



South Tyneside Safeguarding Children Partnership

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements in
South Tyneside

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Foreword

We are delighted to share our multi-agency arrangements for safeguarding children in South Tyneside. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the revised statutory guidance, Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2023, place a shared and equal duty on the statutory safeguarding partners (the Local Authority, NHS Integrated Care Board and Local Police Force), to make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area.

There was a joint approach between Children's and Adults safeguarding at a local level. However, with the update to the statutory guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, the introduction of the National Framework for Children's Social Care and the outcome of the Ofsted inspection of Children's Social Care locally, it was felt that there was a need to separate the two partnerships to ensure there was a clear focus on safeguarding children.

At the heart of our multi-agency safeguarding arrangements lies a shared vision: to invest in the relationships we have with children, young people, and their families. We believe that by actively listening to the voices of children and placing their experiences at the centre of everything we do, we can create a culture that is both inclusive and transformative. Every child matters, and every child deserves a fair chance in life.

Our approach is rooted in collaboration – working closely with children, families, colleagues and partners to build a culture of high challenge and high support. We are committed to fostering an environment where families feel empowered and professionals are confident in their ability to deliver quality, timely interventions that make a tangible difference.

In our borough inclusivity is pivotal. We are dedicated to ensuring that every child, regardless of their background or circumstances, receives the support and protection they need to thrive. For children in need or at risk, we pledge to provide effective, high-quality support at the earliest opportunity.

By championing strong partnerships, focusing on the lived experiences of children and holding ourselves to the highest standards, we are confident that our arrangements will ensure children and young people are safe, valued, and able to achieve the best possible outcomes. Together, we will make a difference.

These multi-agency safeguarding arrangements are in place from January 2025 in response to Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and supersedes any previous arrangements. They will be revised, updated, and published as required, to ensure that current arrangements are reflected.

Signed:

Jonathan Tew (Local Authority)

Sam Allen (NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board ICB)

Vanessa Jardine (Northumbria Police)

[See signature page](#)




Geographical Area

The geographical area for these multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, which includes arrangements for reviewing child deaths, where there is a safeguarding need, will be based upon the South Tyneside Local Authority boundary.

Safeguarding Partners

The Childrens Act 2004 requires every Local Authority, Integrated Care Board and Police constabulary to be covered by Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA). The purpose of which is to ensure that at a local level, organisations and agencies are clear about how they will work together to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

The statutory safeguarding partners are known as Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSP)'s and are the following:

<p>Local Authority Chief Executive Jonathan Tew</p> 	<p>Northumbria Police Chief Constable Vanessa Jardine</p> 	<p>NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board Chief Executive, Sam Allen</p> 
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Each of the LSPs have appointed a Delegated Safeguarding Partner (DSP) for its organisation. The role of the DSP is to be able to speak with authority, take decisions on behalf of the LSP and hold their sectors to account. The Delegated Safeguarding Partners have the responsibility and authority for ensuring full participation in the safeguarding arrangements. Although the Lead Safeguarding Partners have delegated their responsibilities to those named above, they remain accountable for any action or decisions taken on behalf of their respective agency.

The Designated Safeguarding Partners (DSPs) for South Tyneside are:

- Stuart Easingwood (Local Authority)
- Jeanette Scott (NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board ICB)
- Aelfwynn Sampson (Northumbria Police)

The DSP's are expected to attend, in the event that a DSP is unable to attend, a deputy can represent them. The deputy will have full authority to make decisions and commitments on behalf of that organisation. If more than one DSP is unable to attend, then the meeting will be considered not to be quorate and may be postponed.

Structure and Governance

The South Tyneside Safeguarding Children Partnership

The South Tyneside Safeguarding Children Partnership is attended by the Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSPs) and strategic leaders from the Partnership's relevant agencies, as set out under Working Together 2023.

The South Tyneside Safeguarding Children Partnership is chaired by one of the DSPs, the Director of Children's Services.

The day-to-day work of the Partnership is undertaken by the subgroups and the Safeguarding Business Unit (SBU). The SBU supports the operational running of the SCP arrangements and manages the Partnership on behalf of the multi-agency partners.

