

Stockport Safeguarding Adults Partnership Quality Assurance Framework 2024



Introduction

The Safeguarding Adults Quality Assurance Partnership has developed this Quality Assurance Framework to provide assurance that the Safeguarding Adults Partnership and all partner agencies have effective systems, structures, processes and practice in place to improve the outcomes and experiences of adults who receive safeguarding interventions.

We will seek to gain assurance around the quality, impact and effectiveness of our collective work, to ensure we develop practice in a culture of continuous learning and improvement. This framework has been written to set out how we will work to this aim as a Partnership, but also how single agencies can seek and provide assurance to the Stockport Safeguarding Adults Partnership.

We will work to the six safeguarding principles as laid out by The Care Act 2014. These principles will underpin all multi-agency safeguarding activity across Stockport. This Quality Assurance Framework is based on these principles to ensure compliance, quality, and most importantly a positive experience for the adults and families of the borough.

The Care Act 2014 sets out the principle of **Making Safeguarding Personal** (MSP) and states that individuals should be asked about the outcomes they wish to achieve at the outset of safeguarding involvement. To ensure this approach is embedded in practice, we will monitor:

- Information on personalised outcomes through quarterly data reporting.
- Adults' voices and how they are heard as part of all audit work.
- Proxy measures on adult voice as part of thematic work (e.g. compliments and complaints).



This Quality Assurance Framework is primarily for use by Stockport Safeguarding Adults Partnership member organisations. Implementation and delivery will be overseen by the Quality Assurance Partnership, one of our Partnership sub-groups. The themes and focus of our activity will be shaped and informed by our Joint Business Plan 2023-2026.

The framework will be owned by the Quality Assurance Partnership and will be reviewed alongside significant changes to the Partnership's Business Plan or governance structure.

Underlying principles, and roles and responsibilities

Our approach to Quality Assurance will evidence some core values of our Quality Assurance Partnership:

Participation – our quality assurance activity will be carried out in partnership with service users, and professionals. This enables the incorporation of views and feedback into service improvement. This consultative approach extends to partners, encouraging an awareness of quality issues and ownership of the findings.

Comprehensive – we will use different information from varying sources to triangulate findings and validate conclusions. This will enable us to more confidently understand whether arrangements are effective and making a positive difference.

Ethical and Fair – we will always endeavour to respect privacy and confidentiality, extend and develop our knowledge, use public resources in the most effective way possible, and use the findings to create change which leads to improved outcomes. We will take equality and diversity issues into account when developing and undertaking quality assurance activity, ensuring we develop equality of access.

High Challenge, High Support – we will encourage a respectful and mutually supportive environment in which we all work together to have open and honest conversations about safeguarding practice to enable constructive learning. Sharing good practice alongside asking questions of ourselves and each other will help to develop meaningful action plans which provide a measure of tangible change. In this way we can share learning and develop accountability to our own organisations and each other.

Improved Outcomes – research and learning from quality assurance will be collated and shared with partners so it can be used meaningfully to change practice and improve outcomes.

Transparent – we will deliver clear messages about the purpose of quality assurance and how it benefits the organisation and individuals, to encourage openness and willingness to participate. All partners must highlight to the SSAP good practice, areas for development and risks so that the SSAP can agree how they can be shared or mitigated.

Roles and Responsibilities

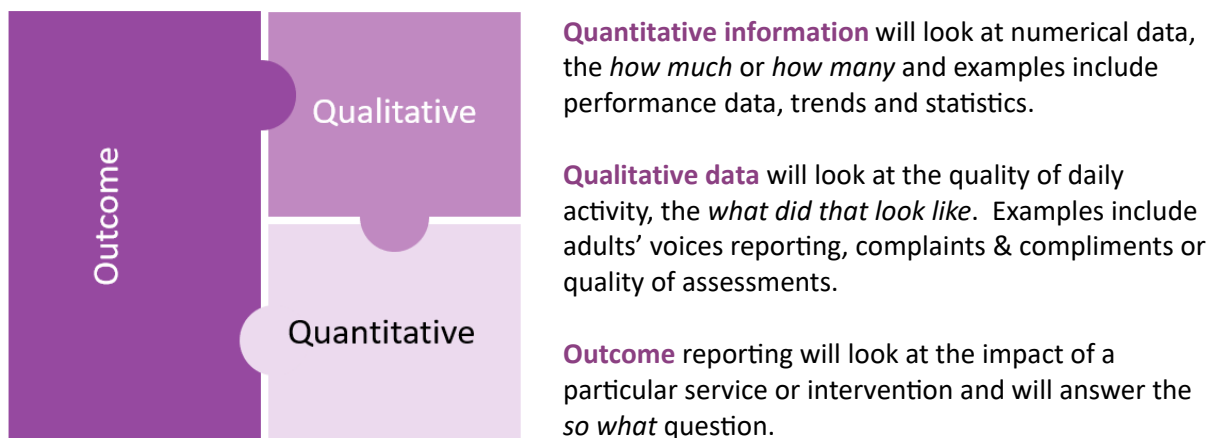
Individual agencies and organisations including all statutory members of the SSAP are responsible for:

