



dialogue

Strategic governance and safeguarding

Safeguarding – the Board and directors.

Welcome to two sessions exploring the strategic role of governance and safeguarding:

- Part 1

- An exploration of how governance is cohesively led at senior leadership level
- We will explore the role and structure of regulated frameworks
- The governance requirements within the frameworks
- Expectations re. Culture/Closed cultures and risk
- Resourcing safeguarding
- Pulling together key strategic themes approach

- Part 2

- Tensions between business need , targets and safeguarding
- Is your data robust, external view?
- Does it safely inform strategy?
- Reputational loss and potential links to safeguarding
- Defensible decision making across the organisation

Group agreement- safeguarding / strategic governance

- Each delegate needs to be honest as well as open.
- Value a diversity of opinions on all topics - different people with different views and opinions. These opinions may clash with each other.

Suggestions can then be noted, referred to later or taken away for further consideration

- Opportunity for everyone for equal participation

- Be open to new approaches as well as listen to new ideas.
- Naïve questions are useful
- Balanced participation
- Confidential space
- Anything else you wish to add?

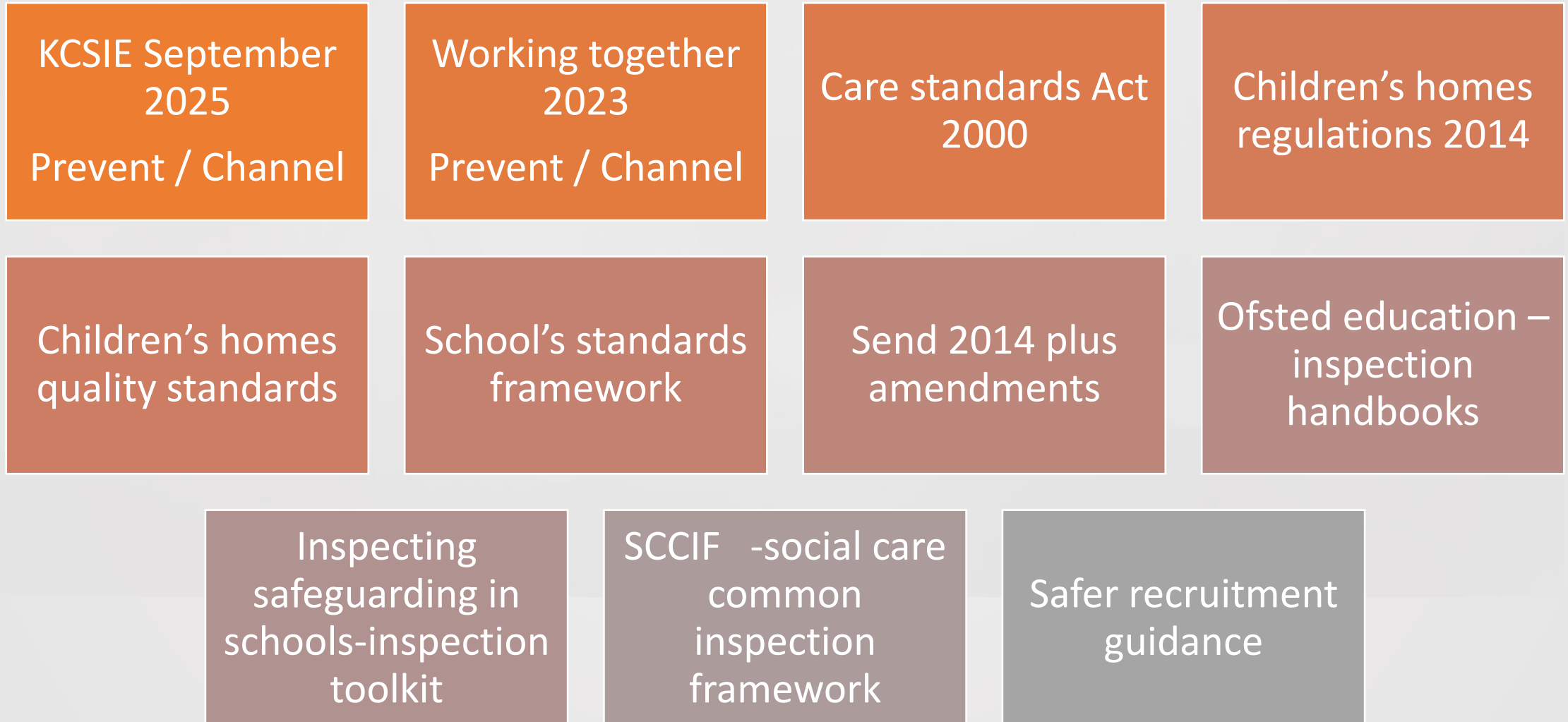
Safeguarding and the Board-core principles

