

# **Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-agency Partnership Arrangements March 2022**

## Foreword

We are pleased to publish this document which updates the Kent children's safeguarding partnership arrangements, known as the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-agency Partnership (KSCMP) arrangements. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children who live in Kent. To do this, we endeavour to provide help and support in the best ways possible to meet their needs.

We recognise that one agency working on its own cannot achieve this single-handedly. We believe that by working together across different organisational boundaries and in partnership with other public sector bodies, and voluntary and community sector organisations, we can provide the most effective support. Our vision is 'to protect children from harm and prevent them from the risk of being harmed, support their recovery from harmful situations and improve services through learning'. Our revised multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, outlined in this document, state how we will arrange our support services to meet the needs of children and families, whilst seeking to continually improve so that we can offer even better levels of support and assistance into the future.

The focus of our KSCMP arrangements is to:

- Promote effective multi-agency safeguarding support;
- Take rapid and decisive action to safeguard those at risk of harm or abuse and access the most appropriate support services to keep them safe;
- Make children's safeguarding personal and timely;
- Engage with children and families, helping them strengthen their resilience and provide access to the most appropriate support;
- Drive effective partnership working;
- Provide robust independent scrutiny and assurance to the partnership in relation to safeguarding and the welfare of children in Kent.

The KSCMP was launched in September 2019, replacing the previous Safeguarding Children Board. In 2021 an Architecture Review was undertaken which looked at the implementation and operation of the KSCMP arrangements, with a view to identifying areas of strength and opportunities for improvement. As a result of this work, the Executive Board agreed a number of amendments to the arrangements and functioning of the Partnership, which are detailed in this revised document. The review and revised arrangements are a clear indication of Kent's intention to take forward a shared and robust set of partnership arrangements and to re-affirm our commitment to work collaboratively across local agencies and organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Kent has a well-established record of organisations working in partnership to improve safeguarding. These revised KSCMP arrangements will ensure a strong foundation for the partnership to work together effectively and in the best way for the children of Kent. It is clear that our partners are committed to our aims of ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Indeed, we have taken on

board lessons from the implementation of the KSCMP arrangements, as well as from other areas approaches to multi-agency local safeguarding arrangements.

As safeguarding partners and relevant agencies, we commit ourselves to:

- Work collaboratively and creatively in discharging our statutory responsibilities regarding children and families by listening, hearing and responding to their views on the help we give;
- Lead on engaging other agencies to promote collective responsibility for building effective safeguarding systems;
- Further develop and promote the best of what already exists in Kent and think innovatively about multi-agency safeguarding practice to improve outcomes relating to children and families;
- Lead on system learning and change, and work across the wider partnerships landscape to develop and implement improved ways of working as well as identify opportunities to join up services to reduce duplication and improve practice and outcomes for children;
- Continue to develop our scrutiny and assurance framework to provide high levels of assurance across the multi-agency safeguarding children's arrangements.

We will work as safeguarding partners and with the broader safeguarding community, to share our understanding of what works, learn from national and local experience, and reflect on our practice. We will critically evaluate our own performance, inviting review and challenge from an independent scrutineer, and endeavour to deliver the best possible multi-agency safeguarding services to the children of Kent.

The amendments described in these revised arrangements will be implemented during 2022.



**David Cockburn**  
Head of Paid Service,  
Kent County Council



**Paul Bentley**  
Accountable Officer,  
NHS Kent and Medway  
CCG



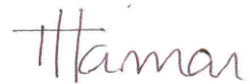
**Alan Pughsley**  
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**Matt Dunkley**  
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Children, Young People  
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Executive Chief Nurse,  
NHS Kent and Medway  
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**Tracey Harman**  
Assistant Chief Constable  
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## Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-agency Partnership arrangements at a glance

<b>Purpose</b>	Safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people	
<b>Safeguarding Partners</b>	<b>Safeguarding Partners:</b> Kent County Council Kent and Medway CCG Kent Police	<b>Relevant agencies:</b> Education, Health providers, District Councils, Social care providers, National Probation Service, Cafcass, Kent Fire and Rescue Service and others
<b>Vision</b>	Protect children from harm and from the risk of being harmed; support their recovery from harmful situations and improve our services through learning.	
<b>Executive Board's Objectives</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Ensure that the legal requirements are met</li> <li>2) Children are safeguarded and receive the support they require in a timely and appropriate manner</li> <li>3) All agencies are clear about their responsibilities and staff receive the relevant training</li> <li>4) The public have confidence in our safeguarding arrangements to keep children safe</li> </ol>	
<b>Sub-groups</b>	Policy and Procedures Group* Scrutiny and Challenge Group Emerging Themes Group Learning and Improvement Group	
<b>Partnership Groups</b>	Health Safeguarding Group* Education Safeguarding Group District Council Safeguarding Group Partnership Forum	
<b>Executive Board Support</b>	Business Support Team	

\* Kent and Medway groups

## Section 1: Introduction

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children through effective co-ordination is everyone's duty. The goal of our Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-agency Partnership (KSCMP) arrangements is that everyone can recognise, respond and fulfil their responsibilities to children and families in order to safeguard children. This can only be achieved through fostering good, collaborative working practices across the organisations and agencies that work with children and families, including those who work with carers.

