



DARLINGTON

Safeguarding Children Board

Annual Report 2014-2015



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1. Chair's Acknowledgement

Welcome to the Annual Report of Darlington Local Safeguarding Children Board. This is my first annual report since I joined the Board as Independent Chair in April of this year. I would publically like to thank partners who make up the Board and therefore by implication all the people they work with and the past Independent Chair, Colin Morris for commitment and work they have done in the year.

Thank you to all the Board members for their contribution to the development of this report and the Safeguarding Boards' Business Unit staff.

2. Introduction

Working Together, March 2015 states:

"The Chair must publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the local area. The annual report should be published in relation to the preceding financial year and should fit with local agencies planning, commissioning and budget cycles. The report should be submitted to the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council, the local Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chair of the Health and Well-Being Board.

The report should provide a rigorous and transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services. It should identify areas of weakness, the causes of those weaknesses and the action being taken to address them as well as other proposals for action. The report should include lessons from reviews undertaken within the reporting period.

LSCB's should conduct regular assessments on the effectiveness of Board partners' responses to child sexual exploitation and include in the report information on the outcome of these assessments. This should include an analysis of how the LSCB partners have used their data to promote service improvement for vulnerable children and families, including in respect of sexual abuse. The report should also include appropriate data on children missing from care, and how the LSCB is addressing the issue. Where the LSCB has a secure establishment within its area, the report should include a review of the use of restraint within that establishment and the findings of the review should be reported to the Youth Justice Board.

The report should also list the contributions made to the LSCB by partner agencies and details of what the LSCB has spent, including on Child Death Reviews, Serious Case reviews and other specific expenditure such as learning events or training. All LSCB member organisations have an obligation to provide LSCB's with reliable resources (including finance) that enable the LSCB to be strong and effective. Members should share the financial responsibility for the LSCB in such a way that a disproportionate burden does not fall on a small number of partner agencies."



3. Independent Chairs Executive Summary

It is clear from this report that the partners who make up the Board have a strong commitment to joint working arrangements to safeguard children and young people and to promote their welfare in Darlington. Partners have worked together to ensure that Board meetings are well attended and focus on directing and responding to the work of each of the subgroups, who in turn draw in and draw on the commitment and skills of a wide range of professionals and lay members from across the partnership.

Members have also evidenced their intention to ensure that the Board is forward looking, and actively learns from experience. With the intention of making sure that all those who work with children and young people or who are involved in other ways are clear about how to recognise when a child or young person is at risk, and that they know what to do about this and who to involve.

During the year the innovative development of a shared business unit to support both the Children and Adults Safeguarding Boards continued to bed in and resulted in increased efficiencies and more joined up approaches particularly in respect of multi-agency training. The report indicates that further development of this potential will need to be an important feature of the revised business plan. This means that we will be in a good position in the coming years to make sure that we all “think family” so that when deciding what is best for a child or young person everyone is involved.

The report demonstrates that progress has been made in terms of “joining up” the work of each of the subgroups; these take forward the Boards key functions and responsibilities. The report indicates that progress has been a mixed picture for a number of reasons, such as maintaining good attendance from a representative range of partners and being able to show how this is making a difference. That said this has been a new way of doing things at a time when more is expected from the Board and some of the tasks and objectives are complex. Nevertheless the report demonstrates how the Board has met and progressed its responsibilities across all areas, with notable progress in the response to child sexual exploitation, multi-agency training, section 11 assessments and maintenance of policies and procedures.

The report clearly demonstrates how the continued development of the Performance Management and Quality Assurance Framework, (PMQA) and the Learning and Improvement Framework will provide a focus for the Board to pull through an improved sight and understanding of the effectiveness of joint working arrangements. Therefore the coming years will require a more developed and impact driven (i.e. are we meeting standards, how do we know this and what difference is the Board making?) based approach.

The report evidences how as a Board we have developed our capacity to scrutinise a range of evidence in order to form judgments that result in either a position of assurance or challenge. We have been able to set standards, provide advice, support and training. The report demonstrates and indicates the need for continued progress and direction in terms of how we prioritise our finite resources. The decision to re-launch the section 11 audit was a significant step and will be subject to further investment in the coming years. This embeds standards and supports organisations (large and small) in the development of their own safeguarding assurance and development arrangements.

The report for the first time this year is required to comment on the effectiveness of the joint working response to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), and the Board’s part in that. The report therefore demonstrates the successful steps taken by partners, led and supported by the Board’s Missing and Exploited Subgroup and how these arrangements can continue to become more effective.

The report demonstrates how large numbers of people who work with children and young people in Darlington have benefited from training provided by or coordinated by the Board, and it also shows how there has been a real join up between training focused on those who work with adults and vice versa. This has set the scene for a more strategic approach in developing the children’s and adults’ workforces in Darlington, with an increased focus on how partners can demonstrate that they are meeting the standards they have agreed as a Board.

There were no serious case reviews finished or started during this reporting period, and a number of areas of practice were subject to scrutiny through forms of alternative reviews including the Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) which is shared with Durham and is required to review all child deaths. Learning from these and serious case reviews completed elsewhere were promoted across partners and the children’s workforce.

During the year we further developed our capacity to see things from a child’s perspective, both in terms of how we do things and in terms of how joint working can positively impact on improved outcomes for children. The report indicates that we need to be clearer about how we do this in future and what we expect to get from this, by focusing on the “child’s journey” (i.e. what happens to them when they need help and protection) and on the “voice of the child” (i.e. what children and young people can tell us about what is important to them and how best they can contribute to being safe).

Towards the end of the year, the monitoring of quality assurance and performance has better informed our view, the Board recognised that it would be helpful to improve our understanding of and therefore have a clearer view of the effectiveness of early intervention and early help arrangements in Darlington. This was in part informed by the work done looking at how we understand the impact of neglect, domestic violence, substance misuse and mental health on the safety and protection of children.

Children and young people spend a significant part of their time in school or other forms of education, and the Board benefited from the proactive commitment and contribution of head teachers and others involved in helping children and young people to get the most out of opportunities. This has highlighted the need as a Board to make sure that we have a better understanding of and response to “children missing from sight” (e.g. children missing from home, school or care, as well as children who should be subject to private fostering arrangements).

The report and the role of the Board is to ensure that there is both a “whole system” view on the basis of an active partnership of all the agencies and bodies involved, and to be able to identify when improvements to how people work together may be needed on the basis of agreed and clear standards. On this basis and as a result of the work undertaken and the evidence considered by the Board during the year the report endorses a view that joint working arrangements and therefore by implication how the Board operates has continued scope and potential for improvement.



In conclusion and on the basis of the evidence contained within and or referred to in the report as Independent Chair I would summarise the report in the following way as set against 3 key questions:

- **Did the Board and the partners who comprise it do all it could to coordinate joint working to protect children and young people in Darlington?**

The report shows that members took this seriously and ensured that all key areas the Board is accountable for were driven forwards and responded to learning. In particular it ensured that policies and procedures were up to date and available, that there was a wide range of training which was taken up by people from across the workforces and different partners and professions. As importantly we were able to start to tell what impact on practice this was having. The progress made in the area of CSE has provided good evidence of how the Board was able to support and drive forward effective coordination of joint working.

- **Was the Board assured of the effectiveness of joint working arrangements?**

The report demonstrates that in parts the board was assured, but was not in the year able to progress sufficiently to the point whereby this assurance was comprehensive and fully evidence based. This does not necessarily mean that they were not effective, indeed when one dives down into the detail of what was looked at by the board it is possible to see that there was active assurance and challenge, which resulted in changes. Rather it seems that the Board has a new challenge to exercise some key judgements as to how it sets standards, monitors and measures these and then reaches a collective view and conclusion as to what needs to change as a result of its scrutiny from a coherent whole system and child's journey perspective.

- **What does this report mean for partners, children, young people and their families in Darlington?**

The report demonstrates that the Board and its members are committed to partnership working that leads to improving services and experiences for children. Whilst "safeguarding" is everyone's business, it is clear that there is more the Board can do to bring greater clarity to this, both in terms of what can be expected and how we can be assured that these expectations are being met. This is a complex undertaking and requires us to be clearer about how we work with and contribute to the other strategic partnerships in Darlington and in part rests with how as a Board we are able to contribute to the other places where decisions are made about priorities. The report provides the grounds for confidence that Board members share a commitment to improving the effectiveness of joint working arrangements to protect children and young people and promote their welfare. It also provides evidence and a clear direction for the next important steps in this. This is in itself a significant challenge, notwithstanding the possible impact of further reductions in public expenditure and the changes this can result in, and will require Board members to focus on the areas of its activity that it feels will have the greatest impact in order to act on the learning from this report.

