



HM Government

Working together to safeguard children

**A guide to inter-agency working to
safeguard and promote the welfare of
children**

March 2015

Chapter 2: Organisational responsibilities

1. The previous chapter set out the need for organisations, working together, to take a coordinated approach to ensure effective safeguarding arrangements. This is supported by the duty on local authorities under section 10 of the Children Act 2004 to make arrangements to promote cooperation to improve the well-being of all children in the authority's area.
2. In addition, a range of individual organisations and professionals working with children and families have specific statutory duties to promote the welfare of children and ensure they are protected from harm.

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places duties on a range of organisations and individuals to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Various other statutory duties apply to other specific organisations working with children and families and are set out in this chapter.

3. Section 11 places a duty on:
 - local authorities and district councils that provide children's and other types of services, including children's and adult social care services, public health, housing, sport, culture and leisure services, licensing authorities and youth services;
 - NHS organisations, including the NHS England and clinical commissioning groups, NHS Trusts and NHS Foundation Trusts;
 - the police, including police and crime commissioners and the chief officer of each police force in England and the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime in London;
 - the British Transport Police;
 - the National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Companies;²²
 - Governors/Directors of Prisons and Young Offender Institutions;
 - Directors of Secure Training Centres;

²² The section 11 duty is conferred on the Community Rehabilitation Companies by virtue of contractual arrangements entered into with the Secretary of State.

- Principals of Secure Colleges; and
- Youth Offending Teams/Services.

4. These organisations should have in place arrangements that reflect the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including:

- a clear line of accountability for the commissioning and/or provision of services designed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
- a senior board level lead to take leadership responsibility for the organisation's safeguarding arrangements;
- a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, both in individual decisions and the development of services;
- clear whistleblowing procedures, which reflect the principles in Sir Robert Francis's Freedom to Speak Up review and are suitably referenced in staff training and codes of conduct, and a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to be addressed;²³
- arrangements which set out clearly the processes for sharing information, with other professionals and with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB);
- a designated professional lead (or, for health provider organisations, named professionals) for safeguarding. Their role is to support other professionals in their agencies to recognise the needs of children, including rescue from possible abuse or neglect. Designated professional roles should always be explicitly defined in job descriptions. Professionals should be given sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to fulfil their child welfare and safeguarding responsibilities effectively;
- safe recruitment practices for individuals whom the organisation will permit to work regularly with children, including policies on when to obtain a criminal record check;
- appropriate supervision and support for staff, including undertaking safeguarding training:
 - employers are responsible for ensuring that their staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and creating an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role;

²³ Sir Robert Francis's Freedom to Speak Up review report can be found at https://freedomtospeakup.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/F2SU_web.pdf.