



Cumberland  
Safeguarding  
Children Partnership

# Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership Arrangements



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# Forward

This document provides the Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements, following both the publication of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and the split of the Cumbria Safeguarding Children Partnership Pan Cumbria Arrangements on 31st March 2025.

Within Cumberland, nothing is more important than children's welfare and safety. Consequently, the partnership will continue to have a strong focus on families in our area, and children will be at the centre of all that we do.

As statutory partners, we remain committed to working together to continue to improve our safeguarding practices to make a difference to the lives of children within Cumberland.

This document sets out how we will work together, whilst working with other agencies, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and their families.

The new structure that is being put in place has been developed to build on the strengths of the previous Pan Cumbria Arrangements, but also seize the opportunity to reduce duplication and work more effectively to improve practice.

We are excited to implement our new priorities within the partnership over the coming years and believe we can truly make a difference to the children and young people in Cumberland.



**Andrew Seekings**  
Chief Executive  
Cumberland Council



**Samantha Allen**  
Chief Executive  
North East & North  
Integrated Care Board



**Rob Carden**  
Chief Constable  
Cumbria Constabulary

# Introduction

Welcome to Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership's (referred to as "the partnership" within this document) Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

At the heart of our arrangements is a commitment from all agencies to 'Work together to keep Cumberland's children safe' and to continuously improve and learn how to best do this.

These arrangements fulfil our responsibilities as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, including the arrangements for:

- The safeguarding partners to work together to identify and respond to the needs of children in the area.
- Commissioning and publishing Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews.
- The Independent Scrutiny of the effectiveness of the Cumberland Local Arrangements.

Following Local Government Reform in 2023, it was agreed that the Pan Cumbria Safeguarding Children Partnership arrangements would remain for 12 months.

A decision was taken by Cumbria Safeguarding Children Partnership's Lead Partners to split the partnership to have two place based multi-agency safeguarding partnerships, to increase oversight and a clearer line of sight on safeguarding practice.

**These Cumberland arrangements replace the arrangements published on 15th December 2024.** A Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangement document will be published separately for Westmorland & Furness Safeguarding Children Partnership.

As with any new Partnership there is a need to continually review what is working well and what can be improved. The DSPs will have a continually cycle of review and if needed will refresh these arrangements with agreement from the LSPs.

## **The Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSPs), who are responsible for the arrangements in Cumbria, are:**

- Cumberland Council - Andrew Seekings, Chief Executive Officer.
- Cumbria Constabulary - Robert Carden, Chief Constable.
- North East North Cumbria Integrated Care Board - Sam Allen, Chief Executive Officer.
- Westmorland and Furness Council - Sam Plum, Chief Executive Officer.
- Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board - Kevin Lavery, Chief Executive Officer.

Although from 1st April 2025, there will be two Multi-Agency Safeguarding Partnerships within Cumbria, Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership and Westmorland & Furness Safeguarding Children Partnership, LSPs have agreed to meet as a Cumbria wide region four times per year for the first year, with a view to move to three times per year. It would be expected that the Delegated Safeguarding Partners would attend two of the four meetings within the first year.

**The LSPs responsible for the new Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership are:**

- Cumberland Council - Andrew Seekings, Chief Executive Officer.
- Cumbria Constabulary - Robert Carden, Chief Constable.
- North East North Cumbria Integrated Care Board - Sam Allen, Chief Executive Officer.

**The Delegated Safeguarding Lead Partners (DSPs) within Cumberland are:**

- Cumberland Council - Martin Birch, Director of Children and Family Wellbeing.
- Cumbria Constabulary – David Stalker, Assistant Chief Constable.
- North East North Cumbria Integrated Care Board - Richard Scott, Director of Nursing and Quality.

## Geographical Boundary



# Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership

The Partnership covers the whole of the Cumberland Council footprint. However, to note, our partners of Cumbria Constabulary cover the whole of the Cumbria footprint and North East North Cumbria Integrated Care Board cover the whole of Cumberland and the North of Westmorland and Furness (former Eden District Council area).

