

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements

December 2024





Working **TOGETHER** to make children, families and communities

S.



Safe
Supportive
Secure
Sustainable

A.



Accountable
Ambitious
Adaptable
Achieving

F.



Family-Focused
Free From Harm
Flexible
Fair

E.



Effective
Empowering
Engaging
Evidence-based

R.



Resilient
Relational
Respectful
Responsive

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1. A shared vision – S.A.F.E.R.

A new shared vision was created within a partnership focus group as part of the revised arrangements. The focus group considered what we were ambitious for the partnership to achieve and how we might talk about the work of the partnership to others. We are confident that this vision captures how we expect the partnership to function and we are excited to promote this vision in all of our future work.

In Cheshire East, we want to work **TOGETHER** as a partnership to make children, families and our communities **S.A.F.E.R.**

We are **family-focused** working with the holistic needs of the family network as a system of support and agent of change. We believe our children are best supported within their families so we work to ensure this can happen safely, so children and young people are **free from harm** at home and in their local communities. We are **flexible** in how we offer support and ensure that there is a **fair** and equitable access for our families.

We will intervene early with **evidence-based** services to work with our families in **engaging** with the right support at the right time, **empowering** them to build on their strengths and achieve success. As a partnership, we will be **effective** to improve outcomes and impact for our children.

We believe in the power of relationships as being one of the key drivers that enables change to happen. In Cheshire East, we want healthy, safe and **resilient** family networks and community networks to flourish. To achieve this, we are creating a partnership that takes a strengths-based, **relational** approach to engaging, empowering and supporting our children, families and communities. We value and are **respectful** of our children, families, communities and practitioners at every level and recognise that a system of high support, high challenge allows consistently good practice to thrive and ensures we are **responsive** to emerging or evolving needs.

Our Children and Young People's Plan 2022-2026 for Cheshire East sets out the Children's Trust's multiagency ambition to improve outcomes for all our children and young people. Within our Children and Young People's plan, some support is targeted at particular groups of children and young people, however, our aim is that as a partnership we will improve outcomes for all Cheshire East children and young people through our universal services such as education and health settings, libraries, leisure centres and other council and partner services.

The Children and Young People's Plan sets out a joint commitment that **TOGETHER** we will make Cheshire East a great place to be young.

TOGETHER is our shared definition of co-production as it is inclusive and overall governance is through the Children and Young People's Trust Board. There are nominated leads from the partnership for each of the priorities in the plan, who each are a buddy to a young person to drive improvement and change linked to the priorities. There will be oversight of the engagement arrangements in the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership board.

[Children and Young People's Plan 2022 - 2026](#)

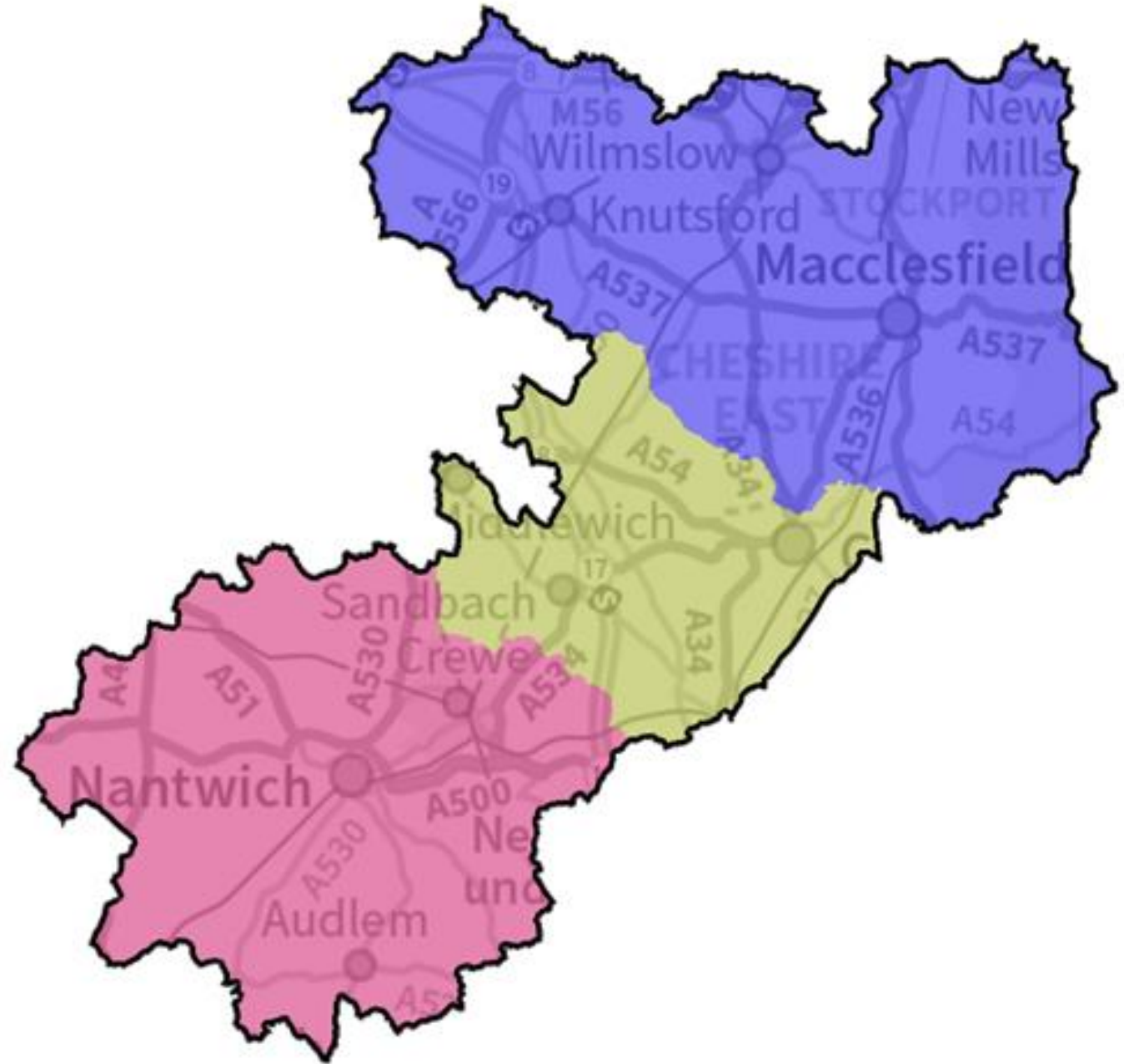
2. Geographical Context

These partnership arrangements cover one local authority area, Cheshire East. Cheshire East is a relatively affluent area, and we know that most of our children and families experience good outcomes. However, there are areas where child poverty and associated deprivation is endemic and intergenerational.

