



# Safeguarding Arrangements 2024

City of York Safeguarding Children Partnership



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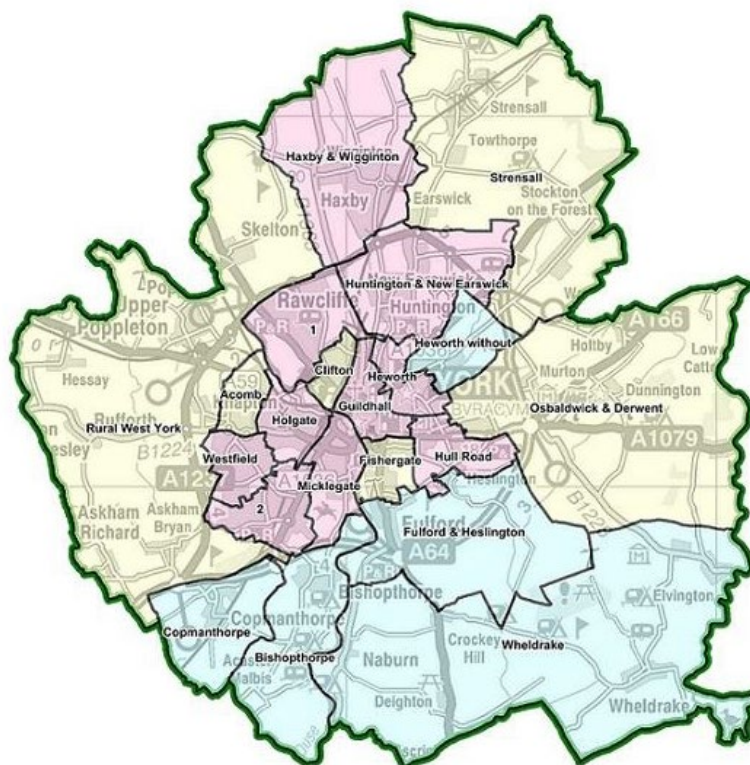
# I. Introduction

- I.1** The Children Act 2004, as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017, and the associated statutory guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2023\)](#) replaced Local Safeguarding Children Boards with local Multi-agency Safeguarding Children Arrangements.
- I.2** Local Multi-Agency Children Safeguarding Arrangements places duties on the three Statutory Safeguarding Partners (namely: the Local Authority, the Police and the Integrated Care Board) in local areas within England to make arrangements to work together, and with other relevant agencies locally to ensure:
- there is a clear, shared vision for how to improve outcomes for children locally across all levels of need and all types of harm
  - when a child is identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm there is a prompt, appropriate and effective response to ensure the protection and support of the child
  - organisations and agencies are challenged appropriately, effectively holding one another to account
  - the voice of children and families combined with the knowledge of experienced practitioners and insights from data, provides a greater understanding of the areas of strength and/or improvement within arrangements and practice
  - information is sought, analysed, shared, and broken down by protected characteristics to facilitate more accurate and timely decision-making for children and families, and to understand outcomes for different communities of children
  - effective collection, sharing and analysis of data, enables early identification of new safeguarding risks, issues, emerging threats, and joined-up responses across relevant agencies
  - senior leaders promote and embed a learning culture which supports local services to become more reflective and implement changes to practice
  - senior leaders have a good knowledge and understanding about the quality of local practice and its impact on children and families
- I.3** This document is a revised version of our previous published arrangements, following the publication of the new [Working Together to Safeguard Children in December 2023](#). Working Together (2023) is central to delivering on the Government Strategy: Stable homes, built on love (2023), which outlines the Government’s commitment to support every child to grow up in a safe, stable and loving home.

- 1.4** This document sets out the structure for delivering our multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in the City of York. It ensures these arrangements follow the spirit of Working Together (2023) whilst understanding the context of ‘place’ to ensure the delivery model is effective. These local arrangements reflect the flexible intent of Working Together (2023) where the guidance suggests a particular practice ‘should’ rather than dictates it ‘must’.
- 1.5** Our partners are fully committed to the new arrangements and continue to work together, so that children and young people in York get the best start in life, are happy and healthy, stay safe and develop the skills and relationships they need to thrive into adulthood.<sup>1</sup> Our plans for how we intend to achieve this are set out within this document. We believe that safeguarding children and young people is the responsibility of everyone, and ask that all individuals, organisations and communities in the City of York join us in ensuring that this happens.

## 2. Geographical Area

- 2.1** The City of York Safeguarding Arrangements cover the area within the City of York Local Authority boundaries, as outlined in the map:



- 2.2** The City of York is a cathedral city and unitary authority area in North Yorkshire. The local authority is the City of York Council, a single tier governing body responsible for providing all local services and facilities throughout the city.

