

An overview of the Child Protection Process

Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee

27 September 2021

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- Overview of the key parts of Child Protection Process
- Durham Context
 - Key Strengths
 - Key Challenges

Strategy discussion

- Reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm
- Local authority children's social care, the police, health and other bodies such as the referring agency.
- Within 2 working days of concerns being identified and where risks are high on the same day.
- The purpose of the strategy discussion is to establish whether there is a need to conduct a criminal investigation and whether further enquires are required under **section 47** of the Children Act 1989.
- Parents would be informed but not part of the meeting

s 47 Investigation

- Multi-agency investigation led by local authority social worker
- Purpose – to decide whether any action should be taken to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of the child
- Consultation with the family and network
- Outcome – if concerns or significant harm are substantiated and the child is judged to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm an **Initial Child Protection Conference** should be convened within 15 days of Strategy Discussion

Initial Child Protection Conference

- Multi-agency – chaired by an Independent Reviewing Officer.
- Brings together child, young person and family
- Provides a forum to share and analyse all relevant information and analyse from all partner agencies
- Decision in relation to future safety, health and development
- If a child is likely to suffer significant harm a Child Protection Plan will be created?
- The primary category of abuse is recorded if threshold is met for a Child Protection Plan

Core Group

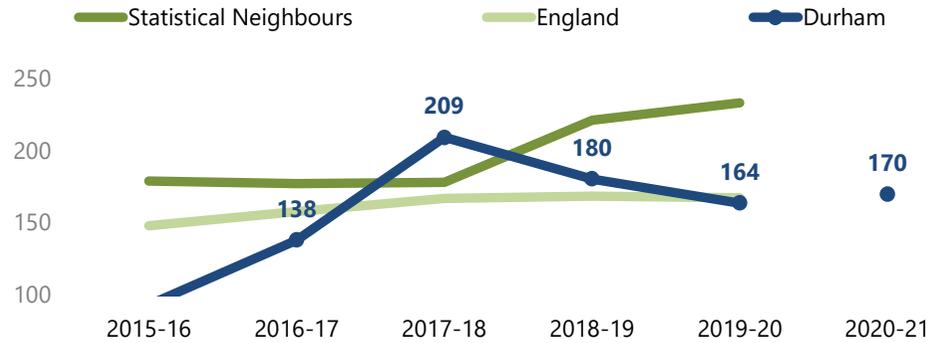
- Formulation and implementation of the Child Protection Plan
- Multi-agency with family and network at the centre
- Within 10 days of Initial Child Protection Conference and monthly thereafter

Review Child Protection Conference

- Review whether the child is continuing to suffer, or is likely to suffer, significant harm
- Review progress against Child Protection Plan and consider whether it should continue or needs to be changed
- Within 3 months and 6-monthly thereafter
- When a Plan ends there should be a clear Child in Need plan to ensure that change is sustained

Durham Context

**Section 47 enquiries initiated in the year
(rate per 10,000 children)**



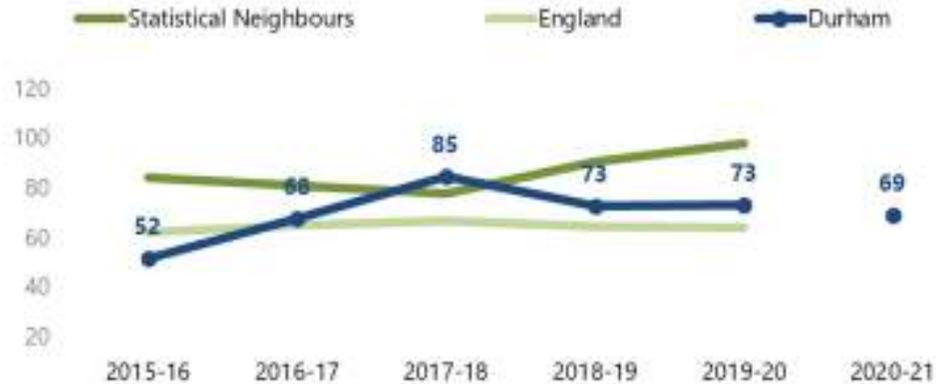
2020 – 2021

1721 s47 Investigations

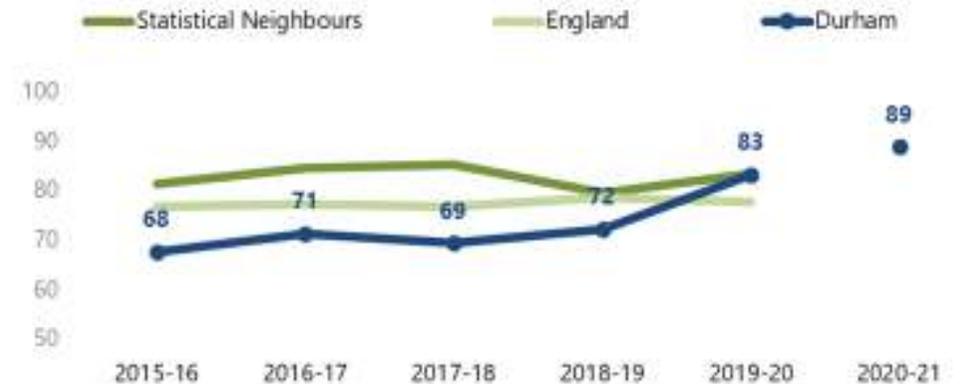
702 Initial Child Protection Conferences

