



South Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board

# Learning and Improvement Framework

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## Introduction

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 sets out an approach to learning and improvement for Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB) and places a duty on them to develop their own local framework. This framework should be shared across local organisations to enable them to be clear about their responsibilities, to learn from experience and improve services as a result.

Each local framework should support the work of the LSCB and their partners so that:

- reviews are conducted regularly, not only on cases which meet statutory criteria, but also on other cases which can provide useful insights into the way organisations are working together to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and that this learning is actively shared with relevant agencies;
- reviews look at what happened in a case, and why, and what action will be taken to learn from the review findings;
- action results in lasting improvements to services which safeguard and promote the welfare of children and help protect them from harm; and
- there is transparency about the issues arising from individual cases and the actions which organisations are taking in response to them, including sharing the final reports of Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) with the public.

The different types of review include:

- Serious Case Review
- Child Death Review
- Domestic Homicide Review
- Review of a child protection incident which falls below the threshold for a SCR
- Review or audit of practice in one or more agencies

(WT2015, pp. 72-73)

## Principles for Learning and Improvement

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 sets out the following principles for learning and improvement to be applied by LSCBs and their partner organisations:

- there should be a culture of continuous learning and improvement, identifying opportunities to draw on what works and promote good practice;
- the approach taken to reviews should be proportionate according to the scale and level of complexity of the issues being examined;
- reviews of serious cases should be led by individuals who are independent of the case under review and of the organisations whose actions are being reviewed;
- professionals must be involved fully in reviews and invited to contribute their perspectives without fear of being blamed for actions they took in good faith;
- families, including surviving children, should be invited to contribute to reviews. They should understand how they are going to be involved and their expectations should be managed appropriately and sensitively. This is important for ensuring that the child is at the centre of the process;
- final reports of SCRs must be published, including the LSCB's response to the review findings, in order to achieve transparency. The impact of SCRs and other reviews on improving services to children and families and on reducing the incidence of deaths or serious harm to children must also be described in LSCB annual reports and will inform inspections; and
- improvement must be sustained through regular monitoring and follow up so that the findings from these reviews make a real impact on improving outcomes for children (WT 2015, pp. 73-74)

"LSCBs may use any learning model which is consistent with the principles in this guidance, including the systems methodology recommended by Professor Munro." (WT 2015, p.74)

The systems methodology assumes that practitioners generally act from good intentions and try and act in the best interests of their clients but that organisations' systems, processes and 'culture' can lead to poor decision making and poor practice. It is therefore these organisational 'systems' which should be the focus of any review and learning and any scrutiny of practitioners cannot be divorced from these critical variables. It is in the spirit of this approach that this framework should be viewed.

For this framework to be effective it must be underpinned by the adoption of a culture of continuous learning and improvement, with all practitioners, managers and organisations taking a reflective, non-blaming, systemic and analytical approach that focusses on achieving best outcomes for children and young people.

