



MULTI-AGENCY SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS IN SOLIHULL

Revised April 2023

Version Control

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Preface

In the arrangements laid out in this document we outline our statutory duty for joint and equal responsibility for the multi-agency safeguarding of Solihull's Children:

- keeping children and young people safe in Solihull
- working with our partners to continuously improve our effectiveness in achieving this
- placing learning and improvement at the centre of our shared work
- keeping a focus on understanding the impact of our work on the outcomes for local children and young people

As safeguarding partners, we recognise the importance of understanding how our new arrangements relate to the work of other local partnerships and the wider governance framework. This is set out within the document, together with our arrangements for independent scrutiny of our work, which we very much welcome.

Together we refer to our multi-agency arrangements as the 'Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership' (SSCP).

We would like to express our gratitude to staff and volunteers working in the many statutory and non-statutory services across Solihull, whose individual and joint efforts provide support and protection for our children and young people.

Signed



Paul Johnson

Acting Chief Executive

Solihull Metropolitan
Borough Council



Craig Guildford

Chief Constable

West Midlands Police



David Melbourne

Chief Executive Officer

Birmingham and Solihull
Integrated Care Board

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document describes how the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in Solihull are organised. Recommendations made in the Wood Report 2016, which reviewed the role and functions of local safeguarding children boards, led to the new multi-agency safeguarding children arrangements set out in the Government's statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children - A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children' (July 2018).
- 1.2 This document sets out how the three lead safeguarding partners work together in Solihull to co-ordinate local safeguarding services and to ensure that they are effective.
- 1.3 Effective local safeguarding children arrangements will ensure that:
- outcomes for children will improve continuously
 - children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted
 - relevant partner agencies collaborate, share information and work to the agreed vision and values established for Solihull
 - organisations and agencies challenge appropriately and hold one another to account effectively
 - there is early identification and analysis of new safeguarding issues and emerging threats
 - learning is promoted and embedded in a way that enables local services for children and families to reflect and implement changes to practice
 - information is shared effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families
- 1.4 These arrangements link to strategic work led by a number of partnerships in Solihull. These partnerships include:
- the Health and Wellbeing Board
 - the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board
 - the Solihull Community Safety Partnership
 - the Exploitation Reduction Board, and
 - the Solihull Adult Safeguarding Board
- 1.5 These multi-agency arrangements will be reviewed on an annual basis.

BOUNDARIES

- 1.6 Solihull's multi-agency safeguarding arrangements apply only to the area defined by that of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council. It should be noted that although two of the three safeguarding partners, Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board (BSOL ICB) and West Midlands Police, cover an area larger than Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, these arrangements relate to the Solihull Local Authority area. That said, where appropriate and beneficial to effective working, some functions are delivered across a wider geographical footprint, for example where Solihull is part of a regional approach to commissioning multi-agency safeguarding procedures and Section 11 Audits.

LOCAL DEMOGRAPHICS

- 1.7 In Solihull, 10.8% of the population was income-deprived in 2019. ¹ Of the 316 local authorities in England (excluding the Isles of Scilly), Solihull is ranked 158th most income-deprived. Of the 134 neighbourhoods in Solihull, 24 were among the 20 percent most-deprived in England. The impact of this is felt across a broad range of outcomes including educational attainment, employment, crime and health.
- 1.8 Conversely, 48 of Solihull's neighbourhoods were in the 20 percent least income-deprived in England. We will therefore take care as a partnership to understand the postcode variations.
- 1.9 Solihull has significant geographic and infrastructure advantages, lying at the heart of the West Midlands motorway network, with excellent public transport connections with the Birmingham city conurbation and linked to European and global markets by Birmingham International Airport. Economically, this supports a strong service sector economy with a thriving Solihull town centre and key regional strategic assets, for example the NEC complex, Land Rover and the Birmingham & Blythe Valley Business Parks.
- 1.10 The area covered by these safeguarding arrangements contains two constituencies: Meriden and Solihull. The same area is divided into 17 Council Wards.
- 1.11 The 2021 census² showed that the population size in Solihull has increased by 4.6%, from around 206,700 in 2011 to 216,200 in 2021. This is lower than the overall increase for England (6.6%) and lower than neighbouring areas such as Coventry (8.9% increase) and Stratford-on-Avon (11.8% increase).

¹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/dvc1371/#/E08000029>

² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censuspopulationchange/E08000029/>

As of 2021, Solihull is the 13th most densely populated of the West Midlands' 30 local authority areas.

- 1.12 Solihull is experiencing dynamic and rapid socio-demographic change. The Black and Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) population more than doubled between the censuses of 2001 and 2011, at which point people from a BAME background represented nearly 11% of the total population. The 2021 census shows that figure has increased by half as much again to reach 17.8%.³ The Borough is less diverse than England as a whole and significantly less so than neighbouring Birmingham.

³<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/ethnicity/bulletins/ethnicgroupenlandandwales/census2021>

2. Partnership working in Solihull

2.1 Lead safeguarding partners

DEFINITION

2.1.1 A safeguarding partner in relation to a local authority area in England is defined under Section 16E of the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act, 2017) as:

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

2.1.2 In Solihull the organisations providing these functions are:

- a) Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
- b) Birmingham & Solihull Integrated Care Board
- c) West Midlands Police

2.1.3 In partnership, these entities work together for these purposes, under the title of the 'Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership' (SSCP).

PURPOSE OF THE PARTNERSHIP

2.1.4 The three safeguarding partners, together with other local relevant agencies are committed to:

- co-ordinating their safeguarding services for maximum impact;
- acting as a strategic leadership group in supporting and engaging others;
- implementing local and national learning including from serious child safeguarding incidents;
- learning from independent scrutiny that judges the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in Solihull;
- developing processes that:
 - facilitate and drive action beyond usual institutional and agency constraints and boundaries
 - ensure the effective protection of children is founded on practitioners developing lasting and trusting relationships with children and their families

- ensuring that relevant agencies have appropriate, robust safeguarding policies and procedures in place;
- publishing a report at least once in every 12-month period, which sets out what they have done as a result of these arrangements, including on child safeguarding practice reviews, and how effective these arrangements have been in practice.

LEADERSHIP

2.1.5 In Solihull, the lead safeguarding partners are:

- the Chief Executive of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council,
- the Chief Executive of the Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board, and
- the Chief Constable of West Midlands Police.

2.1.6 The lead safeguarding partners will meet on a bi-monthly basis. The lead safeguarding partners will agree on ways to co-ordinate their safeguarding services, will act as a strategic leadership group in supporting and engaging others and will implement local and national learning, including from serious child safeguarding incidents.

2.1.7 In Solihull the above lead representatives delegate their functions, but they remain accountable for any actions or decisions taken on behalf of the Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership. The lead safeguarding partner for each agency has identified and nominated a senior officer to have responsibility and authority for ensuring full participation with these arrangements. More detail on the Scheme of Delegation is included at Appendix A.

