



# Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements

December 2024



# FOREWORD

Stoke-on-Trent has always been a city with a strong identity, one that our residents are rightly proud of. In 2024/25, we will build on the foundations put down during 2023/24 to strengthen our partnership arrangements further to safeguard all children from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

The Lead Safeguarding Partners in Stoke on Trent are committed to leading the local Multi-Agency Safeguarding Children Arrangements required by government guidance Working Together 2023.

As leaders, we recognise that safeguarding our children cannot be achieved in isolation from other partnerships, or our communities. Further, by working together to ensure that information about children and their families is shared effectively, risk of harm is correctly identified and understood, and children receive targeted services that meet their needs in a coordinated way.

As a partnership we will provide leadership and joint accountability to provide protection, support, and representation for those in greatest need. We aim to be effective as a partnership through a joined-up approach with other public boards.

## Chris Noble

Chief Constable,  
Staffordshire Police

## Jon Rouse

Chief Executive Officer  
Stoke-on-Trent City Council,

We believe in prevention and that it is better to act before harm occurs, while seeking the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.

We aim to provide local solutions through services working with their communities, we will promote a child-centered approach and continue to do our best to listen to the views and understand the needs of children and families in Stoke-on-Trent. We will do our best to ensure people are supported and encouraged to make their own decisions with informed consent, but where children need to be protected, we will take decisive action to safeguard them.

All three partners have equal and joint responsibility for local safeguarding arrangements, and we are committed to the principles that support these arrangements.

## Peter Axon

Chief Executive  
Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board

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# INTRODUCTION

Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together through a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangement (MASA). The MASA is a statutory requirement of the 2004 Children's Act amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and updated by Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 Statutory Guidance.

Protecting children from abuse, neglect and exploitation is dependent on a joined-up response to safeguarding, enabled by cooperation, that goes beyond individual agencies statutory duties to have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the local area.

This document sets out the Stoke-on-Trent MASA to ensure that agencies and organisations work together to ensure that information is shared effectively to identify and understand risks to children. Further, responses to these risks are targeted and meet the needs identified and improve outcomes for children and families

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 strengthens the importance of leadership in effective MASAs.

The three safeguarding partners are responsible and accountable for this in their local areas.

Safeguarding partners are defined in legislation as follows

- (a) the local authority
- (b) an integrated care board for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area
- (c) the chief officer of police for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area



# LEAD SAFEGUARDING PARTNERS

The Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSPs) have been named as being able to:

- speak with authority for the safeguarding partner they represent,
- take decisions on behalf of their organisation or agency and commit them on policy, resourcing, and practice matters,
- hold their own organisation or agency to account on how effectively they participate and implement the local arrangements.

Each Lead Safeguarding Partner is responsible for discharging their own statutory and legislative duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. As leaders of their organisations and the statutory safeguarding partners, it is for each to assure themselves that their local arrangements are effective and keep children safe. This includes systems of assurance and accountability within each of their organisations, including inspection findings.

The Lead Safeguarding Partners are jointly responsible for ensuring the proper involvement of and oversight of all relevant agencies, and should act as a team, as opposed to a voice for their agency alone. Delivery of multi-agency safeguarding functions and processes is delegated to enable the partners to focus on their joint functions and maintain strategic oversight.



**Peter Axon**  
**Chief Executive**  
**Staffordshire and**  
**Stoke-on-Trent**  
**Integrated Care**  
**Board**



**Jon Rouse Chief**  
**Executive Officer**  
**Stoke-on-Trent City**  
**Council**



**Chris Noble**  
**Chief Constable**  
**Staffordshire Police**

**The safeguarding partners have a duty to:**

- **work together as a team to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area.**
- **include and develop the role of wider local organisations and agencies in the process.**



# DELEGATED SAFEGUARDING PARTNERS

As the three Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSPs) we have been tasked to take decisions on behalf of the Lead Safeguarding Partners, and hold our organisations to account for the delivery of effective multiagency safeguarding arrangements.

Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership have an Executive Committee that meet six weekly chaired by Simon White Interim Director of Children Services to discharge the joint functions of the DSPs as outlined in Working Together 2023.

We maintain oversight of the quality and compliance of the delivery of agreed shared priorities and provide assurance that processes are in place to ensure multi-agency practice is reviewed and operating well.

We report regularly to the Lead Safeguarding Partner Meeting to ensure that this is senior strategic oversight of the local Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements.



**Heather Johnstone**  
**Chief Nurse**  
**Staffordshire and Stoke**  
**Integrated Care Board**



**Simon White**  
**Interim Director of**  
**Children's Services**  
**Stoke City Council**



**Victoria Lee**  
**T/Detective Chief**  
**Superintendent**  
**Staffordshire Police**



# PURPOSE

The purpose of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements is to ensure that, at a local level, organisations and agencies are clear about how they will work together to safeguard children and promote their welfare. This means:

- there is 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.

\*Working Together to Safeguard Children s40 p22 Chapter 2 Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements.

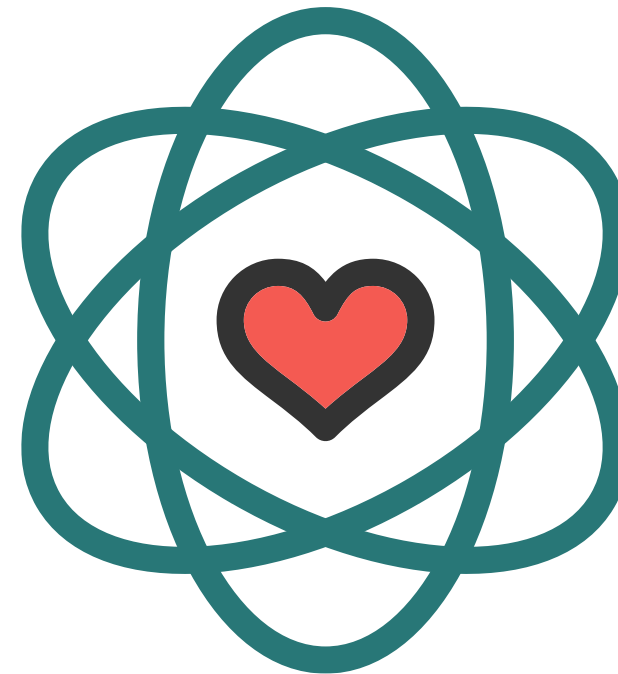


# OUR VISION AND VALUES



Children should be safe, healthy, nurtured and loved.

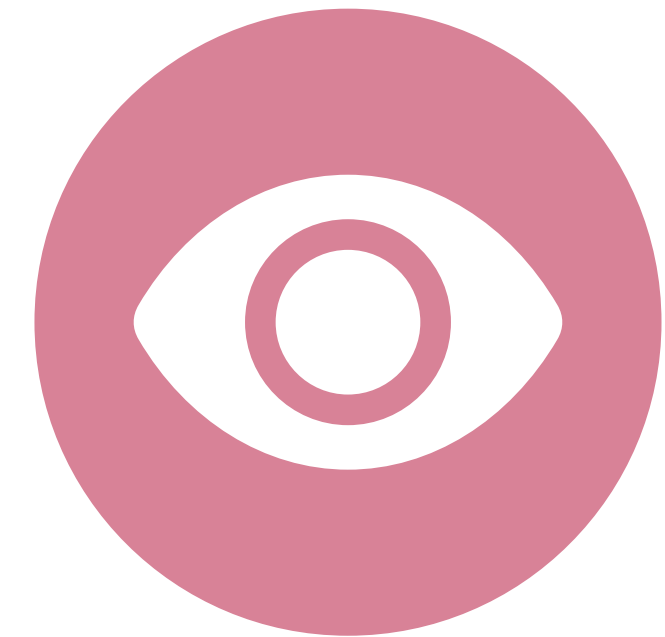
All our partners are committed to working together so that every child in Stoke-on-Trent children and young people are protected from abuse, neglect or harm and are equipped with the skills and knowledge they need to keep themselves safe as they grow older.



Children are at the heart of everything we do, and we will ensure that we listen to children, understand their lived experience and needs, risks are minimised and protective factors supported.

We will learn from each other, promote scrutiny and supportive conversations that have a sharp focus on keeping children safe.

Our strategy, plans and practice will be informed by evidence, performance and evaluation.



As leaders, we recognise that safeguarding our children cannot be achieved in isolation from other partnerships, or our communities. Further, that by working together to ensure that information about children and their families is shared effectively, risk of harm is correctly identified and understood, and children receive targeted services that meet their needs in a coordinated way.

Partners in Stoke-on-Trent will work effectively and collaboratively towards shared priorities to improve safeguarding outcomes for all children.



# PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLES

The Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership have aligned partnership principles to **Families Matter**. We believe families are at the heart of all the work we do to help children to thrive, from the earliest help through to statutory services. As a partnership we have agreed that to deliver best outcomes for children, we need to build supportive, empathetic, and consistent relationships that empower individuals and families.

