



**East Sussex
Safeguarding
Children
Partnership**

Annual Report 2019-20

Safeguarding Context

1. Child population in East Sussex

East Sussex, covering 660 square miles, has an estimated population of 549,557. There are many affluent areas as well as areas of significant deprivation. East Sussex has 19 lower super output areas among the top 10% of the most deprived in England; 16 are in Hastings, two are in Eastbourne, and one in Rother.

In 2019 there were estimated to be **106,338 children and young people between 0 and 17 years old**, accounting for 19.1% of the total population of East Sussex. The area with the highest proportion of under 18's is Hastings (21%) with Eastbourne, Lewes and Wealden all between 19-20%. Rother has the lowest with under 18's accounting for only 17.1% of the total population.

East Sussex is becoming increasingly ethnically diverse. Locally the **proportion of school age children from minority ethnic backgrounds is increasing: from 10.4% in 2013 to 14.1% (9,488 pupils) in 2020^{1]}**, but is still significantly lower than the national figure of 33.1%. (January 2020 school census)

'Other White Background' and 'Other Mixed Background' population groups are the two most common BME groups in East Sussex, followed by 'White and Asian', 'Any Other Asian Background' then 'White and Black Caribbean'. This differs from the national picture where Pakistani, African and Indian groups are more prevalent, although the most predominant BME subgroup is 'Other White Background' nationally.

A large proportion of people who define themselves as 'White Other' are Polish, but there are also other European groups and other white migrants. The profile of the 'Mixed Heritage' group is made up of White and Asian, White and Black Caribbean.

15.2% (11,270) of children attending East Sussex schools are identified as having a special or additional need, compared to 15.5% in England (2020). Included in this group are those with complex needs who require a Statement of Educational Need or an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP). **2,591 (3.5%) of East Sussex pupils had a Statement or EHCP in January 2020 compared to 3.2% in England.** (Number of pupils, by type of SEN provision, by type of school (including independent, including special, schools and general hospital schools) - 2016 to 2020)

It should be noted that 14.2% (1 in 7) of SEN pupils in East Sussex attend non-maintained special and independent schools compared to 7.4% (1 in 14) in England. For pupils with an EHCP in East Sussex, 17.3% (1 in 6) attend non-maintained special and independent schools compared to 7.7% (1 in 13) in England.



106,045 children aged 0-17 years

16,855 children living in poverty

9,076 black and minority ethnic pupils

9,022 pupils with special educational needs

The level of child poverty is lower than the England average with **15.7% of children aged 0 - 15 years living in poverty**; 16,855 children are measured to be living in low-income families in East Sussex^[ii]. Poverty and income deprivation are largely concentrated in Hastings (24.6%), with lower proportions in Eastbourne (18.2%) and Rother (15.8%).

2. Impact of Multi-Agency Working

The ESSCP has the lead role in ensuring that agencies are working together effectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in East Sussex. Multi-agency working is central to the early and effective identification of risk and preventing child abuse. Multi-agency working can take many forms but is largely based on effective information sharing, joint decision making, and coordinated intervention.

12,122 family group contacts to Single Point of Advice (SPOA)

18,578 information gatherings by Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

4,427 referrals to statutory social care

40 Privately Fostered children

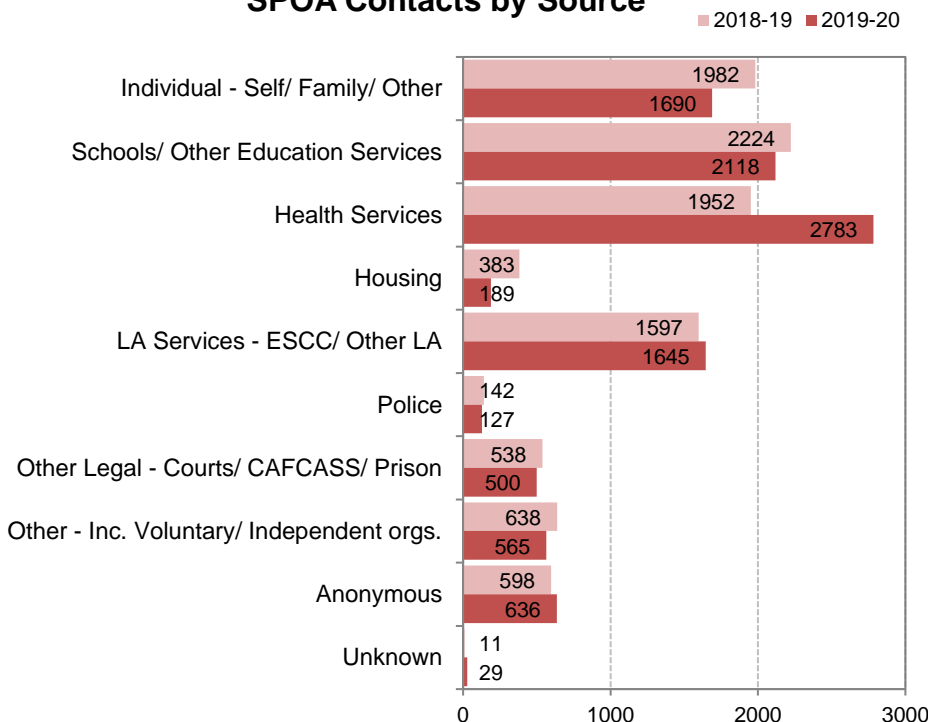
Contact and referral activity

A referral is the first stage of the child protection process: a referral will be made about a child where some aspect of their life is giving cause for concern. An increase in referrals is not good or bad in terms of the safety of children – an increase could indicate an increase in awareness of concerns about the safety of a child or reflect changes in local policy and practice.

In East Sussex, the Single Point of Advice (SPOA) and Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) were implemented in May 2016. In September 2019 the ‘front door’ for referrals for child and adolescent mental health was also incorporated in to SPOA arrangements.

Between April 2019 and end of March 2020, there were **12,122 family group contacts to SPOA**. This will include repeat contacts so the actual number of families these contacts relate to will be lower. The number of family group contacts to SPOA has increased by 15% on the previous year (from 10,558, an increase of 1,564). This is due to the inclusion of CAMHS in to SPOA arrangements – for example prior to September, the average number of contacts was 760 a month but post September this figure was 939 a month.

SPOA Contacts by Source



MASH Information Gatherings (MIGs) are reported at individual Child level, so there were 12,122 Family Contacts to SPOA, and **MASH Information Gathering’s opened for 18,234 Children and Young People**.

The average number of MIGs per month in 2019/20 was 1510, with the highest number of the year in July 2019 of 1742.

The number, and proportion, of contacts made by Health

Services has significantly increased in 2019-20 compared to the previous year. In 2019-20 Health Services made up a total of 27% of contacts (2783 contacts) compared to only 19% in 2018-19 (1952). The number of contacts made by schools and other education services slightly decreased in 2019-20, from 2224 to 2118. A decrease in contacts was seen across agencies, however there was a slight rise in contacts from 'other LA services – such as East Sussex County Council and other Local Authorities, and anonymous sources.

