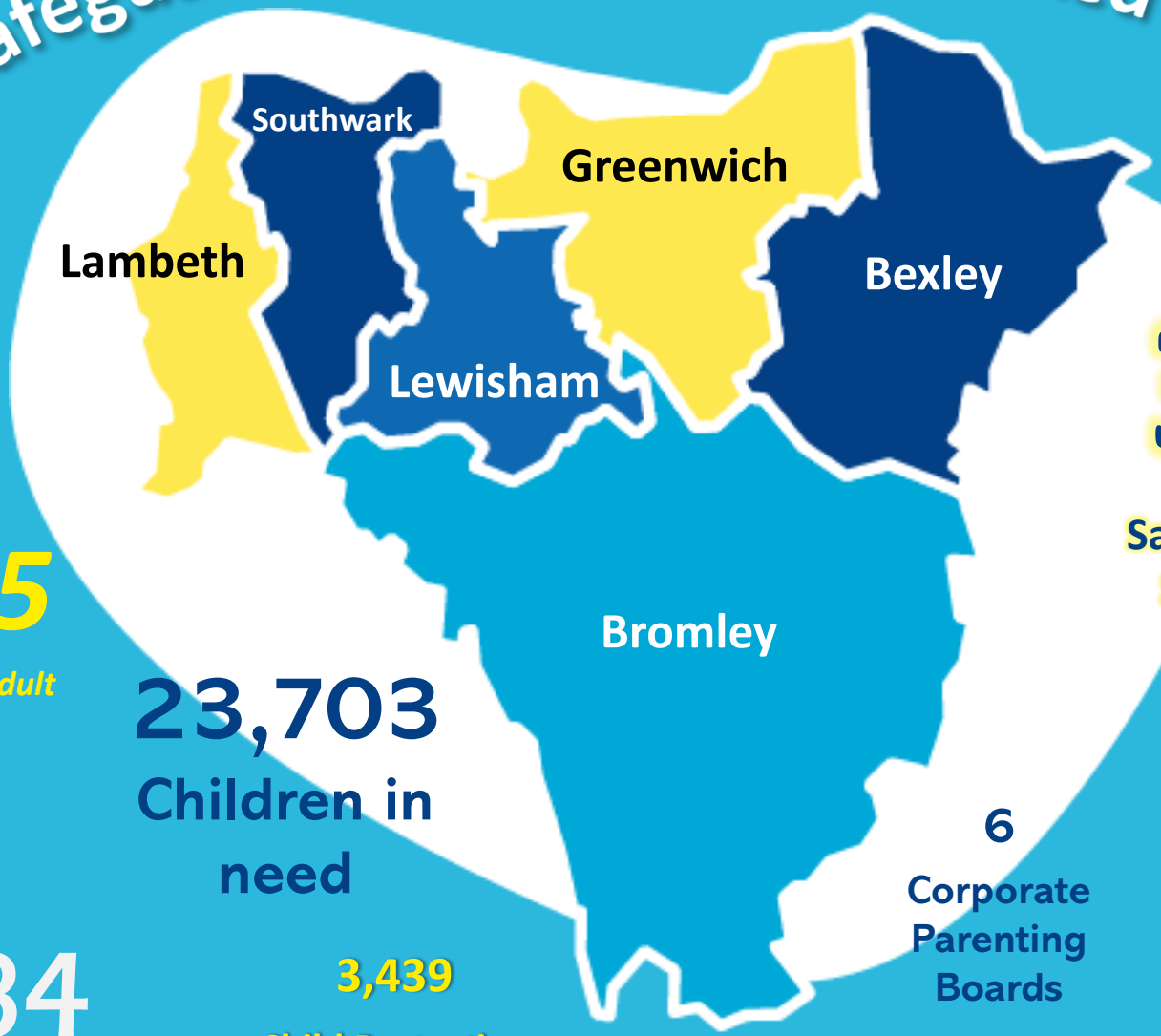
South East London
Integrated Care System

South East London Integrated Care Board
Annual Safeguarding Report 2024-25

SE London Integrated Care Board Safeguarding and Children Looked After



6
NHS Trusts/ CIC's

221
Registered Care Homes

369,069
Children aged 0-17

6
Safeguarding Children's Partnerships

8,595
Safeguarding Adult Concerns

194
GP Practices

23,703
Children in need

7220
Section 47 enquiries

2,384
Children Looked After

3,439
Child Protection Plans

6
Corporate Parenting Boards

38
Safeguarding Statutory Reviews

6
Safeguarding Adults Boards

30
Designated Professionals

12
Named GP's

1,426,811
Adults aged 18+

2175
Section 42 Enquiries

6
Safeguarding Administrators

Foreword

The 2024–2025 reporting year has been marked by significant organisational change, presenting both challenges and opportunities in how we safeguard those most at risk.

In times of transition, our commitment to robust governance and collaborative partnership working has never been more critical. These foundations have enabled us to remain focused on our statutory responsibilities and to respond with agility and integrity to emerging safeguarding concerns.

This report reflects not only the work undertaken across our services but also the collective learning drawn from safeguarding cases. These insights continue to shape our practice, inform our policies, and strengthen our shared accountability.

We recognise that safeguarding is not the responsibility of one organisation alone, it is a shared endeavour that demands transparency, trust, and a relentless focus on improvement.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to fostering a culture of vigilance, compassion, and continuous learning. We thank our partners, staff, and communities for their dedication and resilience, and we reaffirm our pledge to protect and promote the welfare of those we serve.

Gwen Kennedy – Chief Nurse, South East London ICB

Introduction and Overview

NHS South East London Integrated Care Board (ICB) was established on 1st July 2022.

An ICB is an NHS organisation responsible for planning health services for their local population and forms an integral part of an Integrated Care System (ICS). An ICS is a local partnership between heath and care organisations whose purpose is to focus on prevention and well-being, improving outcomes and reducing health inequalities.

The strategic priorities of South East London ICS are detailed here. The principles by which NHS South East London ICB contribute towards those priorities is through partnership, subsidiarity (decisions made closest to where they take effect) and accountability.

This is the third South East London ICB Annual Safeguarding Report. The report builds on the achievements highlighted in the 2023/24 Annual Report and provides assurance that the ICB has fulfilled its statutory duties and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children and young people, safeguarding adults-at-risk, and towards Children Looked After. The values, priorities and principles of the ICS, outlined earlier, are both shared by, and core to, the ICB safeguarding function.

