



ANNUAL REPORT

2019 - 2020

Safeguarding Children in County Durham

www.durham-scp.org.uk

Keeping Children Safe

Contents

| | | | |
|---|----|--|----|
| 1. Foreword by Independent Chair..... | 3 | Joint Targeted Area Inspections (JTAI)..... | 26 |
| 2. Introduction | 4 | Restraint..... | 26 |
| 3. Local Data..... | 5 | Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR)..... | 28 |
| Local Safeguarding Data 2019/20 in brief | 6 | Policy and Procedures..... | 30 |
| 4. Governance and Structure | 8 | Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse..... | 30 |
| Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP) | 8 | 7. Training & Communication | 31 |
| Consultation with Children and Young People | 10 | Marketing and Communication | 32 |
| Independent Scrutiny..... | 10 | 8. Priorities & Areas of Focus 2020/21 | 33 |
| Working across Partnerships | 12 | Covid-19 implications..... | 33 |
| 5. DSCP Vision & Values - 2019/20..... | 13 | Appendix 1 | 34 |
| DSCP Vision and Areas of Focus | 14 | Durham SCP - Membership..... | 34 |
| Improvement & Impact in Key Areas (JTAI) | 15 | DSCP Executive Group: | 34 |
| Multi-Agency Strategy Meetings and Risk Assessment | 15 | DSCP Relevant Agencies:..... | 34 |
| Focus Area – Prevention Through Early Intervention..... | 17 | Contact Details | 35 |
| Focus Area – Joined Up Response | 19 | Appendix 2 – DSCP Staffing and Budget..... | 36 |
| Focus Area – Listening | 20 | Staffing | 36 |
| Focus Area – Identifying | 21 | DSCP Budget | 36 |
| Focus Area – Challenging..... | 23 | | |
| 6. Performance Monitoring and Quality Assurance – Keeping Children Safe | 24 | | |
| Performance, Challenge and Impact..... | 24 | | |
| Audits | 25 | | |
| Multi-agency Audits | 25 | | |

1. Foreword by Independent Chair

Welcome to the first Annual report of Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP). On 1st April 2019, the DSCP replaced the old Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) in accordance with the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and its accompanying guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

The new partnership gives joint and equal responsibility to three statutory safeguarding partners (Police; Local Authority; and, Clinical Commissioning Groups) who, together with a host of Relevant Agencies, have the collective privilege of co-ordinating each other as partners in fulfilling their most important function...safeguarding our children and promoting their welfare.

DSCP's Vision and Values are outlined on page 13 of this Annual Report, and its new structure is presented on page 8.

The DSCP Executive Group, comprising a senior representative of each of the statutory partners, the Designated Doctor for Safeguarding Children and the Chairs of each of the three sub-groups has met monthly to progress the agreed partnership plan. In addition, during this past year, DSCP finalised the Joint Targeted Area Inspection action plan and contributed to the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) proceedings.

DSCP held three Development Days during the year which were open to all partners and well attended. In our inaugural year these forums were specifically focussed on both 'testing' the effectiveness of the new partnership arrangements and increasing our collective knowledge on emerging threats and key issues, such as 'County Lines' and 'Contextual Safeguarding' to name but two.

DSCP appointed a 'Young People's Commissioner' to both assist us in better hearing 'the voice of the child' and hold the partnership to account via an Independent Scrutiny Panel of lay advisors and Cllr Olwyn Gunn, Cabinet Portfolio holder for Children and Young People's Services, together with the recently appointed Independent Scrutineer as Chair, whom I wish well.

This annual Report provides an overview of DSCP's 'Improvement and Impact' on our areas of focus in line with our Vision and Values for keeping children safe.

It has been a privilege to chair the outgoing LSCB, lead on the transition to DSCP and chair the partnership during its inaugural year. I would like to thank our excellent Business Unit for the support which underpins the partnership and also thank the representatives of all partner agencies and organisations who have contributed so much to position the new partnership to best effect in safeguarding our children and promoting their welfare. It is on these bedrocks (as I might have said once or twice...) that every child can flourish, achieve their full potential and live life in abundance.



Michael Banks
Durham DSCP Independent Chair

2. Introduction

The Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP) has a statutory duty to prepare and publish an Annual Report which describes how our partners safeguard vulnerable children and young people.

Our primary responsibility is to provide a way for the local agencies that have a responsibility in respect of child welfare, to agree how they will work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to ensure that they do so effectively.

Section 3 of the report highlights some statistical information about County Durham and provides a local context for our work.

Section 4 describes the local governance arrangements and structure of the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership. It also provides information on the Safeguarding Arrangements that were introduced in 2018/19 through the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

Section 5 highlights progress on key pieces of work in the last year and its impact, our achievements, as well as reporting on the work undertaken in line with our Vision and Values.

Section 6 covers our Performance Management Framework and describes the multi-agency audits we have undertaken. It also provides an overview of Serious Case Reviews and the use of restraint in Aycliffe Secure Services Centre.

Section 7 outlines our multi-agency training provision and describes the marketing and communication activity undertaken by the DSCP.

Section 8 identifies the priorities which the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership will take forward into 2020/21.

The Annual Report 2019/20 demonstrates the extent to which the functions of the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership, as set out in the national statutory guidance, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (July 2018), have been effectively fulfilled.



The information presented in this Annual Report is drawn from a wide range of sources from across the County Durham Partnership. These include the County Durham Integrated Needs Assessment; Lessons Learned from local Serious Case Reviews; the Child Death Review Annual Report; and a range of Durham SCP strategy documents and action plans.

 **More Information:**

Find out more information by clicking here - [Durham Insight](#)

3. Local Data

County Durham stretches from the rural North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the west to the Heritage Coastline in the east and is home to a range of national treasures including Durham Cathedral, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The county has a very diverse combination of communities ranging from some of the most sparsely populated rural areas in the country through to the larger towns and Durham City; each area with its own needs and aspirations.



There are an estimated **526,980 people** living in County Durham (ONS mid 2018 population estimates). Since 2001 the population of County Durham has increased by 30,000 (6.1%).



The 0-15 age population in the County has been relatively stable since 2011 and is currently 90,833 (ONS 2018 population estimates).



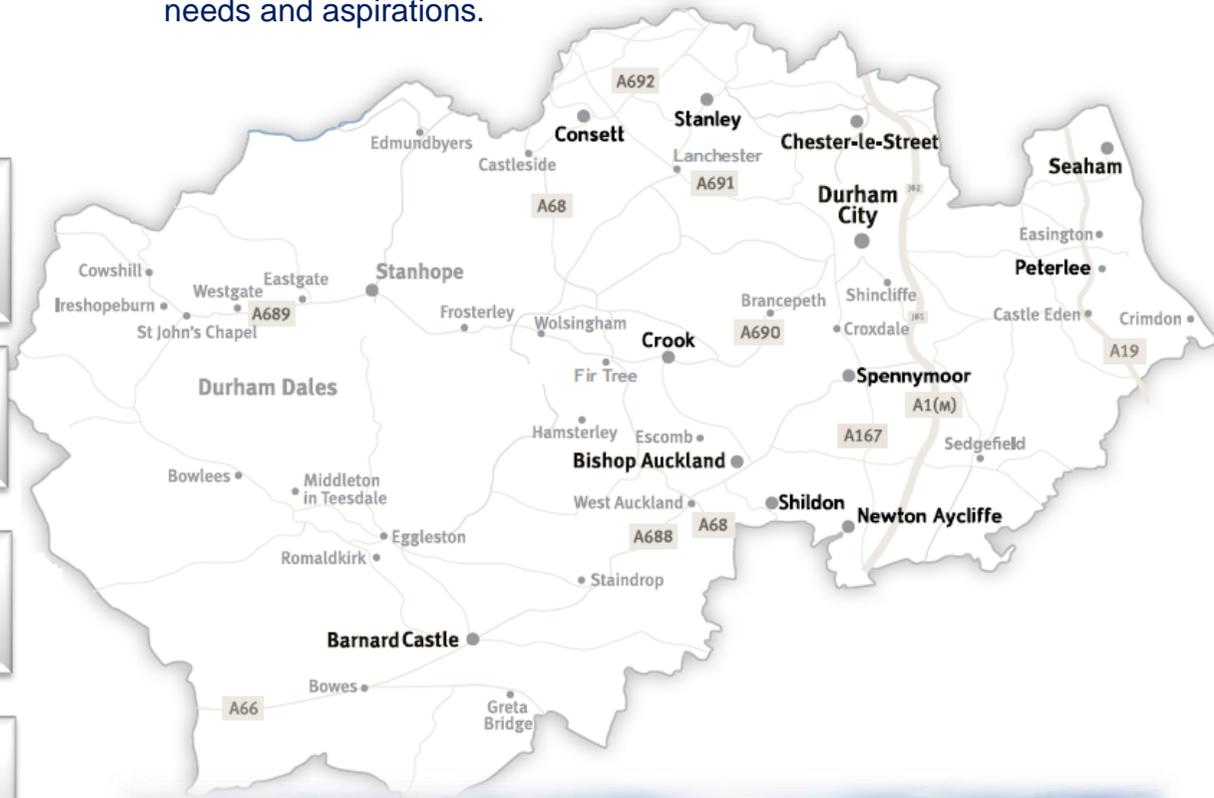
County Durham is a largely rural county comprising of 12 main **settlements** with an estimated population of over 5,000 people (estimated from the ONS Mid-2018 Output Area Population Estimates).



