

Tameside Safeguarding Children Partnership **Quality Assurance and Performance Framework**



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CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Joint Approach to Quality Assurance	6
Assurance Process Emedded in TSCP	7
Converting Recommendations into Practice	8
Assurance Methodology	9
IndependentScrutiny.....	13
Information Sharing and Confidentiality	14
Appendix 1	15



Introduction

Context

As set out in *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2023), Statutory Safeguarding Partners have a duty to make arrangements to work together, and with other partners locally, to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area.

In order to ensure agencies work effectively together to safeguard children and promote their welfare, this means:

- That a clear, shared vision for how to improve outcomes for children locally across all levels of need and all types of harm.
- When a child is identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm there is a prompt, appropriate and effective response to ensure the protection and support of the child.
- Organisations and agencies are challenged appropriately, effectively holding one another to account.
- The voice of children and families combined with the knowledge of experienced practitioners and insights from data, provides a greater understanding of the areas of strength and/or improvement within arrangements and practice.
- Information is sought, analysed, shared, and broken down by protected characteristics to facilitate more accurate and timely decision-making for children and families, and to understand outcomes for different communities of children.
- Effective collection, sharing and analysis of data, enables early identification of new safeguarding risks, issues, emerging threats, and joined-up responses across relevant agencies.
- Senior leaders promote and embed a learning culture which supports local services to become more reflective and implement changes to practice.
- Senior leaders have a good knowledge and understanding about the quality of local practice and its impact on children and families. In order to fulfil these responsibilities, it is essential that the Children's Safeguarding Partnerships have access to a breadth of both quantitative and qualitative performance data, intelligence and information to assure themselves of the effectiveness of local arrangements.

Purpose

The Tameside Safeguarding Children Partnership (TSCP) Quality Assurance and Performance Framework (QAPF), outlines an approach to quality assurance and the analysis of performance information, both on a single and multi-agency basis and brings together a wealth of quantitative and qualitative information on the local arrangements for safeguarding children.

The overarching aim is to enable TSCP to be as effective as possible in understanding the areas of strength and areas for improvement at both an operational and strategic level; to review and understand the impact of the local arrangements for safeguarding children and to identify new risks and emerging threats in order to respond early to prevent harm.

In accordance with Working Together 2023, the TSCP QAPF becomes the mechanism through which the following activities and assurance are to be delivered:

- Oversee and be responsible for the analysis, intelligence, and timely collection of data to support functions, such as:
 - » Obtaining an accurate local picture of how effectively services are being delivered through regular communication across relevant agencies.
 - » Advising the statutory safeguarding partners of the key challenges and emerging priorities.
 - » Coordinating the joint multi-agency strategic plan, ensuring that statutory safeguarding partners and their delegates feed into and own the plan in the local area.
 - » Overseeing the quality of practice and local outcomes for children and families
- Review and promote consistent understanding and application of referral and intervention thresholds across agencies so that the right children receive the right support at the right time.
- Use learning from local practice and serious incident notifications to prompt reflection and analysis of where improvements need to be secured and action taken.
- Strengthen system conditions for effective multi-agency child protection work.

Scrutiny should be based on the sharing and analysis of local and national data, intelligence and information. This could include the development of multi-agency audits, reviews and mapping of what is already being scrutinised by statutory safeguarding partners and relevant agencies, identifying the gaps and aligning with agreed priorities.

The QAPF is primarily for Tameside's safeguarding partners and their workforce. All partners should be actively involved. This includes the need to identify a quality assurance lead, contributing to related activity and providing feedback on single agency quality assurance programmes. The framework and its application will be overseen by the TSCP Learning & Review Strategic Group.

The focus of all activity will be on improved outcomes for Children and Young People (CYP), families and communities. Activity will focus on:

- Practice - exploring practice based issues that affect vulnerable groups.
- Organisational context - how organisations approach safeguarding

It is important for TSCP to establish and make clear a consistent approach to the way in which all related activity is planned, supported, overseen and monitored. The framework subsequently informs agencies of individual and collective responsibilities in actively contributing to all processes linked to multi-agency quality assurance and performance monitoring.