<sup>1</sup> [Children and Young People’s Plan vision \(page 16\)](#)

**2.3** The City of York maintains close links with colleagues in North Yorkshire and other neighbouring local authorities and works jointly on priorities and projects where relevant.

## 3. A Shared Responsibility

**3.1** Chapter 1, in *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)* sets out a shared responsibility which sees successful outcomes being dependent on strong multi-agency partnership working and child centred practice with a focus of a whole family approach.

**3.2** *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)* aims to strengthen our work with children and their families through keeping safeguarding at the centre of practice while working in partnership with families through embedding the principles set out within the guidance. The following principles are also set out within the [Children's Social Care National Framework](#) which recognises that to achieve the right outcomes for children and young people, partnership vision and working needs to be at the centre:

- Children's welfare is paramount
- Children's wishes and feelings are sought, heard, and responded to
- Children's social care works in partnership with whole families
- Children are raised by their families, with their family networks or in family environments wherever possible
- Local authorities work with other agencies to effectively identify and meet the needs of children, young people, and families
- Local authorities consider the economic and social circumstances impacting children, young people, and families

**3.3** The guidance also outlines five multi-agency expectations at all levels across the whole system i.e. strategic leaders, senior and middle managers and direct practice which apply to all agencies and practitioners involved in safeguarding and protecting children. These expectations aim to ensure that we share:

- The same goals
- Learn with and from each other
- Have what they need to help families
- Acknowledge and appreciate difference
- Challenge each other

## Voice and Lived Experience of Children and Young People

- 3.4** Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) emphasises the importance of professionals working with children and young people to consider their voices. The guidance highlights that the children's voice is essential in safeguarding efforts, influencing decisions, shaping services, and ensuring their well-being and safety. Key updates are as follows:
- Professionals should listen to and consider the views and experiences of children. This is fundamental, ensuring their voices are heard and valued.
  - Children should be actively involved in decisions that affect their lives. Their opinions should influence assessments, plans, and services provided to them.
  - Communication with children should be appropriate to their age, understanding, and preferences. This includes using language they understand and being mindful of their individual needs.
  - Establishing environments where children feel safe to express their views without fear of repercussions is crucial. Trust and openness are key to effective communication.
  - Systems should be in place for children to provide feedback on the services they receive. This feedback should be used to improve service delivery and ensure it meets the needs of children.
  - All professionals working with children have a duty to prioritise the child's voice in their practice, ensuring that children's views are central in everything they do.
- 3.5** As a Partnership it is important that we continue to seek assurance from our partners that children and young people are at the forefront of every conversation and that young people have a voice and are involved in decision-making, planning, design and delivery of services.
- 3.6** The voice of the child and their family is a golden thread within all our work and this helps us to better understand how as a partnership we worked well together and how we can work even better together in the future to improve outcomes for children and young people.
- 3.7** The partnership are committed to consulting with involving children and young people when undertaking pieces of work and is included within all terms of references of the partnership sub-groups.
- 3.8** We have continued to promote our [voice pledge](#) and reviewed our voice webpages to support professionals in understanding the voice of children across our partnership.

## 4. Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements

### Lead and Delegated Safeguarding Partners

- 4.1** Our Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements brings together the three statutory safeguarding partners, various organisations and agencies to ensure we work together as a system to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in the city; we call this the City of York Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- 4.2** As a partnership we believe that strong, joined-up leadership and clear accountability is critical to effective multi-agency safeguarding to seek assurance and identify and address system issues. The three safeguarding partners are responsible and accountable for this within their local areas (Working Together 2023).
- 4.3** Working Together (2023) has strengthened the role and responsibilities of safeguarding partners to ensure that the head of each statutory safeguarding partner agency plays an active role in these arrangements. They are referred to as Lead Safeguarding Partners.
- 4.4** Lead Safeguarding Partners have been named in Working Together (2023) because they are able to:
- Speak with authority for the safeguarding partner they represent
  - Take decisions on behalf of their organisation or agency and commit them on policy, resourcing, and practice matters
  - Hold their own organisation or agency to account on how effectively they participate and implement the local arrangements
- 4.5** Within the City of York, the three lead safeguarding partners (LSP's) have been identified as:
- Ian Floyd, Chief Operating Officer, City of York Council
  - Tim Forber, Chief Constable, North Yorkshire Police
  - Stephen Eames, Chief Executive NHS Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board
- 4.6** Each Lead Safeguarding Partner is responsible for discharging their own statutory and legislative duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. As leaders of their organisations and the statutory safeguarding partners, it is for Lead Safeguarding Partners to assure themselves that their local arrangements are effective and keep children safe.
- 4.7** There is full commitment from the Lead Safeguarding Partners for coming together with the Delegated Safeguarding Partners biannually to gain assurance that



safeguarding systems are effective and are working well. Given the complexity of organisational geographic footprints the mechanism for this is still under development. Delegated Safeguarding Partners will also keep Lead Safeguarding Partner's apprised on a regular basis through ordinary channels of communication.