Levels of deprivation in County Durham have remained fairly static, where we are ranked the **48th most deprived area** out of 151 upper tier LA's in England



Child poverty in County Durham is higher than the England average, with **22.3% of children** under 16 years living in relative poverty (2018/19).



Data source: [Office for National Statistics](https://www.ons.gov.uk) (ONS)

Local Safeguarding Data 2019/20 in brief

- ❖ **Child Protection Plans (CPP) = 444** children were subject of a plan (50 per 10,000 population aged 0-18). This remains static from last year, but is still reduced over the longer term.

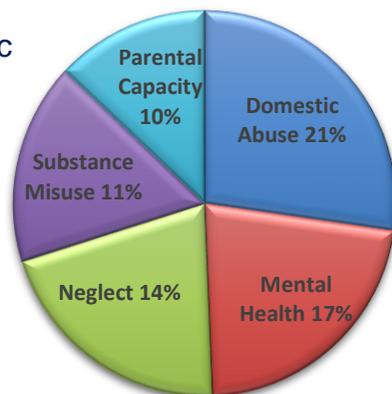


Children on a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time, within two years of the previous plan is **12.5%**

- ❖ **Neglect** - this continues to be the most frequent reason for children being placed on a Child Protection Plan in 2019/20.

77.5% of children who were made subject of a Child Protection Plan under five years old were made so due to neglect. This is an 1.8 % decrease from the previous year.

- ❖ **Parental Risk Factors – Domestic Abuse** at 21% continues to be the main parental risk factor leading to children becoming subject of a Child Protection Plan. Mental Health (17%), Neglect (14%), Substance Misuse (11%) and Parental Capacity (10%) are other main factors.



- ❖ **Looked After System = 917** children are in the Looked After system.



- ❖ **Private Fostering = 11** children in such arrangements during this period.
- ❖ **Multiple Frequency Missing = 65** children and young people were reported missing from home in County Durham more than once in the reporting period.

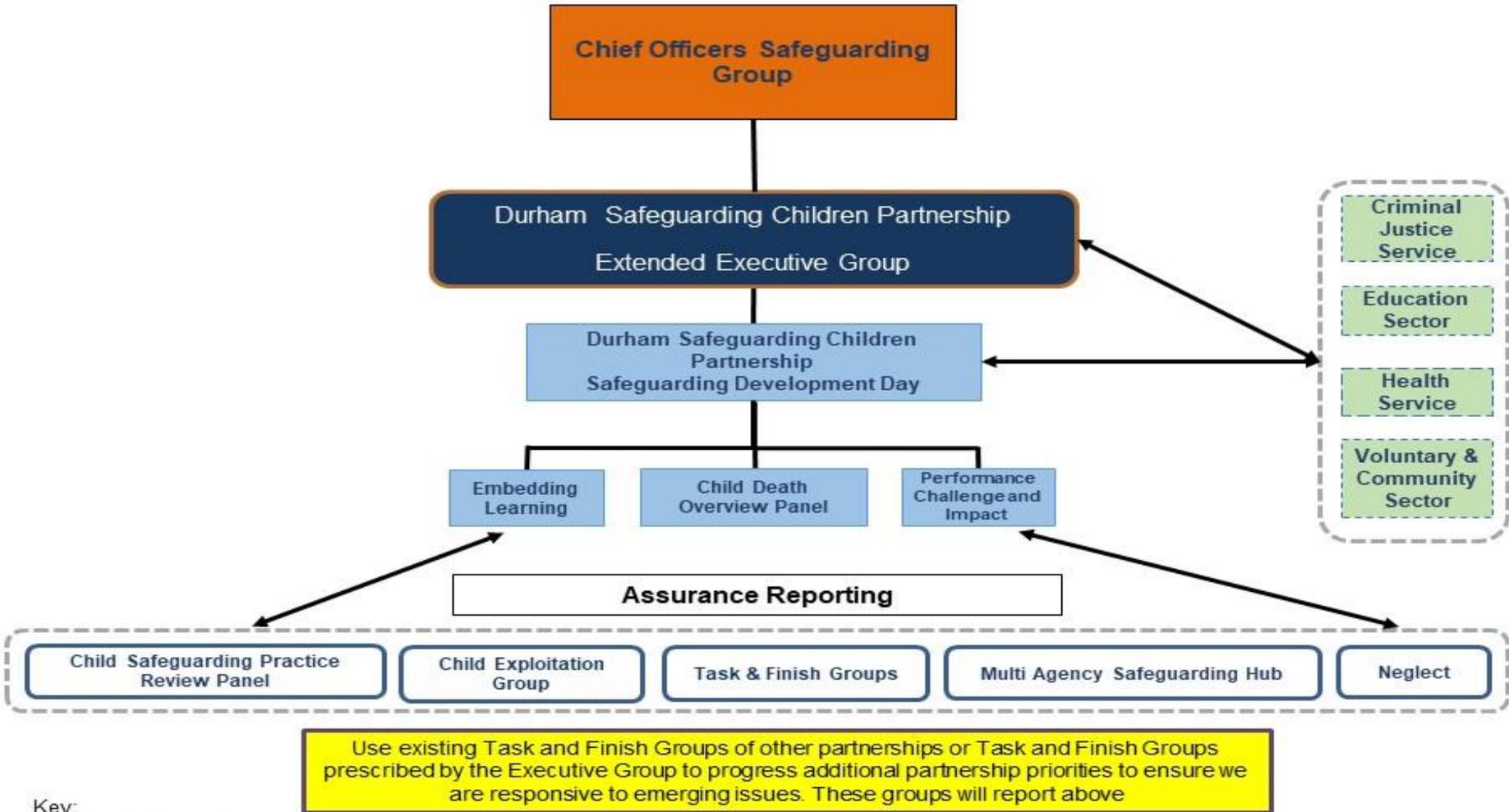
- ❖ **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Referrals = 115.**

This figure has fallen from last year, as in previous, and reflects a heightened awareness around this risk. Most referrals are for girls, with online grooming remaining the most common form of CSE.



- ❖ **Serious Case Reviews – 7** completed, 5 ongoing, none published.
- ❖ **DSCP website - 28,246** unique users visited the DSCP website in 2019/20, with over **130,000** page views.
- ❖ **Multi-agency training - 81** courses and events were delivered and attended by **1,589** staff and volunteers.

Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership Structure



Key:
 Working Relationship —————
 Reporting Relationship - - - - -

4. Governance and Structure

Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP)

Each local area is required by law to have a Safeguarding Children Partnership. The DSCP is a statutory body established in legislation (Children Act 2017) and works according to national guidance, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018', and in accordance with Partnership Arrangements. These came into effect on 1st April 2019.



What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding is about keeping children and young people **safe** and **protecting** them from **harm**, while making sure they grow up in a safe environment.



What does the DSCP do?

We promote the **welfare** of children and young people, **safeguarding** them from harm and **protecting** those children who are at significant risk of **harm** or **neglect**.



What does it mean for me?

Agencies including the Councils' Children and Young People's Services, the Police, Schools and Colleges and Health Services such as GPs, Hospitals and Health Visitors are **all here to help**.

Our Vision: Keeping Children Safe

 **More Information:** Find out more information about [Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

The local safeguarding arrangements are led by three statutory Safeguarding Partners and supported by other Relevant Agencies. Arrangements are also in place concerning Child Death Reviews.

The Safeguarding Partners are:

- The Local Authority
- Chief Constable of Durham Constabulary
- The Clinical Commissioning Groups

Child Death Review Partners are identified as:

- The Local Authority
- The Clinical Commissioning Groups



Working Together to Safeguard Children

A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

July 2018

During the transition from Board to Partnership an Executive Group was established where Safeguarding Partners identified the 'Relevant Agencies' required to support local safeguarding arrangements. These include agencies that were former members of the LSCB, but also reached out further to other organisations with safeguarding children responsibilities. Derived from the relevant agencies, there are 4 agency groups who meet regularly and provide assurance reports to the Executive Group on an annual basis:

- Criminal Justice Group
- Health Group
- Education Group
- Voluntary Group

The Safeguarding Partnership is chaired by an independent person and during the first year's transition met monthly. There were also two development sessions in 2019/20. Durham SCP is supported by a Business Unit, which is hosted by Durham County Council.

The purpose of the Executive Group is to ensure that DSCP fulfils the requirements of the statutory guidance document “Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018”.

Objectives:

- Set the strategic direction for safeguarding arrangements across the partnership.
- Act as a constructively critical friend and promote reflection to drive continuous improvement.
- Provide independent assessment of the effectiveness of multiagency safeguarding arrangements, including the identification and review of serious child safeguarding cases.
- Establish a consistent assurance reporting format regarding the quality of safeguarding work by partners.
- Monitor the dissemination of partnership messages and learning.
- Drive effectiveness in the safeguarding children agenda.
- Endeavour to ensure that risk of harm to children is minimised.

In order to work together effectively with local organisations and agencies the Safeguarding Partners will develop processes that:

- facilitate and drive action beyond usual institutional and agency constraints and boundaries,
- ensure the effective protection of children is founded on practitioners developing lasting and trusting relationships with children and their families.

The Partnership is supported by 3 main sub-groups:

Performance, Challenge & Impact Group

The purpose of the Performance, Challenge & Impact group is to monitor the impact and outcomes of partner activity on behalf of the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP), as required by Chapter 3 of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

The group will consider the performance of all agencies involved in safeguarding children using the Vision of the DSCP as a basis from which to assess good practice and concerns, reporting such to the Safeguarding Executive Group, by using data and intelligence.

