

dialogue

Safeguarding for leaders .

Dialogue

Chris Freestone

Culture - professionals and carers

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# LEARNING FOCUS

The focus of the first session today is to :-

- identify the leadership skills required in establishing a secure and robust safeguarding culture and the way in which risk management sits within this
- To identify key aspects of a closed culture and its' inherent risks.
- These both for professionals and foster carers
- The session will include small group work and peer discussions

# Working together

- Sharing experiences
- Confidential to the room
- Ask naïve questions- they are always helpful.
- Manage your other devices so that you have this time for the session
- Keep cameras on in order to ensure certification for the programme.
- If you have to leave/ answer a call / please send me a message on chat / let me know
- Remember to unmute yourself in order to speak ....
- The opportunity to network
- Enjoy!

## Legislation

KCSIE 2024

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

Fostering Regs and standards - 2011

Care planning , placement and case review regulations 2010; 2014 and amends

Children Act 1989 onwards

Statutory guidance on promoting health and well being of looked after children.

NHS Commissioning /CCG Regs 2012 and ongoing

SEND regulatory revisions 2014

RIPA 2000

Health and Social Care Acts

Counter-Extremism and Safeguarding Bill /Prevent 2023

Care Standards Act 2000

Mental Capacity Act 2005 and onwards

Cheshire West judgement (DOLs) 2013

Safeguarding – Liberty Safeguards 2019

Children's Secure Accommodation Regulations 1991 onwards

Legal Aid , Punishing and Sentencing of Offenders Act 2012

Matrimonial and Family Proceedings Act 1984 Onwards

Mental Health legislation

Health and safety legislation various

Equal Opportunities legislation 2010 onwards

GDPR 2018

The Children & Social Work Bill 2016

Promoting the Educational Achievement of  
Looked After Children (2015) and onwards  
Tackling CSE action plan (2015) amends 2021  
Children & Families Act (2014)  
Care of Unaccompanied and Trafficked  
Children (2014) with amends  
Statutory Guidance on Children Who Run  
Away or Go Missing from Home or Care (2014)  
and ongoing  
Health & Social Care Act (2012)  
Health and safety legislation- various

Children (Leaving Care) Act

PHEW!! I am sure I have missed  
some.....

This is NOT about knowing all of  
these – it is being aware and  
having a copy available- your  
own drop box perhaps?

# Standards and regulations–core:

## STANDARD 4 - Safeguarding Children

### Underpinning Legislation

#### 11 - Independent fostering agencies - duty to secure welfare

#### 12 - Arrangements for the protection of children

**Outcome-** Children feel safe and are safe. Children understand how to protect themselves and are protected from significant harm, including neglect, abuse, and accident.

4.1- Children's safety and welfare is promoted in all fostering placements. Children are protected from abuse and other forms of significant harm (e.g. sexual or labour exploitation).

4.2- Foster carers actively safeguard and promote the welfare of foster children.

4.3- Foster carers make positive relationships with children, generate a culture of openness and trust and are aware of and alert to any signs or symptoms that might indicate a child is at risk of harm.

4.4- Foster carers encourage children to take appropriate risks as a normal part of growing up. Children are helped to understand how to keep themselves safe, including when outside of the household or when using the internet or social media.

4.5- The service implements a proportionate approach to any risk assessment

4.6- Foster carers are trained in appropriate safer-care practice, including skills to care for children who have been abused. For foster carers who offer placements to disabled children, this includes training specifically on issues affecting disabled children.

4.7- The fostering service works effectively in partnership with other agencies concerned with child protection, e.g. the responsible authority, schools, hospitals, general practitioners, etc., and does not work in isolation from them.

## Leadership in safeguarding is key- professionals and foster carers

- Defining the role :
  - do you hold an operational focus?
  - do you hold a strategic focus?
  - are you a positive role model? Are the carers ?
  - do you demonstrate accountability? Do carers?
  - do you have integrity ? A strong value base ? Do the carers ?
  - do you know your procedures and policies ? Do the carers ?

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# Continued...professionals and carers-----

- do you understand the balance of power that you hold ?
- do you understand how you exercise that balance of power ?
- do you have embedded a “do no harm “ approach in the service ,organisation and in the foster carers ‘ homes?
- does your culture mirror the organisation culture and vice versa?
- do you understand your role in setting the safeguarding culture model ? Do the carers understand the organisation culture model and mirror it ? Is there consistency across the board ?
- which model do you use ?
- OPEN DISCUSSION -





## Think about:-

Spend some time ( about 5-10 minutes ) thinking about your service and the organisation and note who holds “power” in these areas in respect of safeguarding.