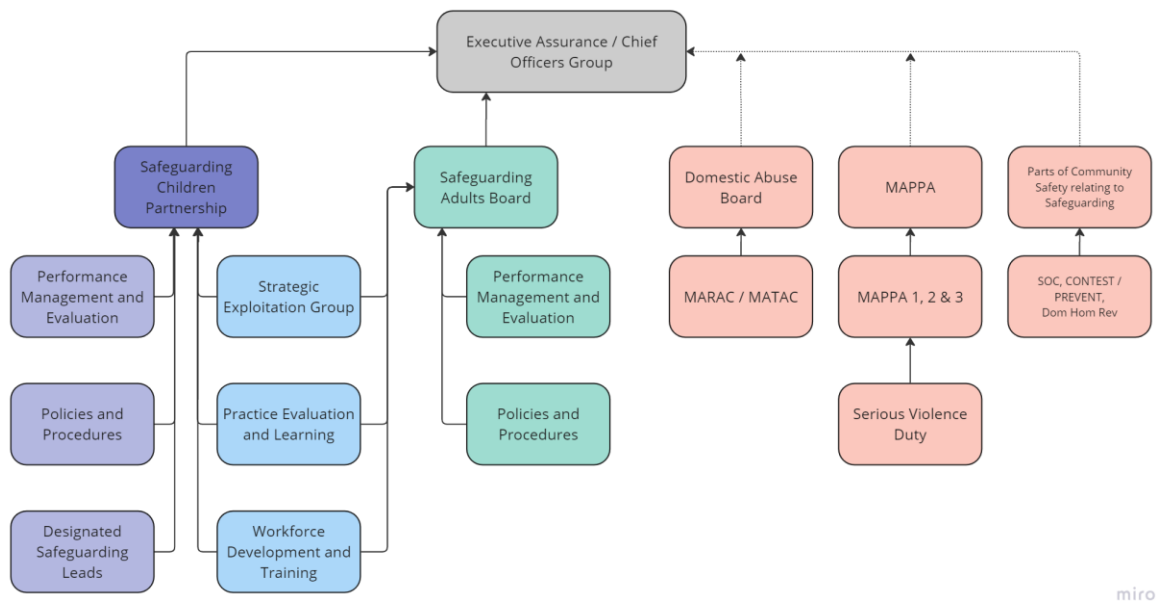
In December 2023 the revised version of Working Together 2023 made it a requirement for all safeguarding partnerships to appoint an independent scrutiny function. The aim of independent scrutiny is to drive continuous improvement and provide assurance that arrangements are working effectively for children, families and practitioners and contribute to the wider system of accountability.

Purpose of the South Tyneside Safeguarding Children's Partnership (STSCP).

The three safeguarding partners, together with other local relevant agencies are committed to:

- coordinating their safeguarding services for maximum impact
- acting as a strategic leadership group in supporting and engaging others
- implementing local and national learning, including from serious child safeguarding incidents
- learning from independent scrutiny that judges the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in South Tyneside
- developing processes that facilitate and drive action beyond usual institutional and agency constraints and boundaries
- ensuring that relevant agencies have appropriate, robust safeguarding policies and procedures in place
- publishing a report at least once in every 12-month period, which sets out what they have done as a result of these arrangements, including on Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs), and how effective these arrangements have been in practice

The current structure of the STSCP is illustrated below:



South Tyneside Safeguarding Executive Board (STSEB)

As highlighted in the structure chart the South Tyneside Safeguarding Children Partnership reports by exception to the South Tyneside Safeguarding Executive Board (STSEB). The SEB was established to provide leadership, governance and ensure local accountability for Children and Adult Safeguarding Services in South Tyneside. It is chaired by the Chief Executive of South Tyneside Council who is one of the Lead Safeguarding Partners, LSP.

The core membership includes the Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSP) for the ICB and Northumbria Police with additional attendees from the following:

- Director of Adult Social Care
- Independent Chair of South Tyneside SAB
- Chair of South Tyneside SCP
- Independent Scrutineer – SCP
- Place Director – ICB
- Business Manager – SCP/SAB

The purpose of the STSEB is:

- to provide joined up, strategic leadership and scrutiny for Children and Adult Safeguarding Services
- to scrutinise the work of safeguarding services, seeking assurance of effective arrangements
- to identify successes and areas for improvement, and in doing so learn from experience
- to monitor trends, examine comparisons and take appropriate action

Subgroups

Practice Evaluation and Learning Subgroup (PEL)

This is a joint subgroup with adults. The aim of the subgroup is to make recommendations to the SCP Chair to undertake a Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR). Initiate and monitor Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews as per the statutory guidance. Oversee and ensure action plans and learning from CSPR's are embedded and evaluated for impact on multi-agency practice.