2.1.8 In Solihull the delegated officers from each statutory agency act as delegated safeguarding partners (DSPs), and they are:

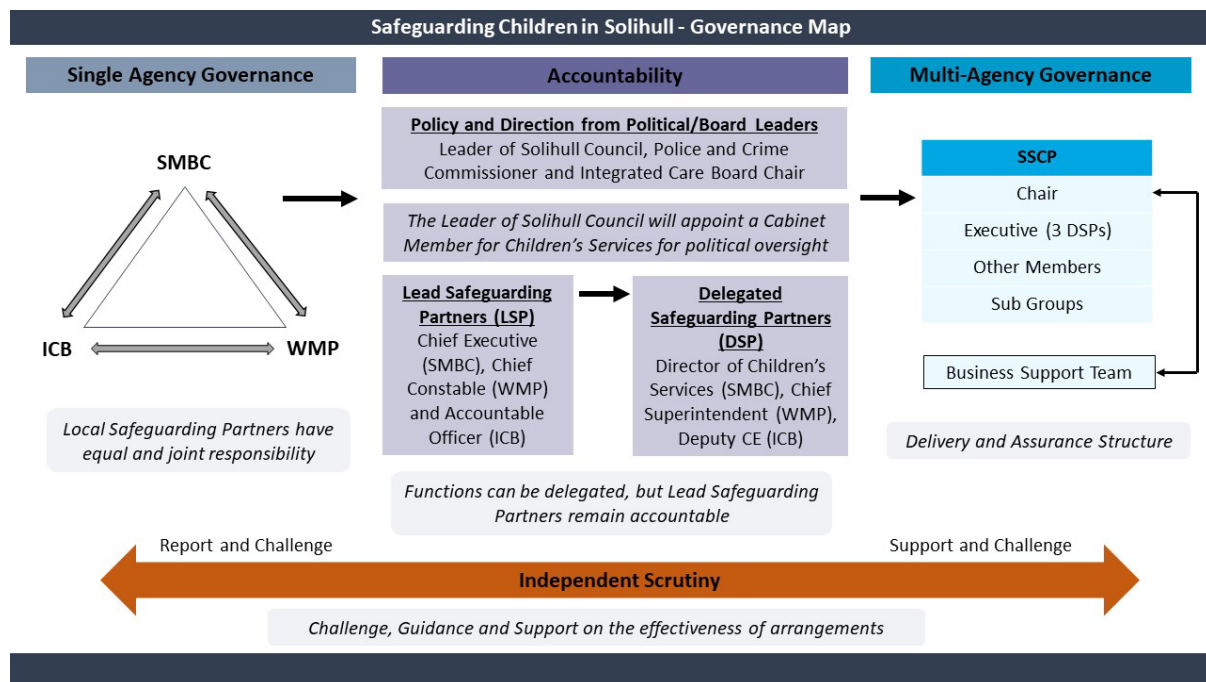
- Director of Children's Services (Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council)
- Borough Commander (West Midlands Police)
- Deputy Chief Executive/Chief Nursing Officer (Birmingham & Solihull Integrated Care Board)

2.1.9 The delegated officers are empowered 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

Section 2: Partnership working in Solihull

- 2.1.10 The delegated officers, working together, assume primary responsibility for implementing the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and providing strong leadership of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements to ensure they are effective in bringing together relevant partner agencies.
- 2.1.11 In the event that an issue arises which requires a clear, single point of leadership, the lead safeguarding partners will decide on who will assume the lead. This would be agreed at their bi-monthly meetings, or virtually by all three lead safeguarding partners, depending on the urgency and circumstances involved.
- 2.1.12 All three lead safeguarding partners (LSPs) have equal and joint responsibility for local safeguarding arrangements.
- 2.1.13 The LSPs have agreed a new model of oversight, single- and multi-agency governance, accountability and service delivery, supported by independent scrutiny. The new model is represented in the diagram below.



ROLE AND BUSINESS OF THE LEAD SAFEGUARDING PARTNERS GROUP

- 2.1.14 Lead safeguarding Partners (LSPs) set the strategic plan and priorities for the multi-agency arrangements. They focus on the key issues which promote multi-agency practice, and which allows them a direct line of view of its effectiveness.

- 2.1.15 Key areas for them to determine include the:
- priorities for the multi-agency partnership,
 - establishing local learning reviews and the learning framework,
 - assessment of the performance and effectiveness of multi-agency practice,
 - agree the SSCP improvement plan, JTAI and National Panel recommendations,
 - model of independent scrutiny,
 - resourcing and funding of the arrangements,
 - structure of the SSCP,
 - priorities of the intelligence and support team,
 - data and information sharing policies,
 - communication and engagement strategy with relevant partners and children,
 - approve the yearly plan as a public safeguarding assurance statement.
- 2.1.16 As far as possible, these issues should be agreed on a three-year timescale with a triennial review.

ROLE AND BUSINESS OF THE EXECUTIVE GROUP

- 2.1.17 The delegated officers for the three lead safeguarding partners meet regularly as an Executive group and have invited representation from Education and Probation in recognition of the important roles they have in ensuring effective multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in Solihull.
- 2.1.18 The DSPs must focus on driving improvement in practice and delivering the agreed priorities and ensuring practice of police, health and local government children service professionals is as effective as it can be to help and protect children. Like the LSPs, DSPs must act as a team and not a spokesperson for their agency alone.
- 2.1.19 The operation of the decisions made by the Lead Safeguarding Partners (see paragraph 2.1.16) should be reported back to the Lead Safeguarding Partners by the Executive group. The Executive group members should not need to refer upwards to the LSPs to seek approval for operational decisions or changes in the arrangement of multi-agency services, including the sub-structure of the SSCP.
- 2.1.20 In addition to single agency arrangements made to hold DSPs to account, the Executive group will be held to account through the scheme of delegation to:

Section 2: Partnership working in Solihull

- provide evidence about the quality/performance of multi-agency practice,
- deliver the SSCP improvement plan, JTAI and National Panel recommendations,
- update on the progress of meeting the SSCP priorities,
- identify and anticipate new challenges to the work of multi-agency teams,
- direct the SSCP support team, minimising bureaucracy ensuring task-oriented activity,
- provide analyses of trends in practice from intelligent interpretation of data,
- report on the engagement of schools, and other relevant partners,
- respond to messages from learning reviews,
- report on the performance of the support team and use of allocated budgets,
- advise on any issues the DSPs cannot agree on.

2.1.21 Membership of the Executive Group includes:

- Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council - Director of Children's Services
- Birmingham & Solihull Integrated Care Board - Deputy Chief Executive/Chief Nursing Officer
- Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board - Director of Nursing: Quality and Safeguarding/Chair of the Solihull Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and MASH Operational Group
- West Midlands Police – Borough Commander
- West Midlands Police – Chief Inspector (Public Protection)/Chair of the Learning and Development group
- Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council - Director of Public Health
- Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council – Assistant Director Performance & Partnerships/Chair of the Assurance and Review Group
- Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council - Assistant Director Safeguarding
- North and East Birmingham and Solihull Probation Delivery Unit - Head of Service
- Headteachers (representing Primary and Secondary sectors, as nominated by the Education and Safeguarding subgroup)
- Independent Scrutineer

- 2.1.22 The lead Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, Education & Skills attends Executive Group meetings as a participant observer.
- 2.1.23 After the Joint Targeted Area Inspection in January 2022 (which focused on the ‘front door’ and MASH arrangements) the Probation Service has been invited to sit on the SSCP Executive Group. Education representation has been included on the Executive group since the new partnership arrangements took effect in May 2019.
- 2.1.24 Executive Group meetings are chaired by the delegated officers for the three lead safeguarding partners on a rotating annual basis.
- 2.1.25 The SSCP Business Manager supports the Executive Group in the delivery of its’ functions and Executive Group meetings are minuted by an SSCP administrator.
- 2.1.26 Members of the Executive Group are nominated to chair the four main subgroups of the SSCP to ensure leadership, oversight and scrutiny of the business activity of the Partnership.

