

Dudley Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB)

Annual Report April 2018 to June 2019



Dudley Safeguarding Children Board

3-5 St James Road, Dudley, DY1 1HZ or visit our website <https://safeguarding.dudley.gov.uk>

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1. INTRODUCTION

This report is produced on behalf of Dudley Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB) in accordance with statutory guidance, Working Together 2015/2018, which requires the DSCB to produce and publish an annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in the local area.

This report will be the final report for DSCB following the Wood Review and the Children and Social Work Bill in 2016, **new safeguarding arrangements** were passed into law through the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

Requirements within the Children and Social Work Act 2017 calls for the abolishment of Local Safeguarding Children Board's (LSCB's) to be replaced by new safeguarding arrangements led by three **Safeguarding Partners** and supported by relevant agencies. It also places a duty on new Child Death Review partners to review the deaths of children normally resident in the local area.

In July 2018 the Department for Education (DfE) released the revised statutory guidance together with guidance on transitional arrangements on the arrangements that should operate as part of the transition from LSCB's to Safeguarding Partners and Child Death Review Partners to be implemented by 29th September 2019.

As such, this report will cover aspects of an extended period from 1st April 2018 to 28th June 2019, the point to which the following key statutory partners will have published the new safeguarding arrangements to replace the DSCB.



Safeguarding Partners are identified as:

- Local Authorities
- Chief Officers of Police
- Clinical Commissioning Groups

Child Death Review Partners are identified as:

- Local Authorities
- Clinical Commissioning Groups

The key partners as above in Dudley have formed a Development Group to plan the process of change as of 29th June 2019.

In the meantime, DSCB will continue to carry out all of its statutory functions, until the point at which safeguarding partner arrangements begin to operate.

This report will therefore summarise the key activities from 1st April 2018 through to 28th June 2019, and will concentrate on key aspects of the Board's work; notably progress made in complying with the statutory functions, the strategic priorities outlined in the business plan for the stated period and the notable improvements made from being in a place of being judged Inadequate by Ofsted in 2016 to Requires Improvement to be good following the Ofsted "Inspection of local authority arrangements for the protection of children" November 2018.

This report will cover the extent to which the functions of the DSCB as set out in “Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015” are being effectively discharged and will include:

- Governance and accountability of the Board
- DSCB income
- Progress against the Improvement Plan
- Progress in relation to the strategic priorities 2017-18.
- Activities of the sub and task and finish groups of the Board
- Other monitoring activities
- Contributions from partners
- Future challenges

The Annual Report draws from information presented at DSCB meetings, including an annual update provided by the chairs against each of the sub group work-plans, the task and finish groups and the progress report provided to the Children Services Improvement Board (CSIB).

A copy of this report will be sent to senior leaders and stakeholders in our area, including the Chief Executive of the Council, the Leader of the Council and the Strategic Director of Children’s Services.

The report will also be sent to the Health and Well-being Board, Safe and Sound (Community Safety Partnership), Corporate Parenting Board and the Council’s People Leadership Team and Corporate Board. Individual agencies will also be encouraged to present this report through their internal Boards and scrutiny arrangements.

This report is aimed at everyone involved in safeguarding children, including members of the local community as well as professionals and volunteers who work with children, young people and families.

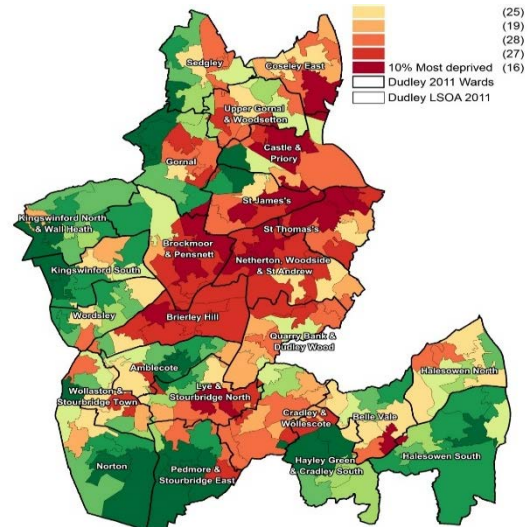
1. Background and Context

ABOUT DUDLEY

Dudley is a metropolitan borough formed in 1974. It is located on the edge of the West Midlands. Dudley is at the heart of the Black Country, which also includes the neighbouring boroughs of Sandwell and Walsall and the city of Wolverhampton. The population has been growing at a modest but sustained rate in recent years, with 14,300 more people in the Borough now compared to the 2001 estimate.

What does Dudley's child population look like?

A total of 75,634 children and young people aged 0 to 19 live in Dudley (Mid-Year population estimates 2017). This is 23.7% of the total population in the area. Since the peak in 2011/12 corresponding to Reception intake of 2016/17, there has been a gradual decline in the Dudley birth rate. (Source: ONS) Primary School numbers have continued to grow as smaller cohorts leave and larger ones enter. Secondary School numbers will follow the Primary School trend as the rise in Dudley births from 2001/02 to 2011/12 flows through. (Source: School Place Planning team)



Map created by Public Health Intelligence, Office of Public Health Dudley.
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The proportion of children and young people from black minority ethnic groups is rising and in 2019, they represented 26.3% of the school population up from 16.0% in 2012. The diversity of ethnic groups has increased particularly in terms of migration from Eastern Europe. There has been a rise in the number of children for whom English is an additional language (10.7% in 2012 to 11.9% in 2019). (Source: School Place Planning team)

Deprivation, Child Poverty and Family Income

Child poverty has remained an issue in Dudley with rates significantly higher than England. The most recent data available shows that 20.5% of dependent children in Dudley aged under 20 live in low income families. Dudley continues to have a significantly higher percentage than England however is not statistically significantly different to the West Midlands. (Source: PHE. Public Health Outcomes Framework)

The proportion of people in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance has been declining. In April 2019, 1,759 people in Dudley Borough were claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), equivalent to 0.9% of the working age (16-64) population. This is 787 people less than April 2018. The claimant rate in Dudley has been on a downward trend since February 2013 but remains higher than the West Midlands percentage (0.8%) and England percentage (0.6%). (Source: NOMIS)

The mean annual wage for Dudley residents working full-time was £26,459 in 2018, below the national figure of £29,686. (Source: ONS)

Education, Employment and Training Amongst Young People

The number of young people (aged 18-24) claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) has continued to decline. In April 2019, there were 45 (0.2%). This is lower than both the regional (0.3%) and national (0.3%) percentages. 40 or 89% of all claimants aged 18-24 in the Borough had been claiming JSA for longer than a year, significantly higher than both regional (56%) and national (46%) averages. (Source: NOMIS)

Health Inequalities

The infant mortality rate in Dudley is 5.4 per 1,000 live births for 2015-17. This is a small decrease on the previous year's rate but statistically significantly higher than the national rate. (Source: Primary Care Mortality Data (PCMD), NHS Digital)

Smoking in pregnancy in 2017/18 was 14.4%, statistically significantly higher than the West Midlands and England average. This is the second consecutive year in which there has been an increase and the percentage is now similar to the 2012/13 percentage. (Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework, Public Health England)

Breastfeeding initiation and continuation rates from 2016/17 show some of the lowest in the country, and rates are fairly consistent although issues with data quality mean the data is less reliable. Rates are particularly poor in the more deprived areas of the borough, and with younger mothers. (Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework, Public Health England)

Primary course immunisation coverage in the first year of life in 2017/18 within Dudley 96.1% was above the England average of 93.1% and the WHO target of 95%. Whilst the immunisation rate in the West Midland and England has been declining for over 5 years the percentage in Dudley has remained high and increased slightly in the last two years. (Source: Health Profiles, Public Health England)

Reception Childhood obesity rates in 2017/18 are not statistically different in Dudley compared to England (10.3% compared with 10.4% in the West Midlands and 9.5% in England). This is the first time in 5 years that Dudley is not statistically significantly worse than the national average. (Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework, Public Health England)

The continuous decline in teenage pregnancy rates in Dudley has plateaued in 2017 with rate being very similar to 2016. Although the overall pattern has been a decreasing trend since 2000 there have been a few occasions where there has been a small increase from one year to the next. Currently Dudley's under 18 conception rate (20.4 per 1,000) is not statistically different to England (17.8 per 1,000) or the West Midlands (19.9 per 1,000). (Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework, Public Health England)

The proportion of 9 and 11 year olds bullied at or near their school has remained above 25% over the last 8 years, results in March 2018 show that 29% of Primary

school pupils said they had been bullied at or near school in the past 12 months.
(Source: Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire)

2. STATUTORY FUNCTIONS – LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Dudley Safeguarding Children Board

The Board

Dudley Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB) consists of senior representatives from agencies working with children and young people from the local authority, schools, health, the police and others. The Board members work together to keep children and young people safe from harm.

DSCB is responsible for scrutinising the work of its partners to ensure that services provided to children and young people actually make a difference. In order to provide effective scrutiny, DSCB is independent from other local structures and has an independent chair that holds all agencies to account. The main roles of the DSCB are set out in its constitution and are to co-ordinate and ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each agency on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Dudley.

Governance

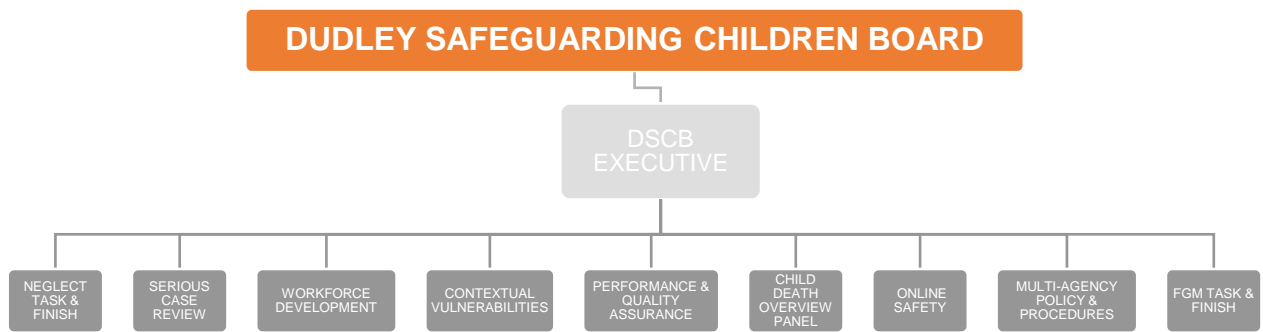
DSCB has three tiers of activity (structure illustration below)

Main Board – this is made up of representatives of the partner agencies as set out in Working Together 2015 (WT15). Board members must be sufficiently senior to ensure they are able to speak confidently and have the authority to sign up to agreements on behalf of their agency.

Executive – comprising representatives from key statutory agencies and has strategic oversight of all Board activity. The Executive takes the lead on developing and driving the implementation of the DSCB's Business Plan. It is also responsible for holding to account the work of the sub-groups and their chairs.

Sub-groups and task and finish groups:

These work on the board's priorities and report to the Executive and are ultimately accountable to the Main Board. The operating structure for the reporting period is as follows:



Dudley Safeguarding Children Board was chaired by an Independent Chair, meeting quarterly during the reporting period. To support the functions and duties as prescribed, DSCB is supported by the DSCB Business Unit which is hosted by Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC).

The Independent Chair is accountable to the Chief Executive who, together with the Strategic Director – People (Statutory DCS) a member of the DSCB) hold regular meetings to maintain an overview of the effectiveness of the board, to hear any safeguarding concerns and to challenge the performance of the Board against the following prescribed statutory duties:

- To provide local multi-agency policies and procedures that promote and result in effective multi-agency working to safeguard and protect the children and young people of Dudley.
- To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what is done by partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advise them on ways to improve.
- To oversee and challenge partners in carrying out their safeguarding responsibilities under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004, to make sure that they are doing that work effectively.
- To plan, co-ordinate, commission and evaluate multi-agency training.
- To promote effective multi-agency early help intervention to ensure early concerns are identified and appropriately supported for children and their families.
- To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of partner agencies internal safeguarding activities individually and collectively and advise on ways to improve performance and quality.
- To undertake reviews of serious cases and child deaths, advise the Board and stakeholders of the lessons to be learnt.
- To communicate effectively to stakeholders regarding the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Members of the DSCB

The following agencies are collectively the members of DSCB, their attendance as illustrated, including contributing to all required activities are instrumental in delivering and executing the statutory safeguarding agenda. Member's include:

DSCB MEMBERSHIP 2018 -2019		
Attendance by agency: 2018/ 19		
Education	Primary	50%
	Secondary	67%
	Special School	83%
	Further Education	17%
Dudley MBC	Children's Services	100%
	Public Health	83%
	Housing	100%
	Cabinet Lead Member for Children	50%
West Midlands Police	Public Protection	33%
	Local Policing	67%
Probation	National Probation Service (NPS)	83%
	Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC)	67%
Health	Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)	100%
	Dudley Hospital Group NHS Foundation Trust	100%
	Black Country Partnership NHS Foundation Trust	83%
	Dudley and Walsall Mental Health NHS Trust	83%
	Shropshire NHS Trust	67%
Community / Voluntary Sector	Lay Member / Advisor	67%
	Dudley Community, Voluntary Sector	50%
Other Members / Attendees	CAFCASS	0%
	Substance Misuse Services	100%
	Independent Chair	100%
	Business Unit	100%

Including the joint development day with Dudley Safeguarding Adult Board (DSAB) and two extraordinary meetings, DSCB met eight times in 2018/19. Meetings were attended by of the range of representatives noted above and the lay member. The Council Lead Member for Children and Young People is also required to attend board meetings as an observer.