Peer reflection / discussion to follow



## Group work:

- In small groups and holding safeguarding at the core of the discussion think about –
  - i. How can carers harm?
  - ii. What harm can they cause ?
  - iii. How would you know that there were issues ?
- iv. SPEND 10 MINUTES THINKING ABOUT THIS AND NOTE YOUR FINDINGS AS BULLET POINTS.
- v. NOMINATE ONE PERSON TO FEED BACK.

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# Power and privilege

- What do we mean by this ?
- How may we see it in – the organisation , amongst the staff team , within young people, within foster carers .
- Open discussion- what are the safeguarding risks?



# Who monitors? Who challenges ?

- Governance is key- what is in place ?
- What is the service and organisation governance structure re. safeguarding ?
- How do you hold governance ?
- How can this go wrong ?
- Open discussion



# Focus-

“

Thinking about culture....

”



# Your role :

- CULTURE- the safeguarding culture within fostering is complex involving as it does multiple layers of law as well as :
- Primary and secondary responsibilities held by and delegated to the IFA
- Children , parents , carers , families
- Social Worker- IFA, FC.
- Social Worker- LA
- Ofsted , CIW,
- Safer recruitment-Form F. Panel .
- Training , supervision ,appraisal
- Commissioners, legal processes for children and young people.
- Protective factors in the culture
- **ANYTHING ELSE?**

# Culture is key:

- It is -
  - the set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterises an institution or organisation
  - the set of values, conventions, or social practices associated with a particular field, activity, or societal characteristic
  - creating a culture of safety means embedding safeguarding into everything an organisation does.
  - Embedding a culture of safety starts at the very top of the organisation with the senior managers pledging absolute commitment and support, including ensuring the resources are available to make it happen.
- **DO YOU RECOGNISE THIS? Is this your organisation/service/foster carers? Can you explain and evidence this ? Can you define YOUR culture?**



# Group work

- Discuss the key elements of a safeguarding culture which you would expect to be in place in order for safeguarding to be supported to be robust and effective.
- Discuss with reference to either the organisation or the foster carer(s)
- CAPTURE IN BULLET POINTS AND NOMINATE ONE PERSON TO FEEDBACK.

