



Falkland Islands Safeguarding Children's Board

Annual Report 2025-26

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Foreword

Welcome to the Falkland Islands Safeguarding Children Board (FISCB) Annual Report for 2025–26. This report provides an overview of the Board’s work during the period 1 June 2025 to 31 May 2026, alongside an outline of our priorities and planned activity for the year ahead.

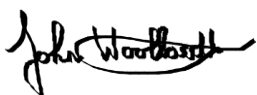
Over the past year, the Board and its sub-groups have continued to meet regularly to fulfil their core responsibility of coordinating the functions delivered by the Falkland Islands Government (FIG) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The Board continues to benefit from strong representation across a wide range of professional disciplines and agencies, ensuring it has the breadth of expertise required to operate effectively. The commitment and dedication shown by Board members and sub-group participants over the past year is both notable and commendable.

During the reporting period, a number of criminal prosecutions involving FIG staff from the Stanley Leisure Centre, including offences against children, required the Board to reflect carefully on the circumstances in which harm occurred and on the adequacy of the safeguarding response. In response, the Board developed and agreed Terms of Reference for an independent learning practice review into children’s safeguarding referrals. This was subsequently approved by both the Board and the Executive Council.

The review will examine whether safeguarding responses met expected standards, identify any missed opportunities, assess the effectiveness of multi-agency working, and determine what immediate or longer-term actions may be required to strengthen practice. It will also consider how effectively those affected were communicated with and supported. A procurement process is currently underway to appoint suitably qualified independent reviewers. Once completed, the findings will be considered by both the Board and the Executive Council, and it is anticipated that the Board will play a key role in overseeing the implementation of any resulting recommendations. An executive summary of the review will be made publicly available, reflecting the Board’s commitment to transparency and continuous improvement in safeguarding practice.

Board meetings remain open to the public, recognising that safeguarding is a shared responsibility that depends on the engagement of the whole community. I would therefore encourage any member of the public with comments, questions, or suggestions regarding the work of the Board to make contact either with myself or with the elected members of the Legislative Assembly who serve on the Board: MLA Dorothy Gould and MLA Stacey Bragger.

Finally, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all those involved in safeguarding children across the Falkland Islands for their continued hard work and commitment over the past year. I look forward to working with colleagues across the Board and partner agencies in the year ahead.



John Woollacott E-mail: jwoollacott@kemh.gov.fk

FISCB Chair and Director of Health and Social Services

Falkland Islands Safeguarding Children

Purpose

To seek to properly safeguard children and young people within our community, requiring key agencies to work together in an assured, effective and efficient manner, in order to co-ordinate appropriate action. (NB - 'Child' and 'young person' includes persons under the age of 18 years).

Objectives

To co-ordinate the appropriate actions of all agencies represented on the Board for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the Falkland Islands; and to ensure the effectiveness of these actions. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development, mental and physical
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances
- Enabling young people to enter adulthood successfully

Child protection continues to be the core business of the FISCBS, with a wider remit to include preventative work to avoid harm being suffered in the first place.

The FISCBS meets four times a year and is open to the public. There are some items that need to be discussed in a closed section of the meeting due to likelihood to disclose exempt information under paragraph 8 *information about children* and paragraph 15 *Draft Papers for Executive Council and information about them* of Schedule 3 of the Committees (Public Access) Ordinance 2012. Minutes are taken and are publically available for the open portion of the meetings.

Membership

The membership of the FISCBS includes representatives from:

- ✓ The Legislative Assembly – portfolio holders for Health & Social Services and Education
- ✓ Representative of Government House – observer
- ✓ Director of Health & Social Services (DHSS) – **Chair**
- ✓ Director of Education (DoE) – **Deputy Chair**
- ✓ Head of Social Services (HSS)
- ✓ Chief Medical Officer (CMO)
- ✓ Chief Nursing Officer (CNO)
- ✓ Chief Police Officer
- ✓ Probation Officer
- ✓ Attorney General's Office – adviser
- ✓ MOD - Officer Commanding Base Support Wing on behalf of Commander British Forces
- ✓ MOD - Senior Social Work Practitioner (BFSWS)

Social Services Update

Post	Establishment	Filled	Vacant	Comments
Head of Social Services	1	1	0	
Team Manager	1	1	0	
Social Worker - Adults	1	0	1	A second round of recruitment is underway after a failed first round.
Advanced Practitioner (Children)	2	1	1	Recruitment underway. An offer has been made.
Social Work Assistant	3	2	1	Two SWAs predominantly work with adults. The other post is dedicated to Early Help. Recruitment is underway for the vacant third post.
Probation Officer	1	1	0	
Residential Support Worker Team Leader	1	1	0	
Residential Support Worker	8	4	4	Not recruiting at present. RSWs are supporting the development of the Supported Living Service whilst there are no children in placement
PA / Office Manager	1	1	0	
Public Protection Police Officer	1	1	0	
Financial Assistance Worker	1	1	0	Following long periods of being vacant, this post was filled in August 2025.

Early Help

The Early Help model continues to work to provide the 'right help at the right time' to children and their families. This timely intervention to families who require extra support, has proved successful in diverting them from requiring statutory services. The Early Help Coordinator carries a case load of children who she provides direct support to. The Early Help Coordinator continues to work with the Team Leader of Jersey House to provide support to children with disabilities who meet the criteria of a 'child in need' under section 22 of the Children Ordinance 2014. This support is targeted to children who have been identified as needing additional support.

Jersey House

Jersey House continues to provide support to both adults and to children and their families. As well as providing targeted support to children with disabilities (and their families) as described above, they are also supervising court ordered contact. There have been no children requiring a residential placement this year. Jersey House Staff are supporting the development of the Supported Living Service by providing bespoke support to adults in the community who have a care and support plan. A consultation process has commenced with staff regarding opportunities to move into the Supported Living Service.

Joint Work (Police and Social Services)

A model of safeguarding has been developed that ensures a joint approach from Police and Social Services from the very beginning (from receipt of a referral). This model works well and has received positive endorsement by the Law Enforcement Advisor for British Overseas Territories in his visit last and is held in positive regard by the FCDO Safeguarding Lead.

The Public Protection Officer is currently supporting RFIP by carrying out sergeant duties, and an alternative officer is undertaking the PPO role. This is working well and builds resilience going forwards.

Signs of Safety

The Signs of Safety model is fully embedded and is the way that safeguarding is practiced in the Falkland Islands. This is supported by the *Azeus* electronic information system that is used by Social Services.

Overseas Territories

The Social Services Department developed a network to support social workers in the British Overseas Territories. This provides an opportunity to share best practice, offer support and build relationships between our remote and isolated communities. Generally, meetings are held quarterly, but it has been less utilised this year due to long-term social work vacancies of posts on Ascension, Tristan da Cunha and Pitcairn.

