

**North Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership Strategic Plan**

**April 2023 – April 2026**



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# Introduction

This Strategic Plan outlines the agreed priorities for North Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSSCP) for the period 2023-2026.

The NSSCP is a statutory body established by Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

The NSSCP is led by three Safeguarding Partners including North Somerset County Council Children’s Services, BNSSG Integrated Care Board and Avon and Somerset Police.

The broader NSSCP consists of Relevant Agencies that cooperate with each other to safeguard children and promote their welfare. We are responsible collectively as a Partnership for strategic oversight of child protection arrangements across the local authority area of North Somerset and our role is to lead, coordinate, develop, challenge, and monitor the delivery of effective child protection and safeguarding practice by all agencies across North Somerset.

# Our Purpose

Working Together 2018 (Section 3) states that the purpose of local safeguarding children partnership arrangements is to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together in a system where:

* Children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted
* Partner organisations and agencies collaborate, share, and co-own the vision for how to achieve improved outcomes for children
* Organisations and agencies challenge appropriately and hold one another to account effectively
* There is early identification and analysis of new safeguarding issues and emerging threats
* Learning is promoted and embedded in a way that local services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice
* Information is shared effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families

# Our Vision

The vision for the North Somerset Safeguarding Partnership is that children and young people who reside in North Somerset grow up in a safe environment, free from abuse and neglect. Children, young people, and their families will receive the right level of support & intervention, at the right time, by skilled professionals to ensure that children and young people have the best start to life.

# Our Values

**Transparency& Respect** – we will foster a culture of openness, respect and transparency. NSSCP partners are required to work openly together, to learn from collective and individual experience, and to seek and receive assurance on the overall effectiveness of work to safeguard and protect children in North Somerset.

**Integrity & Honesty** – we will be honest and open with each other on areas of challenge, transformation and system change to inform decisions on future initiatives and collaborative working.

**Challenge and Innovate** - we will respectfully and constructively challenge each other to drive continuous improvement and deliver the best outcomes for North Somerset’s children.

**Collaboration and Partnership** – The three Safeguarding Partners and all Relevant Agencies will work proactively, effectively, and collaboratively together. We will value differences to help drive improvements for children and young people.

**Care and Listening** to the **voice and lived experience of the child** - Everything we do will benefit children and young people in North Somerset. We will ensure that our work is child centred, and we continually seek to care and engage, and involve our children and young people and their families.

# Key Priorities

The NSSCP Strategic Plan has been developed to focus on a set of agreed priorities that have been agreed at the NSSCP Development event on 10.03.2023.

These Priorities have been identified from themes arising from the Partnership’s existing scrutiny and quality assurance programs and key priorities identified in children’s safeguarding practice reviews. The strategic objectives will remain the same for the three-year period of the plan but the activities that sit underneath them will be reviewed and refreshed annually during that period.

The structure of the strategic plan allows the Board to focus on key strategic areas of partnership activity but also remain flexible to respond to emerging needs and refine existing programs of activity in line with feedback received from children, their families and partner agencies.

To support the delivery of the Business Plan’s more detailed work plans, aligned to the Board’s strategic priorities, will be developed for each Sub and Working Group. The NSSCP will take a leadership role in the delivery and quality assurance of partnership work in these areas. Progress against this plan will be reviewed and monitored by each individual subgroup / Task and Finish Group in the first instance. Where necessary and appropriate, the Execs Plus Group will highlight both areas of concern and areas of good practice and success to the full NSSCP Executive Board meetings for further action.