- Their own quality assurance activity in relation to safeguarding.
- Supplying information and data as required by this framework. Effective information sharing is covered under our Information Sharing Agreement and duties under The Care Act 2014, Section 45.
- Ensuring appropriate representation on the QAP.
- Participating in the multi-agency audits as defined by the QAP.
- Notifying the SSAP on any areas of concern – including poor regulatory inspection outcomes, serious safeguarding concerns, issues that may attract media attention, service re-design that would impact on a safeguarding response, and other strategic developments.

Information sources

Our Quality Assurance Framework draws upon a number of different information sources to provide a balanced and rounded view of adults' experiences of services and pathways.

We will explore three main types of information within this framework.



We will focus our assurance activity and evidence gathering from 4 main sources, as identified below.

Service user experience	We want to prioritise how we capture, listen to, and learn from individual experiences of accessing services in Stockport. Exploring this is crucial to our quality assurance activities and will help us to understand the impact of our collective impact, interactions, and conversations with individuals.
Staff experience	Sitting alongside service user experiences, it is also important for us to consider how our workforce across the Safeguarding Partnership work with adults and deliver interventions from the policy, procedure and training we offer.
Case records	Organisations will create and store case records in a number of different formats. What is important for our quality assurance is that records accurately reflect not just what was delivered, but why, and the impact that it had on the individual.
Performance data	We will scrutinise a range of multi-agency performance indicators to provide a balanced view of safeguarding activity across partner agencies.

The Quality Assurance Partnership has agreed a multi-agency audit methodology which details our multi-agency audits, and will be reviewed, updated as necessary, and issued with each multi-agency audit to ensure partners are clear on expectations of their participation in the process.

Elements of our Quality Assurance Framework

Service User Experience

- Agencies should have processes in place to understand the **service users' experience** of their service. This should be reported via the QAP, so that user experiences can inform the work of the SSAP.
- Partner agencies should have arrangements in place for monitoring **complaints and compliments**. This will ensure safeguarding issues are identified and responded to whilst strengths are identified and built upon.

Audit and self-evaluation

- Partners complete a short **QA Statement** tool to assess organisational arrangements to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of adults at risk.
- **Single agency audits** may take place and can be reported at a thematic level to the Safeguarding Partnership.
- **Multi-agency audits** will take place to identify strengths and areas for development against a specific theme. We aim to complete 3 multi-agency audits each year depending on service delivery pressures across the Partnership.
- We also aim to complete a **Joint Learning Hub** with the Safeguarding Children's Partnership each year. An annual audit plan will be prepared and approved by the Quality Assurance Partnership.
- Partners will complete **Front-line Visits** to other agencies to discuss and learn about safeguarding activity, operational throughput, and service remit.
- **Peer Review** activity provides an opportunity for external review of safeguarding practice and strategic oversight. This can include reviews of a single agency, the Safeguarding Partnership arrangements, or a multi-agency review of all partners.
- **Regulatory inspection findings** will help to identify areas for development and good practice.
- Each year the Safeguarding Partnership will produce an **Annual Report** analysing our activity, achievements and outcomes as well as progress made against the Business Plan.

Safeguarding Reviews

- **Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs)** completed under Section 44 of The Care Act (2014) seek to learn lessons following the death or serious injury of an adult with care and support needs as a result of abuse or neglect.
- Pertinent learning from other review processes including **Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews (DARRs)** or other **Learning Reviews** may provide insight into adult safeguarding processes and pathways.

Service performance and activity

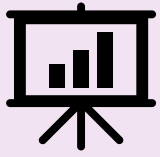
- **Performance data** from partners will populate a multi-agency dashboard to enable the SSAP to understand themes and trends in safeguarding activity.
- Partners will be signed up to the Partnership **memorandum of understanding** which includes an expectation that SSAP is notified of all issues of concern and risk that present safeguarding implications – e.g. poor inspection outcomes, issues that may attract media attention.
- We want to learn from and celebrate **Good Practice** wherever possible.

Framework delivery

We will deliver our Safeguarding Partnership QA Framework through a number of different outputs as described below.