This document describes the amended KSCMP arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, in line with the requirements of the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017) and, the statutory requirements set out in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children, a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote welfare of children 2018' (hereafter referred to as Working Together 2018). These arrangements emphasis that carrying out safeguarding successfully is accomplished by putting children at the centre of the system, and by every person and agency playing their full part. Organisations, agencies and practitioners in Kent should be aware of, and comply, with the principles set out in this document.

Layout of this document

This document is divided into 13 sections:

- Section 1 provides the introductory text of the national context as well as the Kent context;
- Section 2 describes the responsibilities of safeguarding partners and relevant agencies;
- Section 3 sets out the relationship between the KSCMP and the broader strategic partnership boards;
- Section 4 described the steps taken by the safeguarding partners, relevant agencies and organisations to engage children and families;
- Section 5 deals with the offer of support described in the Kent Support Levels Guidance for children and families;
- Section 6 details how learning and improvements are taken forward;
- Section 7 describes the local arrangements regarding Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, the partnership's relationship with the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel, and the child death reviews;
- Section 8 defines the key components of the scrutiny and challenge processes, and the adopted model of independent scrutiny;
- Section 9 deals with how data and other intelligence information are used to assess how well the partnership is performing;
- Section 10 covers information about the role and responsibilities of the Business Support Team which supports the KSCMP arrangements;
- Section 11 details the funding arrangements agreed by the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies;

- Section 12 sets out the process for resolving disputes at the strategic and operational level;
- Section 13 provides information about the annual review process and information about access to the annual report.

### National Context

Working Together 2018 clarifies that the three safeguarding partners in relation to a local authority area as defined in the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017) are:

- “the local authority;
- a clinical commissioning group for an area, any part of which falls within the local authority area;
- the chief officer of police for an area, any part of which falls within the local authority area”.

Working Together 2018 further clarifies that, “the responsibility for this join-up locally rests with the three safeguarding partners who have a shared and equal duty to make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area”.

To fulfil this role, the three safeguarding partners are required to set out how they will work together and with any relevant agencies. Relevant agencies are those organisations and agencies whose involvement the safeguarding partners consider may be required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children regarding local need.

The purpose of these local arrangements is to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together in a system where:

- children are safeguarding, 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 appropriate 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 support 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;
- local data from all agencies is analysed to collectively identify and respond to the underlying conditions and factors that lead to the need for help and protection.

As set out in Working Together 2018, in order to work together effectively, safeguarding partners with relevant partners and other local organisations and agencies should develop processes that:

- facilitate and drive action beyond usual institutional and agency constraints and boundaries;
- ensure that the effective protection of children is founded on practitioners developing lasting and trusting relationships with children and their families.

There is a recognition that, to be effective, these arrangements should connect with other strategic partnership work taking place in the county to support children, young people and their families. This includes other public boards such as the Kent Health and Wellbeing Board, Safeguarding Adults Board, Integrated Care System Partnership Board, Prevent Duty Delivery Board, Community Safety Partnerships, Youth Justice Board, Kent Criminal Justice Board, Violence Reduction Oversight Board, Family Justice Board and Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA).

### Kent context

The requirements placed on the safeguarding partners as a result of the amendments to the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017) are such that it was necessary to establish KSCMP arrangements which better respond to the statutory guidance, but which also improve multi-agency working and co-operation.

Our KSCMP arrangements set us on a course to transform strategic and operational systems to be more strengths-based, aspirational and optimistic for children. Our vision is 'to protect children from harm and prevent them from the risk of being harmed, support their recovery from harmful situations and improve our services through learning'. The voice of children and families in how we safeguard children is central to our arrangements and this should help us form a good understanding in working with families and carers. The arrangements described in this document also communicate our vision and principles. They incorporate all aspects of the Kent model for helping children and families and contribute to our relentless focus on enabling and empowering children and families to be safeguarded within their environment, peer groups, schools and communities, and finding resolutions that work for them.

We are continuing to work to implement our multi-agency scrutiny assurance framework which underpins the multi-agency safeguarding scrutiny system with the aim of learning from and improving the practice of local services for children and families.

Under the KSCMP arrangements, agencies will work together in a system where:

- children's and families, views and experiences are at the centre of all we do;
- first-rate practice is the norm;
- partner agencies hold one another to account effectively;
- there is early identification of emergent safeguarding issues;

- learning is promoted and embedded in practice and system oversight;
- information is shared effectively in support of operational delivery;
- the public can feel confident that children are safeguarded from harm or risk of abuse.

Our ambition is to continue to develop a shared and robust partnership arrangement that is based on a common approach that can respond to identified needs, provide consistent agency responses, and achieve early intervention and improved outcomes for children. Through the Partnership we are able to meet the requirements placed on us to identify, evaluate, plan, implement, review and assure effective multi-agency safeguarding practice.

The Partnership will deliver effective practice in the context of community of safeguarding strategy, policy and service development within Kent. We will examine and drive further opportunities to shape and influence policy development leading to improved practice and outcomes for children.