**4.8** Additionally, Working Together (2023) requires each Lead Safeguarding Partner to appoint a Delegated Safeguarding Partner who is able to support the delivery of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. They should be sufficiently senior to be able to speak with authority, take decisions on behalf of the Lead Safeguarding Partner and hold their sectors to account.

**4.9** It has been agreed within the City of York that the lead officers will delegate their function to the following officers:

- Martin Kelly, Corporate Director of Children Services, City of York Council
- Catherine Clarke, Assistant Chief Constable, North Yorkshire Police
- Paula South, Director of Nursing, Governance, NHS Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board, Humber and North Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership

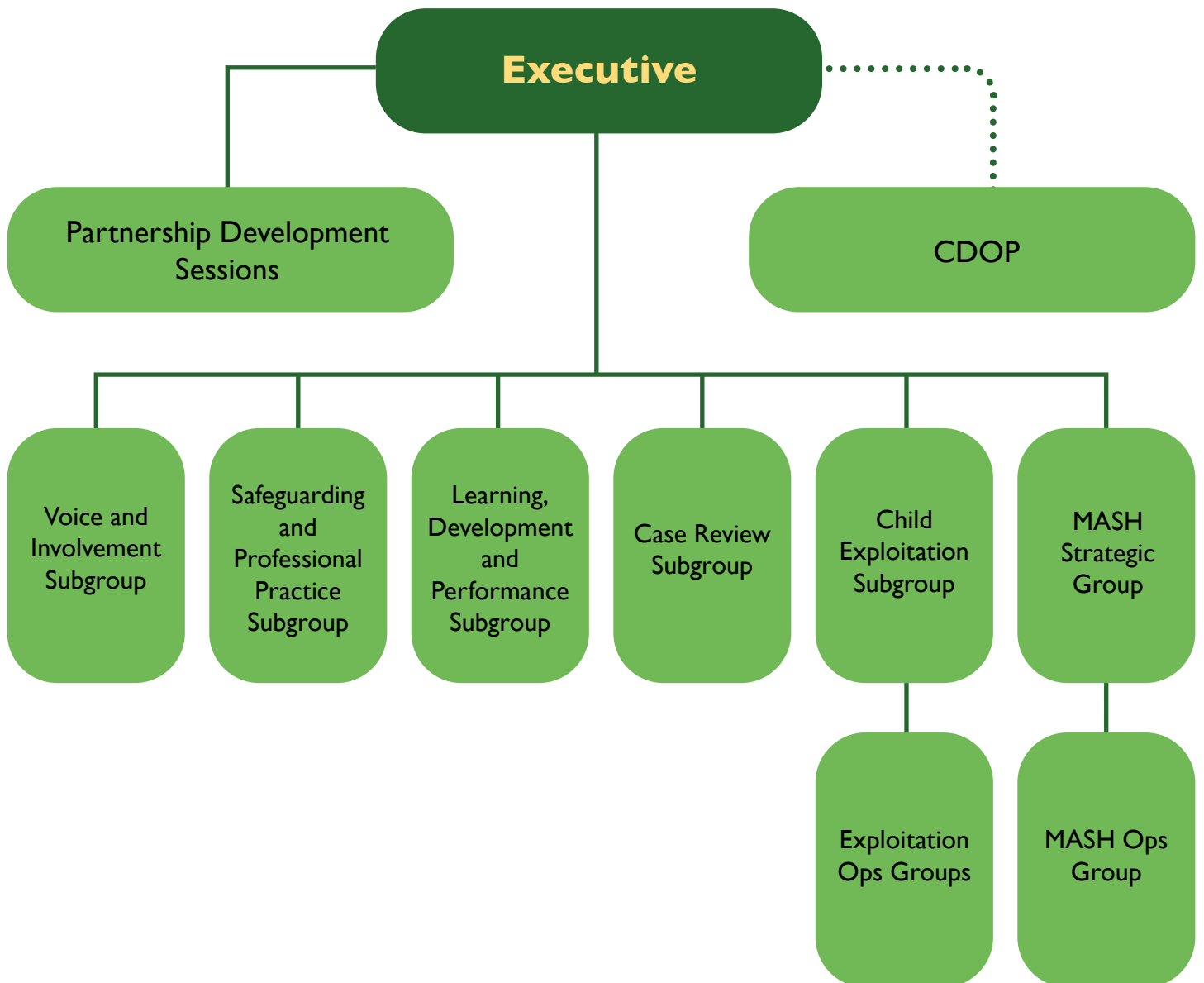
**4.10** The Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSP's) have the following joint functions:

- Delivery and monitoring of multi-agency priorities and procedures to protect and safeguard children in the local area, in compliance with published arrangements and thresholds.
- Close partnership working and 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, with the impact of learning from local and national reviews and independent scrutiny clearly evidenced in yearly reports.
- 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.



