

Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland

Safeguarding Children Competency Framework

Minimum Requirements for Safeguarding Children Learning

This document is a revision of the previous Framework (2018). It is based on current guidance, definitions and terminology and is subject to change.

This document will be reviewed on a regular basis to consider and reflect any changes in legislation, guidance, definition, terminology and practice.

March 2020

The Competency Framework

Contents	
1. Introduction	
2. Process	
3. Context	
4. Essential Information	
5. Core Values	
6. The Safeguarding Children Competency Framework	
Appendix Index	
Appendix A	List of Competencies

1. Introduction

This Safeguarding Children Competency Framework is for use by the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Children’s Workforce to support individuals and organisations to undertake their safeguarding roles and responsibilities in a **confident and competent** manner.

There is an expectation that organisations will ensure that all staff providing a service know how to respond to concerns in line with local and national agendas. Some individuals will work in settings which provide both universal and specialist services for children and adults. It is the responsibility of the organisation to determine the knowledge and learning that is required.

This Competency Framework is for use by everyone who works or volunteers with children, young people and their families, or who is responsible for improving their outcomes.

“Everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe. No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child’s needs and circumstances and, if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.” (p11, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018)

The Competency Framework

This includes:

- Adult Workforce Practitioners who may be in a position to contribute to assessments of parenting capacity
- Staff that support a whole family approach
- Other individuals, who offer a service within the community i.e. housing maintenance staff, receptionists of community centres etc.

NB: There is a separate Safeguarding Adults Competency Framework that you may also need to use within your organisation.

EXCEPTIONS

If your organisation already has an existing mandatory Safeguarding Framework; for example, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and 'Safeguarding Children and Young People: Roles and Competences for Health Care Staff', the training will meet the requirements of the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (Board)s (LSCP(B)s) if it is generally aligned with this framework. Therefore, in this situation it is not necessary to complete this framework in addition to your agency standards.

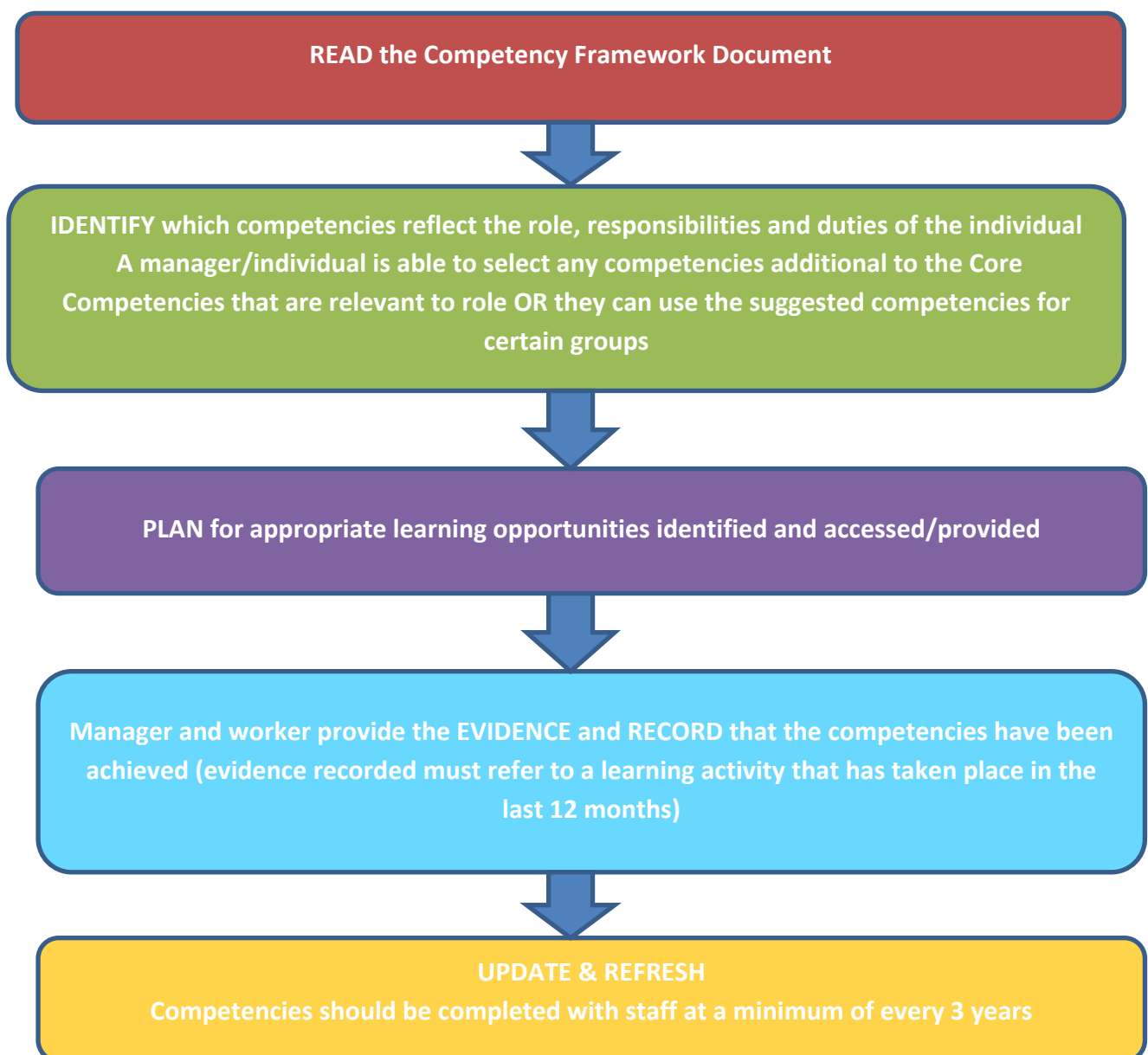
However, if your organisation does not have a Safeguarding Framework in place, meeting the competencies would support an environment to meet the safeguarding expectations of the LSCP(B).

