

Sustaining Whole System Signs of Safety Practice in Norfolk



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Norfolk Signs of Safety Sustainability Plan 2019

Signs of Safety is Norfolk's collaborative way of working that respects families, is rigorous in its analysis of risk and robust in its promotion of what will keep the child safe. Using a questioning approach that involves the wider network as well as multiagency professionals and carers, it drives better decision making that keeps the needs of the child central.

The NSCP are committed to continuing our implementation of Signs of Safety for the long term. We need to ensure the children's workforce use Signs of Safety tools with fidelity and undertake direct work with skill and empathy. Using Signs of Safety as our practice model ensures we work together across the partnership to manage risk, build confidence to secure effective multiagency working with families at the earliest point, keeping the child's needs central. Improvement in the quality of what we do comes from regular, honest, shared reflection at every level of each organisation, and crucially, hearing from the children and families we work with. That way we can continue to learn together about what is working well, and where we need to do better.

Our **Core Principles** using Signs of Safety are:

- we place high value on the quality of relationships we have with each other, families, and carers
- we think critically and never assume we have all the answers
- we work with families collaboratively to help them find their own solutions
- we use plain language that families can readily understand
- we balance optimism with curiosity so that we assess risk rigorously
- we listen to what the child says

David Ashcroft, NSCP Chair

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Signs of Safety, Signs of Wellbeing and Signs of Success are the core foundations of our practice in Norfolk. Based on a whole family and whole system approach that is relationship based, strengths oriented and outcome focused, our work supports children's happiness and health, enabling them to learn and build positive long-lasting relationships that will support them to become happy and successful in their adulthood.



We have worked hard to implement our practice framework in Norfolk. This plan sets out the things we still need to do to ensure consistent good quality practice, how we will maintain that long-term, and how we will continue to learn from children and families, our staff and partner agencies. Practice never stands still and while celebrating successes, we also need to ensure we are reflecting on what else needs to happen that will improve the lives of Norfolk children and families.

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Our Vision for Practice

Leaders:

- Model behaviours using appreciative inquiry
- Use distributed leadership and meaningful measures to agree and drive change
- Always listen to what children and families, staff and partners say
- Invest in 'upstream' services that prevent the need for children to experience 'downstream' services

Practitioners:

- Undertake direct work that empowers families to keep children safe and well looked after
- Ensure only the right children are taken into care and where this is necessary the outcomes for children are good
- Work together to ensure that children and their families have the right support at the right time
- Have the right working conditions that means they have time to do good quality work with children, parents/carers and their support network
- Enjoy their work, continue to learn and want to stay in Norfolk to make a positive difference to children's lives

Children and families:

- Say they are getting the right help at the right time
- Understand why services are involved and find them helpful
- Involve their own network in plans to ensure changes made are maintained through long-standing support
- Experience stability and permanence whether at home or in care, with the least possible changes of workers, schools and carers

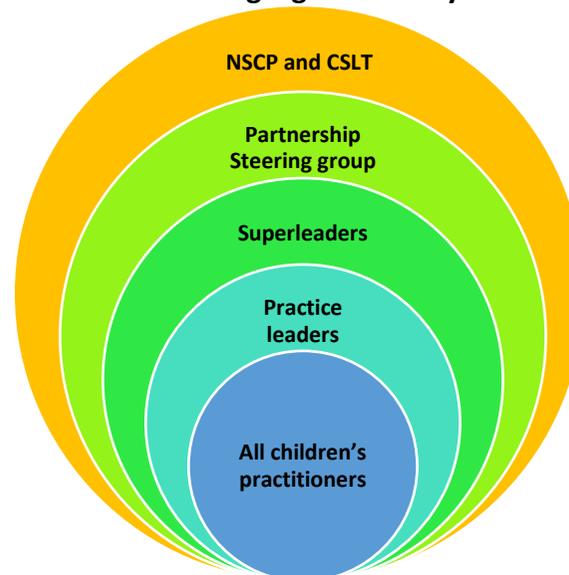
Sara Tough, Executive Director Children's Services

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In Norfolk, Signs of Safety has been introduced across the whole safeguarding and practice system. It is a way of being as well as a way of doing. We want to ensure that all Norfolk children and families get a timely, consistent approach where all professionals work collaboratively and restoratively with the child and their network to help them find solutions to emerging problems and risks. Norfolk began implementing Signs of Safety across all Children's Services and partnership in November 2014. The children's workforce are familiar with the practice and are using Signs of Safety in their direct work and supervision of staff with some consistency.