This will be achieved through non-judgmental communication, transparency, and collaboration with families and between professionals. Trust, respect, fairness, and equity are foundational, with the guiding principles below focusing on empowerment, inclusion, and integrity. Lastly, these efforts must be flexible and adaptable, responding to the unique and evolving needs of the people they aim to support.

## F.A.M.I.L.I.E.S.

- Focused on Strengths
- Adaptability and Flexibility
- Mutual Trust and Relationships
- Inclusive and Accessible Support
- Long-Term Stability and Consistency
- Involvement in Decision-Making
- Empowerment and Collaboration
- Support for Whole Family Well-Being



# MULTI-AGENCY EXPECTATIONS

## A Child Centred Approach

### Leadership

**Collaborate:**

Develop a shared vision for achieving common goals.

**Learn:**

Use evidence from practice to evaluate effectiveness for children and families.

**Resource:**

Prioritize and share resources to support and protect children.

**Include:**

Foster an inclusive culture that values diversity and multi-agency collaboration.

**Mutual Challenge:**

Hold each other accountable for the quality of partnership work.

### Management

**Collaborate:**

Base decisions on shared practices and constructive debate.

**Learn:**

Allocate time for peer learning, audits, supervision, and observation.

**Resource:**

Ensure children receive holistic support from various agencies.

**Include:**

Support staff in identifying and challenging discrimination and stereotypes.

**Mutual Challenge:**

Encourage constructive challenges and value independent judgments to prevent groupthink.

# MULTI-AGENCY EXPECTATIONS

## A Child Centred Approach

### Direct Practice

#### **Collaborate:**

Practitioners share information to get a complete picture of what life is like for the child. Collectively, they ensure the child's voice is at the centre and the right support is provided.

#### **Learn:**

Practitioners learn together by drawing on the best available evidence and sharing their diverse perspectives during regular shared reflection on a child's development, experiences, and outcomes.

#### **Resource:**

Practitioners build strong relationships across agencies and disciplines to ensure they support and protect the child.

#### **Include:**

Practitioners recognise the differences between, and are confident to respond to, circumstances where children experience adversity. Locally this would mean understanding the impact of discrimination and bias in our practice.

#### **Mutual challenge:**

Practitioners challenge themselves and each other, question each other's assumptions, and seek to resolve differences of opinion in a restorative and respectful way.

# COMMITTEES

The partnership multi-agency safeguarding arrangements are delivered through subgroups to provide a framework for collaborative approaches to delivering the requirements and ambitions of the multiagency arrangements.

Each subgroup has terms of reference and an annual workplan which align with the arrangements and clearly demonstrate golden threads to priority areas and impact on the lives of children and young people.

Agendas and facilitative discussions at all meetings focus on safeguarding practice, impact and improvement, and designed to reflect the success criteria agreed by the Lead Safeguarding Partners.

The Partnership Business Unit and a multi- agency Quality Assurance Subgroup (which includes each of the three safeguarding partners) undertake the management and support function of the partnership.

Task and Finish groups are established as necessary. This model allows partnership group meetings to focus on practice and outcomes.



# CHAIRING ARRANGEMENTS

## Functions of Partnership Chair role\*

- To develop strategic links, support and hold to account all Lead Safeguarding Partners in fulfilling their safeguarding duties for children.
- To ensure that local arrangements are designed to work collaboratively and effectively by encouraging and supporting the development of partnership working between the Lead Safeguarding Partners and the Delegated Safeguarding Partners, independent scrutiny role and sub-groups.
- Chair the meetings of the Delegated Safeguarding Partners, including any additional meetings convened as a response to specific and exceptional circumstances, with the help of the business manager and independent scrutiny role.
- Offer appropriate challenge to ensure that the partners are accountable, and that the local arrangements operate effectively.

**The Chair for partnership is named as the City Director for Children's Social Care.**

## Success Criteria

We will know that we have successfully implemented the new arrangements when:

- **Children, families and communities tell us they feel safer and able to contribute to the work of the partnership.**
- **Professionals tell us they feel supported, know where to go for information, and they have opportunities to learn and network**
- **Policies, procedures and tools used by the partnership are regularly reviewed and reflect learning from aggregated quality assurance.**
- **We have strong working relationships with other Partnerships and Boards to help reduce duplication of efforts in promoting the welfare of children, and in protecting children from neglect abuse and exploitation in Stoke-on-Trent.**
- **The Partnership and sub-group chairs have clear workplans in place which are regularly monitored and reviewed.**
- **Escalation processes are well embedded and used to resolve professional differences.**
- **We can evidence that the budget allocated has been managed effectively to implement priorities agreed.**
- **As a partnership we work together to support local improvement plans.**

\*Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 Chapter 2 Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements p30

# JOINT FUNCTIONS

## OF THE LEAD SAFEGUARDING PARTNERS MEETING



Function
Set the strategic direction, vision, and culture of the local safeguarding arrangements, including agreeing and reviewing shared priorities and the resource required to deliver services effectively.
Lead and enable a commitment to the shared priorities, ensuring strong governance, accountability, and reporting mechanisms to hold their delegates to account for the delivery of agency commitments.
Review and sign off key partnership documents: published multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, including plans for independent scrutiny, shared annual budget, yearly report, and local threshold document.
Provide shared oversight of learning from independent scrutiny, serious incidents, local child safeguarding practice reviews, and national reviews, ensuring recommendations are implemented and have a demonstrable impact on practice (as set out in the yearly report)
Ensure multi-agency arrangements have the necessary level of business support, including intelligence and analytical functions, such as an agreed data set providing oversight and a robust understanding of practice.
Ensure all relevant agencies, including education settings, are clear on their role and contribution to multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

How will we discharge this function? We will ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to and approve for publication the Multiagency Safeguarding Arrangements</li> <li>• Agree the Strategic Business Plan and Priorities</li> <li>• Set the funding contributions annually and review resources</li> <li>• Establish arrangements for Independent Scrutiny</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree the delegated functions and delegated safeguarding leads</li> <li>• Agree an annual cycle of reporting</li> <li>• Enlist scrutiny to test the effectiveness of arrangements.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approve core documents including the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements, Yearly Report, Plan for Scrutiny, Annual Budget and Threshold of Need</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree a Performance and Quality Assurance Framework</li> <li>• Receive monitoring and oversight reports</li> <li>• Receive Child Safeguarding Practice Review Reports, Rapid Review Reports and updates on action plans arising.</li> <li>• Hold Delegated Safeguarding Partners to account on outcomes</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree resources to be made available to the partnership business unit and its functions</li> <li>• Agree to consider escalations for unresolved professional differences or concerns in line with the partnership Escalation Policy</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree representation for education, at operational and strategic levels.</li> <li>• Ensure relevant agencies are engaged and communicated with</li> </ul>

# JOINT FUNCTIONS OF THE DELEGATED SAFEGUARDING PARTNERS EXECUTIVE MEETING



Function
Delivery and monitoring of multi-agency priorities and procedures to protect and safeguard children in the local area, in compliance with published arrangements and thresholds.
Close partnership working and engagement with education (at strategic and operational level) and other relevant agencies, allowing better identification of and response to harm.
The implementation of effective information sharing arrangements between agencies, including data sharing that facilitates joint analysis between partner agencies.
Delivery of high-quality and timely rapid reviews and local child safeguarding practice reviews, with the impact of learning from local and national reviews and independent scrutiny clearly evidenced in yearly reports.
The provision of appropriate multi-agency safeguarding professional development and training.
Seeking of, and responding to, feedback from children and families about their experiences of services and co-designing services to ensure children from different communities and groups can access the help and protection they need

How will we discharge this function? We will ....
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and monitor the Strategic Business Plan and Priorities.</li> <li>• Put in place a Performance and Quality Assurance and Learning Improvement Framework.</li> <li>• Oversee the collection, analysis of data, information and intelligence</li> <li>• Seek assurance and monitor the implementation of learning.</li> <li>• Promote a consistent understanding and application of referral and intervention thresholds across agencies so children receive the right support at the right time.</li> <li>• Coordinate the views of children and families about the services they receive</li> <li>• Support engagement with relevant agencies.</li> <li>• Advise the Lead Safeguarding Partners of key challenges and emerging priorities.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure representation on committees and subgroups from education provision and services.</li> <li>• Strengthen the voice of education.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that a multiagency information sharing agreement is in place and is widely disseminated and utilised.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree the procedures for local child safeguarding practice reviews Focus on outcomes from learning through scrutiny.</li> <li>• Oversee the quality of safeguarding practice for children and families.</li> <li>• Use learning from local practice and serious incident notifications to prompt reflection and analysis Strengthen system conditions. for effective multi-agency child protection work.</li> <li>• Chair, attend or be reported to on regular multi-agency operational meetings and subgroups.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that there is an annual programme of training</li> <li>• Receive an annual report on training outcomes and activity</li> <li>• Ensure that training is quality assured and reflects local learning from child safeguarding practice reviews.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider approaches to engagement with children, young people, families and communities as part of the scrutiny plan, consultation on strategies and service redesign.</li> <li>• Strengthen engagement with local participation and engagement groups.</li> <li>• Consider options for a young scrutineer.</li> </ul>