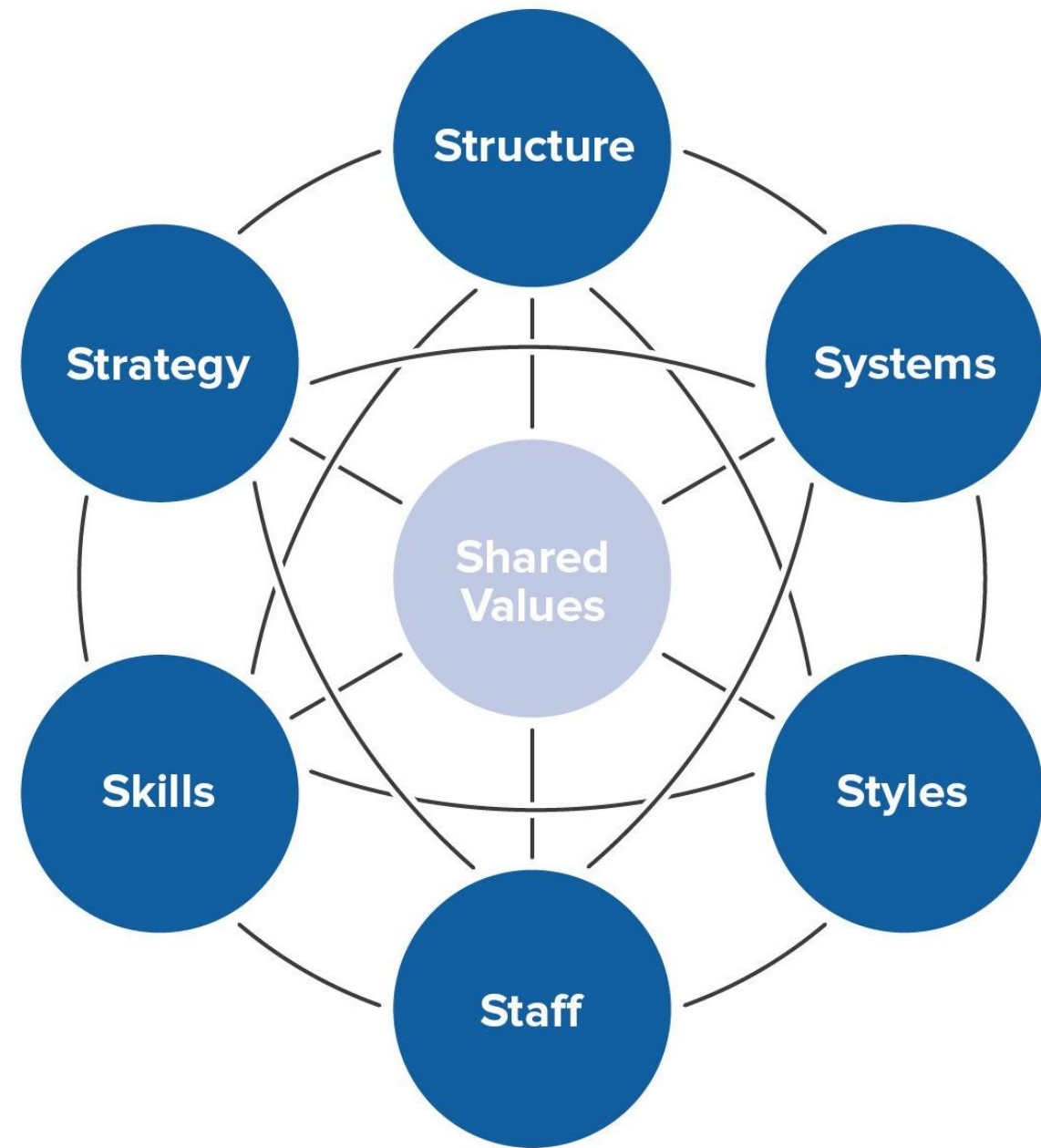




# Are you using a model ?

- useful as it gives a clear and consistent framework to practice and strategy.





# CULTURE STRUCTURE- MCKINSEY



## Culture - constituents and protective features:

- Leadership
- Safer recruitment- foster carers and staff team / others
- Training / knowledge base
- Accountability
- Environment
- Observations
- Performance management. Appraisal , supervision.
- Safeguarding as a key thread in all aspects
- Code of conduct- foster carers and staff
- Policies/processes/procedures
- Record keeping
- Focus on vulnerable children/ SEND/ looked after children et al
- Healthy challenge
- Whistleblowing/ open / transparent responses to challenge
- Reflective , learning culture

# Use your data-

- Accidents / incidents
- Interventions
- Attendance at school /absence
- MASH
- LADO
- Exclusions from school
- Complaints
- Health and safety
- **ANYTHING ELSE?**
- 



# Core throughout.....



- The voice of the child .
  - Heard – formally and informally
  - Influence
  - Directly consulted re. decisions over care and education.....
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- HAS TO BE THERE! IS IT?

# Contextual culture

- Safeguarding should sit within a contextual culture, and it is your role to see that this is in place.

- What is this?
- What is this?
- Captured within a broad culture arc including:
- Recruitment processes/safer recruitment processes. Have you received this training? When?
- Training. Is staff training up to date and current? How are you sure of this?
- Training- foster carer training. Current ? Up to date in practice?
- Supervision /Appraisal- up to date , reflective . Current , fits with the development plan for the carers/ organisation .Fits with the safe care plan for the home?

# Safeguarding culture continued....

- Breadth of experience within the organisation
- Rapid staff changeover – why? If this is happening –identify core themes and issues
- Static staff team – good for continuity but what problems could arise?
- Do staff and foster carers work within an “Arena of Safety” .
- Social media use in particular. Is this built into your HR policy? Do foster carers and staff show curiosity re. phones , tablets , other devices ?
- Boundaries around relationships- complex in fostering.
- Policies , procedures , processes- staff awareness. Foster carer awareness and application
- Record keeping – staff and foster carer awareness and competence. ANY document could end up in the legal arena
- Healthy challenge- do staff, carers, children feel safe enough to do this? Do you know ? If not , why not?

# Safeguarding culture- children and young people.....

- Form F processes, panel processes- are you happy that within the safeguarding culture these are robust and open to challenge . Do you see potential carers being counselled out for the right reasons ? What could these be ?
- Placement-assessment, matching , transition , meeting , , preparation for arrival, are all these process secure and underpinned by safeguarding at ALL times?
- Conflict with income needs for the business?
- Is the environment right- house , their room, outside space , location, access to education , family time ?



# Safeguarding culture...data? Can you use it and prove what you do?

- Data can play a part within your reviews of the foster carers care / safeguarding as well as shape reviews of risk.
- Missing incidents- numbers , impact , outcomes, risks.
- Incidents- what is an incident? What do you class as an incident?

Do you categorise them, check for peaks and troughs, explain why they have occurred , feed that into potential patterns and issues , feedback to staff/foster carers , amend plans, amend risk assessments all as a result!

