

Governor Briefing 5

26 June 2025

18:00-19:00



Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Early Years Team update
3. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities update
4. Safeguarding update
5. Latest updates and reminders from the Team
6. Thank you



Early Years Team Update

Michelle Jenkins

Early Years Quality Improvement Manager

Heather Clarke

Foundation Years Advisory Teacher

Safeguarding in Early Years

June 2025

Awaiting new version
effective from September
2025



Department
for Education

**Early years
foundation stage
statutory framework**

For group and school-based providers



Setting the standards for learning,
development and care for children from
birth to five

Dated: 11 October 2024
Effective: 01 November 2024

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Changes to the EYFS safeguarding requirements from September 2025



Changes to the EYFS safeguarding requirements from September 2025

From September 2025 the EYFS safeguarding requirements will be strengthened. Below are some of the changes you need to be aware of for your settings:

- Amendments to promote **safer recruitment**, including: new expectations to provide references, requirements to obtain references and a requirement for safeguarding policies to include procedures to help ensure that only suitable individuals are recruited.
- New requirements for providers to follow up if a **child is absent** for a prolonged period of time and amendments to ensure providers hold additional emergency contact details.
- New requirements to ensure **safer eating**.
- Creation of a **safeguarding training** criteria annex and a requirement for safeguarding policies to include details of how safeguarding training is delivered, including how practitioners are supported to put it into place.
- Amendments to ensure that early years students and trainees are required to have **paediatric first aid (PFA) training** in order for them to be included in ratios at the level below their level of study.
- New requirements to support **whistleblowing**.
- Amendments to ensure that **children's privacy** during nappy changing and toileting is considered and balanced with safeguarding considerations.
- A small number of **other minor changes** to the structure and wording of the safeguarding requirements to improve clarity.

To find out more visit:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/early-years-foundation-stage-eyfs-safeguarding>

[Early Years Foundation Stage Safeguarding Reforms \(2024\) - Foundation Years](#)

[Information-sheet-about-changes-PDF.pdf](#)

[Early Years Foundation Stage safeguarding reforms - consultation response](#)

Rationale behind the changes

This Government is committed to supporting the early years sector to deliver the safest early years provision possible. A consultation on proposals to strengthen the EYFS safeguarding requirements was held between 22 April and 17 June 2024, with 1470 responses received.

There was strong support from respondents for all of the EYFS changes, with clear consensus that these will improve children's safety and align with current best practice in early years settings.

Safer recruitment

New EYFS wording for the group and school-based provider framework (currently paragraph 3.14):

- Providers must record information about staff qualifications and the identity checks, vetting processes and references that have been completed (including the criminal records check reference number, the date a check was obtained and details of who obtained it).

Safeguarding policies must include procedures to follow to check the suitability of new recruits.

Further safer recruitment guidance regarding references can be read in the consultation response including providing references.

Continue to follow existing safer recruitment procedures as set out in Part 3 of [Keeping children safe in education 2024](#)

ESAT Team offer safer recruitment training via Governor Services and Education Services.

- [Check an early years qualification](#) - Oxfordshire Link. This service is designed for managers to use.
- [Recruiting and managing early years staff - GOV.UK](#) – for further links
- Don't forget if you have childcare provision with a separate Ofsted registration ensure Ofsted are made aware of changes to committee/trustees/managers
- [Apply to join a nursery or other daycare organisation \(EY2\)](#)
- [Report changes to registered people in your nursery or daycare](#)

Attendance

Children being absent from early years settings repeatedly, or for prolonged periods of time, may be a vital warning sign for a range of safeguarding issues.

The changes are about aligning EYFS with schools, helping parents to understand the expectations on them to report absences and the procedure the provider would need to follow if a child is absent.

New EYFS wording under 'Information about the child' - Where possible, settings should hold more than two emergency contact numbers for each child.



The Importance of Good Attendance in the Early Years

Bitesize CPD [The Importance of Good Attendance in the Early Years](#)

Resources on toolkit [Early years toolkit | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

- [Why good attendance is important \(pdf format, 837Kb\)](#)
- [Parental engagement and attendance \(pdf format, 362Kb\)](#)
- [School Attendance Guidance](#)
- [Attendance poster \(pdf format, 300KB\)](#)

Paediatric First Aid (PFA)

New EYFS wording under 'Staff:child ratios'
(currently paragraph 3.49 of the group and school-based provider EYFS):

Suitable students on long term placements and volunteers (aged 17 or over) and staff working as apprentices in early education (aged 16 or over) may be included in the ratios at the level below their level of study, if the provider is satisfied that they are competent and responsible and if they hold a valid and current PFA qualification.

