



Business Plan

2016 – 2019

Part 1

Forward by the Chair of Northumberland Safeguarding Children Board

Welcome to Northumberland Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) Business Plan for 2016-19. The plan builds on the work of the Board undertaken since its inception in 2006 and you can find a detailed account of the progress and learning achieved in the 2015-16 Annual Report.

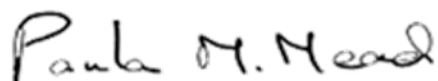
This plan covers a three-year period it sits alongside the Northumberland Children and Young Peoples Strategic Statement for 2015-18.

The Safeguarding Board has representatives from a wide range of organisations which are directly involved in providing services to children and young people and their families. Board members seek to provide a leadership and challenge in all matters relating to the safety and protection of children and young people in Northumberland. We want to make sure that the safeguarding of children and young people in Northumberland is and remains a priority, whether as a volunteer in a youth group, a teacher in a school, a social worker, nurse, doctor, police officer or in other positions. It will also provide a framework for those who are responsible for making decisions about the future of services in the county.

The plan is written in two parts, the first sets out why we have a Safeguarding Board, its purpose, main functions and who is involved and what can be expected for them. It also states the priorities by which the Board should be judged and held to account and how the Board and its sub-committees will contribute to this. The second provides more detail around how the Board will work to achieve its priorities involving a wider range of people, including children and young people

The Annual Report for 2015-16 sets out progress and learning over the past year and also serves as a review of the current priorities.

We anticipate further changes to safeguarding services over the three years of this plan in the light of national and local drivers and budget restraints affecting all the key NSCB partners. In setting its priorities, Board members have sought to ensure that the Board will be able to lead, influence, support and respond to how this may impact upon keeping children and young people safe, in a way that is realistic, builds on the solid work of the past, and maintain confidence in the arrangements for how people work together across Northumberland.



Paula Mead
NSCB Independent Chair

Executive Summary

NSCB's new Business Plan sets out:

- Our priorities for 2016-19
- Why we have chosen these priorities
- How the Board sees its role
- The considerations and challenges the Board is responding to
- How we will organise ourselves to achieve improved outcomes in each of our priority areas
- How we will be able to tell if we are making a difference
- How we will learn through working together so that children and young people in Northumberland are kept safe and protected

The plan is our public statement of what we intend to contribute, how we will do this and how we will be accountable for this

NSCB is a partnership of senior representatives and leaders from organisations and bodies who work with children, young people and families in Northumberland (appendix 1)

NSCB is a statutory body that the County Council is required to have in place to ensure that all organisations and bodies work together to ensure that arrangements to protect and safeguard children and young people work well and are of a high standard (appendix 2)

The Board works alongside the Families and Children's Trust, (FACT) and the Children and Young Peoples Strategic Statement (CYPSS) ([for more information click here](#)), which set out how people will work together to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families. The NSCB plan fits closely with the CYPSS and makes sure that safeguarding children is at the centre of all our work (please see appendix 4 for examples)

There are currently a number of important changes taking place nationally and locally, NSCB will consider whether these changes impact on our priorities and objectives. Some of the important changes are as follows:

- Outcome of enquiries into the historic and current prevalence and nature of child sexual exploitation.
- Further financial restraints on public sector services
- Introduction of inspections of LSCBs
- Organisational changes

We intend this plan to demonstrate that NSCB is:

- Clear about the priorities for 2016-19
- Learning from case reviews and other lessons
- Is engaging the Board and its partners in developing the Business Plan
- Able to make choices about what can be achieved at a time when all of our partners are under financial and organisational pressure
- Promoting improvement in practice and service delivery
- Providing accountability for the NSCB

Board Strategic Priorities for 2016-19

- **Improving focus on the child's experience of services and better embedding it in practice**
- **Further promoting preventative and early help approaches**
- **Improving partnership working with education settings on the safeguarding agenda**
- **Improving support to especially vulnerable children and high risk adolescents**
- **Reviewing our response to sexual exploitation**

Explaining our priorities in more detail:

Priority – improving focus on the child's experience of services

In ensuring that children and young people are protected and kept safe, we need to be able to understand how they see and experience the things that happen to them and to consider the world from their perspective.