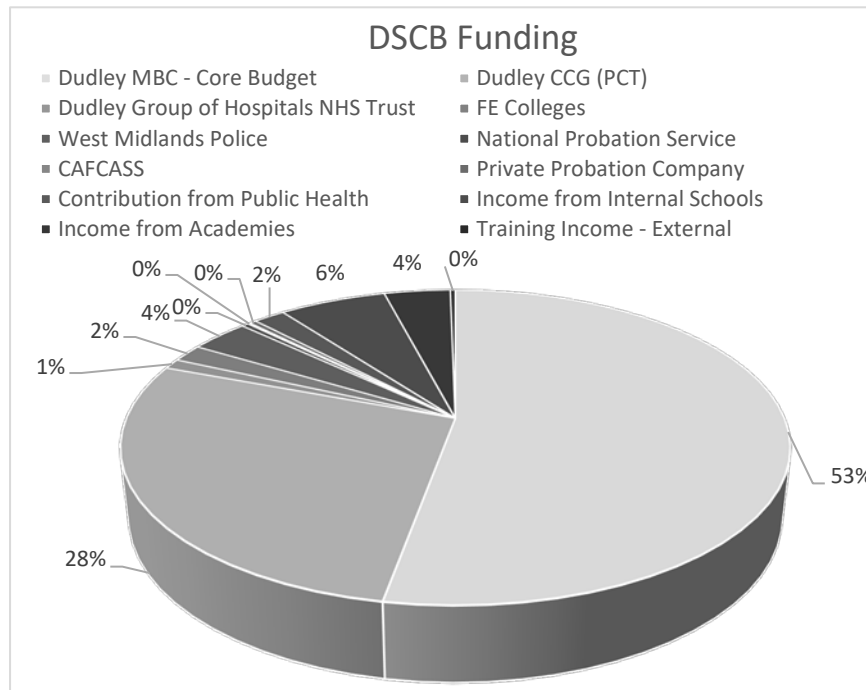
Attendance at DSCB is closely monitored and where attendance falls below 50%, the Independent Chair meets with the agencies senior leads and resolve any issues.

DSCB FUNDING FOR 2018 – 2019

Below is the overall annual income as negotiated with partners for 2018 -19 to support the delivery of the DSCB functions and business plan objectives. This includes covering the cost of Serious Case Reviews, funding a comprehensive training programme, agreed events; including annual conferences, annual licenses and subscription costs, and any independently commissioned pieces of work, including the costs for the Independent Chair. The income revenue from partners also supports the resourcing of a specialist business unit made up of a business manager, senior officers and adequate secretarial support.

2018-19 Income	£
Dudley MBC - Core Budget	176,000
Dudley CCG	107,100
FE Colleges	7,000
West Midlands Police	13,205
National Probation Service	1,500
CAFCASS	550
Community Rehabilitation Company - (CRC)	1,500
Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust	£4,000
Contribution from Early Adopters Grant (Admin Services)	£4,900
Income from Internal Schools	£19,943
Income from Academies	£18,654
Total Funding	354,352

As can be seen in the table above and the chart below, the Local Authority is the



main financial contributor, along with the CCG. Whilst the contributions are disproportionate, much of the activities of the DSCB centres around and connects heavily with arrangements of these core partners.

The financial year commences on 1st April until 31st March each year. DMBC is the accounting body for the DSCB Budget.

Links to Other Partnerships

Through sharing the Independent Chair with Dudley Safeguarding Adults Board, DSCB has formal links with other strategic partnerships in Dudley, namely the Health and Wellbeing Board; Children Services Improvement Board, DMBC Scrutiny Committee; the Children and Young People's Alliance, Clinical Commissioning Groups and Safe and Sound Board (Dudley Community Safety Partnership). The commitment to these important relationships is set out in the Joint Protocol – Partnership Working which was agreed by all relevant Boards during 2016/17 and ensures that strategic priorities are better aligned and focussed on making child safeguarding everyone's business. The Joint Protocol will be reviewed and updated to reflect the implementation of the new safeguarding arrangements in 2019/20. The Independent Chair also maintains regular liaison with other key strategic leaders, for example, the Police and Crime Commissioner, neighbouring and regional LSCB Chairs and Government inspection bodies.

The DSCB provides important peer challenge on areas of child safety and welfare to these partnerships, to ensure that activity to protect children is effective and coordinated. DSCB does this by:

- Providing analysis and information on key safeguarding data and activity
- Identifying any issues or areas for improvement which require joint working and action by strategic partners across the Dudley borough
- Providing input and comment on the actions plans of other strategic partnerships
- Promoting and raising awareness of safeguarding issues and the work of DSCB.

Cross Border Work with other LSCB's

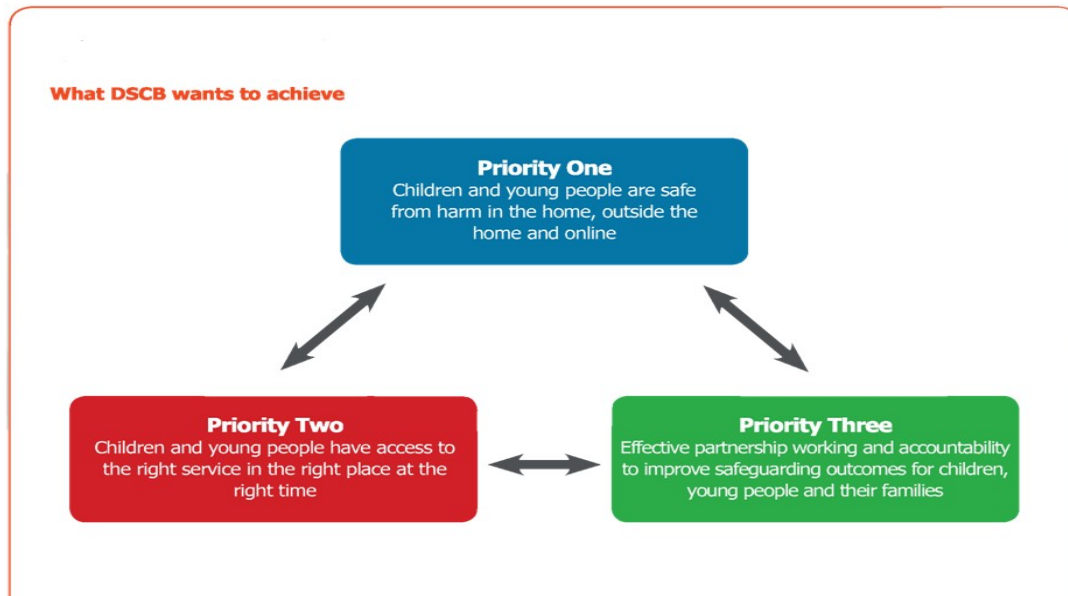
DSCB continues to be members of the West Midlands Regional Safeguarding Procedures Group, and will be responsible for co-chairing meetings as of April 1st 2019.

The DSCB Business Manager also contributes to the West Midlands LSCB's Business Managers Forum, attending meetings on a quarterly basis to share, support and promote best practice, for safeguarding arrangements across the regional LSCB's border areas.

The DSCB Chair is a member of the Independent Association of Independent LSCB Chairs, which is a national membership organisation for Independent Chairs of Local Safeguarding Children Boards. This keeps the Board abreast of national and regional priorities for action, and is particularly vital for the progression of the shift from LSCB's to new safeguarding arrangements. There are some uncertainties in respect of the future of this forum as LSCB's are being replaced, with no statutory requirement for the role of Independent Chairs. We will await notification in due time as to what a new structure, role and remit for this forum will look like moving forward.

3. DSCB Strategic Priorities 2018 - 2019

The Strategic Business Plan 2018-19 confirms the priorities agreed by the members of DSCB and how these will be achieved. The portfolio holders of each subgroup, together with the members have devised individual work plans to ensure successful delivery of the assigned mandate.



Last year's report informed of the significant improvements made since the 2016 inadequate findings following the Ofsted inspection. Building on the improved systems, processes and achievements of the last year, over this reporting period, Dudley has received 3 Ofsted monitoring visits, each providing positive feedback, followed by a full inspection in October 2018, from which the following statement was included in the published report: '*Significant progress has been made in many areas of children's services in Dudley since the last inspection in 2016. Effective work by senior management and staff, together with commitment and investment by political leaders, has led to improved responses to the needs of children and families. As a result, outcomes for many children and their families are better*'.

DSCB agrees with the overall findings from the report, together with grade of; **requires improvement to be good**, whilst also recognising that there are areas requiring further improvements. These will be directed to the new safeguarding partners as the leads for the incoming local safeguarding arrangements post June 2019 and/or when the DSCB is abolished.

3.1 Strategic Priority 1: Children and young people are safe from harm in the home, outside the home and online

The headlines showcasing the progress made against each theme area identified and agreed under strategic priority 1 are summarised below, many of which have been carried forward from the previous reporting year.

3.1a Refocus the CSE group into a broader exploitation group to include trafficking, modern slavery and male victims

- This function of the Business priorities was driven by the renamed Contextual Vulnerabilities sub group, which saw the work-plan's activities broaden from child sexual exploitation (CSE) only, to include other forms of exploitation, such as criminal, and the introduction of Operation Ceiling – led by Youth Offending Service (YOS) to co-ordinate prevention and protection intervention for children at risk or affected by CCE and their parents.
- Innovation fund awarded – funding has been awarded to 3 local charities to enhance the local offer for children known to the CSE / CCE teams.
- Dudley have been highlighted for the increase in NRM referrals since April 2018.
- A new Children Missing Education (CME) protocol has been developed.
- Youth Panel for Sexual Exploitation (YPSE) and CSE and Missing Operational Group (CMOG) are being reviewed, a decision to change the format of YPSE proved positive.
- DMBC Internal Audit of the CSE Team has recently concluded. The majority of actions have been completed before the final report is drafted, this was recognised and praised by the Auditors.
- MASE activity has been reviewed and changes to process and procedures have been co-produced by the new Child Abuse investigation Team (CAIT) and agreed by service managers and Heads of Service. The new arrangements were launched at the Chief Officer briefing on 10th October 2018.
- A CSE resource pack has been developed and shared with approx. 100 Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL's) at the DSL Forum on the 26th September. This initiated a conversation with schools attended by children known to the team and a package of support now exists.
- The improvement / work plan following the contribution of all agencies is now complete and is RAG rated accordingly.
- There was a train the trainer package prepared for delivery in November 2018 to ensure all 300 taxi drivers in Dudley received their mandatory CSE training
- Further training is planned for Hotels.
- Schools and colleges are regularly requesting briefings and training for both staff and pupils.
- The sub group has received draft proposal, papers and presentations on the broader issues of vulnerabilities and criminal exploitations. The paper produced by CSE co-ordinator and Lead for Youth Offending including consultation with subgroup partners.
- A new virtual Children Abused Through Criminal Exploitation team has been created within the Local Authority (CATE champions)

3.1b Utilise the local CSE problem profile to inform the broader exploitation strategy, commissioning and practice

The range of models and strategies to address CSE, and the potential number of related vulnerabilities, indicates the importance of local, live and holistic problem profiling. There are growing concerns as we become more aware of, and are able to

identify the wider interconnected vulnerabilities associated to adolescent exploitation. The need to know and understand the local problem profile is crucial in order to map contexts and apply effective strategies for tackling the issue. In the coming months, led by West Midlands Police, Dudley will begin to generate local profiles which will enable an improved multi-agency safeguarding response to child exploitation and gang association that:

- Is built upon problem profiling
- Is integrated within a broader response to safeguarding young people from other forms of exploitation, sexual abuse and other associated vulnerabilities
- Recognises choice, and therefore consent, as social and in this regard works with young people as partners in safeguarding
- Adopts a contextual approach to identification, assessment and intervention in public as well as private spaces, including disrupting the adults, peer groups, school, community and online environments associated to young people's experiences of exploitation and where appropriate using prosecution and conviction, and
- Promotes relational, as well as physical, safety.

