



Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements in Sussex

September 2024

Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership



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Abstract:

Partnership Arrangements under Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 including pan Sussex and local Brighton & Hove arrangements. Implemented from 2 September 2024.

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Foreword

We are delighted to present our multi-agency arrangements for safeguarding children in Sussex.

As Lead Safeguarding Partners in Sussex we are committed to enabling our children and families to thrive. To achieve this, we must be assured that our services in Sussex provide the right help to children at the right time, delivered by the right people.

We welcome the changes brought by Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023¹(WT23) as an opportunity to strengthen our existing Partnership Arrangements. Since the introduction of Safeguarding Partnerships (following Local Safeguarding Children Boards arrangements) in 2019 a Pan Sussex Strategic Executive Leadership group has been in place, delivering a clear and continuous focus on achieving the best possible outcomes for children. Through effective partnership working we believe that maintaining and further strengthening positive, trusting and co-operative relationships across Sussex will continue to support our innovative work and sharing of best practice across the Sussex footprint.

To ensure that the partnerships are able to ‘hold up the mirror’ to front-line safeguarding practice, we have agreed to retain a locality-based approach within key elements of our safeguarding arrangements. We will continue to focus on improving systems and practice on strategy development through to front line service delivery by optimising our respective roles and responsibilities in line with the expectations set out under WT23. In accordance with the above guidance, this document sets out how across Sussex we will safeguard children. Sussex has a strong track record for its work with vulnerable children and young people and this document outlines how local agencies will continue to build upon this foundation.



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¹ [Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/781211/Working_together_to_safeguard_children.pdf)

1. Background and Introduction

Agencies working with children and families across Sussex recognise that by working in partnership we can achieve as a collective more than the sum of our individual parts. Moreover, we can best safeguard and promote the wellbeing of our children² by harnessing our wide-ranging expertise and resources. This enables us to provide the best possible solutions, be it via our universal services, targeted early intervention or by multi-agency collaborative support work with children and their families.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023³ (WT23) statutory guidance sets out expectations about how we as safeguarding children partnerships provide help, support and protection for children and their families. It applies at every level, from senior leaders to those in direct practice with families, and across all agencies and organisations that come into contact with children. It also gives practitioners clarity about what is required of them individually and how they need to work in partnership with each other to deliver effective services. The Police, Integrated Care Board (ICB) and the local authority must agree and lead local arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area.

Revised multi-agency partnership arrangements in Sussex came in to force from 2 September 2024, ensuring the requirements set out in WT23 are fully met. These arrangements will be reviewed annually and take in to account any future updates to Working Together to Safeguard Children.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined under WT23 as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge.
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network, through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.

Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and is defined for the purpose of this guidance as activity that is undertaken to protect specific

² Pan Sussex SCP arrangements, definition: a child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. 'Children' means 'children and young people.'

³ [Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115251/Working_together_to_safeguard_children.pdf)

children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online. Effective safeguarding means practitioners should understand and be sensitive to factors, including economic and social circumstances and ethnicity, which can impact children and families' lives.

1.1 Purpose of partnership arrangements

The purpose of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements is to ensure that, at a Sussex based and 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.



2. Multi-agency Safeguarding Arrangements in Sussex

The statutory safeguarding partners across Sussex are NHS Sussex ICB, Sussex Police, West Sussex County Council, Brighton & Hove City Council, and East Sussex County Council.

Sussex statutory safeguarding partners have agreed a partnership structure with the following components:

- (i) **A single Sussex Safeguarding Children Executive (SSCE)** responsible for determining multi agency safeguarding strategy and agreeing models for multi-agency working to safeguard children and young people.
- (ii) **Three Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships (LSCPs)** which each reflect the role of the SSCE while exercising separate responsibility for decision making about individual cases of serious incidents, rapid reviews and local practice reviews, through Case Review Groups and Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSPs), DSPs report annually to the Sussex LSPs, meeting together as a group to review the effectiveness of arrangements across Sussex. The relevant DSPs are appointed to the formal Partnership Chair as detailed in 3.1.
- (iii) **Three local area Partnership Groups (PGs)** which support the work of each LSCP, chaired by the relevant Director of Children's Services (Corporate Director of Families, Children and Wellbeing in Brighton & Hove), or DSP from NHS Sussex ICB and Sussex Police. These groups replace the previous Boards and Steering Groups. The broad membership of the PGs is consistent across Sussex comprising representatives of local statutory, voluntary and community sector organisations. The engagement of education partners in each area are being strengthened, building on existing local arrangements.

2.1 Accountability for multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in Sussex

In Sussex, the Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSPs) are:

1. The Chief Executives of the West Sussex County Council, Brighton & Hove City Council, and East Sussex County Council
2. The Chief Executive of NHS Sussex
3. The Chief Constable of Sussex Police

The above named LSPs are accountable for the effectiveness and outcomes of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements across Sussex. They are also jointly responsible to ensuring proper involvement of and oversight of all relevant agencies.

They **meet at least once annually** to review collectively the effectiveness of partnership working to safeguard children in West Sussex, Brighton & Hove, and East Sussex (via scrutiny of the three partnerships' annual reports). The annual meeting is also be attended by the Delegated Safeguarding Leads (see 2.2 below), the Partnership Business Managers, and Independent Scrutineer/s. Other strategic leaders, such as the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner could be invited to attend this meeting as appropriate.

The LSPs also receive a 6 monthly briefing, coordinated by the three Partnership Business Managers, with input from Independent Scrutiny.

