

Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership

Multi-Agency Arrangements for Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children in Bolton



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We would like to extend our thanks to Carole Brooks, Carole Brooks Associates Limited for her independent review of this document and her comments.

For further information about the arrangements, share your experiences of safeguarding in Bolton or get involved in the work we do, contact:

Phone **01204 337479**

Email **boltonsafeguardingchildren@bolton.gov.uk**

Welcome and Introduction

Bolton is evolving and ambitious. There is a clear vision for our communities, the children and families who live in them and the people who work here to be 'Active, Connected and Prosperous' by 2030. Key to this vision is keeping children safe and it is the role of the new Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership to ensure this happens.

We are privileged to be building our new arrangements on the strengths of our safeguarding children board and the successes it has achieved in developing multi-agency work to safeguard children. This new partnership has been established in accordance with statutory requirements¹ which places the responsibility for ensuring strong multi-agency safeguarding systems on us, as the three statutory partners. This is an exciting opportunity for us and all our partners to further improve children's safeguarding outcomes; creating an environment where multi-agency practice is strong and builds on the strengths of families.

We want the arrangements to be inclusive and driven by the experiences and views of children, families, communities and practitioners in Bolton. We hope you will take time to read these arrangements, reflect, get involved and tell us what you think.

¹ Children Act 1989, Children Act 2004 and Children and Social Work Act 2017



Su Long -
Chief Officer,
Bolton Clinical
Commissioning Group



Tony Oakman -
Chief Executive,
Bolton Council



Stuart Ellison -
Chief Superintendent,
Greater Manchester Police



Bolton's Children

Number of children in Bolton



There are

67,433

children in Bolton aged 0-17

Percentage of population who are children

23.7%
Bolton



21.3%
England

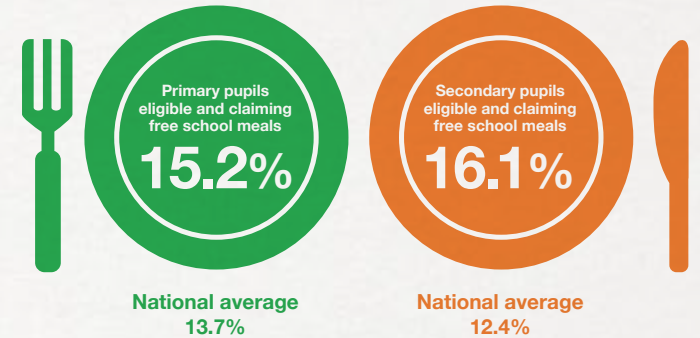
There are 7,020 young people in Bolton (Aged 16 and 17)
295/4.2% of these are not in education, employment or training

Poverty levels in Bolton versus England



National Average 17%

Children with Free school meals in Bolton versus England



Domestic abuse incidents involving children

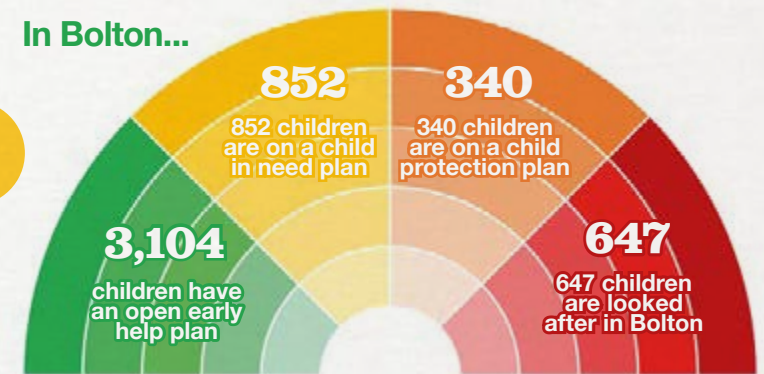
There were

2,719

Domestic abuse and violence incidents recorded as having a child present

(390 incidents per 10,000 children)

In Bolton...



Numbers of children classed as BME in Bolton versus England **29.5%** National average **24.6%**

Children aged 0-17 BME defined as all ethnic groups other than White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British

Bolton has **1,598** children with **Special educational needs**

Bolton's Services



1 Police Service

1 Hospital and community health provider



Further education establishments



Primary Schools

50 GP practices



Secondary schools



Special schools

Mental health services provided by Greater Manchester Mental Health Trust



Ambition and Vision

We want children in Bolton to grow up healthy, living in safe family networks and communities. We want children to gain the skills they need at home and in education, so they grow up to be independent, confident and achieve their full potential. We want all children to have a person who is there for them as a trusted adult who cares, nurtures and encourages them. We want children at the forefront engaging in the plans we make and the services we deliver.

We want a workforce that is passionate and understands children, practitioners who can advocate on their behalf. We want a workforce who understands the impact of adversity on children and on those adults, who care for them. When working with our children, young people, families and communities we want to build on what works.

It is the role of Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership is to be the strategic vehicle to drive forward the safety and welfare element of Bolton Vision 2030 for children and their families.

‘In Bolton we want to give all our children the best possible start in life, so that they have every chance to succeed, be safe and be happy’



The Partnership Values and Principles

Values

Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership have at their core a set of key values and principles which support and contribute to the Bolton Vision 2030. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018² states that the purpose of local safeguarding arrangements is to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together in a system where:

- Children are safeguarded, and their welfare promoted
- Partner organisations and agencies collaborate, share and co-own the vision for how to achieve improved outcomes for vulnerable children
- Organisations and agencies challenge appropriately and hold one another to account effectively
- There is early identification and analysis of new safeguarding issues and emerging threats
- Learning is promoted and embedded in a way that local services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice
- Information is shared effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families
- Tackling disadvantage and promoting equality for all children

