



North Tyneside Council



# North Tyneside Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements



June 2019

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## Foreword

Welcome to the North Tyneside multi-agency safeguarding arrangements for children and young people.

North Tyneside has had a strong and effective Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) for a number of years. In developing our Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA), we have started from a position of strength and have sought to build on this. Whilst we believe our MASA plan is innovative and will deliver a step-change in our partnership arrangements, we are mindful to ensure there is a degree of continuity in the way we work together.


We will continue to lead and promote an inclusive approach, as we know that effective safeguarding relies on everyone playing their part, within a shared approach and common understanding of how things work, what's expected of them and what they can expect from others. We will continue to respect and support the different roles people play, whilst recognising that these continue to change, as we develop more effective early help and different ways of responding to need and risk.

Our new arrangements will place a greater focus on the credibility of scrutiny and learning to inform and challenge partnership practice. We remain committed to supporting a culture and practice that listens to and acts proportionally, collectively and accountably, to what children and young people tell us either directly or through their actions. We are equally committed to listening to frontline staff, and bringing our arrangements closer to the frontline, so that we are learning from those who know best what the challenges are and what works.

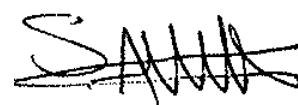
In developing our plan, we have looked at what other areas are doing and considered the emerging opportunities arising out of the North and South of Tyne approach to MASA. This plan articulates the first stage in the development of our MASA, and we will continue to develop our approach, integrate with other existing partnerships, and collaborate with regional colleagues.



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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Strategic Intent

This first plan outlines the way in which the three safeguarding partners will work together, and with other agencies, to deliver the new arrangements.

The new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements described in this plan cover the municipal area of North Tyneside. This corresponds with that of the North Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group. Northumbria Police covers the North Tyneside local authority area and five other local authority areas.

The intention is not to simply replicate the existing Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) governance and structure in North Tyneside but to recognise the positives of our existing approach, build on them, and develop our approach to integrate much more with other key partnerships in the borough.

In doing this, we will ensure that our arrangements incorporate a strategic understanding of need, risk and vulnerabilities in the borough, whilst having an acute focus on multi-agency practice, and a small number of key priorities where we can make a real and tangible difference to the lives of children and young people in North Tyneside.

Our focus on multi-agency practice will ensure we can be responsive to learning, and ensure that our strategic leadership and priorities are focused on outcomes that result in a swift and proportionate response to vulnerability, risk and needs. Whilst maintaining this focus on practice, we will work towards a strategic approach to safeguarding, prevention and early intervention across adults, children and young people as represented by a “Think Family and Community” approach.

To be effective, these arrangements will link to other strategic partnership work happening locally to support children and families, as governed by the Health and Wellbeing Board, Safeguarding Adults Board, Community Safety Partnership, the Local Family Justice Board and Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements.



## 1.2 Legislative Context

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 provides the legislative and policy framework through which this Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements plan has been developed.

It clarifies that the three safeguarding partners in relation to a local authority area; as defined under 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

In North Tyneside, the lead responsibilities associated with the safeguarding partners have been delegated as follows:

Safeguarding Partner	Local Agency	Lead Representatives
The local authority	North Tyneside Council	Director of Children's and Adult's Services
A clinical commissioning group for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area	North Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group	Executive Director of Nursing and Transformation
The chief officer of police for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area	Northumbria Police	Chief Superintendent

All three safeguarding partners have an equal and joint responsibility for the effective delivery of local safeguarding arrangements, including ensuring full participation of relevant agencies within the arrangements – that is, those whose involvement may be required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children – and they must set out how they will secure this. They also have the responsibility for ensuring equitable and proportionate funding, including through any contributions from relevant agencies.

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

- children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted
- partner organisations and agencies collaborate and own the vision for how to achieve improved outcomes for vulnerable children
- organisations and agencies challenge appropriately and hold one another to account effectively
- learning is promoted and embedded in a way that local 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 developed to strategically identify and respond to the underlying conditions and factors that lead to the need for help and protection



## 2. Vision and Guiding Principles

### 2.1 Vision

Our vision is that children live in safe, healthy and resilient family networks. This is underpinned by the three pledges to children and young people in North Tyneside:

1. We will intervene early, with evidence-based, family-focused services
2. We will work in partnership to keep children in school
3. We will keep children safe at home, healthy and connected to their local communities

Whilst maintaining highly effective strategic oversight, and an acute focus on quality of practice, we will agree a small number of core priorities and ambitions that we will particularly focus on each year, driving the partnership collectively to make a real and tangible difference to practice, quality and outcomes.

