

CITY OF EDINBURGH CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT 2025 - 26



Lillian Cringles, Chair

EDINBURGH CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE

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Introduction by the Chair

I am pleased to present the Child Protection Committee Annual Report, which summarises the work undertaken by the City of Edinburgh Child Protection Committee. I have been greatly impressed by the tireless work of the Child Protection Committee partners in ensuring vulnerable children and their families received the support they needed during very challenging times.

The Child Protection Committee and its subcommittees continued to meet throughout the reporting period to help protect Edinburgh's most vulnerable children.

The report is informed by self-evaluation activities covering prevention, early intervention, safeguarding vulnerable children and young people, and protecting them from harm, abuse and exploitation. It outlines our key achievements, strengths and areas for improvement.

The past year has highlighted the strength of partnership working across the City of Edinburgh, with coordinated services focused on those most in need. Although not all planned work was completed, significant progress was made despite the challenges. We have a clear understanding of our current position and future potential, and this report confirms that our capacity for continued improvement remains strong.

Once again, 2025-26 has been a demanding period for the Child Protection Committee, with its work shaped by an evolving national legislative, policy and practice landscape, as well as ongoing organisational and transformational change.

We have strengthened partnership working and developed a more consistent shared approach to quality assurance, including learning review outcomes and self-evaluation.

The Child Protection Committee has set its improvement priorities for the year ahead as we work to implement the actions identified in our three-year business plan 2025-2028.

The hard work, commitment and dedication of our staff remain our greatest strength, making a positive difference to the lived experiences of children, young people and families across the City of Edinburgh.

I trust this annual report provides the Chief Officers Group (COG) with the necessary detail and assurance while recognising the challenges faced by all the multi-agency partners in delivering child Protection.

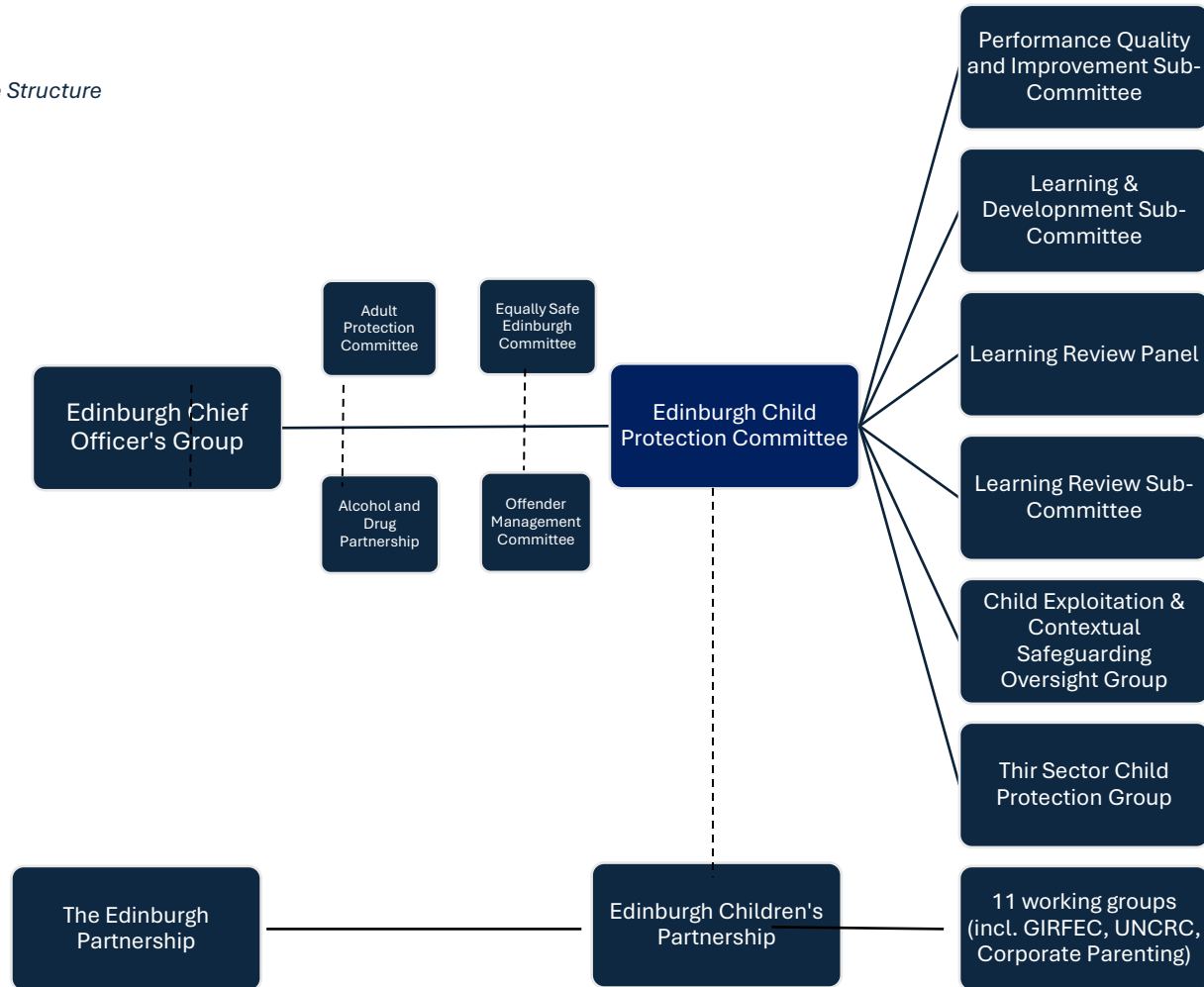
It is a privilege to present this report on behalf of the committee and to acknowledge the dedicated work carried out across the multi-agency partnership.

Lillian Bringles

Independent Chair, Edinburgh Child Protection Committee

Edinburgh Child Protection Committee Structure

Figure 1- Committee Structure



Our Vision

*Children, young people and their families
in Edinburgh are safe and protected from
harm or risk of harm*

In doing so, we share a collection of values and approaches such as

- promoting children's rights
- supporting whole families
- developing trauma informed, preventative and responsive practice.



Edinburgh's Population is growing - 530,680

87, 376
children under
18 years of age
live in
Edinburgh

4,463 births in
2024

60,657 Pupils in
Local Authority
Schools, with a
further 10% in
Private schools

18,000 of
Edinburgh's
children live in
poverty

1,913 households
in temporary
accommodation
(36%) include a
child(ren) (Aug
2025)

817 young people
in temporary
accommodation
(Aug 2025)

61% of school aged
children identify
as White British

26% of school aged
children are from a
minority ethnic
group

13% of school aged
children identify as
White other

There were 991 Inter-
Agency Referral
Discussions for 1,535
children in 2025-26

10% of IRDs
progressed to Child
Protection Planning
Meetings

1.3 children per
1,000 are on the
Child Protection
Register

Sources of data available in Appendix 2

Our Priorities

1. Leadership and Structure

What we said we would do 2025-28?

1. Improve the visibility and transparency of the ECPC's strategic oversight by agreeing the publication of redacted ECPC Action Minutes.
2. Develop a Child Protection Committee Risk Register that is aligned with the other public protection committees.
3. Ensure effective use of the multi-agency Public Protection Budget in progressing local and national priorities.
4. Hold regular Child Protection Committee meetings, including inputs from key services and project that complement the CP Improvement Plan. This should include opportunities to meet in person, throughout the year.
5. Monitor and address any ongoing issues with structure, membership and roles within the ECPC or associated sub-committees.
6. Develop a Communications Strategy for the ECPC and mechanisms for recognising and celebrating good practice. It has already been agreed that this should include the introduction of an ECPC Newsletter.
7. Re-developing the public protection committee's webpages, in line with views from children, families and other stakeholders.
8. Continue a programme of Policy, Procedure, Protocol and Guidance review and ensure these are readily available to the workforce (There is more on this topic within section (c) of this report).

What have we done?

Edinburgh Child Protection Committee Business

Overall, the [Edinburgh Child Protection Committee](#) has acted as a stabilising and collective force through a period of structural change, and unforeseen challenges for some of the key partner agencies in 2025.

The Committee held five Business meeting and an Awayday in the 2025-26 calendar, with a similar pattern of meetings planned for 2026-7. Some of the themes covered within these sessions are included in the table below.



3 MS Teams

- Housing and Homelessness
- Data and Audit
- Bairns Hoose
- Allegations of Harm
- Corporate Parenting & The Promise
- Local Briefing on a CP Safeguarding Practice Review
- Getting it Right for Every Child

2 In-person

- Mandatory Reporting
- National Public Protection Leadership business
- 2 Learning Review presentations by Lead Reviewers
- Cross-cutting links with other committees and forums

1 Awayday

- Towards Public Protection - learning from other areas of Scotland
- Prioritising Safe, long-term housing for children and families

The new 3-year Child Protection Improvement Plan was agreed at the Committee's meeting in April 2025 and was subsequently approved by Chief Officers in the same month.

Multi-Agency Contributions and Attendance

In February 2025 the independent Chair brought a paper to Committee intended to address the issue of poor attendance at sub-committees and the risks to strategic planning and decision-making where meeting went ahead when inquorate. Partners took on board to overarching message of collective ownership and both the Edinburgh Child Protection Committee and Sub-Committees have enjoyed better representation in the last year.

The Edinburgh Child Protection Committee is regularly attended by around 20 contributing members from the following services:



NHS Lothian representation includes the colleagues from the Public Protection Team; Children's Commissioner and the Associate Nurse Director for Children & Young People, within the Nursing and Midwifery Directorate.

Similarly, City of Edinburgh Council contribute to the Committee by way of membership from the Chief Social Work Officer; Service Director for Children and Justice Services; Heads of Service from Education, Children's and Justice Social Work; the Principle Social Worker to the Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership; Service Managers for Quality Assurance, Public Protection, Housing and Homelessness and other dedicated services, in line with specific agenda items.

Colleagues in Police Scotland's Public Protection Unit will link in with colleagues in Prevention, Intervention and Partnership Policing and other sectors, as required.

There are 3rd sector representatives included in all Committees and at least two representatives always attend the ECPC.

The Sub-Committees are chaired and vice-chaired by a range of partners from across the different services. There were further changes to these arrangements for many of the Sub-Committees this year. New Chairs, however, have been supported into their roles and are regularly offered space within the Committee agenda to feedback on the progress of their work plan and raise any issues.

The [ECPC Induction pack](#) continues to be in use to formally support all new members/chairs and the ECPC Chair and/or Lead Officer meet regularly with key contributors to understand their perspective and make sure the Committee is working effectively.

Edinburgh Child Protection Committee

- Independently Chaired

Performance Quality and Improvement Sub-Committee

- Chaired by Police Scotland, E Division

Learning & Development Sub-Committee

- Chaired by NHS Lothian

Learning Review Panel

- Chaired by the Child Protection Committee Chair

Learning Review Sub-Committee

- Chaired by City of Edinburgh Council, Chief Social Work Officer

Child Exploitation & Contextual Safeguarding Oversight Group

- Chaired by City of Edinburgh Council, Chief Social Work Officer

Thir Sector Child Protection Group

- Chaired by Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations' Council (EVOC)

Risk Register

Work on an ECPC Risk register commenced in summer 2026 and was agreed by Committee and approved at Chief Officers' Group in October 2025. The Risk Register was reviewed again in February 2026 by the Committee and will undergo updates within at least 6-monthly intervals.

The Risk Register can be found in [Appendix 3](#). It has proved an effective means of documenting and tracking concerns.

Public Protection Budget

A verbal Budget Report was provided to the Committee in May 2025 and there were two budget setting and review meetings throughout the remainder of 2025-6. This provided some clarity and transparency for partners, enabled forward-planning that links directly to the Child Protection Improvement Plan 2025-28.

From late 2025, it a schedule of quarterly budget meetings has been set and there will be annual reports to the wider Committee on or around fiscal year end.

Communication Strategy

There has been significant progress in formalising the wider communication routes utilised by the Committee, specifically:

- In October 2025 the Committee agreed a Learning Reviews Communication Strategy, which complemented NHS Lothian's single-agency approach.
- Also in October 2025 the first Edinburgh Child Protection Committee ([ECPC Newsletter](#)) was launched and monthly Newsletters have been available to the workforce and general public since this time (*please see the Newsletter section below for further details on the reach and impact*).
- An overarching [ECPC Communication Strategy](#) has been in development and due for sign-off in April 2026.

The Committee recognises a cluttered landscape, as there is a need to maintain City of Edinburgh Council public webpages and a ECPC Knowledge Hub, combined by encouraging single-agencies to ensure their own intranet facilities are relevant and up-to-date. There will be further efforts to consolidate the approach to Committee

communications in the next few years, in line with the Child Protection Improvement Plan and a restructure of City of Edinburgh Council’s Public Protection Team.

ECPC Newsletter

There have been six issues of the [ECPC Newsletter](#) published since October 2025. Members highlight the value for staff and wider partners, alongside the weekly update emails that are pushed out to ECPC Knowledge Hub members (515 professionals).

The Committee partners take varying approaches to distributing the Newsletter locally but, following a request for further information in February 2026, it is understood that the ECPC Newsletter reaches around 1500 individuals by email and is then further disseminated within teams and staff groups or linked to other regular bulletins. It is also available retrospectively to anybody through the relevant Committee downloads page, linked above.

Further, the Child Protection Committee Lead Officer publishes the Newsletter to [Linked In](#), where it appears around 400 times and is accessed by around 125 Linked In members at a local and national level.

Policy and Procedure Review and Development

This year the child protection partnership prioritised the development of the Risks Outside the Home Guidance, Screening Tool and promoting further Contextual Safeguarding tools and approaches (Please see the section on Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation, which covers this in more detail).

