

Salford Children's Services Joint Working Protocol with Voluntary and Community Organisations and Social Enterprises



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Foreword

We are committed to ensuring children, young people and families are safe, successful and happy. Whilst the vast majority are thriving already, we recognise that some people will need extra help from time to time. When this happens, it is important that they can access the support they need quickly, regardless of where they go or who they ask for help. Often, this requires people from different organisations and sectors to work together to provide the most appropriate assistance.

Voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations (VCSEs) and Salford City Council's children's services already work together closely and effectively to support children, young people and families. This work is even more important in the context of the limited resources we now have available. However, we recognise that barriers to working together still exist and that we can do even more to give Salford residents the very best support which they deserve.

We are therefore pleased to endorse this Joint Working Protocol. We are confident that it will help us to build on our collective strengths; address challenges; improve communication and strengthen our partnership. Most importantly, it will improve the support we provide for children young people and families and the outcomes they achieve. We strongly encourage all frontline practitioners to use this Joint Working Protocol as a practical tool that will help us to work together better in Salford.



Phil East

Chair of VOCAL Children, Young People and Families

VCSE Forum facilitated by Salford CVS



Cllr John Merry

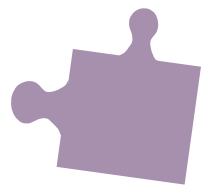
Assistant Mayor, Services for Children and Young People

Chair of Salford Children and Young People's Trust board



Simon Westwood

Independent Chair of Salford Safeguarding Children Board



Introduction

The aim of this protocol is to enhance partnership working between voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations (VCSE's) and Salford City Council children's services. This protocol is intended to assist all partners in the delivery of Salford's Early Help Strategy <http://www.partnersinsalford.org/earlyhelp.htm> and to ensure clear expectations on key safeguarding processes. The protocol particularly recognises the need to work effectively together in the context of reduced resources so that Salford families continue to benefit from a range of appropriate services and activities in the city.



Purpose of the Protocol

Frontline practitioners have highlighted significant good practice in Salford and examples of joint working where the different strengths of statutory services and community provision have provided an enhanced support package for Salford families.

Identified benefits from joint working include:

Specialist support	Sharing workload and creating capacity	Access to specific communities, cultural understanding and overcoming language barriers
More choice for families	Longer standing support for families to meet ongoing needs	Social inclusion: meeting other service users and the confidence to know they are not alone
Services to support integration into UK culture for migrant and refugee families	Improved outcomes for families	Enhanced early intervention

This protocol recognises and intends to grow these strengths and to address some of the barriers to effective joint working which have been identified by a range of frontline practitioners in Salford.

Barriers which have been identified by practitioners include:

Lack of understanding about roles and responsibilities	Wrong assumptions about resources that are available to support families	Lack of awareness of resources available to families
Cultural assumptions	Lack of communication between services	Issues around sharing of information and confidentiality
Time to find out about other services	Competition between organisations for funding, clients, new services	

The protocol provides a framework and guidance as a starting point for services and organisations to work effectively together for the benefit of Salford families. Key to the implementation of this protocol

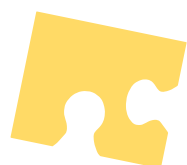
is the development and maintenance of good communication and strong relationships between organisations. This includes giving mutual constructive feedback and the ability to have difficult conversations from time to time.



Parties to this Protocol

The partners who have jointly developed and who share a commitment to the effective implementation of this protocol are:

-  Salford City Council Children's Services Directorate
-  VOCAL – forum of voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations (VCSE's) working with children, young people and families in Salford
-  Salford Community and Voluntary Services (CVS)
-  Other partners are invited to sign up to and commit to the use of this protocol. Please contact Louise Murray at Salford CVS on 0161 787 7795 to discuss.