This is relevant for nursery classes

Providers are responsible for identifying and selecting a competent training provider to deliver their PFA training. There is no hierarchy in relation to the range of Training Providers who offer Paediatric First Aid training, however those who work under the following bodies are fully regulated: one that is a member of a Trade Body with an approval and monitoring scheme, the Voluntary Aid Societies and those who work under Ofqual Awarding organisations. It may also be helpful to refer to HSE's guidance about choosing a first aid training provider, which can be found at: www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/geis3.htm

PFA and Safer eating section

New EYFS wording under 'Food and drink facilities' includes:

- Whilst children are eating there should always be a member of staff in the room with a valid paediatric first aid certificate
- Children must always be within sight and hearing of a member of staff whilst eating. Choking can be completely silent therefore it is important for [providers/childminders] to be alert to when a child may be starting to choke. Where possible, [providers/childminders] should sit facing children whilst they eat so they can make sure children are eating in a way to prevent choking and so they can prevent food sharing and be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions.

Rationale behind the change

Mealtimes and snack times for babies and children can be a high-risk environment for choking incidents and allergic reactions.

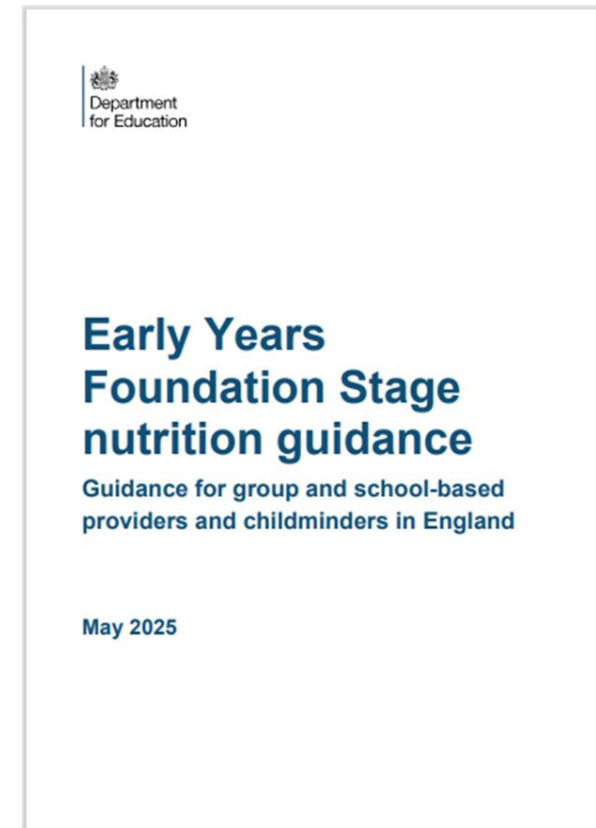
For more info around choking/anaphylaxis - [Help for early years providers : Food safety](#)

We have contacted the DfE for further clarification on lunchtimes in school – awaiting response.

Safer eating continued- nutrition guidance

From September 2025, DfE intend to include a new requirement in the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS that providers must have regard to this nutrition guidance.

This means providers must take this guidance into account and should follow it unless there is good reason not to.



Safer eating continued - managing any known allergies and intolerances.

Before a child is admitted to the setting the provider/Childminder must obtain information about any special dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and intolerances that the child has, and any special health requirements.

This information must be shared by the provider/childminder with all staff involved in the preparing and handling of food.

At each mealtime and snack time [providers/childminders] must be clear about who is responsible for checking that the food being provided meets all the requirements for each child.

- [Providers/Childminders] must have ongoing discussions with parents and/or carers and, where appropriate, health professionals to develop allergy action plans for managing any known allergies and intolerances. This information must be kept up to date by the [provider/childminder] and shared with all staff.

[Providers/Childminders] may find it useful to refer to the NHS advice on food allergies: Food allergy - NHS (www.nhs.uk) and treatment of anaphylaxis: Anaphylaxis - NHS (www.nhs.uk)

Toileting and Privacy

Children's safeguarding needs to be balanced with their privacy. When children are having their nappies changed, or are learning to use the toilet, a member of staff has to be present. However, consideration needs to be given to who else is present and what can be seen. It is important to respect children's privacy wherever this is possible, without compromising on safeguarding.



