



Department  
for Education

## ISAG September Meeting Update

The **Independent Scrutiny Advisory Group (ISAG)** was launched in September 2025 to advise central government on the role and impact of independent scrutiny in safeguarding partnerships. It brings together independent scrutineers, safeguarding partners, and Department for Education (DfE) representatives.

### The group aims to:

- **Shape national policy and guidance**, ensuring scrutiny is proportionate, effective, and inclusive of children, young people, and families.
- **Provide quality assurance** for research outputs and promote tools and resources that support consistent, effective practice.
- **Create a collaborative forum** for sharing experiences, challenges, and examples of good practice.
- **Champion lived experience**, ensuring the voices of children, young people, and families inform both local and national safeguarding developments.

ISAG held its **first virtual meeting on 30 September 2025**, chaired by **Adrian Loades** (National Safeguarding Partner Multi-Agency Facilitator). The group will meet monthly for 12 months to drive forward its strategic priorities.

### Agenda discussed:

- **Terms of Reference:** Members agreed to revise the wording for clarity, inclusion, and accountability. The updated Terms and member list will be published on gov.uk.
- **Independent Scrutiny Project:** A presentation by the DfE, outlined the project's scope, focused on lived experiences and best practice sharing across safeguarding partnerships.
- **Research Survey:** Progress was reviewed, with next steps including interviews and analysis to inform future policy. Members committed to promoting participation and integrating broader public policy perspectives.
- **Forward Planning:** Monthly meetings will be held on the last Tuesday of each month at 11:30 AM BST. Future topics include accountability mechanisms, scrutiny models, and resource disparities.

We welcome input from across the sector. Please contact [Safeguarding.REFORM@education.gov.uk](mailto:Safeguarding.REFORM@education.gov.uk) to share your insights or ask questions.

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday 28 October 2025 at 11:30 AM BST