TSCP will give full consideration to the following definitions of safeguarding included within statutory guidance.

- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether the risk of harm comes from within the child's family and/or outside (from the wider community), including online.
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

The guidance also identifies four principles to achieve effective safeguarding.

- A shared responsibility.
- A child-centred approach within a whole family focus.
- Principles for working with families.
- Outline principles of multi-agency working for direct practice.

Statutory guidance will guide the assurance process. This will include three key questions

- Does TSCP know the strengths and weaknesses of safeguarding in its geographical boundaries?
- Are organisations effective in safeguarding CYP, supporting families and the wider community?
- Is TSCP assured that the multi-agency arrangements are effective in safeguarding CYP?

Joint Approach to Quality Assurance

There are a number of boards and partnerships that TSCP will work with and alongside with regard safeguarding. They include Tameside Adults Safeguarding Partnership Board (TASPB), Community Safety Partnership (CSP), Health and Wellbeing Board, Corporate Parenting Board, Domestic Abuse Steering Group and Early Help Board.

While it is important to identify and remove any duplication of activity across the varying boards and partnerships, there is also a need to ensure that relevant learning from reviews and quality assurance processes are routinely shared. At a local level there is a commitment to support and maintain a cohesive approach to improvement and how learning is communicated.

Some partner agencies will have their own regulatory and inspection framework, such as Ofsted, Care Quality Commission (CQC) and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). There is an expectation that partner agencies will report suitable and timely findings from inspections which represent a risk to multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in Tameside. This will be used as part of the assurance process and TSCP's wider understanding of safeguarding awareness within Tameside.

Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI), is an inspection of the local area arrangements and how leaders, managers and practitioners work together across the Local Authority, Police, Health and wider partners to safeguard children and promote their welfare. To support assurance work in Tameside, TSCP will appropriately convene a multi-agency JTAI working group to support preparation, self-assessment and to review available learning in order to make improvements to systems and practice locally.

It is common for peer reviews to take place in the arena of safeguarding. It is important these are collected to form our understanding of safeguarding in Tameside.

There are also opportunities for TSCP to identify themes for assurance activity from national bodies. These will include, but are not limited to [Children's Commissioner](#), [Department for Education](#), [Department of Health and Social Care](#), Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel, [Home Office](#), [NSPCC case review repository](#), [Research in Practice](#), and [What Works Network](#).

