

# **Wirral Safeguarding Partnership**

## **Multi-agency Safeguarding Arrangements - Draft**

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# Section 1

## Introduction and Background





1.1 The Children and Social Work Act 2017 replaces Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) with new local safeguarding arrangements, led by three safeguarding partners (local authorities, chief officers of police, and clinical commissioning groups). It also places a duty on child death review partners (local authorities and clinical commissioning groups) to review the deaths of children normally resident in the local area - or if they consider it appropriate, for those not normally resident in the area.

1.2 The statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2018) provides the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and a clear framework for the three local safeguarding partners (the local authority; a clinical commissioning group for an area within the local authority; and the chief officer of police for an area within the local authority area) to make arrangements to work together to identify and respond to the needs of local children. This Executive function in the Wirral arrangements is led by the Statutory Safeguarding Partners Executive group illustrated in the model diagram on page 22

1.3 *Working Together* (2018) sets out the duty under section 11 of the Children Act 2004, on local organisations and agencies who deliver services to children to ensure that they consider the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children when carrying out their functions. Responsibility for ensuring effective arrangements in place lies with the three safeguarding partners who have a shared and equal duty to make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area.

1.4 The three safeguarding partners are required to agree on ways to co-ordinate their safeguarding services; act as a strategic leadership group in

supporting and engaging others; and implement local and national learning including from serious child safeguarding incidents.

1.5 To fulfil this role, the three safeguarding partners must set out how they will work together and with any relevant agencies. Relevant agencies are those organisations and agencies whose involvement the safeguarding partners consider may be required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children with regard to local need.

1.6 The purpose of these local arrangements is to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together in a system where:

- children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted
- excellent practice is the norm
- partner organisations and agencies collaborate, share and co-own the vision for how to achieve improved outcomes for vulnerable children
- 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 local services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice
- information is shared effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families



1.7 In order to work together effectively, the safeguarding partners with other local organisations and agencies should develop 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

1.8 This document sets out how the three safeguarding partners in Wirral will work together and with other agencies to ensure all children in Wirral are safeguarded. The published arrangements for Wirral include:

- arrangements for the safeguarding partners to work together to identify and respond to the needs of children in the area
- arrangements for commissioning and publishing local child safeguarding practice reviews
- arrangements for independent scrutiny to provide assurance in judging the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Wirral including arrangements to identify and review serious child safeguarding cases. This independent scrutiny will be part of a wider system which includes the independent inspectorates' single assessment of the individual safeguarding partners and the Joint Targeted Area Inspections.
- who the three local safeguarding partners are
- the geographical boundary the arrangements will apply to

- the relevant agencies the safeguarding partners will work with; why these organisations and agencies have been chosen; and how they will collaborate and work together to improve outcomes for children and families
- how all early years settings, schools (including independent schools, academies and free schools) and other educational establishments will be included in the safeguarding arrangements as relevant agencies
- how residential homes for children will be included in the safeguarding arrangements as relevant agencies
- how the safeguarding partners will use data and intelligence to assess the effectiveness of the help being provided to children and families, including early help
- how inter-agency training will be commissioned, delivered and monitored for impact and how they will undertake any multiagency and interagency audits
- how the arrangements will be funded
- the process for undertaking local child safeguarding practice reviews, setting out the arrangements for governance and how learning is embedded across organisations and agencies
- arrangements and relationships with the Health and Wellbeing Board and emerging children's partnerships
- arrangements for the review of child deaths
- how the arrangements will include the voice of children and families
- how the threshold document setting out the local criteria for action aligns with the arrangements



# Section 2

## Multi-agency Safeguarding Arrangements



## The Safeguarding Partners

2.1 Working Together details the replacement of LCSBs with local safeguarding partners who have the responsibility of creating new flexible local safeguarding arrangements. The three statutory safeguarding partners in Wirral are:

- Wirral Local Authority
- Merseyside Police
- Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group

2.2 The three partners will be represented by:

- Paul Boyce, the Corporate Director for Children – Wirral Local Authority
- Detective Chief Inspector Rachel Wilson – Merseyside Police
- Lorna Quigley, Director of Quality and Safety – NHS Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group

The reps are empowered to speak with authority for their organisation.

2.3 The three safeguarding partners have agreed to assume equal and joint responsibility for local safeguarding arrangements. In situations that require a clear, single point of leadership, for example where a single named person is required the three safeguarding partners have agreed that the Corporate Director for Children will have the overview on issues including implementation and compliance.

2.4 The three safeguarding partners are committed to providing a safeguarding system in Wirral where it can be proven and assurance can be given that:

- excellent practice is the norm, and can be seen in common across services
- partner agencies hold one another to account effectively, and improvement results
- there is early identification of, and co-owned action on 'new' safeguarding issues
- learning is promoted and embedded, and its effects can be proven
- information is shared effectively and translates into knowledge that informs practice
- the public are engaged in safeguarding all children and feel confident that children are protected from harm

2.5 The safeguarding system will include approaches to the following:

- The earliest possible intervention that ensures most children are never in danger or in need of extra help and support
- arrangements to ensure children in need of help and protection receive the right help at the right time
- a model and methodology for undertaking local child safeguarding practice reviews, including reviews which identify and disseminate excellent practice
- continued development and evaluation of the Supporting Families Enhancing Futures (SFEF) model for working with children and families where more intensive interventions, including Early Help are needed
- arrangements for monitoring, scrutinising and challenging partnership compliance with safeguarding standards – including auditing, Section 11/175, using performance data, case studies exemplifying excellence and a means of challenging practice so as to improve it



2.6 The safeguarding system will be underpinned by agreed multi-agency values as behaviours as set out in **Appendix Three**. These will regularly be revisited and examined in practice.

2.7 In exceptional circumstances where there is failure to reach agreement and all other avenues of resolution has been explored, following discussion at the Executive Group or where those providing independent scrutiny consider that the leadership arrangements are weak or malfunctioning escalation will be to the Chief Executive of the Local Authority who will determine actions to be taken following consultation with the Accountable Officer Wirral Health and Care Commissioning and the Chief Constable of Merseyside Police.

## Geographical Area

2.8 The geographical extent of the arrangements comprises the footprint of the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral (shown in the map below).



Wirral (red) show within Merseyside (white)



In the eastern part of the borough, particularly in the built up towns in parts of Wallasey and Birkenhead along the river Mersey, there are high levels of poverty which impact upon children's lives and their development. Approximately 22% of children in Wirral live near or below the poverty line (i.e. living in families with income below 60% of the UK median).

2.9 The population of Wirral is 320,200 including approximately 70,500 children and young people (0-18). The population is predominantly white British (93%) but significant ethnic minority groups exists, particularly Irish, Chinese and Polish.

