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## TOWARDS A PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT ON SAFEGUARDING

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### Introduction

This report presents the findings of a study undertaken by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. The study built a rudimentary evidence-based conceptual framework to facilitate the development of Public Service Agreement targets for safeguarding children. Safeguarding in this context referred to keeping children and young people safe from maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual exploitation, a sub-component of the Every Child Matters 'staying safe' outcome.

The study examined international literature about measurement of performance in relation to safeguarding and applied the evidence by constructing a model of the main features of a safeguarded society. This resulted in the creation of a model that operated at four levels of prevention, comprising a set of 14 elements.

Consultations suggested that this model formed a useful conceptual basis for assessing progress in relation to safeguarding. There was further discussion about specific possible measures at each of the four levels, but opinions were more divided on specific measures. Nevertheless, a set of measures was suggested and the reasons for these given.

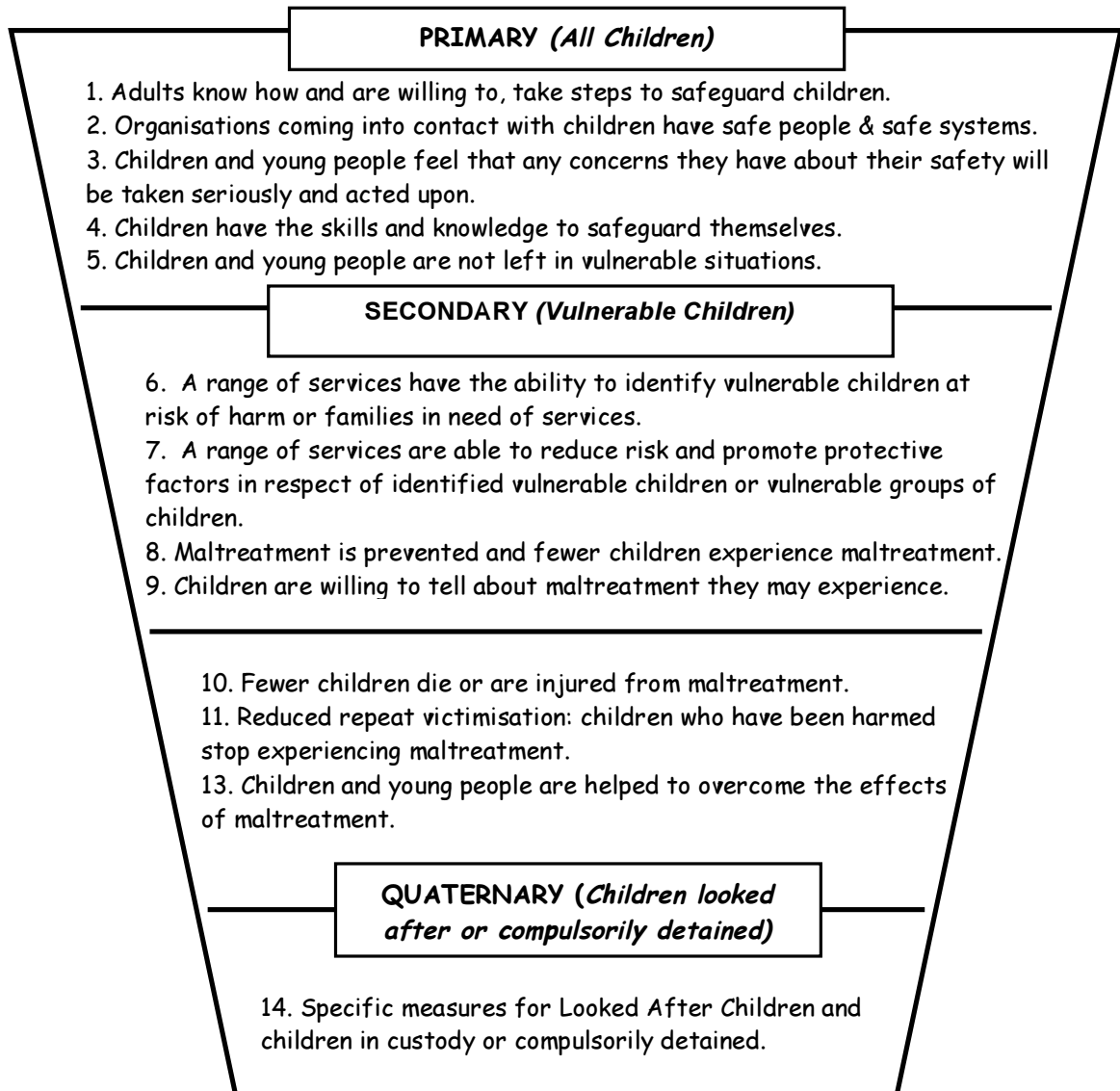
### Key Outputs

The key output of the study was the 14 element model of safeguarding within four levels:

- Primary prevention - taking universal action to promote conditions so that problems do not arise;
- Secondary prevention - focusing on individuals or families who are vulnerable, but may not yet have problems;
- Tertiary prevention - targeting individuals or families who have problems to minimise their adverse effects; and
- Quaternary prevention - optimising the prospects for children where problems have resulted in their placement in substitute care.