In early February 2026 the Committee also welcomed confirmation from the Edinburgh Children’s Partnership that [Multi-Agency Getting it Right for Every Child Practitioner Guidance](#) and corresponding paperwork had been agreed after some time in development.

The following additional multi-agency documents have been revised or developed throughout 2025-6:

Edinburgh and Lothians Multi-agency Child Protection Procedures	April 2025 (reviewed)
Information Sharing Security Statement	May 2025
Risks Outside the Home Guidance and Screening Tool	October 2025
Edinburgh Public Protection Committees Joint Learning Review Protocol and updated Notification Form	October 2025

Female Genital Mutilation interim guidance for Education	October 2025
Interim Safety Planning and Closure Summary Guidance for IRD	December 2025
Engaging with Men Guidance	March 2026
Practice Resolution Guidance (<i>still to publish</i>)	March 2026

There are some cross-cutting pieces of work that are underway but have been subject to delays in relation to local and national issues, such as:

Female Genital Mutilation Procedures (alongside NHS Lothians single-agency procedures)	Due Summer 2026
Human Trafficking Protocol (joint Public Protection Committees approach)	Overdue
<i>A further update to Forced Marriage Policy (May 2024)</i>	Due Summer 2026

At the end of 2025 and into 2026, Public Protection Chief Officers asked for a further piece of work on a Missing People Protocol, which is currently being progressed by Police Scotland's Prevention, Intervention and Partnerships Chief Inspector, with support from the public protection committees.

There is also a cross-cutting piece of work underway in relation to suicide prevention, where the Child Protection Committee is represented by City of Edinburgh's Service Manager for Public Protection.

The Committee is also considering developing new forms of Guidance, largely based on outcomes from the completed Learning Reviews. This is discussed in more detail within specific sections below.

2. Children's Rights

What we said we would do 2025-28?

1. Work to ensure that children and families voice and public bodies' duty to uphold their rights is integral to all parts of the plan.
2. Develop and review local child friendly materials about Child Protection processes to sit alongside [Child Protection Resource Scotland](#) and CPCS Campaigns.
3. Improve understanding of informal advocacy and trusted person's approaches used by Edinburgh's children.
4. Improve understanding of how children share their views and develop a framework or toolkit to support this.
5. Work towards Multi-Agency Chronologies for every child on the Child Protection Register by the point of the 6 month Review Child Protection Planning Meeting.

What have we done?

Children's Rights involvement and reporting

The main responsibilities for Children's Rights sits with the Edinburgh Children's Partnership, which reports into the Edinburgh Partnership (community safety partnership). There is a dotted line between the work of the Public Protection committees and the wider community safety partnership.

The Child Protection Lead Officer contributes to the Children's Rights and Participation working group, which remains one of 6 key priority areas for the [Children's Services Plan 2026-29](#), recently agreed.

Throughout 2025-6 the Child Protection Lead Officer represented the Child Protection Committee at several Children's Rights Working Groups and attended the UNCRC Local Government Conference in February 2026 and provided support to the UNCRC Report, offering information on:

Cluster 1	Equality and Diversity awareness raising and training
Cluster 2	Performance Reporting, Audit/Improvement work and how to inform and include children, young people and their families
Cluster 3 & 4	Shared, collective responsibility across the sector for ensuring the safety and protection of children, especially in relation to child exploitation and trafficking. This includes the development of practitioner policy, procedure, guidance and toolkits, as well as workforce and public communications.

The final report has not yet been published.

The Edinburgh Child Protection Committee has also committed to upholding the priorities of children's rights, participation and the promise within its own plan and resultant business.

Multi-Agency Chronologies

The revised [Getting it Right for Every Child: Multi-Agency Guidance 2026](#) includes advice on single and multi-agency chronologies as part of assessments of need for all children.

Developing the use of chronologies within child protection casework is a priority for the Learning and Development Sub-Committee. Multi-Agency Chronologies are included in the content of the Inter-Agency Risk Assessment learning provided by the ECPC, which is now focused more clearly on the learning needs of intensive contact staff and lead professionals who are undertaking assessment and safety planning in child protection.

Also, City of Edinburgh Council have developed Chronologies training that makes use of current research to set the scene and discuss guidance and procedures, while providing case scenarios to support, debate, discuss and reflect on practice in the writing and upkeep of a chronology. Further, NHS Lothian has Chronologies Guidance for the Pan-Lothian Partnership and offer learning using this approach. There are discussions about how collective multi-agency chronologies learning can be rolled out more widely in 2026-27 to enable shared learning.

Multi-agency Child Protection Audits include quality assurance on chronologies within the assessment process and an annual overview report was addressed by the Performance, Quality and Improvement (PQI) Sub-Committee in December 2025. Further, the value of multi-agency chronologies and integrated assessment has particularly been emphasised in circumstances of neglect where different agencies/services may hold varying pieces of information.

The Edinburgh Child Protection Committee are considering ways to become more involved in the National Chronologies Working Group and how to promote the revised National Risk Framework when it becomes available later in 2026.

Child-friendly Materials, Inclusion and Advocacy

Recent updates to practitioner guidance emphasise the need to intentionally and explicitly involve the child and their family in child protection assessment and planning, although recording decision-making in this area requires to be strengthened further. This is an area of continued focus through Multi-Agency Child Protection audits and other PQI workstreams.

Children, young people and their families receive a locally developed leaflet that explains about the Child Protection Planning Process when they are invited to this type of meeting. They are also sign-posted to the national resources, [Child Protection Resource Scotland](#).

It is intended that more focus will be devoted to the area of participation, advocacy and the voice of the child from August 2026 onwards.

3. Learning Culture and Relationships

What we said we would do?

1. Develop a clear work plan, based on the Child Protection Learning and Development Strategy (December 2024) for the Learning & Development Sub-Committee to progress.
2. Review multi-agency learning opportunities in line with the staff engagement, needs analysis work and current priorities, identified in other areas of the CP Improvement Plan 2025-28.
3. Launch a booking management site to allow the workforce to self-manage their Child Protection learning.
4. Continue to develop opportunities for IRD Workshops and provide a suite of information for different levels of staff on the same topics.
5. The ECPC will partner more closely with the Equally Safe Edinburgh Committee in understanding and meeting the workforce learning needs around violence against women and girls.
6. Map the availability of support and supervision for our staff groups, in line with trauma-informed principles.
7. The ECPC will develop increased opportunities for consultancy and co-development of materials with people with lived experience of services.
8. The ECPC continues to develop robust Learning Review practice, alongside building alternative approaches to learning.

What have we done?

Multi-agency Learning & Development Workplan

The Learning and Development (L&D) Sub-Committee held a development morning in May 2025, focussing on the Workplan that would flow from the [Learning and Development Strategy](#) agreed in December 2024. The task progressed slowly throughout the remainder of 2025 and a new Chair to the L&D Sub-Committee took over in January 2026. The Workplan was then finalised and present to the wider Committee in April 2026.

It is an extensive Workplan with 14 priority areas and 25 deliverables, alongside growing set of additional thematic Learning and Development actions from specific Learning Reviews. It will run alongside the Child Protection Improvement Plan 2025-28 and the L&D Sub-Committee will report into the Child Protection Committee on a 6-monthly basis.

The Workplan includes many of the other priorities highlighted in the ‘What we said we would do?’ Section.

Booking Management System

[MyLearningHub.events](#) was launched on 1 April 2025 and has been in use for a year. It provides an equitable, self-service approach to multi-agency partners exploring and booking on all public protection learning offered by Edinburgh’s Public Protection committees.

Despite this aim, booking and attendance compliance reporting was developed over 2025 and has brought up some discrepancies in how different agencies or disciplines are engaging with the learning platform.

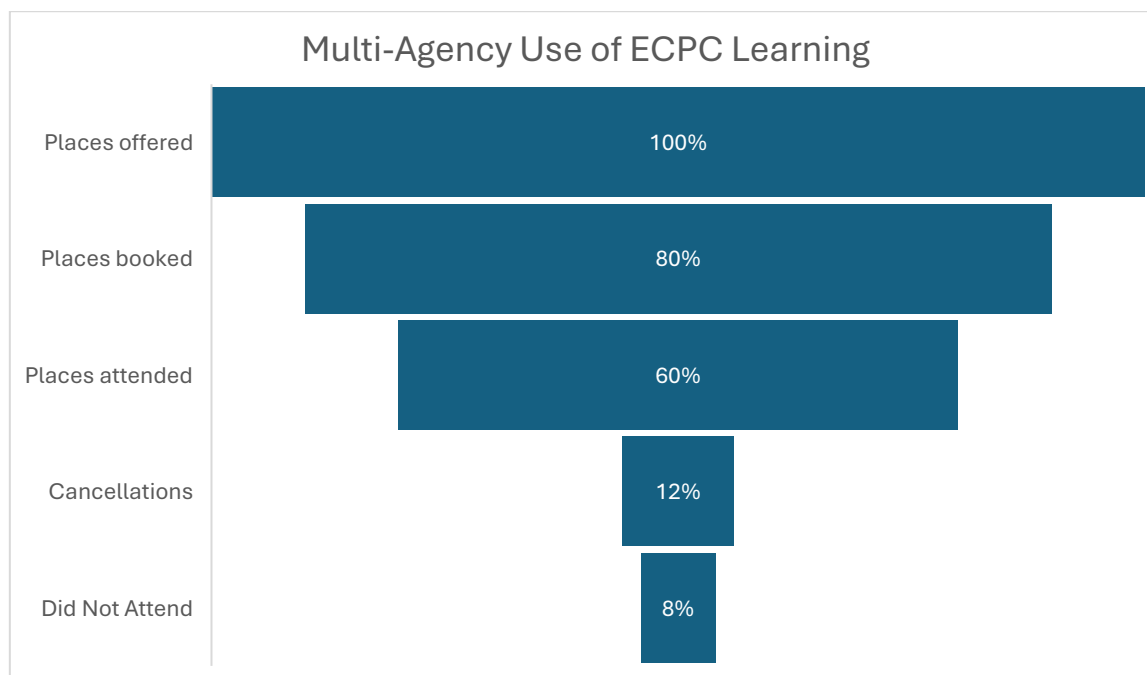
A range of multi-agency learning was offered through the Child Protection Committee in 2025-26 in the following learning areas of practice:

- Child Protection Specific Contact Workforce
- Inter-Agency Risk Assessment (Intensive Workforce)
- Advanced skills in assessing and managing risk in Child Protection (Intensive Workforce)
- Identifying and supporting children at risk of neglect
- Non-accidental or Inflicted Injury to infants and young children
- Domestic Abuse
- Substance Use in Pregnancy: Neo-natal Abstinence Syndrome
- Exploitation of Children and Young People
- Honour Based Abuse and Female Genital Mutilation
- Giving Evidence at Court.



Several of these courses have been updated in the last year, in line with learning from local Learning Reviews and audits, combined with national research and development, with thanks to the continued support of Learning and Development staff from partner agencies.

Despite the continued efforts to make course content relevant and accessible, while also publicising the learning effectively through the ECPC, there continues to be significant issues. This is demonstrated in the table below representing averages from 2025-6.



These figures show a marked increase in the number of bookings (increased from 44% to 80%) and attendance (increased from 31% to 60%) compared to April 2025. It should also be noted there has been a decrease in cancellations, yet there are still as many no-shows. All-in-all there remains a considerable waste of learning and development resource with the aggregate numbers who receive the learning. The Committee are looking at different ways to address this issue.

There have also been a series of stand-alone webinar or in-person events offered throughout the year:

Topic	Date	Attendance
Fabricated or Induced Illness	June 2025	130
The Disproportionate Criminalisation of Care Experienced Young People Research Findings	July 2025	NA
Spider in the Glass Part 1	August 2025	340
The Psychology of Sexual Exploitation – <i>A City of Edinburgh Council learning event offered to partners</i>	September 2025	45
Overdose Awareness and Scottish Ambulance Service call-outs to children and young people	September 2025	60
Crack Cocaine Awareness Raising	October 2025	60
Good Practice with Missing Young People	January 2026	30
Public Protection L&D Event for International Women's Day	March 2026	60



The Learning and Development Sub-Committee has further focused efforts on exploring wider/general learning resources to signpost to, promoting the following external platforms and services:

- ACAMHS Learn
- Children in Scotland
- Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse (CSA Centre)
- Contextual Safeguarding Network
- Crew 2000
- Healthy Respect
- I Am Me Scotland
- ICON
- Lucy Faithful Foundation
- NCLCC – National County Lines Coordination Centre
- NSPCC
- Police Scotland – Partnership Learning Opportunities
- Scottish Drug Forum (SDF)
- Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs (SFAAD)
- Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration (SCRA)
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS)
- The Children’s Society
- TURAS

Violence against Women and Girls – Partnering with Equally Safe Edinburgh Committee

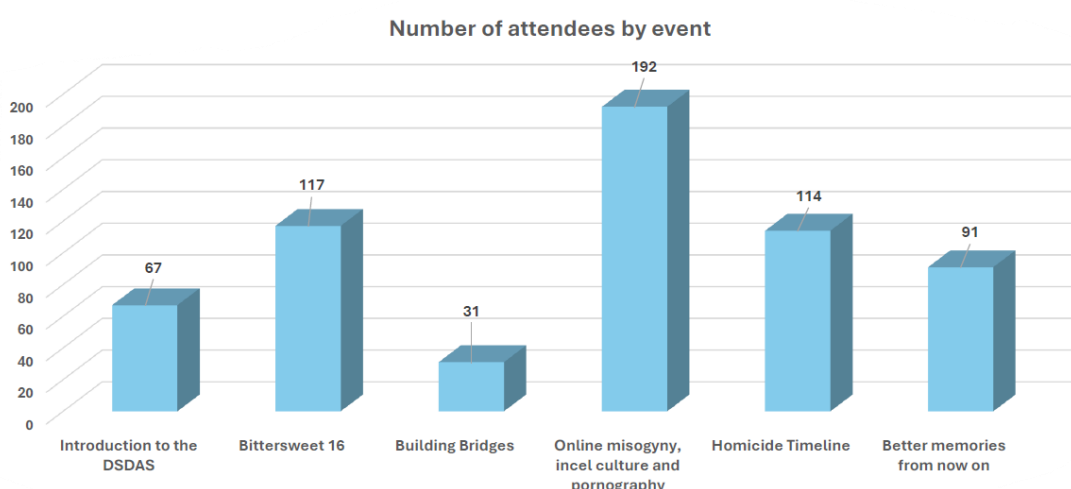
Early in 2025-26 members of the Child Protection Committee met with the Chair and Lead Officer of the Equally Safe Edinburgh Committee (ESEC) to further strengthen the links and cross-cutting support in relation to violence against women and girls.

