

Scottish Contextual Safeguarding Core Group

Terms of Reference

1. Role

To guide, support and encourage the development and implementation of the Contextual Safeguarding approach across Scotland. The group aims to ensure that Contextual Safeguarding is integrated within Scotland's child protection system. This will involve scrutinising existing and emerging evidence and practice to inform, prioritise and agree actions.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the Group is to:

- Monitor the progress of Scotland's approach to Contextual Safeguarding, providing analysis, advice and guidance within relevant strategic forums to promote consistent, high-quality practice.
- Work with the Scottish Local Area Interest Network (LAIN) to identify operational successes and key challenges to implementation of contextual safeguarding across Scotland and to draw on expertise of group to generate solutions and to escalate matters that require a resolution at national or policy level
- Identify opportunities to enhance the evidence-base and shared understanding of contextual safeguarding and its impact.
- Facilitate collaboration amongst professionals, share best practice and promote consistency in delivery across different contexts, including groups, schools, neighbourhood and online spaces.
- Encourage delivery of information about contextual safeguarding across relevant professional groups and professionals in training.
- Support organisations and multi-agency partnerships – including child protection committees - in their journey towards implementation of contextual safeguarding.
- Make strong links between the contextual safeguarding, the national practice model and national guidance
- Make links with adjacent areas of practice development that focus on context and rights e.g. transitional safeguarding.

3. Chair

The Chair and vice chair will be appointed for an initial period of 12 months.

The Chair and vice chair are responsible for:

- chairing the meetings and ensure that they are kept to time;
- ensuring discussions are focussed and relevant;
- ensuring required actions/tasks are agreed and allocated appropriately.

In leading discussions, the Chair and vice chair are also be responsible for:

- building effective relationships with the entirety of the membership;

- ensuring the diversity of views of the membership are reflected in discussions;
- seeking to achieve consensus amongst the membership based on the views expressed and the available evidence base. Where consensus is not achieved, this will be recorded in the meeting minutes and the Chair will consider opportunities for further tabling of these issues at future meetings.

4. Membership

The membership, facilitated by the Chair, will be responsible for reaching collective agreement and recommendations.

Members are expected to:

- actively contribute to the aims of the group and feedback relevant discussions and actions to their own agency and stakeholders;
- take relevant and emerging issues from their organisations, and other partners/ services, to the group for discussion and action;
- take collective responsibility as part of the group to deliver and monitor delivery of shared tasks identified through discussions;
- identify relevant expertise within their own organisations/partners or services to participate in 'deep-dive' sessions to explore specific pieces of work when required;
- progress assigned action between meetings, independently of the group or in partnership with a few members and/or other agency representatives, when appropriate.

The Group will comprise a diverse range of members, including but not limited to:

- Scottish Local Area Interest Network (LAIN)
- Representatives from child protection committees
- Local authority representatives
- Health and social care professionals
- Education Scotland
- Care Inspectorate
- Scottish Children's Reporters' Administration (SCRA)
- Police Scotland representatives
- Youth justice professionals
- Academic researchers in child and youth welfare
- Representatives from voluntary and community organizations
- Young people or representatives from youth organizations (where appropriate)

Membership will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis to ensure relevance and representation.

5. Timing and review

The group will meet on a quarterly basis. It is expected that group members and their organisations will engage out with the meetings to deliver priorities and actions agreed by the group.

6. Accountability and Support

The group is a subgroup of Child Protection Committees Scotland and will report back on progress on a regular basis to the group. The Chair of the Contextual Safeguarding Core Group will be invited to the CPC Scotland Governance Group.

Support will be provided by CELCIS. This will include organising meetings in conjunction with the chair(s), creating Microsoft Teams links, distributing papers, taking a minute of each meeting and managing a distribution list.

7. Review and Evaluation

The Terms of Reference and effectiveness of the Group will be reviewed annually to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness in achieving the stated objectives. Amendments may be made as necessary, subject to the approval of the Group members.

These Terms of Reference outline the structure and function of the Scottish Contextual Safeguarding Core Group, ensuring clarity of purpose and alignment with Scotland's safeguarding objectives

The group will identify outcomes it works to on an annual basis to inform its work.