2.10 The local authority boundary is co-terminus with the footprint of the Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group. The local police force covers the larger area of the ceremonial county of Merseyside, comprised of the five boroughs of Wirral, Liverpool, Sefton, Knowsley and St Helens.

## Pan-regional Collaboration

2.11 New safeguarding children partnerships have been developing plans that will facilitate a smooth transition into the new safeguarding arrangements. There will continue to be a commitment to deliver plans locally, however following consultation across the region it was agreed that there are areas of business where we could perform more effectively and efficiently across the Merseyside region if partnerships work together in a more joined up way, which will assist us to deliver our key priority of safeguarding and protecting children. The areas of business where we will collaborate on are policy and strategy, workforce development and communication.

Agreement is in place to collaborate on the following work streams:

- Child Death Review arrangements, based upon the current Merseyside CDOP
- Safeguarding Policy and Strategy - pan Merseyside documents exist in a



number of areas for example Merseyside has a single Exploitation protocol and Missing procedure.

- Workforce Development
- Communication

2.12 As well as pan-Merseyside collaboration the safeguarding partners in Wirral will also pursue other mutually beneficial local and regional arrangements, for example safeguarding training and learning events.

## Relevant Agencies

2.13 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility both across society and in any service or setting serving children, families and communities. Strong effective multi-agency arrangements are responsive to local circumstances, and engage the right people. For local arrangements to be effective, they must reflect local needs and engage agencies who can provide targeted support to children and families.

2.14 The list of relevant agencies in Wirral reflects both the published statutory instrument *The Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency (England) Regulations 2018*, current LSCB membership – established to reflect local need; agencies which provide a statutory service or are locally commissioned; agencies which support Early Help services; and agencies which locally support children in need of help and protection. Where agencies provide specific support for an identified vulnerable cohort of children in Wirral, young carers for example, they are also included as relevant agencies.



2.15 The three safeguarding partners in Wirral following consultation with the outgoing Wirral Safeguarding Children Board, have agreed which local relevant agencies they must engage in order to ensure effective local arrangements. The list of Wirral relevant agencies is included at **Appendix Four**.

2.16 Each relevant agency has been provided with details of their ongoing responsibilities and the expectations placed on them by the new arrangements in Wirral. The local arrangements in Wirral have been developed in consultation with as wide a breadth of partner agencies as possible and the arrangements now adopted reflect their commitment to improving outcomes for children and young people.

2.17 The safeguarding partners expect relevant agencies to co-operate with them in the same way as agencies have been co-operating with the Wirral Safeguarding Children Board since its inception.

2.18 The partners reserve the right to include any other agencies as relevant agencies and add them to the published list at any time.

## Early Years, Schools, Colleges and other Educational Establishments

2.19 All schools, colleges and other educational providers have clear duties in relation to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare and have a pivotal role to play in safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. Their co-operation and buy-in to the new arrangements is vital for success. All schools and colleges will be relevant agencies in the new arrangements.

2.20 Under the Wirral Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) arrangements there has been very strong education participation and representation at the Board and in its sub committees, including representation by serving head teachers and teachers on various committees. The safeguarding partners are seeking to retain this commitment under the new arrangements and as such have retained education sector representation in key committees and activities.

2.21 Wirral sees the establishment and maintenance of a strong education economy as central not only to safeguarding arrangements but also to maximising outcomes and life chances for all children in Wirral. To help achieve this the safeguarding partners will ensure that the education economy is fully integrated in all aspects of local safeguarding arrangements.

## Residential Homes and Domiciliary Care Providers

2.22 Organisations providing residential or home care services to children and young people have responsibilities to safeguard them and promote their welfare, and will be relevant agencies in the new arrangements in Wirral. Oversight of the quality of provision, including safeguarding arrangements is provided in the following ways:

- participation in the annual Section 11 safeguarding audit process
- ensuring all settings have processes in place, compliant with relevant statutory guidance, for safeguarding children including reporting mechanisms
- ensuring and testing adherence to and compliance with safeguarding policies, procedures and standards published by the safeguarding

partners, particularly but not limited to procedures related to children who go missing, and clear actions taken to avoid the criminalisation of children in care

- oversight of quality and safety by the Clinical Commissioning Group and Local Authority commissioning arrangements
- engagement by the partners with the local providers forum

## Supporting Families Enhancing Futures

2.23 The Wirral Safeguarding Children Board has developed a single framework for working with children and families across the continuum of need. Called Supporting Families Enhancing Futures (SFEF) and developed in a multi-agency way in partnership with Professor Jan Horwath from the University of Sheffield, the model draws from strengthening families approaches and is centred on understanding and responding to the child's and family's daily lived experience.

2.24 SFEF was launched in October 2017, initially being introduced for cases managed under frameworks for Child Protection, Child in Need and Team Around the Family. The model is also being applied to reviews for children looked after.

2.25 The Safeguarding Partners have now agreed that the SFEF approach to working with families will form a central plank of all their safeguarding arrangements and will provide a vehicle for both delivering positive outcomes to children and families and for ensuring a consistent and high quality approach to multi-agency safeguarding practice.



The SFEF model is underpinned by five principles:

- A Child Centred Approach Understanding the World of the Child
- Understanding the World of the Parents
- Recognising families Strengths as well as Concerns
- Engaging parents in the change process
- Measuring change for the better

Detail about these principles is provided at **Appendix Five**

2.26 Responsibility for overseeing implementation and ongoing evaluation of the model sits with the multi-agency SFEF steering group. The group is chaired by the LA's Head of Safeguarding and includes representatives from the health economy, police, and children's services. The steering group is responsible for publishing procedures, practice guidance and resources for SFEF and ensuring the provision of multi-agency training. The group is maintained in the new partnership arrangements and reports progress to the Executive Group. The group also has a focus on evidencing improved outcomes for children and ensuring the thresholds of need support appropriate step up and step down of children appropriate to levels of need and risk. Expansion of the use of SFEF across a wider range of services will proceed under the new arrangements.

## Contextual Safeguarding

2.27 The safeguarding arrangements include a framework for understanding Contextual Safeguarding as a model for identifying and responding to significant harm and risks posed to young people from beyond their family. The approach fits with the SFEF model, especially its consideration of the

lived experience of the child or young person, including all risks to them presented both within and outside of the family home.

## Business Intelligence and QA Function

2.28 The safeguarding model developed by the partners (illustrated on page 22) includes a business intelligence unit. This unit, involving input and participation from across the partnership and supported by the current WSCB business support team is responsible for providing and analysing data and intelligence for the partners to use to assess the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements and the help provided to children, young people and families.