In February 2026 we received a visit from FCDO Consultant, Anthony Douglas CBE. He met with all relevant stakeholders in relation to strengthening the Atlantic Alliance for the provision of Children's Guardians when required for family court proceedings, and this project is on-going. He is also working on developing a set of Island Practice Standards that consider the unique context in each of the Overseas Territories.

Practice Improvement Sub-Group

The Head of Social Services has responsibility for the Practice Improvement sub-group. Rather than holding regular meetings, this role is undertaken by:

- ✓ Selecting and convening the appropriate group of professionals to undertake individual pieces of work (e.g. practice learning events)
- ✓ Attending the other three sub-groups to ensure continuity and that there is no duplication of work
- ✓ Maintaining the FISCB and SAB Training Prospectus
- ✓ Provision of the Local Context Safeguarding Course to relevant professionals

Serious Case Reviews

There have been no cases in 2025 – 2026 that have met the criteria for Serious Case Review. Consideration was given in relation to some recent convictions, and it was decided that whilst the specific criteria for a Serious Case Review wasn't met, it would be appropriate to commission an independent review. The terms of reference were approved by ExCo in May 2026 and the review findings will be reported in the next annual review.

Response to Racism

The Falkland Islands Community School observed a rise in racist behaviour amongst a small cohort of students last year. As well as the impact this was having on the children who were being targeted, this was also having a negative impact on staff and the wider school community.

The Senior Leadership Team at FICS tried many internal strategies to prevent this behaviour from continuing and they have recruited support from other departments such as the Royal Falkland Islands Police, Health, Probation, Legal and Social Services.

Racism is not solely a 'school issue' but reflective of the wider global context where hate crimes in the USA are at an all-time high and in the UK they have risen for the first time in 3 years. A study by the Runnymede Trust warned that Britain is becoming a more racist and intolerant society.

There are no figures or studies specific to the Falkland Islands to draw upon, but educators have warned that there is a problem that requires a community response to understand and address effectively. Therefore, the FISCB agreed the Practice Improvement Group should gather further information and consider how we respond to this issue. This work is underway and a report will be presented to the Board in July 2026.

Social Services' Priorities for 2025 – 2026

- Continue to raise awareness of online exploitation amongst young people, parents, carers, the community and potential perpetrators and provide help at the earliest opportunity. This took place with support from the media outlets and FIG's Communications Department.
- To focus on recruitment to rebuild stability within the team following the departure of key members of staff and overcome the current challenges being faced in recruiting social workers.

The Probation Service Update

Probation Service Key Achievements in 2025 - 2026

The Falkland Islands Probation Service is arguably the world's smallest probation service with just one member of a staff, a UK qualified Probation Officer. The current Probation Officer has been in post since 19th May 2025. Prior to arriving in the Falkland Islands the Probation Officer worked for five years on the British Overseas Territory of St Helena.

All Statutory Commitments Met

Reports for court have been completed within agreed timescales, and community sentences have been supervised and enforced in line with the statutory duties of the Probation Service.

Maintenance of the Non-Statutory Service

Regular rehabilitation work is undertaken with those serving custodial sentences.

The provision of support on a voluntary basis has continued to be a valued service, reflecting the proactive nature of the Probation Service in working with those at risk of offending.

The Probation Service works with young people engaging in problematic or harmful behaviour through the Youth Diversion Scheme. This intervention provides opportunity for young people to explore their behaviours and address the thinking and attitudes underlying this. Engagement in the scheme enables work people to make positive changes and prevents the criminalisation of children.

The Probation Service leads work on the Victim Contact Scheme, an initiative designed to ensure the voice of the victim is not lost within the criminal justice system. Victims are provided with information to aid their understanding of sentences and are given the opportunity to contribute to licence conditions for those people being released from custody.

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements remain a core element in the management of high risk and sexual offenders in both custody and the community. The Probation Service is a member of this panel, holding the role of Deputy Chair.

Joint Work (Prison, Social Services, Courts, Police)

The Probation Service works closely with the Falkland Islands Prison Service, delivering rehabilitation work to prisoners and undertaking comprehensive offender assessments to contribute to risk management within the custodial setting. Contributions are also made to resettlement work, including licence conditions, disclosures and victim contact.

Multi-agency work is key to the work of the Probation Service. This includes close liaison with the Royal Falkland Islands Police to manage high risk and sex offenders in the community. Joint visits are regularly undertaken and contributions made to the risk assessments of registered sex offenders.

Close working relationships are also maintained with Social Services, both adult and children's services. The Probation Service regularly attends and contributes to child protection core groups, child protection conferences and multi-agency meetings regarding adults.

Training and Staff Development

During this year Social Care staff, including the Probation Officer, have attended AIM training. This on-line training comprised three separate courses designed to equip practitioners with the skills to assess and work with children and adolescents engaging in harmful sexual behaviour. AIM3 and AIM Under 12s participants must pass a competency requirement to be able to undertake assessments using the tools provided by the course. The Probation Officer passed the competency requirements, receiving Approval Certificates, valid for three years.

Policy Development

In 2025 – 2026 the Probation Service contributed to reviewing and updating the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements Policy and the Victim Contact Scheme Policy.

Sub-Groups

The Probation Service is a member of the Exploitation Subgroup and the Domestic Abuse Subgroup and actively contributes to the work of these groups, through attendance at meetings and undertaking actions.

Safeguarding Across the Territories

The Probation Service continues to maintain a positive working relationship with the St Helena Island Probation Service (SHIPS), exchanging information for risk management and resettlement purposes. This includes multi-agency working with police services from both territories.

Network Building and Professional Socialisation

The Probation Service maintains an active role in the Community Justice Overseas Territories Network (CJOT), designed to bring together all ten British Overseas Territories with probation service provisions, along with two of the three British Crown Dependencies.

In November 2025 CJOT hosted its first Professional Development Forum, “Promoting Excellence In Practice Across The British Overseas Territories”. This online event featured international speakers, including noted academics from the field of probation and was well-received by attendees.

In April 2026 the Probation Service was represented at the 7th World Congress on Probation and Parole in Bali. This bi-annual event brings together probation practitioners, policy makers and researchers to share best practice, policy insights and research findings from across the globe. This event enabled the Falkland Island Probation Service to forge new relationships and strengthen existing ones with probation services around the world.

