



2025



Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership

Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership Working Together to Safeguard Children Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements

Gloucestershire's multi-agency arrangements to safeguard children.

This document sets out the arrangements in place to enable local partner agencies in Gloucestershire to meet the requirements of Working Together to Safeguard Children statutory guidance.

Foreword

Working Together to Safeguard Children places a ‘shared and equal duty’ on NHS Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board, Gloucestershire Constabulary and Gloucestershire County Council as statutory safeguarding partners. Safeguarding partners are under a duty to make arrangements to work together, and with other partners locally including the education sector and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area. This document sets out the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership’s (GSCP) local arrangements to meet the statutory duties as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children¹

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network² through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children’s Social Care National Framework³.

The Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSP’s) in Gloucestershire, along with our Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSP’s) embrace those responsibilities and view this as an opportunity to further embed child safeguarding considerations across our own agencies and the wider local Partnership under the banner of the GSCP.

The arrangements set out in this document allow us to both build on best practice and to develop a shared learning approach embedding identified learning both collectively and within our own organisations. Our commitment to learning and development reflects Gloucestershire’s collective commitment towards a trauma informed and restorative approach to practice. We welcome the contribution of our Partners, Relevant agencies and community to what we would hope is an ongoing and rich conversation.

We all share the same aim; namely, that the safety, health, welfare and wellbeing of our children is secure and that we remain open to learning and improving to deal with the many challenges and opportunities presented by a rapidly changing world.

Safeguarding undoubtedly remains ‘everybody’s business’ and to that end the GSCP will work closely with the Childrens Coalition, the Youth Justice Management Board, Child Death Overview Panel, Gloucestershire Strategic Domestic Abuse Board, Safer Gloucestershire, Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board and others who will work together around child welfare and safeguarding. We thank you for your continued support, hard work and commitment.

¹ [Working Together to Safeguard Children Statutory Guidance](#)

² A family network can be a blood-relative, or a non-related connected person, such as a family friend or neighbour.

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childrens-social-care-national-framework>

The Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSP's)



Jo Walker
Chief Executive
Gloucestershire County Council



Sarah Truelove
Chief Executive
NHS Integrated Care Board



Maggie Blyth MA, BA (Hons)
Interim Chief Constable
Gloucestershire Constabulary

The Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSP's)



Richard Ocone:
Assistant Chief Constable
Gloucestershire Constabulary
Chair of GSCP Executive



Marie Crofts:
Chief Nursing Officer
Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board



Kirsten Harrison:
Director of Education
Gloucestershire County Council



Ann James:
Director of Children's Services
Gloucestershire County Council



Ruth Greenwood
Chief Executive Officer
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner



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Document Chronology

Version	Date	Detail
1.0	2019	First Published Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements
2.0	2021	Second Edition
3.0	2022	Third Edition
4.0	Dec 2024	Fourth Edition
4.1	July 2025	Fourth Edition Edit to include OPCC Executive Membership and LSP Changes

Our Safeguarding Partnership

Purpose: The Gloucestershire NHS Integrated Care Board, Constabulary and Local Authority have a shared and equal duty, under Working Together to Safeguard Children Statutory Guidance, to ensure that collectively their own organisations as a whole and any agency with a function relating to children, referred to as Relevant Agencies, operating in the county work together effectively to keep children safe.

Structure & Membership: There is no defacto body or legally defined organisation called the GSCP, the GSCP is a partnership of all agencies with a function relating to children. Led by the three partners, welcoming the Education Sector and the Office of The Police and Crime Commissioner as full partners into the GSCP Executive, operating collectively under Working Together legislative guidance and within the GSCP structure enabling joint working between agencies. Agencies nominate lead safeguarding representatives who populate the GSCP Structure to undertake the work of the partnership.

Function: These Published Arrangements set out how the Partnership will fulfil both its Working Together to Safeguard Children statutory functions and its own identified priorities. These functions include:

1. Arrangements for the partnership to Identify and respond to children's needs
2. Undertaking Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (LCSPR's)
3. Undertaking Multi Agency Audits, Section 11, KCSiE & Early Years Foundation Audits
4. Arrangements for the sharing of learning from local and national reviews and audits
5. Arrangements for the effective sharing of information to safeguard children
6. Multi Agency Policy and procedural arrangements to facilitate Multi agency working, including escalation arrangements
7. Commissioning and delivery of Multi Agency safeguarding training
8. Seeking assurances on the effectiveness of legal processes such as the Child Death Review, Care Leaver Death Review, Allegations Management, Private Fostering, Childrens Advocacy and other arrangements

Independent scrutiny: Provided by a qualified external professional, commissioned via the GSCP Business Unit. JTAI findings (August 2023) confirmed the arrangements are both independent and effective.

The GSCP Produce a yearly report on the activity of the partnership. This can be found on the GSCP Website⁴

⁴ [About us | Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children's Partnership](#)

1.0 Background

1.1 The document sets out the arrangements to enable the local Partner agencies in Gloucestershire to meet the requirements of the most current Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance collectively, as the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (GSCP). This document should be read alongside the most recent Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance⁵. All reference to Working Together in this document relates to this guidance.

1.2 Working Together represents a significant platform to develop our collective arrangements to safeguard children in Gloucestershire. It places a 'shared and equal duty' on NHS Integrated Care Board, Gloucestershire Constabulary and Gloucestershire County Council for the safeguarding of Gloucestershire's children

1.3 Gloucestershire's Childrens Coalition, working with local Partners, has set out its vision for Gloucestershire in its 'One Plan'⁶. This identifies key priorities for children; including securing their health and wellbeing and ensuring they have access to a good quality school or early years setting. In addition, the Gloucestershire Youth Justice Management Board have set out its priorities for Gloucestershire in its Youth Justice Plan⁷. The arrangements set out in this document sit alongside and contribute to the achievement of those priorities.