2.29 The business intelligence function will include a range of activity including:

- managing the annual Section 11 and Section 175 (Education) individual agency safeguarding audits
- planning and undertaking the programme of multi-agency safeguarding audits
- collecting and analysing multi-agency performance information and data
- triangulating information with the voice of children, young people and families, and frontline practitioners
- overseeing the annual programme of frontline visits from partner agencies
- co-ordinating annual peer reviews
- co-ordinating case review activity
- undertaking learning reviews and audits as directed by the safeguarding partners
- co-ordinating the multi-agency and single agency training function
- ensuring local safeguarding policies and procedures are in place

Multi-agency Safeguarding Arrangements



## Multi-agency Safeguarding Training

2.30 The safeguarding partners will continue to provide a programme of multi-agency training in line with that previously provided by the WSCB. The partners will maintain a multi-agency training pool of professionals with particular expertise and knowledge drawn from across the partnership. Co-ordination of the training provision sits within the Business Intelligence Unit. The Unit will provide:

- a multi-agency programme of safeguarding training including sessions for Working Together; Supporting Families Enhancing Futures; Child Exploitation; Neglect and Domestic Abuse
- briefings and updates including 60 minute safeguarding spotlight sessions on issues and themes identified nationally and locally
- published seven minute briefings to support professional practice in all services
- a comprehensive training evaluation strategy including feedback 'on the day', a measure of the impact of training 3 months after attendance, and multi-agency focus groups six months after attendance to inform development of future training
- direct commissioning of training only when training cannot be provided through the partnership training pool
- A single agency training offer to schools and colleges
- A basis awareness safeguarding training offer to relevant agencies



## Commissioning of Services

2.31 The safeguarding partners have a role to play in commissioning successful and appropriate arrangements for children. The partners do not commission services directly but will influence commissioning intentions by having a clear understanding of the collective needs of local children. This will be informed through the Joint Strategic Needs Analysis. The safeguarding partners will use this to help them understand the prevalence and contexts of need, including specific needs relating to disabled children, those with special educational needs and those relating to abuse and neglect. This knowledge in turn will help shape services. The partners will ensure that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is a primary consideration in all commissioning arrangements, including, for example bids into external funds such as those from the Police and Crime Commissioner.

2.32 Commissioning decisions will continue to be informed by the voices, views, opinions and wishes of children and young people.

2.33 In May 2018 an alignment of commissioning functions between the Local Authority and Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group was formally agreed through a Section 75 agreement. The commissioning organisation is known as Wirral Health and Care Commissioning, and governance is managed through the Joint Strategic Commissioning Board. The aim of the arrangement is to reduce duplication and streamline commissioning pathways across Wirral to improve the health and care of Wirral's population. In order to achieve this aim joint commissioning intentions are being developed in relation to:

- Abuse and Exploitation of children
- Domestic Abuse
- 0-19 yrs Health and Wellbeing Service
- Mental Health Services
- Sexual Health Services
- Paediatric Services
- Youth Justice Services

## Case Reviews, Auditing and Learning

2.34 The safeguarding arrangements will be centred on the partnership as a learning organisation. This will include a continued focus on and understanding of multi-agency frontline practice which informs effective leadership and provision of services. To support this the safeguarding partners and members will:

- agree and publish minimum standards of practice and test and report compliance with them by all relevant agencies and statutory bodies
- quality assure and audit standards of practice
- provide a comprehensive training/ briefing offer including 7 minute and 60 minute briefings and learning sessions
- host an annual safeguarding learning conference
- undertake bi-annual frontline visits and encourage shadowing and shared learning
- undertake statutory case reviews and local learning reviews to aid and improve learning

2.35 Working Together 2018 sets out arrangements for new local and national safeguarding practice reviews which are replacing the current system of undertaking serious case reviews. The main changes defined in the statutory guidance are:

- Replacement of the current National Panel for SCR's with a Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel
- Introduction of two levels of review - Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (commissioned locally), and National Child Safeguarding Practice Review (commissioned nationally)



- Duty on Local Authorities to notify incidents to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel
- Undertaking of 15 day rapid reviews for cases referred to the new panel

The process for Case Reviews is set out in the partners Learning and Improvement framework which can be accessed here:

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/professionals/learning-and-improvement/>

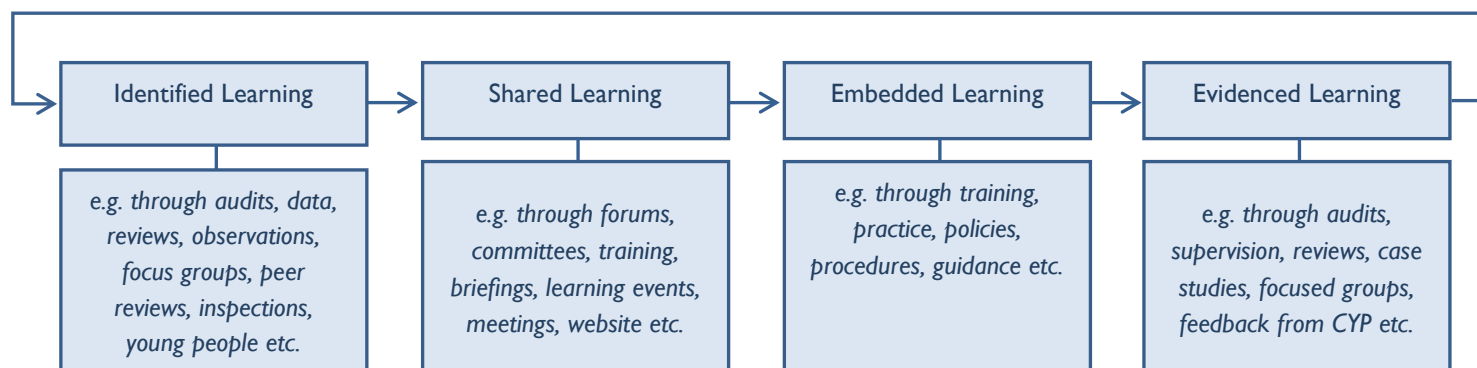
2.36 The Wirral Safeguarding Children Board currently has a multi-agency case review committee. It oversees notifications to the national panel, commissioning and oversight of SCR's and commissioning of local multi-agency reviews (below the SCR threshold). The committee also maintains oversight of single agency reviews of cases, and the learning and actions arising.

2.37 This committee will be retained in the new model by the safeguarding partners with updated terms of reference to reflect the changes to the case review process set out in Working Together 2018. The committee has also already published an updated learning and improvement framework and updated the information and guidance on the safeguarding website.

2.38 Membership of the committee already includes representatives of the three statutory partner agencies and representatives from the wider health and education economies. The current membership of the committee will be retained by the safeguarding partners and will be subject to regular review. The ability of the committee and the partnership to call in other agencies as required will also continue.

