



OUR VISION

Every child and young person in South Gloucestershire will have the **best start in life**, thrive and be prepared for a successful adult life.



OUR MISSION

Our mission is to deliver a service that we can be proud of. A service which promotes positive outcomes for all children and enables them to be healthy, safe and thrive.

We want all the children and young people we work with to:

- Feel safe from harm and know where to go to get help if they need it
- Have a settled and happy education which enables them to achieve their full potential
- Understand the benefits of a healthy and active life
- Be fully prepared for adult life
- Be able to tell us what they think and know that they are listened to
- Build stronger connections with their area and enjoy growing up in South Gloucestershire
- Feel valued, cared for and to know that they are important



OUR VALUES

Our values are central to our work. At all times we will:

- Put children's needs first, ensuring the voice of young people sits at the heart of our practice
- Work with integrity, honesty, empathy and respect, showing fairness and courage in everything we do
- Work together; adopting a whole family approach, considering the views and wishes of parents and carers and others important to the child and their family network
- Champion open communication, always respecting the opinions of others
- Focus on the long-term wellbeing of those we work with, prioritising keeping children safe with the family and their network
- Work together with our partners to achieve the best outcomes for families
- Provide **the right help, in the right way, at the right time**, ensuring that when we stop working with families, they have the skills and support to deal with problems
- Recognise that there is always room for improvement in how we support children and families. We encourage feedback, we are honest when we get things wrong, and we learn from our mistakes
- Support our staff to do their jobs to the best of their ability

South Gloucestershire's Practice Guide

This guide sets out how we work with children and families in South Gloucestershire



Signs of Safety

South Gloucestershire
Council

OUR PRACTICE MODEL

Our practice model is **Signs of Safety**, which is a **strengths-based, relationship approach**, which keeps **children and families at the centre of our practice**. Signs of Safety provides a model for how we work with families in South Gloucestershire, for our practitioners, our partners and the families that we support. We clearly discuss our worries about a child and we **build on strengths and what works**, and support the family network to understand for themselves how they can use their strengths to help overcome their difficulties.

We use **family network meetings** to involve family networks in assessments, planning and we listen to the views of the child and families. We encourage the **family networks** to take ownership of what needs to change and how they can go about it to support the **safety and wellbeing of their children**. We work to sustain and deepen the child and young person's connection with the families, people, culture and communities they were born into and belong to and we always work on the basis that children and young people are best living with their families, so long as it is safe for them to do so. We are **transparent, clear and honest** with families and each other. We believe good practice only happens through **relationships and partnerships**. We always speak plainly to make sure children, young people and families understand what we say, what we do and why. We will keep accurate records about our work with children and families, so that children can understand their lives, their own stories and the decisions that have been made to keep them safe and well.

We are committed to embedding Signs of Safety as our practice model, we have adopted a **whole system approach**; this is modelled through our **leadership** and processes. Our IT and recording systems are aligned with the Signs of Safety practice model, to ensure practitioners can record information in line with the approach and allow the model to be demonstrated in their practice.

TOOLS AND APPROACHES

Our **systemic practice** approach helps inform our work with children and families. As practitioners we look at the whole picture, the person, their family, community and wider society to get a better understanding of what makes someone who they are, and what makes them unique to their own situation. This helps us to avoid looking at presenting issues in isolation but to consider individuals as part of their **wider systems**. With this greater understanding, we can offer them the best support.

Many of the children, young people and families we work with have experienced trauma and adversity in their lives. We have adopted a **trauma informed and responsive** approach to our work to help us better recognise and sensitively respond to their needs.



PRACTICE STANDARDS

Our quality assurance framework is underpinned by the **practice standards** which are in place to support our practice and ensure that we are **getting things right for the child and family**.