**Introduction**

This audit tool is designed to assist organisations in monitoring and evaluating compliance in respect of their statutory obligations under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004. This places a duty on key persons and bodies to make arrangements to ensure that in discharging their functions, they have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

For further information about your responsibilities in relation to safeguarding please see: [Working Together 2023](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2)

**Assessment Standards**

The assessment is broken down into six sections:

1. **Leadership, Strategy and Working Together**
2. **Service Delivery, Development & Effective Practice**
3. **Safer Recruitment, Staff Development & Effective Learning**
4. **People's Experiences of Safeguarding**
5. **Commissioning Services are Robust and Effective**
6. **Impact Assessment**

This self-assessment is owned by your organisation and actions arising should be viewed as an important tool to assist in continuous improvement. An action plan template is included at the end of this document.

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| **Part 1: Leadership, Strategy and Working Together** |
| **1A - Senior management have commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults with care and support needs** |
| **Compliance Criteria** | **Yes/No/Partial?** | **Describe how your organisation is assured that this standard is met.** | **Provide details on plans to meet or improve these criteria.**  | **Included in action plan?** |
| * 1. There is a named person at senior level responsible for safeguarding and championing safeguarding is clearly in their job description and that they understand and undertake their responsibilities
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. The organisation has a safeguarding policy in place that is reviewed every 2 years and provides clear guidance on what action to take if there are concerns about an individual’s safety or welfare.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Strategies and plans include reference to safeguarding and are clear about responsibilities in relation to:
	2. the impact of our services in safeguarding children.
	3. what are the criteria for deciding who we work with
	4. The quality of our work
	5. Whether the timing of our interventions, where measured, are appropriate for the child
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. The most senior leaders ensure arrangements are in place for clearly documented lines of accountability from staff through the organisation to the named person, a clear escalation and whistleblowing policy, and it is compliant with the multi-agency procedures on escalation and whistleblowing (see end of document for useful links).

Documentation should contain references to multi-agency working. | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Anyone who meets children, or their families has their responsibility towards the person’s welfare explicitly stated in job description and this is reviewed in appraisals and supervision.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Practitioners can identify children at risk who would benefit from additional services. They are clear when they need to refer to MASH and ensure these contain appropriate and relevant information which is adequate to support decision making.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Senior managers demonstrate good understanding of safeguarding, keeping abreast of local and national developments and learning, to ensure that practice continues to improve. This includes communicating recommendations / outcomes on practice and changes to procedures (multi-agency and internal).
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| **How do you rate your compliance with this standard?** |
| **Exceptional** [ ]  **Good** [ ]  **Some shortfalls** [ ]  **Significant shortfalls** [ ]  |

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| **1B - Senior management have commitment to the importance of safeguarding and there is a clear line of accountability and a clear statement of the agency’s responsibility towards children and adults with care and support needs** |
| **Compliance checklist – policies & procedures, organisational arrangements** | **Yes/No** | **Describe how your organisation is assured that this standard is met.** | **Provide details on plans to meet or improve these criteria.**  | **Included in action plan?** |
| * 1. The organisation has a commitment to inter-agency working and understand the roles and responsibilities of other organisations. Attendance at multi-agency meetings is monitored and action taken to address non-attendance.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Safeguarding activity is routinely monitored within the organisation, issues are identified at the appropriate level and resources are put in place to resolve them.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Effective complaints systems are in place, in line with current statutory guidance, for children and staff and other people to make complaints and themes of these complaints are addressed.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Child ‘User friendly’ complaints information is used, which includes information on what safeguarding issues are and how to raise a safeguarding concern. This includes ensuring there are interpreting services available, if needed.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. All staff can access adequate reflective supervision and support in relation to safeguarding.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| **How do you rate your compliance with this standard?** |
| **Exceptional** [ ]  **Good** [ ]  **Some shortfalls** [ ]  **Significant shortfalls** [ ]  |

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| **Part 2: Service Delivery, Development and Effective Practice** |
| **Service delivery & development considers the need to safeguard and promote welfare and is informed, where appropriate, by the views of service users and their families** |
| **Compliance Criteria** | **Yes/No** | **Describe how your organisation is assured that this standard is met.** | **Provide details on plans to meet or improve these criteria.**  | **Included in action plan?** |
| * 1. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is central to all service development.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Children needs are actively involved in the design and development of services.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Children from black and minority ethnic backgrounds and other diversity strands are appropriately consulted in the development of services.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. There is a responsive process in place to act on identified unmet need, determine where gaps are met elsewhere and address any remaining gaps in service provision.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Staff and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities if they are concerned about a child at risk and know the procedures to follow in such circumstances.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Staff and volunteers are made aware of the multi-agency procedures and tools for identifying, assessing and recording safeguarding concerns and know how to use them appropriately?
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Children who have experienced abuse are supported and can access services that are appropriate to them, including signposting to and supporting through effective criminal, civil and human rights frameworks.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Processes for sharing information, with other practitioners and safeguarding partners is clear and established in organisational practice.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Staff and volunteers receive reflective supervision and support that meets their organisation’s requirements.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Your organisation measures outcomes and learns from examples of good practice, particularly in the following areas:
* Professional curiosity and over-reliance on self-reported information
* Multi-agency working: understanding professional roles and responsibilities and information sharing
* Mental capacity / mental health of children and young people
* Self-neglect / neglect of children and young people
* Exploitation
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Do you support your staff and volunteers after a significant/serious safeguarding incident and how do you know this works?
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| **How do you rate your compliance with this standard?** |
| **Exceptional** [ ]  **Good** [ ]  **Some shortfalls** [ ]  **Significant shortfalls** [ ]  |