2.39 The safeguarding partners in Wirral are collaborating with the safeguarding partners across Merseyside to agree an approach to local reviews. This includes use of a systems methodology, identifying authors and





commissioning of reviews (a list of approved authors is retained regionally), aligned templates and paperwork, training and the sharing of findings and learning.

2.40 The new safeguarding partnership will be a learning organisation. The new model will promote this at all times from the first identification of learning through to ensuring learning has become embedded in practice and led to positive outcomes. This is illustrated in the diagram above.

2.41 The safeguarding partners have inherited a strong, well established model of multi-agency auditing from the Wirral Safeguarding Children Board, supported by wide multi-agency participation. The partners are building on this strong foundation to develop the wider business intelligence part of the new model with prime responsibility for overseeing all audit, performance and data activity. The Business Unit will oversee all learning activity i.e. all the learning, training, audit, case review and performance activity undertaken by the partners which informs them about the strength of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Activity in the Business Unit will include input from statutory and relevant agencies' frontline professionals, operational and strategic managers. It will be informed by participation and feedback from children, young people, families and the wider public.

2.42 The continual and varied auditing element of the model (detailed in the full model diagram on page 22) includes:

- multi-agency auditing (thematic and in response to findings, emerging issues or identified weaknesses in the multi-agency safeguarding system)
- thematic auditing and deep dives led by frontline practitioners
- activity informed by focus groups of professionals, children, young people and family members
- scrutiny of findings from single agency audits, and the widest possible dissemination of findings and learning
- ongoing themed and partitioned Section 11 and Section 175 auditing (with approach and findings shared pan Merseyside)

2.43 Under the Wirral Safeguarding Children Board multi-agency audit activity was led by its Performance Committee. Under the new arrangements a multi-partner annual audit plan will be developed and agreed at the start of the year and will include activity on a local, a pan-Merseyside and a Cheshire and Merseyside basis. This will be centrally coordinated by the Business Unit.

2.44 The Business Unit holds responsibility for ensuring learning is identified and disseminated as quickly as possible through a variety of means, including



informing training, briefings, policies and procedures, and for testing and evidencing the impact of learning on constantly improving practice and outcomes. The contribution and participation of professionals in the work of the business intelligence unit is key to understanding and improving practice. Partner agencies will be expected to show a clear commitment to its work.

2.45 As well as audit activity, the learning hub will receive findings from case reviews and will collect performance information and data from partner agencies. The Business Unit will provide the safeguarding partners, through the Executive Group with information to support an assessment of the strength of multi-agency and single agency arrangements to safeguard children.

## Child Death Reviews

2.46 The Child Death Review statutory guidance gives clinical commissioning groups and local authorities joint responsibility for child death reviews, and enables a wider geographical footprint for these partnerships in order for them to gain a better understanding of the causes of child deaths.

2.47 Working Together (2018) states that the geographical footprint for child death partners should be able to review at least 60 deaths per year.

2.48 In making arrangements to review child deaths, child death review partners should establish a structure and process to review all deaths of children normally resident in their area and, if appropriate and agreed between child death review partners, the deaths of children not normally resident in their area but who have died there.



2.49 The Child Death partners in Wirral, in agreement with partners in the other boroughs of Merseyside have modelled their child death review structures and processes on their current Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) framework. In Merseyside successful pan-Merseyside CDOP arrangements have been in place for several years. The CDOP process is published in a separate document.

2.50 As is the case at present Liverpool Local Authority and CCG will assume lead responsibility.

2.51 CDOP reports will be reported into the new arrangements and the Wirral Health and Wellbeing board. Initial governance will be provided by the new safeguarding arrangements. Any cases highlighting safeguarding concerns will be shared with the safeguarding partners. An overview of child death safeguarding patterns and trends will be included in the safeguarding partner's annual report.

## Voices of Children, Families and Professionals

2.52 The safeguarding model in Wirral includes mechanisms for gaining feedback from children, young people and families, and from frontline professionals. This feedback is an essential part of the intelligence gathered by the partners to both test the quality of safeguarding arrangements and also to inform commissioning arrangements. The local mechanisms currently in place which will be utilised and developed by the partners include:

- feedback from Early Help, CiN, CP and CLA processes including the Children in Care Council
- the well-developed LA framework for youth participation including the Youth Voice Group
- WSCB audit framework including feedback from families and professionals

- WSCB frontline practitioners group
- ongoing SFEF evaluation process
- presentations and meetings between young people and the WSCB
- feedback mechanisms in partner agencies, for example Catch22 robustly gather feedback from children and young people who regularly go missing.

2.53 Consultation with children, families and professionals formed a very important part of the development of this local model by the safeguarding partners. Their arrangements will remain open to public scrutiny, and to ongoing scrutiny via the Council's processes, those in partner agencies, governance bodies, the Partnerships web presence and publications.

## Threshold Document

2.54 The safeguarding partners publish a transparent, accessible and easily understood threshold document which sets out the local criteria for action, including:

- the process for the early help assessment (EHAT) and the type and level of early help services to be provided
- the criteria, including the level of need, for when a case should be referred to local authority children's social care for assessment and for statutory services under:
- section 17 of the Children Act 1989 (children in need)
- section 47 of the Children Act 1989 (reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm)



- section 31 of the Children Act 1989 (care and supervision orders)
- section 20 of the Children Act 1989 (duty to accommodate a child)
- clear procedures and processes for cases relating to:
- the abuse, neglect and exploitation of children
- children managed within the youth secure estate
- disabled children

The partners' threshold document is published on the website: [www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk](http://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk). It contributes significantly to proven improvements in practice and in shared responsibilities across agencies and partners.

## Relationships with other Influential Bodies

2.55 The effectiveness of the new arrangements is reliant on the strength of its relationships with other influential bodies and boards to ensure a consistent partnership approach to safeguarding arrangements. The role of the safeguarding partners is to ensure that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is a theme which runs through all influential group activity, rather than periodically being a separate agenda item. The partners will help influence the children's safeguarding agenda across a variety of groups and ensure all partners are held to account for the effectiveness of their safeguarding arrangements.

