

**Working together
to keep Cumbria's
children safe.**

Cumbria Safeguarding Children Partnership Plan

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Foreword

Cumbria Local Safeguarding Children Board has provided expertise and leadership across the County. This has been facilitated by strong partnership working; scrutiny of practice through a variety of methods including audit and case reviews, sharing knowledge, developing our workforce, and providing a Cumbria ‘view’ on key issues. The latest LSCB annual report outlines the work undertaken in 2017-18 and its impact on safeguarding outcomes for children and young people in Cumbria.

This plan of arrangements sets out how we, as the safeguarding partners will work together and with other agencies to identify and respond to the needs of children in Cumbria. Our ambition is to build on the strengths of our existing and robust partnership and the plan outlines our new ways of working.

Our approach is proactive and responsive to the needs of children, young people and families in Cumbria and our plan drives opportunities to shape and influence policy development leading to improved practice and outcomes.

Cumbria Safeguarding Children Partnership is fully committed to keeping children and young people at the heart of all they do. All our work will be underpinned by a consideration of the views and lived experiences of Cumbria’s children and young people. This will include our independent scrutiny arrangements in which children and young people’s experiences will be fundamental in quality assurance.



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Background - national and local context

Under the Children Act 2004, as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017, Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) will be replaced. Under the new legislation, the three agencies identified as key safeguarding partners are Local Authorities (LAs), Chief Officers of Police and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs). These organisations must make arrangements to work together with relevant agencies to safeguard and protect the welfare of children in the area.

LAs, CCGs, and Chief Officers of Police now have equal and joint accountability for children safeguarding responsibilities (Working Together 2018). Adult responsibilities remain unchanged in line with the Care Act 2014.

Also under the new guidance, two agencies (Local Authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups) are identified as the child death review partners and must set up child death review arrangements. In Cumbria, these arrangements will continue to be delivered through the Child Death Overview Panel.

The current Serious Case Review arrangements will be replaced by Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, which may be conducted at local or national level. The National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel was established on 29 June 2018 and transitional guidance has been published setting out the responsibility of safeguarding partners when a serious incident occurs from that date onwards.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) sets out the statutory guidance to which all new safeguarding arrangements must adhere. Chief Officers/Executives of the new statutory partners (or their nominees) have reviewed these proposals and make the proposal outlined below to establish new arrangements and ensure compliance with the responsibilities.

The safeguarding partners are required to publish a plan setting out the new arrangements by 29 June 2019. This is the plan of arrangements and sets out how we, as the safeguarding partners, will work together and with other agencies to identify and respond to the needs of children in Cumbria.

This plan set out the new local safeguarding arrangements, including:

- How the safeguarding partners will work together to identify and respond to the needs of children in the areas.
- Arrangements for commissioning and publishing local child safeguarding practice reviews.
- How the effectiveness of the arrangements will be scrutinised by an independent person, including how the arrangements will be reviewed and how many recommendations taken forward.





Working in partnership in Cumbria

Cumbria has developed its new arrangements mindful of the fact that the LSCB arrangements were found to be functioning well by the recent LGA Peer Review. The review identified stable, committed and knowledgeable leadership across the partnership, and an effective, well organised structure to deliver the current LSCB arrangements with good engagement of partners at board and sub group levels. They also reported strong administrative and policy support, effective delivering of multi-agency arrangements and an effective audit function.

We are mindful of the need to build upon what is already working well, whilst recognising the need for continuous improvement, utilising the new partnership arrangements to drive further outcomes. The existing board has provided expertise and leadership across the county which has been facilitated by strong partnership working. The board has ensured scrutiny of practice through a variety of methods including audit and case reviews, sharing knowledge, developing our workforce, and providing a Cumbria ‘view’ on key issues. We have also worked effectively to ensure that the partnership is informed by the voice of children and young people through our Young Perspectives Board and this is a key area to strengthen further.

The new arrangements align with other strategic partnership work happening locally to support children and families. This includes the Health and Wellbeing Board, Children’s Trust Board, Safeguarding Adult Board, Safer Cumbria, Corporate Parenting Board, Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPAs), and the Prevent Board (see below).