The revisions to the KSCMP arrangements will help improve effectiveness of the Partnership, and provide further clarity on our sub-structure, including where we work together with Medway Council.



## Section 2: Safeguarding Partnership

### Leadership

We adhere to the working principle that the leadership which the three safeguarding partners provide is critical to the effectiveness of the new multi-agency arrangements in working with local organisations and agencies.

In Kent, the safeguarding partner organisations and the Chief Officers are:

- Kent County Council – Head of Paid Service;
- Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group – Accountable Officer;
- Kent Police – Chief Constable

All three safeguarding partners have equal and joint responsibility to make local arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, which is underpinned by equitable and proportionate funding, including through any contributions from relevant agencies.

The Chief Officers have delegated their functions to the following senior officers:

- Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education and Statutory Direct of Children's Services, Kent County Council – **Matt Dunkley**;
- Executive Chief Nurse, Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group – **Paula Wilkins**;
- Assistant Chief Constable for Crime, Kent Police – **Tracey Harman**.

The safeguarding partners Chief Officers are responsible for the overall assurance that the statutory requirements are being adequately discharged. The senior managers who have a delegated lead role remain accountable for any actions or decisions taken in their respective agency. The delegated leads will provide proactive assurance to their respective Chief Officers to confirm that the statutory requirements are being fulfilled. The safeguarding partners Chief Officers shall approve the terms of reference of the Executive Board and the Scrutiny and Challenge Group.

The Chief Officers and senior officers they have delegated their authority are able to:

- 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.

Robust leadership is critical for the KSCMP arrangements to be effective in bringing together various organisations and agencies. These arrangements in Kent will be strongly led and promoted, specifically by local leaders, including the Chief Officers and those senior officers within their organisations to whom they have delegated their authority, and relevant political leaders.

## Geographical area

The geographical footprint for these arrangements is the Kent County Council local authority area. The geographical boundary of the Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group corresponds to the parts which fall within the Kent County Council local authority area. Also, the geographic boundary of Kent Police corresponds to the parts which fall within the Kent County Council local authority area.

The safeguarding partners and relevant agencies included in these arrangements will fulfil their statutory and other duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children from Kent who live or are placed outside of the Kent County Council local authority area, including looked after children placed in Kent by other local authorities. We will continue to work jointly with Medway where appropriate and strengthen practical working arrangements with neighbouring authorities such as London Borough Councils, East Sussex and Surrey County Councils.

## Relevant Agencies

Relevant agencies are those organisations and agencies whose involvement the safeguarding partners consider is required to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children. Strong, effective multi-agency arrangements are ones that are responsive to local circumstances and engage the right people. For local arrangements to be effective, we will engage organisations and agencies that can work with us in a collaborative way to provide targeted support to children and families as appropriate. This approach requires flexibility to enable joint identification of and response to existing and emerging needs, and to agree priorities to improve outcomes for children.

When selected by the safeguarding partners to be part of the multi-agency local safeguarding arrangements, relevant agencies must act in accordance with the arrangements. We will continue to make sure that the relevant agencies are aware of the expectations placed on them under these arrangements.

We have selected relevant agencies informed by the concept of a risk-based approach and about what they can actively contribute in safeguarding children in Kent. The selected organisations deemed to be relevant agencies have specific and direct responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and as a result it is necessary to designate them as relevant agencies within the meaning of the regulations. Other organisations and agencies who are not named in the relevant agency regulations have been included in the local KSCMP arrangements. The selected relevant agencies included in the KSCMP arrangements will be subject to our scrutiny and assurance arrangements. See section 8 for further information.

The Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency (England) Regulations 2018 sets out the list of 33 relevant agencies that are required to work under the multi-agency safeguarding partnership arrangements. The full list of selected relevant agencies and other organisations and agencies included in the KSCMP arrangements is detailed in Appendix 1. The list of selected relevant

agencies may change over time to reflect changing circumstances and in response to making the arrangements work more effectively.

Organisations and agencies who are not named in the relevant agency regulations, whilst not under a statutory duty, should nevertheless cooperate and collaborate with the safeguarding partners, particularly as they may have duties under section 10 and/or section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017).

### **Schools, colleges and other education providers**

As detailed in the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021, schools, colleges and other educational providers play a pivotal role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and as such their engagement in partnership arrangements is important. As defined by their duties under Section 40 of the Childcare Act 2006, early years providers play a crucial role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. There are established, collaborative relationships with schools and colleges, which are built on open and transparent partnership arrangements.

Due to the large number of educational and early years settings, it is not appropriate to nominate or identify specific establishments as relevant agencies. However, it is essential that the involvement and engagement of all educational and early years settings takes place. We will reinvigorate and re-establish the Education Safeguarding Group and consider representation through nominated members of existing representative forums, such as the Kent Association of Headteachers.

### **Residential homes for children**

We will develop mechanisms to engage residential children's homes providers and independent fostering agencies in the local arrangements, for example, through the section 11 process and the local provider forum. As a result, all residential homes for children within Kent, including those provided by Kent County Council and private sector organisations, can account for their responsibilities regarding safeguarding and the part they play in the partnership arrangements.