2.56 The partners have agreed memorandums of understanding with the following groups to ensure a direct line of communication, challenge and accountability exists:

- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Merseyside Criminal Justice Board

- Corporate Parenting Board
- Wirral Community Safety Partnership (Safer Wirral)
- Wirral Partnership Board
- Wirral Local Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Pan-Merseyside Safeguarding Adults Board
- Merseyside Protecting Vulnerable Peoples forum
- WHACC Joint Strategic Commissioning Board

## Independent Scrutiny and Annual Reporting

2.57 In order to bring transparency for children, families and all practitioners about the activity undertaken, the safeguarding partners will publish an annual report each summer, and will hold an annual learning/ best practice multi-agency event. The report will cover the period of the previous financial year. The report will set out what the partners in Wirral have done as a result of the arrangements, including through child safeguarding practice reviews, and how effective these arrangements have been in practice. In addition, the report will include:

- evidence of the impact of the work of the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies, including training, on outcomes for children and families from early help to looked-after children and care leavers
- an analysis of any areas where there has been little or no evidence of progress on agreed priorities, and suggested ways forward to improve matters
- a record of decisions and actions taken by the partners in the report's period (or planned to be taken) to implement the recommendations of

any local and national child safeguarding practice reviews, including any resulting improvements

- ways in which the partners have sought and utilised feedback from each other and from children and families to inform their work and influence service provision

2.58 The safeguarding partners will ensure the partnerships work to co-ordinate multi-agency activity to safeguard children is as transparent and open as possible. This will include the safeguarding partners continuing to publish messages, good practice, case studies and safeguarding activity on its website, through newsletters and through its social media channels. This will regularly be reviewed to ensure maximum coverage of activity.

2.59 As per Working Together 2018 the Wirral safeguarding model includes an independent scrutiny function. The independent scrutiny function will provide critical challenge and appraisal of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in Wirral.

2.60 The role of independent scrutiny will be to:

- Assess how well organisations work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to hold each other to account for effective safeguarding
- Contribute to the content of the partnership's annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements, their performance and the effectiveness of local services
- Assess the effectiveness of the help being provided to children and families including early help
- Assess whether the three statutory safeguarding partners are fulfilling their statutory obligations



- Scrutinise the quality assurance activity (including multi-agency case file auditing and processes for identifying lessons to be learned)
- Scrutinise the effectiveness of training, including multi-agency training, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Assess the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in Wirral
- Provide a rigorous and transparent assessment of the extent to which partner agencies are fulfilling their statutory duties to keep children safe
- Evaluate arrangements for the operation of the safeguarding partnership and attend a range of meetings and activities
- Support the implementation of findings and outcomes from safeguarding reviews
- Assess whether effective performance management, audit and quality assurance mechanisms are in place within partner organisations which will support the three safeguarding partners to fulfil their statutory objectives, and which will enable the partnership to identify and measure its success and impact
- Ensure that the voices of children, young people and their families are appropriately represented and heard in the work of the partnership.
- Publish an annual scrutiny report and advise the partners about any deficiencies in the multi-agency arrangements and strategies to improve the arrangements

2.61 The safeguarding partners will determine local arrangements and the independent scrutiny will:



- Provide assurance in judging the effectiveness of services to safeguard children
- Support a learning culture and environment conducive to robust scrutiny and constructive challenge

2.62 The Independent Scrutiny function will be provided by an independent person appointed by the safeguarding partners. The independent person will also lead the safeguarding partnership group events.

2.63 The safeguarding partners also maintain a protocol with the Local Authority's Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee/

## Escalation and Whistleblowing

2.64 All agencies are responsible for ensuring that their staff are supported and know how to appropriately escalate and resolve intra-agency and inter-agency concerns and challenges about a child or young person's wellbeing and the response to their safeguarding needs. The partners have developed and published clear procedures for both multi-agency escalation and whistleblowing which are available on the [www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk](http://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk) website. The partners actively promote the publication and use of the procedures and expect all partners and relevant agencies to support their staff to do so.

## Dispute Resolution

2.65 The three safeguarding partners will aim to resolve any disagreements between them at the Executive meetings. Advice will be sought from the independent person providing scrutiny to aid in any resolution. Where disagreements remain escalation will be made to the Chief Executive of the



Local Authority who will determine actions to be taken following consultation with the Accountable Officer Wirral Health and Care Commissioning and the Chief Constable of Merseyside Police.

## Transitional Arrangements and Timeline

2.66 Transitional arrangements are in place in Wirral as per the published statutory guidance from the Department for Education. The current Wirral Safeguarding Children Board will continue as the statutory body overseeing safeguarding arrangements, including the commissioning and oversight of Serious Case Reviews until the new safeguarding arrangements come into force.

### Timeline

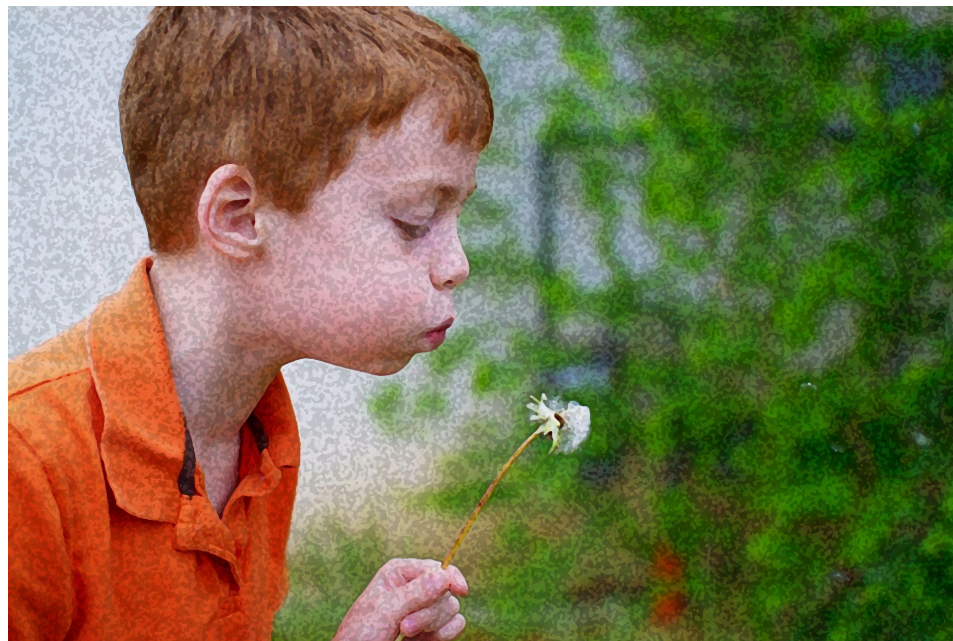
2.67 The partners have published a local transitioning plan which includes introducing new shadow arrangements on the **1<sup>st</sup> April 2019** ahead of the new arrangements being fully in place on the **1st September 2019**. The WSCB will stand down at the same time.

2.68 Following the new arrangements coming into force the safeguarding partners will adhere to the published timescales for previously commissioned serious case reviews and child death reviews to be completed.

2.69 The safeguarding partners will assume all the current multi-agency policies, procedures and guidance published by the WSCB. All of these will remain in force until such time as each is revised and updated. This will provide reassurance to partners that all current procedures will remain unchanged at the time of the transition.