The report outlines the broad scope of current safeguarding practice, details ICB safeguarding governance arrangements, highlights some of the work undertaken in 2024-25, and demonstrates the key achievements and challenges. The report concludes by stating the ICB's key safeguarding priorities for 2025-26.

Our ICB safeguarding commitment

Every person in the UK has the right to live their life in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

Our responsibility to protect the most vulnerable in our communities is at the heart of all the work we do.

We work in partnership and collaboration with local authorities, the Police, NHS Trusts and many other organisations to safeguard children, young people and adults who are experiencing, or are at risk of, abuse and neglect.

The ICB has a critically important role in protecting vulnerable people in South East London. Some of our key functions include

- ✓ **Safeguarding system leadership**
- ✓ **Expert safeguarding and health advice**
- ✓ **Safeguarding effectiveness and quality improvement**
- ✓ **System oversight – identification of risks and escalations**
- ✓ **Ensuring safeguarding is included in our ICB Joint Forward Plan**
- ✓ **Identifying and embedding learning**
- ✓ **Safeguarding assurance in health services**
- ✓ **Delivery of national and regional safeguarding priorities**
- ✓ **Statutory safeguarding reviews**
- ✓ **Delivery of safeguarding supervision**
- ✓ **Safeguarding support to health services**
- ✓ **Partnership working**

Approaches that underpin our work

Voice of the Child

The Voice of the Child is a general term used to express how to create meaningful engagement opportunities with Children and Young People. Safeguarding work must focus on listening and responding to what Children and Young People say is important to them, taking their views into account and considering their wishes.

The ICB safeguarding teams have embedded the Voice of the Child throughout its safeguarding children work during the year, some examples being:

- Listening to Children and Young people, particularly those with experiences of being in care and of leaving care, using those experiences to influence the delivery of services to meet their needs more effectively.
- Working with commissioners to ensure the voice of the child is embedded in procurement and contract processes.
- Through engagement, ensuring the voice of care leavers influences the Care Leavers Covenant programme which aims to offer training and career opportunities for care leavers.
- Regular engagement sessions with children and young people to ensure health and care assessment questions are more sensitive to their needs and situation.

Think Family

The 'think family' agenda recognises and promotes the importance of a whole-family approach. It is built on the principles of

- *No wrong door to services*
- *Looking at the whole family - adults and children*
- *Building on family strengths*

The ICB safeguarding teams use a 'think family' approach throughout their work, strengthening pathways and outcomes for all family members when delivering services that safeguard. The teams have, for example,

- *driven forward the 'think family' agenda in healthcare through strategic work such as training and policy development.*
- *considered 'think family' when considering safeguarding approaches to protect Refugee and Asylum-Seeking people.*

Making Safeguarding Personal

Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) is an initiative which aims to develop a person-centred and outcomes focus to adult safeguarding work in supporting people to improve or resolve their circumstances.

MSP is applicable to all agencies working with adults-at-risk, including those with strategic and commissioning responsibilities such as the ICB. It seeks to achieve a personalised approach enabling safeguarding to be done with, and not to, people, focusing on the outcomes an adult wants and an improvement in a person's circumstances through person-centred practice. MSP is at the forefront of all our adult safeguarding work and decisions.

In addition, the ICB Adult safeguarding teams all contribute to their respective Safeguarding Adults Board, who in turn participate in the London Safeguarding Adults Board Safeguarding Voices Group (LSVG). This is a forum bringing together people with lived experience of adult safeguarding. The LSVG aims to ensure that the voices of people with lived experience are at the heart of adult safeguarding governance and practice.

The ICB ensures that the contributions and recommendations from the LSVG influences all its adult safeguarding work, including the commissioning and procurement process.

Statutory Function

Overview

The NHS has a broad range of duties, responsibilities and obligations in relation to safeguarding children and adults at risk. Those duties, responsibilities and obligations are contained within legislation and national guidance. Some (but not all) of the relevant legislation and guidance is listed in the table opposite.

As an organisation, the ICB has many specific safeguarding duties and responsibilities as laid out within some of these documents, for example

- Being a key partner of a Safeguarding Children's Partnership
- Being a core member of a Safeguarding Adults Board
- Employing Designated Professionals for Safeguarding to provide strategic oversight and health expertise towards safeguarding in the health services and wider system.
- Employing Designated Professionals for Children Looked After, who provide strategic oversight and health expertise towards services meeting the needs of children in care.
- Employing Named GPs for Safeguarding, to advise and support individual GP Practice Safeguarding Leads,
- Ensuring safeguarding obligations are included within NHS contracts, and that oversight is maintained towards organisations delivering those obligations.
- Laying out how the ICB intends to protect vulnerable children and adults-at-risk in its Joint Forward Plan
- Work in partnership with other organisations to reduce risks and enhance the well-being of children in need and adults-at-risk

Legislation

Children Act 1989

Children Act 2004

Children and Social Work Act 2017

Care Act 2014

Mental Capacity Act 2005

Modern Slavery Act 2015

Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Statutory Guidance

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

Serious Violence Duty 2023

Promoting the health and wellbeing of looked after children 2015

Prevent Duty 2023

Guidance

Intercollegiate document (2025) Safeguarding children and young people & children and young people in care: Competencies for health care staff

Adult Safeguarding: Roles and Competencies for Healthcare Staff 2024

Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults-at-risk in the NHS 2024

2024-25 Update

In the past year safeguarding legislation and guidance has continued to evolve in correlation with new and emerging learning, risks and vulnerabilities.

The **Victims and Prisoners Act 2024** officially renamed Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) to Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews (DARDRs). This change ensures that all types of abuse related deaths are considered for review, not just those caused by physical violence.

The **NHS Prevent training and competencies framework - GOV.UK** provided an updated framework for ensuring that NHS staff have the relevant competencies to safeguard individuals at risk of radicalisation.

The **Care and support statutory guidance - GOV.UK** was updated in 2024, strengthening adult safeguarding processes and practice.

Governance and Workforce

People

The ICB Chief Executive Officer has overall accountability for safeguarding in the ICB, whilst the ICB Chief Nurse has executive responsibility. The Chief Nurse is supported by the Associate Director for Nursing, Safeguarding and Quality.