2.0 Scope of Arrangements

2.1 The scope of this document encompasses:

- Terms of Reference for the Lead Safeguarding Partners
- Terms of Reference for the GSCP Executive
- Terms of Reference for the GSCP Management Group in addition to the relevant Subgroups and Task and Finish Groups
- Key links between child safeguarding arrangements and the wider governance network for Gloucestershire
- The role and scope of the Independent Scrutiny function
- The role and function of the GSCP Executive Business Unit
- Key Partnership review processes such as safeguarding practice reviews including Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, Partnership Serious Incident Notification (SIN) arrangements, Child Death reviews, Domestic Homicide Reviews, Multi Agency Audits, Protocol, Policy and Procedural arrangements and dispute resolution / escalation processes
- Multi-Agency Levels of Intervention and Child Safeguarding Threshold Arrangements
- Annual reporting and performance management
- Multi-Agency child safeguarding training
- Commissioning Safeguarding Expectations
- Placements from Other Local Authorities
- Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) Process
- Gambling and Licensing act arrangements
- Arrangements for the management of FOI requests

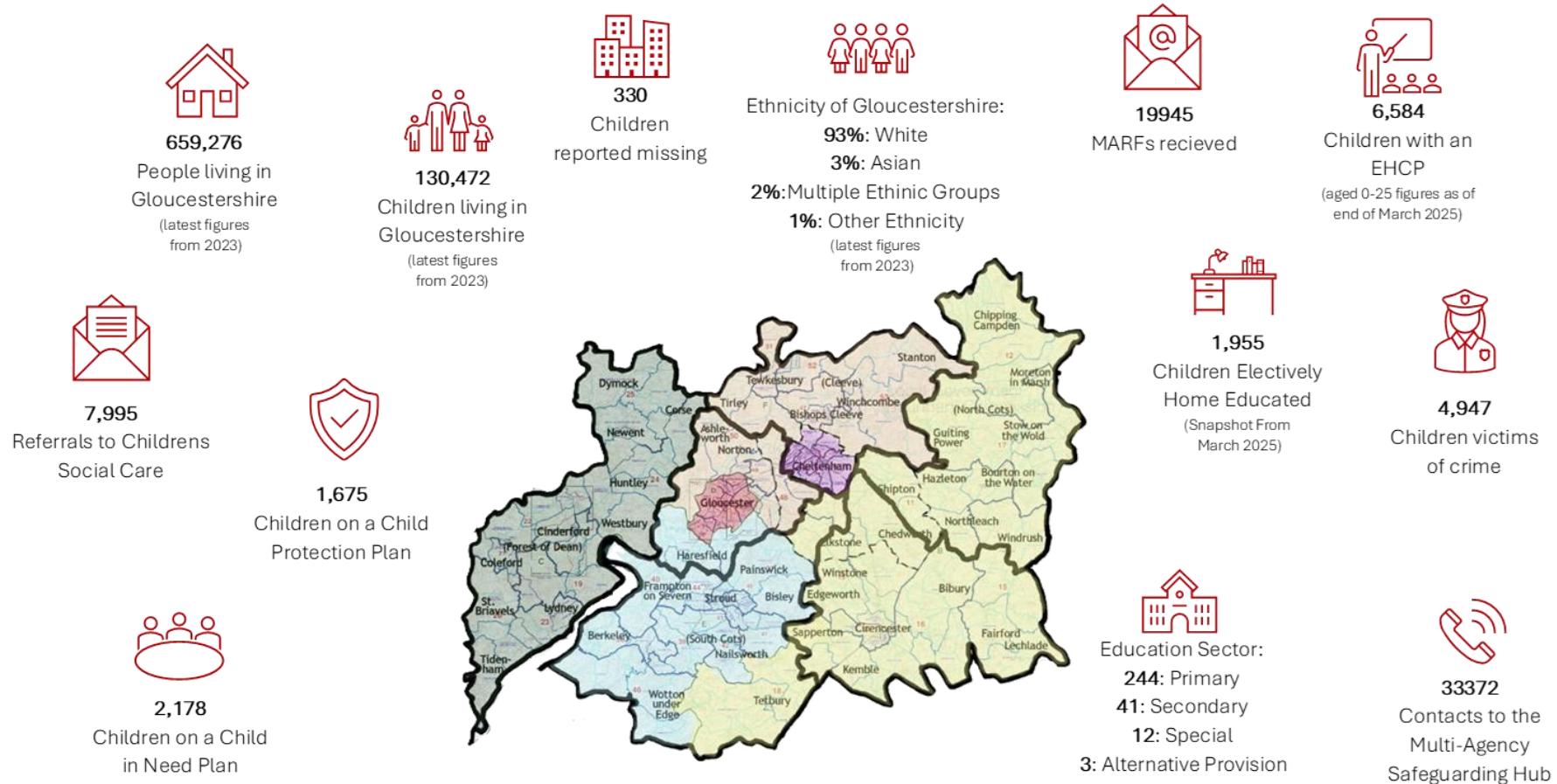
⁵ [Working Together to Safeguard Children Statutory Guidance](#)

⁶ [GCC_4196 One Plan for CYP in Gloucestershire 2024-30_Dev12.pdf](#)

⁷ [Gloucestershire Youth Justice Plan](#)

3.0 Overview of Gloucester

3.1 Gloucestershire is a two-tier county for local government comprising of a county council and six districts with contrasting characteristics in terms of affluence, deprivation, and concentration of population. We are a geographically large and diverse county with differing needs.



3.2 The arrangements set out in these proposals will apply to the County of Gloucestershire, with the Safeguarding Partners (as defined above) being:

- Gloucestershire County Council – Including Education
- Gloucestershire Constabulary - Including the OPCC
- NHS Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board – and its Provider Trusts

3.3 A particular consideration in Gloucestershire is that around 8 -10,000 citizens are registered with NHS Wales and, as such, key services for children such as midwifery, health visiting, and GPs will be provided by services outside of Gloucestershire. In the event of a safeguarding concern, involving a child within that cohort, NHS Gloucestershire ICB will liaise with the relevant NHS Wales agency on behalf of the Safeguarding Partners. It is acknowledged that this does not affect the accountability for child safeguarding arrangements, which remains with the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Partners.

3.4 The three Safeguarding Partners, working through the safeguarding structure established under these arrangements, will co-ordinate their safeguarding services and engage the wider range of Partners with continuing Section 11 duties, including:

- Local Authority - children's and adult social care services, public health, housing, sport, culture and leisure services, licensing authorities and youth services
- NHS organisations and agencies and the independent sector, including NHS England and Integrated Care Boards, NHS Trusts, NHS Foundation Trusts and General Practitioners
- Police, including police and crime commissioners and the chief officer of each police force in England and British Transport Police
- National Probation Service
- Principals of Secure Colleges
- Youth Offending Teams/Services (YOTs)

3.5 Within these arrangements, the wider Safeguarding Partnership comprises of the following and will have a seat on the GSCP subgroup structure or be consulted with in regard to these arrangements through the relevant subgroups

- Gloucester City Council
- Cheltenham Borough Council
- Stroud District Council
- Tewkesbury Borough Council
- Forest of Dean District Council
- Cotswold District Council
- HM Court Services
- Crown Prosecution Service
- National Probation Service
- CAFCASS
- Gloucestershire Health & Care Services
- General Practitioners
- Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- Southwest Ambulance Service Trust
- Gloucestershire Association of Special School Heads

- Gloucestershire Association of Primary School Heads
- Gloucestershire Association of Secondary School Leaders
- Further Education and Private School Settings
- Gloucestershire Fire & Rescue Service
- Gloucestershire Diocese
- Voluntary Sector Partner Providers

3.6 The guidance includes a requirement for the independent scrutiny of any local arrangements established under Working Together. The guidance is not prescriptive around the form these should take and the GSCP will instruct an Independent Scrutineer as a non-Executive member to provide scrutiny oversight for the GSCP Executive.