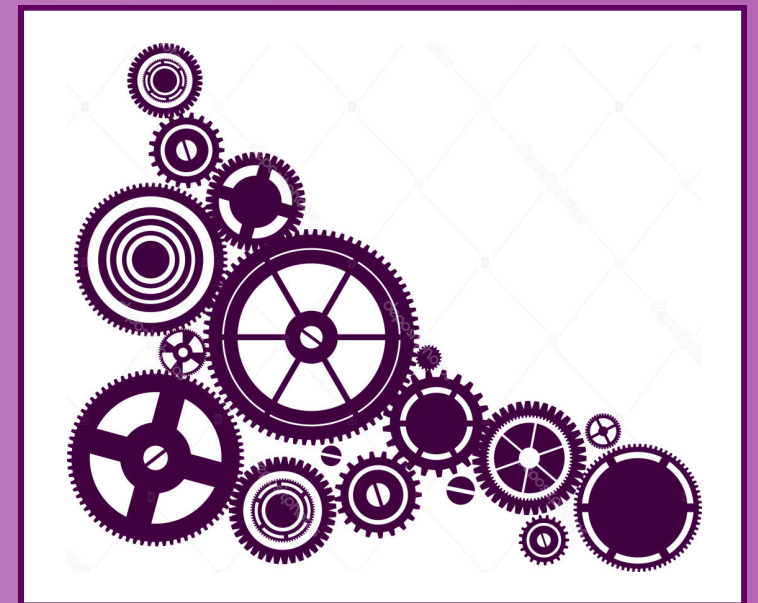
2.70 The WSCB website will also transfer completely to the safeguarding

partners at the time of transition and all the information and guidance on the website will remain valid.



# Section 3

## The Safeguarding Model



3.1 The safeguarding partners have agreed that multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in Wirral will be based on the solid foundation of effective practice. Multi-agency practice will in turn inform the commissioning and structure of services. Governance arrangements will support the assurance of effective arrangements. This three part model is simply illustrated below:



### Governance

Governance arrangements define the structure of the safeguarding model and have been developed to support the delivery of exemplary safeguarding practice in a learning culture under effective safeguarding arrangements.

### Services

Strong partnership arrangements with the right services are crucial to the success of the model. This includes how we best commission and arrange services to ensure positive outcomes for children.

### Practice

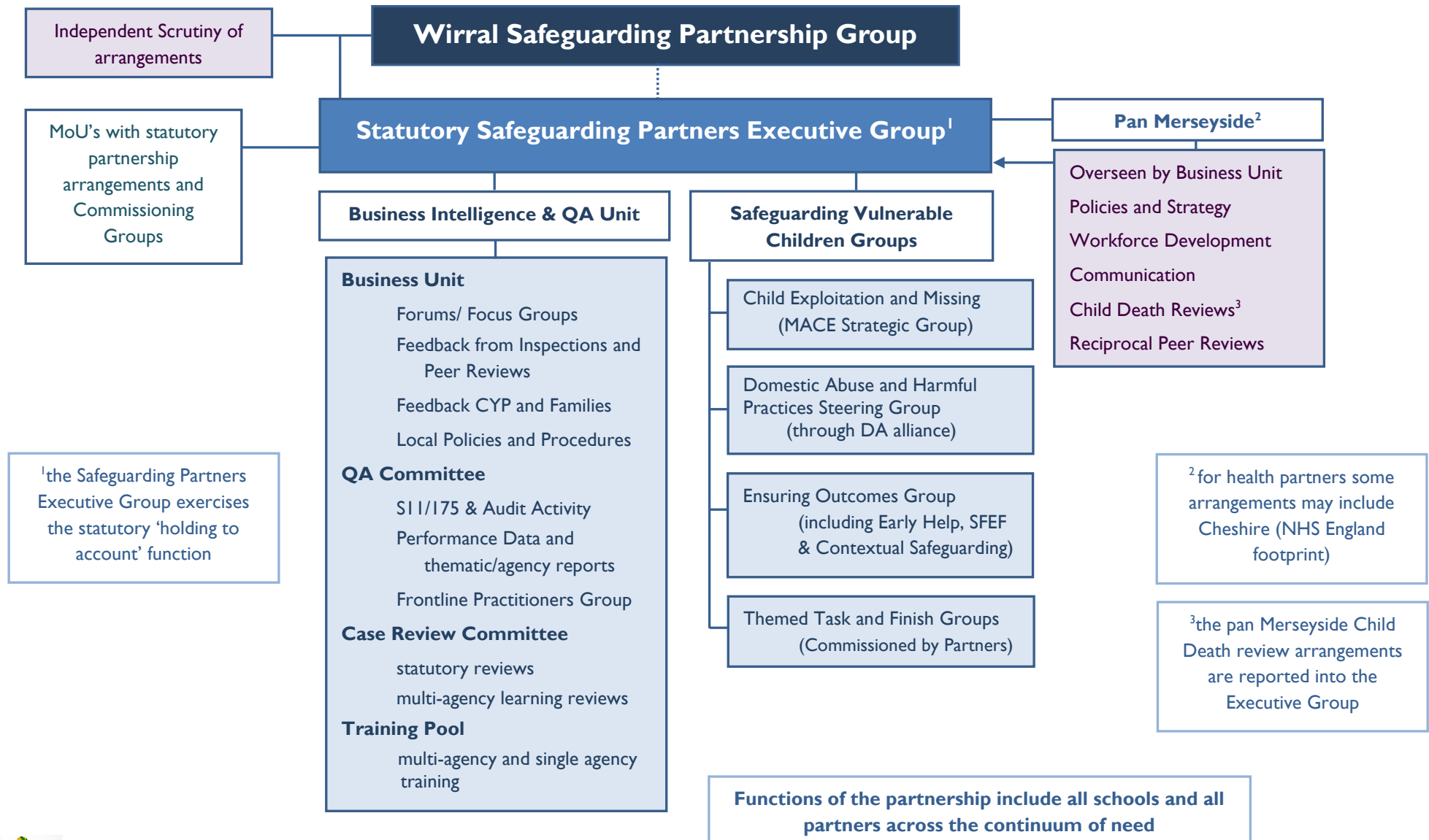
Developing excellent practice will be the basis of the model. SFEF sits at the centre of the Wirral approach to working with families under a consistent framework supported by shared values and behaviours (Appendix One).

3.2 The model includes a Business Unit to ensure feedback and views from multi-agency frontline professionals, children, young people and families will be routinely collected and analysed to provide a measure of the quality of practice alongside more traditional data, review and auditing approaches. The model will utilise, wherever possible, high tech approaches to identifying themes, trends and patterns and emerging areas of concern. The model will stress the importance of regular supervision for all professionals in all services and at all stages of learning.

