



Norfolk Safeguarding
Children Partnership

MASA Plan

Local Plan for Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements

Refreshed: November 2024
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Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership

Working with the Children and Young People's Strategic
Alliance to enable all Norfolk children can flourish.



flourish

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Summary

There are many agencies in Norfolk supporting children and young people, and they work together in partnership to ensure that they keep children safe.

Norfolk's original plan for Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) was published in September 2019. This version of the plan has been revised to reflect changes and development since the original publication and in adherence with Working Together 2023.

1. There are three partners in Norfolk who are jointly responsible in statute for the arrangements for keeping children safe:

Norfolk County Council

Norfolk Constabulary

Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board

2. The Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) continues to be the vehicle through which the three partners work together, with other agencies and the wider safeguarding system.
3. The NSCP's structure includes independent scrutiny to challenge the effectiveness of its work, and continues the emphasis on embedding learning, strong locality working, inclusion of all and promoting early help and support to underpin Norfolk's ambition for children and young people to flourish.
4. The NSCP benefits from an integrated approach to intelligence gathering and information analysis with the establishment of a genuinely systemic view of data, quality, effectiveness and practice, facilitated by shared intelligence, scrutiny and joint quality assurance.

This Plan sets out the details of how the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership works, as well as why and how we adapt in order to provide a flexible response to a complex fast moving agenda.

The Plan is reviewed and refreshed every two years. Arrangements are underpinned by an NSCP Business Plan which is written against agreed priorities and is reviewed regularly and published annually. Further information on our arrangements is reported in the NSCP annual report.

At the heart of the arrangements, is a commitment from all partners to continuously improve as a system and to work together to keep children and young people safe so that they are able to realise their potential.

Foreword

Welcome to this iteration of the Norfolk Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) for children and young people and our plan of how we ensure these arrangements benefit and support children across the county to Flourish. As the named partners in Working Together 2023 and the Children's Social Care National Framework, we are clear about our leadership roles and the influence we have over children's lived experience growing up in Norfolk.

Since the introduction of MASAs in 2019, local safeguarding arrangements have been tested locally and nationally with unprecedented challenges such as responding to a global pandemic and cost of living crises. Here in Norfolk, the partnership has risen to these challenges and demonstrated the true power of working together in terms of sharing resources and intelligence to best protect and safeguard children. The Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership's response to external pressures has been robust, demonstrating agility and flexibility to keep up with changing situations. The collaboration between partners has been exemplary, evidencing the maturity of the partnership and the value of joining up resources and sharing information.

The MASA provides us opportunities to review and, where necessary, change our ways of working. We continue to build on the existing good relationships across the Norfolk system. We focus on how we can make a real difference to multi-agency frontline practice in safeguarding to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families. We aim to achieve these improvements by shared learning, developing and spreading good practice based on what we know works well and is evidence based. This includes our ongoing commitment to support and deliver prevention and early help services as integral elements of effective safeguarding.

This iteration of the MASA plan sets out how the safeguarding partners work together and with others to identify and respond to the safeguarding needs of children, young people and families in Norfolk.

Our ambition is to further develop an equitable, robust partnership, which has a proactive and responsive approach to ensuring that children are safeguarded and that their wellbeing is encouraged and supported.

Delegated Safeguarding Partner



Norfolk
County Council

Sara Tough, OBE
Executive Director
Children's Services



NORFOLK
CONSTABULARY
Our Priority is You

Christopher Balmer
T/Assistant Chief Constable



Patricia D'Orsi
Executive Director of Nursing
Norfolk and Waveney Integrated
Care Board

Lead Safeguarding Partner

Tom McCabe
Chief Executive Officer

Paul Sanford
Chief Constable

Tracey Bleakley
Chief Executive Officer,
Norfolk & Waveney
Integrated Care Board

1. About Norfolk

Norfolk is the 5th largest county or unitary council area in England, with a population of around 918,000 people. Just over a quarter of the population is aged 0-24 (around 238,000).¹

Norfolk's families live in one of seven districts: Breckland, Broadland, Great Yarmouth, King's Lynn & West Norfolk, North Norfolk, Norwich and South Norfolk. Norfolk has a balance of urban and rural districts, with Norwich the most urban and North Norfolk the most rural.

Although Norfolk is often viewed as being quite a well-off area, and it is certainly true that some families do have comfortable lives, deprivation and poverty does influence the health and wellbeing of the population. Currently around 135,000 people in Norfolk live in areas categorised as within the most 20% deprived areas in England². These are mainly located in the urban areas of Norwich, Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn, but also some rural areas, coastal villages and market towns, where rural life can make accessing services and opportunities more difficult. The life expectancy gap between the most deprived areas of Norfolk and the least deprived areas is 7.3 years for men and 4.6 years for women³.

One of the challenges of meeting the needs of Norfolk's children, young people and families is that their needs can be very different, so the way we meet these has to be varied, flexible and built around individual requirements and aspirations.

The Multi-Agency Landscape

The county is served by Norfolk County Council as well as seven district councils. There is one Constabulary, one Youth Justice Service and services provided by the National Probation Service. Health providers are governed by the Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Boards. Providers include:

- 105 GP practices⁴
- Three Acute Hospital Trusts
- Three community health providers
- A mental health trust (Norfolk & Suffolk Foundation Trust)⁵
- Third sector providers

Norfolk County Council's Children Services received an Ofsted judgement of Good in their Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services in January 2023. The Local Authority continues to build on its strengths and is emerging as a recognized area for ongoing development and improvement, as evidenced in achieving autonomy in its Supporting Families programme.

Norfolk Children Services is structured in six localities across the county. The locality areas align with the boundaries of the district councils and largely follow the operational policing boundaries, the clustering arrangements of our schools and health visiting and school nursing arrangements. A good local offer is at the heart of Norfolk's locality model for service delivery.

¹ Office for Nation Statistics mid-year estimates 2021.

² Norfolk Story - Norfolk Insight 2023.

³ Norfolk Story - Norfolk Insight 2023.

⁴ Norfolk Insight: Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment.

⁵ Norfolk ICB Primary & Community Care.

There are over 460 schools in Norfolk, including Further Education Colleges, special schools and independent schools. 22.5% of children are eligible for free school meals, below the national average of 23.8%, but above the Eastern Region average of 19.4%. The percentage of children achieving a good level of development at the end of reception (67.4%) is similar to national and regional averages (both 67.2%). The proportion of Norfolk pupils at the expected standard in all of reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 is around 52%, compared to the national average at 60%⁶. Around 64% of pupils achieved grade 4 or above in both English and mathematics GCSEs, which is above the national average (60.7%), but below the Eastern Region average (66.3%).

The Early Years workforce is comprised of nurseries, registered childminders and early childhood and family services. Learning and development for Norfolk's youngest children is improving, and in 2023, 96.6% of 2-year-olds, and 91.6% of 3 and 4-year-olds were in funded early years placements with providers rated as 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted. This improvement must be sustained so that every child has access to a good or outstanding setting, where it is recognised that the early years are a significant period for learning and development.¹⁰

Norfolk's 0 – 19 Healthy Child Programme is commissioned by Public Health. Services range from ante-natal care through to school nursing and speech and language therapy. Other specialist services, such as occupational therapy, continence support and supporting children with disabilities, are commissioned through a range of other providers.

Further detail on partners and stakeholders is included under Section 3, Relevant Partners involved.

⁶ Education Statistics: Schools, pupils and their characteristics, 2022/23.

⁷ Education Statistics: Early Years and Foundation Profiles, 2022/23.

⁸ Education Statistics: Key Stage 2 Attainment 2022/23.

⁹ Education Statistics: Key Stage 4 Attainment 2022/23.

¹⁰ Education Statistics: Education Provisions for Children Under 5.

2. Vision and Principles

Our shared vision is for all children and young people in Norfolk to Flourish.¹

All children, young people and their families have the right to be: healthy, happy and safe; to be loved, valued and respected; and to have high aspirations for their future. We recognise that children and young people live in families and that families live in communities. We strive to ensure that a good local offer is at the heart of our locality model for service delivery. Norfolk partners, families and communities need to work together to make this happen.

We are committed to ensuring that children will have their needs met in universal services wherever possible, but we also recognise that some families need additional help for their children sometimes, and that some children might have their needs best met by living apart from their families.

This is never a static process: situations change and as a result so does need and risk. We understand that risks of harm to children may increase and require more services and an assessment of risk with specialist support. As interventions have impact, and needs and risks change as a consequence, the level of harm will reduce, but the child may still benefit from additional family support in order to achieve sustained outcomes.

Partners in Norfolk have a long and successful history of working together to protect children and to promote their wellbeing. We wish to build on these achievements by ensuring that our safeguarding arrangements are effective, flexible, proportionate and inclusive. We aim to reduce duplication and bureaucracy and to involve children, young people and families, alongside professionals, communities, citizens and volunteers in working together to keep children safe.

Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and by working together effectively and early we will reduce the number of children and young people requiring statutory interventions and reactive specialist services.

Early Help and Prevention

Norfolk sees prevention and early help as an integral part of effective safeguarding. It is estimated that over two million children in the UK today are living in difficult family circumstances. These include children whose family lives are affected by parental drug and alcohol dependency, domestic abuse and poor mental health. It is crucial that these children and their families benefit from the best quality professional help at the earliest opportunity. For some families, without early help, difficulties escalate, family circumstances deteriorate, and children are more at risk of suffering significant harm. The MASA continues to support and monitor the local multi-agency Early Help offer, for individuals and families. This is a multi-disciplinary approach that brings a range of professional skills and expertise to bear through a place-based approach.

¹FLOURISH is an acronym for: Family and Friends; Learning; Opportunities; Understood; Resilience; Individual; Safe and Secure; and Healthy. The FLOURISH outcomes framework sits under the NSCP's 'sister board' the Children and Young People's Strategic Alliance. See Section 5: Links to Other Partnerships

Continuum of Needs Guidance

Our approach to thresholds for intervention reflects this understanding of dynamic need and risk assessment in the published Continuum of Needs Guidance and supporting toolbox. The guidance has been designed to encourage early discussion and dialogue when we have emerging worries about children. It has been developed to acknowledge that all professionals will need a framework to help them recognise risk and agree an appropriate response. All agencies are required to ensure that their staff undertake training and professional development to keep their safeguarding knowledge up to date.