3.1c Continue to explore ways of engaging children and young people in the identification of their needs around the identification and prevention of exploitation

Through a number of contacts with children and young people innovative ways for engagement are always explored, this includes case studies being presented at meetings, a new DVD specific to gang culture and the issue of girls groomed by gangs developed by Phase Trust and West Midlands Police, young people are attending meetings and able to contribute to decisions being made about them.

3.1d Ensure that the e-safety strategy is embedded and that children/young people/carers recognise the risks associated with the internet, how to avoid these risks and how best to respond if things go wrong

Work has continued to further embed the online safety strategy for children, young people and adults and the internet in Dudley, including identified gaps highlighted directly by practitioners and service users of all ages. Work continued to be undertaken to gain a wider understanding of online behaviour and risks (including of parents and adults).

The strategy and work plan are heavily focused on safer outcomes for children and adults. The strategy and 19/20 work plan are focused on safer outcomes for children and adults, and reflect information obtained through the voice of the child and adult via the HRBQ referenced above.

Further work against this theme can be found under the subgroup contributions.

3.1e Evaluate the effectiveness of the arrangements to safeguard children and young people with disabilities

This transpired in to a multi-agency 'spotlight' round table discussion in February to help us understand how many disabled children are receiving safeguarding services and support; from early support to the identification of, and response to, child protection concerns, and considered whether adequate actions were taken to protect disabled children and young people; therefore, what is working; and the barriers and enablers for promotion, identification, and safeguarding the wellbeing of disabled children.

From this event, what was clear was the fact that improvements in the area had previously been identified and the Council has embarked on a transformation programme which saw the launch of a new service model to support children with disabilities in April 2018. DSCB will monitor the progress of this new approach and revisit this type of event at a later date once the new service has been fully established.

Since February 2019

The integration of the Children's Disability Team (CDT) into Dudley Disability Service (DDS) has been recognised as a strength within the recent Ofsted and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) inspection and the Adults Local Government Review Challenge. DDS has ensured that the CDT staff are integrated within the 0-25 multi-agency team of DDS which has assisted in developing a holistic approach to safeguarding children and young people and developing a whole family and SEND approach.

DDS has been working closely with the workforce and development team to establish a bespoke training programme that will ensure all staff within the 0-25 MDT are skilled in children's safeguarding requirements. Whilst this is in the formation stage frontline staff adhere to the current agreed safeguarding training requirements and processes which are overseen by the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) Manager and Service Lead. In addition to safeguarding training the DDS service has delivered legal training focused on the Mental Capacity and the Mental Health Act which has been received well by staff and assists them in promoting the rights of children and young people.

3.1f Develop and implement a Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) action plan across all agencies to raise awareness of HSB

As a result of the serious case review published In November 2017, which highlighted a number of concerns relating to Harmful sexual Behaviours (HSB) in a local authority foster home. DCSB and Dudley Children and Young People's Alliance agreed this theme to be a priority area for action in 2018/19. A review led via Public

Health Dudley commissioned the NSPCC to support a review and audit of existing provision and help support the development of a strategic plan to address need. The review highlighted a number of deficits in the existing provision; including a lack of assessment and intervention with young people who display HSB, a failure to communicate effectively between agencies and the lack of support for parents and carers. The DSCB has commissioned a piece of work led by Public Health to consider the needs of children and young people who display HSB and make recommendations for service provisions in this area.



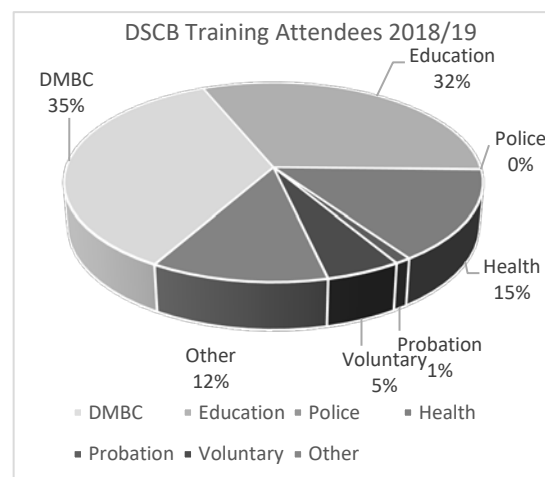
The action plan and provisions being explored will ensure:

- Practitioners are upskilled to recognise indicators of HSB as well as knowing how to respond
- Appropriate preventative measures can be applied in response to early identification.
- Rigour is given when assessing and the referral pathway to specialist support is clear
- Support should be tailored to the holistic needs involving the full range of therapeutic and specialist intervention.
- Development opportunities exist to ensure the workforce at varying relevant roles and position are equipped to address all issues and concerns in relation to HSB.

3.1g Provide learning and development opportunities to enable the workforce to safeguard children and young people including neglect, modern slavery and sexually harmful behaviour

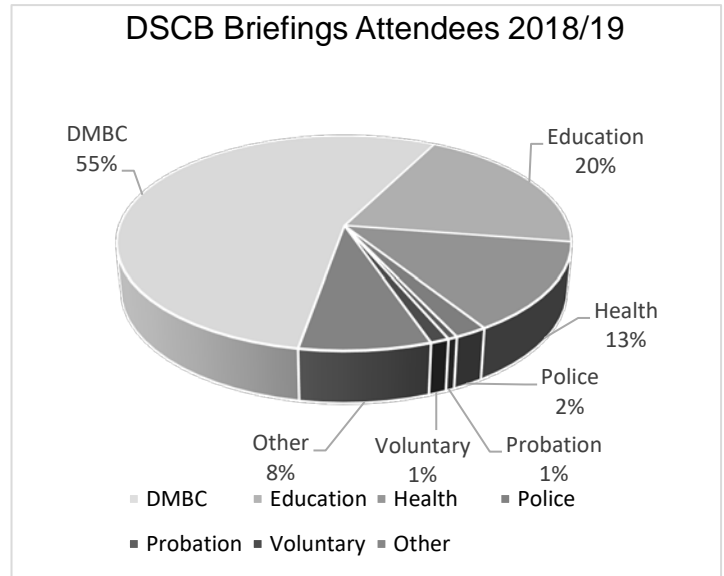
The following table displays the DSCB multi-agency programme offer and frequency for the reported period. DSCB events are generally well attended, however, around 25% of courses were cancelled for the following reasons, being low numbers and lack of suitable facilitators.

Course Title	Sessions
Child Development, What You Need To Know	3
Child Sexual Exploitation	1
Core Working Together	6
Domestic Abuse and Case Review Training	6
Fabricated and Induced Illness	1
Graded Care Profile Training	10
Introduction to Online Safety	1
Management of Allegations and Safeguarding	3
Neglect	5
Parental Drug and Alcohol Misuse and Safeguarding Children	2
Protecting Children from Sexual Abuse	1
Safeguarding Children Online	2
Safer Recruitment	3
Stalking	7
Thresholds Training	6
Understanding Children's Behaviour: Attachment & Relationships	3
Young People in Abusive Relationships	1



The outcome of a review of the multi-agency training programme as displayed above will see a number of the courses being removed or rebranded and refreshed to align with the requirements of the local safeguarding people partnership priorities from April 2020.

Themed Briefings	Sessions
Trafficking briefing	2
Missing briefing	1
CSE briefing	2
Graded Care Profile (briefing)	2
SCR Lessons Learned briefing	6



Recognising that updating and upskilling staff knowledge in respect of safeguarding can be undertaken in various ways, DSCB have offered a number of themed briefing sessions across the year. There seems to be an appetite for these ‘*short and sharp*’ events, and as such we are likely to see a growing number of these themed type events.

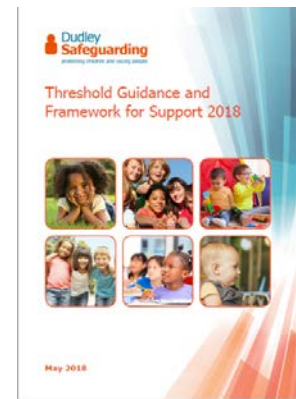
3.2 Strategic Priority Two: Children and Young People have access to the right service in the right place at the right time

DSCB identified five specific areas of focus in conjunction with this Strategic Priority, a summary of the activities undertaken are noted in line with the requirements.

3.2a Launch the revised DSCB thresholds document and provide refreshed thresholds training

In May 2018 DSCB launch its revised **Thresholds Guidance** targeted at all professionals working with children, young people and families in Dudley, and through a 'stage step' diagram, makes clear references and signpost from universal services, through to statutory /specialist intervention

The **Thresholds Guidance** outlines 4 levels of need to identify when a child may need additional support to reach their full potential, and incorporates information relating to the areas of known /increased vulnerabilities, including; Children with Disabilities, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), PREVENT, and Children who go Missing.



The Guidance uses the children act 1989 and 2004 to justify services and support to meet the needs of all children in Dudley in the following ways:

Levels 1 – 3 below complies with elements of the Children Act 2004 which provides a legislative spine for the wider strategy for improving children's lives. This covers the universal services, which every child accesses, and more targeted services for those with additional needs.

Level 4 – calls for statutory intervention under the 1989 Children Act, which provides a framework for Law to be enforced for the protection and safety of children.

The document is designed as a guide to offer clarification, it is not a concrete or rigid set of procedures, as such, and practitioners are always encouraged to apply professional judgement.

Evaluation of the threshold is regularly undertaken as part of Multi agency case audit activity, and in line with other audits of practice, and will be amended in line with new ways of working, such as the Restorative Practice Model that has recently been introduced in Dudley, and in line with the revised publication of Working Together (2018), and under the new leadership of the key safeguarding partners, and will have a heightened emphasis in regards to consent, information sharing and GDPR.

In their October – November 2018 Inspection, Ofsted found 'there is a well-developed early help offer in Dudley that offers effective services to children and families. Thresholds are closely managed, and, where appropriate, cases step up to social care quickly. Early help assessments undertaken by the local authority and subsequent support plans are well constructed and thorough. Thresholds are well understood and applied in most cases and consent is generally sought or is dispensed with appropriately. Child protection concerns are quickly identified and

responded to. Strategy meetings are appropriately called and well attended by MASH partners’.

3.2b Audit the application and use of Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2)

Following an audit of 8 randomly selected GCP2 tools completed across four family centres between November 2018 and March 2019 we are able to gain a flavour of the use and application of GCP2 to support practitioners engagement with families where issues of neglect is of concern.

The GCP2 is aimed to be an assessment to be undertaken in partnership with families to identify concerns then create an action plan with agreed time scale to implement work and effect change. Towards the end of the timescale, a second GCP2 should be completed to evidence the change made within a measurable scale. This method was not found in any of the eight GCP2 tools seen.

A summary of the findings showed, three contained substantial details suggesting that the families were well engaged with the practitioners to implement change. These extended to include the support plans and tasks needed to effect change in the areas raised for the families.

A further two found that the action plans to support change was minimal, this was due to the commitment and work of the families alongside the GCP2 being completed, which resulted in positive changes seen immediately.

The positive progress made with in two cases meant that families stepped down to universal services only and cases closed to the family centre. However, whilst this was evident and clearly recorded in the audit tools, details were not transferred to the case notes on the electronic files to evidence the positive change as a result of the work undertaken, or the GCP2 work completed.

From the above, we can certainly see glimmers of positive progress, however, there is a need to increase the usability of GCP2 to engage with families; this will require further training, and more attention and focus on completing the GCP2.

3.2c. Evaluate the accessibility and impact of the early help offer

Through constant monitoring and regular evaluation of the Local Early Help Offer we have undertaken a series of improvements throughout the reporting year, some of the headline includes:

- Launch of revised Early Help Assessment (20/4/18)
- Launch of revised Early Help Family Plan (1/4/19)
- Troubled Families Maturity Model revised in October 2018
- The development of the Youth Offending Service (YOS) Early Help pathway to provide preventative support for young people at risk of criminal exploitation
- The introduction of school nurses based within Family Centres starting the development of co-location of teams within locality areas
- Additional Early Help enabler resources provided through troubled families funding.
- Robust procedures implemented to monitor and challenge partnership completion of Early Help Assessments and plans.
- Agreed locally increased monthly target of Early Help Assessments from 100 to 170 per month. The target has consistently been exceeded.