Safeguarding partners in Cumbria will continue to work together in order to identify and respond to the needs of children through the new partnership arrangements. The four lead safeguarding partners are as follows:

- Cumbria County Council.
- Cumbria Constabulary.
- North Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group.
- Morecambe Bay Clinical Commissioning Group.

Cumbria County Council and Cumbria Constabulary are coterminous with the proposed geography for the new arrangements. North Cumbria CCG is wholly situated within Cumbria whilst Morecambe Bay CCG has a footprint covering south Cumbria and North Lancashire. The statutory requirements do not allow for local authority boundaries to be split and every effort will be made to ensure a collaborative and consistent approach where possible within the new arrangements for Cumbria and Lancashire.

The new arrangements are supported by changes in the framework for health commissioning and continued collaboration of CCGs across the Integrated Care Systems. Each CCG remains responsible for fulfilling its own statutory and legislative duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The revised arrangements do not remove or detract from the partner organisational requirements laid down within legal and national guidance.

The safeguarding partners and relevant agencies included in these arrangements will fulfil their statutory duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people from Cumbria who live or are placed outside of our local authority area.



How we developed our plan

Our plan has been developed through our existing partnership. While we have set the overall direction and intent, some of the detail regarding areas of focus will be the subject of wider consultation as part of our 'safeguarding fortnight' in September 2019. In developing our plan we have built upon our existing strengths as recognised in our recent LGA Peer Review, as well as thinking about how we take the opportunity to do things differently and maximise the impact of our partnership.

Partnership Vision and Values

Our partnership vision is that we will be "Working together to keep Cumbria's children safe".

As a partnership we commit to the following shared values which will underpin everything we do:

- Learning is promoted and embedded in a way that services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice.
- Practitioners from all agencies working with adults and children work together and share information effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families.
- The lived experience and the voice of children and young people is listened and acted upon at all times.
- A 'Whole-Family' approach is understood and implemented by all practitioners across the Partnership.





Partnership priorities

1) Early intervention and prevention

Prevention is a primary aim, helping to ensure that children do not suffer neglect or abuse. There is a strong early help offer to provide support to children and families as soon as they come to notice aimed at improving lives and preventing issues escalating. The synergy obtained from strong partnership working remains an essential element of effective safeguarding.

The Partnership's priority is to ensure that there is clear coordination and quality assurance of early help; with effective integration between the front door with a shared focus on the journey and experience of the child and family. This work is part of a whole system approach and is based on a clear understanding of local need.

We will achieve this by:

- Listening and engaging with families at the earliest opportunity.
- Working alongside families so that they are engaged in decision making that affects their lives.
- Ensuring partners are kept up to date with emerging themes and key messages.
- Supporting learning and development through Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and Lessons Learned Reviews.

2) Adolescent risk (including contextual safeguarding, exploitation etc.)

The Partnership will work with all agencies to ensure that there is a highly coordinated multi-agency approach to a range of adolescent risks that occur in contexts beyond the family home (e.g. neighbourhood, schools, local shopping centres, youth venues etc.). These risks include child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation, serious youth violence, peer on peer abuse, harmful sexual behaviour and other overlapping forms of harm.

We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring that the Partnership is aware of the risks of exploitation in their local area.
- Developing locality safeguarding groups.

3) Improving child protection and safeguarding practice

The partnership will ensure that good practice is consistent and that Safeguarding is understood and is everyone's responsibility.

We will achieve this by:

- Developing the workforce so that practitioners can work with families to build on their strengths.
- Improving awareness and a common understanding of the thresholds for intervention across the whole partnership.

