



Dudley Safeguarding People Partnership

Communication Strategy 2023-24

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1. Introduction

Dudley Safeguarding People Partnership (DSPP) and its partners agencies play a significant role when it comes to safeguarding children young people, and adults with care and support needs. To achieve the best possible outcomes, individuals should receive universal and targeted services that meet their needs in a co-ordinated way and DSPP believe communication & engagement is integral to achieving this.

This strategy embraces the 'think family' approach and ensures that the work of DSPP is effectively communicated to ensure people who live, work or visit Dudley are aware of what safeguarding is and have access to relevant information.

To achieve this DSPP needs to raise awareness about how everybody can contribute to the safeguarding agenda. This should involve listening to and consulting with individuals and carers, and ensuring their views and opinions are taken into account in planning and delivering safeguarding services. This strategy will outline the best methods to communicate messages that we have identified through engagement with our respective audiences.

2. Aims and Objectives

The aim of this Communication Strategy is to provide a plan of action for improving and strengthening communication to and from DSPP, and to ensure that the Safeguarding partnership communications are managed effectively and professionally.

Our objectives within this strategy are:

- To improve and strengthen how we communicate and engage with individuals, staff, stakeholders and the wider public to raise awareness and promote key messages about safeguarding in Dudley
- To ensure that the safeguarding of children, young people and adults is at the heart of what all DSPP partner organisations do
- To drive forward best safeguarding practice by making sure our multi-agency workforce has easy access to evidence-based information about what works
- To communicate key safeguarding lessons learned from national and local case reviews, audits and research
- To raise awareness of the key business priorities of the partnership, using a variety of ways to cascade information to maximise the engagement of a busy workforce
- Support the delivery of the business priorities of the partnership by developing targeted campaigns, encompassing communications and engagement activities
- Ensure that our communications and engagement inform our multi-agency policies and procedures
- Clear lines of communication are defined and implemented and to ensure consistency and transparency
- Strong links are established with other strategic partnerships to develop a shared understanding of the needs of our people who use services

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Within this strategy, partner agencies working to safeguard people in Dudley have the following responsibilities:

- To be proactive in raising awareness of their role and work
- To promote the work of the DSPP with their colleagues, adults, children and

- young people they may be working with
- To proactively engage with service users, practitioners and the wider community to inform multi-agency policy and practice
 - To engage with professionals to promote an understanding of the work of the Partnership
 - To contribute to and inform of changes to policy, procedure, share best practice and communicate the local and national case reviews and quality assurance work including multi-agency audits
 - To define and implement clear lines of communication to ensure consistency and transparency
 - To ensure that information from the partnership and its subgroups is cascaded to all relevant people within their organisation.
 - To ensure that any issues raised by members of their organisation are raised to the relevant DSPP subgroup.

4. Principles

The DSPP branding should be used in all communications from the Partnership. This can be viewed on the [DSPP website](#).

The following principles will be adopted whilst undertaking communication and engagement activities on behalf of the DSPP:

- Maximise opportunities for shared communication/engagement activities i.e. regional campaigns, joint partner events
- Use and share engagement feedback to inform and drive change
- Communicate messages clearly in a format that is easy to understand
- Communicate messages that are relevant based upon local needs and related research
- Two way communication and engagement activities are encouraged
- Information is kept up to date and accurate

This strategy reflects a number of core communication principles:

- Openness and honesty
- Transparency
- Timeliness
- Accessibility
- Accuracy
- Support of Safeguarding agencies' priorities
- Compliance with GDPR

5. Audience

The DSPP needs to communicate with a diverse community and a range of groups and organisations that care for, educate, provide services for and protect children, young people and adults with care and support needs in Dudley.

In addition to service users and the wider community, the DSPP also has a responsibility to proactively engage with practitioners across a broad spectrum including social care, emergency services, education settings, healthcare settings, the voluntary sector and faith settings, and elected members.

DSPP recognise that people will need information at different stages, in different formats and locations depending on their requirements. Therefore, we commit to

providing information that is accessible, of a high quality and meets the needs of our audiences.

There are often times when communication materials need to be tailored to different groups within the borough, for example campaigns aimed at specific community groups. This should be taken into consideration on an individual basis and materials targeted as appropriate.

6. Methods of Communication

Our main method for communicating messages and training will be done so via our DSPP Website. Partner agencies have their own respective websites which provide information about services, contact details and links to the DSPP website.