OFSTED recognised the “well developed” Early Help offer we have in Dudley and in the report published 10th December 2018 stated:

“There is a well-developed early help offer in Dudley that offers effective services to children and families. Thresholds are closely managed, and, where appropriate, cases step up to social care quickly. Early Help assessments undertaken by the local authority and subsequent support plans are well constructed and thorough. “

The report went on to agree with what we do know in respect of partnership engagement in this area of work requires greater attention. We have started to strengthen our relationships with partners, and through the new arrangements, progress will be closely monitored.

3.2d. Ongoing roll out of the Graded Care Profile 2

Much progress has been made to raise the profile of GCP2 across the borough, and during 2018/19 GCP2 training has continue to be developed, and referenced in face to face, ‘Recognising Awareness of Neglect’ training to complement the GCP2. The table below provides a snapshot of the reach of GCP2 over two quarters. This gives a sense of the growth of programme from training through to engagement with families.

Table 1	Training	No of practitioners actively using GCP2	No of families subject to GCP2	No of individual children
Quarter 1 2018	47	10	12	24
Quarter 2 2018	47	23	13	26

To ensure training remains of high calibre, evaluations arising from training are closely monitored; some of the comments extracted include the following:

- The course provided clear guidance on the use of GCP2 and awareness of GCP2 as an assessment tool
- All of the training was informative and interesting, I feel that the knowledge gained relates to practice and will be very useful
- The activities were useful in order to be able to use the tool, which now enables me to use the GCP2 tool to assess situations.
- The training will give me a better understanding of Neglect.

3.2e Raise awareness of safeguarding in the local community

As this is the final report for DSCB, this section of the report has been extracted from a more detailed report written by Karen Palk the Lay Advisor to DSCB (from September 2010 to present) and will provide a brief overview of the community engagement for the reporting period only.

A 2 day CSE campaign took place in Dudley and Halesowen town centres, where a number of young people were spoken to, particularly in Halesowen. All young people without exception were aware of CSE following discussions taking place in their respective schools by a youth officer from West Midlands Police. With such knowledge, hopefully young people will be empowered to keep safe.

Ms Palk reported that undertaking the campaigns was often quite humbling, as members of the public would sometimes disclose other vulnerabilities or abuse that they had been subject to. For example, one individual actually returned to the town centre to tell Ms Palk that they had been a victim of domestic abuse and described the support that they had needed to leave that relationship and protect their child.

As the 11th March was National Operation Sceptre, Stop Knife Crime Awareness Day, and 18th March was National CSE Awareness Day, a collaborative campaign across the Borough was organised by a member of staff from Dudley Council for Voluntary Services from 11th-15th March. The event included members of DSCB, Ms Palk and partner agencies. The campaign focused on Knife Crime, CSE, and other areas of vulnerability for children and young people including Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), County Lines, Trafficking and Modern Day Slavery and Prevent.

The event was titled NAVIGATE, No Adolescent/Adult Victims involved in Gangs Armed Trafficked or Exploited.

On 11th March, together with a member of staff from the Community Safety Team, Ms Palk headed up the campaign on Stop Knife Crime. This was supported by colleagues throughout the day from Early Help, the Youth Offending Team, the Prevent Officer and CSE Co-ordinator.

Ms Palk organised the venue, which was Asda supermarket in Sedgley and obtained literature to distribute to members of the public. They managed to engage members of the public both within the supermarket and within the local community. Parents from a local primary school offered to distribute leaflets to other parents. A local charity shop offered to display leaflets, a member of staff from a neighbouring

housing association, who showed a keen interest in the campaign took literature and a poster to display. One of Dudley's youth councillors came along and was photographed supporting the campaign. Finally, Asda pledged not to continue selling single knives.

Hopefully, the information and resources provided will help to safeguard children and young people, and enable appropriate concerns and crime to be reported.

Children and young people's experiences of the helping system

The Child's Journey in Dudley

A range of local agencies contribute to the provision of services and support for children and families in Dudley, this spans from engagement at early recognition of need, through to specialist and/or statutory required intervention and child protection.

Early Help

Prevention and Early Help Service.

Recent years has seen an increasing demand for family support services, often with the issues that families are facing becoming increasingly complex. The Family Solutions Service made up of a range of dedicated teams many of which operate from local family centres, aims swift allocation and support to early help cases. In addition, a strand formed within the auspices of Family Solutions, is the Children & Adolescent Response Team (CART). These two service area ensures timely response to referrals for Early Help, and identification of the best service to meet the needs of the child or young person and their family.

During 18-19 Dudley Early Help Offer:

Source	period	Total
Completed Internal EHA's	06/18-06/19	1350
Completed External EHA's	06/18-06/19	1005
Total number of open cases -families	06/19	869
Total number of open cases - children/young people	06/19	1796
Total No. of contacts received at Family Centres	06/18-06/19	4526
Total No of Footfall at centres	06/18-06/19	9497
Total No of requests for advice/support at family centres	06/18-06/19	1557

In addition to the above – CART has worked with a total of 259 Young People (YP) since May 2017

Out of the 259 cases, 38 are currently open to CART with the other 221 now closed. 29 of these have been reunification cases and the other 230 were edge of care cases.

Closed cases

Out of the 221 closed cases, 183 of these remained at home with their parents/relative or carers, 5 were reunified back home from Foster Care or Residential care and 33 YP entered the care system or remained in the care of the LA.

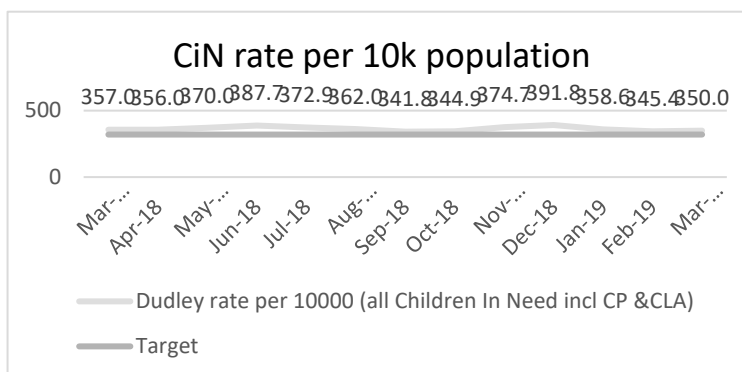
Children in Need and Child Protection

Children in Need

A child in need (CIN) is defined as; a child who is unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or whose health or development is likely to be significantly impaired without provision of services from the local authority, or he/she has a disability.

As at 31st March 2019, there were 2,408 children formally In Need of a Specialist Children's Service.

This rate has remained relatively stable across the financial year and similar to comparator areas. The average rate over the year is 362 which is lower than the statistical neighbour average of 369.

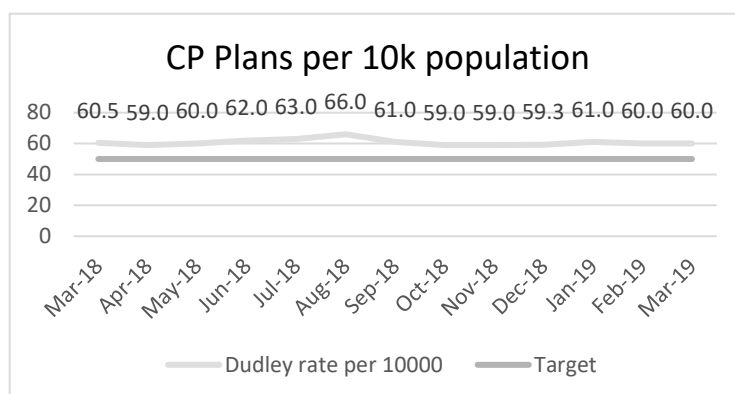


Child Protection

When the local authority receives a referral and information has been gathered during an assessment (which may have been very brief), in the course of which a concern arises that a child maybe suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, the local authority is required by Section 47 (S47) of the Children Act 1989 to make enquiries.

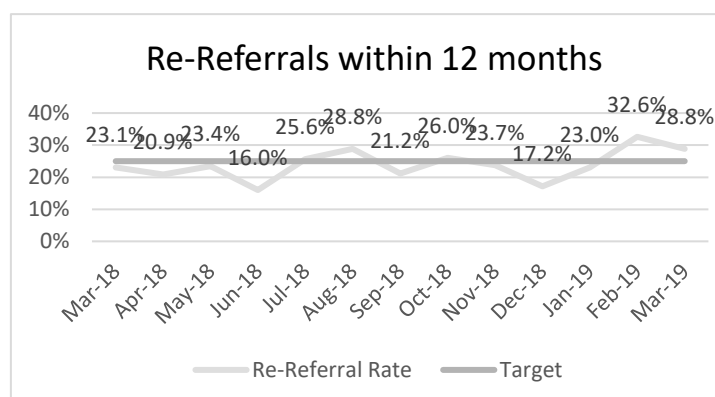
The number of children on Child Protections Plans has remained above 400 and the Child Protection rates per 10,000 continues to remain above our statistical neighbour of 58.

It is anticipated that the implementation of the Threshold Guidance document will reduce this figure by more children being appropriately supported in Early Help.



Contacts and referrals

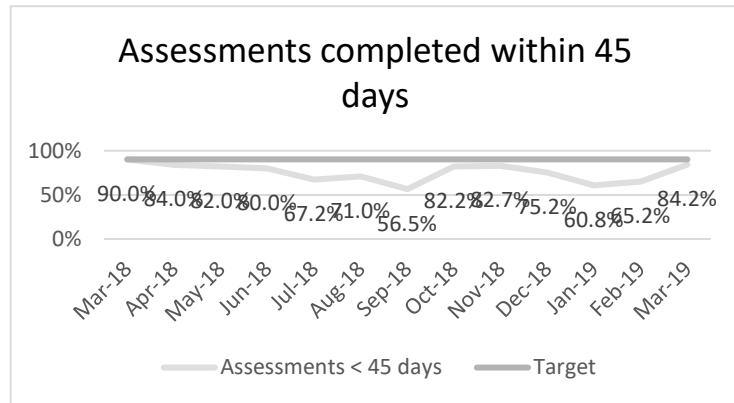
The rate of re-referrals fluctuated throughout the year but increased in the last quarter reaching a peak in February of 32.6%, 10% higher the statistical neighbour average of 22% for the year. DSCB are assured by a plan to dip sample



the re-referrals and analysis of the findings. The analysis will consider whether there has been any pre-mature step downs to Early Help.

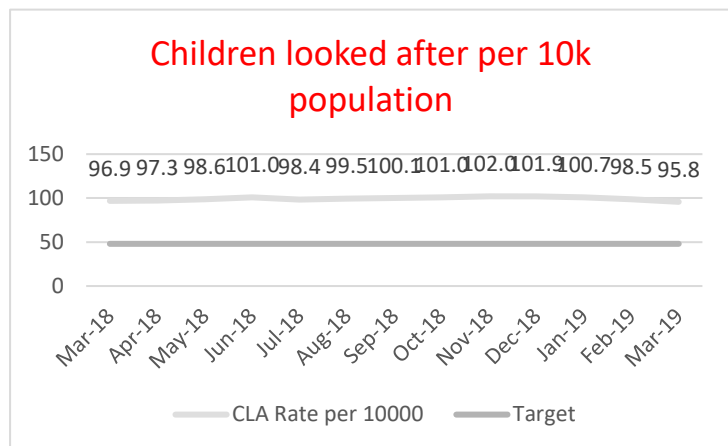
Single (continuous) assessments

The proportion of assessments completed within 45 days had a period of decline over the summer period and again in winter. Operation processes have been reviewed and a more robust mechanism has been implemented to improve completion rates.