## Governance Arrangements

4.11 Our safeguarding governance arrangements are set out below



### Partnership Executive

4.12 The partnership Executive meeting has overall responsibility for the work of the partnership. This group meets bi-monthly and is chaired by the Executive Chair. Membership of the Executive includes the three statutory partners, Public Health and Education.

4.13 The functions of this group are as follows:

- To provide the strategic direction for the City of York Safeguarding Children Partnership (CYSCP) in line with national, regional and local objectives and priorities and to ensure that this correlates with the strategic direction and plans of partners.

- To be responsible for developing the Partnership Business Plan and its priorities.
- To receive exception reports from the subgroup chairs regarding progress against the business plan priorities including demonstrating impact.
- To receive regular updates and seek assurance from partners via their single agency assurance reports and action plans.
- To be responsible for developing the biennially Section II Audit tool/process including Chairing of the Challenge Panel and seeking assurance regarding individual agency actions.
- To be advised of all cases that have been notified to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel by the Local Authority, in accordance with the Children Act 2004 and as outlined in Working Together (2023).
- To be notified of cases that have not been notified to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel but have been identified as significant to local learning i.e. complex case procedures.
- To maintain and develop links with all current and potential partnership agencies such as Health and Wellbeing Board, Community Safety Partnership, Safeguarding Adult Board and the Systems Leadership Group, Serious and Organised Crime Disruption Panel, the Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Partnership and the Partners Prevent Board.

## Chairing of the Executive

- 4.14** Following the development of Safeguarding Partnership arrangements in 2018, York secured an Independent Scrutineer for the Partnership, with chairing arrangements rotated between the three statutory partners. Although a strong partnership review of the arrangements in 2022 found there was insufficient challenge and rigour, in part due to significant movement across Senior Officers. With a change of scrutineer in February 2023 the decision was made to appoint a combined Executive Chair and Scrutineer.
- 4.15** This arrangement has proven to have had significant success with considerable evidence (with examples) contained in the Scrutineer’s annual report 2023/24, of real progress. It is testament to the skills of the Scrutineer, a highly competent individual who has previously held chief officer roles that they are able to act as both an effective chair and Scrutineer, compartmentalising the functions of each role during partnership meetings. Between meetings they act as a highly effective Scrutineer through considerable quality assurance activity showing extensive reach across the system.
- 4.16** Delegated Safeguarding Partners feel they are now able to properly contribute to meetings with effective respectful support and challenge. Partners have reviewed

the arrangements using reflective discussions about the above journey to inform the arrangements.

- 4.17** Therefore, it has been agreed that within City of York our Scrutineer will continue in their role as Executive Chair as they are able to provide scrutiny and challenge within meetings. This chairing role supports the three Delegated Safeguarding Partners to focus on the agenda, discussions and decision-making and assists in the smooth and efficient running of the meeting, facilitation of discussion and keeps the conversation focused and balanced. However, the Lead Safeguarding Partners have appointed a nominated Delegated Safeguarding Partner who will work with the Business Unit Manager and the Executive Chair to agree and sign off the partnership meeting agenda for each meeting. This Delegated Safeguarding Partner will also act as the conduit between Lead Safeguarding Partner's where necessary.
- 4.18** These arrangements will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Local Safeguarding Partners from March 2025 or on the appointment of a new Independent Scrutineer. The role of Executive Chair will only be maintained where the Chair has the relevant skills to compartmentalise the role of chairing a meeting and providing effective scrutiny.

### Partnership Development Sessions

- 4.19** One development session is to be held within the year which the Independent Scrutineer facilitates and leads on. This session includes Executive Members, partners, relevant agencies and stakeholders. The purpose of these sessions are to consider local priorities and themes as well as reviewing wider regional and national themes which will inform the CYSCP in delivering their priorities.
- 4.20** The Independent Scrutineer also shares the outcomes of the Development session with the Executive and feedback is also provided within the annual assurance report. The session also includes hearing presentations from children and young people.

### Subgroups

- 4.21** There are six partnership sub-groups which report into the Executive. These sub-groups are:
- Voice and Involvement Sub-Group
  - Exploitation Sub-Group
  - Case Review Sub-Group
  - Learning, Development and Performance Sub-Group
  - Safeguarding and Professional Practice Sub-Group
  - Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

**4.22** Each sub-group has defined Terms of Reference which are reviewed on an annual basis. The sub-group meetings are held quarterly and the three statutory partners are represented and chair each of the subgroup meetings. There is also good representation from all of our partners.