We want our partnership arrangements to be of the highest quality, with practice that continues to improve and evolve to reflect need and learning. Our new arrangements will be led by a focus on

- Quality and standards
- Learning that results in assurance
- Scrutiny of strategy, priorities, practice and outcomes

We intend to develop a different approach that builds on our previous learning. This will include:

- The provision of events and opportunities to focus at a local level on current developments and learning in and from safeguarding
- Consultation and engagement from practitioners and children and young people
- Participation in scrutiny and review activities to inform and to act on learning.
- The collation and coordination of “evidence” to allow for the forming of hypotheses that will proportionally test the effectiveness of joint working practice and arrangements

### 2.2 Guiding Principles

As a partnership, we have developed a set of principles that will guide us in all the work we do through our new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements.

They are:

- ✓ Seeing things through the eyes of children and young people, practitioners and partners
- ✓ Listening to what people, practitioners and partners tell us
- ✓ Streamlining and integrating partnership arrangements, where appropriate
- ✓ Inclusive approach to scrutiny, assurance and learning
- ✓ Supporting and informing wider multi-agency and regional activity
- ✓ An approach based on better understanding of needs, vulnerabilities and risks
- ✓ A transparent, inclusive and accountable approach to partnership working

### 3. Regional Collaboration

Whilst our primary focus is clearly on delivering effective North Tyneside Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements, we are also committed to pursuing a regional arrangement that would provide strategic leadership and direction. Many issues that keep children and young people safe from harm are not restricted by geographic and organisational boundaries and a regional approach will ensure that children and young people are kept safe and protected by strong regional approaches to complex safeguarding issues that cover more than one Partnership or Local Authority area of responsibility.

The North and South of Tyne Strategic Safeguarding Forum was set up in 2017, originally to consider the learning from Operation Sanctuary. Membership comprises the statutory safeguarding partners from the 6 Local Authorities, 5 Clinical Commissioning Groups and 1 Police Force that cover the geographical area, north and south of the River Tyne. The area covers a footprint of approximately 2144 square miles with a population of 1.5 million, 270,000 being under 18 years.

The Forum made a successful bid for government Early Adopters funding which was available to support partnerships in developing new arrangements. The focus of the work was how system leaders could collaborate on a wider regional footprint to reduce barriers and develop a more effective and joined up prevention, early intervention and safeguarding response. It has been agreed this regional work will continue and it will form a key part of the new safeguarding arrangements for children and young people, and the commitment to identify and implement the opportunities presented by the new national guidance.



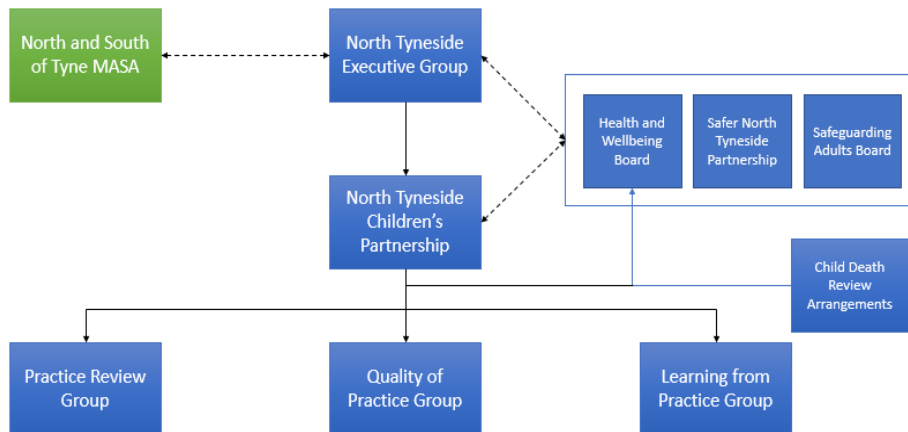
We are committed to supporting the development of a “one footprint” approach. The Terms of Reference for the regional arrangements have yet to be finalised, yet we have designed our arrangements with this in mind. We particularly see opportunities for collaboration at a North and South of Tyne level in relation to:

- Joint policies and procedures – with a balance of focus on contextual and family-focused safeguarding in North Tyneside, we have already committed to developing regional safeguarding procedures at a North and South of Tyne level
- Performance information and analysis – at a strategic level, we believe value can be added by a North and South of Tyne approach to analysis of a core set of indicators, whilst maintaining a tailored and specific focus in North Tyneside
- Peer review and challenge – in line with our intent to maximise the role and impact of independent scrutiny, learning and assurance, we would welcome the opportunity to participate in a North and South of Tyne programme of peer review and challenge
- Benchmarking and shared learning – whilst the commissioning of safeguarding practice reviews is a local matter, we would welcome a collaborative approach to commissioning arrangements and any other moves which provide for effective benchmarking and shared learning.