Statistics for 2025 - 2026

	Average number of cases for 2025 - 2026
Custody	7
Statutory Community	16
Voluntary	4
Youth Diversion Scheme	4

Figures are from 01/07/25 to 31/05/26

- The number of pre-sentence reports completed continues to rise, with thirteen reports being requested during this year. This is an increase on the seven reports completed last year and significantly higher than 2023 - 2024 when just four reports were prepared.
- On average the total caseload was 21, remaining similar to the previous two years.
- Over 400 hours of unpaid work, to the benefit of the community, have been completed by those serving community sentences.

Aims for 2026 - 2027

- To continue to meet statutory commitments.
- To continue to deliver rehabilitative interventions in both the community and custody.
- To continue to develop and promote the Youth Diversion Scheme.
- To continue to develop and promote the Victim Contact Scheme.
- To continue to develop and promote the work of the Falkland Island Probation Service through the Community Justice Overseas Territories Network.

The Royal Falkland Islands Police

Introduction

The Royal Falkland Islands Police (RFIP) continues to play a vital and strategic role in safeguarding children and young people across the Islands. RFIP remains committed to early intervention, cross-agency collaboration, and building a workforce trained and equipped to deal with the complex needs of children at risk of harm.

Despite some staffing pressures, the force has maintained child protection as a priority and remains one of the leading referring agencies to Social Services. RFIP is also strengthened its leadership in key strategic forums to support improvements in practice across the multi-agency safeguarding system.

Strategic Objectives

- In 2024–25, RFIP adopted the following strategic safeguarding objectives which continued-into-2025/2026.
Enhance early identification of harm through robust referral processes.
- Lead on and support community safeguarding awareness (Outreach Clinics, IJS, FICS).
- Improve joint investigations through shared practices.
- Strengthen resilience in the safeguarding function despite workforce challenges.

Leadership and Multi-Agency Coordination

RFIP chaired the Exploitation Sub-Group during this period, broadening its remit from child sexual exploitation to include adults at risk of coercion, modern slavery, or online abuse. RFIP also co-led interagency work on Section 69 procedures and chaired the MAPPA panel.

Safeguarding Workforce and Capacity

While progress has been made since last year, staffing gaps continue to challenge operational capacity:

- Chief of Police: Post is vacant and has been temporally occupied since March 2025.
- Public Protection Officer (PPO): this vacancy has been filled. It is a high-pressure role due to the current demand.
- CID capacity: was at 50 % capacity for most of the year but is now at full compliment.
- Uniformed roles: carried significant vacancies for most of 2024/2025 but has since increased considerably due to local recruitment. Uniform roles are supported by 4 Reserve Constables and recruitment for additional reserve constables will be commencing at some stage.

The PPO role remains a key priority for RFIP. The position, jointly funded with Social Services, is pivotal to specialist safeguarding functions and multi-agency working.

Training and Capability Building

All officers completed the required safeguarding training in 2025–26:

- Level 1 Safeguarding for all frontline staff.
- Level 3 for supervisory roles, PPO, and the Chief of Police.
- High Attendance at Local Context Safeguarding courses coordinated by Social Services.

RFIP also co-delivered:

- ABE (Achieving Best Evidence) interview training in March 2024 during the latter part of 2025 and the first half of 2026.
- Human Trafficking and Criminal Exploitation workshops for officers and external partners.

A future goal is to establish a Safeguarding Skills Register to track and refresh core competencies across the force.

Referral Impact and Outcomes

RFIP accounted for circa 46% of all children’s safeguarding referrals and 12% of all adults safeguarding-referrals-in-2025/2026.

Referrals originating from RFIP continued to show strong alignment with safeguarding thresholds, contributing to:

- There are open cases proceeding under the Child in Need framework.
- Improved quality of initial referrals, reducing duplication and unnecessary escalation.

Priorities for 2025–26

- Use the permanent Public Protection Officer to enrich the safeguarding culture across RFIP.
- Lead the roll-out of the Digital Safeguarding Strategy across community and school settings.
- Deliver joint refresher training on emergency powers and trauma-informed policing.
- Introduce routine audit of referral quality and safeguarding outcomes by originating agency.

RFIP remains steadfast in its role as a key safeguarding agency and will continue to adapt and lead within the unique policing and welfare environment of the Falkland Islands.

Health Service Update

Health Services Staffing

Frontline, patient-facing staff in the Health Service receive level 3 Safeguarding training and child sexual exploitation training, and this includes the Health Visitor and School Nurse who have a specific remit for the care of children and young people.

These two staff form the 0-19 Service, and they work closely with other departments within the Directorate, such as the Emotional Wellbeing Team and Social Services.

The School Nurse and Health Visitor are leads in several intervention plans. These can be a powerful tool in supporting families to prevent those needing social services intervention. An example of this is building a parenting workshop course to educate and support parents with children of primary age.

Together they provide high quality interagency and multi-disciplinary working to ensure joined up thinking and excellent sharing of information. We continue to review the data of children aged 0-19 that have attended the emergency department to identify patterns and areas of safeguarding concern.

The team offer regular one to one sessions for children who are receiving safeguarding support from social services to meet their individual physical or mental health needs either in school or at home.

Outreach work at nurseries and Jelly Tots continues to ensure visibility to the community and is instrumental in preventing and identifying safeguarding concerns.

The health visitor also acts as a liaison between paediatric specialists from the UK that are involved in the care of children in the Falkland Islands.

Plans for the next 12 months

The Health Service will look to consolidate the progress it has made with regards training and build on the excellent working relationship with Social Services to further improve safeguarding practices in the Falkland Islands. A parenting course will be launched, and baby massage will also be offered again.

Education Department Update

Education Staffing

All Education staff have an active responsibility to identify, prevent and respond to safeguarding concerns for children in education. Education staff at FICS, IJS & CE, Stanley House and Falkland College all receive regular training in safeguarding. Each institution has designated safeguarding leads who are trained to a higher level. Education's safeguarding leads and staff work in close partnership with the RFIP Public Protection officer and with Social Services.

Safeguarding training in the Education Directorate is run through Falkland College. Falkland College offers on-line Safeguarding Training (Levels 1, 2 and 3), to all professionals who work with both children and adults. In addition, Child Sexual Exploitation Training is delivered by the MASH Officer and Clinical Psychologist to all professionals, parents and young people to educate them on the signs and indicators of potential exploitation.

There has been a constant focus on e-safety in the year in schools and at Stanley House to enable students, families and staff to keep themselves as safe online as possible. Joint work was carried out with Social Services to promote better knowledge of the Falklands Portal on the Internet Watch Foundation's site and to encourage reporting of images.

16 to 18 years old.

The Education Directorate (with the support of the FISCB where required) continues to work with overseas providers to ensure that FIG sponsored students progress to institutions with a good quality approach to pastoral care and safeguarding of young people living in student halls or homestay.