**4.23** The sub-groups drive forward the work and business of the multi-agency partnership and the priorities identified within the partnership business plan. Some examples of the responsibilities of the subgroups include:

- Sharing of Good Practice and learning from one another.
- Reviewing our safeguarding practice and demonstrate how we as a partnership are continually developing our work with children and their families in York.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the partnership and drive forward performance through reviewing data, commissioning audits and ensuring that multi-agency commissioned training is robust.
- Quality Assurance activity including commissioning local multi-agency reviews.
- Commission multi-agency training and seek assurance regarding the impact of this.
- Review any national, regional or local learning and develop learning resources such as briefings, one minute guides and reports which can be disseminated to front line professionals, partners and stakeholders.
- Provide strategic oversight, scrutiny and challenge in response to how partners will work together to safeguard and promote those young people who are at risk of harm, exploitation and abuse.
- Provide strategic oversight to our Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub.
- Communicating with our wider safeguarding professionals through our social media platforms, through the website, via our monthly newsletter and email distribution lists.

**4.24** Often Task and Finish groups are created to carry out a targeted piece of work. Regular update reports on the work undertaken by the subgroups is provided to the Executive on a quarterly basis.

## **Membership and Relevant Agencies**

**4.25** We are committed to ensure that we have strong, effective multi-agency safeguarding arrangements that are responsive to local circumstances and engage the right people.

**4.26** To support this we ensure that we work together collaboratively with those organisations and agencies working with children, young people and their families

across the city. This approach requires flexibility from all relevant agencies, to enable joint identification and response to existing and emerging needs, and to agree priorities to improve outcomes for children.

**4.27** Relevant agencies are those organisations and agencies whose involvement that the safeguarding partners consider are important to ensure children are safeguarded and their welfare is promoted. Our relevant agencies have been identified as they work directly with children, young people and their families and safeguarding is an integral role (Working Together, 2023).

**4.28** The Partnership have a number of relevant agencies who attend a number of the subgroups and the Partnership Development session. These arrangements are strengthened within the Terms of Reference of each Partnership Meeting.

**4.29** The list of our relevant agencies in the City of York can be found in Appendix A.

### Education and Early Years

**4.30** 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.

**4.31** In the City of York there are total of 69 schools (out of the primary and secondary schools 41 of those have academy status) of which:

- 51 Primary Schools
- 9 Secondary Schools
- 6 Independent Schools
- 2 Special Schools
- 1 Pupil Referral Unit

**4.32** In addition, there are 104 registered childminders, 26 pre-schools, 41 Nurseries and 36 Out of School Clubs.

**4.33** Working Together (2023) strengthens the role of Education at operational and strategic level decision-making to ensure they understand their roles and responsibilities. To support this the partnership has a pivotal role in ensuring Education forms part of our arrangements.

**4.34** We have strengthened the role of Education at our Safeguarding Executive to now include both the Assistant Director, Education and Skills at City of York Council and a Chief Executive from a Multi-Academy Trust to ensure that the voice of education and early years is represented and informs strategic decision making.

**4.35** We have also strengthened representation at a subgroup level to ensure that there is appropriate representation from education providers at operational decision-making level. Colleagues from schools and the early years sector continue to work

in partnership with, and have actively contributed to, a number of multi-agency activities undertaken by the partnership. Strategic messages from the partnership are additionally shared through regular meetings held with the Maintained School Headteachers and Multi-Academy Trust Board meetings. Feedback from schools on partnership activity is also regularly fed back to the Assistant Director by Chief Executives and Headteachers.

- 4.36** Through consultation with Education colleagues, the Partnership are looking to strengthen the role of Education even further by hosting a Safeguarding in Education conference in early 2025. This event has been co-designed and will be co-delivered with our Education partners. As part of this event we will explore further the opportunities, barriers and seek to further strengthen links with multi-agency partners. It is envisaged that we will continue to host an annual event.
- 4.37** The Partnership Business Manager and the School Safeguarding Advisor regularly meet with Education colleagues from Multi-Academy Trusts to feed in key updates regarding safeguarding and taking away any feedback. As part of this working group conversations are taking place to establish the best way to represent schools more widely within the safeguarding partnership in a meaningful way whilst taking care to build on the already established strong working forums between schools and partners.
- 4.38** The City of York Local Authority has a dedicated School Safeguarding Advisor, who sits within Education Service who provides safeguarding advice and supports all schools and colleges in the city. As part of their role, the School Safeguarding Advisor provides annual assurance updates to the Executive regarding safeguarding in schools, which summarises safeguarding activity undertaken in schools and identifies themes and specific safeguarding concerns raised through audit and by colleagues in schools.
- 4.39** The partnership has adopted a procedure which outlines the School Audit (Section 157 and 175, Education Act 2002) and assurance arrangements to the Executive around safeguarding practice within the city's schools. The procedure sets out the audit and assurance arrangements function in respect of schools within the City of York.
- 4.40** The School Safeguarding Advisor is also an active member of the partnership and represents schools at a number of subgroups. In addition, they deliver training via face-to-face sessions with Designated Safeguarding Leads and bespoke safeguarding training sessions (including safer recruitment) with whole schools, governors and with taxi and bus drivers who are contracted to provide school transport. In addition, the School Safeguarding Advisor has continued to work directly with schools in the city to support strong safeguarding arrangements, by undertaking safeguarding reviews and providing an important link to the assurance function of the partnership.

