

Role Description



INDEPENDENT SCRUTINEER GLOUCESTERSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP

SUPPORTED BY:	Business Manager (GSCP Business Unit)
REMUNERATION:	£650 per day (including expenses) depending on experience.
WORKING PATTERN:	20 guaranteed days per year, up to 30 days Maximum Additional days will be as determined by the GSCP Business Manager and Executive dependent on demand.
LOCATION:	Working from Home and Shire Hall Gloucester but may be required to move their base to any other location within the Gloucestershire area during the course of their contract

Purpose:

To provide independent and objective scrutiny of the effectiveness of local multi-agency arrangements in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children within the area. This includes evaluating systems for identifying and conducting child safeguarding practice reviews

Functions of independent scrutiny role

- Provide safeguarding partners and relevant agencies with independent, rigorous, and effective support and challenge at both a strategic and operational level.
- Provide assurance to the whole system in judging the effectiveness of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements through a range of scrutiny methods.
- Ensure that statutory safeguarding duties are being met, that robust quality assurance mechanisms are in place, and that both local and national child safeguarding practice reviews are systematically analysed. Key learning should be identified and its implementation monitored across the safeguarding system to drive continuous improvement.
- Be regarded as a 'critical friend' as part of the overall strong, clear, strategic leadership.
- Provide independent advice when there are disagreements between agencies and safeguarding partners and facilitate escalation procedures.
- Evaluate and contribute to multi-agency safeguarding published arrangements and the annual report, alongside feeding into the wider accountability systems such as inspections.
- Ensure that the voice of children and families is considered as part of scrutiny and that this is at the heart of arrangements through direct feedback, informing policy and practice.
- The Independent Scrutineer will be responsible for providing robust assurance on the effectiveness of Gloucestershire's multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. This includes evaluating how well the partnership identifies and reviews serious child safeguarding cases, and how effectively it promotes the welfare of all children.

The Independent Scrutineer will provide objective assurance on the effectiveness of Gloucestershire's multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, with a particular focus on how these arrangements safeguard and promote the welfare of children, including the identification

and review of serious child safeguarding cases.

In fulfilling this role, the Scrutineer will assess the impact of safeguarding arrangements on children, families, and practitioners, and evaluate the strength of leadership demonstrated by safeguarding partners. To support these judgements, the Scrutineer will lead the GSCP's Quality Assurance and Scrutiny process, a structured programme designed to test, assess, and report on the partnership's effectiveness.

This process begins with the Section 11 audit, which provides a baseline assessment of statutory compliance across partner agencies. It is followed by a detailed evaluation against the GSCP's published multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and its Quality Assurance Framework.

The Scrutineer will undertake a range of scrutiny activities, including desktop reviews of meeting papers, safeguarding reports, and minutes; oversight of audits and safeguarding reviews; and analysis of performance data and exception reporting. These activities are designed to identify strengths, areas for improvement, and the impact of safeguarding arrangements on practice and outcomes.

A key responsibility is to ensure that learning from both local and national safeguarding reviews is identified, disseminated, and embedded across the system. The Scrutineer will also ensure that the voice of the child is central to all scrutiny activity, drawing on direct feedback, partner evidence, and tools such as the Online Pupil Wellbeing Survey.

The GSCP Executive will formally appoint the Independent Scrutineer to lead this process. Their findings will be presented in a comprehensive QA report, which will contribute to the GSCP Annual Report and include an independent evaluation of the partnership's performance, supported by evidence-based conclusions and actionable recommendations.

- Planning and defining the QA process with the GSCP Business Manager.
- Chair the annual S11 Panel.
- Assessment of activity against the published QA Framework.
- Desktop review of papers, minutes, meetings, safeguarding review and audit reports with full access to any papers from those meetings or activities. Seeking evidence of activity against recommendations and learning.
- Partnership data and exceptions reporting seeking evidence of performance information and evaluation to ensure the GSCP have an integrated data set that supports a unified approach across the complex landscape of safeguarding.
- KCSiE and EYFS schools and Early Years audit compliance checks
- The scrutineer will ensure that hearing and learning from the voice of the child is at the heart of GSCP activity utilising individual partnership evidence and the latest Online Pupil Wellbeing Survey
- Partners safeguarding plans and inspection reports.

Responsibilities:

This Quality Assurance process should give the scrutineer the opportunity to assess how well organisations come together to cooperate with one another to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to hold each other to account for effective safeguarding and to allow the scrutineer sufficient evidence to judge:

- Are appropriate and effective systems and processes in place in all partner agencies to

fulfil their statutory duties and ensure that children are protected and that appropriate safeguarding strategies are developed and embedded?

- How effective are the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in getting a clear line of sight on single agency and multi-agency practice?
- Are the structures for the operation of the safeguarding partnership purposeful, efficient and effective?
- Are evidence, performance information and evaluation used to develop an integrated data set that supports a unified approach across the complex landscape of safeguarding?
- Do the arrangements enable space for reflection and learning from practice?
- Is the partnership able to evidence that they are having a positive impact on multi-agency working and/or front-line practice?
- What has gone well and what is the evidence to support this?
- What has potential but it is too early to assess impact?
- Are there concerns or issues that need addressing?

Special Conditions:

The scrutineer will respect confidentiality of sensitive information provided by the partners at all times.

The scrutineer will supply their own ICT at their own expense and utilise the provided independent scrutiny Gloucestershire County Council email address.

Much of the work undertaken will be of a highly confidential nature. The post holder must at all times maintain confidentiality and should be aware that, given the nature of the services provided for children and young people across Gloucestershire, may on occasions be exposed to information that they may find distressing.

The post holder will be contracted to and work for the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership via the GSCP Business Unit.

It is important that the postholder is aware that:-

- There is a requirement for commitment to Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discriminatory Practice.
- The Council operates a Smoke-Free Policy and the post-holder is prohibited from smoking in any of the Council's buildings (including Council owned and Council leased buildings, enclosed spaces within the curtilage of buildings, and Council vehicles).

The above list is not exhaustive, whereby other duties relevant to the role may from time to time be required. Variation may also occur to the duties and responsibilities without changing the general character of the post.