This report will inform the Board's review of its plans and priorities, and a summary will be produced that sets out the changes we have made as a result in the spring 2016.

Richard Burrows

Independent Chair
Darlington LSCB

4. About Darlington Local Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB)

The DSCB was established in accordance with Section 13 of the Children Act 2004 because each local authority is required to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) for their area and it specifies the organisations and individuals (other than the local authority) that should be represented on LSCBs.

The statutory objectives and functions of LSCBs are set out within Section 14 of the Children Act 2004, which are:

- (a) to coordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area; and
- (b) to ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes.

In addition, Regulation 5 of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006 sets out that the functions of the LSCB, in relation to the above objectives under section 14 of the Children Act 2004, are as follows:

- 1(a) developing policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area of the authority, including policies and procedures in relation to:
 - (i) the action to be taken where there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare, including thresholds for intervention;
 - (ii) training of persons who work with children or in services affecting the safety and welfare of children;
 - (iii) recruitment and supervision of persons who work with children;
 - (iv) investigation of allegations concerning persons who work with children;
 - (v) safety and welfare of children who are privately fostered;
 - (vi) cooperation with neighbouring children's services authorities and their

Board partners;

- (b) communicating to persons and bodies in the area of the authority the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, raising their awareness of how this can best be done and encouraging them to do so;
- (c) monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of what is done by the authority and their Board partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advising them on ways to improve;
- (d) participating in the planning of services for children in the area of the authority; and
- (e) undertaking reviews of serious cases and advising the authority and their Board partners on lessons to be learned.

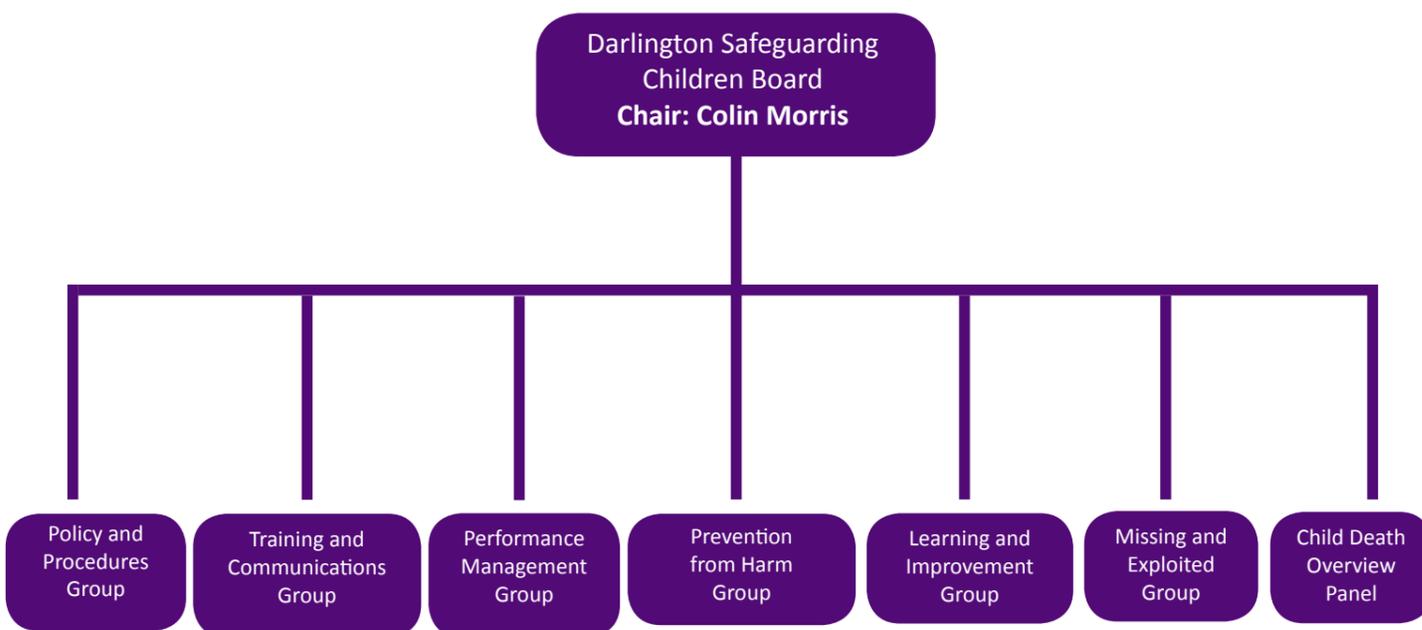
Whilst the LSCB has a role in co-ordinating and ensuring the effectiveness of local individuals' and organisations' work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, it is not accountable for their operational work. Each Board partner retains their existing lines of accountability for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children within their individual organisations.

4.1 Darlington Safeguarding Children Board Structure and Membership

There is a two tier structure (see diagram 1) of the Board. The Board members are made up of strategic partners from across the key agencies that work with children, young people and their families in Darlington. Underneath the Board are subgroups and these groups deliver on the key responsibilities and priority areas which have been agreed by the Board. Supporting the Board and the subgroups is the Safeguarding Boards' Business Unit, which also provides business support to Darlington Safeguarding Adults Board. It is important to note that the Business Support provided by the Safeguarding Boards' Business unit merged in April 2014. The purpose of the merger was to increase efficiency and effectiveness of both Boards, whilst maintaining the quality of the work and ensuring the functions of both boards are fulfilled to a high standard. A result of this merger is a joint Training and Communications Subgroup with the focus of looking at multi-agency training across adults and children in a multi-agency context. Emerging evidence suggests that the business unit and Boards' are benefiting from sharing their experiences and better understanding the context of working with children and adults. It is planned to review these arrangements in 2015/16 in order to formalise this learning.

Board meetings, are held on a bi-monthly basis, their focus is to be assured that partner agencies are working in a coordinated way to safeguard and promote the welfare of children but to also ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each agency in respect of this. This is achieved by the chairs of the subgroups, who lead on the key functions and responsibilities report formally to the Board the progress, risks, issues and challenges against the Board's business plan and the sub objectives set for each theme and or function.

Diagram 1



The [Terms of Reference](#), set out the governance arrangements and standards for the Board. There is an expectation that members of the Board will not only attend the Board meetings, but will also either chair and/or attend subgroup meetings. Board members can also where appropriate nominate someone from their agency (with appropriate decision making powers) to attend subgroup meetings.

4.2 The Membership

The Board meets six times during the year (plus two development sessions):

- Independent Chair
- CAFCASS (Children and Family Courts Advisory and Support Service)
- Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group
- Darlington Borough Council including Adult Social Care, Services for Children, Housing and Public Health
- Durham Constabulary
- County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust
- Community Rehabilitation Company
- National Probation Service
- Lay members (total of 2)
- NHS England
- Representation from Schools and Colleges (total of 5)
- Representation from the voluntary sector (Evolution)
- Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust

During the period April 2014 and March 2015 there has been a number of changes to Board members due to staff leaving their post or retiring. These changes are detailed below in table 1:

Members who stepped down during 2014-15	New members who joined the Board in 2014-15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colin Morris, Independent Chair • Norman Edwards, Lay Member • Murray Rose, Director of People Services (Darlington Borough Council) • Ann Workman, Assistant Director Adult Social Care (Darlington Borough Council) • David Mason, Head of Children's Social Care and Youth offending Services (Darlington Borough Council) • John O'Neill, Deputy Head, Education Village 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kevin Buckle, Lay Member • Briony Richardson, Lay Member • Kevin Kelly, Head of Service, Disabled Children, Adults with a Learning Disability (Darlington Borough Council) • Yvonne Coates, Head of First Contact and Locality Services (Darlington Borough Council) • Joanna Conway, Education Safeguarding Officer (Darlington Borough Council) • Claire Devine, Principal, Education Village • Karen Agar, Associate Director of Nursing, Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust

5. Working Together in Darlington (Partnerships, governance and accountability)

The DSCB works in partnership with other strategic partnerships (attached as appendix B) with the aim to have strong joint working arrangements across agencies, which coordinates the vision, aims and priorities for Darlington and its population. The strategic partnerships are:

- **Darlington Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board (DSAPB):** Both DSCB and DSAPB recognise that safeguarding the most vulnerable within the community is a shared responsibility and there must be a 'whole family' approach. This has been evidenced, as in 2015 both children and adults Boards have identified 'joint priorities' and these are reflected in their strategic plans.
- **Darlington Partnership** have developed the Sustainable Community Strategy 'One Darlington: Perfectly Placed' which aims to improve quality of life for all, promote the economic prosperity of the Borough and reduce inequality. The DSCB links closely with this partnership and the Board presents its annual report to Darlington Partnership outlining key safeguarding learning and challenges, in order to inform and influence future priorities.
- **Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB):** The Health and Social care Act 2012 established health and wellbeing boards as a forum where key leaders from the health and care system work together to improve the health and wellbeing of their local population and reduce health inequalities. The DSCB reports to the HWB and contributes to the strategic assessment of needs from a safeguarding perspective.
- **Darlington Children and Young People's Collective:** aims to ensure organisations work together, and with children, young people and their families to both identify and address how children and young people can be made happier, healthier, safer, more fulfilled and ready for adult life. To deliver its aims, the Collective have published their 2014 - 2017 Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) which is refreshed every three years. The DSCB reports into the children and young people's collective and presents its Annual Report to the Children's Collective outlining key safeguarding challenges and any actions required from the Children's Collective.
- **Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC):** is an elected official charged with securing efficient and effective policing in the area. The PCC has developed a two year plan. In addition the PCC have linked up with DSCB on common agendas and the PCC are part funding the Barnardo's child sexual exploitation worker up to April 2016. DSCB will share its annual report with the PCC and communicate as appropriately on common agendas to complement joint strategic priorities.
- **Community Safety Partnership (CSP):** brings together five responsible authorities: Darlington Borough Council, Durham Constabulary, NHS Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group, National Probation Service/Community Rehabilitation Company, Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service which have a legal duty to work together to tackle crime, anti-social behaviour, substance misuse, environmental crime and issues around re-offending. In addition to the responsible authorities the CSP also brings together a range of partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors who are all engaged in activities which contribute towards making Darlington a safe place in which to live and work. The responsible authorities must also ensure that the CSP has a Community Safety Plan. DSCB reports annually to the CSP and continues to work closely with the CSP on joint areas of concerns identified, including Hate Crime and Domestic Abuse.
- **Local Family Justice Board:** DSCB works closely with Darlington Borough Council Legal and CAF/CASS representatives, who report directly to the Local Family Justice Board on specific issues pertinent to the work of DSCB.

The learning from working with strategic partnerships across Darlington has been to ensure where possible to improve efficiencies through better alignment of strategic priorities and objectives and to sharpen how the key interrelationships between the various partnerships operates in the future Continuum of Need. DSCB in 2015 – 2016

will review the interrelationships, map the strengths and weaknesses, strengthen the shared leadership across partnerships including improved co-ordination and sharing between chairs of partnerships. Positive examples of this to date have been: to adopt the Signs of Safety approach across statutory agencies, monitoring the impact of Single Assessments and reviewing the local thresholds document 'Continuum of Need'.

The Board will develop a three year plan with the emphasis on joint working, sharing the results of single agency and multi-agency audits, learning from scrutiny activity, engaging children, young people and their families in the Boards governance arrangements and further challenge ourselves to seek more than the child's voice but the child's view on the impact on them regarding the services they are in receipt of. The section 11 Audit will be extended out to the Adults Board as a universal s.11/self-assessment exercise for Board members and their organisations to assess their position in relation to key standards that represent what we believe to be key to effective joint working to promote the welfare of children and to protect adults at risk. Board members agreed and committed to making their findings available for sharing and scrutiny through challenge events where other interested parties and board members review the learning from the s.11/self-assessment, to form a view about the level of assurance that can be reached across and within the local governance and accountability arrangements.



6. Budget Arrangements

Section 15 of the Children Act sets out that statutory partners may:

- Make payments towards expenditure incurred by, or for the purposes connected with a LSCB, either directly, or by contributing to a fund of which payments may be made.
- Provide staff, goods, services accommodation or other resources for purposes connected with a LSCB.

A challenge for the Board each year is to ensure the Board has sufficient means and resources to meet its statutory responsibilities. It is outlined within Working Together, 2015 'All LSCB member organisations have an obligation to provide LSCBs with reliable resources (including finance) that enable the LSCB to be strong and effective. Members should share the financial responsibility for the LSCB in such a way that a disproportionate burden does not fall on a small number of partner agencies'. The Board and its members are aware that with the increasing demands on them and in terms of the expectations placed on the Board, this remains an important area to monitor closely especially as some statutory members have signalled they are seeking to negotiate how they contribute to and attend the Board.

Detailed below in table one evidences how members have met the above requirement in the year and how these resources were used. The table summarises the direct monetary contributions from partners, it does not take into account officers' time or the use of rooms (provided free of charge) and it is important to recognise the many other ways members and their staff contribute to the Board e.g. attendance at subgroups, participating in audit and quality assurance work, access to additional resources and designated roles. It should be noted that the cost to safeguard children is significant and the LSCB is therefore grateful to all of the partners who have recognised their commitment to fund the partnership.

The information below shows the core budget for 2014/15 and the projected base budget for 2015/16, where partners have agreed their contributions, with no percentage increase.

Annual budget 2014/15	161 906
Projected budget 2015/16	165 406
Commitments 2015/16	
Independent Chair	15 000
Employee Costs	107 200
Training costs	12 000
Professional fees (case reviews)	12 000
Info/comms e.g. printing, publicity and website	5 000
Supplies and services (e.g. child death reviews)	5 000
	156 200

Partner Contributions	2014/15	2015/16
Darlington Borough Council (Children's Social Care)	92 071	92 071
Durham Constabulary	15 820	15 820
Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group	20 805	20 805
County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust	2 500	2 500
NHS England (Local Team)	2 500	2 500
Probation (NPS)	4 660	4 660
Education Providers	12 500	14 000
CAFCASS	550	550
Youth Offending Service	2 500	2 500
Early Years Providers	4 000	4 000
Training Income	4 000	6 000
	161 906	165 406



7. What is it like to be a child or young person in Darlington?

Darlington is a Unitary Authority and covers an area of approximately 200km². Approximately 22,800 children and young people under the age of 18 years live in Darlington. This is 22% of the total population in the area.

Children and young people from minority ethnic groups account for 6% of all children living in the area, compared with 22% in the country as a whole. The largest minority ethnic groups of children and young people in the area are Asian and mixed. Darlington has higher numbers of Gypsy or Roma travellers than the wider UK with approximately six times the national average – a substantial number are domiciled only during the winter months. The proportion of children and young people with English as an additional language in primary schools is 5% (the national average is 19%), in secondary schools it is 4% (the national average is 14%). Darlington had the 4th fastest growth of child population in North of England .

In Darlington there are 42 schools settings, of which 12 are currently maintained schools and the remainder are academies and free schools. Locally, 88% of schools were judged to be 'good' or better by Ofsted and this exceeds the national performance of 82% . However, the percentage of primary schools in Darlington graded as 'good' or better is currently 93% and has consistently been over 90%, whereas the percentage of secondary schools graded as 'good' currently stands at 58%.

All schools in Darlington are signed up to the Darlington Borough Council and schools@onedarlington strategy for school improvement. This includes a rigorous review of school data annually to inform improvement plans, applications for school, school support and priorities for collaborative work. At present 2 primary schools and 3 secondary schools in Darlington are judged as less than good and each school has an action plan in place to drive improvement.

The Board is required to assess the effectiveness of early help arrangements and how agencies within Darlington work together to provide effective early help to children and their families. The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is an early help inter-agency assessment, used for early identification of children's additional needs, the sharing of this information between organisations and the coordination of service provision. The CAF assessments should identify what help the child and family require to prevent needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989. In Darlington 252 individual CAFs had been opened which is a 20% (316) decrease from the previous year. The main age group an individual CAF had been opened was with the 10 – 16 year old age group, under 5s and 5 to 10 year olds. The age group with the least number of individual CAFs open was with the over 16 year old age groups. As mentioned elsewhere in the report this was noted as a matter of concern and resulted in the Board revising its arrangements to focus on this area in the coming year.

Child protection in Darlington:

- At 31 March 2015, 823 children had been identified through assessment as being formally in need of a specialist children's service. This is a reduction from 897 at 31 March 2014.
- At 31 March 2015, 86 children and young people were the subject of a child protection plan. This is a reduction from 140 at 31 March 2014.
- As at March 31 2015, the numbers of children living in a privately arranged fostering placement remain low at four. This is a small increase from three privately arranged foster placements at 31 March 2014.