In Norfolk we are working to a model of staged intervention. The purpose of the guidance is to help match the response to the child's needs, and is not a check list of concerns, but a way of supporting consistent and clear responses to children's safeguarding and wellbeing.

Principles of Information Sharing

The NSCP supports practitioners to be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children. This may be when problems are first emerging (for example, persistent school absences) or where a child is already known to Norfolk's Children Services social care teams. We recognize that sharing information about any adults with whom that child has contact, which may impact the child's safety or welfare, is also critical.

Information sharing is also essential for the identification of patterns of behaviour when a child is at risk of going missing or has gone missing, including being missing from education. When multiple children appear associated to the same context or locations of risk, or in relation to children in the secure estate where there may be multiple local authorities involved in a child's care, the NSCP considers the best way to build relationships and share relevant information in a timely and proportionate way with each other, other local organisations, and other safeguarding partnerships.

To ensure effective safeguarding arrangements the NSCP has put in place:

- Information sharing agreements that set out clearly the processes and the principles for sharing information. The agreements cover how information will be shared with their own organisation/agency and with others who may be involved in a child's life
- Training and consistent messages to practitioners that they should not assume that someone else will pass on information that they think may be critical to keep a child safe. If a practitioner has concerns about a child's welfare or safety, then they should share the information with local authority children's social care and/or the police. All practitioners are regularly reminded of the importance of sharing information when a child moves from one local authority into another, due to the risk that knowledge pertinent to keeping a child safe could be lost

All information sharing agreements are underpinned by the Data Protection Act 2018¹² and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

Principles of Practice

All safeguarding work, including prevention and early help, seeks to ensure that children and young people receive the right service at the right time and for the right duration to keep them safe and promote their welfare. The Principles of Practice set out for our safeguarding work include:

- Being child-centred
- Hearing the voices of children and young people
- Being rooted in child development and informed by evidence
- Respect of all people at all times
- Being focused on actions and outcomes for children
- Listening to family members and giving importance to what they say
- Building on strengths as well as identifying difficulties
- Setting out clearly in a way appropriate to the family any concerns we have and what needs to happen to reduce those concerns
- Understanding a family's individuality, values, beliefs, culture and spirituality and recognising difference
- Recognising and celebrating the importance of a child or young person's family, friends and community
- Honest and transparent communications about what we do and why we are involved
- Offering help early – doing all we can to assist in keeping our intervention at the lowest possible and safest level

Workforce Development

The NSCP continues to offer a range of training and learning opportunities, and contributes to workforce development objectives in conjunction with the Children and Young People's Strategic Alliance.

Norfolk's Safer Programme, under the NSCP Business Unit, provides training, safeguarding guidance and policy validation. As noted above, this continues to play an important role in equipping voluntary and community organisations to protect children based on up-to-date legislation and best practice.

3. Relevant Partners

Principles of partnership working

The strength of local partnership working is dependent on all those involved in safeguarding working together in collaboration. The three statutory safeguarding partners consider that the involvement of all relevant stakeholders is required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The Norfolk MASA is inclusive and encourages engagement and participation. This is achieved through engaging and communicating with a wide range of local agencies in the six Local Safeguarding Children Groups (LSCGs) which align with operational delivery. The plan also maintains the sector focus at a senior level through the Advisory Groups which bring safeguarding leads in each sector together.

In addition to the three statutory partners a number of other stakeholders work as part of the Partnership, reflecting the strong working relationships already built up in Norfolk over many years. These agencies are invited to Partnership Conferences and Leadership Exchange and Learning Events, and are also represented on the NSCP's Partnership Group (see Section 4 on Structure and Governance Arrangements), Advisory Groups, LSCGs and relevant subgroups overseeing the NSCP priorities. Agencies, groups and individuals may be invited to participate in task and finish groups to tackle particular safeguarding challenges, and are expected to play an active role in appropriate practice reviews, audits and training.

The Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency (England) Regulations 2018 sets out the list of relevant agencies that are required to work under the auspices of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. **It is important to note that:**

1. Although all safeguarding partners are not referred to in the regulations, their staff are subject to local MASA requirements.
2. Certain key stakeholders are not listed in the regulations, as their functions are commissioned or otherwise overseen by one or more of the safeguarding partners – for example primary care, dentists and mental health service providers are already included through the Integrated Care Board, NHS England, and NHS Trusts. Providers of social care services are covered by the commissioning role of the Local Authority. These agencies and their staff are still subject to the requirements of the MASA.
3. The list of relevant agencies is intentionally focused at a strategic agency-based level – it is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all bodies or individuals which come into contact with children.

Other organisations, agencies and stakeholders who are not named in the regulations have been included in the Norfolk MASA.

There are also mechanisms in place to engage with the education sector, the voluntary sector, residential homes and youth custody settings. Provision comes from a range of private suppliers in different locations; the NSCP has established contact systems for engagement and recognise the duty to do so.

A list of key stakeholders is attached as Appendix 1

Where stakeholders have safeguarding duties under Section 11 of the Children Act these will continue to be monitored by the Partnership through a regular process of self-assessment, scrutiny and challenge.

Engaging with Education & Early Years

The NSCP recognizes that schools, colleges, early years and childcare settings, and other educational providers (including alternative provision) all have a pivotal role to play in safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. Their insight and co-operation are vital to the successful delivery of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. People working in education settings play an important role in building relationships, identifying concerns and providing direct support to children. They may be the first trusted adult to whom children report safeguarding concerns.

The NSCP has created an environment which enables all schools, colleges, early years, and other education and childcare providers in the local area to be fully engaged, involved and included in local safeguarding arrangements. We strive to ensure that the views and contributions of education and childcare providers are articulated at the highest level of decision-making.

All schools and colleges in Norfolk are expected to comply with the requirements of the statutory guidance Keeping children safe in education: for schools and colleges (DfE, September 2018), and fulfil the duties of Section 175/157 of the Education Act 2002 and subsequent guidance. See also Chapter 4, Structure & Governance regarding plans to have education as a fourth strategic partner.

In addition to the S175/157 safeguarding self assessments, there are a number of ways that education settings are visible in our local arrangements, for example, through the LSCGs, the Designated Safeguarding Leads network systems, in scrutiny focus groups and through representatives at high level Partnership Group meetings. Education is represented on the Workforce development Group to ensure that DSLs and other relevant staff have appropriate training and support. They are also represented at the NSCP's 'sister' board, the Children & Young People's Strategic Alliance (CYPSA).

Early Years is also represented at Partnership Group and the sector benefits from membership and training via the Norfolk's Safer Programme, which sits within the NSCP Business Unit. Further support and engagement is visible through the Early Years Advisory Group.

As part of the review of this iteration of the MASA, schools were consulted with in the spring and summer of 2024, including a workshop facilitated by a DfE consultant. Further information on this is included in the following chapter on Structure and Governance.

Engaging with the Voluntary Sector

The NSCP recognizes the many voluntary, charity, social enterprise (VCSE) organisations and sports clubs provide education and activities for children as part of their work. The staff and volunteers working with children in these settings often play an important role in building relationships,

identifying concerns, and providing direct support to children; they can often be the first trusted adult to whom a child reports abuse. Some of these work with particular communities, with different races and faith communities, allowing particular insight in potentially hard to reach cohorts. They may also deliver services via health, adult social care, housing, and Prison and Probation Services.

In Norfolk the voluntary sector is supported through the Safer programme which enables them to have appropriate arrangements in place to safeguard and protect children from harm. This extends to charity trustees who are responsible for ensuring that those benefiting from, or working with, their charity, are not harmed in any way through contact with it.

The NSCP engages with the VCSE in a number of ways, with strong links with the umbrella organisation Voluntary Norfolk. As with education, VCSE colleagues are visible at LSCGs, represented at Partnership Group and CYPsA. Norfolk's Voluntary Forum were consulted as part of this MASA review in the summer of 2024.

4. Structure and Governance

All three safeguarding partners have equal and joint responsibility for local safeguarding arrangements. These arrangements are discharged through the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership. The purpose of these local arrangements is set out in Chapter 2 of Working Together, 2023. The Partnership is responsible for holding other partners to account - individually and through other partnership and governance boards - for their safeguarding responsibilities.

NSCP: Lead and Delegated Statutory Safeguarding Partners

Overarching responsibility sits with the chief officers of the statutory partners, i.e. the Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSPs) who are supported by their executive leads, i.e. Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSPs); the DSPs have strategic oversight for safeguarding children in their portfolios.

For clarity, the people named are:

	Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSP)	Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSP)
The Local Authority: Norfolk County Council	Tom McCabe Head of Paid Services	Sara Tough, OBE Executive Director Children's Services
Police: Norfolk Constabulary	Paul Sanford Chief Constable	Nicholas Davison Assistant Chief Constable
Health: Norfolk & Waveney Integrated Care Board	Tracey Bleakley Chief Executive Officer	Patricia D'Orsi Executive Director of Nursing

The Lead and Delegated Safeguarding Partners work together to safeguard children and promote their welfare through clear and visible leadership. This means:

- there is a clear, shared vision for how to improve outcomes for children locally across all levels of need and all types of harm
- when a child is identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm there is a prompt, appropriate and effective response to ensure the protection and support of the child
- organisations and agencies are challenged appropriately, effectively holding one another to account; culturally, accountability is seen as an act of respect and an opportunity for growth and development to enhance collaborative partnership working
- the voice of children and families combined with the knowledge of experienced practitioners and insights from data, provides a greater understanding of the areas of strength and/or improvement within arrangements and practice
- information is sought, analysed, shared, and broken down by protected characteristics to facilitate more accurate and timely decision-making for children and families, and to understand outcomes for different communities of children
- effective collection, sharing and analysis of data, enables early identification of new safeguarding risks, issues, emerging threats, and joined-up responses across relevant agencies

- senior leaders promote and embed a learning culture which supports local services to become more reflective and implement changes to practice
- senior leaders have a good knowledge and understanding about the quality of local practice and its impact on children and families

The LSPs and DSPs adhere to the guidance set out in Working Together 2023 and their specific responsibilities.

Lead Statutory Partners

The LSPs meet twice a year with the chair of the DSP Partnership meeting (see below). This ensures that they have dedicated time to fulfill their statutory duties. In addition, the LSPs are provided quarterly written updates on the work of the NSCP to enable them to effectively oversee and drive forward the work of the Partnership. They are also responsible for final sign off of key documents, including the MASA and the annual report, prior to publication.