As a result, the Committees jointly agreed the trialling of Spider in the Glass, a remote, story-telling learning event, in August 2025.

This resulted in an attendance of 339 practitioners, where nearly half provided feedback on the learning. 91% of feedback scored the event 4* or above, with lots of constructive reflection on how the learning would be applied in practice.

In November the Committee also supported and promoted ESEC’s 16 Days Campaign Events, which focused on the impact of violence against women and girls on children and young people (topics below). The six webinars were open-access and attended by over 620 people.

Introduction to the DSDAS
Bittersweet 16: Abuse and violence in the lives of children and young people
Building Bridges with women in the sex industry
Online misogyny, incel culture, pornography, children and young people
Introduction to the Homicide Timeline
Better Memories from now on: Supporting infants, babies and children living with parental domestic abuse



There were also 37 Book Bug sessions for pre-schoolers and their parent/carers, based on the rights of women. These were attended by 599 children and 551 parents and carers.

The learning from these events was shared with the Child Protection Committee as part of regular updates from the Equally Safe Edinburgh Lead Officer. In turn, the Child Protection Lead Officer regularly attends Equally Safe Committee meetings.

This means there has been constructive links between the Child Protection and Equally Safe Committees, which has allowed this Committee to contribute and share work on Stalking Awareness, Female Genital Mutilation, concerns around violent sexual practices such as Non-fatal Strangulation, Operation Begonia, [Everyone's Safer Schools](#) (with Lucy Faithful Foundation) and in the development of a series of local [Domestic Abuse guidance and resources](#) from December 2025 onwards.



Intensive Learning and Initial Referral Discussion (IRD) Participants Workshops:



The Child Protection Committee has sustained progress in improving Intensive and Specialist Learning Opportunities. This has been achieved by a review of the learning events on offer and clearly 'badging' them in line with the [National Framework for Child Protection Learning and Development 2024](#) and our [Edinburgh Child Protection Learning and Development Strategy \(2024\)](#).

There has also been two face-face IRD Workshops were held in in the reporting period, with a further session planned for May 2026:

- 31 October 2025 – SCIM and IRD Data & Improvement
- 5 March 2026 - Child Neglect



These are multi-agency events for up to 60 members of staff who are involved in facilitating and recording IRD discussions from across City of Edinburgh Council Social Work; NHS Lothian; Police Scotland and Education.

In the last year contributors have included: the Child Protection Lead Officer, a SCIM trained Police Officer and Social Worker; the Lead Paediatrician for Child Protection (Edinburgh); Police Scotland's National Child Protection team; NHS Lothian's Child Protection Learning & Development Lead; City of Edinburgh Children's Services Practice Managers; Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal; and a Third Sector Organisation.

The Child Protection Lead Officer has also met bi-annually with the Children and Young Person's Reviewing Team members who chair Child Protection Planning Meetings on behalf of the Child Protection Committee. This is to look at specific learning and procedural developments that the Child Protection processes they lead on. Typically, the subject matter has been drawn both from Reviewing Officers' collective experiences, from the outcomes of the quality improvement and audit work (covered in the next section) and outcomes from Learning Reviews.

Similarly, the Child Protection Lead Officer has attended sessions of the Children's Partnership, Corporate Parenting Board and the Children, Young People and Families Network of the Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations Council (EVOC), largely to support the concept of developing a learning culture and share the outcomes of Learning Reviews.

Multi-Agency Briefing Papers

The ECPC has shared or developed the following Briefings and resources over the last year:

Fabricated and Induced Illness 7 Minute Briefing June 2025
Home Education 7 Minute Briefing June 2025
Child Protection and Primary Care July 2025
IRD 7 Minute Briefing July 2025
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Guidance for Education October 2025
Contextual Safeguarding 7 Minute Briefing November 2025
Child Sexual Abuse Signs and Indicators December 2025
Responding to Children Sharing Experiences of Sexual Abuse Explainer December 2025
Online Sexually Coerced Extortion Explainer December 2025
Grooming Explainer December 2025
Gender and Exploitation Explainer December 2025
Financial Exploitation Explainer December 2025
Risks Outside the Home Guidance Briefing January 2026
Infant Crying and ICON 7 Minute Briefing January 2026
'Unseen Men' 7 Minute Briefing March 2026
Reflective Questions for Professional Curiosity Explainer March 2026

These are all available on the [Child Protection for Professionals](#) downloads page.

The [Edinburgh Public Protection Committees Joint Protocol for Conducting Learning Reviews in Adult and Child Protection](#) was re-developed over summer 2025, following a period of busy Learning Review activity by both the Adult Protection and Child Protection Committees. The revised Protocol better represents the complexity of information gathering and recommendation at the early stages when a Learning Review Notification is received and how to balance the need for a sensitive, trauma-informed, timely, proportionate and multi-lateral approach to decision-making.

Throughout the last year the Child Protection Committee held five Child Learning Review Panels where there was eight new Learning Review Notifications in respect of fifteen children, young people and care experienced young adults. There were also two pre-existing Learning Reviews (LR) and one multi-agency Reflective Discussion (RD) from 2023-2025 at different stages of the ongoing review process.

Two Learning Review Notifications did not proceed to the Learning Review Panel as they did not meet the criteria and were better dealt with through alternative processes. An overview of the other six Learning Review Notifications and the pre-existing Learning Review activity is provided below:

Identifier	Notified	Type	COG	Stage
Child E	Dec 2023	LR	July 2025	Concluded April 2025, <i>improvement planning</i>
Young Person H	Dec 2024	RD	July 2025	Concluded June 2025, <i>improvement planning</i>
Child F and Child G	Dec 2023	LR	October 2025	Concluded September 2025, <i>improvement planning</i>
Baby J	June 2025	Hybrid LR		<i>Due April 2026</i>
Child K	July 2025	LR		<i>In progress due August 2026</i>
Child L	Aug 2025	LR		<i>Delayed</i>
Family B (multiple children)	Oct 2025	RD		<i>In progress due August 2026</i>
Family M (multiple children)	Feb 2026	LR		<i>Not yet progressed</i>
Child N	Feb 2026	TBC		

There has once again been local learning to come from another full year of Learning Review activity. Particularly, in autumn 2025 the Committee trialled a Hybrid Learning Review. This involved the independent Chair acting as Lead Reviewer but forming a reciprocal arrangement with another regional public protection committee office to facilitate the practitioner and manager reflective events, therefore providing a level of independence without the time and financial constraints that can come with appointing an independent Reviewer. While the Learning Review did progress, it remained a lengthy and involved process due to other pressures and commitments of the officers involved. Local partners also felt they were 'more removed' from timely updates on the process. Therefore, it is unlikely that this approach will be repeated.

The Child [Learning Review Sub-Committee](#) has met on a quarterly basis over 2025-26. In March 2026, the Sub-Committee had oversight of four child learning review action plans. It is fair to say that there is continued concern across Child and Adult Protection committees about drift in resultant action planning and the local committees are continuing to develop the approach to tracking and reviewing the strategies for improvement and learning points identified in a Learning Review report.

The activity of the Learning Review Panel, the Learning Sub-Committee and progress reports on active Learning Reviews are covered in some detail within eight-weekly Lead Officer Reports to the Child Protection Committee, where approval is sought for recommendation, as required, before remitting to Public Protection Chief Officers.

In January 2026 the Chair to the Child Protection Committee shared concerns about the capacity and resource for Edinburgh's Learning Review processes with the Public Protection Chief Officers. This has resulted in a further piece of work by Chief Officers to ensure an appropriate and proportionate approach to systems change and learning culture following the death or harm to a person using our services.

The Child Protection Lead Officer has also worked to develop a briefing process on local Learning Reviews outcomes or those undertaken from other areas of the country. This included, for example, Neglect Learning Review outcomes from two areas in May 2025; a review on complex care needs in October 2025 and a Briefing to the Child Protection Committee about the Sara Shariff Safeguarding Practice Review in February 2026.

The Public Protection Service Manager, City of Edinburgh Council, and Lead Officer also offered a national Learning Review Hub webinar on the outcomes of Child E's Learning Review in February 2026.

There have been the following local opportunities to share the practice and learning implications from our Learning Review activity:

Topic	Date	Attendance
Child E LR Participants Feedback	May 2025	40
CPLO attended Corporate Parenting Board to feedback on collective learning from local Learning Reviews on care experienced children and young people	October 2025	20
Child F & Child G LR Participants Feedback	November 2025	30
Child E Learning Review Outcomes M-A Webinar	March 2026	50
Child F & Child G LR Outcomes M-A Webinar	April 2026	40

These types of Learning Review events are set to continue throughout 2026-27.

What we've still to do?

1. We have not yet been able to make collective progress on the availability of support and supervision for all our staff groups, although we know City of Edinburgh Council is progressing a programme of work for Social Work staff and there are members of the independent schools' network developing capacity in this space.
2. The Child Protection Committee also seek to be more intentional in offering opportunities for consultancy and co-development of materials with people with lived experience of services. This is linked with the rights and participation work in section 2 of the report.
3. The Committee continues to develop robust Learning Review practice, alongside building alternative approaches to learning.

4. Self-evaluation and Assurance

What we said we would do?

Self-evaluation and assurance work runs right through the core of all the Committee business. Given the new CP Improvement Plan will run for three years, there are several thematic issues in priorities (5) – (8) that will all involve elements of evaluation and improvement planning. While it would be difficult to go into all the details here, some of the main themes we will be working on are:

1. Continuing to develop and embed the three main quality assurance tools used by Performance Quality and Improvement Sub-Committee.
2. Re-run the National Child Protection Guidance Self-Evaluation that was previously carried out in October 2023.

What have we done?

The [Performance Quality and Improvement \(PQI\) Sub-Committee](#) has continued to be very busy. The Sub-Committee carries out the [National Minimum Dataset version 2 Reporting](#) on a bi-annual basis, reporting into the Child Protection Committee, with additional oversight from the Public Protection Chief Officers.

The following specific issues have been explored by the group over the last year:

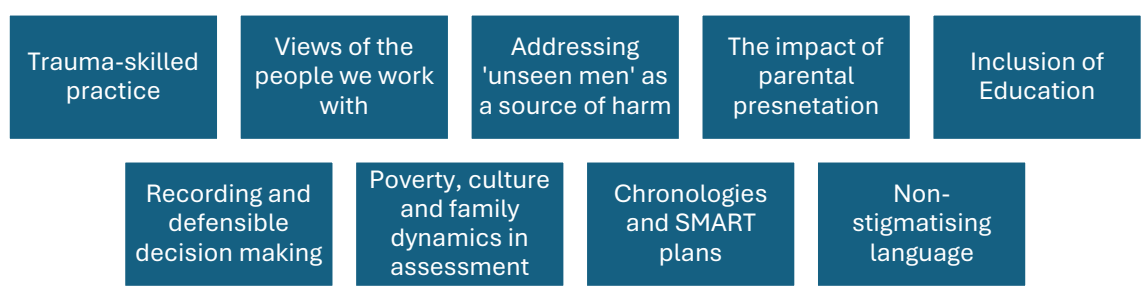
- Impact of Serious Organised Crime on children, young people and their families and how this is addressed through our Child Protection systems.
- Introducing CaRM data
- Exploring the introduction of Disability Indicators.

Some of these are still under further monitoring and development and form part of the continued workplan for 2026-27. This will likely include further learning and areas of data scrutiny work that have come from the early stages of the National Review of group-based child sexual abuse and exploitation that commenced 9 February 2026.

Having launched a new multi-agency child protection audit programme and implemented a multi-agency quality assurance framework in 2024-25, this year has been involved consolidation and beginning to address the findings from these tools. In June 2025, for example, a range of quality illustrations around the Child Protection Investigation stage were developed by Quality Assurance colleagues in City of Edinburgh Council to share with all auditors and ensure greater consistency of scoring. In April and

September 2025 there were interim audit report, with a presentation to PQI Sub in November 2025, followed by a formal annual Multi-Agency Child Protection Audit report in December 2025. There have been several meetings since this time, both with the group of auditors and the wider PQI Sub-Committee about the learning and improvement to take from the activity and thinking ahead to future Multi-Agency Child Protection audit planning.

