

Redbridge Safeguarding Children
Partnership

Annual Scrutiny Report

October 2022 - March 2024



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Introduction by Independent Chair & Scrutineer



The Redbridge Safeguarding Children Partnership (RSCP) annual scrutiny report is a mandatory requirement, directed by the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#). The supporting guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 – A guide to multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children](#) states that on an annual basis the safeguarding partners (the Local Authority, the Police, and Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) must publish a report to bring transparency for children, families and all practitioners about the activity undertaken by the Partnership.

The guidance also requires going forward that the annual report runs across a financial year as opposed to the academic year reporting that has been undertaken previously by the RSCP. This report therefore covers the period October 2022 – March 2024 to bring reporting in line with statutory expectations.

[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#) has also made key changes which requires safeguarding partnerships to review their existing Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) and publish them by December 2024. This report highlights the key changes and the steps taken so far to review and implement the guidance.

The report also outlines the arrangements of the RSCP, the work it has undertaken over the period, and any impact of that work on practice, families, and children. This report also includes scrutiny of the safeguarding partnership arrangements by the Independent Chair of how effective they are using the Checklist for Independent Scrutiny 2022 produced by [The Association of Safeguarding Partners \(TASP\)](#).

One of the key purposes of the annual report is to be transparent on the activity of the Partnership, with this in mind the report will be sent to:

- all the safeguarding partners
- the Redbridge Health and Wellbeing Board
- the national [Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel](#)
- the [What Works Centre for Children’s Social Care \(WWCSC\)](#) and
- made publicly available on the [RSCP](#) and members’ websites.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to register my thanks all the partners and the business unit that support the work of the RSCP.

Warmest regards

Eileen Mills

Independent Chair & Scrutineer

Foreword by the Redbridge Statutory Safeguarding Partners

I would like to thank colleagues and partners who have assisted with preparing this report and all those across the partnership who have worked so hard to try to ensure we have the most effective safeguarding measures in place for children and young people in Redbridge. I'm excited about some of the changes on the horizon which present opportunities for us to further strengthen our safeguarding practices. I'm also encouraged by the innovative work being explored across the Redbridge partnership, seeking to improve our systems and practices for the benefit of children who are most vulnerable and in need of safeguarding. From a policing perspective, being able to effectively safeguard children from crime and protect vulnerable young people from criminal exploitation and fear is critical to our mission to deliver a New Met for London. This report signposts areas of success but also helps us see some of the key challenges ahead. This can only be achieved with a collaborative and effective partnership approach. We look forward to being part of these next vital steps.



Chief Sup Stuart Bell, Borough Commander, East Area BCU MPS



The recent Ofsted inspection of children services in Redbridge highlighted the strength of the multi-agency response to safeguarding children and young people in the Borough. The RSCP has played a key role in creating an environment of multi-agency support and challenge to ensure that children and young people are kept safe. However, we know that we cannot be complacent, children and young people tell us about their concerns for their safety, we know that the Borough continues to change and that we need to constantly challenge ourselves to ensure that our collective system of services is responsive to the changing needs of children and young people. Our governance arrangements will change over the next year as we move to fully establishing the independent scrutineer role and reflect the responsibilities on statutory partners to progress multi agency working in the Borough. In doing so it is important that we do not lose the considerable successes that have been achieved through our current arrangements and their leadership.

Adrian Loades, Acting Chief Executive, London Borough of Redbridge



The Families First for Children (FFC) pathfinder programme is a good illustration of how we as an ambitious safeguarding partnership will continue to work to strive to make a difference to safeguarding outcomes for our local population. Learning from national and local safeguarding incidents and reports, we have challenged ourselves as a partnership in relation to our approach to contextual safeguarding and extrafamilial harm through data driven conversations about the potential for

adultification of children, awareness of racial disparities and disproportionality in our responses to children in our local area.

This report builds on the achievements of the previous year and now looks forward to how safeguarding can be further embedded at place in Redbridge, and in the multiple places across the whole Northeast London integrated care system (NEL ICS). As we transition into the new multiagency safeguarding arrangements, NEL integrated care Board (ICB) has made arrangements that fulfil the requirements of [HM Government Statutory Guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#). NEL ICB has done this in collaboration with our two safeguarding partners (local authorities, chief officers of police) to enable us to work together with relevant agencies to safeguard and protect the welfare of children in Redbridge and also across NEL ICS.

Diane Jones

Chief Nursing Officer, NEL NHS ICB

RSCP Arrangements

Child Safeguarding Multiagency Arrangements in Redbridge

Barking & Dagenham, Havering, and Redbridge (BHR) Safeguarding Partnership

The purpose of the Partnership is to work together at a strategic level to deliver system improvements across the Barking & Dagenham, Havering, and Redbridge (BHR) 'footprint' to support safeguarding children and young people. This will be undertaken through sharing of information and learning, provision of mutual support, themed work streams and quality assurance activities.

Since early 2022 the BHR Safeguarding Partnership no longer holds strategic responsibility of for safeguarding children. This now sits at a local borough level with the RSCP.

RSAB and RSCP Joint Executive

The Executive was established in this reporting period.

The role and responsibilities of the joint Executive Group is to provide multi-agency strategic leadership to the both the RSCP and RSAB, to ensure that agendas are aligned, are informed by horizon-scanning, and agree accountability for joint areas of priority. Ensuring the development and maintenance of strong links with other strategic boards, with a focus on joint working and a holistic approach to safeguarding. These include, but are not limited, to the Community Safety Partnership and the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Redbridge Safeguarding Children Partnership

Redbridge Safeguarding Children Partnership meets at least four times a year, has a strategic focus, leading subgroups who report on a work plan for their area. A thematic approach is taken throughout the year with a focus on the priority areas.

Learning and Improvement Subgroup

Oversees the development and delivery of the RSCP multiagency audit programme, responds to learning from reviews both local and national. Evaluating learning an improvement activity.

Training Subgroup

Undertake training need analysis of multi-agency safeguarding children training needs. Develops, commissions, and evaluates the impact of multi-agency training.

Statement of Intent

Redbridge SCP will work towards keeping children and young people in Redbridge safe from harm. We will support staff, families, and carers in achieving this aim.

Redbridge SCP will ensure relevant organisations in Redbridge co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Redbridge SCP will seek the views of children and young people for Redbridge to be a place where all children and young people feel safe and valued.

Review of Multiagency Safeguarding Arrangements in response to Working Together 2023

In response to the publication of Working Together 2023 the RSCP produced a Summary of Key Changes and Required Actions ([Appendix 3](#)).

The report identifies several actions required. The following is a progress update on the actions.

Consideration on how the National Framework will impact on other agencies current arrangements.

Redbridge has been selected by the Department for Education (DfE) to be a pathfinder for the new Families First initiative, developed following publication of several national reviews and reports, which are the foundations to the revisions for the changes in Working Together 2023.

There is a multiagency implementation board established to progress this work at pace and will inform the development of the MASA for December 2024.