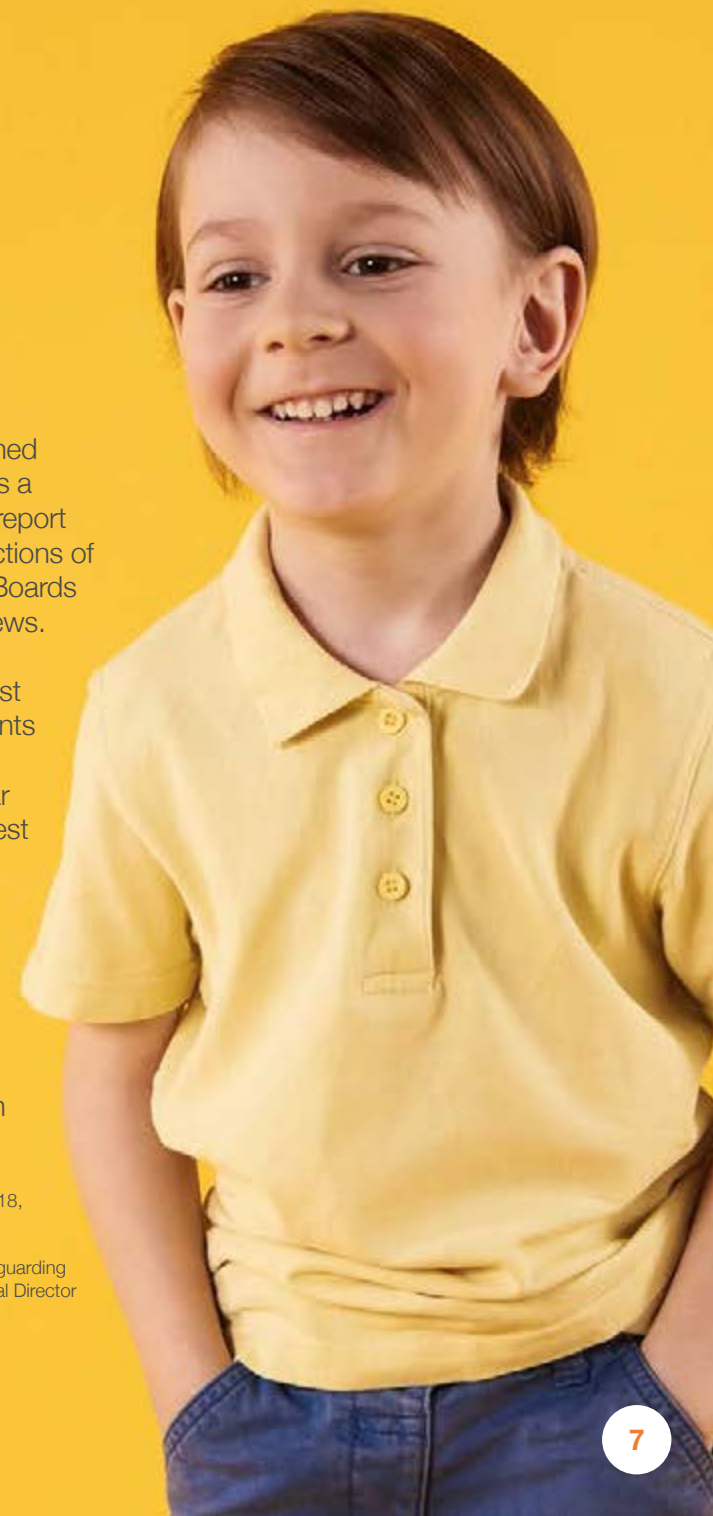
Principles

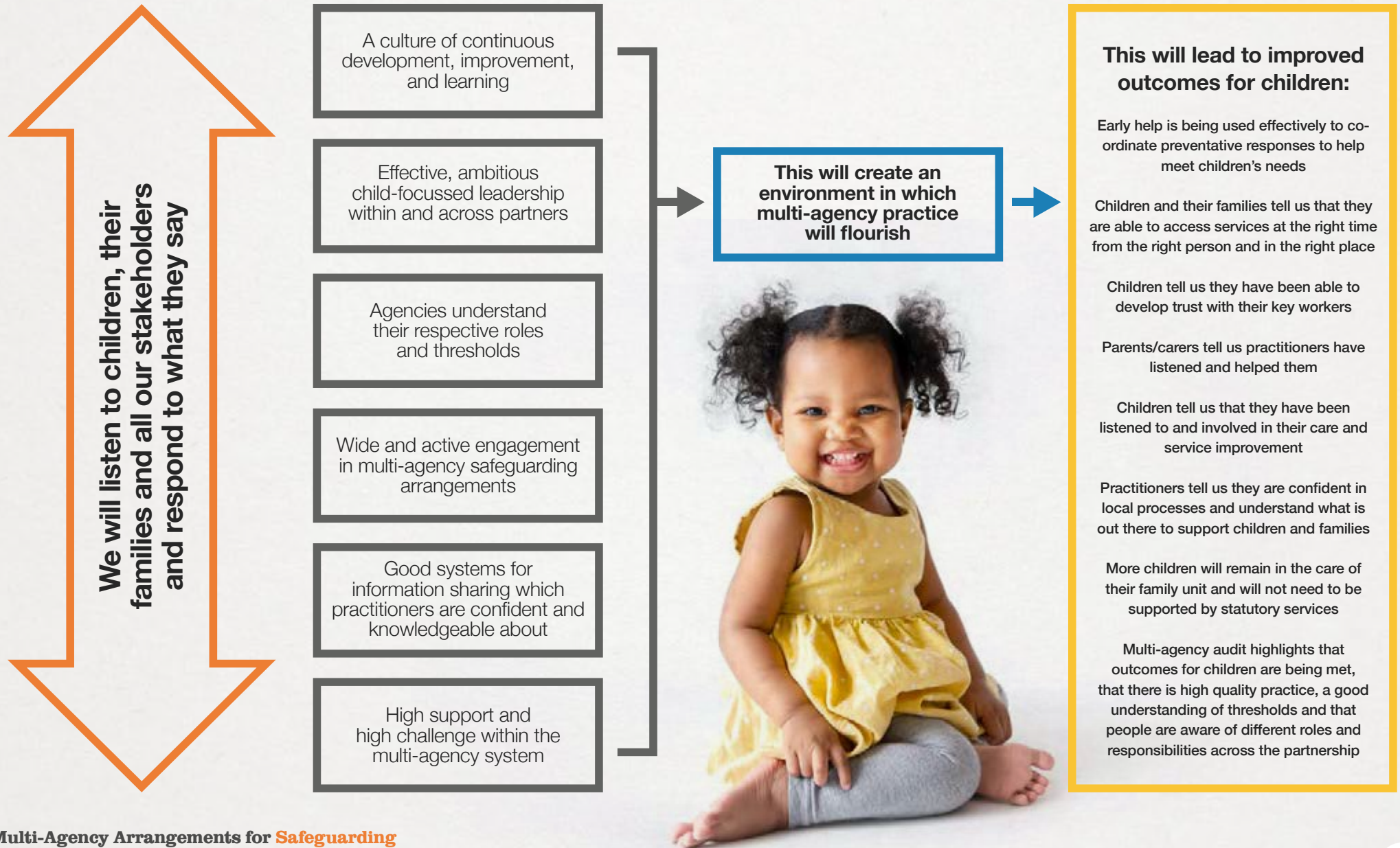
In July 2018 Ofsted's National Director of Social Care published a commentary on what makes a successful partnership³. This report drew on evidence from inspections of Local Safeguarding Children Boards and Joint Targeted Area Reviews.

Ofsted highlighted that the best local safeguarding arrangements are developed from a shared vision, shared values and clear ambition to secure the very best responses to children at risk of harm in their community. Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership have adopted and developed the components as our key principles and provided measure of what they mean in practice.

²Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, Chapter 3, page 74, para 8

³ Social care commentary: multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, Yvette Stanley, Ofsted National Director for Social Care, 10 July 2018





Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership will create a culture of continuous development, improvement and learning. In practice this means:

- We will use partnership data and intelligence to identify what we do well and where we need to make improvements
- We will ensure high quality single and multi-agency audit is regularly used to provide insight into the lives of children and frontline practice to identify good practice and opportunities for learning
- We will promote and model an open, honest culture to enable opportunities to learn and improve
- We will ensure that 'practice reviews' focus on the lived experiences of children and the learning is used to improve safeguarding practice
- We will ensure strong collaborative working between the safeguarding partnership and front-line practitioners, enabling alerts and trends to be identified and acted upon quickly to safeguard children
- We will provide multi-agency training which is well aligned to the strategic priorities of the partnership and learning from assurance activity, to make a positive difference to practice and outcomes for children and their families

Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership will ensure that agencies understand their respective roles and thresholds. In practice this means:

- We will have a shared multi-agency safeguarding training and induction offer across Bolton
- Our local threshold document will set out our local safeguarding arrangements from early help to protection; all relevant agencies, local partnerships and commissioned services will demonstrate how they have integrated and implemented the framework within their safeguarding processes
- We will ensure a joined-up approach to deliver timely responses to vulnerable children that all stakeholders understand
- At a strategic level we will have a good understanding of professional practice to enable good quality decision-making
- We accept that it is not possible to eliminate all risk to children despite our best actions and interventions. However, we will support front-line practitioners, through our safeguarding systems, policy, training and other relevant resources, to develop the skills and knowledge to manage and reduce risk as much as we can

Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership will ensure effective, ambitious child-focussed leadership within and across partners. In practice this means:

- Our leadership will focus on the voice of the child and their lived experience – we will challenge ourselves at every meeting across the partnership to identify ‘what difference are we making to their lives?’
- We will have a shared vision for keeping children safe across Bolton - safeguarding is everyone’s business
- We will have a shared set of safeguarding outcomes for children in Bolton
- We will use partnership intelligence effectively to identify vulnerable children, local need and inform our priorities; partnership intelligence will help us identify our areas of success and help us replicate what works locally
- Our leaders will have a clear line of sight on both the operational and the strategic response locally including the quality of frontline practice
- Our leaders will champion safeguarding in their organisations and across wider partnerships in Bolton
- Our commissioning arrangements will take account of the diversity, needs and wishes of children in Bolton and ensure local services deliver interventions to children and their families that make safeguarding children everyone’s responsibility
- Our leaders will have high expectations of their teams and hold people to account as appropriate

Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership will enable wide and active engagement in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. In practice this means:

- We will ensure that a range of agencies including the voluntary and community sector, education and adult services are involved in developing and implementing multi-agency plans, priorities and processes to safeguard children
- We will ensure that we actively involve children, young people and families when we develop local safeguarding responses
- We will work with other strategic partnerships in Bolton and in Greater Manchester on shared priorities to achieve better outcomes for Bolton children
- Safeguarding arrangements will be embedded within all commissioning arrangements

Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership will ensure high support and high challenge within the multi-agency system. In practice this means:

- We will ensure effective arrangements for independent scrutiny of partnership arrangements
- We will ensure that there is good quality safeguarding children training and supervision across the partnership; this will be evidenced through audit, local assurance processes and practitioner feedback
- We will embed a culture of relationship-based working across Bolton focused on individuals' strengths and with confidence to challenge respectfully as required
- We will ensure that there are clear processes for challenging decisions or escalating concerns about individual children or about partnership decision making

Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership will ensure good systems for information sharing which practitioners are confident and knowledgeable about. In practice this means:

- We will have a system which is clear on the lawful basis for sharing and processing information to protect confidentiality and ensure consent is used where applicable
- We will ensure information sharing agreements are in place for all relevant agencies and within commissioning arrangements
- Where barriers to information sharing are highlighted we will work as a partnership to address these, undertaking the necessary data protection impact assessments

Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership Priorities

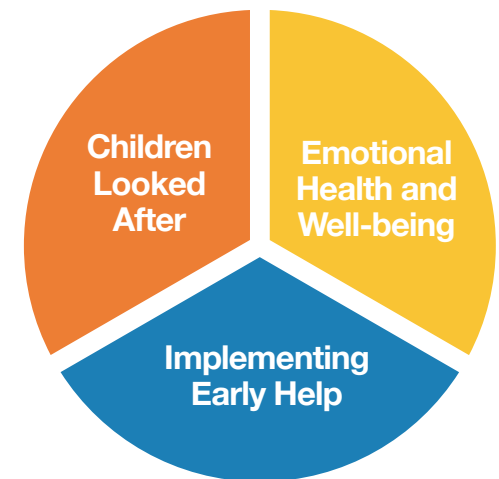
The new partnership has decided to retain the priorities previously agreed by the Bolton Safeguarding Children Board for 2018-2019. The partnership will promote creative approaches to ensure the priorities are progressed, for example by strengthening joint working with the Bolton Community Safety Partnership around domestic abuse and violence and exploring opportunities to work with neighbouring authorities where the priorities are aligned such as childhood neglect.

Our local priority areas for 2019-2020 are:



In addition to the priority areas, Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership will seek assurances about areas of practice which directly impact on keeping children safe.

Our areas for assurance are:



Delivering Effective Arrangements

Three Safeguarding Partners

Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership is led by three statutory partners; Bolton Local Authority, Bolton Clinical Commissioning Group and Greater Manchester Police. The three Safeguarding Partners have a shared and equal duty to make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in Bolton.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 states that the lead representatives for the Safeguarding Partners are the local authority chief executive, the accountable officer of a clinical commissioning group, and a chief officer of police. In Bolton the lead representatives⁴ are: -

Su Long	Chief Officer	Bolton Clinical Commissioning Group
Tony Oakman	Chief Executive	Bolton Council
Stuart Ellison	Chief Superintendent,	Greater Manchester Police

The lead representatives can delegate their functions although they each retain accountability for any actions or decisions taken on behalf of their agency. In Bolton, the lead representatives have identified the following senior officers in their respective agencies as the delegated authority: -

Michael Robinson	Associate Director of Governance and Safety (Executive Lead for Safeguarding)	Bolton Clinical Commissioning Group
Bernie Brown	Interim Director of People	Bolton Council
Rick Jackson	Superintendent	Greater Manchester Police

Each delegated representative will: -

- 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

Each of the delegated representatives will ensure a clear line of sight to their respective lead representatives and as a minimum the annual report will be published on the website and discussed within each agency.

⁴ All details correct at time of publication, June 2019

Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership

Relevant agencies

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 requires Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership to identify relevant agencies. Relevant agencies are those organisations and agencies whose involvement the Safeguarding Partners consider is key to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children.

Education Settings	
Early Years Provider Forum	Bolton Primary Schools Executive
Bolton Learning Alliance (Secondary School Head Teacher Forum)	Bolton Sixth Form Colleges
Bolton Association of Special Schools	
Voluntary and Community Sector	
Bolton Community and Voluntary Services	Bolton Together Consortium - Children's Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Organisations
Health Services, Including Substance Misuse and Mental Health	
Bolton NHS Foundation Trust	Greater Manchester Mental Health Foundation Trust
Bolton GP Practices	
Criminal Justice	
National Probation Service	Cheshire & Greater Manchester Community Rehabilitation Company
Bolton Youth Offending Team	
Housing Sector	
Bolton at Home	Bolton Community Housing

Partnerships

Bolton Health and Well-being Board
Be Safe Community Safety Partnership
Bolton Safeguarding Adults Board
Bolton Residential Children's Homes Forum (in development)

Other

Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue - Bolton
Department for Work and Pensions

The above partner organisations have been selected as relevant agencies given the key strategic and operational insight they provide to keeping children and their families safe. However, in line with statutory guidance, the three safeguarding partners retain the right to request representatives from other agencies/organisations as the partnership develops or need arises from areas of partnership work.

Each relevant agency will nominate a named contact(s) with whom Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership will link and liaise. Some of these representatives will be asked to lead or be directly involved with key work areas and will sit on the implementation group. For others, we will ensure regular contact and discussion via a virtual network to ensure their contribution to safeguarding children is effective. They will also be able to contribute to the delivery groups.

Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership

Relevant agencies will: -

- Act in accordance with the local safeguarding arrangements
- Have appropriate robust safeguarding policies and procedures in place
- Have clear arrangements on how information will be shared amongst all relevant agencies and the Safeguarding Partners
- Be aware of the expectations placed on them by the new arrangements