Delegated Statutory Partners

The DSPs meet regularly and that meeting has the Executive Director of Children's Services, Sara Tough, OBE (DSP) nominated in the role of Partnership Chair. The Partnership Chair acts as the conduit between the DSPs and LSPs, providing feedback and escalating collective risk and issues to LSPs as necessary.

In addition to the statutory DSPs, the DSP Partnership meeting is attended by at least one of the independent scrutineers and the Head of NSCP Business Delivery who provide support and challenge.

The DSP meeting fulfills core functions including:

- Delivery and monitoring of multi-agency priorities and procedures to protect and safeguard children in the local area
- Reviewing and reporting on engagement with education (at strategic and operational level) and other relevant agencies, allowing better identification of and response to harm
- The implementation of effective information sharing arrangements between agencies, including data sharing that facilitates joint analysis between partner agencies
- Delivery of high-quality and timely rapid reviews and local child safeguarding practice reviews
- Agree any areas for independent scrutiny and respond to learning and recommendations
- Sign off the annual report, with emphasis on evidence of learning from local and national reviews and independent scrutiny
- The provision of appropriate multi-agency safeguarding professional development and training
- Seeking of, and responding to, feedback from children and families about their experiences of services and co-designing services to ensure children from different communities and groups can access the help and protection they need

At both the DSP and LSP meetings, the independent scrutineers and Head of NSCP Business Delivery advise on achievements, challenges and recommendations for continuous improvement.

The three statutory partners publish an annual report on the NSCP website, with input from the Independent Scrutiny Team, subgroup chairs and Head of NSCP Business Delivery.

The annual report includes the following information:

- what partnerships have done as a result of the arrangements, including on child safeguarding practice reviews
- how effective these arrangements have been in practice
- the contribution of each safeguarding partner to the functioning and structure of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements
- any themes emanating from aggregated methods of scrutiny, for example, reviews and scrutineer activity and multi-agency audits
- evidence of the impact of the work of the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies, including training, on outcomes for children and families
- an analysis of any areas where there has been little or no evidence of progress on agreed priorities
- an analysis of learning from serious incidents
- a record of key decisions and actions taken by the safeguarding partners in the yearly cycle, including in relation to implementing the recommendations from any local and national child safeguarding practice reviews and the impact this has had
- ways in which the safeguarding partners have sought and utilised feedback from children and families to inform their work and influence service provision
- the breakdown of costs in delivering the arrangements for that period, including the financial contributions of individual partners, any changes to funding and an assessment of the impact and value for money of this funding
- evidence of how safeguarding partners are ensuring the adequate representation and input of education at both the operational and strategic levels of the arrangements
- an overview of how data is being used to encourage learning within the arrangements and evidence of how information sharing has improved practice and outcomes
- a review of the impact and learning from independent scrutiny arrangements to ensure the leadership is strong and the arrangements are leading to the desired and necessary impact
- any updates to the published arrangement with the proposed timescale for implementation
- evidence that national reforms have been implemented, taking into account key decisions and actions taken by safeguarding partners in response to reforms, and any issues or concerns encountered within the yearly cycle

We continue to commit a children and young people's version of the annual report which is co-produced with young people who have experienced a range of services.

Arrangements to Work in Partnership with Education

In 2021, the Independent Review of Children's Social Care and the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel recommended that education have a strengthened role in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. This recommendation was reflected in revisions made to 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' in 2023 which expects that safeguarding partners locally will name schools and colleges as relevant agencies.

The NSCP took this opportunity to reflect on its local arrangements in recognition of the vital role education providers play in keeping our children and families safe. Whilst it is widely recognised that this is a complex challenge the NSCP strives to ensure the voices and opinions of education settings are represented when the Partnership is making strategic safeguarding decisions.

The participation and active engagement of schools, colleges and other educational settings is critical to ensuring effective safeguarding practice in Norfolk. The educational landscape in Norfolk is complex and diverse and a range of mechanisms are used to ensure that the statutory partners can be assured of the effectiveness of these arrangements. There has always been a high level of compliance with safeguarding responsibilities, as demonstrated in the self-assessment through Section 175 audits, and the generally positive scores for safeguarding and pupil welfare achieved by many schools in Ofsted inspections.

In response to the publication of Working Together in December 2023, Norfolk County Council's Education Safeguarding Team consulted with senior leaders in education and Designated Safeguarding Leads in summer 2024 to consider how education is included in our local safeguarding arrangements and how we can strengthen these arrangements further. This included a workshop with education leaders and representatives, facilitated by the National Safeguarding Partner Facilitator for Education – Jon Le Fevre. The focus of the workshop was to discuss and agree how best education can be 'fully engaged, involved and included in Norfolk's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements and how the 'views and contributions of education and childcare providers are articulated at the highest level of decision making' in line with the expectation of Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2023. The aim was to co-produce a draft plan to ensure education is represented and effectively engaged in local safeguarding arrangements and associated decision making in the future. The expectations within WT2023 were discussed and the group identified areas where safeguarding arrangements could be improved (for the benefit of the children and families,) by greater multi-agency working with education. The group also identified where multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and practices were very positive and felt these could be used to identify patterns, behaviours and conditions, through a positive enquiry approach.

The challenges of ensuring the views and contribution of ALL education providers being represented at the highest level of decision making was discussed and the complexities within the local area. (Two tier and three tier schooling, Multi-Academy Trusts, Local Authority schools, independents, Alternative Provision, Early Years, and Further Education.) Two models of education engagement were shared and discussed: an education subgroup and/or direct representation.

It was agreed that Norfolk would take a Phased approach to this. This iteration of the local plan sets out Phase 1, which will:

- Ensure that Primary and Secondary Schools have representatives identified via the Norfolk School Leaders' Association to sit on NSCP Partnership Group, with the support of a clear role description, developed with the education working group
- Map out the connections from the representatives to the networks and groups
- Ensure the communication system is effective and enables two-way flow of information from direct practice to strategic leaders in the partnership

Phase 1 is being implemented in the autumn of 2024 and representatives will be attending DSP Partnership meetings from 2025. Plans for Phase 2 include evaluating Phase 1 and developing further innovative ways to capture and include the voice of the education sector and including them in the meetings with the Lead Safeguarding Partners. This will be written into the next iteration of the local plan for Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements.

Partnership Group

The DSPs meet regularly with a discrete Partnership Group comprised of lead stakeholders, including education leaders, to ensure that the children's safeguarding agenda is moved on at pace. This ensures that the partners continue to build on positive working relationships.

The purpose of Partnership Group is to provide support and challenge to the three statutory partners.

The Terms of Reference defines this support to include:

- Developing and embedding the NSCP's vision and values so that all children and young people in Norfolk can expect high standards in safeguarding
- Developing and monitoring the implementation of the NSCP Business plan
- Agreeing priorities for the NSCP based on intelligence provided through the Safeguarding Information and Performance in Practice (SIPP) subgroups using:
 - Data and strategic analysis of performance intelligence
 - Outcomes and learning from audit, Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, Section 11 safeguarding self-assessment and scrutiny
 - Observations and assessment of frontline practice
- Identifying national and local issues relevant to the responsibilities of the NSCP and progress as appropriate
- Commissioning and participating on any additional work streams not previously included in the Business Plan
- Planning and delivering the Leadership Exchange and Learning Events for the wider partnership
- Enabling the three statutory partners to meet their statutory duties as laid out in Working Together 2023

Partnership Group meets a minimum of six times a year. It is chaired by one of the independent scrutineers on behalf of the DSPs. The DSPs also attend this meeting as well as senior leaders from within their organisations.

In addition to the statutory partners, members of partnership group include Public Health, Voluntary Sector, Education, Chairs of the Advisory Groups and priority workstream leads. Senior managers from Children's Services also attend. Priority updates and data are regular items on the agenda.

Independent Scrutiny Team

The independent scrutiny team is comprised of three scrutineers who are independent of Norfolk and come from a wide range of backgrounds including social care, police and probation. They each have additional chairing roles for Partnership Group, Safeguarding Practice Review Group and Workforce Development Group. The benefits of allocating them chairing responsibilities are three fold: (1) to provide objective challenge and feedback; (2) to inform specific focused work on scrutiny and follow through the learning; and (3) to add capacity.

The Partnership Group Chair/scrutineer takes a lead role in providing independent scrutiny of the safeguarding arrangements. This scrutineer sits alongside the DSPs in their DSP Partnership meetings acting as a critical friend.

Collectively, the Independent Scrutiny Team routinely challenge and question performance and practice as part of their scrutiny role.

See also Section 7 on Independent Scrutiny.

Leadership Exchange and Learning Events

The NSCP is committed to continued engagement with the wider partnership through Partnership Conferences branded as Leadership Learning and Exchange Events.

This system of engagement ensures that:

- Strategic leaders from all organisations including NHS Trusts, local district councils and the voluntary sector are actively involved in a learning process
- The whole system approach is consistent across the county
- Partners continue to engage with the child safeguarding agenda in a multi-agency arena
- Opportunities for networking, challenge and professional development at leadership level are built into the plan

The events happen at least twice a year, with invitations extended to chairs of other safeguarding partnership boards and members of the NSCP's 'sister board', the Children and Young People's Strategic Alliance. The DSPs, with the support of the NSCP's Partnership Group, the Independent Scrutiny Team, and the Head of NSCP Business Delivery, agree the learning focus based on information provided by Safeguarding Intelligence and Performance in Practice (SIPP), the NSCP subgroups and learning from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews.

Safeguarding Intelligence and Performance in Practice (SIPP)

The SIPP pulls together a hub of intelligence, receiving information from three clear workstreams:

- Multi-Agency Audit Steering and Delivery with identified officers responsible for planning and undertaking single and multi-agency themed and case file audits, placing the NSCP in a strong position to respond to all inspection frameworks including Joint Targeted Area Inspections (JTAI) audits as they are published
- Data and Strategic Analysis, making use of the results of stronger strategic analysis (set out in Section 7). This includes identifying questions arising from the data to promote continuous improvement and a Power BI data dashboard. This work is supported by a dedicated senior data analyst working across the NSCP and the Children and Young People's Strategic Alliance
- Multi-Agency Observation in Practice, with members of the Independent Scrutiny Team observing practice and strengthening links with the frontline, children and families

The overarching purpose of the SIPP is twofold:

1. Identifying safeguarding risks and priorities on the basis of sound analysis and shared data: helping to direct where and how resources should be used to best protect children. This work is driven by the products from the data and strategic analysis workstream.
2. Holding partners and the partnerships as a whole to account for the performance of safeguarding activity, identifying trends and changes in performance and alerting agencies and the partnership to where remedial or proactive action is needed.