Principles

Partners to this protocol are committed to the following principles:



Supporting families to help themselves, making sure services spot those who need extra help and acting quickly to access this



Mutual respect between services and organisations which recognises and values diverse working cultures



Maintaining an up to date understanding about other services and organisations and in particular checking out that we have up to date awareness of processes, roles, capacity and resources



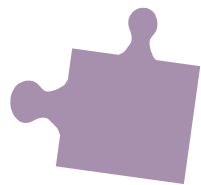
Developing effective communication and building strong working relationships across services and organisations



Sharing information as needed whilst respecting the confidentiality of and building trust with service users



Implementation of the Compact on Relations between the Statutory and Third Sector www.salfordcvs.co.uk/salford-cvs/salford-compact



The Protocol

The Protocol features:

(Click on the text below to be taken to the corresponding section of The Protocol)

Information sharing, safeguarding and confidentiality	Worried about a child?	Salford CVS Child Protection and Safeguarding Awareness training
SSCB Safeguarding Standards for the Voluntary & Community Sector	Early Intervention level support	Risk Management
Referrals and Pathways to Support	Professional Relationships	Concerns, Complaints and Compliments
Developing Your Relationship	Review of this Protocol	

Information sharing, safeguarding and confidentiality

Information sharing is key to ensuring families, children and young people feel that they are not having to repeat themselves to different organisations who they think should be working together. If information sharing is right it should help with the provision of appropriate support and enable families, children and young people to feel listened to and that their needs have been met quickly within a secure legal framework.



Confidentiality is key to sustaining relationships with other practitioners, organisations and families. It is helpful to ask yourself if this person needs to know this information and if so why? Breach of confidentiality can have a very negative impact on families, children and young people trusting organisations to meet their needs.

Information should be stored according to the policies and procedures of each organisation in line with Data Protection requirements. Information will usually be shared with the consent of the family/young person. Exceptions to gaining consent will take place where there is a safeguarding concern or significant risk to others. All organisations should be aware of and implement Salford Safeguarding Children Board's information sharing and confidentiality guidance: http://greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_info_sharing.html

Government has also produced useful guidance for practitioners including the 7 golden rules to sharing information: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419628/Information_sharing_advice_safeguarding_practitioners.pdf

Worried about a child?

If you are worried about the welfare or safety of a child, or if you feel additional support is needed to meet increasing needs it is very important that you contact the Partnership Bridge in Salford on 0161 603 4500 worriedaboutachild@salford.gov.uk. If a child is in immediate danger of being harmed, or if a child is home alone, the police should be called on 999.



Salford CVS Child Protection and Safeguarding Awareness training

Salford CVS delivers Basic Safeguarding Awareness Training approximately five times a year. You can view the Salford CVS training programme online: <https://www.salfordcvs.co.uk/training>



Salford Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) Safeguarding Standards for the Voluntary & Community Sector

Salford CVS in partnership with other members of the SSCB have developed Salford's Safeguarding Standards for the Voluntary & Community Sector.

The Safeguarding Standards have been endorsed by the Salford Safeguarding Children Board, Salford CVS, and VOCAL (The Voluntary and Community Sector Forum to Salford Children & Young People's Partnership).

The 20 standards cover the following:

- Accountability and Information Sharing
- Organisations' policies and procedures
- Reporting concerns, suspicions and allegations
- Safe recruitment and selection
- Management and support of paid staff and volunteers
- Providing safer activities and trips



How do the standards affect your organisation?

Commissioned organisations	Non-commissioned organisations
Organisations commissioned by Salford City Council to provide services for children, young people and families will be asked to demonstrate to commissioners how they as an organisation meet the safeguarding standards.	Organisations not commissioned to provide services can still implement the standards. The standards offer an opportunity to self-assess safeguarding practice and identify areas for improvement. All organisations whatever size can benefit from implementing the standards. To book an appointment with a Salford CVS Development Worker who will support your organisation to implement the standards please tel: 0161 787 7795 or email: office@salfordcvs.co.uk

Early Intervention level support

If the child, young person or family you are working with have any needs that they would like support with that are not a safeguarding concern e.g. employment, counselling, parenting strategies, benefits advice you can, with the family's consent, and if your role permits (capacity etc.) speak to a universal service the family is involved with e.g. school, health visitor, GP, midwife. This may involve use of the CAF (Common Assessment Framework). See flowchart at appendix 1. The Local Authority CAF Co-ordinators can advise you on the completion of a CAF, they can be contacted on 0161 778 0391.