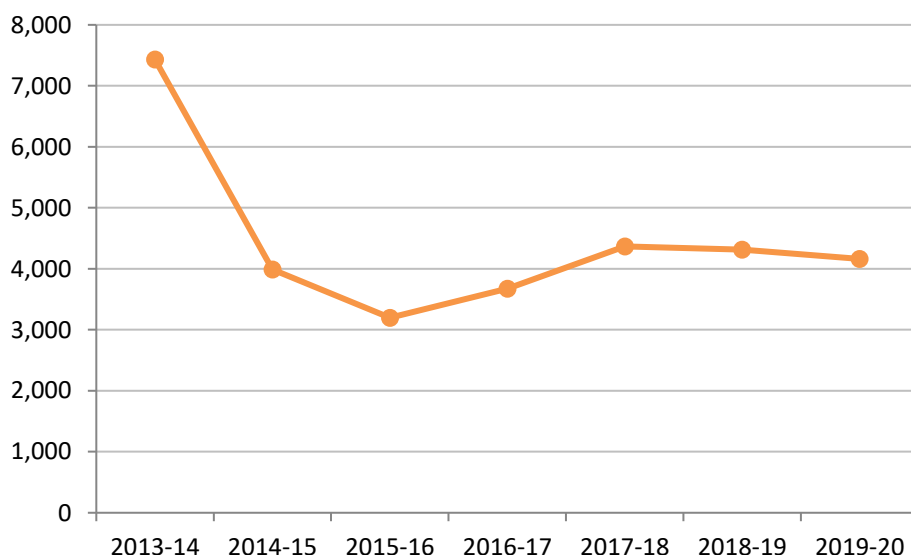
Police contacts to SPOA are low as all Sussex Police contacts are dealt with directly by MASH. The 127 contacts by 'Police' are likely to be from other Police forces across the country.

There were a total of **4165 referrals to statutory social care in 2019-20**, which was slightly lower (decrease from 4,227) than 2018-19. The average number of referrals made was 347 per month. The number of referrals can fluctuate significantly month to month for example, the highest number of referrals made in July 2019 was 459 and the lowest number was made in December (245).

The number of referrals to statutory social care has remained fairly static since 2014-15 and significantly below levels between 2012-2014 figures.

The proportion of referrals to statutory social care with a level 4 (social care) outcome continues to remain high. At the end of March 2020, 98% of referrals led to a level 4 outcome. Monthly averages during 2019-20 were 98% compared to 84% in 2017-18 and 91% in 2018-19. This figure demonstrates that the interface between SPOA and MASH is continuing to work well.

Number of Referrals to Children's Social Care



Child Protection Conferences

An initial child protection conference is held when agencies have investigated concerns about a child and they believe the child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. The purpose of the meeting is to share information between all the professionals who are working with the child, and their family, and decide what future action should be taken to keep the child safe. Each conference may involve a number of children from the family.

There were a total of **320 initial child protection conferences in 2019-20, slightly lower when compared to 350 in 2018-19.**

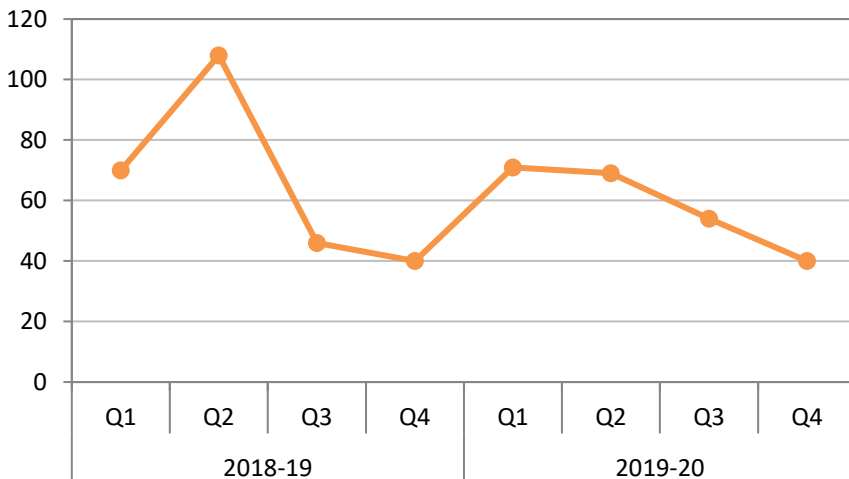
Private Fostering

Private fostering is an informal arrangement made between private individuals and is different from public fostering which is arranged by and paid for by the Local Authority. A private fostering arrangement is considered to be taking place when any child under 16, or under 18 if the child has a disability, spends more than 28 days living with someone who is not a close family member.

Private fostering is a key focus for child protection and privately fostered children can be particularly vulnerable if the Local Authority is unaware of this arrangement. All professionals working with children have a responsibility to safeguard privately fostered children and to notify the Local Authority if they become aware that a child may be being privately fostered. Following work with local language schools in 2018-19, to clarify their obligations around reporting private fostering, the number of children recorded as privately fostered has stabilised. At the end of March 2020, **40 children were registered as being privately fostered**. The highest number of private fostering cases was during April – June (71 cases), much lower than the 2018-19 high of 108.

During the year up to the end of March 2020, 275 children were subject to a Private Fostering assessment, up from 195 during 2017-18.

**Number of Privately Fostered Children
(snapshot)**



3. Children Supported by Statutory Services

As in other parts of the country, some children and young people in East Sussex will be vulnerable and at risk of being abused or neglected. It is the ESSCP's role to ensure that services provided to these children reduce risk and support children and young people to achieve healthy, happy, safe lives, and have a successful transition to adulthood.

Children with a Child Protection Plan

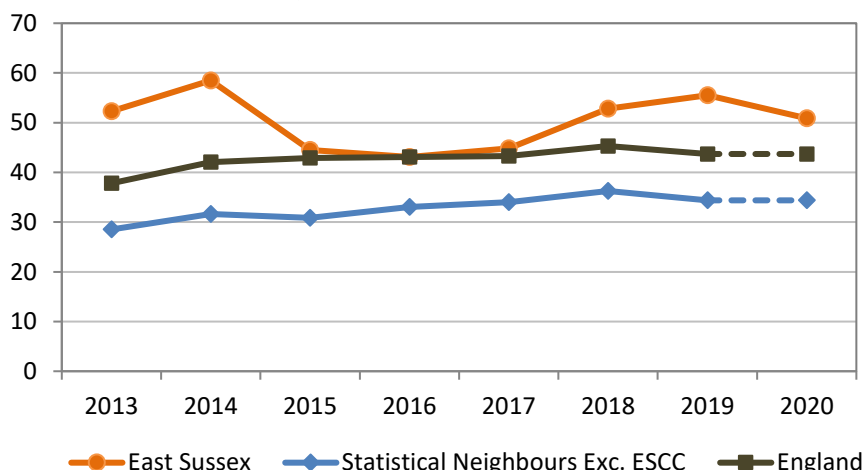
Children who have a Child Protection Plan (CPP) are considered to be in need of protection from either neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse; or a combination of one or more of these. The CPP details the main areas of concern, what action will be taken by a range of multi-agency partners to reduce those concerns and how we will know progress is being made.

Only those children who really need a protection plan should be subject to that formal process. **542 children were the subject of a CPP at the end of March 2020**, compared to 588 in 2019, 550 in 2018, and 476 in 2017.

The end of year number of children subject of a CPP is below than the local target of 574. **The rate of children with a Child Protection plan for 2019/20 was 50.9 per 10,000 children**. This is lower than the 2018/19 rate of 55.5 per 10,000 children. Based on 2019 rates, East Sussex has a significantly higher rate of children subject to a child protection plan than England and East Sussex statistical neighbours.

542 children with a child protection plan
 601 Looked After Children
 27 unaccompanied asylum seeking children
 18 young people at high risk of child exploitation
 487 sexual offences against children

Rate of Children subject to a Child Protection Plan per 10,000 0-17 Year Olds



Maintaining focus on ensuring that the right children are subject to the right plan for the right period of time remains a priority for local services. The increasing number of children and young people coming to social care attention - who are considered to be at risk of significant harm and in need of a CP Plan - is in part down to a range of multi-agency practice developments which

have resulted in greater awareness, for example regarding child exploitation and neglect.