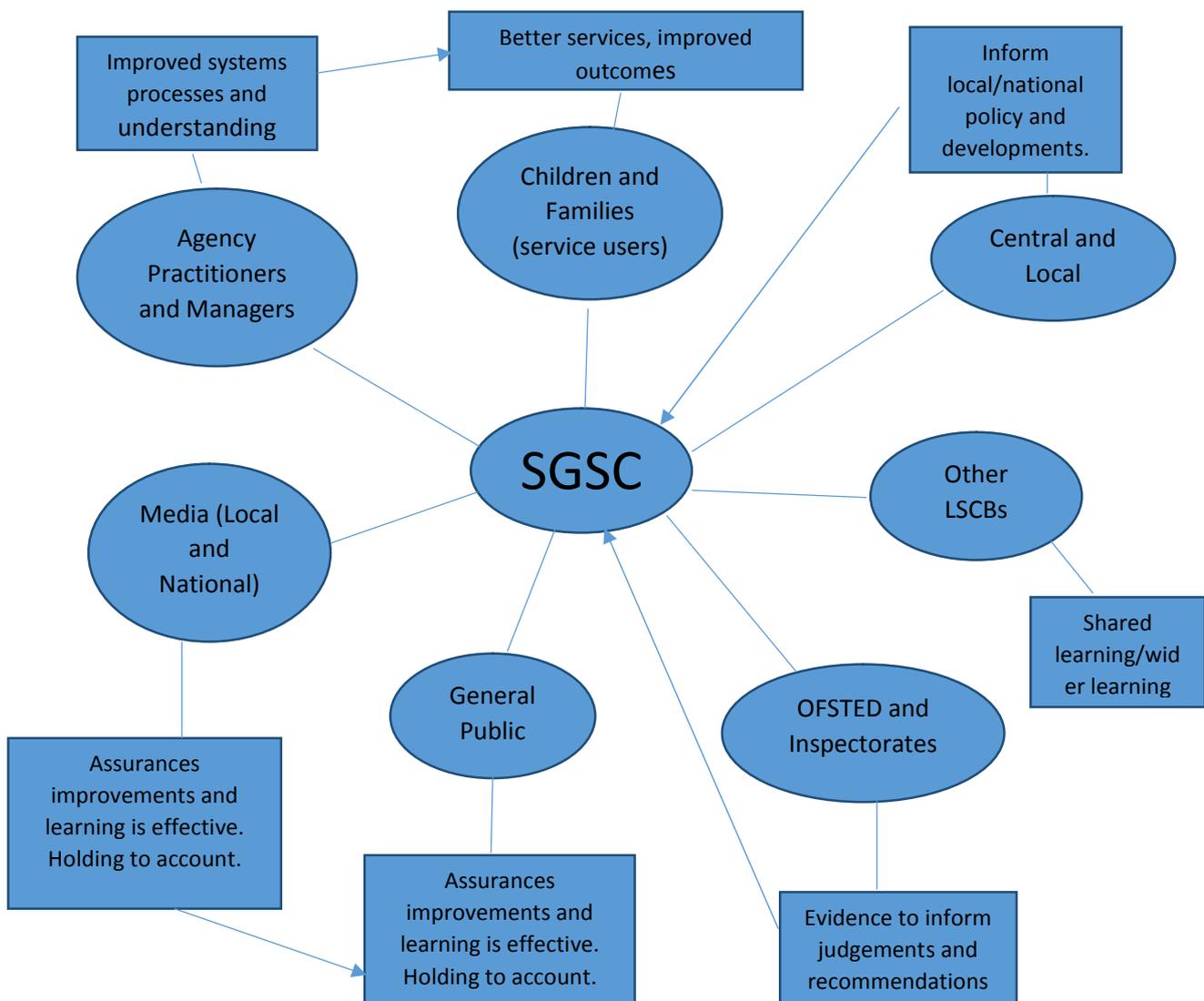
## Objectives

This framework is intended to fulfil the following objectives:

- ensure that the South Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board (SGSCB) fulfils its statutory obligations
- ensure the children's workforce is suitably skilled
- improve services through developing the workforce
- ensure that the expectations of the SGSCB of member organisations are clear
- ensure that single and inter-agency training and learning is of adequate quantity and quality
- set a standard of professional knowledge, skills and values (via the SGSCB Training Strategy)

## Stakeholder Map

It is important to identify the key stakeholders who will influence and be influenced by SGSCB learning and improvements. These are illustrated below showing the key needs of each group.



## Methods and the Embedding of Learning

SGSCB is a learning organisation and through its provision, scrutiny and challenge functions contributes to a significant amount of multi and single agency learning. The following table illustrates the various sources of learning and what the key stakeholders are in each instance:

<b>Method</b>	<b>What we learn</b>	<b>Evaluation Methods</b>	<b>Key Stakeholders</b>	<b>Sub Groups</b>
Serious Case Reviews; Newsletters and subsequent briefings	Multi-agency lessons; Single agency lessons; Risk assessment information	Inspection; Audit; QA	SGSCB Partner agencies; Media; Service Users; Ofsted; The public	Training (including SCR Reading Group); Quality
Multi-agency learning reviews	Multi-agency lessons; Single agency lessons	Inspection; Audit; QA; Participant feedback	SGSCB Partner agencies Service users	Training (including SCR Reading Group); Quality
Child Death Reviews (CDOP); CDOP briefings	Themes and trends; Modifiable factors	Participant Feedback; Annual report	SGSCB partner Agencies; Children and Families; Ofsted	CDOP; Training (including SCR Reading Group)
Quality Assurance & Performance Management activities (audits, surveys, data analysis, performance indicators)	Views of stakeholders; Organisational performance / trends; Quality of practice; Quantitative information	The outcomes from these activities; Participant feedback on process	SGSCB; Partner agencies; Service users; Ofsted	Quality; Training
Audits of single-agency training and practice	Quality and quantity of single-agency training; Compliance with SGSCB standards; Learning outcomes;	Participant feedback; Case file audit; Observation	SGSCB; Partner agencies	Training; Quality