Bitesize CPD [Let's talk about... potty & toilet training](#)

[Help for early years providers : Toilet training](#)

[Schools and nurseries - ERIC](#)

[School toilets - ERIC](#)

Other changes

Change 'lead practitioner' to 'designated safeguarding lead (DSL)'

The aim is to prevent ambiguity by bringing the language in line with other education settings, including schools. This change is also to help prevent confusion as, within other safeguarding documents, 'lead practitioner' relates to a different role.

New whistleblowing requirements.

Bitesize CPD [Let's talk about... Whistleblowing](#)
[Creating Positive Workplaces for Wellbeing](#)

Safeguarding training annex Relevant to: childminders and group and school-based providers

The DSL must attend a training course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex C. • Training must be renewed every two years. Providers may consider whether any staff need to undertake annual refresher training during any two-year period to help maintain basic skills and keep up to date with any changes to safeguarding procedures or as a result of any safeguarding concerns that occur in the setting.

For consideration:

- ❖ Check your understanding of the new requirements
- ❖ Check your policies and procedures have been updated in line with the changes
- ❖ Monitoring patterns of absences in line with your attendance policy
- ❖ Make sure DSLs have up to date OSCP safeguarding training (*Governor Services provides this*)
- ❖ Ensure staff who may be in early years are PFA trained by a training provider who meet the criteria

Cont...

- ❖ As part of your EY monitoring observe snack time to look at how staff supervise children when eating- is there a member of staff in the room with a valid paediatric first aid certificate? Are there resourcing implications?
- ❖ How do you know that staff understand the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis, the differences between allergies and intolerances and that children can develop allergies at any time?
- ❖ What are your procedures for children with allergies and intolerances? Do they have action plans and are all staff aware?
- ❖ Does the school record any choking incidents and alert the child's parents?
- ❖ How is privacy ensured where nappies/toileting take place? Are there resource implications for this?
- ❖ Is your Whistleblowing policy up to date and how do you know staff feel comfortable to share their concerns?

Where to find us

early.years@oxfordshire.gov.uk

[Support for early years and childcare providers | Oxfordshire County Council](#) including toolkit

[Subscribe to fortnightly Early years eNewsletter | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

[Oxfordshire Early Years | Facebook](#)

[Oxfordshire | Education Services](#) for training including Bitesize CPD

[Home - Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

Education, Health and Care Plan Casework Team Update

Nick Field

SEND Operations Manager

EHCP Casework Team

What we do

The EHCP Casework Team is responsible for statutory duties in relation to SEND as detailed in the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice 2015.

The EHCP Casework Team becomes involved when an application for an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) is made.

Our role is to;

- process requests for a statutory EHCNAs for children and young people aged 0-25, in consultation with other agencies, ensuring that assessments are carried out and decisions are relayed to families in a timely manner
- monitor and process Annual Reviews for Children and Young People with EHCPs
- work with partners in Education, Health and Social Care to ensure the best outcomes for all Children and Young People
- monitor outcomes for Children and Young People with EHCPs, ensuring that their needs are appropriately identified and that the Special Educational provision required is delivered
- resolve disagreement, either by working directly with parents or by working with SENDIASS or an independent Mediation Service
- represent the Local Authority's position at the First-Tier Tribunal (SENDIST)
- ensure value for money.

EHCP Casework Team Structure

Teams

- **Early Years and Primary (0-end of year 6)**
 - Lead Officer with three Senior Officers overseeing North, Central and South, alongside a Case Coordinator
- **Secondary and Post 16 (year 7-25)**
 - Lead Officer with three Senior Officers overseeing North, Central and South, alongside a Case Coordinator
- **Tribunals, Resolutions and Compliance**
 - Lead Officer with four Senior Tribunal Officers, one Assistant Officer and a Case Coordinator
- **Assessment Team**
 - Two Senior Officers with Assessment Officers and Plan Writers
- **Finance and Business Support Team**

EHCP Casework Team

Current picture

- Currently 7916 students with EHCPs (as of 23.06.25)
- 7259 students with EHCPs at the end of 2024 compared with 6439 at the end of 2023 (13% increase)
- 735 students currently undergoing statutory assessment
- 7.5% increase in EHCNA requests in 2025 compared with 2024 (on top of the previous 27% increase in 2024 compared with 2023)
- Increased number of requests for placement other than mainstream, Alternative Education Provision and Education Otherwise Than At School (EOTAS)
- Increased number of appeals

EHCP Casework Team

Key Priorities 1

Timeliness

- Statutory timeframes around
 - 20 weeks for new assessments
 - Annual Reviews
 - Phase Transfer (15th February and 31st March)
- Current service plans to address timeliness of EHCNAs and Annual Reviews
- Timeliness of decision making
- Timeliness of communication