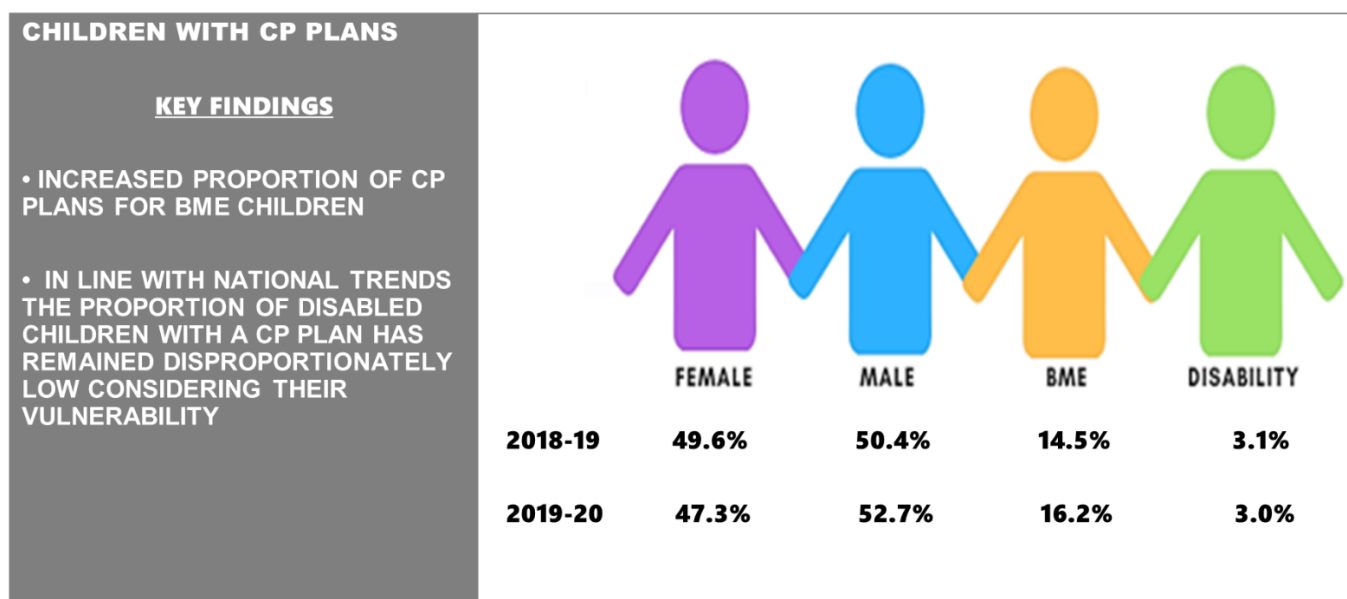
When a CPP ends for a child it means that concerns about the child's safety have reduced and/or they are no longer at risk of harm. The ESSCP monitors the duration of CPP to ensure that CPPs are

appropriate and timely, for example children spending a long time with a plan could suggest that CPP cases are allowed to ‘drift’. At the end of March 2020, the majority of children with a CPP had a plan for between three and 18 months (62%). At the end of March 2020, the **proportion of children ceasing to be the subject of a plan (rolling year), who had a CPP for two or more years was 8%**. This is lower than the end of March 2019, when the figure was 12.7%.

Re-registration data is also monitored by the ESSCP. High re-registration rates could suggest that the decision to remove them initially from a CPP was premature. In March 2020, **11.5% of children becoming the subject of a CPP did so for a second or subsequent time** (within a two year period). This is higher than the end of year figures in 2019 (10.8%) and 2018 (8.3%) but within local target threshold of 10-15%.

Emotional abuse continues to be the dominant category of abuse recorded for child protections. Of all new CPPs during 2019-20, **52% were recorded with a category of emotional abuse**. Neglect is the second largest category of abuse (43%) with much smaller proportions for physical abuse (3%) and sexual abuse (3%). Of all new plans during 2019/20 there has been a significant decline (-70%) in new plans for sexual abuse (15 in 2019/20 compared to 50 in 2018/19) and 39% decline in plans recorded for physical abuse (17 in 2019-20 compared to 39 in 2018/19 and 76 in 2017/18).

The profile of children who are in need of a child protection plan is monitored by the ESCPP on an annual basis.



Over the past few years the proportion of children with CP plans has generally mirrored the ethnic composition of the wider child population. In 2019-20 there was an increase in the proportion of child protection plans for BME children. In line with national trends, the proportion of disabled children with a child protection plan has remained disproportionately low considering their vulnerability.

Looked After Children

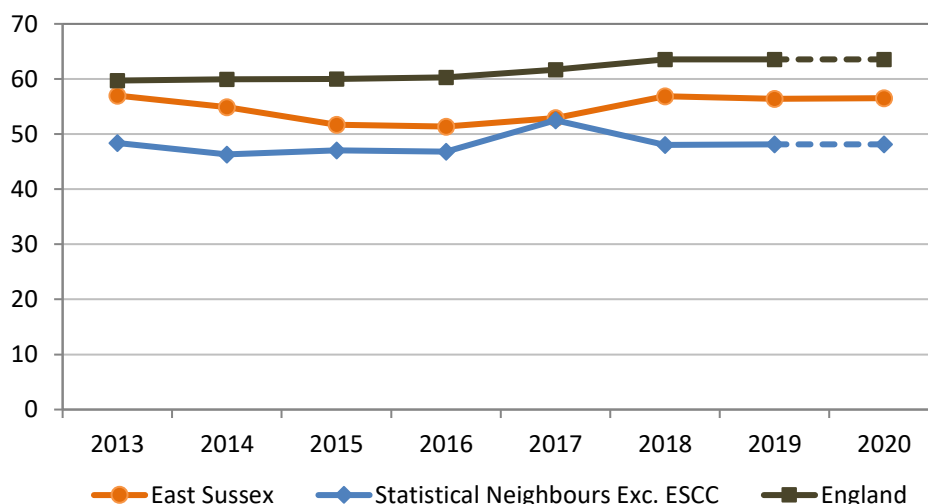
Children in care are those looked after by the Local Authority. Only after exploring every possibility of protecting a child at home, or with wider family members, will the Local Authority seek a parent’s

agreement or a court decision to remove a child from their family. There are many reasons why a child might become looked after, including because a child has suffered abuse or neglect, was at risk, or is disabled. Additionally, a child may become looked after if a parent is ill or disabled, or because parents are absent. Such decisions, whilst difficult, are made when it is in the best interests of the child.

There were **601 children looked after by East Sussex County Council as at the end of March 2020**. This is similar to the end of year figure for 2019 (607) and 2018 (606). The number of care proceedings issued (rolling year) has shown a slight reduction over 2019-20, with an end of year figure of X. Numbers have remained consistent during the course of the year between 84-100.

The rate of Children Looked After per 10,000 population (aged 0-17) in 2019/20 was 56.5 per 10,000. This means that the local rate is higher than other local authorities, similar to East Sussex, but is still below the national rate of 63.6 per 10,000.

Rate of Children Looked After per 10,000 0-17 Year Olds



There are also a number of children who live in East Sussex and who are looked after by other local authorities. While the

placing authority retains responsibility for them, services in East Sussex may still support these children. At the end of March 2020 there were **342 children looked after by other local authorities living in East Sussex**. This is significantly higher than the March 2017 figure of 145, and March 2018 figure 236. However this figure may not be completely accurate as East Sussex County Council relies upon other local authorities to inform them of children coming into the area and when they leave.