Therefore we want to focus on the following;

- Listening to and engaging with children, young people and their families in order that we might better be able to see things from their point of view
- Recognise and address issues that impact on children's lives such as poverty and acting as young carers
- Create opportunities for children, young people and their families to engage with and contribute to what the Board seeks to achieve
- Making sure that care planning for the child is robust, timely and sensitive to their needs and that they understand what decisions are being made about them and the reasons why
- Promote working together arrangements to ensure that when children need help, the help they receive is joined up, has clear purpose and direction and that children, young people and their families are partners in this journey

So we would want to:

Build a culture of participation, to embed the participation of children and young people in organisations, processes and services.

Evaluate the effectiveness of different aspects of the child's journey into help and services.

Priority – further promoting preventative and early help approaches

The NSCB is committed to providing help and support to as many families as possible at the level of need. Currently too many families are having to be referred through children's social care in order to access early help services, The Council and partners are working to improve preventative approaches and access to early help through increasing the number of early help assessments, team around the family and early help plans. The NSCB has an Early Help and Early Intervention sub-committee which is providing a steer to this work and promoting the links between early help and safeguarding services.

So:

We will promote the development of capacity, resilience and independence of families through supporting the early help approaches across universal and specialist services.

Ensure that local agencies work together to identify children and families who would benefit from early help following the thresholds of need guidance.

Scrutinise the early help offer in relation to neglectful behaviours.

Priority – improving partnership working with education settings on the safeguarding agenda

Schools and other educational establishments have individual responsibilities to keep children safe but they are also key partners in raising awareness, building resilience with students and their families and providing other preventative interventions.

We have representation on the LSCB and we would like to further strengthen that and through this, improve our joint knowledge and expertise on addressing the range of safeguarding issues that present in this area. This includes reducing absence; influencing the quality and diversity of pastoral support for all pupils but particularly those disadvantaged; adopting and promoting zero tolerance of bullying; collaborating to improve outcomes for pupils with SEND; and ensuring compliance with the Prevent Duty.

We want to:

Further develop and co-produce a safeguarding assurance, improvement and development 'offer' for education establishments.

Act as a two-way channel of communication between the LSCB and all types of education establishments in Northumberland.

Emerging safeguarding issues are communicated effectively to all educational establishments

Priority - improving support to especially vulnerable children and high risk adolescents

NSCB in past plans has always sought to focus its attention on groups of children who are identified as being more vulnerable than others. This priority reflects a continuation of this.

NSCB understands high need households to mean those family units that we know from experience are more likely to face difficulties in general and specifically in terms of prioritising and meeting the needs of the children and young people who live in them.

This is a complex agenda, involving issues such as poverty, crime, anti- social behaviour housing, environment, health and developmental issues, substance misuse, mental health, domestic violence and other factors that can be seen to increase risks to children and young people. The Troubled Families programme is providing an impetus and framework to be intervening in the lives of children where poor outcomes are the result of these factors. The Family Recovery team is playing a major role in turning around the lives of very complex and troubled families.

We also know that adolescents face particular risk, such as sexual exploitation, substance misuse, self-harming behaviour, bullying, mental health problems, eating disorders and identity issues that we have a number of ongoing work streams.

We want to:

Monitor and review the outcomes for looked after children including those placed out of authority.

Ensure that the vulnerability checklist continues to identify and is used to identify services to support vulnerable young people.

Scrutinise and review the services to children that have emotional health issues, self-harming and suicidal behaviour.

Priority - reviewing our response to sexual exploitation

In the past two years the nature and extent of child sexual exploitation (CSE) has become much better understood although with a recognition that there is opportunity for further development at this stage and that over the next few years we should expect to know more.

A Police led Sexual Exploitation Investigation has established that young people in the North East are as at risk from CSE as in other more high-profile parts of the country but we would want:

Continue to develop a targeted training programme in relation to SE in Northumberland

Ensure that SE becomes a key priority for established multi-agency group's community and faith groups.

Develop peer lead training programmes in partnership with the youth service and youth organisations

Northumberland Safeguarding Children Board

The Board meets a minimum of 6 occasions a year; it may meet additionally for purpose of development and review.

It is chaired by an Independent Chair appointed by the Director of Children's Services (DCS) on behalf of the local authority, who are required to ensure that a LSCB is in place. Board members are involved in this appointment and the chair is annually appraised by the DCS. The current chair took up the role in April 2015.

All partner agencies identify and commit a senior representative to become a member of the Board. Board members work to a role description and new members are provided with induction. Attendance rates are published annually as a part of the Annual Report.