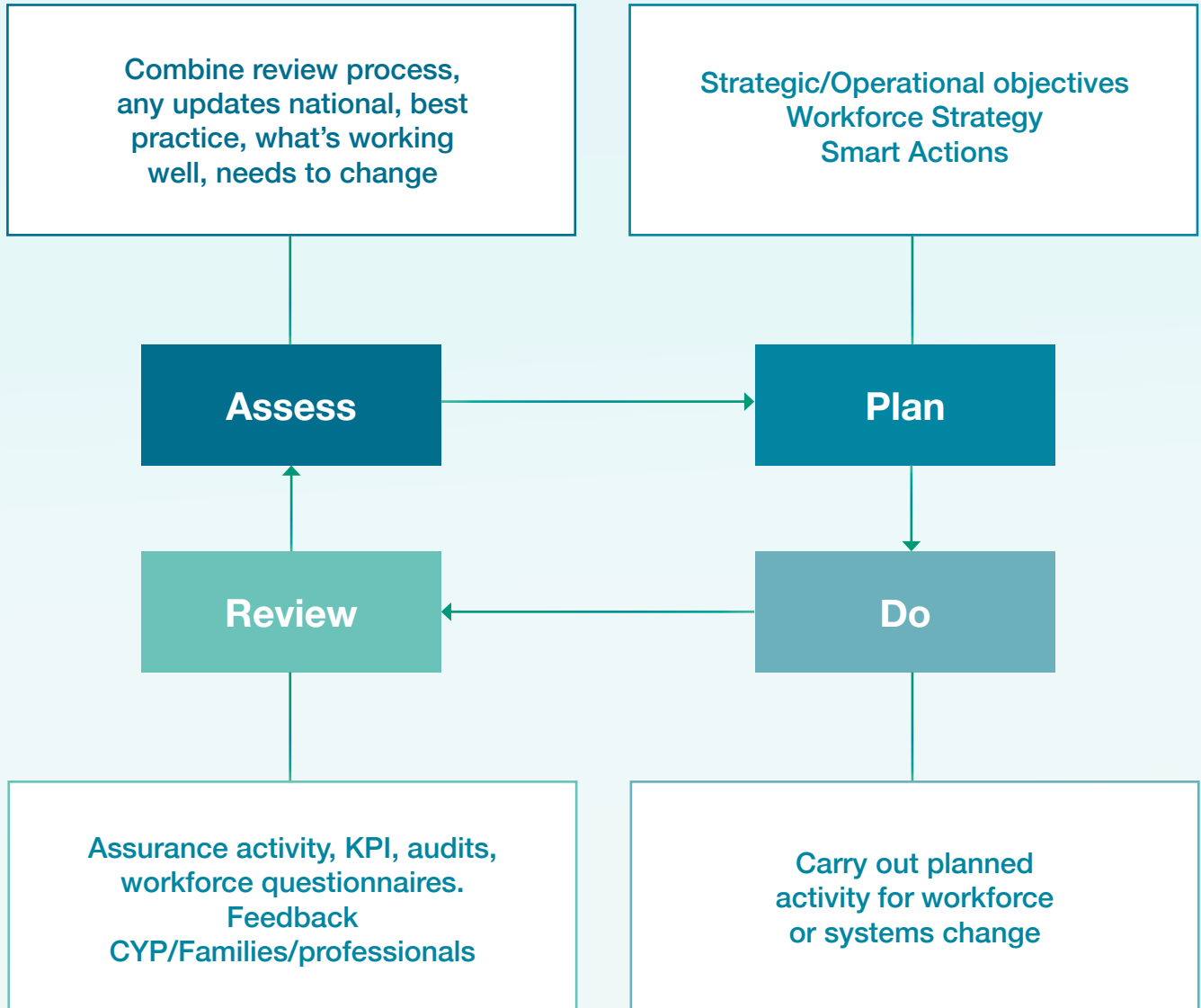
The core principles of the assurance process are:

- Promoting a no blame culture for individuals and organisations. A safe environment for colleagues across agencies partnership to discuss safeguarding.
- If boards or steering groups are responsible for individual areas, TSCP will seek assurances on work undertaken that they understand the strengths and weaknesses within Tameside including multi-agency arrangements. These can include any strategies, Key Performance Indicators (KPI), Policy & Procedures or action plans.
- It is important that TSCP assumes a supportive or leading role in the assurance process regarding the activity of other partnership groups in the safeguarding of CYP.
- If an organisation is judged to be less than Good within an inspection framework. There should be a robust action plan to address the issues.

Assurance Process Emedded in TSCP

An assurance process should not act in isolation to partnership activity. TSCP will adapt the 'Assess, Plan, Review and Do' process for all its strategic and operational policy. For example, Tameside Threshold Document, Neglect Strategy and Escalation Process.

Figure 1 - Assess, Plan, Review and Do process



Converting Recommendations into Practice

It is common for the audit groups, peer reviews, learning from Rapid Reviews or Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR) to produce actions and recommendations aimed at improving the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. TSCP will work to ensure recommendations are turned into SMART actions. SMART actions are: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-based.

In addition, it is important for such actions to have the desired effect and influence on local practice and systems, in order to improve outcomes for CYP. There are three main stages: (1) planning activity around action, (2) implementation of actions and (3) embedding change in practice (table 1).

It is the responsibility of TSCP, and the accountability that is set within the governance structure, to ensure actions and recommendations have an identifiable owner/agency, that there is a monitoring framework in place to prevent drift and delay while also ensuring risks are identified and reported converted into practice. Furthermore, the TSCP Board will hold to account the TSCP Strategic Subgroups and agencies on the delivery and impact.