In addition young people who are remanded into care or custody by the criminal Courts now benefit from looked after children (LAC) status.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)

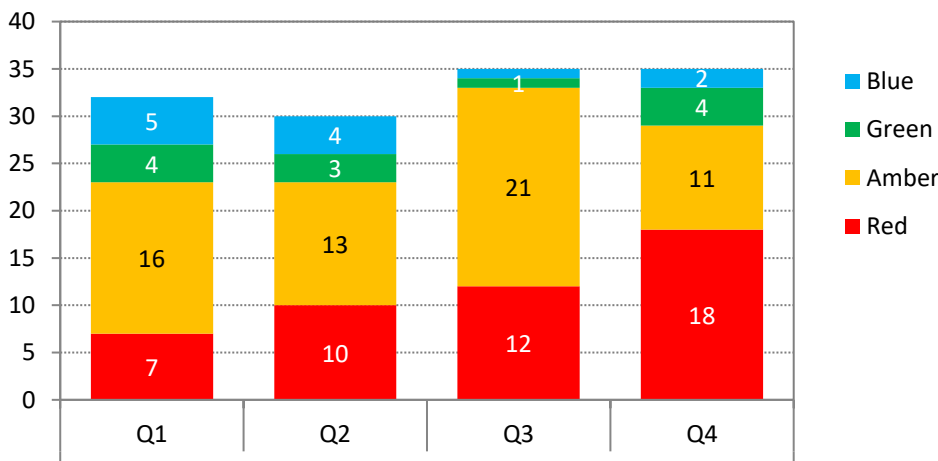
At the end of March 2020 there were **27 Looked After Children who are Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)**; with a high of 32 in November 2019. This is higher than the March 2019 figure of 20 children.

In common with other local authorities, ESCC is committed to accepting the equivalent of 0.07% of its total child population (72 children) as UASC over 3 years. Young people will either come to the Council via the National Dispersal Scheme or present spontaneously, for example via the port of Newhaven.

Child Exploitation

The Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) Subgroup of the ESSCP takes a lead on the identification and recording of children who are vulnerable to exploitation in East Sussex. During the course of 2018/20, the MACE subgroup expanded its focus to include children who are criminally exploited, in relation to county drug lines, not just sexual exploitation. The subgroup also reviews children who are at risk of trafficking or modern slavery.

Number of MACE nominals- Quarterly Snapshot 2019-20



Multi-agency meetings are held monthly to review the level of risk that each child is currently exposed to. This generates a high (red), medium (amber) or low (green) risk score. A multi-agency plan is created for each child within the MACE process which includes planned engagements, home visits, and medical assessments.

There number of high risk children discussed at MACE continues to remain high during 2019-20 (following on from the significant rise from 2017-18, which coincided with the wider focus of the group on all forms of child exploitation). However, compared to 2018-19 more young people are assessed as being at medium risk, than high risk, in 2019-20 compared to 2018-19. On average, **12 young people were considered to be at high risk to child exploitation** each quarter during 2019-20, compared to an average of 15 at medium risk.

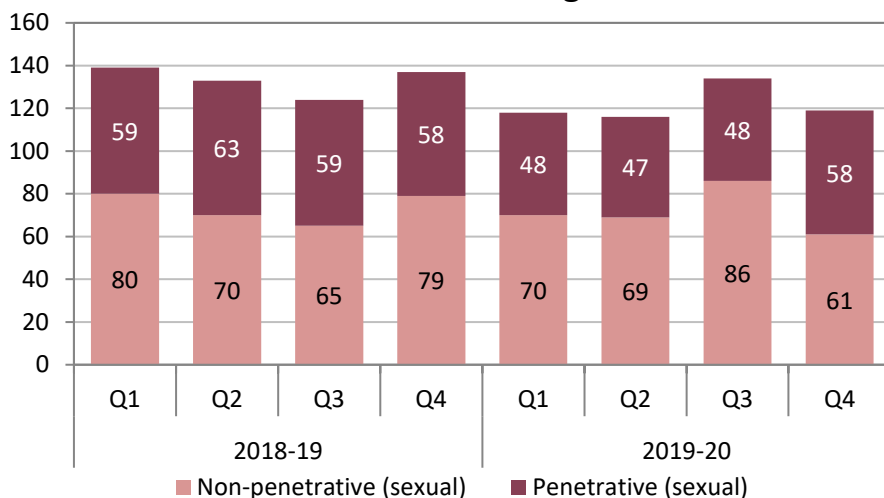
Offences (including sexual offences) against children

The number of offences against children reported to and recorded by the Police are routinely shared with the ESSCP and included in the quarterly ESSCP Performance Dashboard. These include non-penetrative sexual offences against children, penetrative sexual offences against children, and assaults recorded against children, and breakdown of the relationship of the perpetrator to the victim. The data does not reflect the total number of offences committed against children but it does provide an important picture of abuse committed against children. Trends in data may reflect increased public awareness and changes in policing rather than an increase in incidence. Data also reflects the year in which an offence was reported, not the year it was committed, so a proportion of offences will be historic.

A total of **286 non-penetrative sexual offences against East Sussex children** were recorded by the Police in 2019-20. This is a similar figure to previous years (294 in 2018-19 and 295 in 2017-8). Of these

offences nearly two-thirds (60%) were committed by someone known to the family; 30% were recorded as committed by a family member; 9% by a stranger, and a further 2% recorded as 'other'.

Sexual Offences recorded against Children

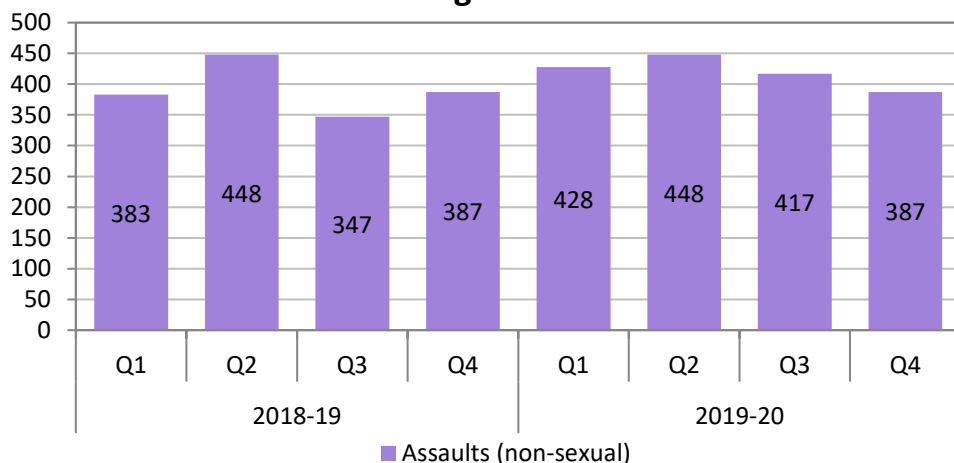


A total of **201 penetrative sexual offences were recorded against children in 2019-20** compared to 239 in 2018-19. With penetrative sexual offences, the proportion recorded as committed by someone known to the family increases. 62% of recorded offences were committed by someone known to the family compared to 25% by family

members; 9% by a stranger and 4% by 'other'.

A total of **1,680 assaults were recorded against children in East Sussex during 2019-20, an average of 420 per quarter**; this represents a 7 percent increase from 1565 in 2018-19. Assaults include 'assault without injury', 'wounding', 'assault with injury', and 'racially or religiously aggravated assault with injury'.

Assaults recorded against Children



4. Children with family related vulnerabilities

The children identified in this cohort of 'family related vulnerabilities' does not mean that every child that is in this group is vulnerable to experiencing harm or poorer outcomes. These indicators are risk factors for vulnerability, rather than indicators of vulnerability in and of themselves. However, it is important for the ESSCP to have oversight on these indicators and understand the complex range of issues children and young people in East Sussex often face.



Domestic Abuse & Violence

A domestic abuse Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) is a meeting that brings together representatives from a number of agencies in East Sussex to discuss the safety, health and well-being of people experiencing the highest risk of domestic abuse (and their children).

In East Sussex, there are two MARAC meetings - Eastbourne, Wealden and Lewes and Hastings & Rother - with each meeting weekly. The process is facilitated by the MARAC Support Team, based in the Safer East Sussex Team. Chairing is undertaken by staff released from core statutory partner agencies, including Sussex Police, Children and Adult Services, as well as the Clinical Commissioning Group.

