

A group of colorful paper cutouts of children holding hands in a circle, symbolizing community and partnership. The children are depicted in various colors and styles, representing diversity. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light color.

# **GREENWICH SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS**

*December 2024*

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# Introduction

All children in Royal Greenwich, regardless of their background and circumstances, should have a happy and fulfilled childhood where they enjoy school and family life, learn, belong, grow and achieve so that they enter adulthood ready, willing and able to achieve their highest potential. Everyone and every agency who comes into contact with children has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action to safeguard them. In response to the Children and Social Work Act 2017, a new partnership was created between the Royal Borough of Greenwich, the Southeast Basic Command Unit of the Metropolitan Police and South-East London Integrated Care System. There is a shared and equal duty to make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in Royal Greenwich. These arrangements supersede those published by the Greenwich Safeguarding Children Partnership previously and, become effective from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2024.

As part of the reflection and update to the safeguarding arrangements, the Greenwich Safeguarding Children Partnership reviewed its existing governance structures and made some changes which are outlined in this document. These structures will enable us to better fulfil statutory obligations and deliver against strategic priorities. In reviewing the arrangements, we have recognised the importance of education as the fourth safeguarding partner. Many of us would like to see schools made the fourth statutory safeguarding partner as we all know that education settings play an important role in safeguarding. The current legislation only puts in place arrangements to require education partners' participation rather than a full equal partner. In Greenwich we want to ensure that we recognise education as a full safeguarding partner, and the Director of Inclusion , Learning and Achievement is now a member of our GSCP Delegated Safeguarding Partners arrangements.

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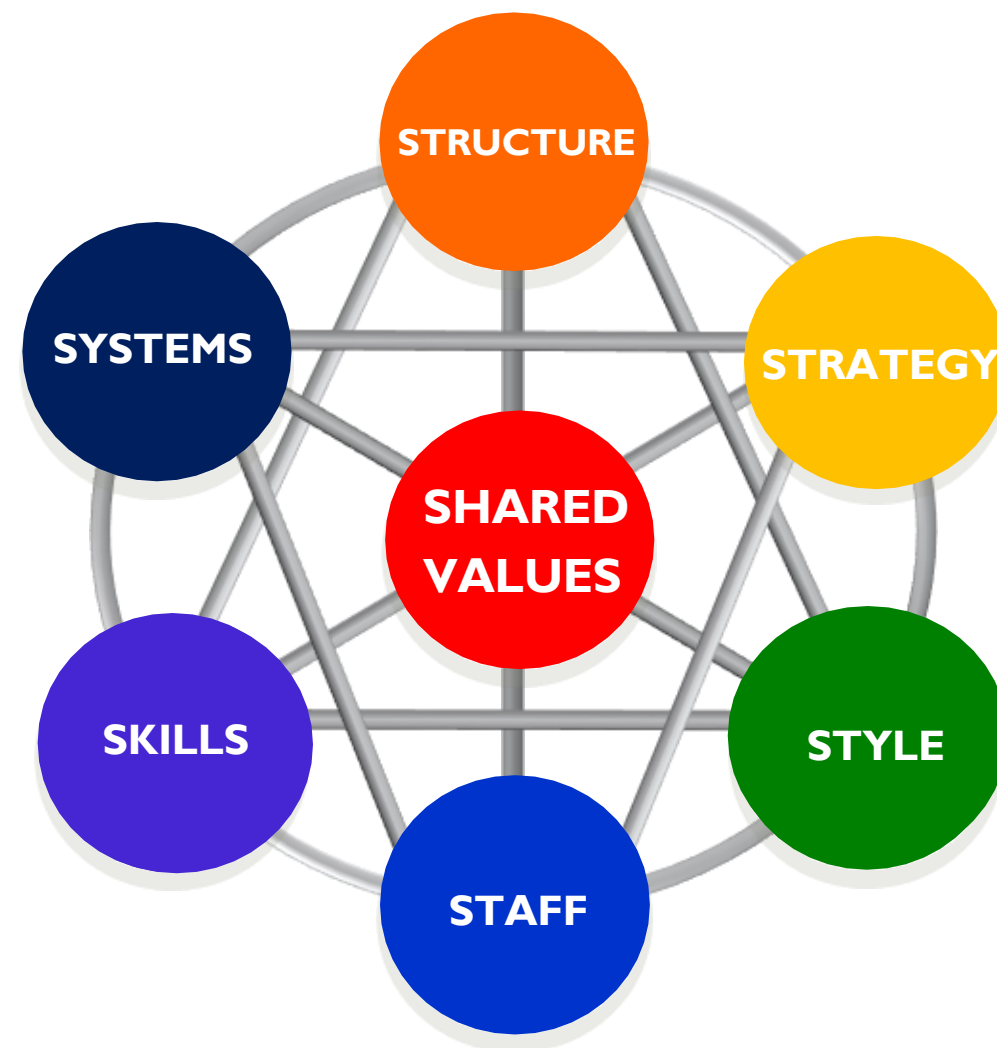
We have used the **McKinsey Seven S Model** to frame our focus as a partnership and you will see reference to it throughout this document.