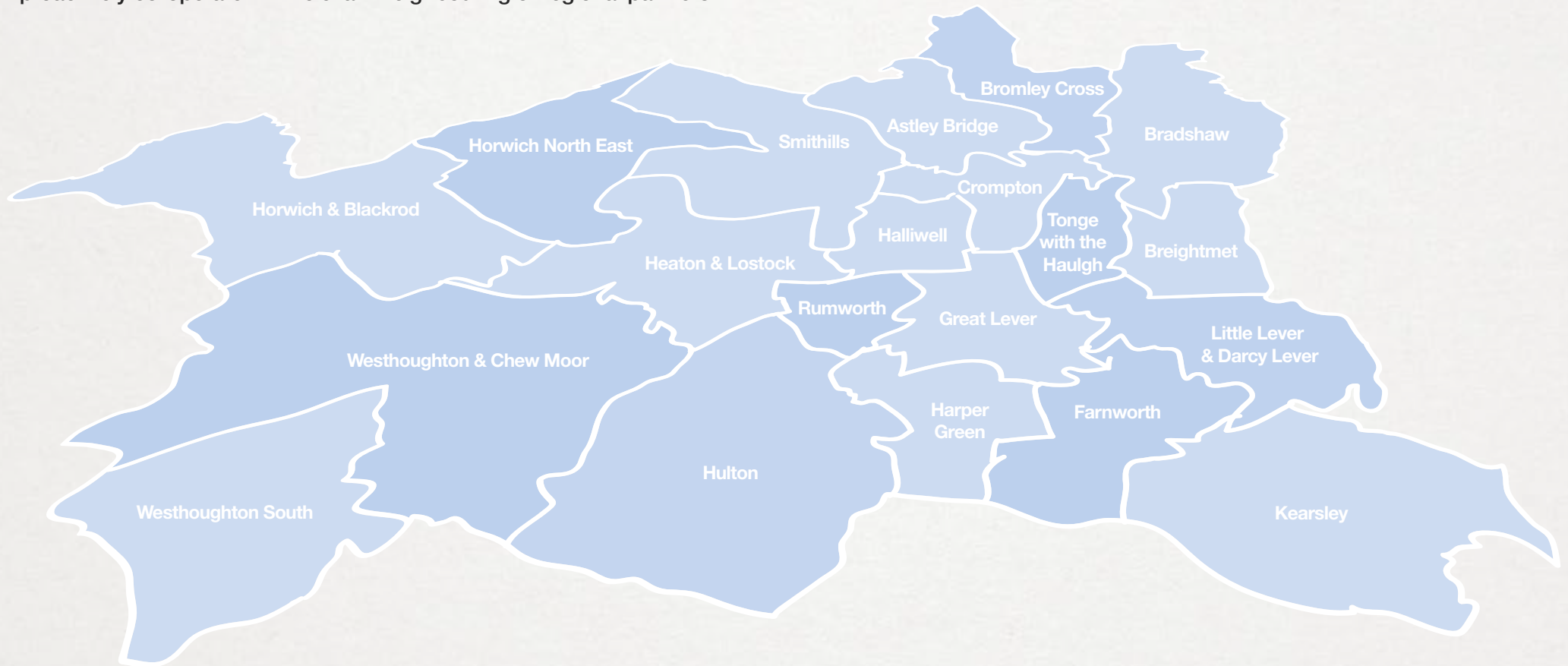
Organisations and agencies not named in the relevant agency regulations, whilst not under a statutory duty, should nevertheless co-operate and collaborate with Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership particularly as they may have duties under section 10 and/or section 11 of the Children Act 2004.



Geographical Area

The Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership arrangements are applicable to Bolton's resident population and covers all areas contained within the Bolton boundary. However, where there are opportunities and benefits to develop responses across a wider geographical footprint we will proactively co-operate with relevant neighbouring or regional partners.

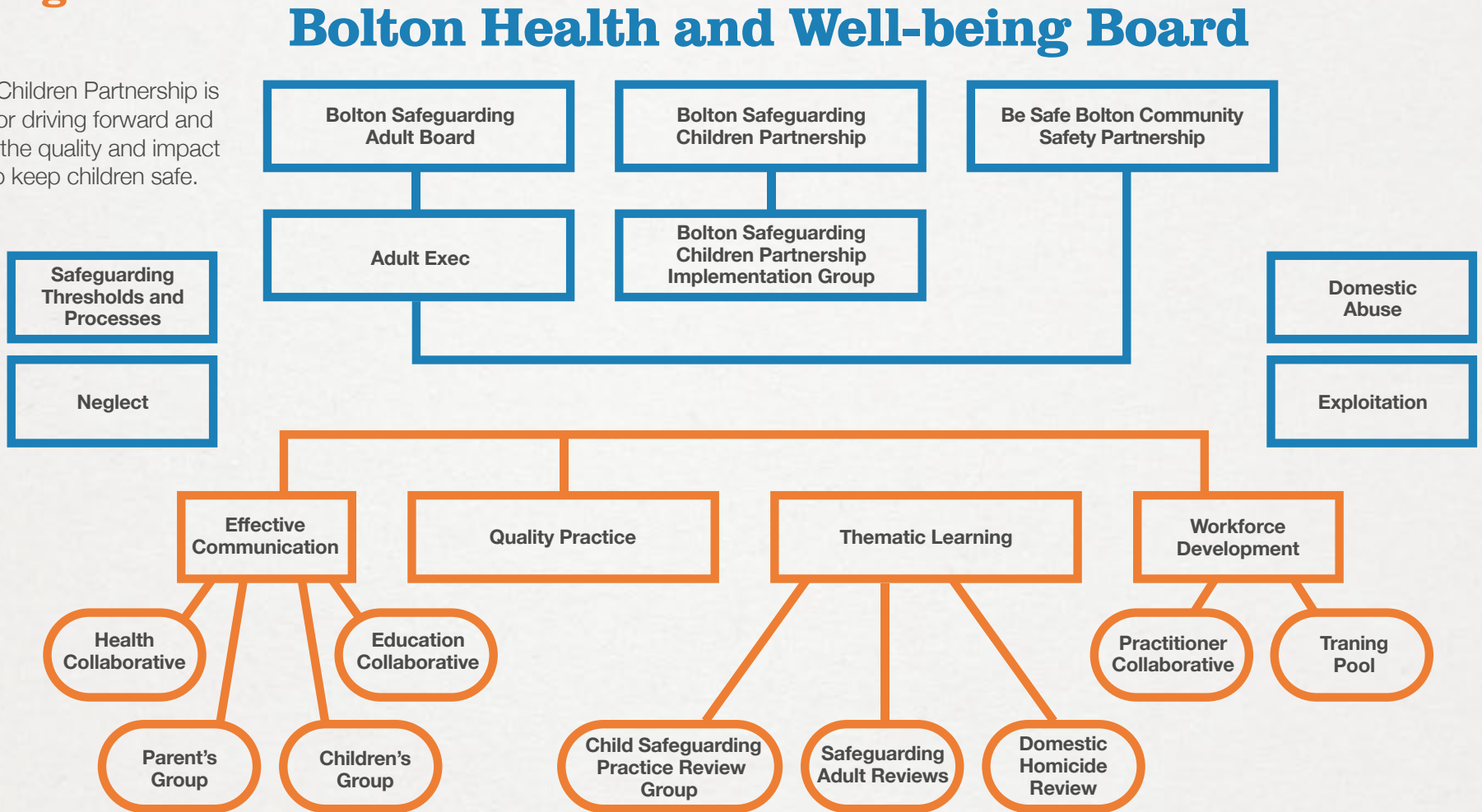
All services delivering support or interventions to children and their families within Bolton, including statutory services or commissioned services, the voluntary, community and faith sector should ensure they demonstrate compliance with the safeguarding arrangements.



The Strategic Vehicle - driving safeguarding forward

Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership is the strategic vehicle for driving forward and continually improving the quality and impact of partnership work to keep children safe.