Risk Management

All partners will proactively provide necessary information around risk to enable other organisations and services to operate in a safe environment. This will include risks to the service user, risks to staff, risks within the environment, and risks to other service users. Partners will respond positively to requests for further information where this is needed.



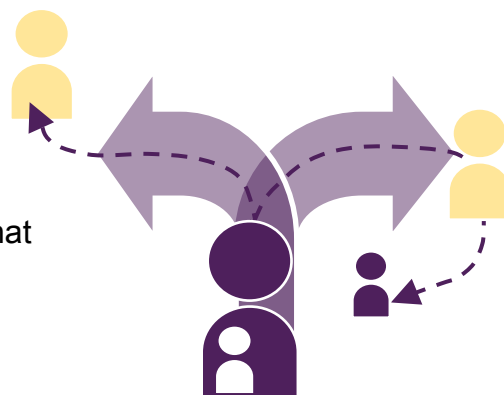
Referrals and Pathways to Support

Prior to making a referral or signposting to a VCSE organisation partners will check that the referral is appropriate and that the resources are currently in place to meet the needs. It is important that this happens before discussions of any potential services with the service user/family. Many local voluntary and community organisations do not receive core funding and operate in a volatile funding environment which means the service offer needs to be checked regularly.

A referral to a VCSE organisation should include a reason for the referral and factual details (e.g. age, Date of Birth) – please check the information required by the organisation. There may be a cost for some services and this will need to be checked. Even when signposting to an open access service e.g. youth club or drop-in, it is important to check the capacity and availability and any introductory requirements.

Arrangements for start dates, a handover strategy or continued joint working will need to be made clear to all partners and include agreed channels for feedback.

All partners will ensure that referrals include a contingency plan that identifies what will happen if needs are not met, the service is not accessed or declined or needs of the service user/family increase beyond the service level threshold.



The Partnership Bridge acts as the single front door for all referrals to statutory agencies and requests for services for children and young people across the threshold of need. The Bridge includes a multi-agency triage function that will identify a suitable service to offer support to a child and their family, including a key worker approach where necessary. The voluntary and community sector are an important partner and will provide essential services/pathways for support for cases considered by the Bridge Partnership.

Professional Relationships

All partners will actively strive to develop and maintain good working relationships which promote mutual respect between services and organisations and recognises and values diverse working cultures. The level of communication will vary but will be enhanced by openness and transparency. Where there are disagreements all partners should seek to resolve these directly with the practitioners involved first, escalating to managers or a complaints process as a second stage.



When there is a disagreement over a significant issue concerning the safety and welfare of a child it is important that you identify explicitly and clearly what the problem is and what you are aiming to achieve. Initial attempts should seek to resolve difficulties at practitioner/caseworker level first. Differences in status and/or experience may affect the confidence of some staff/volunteers to pursue this without additional support.

If you are dissatisfied with the response to your referral or with the decision that has been reached or have a complaint to make use the steps outlined in the escalation guidance as attached at appendix 2, making sure this is in line with your organisation's child protection policy and involves the people designated as responsible for child protection within your organisation.

Concerns, Complaints and Compliments

All partners to this agreement positively encourage feedback from all service users as this contributes to service improvement. We take all complaints very seriously.



All partners will share their concerns, complaints and compliments process with other organisations they are working with. Salford City Council Customer First Service within Children's Services can offer advice and support should a complaint, compliment or comment be received from service users. Salford CVS can assist VCSE's in developing or reviewing their concerns, complaints and compliments process.

Salford City Council will strive to respond to all complaints within 10 working days. If service users are unhappy with the initial response the complaint will be referred to the Customer First Service for consideration and review.

Developing Your Relationship

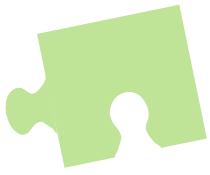
Continued development of the working relationship between organisations can have many mutual benefits. It may be useful to consider inviting organisations to team meetings to explain service offers. VCSE's will also appreciate support in publicising events and fundraising activities. As the relationship develops there may be opportunities for joint training or joint projects or funding bids. In order to help develop understanding of services further you may want to consider offering a work shadowing opportunity.