We will also use the following methods to communicate to our audiences:

- Annual Report and Strategic Plans
- Board/Sub Groups/Task and Finish Groups
- Community group events
- Conferences/ media statements
- Leaflets/Posters/ Factsheets
- Newsletters
- Press releases
- Provider forums
- Public Events/ roadshows
- Service User and Practitioner feedback (Surveys /forums)
- Social Media i.e. Twitter
- Staff supervision
- Training/briefing sessions/ workshops
- Visual media sources

7. Our Communication Programme

Each year the partnership will identify and coordinate a programme of publicity and awareness raising campaigns on a routine basis to tie in with the partnership priorities, learning from reviews and with national and local events or campaigns. The DSPP Executive Group may also wish to take advantage of opportunistic media stories or issues to highlight the role of the partnership and safeguarding awareness. This may need to be done at short notice with advice from safeguarding partners or partner communications staff.

Messages identified by the partnership will include:

- What is abuse, neglect, harm and exploitation?
- Keeping children / adults safe is a responsibility shared across the whole community
- What to do if you are worried about a child and / or adult with care and support needs
- How to spot the signs and vulnerability indicators of the different types of abuse
- What the different responsibilities to safeguard are, and how they should be fulfilled
- A basic understanding of the role of the Partnership, the key priorities and how they can be supported
- Key changes in safeguarding nationally and locally and the implications of these
- The learning from all review activity, including key themes and areas for practice improvement (see our learning and improvement flowchart at appendix 1)

8. Responding to Media Enquiries

Working with the media in most situations should be planned and statements agreed with the DSPP Business Manager, Independent Chair and appropriate Director/ Chief Executive from agencies as appropriate. This is to provide consistency including ensuring a coordinated multi-agency approach is taken.

There may be occasions when the media directly contacts a partner agency. In this situation the DSPP Business Manager must be notified immediately on receipt of such an enquiry. Agencies should avoid responding independently and all press releases should be agreed by the DSPP Business Manager to ensure a consistent response is delivered.

Depending on the issue it may also be appropriate to contact the Independent Chair and/or statutory partner communications teams too.

Partner agencies must ensure that any public communication does not negatively impact on a partner agency.

9. Communicating following a Learning Review

In the event of a Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) or Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) all communication should be directed to the DSPP Business Manager before any press releases are made.

The Independent Chair should be the key representative to speak to the media about a learning review and any actions following that review on behalf of the DSPP.

It is important to note that any news release will only be made once the review has been completed and published. If a media request for a statement is received prior to completion of a review, the DSPP will provide a holding statement on the case. It is important that the families of those who have suffered the death of a relative or whose relative has been subject of a review is kept informed about the review's process. The professionals who would have been involved with the family before and at the time of the incident/s that resulted in a review, may be best placed to make informed and professional judgements about the frequency and method of communicating information to the relatives and passing back information to colleagues.

A SAR or CSPR cannot be published until all active criminal investigations in the case are completed and outcomes decided.

Report Publication timeline process.

Once a report has been presented to and signed off at the respective partnership board (DSAB/DSCPG) and DSPP Executive Group the below process will be followed:

- 21 days prior to publication of the report we will need to inform practitioners involved in the case and their managers to enable them to discuss the learning and findings from the report.
- 14 days prior to planned publication comms to notified of report to be shared with comms partners in partnership to enable coherent messaging around report
- 7 days prior to publication we will need to inform comms and related organisations ready for publication.
- Written briefings will be available for practitioners at time of publication.
- Learning event to take place within 6 weeks of publications

10. How will we know we have made a difference?

This strategy will make a difference in the following ways:

- Service users, carers and local residents will know what safeguarding is, how to protect themselves and how to report abuse.
- Our audiences will understand the role, remit and work of the DSPP and will be able to access information about it.
- People's experiences of safeguarding will inform future communications and improvements to safeguarding practice.
- The workforce will understand their respective roles and responsibilities in safeguarding, leading to improvements in multi-agency working and outcomes for service users.
- Better outcomes for children, young people and adults involved in safeguarding.
- Increase in positive media coverage.

This will be measured by:

- Numbers of visitors to the website and page visits
- Numbers in attendance at public/partner and/or DSCPG and DSAB workshops, conferences, briefings and training
- Completed evaluations/ feedback from practitioners
- Practitioner Surveys
- Feedback from children, adults and their families involved in the safeguarding process
- Inspection feedback
- Progress against the DSPP Business Plan
- Coverage in media and partner newsletters/publications
- Auditing and other Assurance activity
- Feedback from independent bodies, e.g. Healthwatch Dudley
- Evidence/ assurance of how Partners embed learning from reviews and campaigns in their own organisation