- **Leading by example:** Demonstrating exemplary standards of behaviour in personal conduct and decision-making.
- **Integrity:** Acting with honesty, adhering to strong ethical values, and doing the right thing.
- **Transparency:** Communicating, acting and making decisions openly, honestly and clearly.
- **Accountability:** Taking personal responsibility for actions and their consequences.
- **Fairness:** Treating people equitably, without discrimination or bias.
- **Responsible business:** Integrating ethical and sustainable practices into business decisions, taking into account societal and environmental impacts.
- **ALL HOLD SAFEGUARDING**

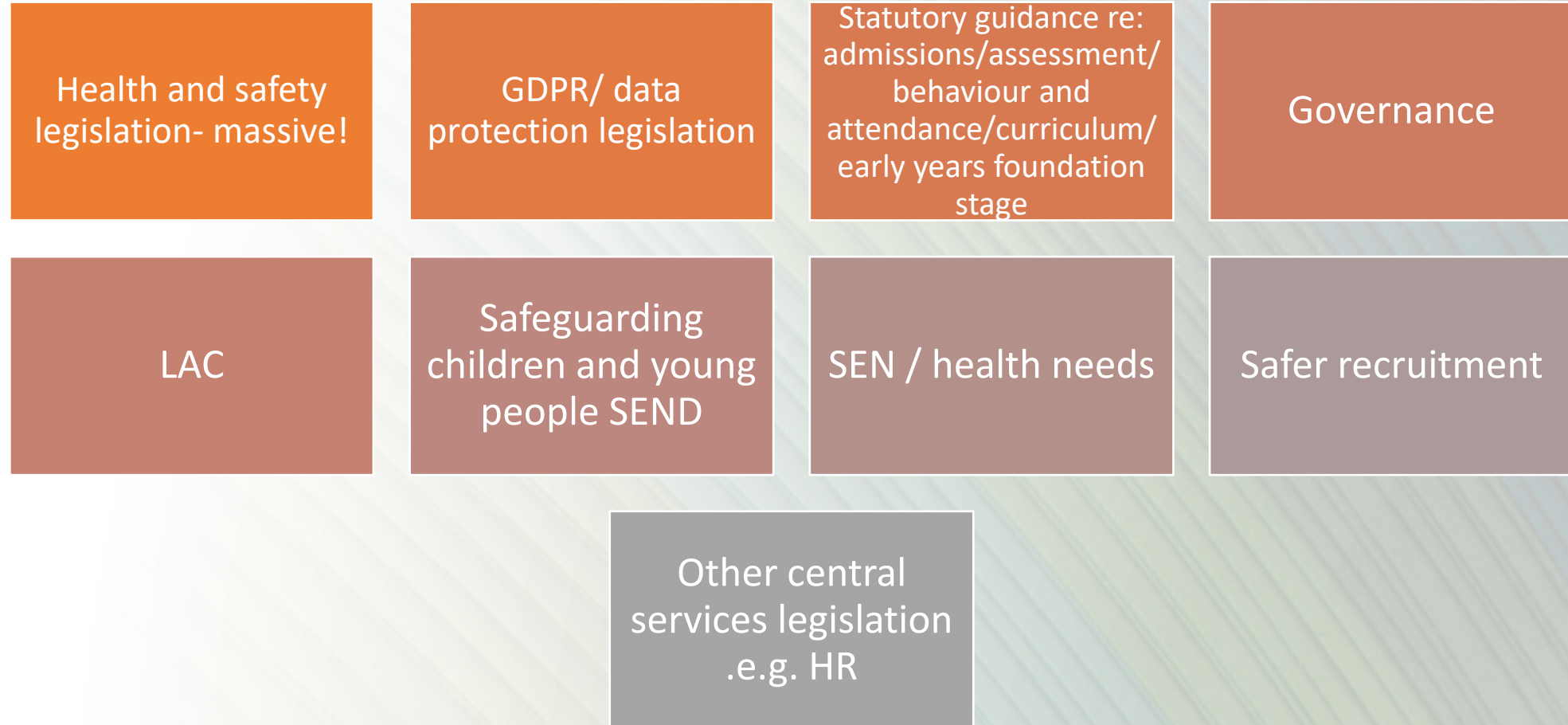
Safeguarding frameworks and legislation- are you all aware of those involved :