Consideration on how best use the grant monies of £47,300 to review and strengthen the MASA and impact of the National Framework

All Safeguarding Children Partnerships were eligible to apply for the grant money, the RSCP submitted a successful application. The funding has been used to fund staffing during the grant period for work that supports the implementation of the new Working Together to Safeguard Children document, including the following outputs

- development of briefings and inclusion in the RSCP training program.
- Business support to the Contextual Safeguarding Review
- Development of a multi agency data dashboard

Publication of Arrangements expected by December 2024 including –

- **arrangements for the safeguarding partners to work together to identify and respond to the needs of children in the area**
- **arrangements for commissioning and publishing local child safeguarding practice reviews**
- **arrangements for independent scrutiny of the effectiveness of the arrangements**

The RSCP meeting in October 2024 is dedicated to the development of the new MASA, including

- How the role of education will be strengthened
- Developing a Children's Rights approach to the MASA
- Responding to disproportionality in safeguarding children
- The development of the [Family First Pathfinder](#) work and
- Proposed amendments to structures and approach to scrutiny

- Consideration on how best embed the expectations and principles of Working Together 2023 in practice

The LSP should agree on the level of funding needed to deliver the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. This includes consideration of business and analytical support, independent scrutiny, infrastructure, and core functions including local children safeguarding practice reviews, multi-agency training and learning events. It is the responsibility of the LSP to ensure that adequate funding is allocated and spent in line with agreed priorities. Funding contributions from the statutory safeguarding partners should be equitable and agreed by the LSP.

The issue of equitable and adequate funding has been a long-standing issue for the RSCP. The issue has been raised at the safeguarding executive on several occasions. The issues have been raised at a national level via the London and National SCP Independent Scrutineers, as reaching a local agreement has proved problematic over many years. Especially the contribution by the Metropolitan Police Service as can be seen in the budget ([Appendix 1](#)) being significantly lower than that of the LA and the ICB.

There is no plan at the present time as how the Lead Safeguarding Partners will resolve this issue.

Review the arrangements for the current Chair reflecting the requirements of Working Together alongside the requirement for independent scrutiny

The guidance states the RSCP meeting must be chaired by of the Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSP). The current role of the Chair includes the role of Independent Scrutineer and will need revision as part of the review process.

DSPs to provide multi-agency safeguarding professional development and training and ensure the provision of multi-agency data

The RSCP training program is well developed and supported by a dedicated Training Manager. The provision of multiagency data has taken significant steps forward in the reporting period in readiness for December, the RSCP Senior Administrator has undertaken training and development to build a multiagency data reporting system. The data for inclusion has been developed and a multiagency subgroup has been established.

Strengthen the coordination and engagement of education and how they are involved in Strategic discussions.

The RSCP has always included representation from schools and colleges in Redbridge. The RSCP recognise there is a need to further develop the way in which all schools are included and represented, alongside inclusion at a strategic level. The Operational Director, Education and Inclusion, LBR, the RSCP Manager and Independent Scrutineer have a meeting planned with the National Safeguarding Partner for Education to review current structures and hear about initiatives in other parts of the country to inform the development of the Redbridge MASA.

**Develop the role and competency requirements of the lead practitioner.
Consider the impact on professionals who have previously not taken on this role**

The role of the lead practitioner is an integral part of the Family First for Children Pathfinder Programme. The programme has the potential to transform the role as all child protection work will be led by the Lead Child Protection Practitioners (LCPP) in the Multi Agency Child Protection Team (MACPT). An additional benefit of the model will be that where a family 'step- up' from Family Help, the Family Help Lead Practitioner will remain involved and co-work with the LCPP.

A series of internal and external briefings sessions for staff and partners are taking place during the summer. These will be further supported by a formal consultation exercise with Children and Families practitioners in the autumn. The business case supporting the transformation process outlines the timelines for the transition to the new ways of working. Accompanying the business case will be an iterative training and development process to support practitioners in understanding and developing the lead practitioner role.

Designated Social Care Officer (DCSO) role to be developed by LA

In Redbridge we have developed the Designated Social Care Officer (DCSO) and its deputy in the last 12 months. We have created the roles to ensure that we have strategic and operational leads framing and developing social care elements of the SEND strategy across the local authority, in compliance with legislative requirements of the SEND Code of Practice (2015). Our ambition is that the roles will directly inform and influence the direction of wider SEND services through intelligence and insight. The leadership for these roles sits with the Head of Service (DCSO) and a Team Manager (Deputy DCSO) within the Children with Disabilities Team. Both have in-depth knowledge and understanding of both social care operations and the SEND reforms agenda.

Harm outside the home

Working Together 2023 requires Safeguarding Partnerships to consider their response to how they respond to children who experience harm outside the home. The RSCP has already undertaken a review of Contextual Safeguarding as part of its priorities reported on later in the report. The RSCP is now focusing on implementation of the recommendations of the Contextual Safeguarding Review.

Learning from serious child safeguarding incidents

The new guidance requires that death of any Care Leaver is reported via the Serious Incident Notification system in addition to the existing criteria. The Redbridge 'One Panel' has reviewed the guidance to reflect the changes.

Learning from Reviews

During the period October 2022 to March 2024 there were two referrals to consider involving two children and young people. From those, two Rapid Reviews were completed and submitted to the national CSCR Panel within statutory timeframes and findings accepted.

In both cases there has been local learning which has been led by the Learning and Improvement Subgroup and reported on further in the report.

One local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSCR) **Child 'A'** has been concluded published on the RSCP website in October 2022. This local CSCR was undertaken to find learning through consideration of practice and systems relating to an infant who sustained a head injury aged 10 weeks old. In response to the recommendations made in the review an action plan was developed. As a result of the work undertaken by the RSCP the following actions and outcomes have taken place.

- Learning resources on the topic of working with fathers has been collated by the Training Subgroup and shared across all partner agencies, with best practice being promoted via the RSCP Training Programme.
- The updated Neglect Toolkit has been disseminated and it is used by the ICB in safeguarding supervision as appropriate.
- Assurance provided from health providers around 'Did Not Attend' policies to ensure assessing of safeguarding risk, particularly if the case is going to be closed.
- A 'dip sample' was undertaken by health providers which provided assurance that the correct terminology in relation to non-attendance of children at medical appointments which should be referred to as 'was not taken'.
- The **National SAB Managers Network resource – 'Non Engagement Toolkit'** and **Briefing Note** – was shared with all partners to inform learning and development activities for practitioners working with parents.
- A specific transition team has been established sitting within Redbridge NELFT Adult Mental Health Service which is dedicated to the transition of young people from CAMHS to adult services. The Trust's Transition Policy is under review.

Evidence of Impact of the work of the RSCP

Learning & Improvement Subgroup

The Subgroup has continued to share and promote learning in a multi-agency forum and this has allowed for opportunities to present examples of success and good practice.

The Subgroup received a presentation from the Redbridge Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in response to the national review into safeguarding children with disabilities and complex health needs living in residential settings. The national review was initiated following a complex abuse investigation undertaken by Doncaster Safeguarding Children's Partnership in respect of allegations at three residential settings run by the Hesley Group.

In response, Redbridge Children's Social Care has undertaken assurance measures, visited provisions and changed the frequency of monitoring arrangements for children in dually registered residential provision where the Ofsted rating has moved adversely. There will be an increase of social worker visits in response to any concern raised about a provision.