In line with the principle of subsidiarity, responsibility for delivery is mainly delegated to six borough teams that constitute the ICB. In each borough, a Place Executive Lead has delegated responsibility towards ensuring

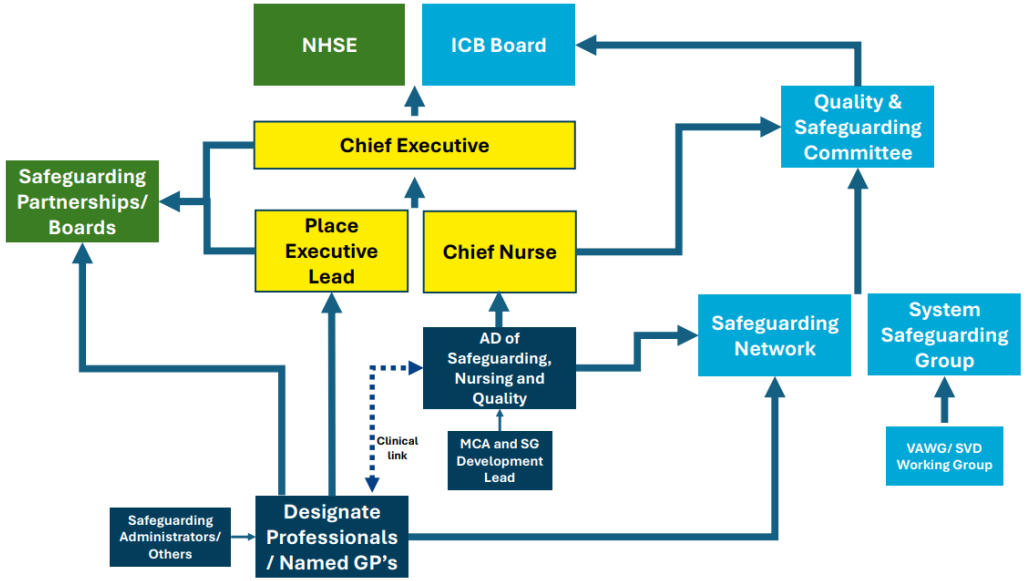
- ICB participation in the local Safeguarding Partnership and Board,
- that statutory safeguarding roles and personnel are in place, and
- that safeguarding has appropriate standing and influence in the work of the ICB at borough level.

The role of the Associate Director is to co-ordinate cross-borough safeguarding priorities and programmes, act as a central point of contact both for the borough safeguarding teams and with NHS England, and to lead on the various safeguarding networks and forums within the ICB. The Associate Director is assisted by the MCA and Safeguarding Development Lead. In each of the six boroughs, there is a team of Designated Nurses and Doctors, Named GP's and administrators. These professionals drive and support the safeguarding workplans, carrying out their duties in correlation with the respective national role and competency frameworks, and working closely with safeguarding Partnerships and Boards.

Forums

The Designated Professionals, Named GP's and administrators from all six boroughs come together at regular Safeguarding and Children Looked After Network meetings where key workplans, risks and issues are discussed. The System Safeguarding Group brings together safeguarding leads from health organisations across South East London Integrated Care System, with the purpose of identifying common safeguarding risks, and working on innovations and solutions.

Workplans arising from these forums are then taken for the purposes of assurance to the ICB Quality and Safeguarding Committee, a sub-group of the Executive Board.



2024-25 Update

Statutory safeguarding roles are both in place and filled across the ICB, the safeguarding resource broadly meeting the recommendations of the various intercollegiate '*Role and Competency Frameworks*'. There has been minimal change in safeguarding personnel during the year, postholders being highly experienced, and having excellent knowledge of their local health and care systems.

The ICB completed a review of its safeguarding function during the year. Review actions were delivered, ensuring strengthened safeguarding governance at executive and senior clinician level, enhancing clinical leadership and supporting equity of resource across the ICB. Additionally, there were changes to relevant safeguarding governance forums within the Quality and Nursing directorate. The System Safeguarding Group was set up, facilitating a focus on health-related safeguarding risks and issues. This Group feeds into the newly formed Quality and Safeguarding Committee.

In March 2025, NHS England announced that significant changes were to be made to the resourcing and configuration of Integrated Care Boards. The proposed changes are likely to shape the organisations governance and workforce agenda in 2025-26.

South East London Safeguarding Partnerships and Boards

The ICB has fulfilled its statutory duties in relation to safeguarding boards and partnerships in each of the six local authority boroughs, providing leadership, strategic expertise and practical support. The ICB is a statutory partner of a Safeguarding Children Partnership, a core member of a Safeguarding Adults Board, and a responsible authority within a Community Safety Partnership

Safeguarding Children's Partnerships

The relevant ICB Place Executive Lead attended the executive Partnership meeting in each borough. Designated Nurses, Designated Doctors and Named GP's support their respective Place Executive Lead at the Partnership, contributing towards the delivery of effective local safeguarding processes.

The ICB safeguarding professionals contribute expert advice towards multi-agency policy, procedure and training as well as taking a lead role in the formulation and embedding of learning from reviews. Annual Reports for each of the six Safeguarding Children's Partnerships can be found on their respective website

Safeguarding Adults Boards

The relevant ICB Place Executive Lead is the core representative on each of the six borough Safeguarding Adults Boards and has provided executive level support and contribution towards decisions at Board level.

The Designated Nurse and Named GP in each ICB borough team have assisted the Place Executive Lead at executive level, whilst additionally providing robust and valued leadership and guidance in the various Board sub-groups and multi-agency workstreams. These workstreams include the formulation of multi-agency policies and procedures, training and the identification and embedding of learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews.

Corporate Parenting Boards

Corporate Parenting Boards for Children Looked After and Care Leavers have been attended by the Designate Nurse and Doctor for Children Looked After (CLA) in each of the six boroughs.

The Designated CLA Professionals have assisted and supported multi-agency workplans which improve the wellbeing and outcomes for children in care. They have also taken a lead in assuring the Boards of the health contribution towards meeting statutory CLA obligations.

Community Safety Partnerships

Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) were introduced by Section 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and bring together local partners to formulate and implement strategies to tackle crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour in their communities.