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT THESE ARRANGEMENTS

- 2.1.27 The lead safeguarding partners are required to agree the level of funding secured from each partner, which should be equitable and proportionate, and any contributions from each relevant agency to support the local arrangements.
- 2.1.28 The lead safeguarding partners make payments towards expenditure incurred in conjunction with local multi-agency arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Details of the Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership annual budget and how it has been spent can be found in the corresponding Annual Report.⁴
- 2.1.29 It should be noted that financial contributions are just one way in which the lead safeguarding partners provide resources to the Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- 2.1.30 Executive Group members, representing the three statutory safeguarding partners in Solihull, contribute their time and expertise to the Partnership as members of the Executive Group and as chairs of subgroups. Nominated representatives from the three lead safeguarding partners lead on Task and Finish work. In addition, representatives are nominated by the relevant

⁴ <https://www.safeguardingsolihull.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2022/11/-Annual-Report-21-22-v1.0.pdf>

agencies to support the SSCP pool of trainers who deliver multi-agency safeguarding training.

2.1.31 The Business Unit supports implementation of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. The Business Unit will:

- facilitate the meetings and support the work of the Executive Group and the subgroups;
- work with chairs of subgroups and 'task and finish' groups to progress areas of focus to help ensure that outputs are delivered in a timely way;
- bring strategic leads from the relevant safeguarding partners together to drive forward these arrangements;
- promote best multi-agency practice to improve outcomes for children and families;
- support partners in the dissemination of local and national learning including from serious child safeguarding incidents;
- support the work of the independent scrutineer and ensure that findings from scrutiny activity are fed into the Assurance & Review subgroup;
- co-ordinate effective data gathering and accurate analysis, interpretation and reporting of information by harnessing the skills and knowledge of data teams from across the partnership;
- support the delivery of multi-agency practice audits;
- lead on the development of multi-agency policies, procedures and practice guidance;
- design, deliver or commission and evaluate multi-agency training;
- facilitate the reporting of performance data and analysis by partner agencies to inform the arrangements and measure impact;
- co-ordinate communications (including website management) in connection with the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements;
- facilitate engagement and consultation activity to inform the work of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

2.1.32 The SSCP business team staff (officers and administrators) are employed by Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council as the host employer on behalf of the lead safeguarding partners.

2.1 Relevant agencies

DEFINITION

2.2.1 Relevant agencies are named in the 'Relevant Agencies Regulations'⁵ and are under a statutory duty to co-operate and collaborate with the lead

⁵ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/789/note/made?view=plain>

safeguarding partners. Relevant agencies are those organisations and agencies whose involvement the lead safeguarding partners consider is required to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children. (The relevant agencies with whom the three lead safeguarding partners are required to work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children are listed in Appendix B).

- 2.2.2 Relevant agencies will receive up to date information at least annually about the expectations of them in engaging with and supporting these multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. In addition, the roles and responsibilities of subgroup members are described in the TOR for each group.
- 2.2.3 The list of relevant agencies will be reviewed annually.
- 2.2.4 When selected by the safeguarding partners to be part of the local safeguarding arrangements, relevant agencies must act in accordance with the arrangements. Representatives from relevant agencies who sit on the SSCP subgroups are expected to:
- make a commitment and prioritise attendance at meetings and, on the occasion they are unable to attend, they should identify an appropriate deputy who is authorised to enact the group members' responsibilities;
 - have the seniority to make decisions on behalf of their area of responsibility and to ensure the delivery and implementation of the local arrangements;
 - be in a position to access and share the information necessary to inform collective action;
 - be critically reflective, strengths-based, solution-focussed and child-centred within discussions to shape and influence practice;
 - lead specific work streams;
 - take responsibility for identified actions and give oversight to these until completion.
- 2.2.5 The relevant agencies will also be asked to contribute to the work of the Partnership by nominating representation on task and finish groups, through attendance at the Practitioner Learning Forum and at SSCP Development Days, and by providing practitioner feedback on specific issues.
- 2.2.6 Relevant agencies are required to participate in multi-agency auditing as part of the Quality Assurance Framework and to provide assurance about single-agency action to embed learning as part of the Learning and Improvement Framework.

- 2.2.7 Relevant agencies are required to contribute to the Rapid Review process following a serious incident and, where necessary, to contribute to local child safeguarding practice reviews.
- 2.2.8 The lead safeguarding partners engage with relevant agencies by requiring agency representation on the Assurance and Review Group and on the Learning and Development Group. Other invitations may be extended to become part of a range of task and finish groups.
- 2.2.9 Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places a statutory duty on key organisations⁶ to self-assess the extent to which they meet safeguarding requirements and standards. This means they have a duty to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The lead safeguarding partners in Solihull will ask its identified relevant agencies to undertake the above self-assessment every two years (S11 Audit) to provide the necessary assurances that those duties are being fulfilled.

2.3 Schools, colleges and other education providers (including Early Years provision)

- 2.3.1 The three lead safeguarding partners regard all schools (including independent schools, academies and free schools), further education colleges, early years providers, and other education providers in Solihull as relevant agencies.
- 2.3.2 As designated relevant agencies, schools, further education colleges, early years providers and other education providers in Solihull, are under a statutory duty to co-operate with these multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- 2.3.3 Schools, further education colleges, early years providers and other education providers will be engaged as relevant agencies as follows:
- Representation on the Education and Safeguarding subgroup which reports directly to the Assurance & Review Group. This group is chaired by the Local Authority and includes representation from;
- Two schools from each of the Collaboratives; one from a primary school and one from a secondary school

⁶ As defined in Statutory Guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004

- Special schools
- Independent schools
- Early Years (via private nurseries, child minders or Children's Centres)
- School Health
- School Governors
- Colleges or post 16 providers
- Bespoke training providers
- Pupil Referral Units
- External Education Welfare Support
- Local Police representation from the Solihull Police and Schools' Partnership.
- Any other places where children learn but which is not registered as a school e.g. Madrasahs, bespoke apprenticeships and Sunday Schools.

2.3.4 All school representatives to be head or deputy head teacher, or from the school's senior leadership team.

2.3.5 In addition to these core members, other professionals, such as Educational Psychologists, Children's Social Care, Domestic Abuse specialists etc., will be invited as and when required.

2.3.6 The Education and Safeguarding Group will enable Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSPs) from each Collaborative to meet together on a regular basis to discuss safeguarding, the work of the Partnership and its priorities, legislation, transition from primary to secondary and any other relevant issues for schools. Any identified safeguarding issues will be reported through to the Assurance and Review Group.