The Subgroup were provided with information on the Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) Hub which has developed a multi-disciplinary team and works closely with the local authority to raise awareness of the CSA pathway and the identified leads with Community Acute teams. A representative from the Hub sits in a Social Care Team once a month and offers consultations on CSA and what is on offer in the Hub. For example, there is an emotional well-being offer which is run by a team of Practitioners that work with young people on their trauma and growth, empowering recovery.

The Subgroup also heard about the work that was undertaken in response to Sudden Unexpected Death in Infants (SUDI). There had been 31 deaths across east London and those were deemed to be vulnerable families that they had history of drugs, domestic violence, mental health problems and homelessness. As a result, task and finish groups in all seven boroughs across NEL have been established. The National Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) Panel noted that the best way to tackle SUDI is to do a protect and prevent model, providing advice at all opportunities and using professional curiosity about where babies are sleeping. To check what provisions are in place and is safe sleeping in place for the baby. To promote this further, training will be rolled out to all agencies to try to improve the knowledge of the risks and the preventative factors.

In response to the recommendations and action plan from the [Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review \(CSPR\) Baby 'A'](#) (see page 9), the Subgroup development a multi-agency self-assessment audit to understand the existing trauma-

informed services within the local authority and partner agencies of the RSCP and/or the Redbridge Safeguarding Adults Board (RSAB) including schools and voluntary sector groups. The findings were collated and the report explored the presence of trauma informed, strengths-based models of working that were being implemented across agencies. The report was presented at the Partnership meeting in July 2023 and found that trauma-informed practice is generally understood across the organisations and this was represented largely in the front-line support services and most organisations had completed a level of formal training within the last five years. It did identify that there is a need for ongoing training, monitoring an evaluation to strengthen trauma-informed practices and to ensure that individuals receive the right help at the right time. A multi-agency practice guide is being developed and will be shared with the (RSCP).

Additionally in response to the recommendations from the (CSPR) Baby 'A', there was a relaunch of the Neglect Toolkit. Following the re launch, the subgroup then instigated a review of the use of the tool to give assurance to the partnership of its understanding and use of the tool among multi-agency practitioners in their assessment of the risk of neglect. The self-assessment focussed on how agencies identify and respond to concerns about neglect and the use of the Neglect Toolkit. There was a varied use of the tool and it was noted that it was not widely used across agencies, however it was acknowledged that there was use of alternative tools such as the Graded Care Profile, Neglect Screening Tool (YOS) and the [Continuum of Need matrix](#) as included in the London Safeguarding Children Threshold Document.

The learning from adolescent suicides has highlighted similar themes, of mental health, self-harm and transitional stages. Transitional points in a young person's life has increased the likelihood of suicidal thoughts and potentially the timing of them taking their life. The importance of educational providers having an understanding of the safeguarding issues following transition and how this is shared in a multi-agency space to ensure that there is wrap around support from the professionals involved is imperative.

The tragic death of a young person can have a long-lasting effect on those around them and the learning from these deaths has highlighted the need to consider the impact of the death on other children either within the household or school environment. To consider the level of support offered and how future indicators may be detected, especially in circumstances where there has already been a death of a parent to suicide as evidence suggests that this increases the risks.

We learnt that a lack of multi-agency professional working at the lower end of need, has prevented good joint up working with continuous channels of sharing information, which may have been able to identify the early signs of escalation if agencies were aware of a fuller picture. Even the use of informal conversations would better establish relationships and promote the development of focussed multi-agency plans to address the concerns.

We explored the need to consider what lies behind the presenting behaviour and the reasons for potential physical health symptoms were important and that there is a need for professional curiosity to explore the lived experience of the young person.

Additionally, it was noted the importance of recognising the impact on a practitioner when a child they have been working with dies and the nature of the support that is offered to them following the tragic event. There needs to be consideration the impact of the trauma and how the practitioner continues to work with the family.

A Rapid Review (RR) was held in September 2023 following the death of a 7 year old child who sadly passed away whilst abroad. A Local Learning Review known as 'SA' was recommended and this was agreed by the National CSPR Panel. 'SA' had complex medical and health needs so the review was led by health colleagues via a multi-agency task and finish (T&F) group which started in January 2024 and is ongoing. The principal concern for the T&F group relate to a lack of oxygen provision in Redbridge and for Child SA boarding a flight without a Fitness to Fly Review/Certificate.

The RR identified areas for improvement around overseas travel for children with supplementary oxygen needs, information sharing between the professional network and training for children's families with complex health needs.

Work underway via the Task and Finish Group has included an audit of communication between acute services and a child's professional network, an update of the children services, children with disabilities protocol, and the creation of a protocol for children with oxygen needs boarding a flight for professionals.

Training Subgroup

The RSCP Training Subgroup comprises of multi-agency partners with responsibility for safeguarding children education and workforce development. Meeting quarterly, the subgroup share training activity delivered in their setting and oversee the delivery and quality of the annual RSCP Multi-agency Safeguarding Training Programme. The Subgroup aims to cascade national guidance and evidenced based practice and to respond to themes and trends seen, local and national learning through CSPRs (Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews), Rapid Reviews and Serious Incidents. It also aims to improve the delivery and the impact of training on safeguarding practice.

Learning from national and local CSPRs has been implemented, such as the national review following the deaths of [Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson](#), e.g. professional curiosity, emphasising good practice in malicious referrals, triangulation in assessment and cultural competence. The [Child 'Q'](#) local CSPR, undertaken by City & Hackney SCP, prompted the addition of a thread to the programme: raising awareness of intersectionality and 'adultification' of children and exploring language e.g. peer-on-peer to child-on-child. This was also reflected in a new course: *Cultural Barriers to Mental Health* and *Professional Curiosity in Safeguarding Practice*. Increased reporting of harmful sexual behaviours (HSB) and [Ofsted's Review of Sexual Abuse in Schools and Colleges](#) led to the inclusion of the accredited [Brook's HSB Toolkit](#). We have also added new courses aiming to focus protection from extra-familial harm and to strengthen families, *Disrupting Child Exploitation* and *Understanding Coercive Control*, co-facilitated by the Metropolitan Police Service.

Over this reporting period the Programme saw the delivery of more courses and increased bookings. We have seen a greater attendance by private health providers and private semi-independent residential providers. It is likely that this has been influenced by recent changes in regulations (2023) requiring registration with Ofsted.

Whilst income generation supports the commission of market leaders amongst training providers e.g. Brook, Ivison Trust, Centre for Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse, free courses were added in partnership with local providers, utilising existing local contracts and priorities: Trauma informed Practice Briefing (LBR), Children's Rights and Safeguarding (UNICEF), Child Friendly Redbridge (LBR), Supporting Recovery and Health of Children Affected by Child Sexual Abuse (The Havens and NEL CSA Hub).