The Seven S Model is a helpful system wide framework which has as a premise that there are seven internal aspects of an organisation that need to be aligned and mutually reinforcing if the organisation is to be successful.

The lack of hierarchy among these factors suggests that significant progress in one part of the organisation will be difficult without working on the others. A change to one will lead to a change in others. It is best understood in terms of the complex relationship between hard elements (strategy, structure, systems) and soft elements (style, skills, staff and shared values).

Hard elements can be easily identified, and we can directly influence them. Some of them are reporting lines, formal processes, IT systems and strategy statements. Soft elements like style, skills, staff and shared values are as important as hard elements. They are more difficult to describe, less tangible and more influenced by culture.

This document sets out our core areas within each of the seven elements of the model and informs our organisational principles and how we move forward.





# Shared Values



# Shared Values

*the beliefs and aspirations that drive our behaviours*

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***We are firmly committed to the belief that nothing is more important than the welfare of children and that everyone who comes into contact with children has a role to play.***

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As a partnership, we are firmly committed to the belief that nothing is more important than the welfare of children and that everyone who comes into contact with children has a role to play. We recognise that although all partners share the same vision for children, they have different remits and resources.

In Royal Greenwich, we defined our values and principles in the [Greenwich Children and Young People Plan 2020-24](#).

#### **Children are at the heart of everything we do**

Our work is family focused, promotes strengths and aspirations, compassion and independence to help yourself.

#### **Strengthen local services and communities**

We make sure children, young people and families can access good quality services in Royal Greenwich through locally based providers.

#### **Involving children and young people**

We will ensure children and young people feel they are an important part of the community and can participate in decision making processes

#### **Promoting equality and combating disadvantage and discrimination**

We always challenge disadvantage and discrimination. We promote equality and engagement with all members of the family, ensuring boys and men are included in particular.

#### **Strong partnerships**

We build collaborative relationships and learn from each other. We are aspirational and promote challenging and supportive conversations that focus on the experience of the child and young person

#### **Strengthen local services and communities**

We make sure children, young people and families can access good quality services in Royal Greenwich through locally based providers.

# Principles

***All agencies are ambitious and strive to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and young people. Safeguarding partners and relevant agencies have an integral role in helping local authorities to achieve the outcomes of the National Framework***

All organisations, including safeguarding partners and relevant agencies, should use the [Children's Social Care National Framework](#) to:

- raise aspirations for what high-quality support and practice with children, young people and families can achieve
- establish a shared approach and strong relationships across agencies, so everyone can engage constructively in delivering effective support to children, young people and families
- embed voices of children, young people and families in the design and delivery of services and support
- determine the right support, challenge, and accountability across agencies so that everyone can work towards the goal of seeing families thrive, and understand the impact of their services in helping to deliver that ambition



# Structure



# Structure

the way we are  
organised  
and relate to each  
other

We know that strong leadership and the right structures are critical for the arrangements to be effective.

*Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)* names the local authority chief executive, the accountable officer of an Integrated Care Service and a chief officer of police as the lead representatives with accountability under the legislation.