### **Voluntary Community Sector**

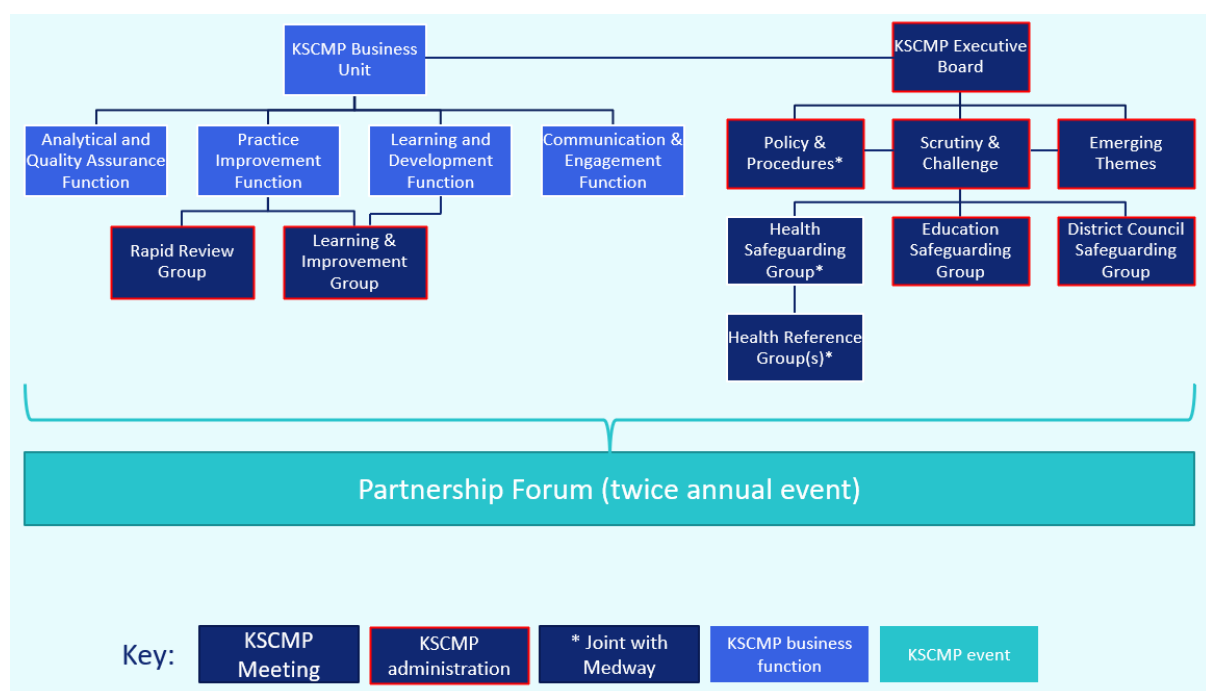
It is not possible to include all voluntary, community, charity and sport providers services as relevant agencies, although their involvement and engagement is essential. Consideration will be given to how the role of the Business Team could engage this sector and provide a direct link between the Partnership and representative forums.

Relevant agency representation in the partnership will be through direct membership on the KSCMP sub-groups, or through the Chair of the relevant partnership group. The twice annual Partnership Forum will also provide opportunities for relevant agency representation and dialogue with the safeguarding partners. The Chairs of the Partnership sub-groups and partnership groups will be standing members of the Scrutiny and Challenge Group and will be invited to attend the Executive Board to report on issues at appropriate intervals.

<b>Relevant Partner</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Represented by</b>
Education	Educates children in schools, colleges and early years setting	Education Safeguarding Group
Health	Provides primary, community and secondary health care provision	Health Safeguarding Group
Additional Social Care	Provides fostering, adoption, children's homes, residential family centres and holiday schemes	Partnership Forum
District Council	Provides housing, waste collection and local planning	District Council Safeguarding Group
National Probation Service	Supervises offenders and released prisoners in the community	Scrutiny and Challenge Group
Cafcass	Looks after the interests of the children involved in family proceedings	Scrutiny and Challenge Group
Kent Fire and Rescue Service	Provides statutory fire and rescue service	Scrutiny and Challenge Group

## Governance arrangements for the safeguarding partnership

The governance structure consists of the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-agency Partnership Executive Board, sub-groups, partnership groups and Business Team. The primary purpose of the Executive Board is to act as the strategic leadership group that leads on safeguarding children arrangements to ensure that children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted in Kent. The safeguarding partners have a shared and equal duty for the safeguarding arrangements in Kent, working together with relevant agencies. The main objective of the Executive Board is to ensure that the functions of the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies are effectively discharged in accordance with the requirements set out in Working Together 2018. The full details about the memberships, roles and responsibilities of the subgroups and partnership groups are set out in the terms of reference for the respective groups.