Children Looked After

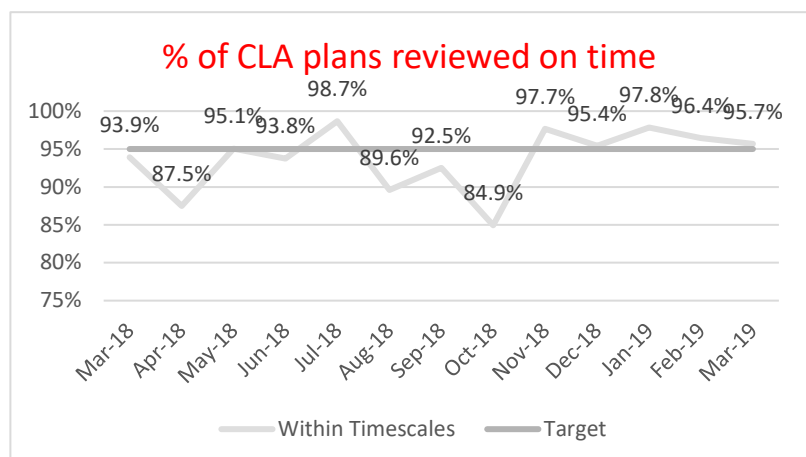
Children Looked After are those that are looked after by the Local Authority either voluntarily or through a statutory order. At the end of 2019 there were 659 children who were looked after by the Local Authority (LA). At the peak in November there were 701 children looked after. This initiated a further drive to reduce the number of Children Looked After by the LA. There is a concerted effort to appropriately bring down numbers of Children Looked After in Dudley through weekly meetings of senior officers with three year targets set to reach a volume more comparable to top quartile performing authorities.



For the children who were looked after at 31st March 2019, 8.3% had 3 or more moves in the year, which is below the local target of 9%.

Across the year the proportion of reviews for Children Looked After showed fluctuating performance, in terms of completion within required timescales. Performance has been more stable since November 2018.

3.3 Strategic Priority Three - Effective partnership working and accountability to improve safeguarding outcomes for children, young people and their families



3.3a. Children and young people are engaged and influence Board business and activity

Attempting to ensure the visibility and voice of children and young people as a golden thread through our work, the opportunity exists to inform on a particular presence of young people from Dudley Youth Council engaging with DSCB. The agenda item tabled as ‘What young people think should be done to improve the lives of children and young people in the borough’, this was delivered via a presentation highlighting the following points:

What is Dudley Youth Council, who they represent and what they do to try and make a difference to the lives of young people?

- Recognised and affiliated to UK Youth Parliament;
- Projects and campaigns undertaken;
- Overview of activities – demonstrating the wide range of young people of varying age, ethnicity, background, ability and experience represented;

Case studies sharing real experiences for two young people in very different circumstances, were presented. These introduced the main focus of the work of the Youth Council for the next twelve months, and where of particular interest to LSCB’s, being Online Safety and Homelessness.

To ensure there was full support of these themes and to hold members to account, the Youth Council required the members of DSCB to write 2 pledges that set out the actions they would take as a result of the issues raised.

It was agreed any developments and progress with the campaign, and the pledges made by members, would be revisited by the Youth Council at a later meeting.

3.3b. Listening to children and young people about their needs

Supporting the Health and Well-being of Young People in Dudley 2018

Through work commissioned and coordinated by the Children and Young People’s Team, part of the Office of Public Health, Dudley MBC; providers across the full range of education contribute to the Healthy Related Behaviour Survey, a nationally regarded and widely used survey from the Schools Health Education Unit (SHEU). This provided a sample of the views of primary pupils aged 9 to 11 and secondary pupils aged 12 to 15 on a number of topics, of which risk taking, safety, relationship and sexual health are included. The figures presented below shows the response from Dudley in the spring term 2018.

These results were collected from subject theme of SAFETY from age 9 to 11 years.

- 4% of pupils reported that they felt afraid of going to school because of bullying

8138 young people were involved in the survey:

School	Year					Total
Year	Year 5	Year 6	Year 8	Year 10	12*	
Age	9-10	10-11	12-13	14-15	16-17	
Boys	1083	1116	673	601	650	4123
Girls	998	1088	634	624	600	3944
Total	2081	2204	1320	1256	1277	8138**

- 'often' or 'very often'. 24% said 'sometimes' while 72% said 'never'.
- When asked if they had been bullied at or near school in the past 12 months, 29% of primary pupils said 'yes'.
- 80% said that their school takes bullying seriously.
- When asked what things school does to raise awareness of bullying, 78% said they did things in anti-bullying week. 72% said they had displays in school and 46% said theatre groups came in to school.
- 86% of pupils said that they use the Internet at home on a laptop or similar device; 89% said they use it on a mobile device, e.g. iPad or phone.
- 85% of boys use the Internet on a gaming device.
- 75% of pupils said that their parents have rules about what Internet sites they can use.
- 88% of pupils said that they use the Internet for playing games, 67% said for schoolwork and 55% said for instant messaging (Snapchat, WhatsApp etc.).
- 24% of boys and 10% of girls reported that they chat to people online who they have never met.
- 95% of pupils said that they have been told how to stay safe while using the Internet.
- 20% of pupils said they had received a chat message that scared them or made them upset.
- 10% of pupils have received a picture that scared them or made them upset and 7% said they had shared a picture that they wouldn't show their parents.

Extracts collected from subject theme of SAFETY from age 12 to 15 years

- 4% of pupils reported that they felt afraid of going to school because of bullying 'often' or 'very often'. 18% said 'sometimes' while 78% said 'never'.
- When asked if they had been bullied in the past 12 months, 21% of secondary pupils said 'yes',
- 45% said that their school takes bullying seriously.
- 59% of pupils said that they have used an Internet chat site or app. 14% said they had received a chat message that scared them or made them upset.
- 20% of pupils reported that they have met someone in real life who they first met online.
- 96% of pupils said that they have been told how to stay safe while using the Internet.
- 74% said that they always follow the advice they have been given.
- 76% of pupils responded that they have found school lessons about e-safety 'quite' or 'very' useful.
- 35% said they were treated for an accident at a health centre or a hospital within the last 12 months.
- 11% of pupils said that they had been the victim of violence or aggression in the area where they live in the last 12 months.
- 27% of pupils rate the safety of their area when going out after dark as 'poor' or 'very poor'. 8% say their safety when going to and from school is 'poor' or 'very poor' and 7% say the same about their safety at school.

Progress against this specific area arising from the survey, will be of interest to and be monitored by the safeguarding partners under the new arrangements.

3.3c. All of the DSCB sub groups will have consistent multi-agency representation

The engagement and commitment of DSCB members to all aspects of safeguarding business is strong, however, as the attendance of partners at the required forums is closely monitored, throughout the year where concerns have arisen, these are addressed, in the first instance via the DSCB Business Unit Manager, then escalated for attention by the Independent Chair as necessary in line with the DSCB Constitution. Monitoring of multi-agency attendance extends beyond board and sub-group meetings, and does include other types of events such as training, briefing sessions, reviews, including multi-agency case file audits and SCR's panel meetings.

3.3d. DSCB dataset contains multi-agency data and multi-agency learning is identified via audit

In previous reports, we have mentioned that the DSCB dataset is heavily reflective of Local Authority data. While this is still the case, we are beginning to see data from the varying discipline of Health Services. Moving forward, data intelligence should be reflective of all partners represented within the remit of the new safeguarding partnership, this will allow for greater insight, understanding of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements across the full cohort of agencies providing services and support to children and families, and therefore better placed to scrutinise and monitor compliance, and hold agencies to account for safeguarding. Within the new arrangements, consideration will need to be more transparent in respect of what data is required and how this will contribute to safeguarding children and improving outcomes, noting that the narrative surrounding data is a critical component relevant to translate data.

3.3e. Professionals report from evaluation on the impact of training, and learning and development has improved practice and so outcomes for children and families

The DSCB course evaluations provide valuable information in terms of the quality of training delivered on the day, however, more is required to gain a true understanding of the long-term impact of multi-agency training on practice, and this is an area of the work plan which is overdue. The following are a selection of the feedback received from some of the courses:

CSE Training

- It was useful to know the indicators of identifying a child at risk and have an overview of the screening tool and referral processes.
- I am better informed of what to look for and will be able to put this into place at all times within my role
- I am now aware of how to safeguard these children and where to refer them

Online Safety Training

- More in depth knowledge of the internet will help with safeguarding victims
- All of the course was useful to use with Service Users in my job, I can use the information acquired to work with Service Users regarding online safety.
- I found the whole day interesting and educational, I will now be contacting the various organisations for help and support and to refer.

Neglect Training

- The course was useful to understand procedures and will give a greater understanding of the signs of neglect
- It was useful to find out the different forms of neglect and will be more mindful of my practices as a result
- I will use tools and be mindful to include in case notes, it was beneficial to see the tools used in Dudley as I am new to the area and useful to have a revision on referral pathways.

3.3f. DSCB (or its successor) is fulfilling its statutory functions

In the previous year, we reported much progress made in delivering the prescribed improvements established on the basis of the 2016 Ofsted grade of inadequate, which extended to direct changes and improvement for the DSCB to be compliant of all its statutory duties.

In particular, there is a drift in releasing the full Section 11 assessment, this is due to securing a platform to accommodate the tool that was easily accessible and user friendly to all DSCB partners. This issue was resolved and a full S11 assessment was undertaken and reported to DSCB in March 2018

In respect of the Learning and Improvement framework (LIF) and activity, the work required to further embed a new model and process has seen much progression. Implementing the LIF, has seen SCR briefing being organised on the back end of each SCR publication. These have been supported by bespoke Learning the Lessons – SCR Briefing Paper that are disseminated to the wider workforce.

The Board has also made further improvement in respect of the quality assurance activities, this includes more data from partners which will provide improved assurances of safeguarding arrangements across agencies. However, to build on the existing improvements, partners should be required to provide the supporting narrative to enable partners to truly understand and scrutinise the data and be assured by demonstrable evidence of what difference is being made.

WHAT DID OFSTED SAY in 2017?	What was accomplished in 2017?	Where are we now in 2018?
The local authority and partner agencies should ensure that the DSCB Business Unit is adequately staffed and resourced to provide effective management oversight and enhanced capacity to support the business of the Board	Increased the DSCB Budget by 20% (Reviewed) restructured the DSCB Business Unit to support starting points to support well-being of DSCB statutory functions	Increased the budget further with additional income from education An increase in starting points within the business Unit, the related starting points include a Performance and Quality Assurance Officer and a DSCB/ S11 Administrator
The structure of and processes supporting the Board should be reviewed by the partners and developed to ensure that there is no undue burden, time and resource placed on the Board's priorities. This includes engagement with children and young people	Reviewed the membership of the Board and its Subgroups. Restructured its Constitution subject to work with that of other partnership boards, while at the same time seeking new ways to increase the engagement and involvement with children and have signed up to a communication strategy to drive this initiative	A revised Constitution, comprising the governance processes, with each subgroup providing quarterly progress report to the executive group. Engagement visibility of young people at the work of the DSCB is evident, with the Board at each meeting of the DSCB. Implementation of young people in online safety, e-saf and neglect workstream. Young person involvement at all levels continues to a reach wider spotlight on children with involvement
The Board should ensure the implementation of an effective quality assurance framework, embedding a programme of quality assurance activities, effective scrutiny of risk	The Board has agreed and increased the quality assurance functions, and is implementing a programme of quality assurance activities including reporting	Quality Assurance Framework, robust, high-impact and demonstrated Multi-agency audit questions around and quality assurance commenced in June 2017

4. SUBGROUP ACTIVITIES

In the main, the statutory functions of DSCB are delivered and monitored via subgroups, these are led by a chair who generates a work plan and then held to account for progress via the Executive group. Work plans form the basis of the DSCB Strategic Business Plan, outlining the priorities and required achievements for the given period.

The following provides a snapshot of the activities undertaken of each DSCB subgroup against the agreed work plan for the reporting period.

4.1 PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY ASSURANCE SUBGROUP

This subgroup drives forward DSCB's monitoring and scrutiny functions, for this period including; undertaking the Section 11 and Section 175 activities, overseeing the performance dataset, managing the annual programme of multi-agency audits, monitoring single agency actions plans following external regulatory inspections and action plans arising from reviews including SCR's and other types of reviews and audits.