SIPP's primary focus is to act as the central 'eyes and ears' for the system: monitoring the effectiveness of arrangements and the safeguarding system at all levels, informing the setting of priorities by the NSCP and informing the work of other key strategic and operational boards. It enables the NSCP to be an intelligence led partnership, with much of the agenda driven by a regular flow of data, feedback from children, audit, analysis and other sources of intelligence which inform judgements about the effectiveness of arrangements.

The intelligence is used for a number of purposes:

- To identify strengths and weaknesses in the system
- To help set priorities for the system to respond to
- To identify the need for changes to policy and practice within the remit of the three key statutory partners which will then be discussed and implemented
- To identify areas where more fundamental service re-design is required or where a wider range of partners needs to be engaged – this will then inform the agendas for the CYP Strategic Alliance, Health and Wellbeing Board and the Countywide Community Safety Partnership

The investment in a dedicated senior analyst has supported the NSCP's growth and development in this area. Other work required of this post include providing information for the annual report and establishing data profiles for the NSCP priorities against which success can be benchmarked.

The data aspect has a separate subgroup jointly chaired by a Norfolk County Council Children's Services Director and a Detective Chief Superintendent from Norfolk Constabulary. Together they ensure that any data shared is done so in adherence to the Data Protection Act 2018¹² and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), supporting that the sharing of relevant information is for the purposes of keeping children safe. These same principles apply to the audit activity and any safeguarding practice reviews.

See also Section 7, Arrangements for Strategic Analysis, Scrutiny and Independent Review.

The focus of and priorities for the NSCP are shaped by data analysis and evidence to ensure we target resources to have the biggest impact on the lives of vulnerable children.

The NSCP Business Unit

The work of the NSCP is supported by a dedicated Business Unit, under the leadership of the Head of NSCP Business Delivery. The Business Unit is a key driver for the NSCP business plan as well as administering training and communicating to the workforce and the public. The Head of NSCP Business Delivery provides regular reports on progress and activity to the Lead and Delegated Safeguarding Partners as well as the Partnership Group and other NSCP subgroups.

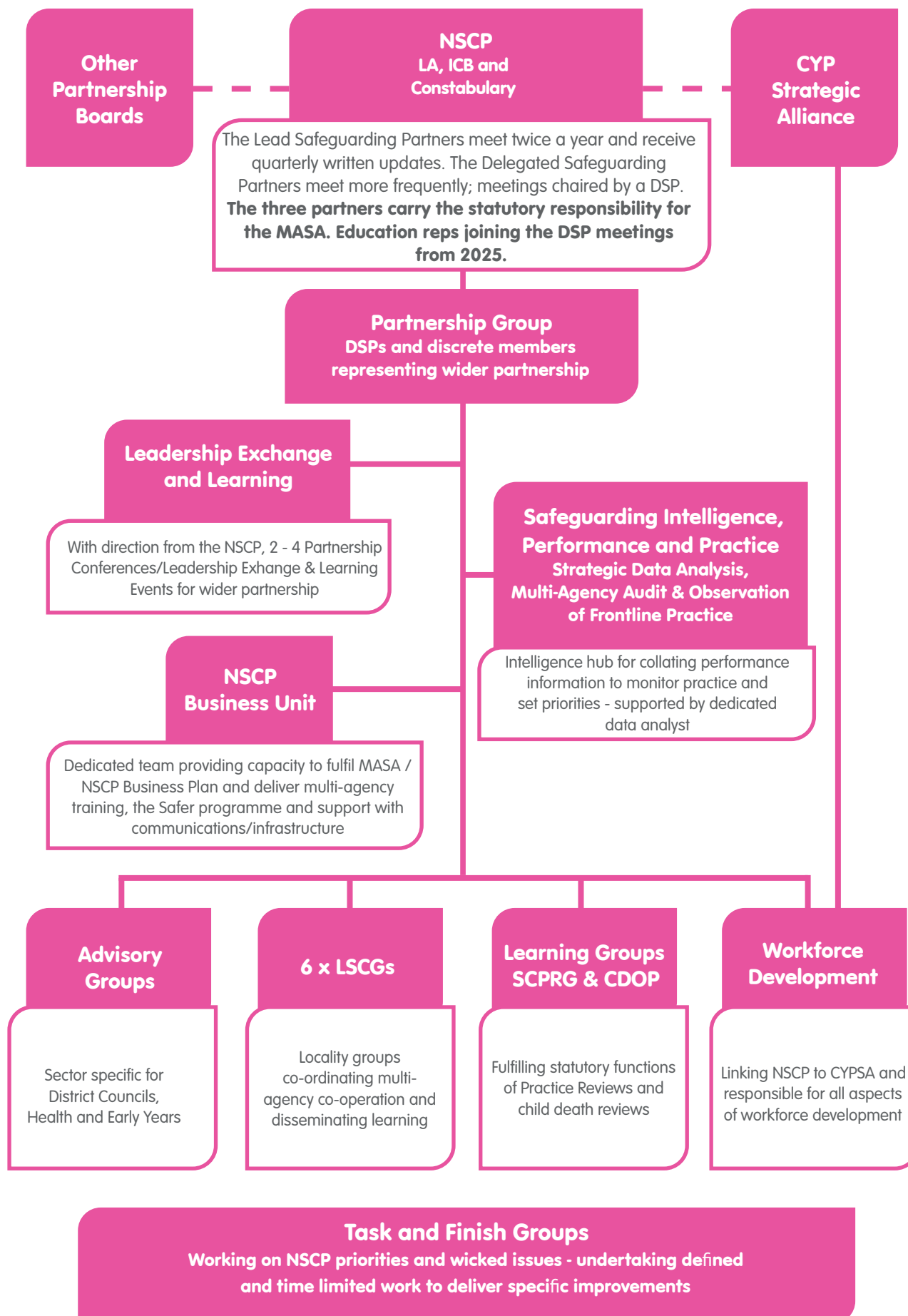
Details of funding arrangements are included in the annual report.

NSCP Subgroups

The Partnership supports standing sub groups responsible for specific parts of the MASA. These are:

- Norfolk Safeguarding Child Practice Review Group (SPRG)
- Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)
- Workforce Development Group (WDG) – operated as a joint group with the Children and Young People's Strategic Alliance
- Local Safeguarding Children Groups
- Sector Specific Advisory Groups
- Task and finish groups delivering against NSCP Priorities

NSCP structure



Norfolk Safeguarding Child Practice Review Group (SPRG)

The SPRG has an Independent Chair who is a member of the Independent Scrutiny Team and also leads on the Section 11 self-assessment process. The SPRG oversees all aspects of Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (LCSPR) as well as other learning options. The group is responsible for:

- Undertaking Rapid Reviews when a case is referred and/or Children's Services have submitted a Serious Incident Notification to Ofsted
- Recommending whether a case should be reviewed under statutory guidance and, if not, proposing how learning can be taken forward; recommendations go to the Lead and Delegated Safeguarding Partners for final decision
- Communicating to the National Panel
- Commissioning reviewers and monitoring the progress of an LCSPR
- Signing off on any reports before they go to the NSCP (to include all heads of agencies involved in the review)
- Overseeing publication
- Disseminating learning
- Monitoring impact of recommendations on practice – in partnership with SIPP and the Workforce Development Group (WDG – see below)
- Using learning from reviews to contribute to Leadership Exchange and Learning Events
- Providing information, analysis and evidence of impact in relation to learning from Rapid Reviews, national and local child safeguarding practice reviews in the annual report

In addition, the SPRG works with the WDG to identify cases of best practice to provide an alternative to the deficit learning model.

See also Section 8, Embedding Learning.

Child Death Overview Panel

Norfolk's Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) is chaired independently, with funding for this post provided by the Local Authority and the Integrated Care Board. CDOP is supported by the ICB's Child Death Review Team (CDRT) with dedicated administrative support provided by the NSCP Business Unit.

The key responsibilities of the CDOP are to:

- Ensure that the pathways for conducting child death review meetings following the death of a child are clear and followed by relevant partners to a set timescale
- Focus on learning and thematic analysis
- Provide an annual report on the work of the CDOP and emerging themes and learning
- Develop communication tools such as information leaflets for bereaved families
- Publishing a standalone annual report jointly with Suffolk

Norfolk works jointly with Suffolk CDOP to submit data via eCDOP software for the national reporting to ensure that we meet the guidance for recommended number of deaths for analysis and reporting. This closer working enables both areas to consider and plan for joint thematic analysis. Work is also undertaken by the CDOP Chair at a regional level to determine arrangements for extended thematic reviews.

Workforce Development Group (WDG)

The WDG is a strength of the NSCP, with strong links to the CYP Strategic Alliance and an Independent Chair who is a member of the Independent Scrutiny Team. The WDG focuses on:

- Procurement of and management of any commissioned multi-agency training
- Identifying any gaps in training and resource within the partnership to address the need
- Monitoring the impact of training
- Planning and delivering other learning events, such as briefing and awareness raising sessions, best practice sessions and learning from child safeguarding practice review roadshows
- Feedback from the frontline on their lived work experience from recruitment and induction to exit interviews
- Oversight of the Safer Programme
- Input into the planning and delivery of wider Leadership Exchange and Learning Events
- Developing, in partnership with the SPRG, mechanisms to identify and review best practice cases and disseminating the learning from cases where things have gone well.
- Providing information, analysis and evidence of impact in relation to training and workforce development in the annual report

Local Safeguarding Children Groups (LSCGs)

The NSCP Business Unit continues to support the six LSCGs, bringing together partner and relevant agencies in each locality. Membership is locally determined, but includes representatives from the three statutory partners, district/borough councils, and local providers of services to children with an interest and involvement in safeguarding. Local school clusters, providers of health, housing and voluntary services are also members. Chairing arrangements are shared between Children's Services senior managements from the Community and Partnership directorate alongside chairs from health, education and the voluntary sector. There is dedicated strategic support from the NSCP Business Unit and administrative support is provided by Children's Services on behalf of the partnership.