The primary purpose of the KSCMP Scrutiny and Challenge Group will be to act as the 'strategic quartet' of Members, Safeguarding Partners, Relevant Agencies and the Independent Scrutineer, to lead on the system of challenge and holding partners to account based on detailed analysis and evidence of system performance. The Group will be important in driving the Executive Board to improve the overall system performance and effectiveness, using monitoring and quality assurance tools including early warning protocols across the safeguarding system. The Group's membership, roles and responsibilities will reflect the relevant statutory requirements.

### **Section 3: Strategic Partnerships**

The KSCMP arrangements have been established in the context of wider partnership arrangements across the county.

It is necessary for the KSCMP arrangements to link with other strategic partnership bodies and workstreams that support children and families, including the Kent Health and Wellbeing Board, Safeguarding Adults Board, Kent and Medway Integrated Care System Partnership Board, Prevent Duty Delivery Board, Community Safety Partnerships, Youth Justice Board, Kent Criminal Justice Board, Violence Reduction Oversight Board, Family Justice Board and Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA).

The strategic arrangements also relate to other supporting and associated partnership forums, such as the Joint Exploitation Group, Online Safeguarding Group, and Child Death Overview Partnership.

The KSCMP will develop joint working protocols between it and relevant other strategic boards such as the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board.

## **Section 4: Voice of Children and Families**

Building on the strong foundation of engaging with children and families through existing mechanisms, the safeguarding partners will forge additional means for working with children and families in a more lasting approach that focuses on understanding issues that matter most to them.

Safeguarding partners and relevant agencies are dedicated to engaging with children and families at an individual, service and strategic level. We will listen to what children and families tell us in our conversations with them and reflect on what they have shared. Safeguarding partners and relevant agencies will share how the voice of the children and families they support is heard within their agency and those messages will contribute to our overall understanding of their views.

We will hear the views of children and families who come into contact with services, particularly the harder to engage groups, to help us improve our provision.

We will work with established groups and forums where children and families can have their say, share their views and lived experiences, challenge and support local decision makers, and shape and influence strategic planning, commissioning and service provision at an individual, service and strategic level.

Emerging issues, themes, impacts and outcomes of engagement will be fed into KSCMP arrangements. The impact of engagement with children and families will:

- help to systematically shape priorities, service development and delivery, and individually support children and families;
- enable information to be developed for children by children;
- support the development of processes to help children to have more awareness of the issues, a greater understanding of what information, services and support are available, and be more empowered to make positive choices and help keep themselves safe;
- improve their confidence, improve skills and improve outcomes;
- promote supportive relationships and safeguarding arrangements between children and families, peers, the wider community, schools and colleges, practitioners and senior leaders.

## Section 5: Helping Children and Families

### Kent Support Levels Guidance

Most children have a number of basic needs that are well supported through a range of universal services. These services include schools, early years education and childcare, health, housing, youth services, leisure facilities and service provided by voluntary organisations.

However, some children have additional or more complex needs and may require access to additional, intensive or specialist services to support them. The [Kent Support Levels Guidance](#) (KSLG) provides further detail and describes the services available for supporting children and families to stay independent, and the thresholds applied in accessing local services. The KSLG summarised below represents a framework which describes the level of need a child, young person or family may have, and the nature of support that is available at each level.

#### **Universal Support – Level 1**

Universal services are provided to or are routinely available to all children and families.

[Read about Universal Support – Level 1](#)

#### **Additional Support – Level 2**

Children and families with additional needs who require extra help to improve outcomes.

[Read about Additional Support – Level 2](#)

#### **Intensive Support – Level 3**

Intensive support can be offered to children and families where they have complex or multiple needs requiring local authority services to work together with universal services.

[Read about Intensive Support – Level 3](#)

#### **Specialist Support – Level 4**

Children who are considered to have been harmed or are likely to suffer significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect.

[Read about Specialist Support – Level 4](#)



## **Section 6: Learning and Improvement**

Our KSCMP arrangements will be underpinned by the proactive gathering of intelligence and a systematic approach to the identification and analysis of safeguarding issues and emerging risks which may undermine safeguarding and the welfare of children. The importance we place on embedding strong analytical capabilities in our arrangements cannot be overemphasised and we are committed to producing insightful information which can inform future changes.

We have established a practice improvement function within the Business Team which leads our cycle of continuous improvement. This function involves representatives from across the three safeguarding partner organisations and other selected relevant agencies. The function is responsible for co-ordinating the outcomes of scrutiny and assurance activity, and will review, monitor and implement new developments as a result of what we have learnt. In addition, the function will disseminate learning from local and national child safeguarding practice reviews, child death reviews, multi-agency audits, and other national reports and research. A key role will be to undertake evaluation of the impact of the training and learning on frontline practice. The Learning and Improvement Group will coordinate much of this activity and will report directly to KSCMP.

### **Multi-agency training**

As outlined in Working Together 2018, multi-agency training is important for supporting the collective understanding of local needs and for multi-agency practitioners to be effective in universal services and across the safeguarding arrangements. This spans the needs of early help practitioners through to targeted and specialist services. To be effective, practitioners need to continue to build their knowledge and skills and be aware of the new and emerging themes. In addition, individual organisations and agencies are required to ensure that their workforce is sufficiently trained and competent in safeguarding children. The premise of multi-agency training is that it is 'added value' and 'better together' to provide a collective understanding of the local needs of children and families and the threshold of intervention.