Review of this Protocol

This protocol will be reviewed by Salford City Council Children's Services Directorate, VOCAL – forum of voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations (VCSE's) working with children, young people and families in Salford and Salford Community and Voluntary Services (CVS) after one year of operation, taking into account evidence of its use from frontline practitioners and services. Thereafter the protocol will be reviewed every 2 years.





Useful Contacts

Worried about a child?

If you are worried about the welfare or safety of a child it is very important that you contact the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub in Salford on 0161 603 4500

worriedaboutachild@salford.gov.uk.

If a child is in immediate danger of being harmed, or if a child is home alone, the police should be called on 999.



Salford Safeguarding Children Board is the multi-agency forum that holds shared responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the children of Salford.

<http://www.partnersinsalford.org/sscb/>



The SSCB provides a diverse range of free training to practitioners and managers working with Salford children, young people and families:

<http://www.partnersinsalford.org/sscb/sscbtraining.htm>



This includes training on recognising and responding to neglect, the most common reason for a child to be subject to a Child Protection Plan in the UK:

<http://www.partnersinsalford.org/sscb/neglecttraining.htm>



You can sign up to current and access archived copies of the SSCB e bulletin:

<http://www.partnersinsalford.org/sscb/news.htm>



The SSCB publishes multi-agency policies and procedures to support practitioners and organisations in Salford:

<http://www.partnersinsalford.org/sscb/procedurespolicies.htm>



Guidance on thresholds of need and response in Salford is published at:

<http://www.partnersinsalford.org/sscb/Thresholds.htm>

Salford Community & Voluntary Services (CVS) is the city-wide infrastructure organisation for the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector; providing specialist information, advice, development support and opportunities for influence and collaboration.

5 Irwell Place

Eccles

M30 0FN

0161 787 7795

www.salfordcvs.co.uk



VOCAL provides broad ranging representation of the interests and views of voluntary and community organisations working with children, young people and families in Salford



Contact through Salford Community & Voluntary Services (CVS)

<https://www.salfordcvs.co.uk/salford-cvs/vocal-forum>

Salford Starting Life Well Service will give you information about childcare services, children's centres, holiday and after school clubs and some services for disabled children.



Second Floor



Unity House

Swinton



Salford

M27 5AW

Tel: 0161 909 6508



Email SLW@salford.gov.uk

<http://www.salford.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies.htm>

Early intervention and prevention service

Work on whole family engagement, assessment and intervention for children and young people aged up to 19 years. Interventions include family support, brief intervention therapy, skills and work, housing support managed by Locality Teams. Referrals for Early Intervention and Prevention support is through the Bridge Partnership, using the worried about a child 'referral' process.

The four locality teams are as follows:



Central Locality

Broughton Hub

50 Rigby Street

Salford

M7 4BQ

Telephone: 0161 778 0601

Email: central.locality@salford.gov.uk



South Locality

Emerson House

Fifth Floor

Albert Street

Eccles

M30 0TE

Telephone: 0161 686 5260

Email: south.locality@salford.gov.uk



North Locality

Burrows House

1st Floor (Front Building)

10 Priestley Road

Wardley Industrial Estate

Worsley

M28 2LY

Telephone: 0161 778 0495

Email: north.locality@salford.gov.uk



West Locality

Little Hulton Children's Centre

Longshaw Drive

Little Hulton

Salford

M27 0BD

Telephone: 0161 686 7235

Email: west.locality@salford.gov.uk

Opening hours: all locality offices are open from 8.30am to 4.30pm.



Salford Children and Young People's Trust is the 'theme' group for children and young people in Salford's City Partnership

<http://www.partnersinsalford.org/cyptrust.htm>



Useful Resources and links



The Starting Life Well Family Information Service provides free, impartial, information and advice on services for children and young people from 0 to 19 and their families in Salford.



Helpline - 0161 909 6508 - is open from 8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday,

You can email us at slw@salford.gov.uk

<http://www.0-19insalford.info/familyservicedirectory/about.aspx>

www.

www.