LSCGs meet every other month with consistent agenda items to link back to the NSCP's countywide priorities as well as local items. Once a year all the LSCGs come together for a wider face to face meeting to support networking and joint learning.

Advisory Groups

The NSCP's governance structure includes sector specific advisory groups which bring together representatives of partners in significant sectors. The Advisory Groups represent District Councils, Health and Early Years. This structure ensures reach to the wider partnership so that communication is shared effectively to otherwise potentially disparate partners.

Norfolk County Council's Safeguarding in Education Team supports the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) in schools their DSL networks across the County and ensure links between DSLs and Local Safeguarding Children Groups. Key messages continue to be disseminated to all schools through training, management information sheets and termly newsletters. The NSCP's Partnership Group is also provided with assurances on schools safeguarding practice through the Local Authority's management of the safeguarding self-review process (Section 157/175).

Task and Finish Groups

The partnership uses task and finish groups primarily to deliver against its priorities. These groups are set up with defined terms of reference and are underpinned by published strategies and action plans which link to the NSCP Business Plan.

Other task and finish activities are commissioned by the Delegated Safeguarding Partners, for example, in response to specific learning or initiatives. Wherever possible and/or appropriate, task and finish group can serve as shared arrangements across partnerships boards.

5. Links to other Partnership

The NSCP is an independent arrangement set up to discharge the safeguarding responsibilities set out in the Children Social Work Act 2017 and Working Together 2023. It is important that this links strongly to other partnership arrangements and that the NSCP can hold stakeholders and related partnership boards to account for their effectiveness in safeguarding children and young people. Processes continue to be developed to facilitate and drive action beyond usual institutional and agency constraints and boundaries, and ensure the effective protection of children is founded on practitioners developing lasting and trusting relationships. To this end the NSCP scrutinises the performance and practice of partners, and provides an account of how effective these arrangements have been in practice. This is done through the publication of the NSCP's Annual Safeguarding Report.

Interface with the Children and Young People's Strategic Alliance

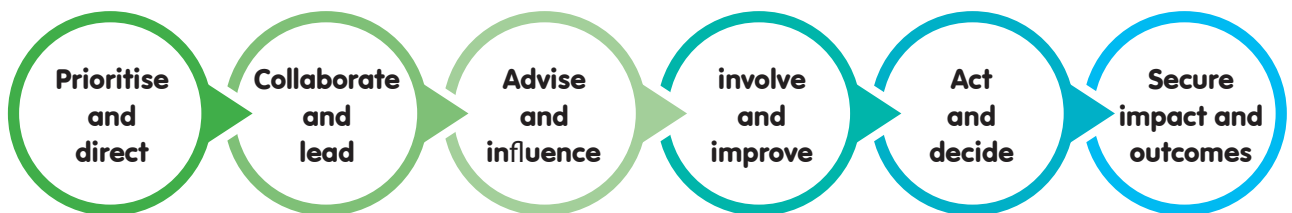
The Children and Young People's Strategic Alliance (CYPSA) is chaired by the Executive Director of Children Services and is a multi-agency Board, including Primary Care Networks. One of the Independent Scrutiny Team is a member of the CYPSA alongside senior representatives from the three statutory partners.

The CYPSA is charged with overseeing the best interests of all children in Norfolk and acting on behalf of the Health and Wellbeing Board and Norfolk and Waveney's NHS Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP). The CYPSA works across the system to improve agreed outcomes for all children and young people; it is the primary body driving pieces of multi-agency service and practice design work across the system.

The Alliance is working to deliver against four strategic priorities:

- Strengthening our shared focus and approach on Prevention and Early Help
- Working together to support children and young people's Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing
- Improving support for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Addressing gaps in Learning following the pandemic

The purpose of CYPSA, set out in its terms of reference, is to provide system leadership so that all children and young people in Norfolk and Waveney can flourish. **To deliver this the CYPSA will:**



The work of CYPSA is underpinned by the FLOURISH outcomes framework.

We want Norfolk to be a county where every child can **flourish**:

family and friends

Children and young people are safe, connected and supported through positive relationships and networks

learning

Children and young people are achieving their full potential and developing skills which prepare them for life

oppportunity

Children and young people develop as well-rounded individuals through access to a wide range of opportunities which nurture their interests and talents

understood

Children and young people feel listened to, understood and part of decision-making processes

resilience

Children and young people have the confidence and skills to make their own decisions and take on life's challenges

individual

Children and young people are respected as individuals, confident in their own identity and appreciate and value their own and others' uniqueness

safe and secure

Children and young people are supported to understand risk and make safe decisions by the actions that adults and children and young people themselves take to keep them safe and secure

healthy

Children and young people have the support, knowledge and opportunity to lead their happiest and healthiest lives

Produced with children, young people and families, FLOURISH is our shared ambition for Norfolk's children and young people. CYPSA has captured areas of children and young people's lives that are important to them and their families and against these we have agreed a framework which sets out:

- **Impacts** – the key long term, sustainable change we want to secure for all children and young people in Norfolk
- **Outcomes** – the difference we want to make which, if secured, will lead to the impacts being achieved

CYPSA is the key driver forum for collaborative leadership across the children and young people's system in Norfolk, with a scope broader than safeguarding. CYPSA relies on the NSCP to act as a critical friend in terms of safeguarding and protecting children, and there is significant shared membership between the two boards. The interface between the NSCP and CYPSA, therefore, is critical to the ongoing drive for improving safeguarding arrangements. The 'sister' partnership boards have children and young people as a shared priority.

To enhance governance arrangements the relationship between the NSCP and CYPsA is streamlined to minimise duplications. Shared functions include:

- Data and strategic analysis
- Workforce Development
- Stakeholder Engagement and Insight
- Communications

The NSCP helps to ensure safeguarding responsibilities are at the heart of the work of CYPsA, and acts as the ears and eyes of the Norfolk children's safeguarding system. This includes close working between the Head of NSCP Business Delivery and the CYPsA Business Lead.

Norfolk Safeguarding Adult Board

There is a close working relationship between the NSCP and the Norfolk Safeguarding Adult Board (NSAB). The independent NSAB Chair meets regularly with members of the Independent Scrutiny Team and the respective business managers. This lends itself well to opportunities to share learning and undertake joint pieces of scrutiny work.

The business managers also liaise in relation to review process and methodologies so that learning can be disseminated across Safeguarding Adult Reviews and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews.

The Health and Wellbeing Board

The NSCP has strong links with the Health and Wellbeing Board and ensures that they are sighted on the annual report every autumn. The NSCP aligns to some shared strategic objective including:

- Providing a single sustainable system to safeguard children in a complex partnership network. Under the leadership of the statutory safeguarding partners and with the support of the independent scrutiny team, the NSCP is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements enable all partners to work together, lead the change and use our resources in the most effective way
- Committing to prioritising prevention through early help, which in turn supports Norfolk's children and young people to be healthy, independent and resilient throughout life
- Understanding and tackling inequalities in communities, and providing support for those who are most in need and address wider factors that impact on wellbeing, such as housing and crime. Much of the learning for children is drawn from the local and national child safeguarding practice reviews
- Joined up working and collaboration in the delivery of people-centred services. Good relationships and clear communication between providers and services as well as between partners underpins effective safeguarding. This includes strategic leaders and links with other partnership boards with shared priorities and cross cutting strategies

Norfolk Countywide Community Safety Partnership

The NCCSP is supported by Norfolk's Office of Police Crime Commissioning. They lead on domestic abuse (DA), the Serious Violence Duty and Prevent, all of which impact on the lives of Norfolk's children and young people. The partnerships are mature and proportionate and join up on sensible areas of work, including the impact of DA on children, serious youth violence and, where appropriate, Domestic Homicide Reviews.

Youth Justice Board

The YJB is chaired by the NSCP's chief scrutineer which provides added insight into the work of youth justice services. This synergy enables the NSCP to maintain oversight of key issues for this cohort, including youth violence, transition and exploitation.

Partnership Board Liaison

The NSCP is included in meetings with other boards responsible for partnership working including the Norfolk Safeguarding Adult Board, the Community Safety Partnership and CYPsA. This is an informal arrangement but a useful mechanism to bring together chairs of all public protection and safeguarding partnership bodies across adults, children, community safety and relevant areas of public health. It also enables better co-ordination where more than one board or partnership may be involved in an area of work, with an aim to identify and reduce duplication and overlaps in safeguarding work.

6. Embedding Learning: Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and Child Death Reviews

Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

Norfolk has developed a robust and innovative approach to learning from cases and undertaking rapid reviews and safeguarding practice reviews. It uses a range of methodologies to investigate cases and identify learning, seeking to be proportionate, to link learning and to explore new ways of approaching challenges.

The Safeguarding Practice Review Group (SPRG) is responsible for receiving notifications of serious incidents, for conducting rapid reviews, for working with the National Panel and for commissioning local child safeguarding practice reviews. It will continue to be independently chaired. This will ensure a level of independent scrutiny and challenge to partners, who frequently bring different perspectives on the learning from cases.

SPRG is responsible for delivering local arrangements for the identification of serious child safeguarding cases which raise issues of importance and for commissioning and overseeing the review of those cases, including the commissioning of independent reviewers/authors, and for the quality control of reports. There is robust and comprehensive Local Guidance on Norfolk's Rapid Review and Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) processes, which is refreshed annually and available on the NSCP website. Process review accounts for national guidance and learning from the National Panel for CSPRs annual report. The processes and guidance are signed off by the Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSPs).

SPRG is independently chaired and is part of the decision making process around commissioning SPRs following Rapid Reviews. Rapid Reviews are completed within 15 working days, as per statutory guidance, and extraordinary meetings are convened to meet this timescale. Recommendations are made to the Delegated and Lead Safeguarding Partners before submitting the Rapid Review to the National Panel. Where Rapid Reviews do not proceed to SPRs, the learning is shared with relevant NSCP subgroups and captured in the NSCP's annual report.

SPRG considers notifications of serious incidents from all partners. In addition to the Ofsted Serious Incident Notification, the SPRG will also accept notifications of community safeguarding and public protection incidents (CSPPIs) from the Norfolk Youth Justice Service (YJS). This enables the YJS to have a mechanism to look at their practice in a multi-agency, child-focused arena.