	Training needs provision			
Audits of SGSCB inter-agency training	Quality and quantity of inter-agency training; Compliance with SGSCB standards; Learning outcomes; Training needs provision	Participant feedback; Learning audits; Follow-up questionnaires and phone calls	SGSCB; Partner; agencies	Training; Quality
Conferences	International and national research; Themes and trends; Good practice; Nature and extent of safeguarding issues; National perspective for local issues	Participant feedback	SGSCB; Partner agencies; Ofsted; Media	Training
Guidance and Policy	Government priorities; Practice guidance; National perspective; Local policies	Compliance with policy	SGSCB; Partner agencies; Media; Central Govt.; Ofsted	Policy and Procedures and all other sub groups
Research in Practice (RiP)	International and national research; Current trends and themes; Practice theory, guidance and tools	Feedback from practitioners and managers;	RiP Team Reps Network; SGSCB;	Policy and Procedures; Training

The above table highlights the variety of learning opportunities available to practitioners and organisations, but in order for the learning to be effective it needs to be embedded within everyday practice. This can take place through:

- policy and protocol development;

- reflective practice and supervision;
- collaborative joint working arrangements; and
- team meeting structures.

## Learning and Continuous Improvement

As a learning organisation it is important to be clear how the learning from this wide variety of sources (as illustrated on pages 5 and 6) is used to drive improvement in practice, policy and procedure. The diagram below illustrates how the SGSCB should incorporate organisational learning into its wider strategic planning cycle and priority setting.



It is therefore important that organisational learning is seen as a dynamic, cyclical and multi-layered process that informs the SGSCBs wider strategic planning framework which determines current and future priorities and resource allocation.

## **SGSCB Training**

The learning and recommendations from the various learning activities illustrated above can be implemented in a number of ways, such as improved procedures and policies, and through training programmes. In some cases it will be incumbent on individual agencies to consider how these recommendations can best be implemented and in turn provide assurance to the SGSCB that this has been achieved effectively. Where the learning is applicable to a number of agencies or the SGSCB itself, it is incumbent on the SGSCB to ensure this happens effectively. Depending on the nature of the learning much of this will take place through the SGSCB sub-groups as appropriate. Where it is felt specific training programmes should be considered, the SGSCB Training Sub-Group will consider how best this can be achieved.

The SGSCB Training sub-group provides a key function in co-ordinating learning needs from a variety of sources to inform the planning and commissioning of inter-agency training. The quality of this training and its impact of practice and outcomes for children and young people is reviewed via a 5 point plan including analysing participant feedback forms and action plans, follow up questions (sent out 3 months after training has been attended), telephone calls to a random sample of participants, observation of training delivery and a requirement that all trainers complete an annual CPD questionnaire. This activity subsequently informs future training delivery and the wider SGSCB Strategy.

SGSCB commissions the Workforce Development Team to provide a wide variety of inter-agency training courses for practitioners and managers to ensure they are equipped with the necessary skills, knowledge and values required to deliver quality safeguarding services and interventions that improve outcomes for children and families. The variety of training products available include 3 hour sessions, 1 day courses, multi-day in depth courses, large practitioner conferences and e-learning. This ensures the diverse range of learning needs can be catered for (from basic awareness raising to in depth specialist learning). The details of how the SGSCB provides this are within the SGSCB training strategy and training programme ([www.southglos.gov.uk/learning](http://www.southglos.gov.uk/learning)).

Appendix B and C set out how the SGSCB, Training sub-group, individual agencies and practitioners will ensure that:

- training/learning needs are identified and met
- training/learning is evaluated and embedded
- feedback from children, young people and families is gathered as a way of trying to identify the impact training/learning has on frontline practice.