# DELEGATED FUNCTIONS

## OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

Function
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure the business of the partnership is efficiently and effectively discharged.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure there is effective joint working and flow of information between subgroups.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be responsible for implementing the Safeguarding Quality Assurance Framework, and related activities.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To take a role in monitoring multiagency performance, audits, case reviews and other assurance activities and to determine impact of the work undertaken.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To review how we are doing and what we can do better and any learning is reported to the SSCP and disseminated to frontline practitioners where relevant</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To seek the views of children and families when undertaking quality assurance activities.</li> </ul>

### How will we discharge this function? We will ....

- Oversee the operational delivery of the Strategic Business Plan and Priorities.
  - Develop a Quality Assurance Performance and Learning Improvement Framework
  - Develop an annual calendar of assurance and programme of multiagency audit undertaken by a multiagency audit panel.
  - Oversee the collection, analysis of data, information and intelligence
  - Reflect learning from case reviews, audits and scrutiny into the quality assurance cycle.
  - Review the thresholds of need periodically.
  - Engage the views of children and families about the services they receive
  - Support engagement with relevant agencies through subgroup membership
  - Advise the Designated Safeguarding Partners of key challenges and emerging priorities.
- Ensure representation on the Quality Assurance Group from education provision and services.
  - Receive updates from the Education Subgroup
- Implement the information sharing agreement in practice with partners through audit, case reviews.
- Receive assurance from the practice review group.
  - Work with the independent scrutineers to focus on improving outcomes for children.
  - Receive reports on quality of safeguarding practice for children and families.
  - Advise on how learning from local practice and serious incident notifications can strengthen system conditions. for effective multi-agency child protection work
  - Provide a quality assurance report to the meeting of the Delegated Safeguarding Partners
- Work with the learning and development group to ensure learning is reflected in the annual programme of training
- Consider approaches to engagement with children, young people, families and communities as part of the quality assurance framework.



# DELEGATED FUNCTIONS

## OF THE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT SUBGROUP



Function
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning, delivering and evaluating the multi-agency training offer to support best practice across the partnership</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seeking assurance that high quality single-agency and multi-agency training on safeguarding and promoting welfare for children and young people is provided at different levels to meet local needs.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that learning from reviews, scrutiny and other assurance event is disseminated widely and the impact is measured</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This group is key in supporting a learning culture across partner agencies and supporting wider system change to improve safeguarding outcomes for children and families.</li> </ul>

How will we discharge this function? We will ....
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a multiagency training programme annually</li> <li>• Oversee the delivery of the training programme through training updates</li> <li>• Oversee the training evaluations through training outcome updates quarterly to ensure training effectiveness and impact.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality assurance of multiagency training</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that training is updated with local learning from case reviews ,audits and scrutiny.</li> <li>• Undertake an annual training needs analysis</li> <li>• Develop actions for learning from reviews as identified in recommendations</li> <li>• Oversee the development of briefing and learning materials for reviews</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a learning improvement approach to support a learning culture, reflecting on how to engage with practitioners, children young people and families in understanding the impact of learning on practice.</li> <li>• Contribute to the partnership newsletter.</li> <li>• Contribute to the partnership website.</li> <li>• Consider ways to engage with relevant agencies in the commissioning and delivery of training.</li> <li>• Support learning events, conferences and Festival of Practice activities.</li> <li>• Provide updates on activity to the Quality Assurance Committee.</li> </ul>

# DELEGATED FUNCTIONS

## OF THE PRACTICE REVIEW GROUP

Function
To oversee the Rapid Review process of all serious incidents notified to the National Review panel. Ensuring that the Rapid Review meets the National requirements, identifies the learning and decides if a Child Safeguarding Practice Review is required.
To commission and oversee all the Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews ensuring they meet national requirements and support the Safeguarding Children partnership to implement and embed the learning at both a strategic and practice level.
To ensure any learning from local Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR) and adult Safeguarding Adult Reviews that relate to children is overseen by the subgroup.
To ensure that all learning from national reviews is disseminated across the partnership and reassurance is sought from agencies that the learning has been implemented locally.
To liaise with the learning and development subgroup to ensure that the learning for all reviews (Rapid, CSPR, relevant DHR's and national reviews) has been incorporated into training and the evaluations can evidence the impact on practice.
To oversee and track the recommendations from all reviews (Rapid, CSPR, relevant DHR's and National reviews) to ensure that they have been completed and agencies can evidence the improvements.

### How will we discharge this function? We will ....

- Working with regional partners on changes and updates to the Toolkit and Operational Guidance
- Receive updates and reports on the delivery of reviews and action plans
- Review author recommendations for commissioned reviews, agree terms of reference and timelines for reviews.
- Quality assure review reports
- Oversee publication and engagement actions
- Ensure that single agency updates and governance are in place for agreeing reports, and action plans
- Domestic Homicide Reviews are a standing agenda item on the Practice Review Group
- Membership extends to include a domestic abuse lead
- Arrangements are in place for someone from the group to attend DHR panels that include children and families.
- Reviews including children and families are received by the group
- Consider national reviews and reports and areas for local area action and dissemination.
- Work closely with the Learning Development subgroup and Quality Assurance Committee to ensure that findings from reviews are embedding in a cycle of continuous learning and improvement.
- Overseeing case considerations, rapid reviews and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews/multiagency learning reviews in response to serious safeguarding incidents.
- Quality Assuring reports and action plans.
- Identify new and emerging areas of risk or learning.
- Seek assurance from agencies on practice improvement in response to learning from reviews.
- Develop actions plans in response to findings and recommendations from reviews
- Monitor and update actions plans in response to reviews

# DELEGATED FUNCTIONS

## OF THE EDUCATION SUBGROUP

Function
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring compliance with safeguarding responsibilities across all education providers. Through Reviewing S175 audits and recommending improvements.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding the roles of education providers in relation to at-risk children and supporting Stoke-on-Trent City Council in fulfilling educational responsibilities.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarifying areas for development in the early help agenda.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sharing insights from Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) network meetings with multi-agency practitioners.</li> <li>Advising on new developments identified by DSLs.</li> <li>Identifying knowledge gaps for school DSLs and finding solutions.</li> <li>Ensuring education providers understand their responsibilities regarding staff allegations.</li> <li>Reviewing and disseminating national and local learning.</li> </ul>

How will we discharge this function? We will ....
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overseeing the section 175 audit, and working with education providing to engage in the process.</li> <li>Receiving updates on areas identified for improvement and action.</li> <li>Having oversight of the Keeping Children Safe in Schools agenda and actions arising.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updating heads of schools and DSLs on safeguarding themes and topics.</li> <li>Sharing learning from reviews, audits and other sources in relation to schools and safeguarding</li> <li>Engaging relevant agencies and other safeguarding professionals in discussion on the multiagency response to risk in line with the partnership priorities</li> <li>Overseeing areas for education providers identified by the partnership such as elective home education, missing in education and SEND</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with early help leads,</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cascade learning to networks</li> <li>Escalate concerns or emerging areas of risk for attention</li> <li>Engaging in consultation on school safeguarding templates and guidance</li> <li>Engaging with the LADO</li> <li>Provide updates to the Quality Assurance Committee.</li> </ul>

# Safeguarding in Education

The Education Safeguarding Subgroup works collaboratively with education providers to ensure they effectively contribute to the development and update safeguarding procedures and guidance.

The Stoke-on-Trent Education Safeguarding Lead Officer continues to represent educational settings to the safeguarding partners. The Lead Officer attends multi-agency meetings/groups to act as a voice for school practitioners. This also means that the Lead Officer can disseminate learning back to schools based on local needs and ensure schools are regularly invited to relevant multi-agency meetings.

The Education Safeguarding Lead is also responsible for ensuring that the Section 175 safeguarding audit is completed annually and provides appropriate qualitative and quantitative information to safeguarding partners and schools in order to promote and ensure self-evaluation as well ensuring that safeguarding duties are discharged.

## **Keeping Child Safe, Helping Families Thrive**

Stoke-on Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership are working with the Department of Education to facilitate discussions on how best to discharge its' statutory functions to work with education partners.