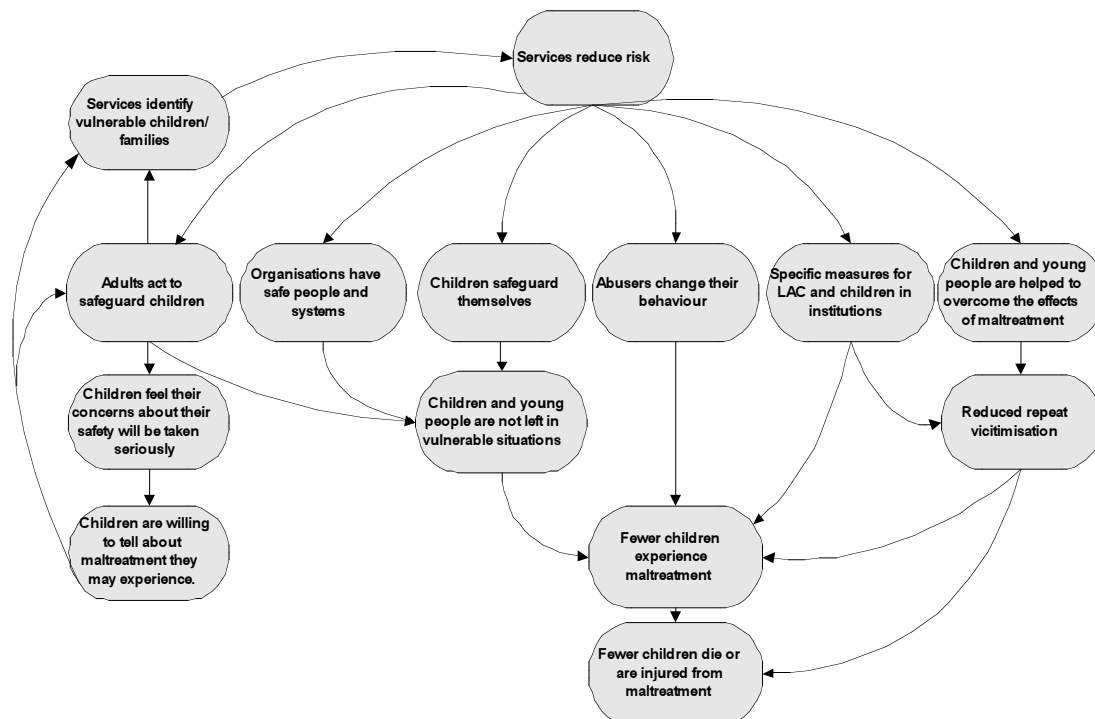
It should be noted that each higher level encompasses those below. That is, the features relevant for groups at the higher levels include the needs identified at lower levels.

**Fig 1. A model of safeguarding elements at different levels**



## Possible network of outcome relationships

Further work was undertaken to set out how the different elements related to each other. In reality all 14 elements of the model are interconnected and mapping every relationship would result in a very complex structure. However, a structure for the main pattern of relationships is given below and provides an explicit conceptualisation of how safeguarding operates.



Constructing such a relationship map was a very useful discipline. Such an approach can be used by agencies and organisations collectively responsible for safeguarding to determine how similar their understanding of safeguarding is and to highlight possible differences in assumptions and expectations.

## Method

The first phase undertaken was to review national and international literature about approaches to measuring safeguarding and to use this to suggest an approach as to how measurement of safeguarding in England could be developed. This resulted in the authors producing a model containing an illustrative list of areas that they thought may cover the range of elements needed for an adequate safeguarding measure. They also gave examples of the sorts of measures that could be relevant for these areas.

The next stage was to consult a range of experts in social care, education, health, community safety, the voluntary and academic sectors about the approach being suggested and the viability of measuring these areas. Twenty interviews were arranged with expert informants and a total of 21 people discussed the measures in 19 interview sessions. These sessions sought to both get their views on the structure of the model that was being proposed and to get their views on measures relating to their specific area of expertise. Elements of the model were revised and measures developed on the basis of these interviews.

An e-consultation process was then conducted to access a wider range of 40 informants, including the criminal justice sector. While similar questions were posed, they were amended to reflect the learning and issues suggested by the interview stage.