- 4.41** Data is also provided to the partnership around children missing from education, those who are Electively Home Educated and information regarding children missing from education and the steps taken to locate them.
- 4.42** The Partnership also maintains contact with schools via electronic communications, website and Twitter. They use these platforms to disseminate key messages, share new documents and keep partners updated with new developments.

## Scrutiny

- 4.43** Safeguarding Partners must ensure that there are arrangements for effective Independent Scrutiny in place for their local area. Within the City of York it has been agreed to maintain an Independent Scrutineer. The Independent Scrutineer provides objective scrutiny, constructive challenge, appreciative inquiry and assurance in judging the effectiveness of local multi-agency arrangements, including arrangements to identify and review serious child safeguarding practice reviews. Their role will require them to work independent of, but closely with the statutory lead safeguarding partners as set out in Working Together 2023, namely the:

- Chief Executive City of York Council
- Chief Executive NHS Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board
- Chief Constable North Yorkshire Police

(or delegated safeguarding representatives) of the safeguarding partnership, ensuring effective implementation of all agreed functions including statutory functions within statutory timescales and responding to local identified priorities.

- 4.44** Our Independent Scrutineer, Mel John-Ross was appointed into this role in 2023 and it has been agreed that Mel will continue in the role of Scrutineer. Mel brings a wealth of experience to the role as a qualified children's social worker, serving as an Executive Director for Children's Services at Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council. Mel acts as a constructive critical friend and promotes reflection to drive continuous improvement and provides assurance in judging the effectiveness of our multi-agency arrangements and assurance that all relevant organisations and agencies co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children within the city.

## Professionals Resolution of Dispute

- 4.45** Working Together (2023) specifies that: 'Safeguarding partners and relevant agencies must act in accordance with the arrangements for their area and will be expected to work together to resolve any disputes locally'.
- 4.46** In the City of York we aim to promote a culture of partnership working, whereby all agencies working with children, young people and their families feel confident, able and supported to address concerns in situations where there are differences in professional judgements around the response to the well-being and safety of children and young people.



- 4.47** As a partnership we are keen to foster a culture of conversation that aims to promote healthy, collaborative relationships between practitioners. We know that when we have strong partnerships between professionals and with families' outcomes for children are better.
- 4.48** These conversations should take place as soon as possible with the aim of achieving a shared understanding and resolving any differences at the earliest opportunity.
- 4.49** If decisions should not be reached together through constructive conversation, the partnership [Professionals Resolutions Practice Guidance](#) outlines further advice regarding principles and processes for practitioners and their managers where disagreement arises.

### Information Sharing

- 4.50** As outlined in Working Together (2023) there is a requirement for all organisations to share information effectively, amongst and between them, to improve outcomes for children and their families. There is also a requirement for partners to share information with the Partnership following a request from the three statutory partners, i.e. a request to share information when undertaking reviews.
- 4.51** The three statutory safeguarding partners and other agencies in the partnership work together to create a positive culture of sharing information and facilitate legally compliant and effective data sharing practices. The [Department for Education](#) has produced information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners for people who provide safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers. Partners are also committed to sharing information and adhere to the local multi-agency information sharing protocol.

### Annual Reporting

- 4.52** The three Statutory Safeguarding Partners will publish an Annual Report setting out what work has been undertaken by the Partnership, and the partners, to safeguard children and young people during the previous year and how effective the partnership arrangements have been.
- 4.53** Within the City of York, it has also been agreed for the Independent Scrutineer to provide a separate Scrutineer Annual Assurance Report. This report is included as an Appendix within the published Annual Report.
- 4.54** The Annual Report is published on the partnership website and copies will be sent to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and the What Works Centre for Children's Social Care within seven days of being published by September each year as per the requirement set out in Working Together (2023). This report is also disseminated across all our partners and stakeholders for dissemination throughout their organisations.

## Funding

**4.55** The Partnership budget is derived from contributions from the three statutory partner organisations. Within the City of York it has been agreed that the three statutory partners will equally share the contributions to fund the partnership.

## Business Unit of the Partnership

**4.56** The Partnership is supported by a dedicated Partnership Business Unit who coordinates the work of the safeguarding children partnership. Members of the Business Unit comprise of: Business Manager (1FTE), Performance & Governance Officers (2FTE) and receives support from Children's Services Business Support (0.6 FTE).