Looking forward to pending changes to anticipated legislative changes to support children and families, the partnership is looking at how, within it's arrangements it can:

- Enhance the role of education in safeguarding
- Create a more integrated and effective approach to child protection that prioritizes the needs and voices of children.
- Represent education at a strategic as well as operational level, ensuring that schools are actively involved in the multiagency safeguarding arrangements.
- Enhance the contribution of educational professionals in identifying and responding to safeguarding concerns.
- Including educational setting in safeguarding discussions
- and decision making processes.



# Quality Assurance and Learning Improvement



# STOKE-ON\_TRENT



263,157 Residents



60,165 Children and Young People



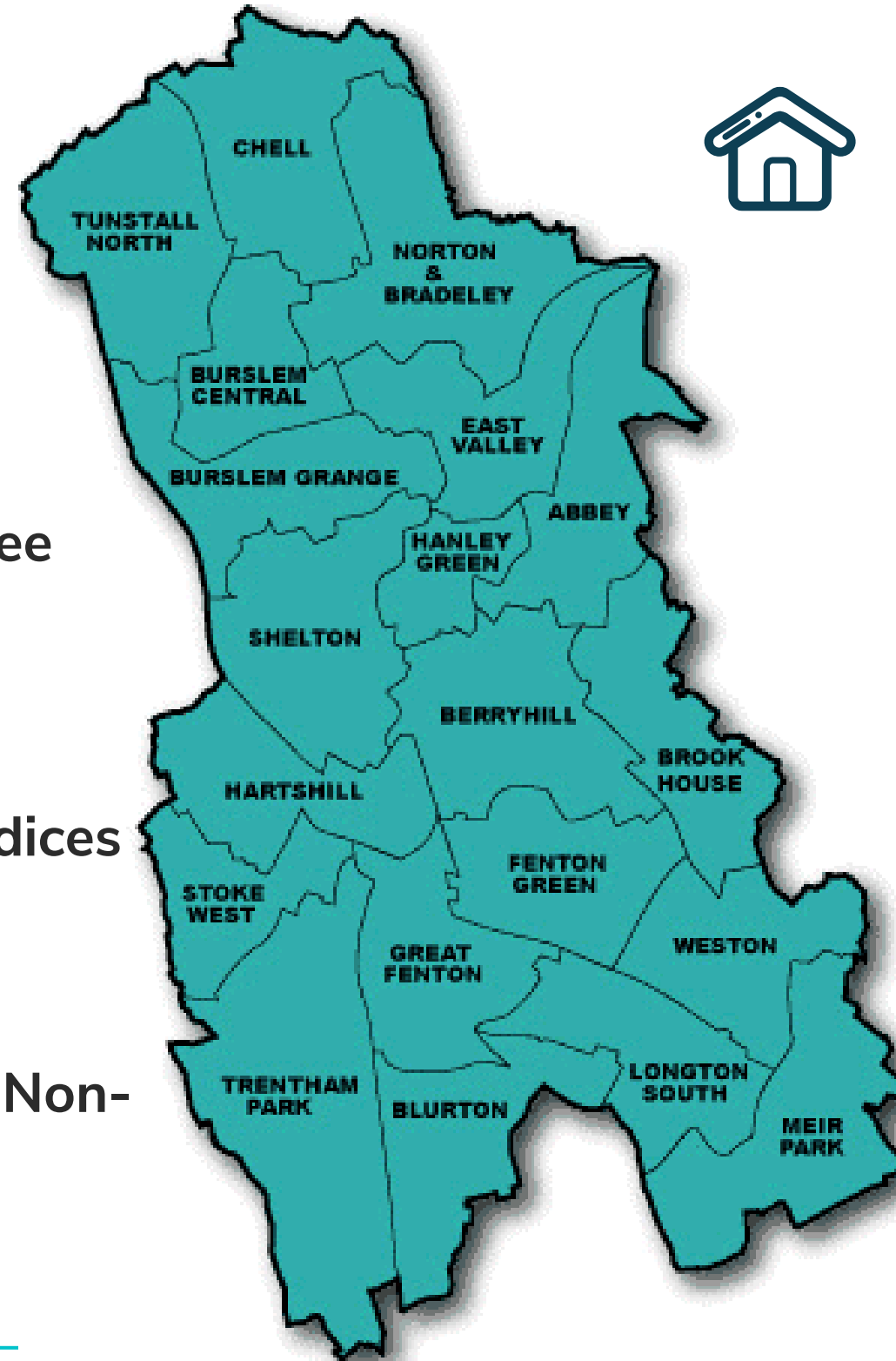
37.4% of children receive school free meals.



Stoke-on-Trent is the 14<sup>th</sup> most deprived LA in England (English Indices of Deprivation, MHCLG 2019)



We are a city growing in diversity, Non-white' account for 27% of the population age 0-15 years



1 in 51 children in the city our in our care.

1 in 26 children in the city have open involvement with children's social care.

19.3% of children have a Special Educational Need or Disability.

Infant mortality rates are significantly higher than the national average.



# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

## Key Priorities for Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership 2022- 2025

The safeguarding partnership has identified two overarching strategic priorities three practice priorities and three assurance priorities:

### Strategic priorities:

- Lead and embed effective Partnership arrangements to safeguard children
- Develop and implement a Quality Assurance and Scrutiny Framework

### Practice priorities:

- Child Exploitation (joint with Staffordshire Integrated Care Board)
- Neglect including the Graded Care Profile 2 (joint with Staffordshire Integrated Care Board)
- Safeguarding young children aged 0-2 years

### Assurance Priorities:

These are areas led by other partnerships but have key safeguarding elements which the Partnership need to be assured of.

Assurance Area 1: Missing Children

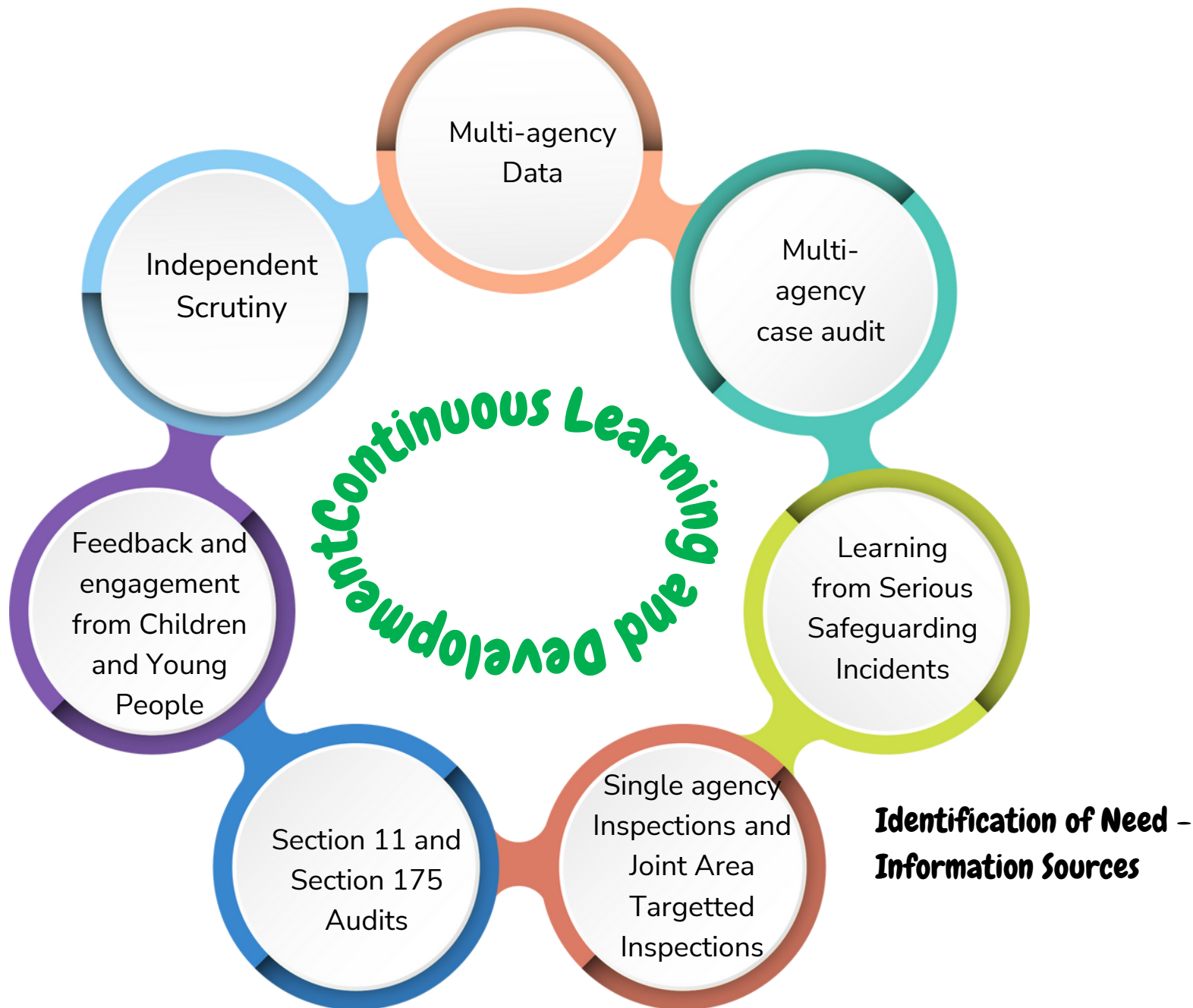
Assurance Area 2: Serious Youth Violence

Assurance Area 3: Child Mental Health

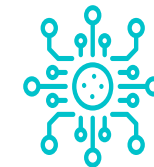
Stoke-on-Trent is currently working on its priorities for 2025-2026 which will be published in 2025.



# QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK



The partnership quality assurance framework employs various methods to ensure effective multi-agency practices for improving outcomes for children and families, including safeguarding reviews and audits. Recently, the model was revised to include three independent scrutineers for enhanced resilience and challenge, each focusing on specific scrutiny tasks.



**Sets the multiagency approach to collect, scrutinise and evaluate local data and intelligence to create a local picture of need and services.**



**Communicate with relevant agencies to respond to key challenges and emerging priorities**



**Creates a culture of continuous learning and improvement.**



# PERFORMANCE

# OUTCOME MEASURES

## Outcome 1 children & families stay together and get the help they need

### Family stability

- Rate of new entrants into care with a breakdown by whether new entrant are Unaccompanied Child Asylum Seeker
- Rate of children in care
- Reunification of Children in Care within 1 year

### Access to support and getting help

- Rate of children in need
- Repeat referrals (within 12 months)
- Percentage of No Further Action at assessment against percentage of No Further Action that progressed to assessment within 6-12 months
- Number of children receiving early help support following an Early Help assessment
- Early Help plans that result in no further plans
- Total number of contacts (by source)
- Number of early help assessments (repeat early help assessments)
- Repeat Children in Need/Child Protection plans
- Source of referrals

## Child wellbeing and development

- School attendance
- Attendance of Children in Need, Child Protection and Children in Care and children previously looked after
- Educational engagement persistent absence and exclusions
- Child and Adult Mental Health referrals
- Number of children referrals for ADHD assessment
- Numbers of Harmful sexual behaviour referrals
- Number of children referred for mental health liaison
- Number of children on Deprivation of Liberty orders
- Number of children receiving AIMs assessment

### Educational attainment

- Educational attainment progress and attainment in key stage results for those open to children social care.
- *Good level of development-early years foundation stage*

# PERFORMANCE

## OUTCOME MEASURES

### Outcome 2 children and young people are supported by their family network

#### Families engaging and receiving support from their family network

- Percentage of children who cease being looked after due to moving into special guardianship order or care arrangement order
- Number of family network/Family Group Conference meetings
- Number of kinship care arrangements
- Number of children private fostering
- Children placed with siblings
- Number of Children in Need who are not living with their parent

#### Harm outside the home

- Assessment factors which include extra familial harm
- Local area crime stats (knife crime, county lines, drug offences, Domestic Abuse, child exploitation, gangs)

### Outcome 3 children and young people are safe in and outside their home

#### Child safety (general)

- Hospital admissions or Accident and Emergency visits cause by unintentional and deliberate injuries to children and young people
- Rates of self harm
- Missing children

#### Child abuse/neglect

- Assessment factors includes child abuse or neglect
- Access to advocacy services
- Percentage of Child Protection Plan over 2 years and repeat Child Protection Plan
- Number of Graded Care Profile 2 assessments completed by agency.
- Number/outcome of strategy discussions
- Assessments where Domestic Abuse is identified
- Number of families considered at MARAC
- Initial Child Protection Conference and Review Child Protection Conference timeliness
- Multi agency attendance at conferences
- Multi agency attendance at strategy meetings
- Multi agency attendance at Multi-Agency Child Exploitation panel
- Number of Local Authority Designated Officer referrals (roles and outcomes)
- Number of children that go missing from home or care
- Number of return home interviews completed
- Number of Multi-Agency Child Exploitation meetings
- Number and nature of reports of bullying in school
- Number of Prevent referrals/type of extremism
- Number of children seen at the Multi-Agency Child Exploitation Panel

# PERFORMANCE OUTCOME MEASURES

## Outcome 4 Children in Care and care leavers have stable loving homes

- Average number of placement changes
- Distance of placements from home
- Percentage of children living in foster, residential or secure
- Average time of placement order to matched for those who are adopted
- Number of adoption early perm placements

## Wellbeing of children in care

- Strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ score)
- Percentage of children who have had up to date annual health assessment
  - up to date immunisations
  - up to date dental check

## Quality of life for care experienced children

- Care leavers employment education and training
- Percentage of care leavers in unsuitable accommodation (children in custody)
- Percentage of children leaving care who are in staying put arrangements

## Outcomes from learning and development

- Number of multiagency training attendees,
- Post training evaluation,
- 3 monthly evaluation of training,



# SCRUTINY

During 2024 the Partnership developed a new model of scrutiny. We now have a pool of three scrutineers who are able to bring expertise from different background to the role. They provide additional assurance in assessing the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area and provide added value to what we already know and do.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 requires that safeguarding partners ensure that the scrutiny is objective, acts as a constructive critical friend and promotes reflection to drive continuous improvement.

The triangulation and scrutiny of how we are doing across the system enables us to test out assurance or identify where additional activity or assurance may be required. In addition to practice review information and quantitative data, the Quality Assurance and Scrutiny Framework sets out other assurance methods such as:

- assurance reports from the statutory partners and designated relevant agencies will be requested where deemed necessary.
- receiving external audits and inspection reports of safeguarding or related issues from bodies
- progress against action plans to address any significant continuing safeguarding risks identified during the above processes.
- themes where performance is considered to be a significant risk.

**The independent scrutiny role involves:**

- **Providing rigorous support and challenge to safeguarding partners at strategic and operational levels.**
- **Evaluating the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements through various scrutiny methods**
- **Verifying statutory duties and implementing quality assurance mechanisms.**
- **Incorporating the voices of children and families into scrutiny processes.**
- **Acting as a 'critical friend' to facilitate dialogue between practitioners and leaders.**
- **Offering independent advice during inter-agency disagreements and aiding escalation procedures.**
- **Driving continuous improvement, assessing local arrangements, and emphasizing evidence-based practices.**
- **Scrutiny is tailored to local need.**
- **Annual reports should reflect the impact of scrutiny on improving effectiveness.**



# OUR INDEPENDENT SCRUTINERS

## **Keith Perkins**

Keith Perkin retired from the Devon & Cornwall Police in January 2020. Previous roles included Local Policing Commander, Head of Public Protection and part of the National Modern Slavery Team, specifically around organised immigration crime. As Local Policing Commander, he chaired the respective Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership and Community Safety Partnerships. On retirement he was appointed as an Independent Chair for a Safeguarding Adults Board and a local Multiple Complex Needs Alliance. He is also a lead reviewer for Safeguarding Adults Reviews.

## **Val Jones**

Val Jones has over 40 years experience in the NHS. Qualified as nurse/ midwife/ health visitor and has worked across a range of health scenarios in clinical and senior roles. Specific areas were quality assurance and safeguarding. Retired as Chief Nurse / Director for Quality & Safety for two clinical commissioning groups in Staffordshire

## **Helen Banister**

Helen Bannister is a qualified social worker with operational and strategic experience in children and adult services including in the context of strategic partnerships. Her most senior role was Head of Service. She has worked as a consultant since 2016 with different local authorities and the Children's Society delivering service reviews, improvement activity, quality assurance frameworks, independent reviews and scrutiny. She is a Local Government Associate.

# CHILD SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE REVIEWS

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 sets out the legal framework in for local safeguarding arrangements for children and the responsibilities for how a system learns lessons from serious child safeguarding incidents.

At a National level this rests with the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (the National Panel) and at a local level with the three Safeguarding Partners (Integrated Care Boards, Police and Local Authorities).

Local areas are required to conduct a Rapid Review whenever a child has died or been seriously harmed and abuse or neglect is known or suspected. As the name suggests the rapid review takes place quickly after the event to ascertain immediate learning, safeguarding, and to facilitate a recommendation on whether to progress to a Child Safeguarding Practice Review.

## **Purpose**

The key purpose of a child safeguarding practice review is understand how practice can be improved through changes to the system. Reviews seek to explore practice and consider why decisions were made.

Stoke-on-Trent operates within the Regional Toolkit and Practice Guide.  
Available [here](#).

# LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR REVIEWING CHILD DEATHS

When a child dies who is normally resident in area, or has died in the area, Child Death Review Partners are required to undertake a review

The National guidance and statutory requirements for this are set out in : Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk) and Child death review: statutory and operational guidance (England) - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)).