3.7 The GSCP maintains a Multi-Agency Procedural Manual⁸ available through its website that sets out the procedural arrangements for the partnership. It is expected that all partners and relevant agencies utilise this manual to underpin their own safeguarding arrangements in Gloucestershire.

3.7 Information sharing is essential for effective safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Gloucestershire's Information Sharing Partnership Arrangements (GISPA)⁹ provides the framework for effective and lawful sharing of information across the Partnership and has been agreed by all parties.

3.8 The GSCP work closely with the Child Death Overview Panel in Gloucestershire. The Partnerships Business Unit oversees the Child Death Review Arrangements for the Gloucestershire Child Death Review Partners:

- Gloucestershire County Council
- NHS Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board

Where appropriate the CDOP and GSCP review arrangements will come together to meet both the requirements of Working Together and the Child Death Review: Statutory and Operational Guidance (England)¹⁰.

3.10 The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is subject to collective oversight by a MASH Subgroup which comprises of senior representatives from local Partner agencies and is, in turn, accountable to the Executive. It is recognised that the MASH designation does not reflect that not all contacts to the front door are for safeguarding services. There is a consensus amongst the Safeguarding Partners that the Gloucestershire MASH is the key interface for operational activity to safeguard children. Gloucestershire MASH is underpinned by a multi-agency threshold document to ensure a consistent approach amongst Partners towards referrals for children's social care and intervention.

3.11 The GSCP identifies its priorities through a cycle of needs assessment, planning, delivery, and review. The priorities will comprise of a range of capacity building measures aimed to enhance collective arrangements alongside specific areas of concern or risk, as evidenced through our quality assurance, data and needs assessment activity. These include:

Capacity building:

⁸ [Welcome to the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children... \(trixonline.co.uk\)](http://Welcome to the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children... (trixonline.co.uk))

⁹ Gloucestershire Information Sharing Partnership Agreement

¹⁰ [Child death review: statutory and operational guidance \(England\)](http://Child death review: statutory and operational guidance (England))

- Ongoing development of Child Safeguarding Performance Dashboard and quality assurance arrangements.
- Ensuring the consistent application of thresholds across all Safeguarding Partners
- Evaluating the impact of learning from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, Serious Incidents and Rapid Reviews etc.
- Ensuring compliance with safeguarding procedures, protocols and tools
- Information Sharing for the safeguarding of children

Key safeguarding Priorities:

- Extra-familial harm, including all forms of exploitation.
- Disproportionality and adultification
- All forms of Child Sexual Abuse
- Inclusion - including missing education, exclusions and elective home education
- Early intervention/prevention work for children with complex needs
- Pre-birth and reducing injuries in non-mobile babies.
- Quality of care and Child Neglect

3.12 The GSCP seeks assurances from partners and relevant agencies, including all education and early years setting through the following self-assessment declaration processes.

- Section 11 Audit Procedure¹¹
- Keeping Children Safe in Education¹² (KCSiE) Self-assessment Declaration
- Early Years Foundation Stage Framework¹³ Section 3 Self-assessment Declaration

All of these processes are mandatory requirements and are self-assessment-based declarations asking that all partners and relevant agencies take a clear leadership within their organisations for the application of their safeguarding duties. In order to test compliance, the GSCP Has developed its own local procedures which can be found on the GSCP Procedure Manual Portal under 'Organisational Responsibilities'¹⁴

3.13 The GSCP through the Constabulary and the MASH delivers Operation Encompass¹⁵ Operation Encompass is a police and education early information safeguarding partnership enabling schools to offer immediate support to children experiencing domestic abuse. The GSCP is committed to the effective and timely delivery of this project which is overseen by the GSCP Education Subgroup.

3.14 The GSCP is assured that the local authority has arrangements in place to review along with partners the death of care leavers aged 18 to 25 where it is believed that there is learning to be had; ensuring that these arrangements operate parallel to and in conjunction with the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board, Community Safety Partnerships Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews and the LCSPR process.

3.15 The GSCP should be transparent in how it co-ordinates, delivers and funds services for children and families locally. In order that others can hold the safeguarding partners to account there are two mechanisms for reporting on service delivery and leadership:

¹¹ [Section 11 Protocol](#)

¹² [KCSIE](#)

¹³ [EYFS Framework](#)

¹⁴ [Organisational Responsibilities](#)

¹⁵ [Home: Operation Encompass](#)

- publication of arrangements
- a yearly report¹⁶

3.16 As part of the approach to transparently set out the activity of the partnership the GSCP has produced a reference guide called “Our Safeguarding Partnership”¹⁷ this will be reviewed and updated alongside the GSCP Published arrangements on an annual basis to reflect changes in national guidance and legislation and changes to the local arrangements for the GSCP.