2.2 Delivery of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in Sussex

On a day-to-day basis, Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSPs) make decisions on behalf of the LSPs and hold their agencies to account for their contribution to safeguarding arrangements. Across Sussex, the DSPs are:

1. The Directors of Children's Services (DCS) West Sussex County Council and East Sussex, and the Corporate Director of Children, Families & Wellbeing, Brighton & Hove City Council.
2. Deputy Chief Nursing Officer, Director of Patient Experience & Involvement, NHS Sussex ICB.
3. Detective Chief Superintendent, Head of Public Protection, Sussex Police Service.

To facilitate the delivery and monitoring of Sussex wide multi-agency priorities and procedures, the DSPs have established a **Sussex Safeguarding Children Executive**, which is chaired by the Deputy Chief Nursing Officer or Head of Public Protection (this is rotated on a 2 yearly basis). For the period September 2024 - September 2026 this falls to Detective Chief Superintendent, Head of Public Protection, Sussex Police Service.

2.2.1 Sussex Safeguarding Children Executive

The responsibilities of the Sussex Safeguarding Children Executive (SSCE) are:

- (i) Agree consistent procedures and strategies to secure effective multi agency safeguarding of children across Sussex.
- (ii) Monitor the impact of procedures and strategies on the wellbeing of children in Sussex, drawing on analysis of data, audit of agency actions, and intelligence about the lived experience of children and families.
- (iii) Review the allocation of resources across partner agencies to ensure they fairly meet the different needs of children and secure consistent and effective discharge of statutory duties.
- (iv) Together with local Quality Assurance Subgroups, monitor the effectiveness of joint working at Sussex and local level in meeting the requirement of statutory guidance, and agree actions to address any gaps as identified.

- (v) Together with the Pan Sussex Learning & Development Subgroup monitor the effectiveness of the pan Sussex training offer and the circulation of local, pan Sussex, and national learning from practice reviews, audits, research, and reports, and agree actions to address any gaps as identified.

The SSCE will determine:

- The strategic approach to all issues requiring multi-agency safeguarding action, including responses to reports published by the National Child Safeguarding Panel.
- The model of multi-agency working to discharge statutory duties (for example the operation of Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) in each area or multi agency child protection teams as proposed in “Stable Homes Based on Love”⁴. Investment decisions by each agency within the partnership will be for the agency in question but constructive challenge and dialogue will be encouraged so that issues can be resolved through consensus wherever possible. Agencies with a Sussex wide remit will base area investment decisions on clear evidence shared with all parties.
- What collective multi agency actions are needed to address gaps in training and practice identified through quality assurance, training need analysis and independent scrutiny. Respectful mutual challenge will be encouraged so that individual agencies experience high support and high challenge through participation in the Executive.
- The procedures which all parties will follow across Sussex to protect children.

The SSCE meets twice a year. The biannual meetings should be attended by the three local authority Heads of Safeguarding, the Partnership Business Managers, and Independent Scrutineer/s.

The SSCE is supported by one of the area Partnership Business Managers, on a rotation of a minimum of two years. For the period September 2024 - September 2026 this is the Brighton & Hove Partnership (BHSCP).

The SSCE receives exception reports from the three areas of Sussex wide work including learning and development; collation and analysis of multi-agency safeguarding data; and Sussex child protection and safeguarding procedures. Each of these three areas are supported by one of the area Partnership Business Managers, on a rotation of a minimum of two years. For the period September 2024 - September 2026:

- Learning and development, including supporting a Sussex wide Learning and Development Subgroup of the SSCE - **West Sussex SCP**
- Collation and analysis of data relevant to multi-agency safeguarding responsibilities, and delivery of the Sussex wide Section 11 audit of agencies

⁴ [Stable Homes Built on Love consultation response](#). (DFE – September 2023).

operating in the Sussex area, and additional Sussex wide audit activity, as directed by the SSCE - **East Sussex SCP**

- Administration of the SSCE and LSP meetings and related activities. Support for the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies and Procedures Subgroup of the Sussex Executive - **Brighton & Hove SCP**

The SSCE may establish subgroups on a standing or task and finish basis as it sees fit, for example in relation to exploitation, neglect or other issues requiring collective strategic development.

2.2.2 Sussex Learning and Development

The strategic oversight and development of the partnership's learning and development programme is now delivered on a pan-Sussex basis. This includes:

- A Sussex Learning and Development Subgroup, of the SSCE which meets on a quarterly basis. The subgroup will be responsible for:
 - Development of a Sussex wide training programme, recognising that some training will still be delivered locally, to ensure that training is responsive to local needs.
 - Development of a consistent charging policy for training across all three partnerships.
 - Responding to Sussex wide learning needs, such as responding to local and national safeguarding practice reviews and reports.
 - Plan for and deliver pan Sussex Conference, drawing from local and national learning to decide theme and approach.
 - Development of a Sussex Learning and Improvement Strategy/Framework.
 - Coordination of communication on Sussex wide learning themes.
 - Considering the potential of a Sussex wide SCP website.
 - Development of an approach to evidence impact of training on practice.
 - Reporting progress annually via the partnerships' annual report with updates twice per year to the SSCE on emerging risks and issues.

Learning from Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews can be held as actions from each area, with overall strategic oversight in Learning and Development Plan but should be locally implemented.

2.2.3 Sussex collation and analysis of data

To enable the early identification of new safeguarding risks and issues, and to ensure a joined-up responses across Sussex, where appropriate, a new collation and analysis of data function is being created. This function includes:

- Development of a Sussex wide 'dashboard' of indicators, in response to joint areas of risk and Sussex safeguarding priorities.

- Delivery of a Sussex Information Sharing Agreement.
- Delivery of the Section 11 audit and scrutiny process.
- Supporting the SSCE on discrete pieces of work, such as delivering needs analysis on key areas of need.
- Facilitation of a twice-yearly meeting between key multi-agency colleagues to review the dashboard and escalate indicators, prior to the SSCE meetings.
- Establish and maintain a network of colleagues who have access to relevant data.