Services, activities and events in Salford directory at www.salford.gov.uk/serviceinfo or via the 'Services' tab on www.wuu2.info (young people's website). Now includes age-specific search.

www.

Way2Wellbeing www.way2wellbeing.org.uk (directory at the bottom)

www.

Local offer for children and young people with special educational needs <http://www.salford.gov.uk/localoffer.htm>

www.

Making Every Contact Count Signposting Directory: <http://www.meccinsalford.org.uk/file/download/53997631d6a56524628b456b>

www.

Salford **Emotional Health Directory** of Services for Children and Young People: under 'Downloadable Documents' at www.partnersinsalford.org/youngemotionalhealth

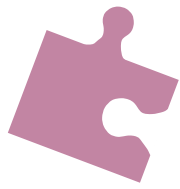
www.

Salford CVS directory of voluntary groups <https://www.salfordcvs.co.uk/civicism/ajaxsearch/search>

www.

NHS Choices www.nhs.uk. The 'more services' option finds "everything from care and support services to pharmacies, opticians and gyms" – this includes various sports and leisure clubs in Salford. (**Heathwatch Salford** point you to NHS Choices under their '[find services](#)' page.)

And not forgetting – **Google** will find many services directly.



Glossary



SSCB

Salford Safeguarding Children Board is the multi-agency forum that holds shared responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the children of Salford. <http://www.partnersinsalford.org/sscb/>



CYPTB

Salford Children and Young People's Trust is the 'theme' group for children and young people in Salford's City Partnership <http://www.partnersinsalford.org/cyptrust.htm>



CAF

The common assessment framework (CAF) is a holistic assessment that helps identify whether a child has unmet needs and what support can be put in place to meet those unmet needs.



VCSE

Voluntary and community organisations and social enterprises are organisations which are charitable in nature or reinvest any profits back into their social purpose. There are about 1376 VCSE's in Salford, 934 of which are micro (annual income under £10,000)



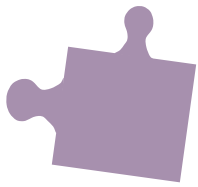
CVS

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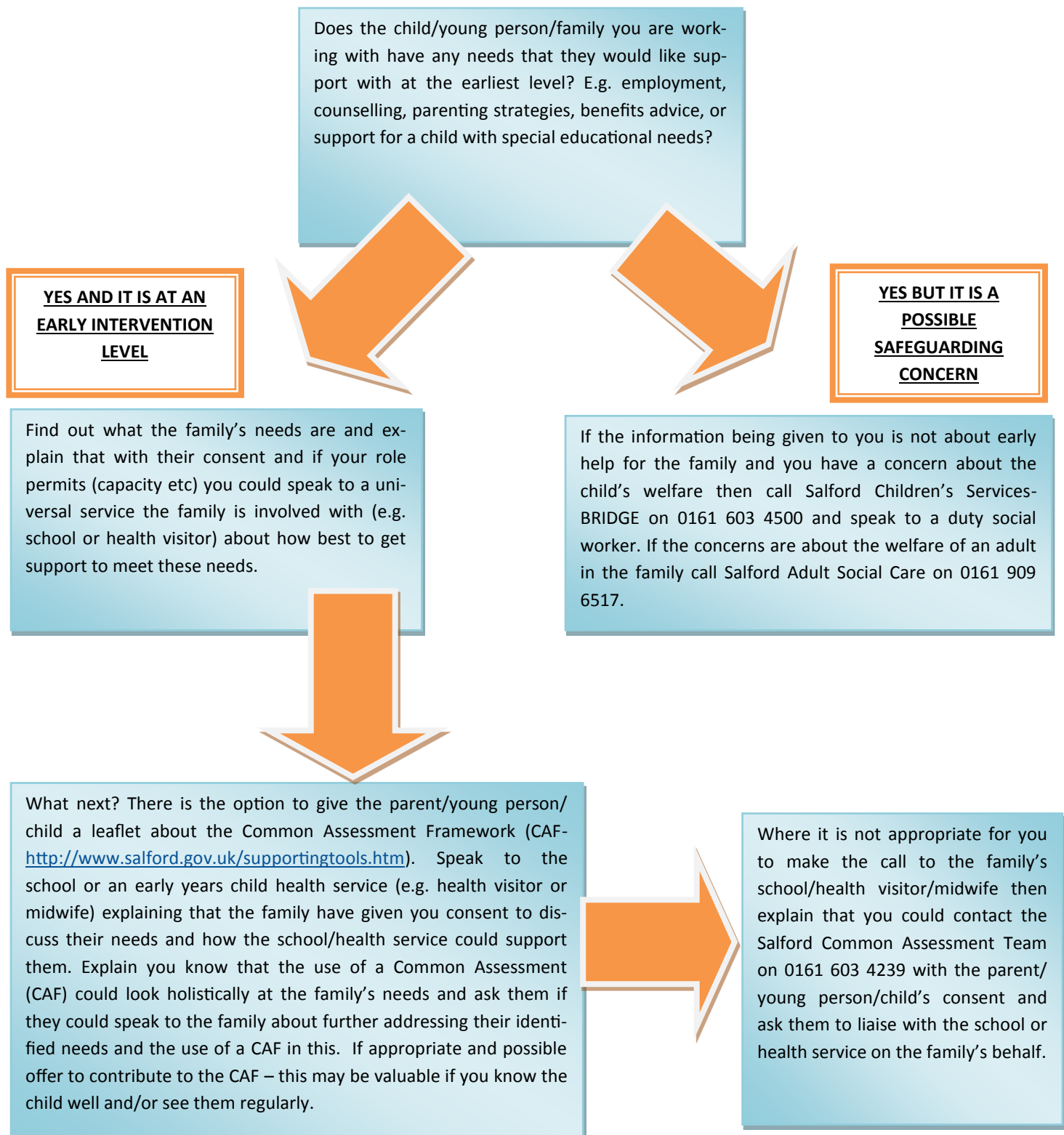