## 4. The Partnership Structure

### 4.1 Executive Group

We will form an Executive Group comprising senior leaders from each of the named Statutory Safeguarding Partners. The Executive Group membership will also include a Head Teacher representative, in recognition of the value and importance that the Statutory Safeguarding Partners place on the role of education in the agenda.



The Executive Group is the key decision making body of the MASA. It will meet quarterly in the first year and agree the independent scrutiny arrangements and delegations; set the budget; agree priorities for the year, linked to the Children and Young People's Plan; monitor progress against the plan; and approve the annual report. This group will provide leadership to promote a culture of learning and will also ensure that other local area leaders promote these arrangements.

The Executive Group will:

- Set, agree and review the plan for the new arrangements
- Provide strategic leadership for all who work together to safeguard children and young people
- Identify priorities and themes for scrutiny
- Ensure that the "relevant agencies/partners" are able to meet their obligations
- Provide the resources required to ensure that objectives are met
- Commission appropriately experienced and high quality independent advisory capacity
- Be responsible for everyone knowing how arrangements work

### 4.2 Relevant Agencies

The strength of local partnership working is dependent on safeguarding partners working collaboratively together with relevant agencies – i.e. those whose involvement the safeguarding partners consider is required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. We will engage local organisations and agencies to collaborate and provide targeted support to children and families.

The Partnership will ensure the arrangements allow for the following key partners in the local area to be fully engaged:

- Schools
- Colleges



- Other education providers
- Youth Justice services
- Services for Looked After Children and care leavers
- Primary, secondary and tertiary health services
- Public Health

In supporting its working principles, public health exists as both a function to the Partnership and as a commissioning partner with relevant agencies to improving health and wellbeing outcomes for children. A public health approach will promote and encourage the Partnership to maintain those working principles by remaining outcome focused, maximising prevention, promoting greater integration of services and utilising intelligence, research or evidence to support planning and decision making.

Where a relevant agency has a national remit, such as Cafcass or NHS England the safeguarding partners will collaborate and take account of that agency's individual responsibilities and potential contributions towards a number of local safeguarding children arrangements. The safeguarding partners have secured the clinical expertise of designated health professionals for safeguarding within their arrangements.

### 4.3 Children and Young People's Partnership

The Children, Young People and Learning (CYPL) Partnership Board is the strategic group that brings partners together to improve outcomes for children and young people in the borough. It oversees the delivery of the Children and Young People's Plan and supports the statutory duties of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Our new arrangements will maintain a focus on the importance of making sure senior representatives from what are now called "relevant agencies", have the opportunity to come together on a regular basis and this will be as part of the **North Tyneside Children and Young People's Partnership Board**. This Group will have a wide strategic membership of other stakeholders and 'relevant agencies', including schools, probation services, public health, health providers and the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Learning. This will focus on the priorities embodied in the **North Tyneside Children and Young Peoples Plan**, which in turn reflects on the wider strategic arrangements to address the health, wellbeing and economic prosperity of people who live in North Tyneside.

The partnership will

- Provide one place where partners can consider the agreed strategic priorities that are intended to impact on and improve outcomes for children and young people in North Tyneside
- Develop and apply approaches to scrutiny, learning and assurance that result in more effective joint working and successful outcomes
- Have a system wide overview that helps to ensure that areas of concern or unforeseen risks are identified and explored
- Support a wider community focused approach that enables local people to play their part and have confidence in how things work.

In the longer term there may also be further opportunities to align and integrate areas of common interest with other partnerships such as Safer North Tyneside and the Northumberland/North Tyneside Adult Safeguarding Board.

## 4.4 Standing Groups

Two standing groups will be established:

- **Quality of Practice Group** – this will not replicate quality assurance standards or activity that has already been undertaken in single agencies. The purpose of this group will be to bring together a multi-agency dataset; a planned series of ‘deep dives’; listening to a range of people and qualitative information obtained through audits, case reviews and other methods including Section 11 assessments. This work will be used to identify areas for practice and procedural improvement and to demonstrate impact on the outcomes for children and young people. The group will also review procedures to ensure they remain up to date and reflect changing needs, government legislation, partnership reviews and inspection findings.
- **Quality of Learning Group** - the purpose of this group will be to learn from every opportunity and ensure we have a skilled workforce who has access to up to date, relevant information to help them to keep children safe. The arrangements ensure that there is a direct link between safeguarding effectiveness and workforce development. In Year 1 we will maintain our commitment to multi agency training whilst exploring opportunities to join up on shared courses over a regional footprint. Opportunities for practitioners to develop knowledge and skills will be varied and include training courses, newsletters, briefings, espresso events, social media and the Partnership website.

This will replace the former requirement to have frameworks for

- Performance Management & Quality Assurance
- Learning and Improvement

For the first 12 months both groups will be chaired by an independent advisor. The advisor will be able to provide support, challenge and oversight and coordinate the programme of scrutiny and learning.

## 4.5 Sections 11 and 157 of the 2004 Children Act

We recognise that this will continue to provide the basis of a shared approach and accountability. The new arrangements will continue to invest in an approach that utilizes self-assessment, focused on standards as one of the foundations of effective safeguarding practice and arrangements. We are committed to making sure that our balance between process and outcomes, results in effective dialogue and commitments from all concerned.



This means that our structure will be as efficient as possible. Our plan, approach and agenda will be as focused as possible on key themes and issues across the contextual and family based safeguarding continuum and our focus as now will be on how we can be assured that early help and the arrangements for statutory interventions are joined up. We will place a new emphasis on how the learning from this can help inform the proactive, wider and longer-term priorities for partners.

## 5. Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

Serious child safeguarding cases are those in which:

- abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected; and
- the child has died or been seriously injured

The responsibility for how the system learns lessons from serious child safeguarding incidents lies at a national level with the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and at a local level with the safeguarding partners. The three safeguarding partners are required to make arrangements 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.

In North Tyneside, our Practice Review Group will meet as required to deliver the local review process. The group will:

- Consider cases referred to it, oversee the rapid review process through Rapid Review panels, and ensure immediate safeguarding action is taken if required and share any immediate learning.
- Report findings to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel.
- Commission and oversee local case reviews. Leadership of practice reviews should be independent of the agencies involved.
- Ensure clarity, high quality and consistency in practice in carrying out case reviews and ensure that the partnership learn lessons that can improve the response to children and families

## 6. Child Death Review Arrangements

In accordance with the Child Death Review Statutory Guidance (October 2018), partners will publish a structure and process to review all deaths of children normally resident in the North and South of Tyne area.

This process will report into Public Health and the Health and Wellbeing Board and report to the Partnership on an annual basis.

Any cases that require consideration as a Local or National Safeguarding Practice Review will be referred directly to the Practice Review Group.

The process will, through referral of findings, learning and recommendations contribute to the Partnership audit, scrutiny and review activity, which will inform multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

## 7. Scrutiny, Learning and Assurance

Scrutiny, learning and assurance are integral to our vision for the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements and maximising their impact.

We will ensure that our scrutiny activity will

- Help form a view that is objective and evidence based
- Be targeted thematically and on key areas of multi and single agency practice
- Promote openness and transparency that supports accountability
- Reflect the challenges and complexities of practice
- Deploy a range of approaches to ensure that the voice of children, young people, their families, practitioners and partners are heard
- Draw on the skills, knowledge and experience of all through collaborative and reflective approaches.
- Result in a clearer view and understanding of what works well and what could work better.

A fundamental component of our approach to scrutiny, learning and assurance is the contribution an independent perspective can bring. We will draw upon a range of independent expertise and advisory capacity, as part of our wider approach to scrutiny, learning and assurance.

Specifically, we will appoint an independent advisor who will provide support, challenge and oversight of:

- The development of our new arrangements
- Co-ordinate our programme of scrutiny and learning
- Produce regular reports
- Provide advice, support and challenge

The Independent Advisor will chair the two standing groups outlined in section 4.4 initially for the first 12 months of the new arrangements.



## 8. Important Dates

This first plan provides a framework and outline approach to implementing the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements in North Tyneside. Between the publication of this plan in June 2019 and the commencement of implementation in September 2019, we will undertake a number of actions to confirm specific operational procedures, governance and supporting infrastructure. We will also