Embedding Learning Group

The purpose of the Embedding Learning Group is to improve the quality of multi-agency safeguarding frontline practice through the implementation of a joint, co-ordinated approach which will ensure good outcomes for children which will be evidenced through multi-agency audit; peer review and inspection.

The work will respond to the recommendations and actions from inspection; audit; child safeguarding practice reviews; local learning lessons reviews; complaints; performance information; and feedback from children and families. This is to ensure multi-agency safeguarding practice is high quality; makes a difference to children; and enhances learning about what works for children and families.

Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)

The purpose of the County Durham & Darlington Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) is set out in HM Government Child Death Review Statutory & Operational Guidance (England). These terms of reference for the CDOP are therefore based on that guidance (see later section).

Working Together 2018 specifies that:

'When a child dies, in any circumstances, it is important for parents and families to understand what has happened and whether there are any lessons to be learned'.

Consultation with Children and Young People

In September 2019, the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP), appointed a Young People's Commissioner Apprentice. This was an innovative move from the partnership, with us being the first nationally to appoint in such a role. The intention is that the Young Commissioner works closely with the DSCP to support and influence their priorities. They will also play a key role in the independent DSCP Scrutiny Panel which holds the partnership to account for its work.

"I'm looking forward to being able to engage with young people and children. It's important they have a voice to ensure their opinions and views are being heard so that professionals can be confident that their objectives meet their needs and improve outcomes for young people. This is especially important in my role as I aim to connect directly with a range of young people and other key community partners to review and explore whether what the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership are doing is keeping young people safe"

The Young Commissioner will engage with young people and coordinate a young people's annual report from feedback from agenda days, and the internal scrutiny panel.

Our Young Commissioner and the Internal Scrutiny Panel will meet 6 monthly and will consist of young people, families, Lay Members and practitioners. The panel will review and scrutinise the previous 6

months' work of the partnership and influence the priorities and forward plan.

County Durham Youth Council

Following extensive consultation with children and young people in primary, secondary and special schools, all parties have indicated that they would welcome a countywide youth council, whose remit it would be to address overarching themes that affect young people countywide and nationwide. Common emerging themes include the climate emergency, mental health, poverty and improving the say of children and young people. Sitting at a county level, young people would have the scope to work with cross-service teams to affect meaningful change. Through it, 11-17 year olds will be elected by their school/college to have a seat on the youth council.

This will undoubtedly provide the DSCP through our Young People's Commissioner an opportunity to engage with children of all ages, to hear and appreciate their voices, as well as influence our priorities going forward.

Independent Scrutiny

Chapter 3 of Working Together 2018 identifies the statutory Safeguarding Partners as responsible for determining local arrangements including involving other relevant agencies.

The Safeguarding Partners have agreed that the independent scrutiny will come from 5 areas:

- Independent Chair
- Commissioned annual review
- 3rd party assurance and DSCP Support Team
- Internal Scrutiny Panel (to include Lay members, parents,

- practitioners and young people)
- External regulatory functions.

The key questions for scrutiny are:

- How effective are the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in getting a clear line of sight on single agency and multi-agency practice?
- Do the arrangements enable space for reflection and learning from practice?
- Do the partnership arrangements have a positive impact on multiagency working and/or front-line practice?

The role of the scrutiny function is to:

- Assess how well organisations work together to hold each other to account for effective safeguarding and promote the welfare of children.
- Inform the DSCP's annual report on safeguarding arrangements and the effectiveness of local services.
- Assess the effectiveness of help provided to children and families including early help.
- Assess whether the three statutory Safeguarding Partners are fulfilling their statutory obligations.

The scrutiny functions will achieve the following:

- Provide assurance of the effectiveness of services to protect children.
- Assist if there is disagreement between leaders with responsibilities for protecting children within the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- Support culture and environments that encourage robust

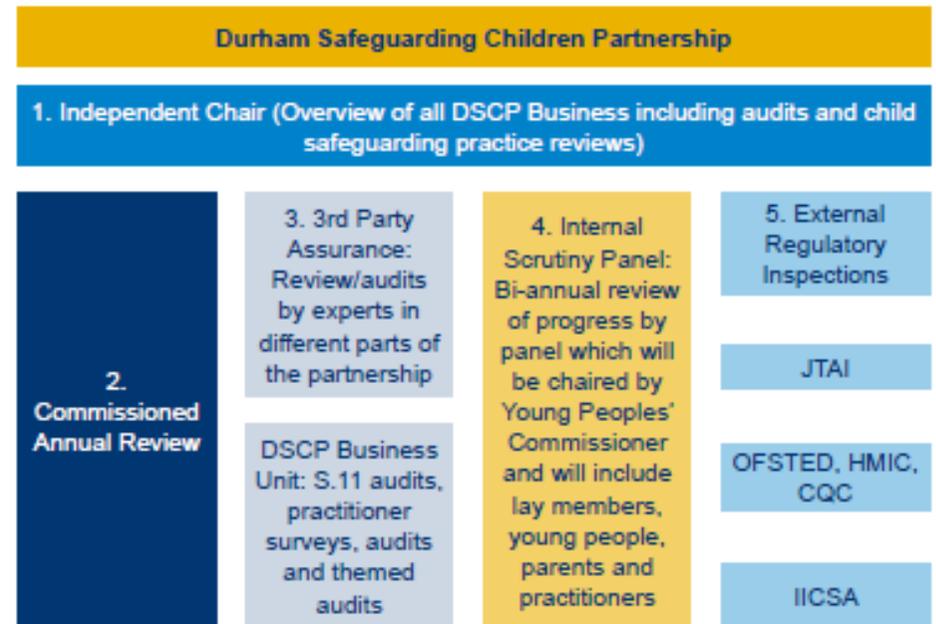
scrutiny and constructive challenge.

- The DSCP Chair will maintain independence from the three statutory Safeguarding Partners, working in liaison with the DSCP Business Unit.

The DSCP will review scrutiny and ensure findings are responded to in a timely manner and inform the annual report.

Scrutiny

Any of the questions within 2-4 can be utilised throughout the year depending upon the theme

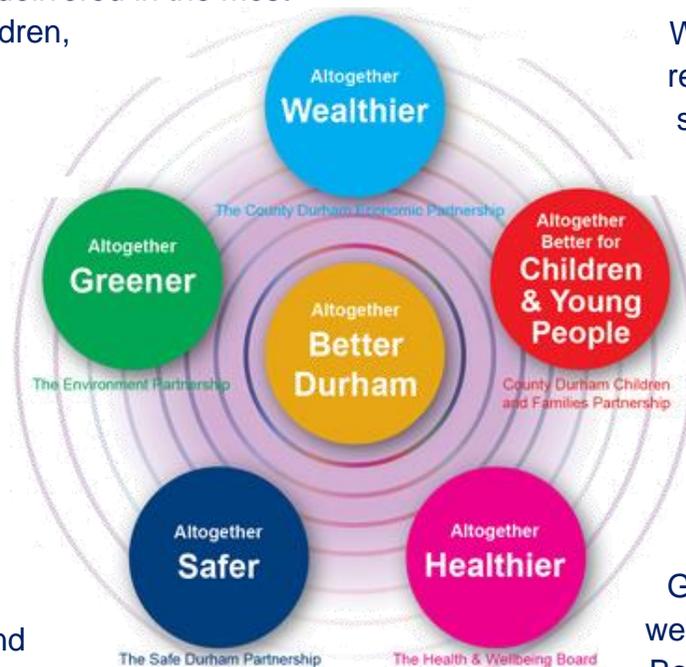


Working across Partnerships

Durham SCP works with a wide range of themed partnerships. Together they form the overarching County Durham Partnership and work towards an 'Altogether Better Durham'.

Each of the five thematic partnerships has a specific focus:

- **The Children and Young People's Integration Board** – Works to ensure effective services are delivered in the most efficient way to improve the lives of children, young people and families.
- **The Health and Wellbeing Board** – Promotes integrated working between commissioners of health services, public health and social care services, to improve health and wellbeing.
- **The Safe Durham Partnership** – Tackles crime, disorder, substance misuse, anti-social behaviour and works to reduce re-offending.
- **The Environment Partnership** – Improves, transforms and sustains the environment to support the economy and the wellbeing of local communities.
- **The Economic Partnership** – Works to make County Durham an area where people want to live, work, invest and



visit; whilst enabling residents and businesses to achieve their full economic potential.

Durham SCP continues to engage and challenge these partnerships where appropriate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in County Durham.

We have strengthened our joint working with a range of partnerships on shared or similar priorities. Examples include:

Working with the Safe Durham Partnership in respect of domestic abuse, alcohol misuse, substance misuse and counter terrorism (PREVENT duty). Aligning and improving work within sexual violence, sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation.

Joint working with the Children's Integration Board to increase the 'voice of the child' through work that includes the Student Voice Survey and the Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge 2019.

Greater integration of the mental health and wellbeing agenda with the Health and Wellbeing Board and the development of a range of support aimed to reduce self-harm and suicide.

 **More Information:** Find out more information about [County Durham Partnership](#)

County Durham Vision 2035

The County Durham Vision 2035 has been developed with partners to provide a shared understanding of what everyone wants our county to look like in 15 years' time. It provides strategic direction and enables us to work more closely together, removing organisational boundaries and co-delivering services for the benefit of our residents.