EHCP Casework Team

Key Priorities 2

Quality

- Review and implementation of Quality Assurance processes across the team (in line with wider Quality Improvement work across the Local Area)
- Current service plans to address the quality of new EHCPs and EHCPs following Annual Reviews
- Quality of decision making
 - Wider training on panels including the Multiagency Panel roles and responsibilities across the Local Area
- Quality of communication
- Clarity around statutory and local processes for parents, settings and professionals
 - Local Offer updates
- Training and CPD programme
- Learning from complaints and Tribunals

EHCP Casework Team

Key Priorities 3

Communication

- Communication 'pledge'
- Roles and functions of the EHCP Casework Team
- Commitment around communications and timeframes for responses
- Decision making panels
- Escalation process
- Changes to Casework Officers
- Complaints, Comments and Compliments

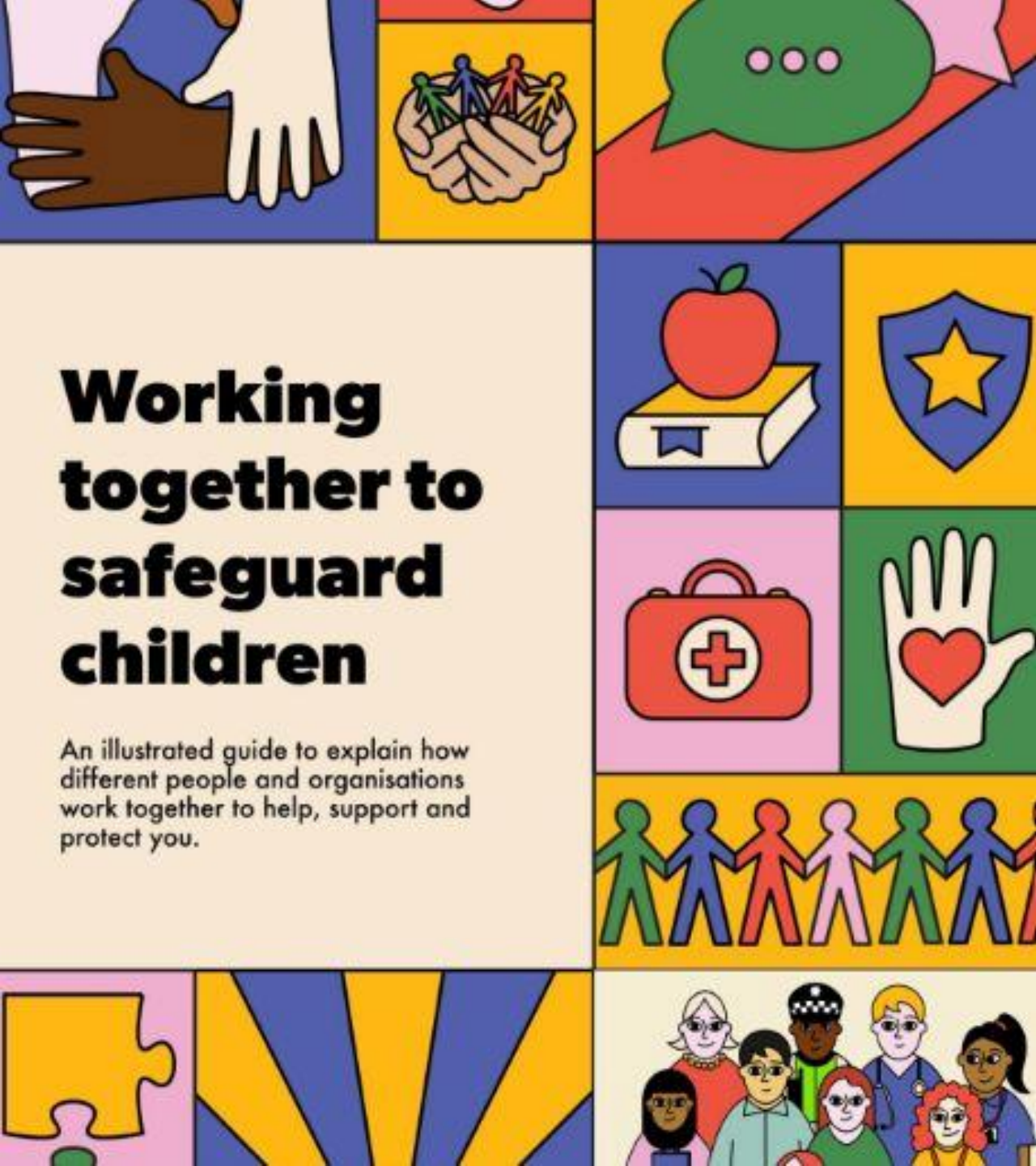
Any questions?