2.3.7 Staff from education settings can access multi-agency safeguarding training delivered by the SSCP.

2.3.8 Staff from education settings are invited to attend the Practitioner Learning Forum.

2.4 Health service providers

2.4.1 There are several health providers commissioned by the Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board. These include:

- Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust
- University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust
- Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust

- West Midlands Ambulance Service University NHS Foundation Trust
- Birmingham Women's and Children's NHS Foundation Trust

2.4.2 The Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council also commissions school health and health visiting services from the South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust.

2.4.3 The lead safeguarding partners regard the above health providers as relevant agencies.

2.5 Voluntary and Community Sector

2.5.1 As part of the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCSE) infrastructure contract, Community and Voluntary Action (CAVA) Solihull represents the community and voluntary sector in these multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

2.5.2 Key safeguarding messages will be communicated to non-commissioned VCSE organisations through Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council's communication channels and via CAVA.

2.5.3 The Chair of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council's Strategic Commissioning Group will ensure that learning resources, policies and procedures are adopted by commissioned organisations.

2.6 Other statutory relevant agencies

2.6.1 Representation on SSCP subgroups is not sought from the following national organisations: UK Visa and Immigration and British Transport Police. However, engagement does take place where necessary, for example when scoping agency involvement following a serious incident and through completion of the S11 self-assessment.

2.7 Other agencies and organisations

2.7.1 Organisations and agencies who are not named in the relevant agency regulations, whilst not under a statutory duty, should nevertheless cooperate and collaborate with the lead safeguarding partners, particularly as they may have duties under Section 10 and/or Section 11 of the Children Act 2004.

2.8 Young Offenders

2.8.1 Solihull does not have any Youth Offender institutions within its' boundary, although young people from Solihull may be placed in custody elsewhere. Those young people will be subject to these arrangements.

2.9 Provision of information

2.9.1 In engaging with relevant agencies the lead safeguarding partners will be aware of their own responsibilities under the relevant information law and have regard to guidance provided by the Information Commissioner's Office when issuing and responding to requests for information.

3. Governance, vision, values and principles

3.1 Vision

3.1.1 The vision for the Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership is to work together to listen, to learn and to improve outcomes for Children and Young People in Solihull.

3.2 Values

3.2.1 The values which sit at the heart of these arrangements are:

- Respectful challenge
- Effective decision making
- Accountability
- Listening
- Learning
- Inclusion

3.3 Shared principles

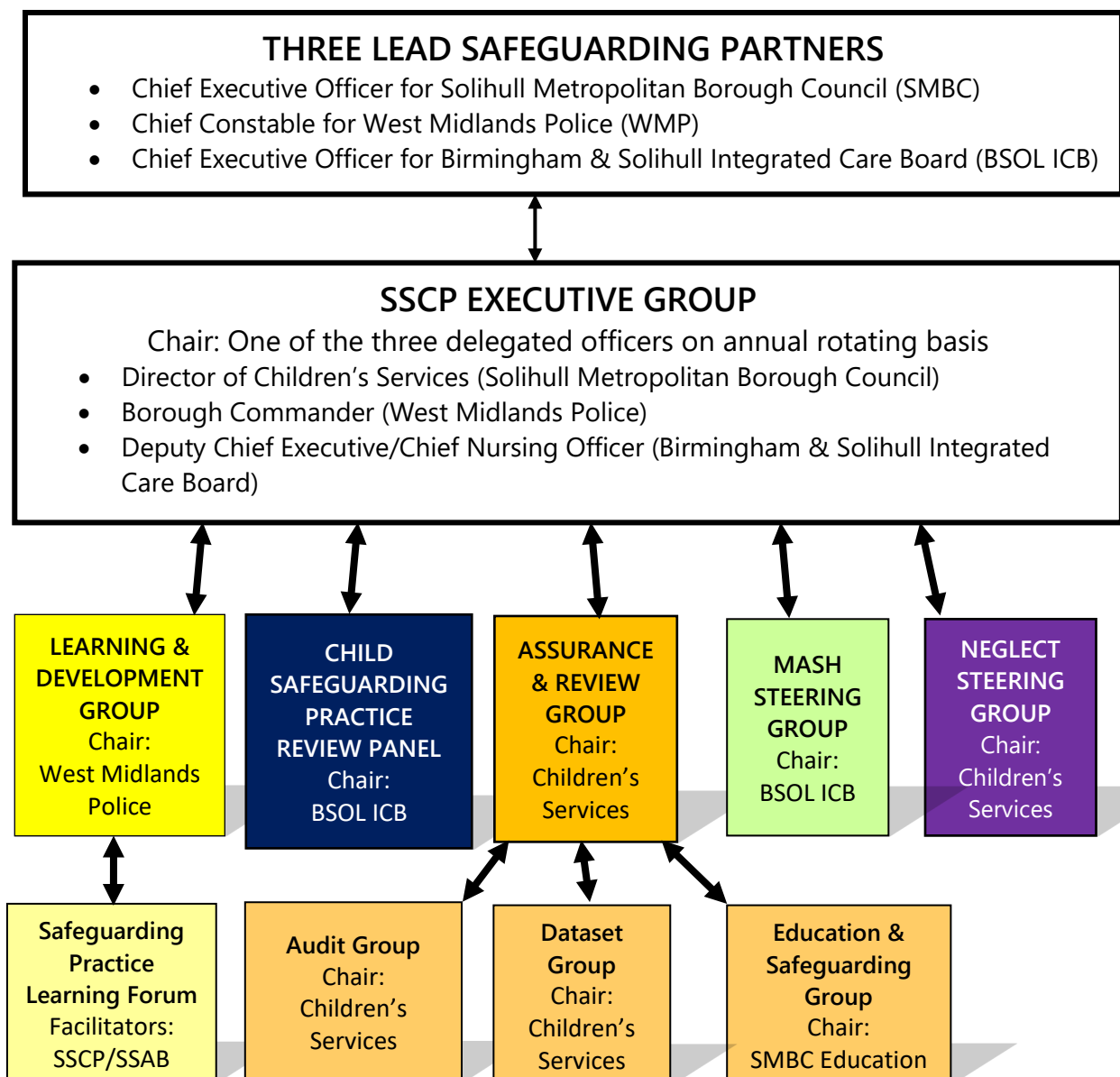
3.3.1 In Solihull we want to take a 'Think Family' approach whereby practitioners identify wider family needs which extend beyond the individual they are supporting. This means that if practitioners/ volunteers work primarily with adults, they should still consider the safeguarding needs of children, and if they work mostly with children, they should still consider the needs of adults. We want everyone in Solihull to be safe, secure and able to reach their full potential, and to do this we need to listen and learn together. We are committed to the following principles:

- Listening and acting on the views and voices of children and young people
- Listening to family members and giving importance to what they say
- Understanding children in the context of their family, as well as contexts beyond the family home
- Building on strengths as well as identifying difficulties
- Focusing on actions and outcomes for children
- Recognising difference and working to understand and respect individuality, values, beliefs, culture, disability, neurodiversity, gender identity etc.
- Being honest and transparent about what we do and why we are involved.