Each SCP will continue to deliver a data and audit function locally, via their Quality Assurance Subgroups.

2.2.4 Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures

The *Pan Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures*⁵ are co-ordinated through the Pan Sussex Policies & Procedures Group (PSP&PG). This multi-agency group meets four times a year and is responsible for the development of policies, procedures and guidance for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Sussex. The PSP&PG reports on its progress annually via the annual report with updates twice per year on emerging risks and issues to the SSCE.

2.2.5 Budget setting and financial support and advice

LSPs agree funding arrangements for local and pan Sussex multi-agency arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Agencies with a Sussex wide remit are basing area investment decisions on clear evidence shared with all parties.

The expenses of each local SCP business support team is met from their respective SCP budgets or provided as an ad hoc contribution from lead partner agencies. The budget must be sufficient to cover statutory responsibilities and core SCP business delivery.

East Sussex, Brighton & Hove and West Sussex retain SCP business support teams locally. Local decisions on budget expenditure are delegated to the LSCPs. Decisions around Pan Sussex projects and funding e.g. scrutiny, training and conferences are made at the SSCE meetings.

The local authority hosts the business support team activity and is therefore responsible for ensuring each partnership's fiscal compliance and governance.

The SCPs' annual report sets out Lead Partner contributions to the SCPs' budgets and a summary of expenditure. Expenditure decisions are made in accordance with local agreements and schemes of delegation.

⁵ [Pan Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures](#)

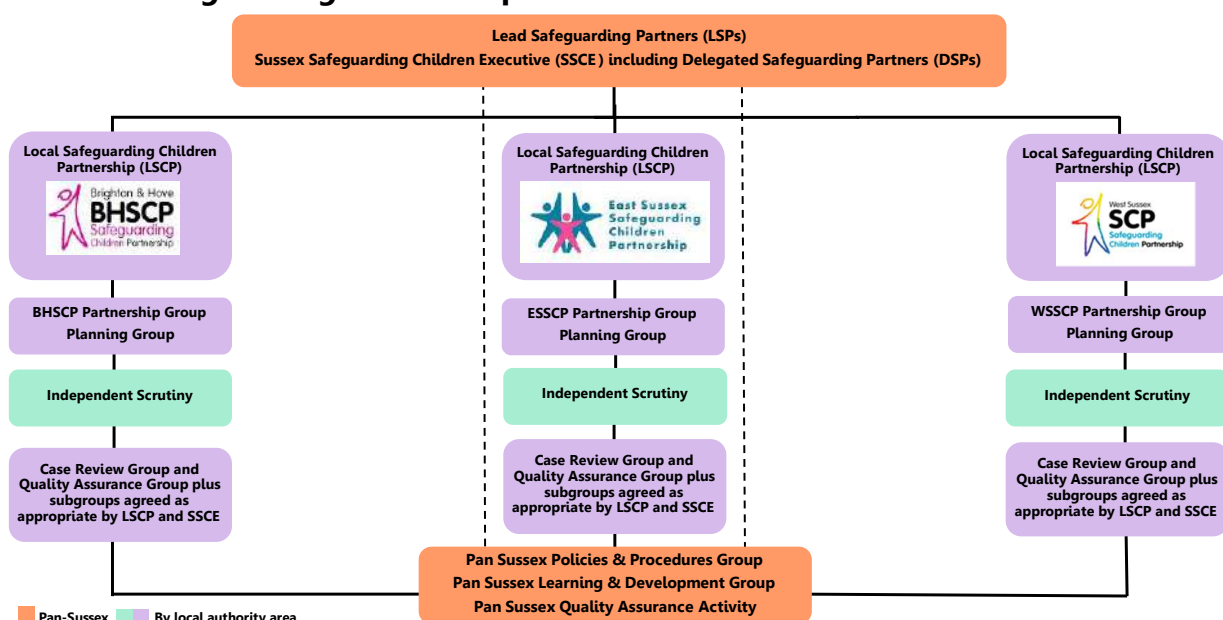
2.2.6 Independent Scrutiny

The DSPs are responsible for making independent scrutiny arrangements on behalf of the LSPs and reviewing those arrangements to ensure safeguarding partners and relevant agencies receive independent, rigorous, and effective support and challenge at both a strategic and operational level.

Arrangements for independent scrutiny are the responsibility of local areas, however where appropriate - such as to reduce duplication or provide additional value - a pan Sussex approach will be taken. For example, a pan Sussex approach will be taken for the scrutiny of the section 11 returns for Sussex agencies. The purpose of independent scrutiny in the section 11 is to provide support and challenge to statutory/relevant agencies and provide assurance on safeguarding arrangements across the wider system. The SSCE will be responsible for agreeing pan Sussex scrutiny activity in response to emerging themes.

2.3 Pan Sussex Structure

Sussex Safeguarding Partnerships Structure



3. Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships

The statutory safeguarding partners across Sussex agreed to retain three Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships (LSCP), based on local authority boundaries. This ensures local level organisations and agencies are clear about how they should work together to safeguard children and promote their welfare, and the partnership is able to 'hold up the mirror' to front-line safeguarding practice.

The statutory partnership for each local authority area shall comprise the LSPs (and DSPs) for the three statutory partners: Sussex Police, NHS Sussex ICB and the respective local authority.

Each of these three partnerships discharge the core partnership functions for their area, including:

- (i) Approving rapid reviews on cases notified to the National Panel.
- (ii) Approving the recommendations and publication as appropriate of local safeguarding practice reviews into such cases.
- (iii) Approving proactive and reactive communications in relation to cases subject to review.

They are supported by the respective Partnership Groups, which shall include representatives of education settings.