The lead representatives may delegate the responsibility and authority for ensuring full participation with these arrangements to a senior officer but remain accountable for any actions or decisions taken on behalf of their agency.

In Royal Greenwich, the Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSP) have named senior officers who have delegated responsibility to work together to promote multi agency safeguarding within Royal Greenwich.

This responsibility includes:

- Setting the vision, strategy and policy direction for Greenwich's safeguarding arrangements
- Ensuring an arc of accountability across services
- Delivering a fully accountable multi agency system for safeguarding and protecting children in all settings.

## **GSCP Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSP)**

The GSCP Lead Safeguarding Partners will meet four times a year and will work closely with the Delegated Safeguarding Partners (see table). They will be required to speak with authority and take decisions on behalf of their agency, commit them on policy, resourcing and practice matters and hold their own organisation to account on how effectively they participate and implement the local arrangements.

## **GSCP Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSP)**

Our Delegated Safeguarding Partners meet every 8 weeks and report into the GSCP Lead Safeguarding Partners as well as working closely with the Work Groups and GSCP Executive Group. Attendees include senior leaders from the Local Authority and Education, SEL Integrated Care System, SEL Metropolitan Police, Executive Headteacher and Independent Scrutineer. This meeting is chaired on a bi-annual rotational basis between the Delegated Safeguarding Partners and members of this group also include the Chairs of the Work Groups, ensuring robust oversight of their work.

## **GSCP Executive Group**

Our GSCP Executive Group meets twice yearly and has membership from strategic leads of agencies across the Royal Borough of Greenwich, SEL BCU Metropolitan Police, SEL Integrated Care System, Bromley Healthcare, Oxleas NHS Trust, Education, the voluntary and community sector, Probation, Education & Schools, Public Health and Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust. The meeting will be chaired on a bi-annual rotational basis between the Delegated Safeguarding Partners.

Five work groups will report to and inform the work of the Delegated Safeguarding Partners :

- Quality Assurance & Audit Group
- Multi Agency Child Exploitation Group (MACE)
- Learning, Training & Policy
- Schools' Safeguarding Network
- Early Help and Prevention Board

In order to minimise bureaucracy and learn from practice, time limited Task and Finish Groups will be convened when needed . (See Systems for more detail)