This audit work generated a plan that covered the following topics:

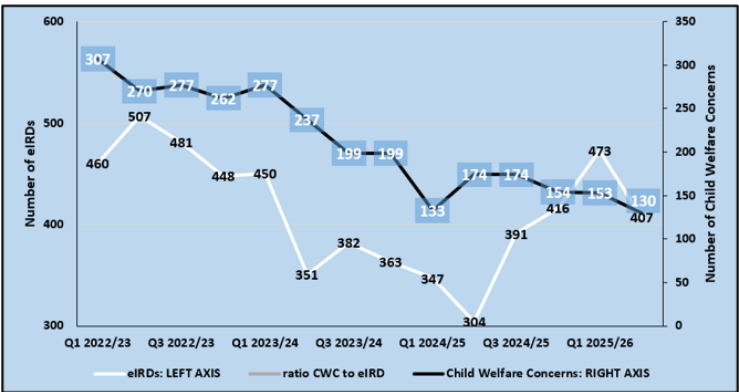


The learning mirrors some of the findings from Edinburgh’s Learning Reviews and has already fed into several of the Committee’s learning events (more details in section 3 of the report). There is a programme of further Child Protection guidance development, especially for Inter-Agency Referral Discussions. These issues will be a continued focus for the PQI Sub-Committee over the coming year.

Below are some of the key indicators and what we have learned through 2025-26.

Child Protection Referrals:

Following a piece of work last year to overhaul the reporting of Child Protection referrals from all 3 core services (Police Scotland, NHS Lothian and City of Edinburgh Council), the Committee has a greater confidence in our data.

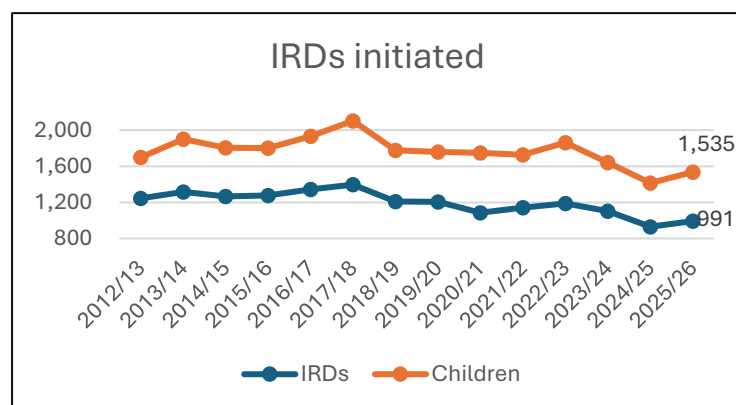


Ratio: no. of CWCs to no. of eIRDs	2022/23				2023/24				2024/25				2025/26	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
	0.70	0.50	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.70	0.50	0.50	0.40	0.60	0.40	0.40	0.30	0.30

Figure 2 - Child Welfare Concerns and IRDs

The Child Protection Committee are still awaiting City of Edinburgh Council's new social work client recording system which will improve ease and confidence in reporting but is now expected in November 2026.

Initial Referral Discussions (IRDs):

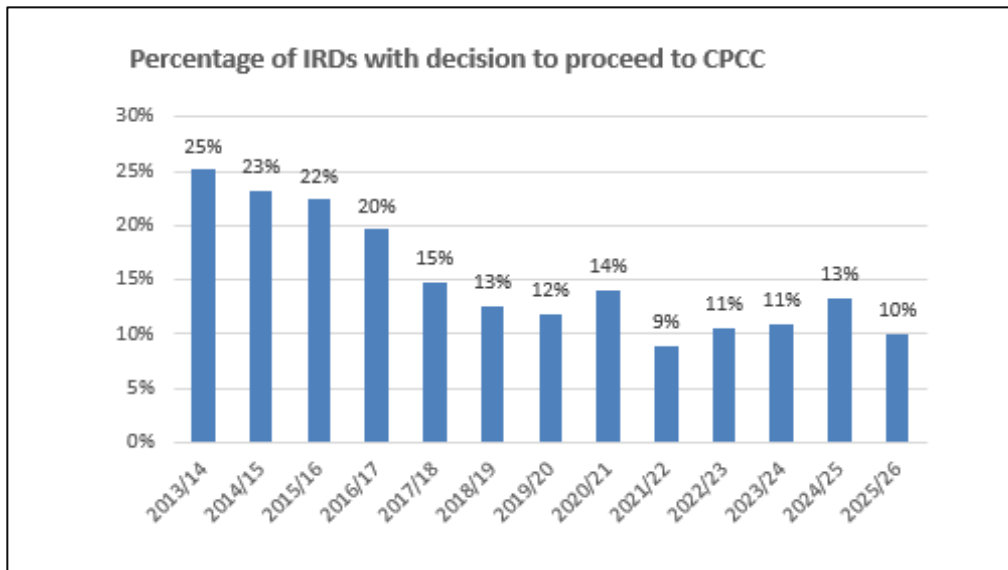


The rate of IRDs per 1,000 children has dropped to 17.0 nationally. Edinburgh also saw a downward trend from 18.1 in 2023-24 to 12.9 in 2024-25, but can that numbers of IRDs have begun to rise again to the levels seen in 2022-23 (white line in Figure 8 above).

There is dedicated improvement and oversight work currently underway in relation to the first stages of a child protection investigation:

- The PQI receives an E-IRD Management report on an annual basis.
- There is a weekly [IRD Review Group](#) involving a multi-agency group of senior staff.
- An [IRD Oversight Group](#) was also stood up in 2025-6 to make sense of and plan the learning and improvement coming from the IRD Review.
- IRD [Interim Safety Planning](#) and [Closure Summary Guidance](#) were launched in September 2025, with further plans for an over-arching IRD Practice Guidance early in 2026-27.
- IRDs were included in all the Multi-Agency Child Protection audits that took place over 2024-25.
- IRD Practitioners' Workshops have continued to take place 3 times per year.

This gives us confidence that comprehensive child protection investigations are being undertaken through the IRD process, enabling many of the potential risks to children and young people to be resolved during the initial child protection investigation, meaning it is not necessary to progress to Child Protection Planning Meeting, as indicated in the chart below.

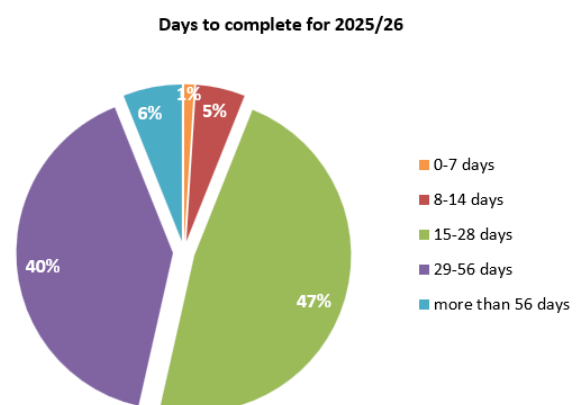


Increasingly, the IRD process is also being used for a cohort of young people exposed to risks outside the home. Their pathway of support does not often result in Child Protection Planning Meeting, but an [IRD Strategic Planning Meeting](#); [Care and Risk Management](#) processes; or another [Contextual Safeguarding](#) approaches potentially involving care planning through [GIRFEC](#). The PQI Sub-Committee is looking throughout 2026-27 to have these pathways better represented within our Child Protection data.

Child Protection Planning Meetings:

As part of the Edinburgh and Lothians Multi-Agency Child Protection Procedures, it is the expectation that all Initial Child Protection Planning Meetings take place within 28 days of the start of the IRD.

Despite an increase in 2024-25, there has been a downward trend since July 2025 in the number of IRDs that close within 28 days (53%). The IRD Oversight group are undertaking some improvement work in this area, which will extend into 2026-27.



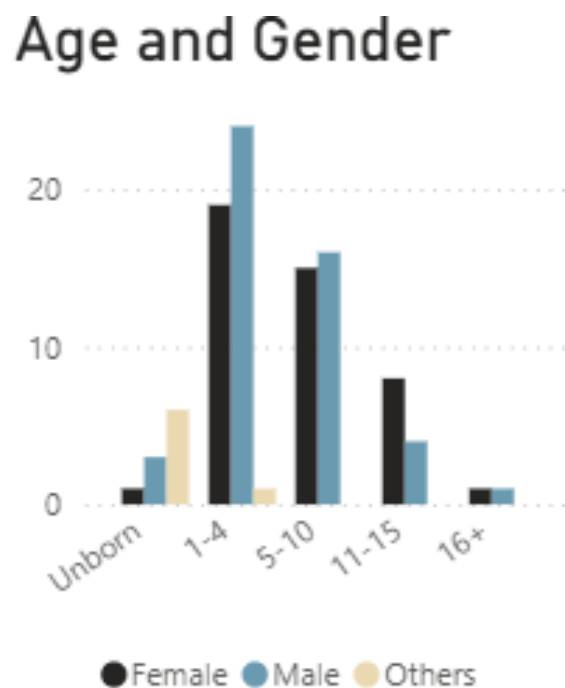
As a result of Learning Review activity, Edinburgh is working hard to ensure all relevant professionals involved in the team around a child or family attend Child Protection Planning Meetings and contribute to assessment of need, risk and resultant child protection planning. This is an area of ongoing work for 2025-26.

Dissent and Practice Resolution:

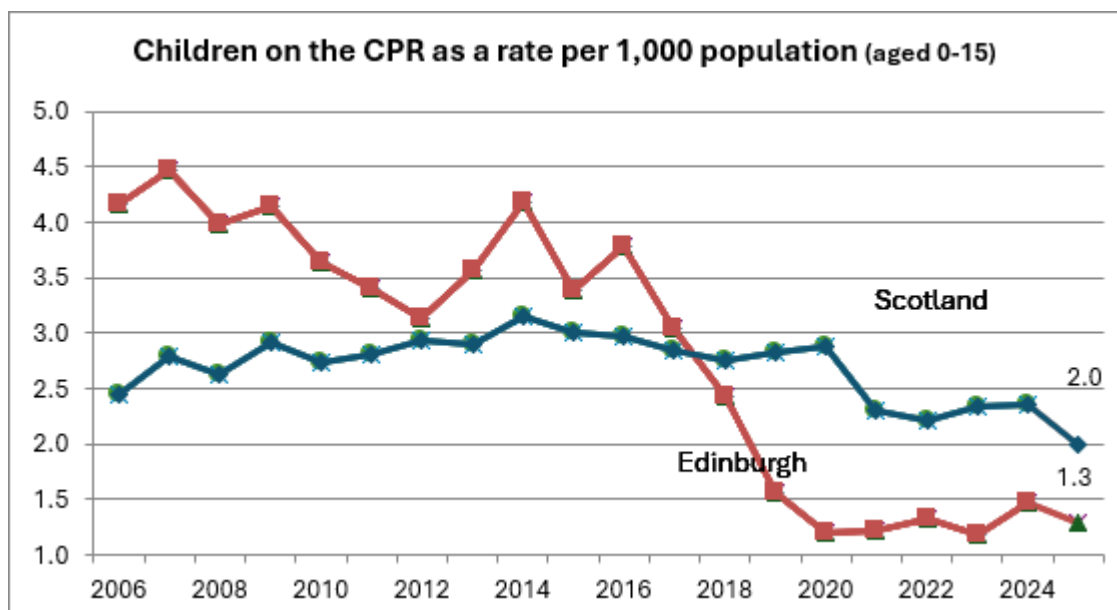
Having updated the Dispute Resolution Protocol in 2024, which covers formal dissent to the decisions of a Child Protection Planning Meeting, multi-agency professionals also noted there should be guidelines for raising differences of opinion and practice issues at all stages of the child protection journey. Therefore, in the latter half of 2025, a Practice Resolution and Escalation Process was developed by members of the PQI Sub-Committee and is due to be agreed and published early in 2026-27.

Child Protection Registration

On 31 March 2026 the number of children on the Child Protection Register in Edinburgh was **98**.



Edinburgh follows a national trend, highlighting stability in the number of children on the child protection register over the last decade, following a steep downward trend from 2016 onwards (see chart below).



This type of high-level performance information is reported to Edinburgh Child Protection Committee on an eight-weekly basis and to Public Protection Chief Officers quarterly, with the more detailed Minimum Dataset performance reporting 6-monthly.

Edinburgh is continuing to develop consistent practice with adolescents, including older young people, aged 16-17 years. The work is being informed by the Child Exploitation and Contextual Safeguarding Oversight Group; the National Referral Mechanism Devolved Decision Making Pilot; Edinburgh's Housing Crisis and links with the Adult Protection Committee. This is a topic of repeated discussion within the Committee.

What we've still to do?

“Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement and success have no meaning.”

– Benjamin Franklin

Much of this section of the report is the day-to-day business of the Child Protection Committee and there is as much ‘Still to do...’ as there is ‘Completed.’

Within our current Child Protection Improvement Plan, we have made a commitment to re-run the National Child Protection Guidance Self-Evaluation that was previously carried out in October 2023. This is to allow us to measure our progress and refocus our attention on the areas still to address. 2026-27 may provide an opportune moment to address this, as we will have some new Committee members and a new Lead Officer.

4. Whole Family Wellbeing and Impact of Child Neglect

What we said we would do?

1. Sustain public communications and workforce messaging on seeking help for families.
2. Improve links between the Edinburgh Child Protection Committee, Edinburgh Children's Partnership and Edinburgh Partnership (Community Safety)
3. Review strategy, practice approaches and learning & development related to child neglect.

What have we done?

The Edinburgh Child Protection Committee has been in firm support of the work carried out by the Edinburgh Children's Partnership in relation to the eleven sub-groups that were formed to achieve the outcomes of the 2023-26 Children's Services Plan. The Child Protection Lead Officer has attended Children's Partnership, when available, and presented on Child Protection Committee Planning at appropriate junctures.