| **Strategic Priority** | **Outcome** | **Actions for 2023 - 2026** | **Time scale** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **LEADERSHIP** | | | |
| To provide strong governance to an effective strategic framework. | A partnership that demonstrates a culture of collective responsibility and accountability, built on principles of respect and openness and challenge | The role and function of the Safeguarding Partnership arrangements are coordinated and informed by a wide range of partners  Relevant Agencies are represented at subgroups and across the priority workstreams. Meeting attendance and progression of Workplans (activity/information/data) supports this | **Quarter 1** |
| Ensure the meaningful participation and engagement of children, young people, and families to inform the work of the partnership. | Children/parents/carers say they are listened to and receive support to build on their strengths.  Empowered children and families meaningfully engaging in safeguarding arrangements | Action Plans are implemented and progressed and the evidence from the Scrutineer, Audit, Reports, Walk the Floor activities, evidence impact. Children and Families tell us that interventions (services/support) have made a positive difference to their lives  Practitioners and front-line managers’ report that they have the knowledge needed and receive support/guidance to safeguard children and young people *(Survey/Walk the floor activity/audits)*  Children/parents/carers say they are listened to and receive support to build on their strengths. | **Quarter 1-2** |
| To improve multi-agency safeguarding practice and outcomes for children and young people through strengths-based assessment (Signs of safety) | Agencies across North Somerset will use the signs of safety strengths-based approach to supporting children and families.  Services are child-focused, putting the needs of children and young people first. | Referrals and subsequent interventions all demonstrate practitioners are using the signs of safety model to document rationale for decisions.  New staff, not familiar with Signs of Safety coming into the Partnership will require access to training  . | **Quarter 1-4** |
| To have oversight and gain assurance of the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in North Somerset. | There is collective responsibility across the partnership which is recognised to ensure effective strategic and operational delivery of safeguarding services for children and young people across North Somerset.  Learning and development opportunities are offered to the workforce which provide professionals with multi-agency safeguarding topic specific learning opportunities in line with NSSCP Priorities and emerging Local/National themes in a variety of formats, style, and content | North Somerset has a trained, well informed multi-agency workforce that are competent to protect and safeguard children and young people and Practitioners and front-line managers’ report that they have the knowledge needed and receive support/guidance to safeguard children and young people (Survey/Walk the floor activity/audits)  Multi-agency decision making/professional challenge and escalation is evidenced through Surveys/Walk the floor activity/audits)  A learning management system that enables partners and relevant agencies to collate training management information to report on the effectiveness of learning experiences along with participation rates individuals / agencies.  Practitioners and front-line managers’ report that they have the knowledge needed and receive support/guidance to safeguard children and young people *(Survey/Walk the floor activity/audits)* Ensure that the new issue resolution guidance is available on the NSSCP website and staff are aware of this.  Children/parents/carers say they are listened to and receive support to build on their strengths | **Quarter 1-4** |
| **LEARNING** | | | |
| Ensure that practitioners have the knowledge and skills to be effective in their safeguarding children’s roles. | Ensure that all Safeguarding practitioners are equipped with knowledge and skills through training and awareness to undertake their job roles safely  To fulfil these responsibilities, it is the duty of this partnership to ensure that all staff have access to appropriate safeguarding children training, learning opportunities, to support and to facilitate their understanding of the clinical aspects of a child, **mental health concerns** and its detrimental impact should child abuse or neglect occur. | All staff who come into contact with children and young people have a responsibility to safeguard and promote their welfare should know what to do if they have concerns about safeguarding children  They will access regular appropriate training according to their job roles and responsibilities.  Staff working in services being delivered to 16–18-year-olds also need to have understanding and awareness of safeguarding procedures as outlined above.  All staff and practitioners learn lessons for Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and rapid reviews, **challenging practice,** ensuring there are effective systems and processes and policies in place through audits and section 11 requirements**.**  **All staff will listen to the voices of children and young people and use these to inform best practice and escalate concerns as required.** | **Quarter 1-4**  **Quarter 1-2**  **Quarter 1-4** |
| **NEGLECT** | | | |
| To identify and support the prevention of neglect by improving the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in North Somerset through effective early identification help and effective support. | To enhance the understanding of neglect amongst professionals across NSSCP and give them the tools to better identify indicators of neglect, and understand what interventions are available to support and protect children affected by and / or at risk of neglect. **To ensure that the voices of children are listened to during professional practice assessment and intervention.** | Complete, implement and launch the Neglect Strategy, Tool Kit and relevant documentation  Agencies identify neglect and raise appropriate referrals in a timely manner  Parents and carers report they know how to seek advice and support.  Parents and children/young people say early help services have made a positive difference to their lives.  Through assessment, parents/carers, children, and professionals identify what is working well and what needs to change.  Plans to provide support set out clearly what needs to change and how the change will be measured.  Staff are confident to recognise all forms of neglect. | **Quarter 1-2** |