3.1 Partnership Chair

To support the functions of the LSPs, DSPs and the SCPs across Sussex the LSPs appointed one of the DSPs to the Partnership Chair role in each local authority area. This role will be reviewed annually. This arrangement replaces the independent chair role. The Partnership Chair in each locality has oversight of their locally based arrangements and acts as a conduit to inform and update LSPs. In the first year the Chairs are appointed as below:

- BHSCP - Corporate Director of Families, Children and Wellbeing, BHCC
- ESSCP - Detective Chief Superintendent, Head of Public Protection, Sussex Police Service
- WSSCP - Deputy Chief Nursing Officer, Director of Patient Experience & Involvement, NHS Sussex ICB

3.2 The key functions of the local safeguarding children partnerships (LCSPs)

- (i) **Three Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships (LSCPs)** which each reflect the role of the SSCE while exercising separate responsibility for decision making about individual cases of serious incidents, rapid reviews and local practice reviews, through Case Review Groups and Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSPs), reporting annually to the Sussex LSPs meeting together as a group to review the effectiveness of arrangements across Sussex. The relevant DSP will be the formal Partnership Chair as detailed above in 3.1.
- (ii) **Three local Partnership Groups (PGs)** which support the work of each LSCP, Chaired by the relevant DSP from the Children's Services, NHS Sussex ICB and Sussex Police. These groups will replace the previous Boards and Steering Groups. The broad membership of the PGs will be consistent across Sussex comprising representatives of local statutory, voluntary and community sector organisations. The engagement of education partners in each area will be strengthened building on existing local arrangements. The local PGs will be held twice a year, with additional meetings arranged as necessary, such as for the purpose of signing off rapid reviews/Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews / associated communications. The membership of the PGs will be listed in the Terms of Reference.

3.3. Partnership Planning

The DSPs from Sussex Police and NHS Sussex ICB meet with each of the local authority DCS (Corporate Director of Families, Children and Wellbeing in Brighton & Hove) at least twice during the business year together with the Partnership Business Manager to plan partnership business at local level.

3.4. Voice Of Children and Families

The voice of children must be reflected in our service delivery as it helps to inform both our future priorities and measurement of service delivery outcomes. We believe that listening to our children and their families about the services they have used or sought to access, and their views about safeguarding priorities in their communities, plays a pivotal part in informing our work priorities. By acting on their feedback and experiences we are better able to understand how to optimise our partnerships' resources and deploy strategies to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of our children.

3.5. Dispute Resolution and Whistleblowing

The pan Sussex procedures has a published escalation procedure, which is promoted to ensure agencies and organisations are aware of how and when to use it.

In the event of a disagreement between the three lead partners the Independent Scrutineer may be asked for advice to help partners swiftly and transparently reach a suitable resolution. The LSPs and/or DSPs may also seek independent advice, for example legal advice when appropriate. Partners will ensure throughout any dispute that their focus remains on safeguarding the child.

3.6. Legal advice

The LSCPs appoint a Legal Adviser to advise and assist them as and when required. Legal Advisor attendance is not required at the pan Sussex or local partnership groups but may do so if requested by any partner agency. Additional expenses arising from the provision of Legal Advice will be met from the local LSCP budgets or will be provided as a contribution from the three lead partners. The Legal Advisor to the partnership does not provide legal advice to individual Partners.

3.7. Annual report

The LSCPs are required under Working Together to Safeguard Children ⁶(WT23) to undertake a review of the effectiveness of its arrangements and tracks its business plan delivery progress. This will inform a retrospective annual report (April to March in line with business year cycle) which is published on the LSCP's website by the end of September of each year.

3.8. Schedule of Meetings

Meeting	Frequency	When
Meeting of Lead Safeguarding Partners	Once per year	September (sign off - SCP annual report/s)
Sussex Safeguarding Children Executive (SSCE)	Twice per year	January and July
Partnership Planning	Twice per year	April/September (or October) – coordinated on one meeting date for all 3 areas
Pan-Sussex Policies & Procedures	Quarterly	April/July/October/January
Pan-Sussex Learning & Development	Quarterly	Suggest: June/September/December/March
Partnership Group (Prefixed with BHSCP / ESSCP / WSSCP)	Twice per year	June and December
Case Review Group	Monthly	
Quality Assurance Group	Quarterly (may vary locally)	
Child Exploitation Subgroup	Varies locally (monthly/quarterly)	
Child Safeguarding Liaison Group	Varies locally (monthly/bi-monthly)	

⁶ [Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/67222/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_-_2015.pdf)

4. Safeguarding Arrangements in Brighton and Hove

4.1. Introduction

Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership (BHSCP) agencies and organisations must work together successfully, thereby ensuring they provide high quality and effective support to children who need help and protection in Brighton and Hove. We view Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023⁷ (WT23) as an opportunity for us to reflect as a Partnership on how we continue to build on the work we have already done to make a real impact on promoting and supporting successful outcomes for our children, through continuous improvement in practice and our collective service delivery. We believe that since 2019 we have made improvements to how we work together. We will retain our focus on delivering our Partnership's ambitious vision.