CSP's oversee a variety of risks relevant to the safeguarding portfolio, including Violence and Women and Girls, Prevent, Modern Slavery and the Serious Violence Duty. CSP's in each local authority were attended by relevant ICB leaders, with ICB Designated Professionals and Named GP's contributing towards respective partnership strategies and workplans.

Safeguarding Statutory Reviews

In general, safeguarding statutory reviews are carried out when serious harm has occurred to an individual because of abuse or neglect. Partner agencies are brought together through a relevant review process to determine what those agencies could have done differently to prevent the serious harm occurring.

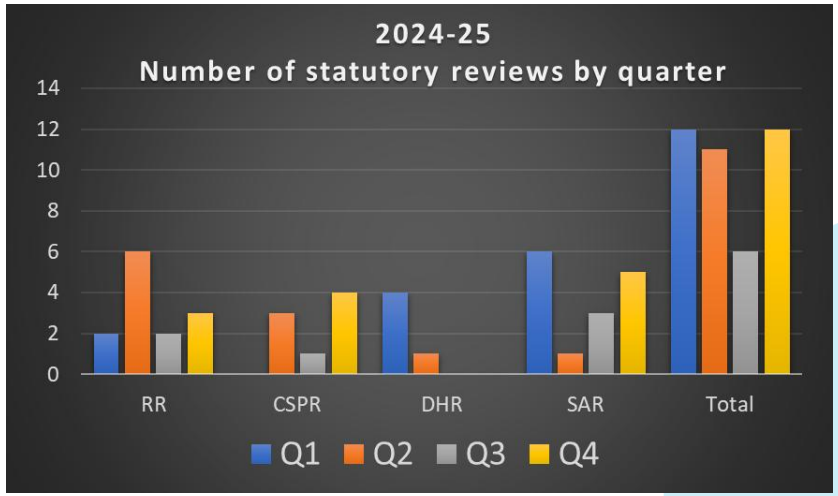
The main types of safeguarding statutory reviews that are relevant to this Annual Report are

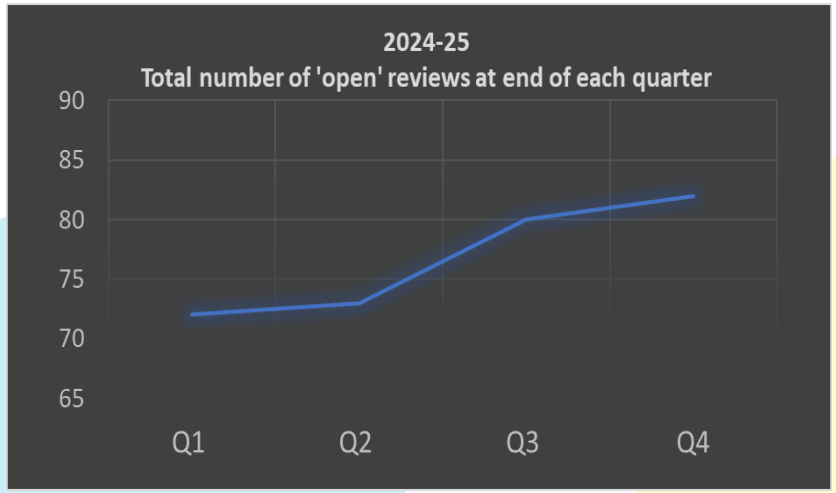
- Rapid Review (RR)
- Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR)
- Domestic Homicide Review (DHR)
- Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR)

The four types of reviews identified above are typically commissioned or arranged at borough level by

- a Safeguarding Children's Partnership in the case of a Rapid Review or CSPR,
- a Community Safety Partnership in the case of a DHR, and
- a Safeguarding Adults Board in the case of a SAR,

As a statutory safeguarding partner, the ICB is an integral part of the statutory review process. However, the ownership of the statutory review ultimately lies with the relevant board or partnership that has commissioned or arranged it.





2024-25 Update

The ICB has contributed to 41 new statutory reviews during the year. ICB Designated Professionals and Named GPs contribute significantly towards the reviews, providing expert advice during the review process and leading on delivering any health recommendations that arise from the reviews. The number of 'open' reviews being worked on, however, is significantly greater than the number of 'new' reviews and has ranged between 70 to 85 reviews at any given point during the year, with a gradual increase throughout the period evident. This outlines the complexity involved towards the completion of some statutory reviews and is a more accurate reflection of the ICB input during the year.

The ICB recognises that utilising learning derived from statutory reviews is a crucial factor in developing the ICB's own SEL wide strategic safeguarding priorities and work streams, as well as those of our NHS partners. During 2024-25 the ICB analysed health related recommendations from 43 south east London Safeguarding Adult Reviews. Evident themes related to a need for trauma informed approaches towards working with adults, the importance of legal literacy, and the continued requirement for effective multi-agency communication. The thematic review has been shared at relevant ICB forums, including the ICB Themes and Concerns, and Learning from Deaths, groups.

The ICB has also provided input towards a new type of statutory review, known as an Offensive Weapons Homicide Review. These reviews are at pilot stage currently before a potential national roll-out. Two south east London local authorities are participating in the pilot, and the ICB has contributed by acting as a 'Relevant Review Partner'.

Safeguarding Assurance & Oversight

South East London ICB has a lead responsibility in ensuring healthcare organisations and services operating in South East London are discharging their obligations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk. For safeguarding children, this responsibility extends to a statutory duty under Section 11 of the Children's Act (2004). For commissioned services, the NHS Standard Contract Schedule 32 outlines the safeguarding expectations contractually placed on the provider. Assurance and oversight is maintained through a variety of mechanisms, including

- Provider safeguarding committees
- Contract monitoring processes
- Safeguarding datasets
- ICB Safeguarding committees, groups and forums
- Touchpoints with provider safeguarding leads
- Close working with the ICB Quality Team and other ICB Directorates and workstreams
- External intelligence, such as from CQC, Ofsted, Local Authorities and the various Partnerships and Boards.

The ICB's main contracts are with Kings College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Guys and St Thomas's NHS Foundation Trust, Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust, Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust and Bromley Healthcare CIC. The ICB also holds numerous other smaller contracts with independent providers. The ICB Designated Safeguarding Professionals for Children, Adults and Children Looked After work closely with leads in all provider organisations, giving practical support and expertise, monitoring, and gaining assurance that the service is delivering on its contractual safeguarding requirements.