Education Safeguarding Update

Jo Lloyd

Service Manager: LADO and ESAT



Working together to safeguard children

An illustrated guide to explain how different people and organisations work together to help, support and protect you.

HM Government

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

A guide to multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children

December 2023

Working Together to Safeguard children

LSPs should give careful consideration to naming all local schools, colleges and education providers as **relevant agencies**.

Relevant agencies are those organisations and agencies whose involvement the safeguarding partners consider are **required** to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children

The LSPs should set out in their published arrangements which organisations and agencies they require to work with them as relevant agencies.

It is expected all local education and childcare providers working with children up to the age of 18, including alternative provision, pupil referral units and further education will be included because of the **pivotal role** they play in children's daily lives and amount of time they spend with them.

When identified by the LSPs as a relevant agency, an organisation must act in accordance with local safeguarding arrangements.

As part of this, the organisation should:

- have a clear understanding of its responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children locally, and how it will discharge them
- co-operate with safeguarding partners to improve, implement, and monitor effectiveness of the local safeguarding arrangements
- share information and data about safeguarding issues and concerns affecting the children involved in their organisation to contribute to local priorities
- ensure local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements are fully understood, and rigorously applied within their organisation

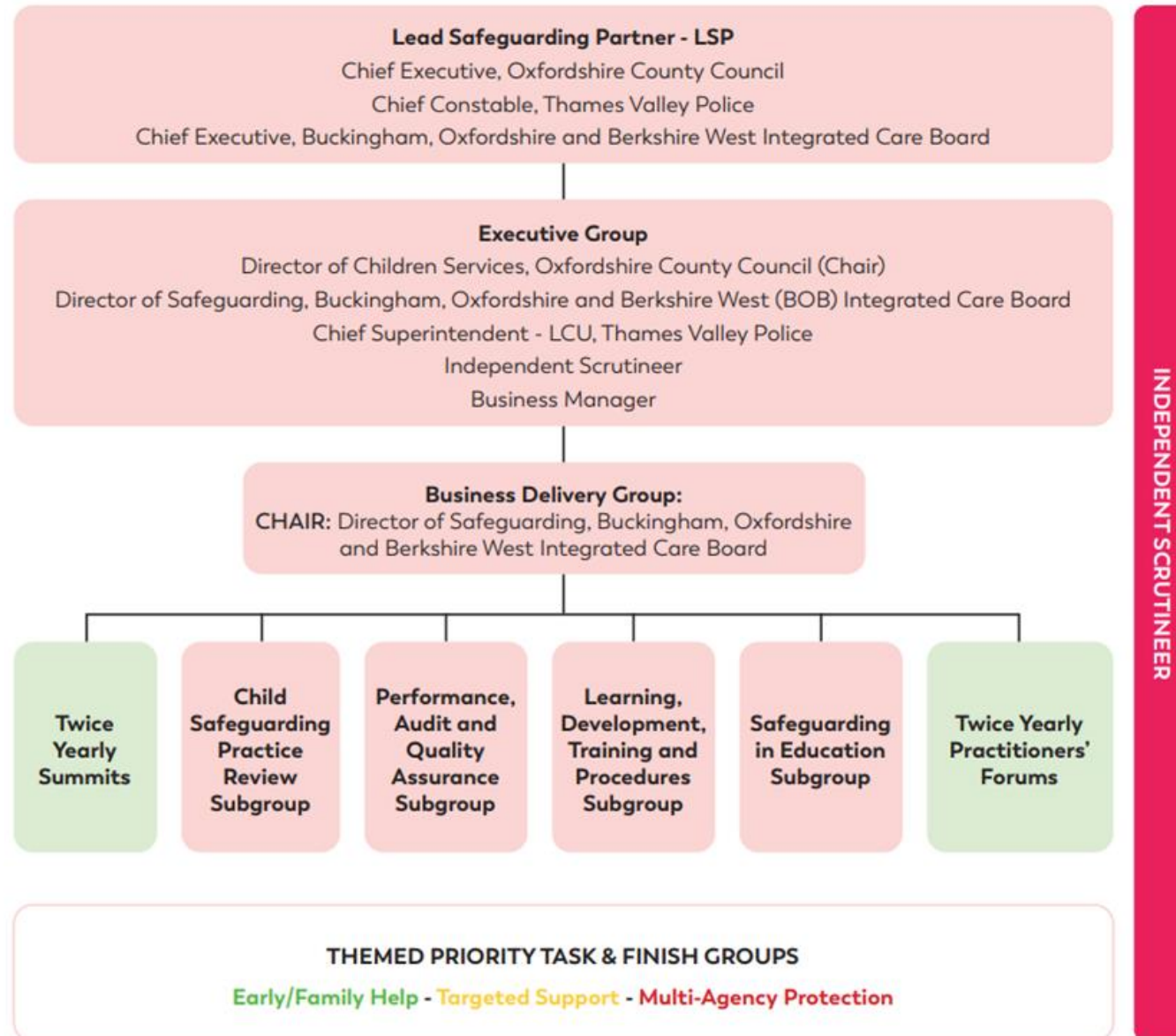
Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) for Oxfordshire



**Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children
Partnership Multi-Agency Arrangements**

Published December 2024

The OSCP Structure Dec 24





Role of the Business Delivery Group

- Ensure continuity of OSCP functions via oversight of sub-groups and task/finish activities
- Direct the development of plans, projects and activities that address OSCP priorities
- Analyse data and performance information to assess effectiveness
- Monitor front line practice, escalating matters to the Executive Group and highlight good practice
- Receive and act on reports from the Independent Scrutineer
- Set the programme for the biannual summit and practitioner's forum
- Report to the Executive Group

Strategic priorities: 2025-2027

1. Neglect

2. Exploitation/harm outside the home

3. Multi-agency protection

Multi- agency expectations for direct practice:

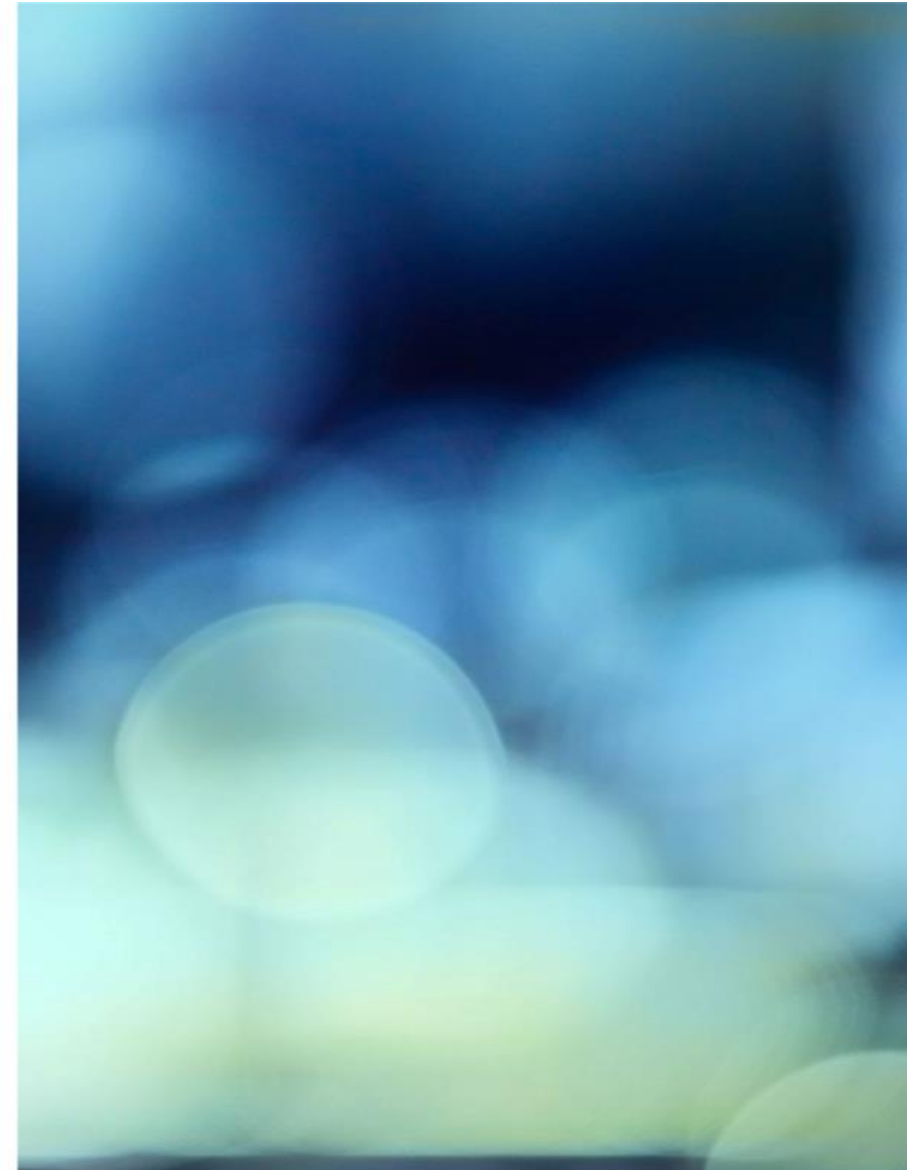
Collaborate: practitioners working with the same child and family share information to get a complete picture of what life is like for the child. Collectively, they ensure the child's voice is at the centre and the right support is provided