The BHSCP's area-based core Partnership functions are:

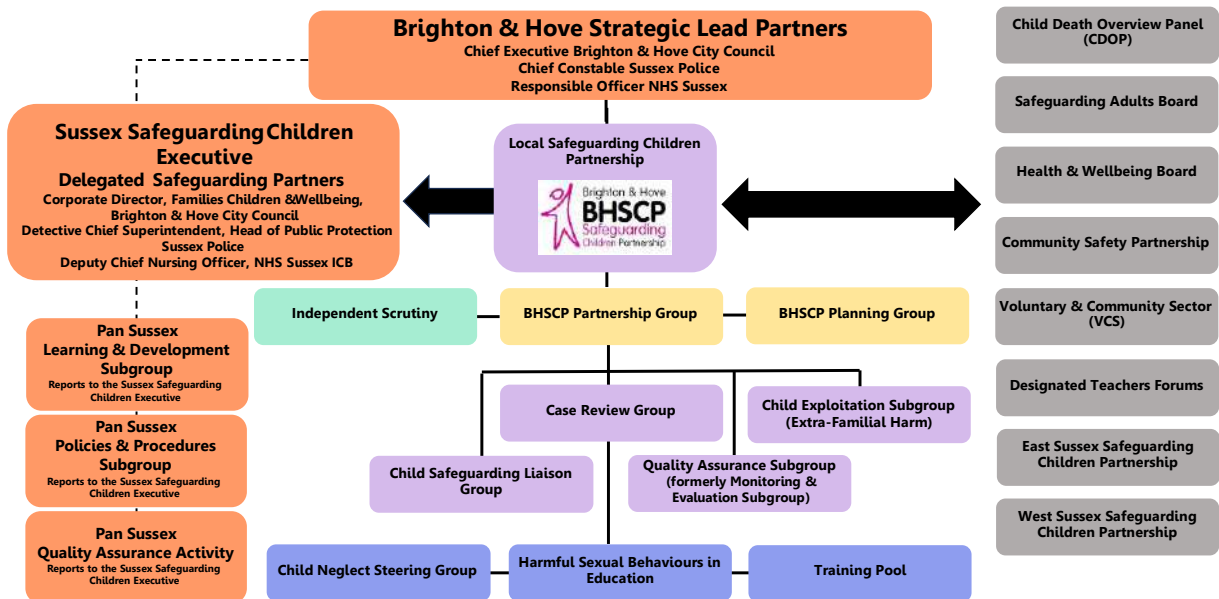
- Development and delivery of local business plan priorities.
- Approving rapid reviews when serious incident notifications are made to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel.
- Approving Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR) recommendations and publication strategies as appropriate.
- Approving proactive and reactive communications on behalf of the BHSCP.
- Ensuring that learning is disseminated and embedded into practice locally through the Pan Sussex Learning & Development Subgroup and local L&D task & finish groups.
- Determining and delivering local quality assurance activity, including audit and performance monitoring via the data Dashboard.



⁷ [Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/101311/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023.pdf)

4.2 BHSCP Structure

Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Children Structure



5. Our Vision and Guiding Principles

5.1. Our Shared Vision

As Brighton and Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership (BHSCP) our vision is for a healthy city where children thrive. We strive for a better future for children and young people.

Our goal is to keep children safe, for no child, young person or family to be left behind and to ensure children experience high quality, inclusive and accessible services in the city.

Nothing is more important than children's wellbeing. Every child deserves to grow up in a safe, stable, and loving home. Children who need help and protection deserve high quality and effective support. This requires individuals, agencies, and organisations to be clear about their own and each other's roles and responsibilities, and how they work together.

We aim to oversee that the agencies in the city provide the right support at the right time to families.

Our shared vision for Brighton & Hove is to be a child friendly city in which children and young people are safe from harm in their families, their communities and their neighbourhoods. We want Brighton & Hove to be the best city for children and young people to grow up in.

All our work is underpinned by a consistent and co-ordinated approach to safeguarding as well as being collectively committed to a child and family centred focus on improving outcomes across the city.

Children and young people, their wellbeing, protection and the promotion of their best interests are at the heart of everything BHSCP does.

5.2. Our Vision is underpinned by our Core Values

- A child centred approach: for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each citizen, practitioner and organisation should play their part.
- Promoting preventative and early help approaches for outcomes to be improved there should be timely identification of a problem; the earlier the better to secure maximum impact and greatest long-term sustainability.
- Always alert to transition points: for outcomes to be improved known transition points should be planned for in advance.

5.3. Our Principles

- To work in partnership.
- To commit to genuine engagement: listening to, and acting, on what our community tells us.
- To be a learning partnership.
- All BHSCP activity is characterised by an attitude of constructive professional curiosity and challenge.
- To be flexible to respond to emerging threats and risks.
- To always ask 'so what' to ensure what we do makes a difference.

6. How we will deliver our Vision

Our multi-agency partners will work together to deliver this vision by:

- Ensuring children are safeguarded via a strong, co-ordinated multi-agency approach.
- Ensuring children and families in Brighton & Hove receive timely Family Help and Safeguarding services delivered in partnership through the Brighton & Hove Family Help: The Right Support at the Right Time (formerly the Threshold Document)⁸, with a focus on the child's needs and aiming for consistently good outcomes across the city.
- By listening to children and families and their views taken seriously both when delivering Family Help and safeguarding services. Their views will be heard when collectively thinking about how we can improve those services, including those that we commission.
- Ensuring agencies adopt a whole system approach to planning services.
- By fully adopting the principles of relationship-based model of practice, anti-racist practice and poverty aware practice.
- Being solution focussed as a partnership; working collaboratively to find the best way to drive improvements to practice and service delivery.
- Evaluating and auditing our work to ensure we are affecting progress, and this is making the difference we expect.

7. Independent Scrutiny Arrangements for BHSCP

Statutory guidance (WT23) requires all safeguarding partners to ensure effective independent scrutiny arrangements are in place in their local area. Independent scrutiny provides assurance to the whole system in judging the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements through a full range of scrutiny methods.

Our Quality Assurance Subgroup is chaired by a Quality Assurance Independent Scrutineer and three of our subgroups are supported by experienced Lay Members. This provides effective and rigorous support, insight, and challenge within our Subgroups, driving continuous improvement and assurance.