This Competency Framework provides the minimum standards expected by the Safeguarding Partnership (Board)s of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

The Competency Framework

2. The Process

- This document covers a range of competencies which will reflect the variety of roles and responsibilities held by workers and volunteers within the children's workforce
- Everyone regardless of job role must demonstrate competency in the Core Competencies which are those numbered 1-10.
- Depending on an individual's role and responsibility, further competencies may need to be achieved and evidenced.
- It is the responsibility of the organisation/individual to determine the knowledge and learning that is required, however there are some suggested groups for the additional competencies.



The Competency Framework

3. Context

This Competency Framework document:

- Provides some guidance regarding how to identify the appropriate competencies for roles by suggesting groups within the Children's Workforce.
- Outlines the minimum competency for staff and volunteers within each group
- Provides suggestions regarding a range of training, learning and development methods and opportunities through which the competencies might be achieved
- Suggests a format for recording this evidence
- Suggests that the evidence is reviewed yearly to support development of workers

This competency framework has been prepared following consultation with the partner agencies within the Children's Workforce of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, and the Multi-Agency Learning and Development Group (MALDG). It is in accordance with Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures <http://llrscb.proceduresonline.com/index.htm>, relevant legislation and the Knowledge and Skills Statements for Social Work.

This Competency Framework has been prepared in accordance with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2018 and also reflects national guidance, research and local 'drivers' and priorities.

Everyone, regardless of job role, must demonstrate competency in the Core Competencies (1-10)

The content of learning opportunities should be **proportionate** to the individual's roles and responsibilities, in order that it is relevant and meaningful.

The Competency Framework

4. Essential Information

This competency framework acknowledges that in addition to traditional training events, there are different ways of learning and developing. Whilst training activities help to provide the knowledge and skills that contribute to staff being able to meet their competencies, attending a training course does not automatically mean that the competencies will have been met - discussion and verification after the event may be required.