The Training Subgroup meets quarterly, as a virtual meeting at the agreement of the group members. The [Terms of Reference](#) and membership have been reviewed and updated and the Designated Nurse for safeguarding children has become co-chair of the Subgroup. There has been inconsistency in representation from some agencies due to staff capacity and operational challenges. As part of Training Subgroup's support and challenge role, an additional theme for members to feedback their training activity on each quarter has been introduced as well as continuing to feedback on their organisations training activity. Themes so far have included child mental health and induction training for new and bank/agency staff.

The RSCP Training Programme runs across an academic year, reporting to the Partnership in the following January. Our 2022-2023 submission found that the Programme continues to be well promoted and saw an increase in bookings from 856 to 980. From evaluation, 95% of respondents felt they had achieved their learning objectives, 94% of respondents felt their training had equipped them for the workplace and 93% would recommend the training to a colleague. Evaluation summaries demonstrate qualitative evidence of learners applying the training to practice.

Impact of work on Priority areas

Strategic Priorities for September 2022 - September 2023

Priority Area	Action	Why this was chosen as a priority	Impact
Transitional Safeguarding	Completing the work begun in 2019/20 on transitional safeguarding – a joint project with the Redbridge Safeguarding Adults Board (RSAB) to develop proposals for an effective Redbridge response to the needs of young adults at risk of exploitation, recognising that adolescence as a developmental phase does not suddenly end on the eighteenth birthday.	Building in on finding of Reviews (RSCP Local CSPR Baby 'A'; RSAB Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR): 'Alice') Voice of young people heard through the Redbridge Youth Council and the Redbridge Community Safety Partnership response to the Redbridge Crime Commission Report	Development of a Transitional Safeguarding Panel with Terms of Reference and Guidance There remain some challenges around developing both joint funding and commissioning opportunities in this area. Developing interventions that are more integrated.
Contextual Safeguarding	Through a task and finish group with the Redbridge Community Safety Partnership, develop a joined-up multi-agency response and support to the exploitation of children.	National Learning London Safeguarding Adolescent peer review finding, Redbridge Crime Commission learning And CCE self-assessment against JTAI findings.	An Independent Multiagency Contextual Safeguarding Review report was completed and presented at an extraordinary RSCP meeting in February 2024 to develop a response to findings.
Responding to National Safeguarding Reviews and Reports	Supporting the response and developments arising from the publication of the Independent Review of Children's Social Care, Final Report, May 2022; the Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) Panel Report – Child Protection in England: National Review into the murders of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson, May 2022; and any future reports or directives published in 2022 – 2023.	Statutory requirement of Safeguarding Children Partnerships to respond to learning from reviews. In anticipation of changes recommended in the national CSPR Panel report Child Protection in England.	Highlighted in the Training Subgroup report above. The National Review was not published until after this period.
Children & Young Peoples Mental Health	Supporting a response to the growth in children and young people's mental health, including raising awareness of different support and resources available.	Rapid Reviews and local CSPRs on adolescent suicides. Voice of children and young people. Findings of the RSCP COVID-19 Pandemic oversight. Young people seeking help for their mental health	The Task and Finish Group identified what support is there to help children, young people and their families navigate the system. Resources identified were share across

			<p>partners to support Children and families</p> <p>The priority was agreed to continue over the following year</p>
Child Friendly Redbridge	<p>Supporting the progress to achieve UNICEF 'Child Friendly Redbridge' status, and the specific priorities of the Redbridge Youth Council relating to safeguarding including: normalisation of sexual harassment in schools; signposting to provision of support for children impacted by domestic violence or homelessness; raising awareness of the effects of substance misuse on young people.</p>	<p>Redbridge strategic priority</p>	<p>The RSCP continue to promote this work at a senior leadership level, highlighting the importance of safeguarding in this approach, and are engaged with the work towards achieving Child Friendly status with regular updates to the Partnership and the Partnership Manager in the role of 'champion'. Progress has been good, and a positive outcome is anticipated.</p>

Strategic Priorities from September 2023 – March 2024

The priorities were agreed at the October 2023 RSCP meeting, prior to the publication of Working Together 2023 and the changes to reporting were known. The safeguarding partners agreed the work on these priorities extend to March 2025.

Priority Area	Rational	Actions	Progress in the first 6 months
Contextual Safeguarding	<p>A multiagency review of Contextual Safeguarding was undertaken in 2022 - 2023. A response will be required from partners to the findings and recommendations of the Review and an action plan developed to respond to them.</p> <p>CSPRs, DHRs and SARs have provided learning to be taken forward in respect of Contextual Safeguarding, developing a recognition of all-age/system learning from incidents and case reviews.</p>	<p>Ensure the findings of the Redbridge multi-agency Contextual Safeguarding</p> <p>Review, alongside local data and research, considers and responds to the findings from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HMICFRS MPS Inspection - Putting Vulnerable Children at Risk, 2023 • Missing Children in London, London Assembly Police and Crime Committee Report, 2023 <p>Ensure arrangements are in place to appraise and respond to the recommendations of the review.</p> <p>To have oversight of the progress on implementation of the recommendations.</p> <p>Provide a learning event for Redbridge professionals and volunteers in conjunction with the Redbridge Safeguarding Adults Board (RSAB) and Redbridge Community Safety Partnership</p>	<p>The action plan in response to the Review has been developed and finish group is meeting to monitor its progress</p>
Child Mental Health	<p>Last reporting period established raising awareness of different support and resources available, there is a need to test is it meeting the</p>	<p>Challenging accessibility and ensuring understanding of the service offer by parents/carers, young people and front-line professionals.</p>	<p>The Task and Finish Group continue to map what support is there is to help children, young</p>

	<p>needs of children and young people.</p> <p>Rapid Reviews and local Learning Reviews on adolescent suicides have provided learning.</p>	<p>Scrutinising agency evaluation and feedback from referrals into mental health services.</p> <p>Review the quality of multiagency working for children experiencing challenges with their mental health.</p>	<p>people and their families. .</p> <p>CAMHS to present data and themes from referrals .</p> <p>A multi-agency table top event planned for 14 November 2024 to review learning from child mental health support available in Redbridge.</p>
<p>A suitable home for every child</p>	<p>Current housing crisis, both nationally and acutely felt in LB Redbridge (4,442 children in temporary accommodation placed by Redbridge at the end of June 2023). Temporary accommodation can be a stable long term home but less so for children in B&B and hostel type accommodation.</p>	<p>Ensuring the prevention of homelessness duties are promoted across the Partnership. Articulating the response across the Partnership for families that are badged as making themselves intentionally homeless or no recourse to public funds but have vulnerable children. To review the effectiveness of multiagency arrangements to ensure continuity and support for those children who are likely to experience frequent changes in accommodation moving in and out of the Borough</p>	<p>Housing have provided information on the pressures in the housing market and how partners can support families at the earliest opportunity to prevent homelessness</p> <p>A monthly meeting is happening between C&F, Adults and Housing and cases are being brought for discussion. Ofsted were positive about the housing provision for care leavers and 16–17-year-olds. C&F are piloting having a Social Worker at housing front desk</p>

Independent Scrutiny

This checklist is developed from "The Six Steps for Independent Scrutiny" (Pearce, 2019) and informed by the work undertaken by The Association of Safeguarding Partners (TASP). This scrutiny report covers the period from October 2022- March 2024. The checklist identifies six areas that to scrutinise the overall work of a Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP). The purpose of the list that is to prompt discussion about who is scrutinising LSCP activity, the methods used for scrutiny and what is being scrutinised.