⁸ [How We Make Decisions - BHSCP](#)

Ongoing scrutiny arrangements are being reviewed in light of the pan Sussex Independent Scrutineer's departure at the end of August 2024. The BHSCP values the role of the Independent Scrutineer as a 'critical friend' and the oversight and challenge independent scrutiny provides the Partnership and individual agencies. Therefore, development of plans for independent scrutiny from September 2024 remain a focus area for the LSPs, DSPs and partners. Future plans may include an expansion of the Lay Member programme to include all appropriate Subgroups, and/or the introduction of Young Scrutineers to support the role of the Independent Scrutineer(s) and increase the inclusion of children's voices in the Partnership. Thematic and specific scrutiny activity to be commissioned locally and/or pan Sussex as required. Published multi-agency safeguarding arrangements will be updated throughout this process.

8. Our Partners, Engagement & Consultation

The LSCP for Brighton and Hove comprises the LSPs (and DSPs) for the three statutory partners: Sussex Police, NHS Sussex ICB and Brighton and Hove City Council (BHCC).

The safeguarding partners will collaborate and work together with relevant agencies to improve outcomes for children and families through:

- Subgroup membership and activity
- Audit activity including section 11
- Learning and development activity
- Partnership Group membership

Current partner agencies include: Safer Communities, Family Hub Service, BHCC Housing, East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service, National Probation Service, Public Health, Sussex Community Foundation Trust, Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust, South East Coast Ambulance Service, University Hospital Sussex, the Virtual School, Youth Employability Service, and representatives from schools and local authority education services. Brighton and Hove has a vibrant and active community and voluntary sector providing services to children and young people and their families. Many of these organisations are also actively represented in the BHSCP including: Brighton and Hove Albion Foundation, Impact Initiatives, Stonewater, Trust for Developing Communities, YMCA Downlink, Community Works, Lioncare, RiSE, and OASIS. Full details of partner agencies and how they collaborate to safeguard local children can be found in BHSCP Annual Reports⁹.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 ¹⁰(WT23) highlights that education providers are to be consulted with at operational and strategic levels as their insight and cooperation are vital to the successful delivery of multi-agency safeguarding

⁹ [Annual Reports - BHSCP](#)

¹⁰ [Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK](#)

arrangements. LSCPs are to commit to creating an environment which enables local education providers to be fully engaged, involved and included in safeguarding arrangements demonstrating the view that education is the fourth partner in safeguarding local children.

BHSCP recognise that education partners in Brighton and Hove have a pivotal role in the safeguarding of children and promoting their wellbeing. Our initial development plans focussed on the inclusion of education representatives at the strategic Partnership Group. We linked with local Headteacher Forums for Primary and Secondary Schools and representatives were agreed from across the education economy. The BHSCP is undertaking further development activity to ensure our education partners, from early years through to further education, are fully included and engaged with.

The BHSCP are working with the DfE National Safeguarding Education Facilitator to optimise our local approach to achieve effective engagement and input from education providers thereby ensuring representation of education partners at an operational and strategic level.

BHSCP are committed to ensuring inclusion plans are co-produced with education providers, this may include the introduction of an Education Subgroup and/or expansion of the representative model. To facilitate inclusion and effectiveness BHSCP aim to develop clear and deliberate structures to fully engage with education safeguarding practitioners and leaders.

The BHSCP is keen to ensure the changes in WT23 are implemented robustly and in a timely way, including but not limited to:

- Embedding the new multi-agency child protection practitioner standards.
- Ensuring early help opportunities are optimised, including those practitioners who can undertake direct work with children under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.
- Strengthening support for disabled children and their families.

Local safeguarding arrangements will be updated throughout this process and will align with WT23 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 guidance¹¹.

9. BHSCP Subgroups

The work of the Partnership is driven by the BHSCP subgroups. The representatives from 'relevant agencies' as identified by WT23 are included to ensure representation on the subgroups from wider partners.

¹¹ [Keeping children safe in education 2024](#)

The overall purpose of all subgroups is to:

- Drive forward and deliver the work of the Partnership.
- Provide reports and information that will inform the Partnership strategic plans.
- Report on progress to the SSCE and PG.
- Keep the DSPs, Partnership Group and SSCE apprised of emerging threats, patterns and gaps in safeguarding delivery.
- Consider recommendations arising from local and national child safeguarding practice reviews.

The subgroups require strong leadership and should be attended by individuals with decision-making status and who can contribute towards the end goals.

The three pan Sussex LSCPs agreed that in order to discharge statutory functions under WT23 each of the three local authority areas must have a Case Review and Quality Assurance Subgroup (previously known as Monitoring & Evaluation Group in Brighton & Hove). Furthermore, additional subgroups, task and finish or focus groups/networks may be formed at locality level to meet the specific needs of the individual local authority area footprint and priorities.

9.1. Case Review Group

A key function of the Partnership is to reflect on systems and practice following a serious child safeguarding incident. A Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR) is undertaken when a child dies, or the child has been seriously harmed. The purpose of a practice review is for agencies and individuals to learn lessons to improve the way in which they work individually and collectively, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, and ultimately to deliver improved outcomes for them.

Our Case Review Group meets on a monthly basis, overseeing the process for undertaking local child safeguarding practice reviews in accordance with the guidance set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and The Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency (England) Regulations 2018.

9.2. Quality Assurance Subgroup

The BHSCP has a key role in achieving high standards in safeguarding and promoting wellbeing, not just through co-coordinating, but also by evaluation and continuous improvement as set out in the BHSCP Quality Assurance Framework 2024¹². Under statutory guidance the purpose of BHSCP local arrangements is to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together in a system where agencies and

¹² BHSCP Quality Assurance Framework 2024

organisations 'are challenged appropriately, effectively holding one another to account'¹³.