The Lead Officer has also acted as the conduit between the Child Protection Committee and the obvious links with wider partnership approaches to Trauma-informed Practice and United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This has involved sitting on some of the groups, contributing to reports and plans or meeting separately with Leads to offer consultancy.

There are several other key members of the Child Protection Committee and Sub-Committees who also sit on the Edinburgh Children's Partnership and offer a shared understanding of their roles in Maternity and Early Years; Neurodevelopmental Pathways; Healthy Places; Poverty; Single Point of Access for Community Mental Health; and Youth Work, for example.

The L&D Sub-Committee have close direct links with the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) Sub-Group and welcomed the [GIRFEC Practitioners' Guidance](#) in March 2026, with an ECPC Member's Briefing event planned for spring 2026.

The Whole-Family Wellbeing Project Manager and the Corporate Parenting & Promise Lead Officer have attended Child Protection Committees to provide update, with the latter last reporting on the Corporate Parenting and Promise Planning at Committee in February 2026.

Members of the Edinburgh Child Protection Committee have also attended a number of Edinburgh Children's Services Partnership and Edinburgh Partnership engagement events and contributed indirectly to the future Children's Service Plan for 2026-29, following last year's [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#).

This committee welcomes the wider Children's Services focus on:

- Reducing child poverty and inequality
- Best start in life
- Wellbeing and mental health
- Youth work inclusion and engagement
- Meaningful participation
- Delivering workforce, data and partnership

including the inherent links with the Corporate Parenting Board and Promise Plan.

The Child Protection Lead Officer is also part of the Edinburgh Alcohol and Drug Partnership Whole-family approach Collaborative, which meets quarterly to progress local actions related to [Families Affected by Drug and Alcohol Use in Scotland: A Framework for Holistic Whole Family Approaches and Family Inclusive Practice](#) (Scottish Government 2021).

The Child Protection Committee continue to support and build on existing approaches and structures, rather than develop stand-alone family support messaging. In this respect, the Committee will continue to offer space to understand the progress of the Children's Services Plan and the work of the six whole-family wellbeing collaborations. The Committee will proactively contribute to this as required.

A Focus on Neglect:

Sadly, the results of [Child E's Learning Review](#) in Edinburgh, along with others regionally and nationally has highlighted that we haven't always achieved GIRFEC aims in getting children and their families 'the right help, at the right time, from the right people' and 'until things get better' ([Scottish Government](#) 2022).

Since 2018 the Child Protection Committee has been focused on identifying targeting and addressing Neglect as a source of harm. Nonetheless, it has remained a significant issue, which has been highlighted again by recent Learning Reviews (see section 3 for further details). As such, the Child Protection Committee have set some goals to:

- Understand the varying use of the word 'neglect' across services and consider thresholds and interventions.

- Actively contribute to the national debate and potential revision of Children and Young Persons (Scotland) Act 1937 s.12 offences.
- Implement changes on addressing Neglect proposed by Learning Review for Child E April 2025, which includes the re-development of Neglect workforce learning opportunities and review impact on practice.
- Audit Child Protection planning where one of indicators is identified (risk of) Neglect.
- Build and share evidence base on trauma informed and responsive approaches to children experiencing neglect.

To these ends, an IRD Workshop themed on Neglect took place in March 2026. This focused on a paediatric response to faltering growth; research from Police Scotland on investigations into Children and Young Persons (Scotland) Act 1937 s.12 offences; tools and approaches to practice in identifying and responding to neglect, including the Risk of Neglect Toolkit. There are also inputs planned from Police Scotland and COPFS on the use of Children and Young Persons (Scotland) Act 1937 s.12 offences in May 2026.

Further, members of the Learning and Development Sub-Committee have offered the Risk of Neglect Toolkit Workshop in multi-agency and single-agency sessions over 2025-26. The 'Understanding Neglect' 2-day course has also been re-developed as a focused 'Identifying and Supporting Children at Risk of Neglect' and is being rolled out from 1 April 2026.

What we've still to do?

The impact of this activity requires robust analysis in order that the Edinburgh Child Protection Committee are assured that staff and volunteers are confident in identifying, assessing and responding to childhood neglect in order to improve the life chances of those who experience it.

5. Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation

What we said we would do?

1. Support the Child Exploitation Oversight Group in establishing a relevant and achievable work plan that aligns with the Terms of Reference (agreed April 2025) and the national leadership group on this subject matter.
2. Demonstrate a joined-up approach to children who are missing from education, home and care settings in line.
3. Develop and review a Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation strategy in line with the recommendations from [Child E Learning Review](#) (April 2025) and also from the initial findings from the data and information returns to the National Review into Group-based Child abuse and exploitation review.

What have we done?

There were four meetings of the [Child Exploitation and Contextual Safeguarding Oversight Group](#) in 2025 where the development of the [Risks Outside the Home Guidance](#) was the priority. This Guidance was agreed by the Child Protection Committee and shared with Public Protection Chief Officers in October 2025 and workforce communications and tools have been further developed.

In addition, a series of multi-agency discussions took place in April – May 2025 about Edinburgh's application to the Devolved Decision-Making Pilot of the National Referral Mechanism, which we were successful in and implemented in October 2025. A mid-point report is coming to the Child Protection Committee around this work in spring 2026 and there will be closer links between the ECPC's work in this area and the Lead Officer for the NRM in future years.

Throughout 2025-26 the Lead Officer met with key partners such as Action for Children, Barnardo's, Lucy Faithful Foundation, UK Safer Internet Centre, NSPCC, LAYC and EVOC to explore and address Child Exploitation and Contextual Safeguarding approaches.

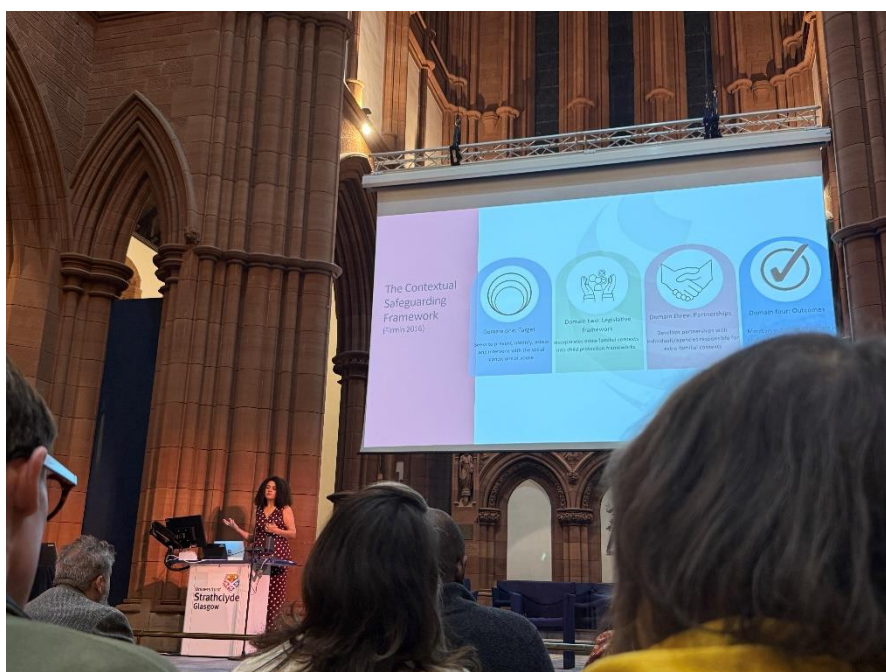
In September 2025 partners were invited to attend City of Edinburgh Council learning events, delivered by a sexualised trauma specialist, on the psychology of the perpetrator in child sexual exploitation of adolescents, which ran over two days.

The Committee also contributed to the National Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation workforce learning workstream with a report on the learning already available locally.

Later on in the year, City of Edinburgh Council also used time-limited funding to offer Contextual Safeguarding training (online or in person) to local staff and a range of other community partners. This was facilitated by the organisation Power the Fight and offered a good grounding in starting to apply a Contextual approach to practice.

A [Contextual Safeguarding 7 Minute Briefing](#) and a series of other explainers related to Child Exploitation were shared by the ECPC in November and December 2025 across the partnership (see section 3). Unfortunately, our system does not allow us to access data on how often they have been downloaded.

The monthly [ECPC Newsletter](#) has covered elements of (group-based) child criminal exploitation, (group-based) child sexual abuse and/or exploitation, going missing, trafficking and contextual safeguarding as an approach in almost every issue this year.



In November 2026 the Child Protection Lead Officer attended two events, a CYCJ workshop on cross-cutting legislation used to protect 16-17 year olds, where exploitation and contextual safeguarding were a key topic and in the same evening, the 23rd Kilbrandon Lecture, where Professor Carlene Firmin of the Global Centre for Contextual Safeguarding spoke on '[When Common sense is Complicated: A call for Cultural reform to safeguarding children beyond their homes.](#)'

The Child Exploitation and Contextual Safeguarding Oversight group has met twice in 2026. Under a new Chaired arrangement there has been a renewed focus to the [Terms of Reference](#) and the Work plan, which now has 3 clear workstreams progressing.

What we are still to do?

Having put in place a governance and oversight for this area of work over the past year, the system requires to implement and adopt the new models of practice and evidence their success.

To this avail, the [Child Exploitation and Contextual Safeguarding Oversight Group](#) is only at the beginning of addressing an ambitious workplan; while also monitoring and tracking the difference these changes make to children at risk of exploitation, trafficking and abuse through a contextual safeguarding approach. To aid this work, City of Edinburgh Council have funded a dedicated Contextual Safeguarding Lead Officer who will take forward the work of this group, alongside the Child Protection Lead Officer.

There will be a new operational governance group and a local community of practice developed for Contextual Safeguarding. This will build on many of the national supports available from the Local Area Network, Regional Champions group and the Global Centre for Contextual Safeguarding as a whole.

There is a plan to offer bespoke Contextual Safeguarding training to education staff in August 2026.

There is a commitment to offer local awareness raising on Child Exploitation, which would reach children and young people and their parents/carers, but also other Community Guardians and private business owners.

In addition, Edinburgh Chief Officers have been undertaking stand-alone group-based Child Abuse and Exploitation Problem Profile work since late 2025 and are understood to be proposing further dedicated multi-agency resource.

All these strands will continue to shape the improvement plan on this area of practice.

6. Child Protection Systems

What we said we would do?

1. Support the re-development of the e-IRD recording system as a secure, collective platform that demonstrates shared recording and defensible decision-making that can be integrated with single-agency records keeping systems.
2. Increase confidence in the intensive contact workforce's skills and confidence in chronologies, risk assessment and child's planning to manage and reduce risk.
3. Increase confidence in intensive contact workforce and their skills and abilities with cross-cutting risk assessments related to a combination of structural inequalities, adult protection and violence against women and girls.
4. Further evidence that children, young people and their families are actively involved in the system to protect them.

What we have done?

Inter-Agency Referral Discussion (IRD)

As discussed in sections 2 and 3, there has been a lot of work carried out to support IRD and e-IRD, particularly in relation to quality assurance, improvement and workforce guidance. These are being tracked carefully with further change ideas being implemented throughout 2026.

The IRD Practitioners' Workshop in October 2025 focused particularly on evidence from audits and IRD Review in relation to defensible decision-making and some new tools that could aid the process.

The [IRD Operational Oversight Group](#) has met four times since it was stood up in November 2025 and has an ongoing workplan related to IRD Improvement work, IRD practitioner workshops and including Education in IRDs.

Wider IRD Guidance is in final stages of drafting, and it is hoped it will be signed off in the early stages of 2026-27.

The e-IRD Steering Group is a pan-Lothian strategic oversight forum for the e-IRD system. The Committee are continuing to address development plans through this forum.

Improving Child Protection Practice

The Corporate Director of Children and Education Services, City of Edinburgh Council, often highlights that one of their key priorities is to ‘do basics beautifully.’ While the Child Protection Committee acknowledges many of the barriers to carrying out basic tasks around chronologies, risk assessment and outcomes-focused safety planning, these are areas of concern that have arisen in multi-agency audits and especially within recent Learning Reviews.

In particular, the [Learning Review](#) into the inflicted injury of Child F and Child G highlighted that Edinburgh were ‘behind the curve’ in our approach to implementing Getting it Right for Every Child and evidencing integrated, multi-lateral assessment and planning for children at risk of harm.

As a result of learning points and findings from a range of sources, the Learning and Development Sub-Committee has developed a new Specific Contact Workforce Child Protection training and re-developed the Inter-Agency Risk Assessment 2-day learning opportunity, while also offering a 1-day Advanced Practice in Child Protection Risk Assessment opportunity for more experienced staff who have already carried out their basic Child Protection learning. The latter two courses are at the intensive contact level, where staff act as lead professionals or contribute regularly to a team around the child or core group meeting. The learning includes the opportunity to practice chronologies and child’s planning skills.

Involvement of Children, young people and families

Multi agency audits continue to highlight real issues in the meaningful involvement and understanding of children and their parents/carers in the child protection processes they find themselves in. While it is understood anecdotally that there is some great, imaginative and flexible practice happening around the city, where practitioners often go above and beyond to reach families experiencing trauma and challenge, these examples are not picked up in single or multi-agency case recording and minutes. This often leads auditors and those involved in learning reviews to have little or no evidence of engagement with children or families.

As part of the multi-agency quality assurance framework developed by the PQI Sub-Committee in 2024, it was intended to regularly collect and analyse qualitative feedback on families’ experiences of ‘the child protection system.’ There was some exploration of how best to do this as part of the IRD, following child medicals and during Child

Protection Registration but nothing has yet been developed and tested. There is limited progress on qualitative evidence within the Scottish Child Interview (SCIM) process, which has now been embedded in Edinburgh for several years.