- Identify the regulatory and guidance frameworks linked to safeguarding which have to be in place and tested / monitored across your individual service areas.
- You don't need to know them all in detail ; you need to know about them and then in detail should the need arise

Just some of the frameworks and regulations associated with safeguarding



Just some of the frameworks and regulations associated with safeguarding



Just some of the frameworks and regulations associated with safeguarding

Fostering standards and regulations

Supported accommodation standards and regulations

Restrictive practices guidance for schools.2025

Gender identity guidance t

Crime and policing bill 2025

Prevent and Channel

Children and well being , schools bill 2025

Just some of the other frameworks and regulations associated with safeguarding

Supervision , appraisal and performance management

Rights of the child , rights of the disabled person , E&D legislation

Training- e.g. team teach , pamova etc with associated regs / guidance

Placing regulations and associated other legislation

HR, Finance legislation,

This exercise shows very clearly:

- That quality assurance / governance at an operational level can be shaped to the individual settings e.g.. all the legislation / frameworks for schools , residential special schools, children's homes.
- This, using the particular suite of documents required
- At a strategic level of governance, you have to take on board a wider premise of :
- ACCOUNTABILITY SITTING WITHIN A ROBUST , WELL INFORMED AND WELL UNDERSTOOD, ORGANISATIONAL, STRATEGIC SAFEGUARDING **CULTURE.**