The Structure:



Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership

Bolton Safeguarding Partnership is responsible for: -

- Creating the local safeguarding system - setting out how all services⁵ delivering support or interventions to children and their families in Bolton will work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children from early help through to protective action
- Identifying priority themes and associated outcomes for children
- Agreeing and implementing scrutiny and assurance arrangements to evaluate the effectiveness of the safeguarding system
- Ensuring the system learns from front-line practice and responds to the experiences of children, adults and the workforce
- Ensuring the system is responsive to emerging risk and threat to children's safety and welfare
- The partnership will meet every two months between July 2019 and March 2020; this will be reviewed at year-end 2019-2020
- The partnership is chaired by the representative from the community and voluntary sector

⁵ Services refer to statutory agencies and commissioned services, the voluntary, community and faith sector and relevant others providing interventions to children and their families

Bolton Safeguarding Partnership consists of the following members: -

ROLE	ORGANISATION
STATUTORY MEMBERS	
Director of People	Bolton Council
Associate Director of Governance and Safety	Bolton Clinical Commissioning Group
Superintendent	Greater Manchester Police
CORE MEMBERS	
Assistant Director Adult Services/Deputy Director of People	Bolton Council
Director of Transformation (Commissioning)/Deputy Chief Officer	Bolton Clinical Commissioning Group
Chief Executive Officer	Bolton Community and Voluntary Services
Director of Public Health	Bolton Council
Bolton Partnership Manager	Department for Work and Pensions
Community Safety Manager	Be Safe Community Safety Partnership
Assistant Chief Executive	National Probation Service
Chair	Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership Implementation Group
ADVISOR	
Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children	Bolton Clinical Commissioning Group

Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership

Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership - Implementation Group

Responsible for tracking and evaluating progress across the partnership to priority themes via the partnership business plan. Membership will be drawn from the chairs of the delivery and priority area groups; this group will meet every two months between July 2019 and March 2020; this will be reviewed at March 2020.

Delivery Groups and Stakeholder Collaboratives

Two mechanisms have been agreed for progressing and continually evaluating the core business of Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership, namely the Delivery Groups and the Stakeholder Collaboratives.

Delivery Groups

The four delivery groups will draw membership from Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership, Bolton Safeguarding Adults Board and Be Safe, Bolton Community Safety Partnership and where practical will be integrated. The groups have joined together to strengthen partnership working, promote a co-ordinated approach and minimise duplication.

Effective Communication 'C'

responsible for ensuring key messages that help people to keep themselves and others safe in their communities are developed collaboratively and distributed; facilitate and ensure the views and experiences from stakeholders inform the work of the partnership, including children, their families as well as the multi-agency workforce. This group will meet four times a year and be chaired by a partnership communications lead.

Multi-Agency Arrangements for Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children in Bolton

Quality Practice 'Q'

responsible for learning from partnership intelligence, assurance activity, practice reviews and audits, independent scrutiny etc. and imbedding this into practice to improve people's safety and welfare outcomes. This group will meet four times a year and be chaired by a partnership performance and quality lead.

Thematic Learning 'L'

responsible for bringing together the learning from local and statutory reviews; identifying and developing joint approaches to tackle key themes. This group will meet twice a year and be chaired by a partnership case review lead.

Workforce Development 'W'

responsible for commissioning and delivering professional development opportunities for practitioners to support them to respond to people's safety and welfare needs. This group will meet four times a year and be chaired by a partnership training and development lead.



Stakeholder Collaboratives

The collaboratives will facilitate a direct link between practitioners, children, families and communities and the partnership, making sure that these key stakeholders directly influence local safeguarding arrangements and provide their evaluation of what works well. In addition to meeting in person, there will be regular virtual communication.

Education Collaborative

this group brings together front-line safeguarding practitioners from the education sector, from early years through to further education. It will ensure a clear line of communication between education settings and the partnership; ensuring full engagement, involvement and inclusion in the safeguarding arrangements. This group will meet three times a year.

Health Collaborative

led by Bolton CCG this group brings together front-line safeguarding practitioners from the health sector. As with the Education Collaborative, it will ensure a clear line of communication between health providers and the partnership; ensuring full engagement, involvement and inclusion in the safeguarding arrangements. It will also provide a safeguarding link to NHS England. This group will meet four times a year.

Parents Collaborative

led by Bolton CVS this group will listen to the experiences of parents/carers who have been involved with the safeguarding system, from early help to children looked after to ensure their voices influence and inform front-line practice and service development. It will also provide a clear line of communication between the partnership and parents/carers.

Children's Collaborative

led by Bolton CVS this group will listen to the experiences of children who have been involved with the safeguarding system, from early help to children looked after to ensure their voices influence and inform front-line practice and service development. It will also provide a clear line of communication between the partnership and children.

Training Pool

led by the multi-agency training leads this group supports practitioners delivering workforce development on behalf of the adults safeguarding board and the safeguarding children partnership. It will work with practitioners to ensure local and national learning, themes and priority areas are embedded across the multi-agency safeguarding training offer.

Practitioner Collaborative

led by the partnership, this multi-agency group will initially meet twice a year as an open forum to discuss key issues such as current good practice, challenges faced by the workforce at the front-line, emerging safeguarding needs learning from case reviews/audit etc. It will also provide a clear line of communication between the partnership and front-line practitioners.



Partnership Priority Groups

In addition to driving forward core business, Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership will identify up to four priority areas annually where safeguarding practice requires specific development or strengthening.

The priority areas will be selected using a combination of learning from partnership intelligence, inspection findings, themes from local or national safeguarding reviews, local audit findings and national research reports. Short-life task and finish groups will be established to address the priority area and once completed the delivery groups will sustain and track the impact.

All priority groups will be required to ensure their work embeds the elements of:-

- **C** - Effective Communication
- **Q** - Quality Practice
- **L** - Informed by Learning
- **W** - Workforce Development



Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership

Resources and Funding

The statutory partners have an equal and joint responsibility to ensure there are sufficient and effective resources to support the arrangements. Bolton's Safeguarding Partners have agreed to co-locate key personnel to create a Strategic Safeguarding Partnership Hub. The aim of bringing a team together is to:

- Support the effective development and integration of the new arrangements
- Ensure co-ordination across the three partners
- Promote information sharing across wider partnerships
- Avoid duplication

The team will include core members:-

- Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership Business Manager
- Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership Multi-Agency Training Co-Ordinator
- Bolton Safeguarding Adults Board Business Manager
- Bolton Safeguarding Adults Board Multi-Agency Training Co-Ordinator (in development)
- Partnership Administrative Support

The team will be enhanced by representatives from:

- Designated Health Leads
- Community Safety Leads
- Local Authority Principal Social Workers from Adults and Children's Services

Multi-Agency Arrangements for Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children in Bolton

Practitioners and safeguarding leads from other services will be made welcome and this will further help the partnership to make links with the front-line.

Financial and in-kind contributions from multi-agency partners supported Bolton Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) to fulfil its statutory functions and enabled any underspends to be carried forward to fund expenditure in future years. BSCB partners agreed to commit these funds for 2019-2020 at the same level to support the transition to Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership for the first year.

Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership have committed to a review of agency contributions and overall expenditure during their first year. The agreed partnership budget and funding arrangements will be published in the first annual report.



Multi-Agency Safeguarding Training Offer

Commissioning and delivering an effective multi-agency safeguarding children training programme and maintaining a local training pool had been a key focus for Bolton Safeguarding Children Board. Bolton's multi-agency training pool consists of over 40 members delivering approximately 70 training courses from early help, to child protection, domestic abuse and child exploitation.

This programme has been well received by the workforce with high rates of attendance with clear examples of how the training offer has developed and improved practice.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018⁶ identifies the following responsibilities for the three safeguarding partners in terms of workforce development: -

- Multi-agency training will be important in supporting this collective understanding of local need
- The three safeguarding partners should consider what training is needed locally and how they will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of any training they commission

The three safeguarding partners have committed to retain the current model. They will seek to extend and enhance this offer by working with multi-agency training leads across the partnership, via the workforce development group. The aim of this work is to develop and deliver a 'safeguarding people' training offer in Bolton by 2020-2021, which includes clear safeguarding induction standards for all practitioners.

Multi-Agency Arrangements for Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children in Bolton

This offer will hold all multi-agency safeguarding training for adults and children in one place and will evaluate the impact of workforce development activity on practice as well as outcomes for children and families. This approach will avoid duplication and recognises the responsibility practitioners must keep both adults and children safe. The offer will also ensure a whole family approach is delivered whenever possible.