The County Durham Vision 2035 contains three strategic ambitions to develop County Durham over the next 15 years:

- More and Better jobs
- People live long and independent lives
- Connected communities

The Children and Young People's Integration Board along with the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership will form part of the delivery mechanism for the Vision, particularly around the key vision objectives:

- Young people will have access to good quality education, training and employment
- Children and young people will enjoy the best start in life, good health and emotional wellbeing
- Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities will achieve the best possible outcomes
- All children and young people will have a safe childhood

The Children and Young People's Integration Board operates under the following principles to support and establish shifts and changes to build children's strategy across the locality to ensure high quality services which meet the needs of all children and young people.

- Work together to make a difference to children and young people and improve outcomes by implementing a children's integration strategy across County Durham
- Collective decisions family centred and inclusive of the voice of children and young people
- Children, young people and their families at the heart of developing and planning integrated services
- Integrated services which focus on addressing inequalities, based on the needs of children, young people and their families, delivered at the point of need

The strategic priorities of the Children and Young People's Integration Board are:

- Integration
- Prevention and Early Help
- Best Start in Life
- Supporting young people into adulthood

Moving forward it is intended there will be a strong connection between this Integration Board and the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership to ensure our respective visions and objectives are well aligned.

5. DSCP Vision & Values - 2019/20



Explanation of DSCP Values

Durham SCP Values

Tenacity - acknowledges that there will be an element of endurance required by teams and individuals facing difficult and long term problem solving where solutions are not immediately apparent. In this area, effective inter-agency working is vital to maintain a focus on keeping the child safe.

Tenacity

Curiosity - It is essential that we look beyond the immediate presentation to ensure that the concerns about children are not being masked or hidden by individuals, circumstances or a lack of curiosity on the part of those responsible for safeguarding.

Curiosity

Openness - we need to be open and empathic to the child and the perspective of other agencies. This includes an openness to challenge and be challenged so that the best decision in the interests of the child are made.

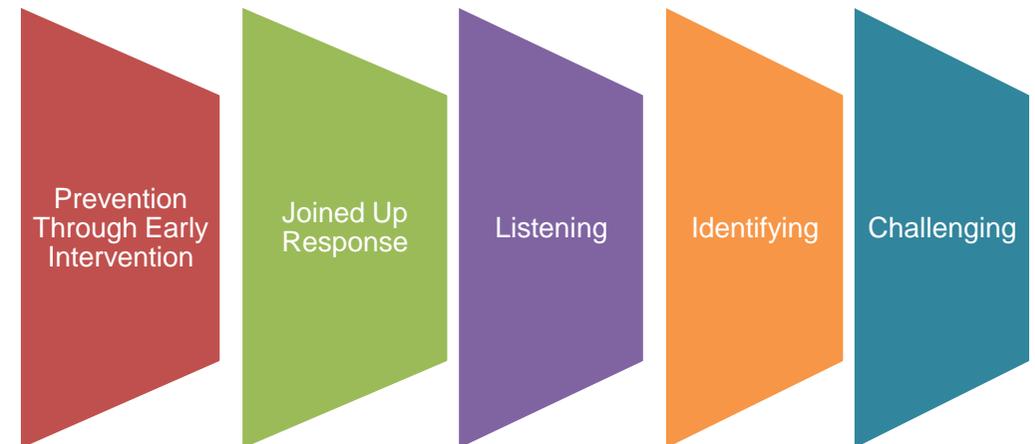
Openness

DSCP Vision and Areas of Focus

In setting the priorities for 2019/20 the DSCP reviewed the progress on previous priorities, and whilst working within our overall Vision & Values, there remained continued focus on Child Exploitation in all its forms; tackling Neglect; Empowering Young People and Working Together. A significant amount of work throughout the last year was structured around our action plan from the Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) carried out in 2018, a flavour of which is shown (see next section).

There has been consolidated effort in this area driven by the DSCP main sub-groups, but also notably through the joint Durham and Darlington Child Exploitation Group (CEG) and the Neglect Group.

Click on the tabs below to take you to each priority section in the report.



Improvement & Impact in Key Areas (JTAI)

Multi-Agency Strategy Meetings and Risk Assessment

Issue - Agencies with critical information fail to attend some strategy meetings or provide relevant background information.

We did - Awareness sessions, teleconferencing facilities rolled out, multi -agency auditing enhanced, peer support.

Impact



Ofsted report Sept 2019 "First Contact, including the multi-agency safeguarding hub, is well managed and provides an effective and timely response to contacts and referrals, ensuring that thresholds are applied consistently. Consent is carefully considered. Information is shared effectively... Most strategy discussions are well recorded. Most child protection enquiries are timely and thorough. Children are seen in a timely manner.

1. Front Door

Issue - The MASH and the First Contact are under-resourced for the increasing volume of contacts. This is leading to delays in decision-making about suitable interventions to improve children's outcomes. The pressure to make decisions quickly, together with the high volume of work, results in incorrect categorisation of some referrals. Some checks undertaken by social workers in the First Contact service are too superficial and result in children not receiving the right support at the right time.

We did - Review of capacity and procedures within the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), so that resource is matched to need, and

new ways of working developed with increased resources, notably from Health. Additional training in risk assessment provided to over 800 staff. Early Help referrals are now done solely online, freeing up the First Contact process for child protection referrals.

Impact

All MASH decisions are now truly multi-agency, with a greater understanding and contribution into decision making, which as a result is of better quality, more timely and child focused, tailoring our response to the needs of the child.



Feedback 2019, "services at the front door are now robust... the local authority has taken swift and decisive action to strengthen services and solid improvements can be seen in many service areas including at the front door"

2. Safeguarding Practice

Issue – Referrals not progressed appropriately, with the history / cumulative harm to the child not fully considered.

We did – Improved Threshold process; revised accountability and governance within the Performance Management Framework in Children's Social Care; more effective use of Signs of Safety and the Harm Matrix.

Impact –

Ofsted report Sept 2019 “The quality of referrals from partner agencies has improved. First Contact, including the multi-agency safeguarding hub, is well managed and provides an effective and timely response to contacts and referrals, ensuring that thresholds are applied consistently. Consent is carefully considered. Information is shared effectively.”

3. Leadership & Management

Issue - The quality of auditing and monitoring of work involved was not sufficiently robust.

We did – Audits now practitioner led with more influence on design and success. They are monitored through the Embedding Learning Group and driven by the Executive at a strategic level.

Impact – Better quality audit function with real focus on the issues that pose the most risk to children. As a result this addresses any potential gaps in service provision so we strive to keep children safe.

4. Voice of the Child

Issue - Some cases seen show that children’s views have not been considered by professionals across all agencies when assessing their vulnerability and risks.

We did – Enhanced Quality Assurance Framework in Children’s Social Care to ensure effective monitoring and scrutiny of visits and interaction; continued work in respect of the Signs of Safety Practice Model, which is becoming well embedded.

Impact –

Ofsted reported – “Children are routinely seen and are seen alone. Social workers listen to and take note of what children say. Home visits are purposeful. The quality of the direct work undertaken with children by social workers and family support workers helps them to understand and make sense of children’s lived experiences.”

External inspection has also provided assurance of improvements made for the benefit of children, young people and families including the Ofsted ‘focussed visit’ regarding “children in need and children subject to a child protection plan” in January 2019, the Ofsted ‘ILACS’ inspection of Durham Children’s Social Care in September 2019 and the HMICFRS inspection of Durham Constabulary in November 2019.

“Inspectors for the ILACS inspection quoted: “*the local authority has taken swift and decisive action to strengthen services. Pace has increased since the focused visit, and solid improvements can be seen in many service areas, including at the front door and for children in care. Firm foundations are in place to sustain and build on the improvements made.*”

For relevant inspection reports follow the 2 below links:-

<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/44/80465>

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/our-work/article/child-abuse-and-child-protection-issues/national-child-protection-inspection/#inspections>

Focus Area – Prevention Through Early Intervention

Exploitation

Multi-agency work around child exploitation is coordinated through the joint Durham and Darlington Child Exploitation Group (CEG). This was extended on from the previous group to reflect a broader focus which includes missing from home, Child Criminal Exploitation, County Lines, Organised Crime and Modern-Day Slavery. Its remit is to monitor partner activity and improve the services and responses to reported missing and absent children and the multi-agency response to Child Sexual Exploitation, which remains the key focus.

The group has recently developed a new Strategic Plan and associated Action Plan around the themes within the DSCP Vision, but still with focus around the 3 P's of Prevent/Protect/Pursue.

What is Child Sexual Exploitation?

- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of **child abuse**
- It can happen to anyone who is **persuaded, bullied or forced** into having **sex or sexual activity** such as taking and sharing naked photos of themselves
- This can be in return for things like **alcohol, money, drugs** or other gifts
- It can happen **online and face to face**
- It **ruins lives** and has serious **long-term effects** on young people and their families

Operation Makesafe –activity continues to educate and raise awareness of Child Exploitation with material circulated focussing on specific locations and sectors, following on from the more generic awareness raising in the previous year.

The Philomena Protocol has continued to be developed in the last year, having been consolidated within Children's Homes, and has been expanded to Foster Carers where children are at risk of going missing. The protocol is aimed to protect children who go missing from care homes by promoting a joint investigation with the aim of returning the child to safety. There has been a clear correlation between the introduction of the Philomena Protocol and a reduction in children going missing from care homes who are at significant risk of all forms of exploitation. In March 2020, the initiative received a national award, namely the 'Transformation in Health and Social Care' award for re-thinking the delivery of care services, transforming, remodelling and encouraging partnership to afford the greatest impact for the customers' ahead of 26 other shortlisted schemes.