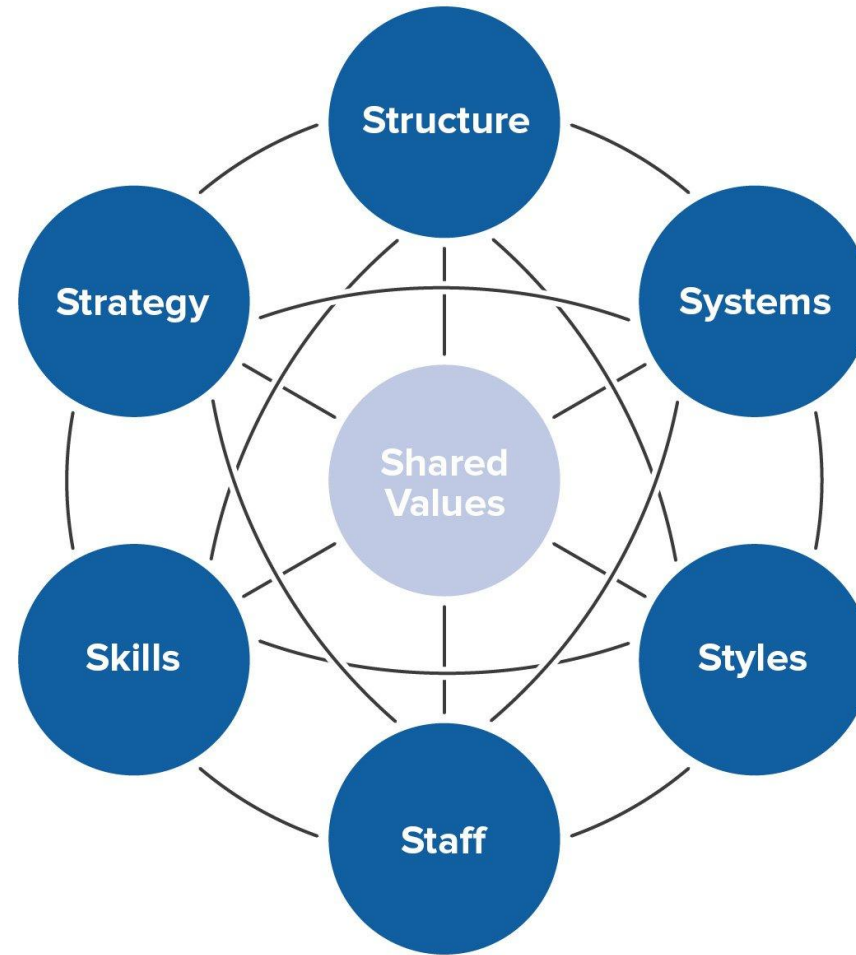
The starting point is key

- When setting up the company have you and the other directors/Trustees (if appropriate) sat down and worked out what happens if things go wrong ? You have differences? Want to leave the organisation ? Want to walk away ? Personal circumstances change ?
- When setting these parameters out, you have to hold at the centre the safety and well being of children who may be impacted by your decisions.

Culture is
key.....
this is a key
focus for an
external view at
senior
leadership
level.

- 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?

Culture structure- McKinsey 2016



What is the governance boards' strategic role in safeguarding?

- *Protecting people and safeguarding responsibilities should be a governance priority for all organisations. Strategy / board members must take reasonable steps to protect all people who come into contact with the organisation from harm, which is a WIDER duty than just taking care of young people and vulnerable adults.*
- ***All board/governance members should have at least the level of knowledge equivalent to the staff working in the settings***
- *The level of safeguarding knowledge at strategic level is a key protective factor throughout the organisation*

As a leadership team.....

- Addressing the strategic challenges of organisational safeguarding ,demands cultural change, complex solutions, and collective action at all levels
- It isn't realistic or possible to set out to 'solve' all of the challenges. What helps is breaking these challenges down into specific issues, defining and giving examples of achievable actions that can support commitment, improve understanding and gain progress.
- This captured within a 1-5year strategic plan.
- **Is this in place in your organisation ? Has it been considered?**

Thematic approach – this gives you an “ all round view”

- Taking a thematic approach , prioritising / responding to issues and challenges, safeguarding concerns with a flexible , dynamic and responsive senior leadership culture is key.
- Themes often sit with:
 - the organisation
 - local authorities
 - Government
 - individual / groups of services
- Themes can be:
 - planned for / predictable
 - urgent and unexpected
 - **Have you done this as a part of your business mapping?**

Key themes- safeguarding

- Safeguarding and pupil welfare/well being- note Whitefield School / BBC /CSPR 1 AND 2
- Safeguarding the welfare of young people in residential care
- Allegations of abuse made against other children /bullying
- Online harms
- Allegations made against staff across all services/focus on low level concerns data and outcomes
- Safer recruitment procedures / amendments
- The Prevent Duty/ Channel referral and support mechanism

Key themes- safeguarding

- Promoting the general wellbeing of young people/adults/families in all services
- School attendance (note mandatory requirements from September 2024)
- Use of reasonable force.- under the spotlight post CSPR 1 and 2 and Whitefield School.
New guidance April 2026 in schools
- Supporting pupils in school/ residential care with additional health needs
- School security/ residential security (Location risk assessment and review)

Key themes- safeguarding

- Safeguarding policies
- The designated safeguarding lead (DSL/DSO) roles in all services
- Inter-agency working
- Staff training
- Online safety- an area of focus
- Opportunities to teach safeguarding

Key themes-safeguarding

- Allegations of abuse made against, Registered Managers, Responsible Individuals, Directors , Trustees .volunteers and other staff.
- Allegations against a Director
- The child's wishes- post CSPR 1 &2 key areas
- Looked after children
- Children with special educational needs and disabilities- key focus from lessons CSPR 1 and 2.

