

# **SOUTHWARK SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP**

**New Arrangements June 2019**



# Southwark Safeguarding Children Partnership New Arrangements

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## 1. Introduction and Context

Alan Wood's review of the role and functions of Local Safeguarding Children Boards, published in May 2016, found widespread agreement that the current system of local multi-agency child safeguarding arrangements needed to change. A new model was proposed that would ensure collective accountability across local authorities, the police and health.

The review's key recommendations are now included in the Children and Social Work Act 2017. Under the Act, local areas are no longer required to have local safeguarding children boards. Three safeguarding partners (local authorities, the police and CCGs) must make arrangements for the partners and any relevant agencies to work together to safeguard children in the area.

In this document we have set out how we intend to implement these legislative changes in Southwark.

Working arrangements already evidence that we are in a strong position through local safeguarding arrangements, with equity across the key strategic partners and engagement from wider agencies. This was demonstrated through the 2017 Ofsted rating of 'good'. Specific reference was made to how Children's and Adults' safeguarding arrangements were aligned to ensure greater synergy and a focus on the family.

Whilst the Children and Social Work Act 2017 creates new duties for police, health and the local authority to make arrangements locally to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area, we believe that the current local arrangements are strong. It is of vital importance that arrangements continue to include input from the wider partnership to ensure we continue in Southwark to make safeguarding children everybody's responsibility. We have therefore not made unnecessary changes, but have developed our new partnership arrangements to build on our existing work.

The new safeguarding partnership arrangements cover the geographical area of the London Borough of Southwark. The relevant Metropolitan Police Command Unit, known as South Central, incorporates two boroughs- Southwark and Lambeth. Health in the borough is covered by NHS Southwark Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).



## 2. Safeguarding Partners

The three safeguarding partners in the Southwark Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) are shown in the table below, including details of those to whom lead representatives have delegated authority. These individuals have responsibility for ensuring full participation with these arrangements; however the lead representatives remain accountable for any actions or decisions taken on behalf of their agency.

Partner Organisation	Lead Representative	Representative with delegated authority
Southwark Council	Chief Executive	Strategic Director of Children's and Adults' Services
Southwark CCG	Accountable Officer	Director of Quality and Chief Nurse
Southwark and Lambeth Police	BCU Commander	Detective Chief Superintendent

All three safeguarding partners have equal and joint responsibility for local safeguarding arrangements. In situations that require a clear, single point of leadership, the three safeguarding partners will decide together who will take the lead. In cases of disagreement, the independent chair can be called upon to mediate.

## 3. Relevant Agencies

The safeguarding partners, in consultation with the outgoing Southwark Safeguarding Children Board, have agreed which agencies they should engage in order to ensure effective local arrangements. Agencies are expected to cooperate with the new Safeguarding Children Partnership arrangements in the same way as they have done with the Southwark Safeguarding Children's Board to date.

Relevant agencies must:

- designate a senior officer to represent them on the Safeguarding Children Partnership Board.
- report to the Partnership Board on their activities to promote and safeguard the welfare of children
- participate in the activities of the SSCP and take forward any action identified for them

Some of the named relevant agencies work national or regionally, including Probation Services, Community Rehabilitation Services and CAFCASS. Safeguarding partners will take account of these agencies' potential contribution to a number of different local safeguarding arrangements.