⁶ Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, Chapter 1, page 13, para 4



Independent Scrutiny and Partnership Assurance

Independent Scrutiny

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018⁷ requires the Safeguarding Partners to set out their plans for Independent Scrutiny. The purpose of independent scrutiny is to provide an impartial assessment of the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area.

Independent scrutiny should:-

- Be objective
- Be a constructive, reflective experience
- Identify strengths and address gaps
- Drive continuous improvement

Independent scrutiny should evaluate:-

- How effectively the arrangements are working for children and families
- How effectively the arrangements are working for practitioners
- How well the Safeguarding Partners are providing strong leadership
- The effectiveness of multi-agency working
- The Safeguarding Partner's Annual Report

Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership's principles in practice provides the framework against which the partnership will be scrutinised. The partnership has identified a two-year cycle for annual independent scrutiny which will be subject to review as the partnership matures. This approach enables the partnership to take a proportionate response to scrutiny findings and implement appropriate action. In the first year of operation the partnership will have an additional 'health-check' after six months of implementation.

⁷ Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, Chapter 3, page 78, para 31



Year 1

What we will scrutinise?

Effective, ambitious child-focussed leadership within and across partners

Agencies understand their respective roles and thresholds

Good systems for information sharing which practitioners are confident and knowledgeable about

Why we are scrutinising?

If the leadership is not effective, then whatever is implemented will have minimal impact

Children and their families are getting the right help and support at the right time

The right information is shared at all levels to make sure good decisions are made to benefit children and their families

How we will carry out scrutiny...

Year 1

- Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership will commission an Independent Sector expert/team from a body such as Local Government Association, Research in Practice, Centre for Public Scrutiny or equivalent to conduct the scrutiny. Scrutiny will use a range of information sources including key documents, stakeholder conversations and the views of children and their families

- A document set will be provided to support Independent Scrutiny, this will include but is not limited to: -

- The Safeguarding Partner's Annual Report (including structure)
- Bolton threshold document

- Minutes of Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership meetings
- Priority area strategies/work plans

- Most recent performance report, including copies of multi-agency audit reports completed in the last 12 months

- Stakeholder views/feedback reports

- The impact and effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding training offer

- The scrutiny will take place in October of each year; the first independent scrutiny will take place by October 2020

Year 2

- As described above but with the addition of an evaluation of our response to the previous year's scrutiny

- The scrutiny will take place in October 2021

Year 2

What we will scrutinise?

A culture of continuous development, improvement, and learning

Wide and active engagement in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements

High support and high challenge within the multi-agency system

Why we are scrutinising?

Local practice develops and evolves from understanding what works locally to best help children and their families

Practitioners in Bolton own, understand and use local safeguarding systems to keep children safe

Practitioners work together to keep children safe and are confident to challenge all levels without fear where practice is not working

Assurance Framework

What we will scrutinise

We will use a range of evidence, including learning from reviews, to help us understand how we are doing and be assured that we are as effective as we can be.

Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership will implement a partnership quality assurance framework in addition to independent scrutiny. This will also run on a two-year planned cycle with responsive assurance undertaken as required.

The local framework will provide assurance as to how well individual agencies have embedded and integrated the arrangements into their practice, to what extent agencies are using the arrangements to work together and what difference it is making to improve outcomes for children and their families. We will also scrutinise a range of evidence including data and intelligence to understand the needs and outcomes of children and families in Bolton, and to assess the effectiveness of the help being provided to them.

When carrying out all our assurance activity Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership commits to: -

- Speak to children, young people and their families about their experiences of our safeguarding system; hearing what helps them and responding to what they think needs to improve
- Involve practitioners in all aspects of our assurance framework, listening and learning from their successes and challenges
- Learn and understand to what extent relevant agencies, partnerships and commissioned services are fulfilling their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Evaluate how well practitioners use local safeguarding resources to identify and respond to children's needs from early help through to their need for protection from significant harm



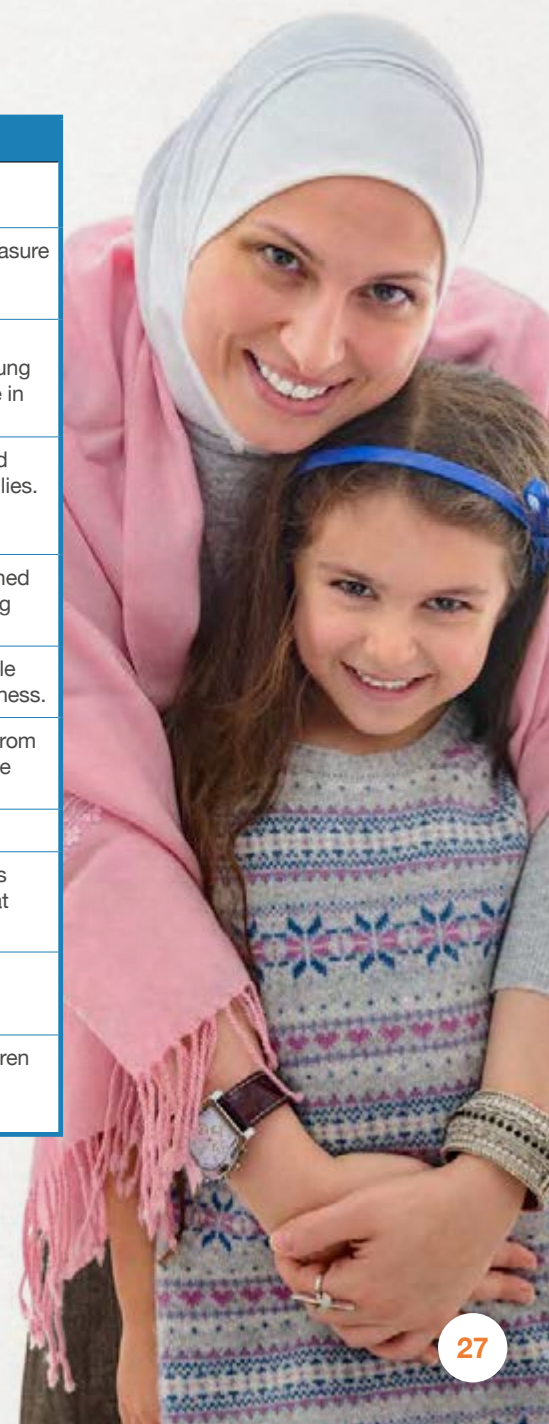
Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership

This will be achieved by using a combination of the following which will be planned over a two-year cycle:-