Key themes- safeguarding

- Risk assessments/risk management / risk register
- Culture and ethos-
- Management and response to historic allegations
- External views of services -Regulation 44 Visitor / Std 3 / Independent Person –RSS / Regulation 25
- Adequate resourcing of safeguarding
- **Policies , procedures , protocols in place ? Captured in your risk register ?**

Starting points for discussion:

Culture- considerations- in place or not?

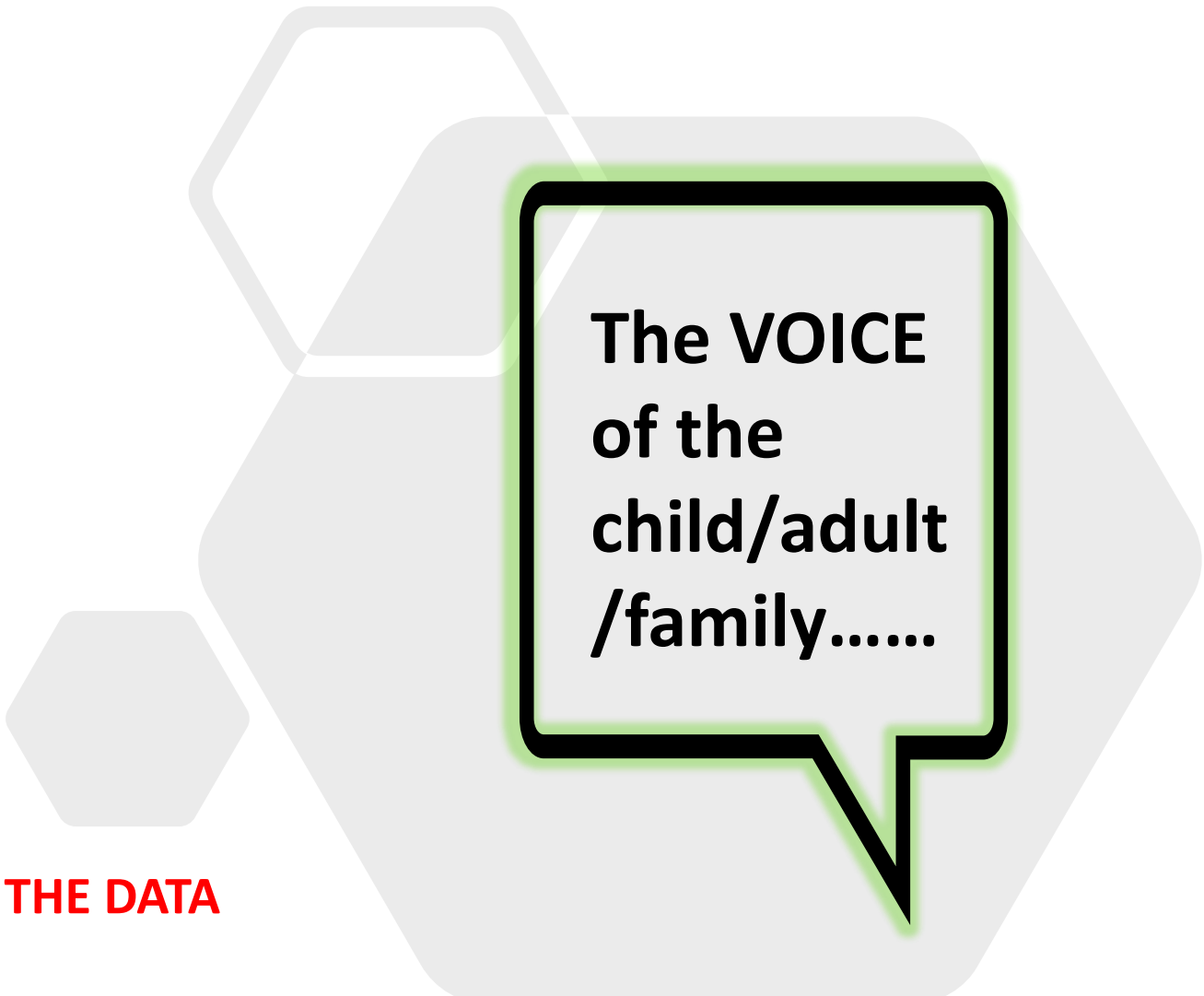
- a clear understanding by the group of the common and specific safeguarding issues feeding into strategic safeguarding considerations?
- a consistent approach across a diverse range of services feeding into strategic safeguarding considerations?
- roles and responsibilities clear at an operational and strategic level ?
- can the **organisation** be held to account?
- how many people should form a safeguarding board? Why can this be problematic? Do you need one ?
- effective communication in place to inform operational practice?
- effective dissemination of information in place to inform practice?
- effective , robust and well-informed information/sources ,feeding into the governance safeguarding culture so that secure decisions can be made, plans devised that have the best chance of success and meet strategic safeguarding need?

