

Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP)

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

1. The three statutory Lead Safeguarding Partners are:
 - Chief Constable, West Midlands Police
 - Chief Executive, NHS Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board
 - Chief Executive, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. The key task of the LSPs is to act as a team, as opposed to a voice for their agency alone.
6. LSPs can delegate their function to a senior officer in their authority. Delegation transfers the three functions to the Delegated Safeguarding Partners. Although the functions can be delegated, ultimate responsibility for them remains with the LSPs.
7. LSPs set the strategic plan and priorities for the multi-agency arrangements. They focus on the key issues which promote multi-agency practice and allows them a direct line of view of its effectiveness. Key areas for them to have in place 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.

8. 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.
9. The DSPs must focus on driving improvement in practice and delivering the agreed priorities and ensuring the 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.
10. The scheme of delegation from LSPs to DSPs should empower decision making and be arranged to ensure a clear line of accountability of the individual to their agency LSPs and the DSPs as a team to the LSPs.
11. As the LSPs will have determined the issues in paragraph seven, the operation of these decisions should be reported on by the DSP team. Empowering the DSP team will ensure they are not constantly referring upward to the LSPs or seeking their approval for operational decisions or changes in the arrangement of multi-agency services including the sub-structure of the SSCP.
12. In addition to the single agency arrangements made to hold DSPs to account, the DSP team should 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 children 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 DSP cannot agree on.
13. The process of accountability of DSPs to LSPs should include **support and challenge from the Independent Scrutineer**. One of their tasks is to advise 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.
14. The Annual Assurance Statement of the LSPs should describe the accountability and governance model and include an assessment of the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements for children in Solihull.