

# Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership

## Annual Report **2022/23**

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Quick guide to the activity of  
the partnership in 2022/203



# About the Annual Report 2022/2023



Reporting requirements for our safeguarding partnership arrangements are set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children on pages 82-83 as follows: “In order to bring transparency for children, families and all practitioners about the activity undertaken, the safeguarding partners must publish a report at least once in every 12-month period. The report must set out what they have done as a result of the arrangements, including on child safeguarding practice reviews, and how effective these arrangements have been in practice”.

The Cheshire East Safeguarding Children’s annual report for 2022/23 sets out examples of the evidence, impact, assurance and learning of the statutory safeguarding arrangements in Cheshire East. It reports on the following activity:

- ❖ The governance and accountability arrangements for the partnership.
- ❖ The context for safeguarding children in Cheshire East, highlighting the progress made by the partnership against our 2022/23 priorities.
- ❖ The lessons that the partnership has identified through the Learning & Improvement subgroup and the actions taken to improve child safeguarding and welfare as a result of this activity.
- ❖ The range and impact of the multi-agency safeguarding training delivered by the partnership.
- ❖ The priorities for the partnership going forward
- ❖ The key messages for those involved in the safeguarding of children and young people.

In line with statutory requirements, the annual report 2022/23 will be sent to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and The What Works Centre for Children’s Social Care within seven days of being published.



# The Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership

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The Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership is established in accordance with the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017) and the statutory guidance issued within Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. The partnership safeguarding arrangements define how safeguarding partners, relevant agencies and other organisations work together to coordinate their safeguarding services. These arrangements meet the requirements of statutory guidance and include details about how safeguarding partners will identify and respond to the needs of children, commission and publish local child safeguarding practice reviews and provide for independent leadership and scrutiny.

The Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership arrangements intend 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 vulnerable 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 accurate and timely decision making for children and families.

The Partnership has a wide membership of partners and 'relevant agencies', including schools, the faith and voluntary sector, probation services, public health, health providers, the police and representatives from the Local Authority. These executive members work together to keep children and young people safe from harm. The partnership is responsible for scrutinising the work of its partners to ensure that services provided to children and young people make a positive difference.





# Joint targeted area inspection of the multi-agency response to the criminal exploitation of children

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On the 26 September 2022, Ofsted published a report with findings from a joint targeted area inspection (JTAI) of the multi-agency response to the criminal exploitation of children in Cheshire East. This was undertaken by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services, Ofsted, and the Care Quality Commission. It formed part of a rolling programme of inspections into various areas where different agencies work together to provide support for vulnerable children. The full report can be found here: <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50194535>

The inspection looked at the how each agency (police, health, and the local authority) work together to reduce the risk of harm when children and young people are missing and at risk of criminal and sexual exploitation.

The inspection found that the partnership needed to improve how it protects children and young people from criminal exploitation and those who go missing from home and care. The partnership fully accepted the findings from the inspection and recognised that there were gaps in our work and that this is not good enough.

Some improvements were made very quickly during the inspection to make sure that the children and young people that we were already working with were safe and that we were doing everything we could to make things different for them. However, the partnership recognised that further improvement work was required to ensure this vulnerable cohort of children were safeguarded appropriately within Cheshire East.

To support the partnership in completing the actions to address the report's findings, an Improvement Board was established which continues to scrutinise the work of the partnership.

# Independent Scrutiny

In October 2022, the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership commissioned an Independent Scrutineer. The purpose was to ensure multi-agency safeguarding arrangements for children and young people in Cheshire East are effective and comply with statutory guidance set out in Working Together 2018 (last updated 9 December 2020) with a particular focus on the following:

- ❖ 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 vulnerable 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.

This work invited the partnership to consider the following areas:

- ❖ A different way of organising and presenting governance arrangements.
- ❖ Developing the Cheshire East quality and learning framework
- ❖ Changing the CESP approach to multi-agency auditing
- ❖ What a year long campaign might look like

The new governance arrangements have been co-produced with the partnership and quality and learning frameworks have been considered. A priority for the partnership in 2023/2024 is to implement these new arrangements alongside a new quality assurance framework and approach to multi-agency auditing. This will be coupled with a communication strategy that supports ongoing partnership campaigns and messaging to partners across different platforms and forums.



# Our Priorities 2022/2023

Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership set these three priorities for our activity through 2022/2023.

Contextual Safeguarding

Neglect

Emotional Health and Wellbeing of  
Vulnerable Children



125,058	154,568	95,054	124,500
125,487	56,845	97,511	125,000
124,000	110,000	99,011	154,000
105,450	150,000	99,216	95,000
86,502	35,000	101,090	154,200
	83,000	101,684	110,000
	45,000	101,962	89,000
		102,747	50,000
			68,700
			123,000



# Impact

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## Contextual Safeguarding

- Reduction in number of children flagged as at risk of exploitation.
- Cheshire East profile developed to identify children most at risk.
- Criminal Exploitation and Serious Organised Crime Strategy developed.
- Increase in numbers of practitioners who have received training around contextual safeguarding.

