



Leeds Safeguarding  
Children Partnership

# MULTI-AGENCY SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS

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*Our shared vision is for Leeds to be a child friendly city in which children and young people are safe from harm in their families, their communities and their neighbourhoods.*

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## CONTEXT

Following the Wood Review in 2015, the Children Act 2004 was amended to remove the statutory requirement of Local Authorities to have a Local Safeguarding Children Board and placed the responsibility for safeguarding equally with local authorities, the police and health (CCGs). Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 placed a duty on the three agencies to work together and define the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. It also placed a duty on other agencies to co-operate with the new arrangements, but for local areas to decide how this should work in practice.

Within Leeds, the Safeguarding Partnership will continue to be known as the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) to ensure the well-established and recognised 'brand' is preserved.

## GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

The geographical area for these multi-agency arrangements, including arrangements for reviewing child deaths will be based upon Leeds Local Authority boundary.

Leeds will continue to work collaboratively across local geographical boundaries.



# A SHARED SAFEGUARDING VISION AND APPROACH FOR LEEDS

Our shared vision is for Leeds to be a child friendly city in which children and young people are safe from harm in their families, their communities and their neighbourhoods.

We want Leeds to be the best city in the UK and the best city for children and young people to grow up in. Through our vision we invest in children and young people to help build an increasingly prosperous and successful city.

The Leeds Best Council Plan 2018/19 – 2020/21 maintains the city's long-term 'Best City' strategic focus on tackling poverty and inequalities through a combination of strengthening the economy and doing this in a way that is compassionate and caring, allowing us to give children the best start in life and support vulnerable children and families.

All our work is underpinned by a consistent and coordinated approach to safeguarding as well as being collectively commitment to a child and family centred focus on improving outcomes across the city.

Children and young people, their welfare, protection and the promotion of their best interests are at the heart of everything the LSCP does.

This means that:

- A) Children and families anywhere in Leeds can expect to receive early help, safeguarding and welfare services delivered in partnership, with a focus on the child's needs and aiming for consistently good outcomes across the city;
- B) Children and families will be listened to and their views taken seriously both when delivering early help, safeguarding and welfare services and when collectively thinking how we can improve those services, including those that we commission;
- C) Practitioners will "Think Family, Work Family" and managers and commissioners should adopt a 'whole system approach' to planning services.





# LEEDS PRACTICE MODEL - The foundation of our approach to working with families

When working with families in Leeds the LSCP will work to the Leeds Practice Model which builds on all aspects of practice and what we know to be useful when assessing, implementing and evaluating what we do. Therefore throughout all our work, including early help, is underpinned with the following Leeds Practice Principles:

- Always working WITH - creating a context of high support and high challenge with children, young people and families and each other;
- Relationship based - assuming that engagement and best outcomes are achieved through trusting and respectful relationships with each other, taking responsibility for creating and maintaining effective relationships at all levels;
- Enabling the utility of the family - putting the family at the heart of everything we do; recognising and enabling the networks and skills within the family; and wherever possible families determine the direction of care and intervention;
- Early in the life of a problem - engaging families in appropriate and effective support immediately when an issue is identified and maintaining a persistent offer to engage in support;
- One family, one lead worker, one plan - wherever possible working to reduce numbers of practitioners involved with a single family and defining one lead practitioner to coordinate a single comprehensive family plan. Where agencies are also involved with the adults in the family, a Think Family, Work Family approach should be adopted;
- Systemic, formulation driven and evidenced based - all plans consider the whole system around a family, information is effectively analysed and plans are created using the best available evidence;
- Transparent - children, young people and families are as fully informed as possible and are always involved in and understand decisions that concern themselves and their families;
- Strength focussed - all interactions, interventions and plans are seeking, affirming and utilising existing knowledge, skills and abilities; and adopt an evidence based approach to assessing needs and managing risk;
- Recognising that engagement with education is a protective factor - seeking to maximise attendance, attainment and achievement;
- Accountability, evaluation and sustainability - always working to continually understand a situation, improve plans and find ways to enable independence and reduce reliability on services.

# LSCP'S STRUCTURE

The LSCP will be structured to support the implementation of the Multi-agency Safeguarding Arrangements under Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (WTSC 2018).