Highlights of achievements in the last 12 months up to March 2019

- Further embed the Quality Assurance Framework (QAF)
- Extended the multi-agency performance dataset
- Maintained the quarterly themed Multi Agency Case File Audits (MACFA). In 2018/19 we scrutinised multi-agency practice against the following areas: unborn protocol, children with disabilities, the impact of parental mental health and safeguards for children, and children missing.
- Completed a Section 175 Audit across Dudley schools
- Completed Section 11 Audit of partner agency safeguarding arrangements
- Presented performance reports at each DSCB meeting.
- To improve the monitoring and scrutiny functions of partners safeguarding arrangements through the QAF, a scheduled assurance report from agencies recently commenced.
- Monitored agencies improvement/ action plans following external inspections



Key Challenges and Priorities for the New Partnership in 2019/20/21

- In order for the DSCB to truly monitor the effectiveness of the agencies internal safeguarding arrangements, the performance dataset needs to include not only data intelligence, but the supporting narrative.
- Over 2018/19 performance data reported through the Board was expanded to incorporate newly developed reporting around Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and the processes of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) & Safeguarding Lead for Education. Alongside this further information was incorporated from across partner agencies, including Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust and West Midlands Police. Whilst the dataset has expanded over 2018/19 and reflects a wider set of issues relating to safeguarding in the borough, a key priority for 2019/20 is to ensure that this is clearly linked to the priorities in the new Safeguarding Board arrangements and is more central to informing activity through the Board and associated partnerships.
- We are beginning to see the presence of children through a range of work undertaken by the Board, this is an aspiration of the new partners and an area for growth
- Over the year, Learning from MACFA briefing sheets are disseminated to members of DSCB for wider circulation within each representing agency. Feedback received suggest these are useful. However, we will need to turn some attention to auditing the reach, and in doing so will have some

assurance that staff across the full range of the workforce are sighted of these and are given the opportunity to enhance practice.

- The full Section 11 self-assessment tool was distributed to partners, there was 90% completion across the partnership. There were two non-complying agencies, these being those that provide safeguarding support across the Black Country region, and those who do not routinely attend meetings of DSCB but receive papers and contribute on an ad hoc basis.
- A summary of the response provided assurance that in the main, adequate safeguards are in place across the member agencies of DSCB. Areas for development including greater visibility and understanding of the role and remit of designated leads in agencies, and a standardised approach for commissioning services. These will be taken forward within the new arrangements by the key safeguarding partners.
- Completion of Section 175 self-assessment was issued to all Dudley schools and colleges, this compliance rate and overall standard was particularly high, with supervision for Designated Safeguarding Leads being the area highlighted for development. Dudley is fortunate to have both a Safeguarding Lead for Education and a Safeguarding Trainer for Education, together, these roles will provide the necessary support to drive improvements across the full spectrum of education.

4.2 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC SUB GROUP

The pace of progress for this work-stream has received some challenges during the reporting year, despite which, the group have maintained oversight of the following areas:

- The provision of a multi-agency training programmes that reflects DSCB priorities.
- Ensured that the finding and learning arising from local Serious Case Reviews and those from MACFA's are disseminated to the wider workforce.
- To monitor the impact of multi-agency training through evaluations completed at the end of each training session
- Implemented the Learning Improvement Framework (LIF) via introducing briefing sessions following the publication of SCR's, ensuring that all recommendations and any practice improvements identified are widely disseminated to the workforce.
- Activated the new booking system which will provide an effective source to host, collate, analyse and support the evidencing of the impact of training on practice moving forward.
- Closely monitored the feedback in relation to the threshold training, to ensure that the application is well understood. The following provides a few comments extracted from evaluations forms following on from the threshold training:

Thresholds Training

- I now have more knowledge of the Threshold Guidance and improvement of completing an Early Help Assessment.
- I have become more knowledgeable with the new current priorities and thinking
- The training was a good refresher on the details around levels / criteria
- The threshold training was relevant to reinforce practice
- The training has provided greater understanding of new vocabulary and systems structure.

The above does replicate the findings of Ofsted during the visit in October 2018, which reported:

“Thresholds are well understood and applied in most cases and consent is generally sought or is dispensed with appropriately. Child protection concerns are quickly identified and responded to.”

Key Challenges and Priorities for the New Partnership in 2019/20/21

Whilst the group continues to receive summarising reports featuring the feedback from DSCB training courses, these can only truly be valuable in terms of the quality of training delivered and information received on the day. The infrastructure to take this to the next phase via the new booking system is in place, but yet to be implemented. Recognising the importance placed on multi-agency training, there is a need to rejuvenate the aspiration to develop a pre and post course evaluation process to measure, and better understand the impact of training on practice.

With the recognition of the importance placed on safeguarding, with this comes a wealth of associated training under a vast range of themes. These are delivered to both single and multi-agency audiences across the local area. Within the new

arrangements, how this is monitored will require consideration and may result in undertaking a review of the safeguarding training programmes being offered to agencies to ensure a) they are in line with local needs, priorities and practice b) they are underpinned by local, regional and national drivers c) there are consistency in information being shared and d) such training is monitored for its impact on practice.

4.3 SERIOUS CASE REVIEW SUB GROUP

This area of DSCB function has seen significant progress over the last 12 months. The DSCB has published 5 completed SCRs within the reporting period. A number of themes have emerged from the reviews and work has been commenced to address these.

The DSCB have also completed 3 local multi-agency reviews and learning from these has also been shared. The sub group have worked hard to ensure that the voice of the child and family is included in the review process. Learning from reviews has been disseminated to front line staff via face to face multi-agency briefings as well as written briefings.

The sub group have monitored the risk register and challenge log, which are standing agenda items. The SCR sub group work plan has been updated and developed for 2019/20.

The highlights of achievements include:

- All Serious Case Reviews (SCR's) undertaken within the reporting period have been completed within timescales.
- Four SCRs have been published and multi-agency briefings have been held for all four. Written briefings have also been disseminated via DSCB members.
- Members of the SCR sub group/authors have met with children and family members of those who have been subject of SCRs.
- Three Local Multi Agency Reviews have also been completed within the reporting period and these have included practitioner involvement.
- Learning from reviews (both SCR and Local Multi Agency) has been disseminated in a timely fashion
- An audit of frontline practitioners was completed to determine if briefings from SCRs and Local MA reviews had been received, what had been learned and how practice had changed as a result.
- Review and update of the Learning and Improvement Framework (LIF) in line with changes to statutory guidance and legislation.
- Quarterly SCR updates are submitted to NHS England (NHSE) in order to obtain a regional picture and to identify any drift or delay.
- The CCG commissioned an external legal training company to deliver 2 report writing sessions in 2018 which covered IMR, SCR, DHR and SAR report writing principles. The sessions were well attended and evaluated well.
- The CCG commissioned a medical expert to present a session on fatal child abuse for paediatric staff within the Acute Trust.



- SCR referrals are now being received in a timely manner.
- Action plans are being monitored via the sub group and via agency assurance processes.

The voice of the child has been very evident in a number of the published SCRs. Members of the SCR sub group have met with parents, foster carers and some of the children themselves.

One child when asked about his life with his foster carers, stated *“I love it here; they look after me well and are kind”. “I love to do housework and enjoy hoovering, I want to learn to iron but (foster carers) won’t let me at the moment because they are worried I will burn myself”.*

On another SCR, A foster carer reported that one child arrived at the house one day when they had been out for dinner to celebrate their anniversary. He brought chocolates and a card *“because I love you so much”.* The foster carers stated the child had a very close relationship with his younger siblings and that they miss him very much and ask about him all of the time.

Key Challenges and Priorities for the New Partnership in 2019/20/21

Going forward, the priorities will be implementing the changes which replaces the process used for undertaking SCR’s with a new two-tier system comprising of a National Panel, who will be responsible for commissioning and publishing reviews into the most serious and complex cases and in turn will provide national learning. These reviews will be known as a National Serious Case Inquiry (NSCI).

In addition, local reviews will still be commissioned into cases where there has been death or serious injury and there is the potential for local learning to improve services. These reviews will be known as Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews. The requirement that reports are as far as possible, published in full, remains. Local arrangements must ensure that a (15 day) rapid review will be undertaken on all cases and the National Panel are notified within 15 days, at which point they will decide who undertakes which type of review, either NSCI undertaken by the Panel, or a CSPR is required at a local level.

In view of the proposals, the Learning and Improvement Framework (LIF) has been reviewed and amended to reflect the statutory changes to safeguarding arrangements and review processes, and will be closely monitored within the new arrangements.

4.4 Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)

On the introduction of new arrangements being announced for child death reviews, a major development for this panel during this period has seen close working with Sandwell CDOP to amalgamate the two panels, with the first joint meeting held in October 2018.

Dudley was also successful in a bid through the DfE Early Adopters Fund to establish a ‘Black Country Strategic CDOP’.

In continuing with the advocacy role, and prior to the joint panel, Dudley CDOP influenced the delivery of a sepsis campaign across the Borough, with specific focus on primary care and how to spot the early signs of sepsis following the sad death of a young person. The panel also influenced the implementation of an adherence to sepsis protocol audit in primary care, and it expects to receive assurances on this from Dudley CCG on a regular basis.

The Dudley CDOP oversaw the delivery of a water safety campaign across the Borough throughout the summer.

Last year was a stable year for child death reviews. The management of death notification and the role of CDOP nurse support was transferred from the Black Country Partnership Foundation Trust to Dudley Group of Hospitals. Partners worked very hard to reduce any negative impact on the review process. Furthermore Dudley CDOP has

- Bereavement support work is ongoing and is being progressed by the Lead Nurse for Child Death.
- Successful recruitment to the post of Bereavement Specialist Midwife and launch of a Maternity, Neonatal and Paediatric Bereavement Working Group.
- Following themes identified, Public Health campaigns are ongoing across the borough including safer sleeping, water safety and the dangers of button batteries.
- Embedding of the Primary Care sepsis pathway within GP practices.
- Completion and presentation of the Dudley CDOP annual report.
- The successful merging of the two CDOPs has resulted in more obvious trends and themes being identified which going forward will be referred into the regional meeting to develop targeted public health programmes across the Black Country.

Ongoing process of implementing new arrangements for reviewing child deaths are per Working Together 2018 and the Child Death Review: Statutory and Operational Guidance 2018.

Evidence of the Voice/Contribution of Children and Young People

Feedback from parents suggested that bereavement support across Dudley was somewhat ad hoc. CDOP has listened and worked to develop bereavements pathway to ensure that bereaved families have access to consistent and effective bereavement support across the Borough.

From two SCR cases it became clear that children were exhibiting behaviours indicating histories of adversity which suggested that they needed help and support at an early stage. It was agreed that such vulnerable young people require more proactive work and Public Health are currently leading on a piece of work around Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the links to poorer outcomes. Public Health has started to raise awareness of the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences and trauma in order to inform / improve both recognition and engagement within the sector and offer support to improve outcomes across the life course.

Key Challenges and Priorities for the New Partnership in 2019/20

This strand of the functions for DSCB does not transfer under the new tripartite arrangements headed by the Local Authority, Dudley CCG and West Midlands Police, and instead will be led by Dudley Public Health and Dudley CCG under separate arrangements. The priorities and any forwarding work will be developed at a Black Country level going forward.

However, any outstanding reviews will be undertaken by DSCB in line with the transitional arrangements and transferred as required.

4.5 ON-LINE SAFETY SUBGROUP

The 18/19 work plan was carried forward and work has continue at a satisfactory pace with elements of some actions already taking place and embedded into 'business as usual'

The highlights of achievements for 2018/19 include:

- Briefings on a range of topics have been shared with practitioners and the public
- Work has taken place with Early Years colleagues to ensure that they are fully involved in the agenda, with permanent representation on the group.
- Members of the group have been involved in updating the DSCB use of image guidance and consent forms
- A short video entitled '*you wouldn't say it in real life, so why say it online?*' has been created and shared via safe and sound social media channels/website.
- An Online Relationships conference on February 8th, was well attended and received positive evaluations. The event was planned with the support of the Youth Council, and the event was co facilitated by one member of the youth council.
- The annual safer internet day debate took place on 5th February 2018, with 25 primary age children attending.
- The adults 'online survey' received a total of 322 responses. This survey also took into account parents experiences which will inform any additional specific work with parents. Several actions have already been added to the 19/20 action plan in response to the survey.
- As the nominated author for the online safety component of the West Midlands Regional Safeguarding Procedures, during this period the group have worked to review and update protocol in line with current guidance.
- On behalf of DSCB, the group submitted a response to the governments Internet Safety Green Paper
- The group has again supported the Diana Awards this year which has trained 438 primary age pupils and 176 secondary a total of 614 ambassadors in Dudley, in addition to our special school pupils
- The group is linking in closely with Dudley Anti-Bullying Accreditation and Working Party, with Bullying being a standing agenda item at meetings, to ensure clear links between anti-bullying work and online safety
- Input at the CCG 'Me Festival' around cyber bullying

- Schools event '*online safety – making it work for you*' – highlighted links between online and prevent and how school networks are monitored and reports used by schools

In celebrating the progress made, the group can also evidence the visibility of children and young people in much of the achievements, during this period:

- Dudley Youth Council were involved in the planning and delivery of the online relationships conference
- The organising of an annual debate gave children and young people the opportunity to share their opinions around an identified topic, it also provided opportunities to look at current trends in regards to apps and games which will then be included in training sessions.
- Diana Awards engage children and young people to change attitudes, behaviours and culture of bullying within schools by building skills and confidence to address different situations, both online and offline

Key Challenges and Priorities for the New Partnership in 2019/20/21

Next steps for the subgroup are currently unknown due to the transition period from DSCB to DSPPB, however the following are actions included within the 19/20 plan

- Identify and carry out a specific piece of work around online hate crime
- Identify and carry out a specific piece of work around Digital Literacy and disinformation
- Explore the possibility of community online safety briefing sessions
- Promote the use of various settings both privacy and security
- To explore how the group can support the 'prevent' agenda in relation to online in response to the Counter Terrorism Local Profile
- To explore the adults online survey results in further detail and identify work streams as appropriate
- To work with trading standards to promote awareness of online frauds and scams / abuse
- Raise awareness of the consequences of illegal and inappropriate online activity
- Be cognisant of national responses (e.g. online harms white paper) and respond as appropriate

4.6 CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION & MISSING SUBGROUP

There are early consideration to progressing contextual safeguarding in Dudley. This will enable the partnership to consider the impact of risks to children away from home and out in the community.