The safeguarding partners and other relevant agencies included in these Cumberland Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements will fulfil their statutory and legislative duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children from Cumberland who live or are placed outside of our local authority area. Likewise, the safeguarding partners and other agencies included in these arrangements will fulfil their statutory and legislative duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children who live within the Cumberland area, including looked after children placed in Cumberland by other local authorities or those who move into our local area. The relevant agencies, along with the safeguarding partners, we will work with are listed in **Appendix 1**.

The geography and demographics of Cumberland is as follows:



Cumberland Council includes the districts of Carlisle, Allerdale and Copeland and is much more sparsely populated than the national average but has both rural and urban centres.



The population in Cumberland is **273,200**



**56,500** of which are children aged 0-19 years



**7.9%** (14 out of 177) of Cumberland's Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) sit within the most deprived 10% of LSOAs in England. These communities are located across the whole of Cumberland, with 7 being in Allerdale, 4 in Carlisle and 3 in Copeland.  
(Source: IMD 2019 - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government 2019).

Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership's vision is that we are "Working together to keep Cumberland's children safe".

As a partnership, we commit to the following shared values, which underpin everything we do:

- The lived experience and the voice of children and young people is listened to and acted upon at all times.
- A 'Whole-Family' approach is understood and implemented by all practitioners across the partnership.
- Learning is promoted and embedded in a way that services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice.
- Practitioners from all agencies working with adults and children work together and share information effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families.

# Partnership Priorities

The Partnership will seek to gain assurance and robust evidence that safeguarding arrangements across the partnership are effective in helping to keep children and young people safe from abuse and neglect and achieving positive outcomes.

## Priority 1 - Improving The Response to Neglect

The Partnership's priority is to ensure that practitioners across the partnership can collectively identify, assess and intervene early to prevent the harmful impact of neglect on children and young people. This work is part of a whole system approach and is based on a clear understanding of local need.

## Priority 2 - Domestic Abuse

The Partnership's priority is to ensure that families live free from domestic abuse, and victims get the help and support they want, when they need it. Children will be safe and happy and grow up understanding kindness and seeing loving healthy relationships.

## Priority 3 - Safeguarding Adolescents from risks and harm outside the family home

The Partnership will work with all agencies to ensure that there is a highly coordinated multi-agency approach to a range of adolescent risks that occur in contexts beyond the family home (e.g. neighbourhood, schools, local shopping centres, youth venues etc.). These risks include child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation, serious youth violence, peer on peer abuse, violence against women and girls, harmful sexual behaviour and other overlapping forms of harm.

## How will we achieve these priorities?

The strength of partnership working is dependent on partners working collaboratively together with the relevant agencies.

The Partnership is structured to provide strong leadership, collaboration, scrutiny and assurance. This requires robust and effective arrangements at both a strategic and a local level.



# The Voice of Children and Young People

The Partnership believes that it is important for children and young people to take an active role in the design and development of services that are provided for them.

The voice of the child is at the heart of the Partnership. Involving children and families is important to safeguarding in Cumberland, both in contributing to delivering the Partnership's vision and in helping to scrutinise and review the Partnership Arrangements themselves.

We will ask our relevant agencies and other partners how they ensure they have captured and listened to the voices of children, young people and families in their work, as well as identifying other innovative ways to gather this feedback through the Partnership

**The Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSPs)** will support the functions of the Partnership and meet as a Strategic Group 4 times per year. The chair of this group will be the Partnership Chair.

## Partnership Chair

As set out in *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, the lead safeguarding partners must work as a team and identify together one delegated safeguarding partner to act as partnership chair.

The partnership chair will act as a conduit between the DSP's and the LSP's, providing feedback and escalating collective risks and issues to LSP's, as necessary, and be the single point of contact for the partnership.