In support of the partnership the CEG has also raised awareness across all agencies concerning Contextualised Safeguarding, coupled with a widening in the remit of the multi-agency ERASE team, who have collaborated in developing new Child Exploitation training.

In 2019 there has been an increased focus on boys and young men at risk of CSE through awareness raising sessions and activity to provide focus on them as victims and not perpetrators.

 **More Information:** Find out more information about [Missing and Exploited Children](#)

Tackling Neglect



Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018 defines neglect as: *'The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.* Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership: Tackling Neglect Multi Agency Strategy 2017 set out its objectives for tackling neglect, promoting early help and delivering effective interventions.

Neglect continues to be a key challenge across County Durham. As of March 2020, 75.7% (336 of 444) of children subject to CPP were due to neglect. In 2019 this was 71.2%. In relation to assessment factors (for all CIN, CP and LAC) covering April 19 – March 2020 neglect is the fifth most commonly identified factor after Mental Health, Domestic Violence, Drug Misuse and Alcohol Abuse. In 2019 it was the third most commonly identified factor after Domestic Abuse and Mental Health.

Being effective in identifying and preventing neglect early, stops problems getting worse and keeps our children safe from harm.

In order to raise awareness of the impact of poor oral health and dental neglect a Dental Neglect conference was held in May 2019 attended by 65 delegates including dentists, children services practitioners, health visitors and early year's providers. The conference feedback supported the development of a range of key actions including:

- a) All dental practices now have contact details of 0-19s service (Health Visitors and School Nurses in County Durham);
- b) A County Durham "what to do when.../ was not brought" process to include dental health. This is being led by the health under the 'was not brought' workstream;
- c) each dental practice have a named safeguarding practice lead
- d) the home environmental assessment tool (HEAT) has been updated to include oral health and includes the child being asked about their oral health and tooth brushing;
- e) DSCP Neglect Strategy and practice guidance has been updated to incorporate key messages on dental neglect.

The Neglect Group in conjunction with Public Health England has established a working group to raise awareness of the impact of poor oral health and dental neglect. A 'Was not Brought' pathway is to be developed and embedded.

The Home Environment Assessment Tool (HEAT) has been revised and relaunched to incorporate analysis and an action plan.

Analytical support from Public Health Intelligence has provided a local profile of children affected by neglect, child poverty and deprivation to better understand the link between poverty and neglect. The profile has also been shared with the DCC Child Poverty Working Group who have developed and implemented a range of interventions aimed at addressing and mitigating poverty and identify neglect early.

The Neglect Group is building on the learning from a National Joint Targeted Area Inspection on Neglect of Older Children. A strategy is under development for working with older children affected by neglect utilising a trauma informed approach.

Where the right support and intervention is provided to a child or young person it can have a dramatic positive effect on them and their life opportunities.

For 2020/21, the Neglect Group from the partnership have developed a new Strategic Plan on a Page and associated Action Plan which focuses on the following areas:

- **Understand Neglect** - To understand the prevalence of neglect across County Durham in order to effectively target resources which helps to prevent and mitigate impact of neglect on children and young people
- **Early Identification** - To improve the recognition and assessment of neglect
- **Effective Interventions** - Practitioners across County Durham deliver effective interventions that reduce neglect before the need for statutory interventions

Focus Area – Joined Up Response

A cross agency Child Exploitation Vulnerability Tracker was launched in November 2019, with a re-alignment of Missing and Exploited operational meetings into the Child Exploitation group set up within the DSCP. It is an innovative piece of work in Durham, as it originally was designed to only track County Lines (as used in most areas), but here it includes a multi-agency screening process and the development of more effective responses to all forms of child exploitation.

In early 2020, after a successful pilot programme, Durham's Children's Services introduced a 'Place Based Approach' to Early Help work. This in effect is a geographical area where local organisations work more closely to improve outcomes for children and families in that area. Within a place-based location, practitioners who work with children, young people and those working with adults who are parents or carers work more closely together so they all have a better knowledge of local needs, to help and support families to be more self-reliant and resilient, and is supported by a process called Early Help Conversations.

A deep dive piece of scrutiny into two high risk children who frequently went missing from home across Durham and Darlington has been led by the CCG using a small multi-agency team and has provided feedback to individual agencies and the partnership on opportunities for improved practice.

A calendar of publicity and media opportunities has allowed a coordinated approach between agencies to promote awareness regarding Exploitation in a more structured way.

The Performance, Impact & Challenge sub-group has considered data regarding criminal offences committed against children; neglect; domestic abuse cases; mental health including self-harm and suicide;

 **More Information:** Find out more information about [Neglect](#)

and child protection data around strategies and child protection conferences in order to better understand risk.

Further work to understand how the partnership can inform and reduce exploitation within areas of potential risk such as those children with Special Educational Needs; those with physical disabilities and the LGBTQ+ community.

The DSCP Threshold Document has received extensive review to reflect the new Partnership arrangements and will provide real consistency over how risk to children and young people is assessed and dealt with.

Focus Area – Listening

The DSCP continues to engage with the [National Youth Advocacy Service](#) who work across different agencies in providing advocacy service for children and young people and have reported that Durham is using their services relatively well. Further work is ongoing to explore further opportunities.

The DSCP has supported the creation of the 'child centred service' based around the newly refurbished Sexual Assault Referral Centre. This includes combined examination suites and child ISVA services. In addition a new 'team around the child' process operates to provide a seamless therapeutic service was introduced.



Other areas explored have been the use of digital technology to consult young people and their families led by the Participation and Engagement Officer from Durham County Council.

In a six-month period during 2019, there was engagement with 116 children, young people and their families through various engagement mechanisms including service user satisfaction surveys, Investors in Children (IIC) Membership, and projects such as Digital Voice and Family Group Conferencing.

In addition, Investing in Children have engaged with 104 young people attending the Children in Care Council, and 304 young people that have been involved in meetings and training between March 2018 and March 2019.

Work within the Education arena, under Operation Encompass has been expanded to cover key holiday periods and additional briefings across schools.

A Social Care commissioned user satisfaction survey showed that 90% of parents/carers were happy with the service and 85% felt more positive about their future.

- All young people agreed a lot when asked if their worker listened to them, 88% of children said their worker kept their promises and listened to them and 90% of parents/carers agreed a lot that their worker always put their child(ren) first and that the worker spent enough time with the family.
- The annual survey for our children looked after and care leavers shows that 96% of respondents get on with their Social Worker and 92% feel they are able to talk to their Social Worker about things going well or worries.

The Practitioner Survey 2019 was conducted to ensure that the voice and experience of the practitioner is also heard, and barriers removed to assist with the delivery of highly effective practice.

Focus Area – Identifying

During our transition in 2019 the Empowering Young People subgroup brought many partners together to create a ‘performance scorecard’ that enables services to define and develop better ways of engaging with young people.

The subgroup considered the question: “What does good look like?” and took steps to identify what changes needed to take place to achieve good in terms of the following key areas:

- What is required to increase confidence and assurance of C&YP who have safeguarding concerns,
- Improved current engagement practice is identified and shared by partner agencies,
- The influence of the voice of the child is improved in processes including child protection conferences,
- The influence of the voice of the child in relation in to neglect and other key priorities (e.g.: bullying) is improved. Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: “you have a say in decisions that affect you.”
- Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: “you have a say in decisions that affect you.”

Our work with children and young people continues to be recognised by ‘Investors in Children’ as good practice.

To increase young people’s awareness of safeguarding issues a safeguarding engagement module for C&YP was co-produced between local authority officers, partner agencies and teachers and children in schools.

The group identified greater scope for the development of initiatives that encourage meaningful participation by children and young people in the academic year 2019/20.



We continue to increase the **visibility and voice of the child** and this year we have continued to focus further on improving the influence of children in the Child Protection processes, and to challenge services to develop through a clearer role in our assessment and scrutiny of the partnership against its identified priorities.

The DSCP has recently appointed an analyst to support and provide focus to our work. This has enabled some in depth studies to be commenced, on which we can build. These include:

- Missing Children – understanding the gaps in assessment for those children who may be reported missing but are not subject to an investigation due to early return; the proportion of children who receive a return interview; Quality of return interviews; voice of child including ‘behavioural voice’; and the Outcomes following on from a return interview.
- Excluded children – understanding if there is a cohort of children excluded from school who are more vulnerable and

known across different services and are there opportunities to intervene at an earlier stage to prevent harm?

- Sexual Harm - Understanding whether assessments are being effectively used for children who are involved in sexual harm.

The work of the analyst will assist the partnership in focusing more closely on areas of risk, and address gaps where we have not done something, either well or at all. We will also be able to properly assess our impact on children and young people through the services we provide.

❖ **SIGNS OF SAFETY -Improving the Assessment of Risk!**

In 2018 the decision was made to introduce and embed the Signs of Safety Practice Framework across County Durham Children's Services. It is a strengths-based and safety-focused approach to child protection work that is grounded in partnership and collaboration with families. It expands the investigation of risk to encompass strengths and signs of safety that can be built upon to stabilise and strengthen a child's and family's situation.