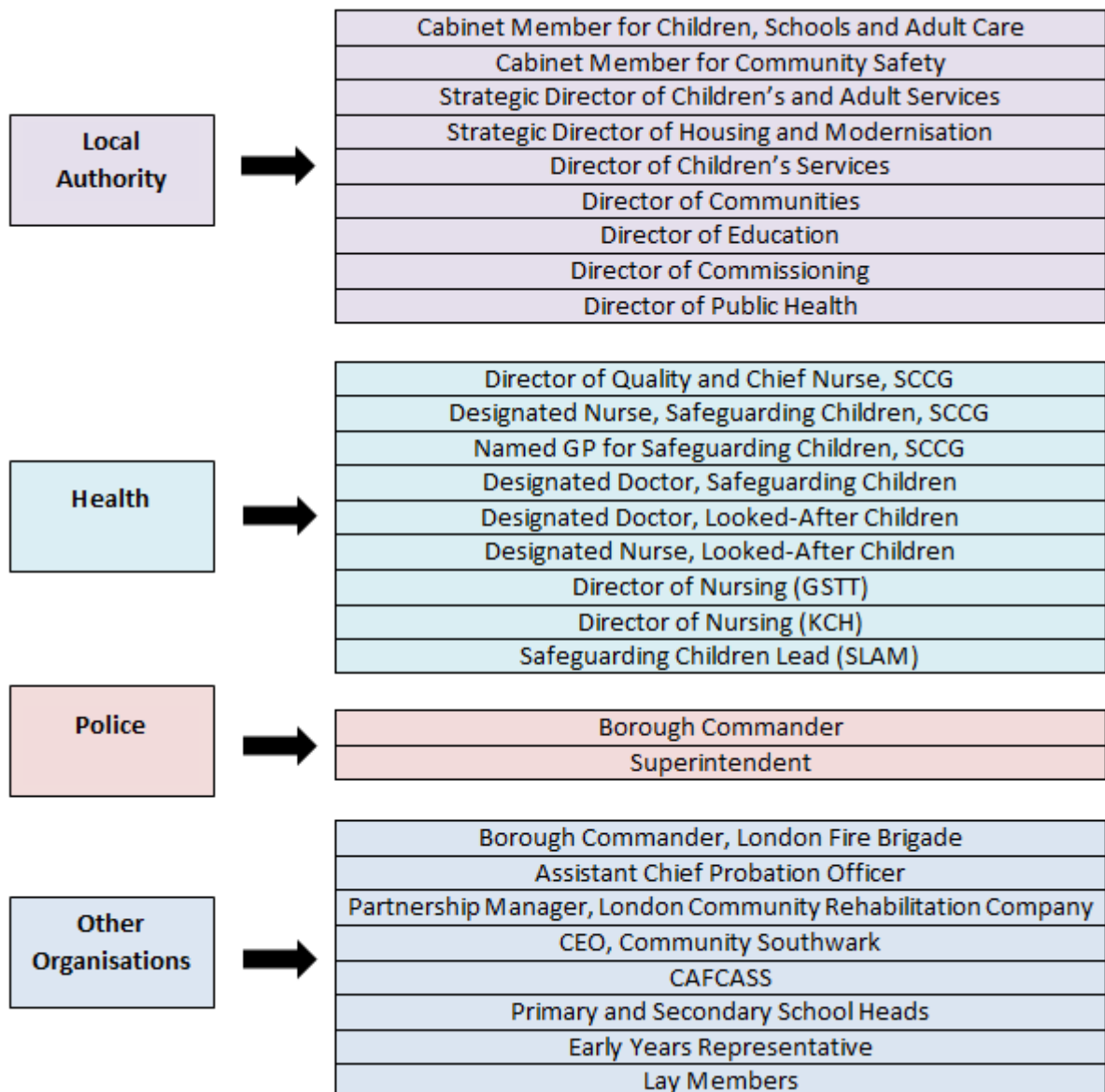
The clinical expertise of designated health professionals for safeguarding children has been secured in the new arrangements via their attendance at SSCP Board meetings and subgroups.



Involvement of schools, colleges and early years settings is vital to the success of the new arrangements. Each setting will therefore be represented on the SSCP Board, along with the local authority's Director of Education.

Partners must be assured that relevant agencies have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place, and that information will be shared appropriately. The Quality and Effectiveness Subgroup of the SSCP Board will use audits and other processes to provide oversight of the effectiveness of individual safeguarding arrangements.