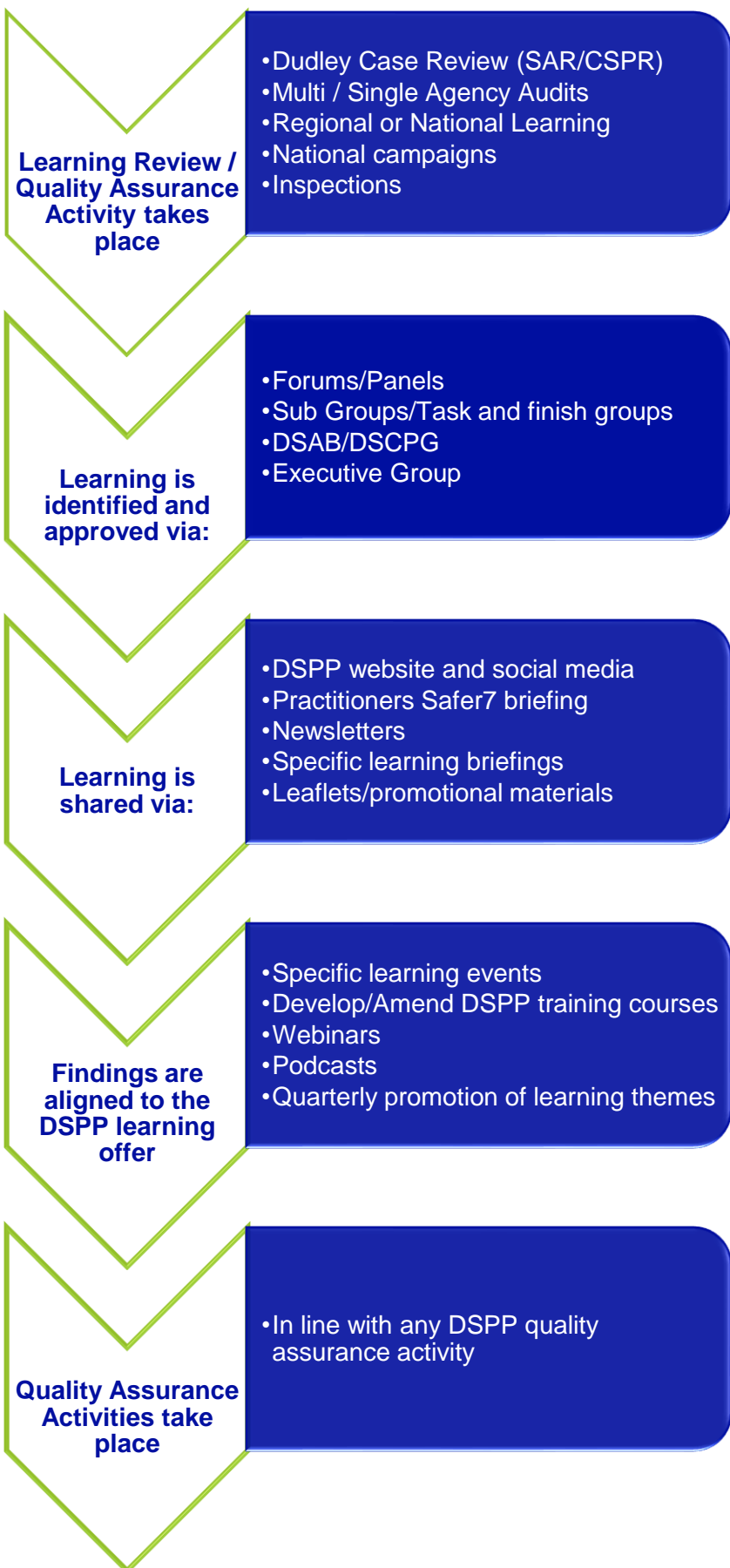
11. Governance and Review

The primary responsibility for implementing this strategy sits with the DSPP Executive but may at any point devolve responsibility to the Dudley Safeguarding Adults Board and/or Dudley Safeguarding Children Partnership Group.

This Communication Strategy will be reviewed every two years, unless there are policy and procedure changes which directly affect the strategy

12. Appendix 1 – DSPP learning and improvement flowchart

This communication strategy seeks to promote continuous learning and improvement across the Partnership.



Learning and Improvement Principles

- There should be a culture of continuous learning and improvement across all DSPP and its partner agencies, identifying opportunities to draw on what works well and promote good practice
- Findings from reviews and quality assurance activities will be shared in good time through various briefings and on the DSPP website
- The content of the briefings will be a combination of information, learning and guidance
- These briefings should be shared far and wide by each agency and can be used in team meetings / staff training or used as an aide-memoir of key learning
- When complete, final reports of reviews will be published in order to achieve statutory duties and transparency
- The impact of the learning on improving services to children, adults with care and support needs and their families will be outlined in the DSPP annual report
- Regular monitoring and follow up will take place to measure sustained improvement to ensure that learning from reviews and quality assurance activities is making a real impact on improving lives for people in Dudley.