In East Sussex, **a total of 1051 cases were discussed at the MARAC meetings during 2019-20** (however it should be noted that cases may be discussed at more than one meeting), this is a significant increase from the 2018-19 figure of 889. The rate of cases per 10,000 (aged 16 + female) population was 39 per 10,000 in Eastbourne, Lewes & Wealden compared to 52 per 10,000 in Hastings & Rother (an increase in both areas on 2018-19 rates). **Of the 1051 cases discussed at MARAC, there were a total of 1,700 children living in the households.** This again, is a higher figure than the previous year (1449).

Of the MARAC cases discussed, **8 of the victims were aged 16-17**: 0.8% of cases in Eastbourne, Wealden and Lewes and 0.7% of cases in Hastings & Rother.

Young Carers

In the 2011 Census, **a total of 1,079 children aged under the age of 15 were recorded as providing unpaid care – this equates to 1.18% of the under 15 population.** This proportion is slightly higher than the England average of 1.11%. While many children find that caring brings positive aspects to their lives, a child can become vulnerable when the level of care-giving, and responsibility to the person in need of care, becomes excessive or inappropriate for that child, risking impacting on their own emotional or physical wellbeing, educational achievement or life chances. There may also be other factors, in addition to their caring role, linked to a parents' illness or disability that may lead to safeguarding issues.

At the end of March 2020, **19% of children’s social care assessments identified caring responsibilities as a safeguarding concern**; this figure is significantly higher than the end of March 2019 figure of 9%. On average, the proportion of assessments where ‘young carer’ was identified as a factor was 9%; the last three months of 2019-20 were the highest during the year at 11%, 15%, and 19% of all assessments.

Health Visitor contact

The ESSCP regularly monitors the proportion of mothers who receive a first face to face antenatal contact with a health visitor and the proportion of children who receive a 2-2 ½ year review. This is because face-to-face contact with vulnerable mothers has been highlighted as an area for improvement in serious case review work in East Sussex.

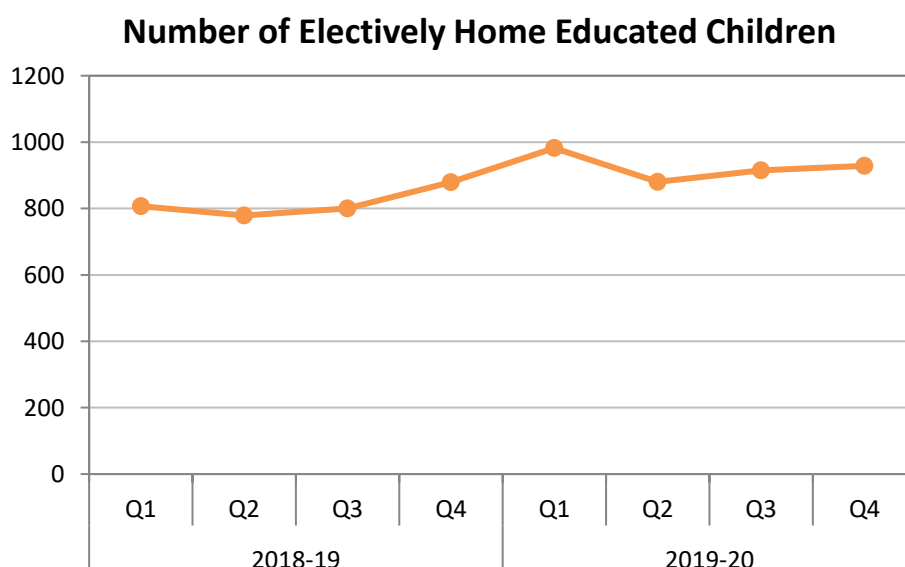
The percentage of all mothers who receive a **first face to face antenatal contact with a Health visitor, in the last quarter of 2019-20 was 71.5% across East Sussex**. This is below the local service target of 80. Lower performance in this indicator is predominantly due to notification issues to Health Visiting; for example from midwifery services outside of East Sussex or late notification post birth.

The **percentage of targeted East Sussex children who received a 2-2.5 year review, in the last quarter of 2019-20 was 85.7%**. This is below the service target of 90% but demonstrates a significant improvement on previous years. An improvement has been made as a wider range of professionals, for example nursery staff, have been trained to complete the reviews.

Electively Home Educated Children

East Sussex supports the right of parents to educate their children at home. Home education is not, in itself, a risk factor for abuse or neglect. However, there is a danger that these children can become invisible to local services and that a small minority of parents may withdraw their children from school as a means of avoiding services. Some recent national Serious Case Reviews have highlighted that, in a small number of cases, elective home education can lead to isolation and to children becoming ‘invisible’ to the universal services, such as schools, that would otherwise be in a position to monitor their welfare.

At the end of March 2020 the **number of electively home educated (EHE) children known to East Sussex County Council was 943, a rate of 103.8 children per 10,000 (4-18 year olds)**. This is higher than the end of March 2019 figure of 929 (and 2018 figure of 813) and continues the rising trend in East Sussex. Figures are generally highest in September while parents wait for their preferred allocation of school place, however the



highest monthly figure in 2019-20 was May 2019 at 982.

The highest number of EHE cases are in the Hastings and Rother, and then Eastbourne and Hailsham areas. At the end of March 2020, nearly half of all children (42%, 434) educated at home were in Key Stage 3 and 4, aged 12-15). There are slightly more males home educated than females.

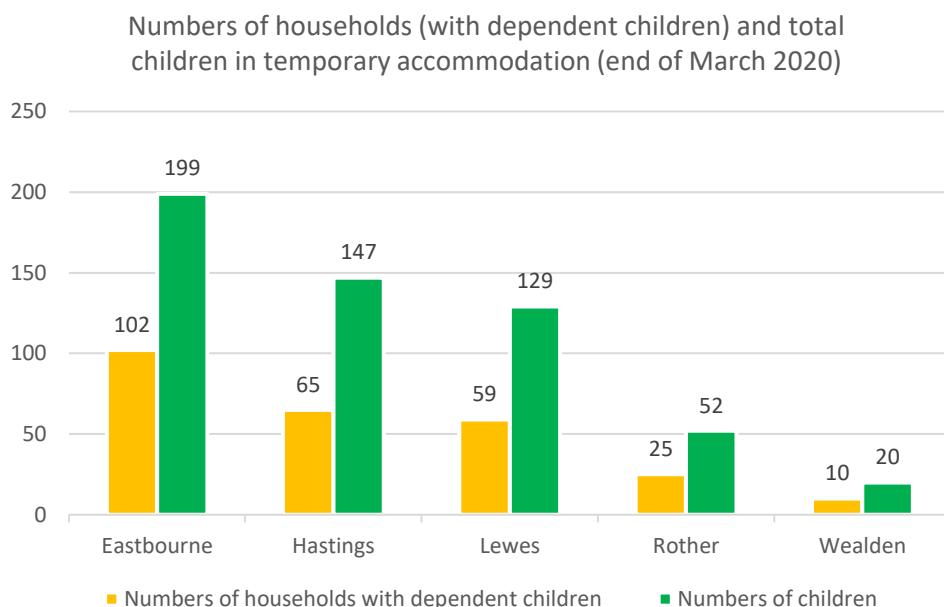
The reasons given by parents for home education were Lifestyle/philosophical/religious (331) followed by Relationship breakdown with school (89), Medical condition (58), Attendance/behaviour (57), Concerns about unmet SEND (49), and awaiting school placement/ school of choice (44). Although 375 parents declined to give a reason for home education.

The numbers of children home educated who have Child Protection plans, are Children in Need or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), by academic year, has slightly fallen in 2019-20. In 2019-20, 11 children had a child protection plan – compared to 28 in 2019-19. The number of children in need had declined from 105 in 2018-19 to 96 in 2019-20, and the numbers of children with an EHCP had also declined from 82 to 74.