Learn: practitioners learn together by drawing on the best available evidence from their individual fields and sharing their diverse perspectives during regular shared reflection on a child's development, experiences, and outcomes

Resource: practitioners build strong relationships across agencies and disciplines to ensure they support and protect the children with whom they work

Include: practitioners recognise the differences between, and are confident to respond to, circumstances where children experience adversity due to economic and social circumstances and acute family stress, and situations where children face harm due to parental abuse and neglect

Mutual challenge: practitioners challenge themselves and each other, question each other's assumptions, and seek to resolve differences of opinion in a restorative and respectful way



Updates from ESAT

Neglect standards for education settings have been reviewed and updated- on OSCP website

Home visit guidance is in development, whilst we wait make sure your clear with your language:

Door step visit

Home visit

Ensure your files will be transferred in line with KCSIE guidance to new settings



Agreed protocol- expectations from social care and schools



Education settings contribution to ICPC and RCPC protocol during school holidays

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 states that the purpose of an Initial Child Protection Conference is to:

Bring together and analyse, in a multi-agency and multi-disciplinary meeting, all relevant information and plan how best to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child and protect them from harm. It is the responsibility of the conference to make recommendations on how organisations and agencies work together to safeguard the child in future.

All involved practitioners should:

- *Work together to safeguard the child from harm in the future, taking timely, effective action according to the plan agreed*
- *Attend and present information about their understanding of the child's needs, parental capacity, family, and environmental factors (including extra-familial contexts) and evidence of how the child has been abused, neglected, or exploited and its impact on their health and development*
- *Bring their agency perspective, expertise and challenge and contribute to decisions about actual or likely significant harm and actions to address by contributing to the plan to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child who is the subject of the conference*

To ensure school attendance during holidays the below process has been devised.

Think about:
Any children on plans now who may be transitioning? Is the new setting aware/involved?

Summer holiday plan:
Any scheduled reviews- ensure report and cover.
Plan for new cases- if invited to a strategy discussion, remember this may mean an ICPC.
How will safeguarding cover be managed?

DSL training for education



Single agency DSL
training for education
delivered by ESAT



Full day 9.30-3.30pm)
face to face



Go live Sept 25



Introducing from September 2025

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

Single agency training for Education

The training will focus upon and include:

- Pro-active safeguarding including early help
- Using tools to support decisions and actions
- Focus on relationships and listening to children- trusted adults, working with families, home visits
- Safeguarding records and information sharing
- Multi agency working including strategy discussions, conferences and other forums- what to expect? What is expected from you? And understanding escalation
- Safeguarding culture including working with governors, safe staff and being curious
- Focus on vulnerable groups
- Neglect and managing cumulative harm
- Looking up and learning – what's in your community? Harm outside the home
- Learning, themes and priorities

Education DSLs in Oxfordshire will have the opportunity to access single agency DSL training, as well as the multi-agency OSCP DSL training.

We are looking for venues across the county to host the training, if you are able to provide a venue with space for colleagues from other education settings or require further information please contact esat.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Section 175/157: Dates for 24/25



175/157



Audit will open..... Monday 14th July



Section 1 to be completed..... Friday 12th September



Final submission deadline..... Friday 28th November

Before September, ESAT will:

- ✓ Wait patiently for KCSIE 2025
- ✓ Update and share Safeguarding policy
- ✓ Safer recruitment and allegation management policies also.
- ✓ Update and share Generalist safeguarding training
- ✓ Deliver Generalist briefing (sharing the new content) ready for delivery in September: (open for any Lead trainers if you want a reminder/refresh)

Online (free) briefings- 1 hr

18/8/25 10.30am

20/8/25 3pm

22/8/25 1pm

27/8/25 9am

28/8/25 10am

Thank you from ESAT and LADO; have a lovely summer.



Governor Services Update

Helen Tate

Governor Support Officer

Headteacher Appraisals

“The governing body of a school must appoint an external adviser for the purposes of providing it with advice and support in relation to the appraisal of the head teacher.