The recent amalgamation of the West Midlands Police Child Abuse Investigation Teams (CAIT) for Sandwell and Dudley has eliminated the scenario of officers being responsible for investigations in one council borough. CAIT officers and supervisors responsible for the investigation of matters involving Dudley Children are now based at a central location in West Bromwich.

This team forms half of what is known as the Western area of Child Investigation for the Police with, Wolverhampton and Walsall forming the other. Up until the 4th of February 2019, each council area operated independently with its own Child Abuse Policing Team. This meant that each area had its own Chairperson; ordinarily the Detective Inspector for the department; however from the 4th of February this is no longer the case.

As part of the re-structure, investigation officers, CSE co-ordinators and ICPC attendees will be managed by a single Detective Inspector and supervisor who have joint responsibility for both areas. The supervisor is responsible for chairing the various safeguarding meetings for both areas as part of already established partnership agreements where information around CSE and missing episodes is shared.

What has also been established is that up until now, Dudley and Sandwell Children's Services have operated in very different ways and have independently established ways of working that is often not mirrored on the adjacent area and visa-versa.

The recent proposal to amalgamate CMOG (Child Missing Operational Group) and YPSE (Youth Panel for Sexual Exploitation) meetings to establish similar working patterns between Dudley and the adjacent council area of Sandwell have recently been agreed. The previous definition of said meetings (CSE & Missing Operations Group) have been re-instated to avoid confusion between partner agencies, police and other boroughs.

The CSE Missing & Operational Group is a multi-agency forum which directs medium and long term actions to safeguard, disrupt and reduce opportunity for children to be harmed through sexual exploitation and missing episodes.

Scope:

- Direct intelligence collection and/or disruptive actions with regard to individuals who are believed to be harming children through sexual exploitation activities.
- Direct safeguarding and disruption activities in locations considered vulnerable to sexual exploitation activities.
- Provide oversight of on-going criminal investigations to ensure interventions reflect the risk of harm.
- Share information and intelligence with regard to children whose behaviour and activities indicate they are at risk through missing episodes or sexual exploitation.
- Understand trends, networks and connections between victims, perpetrators and locations.
- Consider the strong associations that have been identified between different forms of sexual exploitation, running away from home, child trafficking and substance misuse.
- Share information and intelligence with regard to individuals involved in perpetrating abusive and criminal behaviour.

- Understand and respond to key locations that are being used to exploit children and young people.
- Develop multi-agency plans to protect children and young people; manage key locations; and to prosecute/disrupt perpetrators.

Key Challenges and Priorities for the New Partnership in 2019/20/21

- To develop ways of working that is based upon contextual safeguarding to enable the protection of children out in the community as well as within the home.
- To move towards a joint strategy for safeguarding child and young people who are at risk from all forms of exploitation, including CSE, CCE and trafficking. Many children and young people experience more than one form of abuse and the responses from the partnership, therefore must be more joined up.

4.7 POLICIES & PROCEDURES

The sub-group remit support DSCB to undertake its duty; to develop and review the local multi-agency safeguarding policies and procedures.

To support this function DSCB are members of the West Midlands Regional Safeguarding Procedures Group (RSPG), formed in September 2016 and launched the 1st series of the West Midlands Safeguarding Procedures on the 1st April 2017.

Two years on, the group is relatively well established and meet on a quarterly basis to deliver the functions as mandated.

Within the expected functions assigned to this group, is a duty to contribute to the work being undertaken by the RSPG, this specifically requires; producing and maintaining assigned procedures on behalf of the region and also review and maintain any supplementary protocols, procedures and practice guidance that are required at a local level.

The highlights of achievements for 2018/19 include:

During this period, the Policy and Procedures sub-group have continued to ensure that the local practice guidance documents to support and ensure multi-agency safeguarding practice are kept valid and in line with local, regional and national statutory legislative requirements. In accordance with the mandate afforded to this group, the following strategic outcomes and activities have been achieved:

- a) Continued to support and contribute to the development and maintenance of the West Midlands Safeguarding Procedures
- b) To add to the above, the group have maintained the section of the West Midlands procedures which informs on any practice arrangements/expectations that are specific to Dudley, therefore local practice requirements.
- c) As assigned by the RSPG, the group have revised, and maintained the following policies:
 - Forced Marriage
 - Honour Based Violence
 - Online Safety
- d) Introduced and/or revised local safeguarding documents in response to the findings and recommendation from SCR's
- e) Updated documentation on line with local, regional, and national updates relevant to multi-agency practice.
- f) Introduced and maintained a 'procedures inventory', to monitor all documents endorsed by the group, this includes date reviewed/due to be reviewed and version controls to ensure validity
- g) Ensured all multi-agency practice guidance are published on the DSCB website and forwarded to the strategic workforce development subgroup to inform and support the Learning and Development aspects of the safeguarding agenda to ensuring partners are compliant with the current statutory duties.
- h) Updated the Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) and Resolution and Escalation Protocol in line with the Local Threshold for Support

Key Challenges and Priorities for the New Partnership in 2019/20/21

The new safeguarding partnership arrangements to replace DSCB will see the working arrangements for this subgroup take on a new focus which will have a 'think family approach and include adult safeguarding. To ensure we get this right, the priorities for the coming year, will be to develop a joint business plan to encompass both strands of work. However, we will also:

- Maintain oversight of the safeguarding procedures for safeguarding children, including updating and publishing all multi-agency practice documents
- Maintain the links with the RSPG, including leading on the assigned procedures on behalf of the West Midlands
- Direct all procedures to the Strategic Workforce Development group
- Raise the profile of the group
- Ensure the membership includes access to subject matters/experts to reduce issues of drift and delay.

5. TASK and FINISH GROUPS

In 2016, DSCB formed two task and finish groups to assist in the development in the areas of Neglect and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) 3 years on, these groups are still in existence and the work of each for this reporting period is as follows:

5.1 FGM Task and Finish Group

The FGM working group have a wide membership and meet on a quarterly basis to raise awareness both for practitioners and for the general community. A briefing has been shared with Elected Members in order to raise awareness at a strategic level. This included a link to a Home Office short e-learning.

Key Achievements during 2018/19

- The CCG have commissioned Brook to deliver FGM awareness raising sessions for children in primary schools, with any surplus funding to be used to deliver train the trainer sessions for School Nurses.
- A presentation on FGM was delivered to the DSL Forum in November 2018
- A FGM workshop in November 2018 received excellent feedback and elicited a number of suggestions which have been incorporated into the work plan for 2019/20.
- The Dudley FGM Strategy has been reviewed and updated for 2018/20
- The group have secured the attendance of a community development worker with links to Community Groups in Halesowen, Lye and Central Dudley and will be developing informal sessions to discuss emotive issues including FGM.
- The group have also secured the support of a GP as the Primary Care lead for FGM.
- Awareness raising has continued for both practitioners and communities with the distribution of posters, implementation of the FGM screening tool, use of the petal app, training delivered to school staff.
- Information around FGM and links for support has been included on all agency websites including IZone (Children website).
- A Training Needs Analysis identified a need for targeted training within sexual health services (CASH and GUM) and also ED. This has been completed and will be rolled out to a number of other areas including Paediatrics and Maternity.

Key Challenges and Priorities for the New Partnership in 2019/20/21.

The mandate for this group will be streamlined and maintained under the auspices of Safe and Sound (Community Safety Partnership, however, within the new arrangements there will be an expectation for receiving an annual update against the progress and development of this subject area which is or the concern for the DSPPB

5.2 Neglect Task and Finish Group

The Neglect Strategy was developed in 2016 to ensure that all partners are committed to preventing and reducing neglect in Dudley. Evidence of the progress made in this area have been mentioned in earlier sections of this report.

The strategy was endorsed by both the Dudley Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB) and Children and Young Persons Alliance Board (CYPA) respectively in July 2016 and Sept 2016. The strategy was agreed for 2 years to enable a focus on supporting Children's service through the Ofsted process.

A Neglect Task and Finish group was first established in April 2016 to oversee the implementation of the strategy and plan. The group membership was not too dissimilar to that of the Early Help strategy group and therefore following agreement with partners the Neglect task and finish group in 2018 merged within the Early Help group, with smaller sub groups still continuing to lead on aspects of the plan. Going forward, progress against this strategy will be monitored by the DSPPB on an annual basis.

6. OTHER SAFEGUARDING AREAS OF RELEVANCE TO DSCB:

During the year, DSCB monitors the progress and receives annual reports and updates in other areas of notable interest to the safeguarding board agenda. The following and final section of this feature summaries from each of these specific areas.

6.1 LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER (LADO)

Working Together guidance requires each local authority to identify a 'Designated Officer' (LADO) with responsibility for the management and oversight of individual cases where there is concern in relation to a person who works in a position of trust with children. Their role is to *provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations, to liaise with other agencies and monitor the progress of cases* to ensure they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent within a thorough and fair process. The LADO also chairs Position of Trust Meetings (multi-agency safeguarding meeting) this meeting involves relevant professionals (and the police if it appears an offence has been committed) to consider the information/risk and how best to proceed.

The LADO in Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council works with representatives across agencies in Dudley and also regularly works with LADO's in other local authorities where individuals undertake activities with children across different local authority boundaries. Furthermore the LADO will liaise with agencies outside of Dudley where allegations relate to those working in Dudley but whose employers may not be local (for example independent fostering agencies or education employment agencies based out of the Borough).

Key Achievements during 2018/19

The LADO has updated training and delivered briefings on behalf of DSCB multi-agency on the Management of Allegations programme; in addition, the LADO has visited several other establishments and delivered bespoke briefings, when requested by the agency and/or when it has been identified that they would benefit from a tailored session. These have been completed with the SLE to enhance and raise individual and employers awareness of safer working practices.

The LADO has updated key documents/policies for the DSCB in line with changes in Working Together 2018 and KCSI 2018.

A clear step by step process has also been produced for the employer clearly outlining the process and indicating their responsibility as an agency/employer.

Case Study – evidencing the Voice/Contribution of Children and Young People

The child's views as well as parent/carer is routinely captured within the Management of Allegations process.

Child --- alleged he had been assaulted by 'pushing' by a Member of staff (MOS) employed at the children's home where he resides. Child sustained no injury and did not require medical attention. Children home followed safeguarding procedures and reported to the LADO as the MOS is employed in a Position of Trust. They also refrained the MOS from working whilst the matter was subject to LADO evaluation.

Action: LADO liaised with the child's Social Worker and made arrangements for the SW to visit the child in order to ensure his safety, gain his views of the incident and to capture his wishes and feelings.