Three Core Principles

- Working relationships are paramount: to enable honest and respectful discussions of concerns and worries.
- Thinking critically – a questioning approach: to minimize error a culture of shared reflective practice and a willingness to admit you may be wrong is needed. "The single most important factor in minimizing errors (in child protection practice) is to admit that you may be wrong."
- Landing grand aspirations in everyday practice: Command and control social work—what on the ground good practice with complex and challenging cases looks, smells and lives like.

The need for openness, transparency and avoiding the 'blame game' is a key feature, and links with the DSCP Professional Challenge Pledge. The whole programme has a 3 year implementation period, and continues to evolve and develop well.

Reaching out to staff:

- 2 day training – 491 attendees
- 5 day training – 73 Practice leaders
- DSCP training for partners and partner briefings - 778

Impact - The overarching outcome of this implementation thus far has been to improve the quality of practice across Children's Services so that the outcomes for children and young people are consistently good. The DSCP training ensures that these strong working practices and principles under Signs of Safety, are understood across the partner agencies who work with families in all settings, including the voluntary sector.

Significant progress has been made implementing the Signs of Safety framework across Children and Young People's Services, and this was recognised in both OFSTED inspections in 2019. It has been a key driver in continuing to improve the quality of our practice.

The first Signs of Safety Conference took place on 22 November 2019 and was attended by 150 professionals across the partner agencies to learn more and discuss progress to date, and the future. Work on this continues apace with pilot schemes introduced across 6 areas to further deepen, both understanding and practice delivery.

Focus Area – Challenging

Professional challenge and critical reflection within safeguarding is a professional responsibility. It is a sign of good professional practice, a healthy organisation and effective multi-agency working. In April 2019 the DSCP introduced the Professional Challenge Pledge to which all statutory partners and a significant number of the Relevant agencies signed up to



(click image).

Challenging decisions, practice or actions when concerns arise may alter the professional response when ensuring the safety or well-being of a child or young person or their family.

The Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) challenges agencies if agreed actions are not progressed within timescales and escalation processes are in place. Similarly, the Board monitors actions for learning following a Serious Case Review to ensure actions are progressed and implemented. During 2018 a review of SCR's identified recurring themes which required strategic and operational intervention.

The partnership has monitored and challenged agencies following s.11 audits which gives assurance that they were complying with their safeguarding responsibilities.

The Joint Targeted Area Inspection in July 2018 challenged how agencies worked together on the front line. It highlighted areas of good

practice, but also 46 areas for improvement. The resulting action plan identified 108 actions to improve professional practice.

Professional challenge also takes place at a senior level through a Chief Officers Safeguarding Group which includes the DSCP Independent Chair, Durham County Council, local Clinical Commissioning Groups, Probation organisations, local NHS Foundation Trusts and Durham Constabulary.

This forum allows the opportunity to challenge and share information on safeguarding issues including:

- Learning and recurring themes from Serious Case Reviews and Child Death Reviews
- Quality, impact and development of frontline practice
- Outcomes of multi-agency audits and action plans
- Emerging safeguarding concerns or trends
- Development of new Safeguarding Arrangements

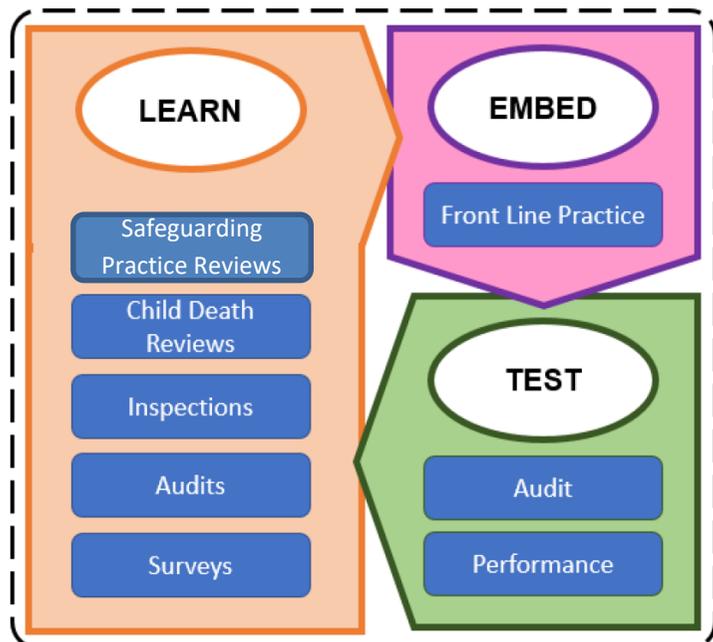
A formal DSCP audit to examine how effective our Challenge process is will take place in the 2020/21 reporting period.

6. Performance Monitoring and Quality Assurance – Keeping Children Safe

The Partnership works to challenge and continuously improve the effectiveness of safeguarding for children and young people in County Durham.

The Embedding Learning sub-group is responsible for co-ordinating multi-agency auditing, ensuring all areas for improvement are addressed effectively and that learning is embedded in practice across the partnership.

It does this through a cycle of improvement activities.



Performance, Challenge and Impact

Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership continually monitors the quality, timeliness, and effectiveness of multi-agency practice. Partners examine a wide range of information and ask the key questions identified in the partnership's performance framework.



The Partnership's Performance, Challenge and Impact sub-group collates and reports information from more than 100 indicators to the Safeguarding Executive group.

The Executive, made up of the three statutory partners, identify priority actions for partner organisations to address any gaps in expected performance.

They also use this information to address any unexpected or emerging concerns and ensure that strategic priorities for improving safeguarding are identified and coordinated effectively.

Audits

The Partnership introduced a new auditing process within the new overall partnership arrangements in 2019. The focus of an audit is now identified through discussion between the chairpersons for the two main sub-groups, Embedding Learning and Performance, Challenge and Impact, and the Partnership's Business Manager. Their suggestions for audits are considered by the Executive Group to ensure the focus relates to the partnership priorities for improvement.

The partnership completed 4 multi-agency audits using the new process, in 2019. The focus for these audits were:

- Child Protection Plans
- Core Groups
- Strategy Meetings
- Missing Children Incidents and Return to Home Interviews

In addition to the Partnership's multi-agency auditing the Executive also request partner organisations to report any safeguarding review activity to support their understanding of safeguarding concerns within single agencies.

In 2019/20 four partner agencies reported 26 separate safeguarding reviews such as audits, surveys and assurance checks.

The Designated Doctor from the CCG is to take a lead on the development of 3rd party assurance for the partnership. A proposal on multi-agency assurance visits, based on an established health

assurance model, was approved by the Executive as well as the wider health partnership. This will be piloted in 2020/21.

Ongoing Quality Assurance

- Monitor **partner compliance** with the statutory requirement to have effective safeguarding arrangements in place (Section 11)
- Carry out **multi-agency audits** and identify lessons to be learned and make recommendations for future improvement and feeding into DSCP training
- Multi-agency audit reports to inform the DSCP of the **quality of work** being undertaken and its impact on outcomes for individual children and young people
- Overview of **multi-audits** to monitor and review practice
- The use of a series of **performance scorecards**

Multi-agency Audits

A Section 11 Audit is the DSCP's primary audit to examine the safeguarding arrangements within a broad range of organisations and provides them with assurance that agencies are doing what they can to ensure the safety and welfare of children and young people.

The DSCP has agreed to conduct Section 11 audits on a two-yearly cycle, with the next Section 11 audit to be completed in 2020/21.

Joint Targeted Area Inspections (JTAI)

A 'JTAI' includes inspectors from Ofsted, Care Quality Commission (CQC), Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) and reaches across the partnership.

As reported in the 2018/19 LSCB Annual Report, the Joint Targeted Area Inspection of 2018 resulted in the 'JTAI Action Plan' and this plan has been the main focus of improvement work by the Partnership in 2019/20.

The JTAI inspectors identified 29 key strengths, more than 100 separate actions relating to more than 40 areas for improvement within 5 themes.

| NO. | THEME | ACTIONS |
|------------------------------|---|------------|
| 1. | Priority Action: Strategy Meetings | 7 |
| 2. | Front Door & MASH | 29 |
| 3. | Safeguarding Practice & Workforce Development | 42 |
| 4. | Leadership & Management | 20 |
| 5. | Voice of the Child | 12 |
| Total No. Of Actions: | | 110 |

This included one area for priority action relating to an initial stage of the child protection procedure called strategy meetings which informed the focus of multi-agency auditing.

In January 2020, one year on since the compilation of the action plan, all the individual actions identified in response to the JTAI inspectors' report were completed and evidence of effectiveness has been collected to provide assurance.

Further ongoing assurance of the effectiveness of the actions is being monitored through the scrutiny mechanisms and the assurance mechanisms, including audits of individual partner organisations.

Restraint

In conjunction with Durham County Council, DSCP monitors the use of restraint at Aycliffe Secure Services Centre. The Centre houses a changing population of young people (aged 11-17) with complex needs. Young people have been referred through the courts because they are a risk to themselves or others, or because there is a concern about their involvement with criminal activities. The home regularly reports information regarding the use of restraint to the Youth Justice Board and Ofsted, who has judged it as being outstanding in all areas.

A member of the Partnership's Business Team visits the home four times a year to review CCTV footage and discuss incidents requiring the use of restraint. The home also provides information relating to the use restraint to provide assurance to the Safeguarding Executive of the wellbeing of young people in the secure environment.