From experience, Norfolk learns best when it hears directly from the frontline and children. Relevant professionals are involved in CSPRs and their feedback on the process is monitored and evaluated. The agencies involved on the CSPR Panel support any staff involved to ensure that the emphasis remains on learning rather than blaming, but also address any dangerous practice outside of the process. Full details of the roles and responsibilities of CSPR review panel members is included in the local guidance.

Children and families are invited to participate in the SPR process.

On completion of a review, SPRs are signed off by the DSPs and LSPs prior to publication and shared at Partnership Group. Heads of agencies involved and relevant stakeholders who are not core members of Partnership Group are invited to attend the Partnership Group meeting advising on the publication plan. The learning from these reviews is also considered by the NSCP to agree on how to engage with the wider partnership on systemic issues and areas for development in response to the findings and recommendations.

The Independent Scrutiny Team, particularly in their capacity as SPRG chair and the Workforce Development Group chair, work with the Head of NSCP Business Delivery to ensure that all Norfolk leaders have the opportunity to reflect on safeguarding practice from the perspective of both their service users and their workforce, adopting a trauma informed and resilience oriented approach to enable risk aware and risk sensible practice to further develop.

Norfolk will continue to develop a range of proportionate and effective methodologies to undertake reviews – ensuring that learning is quickly identified and disseminated, and that learning between partners, practitioners and the public is strengthened to make the whole system work better.

The dissemination of learning is the responsibility of the Delegated and Lead Safeguarding Partners with the support of the NSCP Business Unit. This is done through roadshows across the county, relevant conferences and best practice events in co-ordination with the Workforce Development Group. Single agencies are required to evidence how they have embedded learning through Section 11 safeguarding self-assessment. A wide range of innovative training tools have been developed to effectively summarise the learning and keep the focus on the child.

Recommendations from local CSPRs are captured in a Composite Action Plan (CAP) and monitored regularly. The CAP also includes recommendations from audit, scrutiny and Section 11 to cross reference learning and draw out themes.

Learning from National CSPRs are also a key component of the NSCP's learning and development offer. Relevant recommendations from these reports are included in training, strategy development and action plans and referenced in the annual report to demonstrate Norfolk's response.

Child Death Overview Panel and Child Death Reviews

Arrangements for child death reviews are the responsibility of the Local Authority and Health. Norfolk maintains a county-wide Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) to ensure strong local participation in the arrangements.

The CDOP has an independent chair and is supported by the Norfolk and Waveney ICB Child Death Review Team and dedicated administrative support from the NSCP Business Unit. The independent chair is funded separately by the Local Authority and Health (Norfolk & Waveney ICB). All meetings have template agendas and membership invitations agreed to assist administration. Participation is recorded and reported to the NSCP where deficits occur.

NSCP uses eCDOP software to streamline the administration and collection of data and deliver reporting in line with national requirements. Data is aggregated with Suffolk (and other regional CDOPs) in order to inform a fuller national analysis of learning from child deaths. Joint national reporting is submitted with the Suffolk CDOP to ensure meeting the guidance for recommended number of deaths for analysis and reporting.

The Norfolk CDOP regularly reviews its terms of reference and membership. Meetings are organised to allow for thematic analysis. A joint annual report is produced in partnership with Suffolk CDOP. Work is also undertaken at regional level (East of England and East Midlands) to determine arrangements for extended thematic reviews e.g. suicide.

Child Death Review Meetings

The child death pathway includes a final multi-disciplinary meeting in line with national guidance.

Responsibility for leading and administering the series of meetings in the pathway is confirmed as follows:

- a. **Immediate information sharing meeting** within one hour of death – to be led by hospital lead paediatrician (no change to existing pathway)
- b. **Section 47 Child Death Strategy meeting** to be held as soon as possible within 48 hours of death, led by Children services (no change to existing pathway.) Administration to be provided by Children Services. Education representatives to be included.
- c. **Initial Child death review meeting** may be held within five working days of a child death, if there was no initial strategy meeting. This will be arranged and led by the Child Death Review Team (CDRT) where there is a medical cause of death. Administration is provided by the CDRT. Following the Section 47 Strategy meeting for unexpected unexplained deaths there may be an optional further meeting if deemed necessary.
- d. **A final multi-disciplinary meeting** will follow when the post mortem and all official investigations such as Patient safety incidence response framework (PSIRF) review is available. The decision re who will chair will depend on where the child died but it will either be chaired by a member of the CDR team with administrative support from the CDR team. If there is a hospital Mortality and Morbidity (M&M) meeting a consultant paediatrician will chair. This may be a local hospital or tertiary hospital depending on where the child died. A Panel C Analysis Form will be completed at this meeting using the eCDOP software. Following this meeting the lead will confirm that the case can be scheduled for review at the next CDOP panel. The findings will also be shared with the Coroner.

For neo-natal deaths the reviews are undertaken as part of the established process for peri-natal mortality review and the reports from these are fed into the process at dedicated neo-natal death CDOP meetings.

7. Arrangements for Strategic Analysis and Independent Scrutiny

Strategic Analysis

Children and young people interact with and are supported by a complex network of public services. The risks and safety factors they encounter come from multiple sources. They grow up in communities which do not always align neatly to the geographical jurisdictions of public sector organisations. As such, any one organisation trying to understand either the needs of an individual child or a demographic group of children would only be able to develop a partial view if acting in isolation. However, by acting together and by combining our insights we stand a much better chance of safeguarding children and of strengthening the effectiveness of our arrangements. The concept of 'contextual' safeguarding, of looking to gather information from multiple sources in order to build a picture of a child's situation, is now established as paramount in our efforts to protect children and young people from harm.

As such, the three statutory safeguarding partners in Norfolk have built a shared analytical capability as a central component of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and have jointly funded a dedicated senior data analyst role shared between the NSCP and CYPsA.

This capability and resource is used to:

- Combine intelligence to generate new insights into public services and the needs they serve
- Apply these insights to improve policy and service design and delivery
- Understand better what is working and what isn't within the children's system in Norfolk
- Better target support to individual children, young people and families through predictive analytics
- Inform the agreement of strategic priorities for the NSCP as well as the Norfolk Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board and other key multi-agency safeguarding bodies

The key features of this shared approach and capability are:

- Shared Multi-Agency Intelligence Hub (servicing both the NSCP and the CYPsA to maximise resource)
- Shared platform and integrated technical architecture
- Shared intelligence store
- Integrated analysis with investment in a dedicated data analyst
- Shared information governance framework

For more detail on these features see Appendix 2.

How this shared capability supports the MASA Arrangements

This enhanced and shared analysis capability informs and strengthens the work of the partners and the key governance groups in a range of ways. The NSCP has established a structured process, led by the dedicated data analyst, to combine and distil the collective intelligence from across the system and give strategic leaders a comprehensive picture of safeguarding in our County – including areas of strength, weakness, emerging trends, gaps and changes in needs. A core function includes providing the intelligence to inform the setting of the strategic priorities for the safeguarding system. This set-piece analysis supports the collective agreement of the right priorities for the system for the year ahead and repeated on an annual basis in line with refreshing the NSCP Business Plan.

In addition, the shared capability:

- provides strategic boards with a regularly refreshed set of shared metrics and information as a live picture of the safeguarding landscape for children in Norfolk
- informs the work of individual task and finish working groups looking into particular issues and themes. This includes supporting the development of policy, proposals and business cases with appropriate data and analytics
- builds new data tools which inform service design and help target services where and to whom they are most needed
- supports benchmarking with the provision of comprehensive data profiles against identified priorities to both monitor impact and progress as well as target resources

The shared approach is also essential to the work of independent scrutiny within the system – helping to test the effectiveness of agreed service models – reporting back on the impact on the ground of new policies and initiatives and gathering information about the robustness and consistency of the safeguarding work of each partner.

Joint Strategic Analysis Group

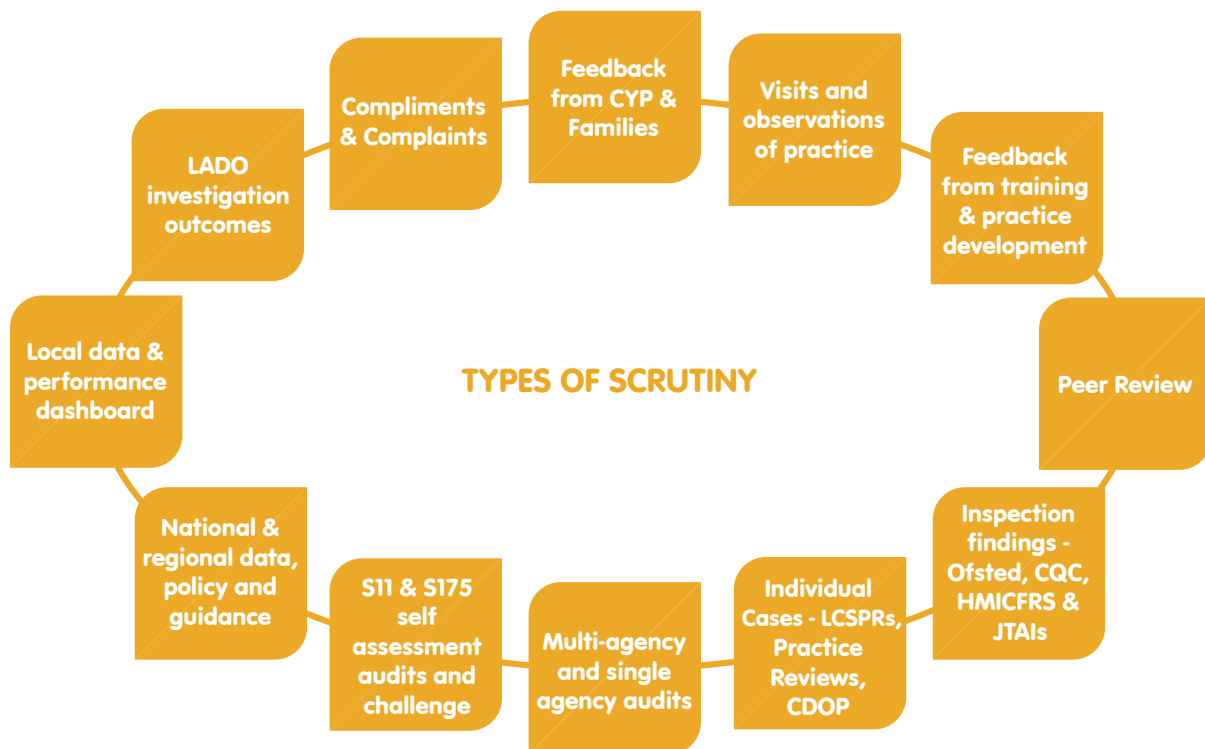
The Joint Strategic Analysis Group (JSAG) is co-chaired by Children's Services Director of Quality and Transformation and the Detective Chief Superintendent leading on Norfolk Constabulary's Safeguarding and Investigations Command. The remit, membership and functioning of the JSAG is shared across the NSCP and the CYPsA, with the business leads from the 'sister boards'; playing an active role in directing the work of the senior analyst. JSAG membership is enhanced by data analysts and strategic leads from across the partnership.