Children looked after in Darlington:

- At 31 March 2015, 200 children are being looked after by the local authority (a rate of 88 per 10,000 children). This is an increase from 190 (83 per 10,000 children) at 31 March 2014. Of this number:
 - 73 live outside the local authority area
 - 25 live in residential children's homes, of whom 10 live out of the authority area
 - one lives in a residential special school that is out of the authority area
 - 157 live with foster families, of whom 60 live out of the authority area
 - two live with parents, of whom one lives out of the authority area
 - none are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children
 - four young people received looked after child status due to a period of remand into custody as outlined in the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 . Any young person who is remanded into custody receives looked after child status for the period of time on remand.
- In the last 12 months:
 - there have been 13 adoptions
 - seven children became subject of special guardianship orders
 - 90 children ceased to be looked after, of whom three subsequently returned to be looked after
 - 11 children and young people ceased to be looked after and moved on to independent living
 - seven children and young people ceased to be looked after and have lived in houses of multiple occupation. There are currently three young people living in this type of accommodation.

More families within Darlington are benefitting from earlier and coordinated help including family support via group work and bespoke packages for individual children and families, the Family Intervention Team, which was extended to include the government's troubled families and high impact households programmes.



³ Census 2011

⁴ Ofsted 26th June 2015.

⁵ These are residential special schools that look after children for 295 days or less per year.

⁶ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/10/contents/enacted>

7.1 Children and young people's health in Darlington

The Darlington Children Health Profile refreshed in June 2015 highlights:

- Children and young people under the age of 20 years make up 24% of the population of Darlington.
- The health and wellbeing of children in Darlington is mixed compared with the England average.
- The level of child poverty is worse than the England average with 20.6% of children aged less than 16 years living in poverty. The proportion of children entitled to free school meals: in primary schools is 19% (the national average is 17%); in secondary schools is 17% (the national average is 15%).
- Children in Darlington have average levels of obesity: 8.5% of children aged 4-5 years and 18.8% of children aged 10-11 years are classified as obese.
- In Darlington, 32% of mothers are still breastfeeding at 6 to 8 weeks, which is lower than the England average. 60% of mothers in this area initiate breastfeeding when their baby is born. Darlington has a lower percentage of babies who have ever been breastfed compared with the European average of 89%.
- In the 2012 National Dental Survey of five year olds, 64% of children in the Darlington sample took part (consented). When comparing a range of measures of disease among five year olds in Darlington with the rest of the local authorities in the North East, only Middlesbrough, Sunderland and Redcar and Cleveland have a worse experience.
- Approximately 30% of children less than five years in the north east have tooth decay and Darlington is amongst one of the highest areas for the disease within the region.

7.2 Prevalence of mental health and emotional disorders

In Darlington the exact prevalence of mental health and emotional disorders in children and young people is not known. The Child and Maternal Health Intelligence Network (ChiMat) Service Snapshot (National Child and Maternal Health Intelligence Network) showed that there were 1,460 children and young people of school age with a mental health disorder in 2014 across Darlington. Breakdown as tabled in figure 1 below.

Figure 1	Estimated number of children aged 5-10 yrs with mental health disorder	Estimated number of children aged 11-16 yrs with mental health disorder	Total
Darlington	600	860	1,460

Source: Local authority mid-year resident population estimates for 2014 from Office for National Statistics.

The Darlington Children's and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Profile tells us that this number of children is 9.8% of the child population of the borough. This is in line with the national average estimated value but slightly lower than the regional estimate.

7.3 Children and Young People's view of their lifestyle

The Healthy Lifestyle Survey led by Darlington Borough Council previously known as Social Norms is carried out annually across the Borough within secondary schools. Every pupil year 7 – 11 complete the survey within their school setting, in total this year there were 3651 responses. The survey measures the actual behaviour of the young people, how they believe their peers to be behaving or their perceptions and their attitudes and values on certain health issues. Some of the main findings from this year's survey were:

Alcohol:

85% of young people have never been drunk, of those who stated they had had a drink, more females stated they had been drunk and had experienced problems, this was particularly noted with the year 9 group responses. This was a higher response compared to the male responses to the alcohol related questions.

Drugs:

94% of young people have not used drugs. Of those who said they use drugs, males are more likely to have tried drugs. Less than 2% reported they used drugs in the last week. The most commonly used drug stated by the young people was cannabis and 16% of the young people felt it is OK to take drugs or New Psychoactive Substances ('legal highs').

Smoking:

94.5% of young people have not smoked in the last 7 days and 84% of young people have never smoked. The data suggests females are more likely to smoke regularly than males and almost half (49%) said they were affected by second hand smoke, more than a quarter said they were affected by second hand smoke at home. Positively, 9 out of 10 young people in Darlington surveyed agree that smoking tobacco is never a good thing.

Physical Activity and Eating Habits:

Two thirds of young people do 60 minutes of physical activity everyday. More than half (54%) of all respondents do their physical activity in PE, with nearly a third in sports clubs and teams outside in the local community. Despite an average 70% of young people reporting that they have a balanced diet, nearly half of those surveyed did not generally eat breakfast. The percentage of girls (43%) not eating breakfast was much higher than for boys (29%). 37% of young people cited body image related motivations ('to lose weight' and 'body shape') for participation in sport and physical activity. Most girls do sport and exercise just because they enjoy it.

Relationships and Sexual health (Yr 9 – 11 only)

85% of young people in Darlington are NOT having sex. Almost a third of those who had sex regretted it afterwards, mainly as they felt they were too young and it was unplanned. More than half of those who had sex said they ALWAYS use contraception.

The survey added in 2013 a question around acceptable behaviour in relationships, this year over a 1/3 thought it was 'OK' to shout at their partner and 21% thought physical violence such as hitting, slapping, kicking and shaking was acceptable. We know that 76% of males are using both the internet and pornography to get information about relationships and sex. Overall we know that 15% have had sex, yet 77% asked over estimated how many young people their age were having sex, the average estimate was 42%.

⁷ PHE Child Health profile June 2015

⁸ Director of Public Health Annual Report 2014,

www.darlington.gov.uk/media/878301/DirectorOfPublicHealthAnnualReport_201415.pdf

⁹ Dental Health Profile 2014,

www.nwph.net/dentalhealth/5yearoldprofiles/North%20East/Darlington%20LA%20Dental%20Profile%205yr%202012.pdf

¹⁰ CHIMAT (<http://atlas.chimat.org.uk/IAS/profiles/servicereports>)

¹¹ <http://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile-group/mental-health/profile/cypmh/data>

Bullying:

95% of respondents agreed that it is NOT OK for young people to be bullied and 69% of young people who completed the survey had not been bullied. 31% of young people questioned said they had been bullied within the last year and the main type of bullying experienced was verbal (24%). The majority (71%) of the bullying which occurs is reported to take place at school and 31% of those who were bullied did NOT tell anybody about what was happening.

In May 2015 there was also a Healthy Lifestyle Survey carried out in primary schools as a pilot exercise, 8 primary schools across Darlington completed the survey in with year 5 and year 6 pupils, 641 in total, the main findings of this were:

- 95% of pupils surveyed have not tried smoking.
- 92% of pupils have either never tasted alcohol or only had a sip once or twice.
- 92% agreed that grown up relationships should be respectful and caring and 36% of children surveyed thought it was 'OK' to shout in a relationship.
- 96% of children surveyed have access to the internet at home and 43% are never supervised on the internet.
- 36% of children have online friends who they do not know in person.
- 49% have been bullied in the last year and almost a third of the bullying took place at school.
- 75% of children surveyed said they ate a balanced diet and 83% ate breakfast daily.
- 74% of children said they felt stressed.
- 80% of children agreed they are important and special.

The survey has been consulted on with schools and young people. As a result of this consultation the Public Health Team have redesigned the survey and how schools will receive the findings of the responses by their schools to inform local planning. Schools will receive support with actioning their findings through a mini Team Around the School (TAS) approach. The survey is annually reviewed and updated through the following groups Stakeholder Group and an Expert Group to ensure the survey reflects the issues that need to be better understood in Darlington.