A SCIM Annual Report was received by PQI Sub-Committee in June 2025, with the next one scheduled for autumn 2026. The report gave some early indications on service user feedback, with further development plans for 2026-27.

This is an area that will require ongoing development in future and it may be that it feeds into cross-cutting aims of section 8 as all public protection committees and some other forums such as parent and carer support, whole-family wellbeing, corporate parenting and the Promise all look to offer inclusion, meaningful engagement, participation and include the voice of lived experience, not only in day-to-day care planning but also in service development and delivery.

8. Cross-cutting Public Protection Theme

What we said we would do?

1. Develop a Public Protection Strategy and consider a strengthened Public Protection Office.
2. Maintain relationships, connection and shared solutioning or contributions to strategic planning.
3. ECPC will revise or develop a suite of Transitions Policies/Guidance.

What we have done?

Public Protection Team

The Child Protection committee will benefit from a strengthened Public Protection Team. This is now in place, following the conclusion of the City of Edinburgh Council Children's Service Review.

The current Child Protection Lead Officer has been promoted into the Public Protection Team Leader role and there will be a new Lead Officer to the Committee. Over spring/summer 2026 the new team will start to take shape.



Transitions

While some transition policy/procedure work has been progressed in both NHS Lothian and City of Edinburgh Council at a single-agency level and documented through the

action planning for the Learning Review of Young Person D, there has been little capacity to do a cross-cutting piece of work.

Both Child Protection and Adult Protection Multi-Agency Procedures are clear that all young people who are 0-18 should be referred to Child Protection in the first instance and that adult Social Care Direct will be involved in the IRD as required.

Despite consistent strategic messaging over a number of years, the Committees remain concerned that there are exceptions rooted out by audits and learning reviews. These issues are sometimes compounded further by Health, Education, Benefits and Housing circumstances, which is why the Edinburgh Child Protection committee regularly invites other partners to share their experiences and learning as part of the Committee.

Maintaining Connections

[Protecting Children and Young People: Child Protection Committees and Chief Officers Responsibilities](#) (Scottish Government 2019) highlights that Child Protection Committees must engage the third sector and seek to maximise the sector's contributions to the protection of children, through the relationship with local third sector forums.

The Edinburgh Child Protection Committee has always enjoyed good relationships with the third sector through the Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations Council (EVOC) and Lothian Association of Youth Clubs (LAYC), not to mention individual relationships with local organisations.



In October 2025 the Child Protection Lead Officer met with a wide range of members from the EVOC Children, Young People and Families Network to update of the 2025-28 Child Protection Improvement Plan and to focus on developing a learning culture throughout the child protection partnership.

Third Sector Services provided views on the Child Protection Improvement Plan, made connections with other city planning, such as the Children's Service Plan for 2026-29 and [Edinburgh Youth and Children's Work Strategy 2023-2028](#). This was an opportunity for them to share concerns about children and young people's mental health and the place of babies and infants, which they noted could have had more prominence in the Child Protection Plan.

The Child Protection Lead Officer was also able to share the [Child Protection Learning and Development Strategy](#), sign-post to our learning platforms, tools and resources, as well as highlight the findings from recent Edinburgh Learning Reviews and how to access further information for team development.

Autonomous Arrangements

Over 2024-25 the EVOC members of the ECPC-EVOC Child Protection Liaison Group noted they intended to develop a network-specific child protection support and oversight that ran autonomously from but reported into the Child Protection Committee. They met with the Chair and Lead Officer from the end of 2025 into early 2026 to develop the concept and are due to present a new Terms of Reference and Action Plan to Child Protection Committee in April 2026.

The objectives of the group will be to:

- Strengthen multi-agency performance, quality, and assurance by leveraging the voluntary sector's leadership and improvement expertise within the Child Protection Committee (ECPC) and its Sub-Committees.
- Provide a clear governance route for the wider EVOC Children, Young People and Families Network and LAYC Forums to raise child protection issues, questions, or insights with strategic partners.
- Contribute proactively to shared local public messaging on child safety, wellbeing, and protection through the ECPC, Edinburgh Children's Partnership, and related forums.
- Enable regular knowledge-sharing and information exchange across disciplines and sectors within Edinburgh's children's services landscape – including producing an annual written report and regular verbal updates to the ECPC outlining key activities, learning, and outcomes.
- Strengthen collaboration, learning, communication, and alignment between voluntary sector organisations and statutory child protection processes, ensuring meaningful voluntary sector representation across the ECPC structure.

The Child Protection Committee welcomes these changes and looks forward to the continued partnership approach.

Cross-cutting Reporting

The Child Protection Committee Chair and Lead Officer have a standing agenda-item at a City of Edinburgh Council Education, Children and Families Committee every autumn. This is an opportunity to present the Child Protection Committee Annual Report and progress on the Child Protection Improvement Plan. In turn, the elected members have a space to explore multi-agency strategic planning that links with the council-specific objectives.

Further, as City of Edinburgh Council's Children's Services have been re-structuring throughout 2025, there has been two service-wide learning events with up to 250 staff where elements of Child Protection Committee developments have been spotlighted. This has been in relation to Risks Outside the Home (ROTH), Contextual Safeguarding and Learning Reviews. As the Children's Services Review reaches a conclusion in spring 2026, the Child Protection Committee will consider how best to engage with staff who are new to the organisation or have changed roles.

Similarly, other partners often present to single-agency forums such as NHS Lothian's Public Protection Action Group (PPAG), Police Scotland's Divisional Tactical Meetings and Briefings.

Other Local Multi-Agency Forums:

The Child Protection Lead Officer continues to attend the other local public protection committees and the Edinburgh Children's Partnership, wherever possible. This has helped build relationship across the public protection network, which will be strengthened further by the structural changes to the Public Protection team described above.

National Meetings and Networks:



The ECPC Chair and Child Protection Lead Officer continue to attend Child Protection Committees Scotland (CPCS) meetings and special events.

A handful of members of both the Child and Adult Protection Committees in Edinburgh were able to attend the annual joint CPCS and ASP Convenors event in autumn 2025, which resulted in fruitful discussions both locally and regionally.

The Child Protection Committee continue to be connected into various networks that offer special events and learning from the likes of Care Inspectorate, CYCJ, IRISS, CELCIS and Scottish Government.

The ECPC is attended by the Care Inspectorate link inspector on a regular basis and interim meetings with the Chair and CP Lead Officer also take place.

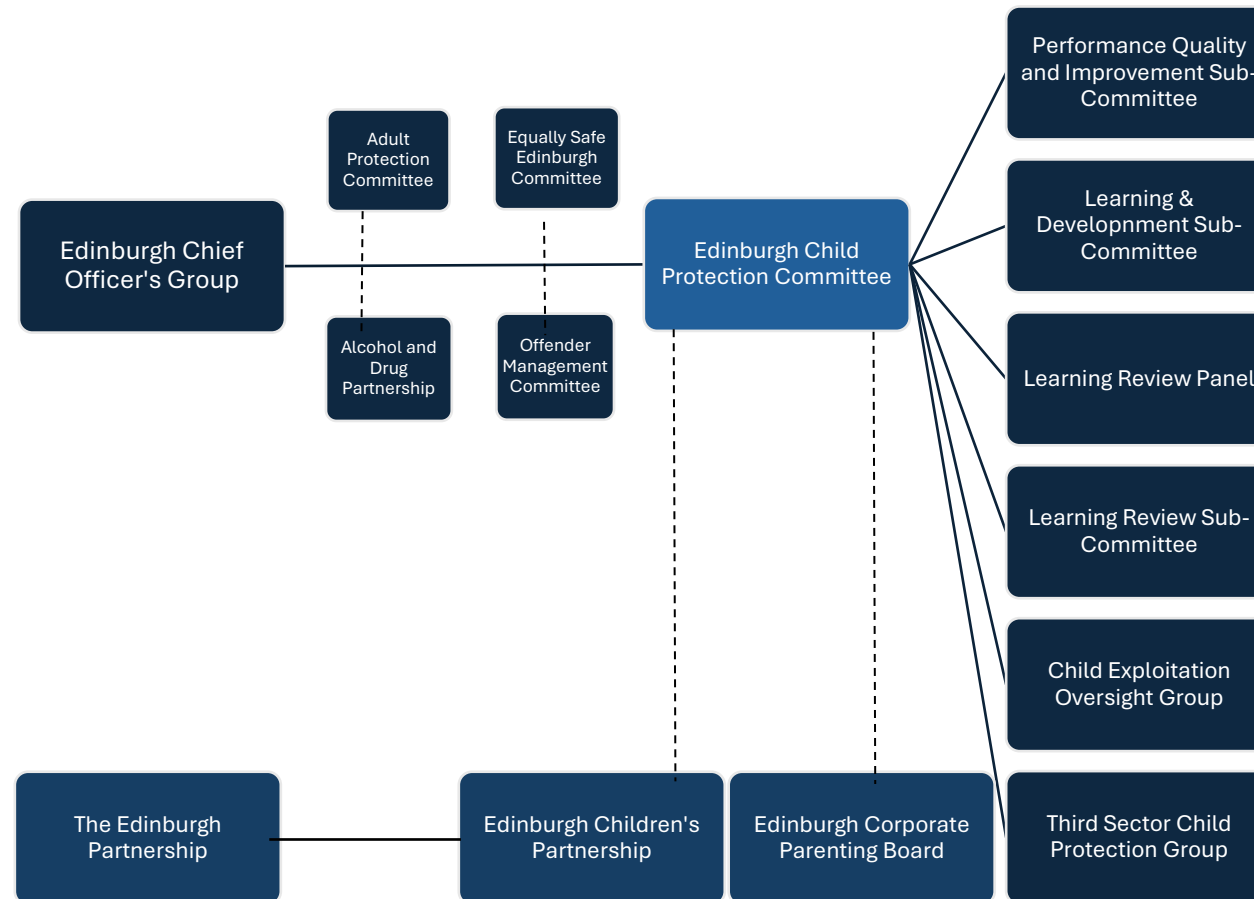
Conclusion

The Edinburgh Child Protection Committee continues to pursue its functions as outlined in [Protection children and young people: Child Protection Committee and Chief Officer responsibilities](#) (Scottish Government 2019), to provide strategic leadership and develop practice to ensure high standards are maintained in the face of increasingly challenging economic and social circumstances.

The Child Protection Committee would like to express gratitude to all our multi-agency colleagues who have continued to deliver robust services in such challenging times. The progress outlined in this report and our plan for 2026 and beyond demonstrates our continued commitment to this.

Appendix 1: Child Protection Committee Improvement Plan 2025-28

3 JUNE 2026



Welcome to the three-year workplan developed to ensure that the Edinburgh Child Protection committee meets the statutory requirements as detailed below.

The Edinburgh Child Protection Committee is the inter-agency strategic partnership, responsible for the design, development, publication, distribution, dissemination, implementation and evaluation of child protection policy and practice across the public, private and wider third sectors in the City of Edinburgh area. Through our local structures and membership, we provide individual and collective leadership and direction for the management of child protection services.

The Committee is made up of senior representatives from across all key areas and partners concerned with the care and protection of children. Guidance issued by the Scottish Government requires every local authority area to have a Child Protection Committee.

In 2019, the Scottish Government published the document “Protecting Children and Young People: Child Protection Committee and Chief Officer Responsibilities”. This sets out the functions of the child protection committee, which are:

- Continuous improvement
- Public information, engagement, and participation
- Strategic planning and connections
- Annual reporting on the work of the CPC.

Based on these core functions and following on from the 2024-25 Edinburgh Child Protection Committee Improvement plan we will focus on the following eight areas during the three-year lifespan of this plan.

The implementation of the Edinburgh Child Protection Committee Improvement plan will be monitored by the ECPC on a six-monthly basis with an annual report submitted to the Edinburgh Chief Officer group.

1. Leadership and Structure
2. Children’s Rights

3. Learning Culture and Relationships
4. Self-evaluation and Assurance
5. Whole Family Wellbeing and Impact of Child Neglect
6. Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation
7. Child Protection Systems
8. Cross-cutting Public Protection Theme

These themes have emerged through the activities identified within the 2024 -2025 plan, alongside the development and the focused areas of priority for the ECPC since the changes in committee and subcommittee membership, governance and review of structure concluded in August 2024. They additionally reflect national and local drivers, with relevance across the multi-agency partnership.