## Neglect

- Refreshed and relaunched the Neglect Strategy
- Family Hub Model will develop an even more localised and targeted response to those children experiencing or at risk of neglect.
- The Threshold of Need Guidance of 'Right Help, Right Time' has been launched in 2023 to enhance the work of the partnership in identifying children and families that require extra help and targeted support through a co-ordinated plan.
- There has been a decrease in the number of children on repeat child protection plans for neglect.

## Emotional Health and Wellbeing of Vulnerable Children

- Introduction of a self-harm information sharing pathway.
- Implementation of a directory of mental health services to aid practitioners.

# IMPACT?





# Areas of focus 2023/2024

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Looking forward, the partnership have identified the following areas of focus for its activity in 2023/2024:

- ❖ Contextual Safeguarding
- ❖ Children missing from education
- ❖ Sexual Abuse

It has also been agreed that the voice of the child will be an overarching area of focus for the partnership running through all our activity in the year.



# Key priorities for the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership in 2023/2024

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Listening to and acting on the voice of the child to place them at the heart of the partnership



Embedding the new arrangements to ensure strategic oversight and line of sight to frontline practice



Improving quality assurance and routine, robust performance scrutiny and challenge



Creating a learning culture that takes action to improve practice



Ensuring there is transparent, decisive and evidence-based decision making in all partnership meetings to support improved outcomes



Create a highly effective partnership with communication based on positive relationships, shared values and clear vision

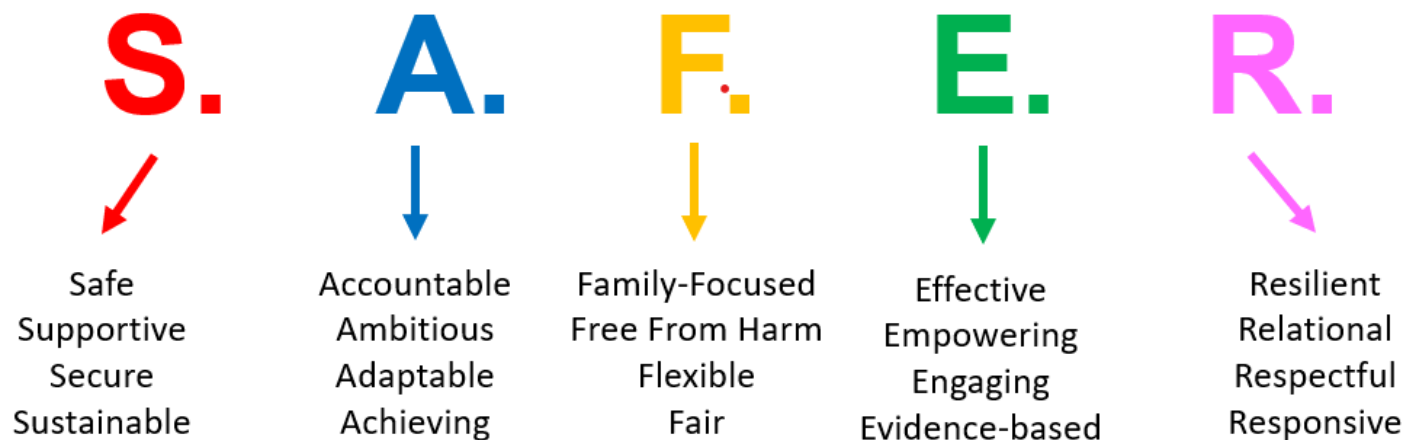


# Shared vision and values to improve partnership working



The partnership have agreed that our vision should be updated to reflect the changes that have been made as part of our new arrangements. In 2023/2024, the partnership will be...

Working **TOGETHER** to make children, families and communities



In line with the revised governance arrangements, we will be rebranding the partnership to complete the cycle of transformation. This will include a refresh of the partnership logo, an overhaul of the partnership website and agreement of a communication strategy to enable partnership messages to be heard 'live' and in multiple formats to best meet the needs of our frontline practitioners. We recognise that an effective partnership is a partnership where frontline practitioners and strategic leaders have a symbiotic relationship. Frontline practitioners need access to the partnership to understand the strategic plan of work to improve outcomes and to drive the strategic plans on the ground and the revised partnership arrangements alongside a clear communication strategy will support this more effectively.

We are ambitious that our refreshed and rebranded partnership will enable us to work **TOGETHER** to make children, families and communities **S.A.F.E.R.** in 2023/2024.