The areas we still need to focus on in Norfolk are set out within this plan as well as the reviewing mechanisms needed to ensure continued learning and improvement. We need to rigorously include the child's natural networks in our partnership approach; building on existing strengths and safety and ensuring our children know they are part of a supportive community around them that promotes their identity and sense of belonging. We want plans for safety, wellbeing, and success to be effective and self-sustaining long-term. And we want the whole children's workforce to work effectively together to ensure that wherever a child needs additional help, those needs are met in a timely, risk sensible way that balances optimism with curiosity.

Roles and responsibilities for sustaining Signs of Safety as a whole systems approach



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The Sustainability plan is split into five sections:

Leadership
Risk Sensible, Collaborative Practice
Learning
System alignment
Measuring impact

Each area includes detail on:

- What needs to happen?
- What will we see?
- How will we evidence this?

The Sustainability Plan will be overseen by the Signs of Safety Partnership Steering Group and updates provided to the NSCP Strategic Workforce Development Group

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Leadership		
What needs to happen?	What will we see?	How will we evidence this?
<p>Leadership which is strong, visible and engaged so that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff feel confident that they will be supported to do effective direct work • There are clear and consistent messages about risk sensible practice that supports children to grow up in their own family • Learning across the partnership is honest, respectful, supportive, challenging and adds value • Behaviours are modelled which support best practice with children and families 	<p>The NSCP Leadership Group, Strategic Workforce Development Group and Local Safeguarding Children Groups will have Signs of Safety as a standing item to monitor impact on practice. The Section 11 monitoring arrangements will report on effective and sustained use of SofS in partnership organisations.</p> <p>All Leaders to model the core principles of SofS in their interactions with staff and encourage a learning culture in their organisations.</p> <p>The Signs of Safety Partnership Steering group will meet bi-monthly to review individual and multiagency progress on implementation and sustainability of SofS practice.</p> <p>The Signs of Safety Partnership Steering group will produce a quarterly staff newsletter highlighting multiagency practice achievements, good examples of SofS, useful research and development tools and information about training and development opportunities.</p> <p>The Superleaders group will meet bi-monthly to review and deliver practice resources, provide evidence of impact from audit and practice, and feedback from development sessions and training activities.</p> <p>Practice Leaders and Managers will observe practice, provide supervision and support, assess SofS practice strengths and development needs in their team, and put in place targeted actions to ensure all practice evidences good quality and depth of practice using SofS.</p>	<p>Minutes and actions from Board meetings and LSCGs.</p> <p>S11 report</p> <p>Evidence of internal communications that support our collective SofS approach</p> <p>Multiagency Events</p> <p>Steering group minutes, actions and reports to Board</p> <p>Superleaders group minutes and actions</p> <p>SofS Resources visibility and use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Evidence from staff surveys ✓ Feedback from children and families ✓ Evidence from audit ✓ Data analysis

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Risk Sensible, Collaborative Practice

What needs to happen?	What will we see?	How will we evidence this?
<p>The children’s workforce has a shared understanding of what risk-sensible practice is so that anxiety driven behaviour is reduced and naïve or over-optimistic analysis is eliminated.</p> <p>All partners understand and engage with the SofS approach so that they know if/when/how to refer for specialist support and how to fully participate in SofS multiagency assessments and processes.</p> <p>The ethos of solution –focused practice which underpins Signs of Safety is at the heart of the way we work</p>	<p>Managers and Leaders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will judge practice by the quality of decision-making, not the outcome • Will take account of the context in which decisions are made • Create an environment in which everyone learns from successes as well as reflecting on failures. • Will support and encourage workers so that they are well resourced and confident in their practice <p>Workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are equipped and resourced to work collaboratively with families and professionals when worries or risks first emerge to prevent concerns escalating • Demonstrate the ethos of Signs of Safety in their language and behaviour with families • Listen to the child and use their words and/or behaviours to inform assessments and plans • Identify and work with whole family & friends networks • Support the child’s networks to create safety plans which positively change the child’s lived experience with services offered and accessed where needed • Apply knowledge of research and child development expressed in language that families understand • Check plans for impact so that cases are closed or moved on with multiagency agreement in a timely way • Use the SofS tools with fidelity • Know what the expectations are for how SofS is used whichever agency they work for • Routinely seek feedback from children and families to better understand their experience of services 	<p>Norfolk data matches other high performing LAs in numbers of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referrals/re-referrals to CSC • Cases active to social care • Child Protection Plans • Children living away from home • Serious Case Reviews • Safeguarding Practice Reviews • Retention of workers <p>Feedback from children and families</p> <p>Case studies/ audit provide evidence that <i>Danger/worry Statements, Safety/wellbeing Goals and bottom lines are clear and robust.</i> Plans focus on behaviour change in the family with safety plans developed by the family and</p>

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Risk Sensible, Collaborative Practice

What needs to happen?	What will we see?	How will we evidence this?
		their network of support.