There are 194 GP Practices in south east London. GP Practices have statutory, professional and contractual safeguarding obligations. The ICB Named GP's work with all GP Practices to ensure they are meeting their safeguarding responsibilities.

Named GPs organise, collate and analyse safeguarding assurance audits, as well as holding regular forums and touchpoints with individual practice safeguarding leads, identifying issues and providing support.

Safeguarding oversight and assurance of South East London ICB is primarily maintained by NHS England through the completion of the Safeguarding Commissioning Assurance Toolkit (S-CAT), the Safeguarding Integrated Data Dashboard (SIDD), and the Safeguarding Case Review Tracker (S-CRT).

The ICB also complete Section 11 Audit's for the various Safeguarding Partnerships, as well as the relevant assurance tool for each Safeguarding Adult Board.

2024-25 Overview

The ICB, through its borough based safeguarding professionals, has delivered on its responsibilities to ensure healthcare organisations and services are safeguarding children and adults at risk.

The ICB has assured NHS England, and local safeguarding Partnerships and Boards that our own processes and practices are effective and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk.

During 2024-25, the ICB has strengthened many of its internal policies to further solidify its robust assurance mechanisms.

ICB Central Safeguarding Team

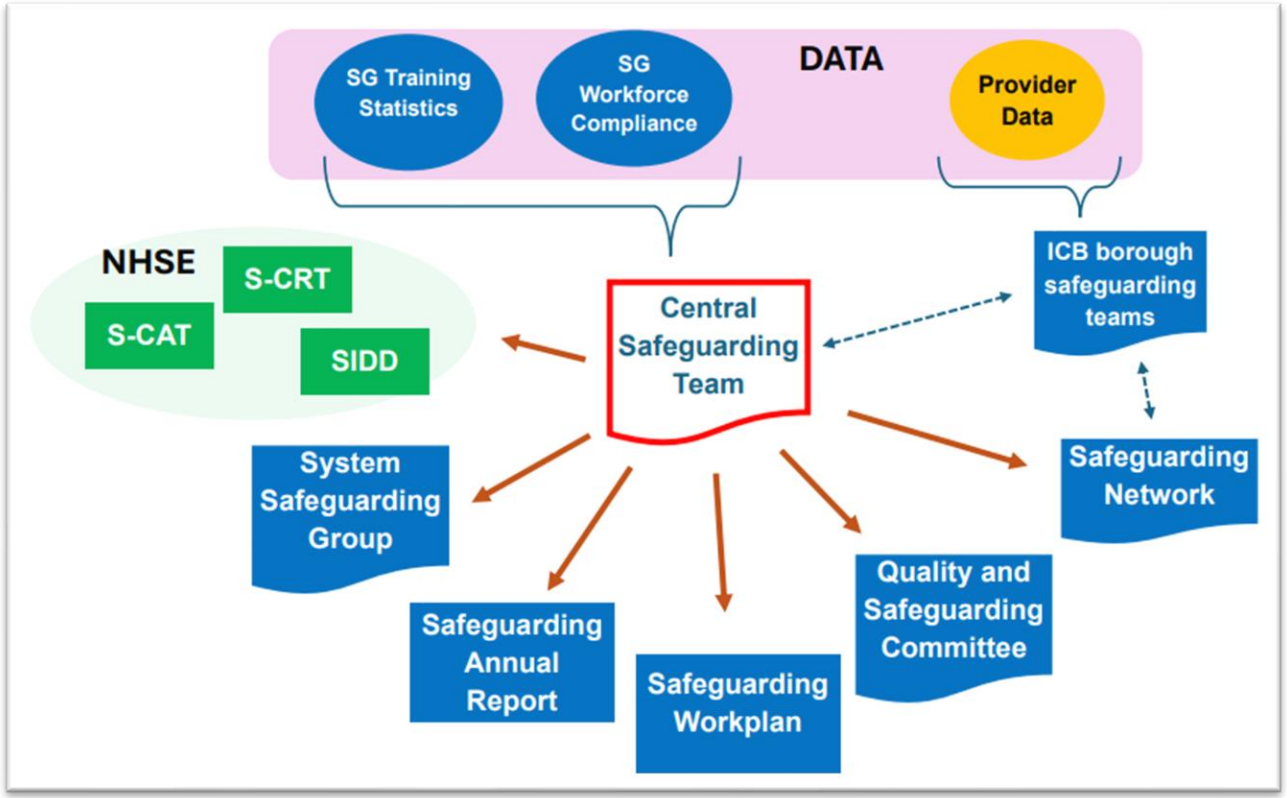
The centrally based safeguarding team consists of the Associate Director for Nursing, Safeguarding and Quality, the MCA and Safeguarding Development Lead and is supported by the ICB Statutory Compliance Manager. The team forms part of the ICB Quality and Nursing Directorate and is the focal point for cross-borough safeguarding work programmes, as well as ICB to NHS England work stream assurance. During 2024-25, the team led the ICB's progress in relation to the national safeguarding priority work programme set by NHS England. The priorities are as follows;

a. Support delivery of the **Child Protection Information Sharing (CP-IS)** system.
b. Comply with the revised **Working Together Statutory Guidance**
c. Strengthen local health oversight of the **Prevent Duty**
d. Enhance local processes in relation to **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**
e. Ensure appropriate ICB oversight towards combatting **Modern Slavery**
f. Contributing towards processes and initiatives which reduce **Serious Violence**
g. Supporting the local health contribution towards reducing **Domestic Abuse**
h. Improving health related processes around **Domestic Homicide Reviews**
i. Help to implement the national **Safeguarding Integrated Data Dashboard (SIDD)**
j. Reducing **Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse** through local NHS led initiatives
k. Improving outcomes for **Care Leavers**, especially with employment opportunities
l. Enhancing safeguarding outcomes around **Local Maternity and Neonatal Systems**
m. Progressing skills, knowledge and competence of Safeguarding at **leadership level**

The central team, working in tandem with the borough safeguarding teams and other ICB colleagues, has made steady progress on all these deliverables during the year.

In relation to its assurance function, the central team has provided data to NHS England through the Safeguarding Case Review Tracker (S-CRT) and the Safeguarding Commissioning Assurance Toolkit (S-CAT) portals. The team collate and combine data from the six borough teams, producing a quarterly report outlining key safeguarding risks and issues across the ICB which is shared with the ICB Quality and Safeguarding Committee.