JSAG is tasked with identifying priorities for action to be recommended to the NSCP and the CYPsA. The dedicated data analyst is responsible for advising the partnerships the key questions arising from the data to ensure continuous improvement. The partnerships also ask JSAG to distill evidence of good practice when they find it and liaise with other areas of the system, namely the Multi-Agency Audit Group and the Independent Scrutiny Team, to test their findings through qualitative analysis such as audit, service user feedback and focus groups with professionals.

Scrutiny

Effective scrutiny is a process not an event. The statutory partners are clear about the value of independent voices and perspectives in the system. The NSCP invests well in the independent scrutiny function and they are key to the local multi-agency safeguarding. The NSCP is also clear that this strong independent perspective must be complimented by self-assessment and peer review between partners, in order that we continue to challenge ourselves and each other in our drive for the best possible arrangements to keep children safe. Norfolk's scrutiny arrangements include a range of mechanisms that are deployed to provide robust examination of performance and practice.

Sources of information for scrutiny



The CYP SA is invited to highlight areas of risk or concern on which it may seek assurance through the NSCP scrutiny arrangements, including Section 11.

Section 11 Self Assessment

The fundamental underpinning of scrutiny arrangements rests in the duties and responsibilities set out in Section 11 of the Children Act 2004. The NSCP has a mature and comprehensive approach to Section 11 process which:

- asks partners to undertake a thorough self-assessment of their safeguarding performance;
- includes peer challenge on how effective these arrangements are in delivering Norfolk's priorities
- increasingly tests the Section 11 returns with the experience of the frontline
- includes submission feedback and progress reporting meetings
- is steered by an independently chaired multi-agency Section 11 steering group

The Section 11 peer challenge and support days involve partners looking at a range of single agency information, including data and inspection reports, so that they can make strong, appropriate challenge in a safe learning environment. These days are themed against the collective response and the Section 11 report reflects the overarching findings.

Peer review is explored through the regional networks, building on previous peer inspection programmes and with reference to relevant inspectorate frameworks.

Multi-Agency Audit

The NSCP's Multi-Agency Audit Group (MAAG) also provides valuable information on how well the system is working in practice. The group's key objectives are to:

- Move forward on key lines of enquiry, inspection priorities, local and national agendas
- Provide an audit forum for exchanging knowledge, expertise, practice standards, good practice, challenges and grading of casework
- Work collaboratively to develop excellent quality assurance practice and audits
- Provide appropriate challenge to all peers and organisations promoting change
- Monitor progress against recommendations made in Safeguarding Practice Review, audit, Section 11 and independent scrutiny

The group also uses Ofsted's Joint Targeted Area Inspection frameworks to audit practice where applicable.

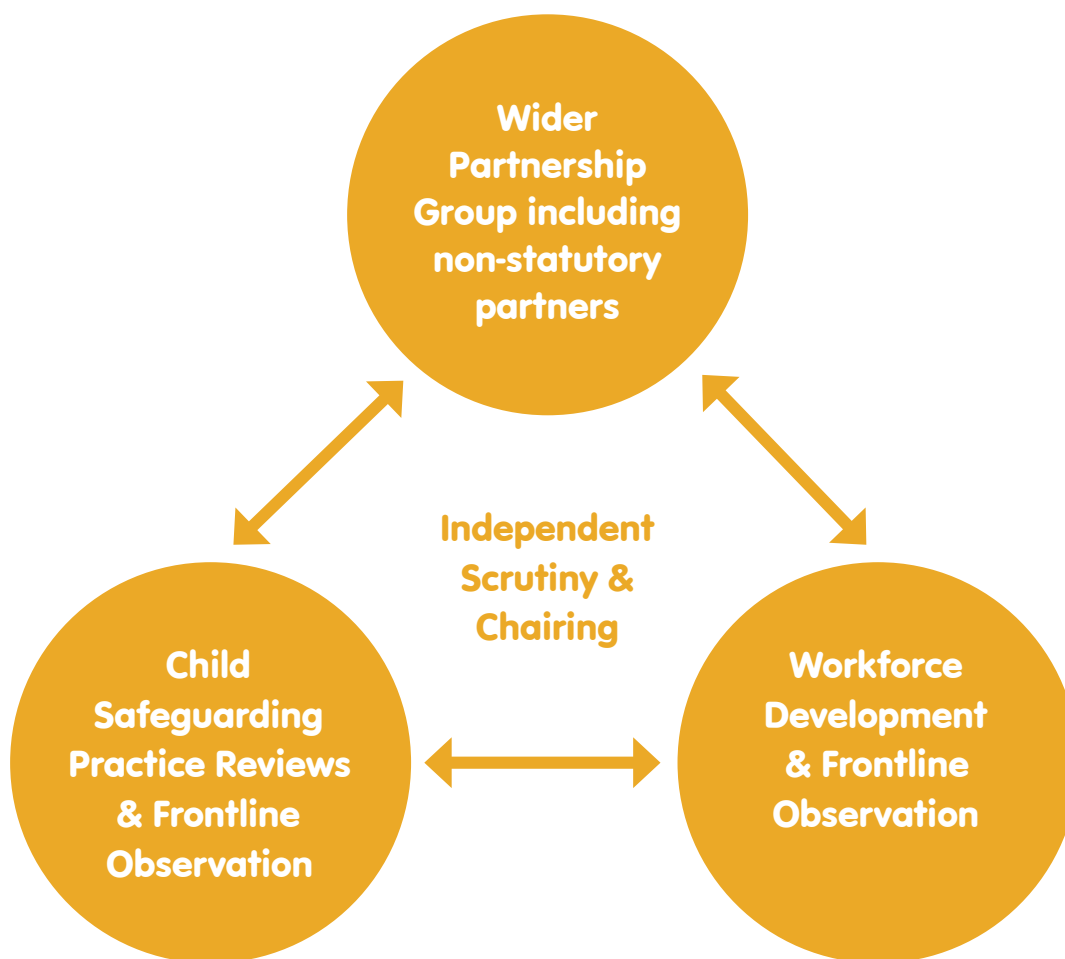
The MAAG is chaired by Head of NSCP Business Delivery with dedicated support from the NSCP's Safeguarding Intelligence and Performance Co-ordinator. In addition to commissioning and undertaking audits, the MAAG is also responsible for monitoring recommendations from all review and scrutiny activity. All recommendations are collated into a Composite Action Plan (CAP) and are monitored for actions completed and impact on practice. A CAP position statement is updated regularly as part of the NSCP's library of evidence. Progress is analysed and shared with relevant subgroups, including the Workforce Development Group.

Independent Scrutiny Team

The NSCP's investment in independent scrutiny ensures a closer focus on practice. There are three members of the Independent Scrutiny Team who all have chairing roles and responsibilities allowing them reach into the system and opportunities to test the safeguarding system. These three posts are responsible for reporting on performance, gaining feedback from the frontline and service users and driving forward improvement. Collectively, the Independent Scrutiny Team advise the Lead and Delegated Safeguarding Partners on focus areas for scrutiny for them to commission a piece of work based on what's coming out of SPRs, audits, national issues and workforce training and development needs. The team also devises methodology for the scrutiny, ensuring inclusion of frontline and service users where possible.

Independent Scrutiny

The independent scrutiny of the safeguarding arrangements is ultimately assured through the lead scrutineer and Chair of the NSCP's Partnership Group; this role holds responsibility for presenting Scrutiny Reports on agreed focus areas to the LSPs and DSPs. These reports are produced with the input of the Independent Scrutiny Team, i.e. the independent chairs of the Workforce Development and Safeguarding Practice Review Groups.



The Lead Scrutineer/Partnership Group Chair:

- has an independent view of the effectiveness of the Partnership
- brings scrutiny to the most senior levels of the partnership and assists in dispute resolution and in holding partners to account
- ensures that the business of the NSCP takes account of all national and regional priorities and policy developments
- ensures that Norfolk considers best practice from regional and national MASA arrangements

The Independent Scrutiny Team work closely together to ensure that all aspects of the system are scrutinised. This includes a schedule of observation of multi-agency practice. The benefits of observation of practice are to:

- ensure that the Independent Scrutiny Team and LSPs/DSPs are in touch with service users and frontline staff so that they improve their understanding of the lived experience of the child and their staff
- strengthen the link between leadership and the workforce, with the strategic leaders and the NSCP more visible and accessible across the partnership
- enable a process of ongoing critical appraisal of practice
- allow for strategic initiatives and learning from case reviews to be tested in real time

Findings from independent scrutiny are included in the NSCP annual report.

8. Workforce Development

The NSCP's commitment to learning and improvement is evident in its approach to workforce development. Locally, this goes beyond just the multi-agency training offer and looks further to really understand the experience of our workforce in the challenging task of keeping children safe. Since 2019, the partnership has been developing a culture of trauma informed and resilience oriented leadership and practice to better support all of our leaders, managers, staff, volunteers, foster carers and families in order to improve outcomes for Norfolk's children and young people.