## Expectations of Single Agencies

Agencies are responsible for:

- ensuring that their workforce is suitably recruited, qualified and enabled to safeguard children;
- providing appropriate supervision and support for staff, including undertaking safeguarding training;
- ensuring that their staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- creating an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role;
- offering their staff mandatory induction, which includes familiarisation with child protection responsibilities and procedures;
- ensuring that all professionals have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they improve over time;
- releasing staff to assist in delivering inter-agency training as well as attending inter-agency training;
- ensuring that all staff have evidence of receiving suitable basic safeguarding training. They are also responsible for ensuring that there is evidence of updated safeguarding learning every three years;
- responding to audits under section 11 of the Children Act 2004; and
- reporting on their compliance and quality of single agency work
- responding to safeguarding audits as requested by the Safeguarding Policy and Practice Manager
- sharing the outcome of safeguarding audits for inclusion in the performance report

## **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the following are in place for this framework to be embedded and therefore effective:

### **SGSCB Agencies**

- the framework is understood and compatible with agency arrangements/planning;
- agencies are clear as to what their responsibilities are;
- agencies support access to training and learning opportunities; and
- agencies provide assurance and evidence to SGSCB that training and learning has been embedded effectively.

### **SGSCB Board Members**

- to be responsible for the dissemination of knowledge and awareness of the SGSCB to all staff/volunteers in the organisation/setting/sector they represent;
- to be responsible for dissemination of policies, procedures, guidance and recommendations coming from the SGSCB to all staff/volunteers in the organisation/setting/sector they represent on a 'need to know/nice to know' basis;
- auditing practitioner knowledge of disseminated information and implementation on a 6 monthly basis;
- to feedback when the application of practice, policies and recommendations from SCRs, DHRs and case reviews is ineffective;
- provide strategic leadership to agencies and sub-groups for learning and improvement priorities;
- seek assurance and evidence that training and learning is effective and embedded;
- seek evidence that improved learning leads to improved knowledge and skills;
- ensure the model of continuous improvement is implemented;
- request that sub groups routinely report on learning needs; and
- request the Training Sub Group to write a training strategy to complement this framework.

## **Appendix A:**

*(Based on an approach developed by Plymouth LSCB)*

### **Guide for Disseminating and Embedding Learning from Serious Case Reviews**

#### **Introduction**

The following guide sets out the process through which learning from South Gloucestershire and national Serious Case Reviews (SCR) should be disseminated and embedded in practice. It details responsibilities for the SGSCB, agencies and practitioners to ensure lessons and good practice identified during the course of the SCR have long lasting affect and lead to practice and service improvement.

#### **South Gloucestershire Serious Case Reviews**

#### **Overview Panel/Review Team Responsibilities**

Following the decision to conduct a Serious Case Review the SGSCB will set up an Overview Panel/Review Team to carry out the SCR. For the purposes of this Guide the Overview Panel/Review Team have two key responsibilities which focus on the identification and presentation of learning:

1. The Overview Panel/Review Team will analyse all of the information gathered during the review. This analysis will lead the Overview Panel/Review Team to formulating its key findings and issues for SGSCB to consider
2. The Overview Panel/Review Team will produce a report detailing its findings and issues for SGSCB and present it to the SGSCB

#### **SGSCB Responsibilities**

The SGSCB will receive the Overview Panel/Review Team's report and examine the findings and issues raised. Consequently, the SGSCB will:

- Formulate a response to the findings and issues raised into improvement action.
- Publish the SCR Review report on the SGSCB website and notify partners of its availability; and
- All relevant findings and SGSCB actions will be shared with the Training sub-group. The sub-group will timetable a specific agenda item to consider implementation and activity. This will include as a minimum;
  - a) Review of SGSCB inter-agency and single agency training programmes and where necessary integration of key SCR learning into course content
  - b) An awareness raising poster campaign aimed at practitioners promoting key messages from the SCR
  - c) Where necessary delivery of multi-agency practice briefings
  - d) Produce a single page practice briefing to all agencies highlighting key messages and implications for practice.

## **Individual Agency Responsibilities**

Agencies involved in an individual SCR may have specific actions to take. However all agencies, as a minimum, should respond to the publication of a South Gloucestershire SCR in the following way:

- Having received notification from the SGSCB that a SCR has been published the Manager/Designated Child Protection Lead should disseminate the report within the organisation/setting;
- Agency managers should consider the content of the report, identify implications for their service and implement any action or change required in light of the SCR learning;
- Team meetings and individual supervision sessions should include an agenda item on the publication of a South Gloucestershire SCR. This will give teams the opportunity to discuss learning, practice and suggest areas for service improvement. Individual supervision sessions will give another opportunity for a one to one analysis of the SCR and how individuals can adopt the learning into their everyday practice; and
- Share any SGSCB provided materials within their organisation.

