






Waltham Forest Safeguarding Partnership Arrangements – December 2024

This paper provides an overview of the safeguarding partnership arrangements in Waltham Forest, in line with statutory requirements for safeguarding adults and children.

Waltham Forest Council	NHS North East London Integrated Care Board	Metropolitan Police	Education
			TBC

1. The Safeguarding Partners

The Care Act 2014 specifies three core partners who are members of Safeguarding Adults Boards. Under the Children Act 2004 and Working Together 2023, these are also defined as the Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSP) and Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSP). There is also a requirement for all education, early years and childcare settings to be appropriately included in the safeguarding arrangements.

	Lead Safeguarding Partner (LSP)	Delegated Safeguarding Partner (DSP)
Waltham Forest Council	Linzi Roberts-Egan, Chief Executive	Nicky Crouch, Director of Children’s Services / Marc Gadsby, Director of Adults’ Services
NHS North East London Integrated Care Board	Zina Etheridge, Chief Executive Officer / Diane Jones, Chief Nursing Officer	Rob Nicholls, NEL Director of Nursing & Safeguarding / Korkor Ceasar, NEL Deputy Director of SGC / Cressida Zielinski, Designated Nurse for SGC
Metropolitan Police	Matt Twist, Assistant Chief Constable	Dan Card, Chief Superintendent, North East Basic Command Unit
Education	TBC	TBC

2. How the Lead Safeguarding Partners discharge their duties in Waltham Forest to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

The LSP are accountable for the effectiveness and outcomes of local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Waltham Forest Safeguarding Partnership forms part of the wider geographical footprints covered by NHS North East London Integrated Care Boards (NEL ICB) and the Metropolitan Police respectively. The joint core functions of the LSP will therefore be discharged through the following mechanisms:

- A round table of the LSP (Council and NHS NEL ICB) convening with the Police DSP (and others as required) at least annually
- A dedicated meeting of the London Safeguarding Children Partnership comprising Police and all other LSPs, at least annually
- Escalation of emerging issues to the Police LSP as required

3. DSP function through the Safeguarding Partnership Executive

A well-embedded joined up approach exists in Waltham Forest which enables the Safeguarding Partnership, across adults and children to work effectively and efficiently with the local Health Partnerships and the Community Safety Partnership, known locally as SafetyNet. The Safeguarding Partnership Executive is a mature and well-established leadership group which operates as the forum for the DSP, where the three safeguarding partners have equal and joint responsibility for the oversight and governance of the adults' and children's safeguarding arrangements.

The Safeguarding Partnership Executive will meet quarterly and will be supported by the Strategic Partnership Unit (SPU). Chairing by one of the Safeguarding Partners will work on an annual rotation starting with Police for 12 months from January 2025. Relevant Agencies (as listed below) will attend as required.

4. Relevant Agencies

The current partnership arrangements in Waltham Forest reflect the commitment and contribution of a wide partnership base and this is reflected in the naming of relevant agencies, who are central to enabling safeguarding arrangements to work effectively in the borough. This is done through collaboration and working together, as active participants whether through membership of the partnerships directly or via the range of working groups pertinent to specific areas of practice to improve outcomes for adults, children and families. The relevant agencies in Waltham Forest are:

- Community Health - North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT)
- Community Health - Tower Hamlets GP Care Group (providing 0-19 health services)
- Department for work and pensions
- Healthwatch Waltham Forest
- HM Prisons & Probation
- Hospital(s) - Barts Health NHS Trust
- Housing
- London Fire Brigade
- Newham Safeguarding Children's Partnership and Safeguarding Adults Board
- Voluntary sector organisations working with Waltham Forest residents
- Waltham Forest GP Federation
- Waltham Forest schools, colleges and other settings including early years and childcare, regardless of size or type

Waltham Forest have in common with Newham their Police and ICB safeguarding partners and there is consensus that closer cross-border working is imperative.

The Waltham Forest Safeguarding Partnership recognises the importance of the breadth of the education / early years / childcare sector being represented and commits to enabling this through a dedicated education safeguarding subgroup of the Partnership. 'Safeguarding in Settings' will comprise representatives from across the different education settings' networks and forums. Two members of this subgroup will join the DSP via the Safeguarding Partnership Executive (Local Authority, Police and Integrated Care Board) to represent education. This will enable the effective synthesis of education voices at a more strategic level of decision making within the Safeguarding Partnership, ensuring all education settings remain central to safeguarding procedures and systems.

5. Funding

The Strategic Partnership Boards are financed by contributions from statutory partners and key relevant agencies. Partners also contribute time and resource to the Partnerships through chairing meetings, co-facilitating statutory reviews / learning events and any other specific pieces of work as required. Additional funds are requested from partners to finance statutory reviews as they arise. Funding arrangements will be reviewed annually.