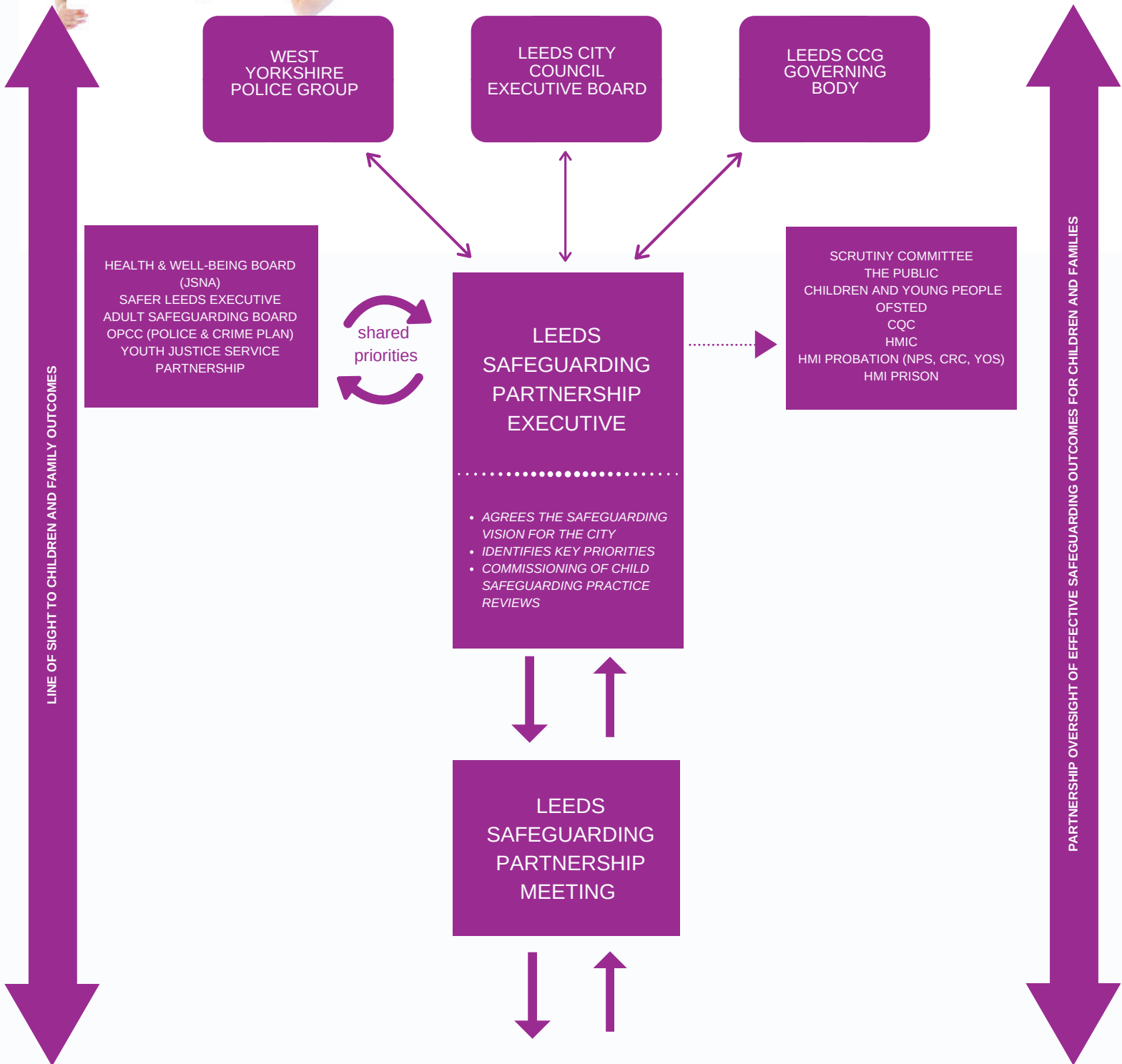
The structure will include an Executive comprising of the three key statutory agencies (Local Authority, Health (through the Clinical Commissioning Group) and Police) who have equal responsibility and accountability for safeguarding in the city, and will set the vision and priorities for safeguarding and improving outcomes for all children and families in the city.

The Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership meeting will bring together those agencies within the city working with children and families, and will be responsible for driving both the safeguarding priorities set by the LSCP Executive and ensuring that core and statutory functions laid out in WTSC 2018 are delivered.