Table 1 gives an example of how a recommendation is converted into practice.

Table 1: Converting recommendations into practice

Phase	Rationale	Example
1. Agree SMART actions	Agree actions and timescale	Agree use of screening tool
2. Planning	Each relevant agency produces a brief plan on: (1) Workforce and/or (2) systems changes and (3) assurance process	Who needs to be trained; are the processes in place; and any systems or processes that need to be changed
3. Implementation	Each agency carries out the plan	TSCP receives written updates and escalation is used when inadequate process
4. Assurance Stage 1	Carry out assurance activity	The workforce are using the screening tool
5. Embedding into practice	Each agency embeds into practice, systems, policy and procedures	Screening tool becomes regular practice in agency
6. Assurance Stage 2	Regular monitor of change	Tools becomes everyday practice
7. Completion	Action is completed and signed off	

Assurance Methodology

TSCP requires assurances on:

- Understanding the strengths and weaknesses within the geographical area.
- Agencies working with CYP to provide assurance that safeguarding arrangements are effective.
- The effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements in safeguarding CYP.

Multi-Agency Audits (MAA):

TSCP Learning and Review Strategic Group to agree an annual programme of multi-agency audits. Delivery of the audits sits with the TSCP Quality Assurance Officer supported by identified agency leads. Requests for multi-agency audit should be accompanied by a rationale and will be considered by the Learning and Review Strategic Group for inclusion and/or to instruct activity.

The methodology for each audit will be agreed at the start of the process. MAA identify a cohort of children/families from specified criteria related to the focus of the audit to see how organisations are working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of CYP.

The process of the MAA takes place in four stages.

- **Stage 1:** Theme identified and the relevant agencies to be involved.
- **Stage 2:** Each partner agency is then requested to audit its own involvement of the finalised cohort using an agreed audit tool.
- **Stage 3:** Agencies will present findings for each case audit. The group to identify and develop a list of recommendations from the audit. Partner agencies will share their findings and agree the overall evaluation of multi-agency practice which feeds into an overview report.
- **Stage 4:** Recommendations presented to TSCP Learning and Review Strategic Group, with the view that the recommendations should be accepted, rejected or amended. To be turned into SMART actions.

Single Agency Audit

Each partner agency should have in place auditing arrangements to assess the quality of their day-to-day safeguarding work. Partner agencies are asked to escalate findings from single-agency audits where these identify implications for TSCP and the shared responsibility for safeguarding of children. Consideration will be given at the Learning and Review Strategic Group to any specific action that is required by TSCP to address issues of concern.

It is critical that partner agencies escalate significant risks identified by their audit activity, including any concerns about capacity where demand exceeds the organisation's ability to respond in a timely way to the safeguarding needs of children. Partners are asked to share their audit schedules and forward plans, to inform the wider TSCP audit schedule.

Performance analysis

The TSCP QAPF outlines a process that best utilises and maximises existing sources of data, intelligence, information and quality assurance arrangements alongside a dedicated Safeguarding Children Partnership integrated performance scorecard. Collectively, this aims to provide an accurate and comprehensive picture of the arrangements for safeguarding children in Tameside.

Multi-agency intelligence and performance data provides TSCP with a line of sight on aspects of frontline practice and the broader safeguarding system. Oversight and analysis of multi-agency data assists the TSCP to:

- Identify trends in prevalence or demand for services
- Identify pressure points
- Identify aspects of practice which require further interrogation

Data can be separated into two different types.

- Quantitative and process driven activity.
- Qualitative and outcome focussed to demonstrate the impact of what has been done.

A list of multi-agency performance indicators can be viewed in APPENDIX 1. The development of an integrated partnership performance scorecard allows for greater oversight, assurance and understanding of the local safeguarding system.

Reporting by partner agencies is requested on a quarterly basis along with the analysis and Commentary required to enable the interpretation data and trends.