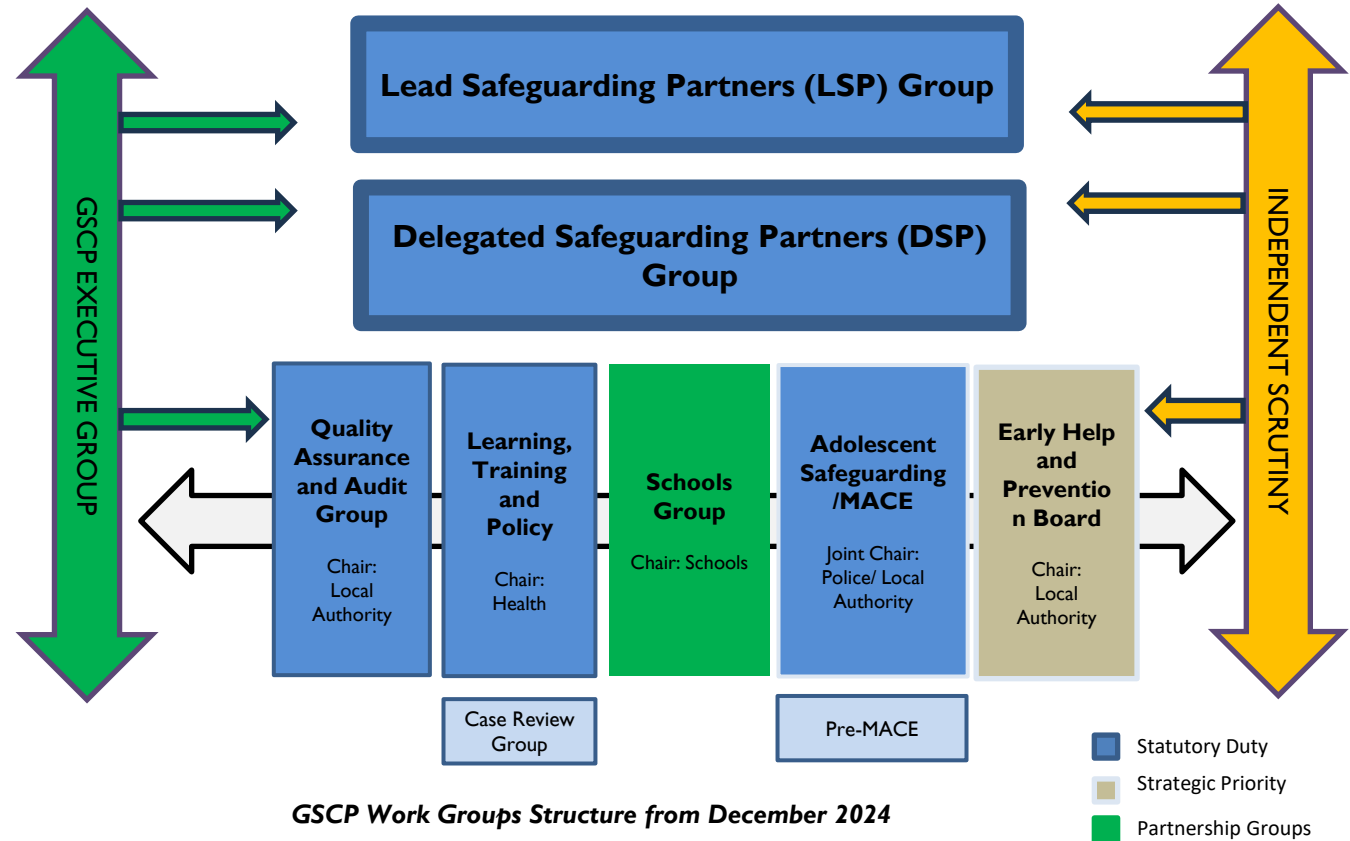
The day-to-day work of the Greenwich Safeguarding Children Partnership will be undertaken by the Business Unit reporting to the Head of Delivery and Improvement. The unit will provide organisational and administrative support, and be responsible for the day to day running of the Greenwich

Safeguarding Children Partnership including the provision of multi-agency training.

Across the Partnership there is a wealth of performance data, evidence and intelligence to assess the effectiveness of our safeguarding work and to identify areas for improvement. However, much of this data has historically existed in silos and has not been used to optional advantage.

A 'virtual' team drawn from the police, local authority and health will work with the Business Unit to create an integrated data set and use a wide range of evidence and analysis to help the Partnership to answer the questions:

- How much have we done?
- How well did we do it?
- What difference has it made?



### Arrangements with Lewisham and Bexley

Greenwich, Lewisham and Bexley will have discrete multi-agency safeguarding partnership arrangements but the three boroughs will work closely together to share learning and improve innovation, collaboration and efficiency.

At the most senior level, this will work through a Tri-Borough Delegated Safeguarding Partners Group that will meet quarterly to consider the areas where a tri-borough focus can most efficiently and effectively improve safeguarding and where possible, align priorities.



# Strategy

# Strategy

## The overall plan for achieving our goals

To deliver our goals, we will:

- **Be an evidence minded partnership** The use of evidence, performance information and evaluation is a key component in each of our services, but more can be done to develop an integrated data set across all partners that will support a unified approach across the complex landscape of safeguarding which will allow us to move more efficiently and effectively from referral to analysis to action.
- **Adopt a policy of continuous improvement** We will build upon our existing good performance by introducing the virtual Performance Unit which will help to track and measure our successes.
- **Involve staff at all levels in practice and improvement** Practitioners in all agencies have a depth of knowledge and understanding about how our systems work in practice. We will work closely with them to share knowledge and develop improvements

We will use evidence and analysis to set the **Strategic Priorities** which will form the focus of our activities.

These priorities will be the ones that we believe are the key areas where, working in partnership, we can improve, develop and achieve our goals. We will maintain a very clear focus on the protection of children, including early help and protecting those who are at risk of exploitation.