3.4 Governance arrangements

3.4.1 The governance arrangements have been reviewed since the Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) undertaken in January 2022. The JTAI judged that Solihull’s multi-agency safeguarding arrangements did not enable safeguarding partners to maintain sufficient line of sight on the experiences of children requiring support and/or protection.

3.4.2 The governance structure for the SSCP is represented in the following diagram:



3.4.3 It has been important to ensure that the right representation is secured from lead safeguarding partners, as well as from the relevant agencies. The

terms of reference for each subgroup set out the membership by role and organisation.

3.5 Business Planning Cycle

3.5.1 A three-year business plan will be developed and annual strategic priorities will be agreed following an analysis of:

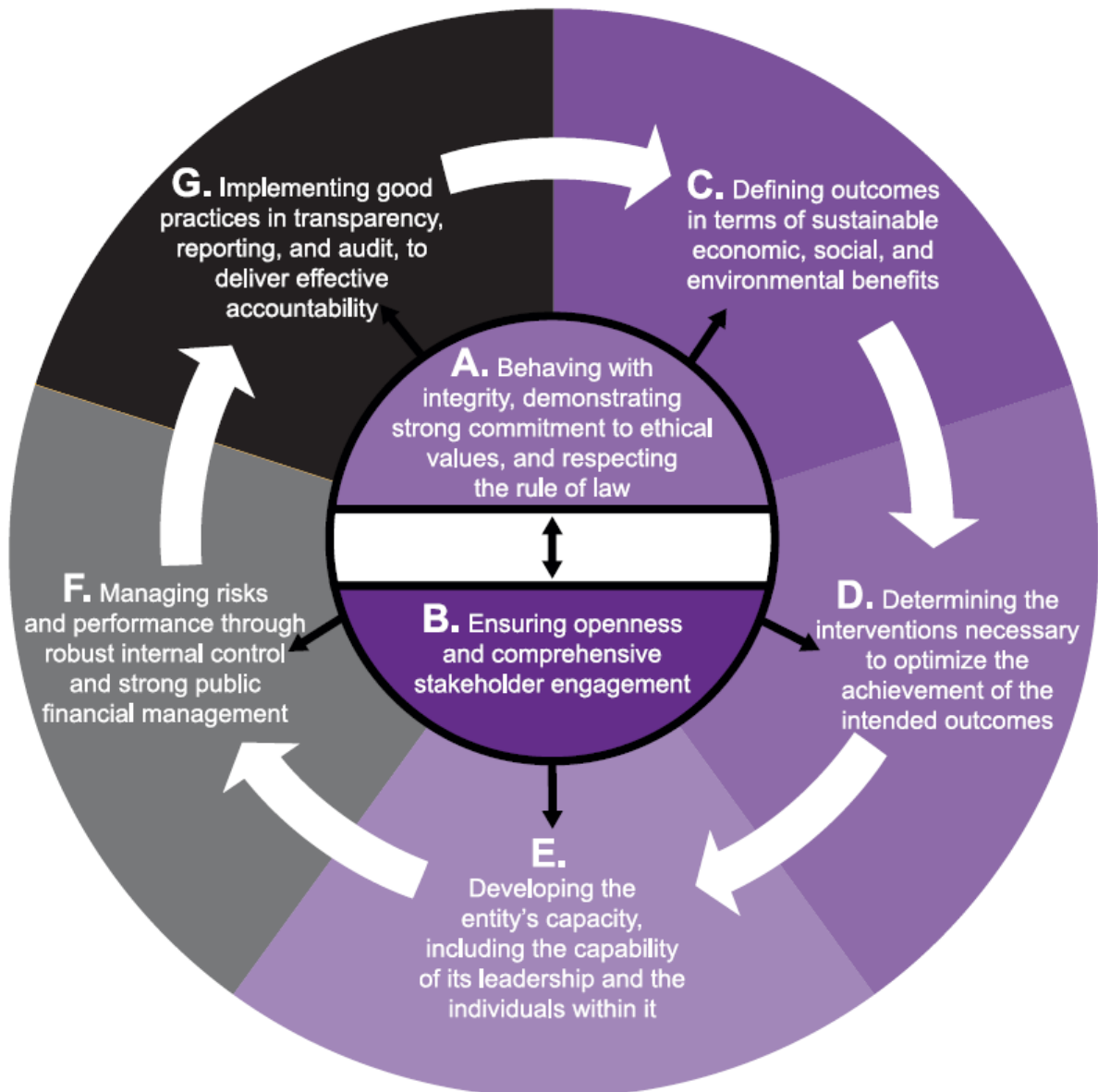
- National drivers
- Local gaps or areas for improvement identified from the evaluation of effectiveness of Solihull's multi-agency safeguarding children response
- Emerging issues or threats identified by safeguarding partners and relevant agencies
- Findings from external inspection or peer review

3.5.2 The outcomes to be delivered through these multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in a given year, the responsible lead and time scales will be set out in the SSCP's Business Plan. The delegated officers on the Executive Group are responsible for monitoring progress and impact of this development work.

3.6 The core principles of good governance

3.6.1 The lead safeguarding partners are committed to adopting the seven principles of good governance as set out in The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's '[Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework](#)'.

3.6.2 The relationship between the core principles of good governance is shown in the following diagram:



Principles A and B permeate implementation of principles C to G. The diagram also illustrates that good governance is dynamic, and that an entity should be committed to improving governance on a continuing basis through a process of evaluation and review.

4. Independent Scrutiny

4.1 Independent scrutiny

4.1.1 The role of independent scrutiny is critical to provide assurance in judging the effectiveness of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. In Solihull the delivery of independent scrutiny is partly fulfilled through the role of an Independent Scrutineer, although scrutiny is wider than any one person's role, sitting at the heart of all audit, review and learning activity.

4.1.2 The Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership aims to build a culture where all members of the Partnership, from frontline practitioners to strategic leaders, positively welcome and actively participate in scrutiny, trusting and learning from each other, while also taking accountability. The lead safeguarding partners will ensure that scrutiny is objective, acts as a critical friend and promotes reflection to drive continuous improvement.

4.1.3 The SSCP aims to achieve improvement by developing good practice based on what we know works well, using an evidence-based approach. Local arrangements for independent scrutiny will:

- provide assurance in judging the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in Solihull;
- provide assurance that there is effective identification and review of serious child safeguarding cases;
- act as part of a wider system which includes the independent inspectorates' single assessment of the individual safeguarding partners and the Joint Targeted Area Inspections;
- consider how effectively the arrangements are working for children and families, as well as for practitioners, and how well the safeguarding partners are providing strong leadership,
- provide objectivity, act as a constructive critical friend and promote reflection to promote continuous improvement;
- make recommendations to the lead safeguarding partners.

INDEPENDENT SCRUTINEER

4.1.4 The independent scrutineer is a commissioned role contracted by the lead safeguarding partners for a defined period and is subject to performance review at agreed intervals.