Running through our safeguarding structure is a clear line of sight and understanding of professional practice and an awareness of children and families lived experience. This will enable us to respond appropriately and proportionally to local need and ensure we are getting it right for children.

The structure is supported by business planning processes which will develop and drive an overarching Business Plan in conjunction with, and agreement from, the Partnership.

Alongside our safeguarding arrangements runs the Leeds Learning and Improvement Framework. This Framework identifies how we will bring together learning and how this will be disseminated and implemented into practice within a multi-agency context in order to improve our responses to children and families across Leeds.



**IMPROVEMENTS IN THE  
OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN,  
YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES**

# LSCP EXECUTIVE

Three statutory partners form the membership of the LSCP Executive, with representation are as follows:

- Director for Children and Family Services
- Chief Executive Officer, Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group
- Chief Superintendent of West Yorkshire Police.

These three key partners have equal and joint responsibilities for local safeguarding arrangements and ensuring that responsibilities under WTSC 2018 are discharged. They will set the safeguarding vision for the city and identify the LSCP priorities on an annual basis. The LSCP Executive meetings will be supported and Chaired by the LSCP Chair.

## LSCP SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP MEETING

This meeting will bring together senior staff from the relevant organisations working with children and young people to make sure the work we do has a positive impact and serves to improve outcomes for children and young people.

Members will be responsible for implementing the LSCP Business Plan and ensuring that priorities, core and statutory functions are delivered.

The Safeguarding Partnership meeting will also act as a conduit up to the LSCP Executive: such that insight and experience from front line practice as well as the views of children and families influence future safeguarding priorities.

This will be achieved through essential communication and dialogue, provision of data and appropriate information and, when appropriate, the commissioning of sub-groups/task and finish groups to take priority issues forward.

The Safeguarding Partnership Meeting will also be the main mechanism by which learning from LSCP activity can be communicated and implemented across the partnership as a whole.



# INDEPENDENT CHAIR AND INDEPENDENT SCRUTINY

The LSCP Exec will appoint an Independent Chair to support the LSCP and the implementation of the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

The Independent Chair will also provide independent scrutiny of the safeguarding arrangements, and the effectiveness of the safeguarding partnership in the city to the LSCP Executive through a variety of means including auditing, reviews, engaging with front line practice and seeking the voice of children, young people and families culminating in an Annual Report.

The Annual Report will also incorporate relevant management information on activity in the course of the previous year, and a review of progress against the agreed objectives, priorities, statutory functions, and core functions.

The Annual Report will support the identification of future priorities and learning as well as informing the Partnership's Business Plan.

## LSCP BUSINESS PLANNING

To facilitate and support the overall safeguarding vision and specific safeguarding priorities set for Leeds by the LSCP Executive, as well as bringing together all other statutory safeguarding responsibilities, the Independent Chair and LSCP Business Unit will work with statutory partners and the wider safeguarding partnership to develop and drive an annual LSCP Business Plan.



# THE RELEVANT PARTNERS

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 defines relevant partners as those organisations and agencies whose involvement the safeguarding partners consider may be required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children with regard to local need.

These partners will include, but is not limited to:

- Leeds Teaching Hospital Trust
- Leeds Community Healthcare Trust
- Leeds York Partnership Foundation Trust
- Leeds Children and Family Services
- Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group
- Third Sector
- Primary Education
- Secondary Education
- Further Education
- West Yorkshire Probation
- Community Rehabilitation Company
- CAFCASS
- Wetherby Young Offender Institution
- Yorkshire Ambulance Service
- British Transport Police
- Immigration and Control.

Other agencies and organisations may become members as agreed by the Partnership. The LSCP Business Manager, along with other individual roles as agreed by the LSCP Exec will be members of the Partnership in an advisory capacity e.g. Designated Nurse/Doctor for safeguarding.

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## **REPRESENTATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY WITHIN THE LSCP**

Relevant agencies of the LSCP are jointly responsible for the work of the LSCP, and should ensure active engagement in the development and ownership of the work of the safeguarding partnership.

Whilst the LSCP has a role in co-ordinating and ensuring the effectiveness of agencies' work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, it is not accountable for their operational work. Each LSCP partner agency retains their own existing lines of accountability for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children by their services.

Partner agencies will provide a representative member to the LSCP. They will hold a strategic role in relation to safeguarding and promoting welfare of children within their own organisation, and must be able to:

- speak for their organisation with authority;
- commit their organisation on policy and practice matters;
- commit their organisation to resources
- hold their organisation to account.