Injuries because of restraint are graded as follows:

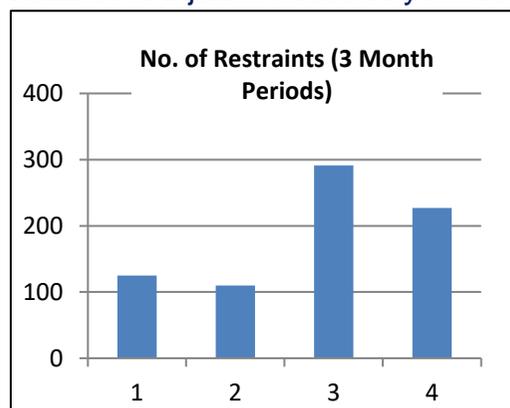
- **Level 1 – Minor Injury** - such as red marks on the skin, welts, superficial cuts and scratches, bruises which do not require medical treatment, including first aid.
- **Level 2 – Minor Injury** – such as such as significant cuts, scratches, grazes, bloody noses, concussion, serious bruising, and sprains where medical treatment is given by staff/nurse.
- **Level 3 – Serious Injury requiring hospital treatment** – includes serious cuts, fractures, loss of consciousness and damage to internal organs.

The secure children's home continues to implement a Restraint Minimisation policy, trying to use a range of alternative approaches to applying physical restraint to young people.

There was a total of 753 incidents which required restraint during 2019/20. This is up on the 520 in 2018/19. There were 89 injuries because of restraint, down from 94 in the previous year. There was also a slight increase in the average monthly occupancy during 2018/19.

| | Restraint 2019-20 | Injury 2019-20 |
|------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| First Six Months | 235 | 52 |
| Last Six Months | 518 | 37 |

Most of the increase in the number of restraints occurred between October 2019 and the end of March 2020. However, in the same period that the use of restraint increased there was reduction in the number of injuries caused by restraint.



Youth Justice residents experienced a significant increase in restraint during the second half of the year compared to the those under welfare provision.

While use of restraint remained high at the end of the year, an overall reduction of 22% was

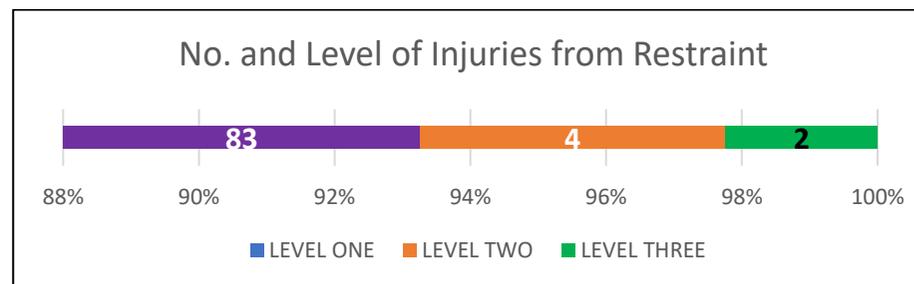
observed within the last six months. The increase can be generally attributed to three individuals who joined the home in the second half

of the year and who were involved in a significant number of restraint incidents, accounting for a total of 60% of all restraints across this period.

Over the whole year, young people resident for Welfare accounted for more of the restraint and injuries from restraint than those resident due to Youth Justice orders.

58% of restraints were applied to young people who are resident under the category of 'Welfare'. This group also accounts for 79% of the injuries due to restraint.

Of the 89 injuries from restraint 83 were graded as 'level 1' with 4 at 'level 2' and 2 graded at the highest 'level 3'. Both level 3 injuries occurred in the second half of the year during the period of increased use of restraint.



A Senior Manager from the home continues to provide regular updates on the use of restraint to the Partnership's Performance group and the plans identified in last year's annual report, for further scrutiny of individual incidents, have been put in place.

This scrutiny involves a regular review of the home's CCTV recordings. Randomly selected incidents are reviewed with a manager from the home with a conversation about the use of restraint, the

circumstances leading up to the incident and what happened after. This scrutiny provides assurance to the Partnership's Executive that the use of restraint is being monitored for quality in cooperation with the home.

The average time a young person stayed at the Secure Children's home was less than last year overall and was noticeably less in the last six months compared to the previous year. A change in residents can also contribute to difficult situations as young people adjust to the disruption in relationships.

Residents at Aycliffe Secure Childrens Home

- **Youth Justice Board** – Sent by a Youth Court to fulfill an order received as a result of offending behaviour.
- **Welfare** – Resident in a secure environment, usually as a result of a court order but not necessarily relating to offending behaviour. These young people are 'Looked After' by the local authority but they have additional needs that require a secure environment or facilities outside the scope of care options available within a non-secure care environment.

 **More Information:** Find out more information about [Aycliffe Secure Services Centre](#)

Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR)

The Partnership Arrangements introduced in 2019 replaced Serious Case Reviews (SCR's) with a new process called a Child

Safeguarding Practice Review. There are many similarities between the new and old form of review, including the Partnership's responsibility to publish the findings of a review, which is done through the DSCP website.

All Reviews are reported to the Safeguarding Executive and they use this information to direct the work of the DSCP through the Embedding Learning sub-group. This group is responsible for embedding learning and the quality assurance of recommendations for improving safeguarding practice by all partner organisations.

The findings of Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews are made available for 12 months on our website. Durham SCP have finalised Serious Case Reviews in 2019/20, with another 5 still ongoing. No official reports have been published.

A key piece of work, a Thematic Review of Serious Case Reviews has been completed and presented to the DSCP Executive Group. This was deferred to the Embedding Learning Group in terms of identifying priorities and developing appropriate delivery plans, which is work still ongoing.

Moving forward through 2020, there is significant ongoing work around identifying Practice Improvement Themes. These coupled with the Thematic Review of SCR Recommendations, and a proposed mapping exercise (delayed due to Covid-19), will be used to inform the Executive Group in terms of setting the areas the Partnership needs to focus upon, in order to improve further.

"7 minute briefings" (short documents available on the DSCP website),

outline key aspects of specific issues and provide an opportunity for professional and critical reflection of key factors from published Serious Case Reviews / CSPR's.

Recurrent themes of published SCRs

- Strategy Meetings
- Assessments including Risk Assessment
- Decision Making
- Child Protection Conference Process
- Challenge & Escalation
- Voice of the Child
- Management Oversight and Supervision

The DSCP will continue to implement the recommendations from any Serious Case Reviews, and now Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews. Action plans are monitored by the DSCP Business Unit and under the new procedures are reviewed by the DSCP Executive Group.

 **More Information:** Find out more information about [Serious Case Reviews](#)

The annual SCR themed learning conference due for April 2020 was cancelled due to the coronavirus crisis. This will however take place as soon as we are able, in order to contribute to the ongoing professional development of staff and improve their understanding of local safeguarding concerns and themes.

Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)

The Child Death Overview Panel was reviewed in order to be compliant with Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance 2018. Membership now includes a GP at each meeting, and lay member engagement during thematic reviews. To ensure robust scrutiny and challenge, Public Health England has agreed to work across four CDOPs in the north East of England, undertaking thematic reviews of: suicide and deliberate self-harm; sudden unexpected deaths; trauma and neonatal deaths. Also, County Durham and Darlington CDOPs will share joint learning with Tees Valley CDOP via twice yearly challenge review meetings.



In addition to the reviews, the County Durham & Darlington CDOP also publish an annual report on the analysis of the child death reviews undertaken, and what they have done as a result. This is also published on the website and the last published report can be found [here](#).

The CDOP works closely with the Safeguarding Executive to ensure any requests for Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews are coordinated quickly, and that the Executive are aware of any recommendations for improving practice within partner organisations.

Policy and Procedures

The online version of the Durham SCP Multi-Agency Child Protection Procedures provides a web-based solution that is fully searchable and allows the user to access content from a wide range of devices. We undertake recurring six-monthly reviews to keep the procedures up-to-date with local and national changes.



Website link - www.proceduresonline.com/durham/scb

Professionals should add the link above into work related phones, smartphones, tablets and computers to link directly to the procedures when needed. The next tri-x update of procedures is due in Summer 2020.

Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse

In December 2019 we carried out a significant piece of work at the request of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA). Although focusing on CSE, some of our findings reach across the entire Partnership. It was clear, that to a certain extent we had been, 'data rich analysis poor', This meant we collated lots of information, but were not effective enough in understanding it, then acting upon it. With the introduction of our new analyst we will grasp this opportunity and drive forward in the areas which require focus in the coming year.

In addition, we have actively promoted the Truth Project; this offers the opportunity for victims and survivors of abuse to share their experience and be respectfully heard and acknowledged. By doing so, they are helping the inquiry and us as a partnership, to better understand the long-term impact of abuse.



Watch this 2-minute video about the Truth Project



Other procedures and guidance updated in 2019/20

- Responding to Abuse and Neglect
- Child Protection Conferences
- Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers
- Child Sexual Abuse in a Family Environment
- Children Missing from Home and Care
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour
- Child Death Reviews
- Challenge & Escalation Policy

7. Training & Communication

Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP) offered 12 core courses in 2019/20 as part of the multi-agency training programme. Other bespoke training events were delivered to single agencies.

- A total of 81 courses were delivered in 2019/20. The courses were attended by a total of 1,589 staff and volunteers.
- When including other bespoke courses a full total of 90 multi-agency training events were delivered or hosted by the DSCP and attended by in total 1,881 staff, which excludes e-learning.

In total across all training courses there was very positive feedback with 97% of attendees indicating they would recommend attendance to colleagues.