8. How effective has the DSCB partnership been in the past year and how do we know this?

As previously detailed, the Board has a two tier structure and underneath the main board sits seven subgroups which coordinate and deliver on the Board priorities:

1. Is Safeguarding really everybody's responsibility?
2. E-Safety
3. Self-Harm and Suicide Prevention
4. Improved Multi-agency working arrangements for families

Detailed below is a breakdown for each subgroup and summarising the following:

- What we have done
- What difference that has made including learning, and
- What is still to be done including why we should do this



8.1 Performance Management Subgroup

During the period of April 2014 to March 2015 the group met seven times and out of the nine agencies invited to attend the meetings there has been three agencies that have been represented at 100% of the meetings throughout the year. These agencies are the CCG, DSCB and Darlington Borough Council. The following agencies (CAFCASS, CDDFT, Police, National Probation Service, NECA and TEWV) attended three out of a possible seven meetings. It must be noted that some agencies have been unable to attend the meetings due to staff changes. The attendance has been raised as issues at the Board and further development work is planned with agencies in 2015 – 2016 to improve attendance from all agencies.

The purpose of the meeting is for all agencies to analyse a critical data set and identify any patterns, trends or issues that are apparent within the data set and to challenge the agency further depending or to undertake a piece of bespoke work to better understand the issue such as deep dive audits and observations. The critical data set enables key agencies to establish the quality of front line practice and the impact this has on children, young people and their families.

What have we learnt and what will we do next?

At the development day in March 2014, the Board members reflected and agreed the future priorities for priority 1 'Is safeguarding really everybody's responsibility?' to continue with the programme of audits, to share their single agency inspection, scrutiny reports, complete the s.11 audits, establish performance clinics and to further develop the critical data set as the main source of data is from one agency and that is Darlington Borough Council. However, that said, due to an emerging issues around looked after children's initial health assessments, Health have been providing specific data and further scrutinising the data to better understand the reasons for the delays. The initial health assessments remains a priority for the Board.

A particular focus of the performance group during the reporting period was to look at the 'child's journey' through services or the Continuum and Indicators of Need. This is a complex and long term development, but there has been progress to better understanding the early help to children, young people and their families through the links between the other subgroups and the data within the critical data set that is scrutinised and further explored to better understand the issues by all agencies.

Examples of where agencies have used the data are: Children's Social Care realigned their Children's Access Point due to the group monitoring the referrals to Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH); the Board monitored the number of children subject to Child Protection Plans during the year and notes an overall reduction but some variations during the year. This was discussed in the subgroup and at Board and assurances accepted that trends and variations were understandable and acceptable. The Board accepted a recommendation that in the coming audit programme it would be timely to explore other aspects of the child protection plan process particularly when children are made subject to a plan and this is then ended at the first review, so to be sure that this is consistent with thresholds around decision making, and the quality of how partners reach a view for example.

- The subgroup also conducted an in depth look at a number of cases as a part of the approach agreed to better understand the reasons why children were made subject to a plan, this fitted in with the priority for the year around "neglect" and the link with domestic abuse. This highlighted and gave context to the links and contributory/casual relationships and in turn fed into dedicated training and the commissioning of further joint audit with the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Implementation Group and it is intended that this will inform strategy development in the current year.
- A significant milestone achieved during the year was the collection and use by the subgroup and the Board of information about children who go missing and children who are placed by other authorities in Darlington and by Darlington elsewhere. Having achieved the point whereby the group felt there was reliable data it was able to develop some key lines of enquiry in relation to missing procedures and response and strengthen links to the child sexual exploitation operations group.

- Children who are Looked After have also been a regular focus for analysis and scrutiny both in terms of high level data and drill down. Board members in part to develop their process and role have focused with some persistence on the variances relating to Initial Health Assessments (IHA) and this has resulted in the relevant partners seeking solutions and reporting back to the Board.
- Detailed in table 2 are the actions and learning from our audits which were undertaken during the reporting year.

Audit	Actions/Learning
Core Group Audit undertaken in July 2014	<p>Chairing Arrangements: The audit identified issues with deputising arrangements at core groups as social workers were making arrangements for a colleague to Chair, this caused issues as there has been reporting of a lack of knowledge of the case and the family's needs. Chairing arrangements to be re-visited in future audit.</p> <p>Minutes: Process to be reviewed to ensure minutes are distributed to all parties in a timely manner and the process to be closely monitored by the Performance Management group.</p> <p>Child's attendance/engagement in the process; identify how we can encourage and evidence the child's engagement in the core group process.</p>
CSE audit - Regional CSE Group	<p>LSCB Development officer to monitor and support the development of Operational MEG, sharing good practice across Durham and Darlington to ensure consistent practice. Operational MEGs should consider problem offenders and disruption tactics in addition to safeguarding young people at risk of CSE.</p> <p>All LSCB members to act as CSE champions for their agency and encourage referrals about children at risk of child sexual exploitation. LSCB representatives from health and education agencies in particular should commit to increase the number of referrals from their respective agencies.</p> <p>MEG group to ensure effective performance measurement is in place to monitor how referrals from other agencies increase.</p>
Conference Process/ chronology Audit	<p>Changes made to the conference invite list and process at strategy 12 months previously require reinforcement with the business support team in the MASH.</p> <p>Policy and procedures subgroup to review chronology procedure as above, this work to link with work ongoing in LIG re neglect case.</p>
Neglect Audit	<p>Identified a number of areas for development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To put in writing issues regarding minutes before the next core group meetings • Core group minutes to be given to school • To work with families who do not attend appointments • Improved communication when referrals are made to children's services • Appropriate support to be put in place for children and young people where they have experienced a DA incident. • Plans to be written using the SMART principles

The group have challenged agencies whereby they have carried out further investigation to understand the issue and reported back to the group. The groups work has informed the Boards training and the multi-agency procedures.

The group also gain assurances from statutory agencies through completing s.11/self-assessment tools and agencies presenting evidence at performance clinics; sharing inspection reports for external scrutiny i.e. CQC, HMIP, sharing single agency audits and annual reports. However, the group does recognise the membership of the performance group does need to be reviewed in 2015 – 2016 to improve agency engagement and to undertake further work around the s.11/audits and other appropriate audits which are informed due to the critical data set.

8.2 Policy and Procedures Subgroup

During the period of the annual report the group met 4 out of a possible 6 meetings, which were planned in, two meetings were cancelled due to the number of apologies submitted and the group not being quorate. 6 agencies are members of the group and only 50% (Darlington Borough Council, DSCB and Tees Esk and Wear Valley) of the agencies attended the meeting 100% of the time, with the average attendance of the following agencies: CCG, CDDFT and Police being to the performance subgroup twice in the year due to conflicting priorities.

This meetings role is to develop policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Darlington, to ensure they reflect new policies and guidance based on national and local information sources and research, the policies are accessible to all agencies and to approve policies and procedures that have been developed by other subgroups.

The group have also agreed to adopt the County Durham Protocol for collaborative working and information sharing between professionals to protect children, young people and adults at risk. This protocol provides the framework for collaborative working and requires a positive approach from services and agencies to work together.

The following policies and procedures were reviewed and circulated throughout the year:

- Operating Procedures for Children who go missing from home or care
- Launch of Indicators of Concern (Continuum of Need) and Practice Guidance
- Working with Uncooperative and hostile families guidance
- Looked After Children – multi-agency roles and responsibilities
- Managing Allegations procedure for concerns against staff, carers and volunteers
- Joint Operational Licensing Protocol

Copies of these policies can be viewed on the LSCB website

What have we learnt and what will we do next?

Board members agreed at the development day in March 2014, they will continue to place a priority and an emphasis on ensuring that all those who work with children and young people in Darlington have access to policies, procedures and guidance. To do this the membership and attendance of the subgroup will be reviewed in 2015 – 2016 to ensure there is the right compliment of agencies participating in policy and procedure development work, the group will continue to regularly review, update and maintain the current policies and procedures. The group has also recognised an opportunity to undertake an options appraisal to develop a joint Children and Adults Boards stand-alone web site to make the Boards information more accessible.

8.3 Training and Communications Subgroup

During the year 6 meetings took place. A total of 6 agencies are members of the subgroup and out of the total number 50% of the agencies (CCG, DSCB and CDDFT) attended 100% of the meetings the following agencies attended on average 4 times (Darlington Borough Council and Darlington College) and one agency (Police) did not attend any of the meetings.

The training and communications group is a joint group with children and adults Boards by providing training and development opportunities to the local workforce in relation to safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk. With the view to develop the skills and knowledge of practitioners in order to achieve better outcomes for children, young people and adults at risk, which is also linked to both boards' priorities. To communicate and raise awareness of safeguarding, and ensuring opportunities are sought to include the voice of children, young people, adults at risk and their families as appropriate.