Individual members of the Partnership have a duty to contribute to the effective work of the Partnership.

If it is found that a LSCP partner is not performing effectively with regards to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and the LSCP is not assured that any planned action to improve performance will be adequate, the LSCP Executive through the Independent Chair, or a member or employee of the LSCP designated by the Chair, should explain those concerns to the appropriate individual or organisation that may be able to take action to address them. This might be the most senior individual in the partner organisation, the relevant Inspectorate, or, if necessary, the relevant Government Department.

# EXTERNAL STRUCTURES AND RELATIONSHIPS

The LSCP is a strategic body of Leeds and has equitable status, and relationship with other strategic bodies within the city. The LSCP will maintain the current relationships with these strategic bodies, ensuring the provision of updates and progress on work as appropriate.

When identifying priorities and developing work programmes the LSCP will ensure it is consistent and integrated with the framework of the city's Best Council Plan. It will also consider and support where appropriate the priorities set by the Children and Families Trust Board, Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board, the Safer Leeds Executive and the Health and Wellbeing Board.



# LSCP BUSINESS UNIT

The LSCP Business Unit will have a key role in coordinating and driving forward the new arrangements and structures. Having independence from all safeguarding partners it will ensure that the Safeguarding Partnership is supported with both the administration and the implementation of the city wide vision for safeguarding, the LSCP Business Plan, its Learning and Improvement Framework, and supporting the Leeds partnership in discharging its duties in relation to Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

The Business Unit, although nested within the Local Authority, will remain independent of all other agencies and supported and managed through the Independent Chair.

## FUNDING

The funding to support the work of the LSCP will be agreed on an annual basis and should be agreed no later than January preceding the financial year in question. The budget should enable the LSCP to effectively undertake all its core and statutory functions and to employ staff to take forward its day to day business. The organisations' shared responsibility for the discharge of the LSCP's functions includes shared responsibility for determining how the necessary resources are to be provided to support it.

The level of contributions from constituent agencies will be reviewed annually. The core contributions will be provided by the Local Authority, Health (CCGs), and the Police and it is the responsibility of each constituent agency to contribute in line with their resources and local circumstances.



# STATUTORY SAFEGUARDING FUNCTIONS

The LSCP will undertake its statutory functions in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children and Young People 2018:

## **Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews**

The LSCP arrangements are set up in a way that will identify and review serious child safeguarding cases which, in their view, raise issues of importance in relation to their area. An agreed notification process will ensure that the LSCP is made aware of any incidents which would require the undertaking of a Rapid Review, and an agreed process for completion and consideration of Rapid Reviews by the LSCP Executive will allow the LSCP to continue to commission and oversee the review of those cases, where they consider it appropriate to do so.

## **Child Death Reviews**

The geographical and population 'footprint' of the child death review process will remain within the boundaries of Leeds.

The purpose of the Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) is to identify any matters relating to the death, or deaths, that are relevant to the welfare of children in Leeds or to public health and safety, and to consider whether action should be taken in relation to any matters identified.

The funding for the CDOP will be through the annual LSCP budget and this will be administered through the LSCP Business Unit.

The CDOP will prepare and publish an annual report on what it has done as a result of the child death review arrangements in Leeds.

## **Section 11 assessments**

The LSCP will continue to seek assurance that agencies are fulfilling their safeguarding requirements through partner agencies completion of Section 11 assessments. Although an ongoing process which agencies can access and update at any time, the LSCP will request assessments are updated on an annual basis, and will report on the overall assessment through the LSCP Annual Report.

The oversight, and assurance of these functions will be through the LSCP Executive.

# CORE MULTI-AGENCY SAFEGUARDING FUNCTIONS

The core objectives of the Partnership are to co-ordinate the work of each Partnership partner agency in relation to its safeguarding functions, and to ensure the effectiveness of that work. In order to achieve this the LSCP through its Business Unit, will undertake the following identified core functions:

- Identify and celebrate good practice and support agencies in doing more of it
- Ensure that regular independent scrutiny and assessment is undertaken through monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of what is done by LSCP partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Monitor and analyse multi-agency safeguarding data to assess the health of the safeguarding system
- Develop multi-agency policies and procedures which safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Leeds
- Audit multi-agency safeguarding systems and practice with a focus on good practice and how we can do more of it
- Provide appropriate multi-agency training for practitioners who work with children or in services which have contact with children and families
- Understand the impact of the work of the LSCP on front line practice
- Listen to and act upon the voice of children and young people
- Develop communication strategies to enable children and young people understand their right not to be harmed and how they can get help
- Communicate to persons and bodies in Leeds the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, raising their awareness of how this best can be done, and encouraging them to do so.
- Work collaboratively with neighbouring Local Authorities and their Partnership partners;

The LSCP may also engage in other activities that contribute to the achievement of its priorities.