499 Children currently subject to a Child Protection Plan

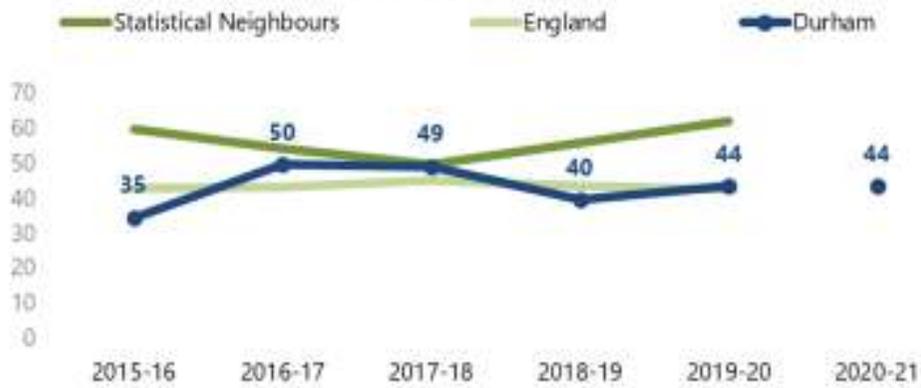
**Initial Child Protection Conferences in the year
(rate per 10,000 children)**



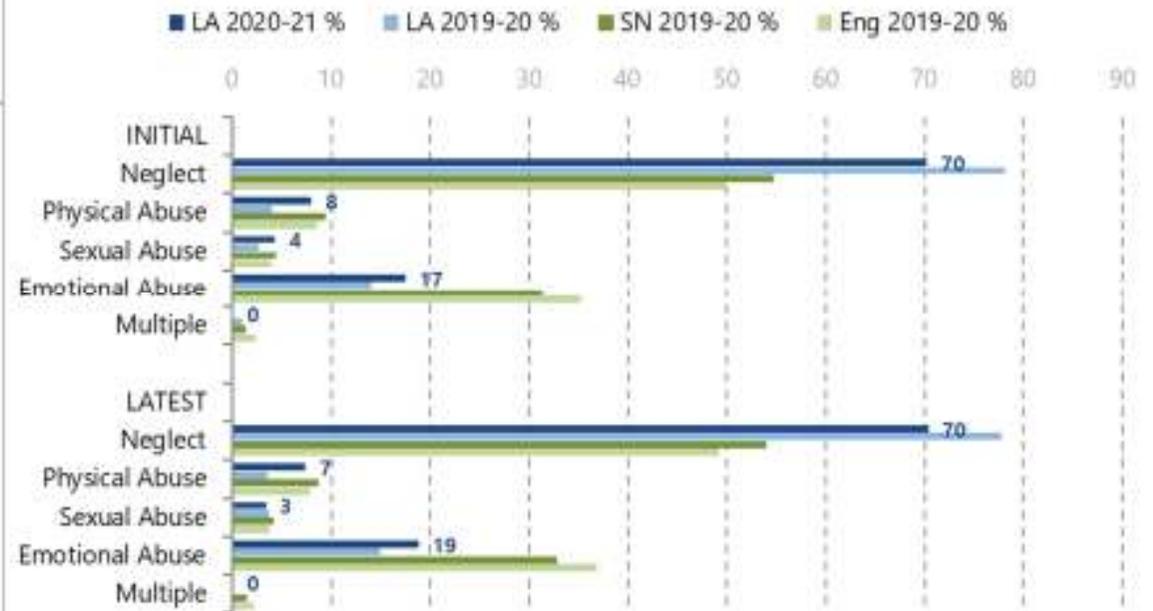
**ICPCs within 15 days of Strategy discussion
(%)**



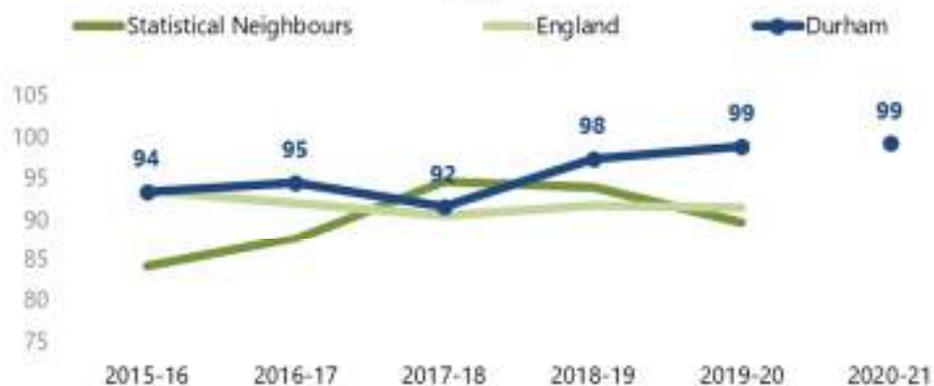
Child Protection Plans open at 31 March (rate per 10,000 children)



New child protection plans by category (%)



CP plans reviewed in timescales (%)



Open CPP by duration (%)



Key strengths

- Timeliness of Initial Child Protection Conferences and Reviews of Child Protection Plans
- Strong multi-agency support
- Response to Covid-19 and maintaining timeliness of reviews
- Development of Mind of My Own

Feedback from a young person to the IRO about their child protection conference:

I didn't want to be part of the whole meeting and the IRO spoke to be beforehand and arranged for me to come via video call to the beginning of the meeting so that I could say what I thought it was like at home, including what was good and what I was worried about. I was then able to listen to what everyone else said from the other side

Feedback from parents to the IRO following a child protection conference:

Your presence and demeanour on the day was really helpful. You seemed kind, calm and supportive. Personally, I also appreciated your understated authority - you seemed very much in charge and I respond well to that sort of thing.

Key challenges

- Recovery from Covid-19 to ensure children and families remain central to the Child Protection Process
- Maintaining a strength based, relational approach throughout the Child Protection Process