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| **Part 3: Safe Recruitment, Staff Development and Effective Learning** |
| **Compliance checklist** | **Yes/No** | **Describe how your organisation is assured that this standard is met.** | **Provide details on plans to meet or improve these criteria.**  | **Included in action plan?** |
| * 1. Safe recruitment practices are in place in line with statutory guidance, are monitored, and safer recruitment training is in place for managers involved in recruitment and selection of staff.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Safeguarding training is effective and has an impact on practice
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. The organisation ensures that staff have the required knowledge, skills and expertise to carry out their safeguarding duties, and feel supported in their role.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. The organisation ensures that practitioners know who their Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is and how to access their support.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. The organisation ensures that DSLs have the required knowledge, skills and experience, and are supported to fulfil the role.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Lessons from local reviews conducted by the Safeguarding Boards/Partnerships been used to drive change and improvement at an organisational level.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. All levels of staff, from frontline workers to Chief Executive/Board level leads have read, understood, and acted upon the learning to improve practice (as appropriate to their role within the organisation).
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Whistleblowing procedures are effective, clear, referenced in staff training and codes of conduct, and staff are supported when raising concerns, or subject to allegations.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| **How do you rate your compliance with this standard?** |
| **Exceptional** [ ]  **Good** [ ]  **Some shortfalls** [ ]  **Significant shortfalls** [ ]  |

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| **Part** **4: People’s Experiences of Safeguarding** |
| **Compliance checklist** | **Yes/No** | **Describe how your organisation is assured that this standard is met.** | **Provide details on plans to meet or improve these criteria.**  | **Included in action plan?** |
| * 1. The organisation demonstrates a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Safeguarding is personalised, so that children experiencing or receiving safeguarding services are treated sensitively and respectfully, feel safer as a result of your intervention and that outcomes are consistent, regardless of the ethnicity, cultural identity / diversity, gender, sexuality, disability or age of the service user.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Outcomes are defined by the individuals concerned or, where people lack decision-making capacity, by their representatives or advocates and advocacy is used appropriately for children who are (or may have been) experiencing abuse.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. The safeguarding process is proportionate, puts individuals in control and where this is not possible (for instance where there is concern that an individual or organisation could harm others) this is fully discussed, and the person’s views considered as much as possible.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Your organisation’s complaints processes are effective and that children are empowered to challenge services when expected standards/responsibilities are not met.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| **How do you rate your compliance with this standard?** |
| **Exceptional** [ ]  **Good** [ ]  **Some shortfalls** [ ]  **Significant shortfalls** [ ]  |

**COMMISSIONERS ONLY TO COMPLETE (NB: your commissioned services should be completing their own self-assessment tool)**

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| **Part 5: Commissioning arrangements are robust and effective**  |
| **How effective are the organisations commissioning arrangements?** |
| **Compliance checklist** | **Yes/No** | **Describe how your organisation is assured that this standard is met.** | **Provide details on plans to meet or improve these criteria.**  | **Included in action plan?** |
| * 1. Robust contractual arrangements are in place with explicit reference to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and monitored effectively on an annual basis.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. The organisation has a demonstrated an understanding of their responsibility to ensure organisations they commission adhere to relevant safeguarding requirements i.e. section 11.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Commissioning and contracting set out quality assurance and service standards to safeguard children.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Contract monitoring has a focus on safeguarding, dignity and respect, and any shortfalls in standards are addressed.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| * 1. Actions take place to safeguard individuals when standards in services put people at risk.
 | [ ]  **Yes**[ ]  **No**[ ]  **Partial** |  |  |[ ]
| **How do you rate your compliance with this standard?** |
| **Exceptional** [ ]  **Good** [ ]  **Some shortfalls** [ ]  **Significant shortfalls** [ ]  |

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| **Part 6: Impact Assessment** |
|  | **Response** |
| What are the key financial and organisational pressures that your organisation is facing that relate to safeguarding children and their families? |  |
| * 1. What is your performance data telling you about the most worrying pressure points in relation to safeguarding children and their families?
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| * 1. What steps are you taking as an individual organisation to address these pressure points and what are the risks for your agency in managing them?
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| * 1. What are the implications for your partners as a result of these pressures?
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| * 1. What do you need from your partners to address these pressures?
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| * 1. What are the implications and risks if this multi-agency response is not possible?
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**Action Plan**

The action plan can be used to provide details of actions your organisation is planning to complete below:

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| **Standard No.** | **Action Required** |  | **Timeframe** | **Comments** |
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**Useful Links**

* [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2)
* [Care and support statutory guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance#integration-and-partnership-working)
* [Government guidance on its Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/dbs-check-requests-guidance-for-employers#overview))
* [CQC Inspection Framework](https://www.cqc.org.uk/news/our-approach-assessing-local-authorities)