The Multi-Agency Training Offer

The NSCP invests a significant proportion of its budget to commissioning an external training provider to deliver multi-agency training. There is a blended approach to these courses with at least 20 face to face training sessions and at least 20 online sessions to ensure that they are accessible to all. The training programme is agreed by the Workforce Development Group and covers a range of topics, including:

- Neglect
- Vulnerable Adolescents
- Trauma Informed Practice
- Working with Families
- Domestic Abuse
- Assessing, Managing & Holding Risk
- Emotional Wellbeing
- Child Sexual Abuse
- Children with Disabilities / Complex Health Needs
- Professional Curiosity and Challenge
- Reflective Supervision Skills
- Voice of the Child

In addition, the commissioned training programme is supplemented by an extensive programme of courses offered by partners including:

- Signs of Safety / Family Networking
- Child Protection Conferences
- Early Help Assessment and Planning
- Gypsy Roma Traveller Cultural Awareness
- Substance Misuse in the Family
- The role of the Local Authority Designated Officer
- Protecting Babies
- Parental Conflict
- Working with Children's Services
- An Introduction to multi-agency working for new practitioners

These are provided as part of the agencies contribution and are commissioned according to demand. This allows flexibility in the system and ensures that the workforce has access to relevant training depending on emerging issues. For example, Public Health have recently agreed to fund a series of courses in substance and alcohol misuse and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner are funding learning opportunities around Adultification and Serious Youth Violence .

There is also dedicated training for father inclusive practice delivered by the NSCP as part of its response to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review [The Myth of Invisible Men](#)

Other learning opportunities

As well as training, the NSCP offers a range of learning opportunities over the course of any given year. These include:

- Best Practice sessions for the wider workforce and targeted sessions for safeguarding trainers
- SPR roadshows to follow up on learning from review activity and informing the workforce of the partnership's response and any new initiatives
- Conferences linked to NSCP priorities

While the majority of these opportunities are aimed at managers and the frontline, the Leadership Exchange and Learning Events will pick up on the professional development for strategic leaders and set the tone for further supporting the ways of collaborative working directed by the Delegated Safeguarding Partners.

Other initiatives

Recruitment and retention are a local and national issue. Norfolk strives to address these issues by motivating people to want to live and work in the county. We recognize that safeguarding has an emotional impact on the staff delivering services to some of our most vulnerable children and families and outside of training they need ongoing support and guidance. Often this comes from within a single agency but we have created opportunities to ensure that practitioners have a space to reflect on their practice outside of operational case management. The Joint Agency Group Supervision procedure was developed in order to provide a safe space to slow thinking down and provide an opportunity to reflect upon situations, which could feel complex or stuck, in addition to supporting professionals working as a group to understand how they are working together to help children and families to flourish; it offers a reflective space for joint analysis of assessment information, an opportunity to explore what professionals know about the lived experience of the child and helps to strengthen the relationship between professionals who are working together with families to secure the best outcomes for children.

The NSCP works closely with Norfolk County Council to ensure that the semi-annual safeguarding practice weeks are multi-agency. These weeks occur in November and May every year and cover a range of topics including a key note conference. Attendance has been rising steadily year on year, particularly with partners attending, and an evaluation report on the reach and impact goes to Partnership Group.

The NSCP also proactively supports champion networks linked to our priorities. For example, we have a large pool of Neglect Champions who are offered additional learning opportunities related to Neglect and conferences in order for them to effectively fulfil their role. They are also invited to Forums to contribute to senior leader's understanding of the challenges that working with neglect in Norfolk presents.

Safer Programme

The NSCP's Safer Programme is a service provided by the NSCP Business Unit to meet the safeguarding procedural, policy and training needs of the voluntary, community and private sectors of Norfolk. Safer produces a standalone annual report.

Safer membership grows year on year and members provide feedback on the value the programme. Membership includes the Early Years sector as well as many voluntary organisations operating in Norfolk, small and large.

Governance and Monitoring Impact

The NSCP's Workforce Development Group is responsible for both the commissioning of the training programme as well as monitoring impact. They also play a proactive role in developing course material as well as observing delivery as part of our quality assurance processes.

The independent chair is supported by a dedicated officer from the NSCP Business Unit and together they evaluate the training offer and work with members of the Workforce Development Group to measure impact.

A significant piece of work was undertaken in 2023 to look at how we measure the impact of training on practice and the findings of this were reported back to the Workforce Development Group in December 2023. As a result of this, further work is being undertaken to develop a comprehensive system to support the NSCP's learning in this area.

9. Hearing the Voice of Children and Families

Norfolk has a number of mechanisms in place to get the views of children and families, such as surveys, the In Care Council, Young Carers, Office of Police and Crime Commissioners (OPCC) Young Commissioners and Youth Advisory Boards (YABs). Their views, and the views of their parents and carers, are also regularly sought during the Safeguarding Practice Review process and through audit. Some of the most powerful messages to reach senior leadership have come from children and families who have been the subjects of reviews and there is a commitment to improve and evidence how we hear and respond to the voice of the child and vulnerable communities.

The NSCP is now closely aligned with the CYPsA and their Stakeholder Engagement and Insight (SEI) subgroup, which allows for a more joined up approach to seeking and acting upon service users' views. The SEI subgroup's terms of reference stated purpose is **To enable the Children and Young People Strategic Alliance and the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership to identify priorities and make decisions across the children and young people system which are informed by effective, inclusive, high quality stakeholder engagement and insight.**

The partnership boards recognise children and young people as key stakeholders. The NSCP continues to build on ensuring that their voices are heard through:

- Strong links between children's groups and the Local Safeguarding Children's Groups
- Engaging with them to co-produce accessible and inclusive documents, building on the successful co-production of Norfolk's Threshold Guide and the children and young people's version of the NSCP Annual Report
- Asking children and parents to present at conferences, workshops and other learning events
- Ensuring they are part of any scrutiny, audit or impact monitoring activities

The NSCP annually consults with a group of young people to go through the evidence of impact in the annual report. With their feedback, a separate children and young people's version of the annual report is co-produced and acts as an executive summary. This is illustrated to ensure that it is more child friendly and the young people involved feed back on how much they enjoy the activity.

10. Funding and Business Support

Funding

The NSCP is well resourced over the last few years with no increase in budget between 2010 and 2020. Additional funding was agreed in 2021 to cover the costs of the senior data analyst; the Local Authority and the Integrated Care Board are also contributing to the cost of the Independent CDOP Chair and the eCDOP software.

The three partners are the main contributors and have committed to ongoing funding. The remaining funding partners have agreed to carry on contributing for the foreseeable future. Equitable contributions remain under review.

In addition to the funding received by partners the Business Unit generates income through its training offer and the Safer training and support programme.

The NSCP will be managed as a single joint budget for which the NSCP is collectively accountable and administered by the Head of NSCP Business Delivery as budget holder.

Business Unit

The work of the NSCP is supported by a business unit hosted by Norfolk County Council. The NSCP Business Unit is responsible for:

- Administration of child death, safeguarding practice reviews and all other NSCP meetings
- Co-ordinating SCRs and child safeguarding practice reviews
- Communication, including website maintenance and Twitter, supporting any campaigns or awareness raising activity
- Training and workforce development
- Multi-agency policy review and updates

The Head of NSCP Business Delivery is also responsible for producing the NSCP business plan for the NSCP and reporting to the chief officers on progress against milestones.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Relevant Agencies Engaging with the NSCP

Appendix 2: Strategic Analysis and Shared Functions

Appendix 1: Relevant Agencies Engaging with the NSCP

Health providers:

Community Health:

- Cambridgeshire Community Services
- Norfolk Community Health & Care
- East Coast Community Healthcare

Acute Trusts:

- Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital
- James Paget University Hospital
- Queen Elizabeth Hospital

General Practitioners: independent primary care

Mental Health: Norfolk & Suffolk Foundation Trust

Ambulance: East of England Ambulance Service NHS

Out of Hours Provider: IC24

NB All providers are supported by the NHS Designated Child Safeguarding Team, who are hosted by Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board.

Education

Through the Local Authority's Education Quality & Assurance and Intervention Services, partnership working includes schools of all phases, including higher education and the independent sector. Early Years providers are also included.

Non-Statutory partners

1. Agencies linked to law and order

Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass)
National Probation Service (NPS)
Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)

2. District Councils:

Norwich City Council
Broadland Council
North Norfolk District Council
Great Yarmouth Borough Council
South Norfolk Council
Breckland Council
Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk

3. The Voluntary Sector

The Voluntary Sector is represented by Momentum Norfolk, the umbrella branch supporting voluntary and community organisations working with children and young people, and the VCSE Forum Chair. They have a place at Partnership Group.

Appendix 2: Public Protection Forum

The strategic analysis functions service both the NSCP and the CYPsA, including the interrogation of data relating to child protection and safeguarding. The key features of this shared approach and capability are:

1. Multi-Agency Intelligence Hub

The respective data analytics and reporting functions within each partner organisation are committed to a proportion of their resource to contribute to the Power BI dashboard and working with the dedicated data analyst to deliver shared data analysis on behalf of the system. The data analyst enables partners to work together on collaborative projects on behalf of the system. Together, they can safely access each other's data sets within an appropriate information governance framework and are empowered to combine these to create new insights. Under the governance of the Joint Strategic Analysis Group (JSAG), the data analyst works to a performance and intelligence plan and provides regular reports to the three statutory partners and Partnership Group. The statutory partners alongside the Independent Scrutiny Team evaluate safeguarding performance and agree further scrutiny and monitoring as necessary.

2. Shared platform and Integrated Technical Architecture

The partner organisations have established a shared data platform that enables the data collected by individual partners to be combined and/or interrogated in order to create new insights. Where appropriate links will be made with Norfolk's Office of Data Analytics.

3. Shared Intelligence Store

The existing and future analysis undertaken by each of the partners will be shared with all the partners as the default approach and combined into a single intelligence store for the system. All non-personal datasets and analysis are shared in this way and the data analyst uses this bank of evidence to inform the analysis of the Norfolk system, in collaboration with JSAG members. The sharing of any personal data collected by each individual partner is only done in adherence to appropriate local and statutory frameworks for information governance – and, if appropriate, used when such data might be combined in order to provide fresh insights

4. Integrated Analysis

In addition to sharing of the individual work of each partner, JSAG works together to deliver new joint analysis on behalf of the system; the data analyst leads on this. Analysis will take a variety of forms, potentially including predictive analysis, place-based insights, longitudinal studies and a range of other approaches which combine data from the various partners to provide a more comprehensive view of the safety and risks to children in Norfolk. Each partner is committed to providing the necessary resource to support these shared data projects, including further development of shared data tools as well as one-off reports.

5. Shared Information Governance Framework

The partners will work together to further develop the necessary information sharing governance arrangements to enable the effective joint analysis work described above whilst ensuring that data-sharing is lawful and appropriate.



Norfolk Safeguarding
Children Partnership