



Thematic Child Safeguarding Practice Review into Serious Youth Violence

Summary Action Plan

Background

- The thematic child safeguarding practice review into serious youth violence in Bristol was commissioned in response to the tragic deaths of Max, Mason and Darrian, and the serious harm suffered by a fourth young person, which occurred within three weeks of each other in early 2024. This review recognises that the harm caused by serious youth violence extends far beyond those immediately affected, impacting whole communities and generations whose perceptions of safety and well-being are deeply altered.
- In total ten young people are considered by this review across three separate incidents: the fatal stabbing of Max and Mason in late January 2024, the separate stabbing of a young man in early February 2024, and the fatal stabbing of Darrian in mid-February 2024.
- Detailed learning has been considered by rapid reviews into all three incidents, with action plans already in place. Recommendations from the rapid reviews highlighted that many of the young people involved in these incidents were known to and supported to different extents by multiple partners across children's social care, policing, health, education and the voluntary and community sector. As a result, the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership (KBSP) was keen to understanding the extent to which 'the system' is able to come together to effectively support and protect all of the young people and so prevent harm from serious youth violence.

The review was commissioned by the KBSP to consider four thematic cross-cutting city-wide issues:

1. **What needs to change to governance and operational structures responding to serious violence so that Bristol's partnership is more able to respond to both the local and individual needs of children and communities**, whilst enabling improvement of strategic oversight and leadership? The reviewers should consider how the decisions made at a strategic level influence and enable effective responses to individual children's needs and enables information to be shared across the city and cross-border whilst ensuring that information sharing is ethical and proportionate.
2. Using the intergenerational conflict within South Bristol as a focus - **how can the partnership improve their assessment, intelligence gathering, community knowledge and response to conflict within an area or group?** We are interested in how the partnership's response can be tailored to different types of conflict, violence and exploitation being mindful of the social contexts of those involved.

3. **What framework should be developed in Bristol to enable a more consistent multi-agency response to safeguarding children from risk outside the home**, ensuring partners are working from one plan for the child?
4. **How could existing partnership resources and work with education partners be more effective to improve educational attendance and inclusion for children who pose a risk of serious harm** to other children, and those with severe and persistent low attendance correlating to harm outside the home?

The review is high level: it focuses on whole systems learning, rather than re-examining individual child practice in detail. A detailed action plan in response to the recommendations is held and overseen by the statutory Keeping Children Safe Board (which sits as part of the KBSP) and is summarised here.

[You can read more about the KBSP on our website.](#)

Action Plan

1) Develop a strong, whole partnership, strategy for responding to harm outside of the home

The structures of the KBSP have been reviewed in line with statutory guidance [Working Together 23](#). This statutory guidance sets out clearly the roles and responsibilities of the Multi – Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (Keeping Children Safe Board), the Independent Scrutineer and the Designated Safeguarding Partners (police, health, the local authority with the education sector as a non-statutory fourth partner.)

A five-year [Harm Outside the Home Strategy](#) has been developed incorporating the [multi-agency Practice Principles for responding to child exploitation and extra-familial harm](#). This Strategy will be reviewed annually and will incorporate learning from previous years. The Strategy focuses on five key delivery themes:

1. **Communities and Voice** – Empowering participation and ensuring that children, families and communities are central to shaping solutions.
2. **Prevention, Identification and Early Intervention** – A focus on early action and building community trust with education settings at the centre of prevention and early intervention.
3. **Intervention and Protection** – improve support and intervention and encourage innovation, evidence based and trauma-informed practice.
4. **Disruption** – identifying and addressing perpetrators, particularly those involved in exploitation
5. **Recovery** – supporting young people to rebuild their lives, repair broken relationships and engage in positive activities.

There is a detailed action plan with a focus on impact on children and young people who are harmed outside the home with impact against each action monitored through the Serious Youth Violence Board (reporting into the KBSP on a quarterly basis).

2) Review and revise all strategic, operational and direct practice panels and boards in relation to all forms of harm outside of the home

The terms of reference for all relevant meetings have been reviewed and a new streamlined governance structure has been developed and agreed with a clear focus on 'harm outside the home'. The new structure launched in July 2025 and is set out in the [Harm Outside the Home Strategy 2025-30](#).

Membership of the new Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) structures has been agreed to ensure appropriate membership at prevention, operational and strategic MACE meetings. This includes representation from the Safeguarding in Education Team and HOPE Virtual School at the operational MACE to ensure effective communication with education settings as well.

3) Adopt the multi-agency Practice Principles for responding to child exploitation and extra familial harm as a whole-partnership model of working to prevent harm outside the home

The Harm Outside the Home Strategy is built around the multi-agency Practice Principles. A practice principles event is planned for October 2025 to review the tool with partners. We will continue to embed this practice and refine our approach with oversight through the Serious Youth Violence Board.

4) Undertake a whole partnership approach to integrating multi-agency data and intelligence in relation to harm outside of the home

We recognise the vital importance of accurate and timely data and have committed to a partnership wide review of shared data and information. A key element of this work has been the establishment of a partnership data subgroup reporting to the Keeping Children Safe Board and Serious Youth Violence Board. This new group will hold shared accountability and oversight of timely and accurate data across the partnership.

5) Implement a single Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) model across all agencies (including education) as the overarching process for supporting children at risk of harm outside the home

The MACE model has been implemented with Pre, Operational and Strategic MACE meetings all now in place. Each meeting has engagement from appropriate partners including safer communities, health, education, housing and voluntary and community sector partners.

A partnership daily intelligence briefing is in place and actions from this meeting are tracked through the MACE governance structure with the Strategic MACE reporting regularly to the Serious Youth Violence Board. Community groups are engaged at a locality level, working through the youth and community workers, to feed in and supporting intelligence into the MACE structure.

6) Establish a Prevention MACE model or equivalent nested within the wider new MACE structure

The development of a prevention partnership/MACE is progressing alongside the Violence Reduction Partnership as part of their work with the Home Office/Ministry of Justice and other local authorities. A key strand of this work involves strengthening engagement with education settings, particularly through the Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) resources in East Central and South Bristol. These initiatives are helping to build a more proactive, place-based approach to early identification and intervention.

In addition, collaboration with the University of Bristol is supporting the development of an evidence-informed model, drawing on research and evaluation to shape effective prevention strategies across the partnership. This includes exploring how data and insights can be used to better understand risk and resilience factors in school-aged children and young people.

These areas of work are being led by the Safeguarding in Education Board (reports into Keeping Children Safe) which works across all education settings.

7) Establish high level oversight and scrutiny of early intervention and prevention activity in Bristol

The prevention partnership will be developed as part of the Harm outside the Home strategy led by the Safer Connections Team and as part of the MACE structure. We're working with local partners and education settings to create a joined-up approach that helps keep children and young people safe, supported, and in education. This includes identifying and supporting children who may be missing from education, and making sure education settings, health services, and social care teams communicate clearly and work together effectively so that children attend education settings and progress in education.

Attending education settings is vital for children's learning, wellbeing, and future opportunities. We are working closely across Bristol to develop our relationships with the education settings with a focus on attendance and achievement particularly for the most vulnerable children and young people.