The 'golden thread' that runs through all the priorities is...
**The voice and lived experience of the child
is at the heart of everything we do.**

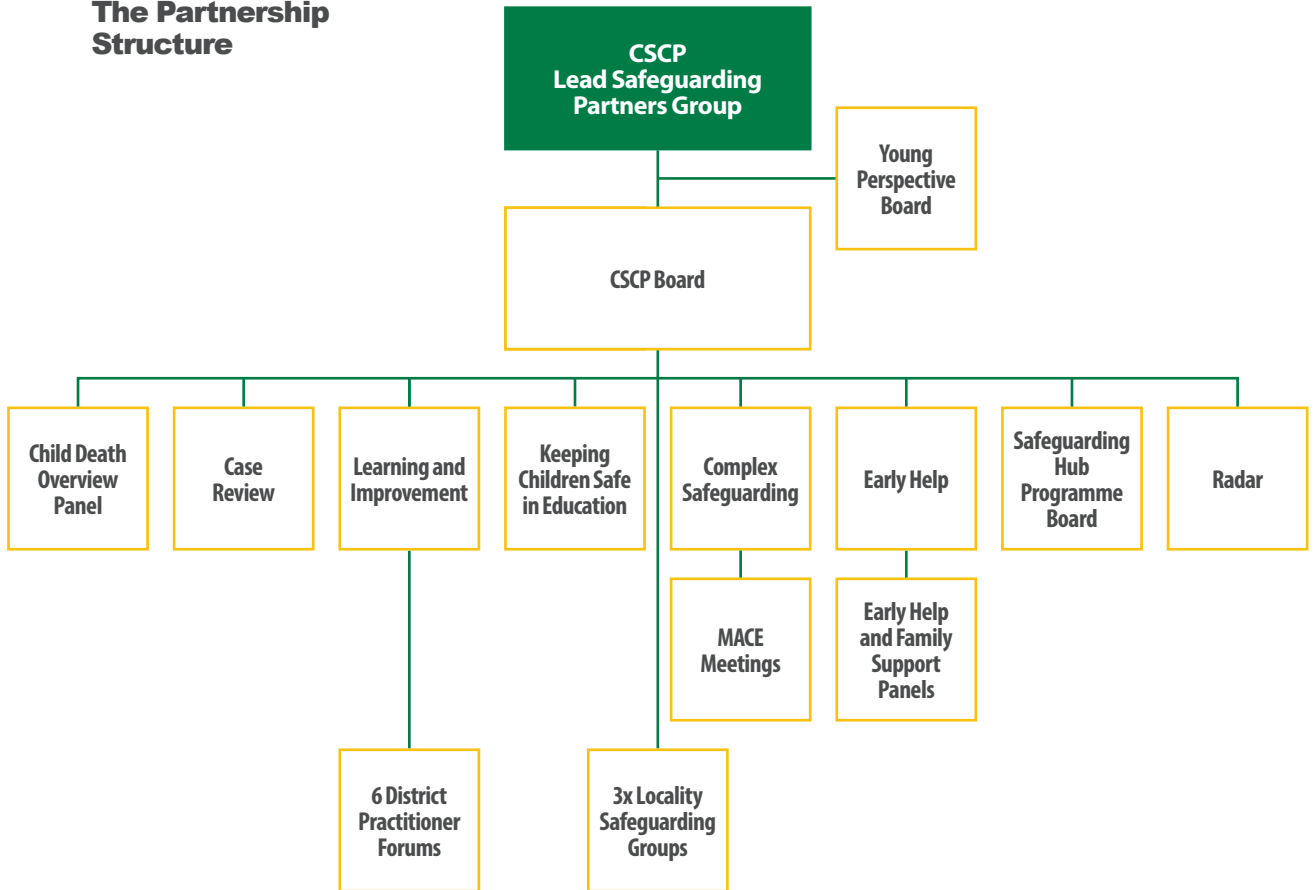
How we will achieve these

The strength of partnership working is dependent on partners working collaboratively together with the relevant agencies, safeguarding partners in Cumbria work together in order to identify and respond to the needs of children through the new Partnership.

The Partnership will be structured to provide strong leadership, collaboration, scrutiny and assurance. This requires robust and effective arrangements at both a strategic and a local level, and it is our arrangements in localities that we are taking the opportunity to strengthen through the new arrangements.