Legal Department Update

Legal Representation at FISCBS

The Attorney General, or his representative, has continued to advise the Falkland Islands Children's Safeguarding Board and its members. Crown Counsel (Civil and Safeguarding) has attended all Board meetings and worked closely with members of the Board in order to ensure the ongoing safeguarding of children within the Falkland Islands. The advice and assistance provided covers a broad range of areas, including;

- Advice on specific cases where safeguarding concerns are raised, including out of hours emergency situations.
- Supporting single and joint investigations, including police investigations.
- Prosecutions which seek to protect children or where there are offences against children.
- Providing representation in the court with public law proceedings.
- Advising on welfare reports for private law applications.
- Ensuring statutory requirements are met in respect of children who are looked after.
- Advising on regulatory matters in a care or education setting
- Advising in respect of child-minding regulations.
- Health and safety and employment law where children are affected.
- Advising on the legal implications of policies and initiatives aimed at safeguarding children.
- Advising on guidance to improve and ensure best practice for child safeguarding professionals.
- Working with education responding to safeguarding issues to ensure appropriate measures and action is taken.
- Advising on housing issues which impact the health and wellbeing of children.

On a strategic level the Attorney General's chamber continues to work closely with members of the Board in reviewing and updating policy across all departments, this has included reviewing and contributing to education policy development around special education needs to ensure that the needs of all children are adequately provided for. Advice has been given leading to updating Child Protection Guidance in respect of travel arrangements for children subject to a plan being approved. The purpose of which is to ensure adequate risk assessments and safeguarding measures are in place, particularly where it is proposed children will travel across international borders where they have already been deemed to be suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm. Additionally, legal advice has been provided in relation to the development of a Placement with Parents policy when children are Looked After. This policy is informed by legislation and relevant regulations and supports safe reunification and family-based care where consistent with the Child's welfare.

To ensure the appropriate representation of children within public law proceedings can continue, Crown Counsel engaged with a consultant safeguarding specialist engaged by the FCDO undertaking work related to a proposed cross-border Guardian initiative and fed into this work.

Crown Counsel has engaged with the UKHSA around the development of a public health project with the organisation aimed at promoting the wellbeing and mental health of young people. The project is in its infancy in terms of development and proposals from the UKHSA are awaited however, the aim will be to identify suitable experts who can undertake quantitative research on Islands and work with the community and young people to develop a suitable and sustainable set of initiatives to target specific safeguarding issues which are impacting children and young people. The project may also incorporate collaborative working with counterparts in other OTs experiencing similar issues which will strengthen links, share best practice and ideas.

Training was delivered in relation to giving evidence at hearings to social work professionals to develop capability and confidence. Crown Counsel also engaged in a reflective learning event with the Head of Social Services to reflect on practice following the conclusion of relevant proceedings. The aim was to embed a learning and improvement culture and drive best practice.

Significantly, the Board has been supported by Crown Counsel to develop Terms of Reference to underpin a safeguarding learning practice review following several significant criminal cases involving employees of the Falkland Islands Government owned Leisure Centre. Executive Council approved these terms in May 2025 and work is underway to source an appropriate reviewer(s) with an aim to complete the report by Q1 2027. This review will examine the practice of statutory safeguarding agencies on the Islands and more broadly, within the Leisure Centre to provide workable recommendations aimed at strengthening safeguarding practice and driving improvement to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children on the Islands in the future.

Exploitation Subgroup

The Exploitation Subgroup is a strategic, multi-agency body working across both children's and adult services to identify, prevent, and respond to all forms of exploitation. As one of four key subgroups (now three) under the Falkland Islands Safeguarding Adults Board, it carries out focused work on behalf of the Board in line with the strategic safeguarding plan.

The group includes representation from the Royal Falkland Islands Police, Social Services, Probation Service, Attorney General's Office, Education, and British Forces South Atlantic Islands (BFSAI), and is chaired by the Chief of Police. It reflects a whole-systems approach to exploitation prevention, response, and recovery.

The Exploitation Subgroup's remit has broadened to focus on preventing the sexual abuse of children and adults. This included police-led disruption of offenders, targeted youth education, wider public awareness campaigns, and coordinated support for victims.

Key Achievements in 2024/25

Provided regular, well-received training on exploitation to professionals and stakeholders.

Embedded the expansion of the strategic scope to include adult victims of exploitation, integrating new priorities into the group's remit.

Strategic Plan for 2025/26

In 2025/26, the group will continue to drive strategic safeguarding efforts around exploitation. Recognising the evolving nature of threats in small, digitally connected communities, the group will prioritise efforts to combat online exploitation — including sextortion, grooming, financial manipulation, and romantic scams targeting both children and adults.

A Digital Safeguarding Strategy will be developed, led by the Exploitation Subgroup, to establish a coordinated inter-agency response to emerging risks. This includes planned awareness campaigns, improvements to early intervention and referral mechanisms, and investment in digital education for both professionals and the wider community.

The Subgroup's ongoing leadership reflects a maturing safeguarding system that adapts proactively to complex harm, promotes resilience across agencies, and ensures both preventative and restorative measures are embedded within practice.

Safeguarding Children Statistics

The annual period of the FISCBS annual report is 1st June 2025 until 31st May 2026 to meet the deadline for presentation to ExCo. The statistics provided for the annual report are for the period 1st April 2025 until 31st March 2026, to allow time for the statistics to be compiled and presented in the report.

Fig. 1 Children's Referrals received by Social Services

Referrals continued to increase over the 2025 – 2026 reporting period, with a total of 340 referrals received. Of these, 59% were regarding children who were already open to social services, or who had already been referred within the past year, whilst 41% were initial referrals. The 101% increase in referrals this year was due in a large part to the offending of two individuals which will be the subject of an independent review later this year. In addition, multiple referrals resulted from alcohol related concerns following social events last year.

