



Independent Scrutineer - Newham Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP)

ROLE DESCRIPTION

- Pay:** Day rate – inclusive of expenses
- Appointment:** Up to 20 days per year for a 3-year term (subject to annual review)
- Accountability:** Accountable to the NSCP Executive

CONTEXT

The Children Act 2004 and as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017 requires the three safeguarding partners to have a shared and equal duty to make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 has set out the arrangements for an independent scrutiny function, which should provide the critical challenge and appraisal of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. The role of the Scrutineer will be independent of the Newham Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP).

MAIN PURPOSE

The role of independent scrutiny is to provide assurance, through monitoring and challenge, in judging the effectiveness and quality of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area. This is undertaken through:

- Providing safeguarding partners and relevant agencies with independent, rigorous, and effective support and challenge at both a strategic and operational level.
- Providing assurance to the whole system in judging the effectiveness of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements through a range of scrutiny methods.
- Ensuring that statutory duties are being fulfilled, quality assurance mechanisms are in place, and that local child safeguarding practice reviews and national reviews are analysed, with key learning areas identified and effectively implemented across the safeguarding system.
- Ensuring that the voice of children and families is considered as part of scrutiny and that this is at the heart of arrangements through direct feedback, informing policy and practice.
- Being regarded as a 'critical friend' and provide opportunities for two-way discussion and reflection between frontline practitioners and leaders. This will encourage and enable strong, clear, strategic leadership.



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- Providing independent advice when there are disagreements between agencies and safeguarding partners and facilitate escalation procedures.
- Evaluating and contributing to multi-agency safeguarding published arrangements and the annual report, alongside feeding into the wider accountability systems such as inspections.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The role has a number of key areas of responsibility; these include:

1. To participate in some of the Performance and Quality Assurance sub group meetings and in particular to focus on:
 - The comprehensiveness of the partnerships multi agency data set, including the quality of analysis of such data, so that this can become an important tool with which the safeguarding partners can understand patterns, trends and themes in safeguarding in Newham
 - Single agency audits reported by agencies focusing on the quality of practice
 - NSCP multi agency audits
 - Voice and influence of children, families and the communities into services partnership strategy
2. To review the quality of Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, ensuring that purposeful recommendations arise from such reviews and that agencies are held to account for the implementation of these recommendations until such time as they are fully completed.
3. To review the Newham Safeguarding Children Partnership's Annual Report and plan.
4. To provide challenge and assurance in the development of the Newham Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP).
5. To maintain oversight of the use of the Newham Safeguarding Children Partnership Challenge and Escalation Policy.
6. To aid in dispute resolution within the NSCP.
7. To ensure that the voice of the child is at the heart of all aspects of scrutiny.
8. To maintain focus on the impact of partnership work on outcomes for children and young people.

The independent scrutineer will also be consulted as part of the decision making around the identification of potential Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews.



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PERSON SPECIFICATION

Qualifications/Experience

Significant experience at a senior, strategic level within a statutory, voluntary or independent organisation in the context of safeguarding children and child protection services. (essential)

Academic or professional qualification in social or health care, education, police or legal discipline of sufficient standing to command professional respect within the Newham Safeguarding Children Partnership. (essential)

Sufficient experience of the operational context of safeguarding work to enable well-grounded contributions to resolving individual case issues (e.g. complaints) and an enhanced understanding of how operational services must work together to deliver services that promote positive outcomes for children.

Commitment to children's welfare demonstrable through previous or current professional or voluntary activities

Demonstrable skill in engaging with community members, parents and children to ensure that their voice is heard and used to formulate and develop priorities within service planning.

Track record of holding agencies/staff to account for the impact of their work

Vision and Leadership

Demonstrate and understand the world from a child's perspective in discharging responsibility and ensure that that perspective influences service development and evaluation.

Demonstrable track record of providing inspirational leadership and achieving excellence in the coordination of safeguarding services, contributing to objective setting at an executive level and able to inspire a culture where change, improvement and learning are welcomed and supported across the partnership.

Commitment to equity, inclusion and diversity, identifying strategies to deliver equitable and fair services for users and employees, challenging discriminatory practices and actively managing and promoting diversity.

Personal Impact

Demonstrate positive leadership and effective challenge.

Skills in negotiations to assist in resolving conflict between agencies.



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Ability to ensure high standards of confidentiality both in terms of individual cases and in terms of sensitive cross organisational matters.

Excellent communication, negotiation, consultation and influencing skills tailored to meet the needs of a wide range of audiences and stakeholders.

Ability to build and maintain supportive and empathetic relationships, securing people's support and commitment to a course of action or different way of thinking by presenting ideas convincingly and persuasively, and to lead major negotiations.

Delivery on Safeguarding Priorities

Working knowledge and experience of safeguarding policy and practice at a high level.

Sound knowledge of the Children Act 1989 and 2004 and other government guidance relevant to this post such as Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.

Knowledge of recent developments in health and social care, of legislation and research underpinning child protection work.

Knowledge and understanding on the role of the Independent Scrutineer

Evidence of commitment to, and ability to provide, a culture of performance management, continuous improvement and proven track record in the successful development and implementation of fundamental improvement/change programmes, ensuring business plans are outcomes focused and meet service requirements.