**Extern Safeguarding Committee
Terms of Reference
July 2022**

**1. ROLE**

The role of the Safeguarding Committee is to:

* Advise the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) of the most appropriate and up to date policy and operational framework for safeguarding across all Extern services.
* Ensure the safeguarding of children and adults is embedded into Externs work on registration, inspection and monitoring.
* Provide strategic oversight for all aspects of safeguarding across the organisation and ensure our policies and procedures are up to date and effective in protecting service users from potential or actual harm.
* Provide assurance that the agreed safeguarding policies and procedures are being adhered to across the organisation.
* Initiate improvements in Externs working practices, systems and procedures to support effective safeguarding practice in all services.
* Identify, respond and escalate, as appropriate, organisational risk within Extern related to safeguarding.
* Raise the profile of children and adults’ safeguarding throughout all areas of Extern’s work, promote proactive communications and raise awareness of safeguarding practice throughout all Extern’s services.
* Monitor and evaluate potential and actual safeguarding breaches to ensure learning is shared and improvements are made.

**2. RESPONSIBILITIES**

Safeguarding is a collective responsibility for all staff across Extern and each Director, Assistant Director and Manager is accountable for its adherence and performance.

Within this, the responsibilities of the Committee are:

* To ensure implementation of all Externs safeguarding policies and protocols, monitor the effectiveness and impact of these both internally and externally and recommend and implement improvements as appropriate.
* To escalate safeguarding issues, as appropriate, to Externs internal governance bodies – Audit & Risk Committee and Extern Company Boards.
* To ensure that all appropriate safeguarding issues are escalated as required to all relevant external bodies.
* To ensure that appropriate data is collected about safeguarding children and adults’ in a way that supports the development and improvement of safeguarding policy and practice within Extern.
* To ensure that training programmes are in place to enable Extern staff to fulfil their duties and responsibilities of safeguarding.
* To ensure that Extern responds appropriately to changes in relevant legislation.

**3. EVALUATION**

The criteria for the success of the Committee will be that:

* Quality assurance and monitoring confirms a consistent approach across the organisation for the identification, decision-making, recording and management of safeguarding issues within all our services.
* Quality assurance and monitoring confirms that the safeguarding protocol is being implemented consistently.
* There is evidence that the safeguarding of children and adults is embedded into Externs work through improved protection practice.
* We ensure effective working relationships with key stakeholders and commissioners by ensuring an open, honest, and transparent approach to safeguarding, as appropriate.

**4. REVIEW**

A review of the function of the Committee will be carried out annually by the Head of Safeguarding and SLT to measure the Committee’s impact benefit and shared understanding and increased safeguarding benefits to service users. As safeguarding considerations become further embedded into organisational culture, the need for the Committee to meet in its current format should be reviewed.

**5. ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Head of Safeguarding has a direct reporting line to Audit & Risk Committee and the Board(s)

The Safeguarding Committee is accountable to SLT.

**6. MEMBERSHIP**

The membership of the Safeguarding Committee comprises of:

* Head of Safeguarding (Chair)
* COO
* Director of Services ROI
* Assistant Directors of Services - Communities and Young People and Families x2
* Internal Audit and Compliance Manager (Vice Chair)
* Data Protection Officer
* Learning and Development Manager
* Programme Manager (Review NI &ROI)
* Senior HR Business Partner NI & ROI

Members are expected to be a safeguarding champion within their own directorate/service, working to ensure that safeguarding considerations are embedded throughout their directorate. Attendance will be recorded by the Executive Assistant.

**8. Quorum**

The quorum for a meeting is a minimum of four members, one of which should be the Chair or Vice Chair. The Chair of the Committee who is the Head of Safeguarding will lead Safeguarding within the organisation.

Other staff members may be invited to attend for discussion of items relevant to their responsibilities.

**10. Frequency**

The Safeguarding Committee will meet on a quarterly basis Additional meeting may be called by the Chair if necessary.

**11. Support**

Secretariat support is provided by a member of the executive support team.

**12. Governance**

The Safeguarding Committee is a sub-committee of SLT. Following each Committee meeting the Committee Chair will present a written report to the next appropriate meeting of SLT informing them of the Committee’s actions and detailing any recommendations.

The Head of Safeguarding will chair a new Safeguarding Governance Group (SGG) which will be a sub-group of the Safeguarding Committee. The SGG will be an operational group that will meet every 6 weeks and the Head of Safeguarding (Chair) will present any findings or concerns that has been identified from the Safeguarding Governance Group to the Safeguarding Committee.