

SAFEGUARDING UPDATE: WORKING TOGETHER 2026



The Department for Education has now published Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.

What it means for us

Whilst many of the changes are already included in workplans and priorities, Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership will update local policies and procedures to reflect changes where needed.

KEY UPDATES AT A GLANCE

1. SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

- A stronger focus on inclusivity, anti-discriminatory and culturally informed practice
- Strengthened guidance on hidden harms

2. MULTI AGENCY SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS (MASA)

- Clearer roles and responsibilities of safeguarding partners
- Stronger focus on data sharing
- Analysis to identify disproportionality and racism
- Evidence of impact on children and families in reporting

3. PROVIDING HELP, SUPPORT AND PROTECTION

- Stronger focus on early targeted intervention
- Stronger focus on anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practice
- Expanded guidance on harms
- Strengthened Section 47 expectations
- Stronger alignment between child protection, family help and care planning

4. ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Greater focus on risks for looked after children
- Stronger links between care planning and child protection
- Highlighted risks in residential settings and exploitation
- Duty to ensure children are supported and protected through care plans

5. LEARNING FROM SAFEGUARDING INCIDENTS

- Raise concerns early and clearly
- Ensure notifications include all child victims and consider wider context, even where names are unknown
- Expanded guidance in relation to care leavers and notifying adults of historic abuse
- 15 working day deadline for rapid reviews
- Learn from incidents that do not meet criteria

Any questions? Email safeguarding@stevenage.gov.uk for more info.

You can read the full detail of the changes here:

[Working together to safeguard children 2026: summary of changes - GOV.UK](#)

[Working together to safeguard children 2026: a guide to multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children](#)

[Statutory Guidance - Working Together Guidance](#)