Blue/Red/Amber/Green legend:

Blue	Complete					
Red	There are significant issues and / or risks that are impacting on the action / task right now = we are not delivering the action / task on time / scope / budget.					
Amber	There are some issues and / or risks that are impacting on the action / task if not fixed = we are at risk of not delivering the action / task on time / scope / budget.					
Green	There are no issues and / or risks impacting on the action / task which is progressing according to plan = we are delivering the action / task on time / scope / budget.					
Not Yet Commenced	This item has not yet been progressed, due to other priorities = we don't anticipate any issues in delivering the action / task on time / scope / budget.					
Date	Total actions	Actions completed	Actions added (new)	Actions amended	Actions ongoing	Actions not commenced
3 June 2026	41	6			28	7

1. Leadership and Structure							
	Care Inspectorate (2022) Quality Indicators for Children and Young People in Need of Care and Protection: 4.1,6.2, 8.1, 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4.						
Objective	Actions	Strategic Lead	Link to other strategic plans	Timescale	Evidence	Progress	RAG
The role and function of the Edinburgh Child Protection Committee is clearly reflected in the membership, commitment and in the Sub-committee structures that support the ECPC	Improve transparency of ECPC's strategic oversight by agreeing the publication of redacted ECPC Action Minutes.	Independent Chair and CP Lead Officer		Mar. 2026	1. Independent Chair and CPLO to present an options paper on publication of minutes and reports to ECPC for consideration 2. Preferred approach to be presented to COG for sign-off 3. Redacted ECPC Minutes are published on ECPC webpage 4. Engagement with webpage is monitored and reported to ECPC by CP Lead Officer 5. ECPC Annual Reports and Committee Meeting Minutes are formally archived.		
	Review or develop Information sharing agreements for all key multi-agency Child Protection activity to ensure	Performance Quality and Improvement Sub-committee		Mar. 2026	1. Sign off at Child Protection committee.		

	they are relevant, up-to-date and recognise current security risks.						
	Develop a Public Protection Committees Risk Register.	Independent Chair, alongside EAPC, ESEC, OMC, EADP.		Aug. 2025	1. Sign off at COG 2. Discussed 6-monthly at ECPC and thereafter reported to COG.		
	Ensure effective use of multi-agency Public Protection Budget in progressing local and national priorities and associated with the CP Improvement Plan.	CSWO and Public Protection Committee Chairs		May 2025	1. Public Protection Budget Partnering Agreement Agreed and Reviewed on a biennial basis 2. 6-monthly budget setting and reviewing meetings 3. Annual budget report to ECPC.		
	Hold at least 6 Committee meetings per year, which include inputs from key services and projects, that complements the strategic improvement plan or addresses emerging issue and take a	Lead officer Child Protection committee Business support		Aug 2025	1. Develop a Committee Calendar with in-person and online meeting dates 2. Develop a pragmatic reporting schedule and framework for Sub-Committees, Children's Partnership and other forums or stakeholders 3. Develop a rolling programme of thematic inputs from key services and organisations involved in specific elements of child protection work. 4. Review the Strategic Improvement Plan on a 6-monthly basis.		

	blended approach with 2/6 meetings in person.						
	Monitor and address any issues on the structure, membership and role of the ECPC and Sub-committees to ensure they support the overall aims.	Independent Chair Sub-Committee Chairs		Mar. 2026	1. Maintain an attendance tracker for Committee and Sub-Committees. 2. Independent Chair to address attendance issues with individual agencies. 3. CP Lead Officer to ensure new members are offered induction meeting and online induction pack is reviewed regularly. 4. A Biennial development day is held for Committee and sub-group members.		
The Edinburgh Child Protection Committee has a visibility amongst partners and publicly.	Develop an ECPC Communications Strategy and mechanisms for recognising and celebrating good practice.	CP Lead Officer to sit on Public Protection Communications Sub-Group		Dec 2025	1. CP Lead Officer to Implement Super Child & families Practice in Edinburgh (SCAPE) reporting platform. 2. Short-life working group of sub-committee members to develop an ECPC Communication Strategy 3. CP Lead Officer to share ECPC Comms Strategy and development plans with PP Communications Sub-group 4. PP Communications Sub-Group to develop and report on effective use of CEC website to alert end-users and stakeholders to Public Protection support and information.		

	Re-develop the Public Protection Committees' webpages on CEC website and the ECPC Knowledge Hub in line with views from children, families and professionals on what would be useful to them.	Lead Officer		Mar 2026	1. Track Click-throughs and engagement with ECPC and CP related web-pages. 2. Track membership and engagement with ECPC Knowledge Hub. 3. Lead Officer to provide Annual Report to ECPC		
	Develop and launch an ECPC Newsletter	Lead Officer		Aug 2025	1. Develop a distribution model and means of reporting on engagement and workforce feedback 2. Produce an options paper on the use of social media		
	Multi-Agency Policy, Procedures, Protocols and guidance up-to-date and publicly available	Lead Officer		Dec 2025	1. Annual cleanse by Lead Officer		

2.	Children's Rights						
	Care Inspectorate (2022) Quality Indicators for Children and Young People in Need of Care and Protection: 2.1, 2.2, 5.4.						
Objective	Actions	Strategic Lead	Link to other strategic plans	Timescale	Evidence	Progress	RAG
Children understand their involvement in Child Protection systems, know how to contact people when they are in need.	Work to ensure that children and families voice and public bodies' duty to uphold their rights is integral to all part of the plan	ECPC Chair and Lead Officer	UNCRC	By 2028	1. A children's rights approach is the bedrock of Child Protection strategic planning		
	Develop and review local child friendly materials about Child Protection processes to sit alongside Child Protection Resource Scotland and CPCS Campaigns.	PQI Sub-Committee And Children and Young Person's Review Team <i>(consider cross-over with Children's Partnership, Corporate Parenting Plan and Pan-</i>		Aug. 2026	2. ECPC webpages include child-friendly information about how to access support. 3. ECPC to develop a strategy on how the CP Resource Scotland website is used and shared locally, alongside a range of other local materials. 4. CPPM Chairs share a 1-page profile about themselves ahead of ICPPM or when they are new Chair. 5. CPPM Chairs visit children ahead of their meeting, where required 6. Commissioned advocacy role being re-negotiated by CEC. 7. Perceptual data gathered as part of section 3. Self-evaluation. 8. Annual Reporting to ECPC on how child-friendly materials are used and shared –		

		<i>Lothian approaches)</i>			<i>measures and reporting period still to be agreed</i> 9. Produce a child friendly' easy read version of data reports (annually) & ECPC annual report and any other documents produced.		
Children's views are central to the decisions that affect them and to wider service delivery and development.	Improve understanding of informal advocacy and trusted person's approaches used by Edinburgh's children. Improve understanding of the means by which children share their views and developing a framework or toolkit to support this.	PQI Sub-Committee	Children's Partnership UNCRC Group Corporate Parenting Board	Dec. 2026	1. Short life working group from PQI Sub-Committee and CYPRT to map all the ways in which children's views are represented in the Child Protection Process and produce guidance/briefing to the workforce. 2. CEC is in the process of re-commissioning an formal advocacy service for Edinburgh's children 3. PQI Sub-Committee MAQA framework includes 6 monthly reporting on nos. of children involved with formal advocacy and develops qualitative measures about the impact of advocacy in the CP Process.		
Children's life journeys are at the centre of assessment,	Work towards Multi-Agency Chronologies for every child on	PQI Sub-Committee & L&D Sub-Committee	Corp. Parenting Board.	Dec. 2026	1. Multi-Agency audit process assesses rate and quality of Chronologies for CPPMs.		

analysis and effective risk assessment.	CPR by 6 mo. RCPPM		Adult Protection Committee.		2. Multi-Agency L&D Sub-committee to develop a learning framework around Chronologies and assess the impact on practice. 3. ECPC will work closely with Children's Partnership and GIRFEC working group on universal understanding and approach to Chronologies in Edinburgh using the MOSAIC template. 4. Build and share evidence base on Trauma Informed and Responsive approaches for children and families involved in child protection through performance, quality and improvement processes.		
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3.	Learning Culture and Relationships						
	Care Inspectorate (2022) Quality Indicators for Children and Young People in Need of Care and Protection: 7.1, 7.2, 9.1. 9.2, 9.3, 9.4						
Objective	Actions	Strategic Lead	Link to other strategic plans	Timescale	Evidence	Progress	RAG
There is a range of opportunities to grow working relationships and offer collective learning to improve practice.	Implement the MA CP Learning & Development Strategy, agreed and published December 2024.	L&D Sub-Committee		Dec 2025	1. Evaluation of objectives and actions through quarterly L&D Sub-Committee 2. Single Agencies to offer assurance that their own CP L&D strategies are in place and effective in supporting the workforce 3. L&D Sub-Committee Annual Report to ECPC – <i>reporting period to be agreed.</i>		
	Implement Booking Management System and e-learning platform for MA learning opportunities.	L&D Sub-Committee/Lead Officer?		April 2025 April 2026	1. Booking Management data will be reported termly to L&D Sub-Committee and high level key messages shared with ECPC. 2. Explore, agree, develop and test an e-learning platform. 3. L&D Sub-Committee Annual Report to ECPC.		
	Offer a range of Multi-Agency Practice Learning Opportunities, including re-establishing IRD Workshops.	L&D Sub-Committee		Jan 2027	1. Redevelop MA learning model and delivery in line with MA CP L&D Strategy Dec 2025 2. Offer 2 IRD Workshops and wider thematic materials per annum 3. L&D Sub-Committee Annual Report to ECPC.		

	Continue to partner with Equally Safe Edinburgh Committee in offering appropriate Public Protection learning opportunities linked to eradicating gender-based abuse.	L&D Sub-Committee Equally Safe Children and Young People's Group		Mar 2025	1. Develop a joint annual report to ECPC and ESEC		
Multi-agency staff/volunteers support and supervision is consistent with the tiers of the workforce in National Framework for Child Protection L&D and local MA CP L&D Strategy	Map the support and supervision available to different disciplines and levels of the workforce across the partnership, in order to develop a framework.	L&D Sub-Committee via single agencies		Dec 2025	1. The ECPC, single-agencies and the workforce themselves have a better understanding of the support and supervision delivered at different levels. 2. ECPC is offered assurance from single-agencies on what is in place. 3. Establish measures to demonstrate ECPC responds to emerging issues national locally from policy development, learning reviews, research or evaluation and quality assurance on local practice issues.		
		L&D Sub-Committee		April 2026			
	ECPC will work closely with Edinburgh Children's Partnership on	L&D Sub-Committee	Children's Servicer Partnership	April 2026	1. Annual report on numbers in the workforce who have undertaken Trauma informed and responsive learning		

	developing and maintaining a trauma informed and responsive (TIRA) workforce.				2. Single-agencies offer assurance that their staff are offered TIRA support and supervision 3. A Multi-Agency staff recognition system is developed and reported on 6-monthly to ECPC.		
Continue to develop practice in relation to the Joint Protocol for Learning Reviews and other informal learning processes.	Develop and regularly review the Learning Review process and a menu of learning options following a Learning Review notification.	Independent chair of Learning Review Panel Learning Review Sub-Committee. Business Support to Learning Reviews	Child Death Reviews	November 2024	1. Maintain a schedule of meetings for LRP 2. Lead Officer will provide an annual report of Learning Review activity on a calendar year 3. Additional qualitative measures of lead reviewers, review team members, practitioner's and family's experience of the process to be incorporated. 4. All Learning Review Notifications are tracked to inform progress on timescales, outcomes, themes. 5. ECPC receives bi-monthly updates on Learning Reviews in LO Report 6. COG receives quarterly updates on Learning Review activity and action planning. 7. Establish measures to demonstrate ECPC responds to emerging issues from national or local learning reviews or other practice reviews.		

4. Self-Evaluation and Assurance							
Care Inspectorate (2022) Quality Indicators for Children and Young People in Need of Care and Protection: 5.4, 6.1, 6.2, 6.4, 6.5.							
Objective	Actions	Strategic Lead	Link to other strategic plans	Timescale	Evidence	Progress	RAG
There are mechanisms to self-evaluate, quality assure and improve Multi-Agency Child Protection practice.	Continue to develop National Minimum Dataset Reporting on 6-monthly basis to ECPC, to ensure it informs service design and practice development.	PQI Sub-Committee		Mar 2026	1.National Minimum Dataset report is analysed and reported 6-monthly to ECPC and shared with COG. 2.The development of new indicators in the NMDS Report is proposed to ECPC and evidence of decision making in Committee minutes.		
	Embed the Multi-Agency End-End Child Protection Quality Assurance Framework (CP MAQA)	PQI Sub-Committee		Aug 2026	1. CP MAQA is a standing item on PQI Sub-Committee Agenda. The tracker is updated and Minutes of the Sub-Committee reflect the analysis and considerations 2. CP MAQA Annual Report is provided in November to ECPC 3. CP MAQA methodology and data collection is reviewed on an annual basis as part of annual report. 4. CP MAQA evidences improvement in qualitative, story-telling elements of the framework, in order to capture child and		

					family's lived experiences and inform service design and improvement delivery.		
	Embed the Multi-Agency Audit programme established in September 2024	PQI Sub-Committee CEC Quality Assurance Team		Sept 2026	1. Support and sustain 16 multi-agency leaders across Police Scotland, NHSL, CEC, Social Work and Education to act as audit teams 2. Consider how to include other partners, such as independent schools, emergency services and 3rd sector as 'critical friends' in audit process. 3. Engage and work together with other Public Protection Committees, both locally and Pan-Lothian in relation to intersecting issues. 4. 6-monthly reporting on audit activity and outcomes to PQI Sub and resulting actions evident in PQI Sub Combined Action plan. 5. Annual Audit Activity report to PQI Sub every November and signed off by ECPC every December.		
	Maintain a programme of partner-supported Policy and Procedure Review and Development.	Quality Regulation, & Improvement & Chief Social Work Office		Mar 2028	1. Policy, Procedure and Protocol tracker maintained by ECPC Lead Officer 2. Single agencies to offer assurance to ECPC that Single-agency policies and procedures are relevant and aligned to Multi-Agency Procedures 3. Evidence of ECPC directing sub-committees or other SLWGs to review or develop Policies/Procedures/Guidance. 4. Evidence in ECPC Minutes and CP for Professionals webpage of new or updated		

					Policies/Procedures/Guidance being produced. - Consider ways to develop a lived experience reference group as part of IIAs. - Evidence of improved, shared IIA practice. - Evidence of Child-friendly, easy-read versions of Policies/procedures/guidance, in line with UNCRC Implementation.		
	Re-run the National Child Protection Guidance Implementation Self-Evaluation, including meaningful involvement from children and families.	ECPC		By Oct 2026	- Report to COG - Evidence of the voice of children and family in audit and evaluation.		
	Ensure the best use of the Public Protection Budget.	Independent Chair Quality Regulation, & Improvement & Chief Social Work Office		Mar 2028	Establish ECPC Budget as a standing item on the ECPC Agenda, with regular reporting.		