# 5. Providing help, support and protection

## Early Help

- 5.1** 'Early Help is a collaborative approach where we recognise families do best when they are supported by those who already know them and can assess and provide early intervention at the earliest stage'.
- 5.2** Early Help is important because early identification and response to need means that children can support children and families to develop the skills they need to live happy, health and successful lives. It can help to improve the quality of children's lives and improve relationships within networks. In addition, it's vital in preventing families reaching crisis point where they require formal or statutory interventions.
- 5.3** Providing the right support at the earliest opportunity is enough to help families get back on their feet and thrive. Every professional working with or engaging with children and families, regardless of organisation has a responsibility to deliver Early Help and support families to access the right services at the earliest opportunity.
- 5.4** During 2024, we reviewed and updated our partnership [Early Help Strategy](#) which outlines our shared vision and ambitions ensuring:
- that children and their families receive the right help at the earliest opportunity by the right person
  - we build on a robust, graduated response to children and families within the City of York by all agencies recognising their role
  - we capture and understand the voice of the child and family including their lived experience to inform planning
  - we support practitioners in delivering Early Help within each agency
  - we use plain language in a format which is understandable to all those who access it

- 5.5** In order to support our city-wide approach to early help and joint working, the partnership have also updated practice guidance and tools. Further information regarding Early Help can be found on the partnership [website](#).
- 5.6** The outcomes within the strategy are monitored via a multi-agency Early Help Steering group which reports into the Safeguarding Professional Practice Subgroup.

### Local criteria for providing help, support, and protection

- 5.7** Working Together (2023) requires each local authority area to publish a threshold document, which sets out the local criteria for action in a way that is transparent, evidence-based, accessible, and easily understood.
- 5.8** In the City of York our shared vision *‘is for all children to get the best start in life, be happy and healthy, stay safe and develop the skills and relationships they need to thrive into adulthood.’*
- 5.9** We know that many children do well however, some children and their families have needs which will require additional support to enable them to reach their full potential. These needs may change throughout a child’s life, needs which might require limited support or intensive support depending on their circumstances.
- 5.10** We have therefore developed in partnership with agencies guidance on the Continuum of Need (threshold guidance) to support professionals working with children when faced with a decision about their wellbeing or safety, to drive our ambition of ensuring children and families are given the right help at the right time. The document sets out which levels of intervention may be needed to support children and their families, while ensuring children are protected from abuse or neglect.
- 5.11** This guidance along with further information can be found on the partnership website.
- 5.12** Where there are [concerns a child is vulnerable or at risk of significant harm](#), contact should be made with the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) in York. The MASH is a multi-agency team made up of representatives from a range of services, including Social Care, Early Help Targeted Intervention, North Yorkshire Police and Health Professionals.

### Local Protocol for Assessment

- 5.13** We know that navigating Children’s Services can be complex therefore within the City of York a Local Protocol for Assessment has been developed to aid practitioners understanding of:
- What happens when a child is referred into Children’s Services
  - The ‘Building Brighter Futures’ Practice Model and communication with children and their families

- Lead Practitioners
- Responses to specific needs
- Communication with children and their families
- How children and their families can make a complaint

**5.14** This protocol should be read alongside the Continuum of Need document, City of York Safeguarding Partnership Procedures, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) and the Children’s Social Care National Framework.

### National multi-agency practice standards for child protection

**5.15** Expectations for practice for senior leaders, practice supervisors and practitioners in local authorities are set out in the [Children’s Social Care National Framework](#). This includes practice to help keep children safe inside and outside of their homes. The following national multi-agency practice standards for child protection are for all practitioners working in services and settings who come into contact with children who may be suffering or have suffered significant harm within or outside the home. During 2024, we have reviewed and developed a new Contextual Safeguarding Strategy which sets our partnership response to those children and young people who experience harm outside the home. This will be launched in January 2025.

## 6. Learning from serious child safeguarding incidents

**6.1** The partnership carries out the functions of improving child protection and safeguarding practice as described in [Chapter 5 of Working Together to Safeguarding Children \(2023\)](#) through the Case Review Subgroup. The main purpose is to identify serious safeguarding cases which raise issues of importance to improve child protection and safeguarding practice to safeguard children and promote the welfare of children across the City of York.

**6.2** Serious child safeguarding cases are those in which:

- abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected
- the child has died or been seriously harmed

**6.3** Where a serious child safeguarding case has been identified the local authority have a duty to notify the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel within five working days of becoming aware that the incident has occurred.

**6.4** This includes children that are in the care of the local authority and care leavers up to and including the age of 17 years regardless of abuse or neglect being present.

**6.5** From December 2023, revisions to Working Together (2023) has meant that local

authorities should now also notify the Secretary of State for Education and Ofsted of the death of a care leaver aged up and including the age of 24 where they are aware of their care leaver status and regardless of abuse or neglect being present.

