

How do South Gloucestershire's Children's Services work with children and families?



OUR VISION

Every child and young person in South Gloucestershire will have the **best start in life**, thrive and be prepared for a successful adult life.

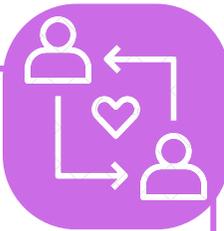


OUR MISSION

Our mission is to deliver a service that we can be proud of. A service which promotes positive outcomes for all children and enables them to be healthy, safe and thrive.

We want all the children and young people we work with to:

- Feel safe from harm and know where to go to get help if they need it
- Have a settled and happy education which enables them to achieve their full potential
- Understand the benefits of a healthy and active life
- Be fully prepared for adult life
- Be able to tell us what they think and know that they are listened to
- Build stronger connections with their area and enjoy growing up in South Gloucestershire
- Feel valued, cared for and to know that they are important



OUR VALUES

Our values are central to our work. At all times we will:

- Put children's needs first, ensuring the voice of young people sits at the heart of our practice
- Work with integrity, honesty, empathy and respect, showing fairness and courage in everything we do
- Work together; adopting a whole family approach, considering the views and wishes of parents and carers and others important to the child and their family network
- Champion open communication, always respecting the opinions of others
- Focus on the long-term wellbeing of those we work with, prioritising keeping children safe with the family and their network
- Work together with our partners to achieve the best outcomes for families
- Provide **the right help, in the right way, at the right time**, ensuring that when we stop working with families, they have the skills and support to deal with problems
- Recognise that there is always room for improvement in how we support children and families. We encourage feedback, we are honest when we get things wrong, and we learn from our mistakes
- Support our staff to do their jobs to the best of their ability

What practice model do we use in South Gloucestershire's Children's Services?

Children's Services vision, mission, values and practice model - a guide for our Partners

In South Gloucestershire's Children's Services we adopt a practice model consisting of Signs of Safety, Systemic Practice and Trauma Informed Approaches. This model guides and influences how we work with children, families, partners and each other.

OUR PRACTICE MODEL

Signs of Safety



A Signs of Safety framework guides how we work with children and families, our partner agencies and each other. We clearly discuss our worries about children and support families to understand for themselves how they can build on their strengths and what works, to help overcome their difficulties. We are transparent, clear and honest with families and each other. We believe good practice only happens through relationships and partnerships. We always speak plainly to make sure children, young people and families understand what we say, what we do and the reasons for this. We keep accurate records about our work with children and families so that children can understand their lives, own stories and the decisions that have been made to keep them safe and well.

Family network meetings are a key component of Signs of Safety and we use these to involve family networks in assessments and planning; we listen to the views of children, their families and networks. We encourage a families networks to take ownership of what needs to change and how they can contribute in order to support the safety and wellbeing of the children. We work to sustain and deepen children's connections with the families, people, culture and communities they were born into and belong to. We always work on the basis that it is best for children to live with their families, so long as it is safe for them to do so.

Systemic Practice



Applying systemic approaches and concepts helps to inform our work with children and families. As practitioners we look at the whole picture, the child or young person, their family, community and wider society to get a better understanding of what makes someone who they are, and what makes them unique to their own situation. This helps us to avoid looking at presenting issues in isolation and to consider individuals as part of their wider systems. With this greater understanding, we can offer the best and most effective support to children and their families.

Trauma Informed



Many of the children, young people and families we work with have experienced trauma and adversity in their lives. We always adopt a trauma informed and responsive approach to our work, to help us better recognise and sensitively respond to the needs of the children and families. We are careful to use trauma informed language when talking to and writing about children and their families. We recognise that "trauma informed" is more than a term; it is a whole system approach which allows children to feel safe and develop trusting relationships with services and practitioners. It also helps practitioners to feel safe and connected in their practice with families and each other.

The information in this practice guide is intended to support professionals across all partner organisations and help us work better together.