The LSPs have agreed that the Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership Chair will be Martin Birch, Director of Children and Family Wellbeing.

## Dispute Resolution

Professional disagreement should not detract from ensuring that a child is safeguarded. The child's welfare and safety must remain the priority. The Partnership will expect all practitioners to hold each other to account and challenge appropriately when concerns or disputes relating to the effectiveness of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements arise. Partners are committed to resolving disputes by open and transparent conversations, where they challenge each other respectfully. Partners are encouraged to use whistleblowing procedures where appropriate. The Partnership has a multi-agency 'Escalation' Policy and Procedure and provides guidance to follow in the event of professional differences

In the event of a disagreement between the three DSPs, the Independent Scrutineer may be asked for advice to help the DSPs quickly and transparently reach a resolution. The DSPs/or the Scrutineer can escalate concerns to all LSPs or relevant LSPs. Such an action would only be used in exceptional circumstances and only after matters have been discussed with all relevant DSPs and where a resolution cannot be reached. The LSPs and/or DSPs may also seek independent advice, for example legal advice when appropriate. However, throughout any dispute the focus must remain on the safeguarding and welfare of the child.

# Independent Scrutiny

In the Pan Cumbria arrangements, a robust Quality Assurance and Scrutiny Framework was in place to deliver continuous improvement in the quality of services delivered by partners for children and young people. Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership have agreed to continue to build on this framework.

The framework is based on key principles:

- Child Centred Practice.
- High support high challenge.
- Promoting Practice leadership.
- Restorative approach.
- Promoting a culture of continuous learning.

There are four elements to the framework, which are:

- Feedback from Professionals.
- Feedback from Children and Young People and Families.
- Quantitative Information.
- Qualitative Information.

Evidence gathered from the four elements of this framework provides the structure by which the Partnership scrutiny and challenge takes place.

In line with *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023*, there has been a discussion locally around how best to implement independent scrutiny. A decision has been made to appoint a Scrutineer, to provide DSPs, and relevant agencies, with robust and effective support and challenge. The Scrutineer of the Pan Cumbria Arrangements has agreed to be the Scrutineer for the new Cumberland Partnership Arrangements, which will provide continuity within the Partnership.