The Quality Assurance Group's function is to provide the early identification and analysis of safeguarding issues and emerging threats through the sharing and analysis of data resulting in joined-up responses across the relevant agencies. Our Quality Assurance Group, formerly known as the Monitoring & Evaluation Group, meets quarterly, manages multi-agency audits, engages with pan Sussex audits, and manages the development of quarterly data Dashboards. Assurance Requests and Additional Information Requests are used as part of the scrutiny function of this subgroup. The BHSCP Quality Assurance Subgroup is chaired and steered by an Independent Scrutineer as part of BHSCP Independent Scrutiny arrangements.

9.3. Child Safeguarding Liaison Group

The Child Safeguarding Liaison Group (CSLG) is a multi-agency forum meeting monthly to review and improve joint working practice in respect of multi-agency Child Protection processes. This includes analysis of examples of operational practice within the context of Child Protection enquiries and investigations. The Subgroup challenges practice and, where necessary, brings matters to the attention of relevant managers and agencies on behalf of the BHSCP with the aim of organisational and partnership learning. This group is not a statutory requirement, but the partners feel this is a valuable group that helps address multi-agency operational safeguarding issues.

9.4. Child Exploitation Subgroup

This multi-agency Subgroup works in direct partnership with the Community Safety Partnership and the Safeguarding Adults Board. As a group they have oversight of BHSCP work on child exploitation, modern slavery, and human trafficking, and of the Violence & Exploitation Reduction Action Plan (VERAP).

The Child Exploitation Subgroup is Co-Chaired by the Detective Chief Inspector from Serious Investigations Unit, Sussex Police and the Head of Safer Communities, with support from the Exploitation and Violence Reduction Coordinator. Our Child Exploitation Subgroup meets quarterly.

¹³ From statutory guidance: [Working together to safeguard children](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/672222/Working_together_to_safeguard_children.pdf) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

10. Responding to Government Reforms

In February 2023, the then government published a vision to transform children's social care: '*Stable Homes, Built on Love: Implementation strategy*'¹⁴. This strategy set out proposals in response to recommendations from the Independent Review (Care Review) of Children's Social Care (2022), the Child Safeguarding Practice Panel's National Review into Child Protection in England (2022) and the Competition & Markets Authority Children's Social Care Market Study (2022). '*Stable Homes*' focussed on developing family help and networks, the decisiveness of the multi-agency child protection system, regional care and a system that continuously learns and improves through better use of data.

In November 2024, the current government published a vision '*Keeping Children Safe, Helping Families Thrive*'¹⁵ to reset the children's social care system, proposing a whole-system and child-centred approach to reform, resetting how national government works in collaboration with local government and local partners to keep families together and children safe. Integral to this are Family Help and Child Protection reforms including the intention to create a new legal duty for local authorities to establish multi-agency child protection teams and require other named agencies to be part of this provision. The findings from the '*Family First for Children Pathfinder Programme*'¹⁶ evaluation will inform the expectations in regulations for the proposed multi-agency child protection teams.

'*Keeping Children Safe*' also outlines the intention to update Working Together 2023 to further strengthen the role and expectations of education in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements to better protect children from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Plus, an overarching focus on early intervention and community multi-agency-based approaches to safeguarding children.

In Brighton & Hove we developed our Family Help: The Right Support at the Right Time¹⁷ framework during 2024 in response to recommendations from *Stable Homes*, providing a framework to support a consistent and co-ordinated approach to safeguarding by collectively committing to a child and family centred focus on improving outcomes. This framework replaces the BHSCP Threshold document. The Early Help Strategy is being currently being reviewed and will be published in early 2025 as the Family Help Strategy incorporating the Right Support at the Right Time relationship-based approach. The BHSCP will continue to monitor and respond to government reforms including '*Families First for Children Pathfinder Programme*' evaluation and subsequent government publications to explore the local response to multi-agency child protection working.

¹⁴ [Children's social care: stable homes, built on love - GOV.UK](#)

¹⁵ [Keeping children safe, helping families thrive - GOV.UK](#)

¹⁶ [Families first for children \(FFC\) pathfinder programme and family networks pilot \(FNP\) - GOV.UK](#)

¹⁷ [BHSCP - How we make decision - Family Help: The Right Support at the Right Time](#)



Appendices

Annex A - Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 - scheme of delegation

1. Scope

This Scheme of Delegation sets out respective responsibilities to ensure decision making is aligned to the governance and accountability arrangements made under Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (WT23). It forms part of the revised local and pan Sussex Partnership arrangements. The Scheme of Delegation is to be read alongside the pan Sussex and local arrangements to provide additional clarity about the functions and decision-making responsibilities of Lead Partner representatives.

The Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSPs) are responsible for the overall strategic direction of the SCPs

- Strategic decisions may be delegated to the Sussex Safeguarding Children Executive (SSCE) with decisions made by the Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSPs)
- Locality based decisions may also be delegated where appropriate via a scheme of delegation.

2. Governance and Management

For clarity key differences between governance and management are set out below:

Governance

- Overview of the organisation as a whole.
- Long-term strategy and policy.
- Systems, processes, and frameworks for effective working.
- Accountable for actions and decisions made by the organisation.
- Compliance with current legislation.

Management

- Day-to-day operation of subgroup chairs' meetings.
- Short to medium-term implementation of plans.
- Detailed planning.
- Responsible for delivery of actions and decisions.

3. Scheme of Delegation: Responsibilities

This Scheme of Delegation sets out the respective responsibilities of LSPs and DSPs for key SCP areas of responsibility:

- Strategic planning.
- Financial management.
- Risk management.

4. Local Safeguarding Children Partnership Group, Subgroups and Forums

LSPs and DSPs may delegate any of their decision-making powers to SCP Subgroups. The remit of any subgroups will be set out in their terms of reference, which will detail the respective responsibilities and specify the areas of delegated authority. The terms of reference will form part of the Scheme of Delegation.