This process is overseen by a multiagency professionals who attend a Child Death Overview Panel or CDOP.

Learning from Child Death Reviews and the CDOP is managed by the National Child Mortality Database (NCMD).

All Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent child death data is held on E-CDOP which links in real-time to the NCMD. The CDOP works with the newly established infant mortality groups, which reports directly to NHS England.

Where a child's death is unexpected a Joint Agency Response (JAR) will be triggered. If a child's death is :

- is or could be due to external causes
- is sudden and there is no immediately apparent cause (including sudden unexpected death in infancy or childhood)
- occurs in custody, or where the child was detained under the Mental Health Act
- occurs where the initial circumstances raise any suspicions that the death may not have been natural
- occurs in the case of a stillbirth where no healthcare professional was in attendance

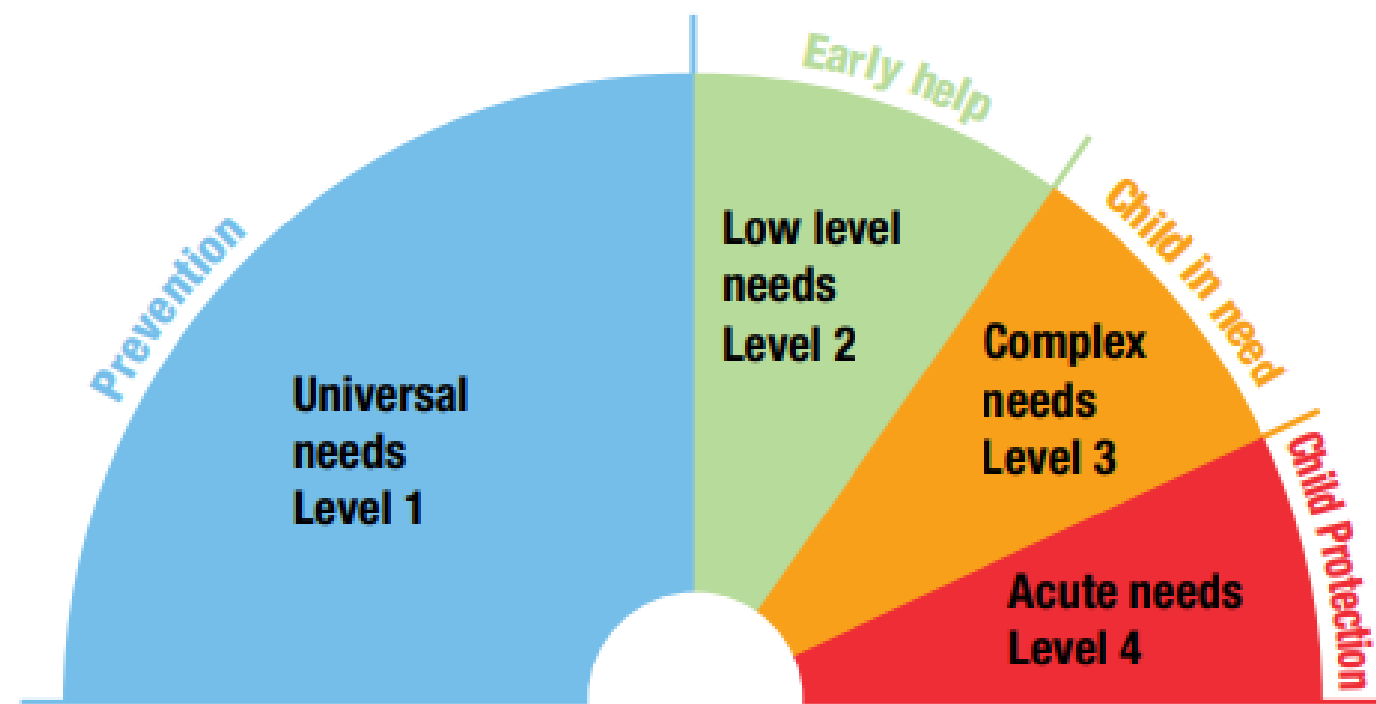
The purpose of the JAR Meeting is to enable the sharing of information, multi-agency discussions, planning to safeguard other individuals, if identified and to ensure support is put in place for the child's family, peers and professionals.

More information can be found- on the partnership website, [here](#).



# THRESHOLD OF NEED

**Understanding need and identifying risk. Providing the right help, at the right time, in the right place.**



## What does it mean?

Restorative Practice is a relationship and strength-based approach that embodies a set of core beliefs and principles which are built on mutual respect and trust. This provides a foundation to ensure that professionals are working in partnership with parents, carers and families to appropriately meet their needs, and that this is taking place in a safe way.

By using these approaches, we will provide staff with a range of language, behaviours and tools that strengthen their relationships with children, young people and families, empowering them to share responsibility by using a solution-focused approach which supports positive change.

This includes being explicit about the 'bottom-line' to safeguard or protect a child, using a 'high challenge' and 'high support' approach, which builds on strong relationship-based practice between children, families and professionals. Therefore, achieving sustainable change and reducing the likelihood of dependency on professional services. The fundamental unifying hypothesis of restorative practices is that "human beings are happier, more cooperative and productive, and more likely to make positive changes in their behaviour when those in positions of authority do things with them, rather than to them or for them."

**Stoke-on-Trent Threshold of Need document can be found on the partnership website.**



## Our Approach

Meeting the Needs of Children and Families in Stoke-on-Trent Restorative Practice - Stoke-on-Trent Children's Services are implementing a Restorative Practice Model across the system. This is about how we work with children and families but also how we work with each other and our partners.



# EARLY HELP FAMILY HUBS

Family Hubs are local buildings where families and children of all ages can access services delivered by co-located partners.

The Family Hub network is the totality of sites, outreach services and virtual services that are connected to the Family Hub. Following the Leadsom Report and the Independent Review of Children's Social Care, the government is funding 75 local authorities (including Stoke-on-Trent) to develop a Family Hub model between 2022 and 2025.

Under the plans, local authority teams will work alongside colleagues from the health, education, voluntary, community and faith sectors to deliver services to families across the Family hub network. Family Hubs provide services tailored to the needs of families in their area, pioneering innovative, evidence-based and cross-sector approaches to universal and targeted early support.

The Start for Life period (the 1,001 days from conception to age 2) is a particular priority, but the government expects Family Hubs to support families with children aged 0-19 (or 0-25 with SEND).



# INFORMATION SHARING

The 'One Staffordshire Information Sharing Protocol' deals with the emerging issues surrounding information sharing between agencies and organisations that are delivering services for the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the community.

Promoting and achieving wellbeing is only likely to be successful where organisations work together to ensure that communities; are kept safe; participate in healthy lifestyle choices; are looked after; are provided with the opportunity to succeed; are part of a thriving economy; and live in and enjoy a protected and respected built and natural environment.

## Requirement

Information sharing among organisations is crucial for improving outcomes for children and families. Safeguarding partners can request relevant information from any person or agency to assist in safeguarding efforts, as mandated by the Children Act 2004. Compliance with these requests is necessary, or legal action may be taken.

Safeguarding partners must understand their responsibilities under information law and follow guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office. An agreement should be established to ensure safe and effective information sharing between partners and relevant agencies.

This Protocol includes information sharing between services commissioned to deliver health and social care services within the boundaries of Staffordshire (including Stoke-on-Trent) but may also include services delivered outside of the area. Our aim is to enable partners to co-ordinate effort, collate and exchange information to achieve joint objectives, co-ordinate resources, support one another in addressing common and locally set priorities and comply with the law.

The protocol outlines the purposes for sharing information, the powers that organisations have to share information, the role of partners and what can be expected from them, the process for sharing and scheduled review dates. The protocol alone does not provide the legal right to share information, it sets out the boundaries and guides under which sharing can occur and shows a commitment from its signatories to uphold what is required of them.

Stoke-on-Trent is a signatory to the One Staffordshire Information Sharing Protocol available [here](#).



# VOICE OF THE CHILD

## We will

- Aim to put children and young people at the centre of understanding safeguarding effectiveness and that we are doing the right things, at the right time. This includes listening to their experiences, views, aspirations, ideas and acting on them.
- Align our participation activities to the Stoke-on-Trent Be the cause, youth participation strategy ( [Policies, procedures and strategies directory – Youth Participation Strategy 2021 | Stoke-on-Trent](#) ) utilising existing forums and structures to maximise opportunities for young people to shape their involvement in the safeguarding partnership.
- Ensure the focus of participation and engagement for the Partnership will be in relation to the priority areas identified in the business plan.
- Seek feedback from children and young people who use safeguarding services, so we know their view on how to keep children safe in Stoke- on-Trent
- Create opportunities for young people to work with the partnership in order to provide young people with the information and tools to keep them safe through accessible social media platforms
- Develop young people as scrutineers to help us scrutinise the effectiveness of safeguarding services linked to the business plan

# DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

## Requirement

Safeguarding partners and relevant agencies must act in accordance with the arrangements for their area and will be expected to understand each other's differences of views and resolve such differences locally.