4.0 Key Groups

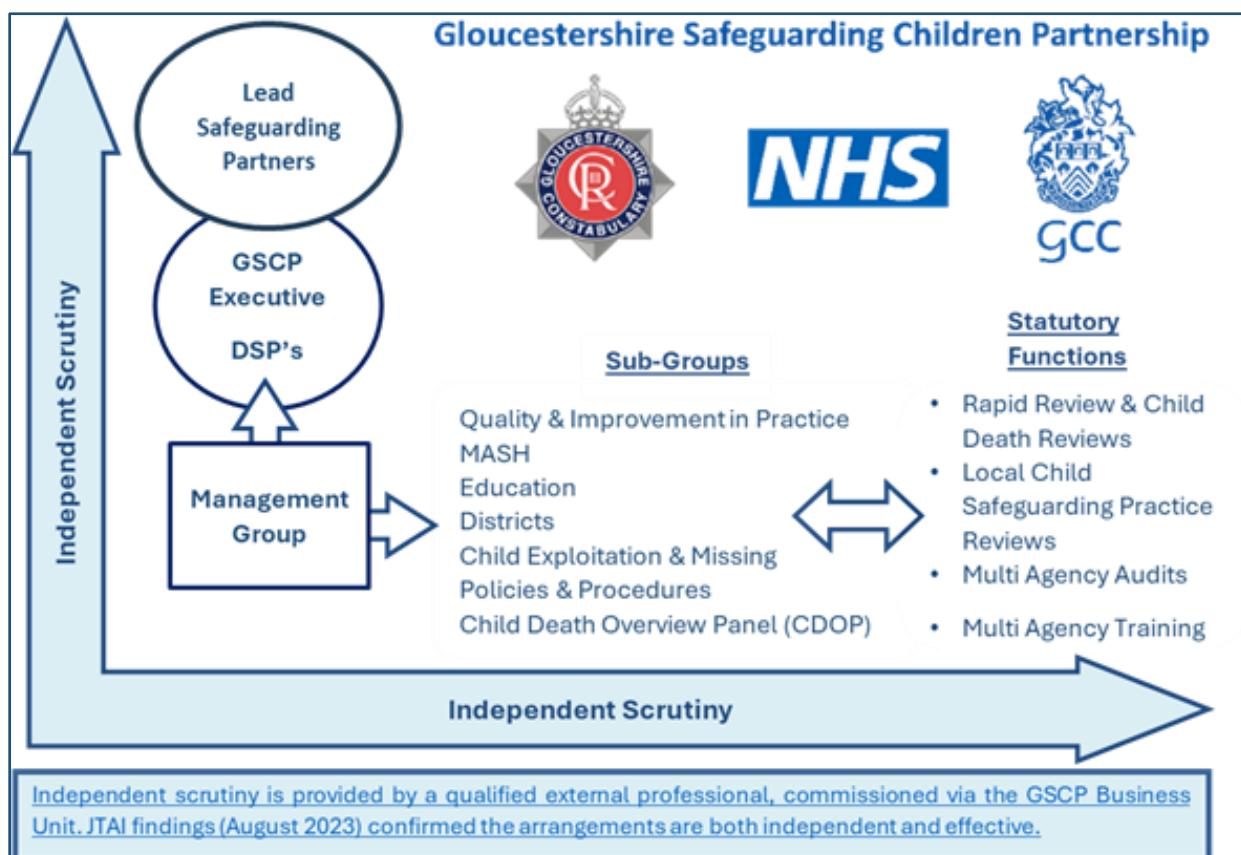
4.1 The essential architecture of Gloucestershire’s arrangements to deliver the requirements of Working Together will comprise:

- A Partnership Executive comprising of the three principal Safeguarding Partner Designated Leads (DSL’s), their respective Lead Officers, the Director of Education for the Authority. Supporting non-executive members are GSCP Business Manager, GSCP Performance Improvement Officer, Chair of the GSCP Management Group and the Independent Scrutineer. The Executive sets the strategic direction for the Partnership and is the key decision-making group for policy, procedural and process changes. Terms of Reference for the Executive are attached at [Appendix 1](#).
- A GSCP Management Group chaired by a senior officer from one of the Safeguarding Partners and comprising of representatives of the local Partner agencies set out in paragraph 3.3. The Chair will be appointed and mandated by the Executive. The Management Group provides direction and support for the GSCP Subgroups who are the engine room for the development of local child safeguarding arrangements as mandated by the GSCP Executive. Its membership is drawn from the Chairs of the formal GSCP Subgroups, the Partnerships Business Unit Manager and GSCP Performance Improvement Officer. Terms of Reference for the GSCP Management Group are attached at [Appendix 2](#).
- GSCP Subgroups are in place to drive and deliver the work of the Partnership and are as follows: [Appendix 3 to 9](#) holds the subgroups Terms of reference
 1. Quality and Improvement in Practice Subgroup (QiiP)
 2. Education Subgroup
 3. Child Exploitation and Missing Subgroup (CEM)
 4. Districts Safeguarding Subgroup
 5. Policies and Procedures Subgroup
 6. MASH Subgroup
 7. Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)
- A Scheme of Delegation has been developed setting out the responsibilities and accountabilities for the Executive, Management Group and Subgroups to ensure decisions are taken at the most appropriate level and subject to effective oversight. On occasion an issue may arise which requires Partner agencies to work together through a Task and Finish / Working Group in order to complete a discrete, time banded piece of work on behalf of the GSCP.

¹⁶ [GSCP Published Arrangements & Annual Reports](#)

¹⁷ [Our Safeguarding Partnership](#)

- Independent scrutiny of these arrangements is provided by a range of means and processes. The role of independent scrutiny is to provide assurance around the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area, including arrangements to identify and review serious child safeguarding incidents. Independent scrutiny forms part of a wider assurance system which includes independent inspectorates' (Ofsted, CQC, HMICFRS), individual safeguarding Partners internal assurance processes, Section 11, KCSiE and EYFS self-assessments and Joint Targeted Area Inspections. Whilst the decision on how best to implement a system of independent scrutiny is to be made locally, our commitment is towards scrutiny that is robust, objective, acting as a constructive critical friend and promotes reflection and learning in order to drive continuous improvement.
- The GSCP have set out its arrangements for independent scrutiny¹⁸ and the reporting process for feeding back on the effectiveness of local arrangements.



Note: Terms of reference for each group can be found on the GSCP Website¹⁹

¹⁸ [GSCP Independent Scrutiny Function](#)

¹⁹ [GSCP Subgroups | Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children's Partnership](#)



5.0 Childrens Partnerships Business Unit (Partnerships Business Unit)

(37Hrs) GSCP Partnerships Manager		
GSCP MA Curriculum (37Hrs.) X1 Practice Development Manager	GSCP Executive Support (37 Hrs.) x1 Assistant Business Manager / Performance Improvement Officer	Child Death Overview (37Hrs.) X1 Child Death Review Coordinator
(22.5 Hrs.) X1 Multi Agency Training Officer	(74 Hrs.) X2 GSCP Business Support Officers	
(22 Hrs.) X1 Multi Agency Training Administrator		

5.1 The child safeguarding arrangements set out in this document are supported by the GSCP Business Unit, managed by the Partnerships Business Manager reporting directly to the GSCP Executive Chair. Its unique role representing the Partnership affords it the opportunity to provide the GSCP with a management hub for independent scrutiny activity.