Impact Analysis – Of the responses received 86% confirmed the learning from the course had impacted on their practice and 66% believed that it had improved outcomes for the children and families they work with

E-learning Courses

Durham SCP, through a 'MeLearning' package provides six targeted safeguarding e-learning courses.



This allows partners the ability to offer up-to-date safeguarding training to all staff.

Courses include:

- Safeguarding Children Level 1
- Safeguarding Children Level 2
- Information Sharing
- Children with Disabilities
- Hidden Harm
- Child Sexual Exploitation

"This training day has helped me to understand the single assessment process and what a good assessment looks like".

In 2019/20:

- 6,665 e-learning courses have been completed
- 97% of those completing evaluations stated they would recommend the course to a friend or colleague.

More they said...

"Gave a lot of information and made me think how we apply this in practice"

"I liked the fact there were professionals from a range of agencies. This helped me gain more of an understanding of how safeguarding impacts other agencies too".

Marketing and Communication

Marketing and communications work is delivered through the Durham SCP website and is the main channel and access point for local safeguarding information and materials to support local and national campaigns. The DSCP website is in the process of being re-designed to make it more accessible to all. A new Communications Strategy is to be introduced in late Summer 2020, focusing on understanding:

- Who is our audience?
- What messages do we want to communicate?
- What is the best way of reaching them?

Content on the website is refreshed regularly, with the '**Toolkits and Guidance for Practitioners**' page, '**Making a Referral**' page and '**Training Programme**' being the top three pages visited in the last year.

Website stats - April 2019 to end of March 2020

- 28,246 **users**
- 45,938 **sessions / visits**
- 130,098 **page views**

Quarterly DSCP newsletters, spread widely across partners and posted on the website, provide partners and service users with updates and future plans,

8. Priorities & Areas of Focus 2020/21

For the coming year the DSCP will remain committed to our Vision and Values.

In terms of added focus, a significant amount of work has been carried out to determine a suite of practice improvement themes, through analysis of Serious Case Reviews, inspections, audit with 4 targeted areas identified namely

- Risk Assessment and Cumulative Harm
- Decision Making
- Domestic Abuse and Coercion and Control
- Challenge and Escalation

These themes will be embedded into the Delivery Plans across all DSCP sub-groups, and as a result will have direct control over the focus of the Partnership.

Covid-19 implications

As a result of the coronavirus pandemic, the DSCP was required to make significant changes to the way in which we delivered our services and carry out our statutory safeguarding duties. Initially, all non-urgent meetings were cancelled, with all necessary multi-agency meetings being hosted online. No face-to-face training has been possible since mid March, although we are in the process of developing new innovative methods of training delivery for the future. During the early phase after lockdown, we as a partnership focused in 3 key areas:

- Domestic Abuse and its impact on children
- Missing Young People
- Online Safety

Our partners are gradually returning to some degree of 'business as usual'. We remain committed as a Partnership to working collaboratively in order to provide an effective safeguarding service to protect those children most at risk, in line with our Vision, Values and Priorities.



| Durham SCP Values | Explanation of DSCP Values |
|-------------------|---|
| Tenacity | Tenacity - acknowledges that there will be an element of endurance required by teams and individuals facing difficult and long term problem solving where solutions are not immediately apparent. In this area, effective inter-agency working is vital to maintain a focus on keeping the child safe. |
| Curiosity | Curiosity - It is essential that we look beyond the immediate presentation to ensure that the concerns about children are not being masked or hidden by individuals, circumstances or a lack of curiosity on the part of those responsible for safeguarding. |
| Openness | Openness - we need to be open and empathic to the child and the perspective of other agencies. This includes an openness to challenge and be challenged so that the best decision in the interests of the child are made. |

Appendix 1

Durham SCP - Membership

The Partnership is led by an Executive Group. All members may request or be invited to attend Safeguarding Executive meetings to provide information and updates on initiatives, inspections and contribute to the DSCP Annual Report. All members will be invited to attend DSCP development days to review priorities and identify partnership progress.

DSCP Executive Group:

- Independent Chair
- County Durham Clinical Commissioning Groups
- Durham County Council's Children and Young People's Service
- Durham Constabulary
- Chairs of DSCP Sub-Groups
- Designated Doctor for Safeguarding Children
- DSCP Business Manager (for support)

The Independent Chair and Local Authority Children and Young People's Service representative will engage with Durham County Council's Portfolio Holder for Children every 2 months. The DSCP membership also includes a broad range of relevant agencies who contribute to achieving the aims of the Partnership.

These relevant agencies participate in or provide virtual representation to subgroups, development sessions and sector groups.

DSCP Relevant Agencies:

- County Durham & Darlington NHS Foundation Trust
- Tees, Esk & Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust
- Harrogate & District NHS Foundation Trust
- North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust
- South Tyneside & Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust
- North East Ambulance Service
- Durham Voice (Voluntary Sector)
- Further Education Settings
- Bishop Auckland College
- New College Durham
- East Durham College
- Derwentside College
- Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass)
- Durham County Council's Education Dept.
- Independent Schools
- Schools
- Public Health
- National Probation Service (Durham)
- Durham Tees Valley Community Rehabilitation Company
- County Durham Youth Offending Service

- Housing Services
- NHS England
- Durham County Council's Adult & Health Services
- Durham County Council's Early Help, Inclusion and Vulnerable

Children Services

- Durham County Council's Legal Services
- The Prison Service
- County Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue Service
- British Transport Police
- Faith Groups

Relevant agencies contribute to 4 sector groups that meet regularly and will provide assurance reports to the Executive Group on an annual basis. They are not required to attend every DSCP Executive meeting but have a vital role in ensuring the effective reach of the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Contact Details

| | |
|--|---------------|
| <u>DSCP</u> | 03000 265 770 |
| <u>Durham County Council</u> | 03000 260 000 |
| <u>Durham Constabulary</u> | 101 |
| <u>County Durham & Darlington</u> | |
| <u>NHS Foundation Trust</u> | 0191 333 2333 |
| <u>North Durham Clinical</u> | |
| <u>Commissioning Group (CCG)</u> | 0191 389 8600 |
| <u>Durham Dales, Easington &</u> | |
| <u>Sedgefield CCG</u> | 0191 371 3222 |
| <u>Tees, Esk & Wear Valleys</u> | |
| <u>NHS Foundation Trust</u> | 01325 552 000 |
| <u>North Tees & Hartlepool Hospitals</u> | |
| <u>NHS Foundation Trust</u> | 01642 617 617 |
| <u>Harrogate & District NHS</u> | |
| <u>Foundation Trust</u> | 01423 885 959 |
| <u>South Tyneside & Sunderland NHS</u> | |
| <u>Foundation Trust</u> | 0191 565 6256 |
| <u>NHS England North</u> | 0113 825 1609 |
| <u>Cafcass (County Durham)</u> | 0300 456 4000 |
| <u>Durham Tees Valley Community</u> | |
| <u>Rehabilitation Company</u> | 0808 168 4848 |
| <u>National Probation Service</u> | |
| <u>North East Division</u> | 01325 246 260 |
| <u>National Offender Management</u> | |
| <u>Service</u> | 0300 047 6325 |
| <u>Schools and Colleges</u> | web link only |
| <u>Voluntary and Community Sector</u> | web link only |

Appendix 2 – DSCP Staffing and Budget

Staffing

The DSCP is supported by the following staff within the Business Unit:

- Business Manager
- Performance & Programmes Coordinator
- Policy & Strategy Officer
- Training & Development Officer
- Safeguarding Children Partnership Officer
- Administrator (vacant)
- Admin Support Officer

DSCP Budget

The financial contributions from partner agencies are as follows:

| Partner | 2018/19 Contribution | 2019/20 Contribution |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|
| Durham County Council | £171,604 | £171,604 |
| Clinical Commissioning Groups | £95,097 | £95,097 |
| Tees, Esk & Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust | £2,680 | £2,680 |
| County Durham & Darlington NHS Foundation Trust | £2,680 | £2,680 |
| North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust | £2,680 | £2,680 |
| Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust | £2,680 | £2,680 |
| Durham Constabulary | £29,285 | £29,285 |
| Durham Tees Valley Community Rehabilitation Company | £1,340 | £1,340 |
| National Probation Service | £2,032 | £2,032 |
| Further Education Colleges | £2,100 | £2,100 |
| Cafcass | £550 | £550 |
| Total | £312,728 | £312,728 |

Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report, 2019/2020 - Safeguarding Children in County Durham



Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP) has a statutory duty to prepare and publish an Annual Report, which describes how our partners safeguard vulnerable children and young people in County Durham. Our primary responsibility is to provide a way for the local organisations that have a responsibility in respect of child welfare, to agree how they will work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in County Durham and to ensure that they do so effectively.

The children and young people of County Durham are at the heart of what all partners in the DSCP do, and our vision of **'Keeping Children Safe'** continues to drive services forward.

This Annual Report gives an account of the work of the Partnership over the past year to improve the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. The report reflects the activity of the DSCP and its sub-groups against our Vision. It covers the major changes and improvements of our partners' service delivery, and the impact it has had. It also reports on the Serious Case Reviews undertaken and identifies the priorities to be taken forward into 2020/21.

Equality and Diversity

Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership strives to promote equal access to safeguarding services, particularly for those children who are unable to communicate, due to their age, disability or first language.

DSCP Business Unit
County Hall
Durham
County Durham
DH1 5UJ

Email: dscpsecure@durham.gov.uk

Tel: 03000 265 770

A copy of this report is available at,
www.durham-scp.org.uk

Keeping Children Safe