Cheshire East has 18 areas which are within the top 20% of the most deprived areas in England. Thirteen of these areas are in Crewe, with two in Macclesfield, one in Wilmslow, one in Alsager, and one in Congleton. Overall, relative deprivation has increased since 2010.

There are approximately 81,251 children and young people under the age of 18 in Cheshire East; 51% are male and 49% are female. Children and young people make up approximately 20% of the total population.

Our geographical pattern of need in Cheshire East very closely mirrors our areas of deprivation. High levels of need are located within a small number of areas, with a more significant cluster of need in the town of Crewe.

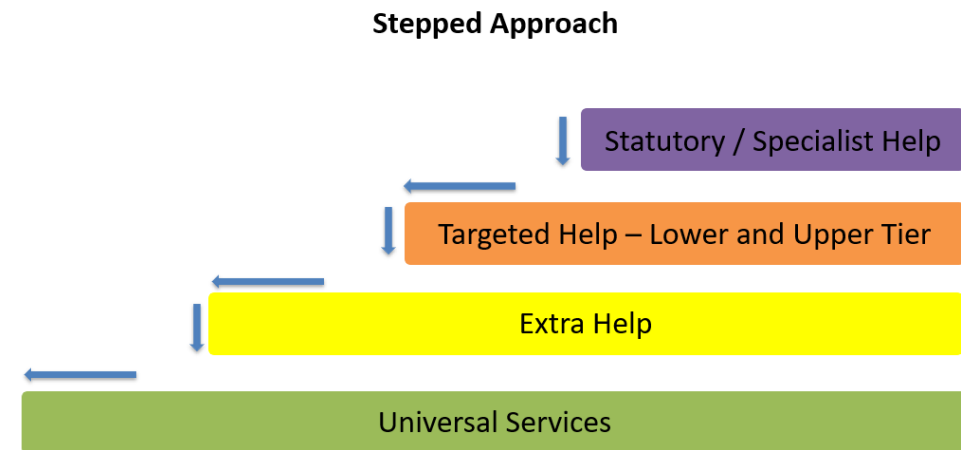


3. Effective Support – Levels of Need

In Cheshire East, we believe that every child should have the opportunity to reach their full potential. We believe children should grow and achieve within their own families when it is in their best interests and is safe for them to do so. The 'Strong Start' and Early Help strategy in Cheshire East is underpinned by the multi-agency front door, Cheshire East Consultation Service, which is the borough wide, central means for the identification of need; ideally at the earliest identification of a potential difficulty. The Early Help Assessment is the multi-agency agreed tool to identify the delivery of effective support at a preventative level.

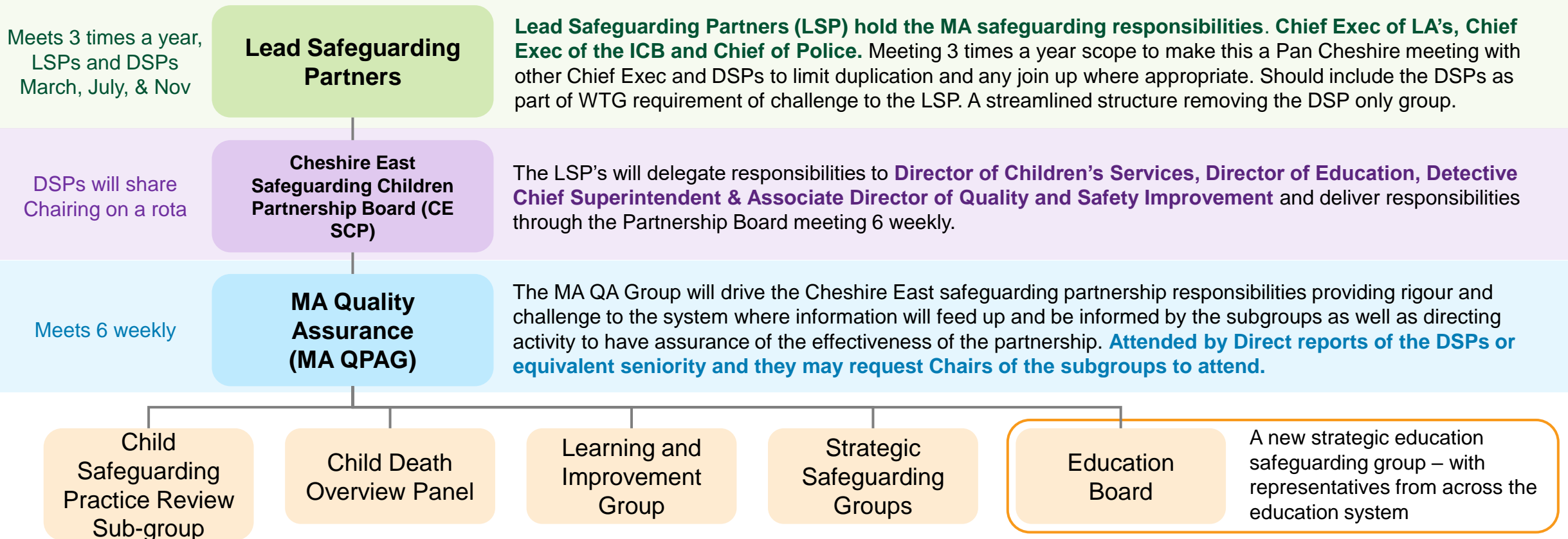
We have recently relaunched our multi-agency threshold of need document, 'Right Help, Right Time: Delivering effective support for children and families in Cheshire East'. This details our stepped approach which aims to reduce risk and vulnerability and meet needs at the appropriate level of support and/or intervention. Access to effective early help and prevention services is essential to achieving this.