| Ensure neglect is included in the multi-agency data set to assess the impact of interventions to support children and families who experience neglect. | Robust Multi Agency data will provide a ‘richer picture’ to identify patterns of neglect and address any new and emerging themes. | The multi-agency dataset reports on neglect and the improvements made in response to positive interventions | **Quarter 1-2** |
| To implement professional development resources to support practitioners to effectively identify and tackle child neglect, and support families. | Information, training, and awareness delivered to practitioners around identifying and understanding neglect will help practitioners identify neglect at the earliest opportunity and ensure early intervention/s are in place. Neglect training, is evaluated and the understanding of neglect and its links to domestic abuse, exploitation, and substance misuse, is understood by practitioners (Staff survey/Audit) | The review of Neglect Training evidence and its impact in particular the understanding of neglect and its links to domestic abuse, exploitation, and substance misuse, by staff across North Somerset.  Any gaps in knowledge and service provision are identified in the review are shared with relevant Agency and Working Group so that mitigating action to address can be taken.  Practitioner’s report increased confidence in identifying and responding to child neglect Practitioners and front-line managers’ report that they have the knowledge needed and receive support/guidance in respect of recognising and understanding neglect (Survey/Walk the floor activity/audits)  Evaluation of NSSCP Training-feedback response required before certificate issued-include a section where an example of how used to improve practice is requested). | **Quarter 1-4** |
| **CONTEXTUAL CHILD EXPLOITATION** | | | |
| Ensure child exploitation is recognised and responded to effectively, including when young people transition into adulthood. | Develop a skilled workforce who can identify exploitation and respond effectively  Assurance that services are Coordinated and intervene, to provide support children and their families from harm  Effectively sharing intelligence and information using the relevant sexual exploitation referral tool kits  The **voice of child** and their family/ carers are heard and responded to  **To publish the contextual exploitation strategy.**  All partners are engaging in ethical decision making.  Practitioner’s report increased confidence in identifying and responding to child exploitation. Practitioners and front-line managers’ report that they have the knowledge needed and receive support/guidance in respect of recognising and understanding exploitation (Survey/Walk the floor activity/audits) | Revisit audit outcomes identified in phase one and review implementation and evidence of impact.  Tools for identifying CYP at risk of or experiencing Exploitation are shared and understood across the workforce  Have a defined data set which supports our joint understanding of, and response to, exploitation.  Practice guidance to be shared and communicated to all partners.  Young people who are, or who are at risk of, being exploited are adequately supported by services when they transition into adulthood, and this is evidenced through feedback from service users.  The NSSCP to ensure the community have clear child exploitation awareness by communicating a common message and how the community can access support. | **Quarter 1-4** |
| Develop effective pathways to prepare, prevent, protect, and pursue, to reduce the risk of child exploitation. | Children at risk of Exploitation are provided the Effective Support via Early Help and are receiving the appropriate support to prevent escalation to child protection.  Practitioners and front-line managers’ report that they have the knowledge needed and receive support/guidance in respect of recognising and understanding exploitation and relevant practice guidance implemented.  Young people who are, or who are at risk of, being exploited are adequately supported by services when they **transition into adulthood**, and this is evidenced through feedback from service users. | North Somerset to implement a data set which supports our joint understanding of, and response to, exploitation.  To ensure that the child sexual exploitation strategy and practice guidance, risk assessment tools have been reviewed and shared and communicated to all partners.  Tools for identifying CYP at risk of or experiencing Exploitation are agreed and understood across the workforce  To implement strong service links and processes with safeguarding adults to ensure that those children who transition to adult hood are well supported. | **Quarter 2-4** |
| To deliver an improvement plan to strengthen the response to Peer on Peer Abuse, including Harmful Sexual Behaviour. | Empowering young people, their families, and carers to understand how to stay safe  Young people who are, or have been victims of Peer-on-Peer abuse are adequately supported by services and this is evidenced through feedback /audit or walk the floor activity | North Somerset to implement a Data Set to include the Number of contacts and referrals to North Somerset CYP programme that are because of a Peer-on-Peer incident  North Somerset to receive the Number of contacts and referrals to Somerset & Avon rape and sexual abuse support (SARSAS) services that are as a result of a Peer-on-Peer incident  Evidence from single agency reports on emotional health and well-being support being provided to CYP in respect of:  Preventing peer-on-peer abuse (e.g., Healthy relationships discussion-Public Health Nurses)  North Somerset to provide1:1 support following an incident of Peer-on-Peer abuse/HSB to victim and /or alleged Perpetrator  North somerset to provide evidence of support provided to children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) who may be perpetrators or at risk of being perpetrators  Evidence of support provided to children and young people with SEND who may be victims or at risk of being targeted due to their SEND | **Quarter 2-4** |