6. Independent Chairing / Scrutiny

The Waltham Forest Strategic Partnership will commission at least one independent person to provide chairing and / or scrutiny functions as set out in respective statutory guidance for Safeguarding Adults Boards and Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships. Throughout each year, the independent chair / scrutineer will view and comment on relevant areas of practice within the partnership, providing challenge and holding partners to account, both collectively and individually as required.

The Independent chair / scrutineer will provide independent, rigorous, and effective support and challenge both at a strategic and operational level and will be regarded as a critical friend, providing opportunities for two-way discussion and reflection between frontline practitioners and leaders to encourage and enable strong clear strategic leadership.

7. Identifying, responding to and monitoring the needs of children, families and adults in the area

The core business of the Waltham Forest Safeguarding Partnership is reviewed biennially and comprises a comprehensive needs assessment to identify areas requiring greater partnership focus and collaboration in relation to safeguarding. Direct links and join up exists with the community safety and health and wellbeing partnerships which enable cross-cutting themes to be addressed and also makes best use of resources.

Data regarding how the effectiveness of the help being provided to children, families and adults is monitored through each of the Partnerships via oversight of progress against action plans and quarterly performance dashboards.

The Safeguarding Partnership promotes escalation as a valued aspect of safeguarding practice and is underpinned by a clear process available to all professionals.

8. Hearing the voices of residents

The views and opinions of adults, children and families in Waltham Forest are captured through a range of methods. The Safeguarding Partnership recognises that hearing from adults, children and families is not always literal and can happen through professionals or through data. Whichever mechanism is utilised for hearing communities' voices, this will be sense checked to identify what this tells us about the matter being explored. Hearing the voice of the child / family / person in the Strategic Partnership Boards, will be woven through our work activity and delivery plans and will take place via:

- Existing engagement pieces of work such as resident insight survey
- Dedicated engagement with relevant resident groups and / or individuals
- Themes emerging from professionals, providers and / or through quality assurance
- Feedback from different resident networks / insight groups such as Youth Independent Advisory Group, Citizen's Panel, Place Based Partnership Health Network

The annual reports will detail how residents' voices have been heard and responded to and will also summarise what difference has been made as a result.

9. Information sharing

The Waltham Forest Safeguarding Partnerships has adopted the pan London safeguarding procedures for adults and children which articulates the arrangements that clearly set out to the safeguarding partners the processes and principles for sharing information and data safely and effectively.

10. Annual Report

Annual reports will be completed each year to evidence progress and performance of the Safeguarding Partnership.

11. Thresholds documents

Guidance on thresholds is articulated in two separate documents for adults' and children's services. They clearly set out local understanding and assist professionals within Waltham Forest to identify suitable responses to the needs of those individuals / families they are working with. This provides a guide, recognising that each person / family network is unique, and their needs should be considered on a case-by-case basis, using professional judgement supported by the threshold guidance documents. These documents also set out the local criteria for action in a way that is transparent, accessible and easily understood. The Safeguarding Partnership will monitor the effectiveness of these documents.

12. Business management arrangements for WFSCB

The Strategic Partnership Unit provides administrative and policy support to the safeguarding partnership. This includes support to the independent Chair / Scrutineer, board members and the range of panels and subgroups delivering against the Partnerships' core business. The Head of Strategic Partnerships who manages the unit is also the advisor to the One Panel.

13. Learning and improving practice

Learning and improving practice are at the centre of the work of the partnerships. A cross-cutting group operates across the four boards and oversees the annual multi-agency audit programme, development of resources such as bitesize guide videos, practitioner's guidance, multi-agency training and events. Evidence is collated on how practice has improved as a result of all the learning and improving practice through practitioner discussion groups, surveys and audits.

14. Statutory reviews

As part of the unique and joined-up arrangements in Waltham Forest One Panel is the multi-agency forum dedicated to considering circumstances for learning and / or meeting criteria for statutory reviews (child safeguarding practice reviews, safeguarding adult reviews and domestic homicide reviews {DHR}), and also acts as the rapid review for serious incidents relating to children. The monthly Panel takes a 'think family' approach and includes membership from across services, including police, health (providers and commissioners), children and adults social care, community safety and education. Where One Panel timings or agendas necessitate, extraordinary rapid reviews will be scheduled to meet statutory requirements. The Panel which commenced in September 2016 functions efficiently and is well respected by all partners. The standing membership has enabled the group to develop a consistent approach to decision making.

The DSP, via the Safeguarding Partnership Executive (or Chair of SafetyNet for DHRs) will review and endorse statutory review or other learning recommendations by the One Panel, as required.

The One Panel and Child Death Review (CDR) Hub are interconnected and have a two-way communication link.

Statutory reviews will be commissioned by the DSP in line with relevant statutory guidance. Final reports will be published via the Safeguarding Partnership Boards' web pages and resultant learning taken forward accordingly.

15. Review

These multi-agency safeguarding arrangements remain under review and are subject to change as required.