



**Darlington  
Safeguarding  
Partnership**

Protecting Children and Adults

# Annual Report

2019-2020



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# 1. Introduction

## Foreword by Statutory Safeguarding Partners

This is the first annual report of the Darlington Safeguarding Partnership which went live on 1 July 2019. The report outlines what we have done over the period 2019-20, drawing upon a range of data and information to illustrate the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements.

We all agreed that the requirement for new safeguarding arrangements for children provided Darlington with an opportunity to work together differently and to further strengthen, partnership working across adults and children to promote a 'whole family approach' to safeguarding to improve outcomes for children, adults and their families. We recognised the Child and Adult Boards were in a good position to progress and make these changes. Partner relationships have been strong and partnership engagement strengthened to enable a move forward to the new partnership vision of 'Darlington is a place where children and adults can live their lives safely.'

There were many challenges in establishing a joint partnership, however partners have fully embraced this new opportunity and saw the benefit of joining up with an aim to strengthen and develop partnership working to keep children, young people and adults with needs for care and support safe. This could not be achieved without the dedication of all partners and practitioners working on the frontline.

Our first year was spent determining the structure and governance arrangements to ensure we have the appropriate processes and systems in place, exploring how the Partnership could develop a more integrated approach with an aim of strengthening and developing safeguarding partnership arrangements.

We continue to ensure there are effective arrangements in place to protect and promote the welfare of children and adults with needs for care and support who are at risk of abuse, neglect, injury or harm and to ensure the voice of the child/adult is evident across multi-agency work. There has been a great deal of activity over the year to ensure we meet our statutory responsibilities, which are outlined in this report.

The COVID-19 pandemic affected everyone in the Darlington locality at the end of this reporting period and we recognise and acknowledge the efforts of the people and employees of all our partners, who continue to keep people safe during this time.

The report recognises the progress the Partnership has made throughout the year and the longer-term challenge is to ensure that the new arrangements have made a positive difference to children, young people and adults with needs for care and support in Darlington.

**Ann Baxter, Independent Chair/Scrutineer**

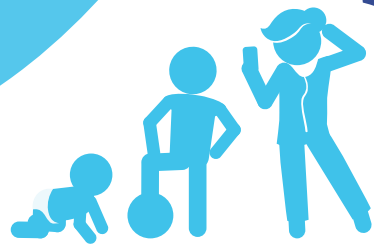
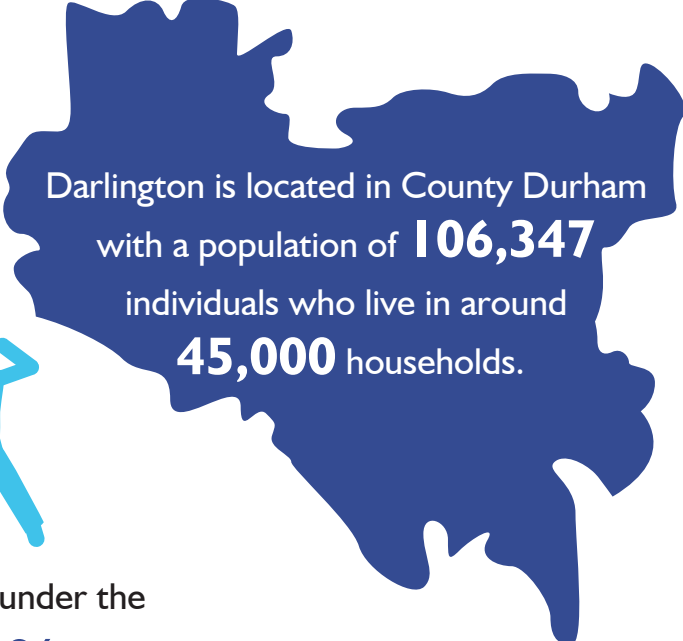
**Adrian Green, Detective Chief Superintendent, Durham Constabulary**

**Suzanne Joyner, Director of Children and Adult Services, Darlington Borough Council**

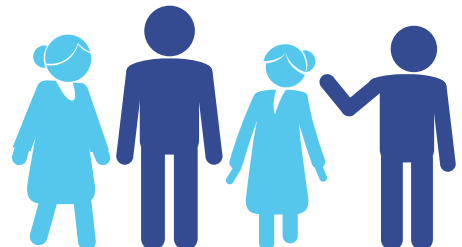
**Gillian Findley, Director of Nursing, Durham and Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group**



## 2. Local picture



Children and young people under the age of 25 years make up **28%** of the population, which is a little lower than the England average at 30%.

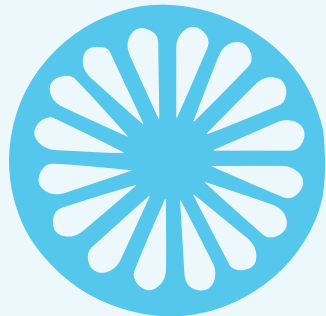


In terms of ethnicity, the 2011 Census reported 96.2% of Darlington's population as White and **3.8%** from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups.