Overall, the Safeguarding Children Arrangements are effective in Redbridge

KEY MEASURES OF SCRUTINY

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Redbridge SCP Leadership | 4. Quality Assurance & Information Sharing |
| 2. Engagement of Relevant Agencies | 5. learning from Local & National Reviews & Research |
| 3. Outcomes for Children & Young People | 6. Multi-Agency Safeguarding Training & |

RAG RATING

Each question in each of the steps can be answered and graded as follows:

Green: positive that the question can be answered with evidence to illustrate this

Amber: acknowledgement that some parts of the question can be answered positively (with evidence to illustrate the positive response) but that there is still work to be done

Red: it is not possible to confirm that any part of the question can be answered with a positive response.

Any response (green, amber, or red) will still require an action plan to ensure reaching and maintaining desired outcomes.

1 Redbridge SCP Leadership				
	Key Line of Enquiry	Evidence	RAG rating	Actions required
1.1	The RSCP Partner Leads are clearly identified and accountable; are developing, reviewing and ensuring funding for strategic RSCP activity; and are identifying and publishing agreed desired outcomes for RSCP activity safeguarding children.	There is a Joint Executive Group for the key statutory partners from both the Redbridge Safeguarding Adults Board (RSAB) and the RSCP with published Terms of Reference (ToR). The RSCP have agreed and published annual priorities. However, since the publication of Working Together 2023 a review of arrangement to meet statutory requirements is needed. There is in place a Joint started meeting with Barking & Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge, however this meeting is often cancelled and there does not appear to be any outputs from the meeting The RSCP is not equitably or adequately funded		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review partner contribution to the funding of the RSCP and continue to pursue more equitable funding 2. Review and publish new MASA for December 2024 3. Continue to receive an annual independent scrutiny report
1.2	Delegated representatives of the three lead partners are strategically placed on relevant partnership meetings, subgroups, and working groups.	Yes – identified from minutes of meetings.		
1.3	The three partner leads are working alongside other partnerships: safeguarding adult board; community safety partnership; health and wellbeing board.	The Executive includes RSAB and RSCP leadership. The HWBB receive the annual scrutiny report. The Chair of the RSAB and RSCP attends CSP and there is representation from CSP at the RSAB and RSCP. Implementation of the One panel to bring learning together from RSAB CSP and RSCP. Evidence of greater joined up working e.g. CSP development of Cuckooing pathway following findings of SAR. Development of a youth intelligence Hub		
1.4	The three strategic leads are ensuring that necessary annual reporting is in place: with the RSCP annual report appropriately scrutinised. They are ensuring that a process is in place to review annual RSCP outcomes and for assessing forward planning procedures.	The Annual Scrutiny Report is completed by the Independent Scrutineer, which is not in line with guidance. Priority areas of work are reported on at every RSCP meeting. Independent scrutiny of Safeguarding Children and Families seeking Asylum and housed in hotels in the borough has been undertaken and actioned.		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arrangements for annual reporting needs to be reviewed in line with WT 2023. 2. Future reports are to be impact focused and produced by partners, the findings are then reviewed by the independent scrutineer.

2 Engagement of Relevant Agencies				
	Key Line of Enquiry	Evidence	RAG rating	Actions required
2.1	All relevant agencies within the RSCP are appropriately informed of, and engaged with, the safeguarding children partnership arrangements and RSCP priorities.	<p>Yes - that can be seen in the attendance at meeting and subgroups and the raising of agenda items</p> <p>At times it has been difficult to get traction on moving priorities forward due to capacity across partners and the resource available via the business unit</p> <p>The connects across school and colleges requires further development.</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review that the communication across all education settings is effective and allows opportunity for engagement in the RSCP activities and meets the requirements of WT 2023 Seek assurance re safeguarding arrangements for children missing school and those in elective home education
2.2	All safeguarding partners are engaged with identifying and reviewing RSCP priorities: communication channels are clear for safeguarding concerns to move up to and down from the three lead partners.	Yes – minutes of Partnership and Executive meetings.		
2.3	All safeguarding partners are engaging with RSCP information sharing and staff training protocols.	<p>Pan London Safeguarding Children procedures are in place and Redbridge is signed up to the London data sharing agreement (2021).</p> <p>There has been no section 11 activity for some time.</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a process for gathering information as required by Section 11 of CA 2004.
2.4	The wider safeguarding children partnership is informed and updated with current findings from research and local and national reviews. They are informed of local and national guidelines regarding safeguarding children in and outside of the home environment.	<p>The RSCP has a newsletter where updates both nationally and locally are shared.</p> <p>Regular presentation at the RSCP and Executive meetings for consideration of any local responses required.</p>		

3. Outcomes for Children & Young People				
	Key Line of Enquiry	Evidence	RAG rating	Actions required
3.1	Children and Young People are consulted; and given opportunities to input into, and influence the development, implementation, and review of the RSCP desired outcomes for children	Youth council attend RSCP to introduce their priorities and update on their progress Information from the presentation inform to some degree the priorities		1. Include in the development of new MASA a Children's Rights approach
3.2	A communication system is in place (engagement strategy) to ensure that those impacted most by safeguarding concerns are aware of their right to be safeguarded and to play a part in developing initiatives to prevent, respond to, and report about safeguarding threats.	As above Redbridge YP take part in the annual youth voice audit identifying priorities for their safety. The RSCP is part of the UNICEF 'Child Friendly Redbridge'		1. As above
3.3	Opportunities are in place for Children and Young People to lead or co-lead safeguarding initiatives focused on improving outcomes for children, safeguarding training for adults and children; and attending relevant meetings, working groups, and subgroups.	C&YP lead and develop their own SG initiatives separate to the RSCP and present their work		As above
3.4	Young people play a role in assessing and representing desired outcomes during their transition to adult services.	Transition Has been a priority area of work for the RSCP and a panel is now established		1. Review the effectiveness of the Transitions panel

4. Quality Assurance & Information Sharing				
	Key Line of Enquiry	Evidence	RAG rating	Actions required
4.1	Mechanisms are in place for the three core partners to collect, analyse, and share relevant multi-agency data pertaining to safeguarding children.	Data set presented quarterly		1. Continue the work on the development of a wider partner data set to be analysed as a partnership 2. Develop exception report for the RSCP with areas of good practice and areas that need further scrutiny
4.2	Agencies from the wider partnership are undertaking and sharing their own single agency audits of data pertaining to safeguarding children.	The RSCP regularly receives report from agencies on the outcome of their single agency audits		1. To ask as part of Section 11 assurance that audit activity is taking place
4.3	Relevant data from the full RSCP is being used to review the impact of safeguarding initiatives on desired outcomes for children.	Limited at the present time		1. The develop of the data set needs to link to the priorities of the RSCP
4.4	Relevant data shared across the partnership is used to inform an assessment of gaps in data needed to identify priorities, and future safeguarding plans.	Remains in its infancy		1. As above