The Approach	The Method
Partnership Intelligence	A partnership performance dashboard will be developed to track the impact of partnership activity against key indicators linked to safeguarding children.
Mystery Shopper	This will be carried out either by community members, current practitioners, service managers or the safeguarding partnership to measure quality of service or compliance/understanding of local safeguarding processes or to gather specific information about a theme or practice area.
Young Inspectors/Young Scrutineers	Young people will scrutinise, challenge and influence the services they access. The process also enables agencies to reflect on and improve their provision to better meet the needs of children. The Young Inspectors are commissioned by agencies to undertake a young inspector visit; alternatively, where an area of interest is identified by young people services will be proactively approached to engage in an inspection though the service does not have to take up the offer
Back to Practice/Walk in the Footsteps Review	The safeguarding partners and relevant agencies will commit experienced practitioners to visit specific services to 'walk the floor' and talk to practitioners on an agreed theme or practice area. Where possible it will provide an opportunity to meet with children and families. Young people, as scrutineers, are also encouraged and supported to contribute. It is an opportunity for agencies to showcase good practice, indicate how they listen to children and families and to talk about further developments.
Thematic Audits	The safeguarding partnership will carry out two thematic audit per year across the partnership. All relevant agencies and commissioned services will be invited to contribute and will be expected to involve their practitioners in this process, including attendance at learning event. The views of children, young people and their families will also be sought to triangulate and test out the findings
Online Surveys/ Questionnaires	We live in a digital age and the safeguarding partnership use online to seek the views of practitioners as well as children, young people and their families on themes or practice. We will also use this approach to seek feedback on the safeguarding partnerships effectiveness.
Compliments/Complaints/ Critical Incidents	We will ask relevant agencies and commissioned services to share with us annually the safeguarding themes and learning identified from compliments, complaints or critical incidents. The safeguarding partnership will be able to collate these to identify learning and shape future service development.
Thematic Peer Review	We will implement a model of peer review utilising expertise across the North West Local Authority areas
Reflective Case Discussions/ What Works Case Reviews	We will encourage practitioners to identify and share with the partnership examples of the work they have done with partners that has achieved a positive outcome for a child and their family. We will use this approach to identify the factors that led to success and what action is needed to share this learning.
Safeguarding Assurance from Commissioning	We will ask Bolton Children's Commissioners to provide evidence of themes and learning from safeguarding assurance
Section 11	The Section 11 self-assessment is a bi-annual review to ensure agencies and organisations with a duty under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 are compliant with their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their organisation. The responses provided by agencies will be tested out as part of the 'Back to Practice/Walk in the Footsteps Reviews'.

This approach will complement external scrutiny carried out by independent inspectorates such as the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Ofsted and Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). It will also build on the assurance each individual safeguarding partner currently undertakes.

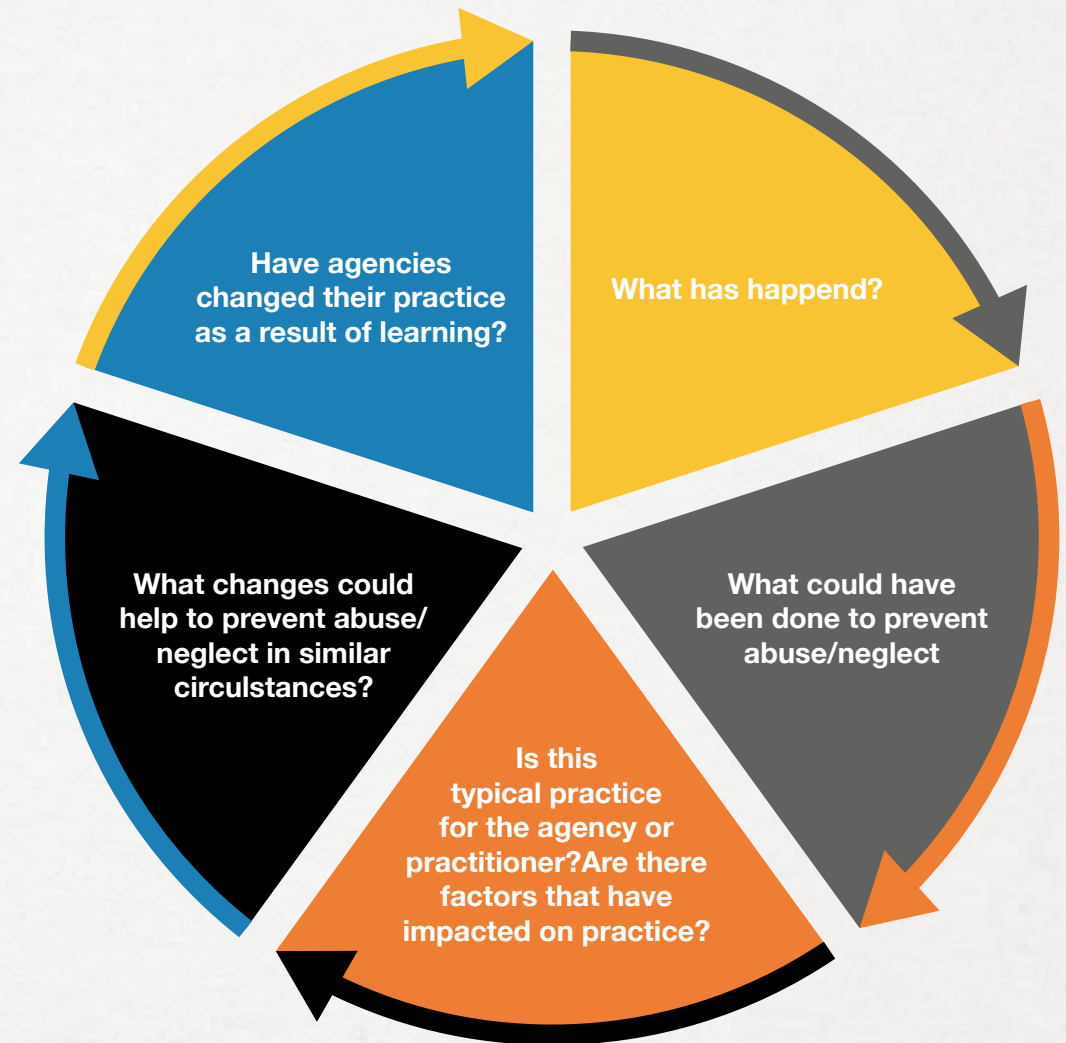
Multi-Agency Arrangements for Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children in Bolton



Arrangements for Commissioning and Publishing Child Safeguarding Practice Review

Learning from local and national child safeguarding practice reviews also forms part of the partnership quality assurance framework. These reviews will act as catalyst to further improve our safeguarding system from often tragic events.

Even when practice is excellent there are always opportunities to learn and develop. In carrying out our local reviews, the partnership will seek to understand and evaluate: -



Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership

All circumstances referred to the partnership that potentially meet the threshold for a Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) will be screened by the multi-agency Child Safeguarding Practice Review Group following the completion of the Rapid Review Process. The threshold for a CSPR is a situation where abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected, and the child has died or been seriously harmed.

The aim of this rapid review is to enable safeguarding partners to:

- Gather the facts about the case, as far as they can be readily established at the time
- Discuss whether there is any immediate action needed to ensure children's safety and share any learning appropriately
- Consider the potential for identifying improvements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Decide what steps they should take next, including whether or not to undertake a child safeguarding practice review

The decision of the CSPR group will be endorsed by the chair of Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership and subsequently sent to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel. This must be completed within fifteen working days.

Where it is locally agreed that a CSPR will be commissioned, expressions of interest will be invited from independent reviewers using established providers and networks. Candidates expressing an interest, and who are suitably qualified, will be invited to attend a multi-agency discussion with at least two members of the partnership to evaluate their suitability to lead the review. The successful candidate will be commissioned following this process.

Multi-Agency Arrangements for Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children in Bolton

The completed review will be written in such a way to protect the identity of the family, and more importantly any surviving children, as much as possible. The report will focus on providing a summary of any recommended improvements to be made in the area as well as an analysis of any systemic or underlying reasons why actions were taken or not.

All reviews will be completed within six months of the initiation date, publication will be within this period unless there are external circumstances which prevent this⁸. The final report will be published on the partnership website; it will be supported by a learning brief and a statement as to how the partnership is responding to learning. A copy of the report will also be provided to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and to the Secretary of State at least seven working days before publication.

⁸ Possible circumstances include ongoing investigations, civil and/or criminal proceedings, challenge to publication from interested parties etc.



Dispute Resolution and Escalation

When working with issues relating to safeguarding children, it is likely that disagreement and dispute will arise at some point but that does not mean it cannot be diffused. Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership will seek to resolve differences at the earliest opportunities.