In addition, Board members will serve as members of the business sub-committee and sub-committees and/or identify personnel from within their organisations to take up roles within these.

Some organisations are required to "designate" particular roles who become members of the Board these include a designated nurse and a designated doctor.

The Board has three Lay Person member positions.

The Board has a programme of development for Board members which focuses on being a successful and effective LSCB. It seeks to equip members with the necessary skills, style, approach and knowledge to be successful.

The Board is funded by a range of contributions from partners. The Board will also draw on external funding streams where available.

Business Group and Sub-Committees

This plan sets out for the purposes of explanation and information the arrangements and current ongoing development of these;

The Business Group

The Business Group drives the work of the NSCB, ensuring that its statutory functions are met and priorities are progressed.

This group also sets the strategic framework for the NSCB Multi-Agency Audit as part of the Learning and Improvement Framework including;

- Agreeing with the relevant sub-committee or business group a lead auditor for each audit.
- Agreeing the appropriate methodology and ensuring practitioner involvement.

The purpose of the business sub-committee is;

- To support the effective and efficient operation of the Board and its priorities and activities, it does this by meeting regularly to action decisions reached by the Board and to coordinate and oversee the work of the sub-committees
- To prepare for Board meetings
- To respond to Board decisions and requests to ensure these are followed through
- To consider, scope, and further research upon key issues and developments
- To schedule and oversee required reviews, tasks and other activities that relate to the overall effective functioning of the Board
- To create and ensure sufficient time and space is created to ensure the maintenance of the Boards evidence base and intelligence within a collaborative and partnership based environment

The business sub-committee works to the direction of the Board and maintains a formal record of its activities.

The Sub-Committees

The Board has a number of sub committees.

Serious Case Review Sub Committee

This Sub Committee considers and makes recommendations to the independent chair whether a serious case review or a smaller scale review of individual case should happen following the death or serious injury of a child or in the case of child deaths, this is where abuse or neglect is known or suspected to be a factor.

Policy, Procedures, Education and Training Sub Committee

This committee develops policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people taking into account national and sub-regional work. It aims to seek agreement across agencies about policies and procedures. It is also responsible for ensuring that high quality, up to date, effective child focussed training is provided and evaluated.

Quality Improvement and Performance Sub Committee (QIP)

This Sub Committee monitors partner compliance with the statutory requirement to have effective safeguarding arrangements in place (Section 11) and develops a Performance Management Framework which collates data from across the partnership about safeguarding activity.

This group also quality assures the Multi-agency audits undertaken by the NSCB;

- Quality assures the audit processes and reports.
- Identifies and evaluates the impact of audits.
- Ensures the learning is disseminated to the relevant board or sub-committee.

Early Help and Early Intervention Sub Committee

This committee forms the focus for the Boards activity in regard to the important areas of prevention and early intervention.

It also leads on helping partners to determine the shape and effectiveness of the development of early help and provides an opportunity to contribute to a shared understanding of what Early Help and Early Intervention means for Northumberland.

It assesses the effectiveness, timeliness and the impact of help offered and provided to Children and families.

Other groups

Communication and Engagement Sub Committee

This task group produces a communications strategy for the Board to consider and lead on engagement programmes to involve children and young people in the work of the Board.

This group also oversees the Boards website development, the regular briefings and resources for organisations and practitioners.

It also supports the Board and the chair in managing media relations as and when required in liaison with the relevant departments in partner agencies.

Sexual Exploitation Partnership Group

This group is a partnership group with Northumberland Safeguarding Adults Board and Safer Northumberland Partnership.

This group will continue to work in partnership with police and key agencies in progressing the Police led Sexual Exploitation Investigation.