Learning		
What needs to happen	What will we see?	How will we evidence this?
<p>Learning as part of everyday work so that reflection and appreciative inquiry continuously support improvement in practice. Formal training provides the starting point and not the end point of learning.</p> <p>70:20:10 principle.</p> <p>Access for all children's workforce to SofS briefings.</p> <p>Access to SofS Foundation and Family Networking training for all case holding and specialist staff</p> <p>Access to Practice Leader training for all team leaders</p>	<p>We establish ongoing, multiagency learning through a combination of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shared case mapping; • structured appreciative inquiry; • collaborative audit; • reflective group supervision • observational visits • Inclusion of the voice of children and their networks • Use of Knowledge bank <p>Formal training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ SofS Briefings- upon request ✓ SofS Foundation training x 6 per year (300 places) ✓ Family Networking Training x 6 per year (300 places) ✓ Practice Leaders Training annually (50 places) ✓ Monthly development sessions in each x 6 localities- monitored by Superleaders ✓ Leadership learning events will align to the principles of SofS practice <p>Regular quality assurance of content, delivery and evaluations from formal training, overseen by NSCP workforce development group.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Evidence from staff surveys ✓ Feedback from children and families ✓ Evidence from audit ✓ Quarterly reports to NSCP partnership group ✓ Data analysis ✓ Use of Knowledge bank ✓ Policy and practice alignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training advertised on NSCP website • Attendance rates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training evaluations • Training cancellations

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Learning		
What needs to happen	What will we see?	How will we evidence this?
	<p>Opportunities to facilitate / recruit to multiagency SofS trainers' group.</p> <p>Refresher Training to be provided within in-house development/alignment work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Induction Programmes • All other relevant training aligns to SofS/helps refresh SofS practice

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System alignment		
What needs to happen?	What will we see?	How will we evidence this?
<p>Systems alignment which minimises barriers to SofS practice so that policies, practice guidance, forms and processes all support and guide the work</p>	<p>Practice guidance, expectations, standards, policies and processes are in line with SofS practice. The Strategic Workforce Development Group and the SofS Partnership Steering Group will work within agencies to support alignment.</p> <p>NSCP policies and multiagency forms are reviewed and monitored to align with SofS practice</p> <p>Multiagency systems and strategic documents e.g. reports to Boards, reinforce solution-focused thinking using the SofS framework and approach.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of SofS is visible in case recording and supporting policies and practice guidance • The experience of families is consistent across services with minimal repetition • The SofS framework is visible within strategic documents and reports
<p>Children’s Social Care Case management recording processes align to SofS</p>	<p>The case management system, Liquid Logic, aligns to SofS throughout all work flow processes in social care.</p> <p>Children and families are consulted about changes to the system that relate to written reports they receive.</p> <p>The case management system allows us to monitor fidelity to SofS practice provides data that helps us measure impact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of Signs of Safety is visible in all case recording • Adaptations to case recording supports best practice, saves practitioner time and adds value to the process for the children and families worked with. • Feedback from practitioners and QA • Feedback from children and families • Data reports

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Measuring Impact- What needs to happen	Who is going to do what?	How will we monitor?
<p>Meaningful measures which capture practice quality and impact on outcomes for children so that there is a robust evidence base for targeting further development work, and gives senior leader insight into practice.</p> <p>Core data and dashboards used across the partnership are transparent and provide benchmarking for Norfolk against statistical neighbours, England averages and high performing local authorities.</p>	<p>The culture of practice and organisations will be explored through independent scrutiny and the S11 process. This will help organisations move towards a Signs of Safety culture.</p> <p>Collaborative, multiagency case audits will provide evidence of practice quality from case files and always include the views of families</p> <p>A suite of indicators track impact on outcomes and refer to KPIs from national recommendations</p> <p>Liquid Logic developments will include SofS fidelity measures</p> <p>Staff surveys give insight into use of SofS elements of practice and staff confidence and help identify specific training needs.</p> <p>Team self-assessments are undertaken that support managers identify team learning needs</p> <p>Child and family surveys help identify areas of practice strengths and weaknesses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiagency and single agency audit outcomes • Performance indicators set against national KPIs • Staff Surveys <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of participants in staff survey ➤ Survey analysis shows improvement over time • Family Surveys <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of participants in staff survey ➤ Survey analysis shows increased satisfaction over time • Number of complaints