What will we do	What we will learn	When we will do it
Self-assessment and QA Statements Each agency will be asked to complete a QA Statement against key safeguarding practices based upon the principles of The Care Act. The Safeguarding Partnership Business Unit and Independent Chair will complete a strategic self-evaluation against Care Act guidance based on available evidence.	By looking strategically across all agencies, we will be able to develop a shared understanding of our collective strengths and areas for development.	The QA Statements will be completed every 2 years. Every 3 years, we will seek out strategic peer review opportunities to test out our collective strengths and areas for development.
Multi-Agency Case File Audits All relevant agencies will be asked to participate in a multi-agency audit and learning event. A findings report and action plan will be prepared in response.	Through audit and case deconstruction, we will arrive at a shared understanding of our collective response, highlighting best practice, and what needs to improve for adults at risk in Stockport.	A minimum of 3 multi-agency audits will take place each year plus one joint multi-agency learning hub with the SSCP.
Performance Dashboard Quarterly reporting on the Safeguarding Adults Partnership performance dashboard.	Key performance indicators across all agencies will provide professionals and leaders across the system with a single overview of how safeguarding activity is being delivered, and what if any pressure points exist.	Performance reporting will be provided on a quarterly basis in arrears.
Thematic Deep-Dives We will utilise learning from SARs, QA reporting, and other regional and national developments to undertake our own thematic deep dives. These will include a mix of audit, performance data, and stakeholder engagement. These enquiries could be based on individual cases or strategic areas of practice. This can include peer-review activity.	Learning will be gained in a similar way to case file audit activity but will be more strategic in that it incorporates performance data and stakeholder feedback.	There won't be a set frequency for completing deep-dive enquiries, and they will be agreed by the QAP Chair when they are required to happen.

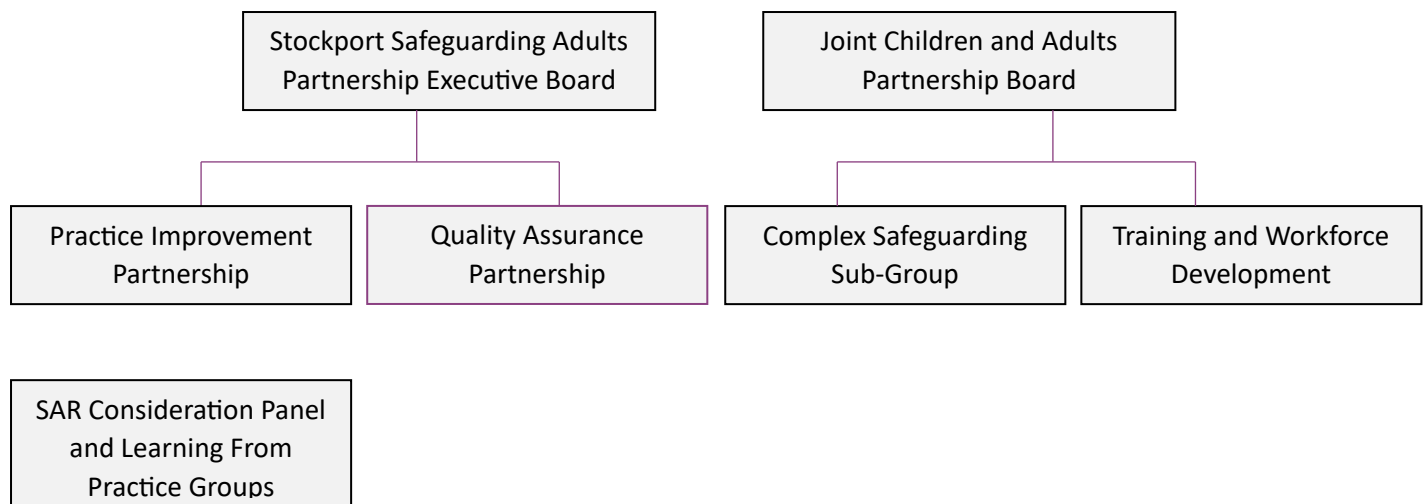
Our Quality Assurance Calendar

	Quarterly	Annually	Every 2 Years	Every 3 Years
Audit Activity 	Multi-Agency Audit Single agency audits Performance dashboard scrutiny Review of SARs (both referrals and completed reviews)	Responding to inspection findings Responding to learning from SARs Joint Learning Hub with the Safeguarding Childrens Partnership	Self-assessment and Quality Assurance Statements	Peer Review Review of training and development offer
Engagement 		Thematic service user survey (in line with MSP approaches)		Member organisation staff survey findings
Reporting 	Audit learning report and action plan progress Performance information report (to include adult voice reporting) Single agency reporting on QA activity	Audit activity and learning overview report – to include adult voice reporting and principles of MSP Annual Report Learning summaries from single agency audit activity		Business Plan priority setting for 3 years based upon learning from all QA activity

Governance

The Stockport Safeguarding Adults Partnership is made up of a number of Boards and Sub-Groups, as illustrated below. We want to ensure that our quality assurance activity influences learning and practice improvements across the borough.