Culture - constituents and protective features- some key features:

- Leadership
- Safer recruitment
- Training / knowledge base for all
- Accountability
- Environment/security
- Performance management.
Appraisal , supervision
- Independent visitors audit
- Oversight of the management of services
- Best interest /mental capacity
- Safeguarding as a key thread.
- Code of conduct
- Policies/processes/procedures
- Record keeping
- Focus on vulnerable children
those with SEND/looked after children
- Healthy challenge
- Whistleblowing
- RI and nominated individual roles
- ANY MORE?

Culture:

- Data- across all services / types e.g.
 - Accidents / incidents
 - Reg 40 / Reg 45
 - Interventions
 - Attendance
 - Exclusions
 - Complaints
 - Health and safety
- **ANYTHING ELSE? ARE YOU GETTING THE DATA YOU NEED?**



**The VOICE
of the
child/adult
/family.....**

Kaizen cycle of quality improvement

Continuous improvement model – one of many

Ten principles
of Kaizen-
useful in terms
of culture ,
especially
safeguarding.
You want to
know what is
going on !

- Let go of assumptions.
- Be proactive about solving problems.
- Don't accept the status quo.
- Let go of perfectionism and take an attitude of iterative, adaptive change.
- Look for solutions as you find mistakes.
- Create an environment in which everyone feels empowered to contribute.
- Don't accept the obvious issue; instead, ask "why" five times to get to the root cause.
- Cull information and opinions from multiple people.
- Use creativity to find low-cost, small improvements.
- Never stop improving.
- Is this you ?

Kaizen cont'd

- Kaizen is based on the belief that everything can be improved and nothing is status quo. It also rests on a [Respect for People principle](#). Kaizen involves identifying issues and opportunities, creating solutions and rolling them out -- and then cycling through the process again for other issues or problems that were inadequately addressed. These following seven steps create a cycle for continuous improvement and give a systematic method for executing this process.

Two key principles below sit well within a strategic and safeguarding view for individuals and the governance board as a whole

- **RESPECT:** We respect others, make every effort to understand each other, take responsibility and do our best to build mutual trust.
- **TEAMWORK:** We stimulate personal and professional growth, share the opportunities of development and maximize individual and team performance.”

Kaizen cycle



Themes going forward :

- Open discussion:
- common safeguarding themes you are aware of
- Concerns
- Any early thoughts re. the Board culture
- feedback

Thinking ahead:

- Potential tensions between business need , targets and safeguarding
- Is your data robust, external view?
- Does it safely inform strategy?
- Reputational loss and potential links to safeguarding

- We will review these aspects in part 2.