Families in Temporary Accommodation

Families in temporary accommodation are likely to already have a number of factors that make them vulnerable; living in temporary accommodation is likely to have a cumulative impact on the safety and welfare of children.

At the **end of March 2020 there were 547 children living in temporary accommodation across East Sussex**, these 547 children were living in 261 households. The numbers of children and families living in temporary accommodation varies significantly across the different district and borough areas of East Sussex. The use of temporary accommodation is significantly higher in the more urban areas of East Sussex – in Eastbourne and Hastings – compared to more rural areas of Rother and Wealden.



5. Children with health related vulnerabilities

The children identified in this cohort of ‘health related vulnerabilities’ does not mean that every child that has a particular health condition is vulnerable to experiencing harm or poorer outcomes. These indicators are risk factors for vulnerability, rather than indicators of vulnerability in and of themselves. However, it is important for the ESSCP to have oversight on these indicators and how these might impact on the safeguarding of children and young people in East Sussex.

16 children with disabilities with a child protection plan

290 children attending A&E due to self-harm

3,400 referrals to child mental health services

Healthy weight at Year 6

Childhood obesity is one of the greatest health threats to children and their future in East Sussex. Not only does being overweight have a major impact on health and wellbeing in childhood, it is also an important predictor of being overweight in later life and the associated risk to both physical and emotional health and wellbeing.

Latest figures for 2018-19 show that **23.4% of reception aged children, and 28.2% of year 6 (aged 10-11) children, are overweight** (including obese). Rates are higher in Eastbourne, Hailsham & Seaford (25%) and Hastings and Rother (25%) than in High Weald, Lewes and Havens (22%) for children in Reception (district and borough information is from 2017-18). This pattern is repeated for children in year 6, however all local rates are lower than the England average for year 6 children.

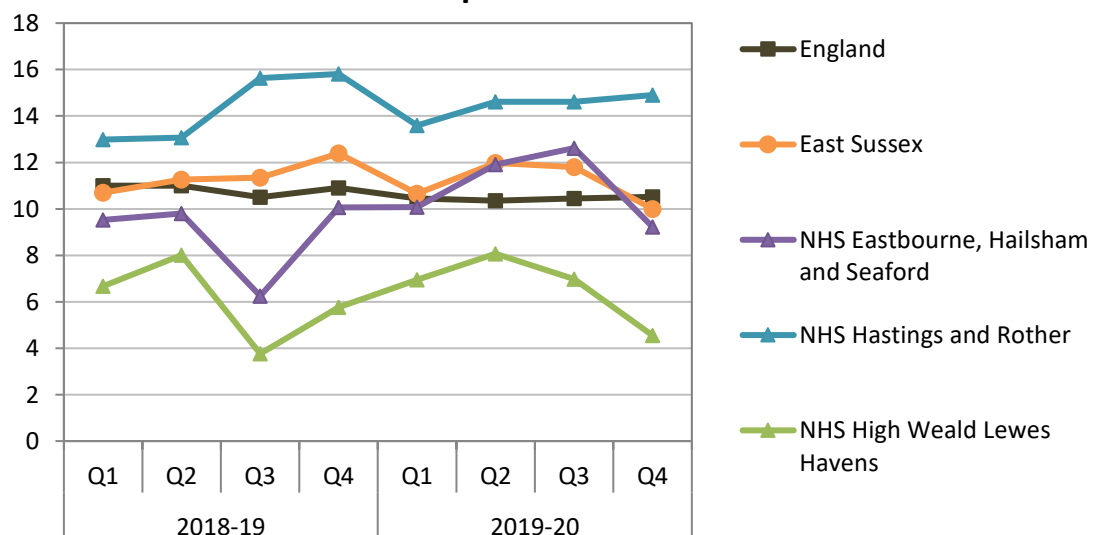
Smoking during pregnancy

The proportion of women who smoke at time of delivery was recently added to the ESSCP’s Performance Dashboard given the number of deaths reviewed by the East Sussex Child Death Overview Panel where smoking during pregnancy was noted as a modifiable factor.

By the end of 2019/20 the average **number of women smoking at time of delivery was 10 per 100 deliveries across East Sussex.** For the first time, this figure is lower than the England average of 10.5 per 100 deliveries.

The East Sussex average masks significant difference in rates between areas: for example, in

Women who currently Smoke at time of Delivery- Rate per 100 maternities



Hastings & Rother this rate is 14.9 per 100 deliveries and in High Weald, Lewes & Havens the rate is only 4.5 per 100 deliveries.

Safeguarding children with disabilities

Research suggests that children with a disability may be more vulnerable to significant harm through physical, sexual, emotional abuse and/or neglect than children who do not have a disability. This may be because disabled children are at an increased likelihood of being socially isolated, they may have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse, and they may have a communication need which makes it difficult to tell others what is happening.

The proportion of children subject to a child protection plan, who are disabled, was 3% (of all CPP) at the end of March 2020. The **total number of children with a disability with a CPP was 16 at the end of March 2020**, compared to 22 at the end of March 2019. The proportion has remained fairly stable, remaining between 3-5% over the past year.

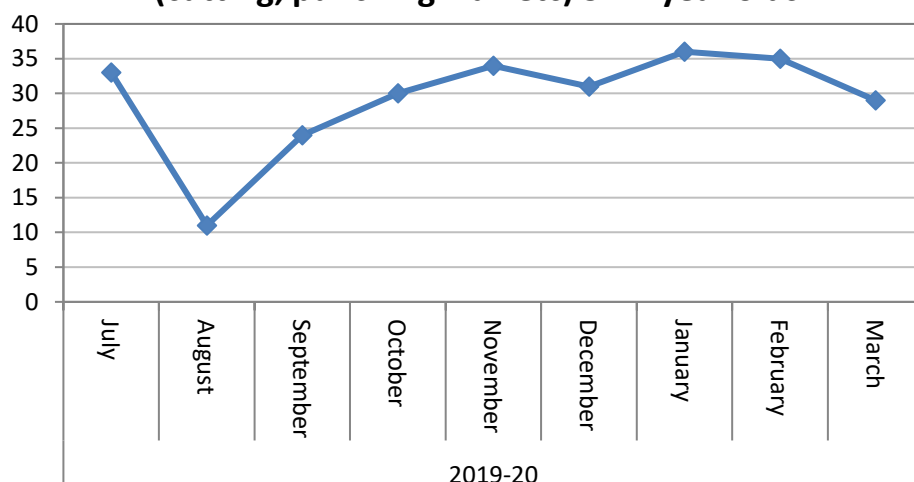
At the end of March 2020 there were **167 children being worked with by the Children's Social Care Children with Disabilities Team and 274 children with a disability classification** open to workers across all children's social care services teams (who were recorded as a child in need, in need of child protection, or were a looked after child).

Self-harm

A total of **290 children attended East Sussex Accident & Emergency in 2019-20 due to deliberate self-harm**. In July 2019 the indicator was amended to include children aged 17 (previously only children aged 5-16 were recorded). This has substantially increased the number of children reported in this indicator: between April – June there were on average 17 attendances per month. Since July 2019 there are on average 26 attendances per month.

The LSCB Steering Group are sighted on strengthening how these children and young people are supported within hospital and following discharge.