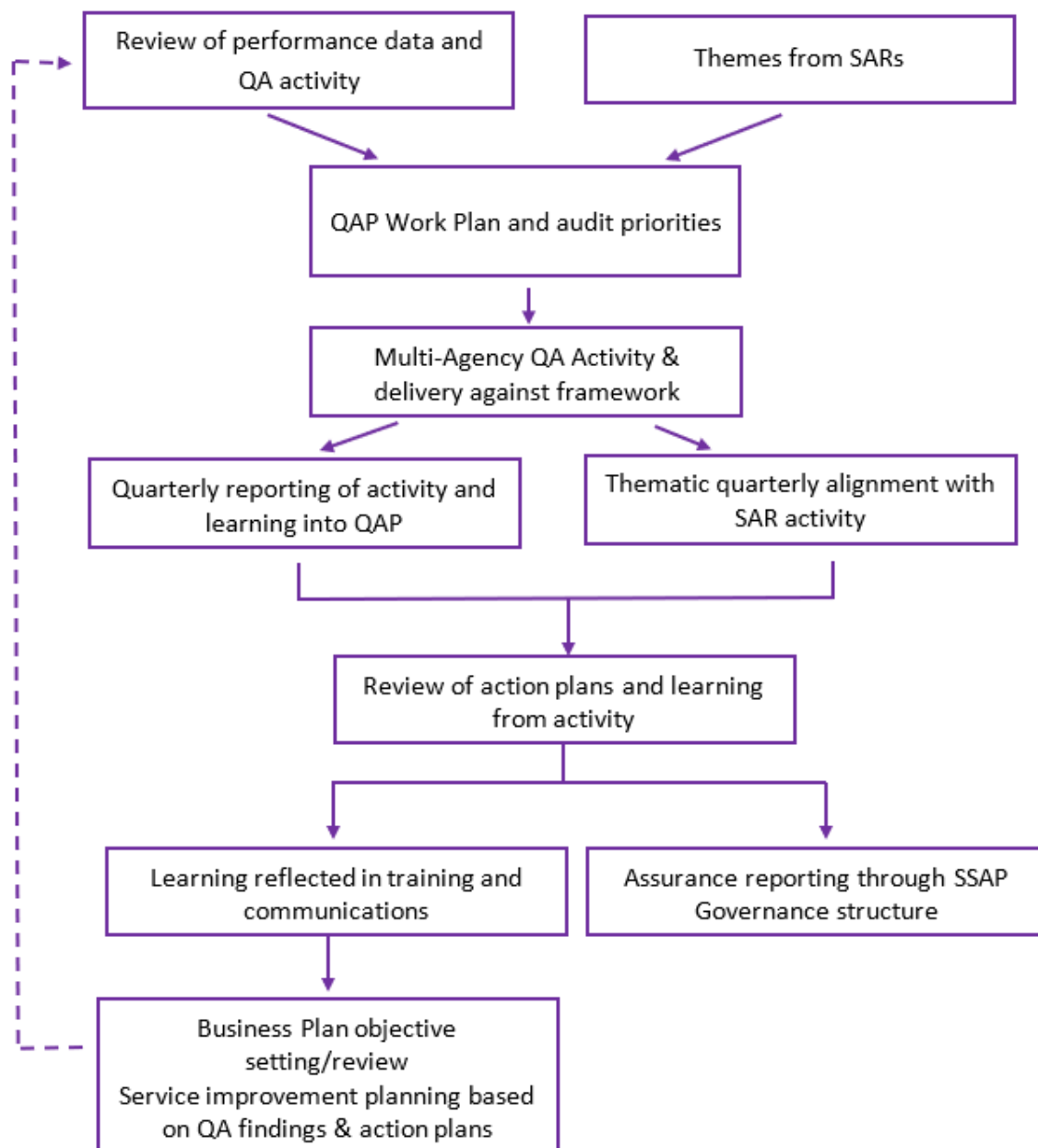
The Quality Assurance Partnership will be the main sub-group to review and deliver this QA Framework, but there are elements that will fall to other groups including the Practice Improvement Partnership and Training and Workforce Development sub-group.