### Strategic Priorities 2023-26

- Adolescent Safeguarding
- Domestic Violence
- Strengthening and co-ordinating Early Help and Prevention
- Safeguarding unborn babies and children in early infancy



Style

# Style

*leadership and how we work with others to achieve our goals*

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***We believe that children are best safeguarded when partners have a shared language and understanding but continue to have different perspectives.***

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We believe that vulnerable children are best protected when professionals clearly understand their individual responsibilities and collaborate effectively.

Royal Greenwich has a rich tradition of effective multi agency working and a shared commitment to improving services to children at risk of harm. All partners are committed to ensuring that this continues and develops further under the new arrangements.

We believe that children are best safeguarded when partners have shared values, shared language and a shared understanding, but continue to have different perspectives. Through high support and high challenge, the partnership commit to ensuring that those perspectives are used to enrich our understanding of complex situations and lead to deeper learning.

All members of the Partnership are committed to openness and a balance of respect and challenge. We will resolve conflict through conversations with maturity and restorative approaches. The Partnership will strive to achieve consensus in making its decisions. Where this is not possible decisions will be made by majority vote with any member permitted to request oversight by the Independent Scrutineer.

The Greenwich Safeguarding Children Partnership will work closely with the Community Safety Partnership, Adult Safeguarding Board and Health and Well Being Board to develop better integration and more efficient and effective safeguarding arrangements throughout the borough.

## *System Leadership*

Strong systems leadership is key to the effective function of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. With leaders considering the wider system, in order to influence our collective focus, enable learning, reflection and the delivery of our shared priorities.

Each work group chair is a system leader within their agency. Within their roles as chairs, they are able to consider the wider system, identify areas of risk to delivery and ensure collaboration and a culture of shared understanding of goals and values.

Their role as system leaders within the DSP group is to raise areas of risk in delivery, advise on policy and strategy in practice and as chairs of work groups, act as a conduit between activity and oversight of the progression of priorities.

## *Scrutiny*

Legislation and Statutory Guidance require us to ensure the effectiveness of our arrangements through scrutiny by an independent person. This role is designed to provide critical challenge to:

- Provide assurance in judging the effectiveness of services to protect children
- Assist when there is a disagreement between agencies
- Support the GSCP to be a learning organisation

Independent Scrutiny will be provided by a single individual with a view to generating usable learning for system improvements.

The Scrutineer will attend Lead and Delegated Safeguarding Partnership Meetings and any other Partnership Meetings as an observer, will be free to read any documentation and attend any meetings that s/he deems appropriate to satisfy himself/herself of the effectiveness of the arrangements.

The Independent Scrutineer works alongside a Young Scrutineer who provides valuable insight from children and young people across the borough.



**Staff**

# Staff

## *valuing and supporting people*

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***When there are weaknesses in the system, our focus is on evidence, analysis and system improvement; not on who did or didn't do what and when.***

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Since **everyone in the children's workforce has a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children**, the GSCP has a remit to ensure that there is a culture and climate that promotes safeguarding among all staff.

We recognise that no single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances and everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action in order to ensure that children and families receive the right help at the right time. We value the diversity of our workforce and the skills and experiences that the staff from different backgrounds and agencies bring.

Although different professionals will have areas of specific, and sometimes statutory, responsibility we aim to ensure that there is no hierarchy of professional identity but instead an understanding of professional and cultural differences and how the range of backgrounds complement each other.

Our goal is for staff in all agencies to feel supported and to be part of a dynamic and self-improving safeguarding culture.

Safe and effective practice is rooted in purposeful quality assurance and challenge and purposeful challenge is rooted in mutual respect, transparency and honesty.

When there are weaknesses in the system, our focus is on evidence, analysis and system improvement; not who did or didn't do what and when.

The work of the Greenwich Safeguarding Children Partnership is supported through the Partnerships Business Unit who work across the GSCP, Children and Young People's Partnership and the SEND Partnership. The unit is responsible for the day to day running of the GSCP, providing organisational and administrative support for all groups within the delivery structure as well as supporting the delivery of the multi-agency training programme. It supports the delivery of our safeguarding priorities, building links between all strategic partnership groups that seek to support and improve the lives of our children and young people as well as supporting the changes set out in Working Together 2023.