5.2 The Partnerships Business Unit is responsible for delivering the secretariat function for the GSCP. In addition to the oversight and delivery of the following on behalf of the Executive:

- Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements
- Commissioning Annual Report writing and publication
- Publication and revision of the GSCP Published Arrangements
- Management and deployment of the Independent Scrutiny function
- Section 11²⁰, KCSiE²¹ and EYFS²² Self-assessment declaration processes
- Management of the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Procedure Manual
- Administration for the GSCP Safeguarding Structure
- GSCP Budget Management
- Safeguarding in Education Traded Service
- Serious Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews Process²³ including LCSPR Publication
- Child Death & Acute Life-Threatening Event (ALTE) Review Processes
- Multi-Agency Audit Arrangements
- Safeguarding Data Reporting as directed by the GSCP Executive
- Multi-agency Safeguarding Training

5.3 The Partnerships Business Unit also supports the following statutory boards and their subgroups

- Gloucestershire Childrens Coalition

²⁰ [S11 Protocol](#)

²¹ [KCSiE Protocol](#)

²² [EYFS S3 Protocol](#)

²³ [LCSPR Local Arrangements](#)

- Starting Well
- Growing Well
- Be Well
- Gloucestershire Youth Justice Management Board
 - Child First Subgroup
 - Custody and Court Subgroup

The Youth Justice Board will look to merge other areas of importance with the GSCP sharing:

- Education Subgroup
- Child Exploitation and Missing Subgroup
- Policies and Procedures Subgroup

And will have membership on the following Boards and groups

- Multi Agency Serious Incident Notification Panel
- Child Death Overview Panel

5.4 Multi-agency Safeguarding Training is commissioned and delivered through the Partnerships Business Unit as a safeguarding training curriculum offer²⁴ underpinned by a set of expectations and quality standards for the Partnership and all relevant agencies. Governance and quality assurance is provided through the Quality and Improvement in Practice Subgroup (QiiP).

5.5 Working Together requires that Safeguarding Partners agree a fair and equitable approach to the funding of any local arrangements. The GSCP agreed an equitable funding model in keeping with Working Together to Safeguard Children. The financial arrangements will be reported on through the partnerships annual report. Copies of GSCP Annual Reports can be found on the GSCP Website²⁵



6.0 Annual Reporting, Business Planning, Performance Management and Quality Assurance

6.1 GSCP hold a Partnership Database which collates key performance indicators relating to child safeguarding and welfare and agencies performance in accordance to Working Together. Each Subgroup has selected specific data points of interest from the Partnership Database, the Performance Improvement Officer (PIO) collates and presents these in a Subgroup Scorecards quarterly. Dependent on the Subgroup this is sometimes done in conjunction with Operational or other groups to ensure a level of analysis and narrative is provided to the subgroup in addition to data and can form part of a larger report. The datapoints which are presented within the Subgroup Scorecard have been agreed by Subgroup members and align with the GSCP priorities, safeguarding reviews, audit and inspectorate recommendations. If a Subgroup identify a topic of

²⁴ [Multi Agency Practice Development Curriculum Offer](#)

²⁵ [GSCP Annual Report Archive](#)

specific interest which needs further investigation a data exceptions report is requested. The PIO works with partner colleagues to collate additional data around a point of interest with the ambition to provide further insight. Subgroups can then make a more informed decision as to if they are assured, or if further actions are required for this area of interest.

6.2 The Executive are sighted the topics discussed on each Subgroup Scorecard, the Data Exceptions Reports and any subsequent improvement works and actions undertaken by the Subgroups. This is communicated to the Executive by the quarterly Partnership Update Report which is authored by the Partnerships Business Unit and authorised at the Management-in Subgroups. The Partnership Analysis Report provides the executive with an overview of the performance of the Partnership, including the data to evidence this. It can highlight areas of good practice as well as areas for improvement. The Report allows the Subgroups and Management Group to present performance but to also directly ask for support if Executive level input is required.

6.3 Safeguarding Assurances: The GSCP currently uses a variety of approaches to test the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements across agencies including the use of an annual safeguarding audit – Section 11 Audit (for agencies), a Safeguarding Assurance Declaration (for schools and colleges) and a safeguarding compliance audit for Early Years provision. Section 11 responsibilities are reinforced within Working Together to Safeguard Children; the GSCP has developed a model for Section 11 audits and the potential for shorter thematic audits where a clear link to serious safeguarding case review and other review findings dictate the need for assurances in the following S11 Standards:

- Leadership and Accountability
- Staff Safe Recruitment, Induction, Training and Development
- Safeguarding Policies and Procedures
- Listening to Children

Assurances across the wider system will be sought with the development of bespoke arrangements for Commissioning across all partners and relevant agencies.

6.4 The partnership has set out how local residential children's homes are involved in its local arrangements. The GSCP Executive require the authority to specifically reference its children's homes throughout its S11 return setting out the arrangements for oversight and scrutiny against the S11 standards. OFSED registered supported accommodation will be monitored through commissioning services S11 standards underpinned by the [GSCP's Safeguarding Duties for Commissioning & Procurement 2024](#).

6.4 Multi Agency Auditing: The GSCP has developed a multi-agency auditing process²⁶ for selected cases and or themes to review and understand the efficacy of multi-agency arrangements to promote the safety and wellbeing of children and measure the impact on children and families. In line with their statutory responsibilities under Working together, multi-agency auditing affords the GSCP Executive a base line on the quality of partnership working, to understand gaps in services, and to highlight areas the GSCP will be required to focus on.

²⁶ [Multi Agency Audit Procedures](#)

The partnership will retain an Audit Overview document setting out the audits undertaken, planned and completed. This will allow for the partnership to track and follow up on all recommendations from Audit in a timely manner.

Multi Agency Auditing requires partners and relevant agencies to share personal and sensitive information relating to children and families to assess the efficacy of multi-agency working. The GSCP Executive considers the lawful basis under which partners and relevant agencies share information as part of multi-agency audit arrangements, to be that of 'public task' with reference to the GSCP's respective s10 and s11 (Children Act 2004) duties to ensure the GSCP has effective partnership arrangements in place to promote the safety and wellbeing of children.

6.5 Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews are a statutory function set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children. The GSCP has developed a robust set of arrangements²⁷ covering the following

- Serious Incident Notification
- Rapid Review
- Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews
- Child Death Reviews and Acute Life-Threatening Event Reviews where there is a requirement to cover both CDR and Child Safeguarding Reviews

Working Together to Safeguard Children sets out that "The local authority should notify the panel of any incident that meets the criteria for an LCSPR via the Child Safeguarding Online Notification System. It should do so within five working days of becoming aware it has occurred. Though the responsibility to notify rests on the local authority, it is for all three safeguarding partners to agree which incidents

should be notified in their local area. The GSCP has a defined Serious Incident Notification Panel comprising of the principal partners and education to determine threshold for the submission of a Serious Incident notification. Where threshold has been met, the Authority are requested to submit the SIN within five working days of the threshold decision being made. From this point the local arrangements will be followed.



7.0 Multi Agency Threshold Arrangements

7.1 GSCP in collaboration with the Gloucestershire Childrens Coalition regularly revises what has become a collective approach toward the provision of support for children and families. They set out Gloucestershire's Levels of Intervention Guidance – Working Together to Provide Early Help, Targeted and Specialist Support for Children and Families in Gloucestershire.