Within the partnership, we are committed to developing a consistent approach to multi-agency training. This is underpinned by robust evaluation processes to support the intent that the training programme should be clearly focused on the core objectives; the delivery of effective services; and the training needs of partners. Under the KSCMP arrangements, the safeguarding partners will undertake a training needs analysis to understand what local training is required. All safeguarding partner organisations and the relevant agencies will be required to contribute. In addition to the needs analysis, the training programme will be informed by case audit processes, local and national case reviews and research.

The KSCMP training programme will be made up of a variety of training approaches, including e-learning, face-to-face training, virtual training and webinars, workshops, conferences, seminars, and immersive learning. The programme will be published and accessed through a dedicated booking portal. Training will cater for basic,

intermediate and masterclass/specialist level needs. The training programme will be flexible, updated and republished as required to reflect local need. These development activities promote putting theory and research into practice; developing evidenced-based practice and expertise; sharing perspectives and learning; and enhancing confidence in helping and protecting children and young people.

Publications that support learning and that may be of interest will also be made available through communications routes and published on the KSCMP website.

## **Section 7: Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews**

### **Undertaking child safeguarding practice reviews**

The responsibility for how the safeguarding community learns lessons from serious child safeguarding incidents lies at a national level with the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (the Panel) and at a local level with the safeguarding partners.

There are procedures in place which enable the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies to:

- identify serious child safeguarding cases which raise issues of importance in relation to the area;
- commission and oversee the review of those cases, where they consider it appropriate for a review to be undertaken.

The local process for identifying and making decisions on whether to undertake reviews and how lessons are learnt and embedded in practice are outlined in the KSCMP arrangements rapid review process. This process is currently being reviewed through the KSCMP Practice Review Project.

The KSCMP Learning and Improvement Group will oversee the capture of learning points from case reviews about improvements needed and disseminate learning.

### **Publication of local child safeguarding practice reviews**

The KSCMP arrangements will comply with the requirements set out in Working Together 2018, including sending a copy of the full report to the Panel and to the Secretary of State within the expected timescale. Where the KSCMP decides only to publish information relating to the improvements to be made following the review, arrangements will be made to provide a copy of that information to the Panel and the Secretary of State within the required timescale.

Where other proceedings have an impact on or delay publication of reports, for example, an ongoing criminal investigation, inquest or future prosecution, the KSCMP will inform the Panel and the Secretary of State of the reasons for the delay.

### **Actions in response to local and national reviews**

There is an ongoing commitment to continuous learning leading to enhanced practice and improvement of outcomes and experiences. Safeguarding partners will take account of the findings from all local and national reviews with a view to considering how identified improvements should be implemented locally. This includes the way in which organisations and agencies work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Findings from local reviews undertaken in Kent will be shared with relevant parties locally, and there will be ongoing monitoring to ascertain progress on the implementation of recommendations.

The sustainability of these improvements will be monitored regularly and followed up to ensure that there is real impact on improving outcomes for children. Responsibility

for this activity sits with both the Scrutiny and Challenge Group and the Learning and Improvement Group.

When further guidance is issued by the relevant government department, it will be incorporated into the KSCMP arrangements by the Policy and Procedures Group.

### **Child Death Review Partners**

As set out in the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017), the child death review partners are Kent County Council and the Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group.

The child death review partners have reviewed their structures and processes and have agreed arrangements which give them the basis for meeting the requirements placed on them. The arrangements make provision for how they will manage children who are not normally resident in the Kent County Council area. Their approach has been informed by the current Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) framework. The CDOP arrangements are set out in the [Kent and Medway Child Death Review Partners Arrangements](#).

To ensure sharing of relevant learning and themes, there will be connectivity between the Partnership and CDOP through the Emerging Themes sub-group. In addition, CDOP will be invited to present their annual report to the KSCMP Executive Board.

## **Section 8: Scrutiny and Challenge**

The KSCMP arrangements have been developed to create an environment that is conducive to robust scrutiny and constructive challenge as well as a partnership approach to learning and improvement across the children's multi-agency safeguarding system.

We will promote a culture of challenge and holding partners to account based on evidence and respect, and these will be embedded across different levels and processes across the safeguarding system. We have adopted a mixed approach to satisfy the independent scrutiny requirements, and it is made up of two essential components. The first component focuses on the ongoing scrutiny and challenge taking place through the work of the partnership sub-groups and the Business Team. The second component relates to the commissioned Independent Scrutineer to review the arrangements.

### **Ongoing scrutiny**

The KSCMP has developed a scrutiny and assurance framework which provides the local safeguarding systems with a mechanism for quality assurance, audits and deep dives into specific themes. This includes the use of good benchmarking information to give a clear picture of overall system performance. We are developing an early warning system based on key indicators which can help inform the safeguarding partners if there are clear signs of system problems. The scrutiny and assurance framework will drive a programme of qualitative and systematic analytical actions by the multi-agency partners and will be used as a means for testing the effectiveness of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. The framework includes the use of single agency and multi-agency audits, underpinned by organisational quality assurance processes in line with section 11 requirements as defined in the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017). The framework contributes to the evaluation of the overall performance of the KSCMP arrangements and how they are improving practice.