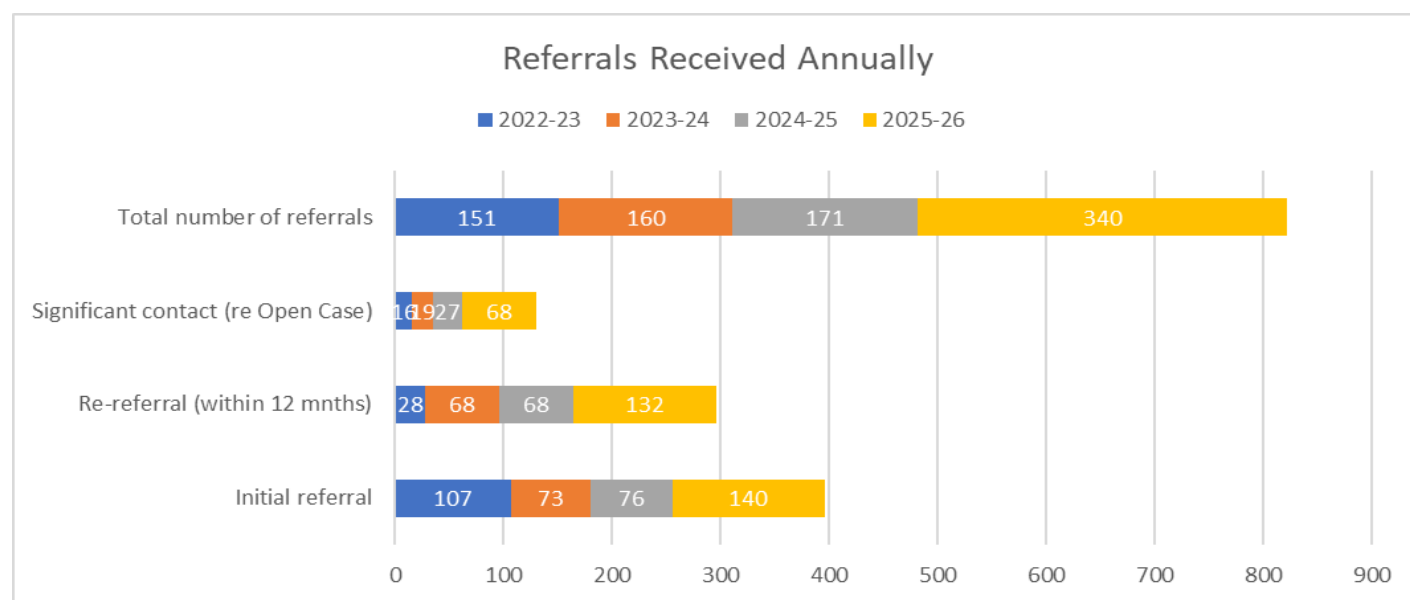


Fig. 2 Category of Concerns Raised in Children's Referrals Received by Social Services

The presenting concern at the point of referral was 'Abuse or Neglect' in 80% of cases. There has been an increase in referrals relating to domestic abuse in comparison to last year. Increased reporting may be as a result of the delivery of training and awareness raising about domestic abuse. There has been an increase for the second year running in referrals relating to children displaying socially unacceptable behaviour. Whilst the increase is of concern, generally, the concerns have been of a low level.

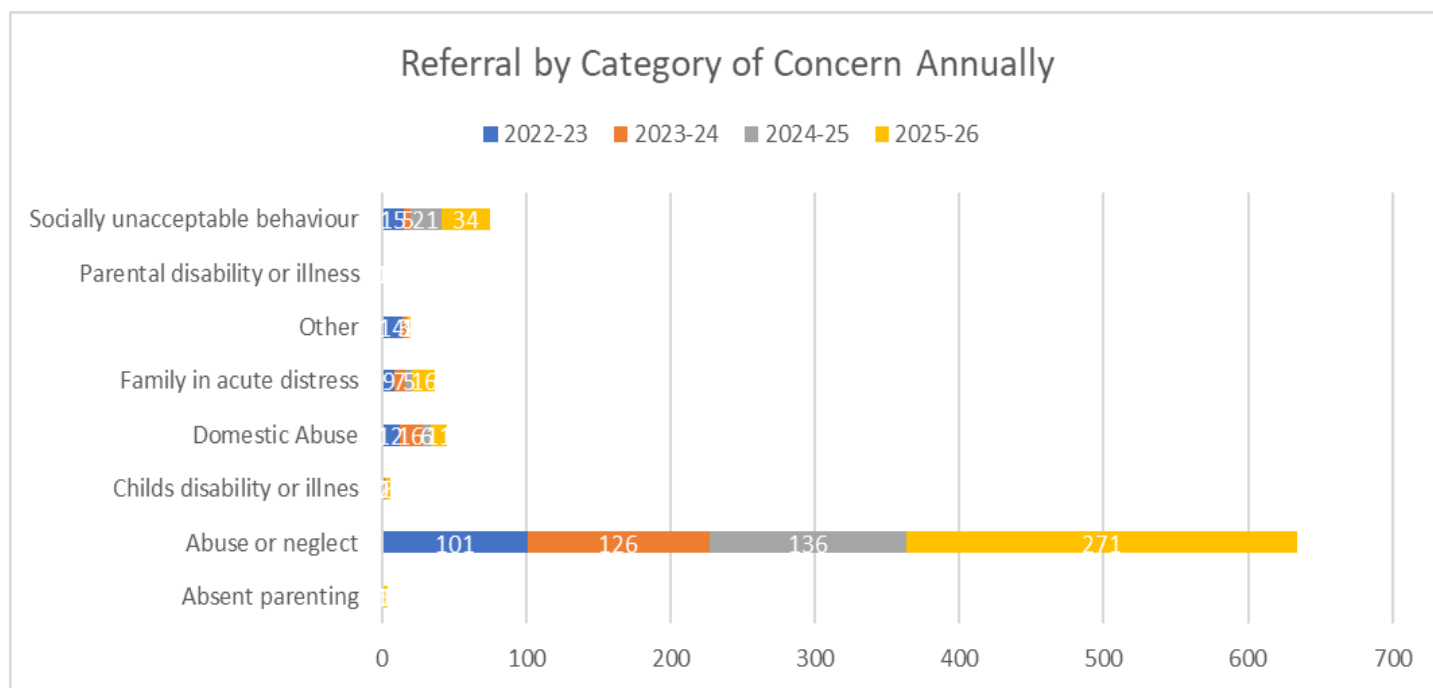


Fig. 3 Source of Children’s Referrals Received by Social Services

The Royal Falkland Islands Police submitted 45% of all referrals. There has been an increase in anonymous referrals this year. 21% of referrals came from a combination of Anonymous, Members of the Community and Family Members whilst 17% came from Education, and 8.5% from Health.