5 Learning from Local & National Reviews & Research				
	Key Line of Enquiry	Evidence	RAG rating	Actions required
5.1	The full RSCP are aware of the criteria and process for referral of serious incidents	Information is published on the RSCP website.		
5.2	Case reviews are adequately resourced to enhance learning, to embrace contextual as well as individual and family concerns and to involve the full range of strategic and operational staff to extract and embed learning.	CSPR are reviewed and commissioned as required		1. Funding as discussed in 1.1
5.3	Learning from local and national reviews is cascaded and used to improve outcomes for children, their families and community.	Evidence of training response to national and local reviews. Shared at RSCP		
5.4	Learning from case reviews is integrated into future RSCP training, policy, and practice.	Yes		

6. Multi-Agency Safeguarding Training & Workforce Development				
	Key Line of Enquiry	Evidence	RAG rating	Actions required
6.1	There is a transparent and clearly understood process for identifying, providing, and evaluating RSCP training needs with all safeguarding partners, including children, families, and communities.	Safeguarding Training Needs Analysis (TNA) is undertaken at a single agency and multi-agency level and reported via the Training Subgroup and is part of the current RSCP dataset.		
6.2	The planning and delivery of multi-agency training is informed by the local safeguarding children plan; review of local data; local and national policy; legislative contexts; and up to date research findings.	The annual RSCP Multi-Agency Training Programme is based on the TNA, learning from local and national reviews, research, feedback from service users and the RSCP priorities.		
6.3	The take up and use of RSCP training is reviewed in all RSCP agencies including take up and use of training by children, young people, and communities.	An annual report on the RSCP Training Programme is presented to the RSCP which includes attendance on the training and impact of learning.		
6.4	The three lead LSCP partners are assessing the impact of safeguarding children training on practice and using this to inform future LSCP training needs.	This can be evidence in quality assurance activities by single agencies and multi-agency quality assurance audits undertaken by the Learning & Improvement Subgroup and as part of the quality assurance work of the BHR Safeguarding Partnership.		

Appendix 1

RSCP Budget 2023 - 2024¹

Income		Expenditure	
Training attendance/non-attendance fees	28,880	TASP Membership	450
LB Redbridge	64,320	RSCP Training Programme	11,500
Metropolitan Police/MOPAC	5,000	RSCP Independent Chair ²	21,600
National Probation Service (NPS)	2,616	RSCP Business Manager ³	42,700
NELFT	7,500	RSCP Training Manager ⁴	34,707
NEL NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB)	35,600	RSCP Senior Admin Officer	47,708
Barking, Havering & Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust (BHRUT)	3,231	Office expenses	31
Bart's Health NHS Trust	5,000	Rapid Reviews	6,582
Department for Education (DfE) Working Together 2023 Implementation Grant ⁵	47,300		
Total Income	199,455	Total Expenditure	165,278

¹ The RSCP budget works across a financial year i.e. April 2023 – March 2024 and the figures presented are based on actual spend.

² Independent Chair/Scrutineer spend is 3 working days per calendar month

³ RSCP Business Manager – figure based on 50% as this is a shared post with the Redbridge Safeguarding Adult Board (RSAB)

⁴ RSCP Training Manager – post is 60FTE

⁵ The DfE grant is a 'one off' to support the implementation of new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements under Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 – see page 32 'Grant Funding'.

Appendix 2

RSCP Membership

Chief Executive Officer	London Borough of Redbridge (LBR)
Corporate Director of People	LBR
Operational Director, Children & Families	LBR
Operational Director, Education & Inclusion	LBR
Head of Safeguarding, Quality Assurance and PCFSW	LBR
Head of Child Protection, Early Intervention and Community Social Work Service	LBR
Head of Youth Justice and Targeted Positive Activities	LBR
Early Years and Childcare Improvement Team Manager	LBR
Director of Public Health	LBR
Operational Director, Housing	LBR
Head of Community Safety	LBR
Detective Superintendent Public Protection	East Area Basic Command Unit, Metropolitan Police Service
Director of Nursing	NHS North East London (NEL) Integrated Care Board (ICB)
Associate Director for Safeguarding Children	NHS NEL ICB
Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children	NHS NEL ICB
Designated Doctor for Safeguarding Children – (Barking & Dagenham, & Redbridge)/Designated Doctor for Child Death	NHS NEL ICB
Primary Care Nurse Consultant	NHS NEL ICB
Integrated Care Director	NELFT
Assistant Director Safeguarding and Named Midwife	BHRUT
Named Doctor of Safeguarding	Partnership of East London Cooperatives (PELC)
Think Family Lead	Bart's NHS Health Trust
Public Law Service Manager	CAFCASS
Head of Service – Redbridge & Waltham Forest	National Probation Service
Deputy Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead	Barley Lane Primary School
Headteacher	Ilford County High School
Headteacher	Beal High School
Headteacher	Apex Primary School
Acting Headteacher	Little Heath School
Designated Safeguarding Lead	New City College
Head of Community Development	Redbridge Community Action (formally RedbridgeCVS)
Community Representative	Redbridge Faith Forum
Lead Member for Children and Young People	LBR
Lay Members	Independent
Solicitor	LBR

Appendix 3

Report: Working Together 2023 – Summary of Key Actions and Requirements

1. Introduction

This report provides a brief summary of the key changes to statutory guidance that provide the framework for multi-agency working in relation to safeguarding children.

2. Background

On 15 December 2023, the Government published *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 – A guide to multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children*. The guidance outlines what organisations and agencies must and should do to help, protect and promote the welfare of children and young people under 18 in England. This statutory guidance replaces *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018* (incorporating factual corrections made in 2020) with immediate effect. The new edition forms one of the main platforms for the delivery of the strategy set out in the *DfE Children’s Social Care: Stable Homes, built on love (2023)*.

Accompanying the new *Working Together* to help with navigating the changes is *Background information for Working Together and the National Framework – Improving Practice with Children, Young People and Families, 2023*. The National Framework should inform the day-to-day delivery of children’s social care. The framework also includes how multi-agency working is prioritised and effective, so it is essential that safeguarding partners and relevant agencies: should read the National Framework alongside *Working Together 2023*, when developing local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements to understand how local authorities will approach their duties and identify what is needed from partner agencies to achieve the outcomes set out in the National Framework.

Consideration on how the National Framework will impact on other agencies current arrangements.

How will changes be negotiated if required? (see section 6)

The new working together is also supported by *Supporting local areas to embed working together to safeguard children and the national framework*. National Facilitator support is also available via the DfE. The new guidance should be considered alongside the new *Children’s Social Care National Framework*, published by the DfE in December 2023, and also *Keeping Children Safe in Education* published in September 2023.

The Department for Education (DfE) is investing more than £7 million, over the next two years to support local areas. This consists of £6.48 million grant funding in January 2024, for safeguarding partners to: make changes to multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in light of the revised working together to safeguard children statutory

guidance to build a shared understanding between agencies of what the national framework means for multi-agency working.