In addition, the subgroup has the authority to determine and recommend to the SCP Chair to undertake learning reviews should any cases not meet the statutory criteria but clearly highlight learning for multi-agency partners. To support PEL members, awareness raising sessions were built into subgroup meetings. These highlight the purpose, criteria and required compliance with the statutory processes.

Workforce Development and Training (WD&T)

This is a joint subgroup with adults. The aim of the subgroup is to develop a multi-agency safeguarding training programme across adults and children as well as to implement a robust quality assurance process across all the training.

The group has a robust quality assurance process which was established to evaluate internal multi-agency children safeguarding training courses to ensure that all courses align with current safeguarding trends and effectively reflect emerging themes to provide participants with timely knowledge and skills. Moving forward all courses will be reviewed against a set of quality standards at the beginning of the training year or when changes to learning outcome are made to align training with national or regional safeguarding trends and themes.

Strategic Exploitation Group (SEG)

This is a joint subgroup with adults. This group ensures that the Safeguarding Children Partnership has a strategic oversight and assurance that appropriate actions have been taken in response to the exploitation of children and young people at risk in South Tyneside. Through a 'live' multi-agency action plan the group contributes to and measures the impact of partners actions against the key elements of the plan.

Policies and Procedures (P&P) Subgroup

The aim of the Policy and Procedures subgroup is to develop and maintain up to date multi-agency policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in South Tyneside. The online multi-agency policies and procedures have now been embedded in all the face-to-face training sessions to ensure that multi-agency practitioners are fully aware of the resource.

Performance Management and Evaluation (PME) Subgroup

The group receives, monitors, and analyses multi-agency performance data on a quarterly basis which informs the Practice Evaluation and Learning (PEL) subgroup the multi-agency safeguarding training offer as well as highlighting strategic issues and providing the SCP with additional information for further consideration. Assurances are provided by this group, based on the multi-agency dataset, to ensure children and young people are safe and resources are effectively aligned with the established priorities.

Learning and Development

Learning and Development is overseen by the Practice Evaluation and Learning (PEL) and Workforce Development and Training (WD&T) subgroups who link with all other subgroups to ensure that opportunities are reflective of and responsive to the work and identified needs of the wider partnership, this includes learning from reviews, audit findings, learning when things go well and sharing of expertise and knowledge.

Multi-agency training forms part of the wider learning and development offer. Multi-agency training opportunities are via a hybrid approach, online, face to face and e-learning, provided via the Learning and Development Advisor.

The impact of multi-agency training on practice and outcomes for children and families is established via training evaluation, audit, feedback from practitioners, children and families.

All multi-agency training materials are reviewed on a regular basis and updated timely in line with any legislative, policy and practice changes.

The multi-agency training offer is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it meets the requirements of safeguarding practice in South Tyneside and will be driven by learning from reviews, findings of audits, inspection findings, change in policy, practice and legislation, and the identified priorities for the city.

Relevant Partners

These are identified by the LSPs, and their involvement within the Safeguarding Children Partnership is required to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children.

Relevant partners contribute to the safeguarding arrangements by membership of the subgroups. Those relevant partners with a wider footprint are consulted on local safeguarding arrangements when appropriate but have open access to the SCP via communication with the Safeguarding Business Unit.

In South Tyneside the relevant safeguarding partners include (but are not limited to):

- CAFCASS
- Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Trust
- Elected Members
- National Probation Service
- NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board
- Northumbria Police
- Primary Education
- Secondary Education
- South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust
- South Tyneside College
- South Tyneside Council, Children and Families Social Care
- South Tyneside Council, Community Safety Partnership
- South Tyneside Council, Family Help and Adolescent Services
- South Tyneside Council, Learning and Early Help

- South Tyneside Council, Public Health
- Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service

Education

The structure includes a Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) forum for education, made up of Designated Safeguarding Leads and Head Teachers. The function of the DSL is to support the wider strategic work of the STSCP by:

- Providing a framework to enhance communication, support and challenge between all educational establishments, including Early Years providers and Further Education, and South Tyneside Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- Support the development and co-production of safeguarding assurance, and improvements across educational establishments.
- Work collaboratively with the three statutory safeguarding partners to support and contribute to the delivery of the locally agreed children partnership arrangements.
- Highlighting strengths, challenges, threats and opportunities for educational settings and the partnership.
- Provide a local sector response to relevant national consultations impacting the safeguarding arrangements of children and young people in education settings.