The CSCP will provide strategic leadership across the County. The arrangements will be delivered through a Lead Safeguarding Partners Group underpinned by a wider Partnership Board Business Group. A number of sub groups will continue to deliver core functions and we will establish (with a phased implementation) Locality Safeguarding Groups.

The Partnership Structure





Lead Safeguarding Partners Group

The Lead Safeguarding Partners Group will be formed of senior responsible officers or their nominated representatives from the three statutory safeguarding partners.

The Lead Safeguarding Partners Group will meet three times a year to drive forward the work of the CSCP, ensuring the vision is upheld and the priorities are delivered. The Group will review progress, assess strengths and identify areas for development.

CSCP Board

The CSCP Board membership will include the chairs of the partnership sub-groups and chairs of the Locality Safeguarding Groups, the statutory partners as well as the other 'relevant agencies' (as detailed in Working Together 2018). In Cumbria this will include representatives from education, health, district councils, criminal justice and the voluntary sector.

The CSCP Board will develop, implement and monitor an annual plan, agree priority actions against core business; and will direct the subgroups in delivery of the plan. It will meet quarterly, with meetings themed around agreed local and national safeguarding priorities and areas identified through data and performance. The group will report to the Lead Safeguarding Partners Group.

Locality Safeguarding Groups

We believe the new arrangements present an opportunity to improve the consistency of our locality response to safeguarding issues. Our new arrangements will establish (on a phased approach) three Locality Safeguarding Groups based on the following locality areas: Allerdale and Copland; Carlisle and Eden; Barrow and South Lakeland. We will be working in consultation with partners to establish how the arrangements will work in practice.

We will work to ensure that the benefits of these will include:

- Ensuring the strategic direction of the Lead Safeguarding Partners Group is informed by local issues.
- Facilitating greater ownership and accountability of children's safeguarding at a locality level.
- Greater opportunities for engagement and co-production of locally owned and developed solutions and ideas, with local stakeholders.
- The locality groups will be chaired by a safeguarding partner and be formed of key senior officers from that local area with decision making responsibility, driving practice locally through the partnership.



Partnership Sub Groups

The Business Group will be supported to deliver the priorities through a number of countywide partnership sub groups:

- Learning and Improvement.
- Child Death Overview Panel.
- Case Review.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education Partnership.
- Complex Safeguarding.
- Early Help.
- Safeguarding Hub Programme Board.
- Radar.

Educational Establishments

The importance of schools is emphasised in the new national guidance recognising their role identifying and supporting vulnerable children and young people. The role of schools and other education settings will be prioritised and supported to promote the best possible engagement across the sector. The Keeping Children Safe in Education sub group will aim to build on established relationships with schools and education providers to ensure they remain a key partner agency and the chair will sit on the Business Group.

Focus on Specific Safeguarding Areas

Themed sub-groups will provide a multi-agency focus on themes.

- **Complex Safeguarding Group**
The existing Missing, Exploited and Trafficked (MET) Group will be refocused as the Complex Safeguarding Group and will provide a focal point for the CSCP in ensuring oversight and consistency of our response to complex safeguarding issues.
- **Early Help sub group**
The existing Early Help sub group will continue to embed the Early Help Strategy and drive improvement of the systems and processes for Early Help.
- **Safeguarding Hub Programme Board**
The Safeguarding Hub Programme Board will continue to set the strategic vision, operation model, deliverables and direction for the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub.





Child Death Overview Panel

This group will manage the completion of child death reviews, following the new statutory guidance in this area. It will adopt a Cumbria footprint to reviewing child deaths, consistent with the previous approach adopted by the child death overview panel. The learning will be fed into other themed learning locally, regionally and nationally and will be used as part of the Learning and Improvement framework.

Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

Since June 2018, responsibility for how our system learn lessons from cases when things don't go well, particularly when this reaches the criteria for a serious child safeguarding incident lies at a national level with the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and at a local level with the Safeguarding Partners. In Cumbria it is overseen in practice by our Case Review Sub-Group, reporting through the Business Group to the CSCP Executive Board.