VOCAL

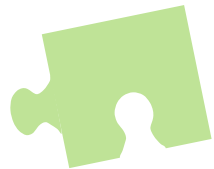
VOCAL provides broad ranging representation of the interests and views of voluntary and community organisations working with children, young people and families in Salford



Appendix 1: Early intervention support for community & voluntary organisations and social enterprises working with families - January 2015



It is expected that larger organisations such as Barnardo's complete the CAF and the NSPCC complete CAFs independently or co-author them with a relevant service. Smaller community and voluntary organisations will be expected to be CAF aware and signpost a family to a universal service such as a school. If manageable and appropriate they could make contact with the school with the parent's consent. The school could take the lead on the CAF and then get the organisation's contribution to add to the CAF and Team around the Child meeting if the family wants this.



Appendix 2: Guidance for Voluntary and Community Organisations on referrals and challenge in safeguarding

1. Introduction

This guidance has been developed specifically for the voluntary and community sector by Salford CVS and members of VOCAL (the voluntary and community sector forum) in consultation with Salford Children's Services. It is complementary to the SSCB Escalation Guidance (available at <http://www.partnersinsalford.org/sscb/escalationofconcern.htm>) and highlights specific issues that voluntary or community organisations may face, for example, the safety of volunteers.

2. Worried about a child - how your referral should be dealt with:

1. Go to <http://www.salford.gov.uk/childconcern.htm> or telephone The Partnership Bridge on 0161 603 4500. If a child is in immediate danger of being harmed, or if a child is home alone, the police should be called on 999.
2. Complete the Referral Form for children's services at <http://www.salford.gov.uk/secureupload.htm> and submit via the secure upload. If you want to offer ongoing support to the child/family and have their consent please make sure this is made clear on the referral form. If you are concerned that there may be a risk to a volunteer or member of staff by making this referral (e.g. a staff member lives in the same neighbourhood as the family) please highlight this on the referral form and ask to be contacted in advance of any contact from children's' services with the family.
3. You should receive an automated response immediately.
4. You will receive a Referrals Outcome Form within one week telling you whether this has progressed to:
 - a. Social Work Assessment on a child in need basis
 - b. Social Work Assessment due to child protection concerns including a multi-agency child protection enquiry
 - c. No further action from Children's Social Care but signposted to another service, including allocated in Early Intervention and Prevention to a key worker.
5. If you have specified in the Referral Form an offer of ongoing support from your organisation you will be contacted by the Partnership Bridge before the Outcome Form is generated