During 2024-25 there were no areas of weakness or concern identified in relation to the various NHS England assurance mechanisms. An independent internal audit was also undertaken, which showed progress across all areas of ICB safeguarding governance.



Mental Capacity Act (2005) (MCA)

The MCA is the law which provides a framework around decision making for people who may not be able to make decisions themselves. Application of the MCA by practitioners, both in health and social care, has not been consistent since the inception of the MCA 2005, and this is cited in many statutory and non-statutory review processes as a contributory factor in poor outcomes for some of our most vulnerable people.

In 2024-25 the ICB continue to support improved MCA practice through our central and borough safeguarding teams, providing expert advice and delivering training. The various ICB Continuing Healthcare teams have made applications for 'Community' Deprivation of Liberty court orders, ensuring the human rights of those deprived of their liberty are fully protected.

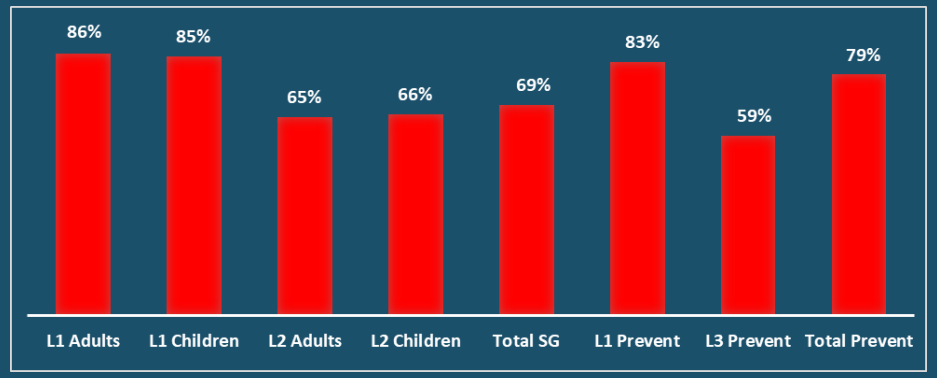
Workplan Priorities

	Domestic Abuse	*Serious Violence*	CP-IS
Context	The Domestic Abuse Act Statutory Guidance (2022) states '*Responding to and preventing domestic abuse should be a strategic priority for both ICBs and ICPs and should be the responsibility of all healthcare professionals working within a system.*' The Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) Statutory Guidance (2016) mandates Primary Care Trusts (now ICB's) to participate in DHR's.	*The Serious Violence Duty (2022) places a statutory duty on specified authorities, (including ICB's) to collaborate with other duty holders to prevent and reduce serious violence in their respective area. Moreover, the Offensive Weapons Homicide Review (OWHR) Statutory Guidance (2023) identifies the ICB as one of the 'relevant partners' that is required to contribute to an OWHR.*	The Child Protection – Information Sharing (CP-IS) service links IT systems across health and social care in England, enabling the sharing of information securely to better protect children and young people who are known to social care because they are either 'looked after', or have a child protection plan. The scheme is predominantly available to unscheduled care settings.
24-25 Overview	The ICB continues to give domestic abuse it's highest priority. The ICB contributed to each of the six individual borough's Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategies. The ICB provided ongoing support to GP services with practice advice and training around domestic abuse, mainly through the IRIS programme. In addition, the ICB contributed practical assistance and expertise towards seven new DHRs (aka DARDRs) during 24-25. The ICB implemented a DHR governance process to ensure that health input towards a review is of the highest possible quality prior to the review being forwarded to the Home Office, whilst also ensuring delegated executive sign-off, on behalf of NHSE, at the Home Office DHR panels.	*Through 2024/25 the ICB has made progress with its responsibilities under the legislation. Via its membership of the NHS England London Violence Reduction Unit (VRU), the ICB has focussed on developing a local dashboard expanding upon the Information Sharing to Tackle Violence dataset. The dashboard provides high level data to stakeholders in relation to admissions to emergency care for reasons of violence. The dashboard has been commended at the VRU. In addition, the ICB has contributed to several Offensive Weapons Homicide Reviews, facilitating GP involvement in the reviews and helping to shape the review narrative, lessons learned and recommendations.*	The second phase of the implementation of CP-IS is aimed at connecting scheduled care settings, such as GP services, CAMHS, school nursing and health visiting, to local authorities, thereby improving opportunities for early safeguarding decisions. The ICB has progressed delivery of the second stage, with work being focused in one borough as a testing site. Implementation has involved support from IT services, and the development of Standard Operating Procedures, as well as training and awareness raising. The roll-out of the second stage of CP-IS is complex due to the varied nature of IT systems across the system, however these complexities are being gradually navigated.
25-26 Workplan	The ICB will continue to support a zero-tolerance approach towards violence against women and girls. It intends to implement a new ICB Sexual Misconduct Policy, providing clear pathways and support for affected ICB staff. Through the System Safeguarding Group, the ICB also plans to lead on the development of a sector wide domestic abuse competency framework for health practitioners	*The ICB plans to strengthen its partnership role in aiming to reduce serious violence. Work planned includes the mapping of key health stakeholders and development of a Serious Violence Duty strategic plan for health organisations in south east London. The ICB will also support the implementation of relevant actions arising from the OWHRs.*	The ICB will continue to support and progress the roll-out of Phase 2 CP-IS in the coming months. This involves working with key health stakeholders from all six boroughs, and colleagues in NHS England. Designate and Named Professionals in the place-based ICB teams will lead on the implementation in their respective borough, with oversight coming from the SEL-wide team.

Organisational Development

Training

Throughout 2024-25, the ICB has supported development of its own workforce in line with the respective Safeguarding Roles and Competency guidelines. In correlation with the ICB Safeguarding Competency Strategy, access to different levels of safeguarding training have been gradually strengthened via the ICB Workforce system. Safeguarding training compliance rates as of 31st October 2025 are as follows



The compliance rates are expected to rise exponentially during 2025-26 as staff migrate to the correct training level for their job role.

The ICB continued to provide bespoke Level 3 safeguarding training, both Adult and Children, to GPs in each of the six boroughs, ensuring relevant competence for a large cohort of professionals.

In collaboration with the Kings Fund, the ICB has devised a 'Safeguarding Leadership Programme' for 16 safeguarding professionals across south east London. The programme is being driven forward by the central ICB safeguarding team and will provide leadership skills to new and emerging safeguarding leaders and will take place during 2025-26.