The subgroup undertake a training needs analysis of all stakeholders to identify training demands across sectors within Darlington, which is used to inform the training programme. The training programme is underpinned by an ethos which values working together collaboratively across agencies, respects diversity, promotes equality, is child and adult centred and promotes the participation of children, young people, adults and their families. To deliver on the training programme, the Board appointed during 2014 – 2015 a Multi-Agency Trainer who develops and delivers both a multi and single agency training. In addition the trainer recruits and works with colleagues who are 'train the trainer' trainers to deliver multi-agency training on behalf of the Board. The agencies that have approved Board trained trainers are: Darlington Borough Council, Police, Foundation Trust, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Barnardo's. The administration of the training is co-ordinated and facilitated by the Safeguarding Boards' Business Unit.

Of the training sessions offered there was 77% places taken up. There were 14 courses cancelled (327 places) due low booking numbers and a number of sessions were cancelled due to the availability of a trainer. Compared to the previous year there has been a 21% increase in the take-up of the Boards training. However, it must be noted the data for 2014 – 2015 includes adult safeguarding training which was not available in 2013-14. The main agencies that have accessed the Boards training is Darlington Borough Council, Schools, Colleges and Care settings. There is a category titled as 'other' which needs to be better explored by the business unit as this represents 18% of the total number of places accessed. The data suggests attendance by the Health sector is low, this is largely because Health Trainers deliver single agency safeguarding Level 1, 2 and 3 training to health professionals.

At the end of each training session an evaluation form is completed by delegates. The evaluations have been analysed throughout the year using two different tools, Survey Monkey and piloting Paperdata system. Paperdata is currently being used by Darlington Borough Council's Workforce Development Team and adults training was evaluated using this tool from April to September 2014 until the Business Unit took over the administration. Survey Monkey was used to evaluate Children's training until it was agreed to evaluate all training using Paperdata as a pilot in February 2015.

Paperdata analysis (This is a way of getting feedback from people who attend and sorting it electronically) Paperdata was used for evaluating adults safeguarding training from period April to August 2014 until mid February when children's safeguarding training evaluations were included into the Paperdata system. From the total evaluations received between April 2014 to March 2015, 89% of learners said the training session gave them the skills and knowledge to do their job better with 87% stating the training had inspired them to want to learn new things and 74% stating the training had increased their confidence.



The evaluation asked candidates how they would implement in practice what they had learnt and below is a sample of the responses received:

“Knowledge learned can be passed onto other staff members”

“Increased awareness, built up a great bank of information and resources and will be able to inform clients of appropriate organisations and be aware of indicators of abuse and knowing what to do next.”

“When working with young people who have been groomed/exploited I now know the tools to use to help educate them.”

Detailed in the [training annual report](#) provides a comprehensive overview of the Boards training which delivered during 2014 – 2015.

What have we learnt and what will we do next?

Board members reviewed and supported training delivery and development in the year to ensure that the programme met its objectives including regularly updating and reviewing both Boards’ training content to include lessons from case reviews. There has been continued progress in developing stronger measures through the joint Training and Communication subgroup to ensure the quality and consistency of single and multi-agency training through initiatives such as training needs analyses, training delivery standards, quality assurance approaches, monitoring and evaluation processes, which provides the Board with assurances that the training delivered is effective and is having a positive impact on practice.

In the coming year we intend to maintain these developments and further understand and explore the advantages and any potential risks associated with our integrated approach to training across both boards, and we feel this is a positive and an exciting development. This was the first full year of this approach. We also plan to develop a more strategic approach with partners so that both Boards can make a stronger contribution to and lead for a Safeguarding Strategic Workforce development approach particularly to address the opportunities presented by the “joined up approach” of both boards and the proposed developments in Early Help and Intervention.

The training needs analyses, carried out during 2014-15 identified the following training needs for both Adults and Children’s workforces:

- Recording Skills/Best Practice
- Think Family Approach to Safeguarding
- Positive Risk Taking and Safeguarding

These training needs are to be incorporated into the [2015-16 training programme](#). The joint training programme is updated and communicated on a regular basis via the e-bulletin and is available on both the LSCB and SAPB websites.

The group intends to improve multi-agency working arrangements for families - The Board will have an active role in disseminating and implementing ‘new’ tools for practitioners in their work with families:

- Effective launch and implementation of the Continuum of Need/Indicators of Concern (Thresholds tool)
- Implementation of the Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- Cases discussed at Learning and Improvement Group demonstrate effective application
- Large scale multi-agency briefings
- Implementation of regular newsletters
- Training adapted
- Case file audits demonstrating appropriate use of threshold tool
- Analysis of MASH data

The business unit has also recognised the gap in receiving feedback from single agency trainers and are to develop a process to capture the delegate’s experience of their training and the trainer. It was also identified through the training needs analysis that there was a gap in domestic abuse training, and in 2014/2015 when this training was rolled out, there was a low take up. This is to be further explored with agencies to understand why there was a low take up.

8.4 Prevention from Harm Subgroup

The group is represented by a total of 11 agencies, out of the 11 agencies 36% (Darlington Borough Council, DSCB, CDDFT and Darlington College) have attended 100% of the meetings which took place. The average attendance by the other agencies is 4 meetings out of a possible 5 meetings. The group cancelled one meeting due to the number of apologies submitted and the group not being quorate.

The aim of the group is to work with partner agencies to improve multi-agency practice in reducing the impact of ‘harm’, with a specific focus on self-harm and suicide prevention.

What have we learnt and what will we do next?

The group reflected on this priority in March 2014 and have acknowledge they have done this through gaining a common understanding of ‘self-harm’, agreeing locally the NICE, 2004 definition of self-harm:

The definition of Self-harm is:

*“Intentional self-poisoning or self-injury, irrespective of the apparent purpose of the act.
Self-harm includes cutting, poisoning, asphyxiation, burning and other self-inflicted injuries”*

The group better understands the prevalence of self-harm in Darlington, due to sharing of information such as soft intelligence, data and audit reports provided by two Education Settings, which suggests there is an issue. The group have also recognised the reporting of self-harm data is very complicated as not all young people will present to the Emergency Department. The subgroup has accessed self-harm training together.

The group recognise that although there is data available efforts are to be made to get more robust data to understand the prevalence of self-harming in Darlington and to develop a self-harm pathway tool to guide practitioners when supporting a child or young person who maybe self-harming. In addition the group will be reviewing its membership to ensure the agencies with a key interest are represented.

Most importantly the group will establish engagement with children and young people to develop appropriate literature to support young people who are self-harming or considering self-harming.



8.5 Missing and Exploited Children (MEG) Subgroup

There are two groups linked to the Missing and Exploited subgroup, the 'strategic group' which looks at patterns and trends of children's missing behaviour including child sexual exploitation referrals and the 'operational' group where agencies share information about the young person and identify the level of risk to formulate appropriate multi-agency strategies to support the young person and to reduce their risks they are presenting such as through prevention and disruption planning.

The group have had a total of six meetings and six agencies are members of the group. Out of the total number of agencies, 50% (Police, DSCB and Darlington Borough Council) attended the meetings 100% of the time. The average attendance of the other agencies invited (Barnardos, National Probation Service and CDDFT) the average attendance was 3 out of the possible 6 meetings held in the year.

As part of this group they have oversight of the e-safety agenda to increase the awareness of e-safety through agencies and aimed at children and young people and families in recognising the importance of e-safety (internet safety) and the linkages with child sexual exploitation. The Board has done this through a range of development work such as commissioning e-safety training to a range of audiences including schools and the wider community, through multi-agency briefings, the media via an article within 'Darlington Together', reviewing agencies compliance in respect of the multi-agency procedures through the MEG group, the Board are also a National Working Group (NWG) Gold member which gives them access to national resources that can be adopted and developed for local use. The Board have developed multi-agency procedures for CSE, Missing, a performance framework and better links to private children's homes.

What have we learnt and what will we do next?

The data available to the MEG group has identified the strategies adopted by perpetrators targeting young people in Darlington and this has primarily been through online grooming. The MEG group have oversight of all victims that maybe of medium or high risk of CSE and agree strategies based around the three principles:

- Preventing the sexual exploitation of children
- Identifying, protecting and supporting the victims
- Disrupting and stopping perpetrators, securing justice for victims and obtaining convictions.

The Board co-funds with the PCC a Barnardo's CSE worker to provide timely support to victims of CSE and their families. Targeted online e-safety training has been rolled out across Darlington to prevent children from being exploited and through good information sharing arrangements in place this enables agencies to develop disruption strategies to stop perpetrators from further exploiting children. In addition two CSE audits were undertaken, one single agency by the local authority and a joint regional audit with Durham, findings as detailed under Performance Management. The Board will also write an annual report on the retrospective activity on CSE in Darlington.