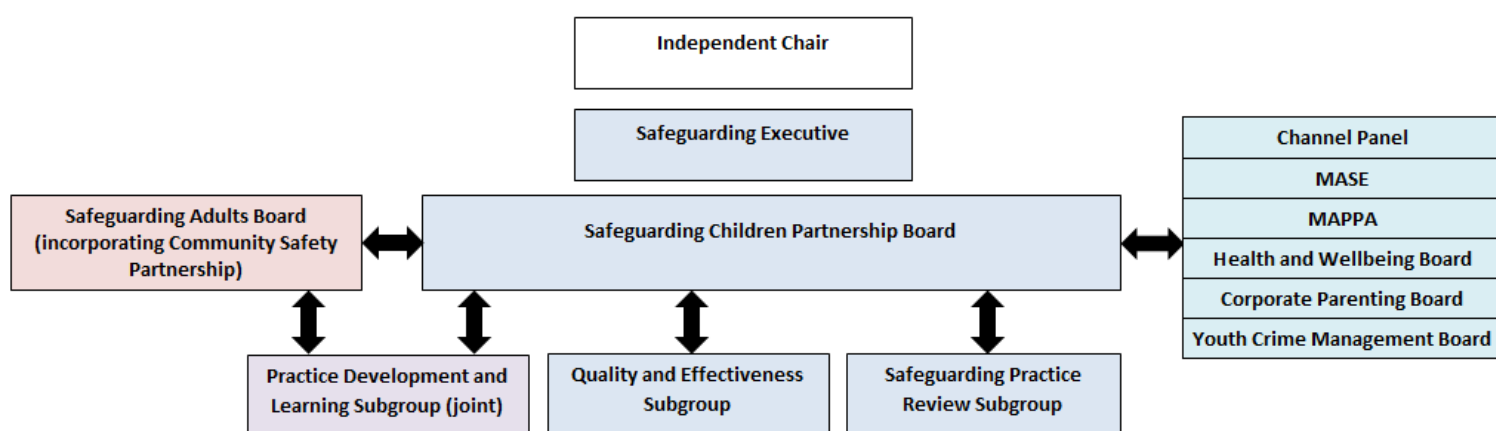
Agencies represented on the SSCP Board are set out below. The safeguarding partners may amend the list of relevant agencies at any time.



## 4. Partnership working

The Southwark Safeguarding Partnership Board will provide strategic leadership of safeguarding arrangements in Southwark.

The SSCP arrangements link with other strategic partnership work happening in the area; the SSCP will have a strong and clearly defined relationship with other strategic partnership boards. The Southwark Safeguarding Children Board had been taking steps to align more closely with the work of the Southwark Safeguarding Adults Board, for example by holding joint meetings focussing on cross-cutting themes, and the SSCP will continue to build on this good work. The SSCP may, if required, hold joint meetings with neighbouring boroughs to discuss issues of common concern.



### Multi-Agency Threshold of Need Guide

Southwark's Multi-Agency Threshold of Need Guide was revised in 2019. It provides a borough-wide threshold agreement that can be understood and applied by all professionals and the community, setting out the different levels of need, with detailed guidance about how concerns within these different levels should be responded to by the SSCP.

The threshold of need guide is available on the SSCP website, and has been disseminated to all relevant agencies.

### Escalation and Whistleblowing

The SSCP has an escalation policy, developed to ensure all agencies working within Southwark have access to guidance to quickly resolve professional differences where there are concerns about the safety and welfare of children. The policy aims to promote a strong culture of partnership working, resulting in early resolution of disagreements and earlier help offered to the child and their family.



The policy does not replace statutory complaints processes available to individual partner agencies. Each agency will also have a whistleblowing policy and these mechanisms may from time to time need to be considered alongside the SSCP escalation policy. All agencies will be responsible for ensuring that their staff are supported and know how to appropriately escalate in order to resolve professional disagreement.

The escalation policy is available on the SSCP website.

## 5. Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

Responsibility for how lessons are learned from serious child safeguarding incidents lies at a national level with the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel, and at a local level with the safeguarding partners, via the Safeguarding Practice Review Subgroup. The terms of reference for this group have been revised to take into account the new statutory guidance.

The Safeguarding Practice Review subgroup is responsible for identifying cases which meet the criteria for a Child Safeguarding Practice Review. For cases that fall below the threshold the group will determine if there is relevant possible learning from the case, and recommend the process and methodology for understanding the learning.

The group will identify any themes or trends within local referrals and national reviews that may further improve the quality and impact of safeguarding in Southwark.

Once a review has been completed, they will monitor the implementation and impact of any multi-agency lessons to be learned, and ensure that the learning from all case reviewing activity is embedded in practice.

Where appropriate, final anonymised reports will be published on the SSCP website.

## 6. Independent Scrutiny

Independent scrutiny of the SSCP arrangements will be secured by:

- Appointing an independent chair of the SSCP Board. This will incorporate the chairing of the Quality and Effectiveness Subgroup, overseeing decisions relating to local practice reviews and notifications to national bodies. The independent chair will also have oversight of the SSCP annual report.
- Bringing in external scrutineers from national bodies where required.
- Taking into account inspections and reports by external regulatory bodies.

The above scrutiny functions will:



- Ensure that the SSCP operates effectively
- Ensure that the SSCP has a clear focus, and delivers against its priorities
- Provide assurance as to the effectiveness of the new SSCP arrangements
- Drive forward continuous improvement.