# Skills

# Skills

## *Our distinctive capabilities and competencies*



All of our activities, processes and procedures will be designed to support learning that can be embedded consistently and coherently across agencies and systems.

Our focus is on ensuring that learning is promoted and embedded in a way that local services for children and families can become more reflective and that changes to practice can be implemented.

To be effective, practitioners need to continually develop their professional judgement and be aware of new and emerging risks and learning.

The Greenwich Safeguarding Children Partnership is designed to be a dynamic and self-improving system with learning from audits, deep dives, feedback, surveys, learning reviews and an annual conference used to inform the development of single and multi-agency training as well as learning events. .

Multi agency and inter borough training and learning events will be organised by the Business Unit who will also report on effectiveness and impact.

Our approach is both challenging and supportive. We want to learn from what works, as well as look openly and forensically when the system does not work as well as it needs to.



# Systems

# Systems

*the daily activities, procedures, processes and routines that we use to deliver our work*

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*All of our systems are designed to facilitate and drive action beyond institutional and organisational boundaries.*

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All of our activities, procedures and processes are designed to facilitate and drive action beyond institutional and organisational boundaries.

The work of the Safeguarding Partnership will be supported by a Business Unit which will take responsibility for delivering the activities of the Partnership including supporting the activities of the work groups and any task and finish groups. These groups work with the Delegated Safeguarding Partners to identify new safeguarding issues and emerging risks as well as ensure that learning is promoted and embedded in a way that local services can become more reflective and implement changes to practice.

The following pages give more detail about our work groups and how our systems will work together, including the critical role of Scrutiny, Funding, Thresholds and Dispute Resolution and our Annual Report.

## ***Task and Finish Groups Chair: Variable by Theme***

We believe that time and energy should be focused on front line practice and not diverted to bureaucracy and meetings. However, we are also committed to ensuring that where necessary multi agency teams can collaborate to bring about change and improvement. When specific needs are identified (e.g., input on commissioning and evaluating the content and effectiveness of multi-agency training.)

These groups will be time limited with clearly defined remits and deliverables (ensuring that communications are effective, agreeing a multi-agency response to an emerging theme) task and finish group will be convened.

# Thresholds and Dispute Resolution

In Greenwich, we believe that the most effective way to ensure the right support, from the right service at the right time is to move away from tables and tick boxes. Instead we want practitioners to work together using a combination of deliberation and professional judgement.

Deliberation and professional judgement must be used in the context of open and honest discussion, consultation and supervision. All practitioners should know when and why to consult with safeguarding leads in their own and other organisations and how to do it. <https://greenwichsafeguardingchildren.org.uk/policies-practice-guidance/threshold-document/>

We recognise that there are times when practitioners believe that the actions, inactions or decisions of another practitioner do not adequately safeguard a child. Disputes should be resolved in the shortest timescale possible in line with the Multi Agency Escalation Policy.

<https://www.greenwichsafeguardingchildren.org.uk/policies-practice-guidance/resolving-disputes/>

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***We believe that the most effective way to ensure the right support from the right service at the right time is for practitioners to work together using deliberation and professional judgement.***

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# Work Groups

## ***Learning, Training & Policy***

***Chair: Health & Local Authority***

The Learning, Training & Policy Work Group is part of our commitment to a dynamic and self-improving system, where excellent practice is the norm. Under the direction of the Delegated Safeguarding Partners, it has responsibility for identifying and reviewing incidents that raise issues of improvement to practice, conducting rapid reviews and, where appropriate, notifying incidents to the National Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and commissioning and publishing local child safeguarding practice reviews.

The Learning, Training & Policy group has a key role to play in improving collective knowledge about where there is good practice and also whether there are systemic issues and how policy and practice might change to address them.

## ***Quality Assurance & Audit***

***Chair: Health & Local Authority***

The Quality Assurance & Audit Work Group ensure effectiveness and impact of the multi-agency safeguarding practice, including the work of the GSCP.

Multi agency audits help to measure the quality, effectiveness and outcomes of safeguarding work across the Partnership. Members of this work group participate in audit activities including case audits, interviews with children, young people and parents, surveys, consultations and discussions with practitioners. They then triangulate this information to establish the quality of safeguarding delivery, identify areas that require further improvement and influence system change.