- Physical Intervention- what is a PI? Training for staff- up to date and current practice? Training for foster carers up to date ? Why? When? Patterns ? Triggers?
- nb. Children reported that staff need to be able to avoid problems building up to a danger level and should only use restraint as a last resort. They accepted that restraint is sometimes necessary but only when someone is likely to get hurt or property is likely to get seriously damaged. They were clear that restraint should never involve pain and stressed the importance of staff training in how to restrain without hurting (Morgan, 2005, Longfield 2018, de Souza 2019/20)

# Safeguarding culture.....data continued.

- Schedule notifications
  - Accidents
  - First Aid
  - Complaints or lower - level grumps and grumbles
  - Feedback from children ....
  - Health and safety issues or RIDDOR notifications
  - Staff turnover/ foster carer turnover
  - Issues from the pandemic and restrictions
- Data can give evidence in a quantitative format of issues which may arise and how you have monitored , tracked , recognised , assessed, planned and put actions in place. It should be balanced by your narrative (qualitative) understanding of what the safeguarding culture is in your organisation?
  - Can staff articulate what that culture is ? If not, why not?
  - Can foster carers articulate how their home safe plan applies ? .

# Discussion:

- ▶ What do children need from us and the foster carers to be kept safe ? What do children say they want ?
  - ▶ What is your evidence base for this ?
  - ▶ What do adults say they need from us, in order to feel safe ?
  - ▶ Reflect on this for 10 mins and then we will feed back into the whole group. This exercise can also be used with the team.
- Discuss the key areas we need to consider.
  - Are these incorporated into your supervisions and support for foster carers?
  - Do you consult with children and young people about their safety ? Do you consult with adults?
  - How are you logging , reporting and sorting out low level concerns? What concerns do you have ? Any impact re. culture? How would you know ?

# What should a secure safeguarding culture mean for individual children and young people/adults?

- Their individual needs are assessed , recognised and met within the service
- There is support for them to develop resilience- social, emotional , mental , physical.
- Their wellbeing is core to practice
- There is a recognition of the impact of the last few years for them
- There is the opportunity to develop an improved level of self esteem
- There is involvement of all professionals and support which can help and support (social pedagogy model)
- They feel SAFE- each young person will define that word differently? Each adult will define it differently ? Have they ever been asked them what they need to feel “safe?”
- They can demonstrate progress at their own pace and level .
- They are listened to and know this.
- IS THIS YOUR SERVICE ?



# What happens when a culture closes ?

- So called – closed cultures can lead to serious safeguarding failures.
- We will look at some of the indicators- bear in mind- could this be , is this your service ? Are there alarm bells ?
- This is an area in the spotlight especially after the CSPR / Hesley and other reports



# Closed cultures...

- One of the biggest risks and as seen in the CSPR / Hesley phase 1 and 2 reports, Whitefield School et al , can lead to serious and significant harm for children and young people.
- As a senior leader what should you look out for ?
  - ❖ Poor experience of children who should be safeguarded and their well being supported and promoted
  - ❖ Weak leadership and management
  - ❖ Limited or no external input , review , alignment
  - ❖ What could this mean ?



# Closed cultures.....

## Features:

- Children are at risk of deliberate or unintentional harm-**what would be the indicators of this ? How may unintentional harm occur ?**
- Leaders / staff /carers stop seeing or have never seen the true situation re. safeguarding in the setting-**how can this happen ?**
- Children / staff /carers are unable or afraid to speak up for themselves and are not listened to if they do-**why?**
- There may be high levels of dependence on some staff/ SW/others-**risks?**
- There may be breaches of human rights and equality law





# Closed cultures.....

- Poor skills, experience and training of staff / leaders/carers
- There are regular changes in leadership roles
- There is a high staff turnover- across the board-**what is yours currently ?**
- High frequency of staff absence / leadership & SLT absence / illness
- Cliques-**why are these so dangerous?**
- Staff/carers/children are not supported or encouraged to raise concerns.
- SLT fail to monitor, and address issues raised by staff, ,children , families and others
- SLT fail to respond to recommendations of others, for example professionals and regulators.





# Closed cultures

- There is a high use of agency/cover staff
- There is a lack of suitable induction, training, monitoring and supervision of staff.



# Closed cultures.....

External oversight..

- Is there a high or increasing number of safeguarding incidents, complaints or other notifications?  
Especially concerning if they involve:
- any form of inappropriate behaviour by staff/carers towards children / young people
- complaints by children / young people using the service, their family and friends, including those that are withdrawn subsequently.
- Anything else ?
- 



# Lots to review and reflection is key...

- What gives you cause for concern ?
- Are any of these issue causing you concern in terms of governance ?
- Stability of the staff team? Foster carers ?
- Skills base of the staff team? Foster carers ?
- Skills of leaders and managers ?
- Organisation changes and indicators of closed cultures appearing?
- Any thoughts- open discussion....
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Any:

- Follow up?
- Thoughts?
- Queries?





Risk and forensic analysis  
to follow.....

Chris .