Strategic planning		
LSP functions - WT23	DSP functions WT23	Procedure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 their organisation's individual contribution 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Business Plan priorities agreed, and progress monitored annually by LSPs and DSPs via SSCE and annual reporting mechanisms.</i> ○ <i>Business plan delivery updates to be presented twice per annum at SSCE.</i> ○ <i>Annual review of performance and achievements provided by the independent Scrutineer to LSPs/DSPs.</i> ○ <i>SSCE/planning meeting to approve undertaking work in new areas not included in the strategic plan, where this is in line with the SCP's overall objectives.</i> ○ <i>DSP representatives to be decided by DSPs as applicable.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide shared oversight of learning from independent scrutiny, serious incidents, local child safeguarding practice reviews, and national 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivery of high-quality and timely rapid reviews and local child safeguarding practice reviews (LCSPRs), with the impact of learning from 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Rapid Reviews and LCSPRs signed off by DSPs as per current process.</i>

reviews, ensuring recommendations are implemented and have a demonstrable impact on practice (as set out in the yearly report).	<p>local and national reviews and independent scrutiny clearly evidenced in yearly reports.</p> <p>- 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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Annual report sign off by DSPs and LSPs.</i> ○ <i>Independent scrutiny commissioned by DSPs.</i>
- 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.	- The implementation of effective information sharing arrangements between agencies, including data sharing that facilitates joint analysis between partner agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>SSCE oversight of data and audit.</i> ○ <i>QAG locality-based data and audit.</i>
- Ensure all relevant agencies, including education settings, are clear on their role and contribution to multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.	- Close partnership working and engagement with education (at strategic and operational level) and other relevant agencies, allowing better identification of and response to harm.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>DSPs to agree Education representation at SSCE.</i> ○ <i>SCP Partnership Business Managers to discuss education reps for PG and locality-based subgroups.</i> ○ <i>Development of Pan Sussex L&D subgroup and training programme.</i>
Financial management		
LSP functions	DSP functions	Procedure
- Custodians of SCP's assets, ensuring they are used only in accordance with the SCP's	- Delegated responsibility for the day-to-day running of the SCP, ensuring financial stability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>SCP Business support team ensure SCP's funds are used appropriately;</i>

objectives, and to ensure financial sustainability.		<i>to report on solvency and ongoing concerns.</i>
- Approve SCP's financial strategy - business plan and annual budget.	- Oversee development and viability of financial strategy	○ <i>Annual report and SSCE approvals.</i>
- Approve expenditure authorisation limits.	- Oversee governance of expenditure authorisation limits	○ <i>Under £1,000 - in principle decision to be taken by LSCP Business Manager and Head of Safeguarding.</i> ○ <i>Between £1,000 and £10,000 - decisions to be discussed with Subgroup Chairs. DSPs must be advised of decision with escalation to LSPs only if required.</i> ○ <i>Over £10,000 - decision to be taken by the three DSP - with escalation to LSPs if required.</i>
- In the event of redundancies, to approve the budget for redundancy payments and any redundancy payment packages for members of the SCP team.	- In the event of redundancies, to recommend a budget payment package to LSPs.	○ <i>Decision via SSCE or SCP planning meeting / extraordinary DSP meeting.</i>
Risk Management		
LSP functions	DSP functions	Procedure
- Oversight of risk management order to identify and control risks and to ensure it is appropriate and effective.	Maintain a risk management system that identifies and reviews key risks that the SCP faces and to implement controls to mitigate these.	○ <i>Report annually to LSPs recommending any changes needed to risk management system when appropriate.</i> ○ <i>Risks and issues register - Local SCPs to report</i>

		<p><i>twice per year to the SSCE as part of the LSPs Briefing developed by the pan Sussex SCPs Business Managers. LSCPs to maintain Risk Register locally.</i></p>
<p>- Review identified risks and DSP's judgements on them; ensure Annual Report comments on the key risks faced by the SCP and the effectiveness of the controls in place.</p>	<p>- To interrogate identified risks and the effectiveness of the controls put in place to mitigate risks.</p>	<p>○ <i>Report annually to the LSPs details of identified risks and the controls in place to manage risks.</i></p>

Annex B - Pan Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures

Procedures referred to throughout the document:

- [Arrangements for commissioning, undertaking, publishing and embedding learning for local child safeguarding practice reviews](#)
- [Information Sharing](#)
- [Resolving Professional Differences](#) and [Professional Difference Statement](#)
- [Agency Roles and Responsibilities](#)
- [Pan Sussex Threshold documents](#)
- [Safeguarding Children Partnerships](#)

The full [Pan Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures](#) are sub divided into the following parts, each part contains relevant Chapters/Procedures:

1. [Working with Children and Families](#)
2. [The Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)
3. [Information Sharing and Confidentiality](#)
4. [Early Help](#)
5. [Recognition and Referral of Abuse and Neglect](#)
6. [Response to Child Protection Referrals](#)
7. [Child Protection Conferences](#)
8. [The Child Protection Plan](#)
9. [Organisational Guidance](#)
10. [Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews](#)
11. [Child Death](#)
12. [Risk Management of Known Offenders and Those who Pose a Risk](#)
13. [Parents with additional needs](#)
14. [Self-harm and suicide](#)
15. [Safeguarding Children Practice Guidance \(Children In Specific Circumstances\)](#)
16. [Safeguarding children living away from home](#)
17. [Harmful practices linked to faith or culture](#)
18. [Allegations against people who work with, care for or volunteer with Children](#)
19. [Miscellaneous Safeguarding Information](#)
20. [Appendices](#)