It will further review and improve the Northumberland Sexual Exploitation Strategy particularly with Northumberland Safeguarding Adults Board and Northumberland Community Safety Partnership

It will continue implementation of the CSE Action Plan to progress our response to and prevention of CSE

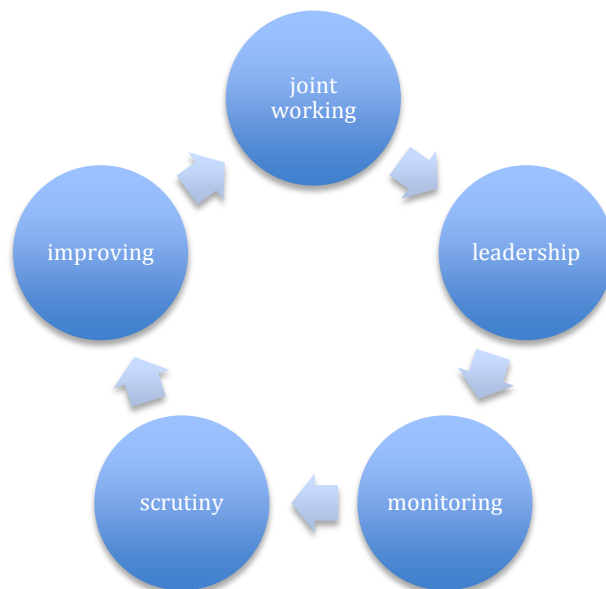
Education Reference Group

This is a new group which is chaired by the Head of Inclusion from the Education and Skills Service, with representatives from Education Partnerships, Further Education, CYPS, Health, LSCB and the Police.

The main aim of this group is to develop a framework to support a new relationship between education establishments and the LSCB and to develop and produce a safeguarding assurance, improvement and development framework for education establishments.

How the sub-committees make a difference

As well as working to specific objectives relating to each priority, each sub-committee work with the business sub-committee to support the Board delivering its key functions.



Each sub-committee is chaired or co-chaired by a person appointed by the Board in order to ensure best fit between reflecting the membership of the Board, skills and knowledge and chairing skills. Each chair is a member of the business sub-committee and may already be a Board member.

The sub-committees provide an opportunity for individuals from across partner organisations to work together, share experience, expertise and a common interest.

The sub-committees seek to make a difference by;

- Being focused and outcome led
- Bringing together local expertise and knowledge
- Providing leadership and directly supporting the Board's priorities
- Contributing to the development of a learning system
- Making the best use of time and resources

We will also use **Task and Finish groups**. These are short term groups convened usually by the business sub-committee to address the requirement to look at specific areas or new issues with the specific purpose of ensuring that the Board is able to consider any new proposals or proposed solutions to complex issues on the basis of a thorough, systematic and considered analysis.

How it all fits together

Ensuring children and young people are safe and protected ultimately requires every member of the community to contribute and behave appropriately.

Children and young people also have a key role in being safe and knowing that when they are not safe they can access advice, support and help.

All organisations represented on the Board recognise that the way they organise and deliver their services has a critical part to play in helping ensure children and young people are safe and responding quickly and effectively when they are not.

By coming together as a Board, members speak for the organisations and interests they lead and represent and are expected to help the Board to ensure that everyone;

- Has a shared understanding of the risks and harm that children and young people face
- Has in place clear arrangements for preventing, recognising and responding to the threats that children and young people can face
- Have ensured that their people work together to common ends

To lead and support this Board members undertake to;

- Monitor and be in a position to form a judgement about all aspects of and activities that relate to ensuring that children and young people are safe.
- Provide challenge to each other and to act to make improvements.
- Have in place shared arrangements, policies, procedures and guidance, training and resources.
- Focus specifically on when children are not kept safe in order to learn from this.
- Have a clear view about how risk is managed and minimised.
- Develop relationships based on trust and challenge.
- Demonstrate that they are able to sympathetically, openly and quickly look at what did not work, as it should and act to ensure partner organisations and the board learn and improve.
- Ensure that all levels of decision making and authority there is an understanding and a commitment to prevention, early intervention and early help and effective protective services.

In taking forward this plan, the NSCB and its members will strive to be open, diligent and organised so as to play their key role in providing leadership, support and improvement in how communities, families, organisations and professions come together with one purpose in mind.

