



# Priorities and Pledge

2023

Safeguarding partners have agreed six strategic priorities to underpin the work of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP). These will be reviewed annually with the plan supporting implementation reviewed by both the CHSCP Executive and the Safeguarding Children Partnership Boards in both the City of London and Hackney. They provide focus to ensure the right conditions are in place for high quality safeguarding practice to thrive.

## Our Vision

Children and young people in the City of London and Hackney are **seen, heard and helped**; they are effectively safeguarded, properly supported and their lives improved by everyone working together.

## Our Principles

**Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.** As a partnership, we will champion the most vulnerable and maintain a single child-centred culture.

**Context is key.** Capitalising on the unique opportunities presented by a dual-borough partnership, we will have an unswerving focus on both intra-familial and extra-familial safeguarding contexts in the City of London and the London Borough of Hackney.

**Active Anti-Racist practice is key.** The CHSCP's safeguarding arrangements are proactively anti-racist. Our focus in this context moves beyond the rhetoric and is evident in our leadership, our practice and in the outcomes of the children, young people, and families we engage.

**The voice of children, young people and families.** We will engage with children, young people and their families, using their lived experience to inform the way we work. Their voices help both design and improve our safeguarding arrangements.

**The voice of communities.** Improving our understanding of the diverse communities across the CHSCP's footprint, we will regularly communicate with, listen to, and engage local communities in the work of the CHSCP. We will harness their experience to both inform and improve the way we safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

**Enabling high quality safeguarding practice.** We will promote awareness, improve knowledge and work in a way that is characterised by an attitude of constructive professional challenge.

**Fostering a culture of transparency, learning and improvement.** We will enable the CHSCP to learn from the lived experience of children and continuously improve the quality of multi-agency practice.

# Our Priorities

## **Priority 1: The Health & Stability of the Safeguarding Workforce**

**Outcome:** Safeguarding partners, relevant agencies and named organisations attract, retain, develop, and support their workforce. A healthy and stable workforce contributes to high quality safeguarding practice that improves outcomes for children and young people.

## **Priority 2: Active Anti-Racist Practice**

**Outcome:** The partnership's approach to safeguarding children and young people in a 'racialised society' is characterised by active anti-racism. This is reflected in the people employed, the policies developed, and the practice undertaken. Practice that disproportionately and negatively impacts on Black and Global Majority children (and their outcomes) is identified and reduced. Children and their families are confident in challenging their experiences of racism and have mechanisms in place to escalate their concerns, practitioners are confident in challenging racism and there is evidence this is being done. Children and families tell us that they can see change.

## **Priority 3: The Voice of Children and Young People**

**Outcome:** Multi-agency safeguarding practice reflects the lived experience of children and young people. The voices of children and young people are central to all aspects of practice across the child's journey in the safeguarding system. These influence action and improve outcomes.

## **Priority 4: Getting the Basics Right**

**Outcome:** Safeguarding practice in the City of London and Hackney is at least good. Children and young people are effectively protected from harm by early, robust, timely and coordinated multi-agency intervention and support.

## **Priority 5: The Appetite to Learn**

**Outcome:** Children and young people are effectively safeguarded by professionals being actively engaged with the CHSCP's learning & improvement framework. Leaders encourage independent scrutiny, challenge performance, and embed lessons for practice improvement across their respective organisations.

## **Priority 6: Making the Invisible Visible**

**Outcome:** The activity of safeguarding partners, relevant agencies and named organisations makes children and young people who live in groups and communities that are less visible and less engaged with public services safer. Of specific relevance to our local context, legislation in respect of Unregistered Educational Settings (UES) is amended by government and the CHSCP obtains reassurance that the safeguarding arrangements of all settings are sufficiently robust.

## Our Pledge

**The Health & Stability of the Safeguarding Workforce** - Without a healthy and engaged workforce, no agency can fully participate in and support the work of the partnership. The CHSCP will therefore seek to develop a better understanding of the pressures that staff and volunteers face and the steps that can be taken to mitigate them. This work will be undertaken in the context of what we know about the current conditions – Covid-19, organisational change, and restructure, reduced resourcing levels and increased demand. It will include evaluation of workforce stability, its capacity, and the support available to help deliver high-quality practice.

**Active Anti-Racist Practice** – Through our collective leadership, we will model our values and promote a way of working that puts active anti-racism front and centre. This will be seen in the strategies we develop, the decisions we take and the people we employ. Critically, active anti-racist practice will be evidenced in the behaviours of our staff and volunteers. Through a relentless focus on improvement and challenge, Black and Global Majority children and families will see, hear and feel the difference when engaged by those responsible for their help and protection.

**The Voice of Children and Young People** - We will support and enable a culture of working that routinely seeks out and reflects the voices of children and young people. The lived experience of local children and young people and their voices will be evident in the policies we create, the practice we review and the communication channels that our wider partnership creates. Importantly, it will be evident in our casework and our intervention to improve outcomes for children and young people.

**Getting the Basics Right** - Whilst welcoming innovation, the CHSCP is aware that good practice begins with getting the basics right. We will maintain focus on ensuring these aspects are embedded in our work covering the journey of the child through the safeguarding system. This includes our approach to early help, children in need (including those with SEND), child protection, looked after children and care leavers. We will also concentrate on those areas that require strengthening as identified by our Learning & Improvement Framework, local intelligence and the CHSCP strategic data analyst.

**The Appetite to Learn** - We are committed to maintaining our improvement journey and to that end, we will actively seek out and embrace opportunities to learn. Our quality assurance activity remains structured on our learning and improvement framework. We will routinely revisit the action plans to ensure that identified improvements are reflected in contemporary practice. Critically, we will respect the independent scrutiny role of the Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner, the right to 'roam', the right to ask difficult questions and the right respectfully challenge. Whenever required, safeguarding partners, relevant agencies and named organisations will provide whatever information they can to address a relevant enquiry or concern.

**Making the Invisible Visible** - The CHSCP will seek to better understand the vulnerabilities that can negatively impact on the outcomes for children and young people, particularly with those for whom oversight, and engagement is limited. We will seek to develop a more complete understanding of existing and emerging harms and work with communities to mitigate and prevent them. We will seek to understand vulnerability based on age, location, need and the context of young people's lives, at home, in care and in the public spaces and places (including the internet) they frequent.