Different recognised activities that could contribute to meeting the competencies include:

- Taught courses, conferences and briefings (single agency, multi-agency, joint courses – in house or external provider)
- Practice based workshops (single, joint and multi-agency)
- E-Learning /workbooks
- Personal research such as reading and using articles
- Self-directed learning and distance learning
- Mentoring and shadowing
- Reflective supervision
- LSCP(B) and SAB (Safeguarding Adults Board) briefings/Serious Case Review briefings
- Formal education/Qualification pathway
- Peer reviews, case conferences
- Learning / knowledge from previous qualifications

Evidencing and Recording the Competency requirements

It is the responsibility of organisations to:

- Identify which competencies their staff/volunteers need to meet
- Recognise and consider different learning activities, in addition to traditional training events and ensure that these development opportunities are accessible; which includes allowing the individual the time to attend a training course or other learning
- Identify on-going developmental needs
- Identify and use a system to record learning and then evidence that the minimum competency has been achieved – this must be based on learning activities that have taken place within the previous 12 months. NB there is a template provided to record that competencies have been met – but any system that is clear on what has been evidenced, when, and how would be appropriate.
- Ensure that staff and volunteers are given learning, training and development opportunities within the appropriate timescales to enable individuals to meet their minimum requirements over a 3 year period
- Submit information about learning and development undertaken by staff to the relevant LSCP(B) as requested.

It is important that the opportunity to reflect on learning is also provided and recorded, to ensure the competencies were fully met.

The Competency Framework

These competencies can be assessed in a number of ways, often using mechanisms that are already in place to assess the level of skill and knowledge in staff members and volunteers. The following methods could be used to assess competency:

A manager could assess through:

- Induction programme
- Probationary period
- Direct observation
- Supervisions / one-to-ones
- Performance and Development Reviews (PDRs) / appraisals
- Discussion, formal or informal
- Questioning, individually or in staff meetings
- File audits
- Completion of an e-learning assessment module

A Trainer or Assessor could assess through:

- Direct observation as part of a qualification
- Coursework and assignments as part of a qualification

A practitioner could assess through:

- Peer audits

The competency framework below contains suggestions of evidence that can be used to demonstrate the competency of staff members and volunteers. The decision about how to assess should be made by individual agencies, in a way that is appropriate and relevant for their workforce and their service users, as well as meeting any statutory and regulatory requirements.

It is recommended that assessments of competency take place as early as possible for all new starters – this will ensure that any development needs are identified as soon as possible, to reduce the risk of children, young people and families experiencing abuse or harm. These assessments of competency could be formal or informal, and could include discussion, questions at interview or observations of practice.

Timescale for refresher/update training:

It is recommended that training/learning is attended every three years (minimum), and, best practice would be for this to be multi-agency training. As well as meeting the competencies within the Framework, attending multi-agency training will support with learning, networking and will allow organisations to better understand the roles of partner agencies. This particularly applies to those who carry out safeguarding assessments and investigations.

The Competency Framework

Requirements and responsibilities relating to all competencies:

The employing agency/organisation has the responsibility for:

- Ensuring and evidencing that staff meet the required competencies and the Core Values (below).
- The organisation, delivery and recording of learning undertaken.
- Ensuring that any Safeguarding Children learning reflects the Core Values.

The Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (Board) has the responsibility for:

- Ensuring that partner agencies and organisations monitor and quality assure the training / learning provided to enable staff to have the opportunity to meet the minimum requirements.
- Seeking assurance from employing agencies/organisations that the training/learning has been effective

5. Core Values

The Safeguarding Children Competency Framework is underpinned by two Core Values that all staff and volunteers and safeguarding trainers should demonstrate throughout their evidence in meeting the competencies:

- **Place the child at the centre** and promote the importance of understanding the child's daily life experiences, ascertaining their wishes and feelings, listening to the child and never losing sight of his or her needs
- **Create and support an ethos** that values working collaboratively with others (valuing different roles, knowledge and skills), respects diversity (including culture, race, religion and disability), promotes equality and encourages the participation of children and families in the safeguarding processes.

6. The Safeguarding Children Competency Framework

The competencies are set out below in suggested groupings. All staff must complete competencies 1-10 which are the Core Competencies. Some staff must then complete additional competencies to reflect their role and responsibilities.

Managers and staff/volunteers are able to add to their competencies from other groups if they believe this to be relevant. There are also spaces on the suggested template to add additional competencies should this be relevant. For example, in a specialist role around supporting Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children there may be other 'competencies' potentially around the law that could be added. However, this is not an expectation of the LSCP(B)s, merely a suggestion.

A complete list of the competencies is available in Appendix A.