Appendix 1 Board Membership

Members	
Representing:	Name
Independent Chair	Paula Mead
Children's Services, Northumberland County Council	Daljit Lally, Executive Director Wellbeing & Community Health Andy Johnson, Director of Education and Skills Cath McEvoy Service Director, Children's Services Alan Hartwell Senior Manager, Education, Safeguarding & Performance Team, NCC
NSCB	Robin Harper-Coulson, Business Manager, NSCB.(in attendance)
Northumberland County Council	Wayne Daley, Lead Member Children's Services (Observer) Julie Young, Senior Vulnerable Persons Housing Officer/Housing Access Manager Ian Billham, Strategic Community Safety Manager, NCC
Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group	Julie Ross, Chief Operating Officer, Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group Annie Topping, Director of Nursing, Quality & Patient Safety, Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group Margaret Tench, Designated Nurse, Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group
Cumbria and North East sub-region NHS England	Anne Graney, Quality and Safety Manager, Cumbria and North East sub-region NHS England
Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust	Debbie Reape, Deputy Director of Nursing/General Manager Children's Services, Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust Dr Naomi Jones, Designated Doctor, Northumberland
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust	Vida Morris, Group Nurse Director In Patient Care
Northumbria Police	Paul Woods, Detective Chief Inspector
Northumbria Rehabilitation Company	Liz Kelly, Director of Offender Management
National Probation Services	Carina Carey, NPS, Head of North of Tyne Probation Service, Sheila Askew, NPS, Deputy Head of North of Tyne Probation Service
Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service	Deborah Brown, Community Safety, Fire & Rescue Alex Bennett, Chief Fire Officer

Barnardo's North East	Julie McVeigh, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Responsible for Northumberland Locality) Barnardo's East Region
Action for Children North East	Gill Physick, Action for Children Christine Joyce, Operations Manager,
CAFCASS	Carole Goodman, Service Manager
Adult Safeguarding	Anna English, Strategic Safeguarding Manager, Northumberland Safeguarding Adults Board
VOICES Network	Julie Dodson, Director
Lay Members	Sue Reilly Jill Scarr Nicholas Greenly
School	John Barnes, Head Teacher Astley High School Deborah Reeman, Head Teacher Prudhoe High School Barry Frost, Head Teacher, Nunnykirk Centre for Dyslexia
Public Health	Karen Herne, Senior Public Health Service Manager

Appendix 2 Functions of the Local Safeguarding Children Board

Local Safeguarding Children Boards have a central role in supporting and ensuring that all organisations that work with children and young people work effectively together to reduce risk, prevent and respond to situations where children and young people are likely to suffer significant harm or abuse.

The LSCB is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how relevant organisations within Northumberland will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and for ensuring the effectiveness of the work undertaken. As such, the NSCB provides the strategic direction and operating framework that is needed to ensure the relevant organisations focus on their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children and young people within the county.

NSCB has a strategic role in scrutinising and challenging the overall quality of safeguarding work so that practice continues to improve. It does this in two ways:

- By co-coordinating the safeguarding activity of all partners; and
- Ensuring that safeguarding work is consistent, of a high quality, and effective.

The Board is not an operational body, nor does it deliver services to children, young people and families. Its role is to co-ordinate, to ensure the effectiveness of each member organisation and good collaborative working between agencies to keep children safe from harm. It also contributes to the broader planning, commissioning and delivery of services.