4.1.5 The role of the Independent Scrutineer must be focused on the impact decision makers are having on outcomes for children through their leadership of the system. This means at one level, working to challenge the LSPs on:

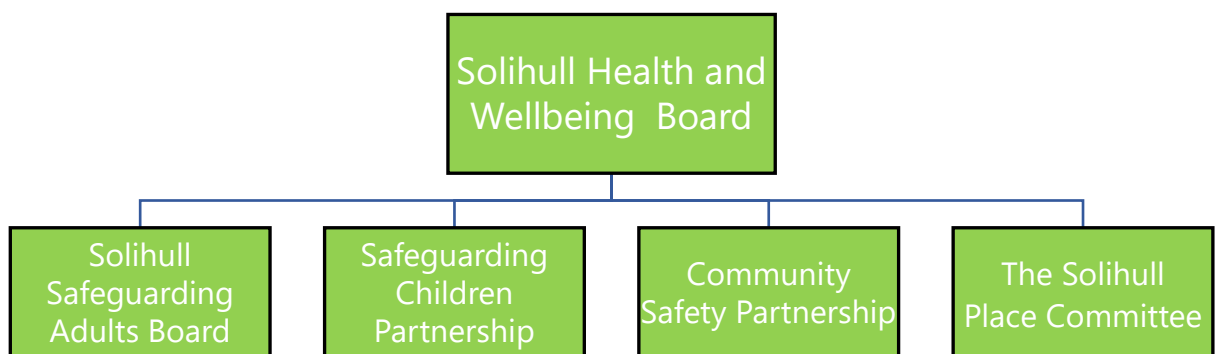
- what their priorities are and why;
- what they know about the quality of practice;
- resources for and the effectiveness of the partnership;
- how they operate as a team and not three separate leaders, and
- how they know the system is as safe as is possible.

4.1.6 The challenge and support offered to the Executive group in their role as leaders of practice should include:

- the partnership structure to meet multi-agency priorities;
- how learning from serious events is inculcated in practitioners;
- assessing quality assurance and performance management of the partnership;
- the professional development framework for multi-agency staff;
- engagement with relevant agencies especially schools, and similar key issues.

5. Relationships with other Partnership Boards and regional networks

- 5.1 The lead safeguarding partners need to ensure that Solihull has positive relationships with other partnership boards and with local areas to ensure that relevant information is shared in a timely and proportionate way.
- 5.2 Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership reports to the Solihull Health and Wellbeing Board on its annual strategic priorities and on its evaluation of the effectiveness of safeguarding children in Solihull contained within its' yearly report. Safeguarding is not solely the responsibility of the Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP). Other statutory Boards take forward aspects of safeguarding work that is congruent with the aims of the SSCP.



- 5.3 A protocol for working together has been developed between the following partnership boards:
- Solihull Health and Wellbeing Board
 - Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership
 - Solihull Community Safety Partnership
 - Solihull Safeguarding Adults Board
- 5.4 Chair/scrutineers of the Solihull partnership boards meet once a year with the Business managers to consider cross-cutting issues and strategic priorities.
- 5.5 The Business Manager and the Independent Scrutineer are both members of the West Midlands regional Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) Network. Quarterly meetings are well attended by the 14 LSCPs across the wider West Midlands where national and regional issues are considered.

Section 5: Relationships with other Partnership Boards and regional networks

- 5.6 Solihull is part of a consortium of safeguarding children partnerships who share regional safeguarding children procedures. The Solihull Business Unit provides the project support to the Regional Safeguarding Procedures Group and the other partnerships reimburse the SSCP for the manager's time.
- 5.7 Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership has lead on the commissioning of a West Midlands S11/Care Act Compliance audit tool which was implemented in January 2023.
- 5.8 The SSCP is a member of The Association of Safeguarding Partners (TASP) which enables the Business Manager to attend a national network of Business Managers to discuss relevant issues pertaining to the safeguarding of children.
- 5.9 In the Partnership's aim for continuous improvement, lead safeguarding partners will actively seek and accept external guidance, support and scrutiny from good and outstanding partnerships and relevant individuals identified by the Department for Education.

6. Responding to child deaths and serious incidents

6.1 Child Death Reviews

- 6.1.1 The lead safeguarding partners are required to respond to notifications from Child Death Review partners that a child has died and abuse or neglect is known or suspected in order to determine whether the case meets the criteria for a child safeguarding practice review (as referenced in Child Death Review Statutory and Operational Guidance (England) 2018 page 27).
- 6.1.2 The lead safeguarding partners are required to respond to notifications from the Coroner that a child has died and that the Coroner has decided to investigate the death or commission a post mortem (as referenced in Working Together 2018 page 101). In these circumstances, where abuse or neglect is known or suspected, the safeguarding partners will need to determine whether the case meets the criteria for a child safeguarding practice review.
- 6.1.3 The lead safeguarding partners are required to respond to any safeguarding issues that fall out of the child death review process, including the Birmingham and Solihull Child Death Overview Panel which reviews the deaths of all children in Solihull.

6.2 Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

- 6.2.1 The lead safeguarding partners are responsible for conducting rapid reviews following serious incidents, and for commissioning local child safeguarding practice reviews where necessary.
- 6.2.2 At the core of this work, is the commitment to ensuring that local agencies understand the events leading to a death, and the ways in which those same agencies and others can help to protect children in the future.
- 6.2.3 Solihull follows the West Midlands framework for undertaking rapid reviews and local child safeguarding practice reviews.⁷
- 6.2.4 The lead safeguarding partners have established the Solihull Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel which has delegated responsibility for receiving and considering child safeguarding practice review referrals from partner agencies, conducting rapid reviews following notifications of

⁷<http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/assets/clients/6/solihull/Local%20Child%20Safeguarding%20Practise%20Reviews.pdf>

serious incidents, and for commissioning child safeguarding practice reviews when required.

- 6.2.5 The Solihull Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel will:
- Promptly undertake a rapid review of the case in line with regional and national published guidance in order to make a recommendation about whether a local child safeguarding practice review should be commissioned;
 - Identify immediate learning for individual partner agencies and monitor the implementation of single-agency actions to improve practice;
 - Identify any key messages from the rapid review for dissemination across the wider workforce;
 - Have clear processes for how it will work in parallel with other investigations and work collaboratively with those responsible for carrying out those investigations;
 - Agree with the reviewer of a local child safeguarding practice review the method by which the review should be conducted;
 - Seek to ensure that practitioners are fully involved in local child safeguarding practice reviews, and that families, including surviving children, are invited to contribute to the review;
 - Ensure the final report of a local child safeguarding practice review includes a summary of recommended improvements and an analysis of any systemic or underlying reasons why actions were taken or not in respect of matters covered in the report;
 - Develop and monitor actions to implement changes arising from the findings of the review.
- 6.2.6 The lead safeguarding partners will consider carefully how best to manage the impact of the publication of local child safeguarding practice reviews on children, family members, practitioners and others closely affected by the case;
- 6.2.7 The lead safeguarding partners will make arrangements to inform the National Panel and the Secretary of State of the reasons for a delay of a local child safeguarding practice review, set out any justification for any decision not to publish either the full report of information relating to improvements and have regard to any comments from the Panel and Secretary of State in respect of the publication;
- 6.2.8 A copy of the full report of the local child safeguarding practice reviews will be sent to the National Panel and Secretary of State;

Section 6: Responding to child deaths and serious incidents

- 6.2.9 The lead safeguarding partners will delegate to the Learning and Development group responsibility for considering key messages from Solihull's rapid reviews and local child safeguarding practice reviews, and from all national reviews, and for disseminating findings to relevant agencies and the wider workforce.
- 6.2.10 The lead safeguarding partners will delegate to the Assurance and Review Group responsibility for auditing progress on the implementation of recommended improvements following local child safeguarding practice reviews.