The Safeguarding Children Competency Framework

The Competency Framework

Please remember that the evidence to meet the competency should be **proportionate** to the individual's roles and responsibilities, in order that it is relevant, meaningful and appropriate.

***Suggested Evidence** – is a suggested way in which a competency can be met to support the completion of an Evidence Log. There are many other ways that could be considered.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Target Group: Anyone working or volunteering in positions where they have contact with children and young people whether this is direct or indirect, no matter what the frequency. They may be a frontline worker in other areas such as adult social care or housing.

[Suggested template for Evidence Log here !\[\]\(339a16584d5da0f0a3ca4e9ec17bf6a1_img.jpg\) \(this is one way to evidence the competencies\)](#)

	Core Competencies	*Suggested Evidence
1	Consider the daily 'lived' experience of the child or young person and place them at the centre, listening to their voice, working out what they are trying to communicate and never losing sight of their needs.	Professional discussion regarding a case or a specific incident stating how the daily lived experience of the child had been considered.
2	Know how to recognise possible signs and indicators of abuse and neglect.	Through e-learning and/or a training event and discussion afterwards.
3	Know how to respond and communicate with children, young people or adults when they may be trying to tell you something. This could be verbally, non-verbally or through their behaviour.	Evidenced during professional supervision or discussing a situation/case where individuals have raised issues around safeguarding.
4	Know what to do with important information; how it should be recorded, how it should be shared safely and with whom it should be shared.	Demonstrated through daily documents in the work place, such as case files, logs, handover diaries.

The Competency Framework

		Written evidence if a referral has been made to a safeguarding lead, manager or another agency.
5	Understand the importance of sharing information and what could act as a barrier to doing this.	Professional discussion during induction or when something has happened in the workplace. Possibly through a multi-agency training event.
6	Understand that safeguarding requires working effectively across teams, different agencies and professions, as well as with children, young people and families themselves.	Through induction by understanding own role and who else is involved in assisting children to meet their potential. Considering the law and how it applies to role. Possibly through a multi-agency training event.
7	Be persistent in your response to safeguarding needs, notice, check and share. Follow up with enquiries, escalate where necessary and ‘whistle blow’ as required.	Demonstrate that, when other people have been contacted with safeguarding information, it is known what happened next. This may be through a discussion of ‘what would you do?’
8	Understand what to do if your referral is not accepted.	Demonstrate that more information has been sought following referral. This may be through a professional discussion of ‘what would you do?’
9	Understand what might make some children more vulnerable taking into account diversity, difference and promoting equality.	Through a training course with a discussion or team/group meeting following. When having an admission into a setting.

The Competency Framework

10	Have knowledge of safeguarding legislation, statutory and non-statutory guidance, as well as other 'Safeguarding' bodies/agencies appropriate to role (such as the LSCP(B))	Through induction into role and/or everyday working practice. Reading/accessing the LSCP(B) website and procedures
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Target Group: Frontline workers or volunteers, who work directly with children and young people.

[Suggested template for Evidence Log here](#)  **(this is one way to evidence the competencies)**

CORE COMPETENCIES plus

11	Understanding of Child Development, to help identify changes in behaviour or progress, which may indicate abuse.	Through a professional qualification relevant to role. By being involved in the lives and outcomes of children.
12	Know how to contribute to assessments of children, young people and/or parents/carers	Through observing a competent worker in this role. By discussing situation with manager/safeguarding lead.

Target Group: DSL or Professional Advisors who are responsible for advising and supporting other professionals, workers and volunteers who may have safeguarding concerns, and have the responsibility to receive and refer safeguarding information. This includes Childminders and other standalone practitioners.

[Suggested template for Evidence Log here](#)  **(this is one way to evidence the competencies)**

CORE COMPETENCIES plus

11	Understanding of Child Development, to help identify changes in behaviour or progress, which may indicate abuse.	Through a professional qualification relevant to role. By being involved in the lives and outcomes of children.
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The Competency Framework