Outcome:

- Conduct issue for employer to manage internally
- Additional training for staff around de-escalation/physical intervention
- All staff to attend safeguarding refresher training
- Information leaflet around the Management of Allegations process for parents/carers

Areas identified for development during 19/20

- Information leaflet around the Management of Allegations process for parents/carers
- Continue to raise awareness about LADO service/process to partner agencies by delivering multi-agency briefings on behalf of DSCB

6.2 SAFEGUARDING LEAD FOR EDUCATION

Dudley has invested in its commitment to safeguarding support specific to providers of education through the employment of a Safeguarding Lead for Education. During the reporting period, this has seen,

The development of a Safeguarding in Education Reference group made up of Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL's) for schools and Headteachers, who together ensure that schools have a voice with safeguarding matters/training offer and support

The establishment of weekly Safeguarding Newsletter – for sharing new safeguarding information

The creation of a webpage which holds Safeguarding in Education information in one place

Quarterly DSL Forums – providing regular updates to ensure schools are fully abreast of emerging and growing themes, these feature speakers from partner agencies and topics of relevance, for example:

- Head teacher from out of area presented her experience of a child that died and subsequent SCR that attracted media attention and have contributed to national changes in practice.
- Awareness raising of Harmful Sexual Behaviour following a SCR pertaining to Complex Sexual Abuse
- The importance of working within the Guidance for Safer Working Practice
- The requirement for PREVENT awareness in schools
- The introduction of 'contextual safeguarding' and the connectivity to drug, gang and knife crime
- The local position of Domestic Abuse in Dudley and the impact on children and young people.
- Raising awareness of Private Fostering and what schools need to know
- Use of images and wider concerns related to online safety
- The impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's)

In addition to the above, the outdated training offer for education has been refreshed in line with the statutory safeguarding guidance for schools published in November 2018

6.3 PRIVATE FOSTERING ARRANGEMENTS IN DUDLEY

Key Achievements during 2018/19

In October 2018 Private Fostering was subject to an Ofsted inspection (as part of Dudley Children Services inspection) the report was very positive around areas of Private fostering reporting that '*Dudley local authority is active in identifying private fostering arrangements and raising awareness across other service providers in the borough. Private fostering assessments are timely and demonstrate appropriate understanding and application of thresholds, decision-making, policy and procedure.*

Social workers make sure that children are spoken to alone and that their voices are heard. ‘

There is an audit process in place for the Private Fostering Social Worker to ensure that all areas within the standards are covered. The Fostering Team Manager also oversees all documents and signs off all completed assessments. There is management oversight on cases supported by regular and reflective supervision. Supervision is documented on the social work information system in line with Dudley’s procedures.

The Private Fostering Social Worker has continued to ensure the child/rens needs are being met and ensure that they are seen alone (and if not spoken to alone, the reasons are recorded) to inform the assessment and analysis of the suitability of the placement in meeting their needs and to ensure the Child’s voice is recorded throughout all assessments and visits and listened to when decision making. Private Foster Carers report that they have found having a designated Private Fostering Social Worker as being really positive. Carers feel that they can get a quick response to any questions or concerns that they may have.

There has been an ongoing campaign for awareness raising for Private Fostering as it is still misunderstood. As part of the awareness campaign the Private Fostering Social Worker will liaise with the general public, schools, faith communities, district Social Work teams, with Professionals and any other agencies that have contact with children. The post has become full time dedicating more time for the Private Fostering social worker to have increased time for awareness raising.

Literature on Private Fostering for children and families within Dudley, including feedback forms for children, carers, parents and professionals have now been updated. Work to update marketing and communications leaflets and posters regarding private fostering have progressed.

Children’s views are valued and their ‘voice’ is recorded and views acted upon to what they want as their outcomes, this is essential in safeguarding children that are Privately Fostered within the Dudley Borough.

From visits made to see children in their Private Fostering arrangements, examples of the responses have been:

‘I am happy and with people I love’

‘I like to see my mom, but want to live with my aunty, where I feel happy’

‘I like my visits with my Social Worker; I can talk to them about my family’

‘I understand why you have to visit to make sure I am happy and safe’

‘I know the person looking after me; they know my family so I don’t have to explain things’

‘I don’t need any help but I like having a visit from you’

‘I miss my dad but feel happy where I’m living’

‘I didn’t think of myself as a child as I have always had to be responsible for my dad’s health needs’

Case Study

Children become the subject of Private Fostering arrangements for a variety of reasons within the Dudley Borough. Yearly there are a number of children that become Privately Fostered due to their links with Elmfield Rudolf Steiner School. The School is an independent school situated in the Stourbridge area of Dudley. It

educates around 260 children aged from 3 to 17 years who follow the international Steiner Waldorf Education curriculum.

There is an exchange programme in place where French, German, Swiss and Spanish children stay in the Dudley area with families linked with the school.

Background:

Sophie, is a 14 year old female who came to England to attend Elmfield School. The Private Fostering Social Worker has close links with Elmfield School due to the number of children that are Privately Fostered each year. Notifications are always made in a timely manner, with the School giving full details of the prospective carers and full details of the child and their families. The Private Fostering Social worker was made aware that Sophie was coming to stay with a family assessed and known to Elmfield School for two school terms, therefore it was deemed as a Private Fostering arrangement as Sophie is under 16 years of age and she was staying with a non- family member for more than 28 days

Support Offered

Sophie was initially seen with an interpreter and while Sophie had some understanding of the English Language, the Private Fostering Social Worker wanted to make sure there were no misunderstandings due to language barriers. As with all visits Sophie was spoken to alone. Sophie had advised she followed the Catholic faith and would like to attend church. The Private Fostering Social Worker and the carer identified Catholic Churches close to the carers home.

Sophie also expressed she liked playing the piano and exercising, this was also discussed and suitable clubs and groups were identified. Sophie and her family had been made aware that the Private Fostering Social Worker would visit Sophie on a regular basis and an assessment would be completed.

Sophie's parent's advised that this gave them 'peace of mind' that someone was there to invest in their daughter's welfare. Sophie and her Parents were given information about Private Fostering and the contact details of the Private Fostering Social worker, to contact at any point where required.

Outcome

During Sophie's time with the Private Fostering Carer, she was happy to see the Private Fostering Social Worker, to give updates on her experiences of attending Elmfield School, the new friends she had made and the places she had visited. Sophie's main goal while staying in a Private Fostering arrangement was to learn about the English culture and to improve her English. At the end of the placement Sophie had certainly achieved her goals.

6.4 MODERN SLAVERY

The two safeguarding Boards held a joint event in 2018 to raise awareness of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking across the borough. An action plan arising from the event was developed, being cognisant of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and the requirements of Local Authorities and partners in accordance to the act.

The DMBC Modern Slavery Statement and Policy were signed off at DMBC's Cabinet meeting on 25th October 2018. This has been uploaded onto the DMBC website as per statutory requirements

The Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking (MSHT) local referral pathway has been agreed and has been ratified by DSAB and DSCB.

Communications went out during October 2018 to raise public awareness of MSHT (to coincide with national anti-slavery day), in addition the community safety team worked with the PCC's Office and the NHS on a 'mobile van' campaign to promote awareness of modern slavery among communities. This was part of a West Midlands initiative funded by the PCC.

Following DMBC staff attending a regional 'train the trainer' day, initial awareness training in regards to modern slavery has taken place for Local Authority staff. Over 1000 staff received an input between September 2018 and March 2019.

Awareness sessions for voluntary, community, faith and business sectors have also taken place. A number of ½ day training sessions for LA staff have also taken place. An online training package and future training roll out is being explored.

Specific conversations have taken place with CPP in regards to the roll out of training to the Children work force.

The help hub page on the safe and sound website is regularly updated to ensure relevant information is available and accessible. This includes a link to a free online training course created by the Salvation Army.

Key Challenges and Priorities for the New Partnership in 2019/20/21

- Review of Governance arrangement for Modern Slavery agenda, including DSAB and DSCB arrangements
- Consideration to be given to the adoption of an Anti-Slavery Charter / Regional Pledge
- Support the work of the regional action plan as appropriate
- Build survivor input into local programmes and polices where possible and appropriate in line with the regional plan
- Identify work to ensure community, voluntary and faith sector are engaged in the agenda
- Explore improvements to reporting and recording systems where possible and appropriate
- Explore the possibility of developing a local 'charter mark' for genuine car washes / nail bars
- Raise awareness to increase identification of pop up shops and barber shops where there are possible links to Modern Slavery.
- Support the work of the serious organised crime delivery plan in regards to links to OCGs including county lines and Supported Accommodation for exploited children.

5.5 PREVENT DUTIES

Partnership Prevent activity has been taking place in Dudley since 2007

Under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 specified authorities have a legal duty to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. Government Guidance also sets out that specified authorities should work in partnership to agree risk and coordinate activity

Governance arrangements for Prevent in Dudley sit with safe & sound (Dudley’s Community Safety Partnership). Work is taken forward by and large through the Prevent Delivery Group and the Channel Panel which have multi-agency representation. There are a number of documents and resources (including on-line training) relating to Prevent on the safe & sound website

Prevent Delivery Group

The Prevent Delivery Group is a multi-agency group that takes forward work in respect of Prevent in line with Government Guidance and is informed by the Counter Terrorism Local Profile.

Prevent Delivery Plan objectives for 2018/19 were:-

- Provide a framework for safeguarding vulnerable individuals.
- Support specified authorities to comply with the Prevent Duty
- Support educational settings to safeguard students and to comply with the Prevent Duty
- Engage with 3rd sector organisations and businesses to facilitate safeguarding and ensure that their resources are not used to promote extremism
- Engage with young people aged under 25 who are vulnerable to extremism in order to provide safeguarding support

For 2018/19 there were 20 actions detailed within the Prevent Delivery Plan. As at the 31st March, 2019 17 actions were “RAG’d” as green (had been completed) 3 were “RAG’d” as amber. (Begun, but not completed).

WRAP and Other Prevent Training

During 2018/19 Dudley’s Prevent Coordinator and Prevent Education Officer delivered training as follows:-

- Education and out of schools settings – 2406 staff trained
- DMBC Staff – in excess of 1141
- Elected Members and Community Groups – 254

Partners and other Local Authority Staff will have also delivered Training.

There was a Prevent “Expo” for those working in education and out of school settings in December 2018 and a Prevent Conference in March 2019. These events were designed to further raise awareness of the Prevent agenda and refresh and update partner’s knowledge and understanding of issues relating to the Prevent Agenda.

Key Challenges and Priorities in 2019/20

From 1st April, 2019 Dudley is no longer a Home Office Prevent Priority Area. The Home Office decision was challenged by the Leader of the Council, DMBC Chief Executive and Dudley's Neighbourhood Policing Unit Commander. However, the decision was upheld. From 1st April 2019 there is no Prevent Grant for Dudley, therefore the Prevent Coordinator and Prevent Education Officer's temporary contracts have ceased.

Whilst some mitigating actions have been put in place in respect of work previously undertaken by the Prevent Coordinator and the Prevent Education Officer there is currently a gap which requires attention particularly around training for schools, whilst the governance arrangement for PREVENT sits within safe and sound and delivered through the Prevent Delivery Group, the deficit identified above will be of the concern and interest of the DSPPB within the new arrangements.

7. CONCLUSION

This annual report provides a closing position statement from the DSCB to the new safeguarding partnership represented as Dudley Safeguarding People Partnership Board. DSPPB will take forward the work of DSCB as prescribed by the Social Work Act 2017 and the subsequent Statutory Guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018).

The report showcases a range of success stories, and elevates the areas that are underdeveloped and require attention in taking forward and progressing the multi-agency safeguarding agenda.

Particular attention is drawn to the following areas, where further development is needed as we move into the new safeguarding arrangements for children and adults.

- Developing a problem profile to better understand CSE, CCE and wider exploitation.
- Develop of voice and influence of children, young people and families into the work of the DSPPB.
- Develop connectivity with the wider multi-agency workforce and ensure mechanism to seek their views on the work through the DSPPB.
- Develop strong links between the work of the DSAPG and the DSCPG to ensure effective safeguarding across the whole life course.
- Develop a mechanism for understanding the impact of multi-agency training on practice across the partnership.
- Increase understanding of agencies responsibility for the training of their own staff and the importance and remit of multi-agency training.
- Developing further the performance data set across the DSPPB.
- Increase connectivity with wider community groups and use their views to shape plans of the DSPPB.
- Progress the action plans arising from Section 11 and Section 175 self-assessment audits

The new safeguarding arrangement build on a strong foundation of partnership working in Dudley. The DSPPB will routinely and systematically connect the new safeguarding arrangements with the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Community Safety Partnership (known a Safe and Sound) arrangements locally and also the wider governance arrangement of the three statutory partners (Local Authority, Police and Clinical Commissioning Group). DSCB closes this final annual report in wishing the Dudley Safeguarding People Partnership Board and the very dedicated and committed members well in taking forward the safeguarding agenda.