LSPs should therefore agree a system to resolve disputes and issues between partners within multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. This may be applied to isolated issues or incidents as well as any intractable recurring ones. . At all stages LSPs and their delegates should make use of key stakeholders in their local systems, that might include Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), Mayors, lead members, and/or independent persons, who can be brought to the table to assist them to settle on a solution. If the issue remains unresolved between the three safeguarding partners and their local networks the next stage of escalation is to the Secretary of State.

\*Working Together To Safeguard Children 2023

## Professional Challenge and Escalation

During 2024 we have updated our Escalation and professional challenge document to support Safeguarding partners working together to resolve any professional challenges and disputes locally. Whilst every effort will be made to work across the partnership in a strengths-based way, there may be occasions where necessary agreement cannot be reached after escalation to the Partnership.

This partnership policy does not negate any single agency policies and it is expected that organisations will adhere to their own whistle-blowing policies as appropriate. For more information see the Stoke-on-Trent whistleblowing guidance. The Lead Safeguarding Partners and all relevant agencies will be expected to adhere to the policy.

In order to reach a resolution, the partnership may need to commission an independent adviser to review and make recommendations and the Lead Safeguarding Partners will make any final decisions required.

**Stoke-on-Trent Escalation Policy can be found on the partnership website [here](#)**



# BUSINESS FUNCTION

The Partnership Business Unit is operationally managed by the Partnership Business Manager, and corporately managed by the hosted agency, Children's Social Care.

Duties are varied, but will include the following:

- Maintain and update policy and procedures, including links with Staffordshire and the West Midlands Partnership Network.
- Maintain communications and knowledge sharing including briefings and web presence, including communicating learning and key messages to all agencies.
- Maintain partnership plans such as a forward plan, business plan and support subgroup work plans.
- Preparing agendas, administer and minute meetings of all groups that sit within the arrangements.

- Support a range of multi-agency practice reviews including co-ordination management of action plans.
- Coordinate and administer multi-agency audits.
- Collate performance information reports and draft annual reports.
- Lead a Safeguarding Training Needs Analysis of the Stoke-on-Trent safeguarding children workforce.
- Manage multi-agency learning and development, co-ordinate training and delivery of multi-agency training programme and learning events
- Maintain links and joint working with other partnerships and Boards.

\*Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 Chapter 2 Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements p30



# FUNDING

The Delegated Safeguarding Partners agreed the overall budget for 2024/25 will be maintained at the current level subject to confirmation in the formal budget setting process.

The budget will be shared and proportional, transparent to children and families in the area, and sufficient to cover all elements of the arrangements. In addition to funding, donation of professional's time to the training pool, supporting sub-group activity and no-cost venues for training and meetings are provided by a range of partners.

## Requirement

The Lead Safeguarding Partners should agree on the level of funding needed to deliver the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. This includes consideration of business and analytical support, independent scrutiny, infrastructure, and core functions including local children safeguarding practice reviews, multi-agency training and learning events. It is the responsibility of the Lead Safeguarding Partners to ensure that adequate funding is allocated and spent in line with agreed priorities.

Funding contributions from the statutory safeguarding partners should be equitable and agreed by the Lead Safeguarding Partners.

The arrangements should be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that they can meet the financial needs of the arrangements.. The funding should be transparent to children and families in the area, and the individual contributions of safeguarding partners and relevant agencies should be clearly set out in reporting.

\*Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 Chapter 2 Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements p30

# WORKING WITH THE VOLUNTARY, CHARITABLE ENTERPRISES SECTOR

## Requirement

Voluntary, charity, social enterprise (VCSE) organizations and sports clubs play a vital role in children's education and activities. Staff and volunteers often establish trusted relationships with children, being key figures in identifying concerns and providing support, including safeguarding against abuse.

Local Safeguarding Partnerships (LSPs) should recognise the importance of including VCSEs in safeguarding arrangements, engaging them in the development of these measures and ensuring they understand their statutory duties.

Additionally, non-statutory guidance outlines necessary safeguarding protocols for these providers, emphasising the need to know local arrangements and referral paths.

Stoke-on-Trent have a [Community Directory](#) which is an online tool to help people find out about activities, clubs, support, health services, in the local area.

It is a searchable online directory containing details of a wide range of care providers, services, self help groups, community and voluntary organisations and much more.

Organisations can add their own organisation or service for free simply by creating a log in.

STOKE-ON-TRENT  
COMMUNITY DIRECTORY



# JOINT WORKING STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY AND STOKE-ON-TRENT CITY

Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership has a strong commitment to working closely with the County of Staffordshire in recognition of the geographical footprint across Health and Police partners.

A collaborative and joined up approach can only improve safeguarding outcomes where we have identified common areas of concern.

Our approach recognises that children and families move across local authority boundaries and will benefit from an aligned response to key strategic areas.

We have been working together with Staffordshire on our response to Domestic Abuse, Child Exploitation and Neglect.

We look forward to consolidating this work and being open to opportunities to create a stronger response to safeguarding as a result.

## **Regional Working Arrangements**

Stoke-on-Trent has commissioned Tri-x and will be working from a common directory of resources, policies and procedures for professionals across the region. This will reduce any variable practices across the region in response to safeguarding concerns, and standardize ways of working for those safeguarding professionals working across different local authorities.





# JOINT WORKING

## **Lead Member Role**

The Lead Member for Children's Services in the local authority holds key political accountability for ensuring that the needs of all children and young people, including the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, and their families and carers, are addressed. In doing so, they work closely with other local partners to improve the outcomes and well-being of children and young people.

## **Health and Wellbeing Board**

The Health and Wellbeing Board is a statutory Board that develops and oversees the delivery of a local Health and Wellbeing Strategy for the city, based on a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment that is produced by the Director of Public Health. The core purpose of the Board is to bring about improvements in the health of the population.

## **Integrated Care System (ICS) and Integrated Care Board (ICB)**

The Health and Care Bill was passed through Parliament in early-2022, set out plans to put Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) on a statutory footing, empowering them to better join up health and care services, improve population health and reduce health inequalities. The ICS is led by an NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB), an organisation with responsibility for NHS functions and budgets, and an Integrated Care Partnership (ICP), a statutory committee bringing together all system partners to produce a health and care strategy.

## **Children, Young People and Families' Strategic Partnership Board**

This is the overarching coordinating board for improving the lives of all children in Stoke-on-Trent. It is chaired by the Leader of Stoke-on-Trent City Council and has representation from across the Partnership at senior level. It will have oversight of the delivery of the portfolio of programmes and projects.

## **Children's Improvement Board**

This is the Board that is overseeing the required improvements in children's social care in the city. In this period of our improvement journey it is chaired by a Children's Advisor appointed by the Department for Education. It has a membership that is reflective of the local partnership but also includes the Department for Education. The Board holds the Council and its partners to account for the delivery of the agreed continuous Improvement Plan as well as identifying support that the city may require to secure the necessary improvements.

## **Community Safety Partnership**

The Community Safety Partnership is made up of a group of statutorily defined responsible authorities that together must seek to protect their communities from crime and help people feel safer. In the context of this Strategy, the Community Safety Partnership will have a crucial role with respect to prevention and early intervention.



# RELEVANT AGENCIES



Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership will set up and maintain a Stakeholder Directory of all relevant agencies and organisations in Stoke-on-Trent that will either be part of our safeguarding arrangements or receive information, including those who will be required to undertake an audit under Section 11 of The Children Act 2014. All schools are relevant agencies and will support the partnership through Section 175 and 157 audits. The Section 175/157 safeguarding audit supports education settings in identifying their progress in relation to their safeguarding duties.

This will promote consistency of the application of statutory guidance and good practice, and we are committed to continue efforts to get full engagement of all independent, private providers and communities.

- **Definition and Role:** Relevant agencies are organizations and agencies whose involvement is required to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children. They are listed in regulations and must cooperate with safeguarding partners.
- **Flexibility and Collaboration:** Effective multi-agency safeguarding arrangements require flexibility and collaboration among relevant agencies to address existing and emerging needs and improve outcomes for children.
- **Inclusion of Education Providers:** All local education and childcare providers, including schools, colleges, early years settings, and alternative provision, should be included due to their significant role in children's lives.
- **Responsibilities:** Relevant agencies must understand their safeguarding responsibilities, cooperate with safeguarding partners, share information, and ensure their policies align with local safeguarding arrangements.
- **Consultation and Engagement:** Safeguarding partners should consult relevant agencies when developing safeguarding arrangements and ensure they are aware of their duties and contributions.
- **Review and Adaptation:** Local safeguarding arrangements should be reviewed and updated regularly to reflect changes in demographics, social, and economic challenges, ensuring they remain effective.