5.	Whole Family Wellbeing and Impact of Neglect						
	Care Inspectorate (2022) Quality Indicators for Children and Young People in Need of Care and Protection: 1.1,2.1, 2.2 5.1,5.2,5.3,5.4,8.2						
Objective	Actions	Strategic Lead	Link to other strategic plans	Timescale	Evidence	Progress	RAG
Families will know how and where in their own community to get timely help for challenging circumstances.	ECPC will sustain public comms and workforce messaging and sign-posting about how to seek help for your family, in line with the previous 'All of Us' Campaign 2020-22 and wider Poverty/Whole family support messaging.	Child Protection Lead Officer	Children's Services Partnership	March 2026	1. Measure click throughs and use of All of Us webpages and resources.		
	ECPC will improve links with the Children's Partnership and Edinburgh Partnership in understanding the impact of early and	PQI Sub-Committee CP Lead Officer	Children's Services Partnership	Mar 2028	1. PQI Sub-Committee to develop whole family wellbeing and GIRFEC measures associated with MAQA Framework. 2. CP Lead Officer will attend Edinburgh Children's Partnership and develop links with partnership outcomes and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment		

	effective interventions to divert children and families from formal child protection measures.	Chair of ECPC			- Children's Partnership Whole Family Wellbeing Project Manager will report to ECPC on 6-monthly basis. - ECPC will be offered assurance by Edinburgh Partnership of impact related to coordinated plans to reduce child poverty.		
ECPC is confident that there is a collective local approach to addressing Child Neglect that makes a difference to the outcomes of the city's children	ECPC to review strategy, practice approaches and learning & development related to child neglect, in line with National Guidance for Child Protection 2021 and other local/national drivers	ECPC		July 2026	- ECPC will actively contribute to the national debate and potential revision of Children and Young Persons (Scotland) Act 1937 s.12 offences. - ECPC implements changes on addressing Neglect proposed by Learning Review for Child E <i>April</i> 2025. - PQI Sub-Committee will be tasked with undertaking a dip-sample audit of children subject to a Child Protection Plan where the primary impact on/abuse of the child is identified as neglect. - Build and share evidence base on trauma informed and responsive approaches to children experiencing neglect. - L&D Sub-Committee to review the impact on practice of the Neglect Toolkit training Workshop and Understanding Neglect Multi-		

					Agency learning event with a view to proposing a more effective learning pathway that aligns with L&D M-A Strategy 2024.		
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6.	Child Exploitation						
	Care Inspectorate (2022) Quality Indicators for Children and Young People in Need of Care and Protection: 1.1,2.15.1,5.2,5.4,8.2.						
Objective	Actions	Strategic Lead	Link to other strategic plans	Timescale	Evidence	Progress	RAG
ECPC is confident in the approaches taken in Edinburgh to addressing the risks and harms of Child Sexual Abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation and Criminal Exploitation, including group based Abuse and Exploitation.	ECPC to support the Child Exploitation Oversight Group in establishing a relevant and achievable work plan that aligns with the Terms of Reference (agreed April 2025) and the national leadership group on this subject matter.	Child Exploitation Oversight Group		Dec 2026	1. Agree and Implement ROTH Guidance 2. Revise Human Trafficking Guidance to include proportionate and growing concerns around Child Exploitation. 3. Make a bid to pilot local NRM decision making for children from the Home Office. 4. Improved understanding and approaches to Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children and the risks of trafficking. 5. Improved understanding and response to children who are radicalised.		
	The Child Exploitation Oversight Group and ECPC are committed to ensuring a Child Exploitation Public Campaign takes			<i>Added to CP Improvement Plan 03.06.25 for completion by 2028</i>			

	place in Edinburgh during this improvement period.						
	ECPC can demonstrate joined up approaches to children who are missing from education, home and care settings in line with the Edinburgh Learns for Life Outcomes Framework.	Child Exploitation Oversight Group		April 2026	1. Child Exploitation OS group to report on the links between Exploitation and children who are missing 2. CEC Education to report to Child Exploitation OS group on their attendance objectives.		
	Develop and review a Sexual Abuse and Exploitation strategy in line with recommendations from Child E Learning Review (agreed April 2025)	Child Exploitation Oversight Group		July 2026	1. Local CSA strategy developed that encompasses prevention and response and covers familial, extra-familial, Institutional, Child Sexual Exploitation and Harmful Sexual Behaviour. This should include online risk and resilience. 2. Develop local guidance and adjacent learning opportunities for the workforce. 3. PQI Sub-committee to track rates of concerns around areas of Child Sexual Abuse at IRD, JI, Medical and CPPM/ROTH meeting to understand trends and develop approaches.		

7. Child Protection Systems							
Care Inspectorate (2022) Quality Indicators for Children and Young People in Need of Care and Protection: 1.1, 2.1, 5.1,5.2, 5.3							
Objective	Actions	Strategic Lead	Link to other strategic plans	Timescale	Evidence	Progress	RAG
The ECPC is confident that formal CP Processes are efficient, fit for purpose and meet the key principles of National Guidance 2021	ECPC to support the re-develop e-IRD system as a secure, collective information sharing platform that demonstrates defensible decision making and can be integrated with records keeping systems.	PQI Sub-Committee		April 2026	1. ECPC attend an e-IRD Oversight group meets biennially across the Edinburgh & Lothians partnership and a ToR is devised and reviewed as required. 2. ECPC develop IRD Guidance for practitioners 3. IRD's are quality assured through the MAQA Framework overseen by PQI Sub-Committee		
	ECPC is confident that intensive contact staff are equipped with chronology, risk assessment and child's planning tools and resources to manage and reduce risk.	L&D Sub-Committee		Sept 2026	1. Suggested Strategies for improvement from Learning Reviews or quality assurance activities are used to shape a programme of revision around tools and resources. 2. Single-agencies to assure ECPC on the impact of service or information management system redevelopment in promoting risk assessment and response.		

					3. Annual reporting on e-learning and face-to-face attendance at learning events.		
	ECPC is confident that intensive contact staff have skill and experience in cross-cutting risk assessments related to matters such as Structural Inequalities, Adult Protection and violence against women and girls.	Equally Safe Children and Young People's - Sub-Group & L&D Sub-Committee		April 2027	1. Annual reporting on Public Protection e-learning and uptake of learning on intersecting topics, such as domestic abuse, honour-based abuse, female genital mutilation.		
	ECPC has evidence that children and young people and their families are involved in the systems to protect them.	Performance Quality and Improvement Sub-Committee And Children & Young People's Review Team.		April 2027	1. Qualitative evidence of inclusion and involvement is developed and sustained within MAQA Framework and MA CP Audit Programme. 2. CYPRT work programme.		

Appendix 2 : Sources of Data for the Edinburgh Context

[Edinburgh City - National Records of Scotland \(NRS\)](#)

[Edinburgh-by-Numbers-2025](#)

[End Poverty in Edinburgh Annual Progress Report December 2025](#)

[Homeless Accommodation Support for Young People in Full Time Education Report September 2025](#)

[Pupil Census 2024 – supplementary statistics](#)

[Children's Social Work Statistics: Child Protection - 2024-25](#)

Reports that are not available publicly

E-IRD Management Report May 2026

Homelessness and Household Support Update Report to Edinburgh Child Protection Committee in October and December 2025

Appendix 3 : Edinburgh Child Protection Committee Risk Register (revised February 2026)

Risk Register for: Edinburgh Child Protection Committee													
Risk ID	Enterprise Risk Category	Risk Description	Impact	Like/hood	Inherent Risk Rating	Current controls	Impact with controls	Like/hood with controls	Current Risk Rating	Risk treatment	Action(s) to be taken	Action owner(s)	Action due dates
	e.g. Strategic Delivery, see Council Risk appetite for full list of categories												
R1	Service Delivery	Child Protection Response Timely response and allocation of Child Protection concerns or fully meet the needs of children and their families due to increasing volume/complexity of demand or changing working practices.	5	3	15	1) Prioritisation of Child Protection work 2) Strengthen shared decision making processes and scrutiny through IRD Review Group and PQI Sub-committee data analysis 3) Develop escalation processes	2	2	4			All CPC Members	
R2	Service Delivery	Learning Reviews If a Learning Review is not identified and conducted in a comprehensive, timely and effective manner, with the learning disseminated effectively, there is a risk that practitioners within the partnership are not given the best advice resulting in poor service delivery with potential life and limb impacts for adults at risk or service users. Causative factors include a range of financial and practical issues in hiring external reviewers, lack of internal capacity or lack of internal skillset/ conflict of interest to lead Learning Reviews.	4	3	12	1) LRI Protocol review revised and published. 2) Single-agencies to raise awareness and promote the Learning Review process and principles. 2) CPC L&D Subcommittee to prioritise CPC learning and training activities and topics and develop a training Calendar. 3) Learning Booking platform is available and e-learning platform still under consideration 4) Learning Review Capacity, across CP and AP Committees was raised at COG Jan 2026 and a round table discussion will be led by Executive Director of Children's Services in due course.	5	2	10			Independent chair CPC CSVD	
R3	Service Delivery	Data and Self-Assurance Activity Challenges in quality data-analysis from across all partner organisations to inform strategic development of approach to improving Child Protection activity	5	2	10	1) PQI sub-committee continue to use National Minimum Data set v2 on 6 monthly basis, with scrutiny from CPC and Chief Officers. 2) PQI sub-committee have augmented this with a Multi-Agency Quality Assurance Framework, which has been running for nearly 12 months 3) PQI sub-committee have re-established multi-agency child protection audit process, which has involved 48 children audited annually by quads of senior operational staff from Police, NHS, Social Work and Education. 4) Further consideration is required on other sources of data, such as other PP committees, VFM, 3rd sector, Public Health and how these are shared and used together. 5) Processes to be reviewed, refined and committee reporting frameworks to be further strengthened.	5	1	5			Chair PQI sub-committee	
R5	Strategic Delivery	Communication There is currently no CPC Communications Strategy and increased complexity with cross-cutting areas of public protection, trauma informed, rights based responsibilities. The public website is critical for public communication and all multi-agency partners to ensure relevant national and local developments are shared. Lack of resource/capacity for ongoing development and maintenance present a risk to the CPC if not addressed.	4	4	16	1) Communication currently the responsibility of the Lead Officers, without a strategy and with minimal support. There are ongoing capacity issues being addressed 2) There is a reliance on CEC website and a range of legacy pages that are not fit for purpose. 3) Public Protection Oversight Group has commenced to look at cross-cutting issues but all public protection committee areas face similar capacity/resource issues.	4	3	12			Chief Social Work Officer	

Risk Register for:

Edinburgh Child Protection Committee

Risk ID	Enterprise Risk Category	Risk Description	Impact	Likelihood	Inherent Risk Rating	Current controls	Impact with controls	Likelihood with controls	Current Risk Rating	Risk treatment	Action(s) to be taken	Action owner(s)	Action due dates
R5	Strategic Delivery	Communication There is currently no CPC Communications Strategy and increased complexity with cross-cutting areas of public protection, trauma informed, rights based responsibilities. The public website is crucial for public communication and all multi-agency partners to ensure relevant national and local developments are shared. Lack of resource/capacity for ongoing development and maintenance present a risk to the CPC if not addressed.	4	4	16	1) Communication currently the responsibility of the Lead Officers, without a strategy and with minimal support. There are ongoing capacity issues being addressed. 2) There is a reliance on CEC webteam and a range of legacy pages that are not fit for purpose. 3) Public Protection Oversight Group has commenced to look at cross-cutting issues but all public protection committee areas face similar capacity/resource issues.	4	3	12			Chief Social Work Officer	
R6	Financial and Budget Management	Financial situation The management and oversight of the multi-agency public protection budget, is crucial in ensuring the CPC can meet its statutory requirements, with all partners having an equal say. The allocation of funding from this budget presents a high risk to the partnership if not delivered.	4	4	16	1) Regular meetings arranged with relevant senior managers from each partnership	4	4	16			Chief Social Work Officer	
R7	Service Delivery	Learning and Development There has been a failure to retain a full complement of Learning & Development leads/consultants to develop, deliver, commission, evaluate and report on workforce child protection learning and take forward learning activities demanded by Learning Review activity. There has also no clear Learning and Development strategy for the Child Protection Committee.	3	4	12	1) Learning and Development Sub-Committee Membership and Chairing reviewed by CPC Chair and change process 2) Multi-agency Child Protection L&D Strategy agreed Dec 2025 and in the process of being implemented. 3) Realignment of L&D priorities for 2025 and advanced planning for 2026, in line with L&D Strategy	3	2	6			Chair of L&D Sub-Committee and Manager of PP L&D staff	
R8	Service Delivery	Learning Review Improvement Planning There is a lag in Learning Review improvement activity due to the limited capacity within the system to keep up with the Learning Review activity and all subsequent improvement planning. There is a limited number of senior officers who can undertake this work and there has been unexpected absences, without contingency. This means improvement work has not been completed within	4	4	16	1) Interim Chair of Learning Review Sub-Committee agreed, in absence of Chair 2) Alternative Leads for Improvement Plans will be identified and thematic, overarching planning is being considered by the ECPC Chair and PP Service Manager 3) Learning Review Capacity, across CP and AP Committees was raised at COG Jan 2025 and a round table discussion will be led by Executive Director of Children's Services in due course.	3	3	9			ECPC Chair and CSVO	