Attendances at A&E - Deliberate self harm (cutting, punching wall etc) 5-17 year olds

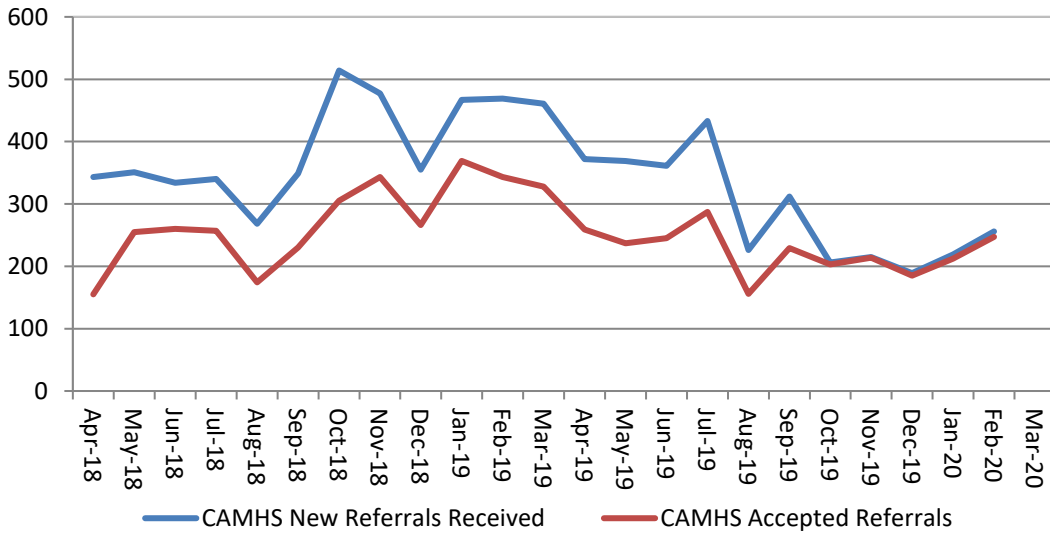


Mental health

Mental health problems during childhood and adolescence are associated with a wide range of adverse outcomes in later life, including higher rates of adult mental health problems, poor educational outcomes, unemployment, teenage parenthood, marital problems, and shorter life expectancy.

Failure to treat mental health disorders in children can have a significant impact on their future; half of

CAMHS Referrals/ Accepted Referrals



adults with long-term mental health problems experienced their first symptoms before the age of 14.

East Sussex CAMHS are predominantly delivered by three generic teams: Hastings & Rother, Eastbourne & Hailsham and Ouse Valley. There are

also a number of smaller discrete teams providing specialist mental health services to particular cohorts of especially vulnerable children and young people. Services are multidisciplinary, deliver evidence-based pathways of care and aim for compliance with NICE guidelines within the given resources.

Sussex Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) **received a total of 3400 referrals to their services in 2018/19**. This is a significant decrease from previous figures of 4,728 (2018-19) and 4,667 (2017/18). The drop in CAMHS referrals coincides with when the 'front door' for referrals for child and adolescent mental health was incorporated in to SPOA arrangements (September 2019). Since September 2019 the **proportion of CAMHS referrals that were accepted has improved to a monthly average of 94%**. Prior to September 2019 the proportion of CAMHS referrals that were accepted averaged 67% per month.

On average, a total of 283 new referrals to CAMHS were made each month during 2019-20. The highest number of monthly referrals was received in July 2019 (a total of 433) and the lowest proportion (189) of referrals to CAMHS was received in December 2019. The introduction of a CAMHS worker in SPOA has enabled easier access to phone consultation ahead of a referral being made, leading to more appropriate referrals being made.

6. Children whose actions place them at risk

The children identified in this cohort 'whose actions place them at risk' does not mean that every child in this group is vulnerable to experiencing harm or poorer outcomes. These indicators are risk factors for vulnerability, rather than indicators of vulnerability in and of themselves (and by 'vulnerability', we mean the additional needs or barriers children face may make them likely to healthy, happy, safe lives, or less likely to have a successful transition to adulthood). Therefore, it is important for the LSCB to have oversight on these indicators and understand the complex range of issues children and young people in East Sussex often face.



Missing episodes

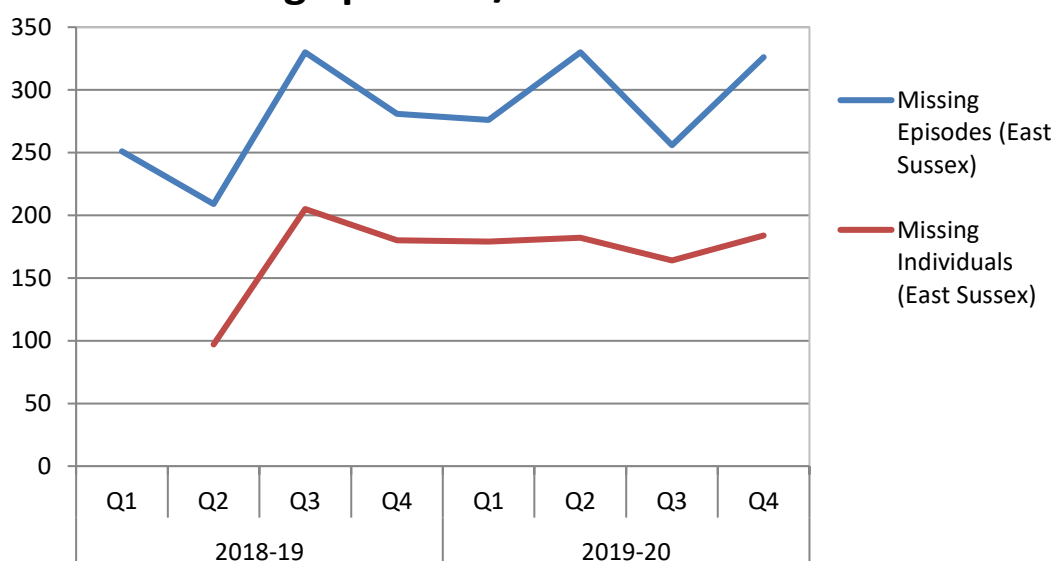
Evidence suggests that missing children are at risk from child sexual exploitation, and other forms of exploitation, and that children and young people who are sexually exploited are likely to go missing from

home or care on a regular basis and/or for short periods of time.

During 2019-20, there were a total of 1192 missing episodes recorded by the Police and children's social care (a slight increase from 1171 recorded in 2018-19).

These missing episodes were regarding 712 individuals (and this number may be

Missing episodes/individuals



smaller as the same individuals may go missing multiple times across the year).

Looked After Children who are missing from care are at further increased risk. During 2019-20 there were **414 missing episodes from care episodes**, with an average of 17 missing individuals from care each month. The highest number of individuals missing from care was in March 2020 (56 individuals) which coincided with the introduction of the national lockdown due to COVID-19.

For looked after children, the number of both missing episodes and missing children has remained fairly stable from 2018-19.

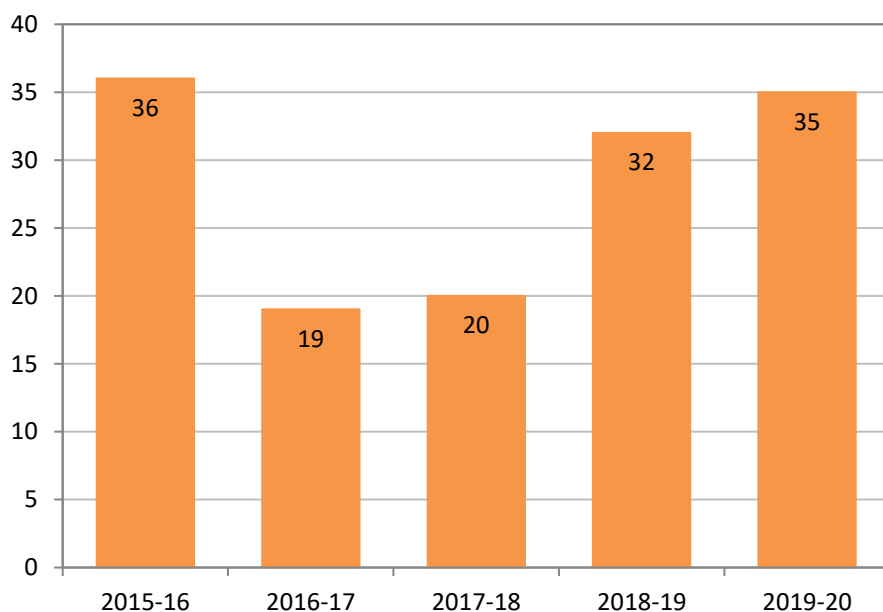
Criminal exploitation and gangs

During 2019-20 there were a **total of 79 social care assessments where 'gangs' were identified as a factor**. This is a nearly double the 2018-19 figure of 79 assessments, however the overall figure was significantly impacted in December when there were 32 assessments where 'gangs' were identified (12% of all assessments). Generally, this figure is fairly low in comparison to all assessments undertaken; ranging between 0% to 6%.