7.2 Regular review and collective exploration of the effectiveness of threshold application will remain a priority within Gloucestershire's child safeguarding arrangements in partnership with the Childrens Coalition who oversee the development of the Early Help Graduated Pathway. The

²⁷ [Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review Protocol](#)

document itself will set out the anticipated review schedule falling into pace with Working Together to Safeguard Children Statutory Guidance and other key legislation changes.



8.0 Links with Schools, Educational Settings, and Early Years Providers

8.1 The GSCP Executive are committed to the engagement of its Education Directorate and education sector in its published arrangements and as far as practicable as a key partner in the partnership's governance arrangements from Executive to a defined Education Subgroup.

8.2 The GSCP Education Subgroup provides a robust oversight over the interconnectivity between the partnership and the education sector. The education settings are engaged through the GSCP processes with the Gloucestershire Education Associations providing a mandate for the GCC Director of Education to take a seat at the GSCP Executive to represent the sector. Relationships are robust and well developed. Engagement with early years' settings is via an active 'Early Years Forum' with representation drawn from across the sector.

8.3 The GSCP Executive has a Safeguarding Traded Service for Education in place delivered through its Business Unit. It offers bespoke training, information advice and guidance, regular updates and brief guides around thematic issues. The team routinely serves around 90% of settings in Gloucestershire. The Traded Service supports participating settings with regards to their legal duties and responsibilities under primary safeguarding legislation, including the most current Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working Together to Safeguard Children. However, it must be remembered that the legal duties under this legislation and the duty to respond to local arrangements remains that of each educational setting itself.

8.4 Schools, education settings and early year's providers have a pivotal role to play in promoting the safeguarding and welfare of children. It is important to note that the guidance provided by Working Together to Safeguard Children applies in its entirety to all education and early years settings, as 'Relevant Agencies'. The GSCP seeks assurance about the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements within these sectors through the annual Safeguarding Assurance Declaration Process for Education²⁸ and Early Years²⁹.

8.5 Elective Home Education is a priority area for the GSCP Education Subgroup. There are many reasons why parents decide to home educate their children, which can work well for many children. It is not the purpose of the GSCP to comment on the implications of home education for education and learning but instead to focus on issues relating to the safeguarding and protection of children. The GSCP supports the right of parents to educate their children at home. We share the view of the Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza, that home education is not, in and of itself, a safeguarding risk (Lost in Transition. The destinations of children who leave the

²⁸ [GSCP KCSiE Self-Assessment Process](#)

²⁹ [GSCP EYFS S3 Self-Assessment Process](#)

state education system³⁰). The GSCP are of the view that there are some children within this cohort who will require the attention of safeguarding agencies because they are at risk of harm and may not be visible to services. It is on this group of children that the GSCP via its Education Subgroup is focused.

8.6 The GSCP has determined that the authorities Elective Home Education Service must be seen and engaged with by all partners and relevant agencies as if it were a formal education setting, appropriately sharing information with the team, ensuring the team are invited to relevant statutory meetings and processes and any other safeguarding arrangements in place as they would with any other formal education setting.



9.0 Statutory Safeguarding Review Processes

9.1 Ofsted has 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. Since 29th June 2018, local authorities in England have been required to notify the national Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel within five working days of becoming aware of a serious incident. Notifications must be made using the online form for notifications of serious incidents for local authorities. Whilst the authority retains the legal duty to report a Serious Incident Notification the determination of threshold is a partnership one and will be determined by a SIN Panel Locally.

9.2 In order to ensure Gloucestershire Safeguarding Partners and local agencies can comply with the statutory safeguarding review requirements, a multi-agency process guide³¹ has been developed, including the Partnerships Serious Incident Notification (SIN) Process arrangements following the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel guidance for safeguarding partners³². It is important to note that its aim is to ensure a timely and appropriate response by local agencies when they become aware of a serious safeguarding incident.

9.3 Responsibility for learning the lessons from serious child safeguarding incidents lies at a national level with the National Panel and at local level with the GSCP. The QiiP Subgroup will oversee on behalf of the GSCP Executive the local safeguarding review arrangements and provide the link between the national and local response to incidents.

9.4 The GSCP has overall responsibility for ensuring that all incidents are notified in accordance with local guidance to ensure that the reporting requirements are met and the criteria for a local review. A rapid review will be initiated by the Business Unit, to be completed where practicable within 15 working days of the notification and sent to the National Panel.

³⁰ <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/resource/lost-in-transition>

³¹ [GSCP CHILD SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE REVIEW PROCEDURES](#)

³² [Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel guidance for safeguarding partners](#)

9.5 Any decision to commence a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR), or not to do so, will be for the QiiP Subgroup delegated by the GSCP Executive, as informed by the findings of a Rapid Review. The Chair of the QiiP shall consult with the Business Manager on any occasion in which there is a lack of agreement between the Safeguarding Partners reporting to the Chair of The Management Group to determine an independent oversight solution on a case-by-case basis. In extremis the Management Group Chair may choose to Escalate to the Executive for a decision.

9.6 Any local child safeguarding practice reviews initiated under these arrangements shall be scoped and commissioned in accordance with Working Together. The GSCP, via the work of the QiiP Subgroup, will agree the terms of reference and methodology for any review and appoint a suitable lead reviewer, having regard to the circumstances of each case and the particular knowledge and expertise this will require of the reviewer. The GSCP Executive will have the final decision on publishing arrangements and ensure a copy is provided to the National Panel and DfE no less than seven working days ahead of publication. The presumption is that a report will be published unless the Safeguarding Partners consider it inappropriate to do so. The rationale for not publishing a local review will also be provided within the same timescales.

9.7 Child Death Review Arrangements: The Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) as set up by the Child Death Review Partners the Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board and the Gloucestershire Local Authority have the statutory duty to review the deaths of all children aged 0 to and including 17 years of age. The GSCP works in Tandem with the Child Death Overview Panel seeking assurances regarding local arrangements and adherence to Working Together to Safeguard Children Statutory Guidance. The CDOP forms part of the GSCP subgroup structure reporting on exception through the Management Group to the Executive. Section 13 covers the responsibilities of the CDOP

9.8 The local authority should also notify the Secretary of State for Education and Ofsted of the death of a care leaver up to and including the age of 24. The death of a care leaver does not require a rapid review or local child safeguarding practice review. However, safeguarding partners must consider whether the criteria for a serious incident have been met and respond using the LCSPR process as set out above, 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, including where the care leaver is 18 up to and including the age of 24, consideration of alternative review processes such as Domestic Abuse Related Death Review or a Safeguarding Adult Review must be made. In the absence of any other statutory review the authority may choose to seek a death in service review, where a care leaver is under the care of a commissioned service or undertake a learning review themselves. The decision to proceed to a review or not will be that of the responsible authority where there is no threshold for a statutory review.

