
- Relationships with people older than them
- Changes in behaviour, i.e., more withdrawn or isolated
- Unexplained amounts of money, clothing, or other items and gifts
- Increasingly disruptive, hostile or physically aggressive at home or school
- Substance misuse or dependency
- Having multiple mobile phones or use of a phone that causes concerns, e.g., multiple callers or more texts than usual
- Self-harm and/or significant changes in emotional wellbeing
- Unexplained physical injuries and refusing to seek medical help
- Carrying weapons
- Sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- Inappropriate or sexualised behaviour

Appendix 3

Connected strategies, policies, protocols and guidance

Local strategies and plans

- [Council Plan 2023-2026](#)
- [Safer and Stronger Communities Board Community Safety Plan](#)
- [Empowering Young Enfield](#)
- [Tackling Child Neglect Strategy](#)
- [Early Help for All Strategy](#)
- [Looked after Children Strategy](#)
- [SEND Partnership Strategy](#)
- [Modern Slavery Strategy](#)
- [Youth Participation Policy](#)
- [Youth Justice Plan](#)
- [Enfield Inclusion Charter](#)
- Enfield Trauma Informed Practice in Schools and Settings Plan
- Secondary Behaviour Support Service Plan
- SWERRL (Strengthening Wellbeing, Emotional Health, Relationships and Readiness for Learning) Plan
- Emotionally Based School Avoidance Guidance

Local policies, protocols and guidance

- [Missing from Home, Care, Education or and/or Health Protocol](#)
- [Threshold Guidance](#)
- [London Safeguarding Children Procedures and Practice Guidance](#)
- [London Child Exploitation Operating Protocol](#)

Underpinning documents and research

Local

- [Children Safeguarding Practice and Serious Case Reviews](#)

National

- Children's Society (2022), [Appropriate Language in Relation to Child Exploitation](#)
- Association of London Directors of Children's Services and London Innovation & Improvement Alliance (2022), [Adolescent safeguarding in London](#)
- Home Office (2022) – [Child Exploitation Disruption Toolkit](#)
- Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (2022) – [Safeguarding children at risk from exploitation: review](#)
- Office of the Chief Social Worker for Adults et al. (2021), [Bridging the Gap: Transitional safeguarding and the role of social work with adults](#)
- Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (2022) – [Annual Report 2021](#)

Appendix 4

Definitions

Adolescence	The phase of life between childhood and adulthood, from ages 10 to 19. Adolescents experience rapid physical, cognitive and psychosocial growth. This affects how they feel, think, make decisions, and interact with the world around them.
Adultification	Safeguarding practice reviews and research have highlighted the concept of 'adultification'. This is a form of bias where children from Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities are perceived as being more adult-like, less innocent and less vulnerable than other children. This can negatively impact on how children are safeguarded and protected.
Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE)	Highly stressful and potentially traumatic events or situations that occur in childhood and or/adolescence. This includes physical, sexual and emotional abuse, exposure to domestic violence, bereavement and living with someone with substance misuse problems. ACEs can have lasting negative effects on physical health, wellbeing, the ability to form healthy relationships and lifelong opportunities such as education and employment.
Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)	A form of child sexual abuse. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.
Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)	Occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.
Child on child abuse	Children can be exploited by children of a similar age as well as adults. In some cases, children who have been exploited themselves by adults or peers will recruit other children to be abused. In other instances, sexual bullying in schools and other social settings can result in the exploitation of children by their peers. Exploitation also occurs within and between gangs where sex is used in exchange for safety, protection, drugs and simply belonging.

Contextual Safeguarding	An approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships. Contextual safeguarding is therefore the intervention into the contexts presenting harm to children.
County lines	Gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other forms of "deal line". They exploit children and vulnerable adults to move the drugs and money and will often use intimidation, violence and weapons.
Disproportionality	A group's representation in a particular category that exceeds expectations for that group or differs substantially from the representation of others in that category. Research shows that the youth justice system treats children and young people from ethnic minority backgrounds differently. This means that children and young people from certain ethnicities are over-represented in sentencing, custody and other parts of the system compared to the proportion of that group within the general population.
Early help	Providing support as early as possible to prevent problems escalating and causing distress. Early help includes universal services and targeted services designed to reduce needs or prevent problems from becoming entrenched and difficult to address.
Edge of care	Young people aged 11 years and over for whom entry into care has been considered but who are being supported, along with their family, through alternative services with the aim of keeping the family together and avoiding care proceedings.
Enfield Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESCP)	The ESCP includes three statutory safeguarding partners: Enfield Council, the Metropolitan Police Service and the NHS Integrated Care Board who work together with relevant agencies such as schools, health care providers and voluntary sector organisations to keep children and young people safe.
Extra-familial harm	Harm or exploitation that occurs to children outside their families, often during the adolescent years when social networks widen, and young people spend more time outside of the home. These extra familial threats can arise at school and other educational establishments, from within peer groups, or more widely from within the wider community and/or online.
Gangs	A relatively durable, predominantly street-based group of young people who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) See themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group, and (2) Engage in a range of criminal activity and violence.
Modern slavery	The recruitment, movement, harbouring or receiving of children, women or men through the use of force, coercion, abuse of vulnerability, deception or other means for the purpose of exploitation. It is a crime under the Modern Slavery Act 2015 . Children (those aged under 18) are considered victims of trafficking, whether or not they have been coerced, deceived or paid to secure their compliance. They need only have been recruited, transported, received or harboured for the purpose of exploitation.

Multi-agency	Involving co-operation between several organisations. In the context of safeguarding, this means that professionals from the local authority, police and health work together with other partners locally to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area.
National Referral Mechanism (NRM)	Framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support. First responder organisations (including local authorities and the police) have a legal duty to notify the Home Office when they come across potential victims of modern slavery.
Neglect	The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect can have long-lasting impacts on a child's life, including poor mental health, difficulty forming positive relationships, unhealthy sexual behaviour and substance use. Prior experience of neglect can increase a young person's vulnerability to extra-familial harm.
Professional curiosity	Children rarely disclose abuse, neglect or exploitation directly to practitioners. This makes identifying abuse, neglect or exploitation difficult for professionals across agencies. Professional curiosity is the capacity and communication skills to explore and understand what is happening in a child or young person's life rather than making assumptions or accepting things at face value. This approach is important in helping to gather and share the right information to assess risk and identify harm.
Radicalisation	Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.
Safeguarding	Working Together to Safeguard Children defines safeguarding as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting children from maltreatment • Preventing impairment of children's health or development • Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care • Taking action to ensure that all children have the best outcome
Serious youth violence	Violence with a weapon in a community or public space with a victim aged 10-19 years.
Supervision	Regular one-to-one or group meetings between social workers and managers to help manage case work, reflect on practice, support professional development and provide workers with emotional support
Trauma	An event, series of events or set of circumstances that is experienced by someone as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and has negative impacts on their neurological, biological, psychological and social development.
Trauma informed practice	An approach that aims to increase practitioners' awareness of how trauma can negatively impact on individuals and communities, and their ability to feel safe or develop trusting relationships with services and professionals. It aims to improve the accessibility and quality of services by creating culturally sensitive, safe services that people trust and want to use. It seeks to prepare practitioners to work in collaboration and partnership with people and empower them to make choices about their safety and wellbeing. The 6 principles of trauma informed practice are: safety, trust, choice, collaboration, empowerment and cultural consideration. Further information can be found here .



Website

www.safeguardingenfield.org



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