Practice

In South Tyneside we have guiding principles that underpin the work of the SCP to support children, families and communities and keep children safe.

Restorative Practice: our approach in South Tyneside to working with families is a restorative one, and our work with families must maintain a focus on investing in the relationships we have with children, young people and their families, and with colleagues and partners to improve outcomes, prevent or resolve harm. Practitioners and agencies have a responsibility to offer both support and challenge to families and to each other in order to respond robustly, whilst appropriately utilising the strengths of the families and using restorative language.

Voice of the Child: in all of our work, it is vital to hear the child's voice, and to focus on their experiences, from interactions and support to children and families, through the system to the strategic direction. We have made a commitment throughout the safeguarding partnership that the voice of children and young people will be central to all that we do.

Always work with: Creating a context of high support and high challenge with children, young people and families and each other as professionals and partners.

Strength focussed: All intervention, interactions and plans are seeking, affirming and utilising existing knowledge, skills and abilities, and adopt an evidence-based approach to assessing need and managing risk.

Priorities

South Tyneside Safeguarding Children Partnership has agreed the following four priorities:

- Communication and Information Sharing
- Healthy Relationships
- Contextual Safeguarding
- Relational/ Restorative Practice Approach

Independent Scrutiny

Local arrangements for independent scrutiny will:

- Provide assurance in judging the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in South Tyneside
- Provide assurance that there is effective identification and review of serious child safeguarding cases
- Act as part of a wider system which includes the independent inspectorates' single agency assessment of the individual safeguarding
- Consider how effective the multi-agency arrangements are for children and partners
- Provide objectivity, act as a constructive critical friend and promote a culture of continuous improvement
- Consider how safeguarding partners are providing strong leadership across the children's safeguarding system.
- Make recommendations to the LSPs

Escalation of Concerns

To support staff at all levels across the borough, the partnership has in place an [Escalation and Challenge Protocol](#) which outlines the steps to be taken when there are disagreements between practitioners from differing agencies in relation to concerns about the safety and welfare of a child or young person, and/or action being taken to safeguard a child or young person.

The process does not replace the need to respond to significant safeguarding concerns immediately. The safety and wellbeing of the child, young person or unborn, is paramount, and should they be considered at risk of significant harm safeguarding processes should be followed.

Information Sharing

The partnership has an information sharing agreement in place, which all partners have signed up to and supports the work of the partnership.

Information sharing guidance is included within relevant learning and development opportunities and a resource for staff is provide via the South Tyneside website.

Funding

The lead safeguarding partners should agree the level of funding secured from each partner, which should be equitable and proportionate, and any contributions from each relevant agency to support effective local arrangements.

Agency contributions and the budget for the STSCP are set out in the Annual Report.

It enables the Safeguarding Partnership Business Unit to fulfil its functions and allows the existing arrangements to deliver against statutory responsibilities and strategic priorities.

Funding covers staffing costs, scrutineer functions, multi-agency training and audits, the undertaking of child safeguarding practice reviews and child death overview process, as well as timed limited work in-line with the priorities of the STSCP.

Any changes to the budgetary arrangements are agreed by the Lead Safeguarding Partners but must ensure that the partnership can continue to meet its statutory obligations.

The delivery cost of providing child protection and safeguarding services incurred by each statutory safeguarding partner is subject to their organisation's budgetary arrangements.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements.

The lead safeguarding partners have a responsibility to monitor the effectiveness of the local multi agency safeguarding arrangements and to publish a report at least once in every 12-month period.

The annual report will be published on the STSCP website.

The MASA will be reviewed annually and published on the STSCP website.


The Independent Scrutineer will scrutinise the effectiveness of local arrangements reporting to the STSCP and the STSEB.


Document Sign Off


Document Title:	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements
Final Document:	December 2024
Review Date:	December 2025

The undersigned organisations:

Have read and agreed to the document as a final version:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Signed on behalf of: South Tyneside Council	
Name:	Jonathan Tew
Designation:	Chief Executive
Signature:	
Date:	20/12/2024

Signed on behalf of: Northumbria Police	
Name:	Vanessa Jardine
Designation:	
Signature:	
Date:	27/12/2024

Signed on behalf of: North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB)	
Name:	Samantha Allen
Designation:	Chief Executive
Signature:	
Date:	19/12/2024
Name:	Sam Allen