

Contextual Safeguarding Local Area Implementation Group Terms of Reference

Contextual Safeguarding is a conceptual and practical framework for advancing safeguarding responses to extra-familial contexts and relationships in which young people experience, or at risk of, abuse. At the University of Bedfordshire we have been developing Contextual Safeguarding, in partnership with a number of practitioners across the country, since 2013. The term was included in Working Together 2018, but is yet to be reflected in equivalent policy frameworks in the other UK nations. To embed this approach within safeguarding systems and consider the implications for the future policy and practice we are supporting a series of local areas to develop their own Contextual Safeguarding systems until 2022:

- The London Borough of Hackney was the first formal test site – in development since 2017
- Five of these are formal test sites outside of London - work commenced in 2019
- Four are parallel test sites in London - work commenced in 2019
- A further two are using funded intervention projects to explore CS approaches
- Many others are proceeding to the implement the approach drawing upon learning and resources published on the Contextual Safeguarding Network

This document outlines the Terms of Reference for an implementation group which draws together local areas from across England and Wales who are currently implementing the approach. The group is a sub-set of a wider Interest Network of areas who are starting to explore the approach but are yet to commence implementation. As members of this network further their work they will be invited to join the Local Area Implementation Group (LAIG).

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Group Aims

The Contextual Safeguarding Local Area Implementation Group (LAIG) seeks to develop, test and review CS principles and CS resources/activities to advance the approach. By meeting as a group, it aims to

- 1.1 Advance Contextual Safeguarding approaches and systemic change by providing a forum in which opportunities, development, challenges and risks can be shared.
- 1.2 Provide a structure through which the Contextual Safeguarding team can track and explore thematic developments in practice, or requirements from policy, to inform steps taken by other areas and decision-makers nationally

2. Group Objectives

- 2.1 Provide sector leadership for areas invested in developing a Contextual Safeguarding approach
- 2.2 Actively work together to address shared challenges or gaps in knowledge, thereby reducing demand on the Contextual Safeguarding team and building sector expertise
- 2.4 Share and discuss resources, approaches and structures that could be tested collectively to advance Contextual Safeguarding practices

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- 2.5 Review and provide feedback on Contextual Safeguarding resources
- 2.6 Provide critical challenge and scrutiny to the Contextual Safeguarding team, supporting the team to prioritise requests and focus on developing approaches/advice/evidence that is most required
- 2.7 Promote the voices of children and families when reflecting on potential next steps in implementing Contextual Safeguarding
- 2.8 Each group member is to act a conduit between the Contextual Safeguarding team and their area, as well as their sector, disseminating information from the programme into their respective bodies
- 2.9 Offer peer support and advice to wider members of the interest network on matters for which they are well placed to address (based on experience/expertise)
- 2.10 Where appropriate contribute case study examples that can be utilised by the sector and/or incorporated into training and presentation materials by the Contextual Safeguarding team

3. Accountability of the panel and members

- 3.1 LAIG members are accountable to their member organisations.
- 3.2 Members who attend LAIG meetings represent areas. The 'area' rather than the person is a member of the group. By becoming a member of the group, areas (and their leaders) commit to:
 - (where appropriate) lead sub group discussions on specific interest themes (i.e. meeting structures, thresholds) that might emerge over the course of the group's work
 - support/encourage their staff to join the CS network
 - identify staff who could actively champion the approach to build sector capacity in localities
 - Test/develop CS approaches and report learning at implementation group meetings
- 3.3 The LAIG is well placed to advise the Principal Investigator of the CS programme (Carlene Firmin) and project teams, but are not responsible for ensuring project delivery or directing/mandating the actions of the project team. The University of Bedfordshire is accountable for project delivery and to project funders.
- 3.4 Members of the LAIG will uphold confidentiality as agreed within the programme delivery team (including discussions, decisions and preliminary findings) unless prior agreement has been given to share outside of the group.
- 3.5 Should you have complaints about the delivery of the CS programme at any time please contact Professor Emily Munro, Director of the Institute of Applied Social Research which the Contextual Safeguarding Programme is based, on emily.munro@beds.ac.uk

4. Governance arrangements for the Contextual Safeguarding Programme

- 4.1 Specific projects within the CS programme have their own project boards or

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research advisory groups. In addition the CS programme is supported by, and feeds into:

- a) A UK Advisory Panel: Government Departments, National Associations, Regulators and Sector representatives – chaired independently by Dez Holmes, Research in Practice. The group meets twice a year to identify opportunities to implement the learning emerging from the programme – and associated groups including the LAIG – to inform the development/delivery of related policy and practice fields. A representative of the LAIG is welcome to represent the group at this meeting.
- b) Voluntary and Community Sector Collective: Meets three times a year to consider the implications of Contextual Safeguarding for the voluntary and community sector, and to develop processes through which to engage young people and families in the design of Contextual Safeguarding systems.

5. LAIG Chairing

- 5.1 The LAIG is chaired by Sarah Wright, Director of Children and Families, London Borough of Hackney, who acts independently of the project team

6. Membership

- 6.1 Members have been invited to join the LAIG because they represent an area who is actively implementing a CS approach. Current member areas are:

1. Barking and Dagenham
2. Brent
3. Brighton
4. Bristol
5. Devon
6. Ealing
7. Greater Manchester
8. Hackney
9. Kent
10. Knowsley
11. Lewisham
12. Lincolnshire
13. Merton
14. Salford
15. Sutton
16. Swansea
17. West Sussex
18. Wiltshire

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7. Functioning

- 7.1 The LAIG will meet twice a year for three hours to a) Discuss thematic challenges of areas of system change b) drill down into case examples in individual sites to develop practice learning c) feed into policy frameworks
- 7.2 Meetings will be held in either London or in one of the members' sites if they can host a meeting. Where possible members can phone or video-link into meetings when they are unable to attend in person
- 7.3 All disclosable documentation i.e. minutes and steering group papers will be made accessible upon request

8. Staffing

- 8.1 The LAIG will be supported by the CS Project Administrator who will minute all meetings and provide logistical support in preparation for each.