7. Evaluating the effectiveness of the local safeguarding response

7.1 Reporting on the effectiveness of safeguarding children arrangements in Solihull

- 7.1.1 The lead safeguarding partners have a responsibility to monitor the effectiveness of the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and to publish a report at least once in every 12-month period to set out what they have done as a result of the arrangements, including child safeguarding practice reviews, and how effective these arrangements have been in practice.
- 7.1.2 Updates to these multi-agency safeguarding arrangements will be included in the annual report.
- 7.1.3 The annual report will be reviewed by the Independent Scrutineer prior to it being signed off by the lead safeguarding partners.
- 7.1.4 The Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report will be published on the SSCP website, presented to the Solihull Health and Wellbeing Board and circulated to chairs of partnership boards.

7.2 Using data and intelligence to assess effectiveness

- 7.2.1 The lead safeguarding partners use data and intelligence to assess the effectiveness of help being provided to children and families across the early help and safeguarding systems in Solihull. The data and intelligence will be a combination of single-agency data alongside multi-agency performance indicators agreed by the Executive group.
- 7.2.2 Skilled and knowledgeable data analysts will support the local safeguarding partners to effectively and accurately analyse and interpret data and intelligence. This will enable lead safeguarding partners to judge the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements. It is the responsibility of partner agencies to provide a detailed analysis of cross-partnership data.
- 7.2.3 The lead safeguarding partners will use the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment to help them understand the prevalence and contexts of need, including specific needs relating to disabled children and those relating to abuse and neglect which, in turn, should help shape services.
- 7.2.4 The SSCP Quality Assurance Framework sets out the approach to utilising data and intelligence to assessing the effectiveness of safeguarding

Section 7: Evaluating the effectiveness of the local safeguarding response

services. The Quality Assurance Framework has recently been reviewed and will be published on the SSCP website.

7.2.5 The components of the Quality Assurance Framework are represented in the following diagram:



7.2.6 The Chair of the Assurance and Review Group is the lead on behalf of the delegated safeguarding partners for overseeing the use, analysis and interpretation of intelligence and data from the above activities. They will do this by reviewing, seeking clarification and escalating, where appropriate and relevant.

7.2.7 Each year the Assurance and Review Group (ARG) will agree a work plan which includes a programme of multi-agency audits. Delivery of multi-

agency audits sits with the Case Audit Group which reports into the Assurance and Review Group (ARG). The final overview report will be approved by the SSCP Executive Group.

7.2.8 Since the Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) undertaken in January 2022 new processes have been developed for multi-agency audits; a combination of thematic audits to look in-depth at multi-agency practice for a group of children, and dip sampling to look at specific practice issues. From these processes there are the following outputs:

- An overview report which identifies the findings from the audits
- Single-agency actions identified by auditors, which are monitored by the Audit Group to ensure they are implemented
- A multi-agency action plan which specifies action(s) which require a response by more than one partner agency. This action plan is monitored by the Assurance and Review Group

7.2.9 Feedback is sought from parents/carers and young people as part of the multi-agency audit approach.

7.2.10 Headline data, supported by analysis and intelligence, provides the safeguarding partners with a line of sight on practice in the MASH and on aspects of the wider safeguarding system. Oversight and analysis of multi-agency data will assist the lead safeguarding partners to:

- Identify trends in prevalence or demand for services
- Identify pressure points in the MASH response to new referrals
- Benchmark Solihull against national data
- Identify aspects of practice which require further interrogation

7.2.11 Relevant agencies are asked to identify from their own quality assurance activities, including complaints and compliments processes, any issues which have implications for the safeguarding of children which need to be escalated for consideration by the Assurance and Review Group.

8. Learning and improvement

8.1 Learning and Improvement Framework

8.1.1 The Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership has set out its approach to learning and improvement in its Learning and Improvement Framework. The Framework demonstrates how learning is identified, disseminated, and implemented within a multi-agency context.

8.1.2 Learning will be identified through a range of activities which are referred to in Section 7. The diagram below demonstrates how the SSCP subgroups work together to undertake quality assurance activities, identify learning, and take this forward to make improvements to the safeguarding system and, in turn, to improve outcomes for children and young people.



8.2 Multi-agency safeguarding training

- 8.2.1 The lead safeguarding partners are responsible for considering what multi-agency training is needed locally and how they will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of any training they commission.
- 8.2.2 A training needs analysis is undertaken at agreed intervals to inform decisions about the range of multi-agency courses required across the partnership.
- 8.2.3 The SSCP delivers a programme of multi-agency training facilitated, with support from a pool of trainers from a number of relevant agencies, by the SSCP Training and Development Officer.
- 8.2.4 Multi-agency training provided by the SSCP can be accessed using [this link](#).
- 8.2.5 Evaluations completed in respect of the training courses delivered are monitored by the Learning and Development Group.

8.3 Practitioner Learning Forum

- 8.3.1 The Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Safeguarding Adults Board in Solihull have collaborated to develop a Practitioner Learning Forum.
- 8.3.2 The purpose of the Practitioner Learning Forum is to bring together practitioners and managers working with adults and children to enable them to access relevant local and national learning.
- 8.3.3 It also provides an opportunity to discuss safeguarding practice in Solihull, to identify risks and/or issues that may need to be escalated to the Executive Group, to provide practitioner feedback on specific issues and to share good practice.

8.4 Embedding learning across the system

- 8.4.1 The lead safeguarding partners have a responsibility to ensure that local and national learning is embedded in order to make improvements to practice. The Learning and Development Group will develop dissemination action plans once key messages have been agreed for target audiences.
- 8.4.2 Learning resources will be developed and circulated to all strategic leads in relevant agencies with a request that they are embedded into their organisation's operating processes with plans put in place for ensuring that the learning is having an impact on practice.
- 8.4.3 The Learning and Development Group will monitor single agency action to embed the learning and will develop an assurance position on behalf of the lead safeguarding partners.