- 6.6** It has been agreed between North Yorkshire and City of York local authority areas to have a joint process for reporting the death of a care leaver up to the age of 24. This will be via a central point of contact through Child Death Review Notification process.
- 6.7** Further information including the [notification and one minute guide](#) for professionals can be found on our partnership website.

## 7. Child Death Reviews

- 7.1** All deaths of children up to the age of 18 years, excluding stillbirths and planned terminations have been reviewed by the Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) since April 2008. The Child Death Review process is undertaken in accordance with national guidance and statutory guidance set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023. The Child Death Review Statutory and Operational Guidance 2018 builds on the requirements set out in Chapter 6 of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.
- 7.2** Child Death Review partners, the Local Authorities and Integrated Care Boards for North Yorkshire and City of York have a responsibility to undertake the Child Death Review Process as set out in the Children Act 2004, and as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017. Given that the statutory Child Death Review Partners make up two of the three Safeguarding Partners; the third being North Yorkshire Police who are also involved in Child Death Review Panel processes.
- 7.3** The Child Death Review arrangements are undertaken cross-border and cover the geographical areas of City of York and North Yorkshire Local Authorities, with learning enhanced by collaboration with other regional neighbours. North Yorkshire and City of York work together to review to identify any matters relating to the death of a child that are relevant to the welfare of other children in the family, in their local area, or to public health and safety
- 7.4** The Child Death Overview Panel is multi-agency with differing areas of professional expertise with the child death review process being undertaken locally for all children who are normally resident within North Yorkshire and City of York.
- 7.5** The Partnership recognise the life changing impact the death of any child will have on their family, friends and local community. The panel reviews the circumstances of each child's death with dignity and respect with the mantra that the review, from a professional perspective, is the last good thing that can be done for any child who has sadly died.



**7.6** The collation and sharing of all learning from Child Death Reviews and the CDOP is managed by the National Child Mortality Database (NCMD) which has been operational since 1st April 2019. The NCMD gathers information on all children who die across England with the aim to learn lessons to reduce child mortality.

**7.7** The CDOP is not a subgroup of the CYSCP, rather it has a ‘dotted line’ in terms of the governance structure and should report any relevant safeguarding issues to the Partnership. It is chaired by the Public Health Consultant, City of York Council. The CDOP Panel continues to meet bi-monthly and provides reports on activity to each of the York and the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnerships and publishes an Annual Report on:

- Local patterns and trends;
- Lessons learnt and actions taken;
- The effectiveness of the wider child death review process.



## 8. Appendix A - List of relevant agencies


The list of relevant agencies are as follows:

- North Yorkshire Police
- NHS Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board
- City of York Council
  - ✓ Lead Member for Children, Education and Young People
  - ✓ Children's Services, City of York Council
  - ✓ Legal Services, City of York Council
  - ✓ Adult Services, City of York Council
  - ✓ Housing Services, City of York Council
  - ✓ Education Services, City of York Council
  - ✓ Special Educational Needs and Disability, City of York Council
  - ✓ Youth Justice Service, City of York Council
  - ✓ Sport and Active Leisure, City of York Council
  - ✓ Licensing, City of York Council
  - ✓ Public Health, City of York Council
- York and Scarborough Teaching Hospital Foundation Trust
- Tees & Esk Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust (Mental Health provider)
- Healthy Child Service (Health Visiting and School Nursing)
- Leeds & York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
- Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust
- NHS England
- YorSexual Health
- Probation
- CAFCASS
- HMP Askham Grange Prison (York)
- British Transport Police
- York and North Yorkshire Office for Policing, Fire, Crime and Commissioning
- Fire and Rescue Service
- York CVS
- IDAS
- York Drug and Alcohol Service, Change Grow Live
- York Adults Safeguarding Board



- Education/Early Years Providers
- University of St Johns
- University of York
- Star MAT Lead (Tadcaster Grammar)
- Fulford School
- Archbishop Holgate's School
- Ebor Academy
- South Bank Academy
- Hope Academy
- All Saints School
- NPCAT Academy
- Pupil Referral Unit: Danesgate
- York College
- Askham Bryan College
- Henshaw's College
- St Peter's School
- Bootham School
- Hob Moor Oaks
- Applefields School
- St Pauls Nursery (maintained nursery)
- Funfishers out of School and Pre-School
- York Montessori Nursery
- York CVS
- York Racial Equality Network
- SSAFA
- North Yorkshire Sport
- One Adoption North
- St Giles Trust
- NSPCC
- Ivison Trust
- The Island
- Diocese of York
- Diocese of Middlesborough

If you would like this document in an alternative format, please contact:

 (01904) 551550

 [ycc@york.gov.uk](mailto:ycc@york.gov.uk)

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It is available in the following languages:

我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

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