Teenage conceptions and births

Most teenage pregnancies are unplanned and about half end in abortion resulting in an avoidable experience for the young woman. While for some young women, having a child when young can represent a positive turning point in their lives, many more find raising a child extremely difficult. This often results in poor outcomes for both the teenage parent and the child, in terms of the baby's health, the mother's emotional health and the likelihood of both the parent and child living in long-term poverty.

Number of Live Births to Under 18 Year Olds



The teenage pregnancy rate is currently at its lowest level nationally for 20 years. However England still has one of the highest rates of teenage pregnancy in Western Europe.

The ESSCP is provided with live births data for under 18s who gave birth at an East Sussex Healthcare Trust site. 63% of all hospital births to East Sussex resident mothers were delivered at ESHT sites in 2017/18 and so

we know that the data above is not a complete picture for East Sussex residents. Of births in ESHT settings, **in 2019-20 there were 35 live births to under-18 year olds**. This is an increase on the 2018-19 figure and continues the rising trend from a low in 2016-17.

The latest conception data for East Sussex is for 2018. East Sussex has a under 18 conception rate of 15.6 per 1,000 females; this is higher than the regional South-East rate of 13.5 per 1,000 but lower than the England average of 16.7 per 1,000.

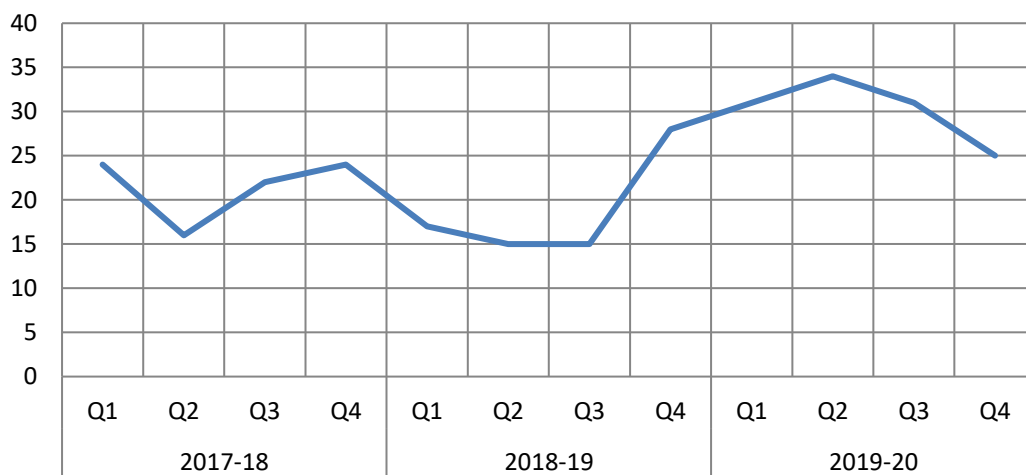
Evidence shows high quality relationships and sex education (compulsory in all secondary schools from September 2019), accessible health services in terms of location and opening hours, and friendly non-judgmental staff, help young people to delay sex until they are ready and to use contraception effectively.

Offending

A total of **121 young people entered the youth justice system for the first time (FTE) in 2019-20**. This was the highest number since 2016-17. However East Sussex exceeded the target of fewer than 300 FTE per 100,000 of population. Nearly all the children who became first time entrants were male, with only nineteen female FTE in 2019/20.

Number of First Time Entrants to the YJ System

There was a decrease in the number of children with Youth Offending Team (YOT) interventions starting in 19/20 compared with 18/19; down from 262 to 228. **Males consistently constitute just over three quarters of the YOT population and in 2019-20 they accounted**



for 77% of all children worked with. Despite the overall decrease in children, compared with 2018/19 the YOT worked with more children aged 15 - 16 with a noticeable reduction in 17 year olds.

Four children received six custodial sentences in 2019/20. This is a decrease of four on the previous year and the joint lowest number of custodial sentences in the entire reporting period since 2005-06. This decline in numbers is reflected nationally.

The latest Ministry of Justice data shows a 28.2% reoffending rate, down from 34% on the cohort published six months previously and this is the seventh consecutive fall in reoffending using this measure. This places East Sussex second lowest of the YOTs who constitute our statistical neighbour group and below the National Reoffending rate.

The YOT worked with 26 Looked After Children (LAC) in 2019-20. A snapshot taken of open cases on 31 March 2020 showed that the YOT were working with 5 Looked After Children, equivalent to 5% of the caseload. Given the percentage of the wider 10-17 population who are LAC is around 0.5% this leaves LAC over represented on the YOT caseload. Two children became Looked After as a result of being securely remanded. Every young person being securely remanded automatically becomes Looked After for the duration of the remand or until they turn 18.

The **twenty-five incidences of children held in overnight police custody in 2019-20 have been for sixteen separate children**, all male. Eleven children have been held just once whilst five have been held on multiple occasions, the youngest two being just 13.

Radicalisation and Prevent

East Sussex remains a non-priority Prevent area and although the risk here is less than other areas within the UK the LSCB supports the work of the Safer East Sussex Team to remain committed and diligent in upholding and adhering to the requirements of the Prevent Duty. The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 introduced a number of new duties for local authorities and the Safer East Sussex Team has taken the lead in implementing these duties and ensuring compliance with the legislation on behalf of East Sussex County Council. East Sussex County Council chairs and coordinates the work of the East Sussex Prevent Board which assesses the countywide risk of people being drawn into terrorism and coordinates Prevent partnership activity.

Channel is a voluntary, confidential programme which operates throughout England and Wales to safeguard people identified as vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. In East Sussex Channel figures are relatively low and in **2019 there were three young people adopted onto the Channel programme** in East Sussex and six Channel cases were closed (2 adults and 4 young people).

We continue to see most referrals from the education sector, predominantly male, with mixed unclear unstable ideologies and with undiagnosed/diagnosed autism. South East Forensic CAMHS, Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, SWIFT Specialist Family Services and the Early Help Keywork Team have been significant partners in supporting these referrals.

All referrals are received by the police to consider whether the individual in question is already under investigation, if there is a genuine vulnerability and if that vulnerability is related to terrorism. In many cases, no further action is required, or the vulnerability is assessed as not related to radicalisation and an onward referral is made for other support as needed.

For those referrals where the police assess that there is a risk of radicalisation, a Channel panel meets to discuss each case and carefully assess the extent of the potential vulnerability of the individual. Support could be in the form of ideological mentoring to provide vulnerable individuals with the skills to protect themselves or other support services.

Channel reviews take place once an individual has exited Channel as per the National Channel Guidance – at 6 months and then 12 months. Cases are reviewed to ensure there has been no change in terms of increase in risk since their exit from Channel. If there is an identified increased risk since exit from Channel then referral pathways are identified for further intervention or re-engagement with Channel. In 2019 five reviews were undertaken with no increased risks being identified.

Sources/References

⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ <http://www.eastsussexinfigures.org.uk>