

MESSAGES BULLETIN

FROM THE DARLINGTON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

ISSUE 5 – January 2017

Welcome to the fifth bulletin from the Darlington Safeguarding Children Board. The Board is made up of leaders from a range of organisations such as the Local Authority, police, public health, the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), providers of health care, social care, housing, voluntary services and the Probation Services all of whom have an interest in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. On a bi-monthly basis the board meets to ensure safeguarding practice is well coordinated and meeting the safeguarding needs of children in Darlington.

The Board met on **25th January 2017** and the headlines from the meeting are:



Developing a stronger Safeguarding Children Board

The Board partners met in December 2016 to reflect on progress to date, what further work the Board needed to prioritise and areas of how it can develop and improve which will strengthen how agencies work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Darlington. The Board discussed the priorities and a follow up meeting has been arranged in February to finalise.

Board will receive the finalised Business and Improvement Plan in March 2017. Once approved, the plan will be available on the [Safeguarding Boards website](#).

In addition to the Boards Business plan, it has developed an Ofsted improvement plan, which sets out the Boards commitment to develop on the recommendations received during the Ofsted inspection and how it will also support the work of its partners as a member of the Children's Services Improvement Board (CSIB). The CSIB is a multi-agency Board with stakeholders to support Darlington Borough Council and its partners to improve the services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers in Darlington.



Improving the support and coordination of support to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) Community

It has been acknowledged by Board that in Darlington it has the largest population of the GRT community. Board are seeking assurances that the community are able to access support and provision from all services. The initial work has established there is specialist provision available, but the coordination of this work should be improved.

Board noted that there are other communities that Board need to seek assurances on in respect of access to provision and safeguarding services. It was agreed further work is to be undertaken with strategic leads for Board to seek these assurances.



Developing Early Help offer to families in Darlington

Board received a report which summarised the journey to date on the early help offer and how all agencies are developing their services collectively. An Early Help reference group has been set up and the terms of reference are being finalised for this group. There is a further time limited group to develop a partnership strategy in respect of Early Help.

Board noted that they would want a further update on the multi-agency working in relation to access arrangements, understanding of the number of children and young people receiving support and the quality and impact services have had on their lives. In addition the Quality Assurance and Performance Subgroup have been asked by Board to further develop Boards understanding of the Early Help offer across the partnership through data sharing and quality assurance activity. The reference group will also be required to provide Board with its assurances.



Approved policies and procedures to support practitioners

The following procedures have been approved and are available from the [Safeguarding Boards' Website](#) in the professional's area:

- Procedure for children and young people who go missing from home, care or education
- Child Sexual Exploitation Procedure and Practice Guidance
- Child Sexual Exploitation Risk Assessment Information Form
- PREVENT Practice Guidance and Channel Process
- Protocol for collaborative working and information sharing between professionals to protect children and vulnerable adults
- Learning and Improvement Framework (Notifiable Incidents, Serious Case Reviews, Case Reviews and other alternative reviews Procedures and Guidance)



Dedicated Safeguarding Team in Darlington led by a Detective Inspector

Durham Constabulary has reviewed their structure to merge the child and adult safeguarding teams. This change has increased the capacity and will develop Detectives knowledge and experience of dealing with all safeguarding matters. It will also provide greater effectiveness in supervision leading to quicker investigations and an improved outcome for victims.

Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Children Board is:

Simon Hart

The Safeguarding Children Board is supported by a joint business unit which also supports the Darlington Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board.

For further information you can contact a member of the team on: 01325 406452 or visit our website: www.darlingtonsafeguardingboards.co.uk