8.6 Learning and Improvement Subgroup

The learning and improvement group meets on a quarterly basis to consider any cases that may meet the threshold for a serious case review (SCRs), multi-agency practice that is working well and where it may not be working very well and from cases where they do not meet the SCR threshold, but there is learning to be drawn from the case. The group will review the information and advice on the next steps such as: initiate a serious case review, lessons learnt case review, multi-agency case file audit, or no further action.

The group met five times during the year and a total of 8 agencies are invited to the group. Out of the 8, 63% of the agencies attended (Evolution, DSCB, Darlington Borough Council, CDDFT, TEWV) the meeting 100% of the time. The following agencies: CCG, Police and Community Rehabilitation Company attended on average 3 out of the possible 5 meetings. The Board will be reviewing the membership of this group and the chair in the 2015-2016 period.

It must be noted no serious case reviews were commissioned or completed in this annual report period.

What have we learnt and what will we do next?

The Board further examined their priorities at the March 2014 development day and they have developed jointly with Durham Safeguarding Children Board, the learning and improvement framework which has enabled agencies to be clear about their responsibilities and when to refer cases and multi-agency issues into the learning and improvement subgroup and to develop the learning culture across agencies to learn from experiences and improve services as a result. The learning and improvement framework has also helped the Board to develop an approach to managing notifiable incidents as outlined within Working Together, 2015 and the business unit is the conduit between DfE/Ofsted and the statutory agency.

The Board has identified the need to further develop the framework to draw on learning from other LSCB's and the overlap with the Safeguarding Adults Board as to how we commission and manage all forms of case reviews (e.g. proportionate serious case reviews, learning lessons reviews, reviews commissioned by other partnerships e.g. LSCB's outside of the area and domestic homicide reviews).

Although no SCRs were commissioned, the Board has undertaken a number of alternative reviews which did not meet the criteria for an SCR. In total 5 reviews have been identified two facilitated discussions took place and two cases discussed within the Learning and Improvement Group (LIG), a number of actions were identified from these meetings along with learning and have been shared with the individual organisations involved. The remaining case is ongoing and will be included as part of the 2015 – 2016 annual report.

A number of procedural issues were identified from these reviews as well as sharing of information where cases crossed over into other authorities, this resulted in procedures and processes being updated.

8.7 Child Death Overview Subgroup

The Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) is a sub-committee of both Durham and Darlington LSCB's. It is responsible for reviewing the available information on all child deaths and is accountable to both Boards. The CDOP must consider if there are modifiable factors as per the definition 'where, if actions could be taken through national or local interventions, the risk of future child deaths could be reduced¹²'.

The Board has received regular reports from the CDOP Chair and the Board is assured the CDOP process meeting the statutory timescales prescribed within Working Together, 2015. An area identified for further improvement was for the CDOP chair to provide an update of locally specific information including modifiable factors and learning identified by the CDOP panel.

The CDOP maintains an action log and learning from child death reviews into an action plan which is reviewed and updated at each meeting and reported into the Board regularly.

What have we learnt and what will we do next?

Board members feel that the CDOP process is well led and has a clear sense of direction, but have also recognised there is further improvement to ensure the CDOP process is linked into the learning and improvement subgroup and for the learning from child deaths including modifiable factors are widely communicated to all agencies and children, young people and their families within Darlington.

Further information about CDOP is outlined in the joint [CDOP annual report](#)

8.8 Allegations Management and Safer Recruitment

DSCB have two development officers who are also the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), and it is part of their role to have an overview of the management of allegations and concerns against individuals who work with children and young people in Darlington. The Board are assured that all allegations and concerns are dealt with in a fair and consistent manner. There is robust oversight and monitoring arrangements in place by means of fortnightly meetings with the Boards' Business Manager. The 2013-14 Section 11 audits demonstrated agencies prioritise safer recruitment.

The Board found that in the 2014/15 reporting period a total of 56 referrals were received to the unit, this is an increase of 24% on the previous year, and 86% on 2012/2013. This could be attributed to the awareness raising work undertaken by the Board across settings through e-bulletins, DSCB training, other communication and the workforce procedures. A broad range of settings have submitted concerns which indicates organisations are aware of their responsibilities to refer to the LADO. Educational settings accounted for the highest proportion of referrals to the LADO of 35% during 2014 - 2015, other referrals were from police, religious/faith settings, health and local authority staff across a range of disciplines. In addition, referrals were also received from individuals that were self-employed.

The LADO's have produced a detailed [annual report](#) and within this report it compares three years data. The data assures the Board that agencies across roles and settings are following the managing allegations guidance.

What have we learnt and what will we do next?

The Board are confident the role of the LADO and the procedures are well communicated across all sectors who work with children and young people in Darlington, this is indicated through the increased number of referrals made to the LADO's. However, the Board does recognise further work to continue, to include the safer recruitment on the DSCB training programme, communicate with all children's workforce of their responsibilities of referring cases to the LADO, to monitor data and identify any themes that emerge and remain informed of local, regional and national practice and any legislative changes. The LADO will also explore approaches to improve the current IT system that will enable for more timely and robust reporting including liaising with regional counterparts to ensure that there is consistency of recording practice across the region.

8.9 Private fostering

This is an ongoing focus for the Board, however the number of children and young people who are known to be privately fostered in Darlington is less than five. Leaflets have been developed and distributed by the private fostering team and the DSCB has raised awareness across partner agencies through e-bulletins and multi-agency training.

What have we learnt and what will we do next?

The Board recognises, due to the low numbers of children in a private fostering arrangement it must continue to raise awareness and training of 'what is a private fostering arrangement' to partner agencies and to children, young people and their families.

¹² Working Together, 2015

¹³ DfE, Keeping Children Safe in Education, July 2015

9. Key Messages that will inform the review of our business plan, our priorities and the Executive Summary of this report that will be produced by the end of 2015.