12	Know how to contribute to assessments of children, young people and/or parents/carers	Through observing a competent worker in this role. By discussing situation with manager/safeguarding lead.
13	Ability to assess risk, need, and to follow procedures/pathways to engage with appropriate services	Through attending a multi-agency training event and following discussion/actions. Written evidence from referring to other services.
14	Ability to use professional judgement to make decisions as to whether a child or young person is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm	Professional discussion or written evidence, regarding an incident/case where such a decision has been made.
15	Participate in all relevant statutory multi-agency meetings such as Strategy Meetings, Core Groups etc.	Evidence of attending meetings as required.
16	Ability to give effective feedback and offer professional challenge to those you are advising.	Written evidence from meetings or supervision.
17	Understand the Safer Recruitment practices where relevant to role.	Demonstrated through recruitment of staff/volunteers.
18	Supports contributions to Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR) (previously Serious Case Reviews (SCRs)) and other multiagency reviews and audits. Co-ordinate any action plans arising from these.	Evidence of having completed LSCP(B) documentation. Attendance at meetings. Evidence that actions are complete from any plan.

The Competency Framework

Target Group: Managers and Supervisors who are managing staff or volunteers, who may be involved in protecting or safeguarding children and young people.

[Suggested template for Evidence Log here](#)  (this is one way to evidence the competencies)

CORE COMPETENCIES plus

17	Understand the Safer Recruitment practices where relevant to role.	Demonstrated through recruitment of staff/volunteers.
18	Supports contributions to Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR) (previously Serious Case Reviews (SCRs)) and other multiagency reviews and audits. Co-ordinate any action plans arising from these.	Evidence of having completed LSCP(B) documentation. Attendance at meetings. Evidence that actions are complete from any plan.
19	Lead and promote the reflective supervision of staff	Written evidence of supervision. Professional discussion with manager.
20	Ensure that staff have appropriate knowledge and skills in relation to safeguarding and child protection according to their role	Evidence of completing yearly annual appraisals with staff. Allowing time and space for the Continuing Professional Development of staff. Through recruitment and induction.
21	Understanding of leadership and management in safeguarding and child protection services.	Attending a management course and following discussion. Evidence of case work supervision.
22	Management of conflict and disagreement between professionals within and across services/agencies and confidence to appropriately challenge and escalate where necessary.	Demonstrated by using the escalation policy. Evidence from meetings. Written evidence in reports/e-mails.

The Competency Framework

23	Ability to manage performance to demonstrate that individuals are competent, having the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to carry out their role.	Through yearly performance appraisals discussions/reports Evidence of using HR processes.
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Target Group: Specialist Frontline Practitioners who have the responsibility to investigate where there are child protection concerns or make enquiries where there are children in need.

[Suggested template for Evidence Log here](#)  **(this is one way to evidence the competencies)**

CORE COMPETENCIES plus

11	Understanding of Child Development, to help identify changes in behaviour or progress, which may indicate abuse.	Through a professional qualification relevant to role. By being involved in the lives and outcomes of children.
24	Know how to lead and/or contribute to assessments of children and/or parents/carers	Through observing a competent worker in this role. Evidence through written assessment report.
25	Ability to look holistically at children, families and their communities considering: the child's developmental needs; parenting capacity; and family and environmental factors.	Evidence through written assessment report. Through a professional qualification relevant to role. Demonstrated through every day working.
26	Recognising the role of other agencies and their limitations as well as your own	Attending multi agency training and following discussion. Professional discussion with manager.
27	Ability to work with children and families where there are safeguarding or child protection concerns, as part of a multidisciplinary team, when assessing a child	Through induction by understanding own role and who else is involved in assisting children to meet their potential.

The Competency Framework

		Demonstrated through every day working and/or specific scenarios/cases.
28	Ability to complete reports and present safeguarding/child protection concerns verbally and in writing for professional and legal purposes as required	Through written evidence of a Court Report. By giving evidence in court and/or at other legal meetings.
29	Ability to give effective feedback and offer professional challenge to colleagues across agencies	Written evidence from meetings.

Target Group: Strategic Leads who have responsibility for ensuring and embedding effective safeguarding children practice and process within their organisation, including but not limited to LSCB representatives, elected members and Safeguarding Leads

[Suggested template for Evidence Log here !\[\]\(3d8c13c92b853674f749aac6fa869926_img.jpg\) \(this is one way to evidence the competencies\)](#)

CORE COMPETENCIES plus

30	Leading the development of effective policy and procedures for safeguarding children in their organisation	Evidence of clear written policies and procedures within the organisation.
31	Ensure plans and targets for safeguarding children are embedded at a strategic level across the organisation	Written evidence from strategic meetings. Discussion with strategic leaders/managers.
32	Promote awareness of safeguarding children within and outside their organisation	Demonstrated on organisational websites.