3. Anonymous Referrals

It is possible to make an anonymous referral if you are worried about a child but feel that you cannot give your own contact information. For example, you may be a volunteer in a local community group and feel that your concerns about a child would lead to repercussions on your own family. You will need to identify your concerns in the same way to the Partnership Bridge in Salford on 0161 603 4500 and your referral should be accepted. However, it is important to note that families can often work out where a referral has come from and it is usually better to be open with the family about your concerns and about your responsibilities as someone who works or volunteers with children in the community. It is important to have support in place from your

organisation's designated person responsible for child protection and to follow your organisations safeguarding children policy. Please see Safeguarding Standards for the Voluntary and Community Sector at <http://www.salfordcvs.co.uk/salford-cvs/children-and-young-people>

4. Steps to challenge a decision made by children's services

Please also see the SSCB Escalation Policy available at: <http://www.partnersinsalford.org/sscb/escalationofconcern.htm>

When there is a disagreement over a significant issue concerning the safety and welfare of a child it is important that you identify explicitly and clearly what the problem is and what you are aiming to achieve. **Initial attempts should seek to resolve difficulties at practitioner/caseworker level** first. Differences in status and/or experience may affect the confidence of some staff/volunteers to pursue this without additional support.

If you are dissatisfied with the response to your referral or with the decision that has been reached or have a complaint to make use the following steps, making sure this is in line with your organisation's child protection policy and involves the people designated as responsible for child protection within your organisation:

1. Telephone the Partnership Bridge in Salford on 0161 603 4500 and ask to speak to a Practice Manager and/or email the practice manager at: worriedaboutachild@salford.gov.uk You may choose to telephone initially for a discussion or if your concerns are immediate. However, it is recommended that concerns are put in writing via email. You will receive an automated response to confirm receipt. To document the issues you wish to raise please use the Escalation Notice to record information and copy to the SSCB Business Manager. See end of this document and the SSCB website: <http://www.partnersinsalford.org/sscb/escalationofconcern.htm>
2. The practice manager will respond to your complaint within 5 working days. If you are not satisfied with the response from the practice manager contact the Service Manager using the above process and using the same generic email address and phone number. Attach the original escalation notice to your email.
3. The service manager will respond to your complaint within 5 working days. If you are not satisfied with the response from the Service Manager contact the Head of Service using the above process, copying the escalation notice, and using the same generic email address and phone number.
4. The Head of Service will respond to your complaint within 5 working days. The Safeguarding Children and Quality Assurance Unit will offer consultation and advice on cases and will intervene to help resolve issues if that is appropriate.

Safeguarding Children and Quality Assurance Unit
Sutherland House
303 Chorley Road
Swinton
M27 6AY
Tel: 0161 603 4322

5. Monitoring by SSCB

1. The SSCB has a statutory role to ensure that arrangements are in place to safeguard children. This includes having a specific interest in how well agencies work together.
2. Therefore the Service Manager (or equivalent) should forward a copy of each escalation notice to the SSCB Business Manager. These will then form the basis of a report by the Business Manager to the SSCB Executive Committee setting out issues in escalation and the consequences for policy.

6. Following the use of the Escalation Policy

1. It may be useful for individuals to debrief following some disputes in order to promote continuing good working relationships.
2. When the issue is resolved, any general issues should be identified and referred to the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit and the SSCB Business Manager for consideration to inform future learning.

Agency Report re:
Recording inter agency conflict and resolution on a service users file

Name of Child/Young Person	D.O.B

Please document any information of concern:

Report completed by:

Name:

Role:

Contact Details:

Date:

Who has a copy of this notice has been sent to:

Return to:

SSCB Business Manager
Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit
Sutherland House
303 Chorley Road
Swinton
M27 6AY

Return to;

SSCB Business Manager
Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit
Sutherland House
303 Chorley Road
Swinton
M27 6AY
Tel: 0161 603 4322