8.5 Evaluating the impact of learning

8.5.1 In order to ensure that local and national learning impacts positively on practice and that changes are embedded, sustainable over time and have the desired effect, monitoring will be undertaken through the following processes:

Performance analysis:

- SSCP multi-agency dataset
- Single-agency performance measures

Quality assurance and audit activity:

- SSCP multi-agency audit activity
- Single-agency audit activity

Survey activity:

- children, young people and their families
- practitioners and line managers

Feedback from:

- practitioners and line managers on the impact on practice of learning and development activity
- children, young people and their families on the impact of interventions

9. Participation and engagement

9.1 Feedback on services

- 9.1.1 Lead safeguarding partners and relevant partner agencies are responsible for having processes in place for receiving feedback from children and their families about the services received. This feedback should be used to inform the development of services being delivered to improve the experiences of children and parents/carers.
- 9.1.2 The S11 Audit tool, to be completed every two years, asks partner agencies specific questions about the effectiveness of their single agency processes for seeking feedback on services and utilising feedback to support service development. If the self-assessment is that this requires improvement, the S11 audit tool asks for details of the proposed actions to be taken to make the necessary improvement. The SSCP will seek assurance on any areas identified as requiring improvement as a result of the audit.
- 9.1.3 The SSCP will provide opportunities for young people and parents/carers to provide feedback on their experiences of services as part of the multi-agency audit process. Feedback will be used to triangulate findings from the audit process and will inform the recommendations for improvements.
- 9.1.4 Feedback on services may also be received via single agency complaints procedures or via the SSCP Stage 2 Complaints Process regarding the outcome of child protection conferences.

9.2 Consultation with children and families

- 9.2.1 The lead safeguarding partners will consult with children and young people, parents and carers on specific issues to ensure that its information is relevant and accessible. Examples of such consultations might include:
- Views about specific safeguarding issues
 - Information leaflets aimed at parents/young people
 - The development of policies or good practice guidance when appropriate
 - Content located on the parent/young people specific SSCP website pages

10. Thresholds for Intervention

10.1 Thresholds for intervention to provide support and protection

- 10.1.1 The lead safeguarding partners are required to work with relevant agencies to agree the levels for different types of assessment and services to be commissioned and delivered.
- 10.1.2 The SSCP has developed revised (December 2022) Thresholds Guidance, which is titled 'Right Help, Right Time, Right Response'.
- 10.1.3 The Thresholds Guidance is published on the SSCP website and located in the Solihull multi-agency procedures.⁸
- 10.1.4 Multi-agency audits will evaluate whether children in Solihull receive the right services at the right time, at the earliest opportunity.

⁸ [https://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/assets/clients/6/Thresholds_Guidance_25Nov22%20\(003\).pdf](https://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/assets/clients/6/Thresholds_Guidance_25Nov22%20(003).pdf)

APPENDIX A



Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSPs) – Scheme of Delegation to Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSPs)

1. The three statutory Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSPs) are:
 - Chief Constable, West Midlands Police
 - Chief Executive, Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board
 - Chief Executive, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council.
2. Each of the LSPs has agreed to delegate certain functions to senior officers within their organisation (DSPs). These officers are:
 - Chief Superintendent for Solihull, West Midlands Police
 - Deputy Chief Executive & Chief Nurse, Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board
 - Director of Children’s Services, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council.
3. Although the functions can be delegated, ultimate responsibility for them remains with the LSPs. The DSPs should operate in accordance with this scheme of delegation but should be clear on where matters need escalating to the LSPs. The DSPs should report into bi-monthly meetings of the LSPs.
4. The LSPs have joint and equal responsibility for multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in Solihull. They are required to show strong leadership in overseeing the arrangements to help and protect children. Their focus is on multi-agency activity.
5. Each agency will have its own arrangements for ensuring effective safeguarding. On occasion this will be escalated to the SSCP, its principal focus is on the multi-agency aspects of protecting children.
6. Safeguarding partners have three functions, these are detailed in ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’. The functions are to:
 - Speak with authority on behalf of their agency,
 - Commit their agency to the agreed actions of the SSCP, and
 - Hold their agency to account for the effective delivery of the arrangements.

7. The key task of the LSPs is to act as a team, as opposed to a voice for their agency alone.
8. LSPs set the strategic plan and priorities for the multi-agency arrangements. They focus on the key issues which promote multi-agency practice, and which allows them a direct line of view of its effectiveness. Key areas for them to determine include the:
 - priorities for the multi-agency partnership,
 - establishing local learning reviews and the learning framework,
 - assessment of the performance and effectiveness of multi-agency practice,
 - agree the SSCP improvement plan, JTAI and National Panel recommendations,
 - model of independent scrutiny,
 - resourcing and funding of the arrangements,
 - structure of the SSCP,
 - priorities of the intelligence and support team,
 - data and information sharing policies,
 - communication and engagement strategy with relevant partners and children,
 - approve the yearly plan as a public safeguarding assurance statement.
9. As far as possible, these issues should be agreed on a three-year timescale with a triennial review. This would give a sensible planning horizon for DSPs to plan their improvement work.
10. The DSPs must focus on driving improvement in practice and delivering the agreed priorities and ensuring practice of police, health and local government children service professionals is as effective as it can be to help and protect children. Like the LSPs, DSPs must act as a team and not a spokesperson for their agency alone.
11. The scheme of delegation from LSPs to DSPs empowers decision making and is arranged to ensure a clear line of accountability of the individual to their agency LSPs and the DSPs as a team to the LSPs.
12. The LSPs will determine the issues in paragraph eight. The operation of these decisions should be reported on by the DSP team. The DSP team should not need to refer upwards to the LSPs to seek approval for operational decisions or changes in the arrangement of multi-agency services, including the sub-structure of the SSCP.

13. In addition to single agency arrangements made to hold DSPs to account, the DSP team will be held to account through the scheme of delegation to:
- provide evidence about the quality/performance of multi-agency practice,
 - deliver the SSCP improvement plan, JTAI and National Panel recommendations,
 - update on the progress of meeting the SSCP priorities,
 - identify and anticipate new challenges to the work of multi-agency teams,
 - direct the SSCP support team, minimising bureaucracy ensuring task-oriented activity,
 - provide analyses of trends in practice from intelligent interpretation of data,
 - report on the engagement of schools, and other relevant partners,
 - respond to messages from learning reviews,
 - report on the performance of the support team and use of allocated budgets,
 - advise on any issues the DSPs cannot agree on.
14. The process of accountability of DSPs to LSPs should include **support and challenge from the Independent Scrutineer**. Their tasks include advising LSPs of the effectiveness and leadership of the DSP as a team; progress against the SSCP improvement plan, JTAI and National Panel recommendations; key priorities of the LSPs; improvement in multi-agency practice; and areas which require the attention and or decision of the LSPs.
15. The yearly report of the LSPs should describe the accountability and governance model and include an assessment of it as part of their annual public statement of assurance as to the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding for children in Solihull.

APPENDIX B: RELEVANT AGENCIES

The following agencies are 'relevant agencies' as defined in the Schedule to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency (England) Regulations:

- Education providers
- Registered providers of a children's home
- Registered providers of a Fostering agency
- Registered providers of an Adoption support agency and/or a registered Adoption Society
- Registered providers of a registered holiday scheme for disabled children
- Registered providers of a residential family centre
- CAFCASS
- A Governor of a Prison
- Providers of Probation Services
- NHS Commissioning Board, known as NHS England (West Midlands)
- Commissioned providers of health services
- Providers of community housing
- UK Visa and Immigration
- Youth Justice Service
- Fire and Rescue Service
- Voluntary and Community Sector including charities, religious organisations/faith groups
- Sport or leisure providers

All Solihull schools and educational establishments, regardless of size or type, are seen as Relevant Agencies by the Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP).