

Terms of Reference

SSCP Multi-Agency Audit Group

1. Role and Function of the SSCP Multi-Agency Audit Group

The Audit Group has responsibility to implement and deliver the SSCP's annual multi-agency audit programme. This audit programme is aligned to local priorities, national and regional and local learning. The Audit group is chaired by the Head of Safeguards in Solihull Children's Services.

The purpose of this group is to support the work of Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) in ensuring the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding practice for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

This will be achieved by:

- Developing a robust programme of audits, taking account of the SSCP priorities and themes from local and national learning;
- Undertaking audits of multi-agency safeguarding practice, drawing on agencies' records to enable conclusions to be drawn as to the effectiveness of their safeguarding practice;
- Responding to concerns raised during the audit process in relation to particular children and young people and escalating this where necessary;
- Agreeing multi-agency agency action plans in response to issues identified in audits and key findings as well as seeking confirmation of single agency action plans;
- Making recommendations for change, supported by the evidence of audits e.g., awareness raising or procedural changes;
- Providing written reports for each audit undertaken, detailing the methodology, findings, conclusions, recommendations, and actions to be undertaken to improve practice;
- Identifying learning for specific agencies and ensuring this learning is fed back to relevant practitioners in their respective organisations;
- Seeking service user feedback for a number of themed audits throughout the year in order to triangulate the experiences of children and families with the audit findings.

2. Accountability

The Audit Group is accountable to the SSCP Assurance and Review Group who will monitor any findings identified by the audit group and interrogate where necessary to provide overall assurance to the SSCP and the robustness of practice.

Members of the Audit Group are also accountable to each other, their agencies and the SSCP for completion of actions as required for the delivery of the Audit group work programme.

3. Role of Chair

The Chair of the Audit Group should represent one of the three safeguarding partners: local authority, police, or health.

The Chair of the group will work closely with the SSCP Project Officer to prepare for meetings and set agendas.

The Chair will hold group members to account for attendance, engagement, and the delivery of specific tasks.

The Chair will model appropriate behaviours and language at all times.

4. Role of Group Members

Each member of the Audit Group is responsible for both working on behalf of the Safeguarding Children Partnership in the delivery of its learning and delivery function and for holding their own agency to account for its safeguarding children activity.

Members will have a clear understanding and knowledge of child safeguarding issues; they should be employed in a sufficiently senior position to ensure actions and issues identified are addressed robustly followed up and addressed.

Group members to ensure they have the support of their line manager/organisation to fulfil the requirements of the role.

Group members will prepare for meetings and come ready to actively engage with discussions. As well as ensuring the completion of various audits throughout the year.

Group members will positively support with the completion of tasks between meetings when asked to do so by the Chair/Deputy Chair.

Group members will attend all meetings and, in the event that they are unable to do so, will identify a suitable person from their agency to attend on their behalf.

Group members will be expected to respond in a timely way to communications between meetings.

Group members will model appropriate behaviours and language at all times.

5. Frequency of meetings

The frequency of meetings will be dictated by the audit schedule for the year, this is likely to equate to 6-8 meetings a year dependent on demand for completion of audits.

6. Administration

The SSCP Project Officer will take notes at each meeting.

The agenda and papers will be circulated ahead of the meeting and notes will be produced and circulated within two weeks of the meeting.

7. Membership

Members of the group include:

- Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board - Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children and Adults (Lead for Children) (Deputy Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children and Adults to deputise)
- Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust - Named Nurse for Safeguarding Children and Young People (Safeguarding Lead for Quality and Assurance to deputise)
- Education and Early Years – Senior Education Improvement Adviser (another Senior Education Improvement Adviser will deputise where necessary)
- Solihull Children’s Social Care - Quality Assurance and Compliance Manager
- SWFT - Lead Nurse for Safeguarding Children (Named Nurse for Safeguarding Children to deputise)
- Probation Service – Senior Probation Officer (another Senior Probation Officer will deputise where necessary)
- Solihull Community Housing - Safeguarding & Community Safety Project Manager (Neighbourhood Services Manager to deputise)
- University Hospital Birmingham (UHB) - Team Lead for the Children’s Safeguarding Team
- West Midlands Police (WMP) – Detective Inspector
- Solihull Youth Justice Service - Service Manager – Exploitation, Missing and Youth Justice (Team Manager – Wider Exploitation and Missing Team to deputise)
- Solihull Adults Social Care – Team Manager: Safeguarding (Exploitation Reduction Lead to deputise)

8. Quoracy

Meetings will not be considered to be quorate unless there is representation from the three named safeguarding partners: Local Authority, Integrated Care Board and West Midlands Police

Updated July 2023