The purpose of a local Child Safeguarding Practice Review is to identify and inform improvement in safeguarding practice. The Case Review Sub Group will continue in the new arrangements to oversee the process and ensures that learning leads to improvement in front-line practice. A clear plan for disseminating and sharing the learning from the review with all 'relevant agencies' is developed for each case. An ongoing programme of training targeted at practitioners focus on emerging key themes and learning from reviews to improve practice. For every review we will produce a 'Learning Lessons Briefing': this will provide a short summary of the background to the case, identify key learning and highlight areas for practice improvement.

Thresholds

The LSCB has threshold guidance that will be reviewed by the CSCP as part of the new arrangements. The guidance describes the overarching approach taken in Cumbria to supporting young people and children (pre-birth up to 18 years) and their families and then explains the different elements of the approach in more detail.

This multi-agency guidance seeks to:

- Describe levels of vulnerability and the appropriate response at differing levels.
- set out the principles that underpin the way we will work with children, young people and families.
- Make clear the thresholds for action/intervention and provide case studies that give real life examples of this.
- Provide a description of the Cumbria Safeguarding Hub and how this works in supporting a multi-agency approach to working with children, young people and families when it is appropriate to use it.
- Provide the necessary information to ensure that those children and young people identified as having additional needs receive timely intervention and have access to services to address these.



Use of Data and Intelligence

The current arrangements for data and intelligence which have been in place for the LSCB will continue for the CSCP.

There is a robust system of performance scrutiny, analysis and challenge with a multi-agency data set for the Board and a priority-based dataset for each themed sub-group. This will continue for the new Safeguarding Partnership. The multi-agency datasets include data on all aspects from early help through to statutory intervention. The partnership priorities will be underpinned by outcome measures.

Each sub-group reports to the Business Group via a Highlight Report on activity, actions and performance. A composite report is completed by the Business Group and presented to the Partnership, highlighting performance issues, exceptions, actions and recommendations for further action.

Actions and outcomes from all case audits and reviews are analysed and re-visited to ensure that they are embedded in practice.

The CSCP Business Plan records and reviews actions and outcomes for each Partnership priority.

A system of Section 11 Safeguarding Audits ensures that the Partnership receives assurance from each organisation about their safeguarding children arrangements.

The CSCP will publish a report annually giving details of activity and the impact of that activity across the Safeguarding Partnership.

Embedding the Learning and Multi-Agency Training

Locally, there is an ongoing commitment to developing a consistent approach to multi-agency training, which is underpinned by robust evaluation processes to ensure that the training programme is clearly focussed on embedding good practice: our approach will be both challenging and supportive. We want to learn from what works, as well as look as look openly when the system doesn't work as well as it needs to. As outlined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, multi-agency training is important for supporting the collective understanding of local need and for practitioners to be effective in universal services and across the safeguarding pathway. This spans from early help through to targeted and specialist services including looked after children and care leavers. To be effective practitioners need to continue to build their knowledge and skills and be aware of the new and emerging threats.

The Learning and Improvement Sub Group are responsible for the planning, co-ordination, commissioning and evaluation of high quality multi-agency training to the children's workforce. The group ensures that the learning and development provided within agencies equips professionals to safeguard children.

The Partnership continues to implement Signs of Safety as its overarching practice model which is a more inclusive, strengths based approach for all of the partnerships work with children and families.

In addition to training activities, there will also be development opportunities such as information sessions and briefings, practice forums and conferences. These activities will promote putting theory and research into practice, developing evidence-based practice and expertise, sharing perspectives and learning and enhancing confidence in helping and protecting children and young people.

The Partnership acknowledge that good quality supervision is fundamental to support safe and effective practice; the Partnership will continue to promote a culture that values and engages in regular safeguarding supervision.



Youth Custody and Residential Homes

The Youth Offending Team reports to LSCB and will continue to support the CSCP via the Local Authority Children's Services representative on the Lead Safeguarding Partners Group. The Youth Offending Team is directly represented on the CSCP Business Group and on other sub-groups.

There are no Youth Custody homes within the local authority but those which are in the region will be required to report on arrangements as and when necessary. There is representation from the Forum of Independent Schools and Children's Homes (FISCH), on the CSCP Complex Safeguarding Sub-group.