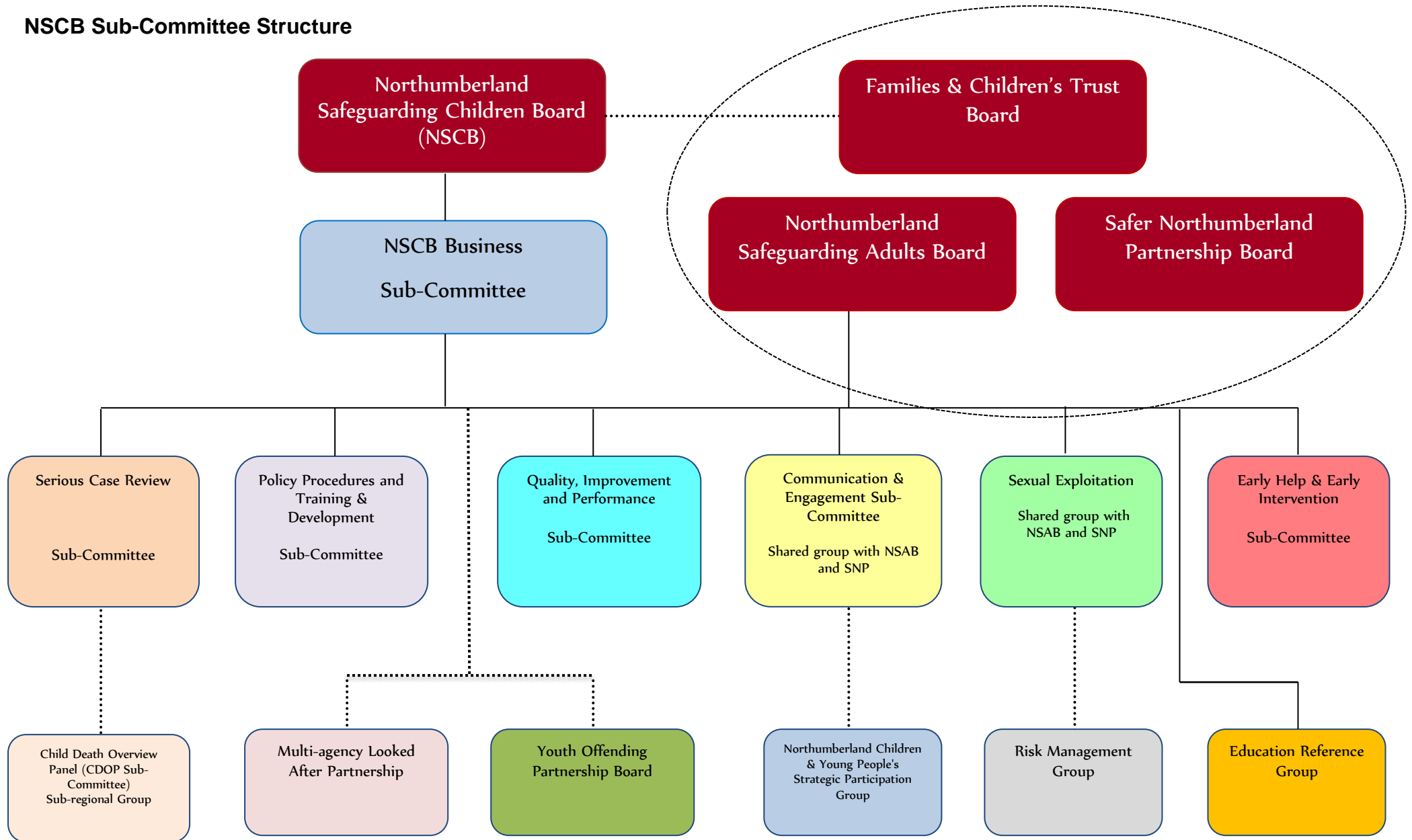
To carry out its co-coordinating and monitoring role, NSCB has responsibility for the following functions, which are defined in some detail in [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2015\)](#):

- Monitoring how effectively organisations are fulfilling their duties under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 to safeguard and promote children's welfare, including safe recruitment practices promoting better understanding of children's safeguarding issues in the wider local community setting up and running a programme of inter-agency safeguarding training
- Developing and reviewing inter-agency policies and procedures to safeguard children
- Carrying out Serious Case Reviews taking an overview of all child deaths (under 18) in the area and identifying any potentially contributory recurrent factors, limitations or limitations in services provided by one or more agencies.

The local authority and the Director of Children's Services hold a key role in ensuring the Board is established and effective. Board members however share accountability for the operation and effectiveness of the Board as well as having responsibility within and on behalf of their organisations for ensuring that the work of the Board, joint working arrangements and procedures for protecting children and young people in Northumberland are of the highest standard.

Appendix 4

NSCB Sub-Committee Structure



Appendix 4 [Northumberland Children and Young Peoples Strategic Statement \(2015-2018\)](#)
and fits with NSCB Business Plan 2016-19

In this way this Business Plan seeks to form a direct contribution to the following elements of the [Children and Young Persons Strategic Statement \(2015 - 2018\)](#)

Outcome *All children and young people living in safe and secure environments*

Related strategies:

- Looked After Children's Strategy
- Corporate Plan
- Service Statements
- Integrated e-safety strategy in schools
- Safeguarding Board Annual Reports
- Northumberland Workforce Strategy
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Example of shared priorities:

- Meet the safeguarding needs of children and young people who are at most risk of harm
- Promote the safeguarding of vulnerable children and young people

Preventative and targeted services

- Adequately equip the workforce to work effectively with vulnerable children and families through the provision of training and development opportunities
- Support the work of the NSCB and partner agencies in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people
- Ensure that resources are suitably targeted to respond to the requirements of new legislative/statutory regulations
- Improve e-safety processes in schools
- Drug and alcohol awareness and harm reduction
- Improving young people's emotional health and wellbeing and access to mental health services