Appendix A: Glossary of terms

Abbreviation	Definition
CQC	Care Quality Commission
DoLS	Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards
MSP	Making Safeguarding Personal
PIP	Practice Improvement Partnership
QA	Quality Assurance
QAP	Quality Assurance Partnership
SAR	Safeguarding Adult Review
SSAP	Stockport Safeguarding Adults Partnership

Appendix B: Process flowchart



Appendix C: Audit methodology (to be issued with each audit)

Purpose and approach

The Stockport Safeguarding Adults Partnership utilises the Quality Assurance Partnership sub-group to seek and deliver assurance regarding multi-agency safeguarding practice. To help partners in delivering the multi-agency audit programme, this document has been developed which outlines our approach and methodology.

A broad approach to multi-agency auditing is included below which has previously been in place in Stockport. The approach has been designed to support partners in streamlining auditing activity whilst still providing assurance to the Partnership Board on safeguarding practice.

Multi-agency auditing activity will take place in line with priorities agreed in the [Business Plan 2023-26](#), as well as themes arising such as learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews. Additional priorities may be suggested by the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Executive Board.

The high-level process is shown below, with more detailed information provided elsewhere in this document.



Methodology

Unless agreed otherwise at the Quality Assurance Partnership (QAP), and depending upon the theme of the audit taking place, multi-agency audits should include input from the following agencies from the Partnership.

- Adult Social Care
- NHS Greater Manchester – Stockport locality
- Stockport NHS FT
- Pennine Care NHS FT
- The Prevention Alliance
- Northwest Ambulance Service
- Greater Manchester Police
- Stockport Age UK
- Probation Services
- Stockport Homes Group

Auditing activity will usually comprise case-file auditing or reviewing records as appropriate. A representative sample size will be selected and agreed by the Quality Assurance Officer in consultation with partners and agency leads. The cases selected will cover a range of gender, age, ethnicity, disability, and level of need.

An audit tool will be provided which will be adapted to the theme being explored. At a minimum, it would be expected that auditing activity will take account of:

- The adult's voice, or the views of their advocate or representative
- Acknowledgement of any protected characteristics or equality, diversity or inclusion context

The audit tool will be designed so it is not overly complicated or onerous to complete and will be adapted to each audit theme. Unless agreed otherwise, all agencies will be asked to complete the same audit tool from their agency's perspective.

Following completion of the audit tools, auditors and representatives from the QAP will be invited to an 'audit day' to review findings and discuss and agree learning. This session will give all agencies an opportunity to come together in person and discuss the audit findings both at an individual case level and also thematically to ensure all learning is captured. The sessions will normally be chaired by the QAP Chair and Business Manager.

The Safeguarding Partnership Business Unit will then produce a findings report, and members of the QAP will agree and collectively deliver an action plan in response to the findings.

Timescales

The Quality Assurance Partnership aims to deliver 4 multi-agency audits per year, with one of these being a joint audit with the Children's Partnership. This means there is a 12-week window in which to deliver each individual audit activity. These 'windows' will be scheduled around QAP meetings to ensure there is minimal delay in the audit timetable.

Timescales for each individual audit will be reviewed to ensure they are meaningful and deliverable and will take account of other review work taking place within the Partnership.

A forward plan will be discussed and agreed or updated at each meeting of the Quality Assurance Partnership, with assurance provided to the Executive Board as part of routine sub-group activity reporting.

Week	Activity
1	Audit commences, QAP members will have been notified at previous meeting Audit tool amended and agreed Case sample agreed
2	Auditors notified of case sample and audit tool shared
7	Completed audits returned to SSAP Business Unit
8	All audits shared with partners ahead of audit day
9	Audit day event held
10-11	Findings report prepared
12	Presentation of findings at QAP and action plan commences

Audit day event

To ensure that auditing activity is focused on multi-agency learning, it is important that partners are given an opportunity to come together and reflect on the findings, learning, and the process itself.

The dates for each audit event will be agreed and shared in advance, and wherever possible will be held in person. The event will be led by the QAP Chair and SSAP Business Manager. To facilitate discussion and to get the most out of the event, all completed audits will be shared at least 1 week in advance.

At each event, the agenda will include dedicated time to identify and discuss good practice evident in the case.

Following the event, an action plan will be developed and overseen by the Quality Assurance Partnership to address any findings and recommendations. As part of the process, there may be single-agency actions identified. It will be the responsibility of each agency to input and deliver against the action plan.

Supporting information

At the start of each audit cycle, the SSAP Business Unit will issue an information pack to provide support and additional information on the audit process, the audit theme, and the learning audit day event.

The Quality Assurance Officer and Business Manager will be available to support all partners throughout the audit process.