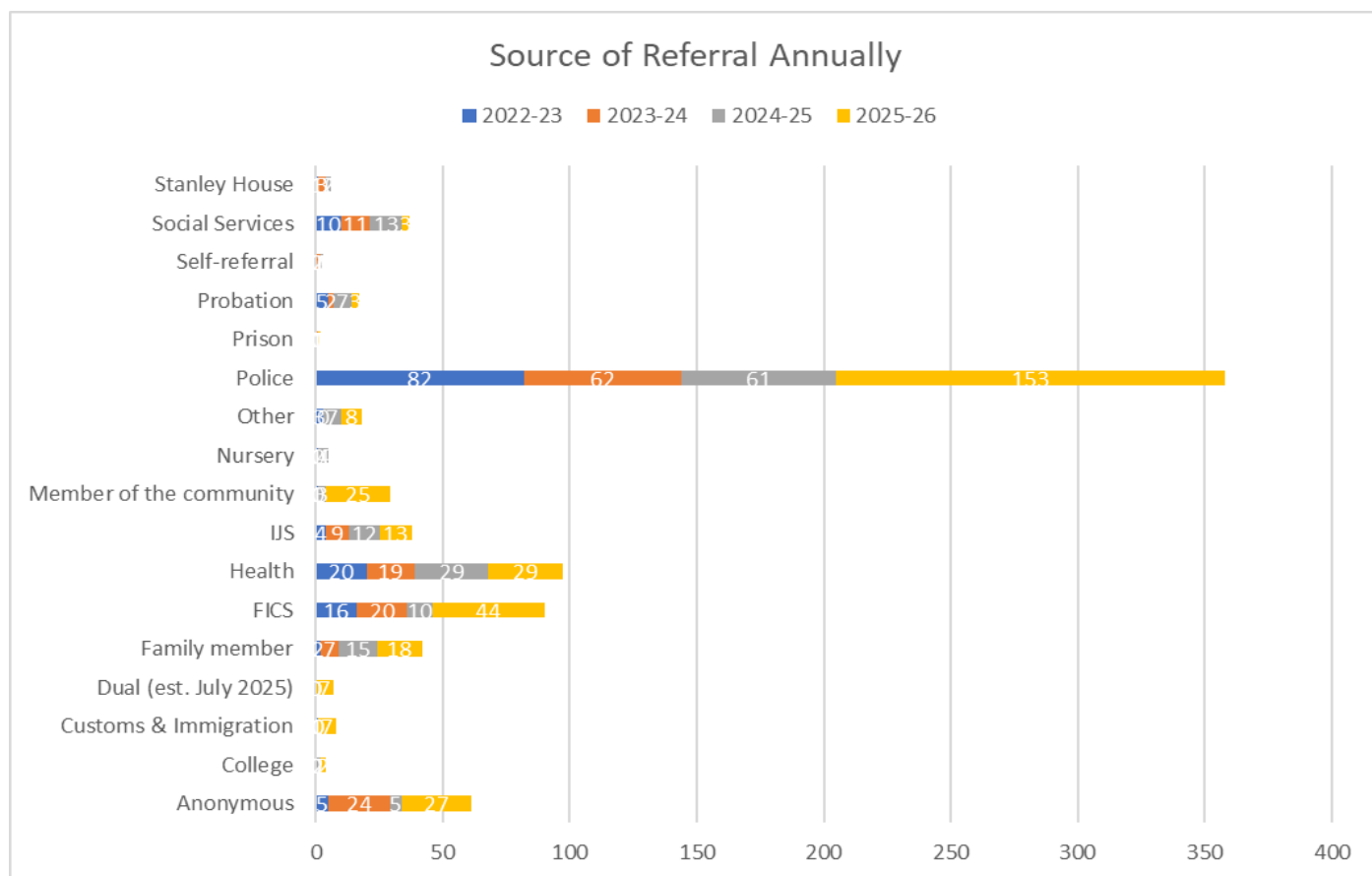


Fig. 4 Actions following the initial strategy discussion between the Team Manager and Public Protection Officer of Children’s Referrals

Following the initial strategy discussion between police and social services, 31% of referrals resulted in a decision that the threshold had been met to convene a multi-agency strategy meeting. This is a reduction of 10% from last year. 36% of referrals resulted in no further action which was an increase of 10% from last year. However, this category of ‘No Further Action’ refers to no further action for Social Services specifically. It doesn’t capture the single agency work taken forward by RFIP which has been considerable this year. Following the review of the safeguarding procedures in December 2023 the professional strategy process was introduced, creating the role of the Designated Officer. This procedure is followed in circumstances where an individual employed or volunteering with children is suspected of causing harm to a child. Five professional strategy meetings were held under these procedures this year.