# RELEVANT AGENCIES

Schedule 2 of the Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency (England) Regulations 2018 identifies relevant agencies who are required to work with the Safeguarding Partnership

## Education and childcare

1. The proprietor of an Academy school within the meaning given by section 1A of the Academies Act 2010([1](#)).
2. The proprietor of a 16-19 Academy within the meaning given by section 1B of the Academies Act 2010.
3. The proprietor of an alternative provision Academy within the meaning given by section 1C of the Academies Act 2010.
4. The governing body of a maintained school within the meaning given by section 20(7) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998([2](#)).
5. The governing body of a maintained nursery school within the meaning given by section 22(9) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.
6. The governing body of a pupil referral unit within the meaning given by section 19(2) of the Education Act 1996([3](#)).
7. The proprietor of an independent educational institution registered under section 95(1) of the Education and Skills Act 2008([4](#)).
8. The proprietor of a school approved under section 342 of the Education Act 1996([5](#)).
9. The proprietor of a Special post-16 institution within the meaning given by section 83(2) of the Children and Families Act 2014([6](#)).
10. The governing body of an institution within the further education sector within the meaning given by section 91(3) of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992([7](#)).

11. The governing body of an English higher education provider within the meaning of section 83 of the Higher Education and Research Act 2017([8](#)).

13. A person registered under Chapter 2, 2A, 3 or 3A of Part 3 of the Childcare Act 2006([10](#)).

14. The provider of a children's centre within the meaning given by section 5A(4) of the Childcare Act 2006.([11](#))

## Health and Social Care

15. The National Health Service Commissioning Board (known as NHS England) as established under section 1H(1) of the National Health Service Act 2006([12](#)).

16. An NHS trust established under section 25 of the National Health Service Act 2006.

17. An NHS foundation trust within the meaning given by section 30 of the National Health Service Act 2006([13](#)).

18. The registered provider of an adoption support agency within the meaning given by section 8(1) of the Adoption and Children Act 2002([14](#)).

19. The registered provider of a registered adoption society within the meaning given by section 2 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002([15](#)).

20. A registered provider of a fostering agency within the meaning given by section 4 of the Care Standards Act 2000([16](#)).

21. A registered provider of a children's homes within the meaning given by section 1 of the Care Standards Act 2000([17](#)).

22. A registered provider of residential family centre within the meaning given by section 4(2) of the Care Standards Act 2000.

23. The registered provider of a residential holiday schemes for disabled children within the meaning given by regulation 2(1) of the Residential Holiday Schemes for Disabled Children (England) Regulations [2013/1394\(18\)](#).

# RELEVANT AGENCIES

## Local Government

24. District Councils within the meaning given by section 1(1) of the Local Government Act 1972([19](#)).

## Criminal Justice

25. The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass) as established under section 11 of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000([20](#)).

26. A governor of a prison in England (or, in the case of a contracted out prison, its director)

27. Providers of probation services as defined by section 3(6) of the Offender Management Act 2007([21](#)).

28. The principal of a secure college.

29. The governor of a secure training centre (or, in the case of a contracted out secure training centre, its director).

30. The governor of a young offender institution (or, in the case of a contracted out young offender institution its director)([22](#)).

31. Youth offending teams as established under section 39 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998([23](#)).

## Police and Immigration

32. The British Transport Police as established under section 18(1) the Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003([24](#)).

33. The Common Council of the City of London in its capacity as a police authority.

34. Port Police Forces as established under an order made under section 14 of the Harbours Act 1964([25](#)), under Part 10 of the Port of London Act 1968([26](#)), or under section 79 of the Harbours, Docks and Piers Clauses Act [1847 \(c.27\)\(27\)](#).

35. Any person or body for whom the Secretary of State must make arrangements for ensuring the discharge of functions under section 55 of the Borders Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009([28](#)).

## Miscellaneous

36. Charities within the meaning given by section 1 of the Charities Act 2011([29](#)).

37. Religious Organisations as set out in regulation 34 of, and Schedule 3 to, the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012([30](#)).

38. Any person or body involved in the provision, supervision or oversight of sport or leisure .

# REPORTING

## Requirement of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements

- Who the three safeguarding partners, their delegates and partnership chair are.
- Geographical boundaries, including if the arrangements operate across more than one local authority area
- The relevant agencies the safeguarding partners will work with, why these organisations and agencies have been chosen, and how they will collaborate and work together to improve outcomes for children and families 37 Children Act 2004 Section 16G 40
- How all, schools (including independent schools, academies, and free schools), colleges, early years and childcare settings, and other educational providers (including alternative provision) will be included in the safeguarding arrangements
- How any youth custody and residential homes for children will be included in the safeguarding arrangements (Not applicable)
- How the safeguarding partners will share information and data safely and effectively, using arrangements that clearly set out the processes and the principles for sharing,
- How the safeguarding partners will use data and intelligence to assess the effectiveness of the help being provided to children and families, including early help
- How multi-agency training will be commissioned, delivered, and monitored for impact, and how they will undertake any multi-agency and inter-agency audits
- How the arrangements will be funded
- The process for undertaking local child safeguarding practice reviews, setting out the arrangements for embedding learning across organisations and agencies
- How the arrangements will include the voice of children and families, including how to escalate concerns and how any disputes will be resolved, including whistleblowing procedures
- How the local threshold document in place aligns with the arrangements.

# REPORTING

## Requirement

Safeguarding partners should be transparent in how they co-ordinate, deliver and fund services for children and families locally. In order that others can hold the safeguarding partners to account there are two mechanisms for reporting on service delivery and leadership:

- publication of arrangements
- a yearly report 102.

Both documents should:

- be contributed to and signed off by all LSPs
- clearly demonstrate the links between them
- be easily accessible Publication of arrangements .

Once agreed, local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements must be published and must include:

- arrangements for the safeguarding partners to work together to identify and respond to the needs of children in the area
- arrangements for commissioning and publishing local child safeguarding practice reviews
- arrangements for independent scrutiny of the effectiveness of the arrangements

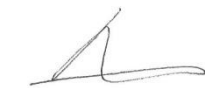
The arrangements are available on the Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children website.



**Jon Rouse**  
**Chief Executive Stoke-**  
**on-Trent City Council**



**Chris Noble Chief**  
**Constable Staffordshire**  
**Police**



**Peter Axon Chief**  
**Executive**  
**Staffordshire and**  
**Stoke-on-Trent**  
**Integrated Care**  
**Board**

Date: 31 December 2024

# GLOSSARY

<b>LSP</b>	<b>Lead Safeguarding Partner</b>
<b>SOTSCP</b>	<b>Stoke-on-Trent Local Safeguarding Children Partnership</b>
<b>DSP</b>	<b>Delegated Safeguarding Partner</b>
<b>GCP2</b>	<b>Graded Care Profile 2</b>
<b>ADHD</b>	<b>Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder</b>
<b>MARAC</b>	<b>Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference</b>
<b>CP</b>	<b>Child Protection</b>
<b>CIN</b>	<b>Child in Need</b>
<b>CSPR</b>	<b>Child Safeguarding Practice Review</b>
<b>Section 11</b>	<b>Section 11 Children's Act 2004</b>
<b>Section 175</b>	<b>Section 175 Children's Act 2004</b>
<b>CDOP</b>	<b>Child Death Overview Panel</b>
<b>NCMD</b>	<b>National Child Mortality Database</b>



# References

Working Together (2023) [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022) [Keeping children safe in education – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Wood Review of Local Safeguarding Boards (2016) [Wood report: review of the role and functions of local safeguarding children boards](#)

Wood Review of Multi-agency Safeguarding Wood Arrangements (2021) [Wood Review of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements](#)

[GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

The Charity Commission (2018) [Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees](#)

Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (2014) [Safeguarding children and young people – roles and competences for healthcare staff](#)

Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership ([www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk](http://www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk))

Stoke-on-Trent City Council [SoTCC homepage \(stoke.gov.uk\)](http://stoke.gov.uk)

Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board [Home – Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent ICB](#)

Staffordshire Police [Home | Staffordshire Police](#)

## Address

Civic Centre, Glebe Street,  
Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 1HH

## Email

SSCP.Information@stoke.gov.uk

## Website

<https://safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk>

# Contact Details

## CONTACT DETAILS FOR THE PARTNERSHIP

The partnership business manager can be contacted on e-mail address [SSCP.Information@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:SSCP.Information@stoke.gov.uk)

Information can be found on the Partnership website  
<https://safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk>

## IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT A CHILD IN STOKE-ON-TRENT

Call the Children's advice and duty service (CHAD) on 01782 235100 (Monday to Friday 8.30am to 6pm).

If you need to contact Children's Social Care out of hours, call the Emergency Duty Team on 01782 234234