Performance oversight

A performance monitoring subgroup of the TSCP Safeguarding Effectiveness Strategic Group, will work collaboratively to bring together the sources of data, intelligence and information into a coherent narrative regarding performance and the effectiveness of local arrangements. This requires both data analysis and multi-agency safeguarding expertise to examine what the sources of information are reporting; about where local arrangements are strong and where there is a need to have a deeper understanding or scrutiny of practice to make recommendations for improvement.

The focus of this subgroup will be to use the wealth of information collated to answer the following questions:

- What does the information tell us about the effectiveness of the local arrangements?
- What are the strengths and what needs to be improved?
- Are all agencies working together to safeguard children? If not, why not?
- Are children receiving the right level of support at the right time from the right organisation?
- What is the impact of the local area arrangements in safeguarding children and improving their outcomes?

The subgroup will report back into the partnerships any Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) for consideration / exploration and also any areas of strength. This will provide both scrutiny and assurance to the partnership of both quantitative and qualitative measures, evidencing the effectiveness of arrangements, areas of learning, strong practice and improved outcomes for children and young people across Tameside.

Learning from Serious Incidents and Reviews

The Local Authority has a duty to notify the National Child Safeguarding Review Panel of any serious incidents which occur in its local area and to inform the TSCP. A screening process is undertaken by representatives from statutory safeguarding partners to determine whether criteria for Rapid Review has been met.

Should a Rapid Review be instructed, the timely coordination of partners will take place to:

- Gather facts about the case
- Agree any immediate safeguarding actions
- Consider the case against the criteria for CSPRs
- Identify any immediate learning which can be acted upon and agree how this will be undertaken
- Decide what steps should be taken, including whether to undertake a child safeguarding practice review
- Complete the Rapid Review template and agree the recommendation

Learning from serious incidents contributes to the evaluation of effectiveness of the local safeguarding arrangements. Separate procedural guidance is published on the TSCP Review Process and decision making arrangements.

Feedback from CYP, families, workforce and frontline practitioners

It is important that individual agencies receive feedback about the service provision within Tameside. This is particularly important when seeking the experiences of CYP and their families who are in need of support and/or protection. This can be in the form of direct engagement, but can also take place indirectly by seeking assurance that processes are in place that aim to promote and encourage the capturing of feedback from CYP, families, practitioners and wider workforce.

This framework places an expectation on partner agencies to escalate via TSCP Learning and Review Strategic Group, any specific safeguarding risks arising from direct feedback from children, young people and families.

TSCP will also consider feedback from the workforce by reviewing staff surveys such as the annual Workforce questionnaires and questionnaire on a particular topic to gauge the workforce views on the effectiveness of the work of the partnership. These are important to assess whether any practice model, concepts or knowledge is impacting on the workforce.

Complaints, Compliments and Escalations

It is important that each agency understands the process of receiving feedback around safeguarding. Important lessons can be learned from any complaints or compliments regarding safeguarding. Assurance is not just about practice improvement but assurance on the interactions and performance of agencies.

Self-Assessment

Partner agencies are required to complete self-assessments at agreed intervals and to report their evaluations into TSCP.

There are two main self-assessments for statutory agencies to complete on an annual basis

- Section 11 Audit (compliance with Children Act 2004)
- Section 175/157 Audit of Safeguarding Arrangements in Schools and Colleges.

TSCP Section 11 audit themes are aligned to the Greater Manchester template questions with updates from statutory guidance.

Independent Scrutiny

The role of the Independent Scrutineer is to undertake the role as a critical friend to the safeguarding partners through the provision of support, guidance and challenge to promote the effective delivery of their statutory functions.

A programme of scrutiny activity will be commissioned by the safeguarding partners, to be coordinated and overseen in partnership with the Independent Scrutineer. This should draw on a range of sources, which may include the Section 11 audit findings, self-assessment, peer review and mutual challenge and support through regional mechanisms.

Information Sharing and Confidentiality

Effective information sharing underpins integrated working and is a vital element of both early intervention and safeguarding. It is vital that information is shared in an appropriate and timely fashion. Practitioners should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children.