The Competency Framework

33	Develop and maintain systems to ensure the involvement of children and families in the evaluation and development of service provision	Evidence of consultation with groups of young people and families.
34	Understand the role and function of the LSCP(B) and SAB	Through professional discussion with manager. Through every day working.

These are the suggested competencies for the groups outlined in the table above. Should a manager or individual believe that they have responsibilities that fall into other group competencies it is possible to mix and match. However, the Core Competencies must always be completed, it is only additional competencies 11- 34 that can be flexible. Please see Appendix A for the complete list of competencies.

Appendix A – List of all Competencies

Core Competencies

- 1. Consider the daily ‘lived’ experience of the child or young person and place them at the centre, listening to their voice, working out what they are trying to communicate and never losing sight of their needs.**
- 2. Know how to recognise possible signs and indicators of abuse and neglect.**
- 3. Know how to respond and communicate with children, young people or adults when they may be trying to tell you something. This could be verbally, non-verbally or through their behaviour.**
- 4. Know what to do with important information; how it should be recorded, how it should be shared safely and with whom it should be shared.**
- 5. Understand the importance of sharing information and what could act as a barrier to doing this.**
- 6. Understand that safeguarding requires working effectively across teams, different agencies and professions, as well as with children, young people and families themselves.**
- 7. Be persistent in your response to safeguarding needs, notice, check and share. Follow up with enquiries, escalate where necessary and ‘whistle blow’ as required.**
- 8. Understand what to do if your referral is not accepted.**
- 9. Understand what might make some children more vulnerable taking into account diversity, difference and promoting equality.**
- 10. Have knowledge of safeguarding legislation, statutory and non-statutory guidance, as well as other ‘Safeguarding’ bodies/agencies appropriate to role (such as the LSCB)**

Additional Competencies

- 11. Understanding of Child Development, to help identify changes in behaviour or progress, which may indicate abuse.**
- 12. Know how to contribute to assessments of children, young people and/or parents/carers**
- 13. Ability to assess risk, need, and to follow procedures/pathways to engage with appropriate services**
- 14. Ability to use professional judgement to make decisions as to whether a child or young person is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm**
- 15. Participate in all relevant statutory multi-agency meetings such as Strategy Meetings, Core Groups etc.**
- 16. Ability to give effective feedback and offer professional challenge to those you are advising.**
- 17. Understand the Safer Recruitment practices where relevant to role.**

The Competency Framework

18. Supports contributions to Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR) (previously Serious Case Reviews (SCRs)) and other multiagency reviews and audits. Co-ordinate any action plans arising from these.
19. Lead and promote the reflective supervision of staff
20. Ensure that staff have appropriate knowledge and skills in relation to safeguarding and child protection according to their role
21. Understanding of leadership and management in safeguarding and child protection services
22. Management of conflict and disagreement between professionals within and across services/agencies and confidence to appropriately challenge and escalate where necessary
23. Ability to manage performance to demonstrate that individuals are competent, having the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to carry out their role.
24. Know how to lead and/or contribute to assessments of children and/or parents/carers
25. Ability to look holistically at children, families and their communities considering: the child's developmental needs; parenting capacity; and family and environmental factors.
26. Recognising the role of other agencies and their limitations as well as your own
27. Ability to work with children and families where there are safeguarding or child protection concerns as part of a multidisciplinary team when assessing a child
28. Ability to complete reports and present safeguarding/child protection concerns verbally and in writing for professional and legal purposes as required
29. Ability to give effective feedback and offer professional challenge to colleagues across agencies
30. Leading the development of effective policy and procedures for safeguarding children in their organisation
31. Ensure plans and targets for safeguarding children are embedded at a strategic level across the organisation
32. Promote awareness of safeguarding children within and outside their organisation
33. Develop and maintain systems to ensure the involvement of children and families in the evaluation and development of service provision
34. Understand the role and function of the LSCP(B) and SAB