

# SAFEGUARDING -

*What's it all about?*



An introductory briefing for individuals working with children and families

Definitions – Key Terms & Principles – The role of Individuals, Organisations & Local Authorities – Next Steps



# SAFEGUARDING - A DEFINITION

Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2018 (1) defines Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Safeguarding, early help, promoting welfare, child protection....  
how do they fit together?

Early Help and Child Protection come under the banner of 'safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children' but are at different stages of the continuum of how we undertake this responsibility: early help is about the support provided to address a problem when it first emerges and child protection is about protecting children who are at risk of serious harm.

Local areas are required to publish their 'thresholds for access to services'. Take a look at the Thresholds for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland here to better understand early help and child protection.

(1) Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 is a document published by the Department for Education setting out the legal responsibilities of individual services to safeguard children.



# SAFEGUARDING

# KEY TERMS AND PRINCIPLES



**A Child** is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. Use of the term 'child' should be understood to cover 'children and young people'

<http://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/glossary/children.html>

**The Welfare of The Child is Paramount** – also known as the paramountcy principle. The Children Act 1989 makes it clear that where legal decisions are being made about a child, their welfare is the most important consideration. This is a useful concept to remember when making decisions in more general practice as well – for example when deciding to share information.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/section/1>

**Information Sharing** is a vital element of both early intervention and safeguarding. Research and experience have shown repeatedly that keeping children safe from harm requires practitioners and others to share information.

[https://llrscb.proceduresonline.com/p\\_info\\_sharing.html](https://llrscb.proceduresonline.com/p_info_sharing.html)

**A Child Centred Approach** means keeping the child in focus when making decisions about their lives and working with them and their families. This means seeking the voice of the child and reflecting and responding to their lived experience, needs and views and not placing the interests of adults above the needs of the child.

[https://llrscb.proceduresonline.com/p\\_voice\\_of\\_ch.html](https://llrscb.proceduresonline.com/p_voice_of_ch.html)



# WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR SAFEGUARDING?

Parents and carers have primary care for their children but others have specific duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children:



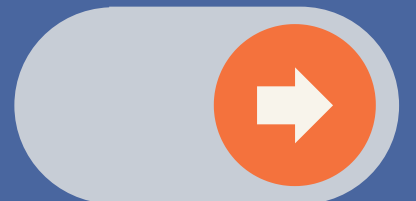
**Everyone who works with children** has a responsibility for keeping them safe.



**Organisations and agencies** have a responsibility to work together to safeguard children and to ensure they have effective safeguarding arrangements in place.



**Local authorities and their social workers** have specific responsibilities to lead assessment of children in need and child protection enquiries.





# THE ROLE OF THE INDIVIDUAL

**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.<sup>(1)</sup>

## What can you do to ensure you can meet this responsibility?

Lots of things! Read your organisation's safeguarding policy, attend some training... But before you start you should take a look at the Safeguarding Children Competency Framework for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Children's Workforce.

This document sets out the knowledge and skills individuals working with children are expected to have in order to be confident and competent in their safeguarding responsibilities. The Framework makes suggestions regarding how this knowledge can be developed e.g. through training, through workplace induction, through e-learning, reading, shadowing.....

[Take a look at the Competency Framework here](#)

(1) <http://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/chapters/intro.html>





# THE ROLE OF ORGANISATIONS

**Organisations and agencies have a responsibility to work together to safeguard children and to ensure they have effective safeguarding arrangements in place.**

## **Working together**

Organisations and agencies share the responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area

(1) Arrangements should be in place to support joined up working across local areas and these arrangements are overseen by Safeguarding Children Partnerships.

You can find out more about the local arrangements for [Leicester here](#) and [Leicestershire and Rutland here](#).

## **Safeguarding arrangements**

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 sets out the specific arrangements that organisations should have in place to ensure they are reflecting the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child throughout the delivery of their services. It places a statutory duty on specific organisations to have these in place (2). Whether covered by Section 11 or not, all organisations should have these arrangements in place. (3)

[Read the list of organisational arrangements here](#)

(1) [http://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/chapters/chapter\\_three.html](http://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/chapters/chapter_three.html)

(2) [https://llrscb.proceduresonline.com/p\\_agency\\_role.html#2.-statutory-duties](https://llrscb.proceduresonline.com/p_agency_role.html#2.-statutory-duties)

(3) [https://llrscb.proceduresonline.com/p\\_agency\\_role.html#6.-organisations-without-statutory-duties](https://llrscb.proceduresonline.com/p_agency_role.html#6.-organisations-without-statutory-duties)







# THE ROLE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND THEIR SOCIAL WORKERS

**Local authorities and their social workers have specific responsibilities to lead assessment of children in need and child protection enquiries.**

The Children Act 1989 places a number of duties on Local Authorities:

**Section 17** – Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare; A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 by a social worker. [Find out more here.](#)

**Section 20** – Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 provides the local authority with the power to provide accommodation for children without a court order when they do not have somewhere suitable to live. It is widely known as voluntary accommodation because the parents must agree to the child being accommodated. [Find out more here.](#)

**Section 47** – Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child (who lives or is found in their area) is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take any action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. [Find out more here.](#)



# WHAT DOES ALL THIS LOOK LIKE IN PRACTICE?

Placing children at the centre – listening to their voice, working out what they are trying to communicate and never losing sight of their needs.

Being able to recognise when a child is experiencing difficulty, including recognising possible signs of abuse and neglect

Knowing what to do when you have a concern – who to talk to, the different levels of response, how to record it

Understanding the importance of information sharing

Being able to work with others – professionals, agencies, the family and children





# NEXT STEPS

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is about all the things we do to keep children safe and ensure they achieve the best outcomes. This is the responsibility of everyone who works with children and the agencies they operate within and this is underpinned by legislation and local procedure. Below are some suggestions of the next steps you can take to ensure you know what you need to know so you can be confident and competent in meeting your responsibilities.



**Read your organisation's safeguarding policy** – make sure you know what's expected of you and your organisations procedure for dealing with concerns about a child

**Take a look at the local thresholds guidance** – become familiar with the continuum of need and the ways in which children and families can be supported

**Review the Safeguarding Competency Framework** – what are the competencies for your role, what do you need to do to develop or evidence the relevant skills and knowledge?

**Visit the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Partnerships Procedures Manual** – take a look at the information you can access through the manual and become familiar with the types of practice guidance available

Have a look at **Learning, Training and Development opportunities** available through the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Multi-Agency Training Programme. What learning activity could you undertake to boost your skills or knowledge?