## ***Schools' Safeguarding Network***

***Chair: Schools***

Schools and education have a pivotal role to play in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Practitioners in schools see and have close relationships with the majority of school age children in Greenwich.

Schools are at the forefront of identifying need and providing early help for children young people and families

The Schools' Safeguarding Network is responsible for communicating the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children to all schools within the Royal Borough of Greenwich. It will monitor safeguarding activities across the clusters to improve outcomes for children, provide a communication channel between all schools and the GSCP and act as a source of peer support in meeting safeguarding responsibilities.

# Work Groups

## ***Case Review Group***

### ***Chair: Health & Local Authority***

The Case Review Group maintain oversight of Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and other reviews undertaken by the Greenwich Safeguarding Children Partnership. The group has responsibility for the progression of reviews, following agreement by the statutory partners, including agreeing and developing methodologies, independent reviewers, learning recommendation action plans, and publication plans.

The group forms the panel for Rapid Review meetings following serious incidents and make recommendations to the Delegated Safeguarding Partners on whether the criteria for conducting a local or national child safeguarding practice review are met and if not, what learning can be disseminated from the rapid review meeting.

## ***Multi Agency Child Exploitation***

### ***Chair: Police & Local Authority***

The GSCP recognises that children and young people can face risks of going missing, becoming involved in serious youth violence, or being exploited sexually or criminally. These risks are often inter-linked and arise from a complex combination of factors, many of which may be 'extra-familial' i.e. from the community or wider peer group.

It is important that we share information across services about these adolescents effectively and in a timely way to prevent and reduce harm. We need to focus on protecting children and the public, as well as disrupting harmful activity and perpetrators.

The MACE and Pre-MACE Panels will carry out this function on behalf of the GSCP Partnership. The panels will enable collaborative safeguarding partnership in risk management to ensure that this is not viewed to be the responsibility of single agencies. They will include members from community and voluntary sector, be informed by the voice of the child, address disproportionality and promote a 'community safeguarding' approach.

The Chairs of each of the work groups are members of the Delegated Safeguarding Partners Group, ensuring that there is an established learning loop as well as a direct line of sight between senior managers and frontline practice.



## Supporting activity

The Partnership website hosts a wealth of resources including factsheets, 7-minute briefings, procedures and practice guidance aimed at supporting agencies in their activity and the day to day support they provide to children and families.

This includes the GSCP Thresholds document which has been designed to support professional judgement and deliberation when assessing which is the right service for children and families and when is the right time for a service to be received. It is closely aligned to the London Safeguarding Children Procedures, Threshold Continuum of Need which provides a framework for professionals who are working with children and families to help identify when a child may need additional support to achieve their full potential.

Partnership activity draws on local, regional and national resources and learning to further support its work and strengthen its joint working.

The Multi-Agency Learning Development programme includes training via multiple platforms on a range of topics which are reviewed annually and based on local need, learning and partnership priorities.

## Funding

Partners and relevant agencies will be asked to contribute funding and services to support the implementation of our priorities.

Funding will be agreed with partners and reviewed every three years.



# Annual Report and Review

In order to ensure accountability and transparency for children, families and practitioners about our activities and outcomes, we will produce an annual report.

This report will include:

- Our agreed priorities and evidence of the impact of the work of safeguarding partners and relevant agencies on those priorities, including areas where there has been little progress
- A report and analysis of training and effectiveness
- A record of decisions and actions taken, or planned to be taken, to implement the recommendations of any local and national child safeguarding practice reviews, including and resulting improvements
- Ways in which the voice of children and families has been used to inform work and influence service provision
- Any agreed updates and proposed timescale for implementation to our published arrangements

Prior to publication, the report will be subject to independent scrutiny by the Scrutineer. It will be endorsed by the Lead Safeguarding Partners before being presented to the Local Authority Cabinet meeting, the ICS Governing Body and the agreed Metropolitan Police governance arrangements. It will be published on the Greenwich Safeguarding Partnership website and distributed through relevant routes across the relevant partners.