## 7. Multi-Agency Training and Audits

### Training

The Practice Development and Learning Subgroup have put together a package of training. They have agreed a greater emphasis on e-learning, as requested by partners and relevant agencies, with partners in the PDL subgroup reviewing the content of courses to make sure that they are tailored to Southwark's needs. E-learning development will be supported by an action learning set approach, with shorter, seminar type sessions. These will be both during the day and twilight sessions, as local voluntary sector agencies have indicated that this will facilitate their attendance.

The learning offer will be scheduled in partner buildings across the borough, to share resources and ease access.

Appropriate learning resources from partner agencies have been made available via the multiagency learning management system.

The learning offer has been reviewed to ensure that it covers the priority themes and that learning opportunities are maximised where there are synergies. The course subject matter, course material and available e-learning will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to make sure that they meet the partnership requirements.

The subgroup will continue to monitor attendance rates and the impact of training.

### Audit

The Quality and Effectiveness Subgroup will lead developments in audit and learning designed to improve safeguarding arrangements which have cross-sector or inter-agency relevance. Audit and learning tools will be used to test and ensure compliance across the partnership in respect of safeguarding standards. The subgroup will commission task and finish groups for audit to gain an accurate overview of the position of safeguarding arrangements across the partnership in Southwark; this will include both qualitative and quantitative information.

On the basis of comparative analysis across the partnership, the Quality and Effectiveness Subgroup will identify and take action to strengthen safeguarding arrangements in Southwark. They will demonstrate that the learning from multi-agency audits has been disseminated, and demonstrate the impact on practice and improved outcomes for children.





The sharing of relevant audit and research activity from single agencies will be encouraged, to provide learning across the partnership.

The Quality and Effectiveness Subgroup will work closely with the Practice Development and Learning Subgroup to ensure that lessons learned are shared across the partnership and all relevant agencies. Each agency representative will take responsibility for sharing the findings and recommendations within their single agencies and reporting to the subgroup what actions they will be taking as a result of the findings. Audit reports will be shared widely to ensure all agencies are informed of findings and recommendations. Lunchtime learning events will also be used to share learning and highlight areas of good practice.

## 8. Funding Arrangements

The funding arrangements for the SSCP will continue in 2019/20 as previously provided to the Southwark Safeguarding Children Board. The existing safeguarding board budget will be transferred to the partnership.

Funding for child safeguarding practice reviews will be met by the three safeguarding partners. Where necessary, each partner will contribute equitable and proportionate funding over and above the normal allocation.

The SSCP Manager and administrative team will be hosted by Southwark Council.

Contribution	Total
<b>Police (MOPAC)</b>	£5,000
<b>Southwark CCG</b>	£110,000
<b>SLAM</b>	£5,000
<b>London Fire Brigade</b>	£500
<b>London Borough of Southwark</b>	£126,843
<b>CAFCASS</b>	£1,100
<b>Total from contributions</b>	<b>£248,443</b>



## 9. Engagement

The Cabinet Members for Community Safety and Public Health and for Children, Schools and Adult Care will attend the SSCP Board meetings, along with lay members, to ensure that the views of local people are represented.

Families will be involved as far as possible in learning reviews and events.

Engagement with young people and youth groups will continue to be at the heart of what we do, including the involvement of:

- Youth Offending Service Peer Navigators
- Southwark Youth Council
- Southwark Young Advisors

Previous events have garnered the opinions of a wide range of children, young people and families on their concerns and their vision for the future. The SSCP will continue its involvement in engagement events, to ensure that the voices of children, young people and families are included in safeguarding arrangements.

## 10. Performance Data and Intelligence

A multi-agency dataset, themed around the SSCP's priorities, will be scrutinised quarterly by the Quality and Effectiveness Subgroup. They will analyse trends, and escalate areas of concern to the Safeguarding Executive and the SSCP Board. Additional data and reporting may be requested on specific areas the partnership feels require closer monitoring.

Data will be combined with soft intelligence, and the outcomes of any audits and reviews, to help identify areas for improvement.

## 11. Annual Report and Review of Arrangements

The final implementation of these changes will be in September 2019.

The safeguarding partners will publish an annual report, which will be made available on the safeguarding partnership website, and will also be disseminated to relevant agencies. The independent chair will provide oversight of the annual report. The report will include an analysis of progress against agreed priorities, and will set out future priorities.

The safeguarding partners will review these arrangements on a regular basis. Any updates to these arrangements will be included in the annual report.



## Signatories:



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