Consideration on how best use the grant monies of £43,000 to review and strengthen the MASA and impact of the National Framework

Publication of Arrangements expected by December 2024 including -

- arrangements for the safeguarding partners to work together to identify and respond to the needs of children in the area
- arrangements for commissioning and publishing local child safeguarding practice reviews
- arrangements for independent scrutiny of the effectiveness of the arrangements

See section 6

3. Summary of Key Changes

The DfE have produced a short [summary of changes](#) for each chapter with a confirmation that no statutory roles or functions have been removed from the guidance. Below is a summary of the key changes based on this and a [NSPCC Learning CASPER Briefing 'Key provisions introduced in Working together to safeguarding children 2023'](#).

a) Chapter One: A shared responsibility (pages 11 – 22)

This is a new chapter which highlights how positive outcomes for children depend on strong multi-agency working. It also introduces a set of multi-agency expectations for all practitioners involved in safeguarding and child protection. These expectations aim to ensure that practitioners learning with and from each other; have what they need to help families; acknowledge and appreciate difference; and challenge each other. They are structured across three levels: strategic leaders (e.g. Chief Executives); senior and middle managers (e.g. Heads of Service; Headteachers; Team Managers); and direct practice (e.g. social works, police constables and teachers).

The guidance sets out four principles that professionals should follow when working with parents and carers:

- effective partnership and the importance of building strong, positive, trusting and co-operative relationships
- respectful, non-blaming, clear and inclusive verbal and non-verbal communication that is adapted to the needs of parents and carers
- empowering parents and carers to participate in decision making by equipping them with information, keeping them updated and directing them to further resources

- involving parents and carers in the design of processes and services that affect them.

Consideration on how best embed the expectations and principles in practice.

b) Chapter Two: Multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (pages 23 to 42)

This chapter is critical for the Redbridge SCP as it outlines new roles and responsibilities relating to the three safeguarding partners (the local authority, the police and the Integrated Care Board (ICB)). The head of each statutory safeguarding partner will be referred to as the 'lead safeguarding partner' (LSP), who will be required to appoint a 'delegated safeguarding partner' (DSP).

Lead Safeguarding Partner (LSP)

The LSP is the head of each statutory safeguarding partner agency. For local authorities, for example, the LSP should be the Head of Paid Service, also known as the Chief Executive. For the Police this is the Chief Officer of Police and for ICBs the Chief Executive.

LSPs from different agencies are jointly responsible for the proper involvement of all relevant agencies, and should work as a team, as opposed to as a voice for their own organisation

The LSP is responsible for holding their own organisation or agency to account, speaking and making decisions on behalf of their agency, and meeting the statutory and legislative duties of their agency.

Consideration on how this will be enabled for Redbridge and how ICB and MPS will achieve joint functions of lead safeguarding partners (LSP).

1. Set the strategic direction, vision, and culture of the local safeguarding arrangements, including agreeing and reviewing shared priorities and the resource required to deliver services effectively.
2. Lead their organisation's individual contribution to the shared priorities, ensuring strong governance, accountability, and reporting mechanisms to hold their delegates to account for the delivery of agency commitments.
3. Review and sign off key partnership documents: published multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, including plans for independent scrutiny, shared annual budget, yearly report, and local threshold document.
4. Provide shared oversight of learning from independent scrutiny, serious incidents, local child safeguarding practice reviews, and national reviews, ensuring recommendations are implemented and have a demonstrable impact on practice (as set out in the yearly report).
5. Ensure multi-agency arrangements have the necessary level of business support, including intelligence and analytical functions, such as an agreed data set providing oversight and a robust understanding of practice.
6. Ensure all relevant agencies, including education settings, are clear on their role and contribution to multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

The LSP should agree on the level of funding needed to deliver the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. This includes consideration of business and analytical support, independent scrutiny, infrastructure, and core functions including local children safeguarding practice reviews, multi-agency training and learning events. It is the responsibility of the LSP to ensure that adequate funding is allocated and spent in line with agreed priorities. Funding contributions from the statutory safeguarding partners should be equitable and agreed by the LSP.

Funding has been an ongoing challenge for the RSCP, the guidance strengthens the requirements of the SCP – how and where will this be agreed? See section 4

Delegated Safeguarding Partner (DSP) and Partnership Chair

The LSP of each partner agency should appoint a delegated safeguarding partner (DSP) responsible for operational delivery.

- One DSP within the partnership should be appointed partnership chair for multiagency arrangements. This role can be rotated between the DSPs if deemed appropriate by the LSPs.
- The partnership chair should facilitate partner discussions, provide greater continuity, and act as a single point of contact for the partnership. The full functions of the partnership chair are detailed on page 30.
- The role of partnership chair should not replace existing formal complaints procedures and does not provide independent scrutiny.
- This arrangement removes the need for a local area to maintain another chair or independent chair.

Review the arrangements for the current Chair reflecting the requirements of Working Together alongside the requirement for independent scrutiny
Agree plans for the RSCP Chair from December 2024

There is a clearer emphasis on the role of DSPs to **provide** multi-agency safeguarding professional development and training (page 29) and **ensure the provision** of multi-agency data (page 30).

Review current funding of MA safeguarding training and the support for development of MA data.

Schools, colleges and education providers

- It is recommended that LSPs have a representative from the education sector present at strategic discussions.
- It is expected that all local education and childcare providers working with children up to the age of 18 will be included in local arrangements.
- LSPs should consider including voluntary, charity, social enterprise (VCSE) organisations, childcare settings, and sports clubs in their arrangements.

Strengthen the coordination and engagement of education and how they are involved in Strategic discussions .

Whilst an independent chair is no longer required, safeguarding partners must ensure that there are arrangements for effective independent scrutiny in place in their local area.

Chapter Three: Providing help, support and protection (pages 43 – 108)

This section is split into three sections: Early help, Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and Child protection.

Section 1: Early help

Considering family needs in the context of early help

- Assessments for early help should consider how the needs of different family members impact each other. This includes needs relating to education, mental and physical health, financial stability, housing, substance use and crime.
- Specific needs should be considered such as disabilities, those whose first language isn't English, fathers or male carers, and parents who identify as LGBTQ.
- Early help services may focus on improving family functioning and developing the family's capacity to establish positive routines and solve problems. Where family networks are supporting the child and parents, services may take an approach that enables family group decision making, such as family group conferences.

The role of education and childcare settings

- Safeguarding professionals should work closely with education and childcare settings to share information, identify and understand risks of harm, and ensure children and families receive timely support.

Section 2: Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

Children's social care assessments

- Assessments should consider the parenting capacity of both resident or non-resident parents and carers, as well as any other adult living in the household that can respond to the child's needs.
- Assessments should also consider the influence of the child's family network and any other adults living in the household, as well as the impact of the wider community and environment.

Lead practitioners

- A lead practitioner will be allocated by the local authority and their partners once a referral has been accepted.
- The lead practitioner role can be held by a range of people, including social workers. For child protection enquiries, the lead practitioner should always be a social worker.
- The lead practitioner will have the appropriate skills, knowledge and capacity to carry out assessments, undertake direct work with families and co-ordinate services.

Develop the role and competency requirements of the lead practitioner.