3.3 The model retains a traditional committee approach to governance and to retaining oversight of multi-agency safeguarding activity but differs from the previous LSCB model by having fewer 'permanent' committees and more flexible task and finish activity. The multi-agency partnership group is entirely separated from operational activity and performs the duties of a stakeholders group who receive a transparent assessment about the quality and effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements from the Executive Group. An illustration of the Wirral safeguarding model is provided overleaf.



### 3.4 Structure of the Wirral Safeguarding Model





3.5 The function of each of the groups illustrated in page 22 is outlined below. Further detail including individual terms of reference and membership is published in the safeguarding partners Operating Framework document available on the website: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/>.

### Safeguarding Partners Executive Group

The Partners Executive Group provides the statutory 'holding to account' function and is responsible for ensuring actions to improve safeguarding practice are completed and impact is evidenced. The Executive has oversight of the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements, including child death reviews and presents this into the Partnership Group. The Executive is responsible for overseeing the business, including case reviews and establishing and overseeing committees and working groups. Membership of the Executive is drawn from the three statutory safeguarding partners.

### Wirral Safeguarding Partnership Group

The Partnership Group is the stakeholder group of safeguarding arrangements and includes representation from across the statutory and non- statutory sector including the lead member for children and families, young people, families and lay members of the community. The partnership Group receives bi annual reports from the Partners Executive about the strength of safeguarding arrangements. All relevant agencies are members of the Partnership Group and are held to account by the Partners Executive.

### Business Intelligence and QA Unit

The Business Intelligence Unit and QA Unit oversees all audit activity, case review activity and all performance information and data on behalf of the Executive Group. This includes the identification of themes, trends, good practice and learning arising from safeguarding practice. The Unit oversees local policies and procedures. Recommendations from the Unit supports the activity of the Executive Group.

### Case Reviews

The case review committee sits within the Business Intelligence Unit and oversees the identification and commissioning of local reviews, undertaking of rapid reviews, notifications to the national panel, adherence to timescales and oversight of reviews below the statutory threshold, developing and overseeing all case review action plans and identifying national and local learning. The committee reports to the Partners Executive Group who are responsible for approving decisions about levels of review.

### Safeguarding Vulnerable Children

This function is responsible for overseeing that effective multi-agency arrangements are in place to safeguard vulnerable children. The function will oversee activity from multi-agency groups including the Ensuring Outcomes Group (including SFEF and Contextual Safeguarding), the Multi-agency Child Exploitation (MACE) Group and the Domestic Abuse Alliance. The safeguarding vulnerable children function will be accountable to the Partners Executive Group.

### Ensuring Outcomes Group

The group is responsible for overseeing and providing assurance to the safeguarding partners about the operation of:

- Early Help
- Supporting Families Enhancing Futures (SFEF)
- Contextual Safeguarding

### Themed Task and Finish Groups

Commissioned by the Partners Executive Group in response to significant findings (including identification of exemplary or poor practice) multi-agency task and finish groups undertake deep dives or other time limited pieces of work which will benefit multi-agency practice to improve outcomes for children, young people and families.

### Training Pool

The multi-agency training pool ensures that a comprehensive, relevant and effective multi-agency training offer is in place. The pool oversees the needs analysis and the evaluation strategy, and translates learning from the 'hub' into briefings and training. The training pool review all training packages including testing the effectiveness of single agency training.





# Section 4

## Appendices



## Appendix One - Purpose and Function of the Safeguarding Partnership

### Objectives

The core objectives of the partnership:

- To co-ordinate safeguarding services and work by relevant agencies to safeguard children and to promote their welfare; and
- To ensure that what is done is effective.

### Purpose

The purpose of these local arrangements is to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together in a system where:

- children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted
- partner organisations and agencies collaborate, share and co-own the vision for how to achieve improved outcomes for vulnerable children
- 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 local services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice
- information is shared effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families

### Function

The functions of the partnership are to:

- develop policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Wirral;
- raise awareness in Wirral of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and to provide advice and guidance as to how this can be achieved;
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what is done by all relevant agencies, individually and collectively, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children – and to advise them on ways to improve
- participate in the local planning and commissioning of services for children in Wirral and to ensure that they take safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children into account
- undertake statutory case reviews and local learning reviews
- provide multi-agency safeguarding training and learning opportunities
- understand and assess the effectiveness of frontline multi-agency practice

A key aim of the work of the partnership is to promote high standards of safeguarding work and to foster a culture of continuous improvement. Through its work the partnership will identify and act on identified weaknesses in services. It will aim to avoid unnecessary duplication of work. The partnership should ensure that its monitoring role complements and contributes to the work of other influential groups including the health and wellbeing board, which in turn will devote a larger share of its business on the behalf of children and young people.



## Appendix Two - Safeguarding Partnership Group

### Job Purpose

To be responsible to the statutory safeguarding partners and share responsibility with other members of the partnership to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, in accordance with government legislation and guidance.

### Objectives

- To ensure there is an effective means of communication about the work of the partnership within each agency
- To ensure that the partnership is adequately resourced
- To provide the partnership with management information so that the partners can ensure the effectiveness of inter-agency safeguarding work
- To develop and evaluate the impact of inter-agency safeguarding procedures, practice guidance and protocols
- To develop and evaluate the impact of inter-agency training in safeguarding and child protection
- To contribute to the development of the work of the partnership

### Person Specification

Safeguarding partnership group members should have a senior strategic role in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in their own organisation.

Members should be able to:

- Speak for their organisation with authority and wherever possible delegated authority
- Commit their organisation on policy and practice matters, including expenditure in relation to board activity without recourse to higher authority
- Hold their organisation to account on behalf of the statutory partners

Where members are representing educational establishments, independent health care organisations, voluntary, community or faith sector organisations, members should be able to:

- Communicate formally with other similar organisations about the work of the partnership
- Champion safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people informally both in their own establishment and in their contact with other similar establishments or organisations

Partnership Board members should hold a current satisfactory enhanced DBS check, which should be reviewed at intervals of no less than 3 years.