## **Practitioner Responsibilities**

Everyday reflective practice is important to help gain an accurate picture of a child's situation. Practitioners should engage in SCR learning in the following ways:

- Read SCR publications;
- Read SGSCB Briefings;
- Attend single agency and multi-agency training;
- Contribute to agency development through team meeting and supervision discussions;
- Case conversations with colleagues; and
- Incorporate into assessments as means of evidence based practice.

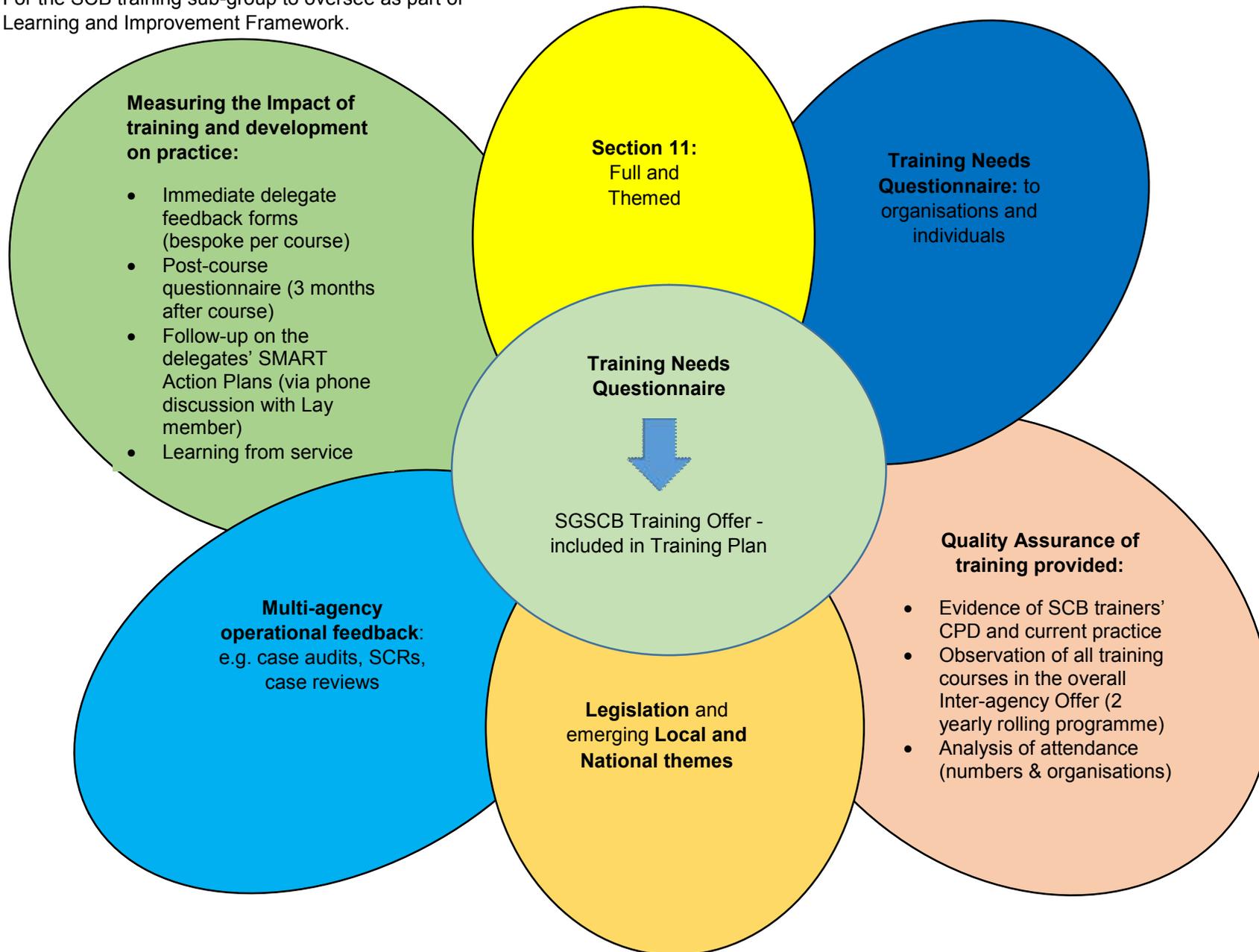
## **National Serious Case Reviews**

In addition to South Gloucestershire Serious Case Reviews, LSCBs across the country publish their own reviews following the death or serious injury of a child. These national SCRs also serve as important sources of learning, some of which achieve higher prominence through national and widespread media coverage. SGSCB will regularly post the latest national SCR publications, Department for Education SCR reports, latest methodologies for conducting SCRs etc. on the SGSCB website. Individual organisations and practitioners should respond to national SCRs as outlined above with an equal focus of services considering agency implications, including agenda items in Team Meetings and Individual/Group Supervision/Support Sessions, evidencing learning in assessments etc.

## Learning and Development Overview

*n.b. Provide a list on training site of alternative 'learning', e.g. RiP webinars, case review briefings, masterclasses, etc.*

For the SCB training sub-group to oversee as part of Learning and Improvement Framework.



## **Appendix C:**

### **Guide to discharging responsibilities around training/learning**

#### **Introduction**

Ofsted is clear that as learning organisations, LSCBs will ensure that “multi-agency training in the protection and care of children is effective and evaluated regularly for impact on management and practice” (Ofsted 2013)

The following sets out how the SGSCB, individual agencies and practitioners will contribute to and achieve the above.

#### **SGSCB Responsibilities**

- SGSCB to compile a learning needs questionnaire of partner agencies and their staff with the support of SGSCB sub-groups;
- The SGSCB Training sub-group to submit an annual report to the SGSCB including evaluation of evaluation forms and action plans completed at inter-agency training sessions and of three month follow up questionnaires and telephone calls;
- The SGSCB Training sub-group to continue to develop and implement a programme to quality assure single-agency and inter-agency training/learning events; and
- The SGSCB Training sub-group to develop and implement a strategy to gather feedback from children, young people and families about their experiences of receiving services.

