**Safeguarder Role Description**

**General Role**

The role of the Safeguarder is to identify and safeguard the best interests of a child (or children) to whom they have been appointed in Children’s Hearing or court proceedings, relating to the child. The post holder must work to the highest level of integrity, be guided by and act in accordance with the [Practice Standards for Safeguarders](https://www.childrenfirst.org.uk/media/ldvnv4mm/designed-safeguarderpanel-practicestandards-digital-version-single-pages.pdf) at all times, and follow the overriding principle of the Child is at the Centre of the Hearing.

**Specific Responsibilities**

1. To ensure that the interests of the child are safeguarded throughout all proceedings.
2. To undertake all necessary and proportionate enquiries to conclude what is necessary to safeguard the interests of the child.
3. To encourage and support the child’s understanding of and participation in the hearing and /or court process. To obtain the child’s views if age and maturity allow and make these available to either the Children’s Hearing and /or court.
4. To reach, and articulate independent, clear, reasoned, and justifiable recommendations within set timescales which will assist Children’s Hearings or court’s decision in achieving the best interests of the child as necessary.
5. Where required, to report to a Children’s Hearing or court orally and /or in writing to assist the hearing or court’s consideration.
6. To attend and participate as necessary at any relevant children’s hearing and/or court hearing to ensure decision making is not delayed unnecessarily.
7. To treat information sensitively, securely and confidentially, in accordance with the law.
8. To act as role model for and promote the values and Practice Standards for Safeguarders and the national Safeguarders Panel.
9. To engage with and assist in the development of the general practice and conduct of Safeguarders.
10. To support the ethos of the Better Hearings agenda through treating all concerned with respect, transparency and fairness.

**Additional Requirements**

1. To be familiar with the legislation and court rules relevant to the role.
2. To comply with all current [Policies and Guidance](https://www.childrenfirst.org.uk/about-us/working-with-professionals/safeguarders-panel-team/for-safeguarders/policies-and-guidance/) for Safeguarders, including the Child Protection Policy, Complaints or Concerns Policy, Data Retention and Data Management Policy and Guidance, Lone Working Policy and the Fees, Expenses and Allowances Scheme.
3. To meet the [Practice Standards for Safeguarders](https://www.childrenfirst.org.uk/media/ldvnv4mm/designed-safeguarderpanel-practicestandards-digital-version-single-pages.pdf) and to comply with the requirements of the [Performance Support and Monitoring Framework](https://www.childrenfirst.org.uk/media/jqdpvyhs/psmf-final-010523-without-legal-guidance.pdf).
4. To attend and engage at training and support sessions.
5. To offer availability of such breadth and frequency to allow the taking of a reasonable amount of Safeguarder appointments.
6. To submit claims for fees and expenses appropriately and timeously.
7. To ensure appropriate car insurance is in place.
8. To display appropriate conduct both during any appointment and in upholding the reputation and regard of the national Safeguarders Panel.
9. To share information as required with the Safeguarders Panel Team, acting on behalf of Scottish Ministers, including information about availability and matters that may affect ability to remain on the national Panel.
10. To register as a data controller in the role of Safeguarder.
11. To exercise due care in the use of information and to hold, return and or destroy information as required by relevant [Policies and Guidance](https://www.childrenfirst.org.uk/about-us/working-with-professionals/safeguarders-panel-team/for-safeguarders/policies-and-guidance/).
12. To be accountable for individual practice and conduct in the role.

**Safeguarder Person Specification**

Safeguarders cannot be appointed without being capable of satisfying key competencies. These are assessed at the Pre-appointment Assessment and Training, following successful initial interview process and before appointment by Scottish Ministers.

It is the responsibility of the Safeguarders Panel Team acting on behalf of Scottish Ministers to ensure that Safeguarders are selected, trained and supported to have the required interpersonal, communication, practice skills and legal knowledge to fulfil their role.

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| Area | Requirement |
| **Competencies** | * Keep central focus on the child |
| * Fulfil responsibilities as required in the role |
| * Work effectively as an individual and alongside others developing effective professional relationships with those connected to the role |
| * Communicate sensitively, purposefully, effectively, and respectfully (core competence to communicate with children) |
| * Assimilate and analyse information to make clear, reasoned and justifiable recommendations |
| * Continue personal development relevant to the role by meaningful self-reflection and engagement with learning and development |
| **Values** | * To be child centred, always keeping the child, their best interests, and human rights to the forefront |
| * Treating everyone with dignity and respect, understanding and respecting others’ roles, experiences, and backgrounds |
| * Being self-aware and questioning the impact of your own values and beliefs |
| * Being collaborative and participative in your approach, considers a range of ways to enable participation |
| * Acts with professional integrity, openness and honesty, and humility |
| * Committed to the role and motivated and focused on achieving best outcomes |

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| **Skills** | * People skills – ability to develop and maintain effective and supportive relationships |
| * Excellent verbal and written communication skills |
| * Ability to work independently and effectively prioritise own work under pressure |
| * Effective time management and organisational skills and the ability to meet deadlines |
| * Effective written reporting skills; able to effectively carry out analysis and reasoning |
| * Commitment to the principles of confidentiality in relation to children and young people - handling information securely and sensitively |
| * Ability to manage challenging and stressful situations |
| * Competent in the use of MS Office packages - ability to type own reports and submit electronic claim forms |
| **Knowledge** | * Parameters of the role of Safeguarder |
| * Communication styles, especially with children |
| * Relationship based approaches |
| * Understanding of Children’s Human Rights and the Promise |
| * Understanding of current thinking on child well-being and child protection |
| * Attachment / child development / resilience & trauma |
| * Impact of multiple adversities |
| * Legislative and regulatory context including Children & Young People (S) Act 2014, and UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 |
| * Children's Hearings and associated court proceedings including appeals (current) |
| * Report writing |
| * Roles within system |
| **Experience** | * Recent experience of working with children and families |
| * The Children’s Hearing system in operation |
| * Working with complex and potentially conflicting information and situations of conflict |