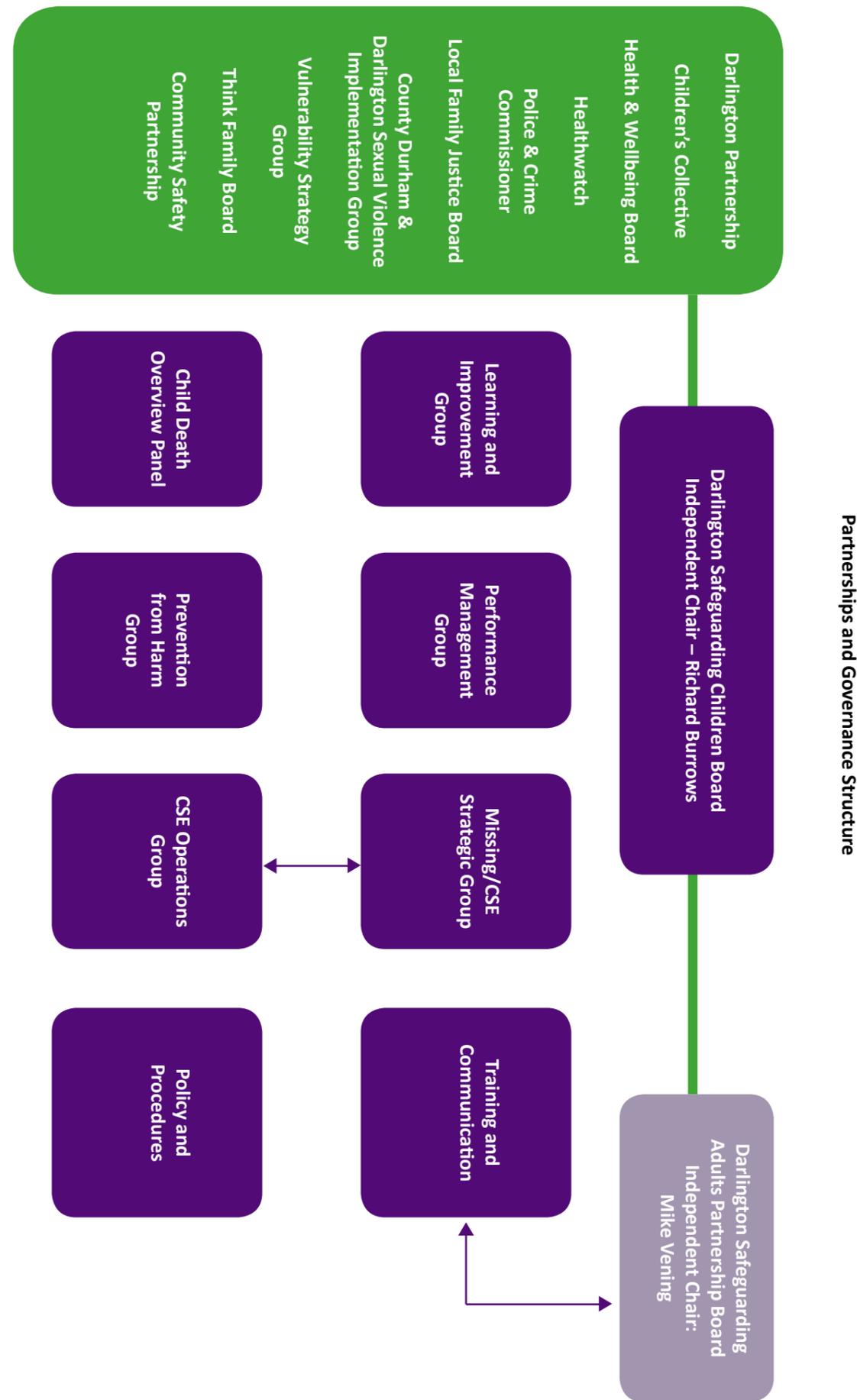
- Board members and their organisations are committed to the LSCB
- Financial contributions have matched our activities
- We have responded to changes in the ways services are configured and ensured that membership of the board continues to reflect this. We have recognised the opportunity to explore new ways of sharing information and common interests in regard to safeguarding and our assurance role
- We have supported a strong and effective response to CSE, and have moved significantly to a position whereby we can be assured on the basis of evidence that these arrangements are effective and forward looking. We have recognised that we can apply this learning to other aspects of joint working arrangements and that we need to be responsive to emerging safeguarding issues such as Female Genital Mutilation, the Prevent Duty and radicalisation
- We have kept our policies and procedures up to date and promoted these, and recognise that we will need to maintain this and test out in a more thorough way that they are useful and are making a difference.
- We have maintained our levels of performance in providing multi-agency training and recognise that we need to set system wide objectives so as to be assured that all those who work with children and young people have the right knowledge and skills.
- We have overseen and delivered an effective CDOP arrangement and learnt that we need to find new ways of making sure this makes a difference locally and that it complements our other responsibilities in respect of critical incident notifications and case review.
- We have learnt that in developing our performance management and quality assurance arrangements that we will need to refresh our approach and will need to identify the resources to take this to the next level.
- We have been assured that the Local Authority and partners are proactively addressing safer recruitment and allegations against people who work with children. As a result we have recognised that we need to encourage improved reporting and SMART outcomes.
- The new business unit arrangements have produced some positives but we need to look at this in a structured way to form a view as to the benefits and risks.
- The way we have organised the sub groups and how they have reported into and informed the Board members leadership role has worked well in some ways but not so well in others, so we need to understand this better and make any changes that may be needed.
- We have recognised that partners may struggle to maintain their commitments to the wide agenda we have especially in terms of the sub groups, so we will look at this with a view to reducing any potential duplication, making sure that we have a focus on leadership and making sure that we have the right people in the right place doing the right thing.
- We have learned that we will need to focus more energy and resources in developing a more comprehensive way of scrutinising the performance and quality of joint working arrangements in order that the Board and its members can fulfil their responsibilities to promote learning, challenge, assurance and improvement.
- We have listened to children and young people but recognise that we need to develop this into a more coherent plan that makes sure we are clear about how we see things from their point of view and how and in what ways this will make a difference to how we undertake our responsibilities.
- We have learnt from our work with the Safeguarding Adult Board, and recognise that we need to enter into dialogue with partners and other strategic partnerships about how we can ensure a more “joined up” approach on the basis of a better understanding of the respective roles each plays.
- We have recognised that not having recently undertaken a SCR we may need to assure ourselves that our review processes are thorough, transparent and robust.
- We have learned that as a Board we need to become more effective in providing leadership as well as challenge and the basis on how we reach a point of assurance, we will therefore continue to invest in board member development, how we set and manage priorities and how we risk assess and monitor progress against outcomes that focus directly in the impact they will have for children and on whole or part system effectiveness.
- We have been successful in expanding our “reach” into and “connect” with the wider community and this has served to highlight that we need a more detailed plan for how we will build on this.
- We have recognised that we may not be able to maintain the breadth of our current focus, so as a Board we will need to think carefully in revising our plans and objectives as to where, how and on what basis we direct our efforts.
- We have only been able to make a “qualified” judgement in terms of how assured as a Board we are regarding the “sufficiency” of joint working arrangements to safeguard children and young people and to promote their welfare. We do not have any reason to believe that children and young people are not safe as a result of this.

10. Appendices

Appendix A

Darlington Safeguarding children Board Membership 1st April 2015

Agency	Name	Job Title
LSCB	Richard Burrows	Independent Chair
	Kevin Buckle	Lay Member
	Briony Richardson	Lay Member
	Odette Robson	Business Manager
	Amanda Hugill	Development Officer
Darlington Borough Council	Jenni Cooke	Service Director - Children, Families and Learning
	Kevin Kelly	Head of Service
	Yvonne Coates	Head of First Contact and Locality Services
	Hazel Neasham	Head of Housing
	Jo Benson	Youth Offending Service Manager
	Lisa Summers	Head of Review and Development
	Nicola White	Principal Solicitor
	Joanna Conway	Education Safeguarding Officer
	Cyndi Hughes	Lead Member Children and Young People
	Public Health	Miriam Davidson
Education	Claire Blackett	Head Teacher, Priory
	James Keating	Deputy Head, Hummersknott Academy
	Clare Devine	Principal, Education Village
	Neil Parker	Head Teacher, BR and H Academy
	Carole Todd	Director Quality and Student Services, Darlington College
Evolution	Karen Grundy	Executive Director
Durham Constabulary	Paul Goundry	Detective Superintendent
County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust	Kath Vasey	Head of Children and Families Service
	Maureen Grieveson	Associate Director of Nursing
	Stephen Cronin	Designated Doctor
County Durham and Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group	Carole Atherton	Designated Nurse
NHS England	Bev Walker	Deputy Director of Nursing
National Probation Service	Carina Carey	Head of Durham NPS
Durham Tees Valley Community Rehabilitation Company	Hazel Willoughby	Head of Offender Services
Tees, Esk & Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust	Karen Agar	Acting Associate Director of Nursing
CAFCASS	Alison Wild	Service Manager



10. Glossary of Terms

CAF	Common Assessment Framework
CAFCASS	Children and Family Court and Advisory and Support Service
CAMHS	Child Adolescent Mental Health Service
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CDDFT	County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust
CDOP	Child Death Overview Panel
ChiMat	Child and Maternal Health Intelligence Network
CQC	Care Quality Commission
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
CSP	Community Safety Partnership
CYPP	Children and Young People's Plan
DBC	Darlington Borough Council
DfE	Department for Education
DSAPB	Darlington Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board
DSCB	Darlington Safeguarding Children Board
HMIP	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons
HWB	Health and Wellbeing Board
IHA	Initial Health Assessment
LA	Local Authority
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
LIG	Learning and Improvement Group
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Board
MASH	Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub
MEG	Missing and Exploited Group
NECA	North East Council for Alcoholism
NHS	National Health Service
NICE	National Institute for Health and Care Excellence
NWG	National Working Group
NPS	National Probation Service
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner
PMQA	Performance Management and Quality Assurance
QA	Quality Assurance
SCR	Serious Case Review
TEWV	Tees Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust



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Business Unit

or send to:

Darlington Safeguarding Children Board
Room 10, North Lodge,
Gladstone Street,
Darlington,
DL3 6JX.

We have incorporated hyperlinks where possible to take you to additional information and/or further details, if you are not able to access this then please contact us to arrange for the information to be made available.

We would welcome feedback and this can be made to either the DSCB Independent Chair or by contacting the Board's Business Unit on 01325 406450, address as above or by e-mail

If you require this report in an alternative format, please contact the Board's Business unit on contacts above.

This report is formally sent to:

- The Chief Executive of the Local Authority
- The Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board
- The Police and Crime Commissioner Durham
- The Chief Executives of all organisations who sit on the Board
- Board member are required to promote and share the report within their own organisations

The report is published on the DSCB website.