There are four different levels of need: **universal services**, which are available to all children and include education and health; **extra and targeted help** for those children who need additional support to reach their potential; and **statutory and specialist** help where the issues are more complex. There has been a multi agency task and finish group to update the document and this can be found on the partnership website.



4. Governance Structure for the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children Partnership

The LA Chief Executive holds the responsibility as the LA statutory Safeguarding Partner and will nominate an Education and Social Care representative as Delegated Safeguarding representatives to take decisions (part of social care reforms and WTG to have Education as a key partner)
 The partnership will be flexible during the implementation of the new structure regarding frequency of meetings. Meetings will be held on a regular basis and whilst the below sets out the ambition, a conscious decision has been made to allow 12 months for the below frequency to be established.



The addition of the new education board. *Note – New education reps will also attend all sub-groups



Rob Polkinghorne, Chief Executive, Cheshire East Borough Council



Mark Roberts, Chief Constable, Cheshire Police



Christine Douglas, Executive Director of Nursing and Care
NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board.

5. The Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSPs)

All three partners have equal and joint responsibility for local safeguarding arrangements and will work collaboratively for the Cheshire East Children's Safeguarding Partnership, and along with Relevant Agencies, meet the following principles:

- ❖ Children and their families will be at the heart of the arrangements and central to all the work of the partnership.
- ❖ The arrangements will improve outcomes for children and the partnership success measures will work towards evidencing impact of improved outcomes.
- ❖ Children will be more effectively safeguarded through a system of policies, procedures, safe working practices and appropriately trained staff.
- ❖ The partnership will work **TOGETHER** in collaboration with children, young people and their communities to develop multi-agency services and practice that improves outcomes for children and keeps them safe from harm.
- ❖ The partnership will hold partners and agencies individually to account for their safeguarding work and their responsibility for effective multi-agency working
- ❖ The partnership will be a learning organisation and will offer psychological safety to practitioners within an environment of high support and high challenge to improve the quality of life and opportunities for all children.

6. Lead Safeguarding Partners Strategic Alliance Group

Purpose

The LSP's meet 3 times a year at the **Strategic Alliance Group**, in accordance with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 guidance. The Alliance provides strategic oversight of Children and Adult Safeguarding arrangements at a pan-Cheshire level. The Alliance covers the Local Authority geographical jurisdiction of Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Halton and Warrington. Meeting on a pan-Cheshire basis enables a sub-regional collaboration across Cheshire and Warrington aligned to the Cheshire Constabulary footprint, and covering 4 out of the 9 ICB 'places.'

Function

The Alliance is supported by Delegated Safeguarding Partners from each of the Statutory Agencies. The group is responsible for setting the pan-Cheshire strategic direction, vision and culture of all-age pan-Cheshire safeguarding arrangements. The group discusses common matters relating to the delivery of safeguarding arrangements for children, vulnerable adults and families across the Cheshire footprint. They seek assurance on any escalated issues of concerns, have oversight of the key strategic delivery outputs and ensure the sharing and dissemination of good practice. The group oversee and ensure consistency in respect of funding and resources for the individual safeguarding arrangements.

The group have oversight and provide appropriate challenge in relation to quarterly performance and delivery against local safeguarding partnership plans. The group ensures that there is robust and appropriate dissemination of learning from local practice reviews and national reviews as appropriate. The group reflects on how policy has been embedded and implemented in practice, highlighting any specific, key emerging themes, and sharing success and best practice. The group supports the inclusion of voices and experiences of children, young people, adults, their families, and carers to directly inform policy design and implementation. Members inform the group about risks and challenges facing the child safeguarding and protection system.

Governance and Accountability

The **Strategic Alliance Group** is chaired by one of the three Lead Safeguarding Partners with business support from the police. The chair rotates annually. The actions, notes and recommendations from the group are disseminated to all Local Safeguarding Partnerships boards (Children and Adults) and any actions and recommendations fed back in their executive meeting.



Theresa Leavy, Interim Executive Director of Children's Services, Cheshire East Borough Council



Josette Niyokindi, Interim Associate Director Quality and Safety Improvement, NHS Cheshire and Merseyside ICB, Cheshire East



Gareth Lee, Detective Chief Superintendent, Public Protection, Cheshire Police



Claire Williamson, Director of Education

7. The Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSPs)

In Cheshire East, the lead safeguarding partners have identified the following senior officers in their respective agencies who have responsibility and authority for ensuring full participation with these arrangements. We recognise education has a critical role within the partnership and Cheshire East has made the decision to name education as a fourth Statutory Partner.

- ❖ Theresa Leavy, Interim Executive Director of Children's Services, Cheshire East Borough Council
- ❖ Josette Niyokindi, Interim Associate Director Quality and Safety, Cheshire East NHS Cheshire, and Merseyside
- ❖ Gareth Lee, Detective Chief Superintendent, Public Protection, Cheshire Police
- ❖ Claire Williamson, Director of Education

The senior officers have delegated authority to speak on behalf of the safeguarding partner they represent, make decisions on behalf of their organisation or agency and commit them on policy, resourcing and practice matters. They also hold their own organisation or agency to account on how effectively they participate in and implement the local arrangements.

8. Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership Board

Purpose

The purpose of the **Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership Board** is to coordinate the work of the Safeguarding Partnership. It is made up of the delegated representatives from the LSP's, the three safeguarding partners – Cheshire Police, NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Commissioning Board, Cheshire East Council. We have a clear vision around strengthening engagement with Education and in Cheshire East, the LSP's have named Education as a Delegated Statutory Partner. As outlined in Working Together 2023, the LSP's delegate responsibility to one of the DSPs to chair the partnership board and the chair alternates annually.

Function

The **Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership Board** is responsible for delivering the success and impact measures for the partnership's key areas of focus against the wider partnership children's plan. It offers scrutiny of the partnership's dataset to evidence outcomes and impact for children and their families. It is informed by any key or emerging safeguarding issues that are highlighted within the **Multi Agency Quality Assurance Group** and it makes recommendations to the sub groups for work to be undertaken.

The **Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership Board** has oversight, and provides scrutiny to, the annual reporting activity of the partnership, improvement plans for the partnership, recommendations from Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews or local learning reviews, and reviews the work of the multi-agency operational quality assurance. It has oversight of the **Learning and Improvement Group** activity for assurance that learning is having a direct, positive impact on practice, through the Multi Agency Quality Assurance Group.

Governance and Accountability

The **Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership Board** is chaired by one of the delegated lead representatives of the three safeguarding partners on a rota basis and receive business support from the partnership's business support team. The board will only be quorate with a representative from each of the safeguarding partners in attendance. The partnership will be flexible during the implementation of the new structure regarding frequency of meetings. Meetings will be held on a regular basis and whilst the below sets out the ambition, a conscious decision has been made to allow 12 months for the frequency of the board to be established. In 2025, dates have been set at bi monthly to allow for the introduction of the sub groups.

Delivery of the Partnership board is supported by the Business Unit, led by the Business Manager. The Business Unit also has a Quality Assurance Officer, a Training and Development Manager and Business Support.

The partnership mailbox: CESCP@Cheshireeast.gov.uk

The partnership website: <https://www.cescp.org.uk/homepage.aspx>

9. Sub groups

Learning and Improvement Group

Cheshire East's framework for learning and improvement is driven by the Learning and Improvement Group which aims to drive improvements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Professionals and organisations protecting children need to reflect on the quality of their services and learn from their own practice and that of others. Good practice should be shared so that there is a growing understanding of what works well.

CSPR Sub Group

The function of the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Group is to ensure that recommendations from learning review, rapid reviews and CSPR's is appropriately considered by the partners and that action is taken to evidence positive impact and change for children and young people in Cheshire East.

Child Death Overview Panel

The Pan-Cheshire Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) is a multi-agency body that the NHS Integrated Care Board and the four Cheshire local authorities (the child death review partners) are required to arrange as stated in the Childrens Act 2004 and Child Death Review Statutory and Operational Guidance September 2018. This is to improve the experience of bereaved families, as well as professionals, after the death of a child; and to ensure that information from the child death review process is systematically captured to enable local learning and through the planned National Child Mortality Database, to identify learning at the national level, and inform changes in policy and practice.

This panel has representatives from the NHS, Police. The panel meets on at least a quarterly basis in Cheshire East to review cases. The four Cheshire local authorities are represented each areas Head of Service for Safeguarding and Quality Assurance. It also commissions an independent chair.

Cheshire East Council (through Public Health) currently manage both the contract of the independent chair and the CDOP administration is hosted by Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. A yearly report is provided by CDOP and scrutinised at the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership board.

Education Board

The function of the Education Board is to identify and discuss issues and risks raised by educational providers and where required, to highlight these to the DSPs and make recommendations. The board will support educational providers with awareness of and compliance with national legislation, policies, guidance, best practice and findings from national case reviews related to safeguarding including highlighting changes. Educational providers will be provided awareness and understanding of any key local developments in relation to safeguarding including guidance, findings from inspection, audits and case reviews and will be expected to feedback to the partnership on the implication of decisions and policy changes relating to safeguarding in education settings. The Education Board will provide an opportunity for educational providers to identify and share best safeguarding practice and consider themes from Ofsted / Independent Schools Inspectorate reports / inspections. Representatives from educational settings are enabled to link with the work of the partnership and refer to sub-groups as appropriate and develop a work plan to carry out such work as agreed with the partnership in line with the partnership and the group's priorities. The Board will be expected to report annually on the work plan and contribute to the production of the annual report.

10. Task and Finish Groups and Independent Scrutiny

Our partnership priorities for 2024/ 2025 are:

- ❖ **Contextual Safeguarding and Serious and Organised Crime (CS/SOC)**
- ❖ **Sexual Abuse**
- ❖ **Children missing from Education**
- ❖ **Neglect**

To help deliver and progress practice in these areas, we have task and finish groups which report directly into the strategic safeguarding groups and ultimately, the Multi Agency Quality Assurance group. The Multi Agency Quality Assurance group feeds directly into the DSPs and LSPs. The safeguarding partnership recognises the importance of voice of the child in our arrangements and this an overarching theme and area of focus that runs through all of its activity in 2024/2025.

Quality Assurance The areas of focus task groups will meet quarterly. The task groups will report into the multi-agency safeguarding operational group where any practice issues can be considered and understood in a partnership context. Any new or emerging themes will be reported into the Learning and Improvement Group for further consideration. These groups will measure success against the objectives outlined in the terms of reference for these group as well as through the partnership scorecard to ensure we are delivering a high standard of practice and are evidencing impact.