Information sharing should always be necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure.

TSCP members work is aligned to Working Together 2023, which sets out how agencies will share information. This includes awareness and compliance with Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

As part of the quality assurance process no personal information will be made public and no individuals will be personally identifiable. All staff who are part of TSCP quality assurance activity will take the necessary steps to safeguard personal and sensitive information. .

Local information sharing protocols are published, in addition to the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Children Procedures Manual, which includes principles and expectations specific to Data Protection, Information Sharing and Confidentiality.

Appendix 1

Key Performance Indicators

Indicator
Child deaths
Child homicide/undetermined safeguarding
Child suicides

Theme MASH (Children Services Data)

Indicator
MASH Screenings Completed
MASH referrals by agencies
MASH Screening Outcomes - Information and Advice
MASH Screening Outcomes- Early Help
Referrals to Children Social Care
Re-referral within 12 months of a previous referral

Theme Demographics

Indicator
Early Help Episodes (all teams No. Open)
Early Help Episodes (all teams No. Open)- lead agency
Child in Need Plan (No.)
Child Protection cases (No.)
Cared for Children
Number and rate of children starting to become looked after
Number and rate of children and young people ceasing to be looked after
Number of children & young people open to the Complex Safeguarding Team

Theme Neglect. (Children Services Data)

Indicator
Number of new children to Early Help, CIN, CP and CFC due to Neglect.
Number of new children to Early Help CIN, CP and CFC due to Neglect with a neglect assessment tool (GCP1, TNAP, GCP2)
Staff trained on GCP2 by agencies

Theme Child Protection (Children Services Data)

Indicator
Re-referral of CP last two years
Child on CP for more than 18 months
Child on CP for more than 2 years
Number of children and young people who are the subject of a child protection plan under the category of sexual abuse and criminal exploitation

Theme Child Protection Stability Indicators (Children Services Data)

Indicator
Cared for Children with 3 or more placements in a 12 month period. (%)
Cared for Children for 2.5 years who were living in the same placement for at least 2
Cared for Children subject to 3 or more changes of Social Worker in the last 12 months (%)
Agency Social Workers (% of non managerial Social Work staff)

Indicator
Early Help Assessments Completed in Timescale 45 days % each month
Child and Family Assessments completed under 45 working days
Child Protection - Statutory visits in timescale
Cared for Children - Statutory Visits in Timescale (%)
Initial health assessments within 20 w/d- Cared for Children
Stat requirements for health assessments- cared for children.
Timeliness of strategy meetings
Timeliness Child Protection Conference

Indicator
Number and rate of Section 47 enquiries
Number of section 47 medical and timeliness

Theme Multi-agency attendance at meetings (Children Services Data)

Indicator
Strategy Meeting Attendance by Key Agency - Police (%)
Strategy Meeting Attendance by Key Agency - Health (%)
Strategy Meeting Attendance by Key Agency - Education (%)
Attendance at Initial Child Protection Conference by Police (%)
Attendance at Initial Child Protection Conference by Health (%)
Attendance at Initial Child Protection Conference by Education (%)

Theme Missing from Home (Children Services Data)

Indicator
Number of Times a Child was Reported Missing (No Month)
Number of Times a Child was Reported Missing- CP plan Cared for Children (No Month)
Number of Children with one or more missing incident each month
Number of Times a Child was Reported Missing- CP plan/ Cared for Children (No Month)
Missing incidents completed return home interview with 72hrs (No)

Theme Education (Children Services Data)

Indicator
No Missing from education
No elective home education
Overall Absence
Rate of permanent exclusions
Rate of fixed term exclusions

Theme Mental Health

Number of children and young people presenting at A&E for self-harming
Number of under 18s admitted to psychiatric wards

Greater Manchester Police

Indicator
CP Crime
CP Crime perpetrator under 18
CP under 18 violence/with or without injury
% of crime under 18
Concern of safety under 17
DA incident/ Child present
CSE/CCE incidents (reported to the Police)
CSE/CCE crimes (discovered by the Police)