10.0 Escalation of Professional Concerns – Dispute Resolution

10.1 The GSCP has a robust escalation and dispute resolution guidance protocol³³ in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children Statutory Guidance. It is the expectation of the GSCP

³³ [GSCP Escalation Protocol](#)

Executive that all partners and relevant agencies adhere to the Protocol at all times when dealing with an interagency dispute relating to the safety and welfare of a child. At no time must professional disagreement detract from ensuring that the child is safeguarded. The child's welfare and safety must remain paramount throughout. The protocol identifies a non-exhaustive list of potential areas of disagreement, guidance on resolving disputes and procedures to be followed when disputes cannot be resolved through discussion and negotiation between professionals at front line level. Some organisations use the term Conflict Resolution or Resolution Protocol.

10.2 A central feature of our arrangements is a commitment to ongoing inter-agency communication based on openness; transparency and mutual respect in order to resolve concerns by informal means, with the use of formal processes kept to a minimum. Dispute resolution will also be child-centered, with clarity on the impact/change for the child the escalation is seeking to achieve.

10.3 The Chair of the GSCP Executive supported by the Business Manager will be the final stage of local resolution. It is acknowledged that Safeguarding Partners are able in extremis to escalate concerns to the relevant inspectorate, governing body or the Secretary of State if local resolution is not achieved.

10.4 The GSCP Executive hold a Strategic Escalation Log holding and monitoring strategic escalations that are of a systemic or organisational procedural, cultural or operational nature that impact the partnership's ability to safeguard children. These escalations will impact more than one child or family and require a strategic Executive level resolution. The GSCP Executive monitor at all meetings the status of Strategic Escalations.



11.0 The Voice of Children

11.1 Obtaining the views of children and families is essential in ensuring that local agencies and services are well positioned to meet their needs and particularly so in ensuring that the most vulnerable children are effectively safeguarded.

11.2 A key element within the Independent Scrutiny function will be to commission and report on suitable consultation with the Ambassadors, Children in Care and Care Leavers Groups, locality children's groups or councils to ensure children's views are contributing towards the development and efficacy of child safeguarding arrangements.

11.3 Engagement of local children as participants in the [GSCP Section 11 Audit process](#) is an integral part of the partnerships commitment to engaging meaningfully with children in measuring the efficacy of partners safeguarding arrangements.

11.4 The effectiveness of Childrens Advocacy, Independent Visitors, Appropriate Adults are area that the GSCP will remain focused on as part of these arrangements. All commissioned services delivering these services to children will be required to report on an annual basis to the GSCP.

11.5 Commissioning arrangements across the partnership will be monitored through the partnerships S11 arrangements³⁴ with regards to the voice of the child and how commissioned providers are meeting the relevant standard. The partnership has a defined protocol setting out the safeguarding expectations for commissioners across the partnership under section 12 of this document.



12.0 Safeguarding Duties for Commissioning & Procurement 2024

12.1 As set out in legislation, all commissioning agencies retain responsibility for the efficacy of the safeguarding arrangements of all providers or services that are procured through the varied commissioning and grant giving mechanisms; in addition, they must pay heed to their own commissioning departments duties under Section 11 of the Children Act.

12.2 The GSCP has clearly defined within the Gloucestershire Protocol Establishing Safeguarding Duties for Commissioning & Procurement 2024³⁵ the minimum expectations required by the GSCP Executive on all commissioning and procurement services and the providers that are engaged to deliver services for and on behalf of children and families but also any provider commissioned to deliver a service where they may come into contact with children and families through the course of their service delivery.

12.3 All services commissioned and or procured to deliver services for or on behalf of children and families and any service that may come into contact with children or families through the course of their service delivery are considered to be relevant agencies under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004, these published arrangements and therefore Working Together to Safeguard Children Statutory Guidance, and The Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency (England) Regulations 2018³⁶



³⁴ [Section 11 Protocol](#)

³⁵ [Gloucestershire Protocol Establishing Safeguarding Duties for Commissioning & Procurement 2024](#)

³⁶ [The Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency \(England\) Regulations 2018](#)



13.0 Child Death Overview Panel

13.1 The child death review Partners with the responsibility for Child Death Reviews are the Local Authority and the NHS Integrated Care Board. They have committed to the ongoing purchase of ECDOP. This provides a secure, flexible web-based solution to facilitate the CDR processes whilst ensuring seamless transition of data from Gloucestershire to the National Child Mortality Data Base Service (NCMD).

13.2 Gloucestershire has a well-established Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)³⁷ that facilitates comprehensive multi-agency reviews of child deaths and Acute Life-Threatening Events, in order to better understand how and why children die. The local CDOP is closely aligned to the GSCP Structure.

13.3 The GSCP has a duty to be assured that the CDOP arrangements meet the requirements as set out in Working Together statutory Guidance. That assurance is sought through the Partnerships Business Manager oversight, the Chair of CDOP sitting within the GSCP Management Group reporting on exception and the presentation of the CDOP Annual Report to the GSCP Executive and publicly made available through the GSCP Website.

13.4 The Child Death Review process is managed and overseen by the Child Death Review (CDR) Team for Gloucestershire. The CDR team comprises of the Lead Child Death Nurse employed by Gloucestershire Health and Care Trust, the Designated Child Death Doctors employed by Gloucestershire Hospitals Foundation Trust and the Child Death Review Coordinator employed under the allocated CDOP budget held by the Partnerships Business Unit.

13.5 The Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) oversees compliance against the national Child death review statutory and operational guidance (England)³⁸ and the duty to undertake Child Death Reviews and the associated Acute Life-Threatening Event Reviews (ALTE). CDOP operated with its own ringfenced budget managed by the Partnerships Business Manager. The GSCP welcomes this close alignment allowing the GSCP oversight of all deaths of children on the county with a specific lens of safeguarding whilst CDOP focuses on its statutory child death duties.

13.6 The CDOP support and secretariat function sits with the Partnerships Business Unit under the Partnerships Business Manager with a full time Child Death Review Coordinator working as part of the Child Death Review (CDR) Team. The Partnerships Business Unit offers business support cover in the absence of the Child Death Review Coordinator to assist in the facilitation of urgent statutory meetings and functions. Oversight and responsibility for both specialist advice and non-urgent process cover for the Child Death Review Coordinator must come from the CDR Team.

³⁷ [Terms of Reference for the Child Death Overview Panel](#)

³⁸ [Child death review statutory and operational guidance \(England\) 2018](#)



14.0 People in Position of Trust: Allegations Management Arrangements

14.1 Local authorities should put in place arrangements to provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations and agencies on how to deal with allegations against people who work with children. Local authorities should also ensure that there are appropriate arrangements in place to liaise effectively with the police and other organisations and agencies to monitor the progress of cases and ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process.