Independent Scrutiny

| Area of Scrutiny | Board signs off on the scope | Delivery of the scrutiny work | Report to be with the Board |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Contextual Safeguarding | January 2025 | Feb – March 2025 | April 2025 |
| Sexual Abuse | February 2025 | March – April 2025 | May 2025 |
| Neglect | April 2025 | May – June 2025 | July 2025 |
| Education as a Protective Factor | August 2025 | September – October 2025 | November 2025 |

Cheshire East Safeguarding Children’s Partnership has dedicated Independent Scrutiny who holds the partnership to account. The Independent Scrutineer provides challenge of how the partnership is meeting its statutory duties. Additional scrutiny will then be scheduled against our safeguarding partnership priorities to further assure that our work is delivering the intended impact. The partnership will consider who holds the right skills and experience aligned to the area of scrutiny planned to commission the right person. This level of scrutiny will be 4 times a year set out by the Multi-Agency Quality Assurance Group. The priorities for scrutiny are proposed as follows for the Boards approval or amendments:

11. Relevant Agencies

The strength of local partnership working is predicated on safeguarding partners working together collaboratively with relevant agencies whose involvement the safeguarding partners consider is required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

These organisations and agencies are referred to as relevant agencies and when nominated by the safeguarding partners as relevant agency organisations, should act in accordance with the arrangements through fully engaging with the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership functions as set out within this document, providing information which enables and assists the safeguarding partners to perform their functions to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area, including as related to local and national child safeguarding practice reviews. Relevant agencies should ensure that their organisation works in accordance with the safeguarding procedures and protocols approved by the partnership and have robust safeguarding policies and procedures in place specifically relevant to their organisation.

Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership recognises that, similar to staff in schools and colleges, the staff and volunteers working with children in these settings will 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. Therefore, many of these organisations will have a crucial role to play in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Relevant agencies will anticipate fully in multi-agency audits and assurance activities when required.

Our relevant agencies include:

East Cheshire NHS Foundation Trust

Mid Cheshire NHS Foundation Trust

Wirral Community NHS Trust

Cheshire Fire and Rescue

Styal Prison

CAFCASS

Education [School organisation](#) (Click the link to see the list of schools in CE) ,

Voluntary and Faith sectors [CheshireEast MarketPlace](#)

British Transport Police

Adoption Counts

Children's Centres

As the partnership transitions into the new governance arrangements, it will call upon the experience and expertise of relevant agencies. The partnership training programme is made widely available to all the above relevant agencies. The partnership is ambitious to include all agencies voices in the arrangements and currently have a voluntary and faith representative joining the partnership board meeting, including 2 voluntary agencies. There is also voluntary agency representation at the Child and Young People's Trust board and within some of the task and finish groups around the partnership priorities. The Children's Centres directly feed into the Early Help Board and the chair feeds directly into the partnership board.

As mentioned, education has been named in Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership as a statutory partner. This will include all local education and childcare providers working with children up to the age of 18, including alternative provision, pupil referral units and further education will be included because of the pivotal role they play in children's daily lives and amount of time they spend with them. This will be done through establishing an Education board, as described in the governance structure.

12. How any youth justice and custody services and residential homes for children will be included in the safeguarding arrangements

As identified in Working Together (2023), the safeguarding arrangements of the partnership have to take into account how any youth justice, custody services and residential homes for children will be included.

Youth Justice and Custody Services Cheshire East has no youth custody facilities within the local authority area. It does have a well-established PanCheshire Youth Justice Service Board which the Director of Children's Services sits on to provide oversight and governance of youth justice services within our local authority area. The Cheshire East Children's Safeguarding Partnership would expect to be alerted to any safeguarding issues relating to secure facilities where Cheshire East children are placed.

The Youth Justice Service is well integrated within the partnership. Staff from the service are represented across a range of groups. Youth Justice contribute to the work of the partnership around children and young people who are risk of exploitation and children and young people who go missing.

As a multi-agency partnership, the Youth Justice Service has strong working relationships with the police in particular and have developed the DIVERT strategy to ensure that children and young people at risk are identified early and diverted from criminal and civil proceedings.

Residential Homes Cheshire East are part of a North West Provider Forum to enable better communication and information sharing. Any safeguarding concerns are notified to Ofsted and the partnership would expect to be alerted to any safeguarding issues relating to residential provision where Cheshire East children are placed.

Cheshire East Local Authority currently owns 2 3 bed residential homes. Each home works with their local safeguarding partners to agree how they will work together, and with the placing authority, to make sure that the needs of the individual children are met and the staff have access to the full programme of partnership training.

Secure Youth Establishments Where a child becomes looked after, as a result of being remanded to youth detention accommodation (YDA), Cheshire East local authority will visit the child and assess the child's needs before taking a decision on how they should be supported. This information will be used to prepare the care plan, which will set out how the child's needs will be met whilst the child remains remanded, and at any point of transition they will experience (either returning to the community or upon receiving a custodial sentence). The care plan will be reviewed in the same way as a care plan for any other looked after child.

13. Information Sharing

When identified by the LSP's as a relevant agency, an organisation must share information and data about safeguarding issues and concerns affecting the children involved in their organisation to contribute to local priorities. The joint function of safeguarding partners is to implement effective information sharing arrangements between agencies, including data sharing that facilitates joint analysis between partner agencies.

Effective information sharing underpins integrated working and is a vital element of both early intervention and safeguarding. Research and experience have repeatedly shown that keeping children safe from harm requires practitioners to record, analyse and understand the significance of the information they have about: a child's health and development and any exposure to possible harm; a parent who may need help, or may not be able to care for a child adequately and safely; and those who may pose a risk of harm to a child.

It is vital that information is shared in an appropriate and timely fashion. Often, it is only when information from a number of sources has been shared and is then put together, that it becomes clear that a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Practitioners should 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 includes when problems first emerge, or where a child is already known to local authority children's social care (e.g. they are being supported as a child in need or have a child protection plan).

14. Partnership Training and Development

WT23 states the delegated safeguarding partners' joint functions should include *"the provision of appropriate multi-agency safeguarding professional development and training"*. The content and quality of the training must *"support collective understanding of the demographics and needs of the local community, the local practice framework, and the services available to support children"*.

The Cheshire East Safeguarding Children Partnership training programme seeks to strengthen and develop a vibrant offer to meet diverse and comprehensive local demands. These are satisfied through mixed delivery of core topics and specialist subjects throughout which consistent key messages are weaved. Programme content is regularly reviewed and updated, informed by service consultations, feedback mechanisms, on-going audits and practice case review findings. The overall programme incorporates current expert knowledge and research, wider case review significant findings and statutory guidance.

As such, core topics that are repeated across the year include:

| | |
|--|---|
| Contextual Safeguarding and Serious and Organised Crime | Sexual Abuse: Intrafamilial Harm, Harmful Practices, Responding to Sexual Assault and Harmful Sexual Behaviours |
| Complex Neglect | Fundamental Safeguarding |
| Child Protection Processes, including Education as a Protective Factor | Trio of Vulnerabilities (covering mental health, substance use and domestic abuse) |
| Professional Curiosity, Critical Thinking and Professional Challenge | Professional allegations and the LADO |
| Children with disabilities | Suicide Prevention and Planning |
| Digital Safeguarding | |

These topics are supplemented with a thorough range of relevant dynamic subjects that are delivered in a variety of ways to reach the widest audiences. For example, each month calendar invites are widely distributed for automatic ease of access to allow practitioners to join short lunchtime sessions and these appear under one of three titles:

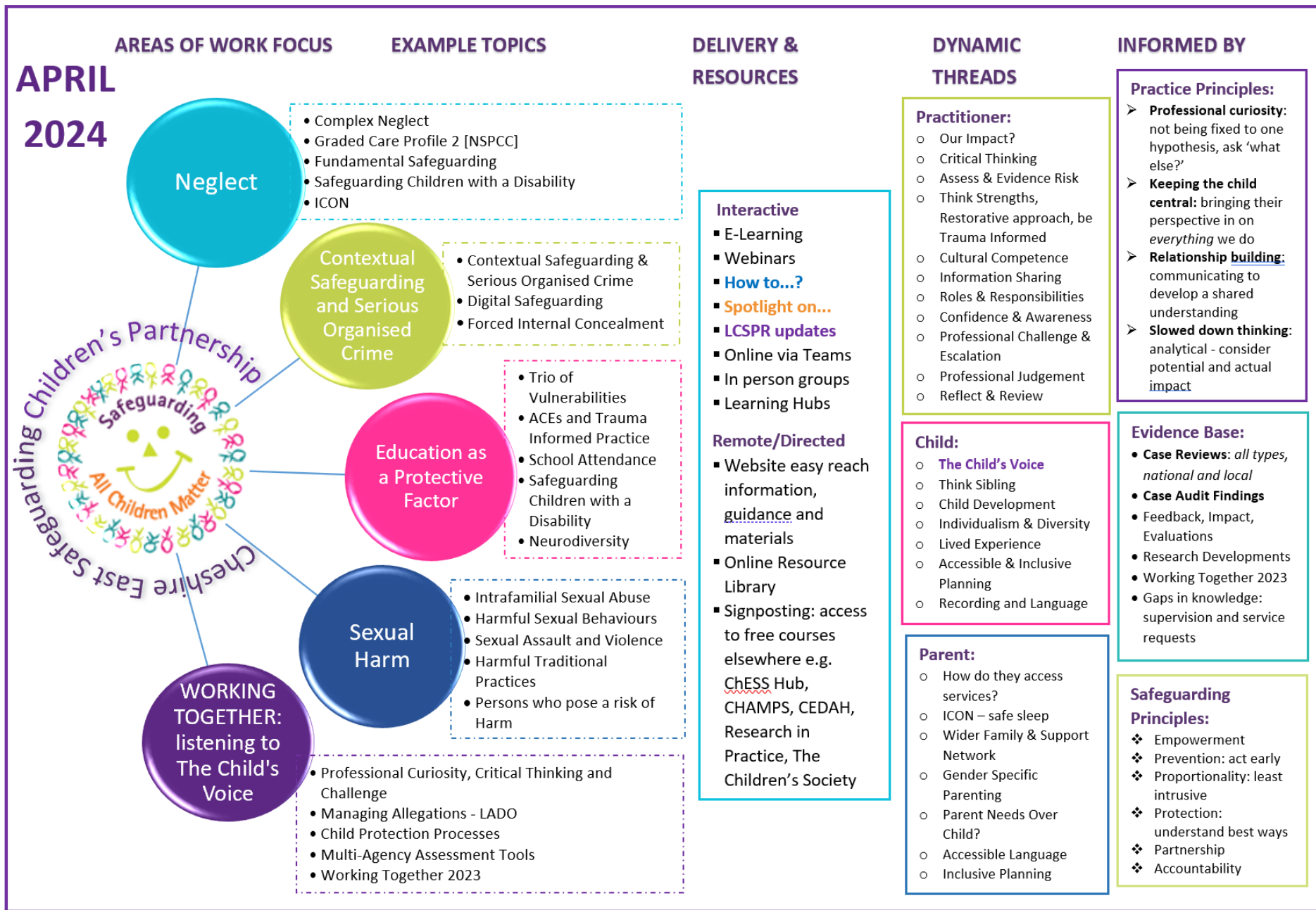
- *'Spotlight on...'* sessions highlight a service, team or individual, offering opportunities to 'meet and greet', build lines of communication, make contacts as well as understand roles and responsibilities.
- *'How to...'* forums offer practical guidance and advice to support workflows and procedural understanding and, to encourage shared/joined up approaches to working with children and families.
- *'LCSPR updates'* provide a monthly news desk facility for the partnership to disseminate recommendations from case reviews and audits as is essential to support appropriate operational and mindful professional practice. This platform is also used to exchange information about relevant partnership events.

A highlight of the training calendar year each February is 'Learning Week' which plays host to an exciting and diverse assortment of activity with aims to inspire and encourage joined up best practice across the partnership. We have hosted a number of learning events that have considered child exploitation and child sexual abuse. New in November 2024, we are running a collaborative conference day to place emphasis on Vulnerable Infants and, for a full week in March 2025, we will turn our focus to the risks and vulnerabilities linked with adolescents. All these events give opportunity to introduce external knowledgeable speakers and, experts with lived experience are given space to use the power of their voice to facilitate professional learning.

The training offer is evolving and growing in line with service need. To find out more and to browse the detail of the training offer available, please follow the training link shown here:

https://form.cheshireeast.gov.uk/service/CESCP_Training_Booking_2023_24

15. Partnership Training



16. Engaging with children, young people and their families

The Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership has mechanisms for engaging with children and young people. There are spaces, forums and opportunities for us to listen to the voices and lived experiences of our children and young people, these include:

- Cheshire East Youth Council
- Children and Young People's Trust Board
- Cared for Children and Care Leavers Committee
- Corporate Parenting Strategic Board
- My VOICE and Junior My VOICE – Children in Care Council
- Care Leaver Monthly Meet Ups
- Care Leaver Ambassadors
- Jigsaw – SEND Youth Forum
- SEND Partnership Board
- Children and Families Committee

The activity of the partnership will reflect the outcomes of the [Children and Young People's Plan](#) to ensure we are working in collaboration with key stakeholders. This includes children, young people and their families feedback and lived experiences which are central in shaping the decisions and services that affect them and making sure that key learning is taken away to improve the practice of the workforce. Partnership priorities are interlinked with outcomes of the Children and Young People's Plan.

Since the launch of the [guidance on how to capture the voice and lived experiences of children and young people](#), there have been opportunities for professionals to access training to support improving their practice confidence when working with children and young people. Although services across the partnership work differently, there is a shared approach to capturing the voice and lived experiences of our children and young people.

To continue to strengthen how we capture and include the voice of children and young people, we have quality assurance mechanisms in place to make sure that the voice of the child and their lived experiences is recorded in a way that tells us exactly what life is like for them. This will be developed through the Participation and Engagement strategy. When Multi Agency audits are undertaken, we are ambitious to listen to the voices of children and use the learning to influence and shape practice through training and development opportunities which have an impact on the service that children and young people receive.

Moving forward we will:

- Cheshire East Senior Leaders and Partners have made a pledge to scheduled activities to listen to children and young people to obtain their views on safeguarding issues and these will inform partnership developments.
- We will continue to ask relevant agencies and other partners how they have captured the voices of children, young people and their families in their work as well as identifying other innovative ways to gather feedback through the partnership – including via Section 11 audit.
- Where possible we will involve families in learning reviews and events.
- Our Cheshire East Participation team will support this work and report directly to existing forums for children and young people in Cheshire East.

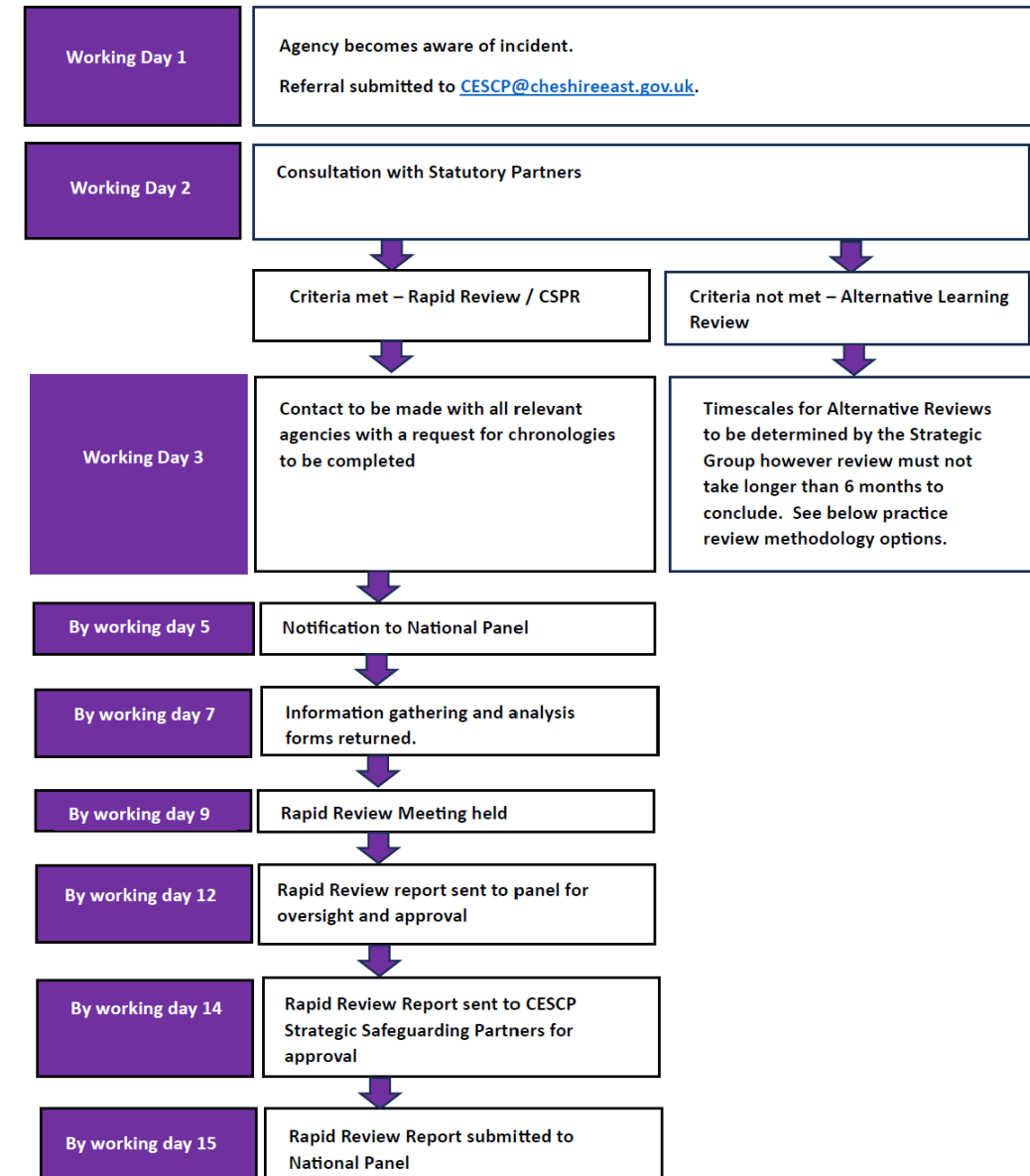
17. Arrangements for Local Safeguarding Child Practice Reviews & Notifications to the National Panel

The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Group oversee all serious incident cases and their corresponding recommendations and actions plans as well as consider examples of good practice. The group will be responsible for ensuring that actions are completed in a timely manner, that evidence of completed actions is submitted; and that key learning points are cascaded across the partnership. The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Group will agree the terms of reference for each local review, monitor progress with the review, and lead on the development of any improvement plans coming out of the review. The progress will be reported to the Multi Agency Quality Assurance Group, and ultimately DSPs and LSPs.

Ofsted published guidance on how local authorities should report a serious incident of child abuse or neglect, or the death of a child who is looked after. From 29 June 2018, local authorities in England must notify the national Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel within five working days of becoming aware of a serious incident.

The local authority will notify the National Panel of the death of a care leaver up to and including the age of 24. The partnership is aware that this may not always require a rapid review or local child safeguarding practice review. However, safeguarding partners will consider whether the criteria for a serious incident has been met and respond accordingly, in the event the deceased care leaver was under the age of 18. If local partners think that learning can be gained from the death of a looked after child or care leaver in circumstances where those criteria do not apply, they will undertake a local child safeguarding practice review. Notifications are made online using the online form for notifications of serious incidents for local authorities and separate notification forms are used for adoption support agencies, children’s homes, independent fostering agencies, residential family centres, and secure children’s homes.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-a-serious-child-safeguarding-incident> and <https://childsafeguarding.education.gov.uk/>



18. Budget for the partnership and arrangements for funding

The current income is made up of contributions from the Local Authority including school contributions, Health partners, the Police and Styal Prison.

Arrangements are in place through the Strategic Alliance group to enable the LSP's to agree on the level of funding needed to deliver the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. This includes consideration of business and analytical support, independent scrutiny, infrastructure, and core functions including local children safeguarding practice reviews, multi-agency training and learning events. It is the responsibility of the LSP to ensure that adequate funding is allocated and spent in line with agreed priorities.

As outlined in Working Together 2023, funding contributions from the statutory safeguarding partners should be equitable and agreed by the LSP. Funding for the arrangements are reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that they can meet the financial needs of the arrangements. The funding is also detailed in the yearly report.

There is work being undertaken by the North West Regional Improvement pilot, funded by the DfE, regarding a funding formula. It is anticipated that this piece of work should conclude by April 2025 and will support the partnership to develop equitable contributions.

Contributions in 2024/2025 are as follows:

| Funding Agency | 2024-2025 |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| Local Authority | £169,968 |
| Police | £27,825 |
| ICB | £43,146 |
| East Cheshire NHS Trust | £5250 |
| Cheshire and Wirral Partnership | £4298 |
| Wirral Community NHS Trust | £5775 |
| Mid Cheshire Hospital NHS Trust | £7111 |
| Schools | £50,000 |
| HM Prison & Probation Service | £2520 |
| Total Contributions | £315,893 |

19. Yearly Report

Safeguarding partners must jointly report on the activity they have undertaken in a 12-month period. The focus of the report will be on multi-agency priorities, learning, impact, evidence, and improvement and ensure transparency of the activity undertaken. The report provides an analysis of the effectiveness of our local arrangements, including progress against the partnership's areas of focus and the impact the partnership's activity has had on the lives and experiences of our children, young people, families and communities.

Within the annual report, the partnership provides details of any safeguarding practice reviews undertaken, the findings from multi-agency audits and any thematic reviews completed to highlight the learning identified and what the partnership have done to embed the learning into front line practice.

The report captures the ways in which the partnership have sought and utilised feedback from children, young people and families to inform their work and influence service provision.

The annual report will be widely available and is published on the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership website along with being formally scrutinised through the governance arrangement and independent scrutineer.

20. Multi-agency escalations and dispute resolution

Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership is committed to the continuous improvement of multi-agency safeguarding and child protection practice. Generally, there is a good working relationships between partner agencies in Cheshire East. Differences and debates are all part of multi-agency working and are useful tools to support appropriate and respectful challenge to improve outcomes for children and their families. If there are serious differences of views on how best to manage risk and safeguarding, and protect vulnerable children and young people, then escalation polices provide a framework for exploring and resolving professional disagreements.

Cheshire East's Safeguarding Children's Partnership encourages agencies to speak up and arbitrate different views on practice issues and provides a psychologically safe culture in which this can happen. All partners are expected to make use of the multi-agency escalation policy to avoid exacerbating or prolonging conflict, and to avoid any possible impact on children and young people.

When a disagreement arises between members of the partnership, then the general principles of resolution with apply. Any statutory agency can request a multi-agency meeting where there is a need to resolve professional differences, however, where resolution cannot be achieved the three statutory partners can act as arbitrators/mediators in the case of protracted or intractable disagreements.

There is an expectation that agencies will have systems for recording when escalation policies are used and how disagreements are resolved. There is also an expectation that the terms of reference for all multi-agency panels and meetings includes reference to what to do if there is a disagreement.

In line with Working Together 2023, at all stages LSPs and their delegates should make use of key stakeholders in their local systems, that might include Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), lead members, and independent persons, who can be brought to the table to assist them to settle on a solution. All escalations will be overseen at the Multi Agency Quality Assurance group which reports to the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership board and the Strategic Alliance Group.

For more details on the multi-agency escalation and dispute resolution policy, please follow this link:

https://www.proceduresonline.com/pancheshire/cheshire_east/p_escalation_pol.html