### Responsibilities of individual partnership board members

- To be accountable to the statutory safeguarding partners in respect of the work of the Group
- To ensure that agency contributions, both financial and 'in kind', are sufficient to enable the partnership to function effectively
- To attend and contribute to all Group meetings and events
- To exercise the right to challenge
- To co-ordinate the timely dissemination of information within own agency, and to consult agency staff on pertinent issues



- To represent own agency's views with authority
- To promote good safeguarding practice within own agency and to monitor and evaluate their compliance with partnership policies and procedures
- To be aware of, and bring to the attention of the safeguarding partners, any national or local developments or any changes to agency requirements which might impact on the delivery of services
- To prepare adequately for meetings, by reading minutes and associated papers and to contribute to debate, recommendations for actions and decisions
- To complete any actions within agreed timescales
- To accept shared responsibility for the development and satisfactory completion of the partnership Annual Report, and for the development of safeguarding policies and procedures both for the partnership and own agency
- To attend at least one multi-agency training session every year
- To report to a senior accountable person within own organisation on the organisations performance in relation to safeguarding partnership activities
- To ensure their own agency complies with policies, procedures and published standards, and participates in statutory and non-statutory case reviews
- To participate, when required in audits (including Section 11/175) and other learning activities

- To undertake a bi-annual observation of frontline practice in a partner agency
- To be subject to an annual appraisal led by the safeguarding partners and to participate in peer/ 360 appraisals of other members



## Appendix Three - Safeguarding Partnership Principles, Values and Behaviours

The following **Principles** guide the work of the Safeguarding Partners and are promoted by all partner agencies:

- All children and young people have a right to be safe from abuse and neglect;
- All our work is underpinned by the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- Children and young peoples' well-being and safety will be at the heart of all our work;
- All children and young people are unique and all our work will consider and address issues of diversity and vulnerability;
- Agencies and their staff have a shared responsibility to work together and safeguard children and young people and promote their welfare;
- Prevention strategies will be an important aspect of our work to safeguard children and young people;
- The active involvement of children, young people and their families will be incorporated in our work.

To deliver our shared principles all professionals include the following **Values and Behaviours** in all they do to improve outcomes for children, young people and families:

Value	Behaviour
<b>Improving Outcomes for Vulnerable Children</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• passionate about making a difference for children in Wirral</li> <li>• we fully use the skills, talents and assets of our partners, communities and organisations</li> <li>• we work with families to encourage change</li> </ul>
<b>Honesty and Integrity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• we are open, honest and trustworthy in all we do</li> <li>• we communicate clearly</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership and Partnership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• leadership is credible, passionate and ambitious and applies to us all, not just managers</li> <li>• we seek to develop positive relationships with our partners and children, young people and families</li> </ul>
<b>Professionalism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• we work to the highest possible standards</li> <li>• we respond to needs in a timely manner</li> <li>• we learn from and share knowledge and expertise with others</li> </ul>
<b>Equality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• we treat everyone with dignity and respect</li> <li>• we always act with fairness and impartiality</li> </ul>
<b>Quality and Standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• we always seek to raise standards and improve outcomes</li> </ul>
<b>Ambition and Innovation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• we are risk aware, not risk averse</li> <li>• we are ambitious for our children and young people</li> <li>• we seek innovative and creative solutions</li> <li>• we learn from mistakes</li> </ul>
<b>Accountability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• we are accountable and take responsibility for our personal and organisational actions and decisions</li> </ul>





## Appendix Four – Relevant Agencies in Wirral

- All early years provision including schools including academies, independent, special and alternate provision
- Wirral Metropolitan College and Birkenhead 6th Form College and all providers of 16-18 education and training
- Children's Centres
- Childcare Providers and Nurseries including Child Minders
- Residential Providers
- Independent Fostering and Adoption Agencies
- NHS England
- Adult Social Services
- Housing Providers
- Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- Wirral Community NHS Foundation Trust
- The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre NHS Foundation Trust
- Wirral and Cheshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
- Youth Offending Service
- National Probation Service
- Community Rehabilitation Company
- Border Force and Immigration Services

- British Transport Police
- Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service
- CAFCASS
- Local Authority
- All providers of Sports involving Children including those providing oversight
- All providers of extra-curricular activities to Children including clubs
- All religious organisations in Wirral
- Career Connect
- Barnardo's
- Catch22
- Wired
- Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector including charities, religious organisations and providers of sport and leisure activities



## Appendix Five – Principles of the Supporting Families Enhancing Futures (SFEF) Model

The SFEF model lies at the centre of our multi-agency working with families. The following principles underpin SFEF:

- **A child-centred approach.** Central to this approach is gaining insight into the lived experience of each child in the family. This is essential to gain insight into their world and learn about the needs that are or are not being met. This means learning about a day in their life, how they feel about that experience; what are the positive parts of the day; what parts of the day they dislike or frightens them? It is important that practitioners learn about the daily lived experience of EACH child in the family for the following reasons this:
  - ◇ Gives the child or young person a voice
  - ◇ Enables practitioners to step ‘into the child’s shoes’
  - ◇ Ensures withdrawn or marginalised children and carers are made more visible
  - ◇ Enables the differing needs of siblings to be identified and addressed
  - ◇ Increases understanding of the impact on children of parenting behaviours
  - ◇ Identifies areas for further assessment
  - ◇ Provides a vehicle for measuring progress.
- **Understand the world of the parent/s.** To establish why the needs of a child are not being met it is important to understand what daily life is like for the parent/s. By gaining these insights practitioners can:
  - ◇ Establish what the parent/s is doing during the day and how this impacts on their parenting capacity
  - ◇ Identify the daily promoters and inhibitors that affect the parent/s ability and motivation to meet the needs of the child.
  - ◇ Facilitate discussion about good enough parenting
  - ◇ Promote a holistic perspective of family life and situation
  - ◇ Facilitate family engagement.
- **Recognise family strengths as well as concerns.** It is just as important to identify the needs of each child that are being met as those that are not. In addition, parents need to know what they are doing well in terms of child rearing. Practitioners should try and build on these strengths to address concerns.
- **Engage parents in the change process.** This means assessing evidence of the parent/s ability and motivation to change throughout both the assessment and intervention.
- **Measure change** through actions and interventions of both family and professionals only in terms of quality differences to the lived experience of the child.



## Appendix Six – Funding and Resourcing

The Business Support and QA function, including its staff will be employees of and be accommodated by the Local Authority Children's Services. The staff will directly support the safeguarding partners and the committees and groups of the safeguarding partnership, and the Independent scrutiny function. Posts which will support the partners are:

- Business Manager
- Performance and Quality Assurance Officer
- Safeguarding Training Officer
- Education Safeguarding Training Officer
- Business Administrator
- Assistant Business Administrator

Year 1 (2019-20) will be a transitional year from the WSCB, which will remain the statutory agency between April and September 2019, and into the new arrangements which will come into effect on 1st September 2019.

Consequently the funding for Year 1 will reflect the WSCB model and include financial contributions from the following partners:

- Wirral LA Children's Services
- Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group
- Merseyside Police
- National Probation Service
- Community Rehabilitation Company
- CAFCASS

During year 1 a new funding model will be agreed by the partners for Year 2 and beyond.