Independent Scrutiny

The role of independent scrutiny will provide assurance in judging the effectiveness of the multi-agency arrangements, including those to identify and review serious incidents and conduct child safeguarding practice reviews, (previously known as Serious Case Reviews).

Our approach to securing independent scrutiny has been identified as a strength across our system in the recent LGA Peer Review. Current arrangements include; an independent Board Chair, regular multi-agency audits, practitioner surveys, the Young Perspectives Board (which will continue to be the dedicated voice for children and young people in Cumbria), and Learning Reviews.

We will further strengthen these arrangements through reciprocal agreements with other local areas to undertake peer reviews, developing the use of Appreciative Inquiry as a model for identifying and celebrating what is working well, and further involvement of children, young people and families.

The Council's Children and Young People's Scrutiny Advisory Board will be part of the new safeguarding partnership's scrutiny arrangements, receiving regular updates on the progress of the new partnership arrangements.

As a learning partnership we are keen to evaluate how our new arrangements are working and whether we are securing the desired impact. We will commission an external Peer Review to take place during the autumn in 2020.

Voice of Children and Young People

The voice of the child is at the heart of the partnership. Involving children and families is important to safeguarding in Cumbria both in contributing to delivering the partnership's vision and in helping to scrutinise and review the partnership arrangements themselves.

Voice, engagement activity, co-production and working collaboratively with children and young people's perceptions, aspirations and skills is an area of strength in Cumbria. The Young Perspective Board is well established, meets regularly, reports to the Board and will continue to be the dedicated voice for young people in Cumbria.

We will continue to ask our relevant agencies and other partners how they ensure they have captured and listened to the voices of children, young people and families in their work as well as identifying other innovative ways to gather this feedback through the partnership.



Dispute Resolution and Escalation Process

All agencies working with children in Cumbria remain subject to the policies and procedures set out in the existing Multi Agency procedures manual and its 'Escalation Policy'. This sets out the general principles of resolution as well as the specific processes to be followed if escalation is required.

The Cumbria Safeguarding Children Partnership and all relevant agencies will be expected to adhere to the policy. Should a disagreement arise at no time must professional disagreement detract from ensuring that the child is safeguarded. The child's welfare and safety must remain paramount throughout.

Policies and Procedures

CSCP will assume all the current multi-agency policies, procedures and guidance published by Cumbria LSCB. All of these will remain in force until such time as each is revised and updated. The Policies and Procedures Sub Group will oversee this work.

Resources and Infrastructure

The existing support arrangements for the partnership (recognised as a strength in our recent LGA Peer Review) will be retained. As our new arrangements develop the impact on the support required will be monitored to ensure capacity to provide effective support is maintained. There is an ongoing commitment from statutory partner to resource the partnership and a recognition that locality working may have some resource implications but will lead to improved outcomes.

The Partnership is committed to an agreed equitable split of the costs associated with the new arrangements. A pledge has been made to keep commitments the same for 2019/20.

Agency	
Local Authority (staffing/board support)	£141,600
CCG's, Acute & Provider Trusts	£71,878
Police	£13,811
Others	£2,326
	£237,416





Transitional arrangements and continuous improvement

The process of developing the new partnership arrangements included a number of critical stages:

Milestone	Deadline
Establishment of Working Together Group	September 2018
Options paper to the Board	February 2019
LGA Peer Review	March 2019
Paper to Cumbria County Council Cabinet	6 June 2019
New arrangements to be published	29 June 2019
New arrangements to be in place	29 September 2019
New Partnership Board and Business Group Arrangements begin	September 2019
Development of Locality Safeguarding Groups	December 2019
Locality Safeguarding Group implementation	February 2020 onwards
Publication of Annual Report	TBC



Glossary

CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CDOP	Child Death Overview Panel
CSCP	Cumbria Safeguarding Children Partnership
FISCH	Forum of Independent Schools and Children's Homes
LA	Local Authority
LGA	Local Government Association
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Board
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
SCR	Serious Case Review