#### **Individual Agency Responsibilities**

- Managers/Supervisors/Child Protection Leads to ensure that practitioners have completed and returned training follow-up questionnaires (sent three months after individual Inter-Agency and Advanced Inter-Agency Child Protection Training sessions);
- Managers/Supervisors/Child Protection Leads to ensure that staff/agency training requirements are up to date;
- Managers/Supervisors/Child Protection Leads to ensure that staff are attending relevant training;
- Supervision/support/team meetings should be used to identify and respond to practitioner learning needs;
- Supervision/support/team meetings to analyse the impact of training/learning events and how they will benefit practice;
- Contribute to a SGSCB learning needs questionnaire; and

- To contribute to the SGSCB strategy to gather feedback from children, young people and families about their experiences of receiving services.

### **Practitioner Responsibilities**

- Use supervision/support/team meetings to identify training/learning needs;
- Attend relevant single agency and inter-agency training/learning events;
- Complete and return training follow-up questionnaires (sent 3 months after individual Inter-Agency and Advanced Inter-Agency Child Protection Training sessions);
- Use supervision/support/team meetings to analyse the impact of training/learning events and how they will benefit practice;
- To share with colleagues the learning gained from training/learning events;
- To contribute to a learning needs questionnaire;
- To contribute to the SGSCB strategy to gather feedback from children, young people and families about their experiences of receiving services; and
- Adhere to responsibilities as set out in legislation and guidance e.g. the Children Act (1989 and 2004), Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2016).

## Appendix D:

### Learning resources/websites:

CASPAR (Current Awareness Service for Practice, Policy and Research) – free weekly email updates

<http://www.nspcc.org.uk/services-and-resources/research-and-resources/sign-up-to-caspar/>

South Gloucestershire Safeguarding Board – [www.southglos.gov.uk/safeguarding](http://www.southglos.gov.uk/safeguarding)

Research in Practice – [www.rip.org.uk](http://www.rip.org.uk)

Children and Young People Now – free daily email updates, news and research (some articles require a subscription) [www.cypnow.co.uk](http://www.cypnow.co.uk)

National repository for Serious Case Reviews -

[http://library.nspcc.org.uk/HeritageScripts/Hapi.dll/search2?searchTerm=\\* &Fields=%40&Media=SCR](http://library.nspcc.org.uk/HeritageScripts/Hapi.dll/search2?searchTerm=* &Fields=%40&Media=SCR)