14.2 In Gloucestershire the Local Authority has an appointed Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to manage allegations against people in a position of trust³⁹.

14.3 The GSCP will provide guidance and information⁴⁰ for employers in relation to the Employers responsibilities as relating to effective and efficient management of allegations and low-level concerns relating to adults in a position of trust.

14.4 Under Working Together to Safeguard Children statutory Guidance the GSCP must be assured regards the efficacy of the local authorities' arrangements for the management of allegations. This is achieved through a requirement for the service to be represented at key subgroups in addition to the service presenting a signed off annual report to the GSCP Executive for information and assurance.



15.0 Duties under the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005

15.1 Licensing Authorities (each of the six districts in Gloucestershire) are required by regulations to state the principles they will apply in exercising their powers (2005 Act, s.157(h)) to designate, in writing, a body which is competent to advise the authority about the protection of children from harm. The principles are:

- The need for the body to be responsible for an area covering the whole of the Licensing Authority's area; and
- The need for the body to be answerable to democratically elected persons, rather than any particular vested interest group.

³⁹ [The Role of the LADO & The Allegations Management process](#)

⁴⁰ [Successfully Managing Allegations against people in a position of trust. an Employers Guide](#)

15.2 In accordance with the guidance the Licensing Authorities have designated the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (GSCP), comprising of NHS Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board, Gloucestershire County Council and Gloucestershire Constabulary.

15.3 The GSCP Executive will review and delegate its duties as 'Responsible Authority' to the most suitable Safeguarding Partners for this purpose setting out its arrangements in its own 'Published Arrangements' document.

15.4 The Partners delegated to operate as the Responsible Authority in this area will be Gloucestershire Constabulary and Gloucestershire Public Health.



16.1 Freedom of Information (FOI) and Subject Access Request (SAR)

16.1 Freedom of Information Requests: The Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (GSCP) is in itself not subject to the Freedom of Information Act and is under no obligation to provide information in response to requests received by its partner organisations or directly through the Business Unit. It is recognised that there may be occasions when the Partnerships Business Unit on behalf of the GSCP and/or the Child Death Review Partners volunteer's information to support a timely and importantly accurate response. All FOI requests received by the Partners relating to safeguarding or child deaths will be shared with the Partnerships Business Unit for consideration. Where the Partnerships Business Unit is voluntarily sharing information, this must be made clear in any response to an FOI by the partners.

16.2 Subject Access Requests (SAR)

- In relation to Child Death Reviews: The Data controllers for Child Death Reviews resides with the ICB and Local Authority as the statutory child death review partners. The personal data of a deceased individual is not captured by the Data Protection Act as this only applies to living individuals; therefore, SAR requests are invalid. However, to ensure our duty of care to the family of any deceased individuals the GSCP and CDOP would defer to the Local Authorities internal process for the management of requests for such personal data under GCC's Access to deceased person's records policy⁴¹.
- In relation to Safeguarding Reviews. The data controllers for any safeguarding review undertaken through the statutory duties of the GSCP resided with the Local Authority, NHS ICB and the Constabulary. Any requests received will require all three partners to jointly consider and respond to such requests. These requests cannot be processed or managed by the Partnerships Business Unit and will always be referred to the relevant partners teams.

⁴¹ [access-to-deceased-persons-records-policy-2022.pdf](#)



17.0 Placements from other Local Authorities in Gloucestershire Guidance

17.1 In accordance with The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010⁴², Local Authorities placing children in the area of another Local Authority are required to provide written notification to the Authority concerned.

17.2 In addition and according to statutory guidance⁴³, “when a child starts to be looked after or changes placement, the Local Authority must, before the placement is made, notify the child’s GP, parents (except where clearly inappropriate) and those caring for the child. When a child starts to be looked after, changes placement or ceases to be looked after, the Local Authority must also notify in writing:

- the ICB for the area in which the child is living
- the ICB and the Local Authority for the area in which the child is to be/has been placed” and; “ICBs and officers in Local Authorities who are responsible for looked after children’s services should ensure that sufficient resources are allocated to meet the identified health needs of the looked-after children population, including those placed in their area by other Local Authorities, based on the range of data available about their health characteristics”

17.3 The Local Authority through the MASH team will write to all authorities on an annual basis seeking assurances that the above arrangements and legal duties are followed and asking for up to date information on all children placed in the county. This information will be made available to the GSCP.

17.4 When any partner becomes aware of a child placed in the county where due notification has not been made by the placing authority, they should both escalate to the placing authority and inform the GSCP via the Partnerships Business Unit. In extremis the partner may choose to also inform the relevant regulatory authority alongside of their escalation to the placing authority.

17.5 The GSCP has set out a [Guidance Document](#) for other Local Authorities detailing the expected legal arrangements whilst detailing key contacts and enabling effective information sharing.



⁴² [Children Act 1989: care planning, placement and case review - GOV.UK](#)

⁴³ [Promoting the health and wellbeing of looked-after children - GOV.UK](#)

18.0 Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and Statutory Guidance 2022

18.1 The GSCP will work in partnership with the counties Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership to meet its obligations under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021⁴⁴ and the accompanying Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance 2022⁴⁵. The GSCP will seek assurances and undertake activity relating to the safeguarding implications and impact that domestic abuse has on children. This position reflects that children witnessing or living in a household where domestic abuse is present or suspected are defined as being victims of domestic abuse.

18.2 Safer Gloucestershire, which is the countywide Partnership for safer community activity in Gloucestershire, has a published [protocol for Domestic Homicide Reviews](#) (DHR) in order to ensure a consistent approach to the completion and dissemination of multi-agency learning across the county.

18.3 There is recognition within the protocol that a domestic homicide may trigger a requirement for other reviews, such as a local or national child safeguarding practice review. In these circumstances the GSCP will consider the most appropriate review process in order to avoid duplication and maximise learning, whilst ensuring the requirements of statutory review processes are satisfied.



19.0 Channel Panel

19.1 Gloucestershire has a well-established Channel Panel that operates alongside our multi-agency child safeguarding arrangements, acknowledging that the radicalisation of children involves the potential for safeguarding harm. The involvement of children's social care practitioners within both our Channel and Safeguarding Partnership ensures that where vulnerabilities are identified that require intervention from social services or the individual is known to social services the appropriate support is provided.

20.0 Terms of Reference

[The Terms of Reference for all GSCP meetings can be found on the GSCP Website⁴⁶](#)



⁴⁴ [Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#)

⁴⁵ [Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance 2022](#)

⁴⁶ [GSCP Subgroups | Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children's Partnership](#)



Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership