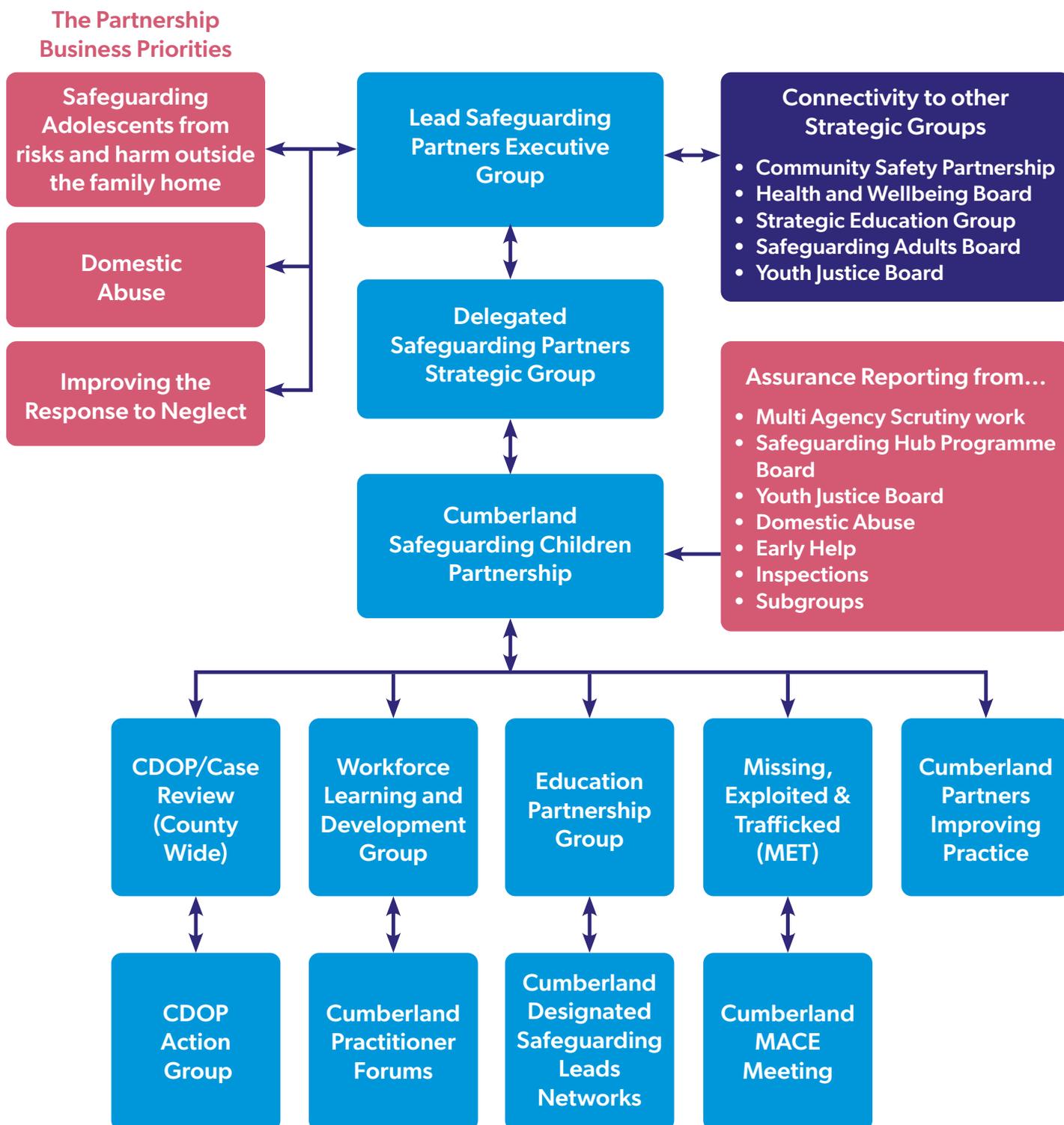
The Cumberland partners acknowledge that the Independent Scrutineer can never be the sole provider of feedback or reflection, but they play a critical role, alongside a comprehensive Cumberland Safeguarding Children Quality Assurance and Scrutiny Framework in evaluating effectiveness and impact.

The Independent Scrutineer will lead the Partnership's planned scrutiny learning events and provide reports reflecting on the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding practice and make clear recommendations to assist the partnership to improve safeguarding outcomes for children and families in Cumberland.

Following feedback on the number of subgroups within the Pan Cumbria Arrangements, there has been consideration of the sub-group structure and where efficiencies could be made by merging or changing the structure.

The structure of the groups can be seen below:

# Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership Structure



The Partnership operates under a subgroup structure which seeks to ensure partners work together and respond to the needs of the children in the area in line with national and local objectives and priorities.

This structure will be reviewed and any amendments will be reflected in updated published arrangements.

# Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership Meeting

In addition to the Delegated Safeguarding Partners Strategic Group, the DSPs will meet with wider strategic leads from relevant agencies at the Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership Meeting.

It has been agreed that, to ensure DSPs can focus on the agenda, discussions and decision-making, the Independent Scrutineer will be the Chair of the Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership meeting which will meet regularly.

The Independent Scrutineer will Chair this meeting to ensure the DSPs are able to effectively communicate and be engaged within the meeting, be able to understand operational partnership working to understand current practice and potential areas for improvement. This group will have a regular assurance schedule, and the functions of the Chair role will be supported through regular communication with the Cumberland Partnership Business Manager.

## Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)

The governance of the CDOP currently sits under the Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership arrangements and is a county wide panel.

The CDOP function is to review all deaths up to the age of 18, excluding both those babies who are stillborn and planned terminations of pregnancy due to medical reasons, even if that child is born alive. The group collates and collects information on each child and determines whether there could have been modifiable factors in the death to inform future practice to prevent further deaths. The group will make recommendations to the appropriate Safeguarding Partnership, share and disseminate learning to ensure it is acted upon locally.

This panel is currently subject to review, due to the uniqueness of it sitting within the Safeguarding Partnership structure.

## Case Review

In accordance with the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the Case Review Group is the arrangement by which Local Safeguarding Partners will identify serious safeguarding cases, which raise issues of importance in relation to the area.

The group contribute to Rapid Reviews convened by the Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership Business Unit for cases that have been notified to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (NCSPRP) and decide on the next steps. This will include whether to undertake a Child Safeguarding Practice Review and whether the review may have national importance. A clear plan for disseminating and sharing the learning from reviews with all 'relevant agencies' is developed for each case. An ongoing programme of training targeted at practitioners focus on emerging key themes and learning from reviews to improve practice. For every review, the Partnership will produce a 'Lessons Learned Briefing', this provides a short summary of the background to the case, identify key learning and highlight areas for practice improvement.

## **Education Strategic Group**

The importance of education continues to be emphasised within Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, recognising their critical role in identifying and supporting vulnerable children and young people. The role of schools and other education settings are prioritised and supported to promote the best possible engagement across the sector. The Education Strategic Group will build on established relationships with schools and education providers to ensure they remain a key partner agency. There are established Designated Safeguarding Lead Networks across Cumberland, where the voice of education is sought and will feed into the Education Strategic Group.

Through the delivery of Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership Practitioner Forums, the voice of education will continue to be regularly sought and will feed into both the Education Strategic Group and Scrutiny work. There is regular liaison with the Primary Heads Association and the Cumbria Association of Secondary Headteachers.

## **Workforce Learning and Development Group**

The role of this group is to plan, develop and evaluate multi-agency learning and develop programmes within the context of local and national policies, research and practice developments. Working with partners, education and the voluntary sector, this group will drive the partnership priorities of Neglect and Domestic Abuse and will embed learning from scrutiny.

The group also identifies the most effective methods to deliver learning to inform practice through face-to-face training, webinars, e-learning, videos and other forms of communication.

## **Safeguarding Adolescents from risks and harms outside the home**

Following consultation with partners, a decision has been made to reduce the two previous Pan Cumbria Missing Exploited Trafficked Groups into one Missing, Exploited and Trafficked (MET) Group. The role of this group will monitor the impact and effectiveness of multi-agency working, monitoring practices of agencies to ensure procedures are followed, monitoring of performance data in relevant areas and making best use of intelligence gathered. The group will continue to develop, deliver and monitor the Child Exploitation Action Plan from the previous scrutiny work and provide progress to the partnership.

## **Cumberland Partners Improving Practice**

The focus of this group will be to support continuous improvement of services and interventions provided to Cumberland children and be an intelligence led partnership. This will be achieved by the voice of children, the sharing and analysing of performance data to identify best practice, along with the identification of trends, changes in performance and the identification of risks and issues. Responsibilities will include scrutiny, audit activity and other sources of intelligence to inform judgment about the effectiveness of arrangements.

# The Use of Data and Intelligence

The Partnership will utilise local and national data to enable early identification of trends, themes and risks. The Cumberland Partnership will develop a partnership data set, which will be shared and analysed within the Cumberland Improving Practice Group. A data set will also be used as part of the MET Group to gain understanding of the harm suffered by children and young people in Cumberland.

# Cumberland Multi-Agency Threshold Guidance

The guidance describes the overarching approach taken in Cumberland to supporting young people and children (pre-birth up to 18 years) and their families and then explains the different elements of the approach in more detail.

The guidance supports practitioners and managers to identify when a child may need additional support. The needs of children, young people and families should be considered on a case-by-case basis and responses should be based on sound assessment, professional judgment and, where appropriate, statutory guidance. Through strength-based conversations, it introduces a Continuum of Need and support, it provides information on the levels of need and gives examples of some of the factors that may indicate that a child or young person needs additional support.

This document is to be reviewed within the first year of the Cumberland Partnership.

# Youth Justice Service and Residential Homes

The Youth Justice Service will report to the Partnership via attendance at the Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership. The Youth Justice Service will be represented within the appropriate sub-groups.

There are no Youth Justice homes within the local authority, but those which are in the region will be required to report on arrangements, as and when necessary.



# Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

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 (the Panel) and at a local level with the safeguarding partners. 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 harmed.

The three safeguarding partners must 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.

To determine whether to carry out a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review, the Case Review Group will be convened with the safeguarding partners' representatives as the core members. Should a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review be undertaken, the Case Review Group will continue to give oversight to the action plan until completion or with agreement from the safeguarding partners. The Action Plan will be monitored by the group, with final sign off by the Delegated Lead Safeguarding Partners. The current Pan Cumbria policies and procedures, which can be accessed [here](#), outline the local process for identifying a serious child safeguarding case, notifying the safeguarding partners and the Panel, undertaking a Rapid Review and decision-making on whether to undertake a review. The procedures also inform on commissioning, overseeing and publication of a review and how the findings, learning and identified improvements are embedded in practice to make a real impact on improving outcomes for children. LSPs will have shared oversight of the learning from reviews undertaken.

## Resources and Infrastructure

Working together 2023 identifies that 'Funding contributions from the statutory safeguarding partners should be equitable and agreed by the LSP. Funding for the arrangements should be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that they can meet the financial needs of the arrangements. The statutory partners will agree contributions from each partner on an annual basis. They are committed to the principles of equitable and proportionate funding.

In the event of a Child Safeguarding Practice Review, funding will be met by the safeguarding partners and, where necessary, each partner will contribute equitable and proportionate funding over and above the normal allocation to fulfil the full costs of any review.

## The Partnership Business Team

The work of the Partnership is coordinated by the Partnership Business Team. The team is funded by the financial contributions as set out above. The team work closely with the partnership chair, delegated safeguarding partners, independent scrutineer, and partner agencies to ensure the partnership operates effectively and fulfils its statutory requirements. There is shared responsibility with Westmorland and Furness Partnership Team on the administration of the LSP meetings.

## Relevant Agencies

The strength of local partnership working is centred on safeguarding partners working collaboratively with relevant agencies whose involvement, as considered by the safeguarding partners, is required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The safeguarding partners are obliged to set out within their arrangements which organisations and agencies are required to work as part of those arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children. These organisations and agencies are referred to as relevant agencies and when nominated by the safeguarding partners as a relevant agency, organisations, should act in accordance with the arrangements. A list of the Partnership's relevant agencies is provided at **Appendix 1**.



# Appendix 1

The relevant agencies, as named by the safeguarding partners, are:

## Education and Early Years

- All Education Setting (Maintained, Academies, Independent, Further Education and Higher Education).
- All Early Years Settings.

## Health

- North Cumbria Integrated Care.
- Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust.
- Primary Care (GPs).
- Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board.
- North East North Cumbria Integrated Care Board.
- North West Ambulance Service.

## Criminal Justice

- CAFCASS.
- National Probation Service.

## Voluntary Sector

- Commissioned Services.
- Voluntary Sector Reference Group.
- Other voluntary sector groups by discussion and representation.

## Public Services

- Cumbria Constabulary.
- Cumbria Office of Police and Crime Commissioner.
- Cumbria Fire and Rescue.
- Cumberland Council.
- Westmorland and Furness Council.
- Cumberland and Westmorland and Furness Adult Social Care.
- Cumberland and Westmorland and Furness Public Health.
- Cumberland and Westmorland and Furness Youth Justice Service.

## Other

- Sporting Organisations – Active Cumbria.
- Faith Groups.