Moreover, in responding to disputes, the partnership encourages all those involved to remember: -

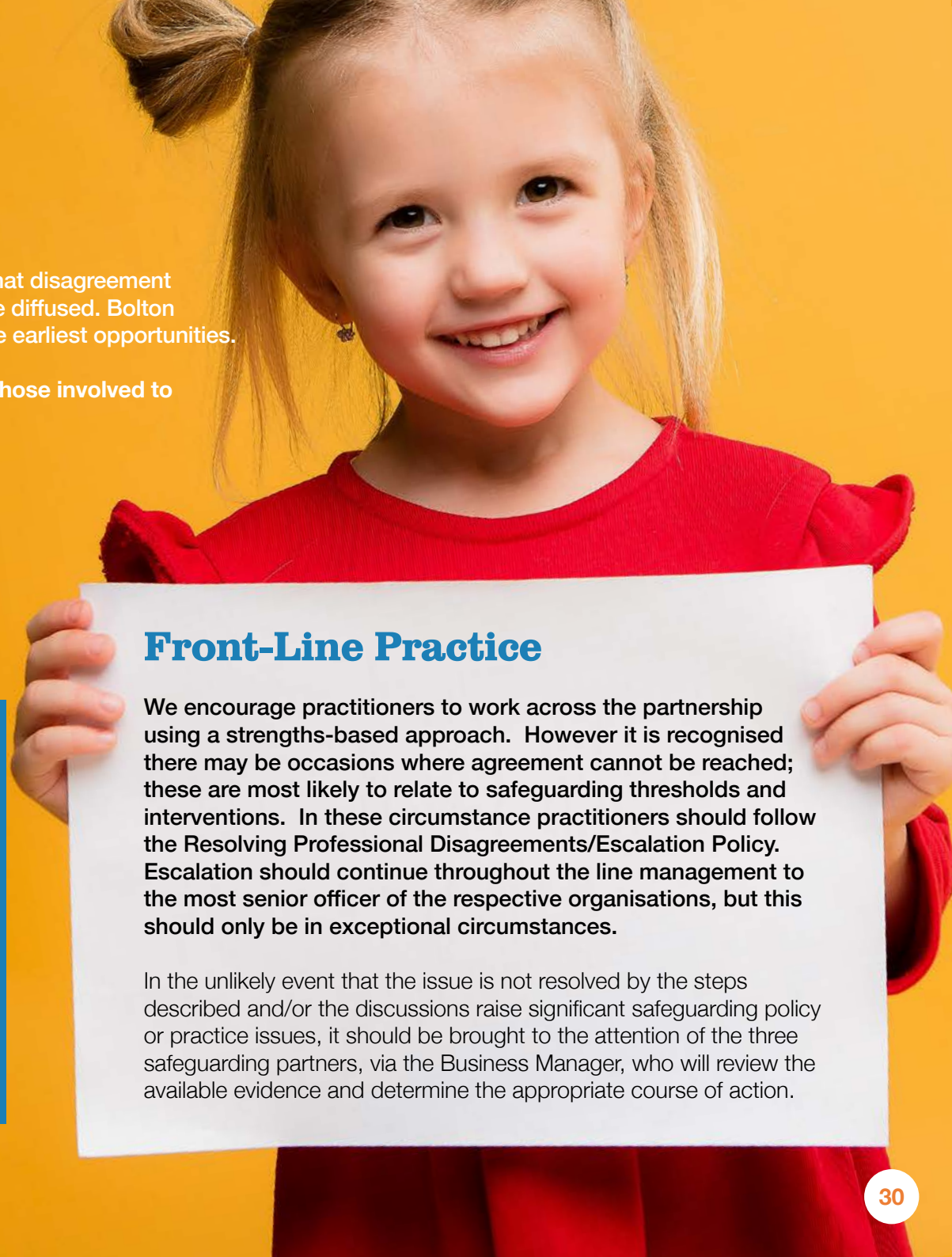
- Good relationships are the priority
- Keep the person and the problem separate
- Pay attention to the issues being presented and be open to changing your position in response to facts
- Reflect and learn from disagreement to strengthen practice

The partnership has identified the following sources of potential dispute relating to the safeguarding arrangements:

Children, Young People & Families

We want practitioners to work in partnership with children and their families; developing trusting relationships that are based on promoting and sustaining strengths within the family unit while delivering effective support to address any needs or risks.

In all our multi-agency safeguarding systems and processes we will ensure that we are clear and transparent with children, young people and their families as to how they can raise concerns about a safeguarding partnership policy/process or how it has been used and seek a resolution. We also commit to learn from such situations and use these to strengthen front-line practice.



Front-Line Practice

We encourage practitioners to work across the partnership using a strengths-based approach. However it is recognised there may be occasions where agreement cannot be reached; these are most likely to relate to safeguarding thresholds and interventions. In these circumstance practitioners should follow the Resolving Professional Disagreements/Escalation Policy. Escalation should continue throughout the line management to the most senior officer of the respective organisations, but this should only be in exceptional circumstances.

In the unlikely event that the issue is not resolved by the steps described and/or the discussions raise significant safeguarding policy or practice issues, it should be brought to the attention of the three safeguarding partners, via the Business Manager, who will review the available evidence and determine the appropriate course of action.



Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership

The three safeguarding partners with delegated authority will work together to resolve any professional challenges or disputes between them by discussion, negotiation and consensus. For example this could include issues related to allocation and prioritisation of funding/ resources, strategic priorities, thresholds, failing to comply with agreed safeguarding systems/processes, not fulfilling roles and responsibilities.

Should an issue continue to remain unresolved and in dispute, a meeting of the Lead Representatives will be convened to hear and adjudicate on the matter; their decision making will be based on each delegated safeguarding partner providing a report setting out their respective position. In very rare occasions where resolution cannot be reached, despite escalation to the Lead Representatives, the partnership may need to commission an Independent Adviser to review all available information and reach a definitive conclusion.

Relevant Agencies

Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership has identified several relevant agencies as key to developing, embedding and implementing safeguarding priorities and practice. The three safeguarding partners are committed to working with these agencies to develop the best local safeguarding responses. However the partners recognise there may be occasions when a relevant agency does not act in accordance with the arrangements or with the expectations placed upon them.

In these circumstances disputes will be resolved or escalated by the three safeguarding partners writing to the agencies named safeguarding lead and the chief executive outlining their concerns and requesting a written response, including a statement of action to address the issues raised.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018⁹ states 'public bodies that fail to comply with their obligations under law are held to account through a variety of regulatory and inspection activity. In extremis, any non-compliance will be referred to the Secretary of State'. If at any point evidence collated by Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership or a matter referred/whistle-blown to the partnership indicates this threshold is met, the partnership will be required to share this information with the appropriate regulator and/or the Secretary of State.

⁹Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, Chapter 3, page 80, para 40

Remember Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility

Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership publishes a Threshold Document on our website to ensure that everyone understands and is able to act appropriately where there are safeguarding concerns.

If you are worried that a child may be being abused or neglected, then please act. In an emergency call 999 or you can contact Bolton's Multi-agency Screening and Safeguarding Service (MASS) on **01204 331500** during officer hours.

If you have a concern outside office hours you can contact the Emergency Duty Team on **01204 337777**

Or alternatively discuss your concerns with the NSPPC:

- Telephone – **Freephone 0808 800 5000**
- Email – **help@nspcc.org.uk**
- Text – **88858**

If you are a child or young person and need to talk to someone you can contact Childline on Freephone **08001111** or visit Childline **www.childline.org.uk**

Your call could save a child's life.



For further information about the arrangements, share your experiences of safeguarding in Bolton or get involved in the work we do, contact:

Phone **01204 337479**

Email **boltonsafeguardingchildren@bolton.gov.uk**



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