The scrutiny and assurance framework enables safeguarding partners to:

#### **a) seek assurance as to:**

- whether all agencies are fulfilling their responsibilities to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- whether all agencies are joined up and working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children across the safeguarding system;
- the efficacy of frontline practice;

#### **b) provide the focus for:**

- testing the interconnectedness between performance, practice and the views of children and their families;
- the annual report;

#### **c) analyse and respond to:**

- independent scrutiny which helps to determine the effectiveness of our arrangements, including arrangements to identify and review serious child safeguarding practice reviews;

- the voice of children and families.

### **Independent Scrutiny**

The second component will consist of the commission of specific independent scrutiny work (such as an end of year review and report) by the Chief Officers to provide the critical challenge and appraisal of the multi-agency safeguarding partnership arrangements. Additional independent scrutiny activity can be commissioned in response to recommendations from Local Practice Reviews or as a follow up to recommendations and actions from regulatory inspections.

The role of the independent scrutineer is critical to provide assurance in assessing the effectiveness of the KSMCP arrangements, including arrangements to identify and review serious child safeguarding practice reviews. The appointed independent scrutineer will carry out the work with reference to the agreed scrutiny and assurance framework.

## Section 9: Performance Data and Other Intelligence Information

The KSCMP arrangements will use data and other intelligence information to assess the effectiveness of the help being provided to children and families across the safeguarding system in Kent.

KSCMP will seek to address:

- the outcome we want for children and families;
- what success looks like;
- what we have done and how we have improved;
- the impact of our work.

Responses to these four key areas will inform our monitoring, evaluation and next steps planning, focused to deliver a culture of continuous learning and improvement, this culture both challenges and supports the KSCMP arrangements at all levels, and will set high standards of expectations for systems leaders and individual agency leads.

We will adopt a responsive and balanced approach to monitoring performance and intelligence that can be flexible to meet the needs of changing local conditions and emerging threats and issues.

We have adapted the “Three Lines of Defence” methodology in our scrutiny and assurance framework to help us assess the effectiveness of local interventions. The framework relies on a balanced focus across different tiers, ensuring a clear line of sight from practice delivery to the strategic level. The approach to the system-wide detailed analysis and oversight, includes the use of routine scanning of contextual safeguarding risks, early warning indicators and a dynamic dashboard to help us identify and track poor system performance and good practice examples.

The evolving shared understanding of the safeguarding arrangements and the scrutiny and assurance processes, will support the pro-active management of risks and should provide an understanding of: the operational delivery of safeguarding activity; the overall effectiveness of the whole system in protecting and meeting the needs of vulnerable children; and the efficacy of the system in meeting regulatory, statutory standings and requirements how best to embrace opportunities to act in a manner which can achieve the greatest anticipated impact.

## **Section 10: Safeguarding Partnership Business Team**

The KSCMP Business Team is responsible for the development and implementation of the amended KSCMP arrangements. The team consists of posts that are multi-disciplinary and operates under the ethos of agile working. Day-to-day management will be through the KSCMP System Improvement Manager.

The Business Team co-ordinate the work of the KSCMP Executive Board, bringing together strategic leads, developing overarching strategic approaches, and are responsible for the day-to-day running of the KSCMP arrangements, the main structure and sub-structures and workstreams, including co-ordination of Executive and partnership meetings, training, communications and engagement (including social media and website management). Whilst the Team will support the sub-groups and partnership groups in considering safeguarding matters, it remains the responsibility of the safeguarding partner agencies and relevant agency membership of those groups to take forward the actions identified.

The Business Team will also be responsible for:

- developing and promoting best and innovative practice to improve outcomes relating to safeguarding for children and families;
- leading on system change that allows partners to work together differently and more effectively across the safeguarding pathway;
- designing and producing insightful analytical reports to the KSCMP Executive Board about what is working well and which areas of practice or management need improving;
- working with partners to develop and implement new ways of working.

The Business Team support the Scrutiny and Assurance Framework which helps KSCMP determine overall assurance across the safeguarding pathway. This includes improved data and needs analysis to inform measuring the impact of KSCMP arrangements.

The Team also leads on learning from local and national reviews, including from serious child safeguarding incidents. Furthermore, the Business Team are instrumental with regard to reviewing the implementation of relevant new legislation and statutory guidance, policies, procedures, strategies and other key documents.

The Business Team is funded by the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies.



## **Section 11: Funding Arrangements**

Working in partnership to meet our statutory obligations means that, as safeguarding partners, we must agree how we fund the KSCMP arrangements. The Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017) and statutory guidance require selected relevant agencies to contribute to the KSCMP arrangements, including funding, accommodation, services and any resources connected with the KSCMP arrangements. Therefore, in Kent, safeguarding partners and relevant agencies will be required to provide appropriate funding to the KSCMP arrangements. Funding should be sufficient to cover all elements of the partnership arrangements and be contributions of actual funding and in-kind resources.