“In appraising the performance of the head teacher, the governing body of a school must consult the external adviser appointed under regulation 4.”

[Education \(School Teachers' Appraisal\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#)

- A **statutory process** in maintained schools and is best practice for academies.
- The process is delegated to the headteacher **sub-group**, a group of two or preferably three governors appointed by the board.
- Governors who sit on this sub-group should have **training**.
- In maintained schools, the headteacher appraisal panel must be supported by a suitably skilled and/or **experienced external adviser** appointed by the board.

How we can help

Training

- Tuesday 30 September 2025 7pm - 8.30pm
- Monday 17 November 2025 7pm - 8.30pm

These sessions can be booked:

Directly through [GovernorHub](#)

OR

By contacting Governor Services
on GovernorTraining@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

External Advisor

An experienced adviser can be commissioned through Governor Services

A new process:

To purchase one of the Headteacher Appraisal Packages, please ask your school to visit <https://secure2.sla-online.co.uk/v3/Store/Index> where, after logging in, an external adviser can be booked in the Services section at the bottom of the page.

[Headteacher appraisals | Oxfordshire Schools](#)

Sustainability and Climate Action Plans

By **Sept 2025**, schools are expected to have dedicated sustainability leads and a Climate Action Plan. This includes nominating a sustainability lead and developing a climate action plan.

A holistic climate action plan should cover the following **4 areas**:

Decarbonisation - reducing emissions and become more energy efficient

Adaptation and Resilience - adapting buildings and ground to prepare for the impacts of climate change

Biodiversity - enhancing species diversity and connection with nature

Climate Education and Green Skills - preparing students and adults for a world impacted by climate change

Climate Action - What is the governance role in this?

- To encourage a whole school approach
- Take a leadership role (consider appointing a link governor)
- Support but not to overburden/overload
- Raise awareness

Where to start

Eco schools has created a free tool to create a benchmark for schools to start from: [Home - Count Your Carbon](#)

The NGA has shared resources which are designed to help schools and trusts to develop their climate action plans:

[Sustainability Support for Education](#)

[Climate Ambassadors: Turning Climate Ambition into Climate Action in Education | Climate Ambassadors](#)

[Home | Education Nature Park](#)

Schools are also encouraged to sign up to the Let's Go Zero commitment:

[UK Climate Change • Let's Go Zero](#)

[Governor Services Climate Action Plan template](#)



Succession planning and filling vacancies

Summer term: a good time to put succession planning on the meeting agenda

Is your chair planning to stay or move on?

Is anyone else interested in taking more of a leadership role?

Encourage governors to share their future plans so that the board can plan for change

Review your vacancies. How many and what types do you have?



Do you train existing governors or recruit ones with the skills you need?

Plan a training programme for your board – where are your gaps?

Does your instrument of government still suit the needs of the board?

Assess what you skills you have as a board.



Governor Recruitment – some ideas

Locally

- Social media
- School communications
- Chamber of Commerce
- Local media
- Neighbouring schools
- Community spaces and events
- Headhunting
- Alumni
- Professional groups
- Church
- Local employers
- Parish Magazine



Organisations which can help

- [Governors for schools](#) - finds, places, and supports skilled volunteers as governors and trustees on school and academy boards.
- [Edu-Gov](#) - paid for recruitment service
- [Do IT](#) - a national database of volunteering opportunities, including school governance.
- [Reach Volunteering](#) - allows organisations to post vacancies and search their community to find new volunteers.
- [National Black Governors Network \(NBGN\)](#) represents black people seeking to become trustees and governors across all levels of education.
- [Young Trustees Movement](#) - specialises in promoting trustee positions for volunteers under 30 years of age.

PE and Sports Premium

The digital expenditure reporting return is now available to complete online.

All primary schools ***must*** complete this by Thursday 31 July at 5pm and the Chair of governors must sign off the form

[PE and sport premium for primary schools - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pe-and-sport-premium-for-primary-schools)



DfE Updated guides

The DfE yesterday released new versions of :

[Maintained schools governance guide - GOV.UK](#)

[Academy trust governance guide - GOV.UK](#)

[Academy trust handbook 2025: effective from 1 September 2025 - GOV.UK](#)

We will provide a summary of key changes in the next newsletter



Oxfordshire updates

Annual Schedule of Governing Board
Business 25/26 update coming before the
end of term

Buyback of traded services closes on
Monday 30th June – please ensure your
board has signed up.



Governor Services | Oxfordshire Schools



Governorservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Finally...

Thank you to you all.