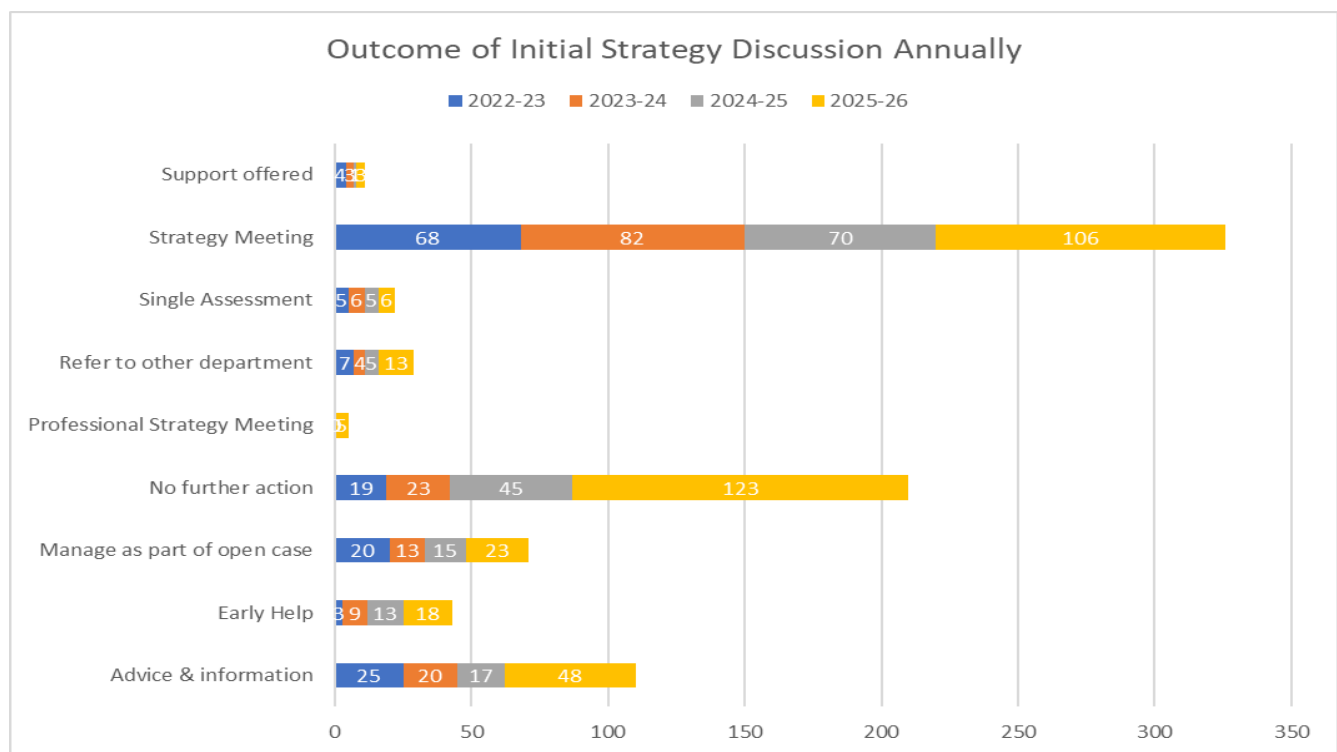
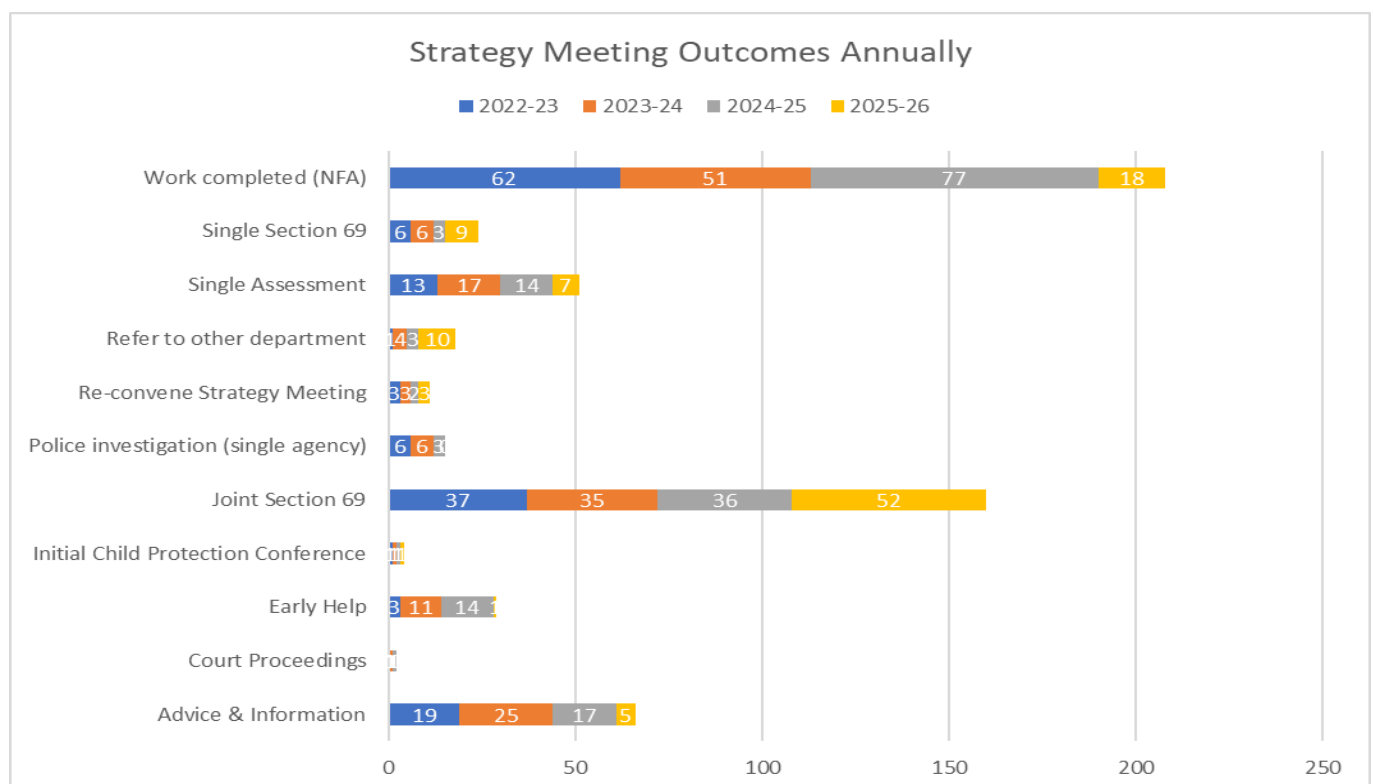


Fig. 5 Actions following the Strategy Meeting

Following the convening of strategy meetings, 68% resulted in further enquires being undertaken under section 69 of the Children Ordinance 2014 or via a single assessment. 17% of strategy meetings resulted in the determination that no further action was required (work completed).



Intervention resulting from Referrals Received by Social Services

Due to the threshold of significant harm being met a total of 61 child protections investigations were completed. 85% of these were joint investigations between police and social services and 15% were single agency enquiries undertaken by social services.

Case Allocations

100% of all cases that required allocation to a social worker, were allocated within 2 days.

Other Protective Action Taken for Children

There were no children taken into Police Protection throughout 2025 – 2026 and no Child Abduction Warning Notices were commenced.

All statutory visits to children we care for were undertaken within statutory timescales. There were no late visits made to children on child protection plans due to delays that social services were responsible for. I.e. the delays that materialised were due to family members not making themselves available for visits as per the child protection plan.

British Forces South Atlantic Islands

There were no children at Mount Pleasant Complex (MPC) on a Child in Need Plan or a Child Protection Plan during this reporting period.

Safeguarding Training Statistics

The delivery of mandatory safeguarding training continues to be provided in line with the Safeguarding Boards' Training Prospectus 2025 – 2026. The Prospectus outlines the roles required to undertake specific courses, and how often this training should be updated. The mandatory training courses which are specifically related to child safeguarding are:

- ✓ Child Safeguarding level 1 or Advanced for defined posts
- ✓ Local Context Course – a face-to-face course that provides delegates with an understanding of safeguarding children in the Falkland Islands context.
- ✓ Understanding Child Sexual Exploitation

The Prospectus contains details of other courses provided to specific roles within the Safeguarding process such as *Achieving Best Evidence* workshops for ABE trained staff, to ensure that their skills are kept up to date. The Senior Crown Prosecutor has provided four workshops over the past year to relevant staff from the RFIP and the Department of Health and Social Services. The feedback on these courses has been positive with staff reporting they feel more confident in undertaking ABE interviews following the workshops which are a combination of taught and practical sessions with feedback provided by Mr Walker.