Consider the impact on professionals who previously not taken on this role

Supporting disabled children and their carers

- Assessments of disabled children should focus on the specific needs of the child and family, be strengths-based and gather effective information to support the best outcome for the child and family.
- Local authorities should implement a Designated Social Care Officer (DCSO) role to improve links between the social care services and the special educational needs and disability (SEND) system.

Designated Social Care Officer (DCSO) role to be developed by LA

Harm outside the home

- Practitioners should consider the needs, experiences and vulnerabilities of the individuals or groups who are experiencing, or are at risk of experiencing, harm outside the home – including from criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation or serious violence.
- Practitioners should work with relevant partner agencies to consider the influence of groups or individuals perpetrating the harm.
- Professionals should assess whether a child who is experiencing, or is at risk of experiencing, harm outside the home is in need under section 17 or 47 of the Children Act 1989.

Implementation of the recommendations of the Contextual Safeguarding review

Section 3: Child protection

National multi-agency practice standards

The updated guidance introduces new multi-agency practice standards for all practitioners working in services and settings that come into contact with children who may be suffering or have suffered significant harm within or outside the home.

Operational Responsibilities

The guidance introduces changes that emphasise the advantages of prison and probation services exchanging information with children's social care and other agencies.

Learning from serious child safeguarding incidents

Not a statutory requirement but the guidance notes how local authorities should “notify the Secretary of State for Education and OFSTED of the death of a care leaver up to and including the age of 24.” If local partners think there may be learning to be gained from the death of a looked after child or care leaver even if the criteria for a serious incident are not met, they may wish to conduct a local safeguarding practice review.

Review Redbridge ‘One Panel’ guidance

Child death reviews

Factual updates have been made to reflect the latest legislation and guidance.

4. Partner Funding Contributions

The LSP should agree on the level of funding needed to deliver the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. This includes consideration of business and analytical support, independent scrutiny, infrastructure, Rapid Reviews and CSPRs, multi-agency training and learning events.

It is the responsibility of the LSP to ensure that **adequate funding** is allocated and spent in line with agreed priorities. Funding contributions from the statutory safeguarding partners should be **equitable** and agreed by the LSP ([Working Together, page 38](#)). The funding arrangements need to be transparent and included in annual reports.

5. Reporting

In order that safeguarding partners can be held to account there are two required mechanisms for reporting on service delivery and leadership:

- Publication of arrangements – required by December 2024
- An annual report⁶ - what should be included is detailed on pages 40 – 42.

Both documents should be contributed to and signed off by all LSPs, clearly demonstrate the links between them and be easily accessible.

Publication of arrangements must include

- arrangements for the safeguarding partners to work together to identify and respond to the needs of children in the area
- arrangements for commissioning and publishing local child safeguarding practice reviews (see chapter 5, paragraphs 356-359)
- arrangements for independent scrutiny of the effectiveness of the arrangements

They should also include:

- who the three safeguarding partners, their delegates and partnership chair are

⁶ It has been for Redbridge SCP by the statutory partners that the Annual Scrutiny Report for October 2022 – September 2023 will be extended to include the period to end of March 2024 and be ready for publication in September 2024.

- geographical boundaries, including if the arrangements operate across more than one local authority area
- the relevant agencies the safeguarding partners will work with, why these organisations and agencies have been chosen, and how they will collaborate and work together to improve outcomes for children and families
- how all, schools (including independent schools, academies, and free schools), colleges, early years and childcare settings, and other educational providers (including alternative provision) will be included in the safeguarding arrangements
- how any youth custody and residential homes for children will be included in the safeguarding arrangements
- how the safeguarding partners will share information and data safely and effectively, using arrangements that clearly set out the processes and the principles for sharing
- how the safeguarding partners will use data and intelligence to assess the effectiveness of the help being provided to children and families, including early help
- how multi-agency training will be commissioned, delivered, and monitored for impact, and how they will undertake any multi-agency and inter-agency audits
- how the arrangements will be funded
- the process for undertaking local child safeguarding practice reviews, setting out the arrangements for embedding learning across organisations and agencies • how the arrangements will include the voice of children and families, including how to escalate concerns and how any disputes will be resolved, including whistleblowing procedures • how the local threshold document in place aligns with the arrangements

5. Support

a) Grant Funding

Details were set out in a S31 Grant Determination Letter for Strengthening Multi-Agency Leadership for Reform: Supporting the Implementation of Working Together and the Children’s Social Care National Framework received on 15 December 2023.

The following timescales have been stipulated in relation to implementing the required changes and receipt of the Government funding (£47,300) which will be provided during January 2024 via the Local Authority. The DfE expects this one-off payment to be used in the financial year 2023 – 2024. An Annex G form need to be submitted in March 2024 setting out how the funding has been used.

b) Webinars

The first webinar in a planned series on Implementing changes to Working Together is scheduled for 30 January 2024, from 11:00 – 12:30. Bookings can be made via this [link](#).

Additionally, the DfE and members of the Children’s Social Care National Practice Group are delivering an event on 1 February 2024 from 13:00 – 14:30 to introduce the

new Children's Social Care National Framework and Dashboard. Bookings can be made via this [link](#).

Further learning events on sharing information and good practice will be available later in 2024.

c) National Facilitators and Peer Support

National Facilitators will be available to help with implementation of changes. Additionally, those areas that acted as pilots will be able to offer peer support through the use of a maturity tool allowing partners to review how aligned they are to the new guidance.

6. Next Steps

The actions detailed for safeguarding partners in [Supporting local areas to embed working together to safeguard children and the national framework](#) are:

- commit to reviewing multi-agency safeguarding arrangements
- identify where improvements may be needed to strengthen services to deliver the best possible outcomes for children, young people and families
- identify and agree named lead and delegate safeguarding partners for each statutory agency, after reviewing the functions listed in Chapter 2 of Working Together to Safeguard Children
- appoint one of the delegated safeguarding partners as the partnership chair for the multi-agency arrangements
- remove the role of independent chair (if this is still in place)
- consider the role of education partners within the partnership structure and strengthen this where necessary
- publish and submit a yearly report by **September 2024** and publish revised multi-agency arrangements by **December 2024**
- implement effective information-sharing arrangements between agencies

Partners must also agree how the core functions of the partnership chair and independent scrutiny will be delivered and amend structures and arrangements as necessary.

The lead and delegate safeguarding partners (LSPs and DSPs) must ensure there is independent scrutiny to evaluate how effective multi-agency safeguarding arrangements are.

Safeguarding partners should review funding arrangements to ensure that agencies are contributing enough to support the decision-making infrastructure and statutory requirements of local arrangements.

They should review current ways of working to support effective practice as set out in the multi-agency expectations, principles for working with parents and carers and the multi-agency child protection standards.

Additionally, in **March 2024**, partners will need to submit Annex G (Grant Funding) specifying how the grant has been spent.

Inspection via the Joint Targeted Area Inspections (JTAs) format will continue with one of two types:

- evaluating the multi-agency response to identification of initial need and risk; or
- looking at a particular theme or cohort of children.

Local Authorities have a 12 month period from 15 December 2023 – 20 December 2024 to begin work to embed the **national framework** and make plans for how they align practice systems to the expectations for children's social care.

January 2024