# EDUCATION SECTOR

Children and young people in Leeds spend a significant part of their life in an educational setting, and within Leeds Primary, Secondary and Further education establishments provide a safe place for young people to receive their education.

The LSCP through its Education Reference Group (ERG) has established strong relationships with these education establishments throughout the city. The ERG will continue to be the link to the wider education sector and will offer challenge in ensuring Schools and colleges are compliant with relevant legislation<sup>1</sup> when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The Section 175/157 assessment supports education settings in identifying their progress with regards to safeguarding duties and the outcomes of this process will be provided to the LSCP via the ERG.

# THIRD SECTOR

The LSCP recognise that the Third Sector has a vital role to play in the partnership approach to safeguarding children and young people in Leeds. We also acknowledge that the Third Sector is diverse, encompassing everything from volunteer-led community groups to large organisations with multi-million pound turnovers. Through our relationship with Young Lives Leeds and the work of the Third Sector Safeguarding Group we will ensure that the voice of the sector is heard and best practice shared.

# SECURE SETTINGS

The local authority boundary of Leeds includes two secure estates for young people, Wetherby Young Offenders Institute and Adel Beck Secure Children's Home.

The LSCP has good relationships with both of these establishments, and will retain these through ongoing engagement with them. Assurance with regards to the safeguarding of young people in these establishments is provided through the sharing of data, their respective inspectorial processes and the annual Safeguarding in Secure Settings Report.

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1 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 from the Department for Education issued under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002; the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014; and the Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015.

# THRESHOLDS

Leeds recognises that continual assessment supported by conversations is the best way of identifying and responding to the needs of children and young people. A check list approach is mechanistic and identifies weaknesses. It doesn't take into consideration the complexity of individual situations and can overlook strengths.

When a child's needs cannot be met by Universal Services alone quality conversations strengthen and improve decision making and joint working to provide the right help at the right time for families.

This is better than the use of predetermined thresholds to define service responses as:

- Thresholds cannot take account of the complexities of individual children's lives
- They give a false sense of certainty based on limited rule based assessments
- They are based on unrealistic models of decision-making
- They can produce incentives to pass on responsibility by raising or lowering thresholds or tailoring referrals.

Therefore, in agreement with the DfE, Leeds does not have a Threshold Document, rather an agreed conversational approach to ensure that the right help is provided at the right time. This approach has been tested through the recent 2018 OFSTED inspection.

The LSCP monitors, and will continue to monitor this approach to ensure that responses are timely and appropriate.



# VOICE OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES

The LSCP support the vision for a Child Friendly Leeds by working to ensure that all children, young people, parents and carers have their voices heard and can influence decisions and services that affect their lives. We will do this in the following ways:

- The LSCP has a Student LSCP which seeks and provides the voice of children and young people.
- The 'My School My Health Survey' in Leeds attracts over 17,000 responses. The LSCP will use these responses as a standing priority to identify what young people are saying and in turn ensure that the LSCP responds to what they have identified.
- The voice of children and young people is a focus within Section 11 audits.
- Listening to the feedback that front line practitioners hear from the children and families that they work with.

Where appropriate the LSCP will also engage children, young people and families through additional methods and groups including the city's well established voice and influence programmes.

## CONCERNS RESOLUTION PROCESS

Leeds have a robust process that outlines the steps to be taken when there are disagreements between practitioners from differing agencies in relation to concerns about the safety and welfare of a child or young person, and / or action being taken to safeguard a child or young person.

## REVIEW OF THE MULTI AGENCY SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS

These arrangements will be reviewed on an annual basis by the LSCP Executive. Amendments to these arrangements can be made at any other time with the agreement of the LSCP. Suggested amendments to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements structure should be proposed as agenda items at LSCP meetings.