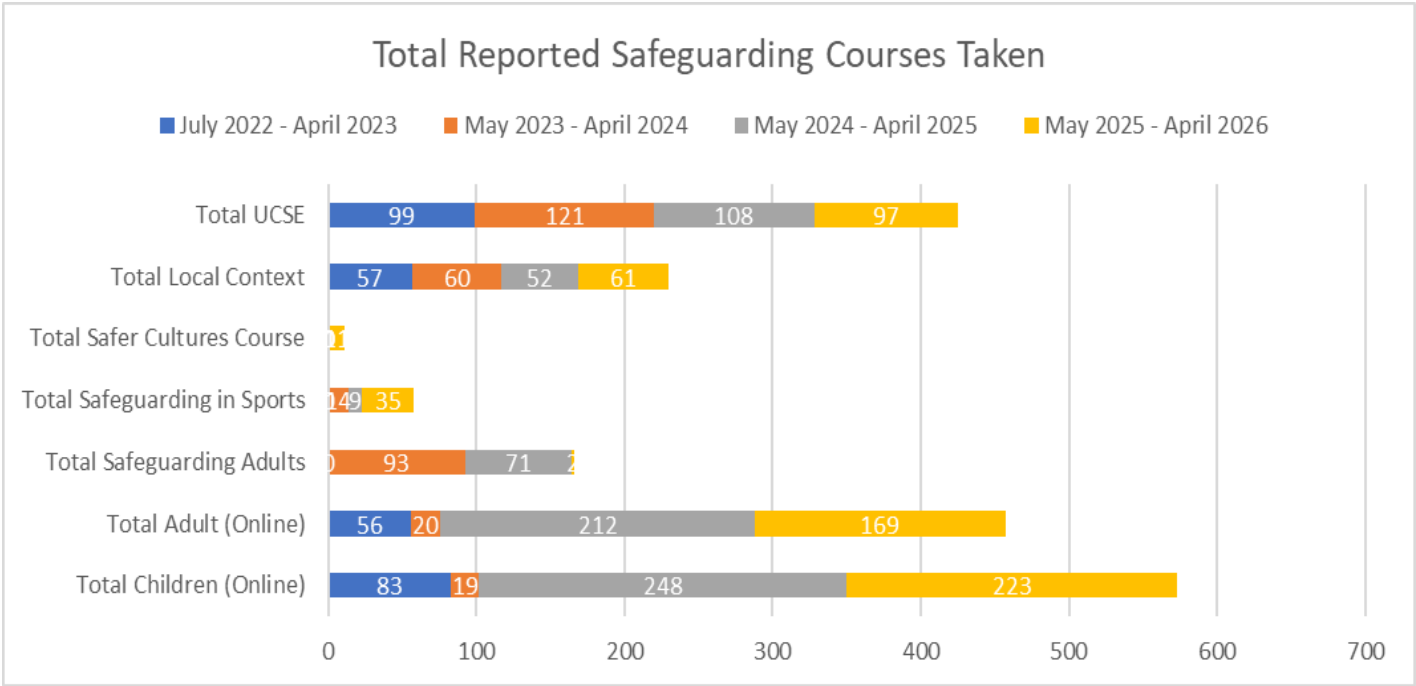
The FISCB agreed that relevant staff could continue to access online safeguarding courses via Falkland College or via reputable providers that have been approved by different disciplines. An example of this is that staff in the Health and Social Services Directorate have been able to access online training via the 'E Learning for Health' (elfh) training platform. The benefits of this are that the training is geared more specifically towards particular disciplines and in many circumstances, it is provided for no charge.

Attendance at mandatory training continues to be monitored by the FISCB as a standing item. It remains the responsibility of each directorate to inform Social Services of the safeguarding courses that their staff have undertaken. Whilst recorded attendance on face-to-face courses such as the Local Context Course and the Understanding Child Exploitation courses are accurate, it is thought that there is under-reporting in respect of attendance on on-line safeguarding courses, and that the recorded attendance figures (below) are lower than staff's true attendance on online safeguarding training.

Community engagement remains good with the Safeguarding in Sports courses being well-attended by the vast majority of National Sports Council member clubs. It is of note that the National Sports Council funded their Sports Development Officer to undertake the International Olympic Committee certificate of Safeguarding Officer in Sport.

Jo Turner has successfully completed this course which equips her to be involved in safeguarding athletes of all ages from harassment and abuse and she is now qualified to fulfil the Safeguarding officer role for the National Sports Council, which will also benefit their member clubs.

Fig 1. Total Safeguarding courses taken in the reporting period



Looking Ahead

A key priority for the Board over the next 12 months will be progressing the independent learning practice review of children's safeguarding referrals, as referenced in this report. Once finalised, the Board will consider the report's findings and agree how best to ensure effective oversight of the implementation of its recommendations. Delivering the review will require coordinated support from a range of FIG departments and wider stakeholders. In line with its commitment to transparency, the Board will also give careful consideration to the timing, messaging, and communication of the report's findings and recommendations when they are ready for publication.

Another significant area of focus will be the growing issue of online harm and abuse. The digital landscape continues to evolve rapidly, often requiring responses to emerging risks to be reactive rather than preventative. A recent report by the Communications Regulatorⁱ has highlighted a notable gap between parents' perceptions of children's online activity and the reality of their experiences. As jurisdictions around the world explore or introduce additional restrictions on children's access to online platforms—particularly social media—the Board will consider what a proportionate and practical response might look like in the Falkland Islands context. The Communications Regulator's report will be discussed at the next Board meeting.

The Board will also seek assurance that safer recruitment processes consistently prioritise safeguarding by preventing unsuitable individuals from working with children, young people, and adults at risk. The FISCB will request monitoring information from HR to confirm that all recruitment aligns with the Board's safer recruitment guidance and will encourage FIG to embed policies and practices that are fully consistent with this guidance.

Alongside these emerging priorities, the Board will continue to oversee routine safeguarding activity across FIG. While much of this work is now well established and may be considered “business as usual,” it remains essential to sustain the progress achieved in recent years. Systems and processes must be maintained, regularly reviewed for effectiveness, and strengthened where possible. This ongoing work will be guided by the following strategic principles:

- ✓ **Prepare** – Demonstrate strong leadership, implement effective systems, and collaborate with partners to proactively address and combat online exploitation.
- ✓ **Prevent** – Raise awareness of online exploitation among children and young people, parents, carers, the wider community, and potential perpetrators. Provide early support and intervention and strengthen resilience by working with families and partners to understand and prevent this form of abuse. Leverage a wide range of available technologies to support these efforts and ensure these take account of the unique local context. Introduce a Digital Safeguarding Strategy across community and educational settings.
- ✓ **Protect** - Safeguard children and young people by offering targeted support to those at risk of, or affected by, online exploitation. Equip professionals with the training, tools and guidance needed to intervene effectively. Take robust action against perpetrators by utilising all available legal measures including liaison with the National Crime Agency.

Report Ends

ⁱ Falkland Islands Communications Regulator. Young People Media Use and Attitudes Online Survey Report 2026- available online.