Supervision

Working Together to Safeguarding Children (2023) outlines the importance of lead practitioners having access to safeguarding supervision, stating *'Effective supervision can play a critical role in ensuring a clear focus on a child's welfare and support practitioners to reflect critically on the impact of their decisions on the child and their family'.* The supervisory relationship creates a safe, contained environment where the practitioner has the capacity to think and reflect.

The ICB has ensured during 2024-25 that all Designated Professionals for Child and Adult Safeguarding, Named GP's and Designated Professionals for Looked After Children have access to high quality supervision.

From September 2023, the ICB commissioned an independent provider, with significant experience and expertise in the field of safeguarding supervision, to deliver this crucial support to our safeguarding staff.

The provider has set up a range of individual and group supervision sessions, some of which have specific safeguarding themes such as *'Think Family'.* The supervision has proved to be very popular, with high booking rates for sessions.

Individual Supervision Overall Rating (out of 5)	4.6
Individual Supervisor Rating	4.75
Group Supervision Overall Rating	4.5
Group Supervisor Rating	4.6

ICB Safeguarding and Children Looked After Teams – Key 24-25 Outputs

	Bexley	Bromley	Greenwich
Against 23-24 Priorities	• **Think Family** – further work continued, including contributing to the 'Think Family Protocol' • **Routine Safe Enquiry Training** – offered to all GP Practices • **Transitional Safeguarding** – Best practice guidance workstream ongoing, with ICB as key contributors • **Self-neglect** – Panel launched last year with ICB as key panel members. • **Domestic Abuse** – training and other support ongoing • **Voice of the Child** – embedded across all policies, protocols and systems. • **Immunisation Rates for Children Looked After** – improved due to increase partnership working	• **Procurement** – continue to focus on embedding safeguarding standards though the commissioning process • **Primary Care Support** – through the continued provision of the GP IRIS Clinical Lead • **Strategic Influence** – ongoing support to multiple partnership workstreams, notably in relation to VAWG. • **Gender Dysphoria** – further local work to embed the recommendations of the Cass Review • **Emotional Base School Avoidance** – involvement in local working groups and provision of training • **Care Leavers** – continued progress made, such as contributing towards care leavers accessing employment	• **Training** – ICB training to GPs amended to include Self-Neglect and Hoarding • **Awareness** – Findngs from local SAR communicated to GPs via a forum • **Training** – Ongoing safeguarding CYP training to GPs • **Engagement** – Work in GP practices to engage HVs
Other 24-25 Achievements	• Increase in referrals to DA services by all health providers including primary care • Continued focus on identifying vulnerable adults in Bexley due to GP premium • New role of child IDVA in post which SEL ICB has part funded • Health partners participated in a multi agency audit on CSA coordinated by NSPCC. • High performance for key health CLA outcomes- Immunisations 71%, Dental 91% and RHAs 98% • Metro C Card training has been undertaken to be able to provide young people with condoms. • Children Looked After Nurse's have attended the short course 'ERIC' training for bladder and bowel health.	• JTAI in January 2025 identified strong effective leadership across the partnership • Named GPs for adult and child safeguarding organised training for GP Practice safeguarding leads • Guidance related to ACE's and Trauma informed practice has been put together by the Designated Doctor • The CLA Health Forum incorporated hearing the voices of care experienced young people • Audit of statutory health assessments and contribution to a peer review of neighbouring CLA service • Recommissioned the Bromley IRIS service which commenced service delivery in October 2024. • Care Homes Quality Liaison Nurse collaborated with stakeholders to improve the quality of care to residents in Care Homes and Extra Care Housing.	• Contributed to the development of a Homelessness and Adult Safeguarding summit. • Continued to jointly fund primary care domestic abuse service, resulting in increased awareness/ referrals • Domestic abuse training has been delivered to GP Practices. • Updated CSA multiagency pathway • Written multiagency memo for safeguarding and medicines, • Written multiagency pathway for children taken abroad for treatment • Improvement in timely completion of IHA • Helped establishment a multi-agency IHA Task and Finish group, with beneficial outcomes • Provision of supervision for the Named professionals within the provider service.

ICB Safeguarding and Children Looked After Teams – Key 24-25 Outputs

	 Lambeth	 Lewisham	 Southwark
Against 23-24 Priorities	• **Think Family** – continue to develop 'Think Family' approach to safeguarding • **Procurement** – participated in care home commissioning processes • **Primary Care** – improved safeguarding work with primary care • **Partnership Working** – reviewed and refreshed Partnership subgroups • **Children Looked After** – reviewed and enhanced performance dashboards and pathways. Audit also undertaken	• **Partnership Working** – continued collaborative working with Boards and Partnerships • **Assurance** – ongoing meetings with providers using a safeguarding assurance framework • **Initial Accommodation Centres** – contributed towards continued multi-agency working, supporting vulnerable Refugee and Asylum-Seeking people and families. • **Training** – Statutory review learning disseminated across health providers, including Primary Care	• **Complex Case Pathway** – continued to support development in health providers • **LeDeR** – supported work around learning actions from LeDeR reviews, including related to the MCA • **Serious Violence Duty** – supported work in completing the local SVD strategy. • **Neglect Strategy** – led on health input, including a Neglect Assessment Tool • **VAWG** – contributed towards procurement of local DA service, ensuring the voice of the child was heard • **Gender Dysphoria** – reviewed all cases of Looked After Young People seeking related support
Other 24-25 Achievements	• The team contributed to four Offensive Weapons Homicide Reviews as part of pilot project. • Cascaded LeDeR learning 'themes' related to Lambeth residents across agencies and commissioning teams. • Strengthened commitment to VAWG through the commissioning of a new Health Independent Gender Violence Advocacy (IGVA) service. • Recommissioning of the MARAC Lead Nurse post. • Successful recruitment of a Named GP for Child safeguarding, who was appointed to in March 2025. • The Designated CLA Doctor has reviewed the coverage of SDQs within Lambeth. • Established clear frameworks for risk assessment, and sharing information about vulnerable children in care. • Continued the free prescriptions for care leavers initiative.	• Contributed to the associated activities of the Families First for Children Pathfinder Programme. • Designated professionals have contributed to the ongoing delivery of the NRM panel. • Supported with Child Protection Information Sharing (CP-IS) Phase 2 Implementation • Facilitated the delivery of Domestic Abuse training across the system in Lewisham including Primary Care • We delivered in protected learning time on a range of subjects across the system predominantly to Primary Care • The Designate is the Contract Lead on Safeguarding Supervision across the SEL ICB.	• Supported the opening of a local children's home including health related policies and practice. • Audit towards CLA that are identified within GP patient recording systems as a diagnosis of ASD/LD. • Designated Doctor CLA jointly pioneered a neurodevelopmental assessment clinic prioritising children in care and those supported by a CP Plan. • Contributed to the implementation of the Multi Agency Children & Young People Safe Discharge Protocol • A health safeguarding forum was held on further developing our Trauma Informed Approach (TIA) across the local health economy: • Collaborated with partners on the publication of the Southwark Serious Violence Duty (SVD) Strategy. • Collaborated with partners on the recruitment of an Independent Gender Violence Advocate (IGVA)

Place based ICB safeguarding teams - ambitions for 2025-26

Bexley

- Focus on Mental Capacity Act within primary care
- Develop training on safeguarding in care homes for primary care
- Strengthen relationships with local authority rough sleeping team, improving safeguarding response
- Continue to embed Think Family model across all of health
- Ensure funding is continued to employ the Children's IDVA
- Continues to make child mental health a top priority in all strategic and operational decision making
- Continued focus on improving CLA immunisation uptake.
- Ensuring the voice of the child is further enhanced.

Bromley

- Support health providers to implement the multi-agency Families First Partnership Programme.
- Work to support health providers when the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill is enacted.
- Support preparation for the borough SEND inspection
- Continue to lead on the development of the GP Champion for Care Leavers Project.
- Ensure CLA and Care Leavers Training is delivered across the wider economy.
- Collaborate with stakeholders to improve the quality of care to residents in Care Homes and Extra Care Housing
- Drive Safeguarding Adults strategic influence
- Strengthen safeguarding practice in Primary Care

Greenwich

- Support implementation of the CLA and Care leavers health service specifications.
- Targeted capturing of the voice of the CLA including those who decline attending their health assessments.
- Joint work with Social Care on Young People in residential placements.
- Temporary accommodation and safeguarding pilot and implementation of pathway
- Developing Families First programme with other agencies
- Update of FGM policy for Greenwich
- Extend domestic abuse training to local community services such as opticians, dentists and pharmacists
- Organise a domestic abuse healthcare summit

Lambeth

- To seek assurance that emotional health and mental health support improves outcomes for CLA.
- Monitor the provision of health services for Lambeth CLA who are placed out of borough
- Prioritise safeguarding children and adolescents suffering significant harm due to neglect
- Provide a more joined up approach and strategic response to children and young people (CYP) who may be at risk of; child sexual exploitation, missing from home, school and/or education, serious youth violence, gangs and/or county lines and/ or radicalisation)
- Support the DRIVE project (perpetrators programme) which was initiated in April 2025.

Lewisham

- Work jointly with partners to complete CSPRs as per statutory requirements and promote/disseminate learning.
- Work in collaboration with the stakeholders in Lewisham to effectively implement / roll out CP-IS.
- Continue in alliance with statutory partners to develop and enhance the delivery of the Families First Pathfinder Programme.
- Continue to collaboratively work with the objectives of Partnership Boards in a 'Think Family Approach'.
- Continue to support the Strategy and Performance Framework of the Community Safety Partnership in encouraging Safer Communities.

Southwark

- Neurodiversity: Work with commissioners to ensure that looked after children are considered as a high priority
- Continued dissemination and implementation of learning from partnership reviews.
- Focus on the vulnerabilities of CYP subject to DOL.
- Continue to lead for health strategically on the co-design of the Families First Partnership programme.
- Explore opportunities to develop extra-familial harm GP team case notification
- Embed the Complex Case Pathway Framework (CCPF)
- Collaborating with the SAB on a PiPoT Framework.
- To take themes from SARs, DHRs and LeDeR reviews to the SEL ICS themes and concerns meeting.

Conclusion

The information provided in this report provides assurance that the ICB is discharging its statutory obligations towards safeguarding children and adults at risk and towards children who are looked after by the local authority.

The landscape in which health services operate is complex, and ever-changing. Moreover, safeguarding processes are multifaceted and continue to evolve in line with legislation, policy, and new learning. The rapidly growing nature of the safeguarding agenda for vulnerable children and adults' places challenges on organisations including the ICB. This Annual Report demonstrates that the ICB has engaged in a wide range of activity to support and enhance safeguarding partnership arrangements. The ICB safeguarding teams continue to work hard ensuring service improvement and development of safeguarding practice throughout health services in south east London.

Priorities for 2025-26

An overview of the ambitions of each borough-based safeguarding and CLA team for next year are laid out earlier in this report. In addition, the ICB is focused on the following priorities which permeate through the safeguarding function across the ICB.

1. The ICB aims to work through any changes or revision to its safeguarding governance and delivery emanating from the proposed 'Change Programme' and NHSE Model ICB Blueprint.
2. The ICB aims to continue its good work in relation to the Serious Violence Duty, by developing a health-based SVD strategy.
3. The ICB aims to embed its Domestic Abuse and Sexual Misconduct staff policies within the organisation.
4. The ICB will ensure support and practical contributions towards implementing the Children Social Care reforms, such as the Families First Partnership programmes in each borough.
5. The ICB will continue to support the implementation of the Child Protection Information Sharing system (CP-IS) across the sector.

Links

The ICB borough-based safeguarding teams are an integral part of their respective Safeguarding Children Partnerships and Safeguarding Adults Boards.

Please follow links below to find out more about their work

BEXLEY
Bexley Safeguarding Children Partnership
Bexley Safeguarding Adults Board

BROMLEY
Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership
Bromley Safeguarding Adults Board

GREENWICH
Greenwich Safeguarding Children Partnership
Royal Greenwich Safeguarding Adults Board

LAMBETH
Lambeth Safeguarding Children Partnership
Lambeth Safeguarding Adults Board

LEWISHAM
Lewisham Safeguarding Children Partnership
Lewisham Safeguarding Adults Board

SOUTHWARK
Southwark Safeguarding Children Partnership
Southwark Safeguarding Adults Board