A young people's discussion was held with a group of young men in a Young Offenders Institution. This was held in order to obtain perspective on the nature of risks facing children and young people and how these dangers can be identified.

An expert focus group was arranged to discuss and explore in more detail some of the dilemmas and issues presented by the interview and e-consultation stage.

### Recommended Measures

As a consequence of these discussions the following set of measures was suggested as being worthy of further consideration:

#### Primary level

Measures	Source
Percentage of adults willing to take action to protect children <b>[to rise]</b> . Percentage of adults saying they would know what to do if they were worried about the safety of a child <b>[to rise]</b> . Percentage of adults (base = those who have ever been in a situation where they were worried that a child was experiencing cruelty) who did nothing <b>[to fall]</b> .	Attitude and action survey.
Percentage of agencies and organisations not compliant with vetting and barring requirements <b>[to fall]</b> .	Barring and vetting scheme.
Number of cancellations of provisions that are related to category one complaints (Ofsted's category suggesting child protection concerns), <b>[direction to be clarified]</b> . Number of conditions imposed by Ofsted <b>[direction to be clarified]</b> .	Ofsted.
Percentage of young people who can identify opportunities they do not take up because of fears about personal safety <b>[to fall]</b> .	Development of Home Office's Offending, Crime and Justice Survey.
Percentage of unauthorised absences from school for primary schools and secondary schools <b>[to fall]</b> .	Pupil Absence in England - DfES.

#### Secondary level

Measures	Source
The number of Common Assessment Frameworks (CAFs) completed, by agency and the proportion of referrals to specialist services that are evidenced by CAFs <b>[to rise]</b> .	New system via local agencies.
Percentage of Schools attaining level 3 of the National Healthy School Standard <b>[to rise]</b> . Percentage of schools judged to be satisfactory or better by Ofsted on the 'Care, Guidance and Support' measure. <b>[to rise]</b> (or percentage of Schools attaining level 3 of the National Healthy School Standard) <b>[to rise]</b> .	Ofsted, National Healthy Schools Programme.
Percentage of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB) plans that address: incorporating priorities from Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) business plan engagement with voluntary sector engagement with sports and leisure services tracking and assessing outcomes for children served by child protection system presence of dedicated resources <b>[to rise]</b> .	Audit of LSCB plans.
Survey to identify absence of bullying, presence of safe environments and awareness of adult supervision <b>[to rise]</b> .	Development of the Health-Related Behaviour Questionnaire.
A reduction in the key baselines of prevalence of abuse <b>[to fall]</b> .	New prevalence study.

## Tertiary level

Measures	Source
Child homicides <b>[to fall]</b> .	Homicide and gun crime statistics.
Hospital episodes classified as assault <b>[to fall]</b> .	Hospital episode data.
Number of children placed on Child Protection Register (CPR) who are ever re-registered <b>[to fall in the long term]</b> . Repeat substantiations of harm by age of 18 (possibly use repeat initial conferencing as a proxy) <b>[to fall]</b> .	Longitudinal Development of Referrals, Assessments and Children and Young People on Child Protection Registers
Percentage of LSCB plans that contain an explicit reference to the MAPPA business plan <b>[to rise]</b> .	Audit of LSCB plans
Agreed recommendations in child protection plans that have been actioned within six months <b>[to rise]</b> .	New recording required possibly within the Integrated Children's System (ICS).
Identify and narrow the gap in educational achievement between children entering the child protection system and that of their peers, eg percentage of children in the child protection system at a point in their lives who achieve at least five GCSEs from Grade A* to C or equivalent <b>[to rise]</b> .	New longitudinal tracking of education attainment under Information Sharing and Assessment (ISA).

## Quaternary level

Measures	Source
Percentage of looked after children achieving at least five GCSEs Grade A* to C or equivalent <b>[to rise]</b> .	PSA Target No. 3. and Performance Assessment Framework CF/A2
Percentage of looked after children in education with a personal education plan <b>[to rise]</b> .	no current source
Percentage of care leavers in education, training or employment a year after leaving care <b>[to rise]</b> .	PAF CF/A4.
Suicide and self-harm reports for looked after children and young people in custody per year <b>[to fall]</b> .	New local authority and prison service data collection system needed.
Percentage of looked after children placed out of borough <b>[to fall]</b> .	No current source

## Additional Information

Copies of the full report (RR829) - priced £4.95 - are available by writing to DfES Publications, PO Box 5050, Sherwood Park, Annesley, Nottingham NG15 0DJ.

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Copies of this Research Brief (RB829) are available free of charge from the above address (tel: 0845 60 222 60). Research Briefs and Research Reports can also be accessed at [www.dfes.gov.uk/research/](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/)

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