Funding arrangements are agreed on annual basis, subject to discussions with the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies. If any safeguarding partners do not fulfil their funding responsibilities as identified in the KSCMP arrangements, the dispute resolution process, outlined in section 12, will be invoked.

## **Section 12: Dispute Resolution**

Working collaboratively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and families which leads to better outcomes is at the heart of our KSCMP arrangements. We are committed to resolving any disputes between the safeguarding partners, relevant agencies and other organisations in a timely manner through effective leadership, openness, transparency and effective professional challenge.

Where necessary, legislation allows the Secretary of State to take enforcement action against any agency that is not meeting its statutory obligations as part of local safeguarding arrangements.

It is acknowledged that any safeguarding partners that fail to comply with their obligations under law are held to account through a variety of regulatory and inspection activities, for example, Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills), HMICFRS (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services) and CQC (Care Quality Commission).

### **Safeguarding partnership-level escalation process**

If a clear single point of leadership is required, the safeguarding partners will agree on the most appropriate partner, who will act on behalf of and in the interest of all three safeguarding partners. This will be done through discussion at the KSCMP Executive Board meeting. If there is need to address matters outside of the ordinary cycle of executive meetings, this will be recorded in the minutes of the next KSCMP meeting. The dispute resolution process is as follows:

#### **Stage 1**

The first point of resolution of issues is via the representatives of safeguarding partners on the KSCMP Executive Board. Any issues that cannot be resolved directly between the representatives of Safeguarding Partners will be escalated to the Chief Officers.

#### **Stage 2**

If a resolution cannot be reached by the Chief Officers of the safeguarding partners, the issue will be escalated to an independent scrutiny person for consideration of mediation (if required) and resolution. If a meeting is required, the meeting will be chaired by an independent scrutiny person with an agenda agreed prior to the meeting by all parties involved.

#### **Stage 3**

If no resolution can be reached, consideration will be given by the safeguarding partners to seek formal independent arbitration via a professional body such as the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators or under the CEDR (Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution) Model Mediation Procedure to reach an acceptable conclusion.

### **Safeguarding practice-level escalation process**

Although safeguarding partners and relevant agencies work within different organisational structures, with staff from a variety of professional backgrounds and perspectives, there is a common understanding that we should work in collaboration to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This requires that all agencies must act in compliance with Working Together 2018 and the underpinning KSCMP arrangements policies and procedures.

It is necessary to have in place a quick and straightforward means of ensuring safeguarding arrangements and resolving professional differences of opinion. In the event of any disagreement between practitioners involved in the KSCMP arrangements relating to multi-agency safeguarding practice, the required steps to be taken are detailed in the [KSCMP Escalation and Professional Disagreement Policy](#), which can be found on the KSCMP website.

## **Section 13: Annual Reporting Arrangements**

An Annual Report will be published which sets out what has been achieved through the KSCMP arrangements and how effective the arrangements have been in practice. The annual report will also include actions relating to any local child safeguarding practice reviews or national child safeguarding practice reviews as relevant and what safeguarding partners have done as a result.

In addition, the report will also include:

- evidence of the impact of the work of the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies on outcomes for children and families;
- an analysis of any areas where there has been little or no evidence of progress on agreed priorities;
- a record of actions taken by the safeguarding partners in the report's period (or planned to be taken) to implement the recommendations of any child safeguarding practice reviews;
- ways in which the partners have sought and utilised feedback from children, young people and families to inform their work and influence service provision.

The annual report will be approved by the lead representatives on behalf of the respective safeguarding partners. Following such approval, the report will be presented through the established governance channels of the safeguarding partners.

It will also be available to relevant agencies and other strategic partnership bodies.

The annual report will be published on the KSCMP's website.

## **Appendix 1: List of selected relevant agencies and other agencies included in the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-agency Partnership Arrangements**

### **Education**

The Education People  
 16-19 Academies  
 Alternative provision academies  
 Governing bodies of maintained schools  
 Governing bodies of maintained nursery schools  
 Governing bodies of pupil referral units  
 Independent educational institutions  
 Schools approved under section 342 of the Education Act 1996(e) – SEND  
 Special post-16 institutions  
 Governing bodies of institutions within the further education sector  
 Governing bodies of English higher education providers  
 Childminders

### **Health provider trusts**

Kent Community Health Foundation Trust (KCHFT) – community health provider  
 Kent and Medway Partnership Trust (KMPT) – adult mental health provider  
 North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT) – children and young people mental health provider  
 South London and Maudsley (SLAM) – Tier 4 children and young person’s mental health service provider  
 East Kent Hospital University Foundation Trust (EKHUFT)  
 Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust (MTWNHST)  
 Darent Valley Hospital (DVH)  
 South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAmbs)

### **Additional social care**

Registered providers of adoption support services  
 Registered providers of fostering services  
 Registered providers of children’s homes  
 Registered providers of residential family centres  
 Registered providers of residential holiday schemes for disabled children

### **District council**

All Kent district/borough councils

### **Other agencies**

National Probation Service (NPS)  
 The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass)  
 Kent Fire and Rescue Service