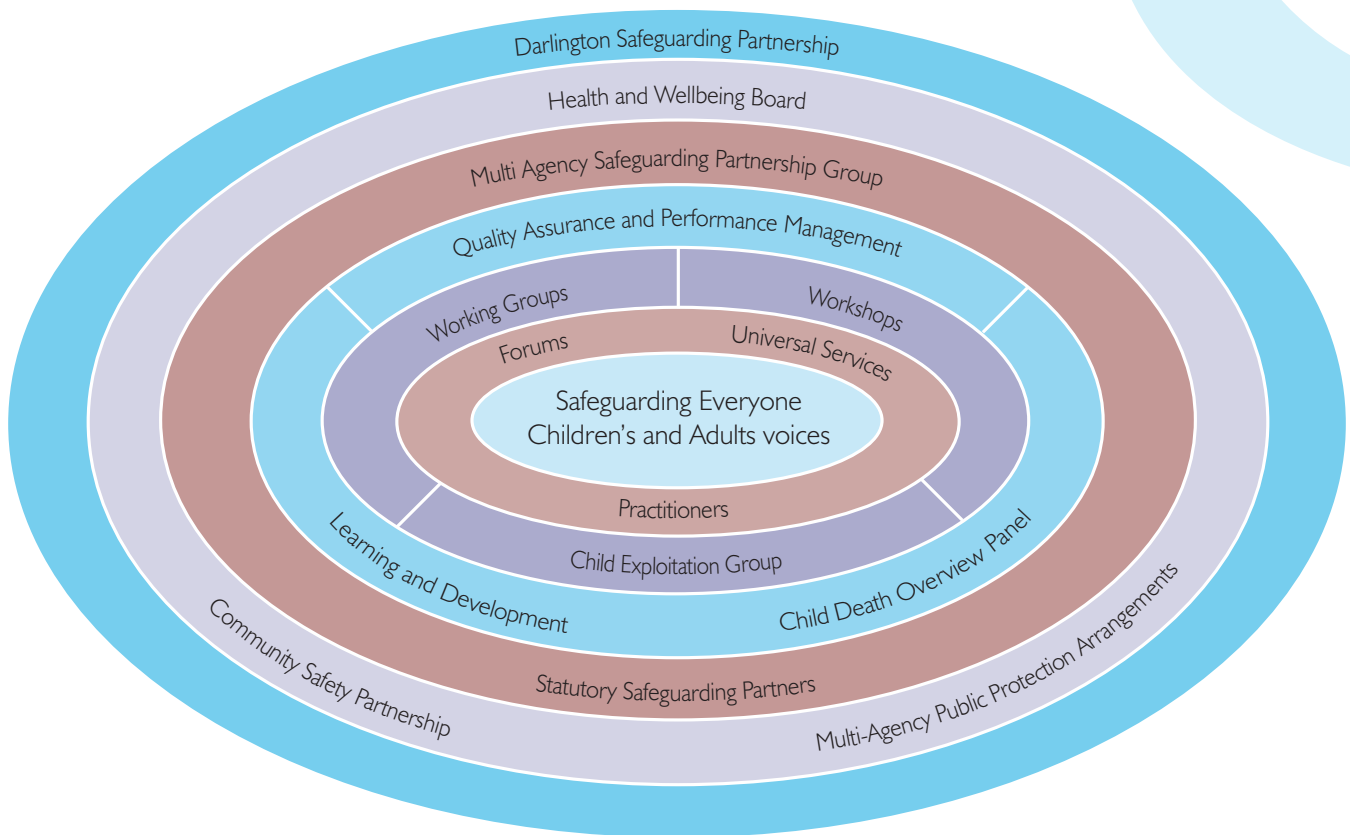
The number of people aged over 65 years old in Darlington is estimated at **21,700**

In County Durham and Darlington the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) community form the largest single ethnic minority group, the proportion of Darlington residents who identify themselves as GRT (2011 census) is **0.3%** which is three times higher than the national average.





# 3. Governance and Structure



Whilst the Statutory Safeguarding Partners are committed to meeting regularly to ensure the Partnership is efficient and effective, to enable them to oversee safeguarding arrangements and be sighted on issues affecting the local area, they established a number of sub-groups to oversee the quality of safeguarding work and to identify opportunities for learning.

- **Quality Assurance and Performance Management sub-group (QAPM)**

The QAPM group oversees the Quality Assurance and Performance Framework in order to provide a strategic overview of the quality of safeguarding work across the Partnership using a range of tools. By scrutinising, monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of safeguarding work across partner agencies and commissioned organisations, the group is able to highlight areas of concern or improvement as well as identifying what is working well.

- **Learning and Development sub-group (L&D)**

The primary purpose of the L&D group is to identify opportunities for learning and improvement and embed the quality of multi-agency frontline practice, for those practitioners working in child and adult safeguarding arenas to improve outcomes for children and adults. It ensures the effective development of multi-agency training, policy, procedure and practice guidance.

- **Child Exploitation Group (CEG)**

The primary purpose of CEG is to oversee, monitor and improve responses to tackle children missing from home, care and education and act as the strategic lead group for the reduction of Child Exploitation. It is a joint group with members of Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership. An operational group oversees individual cases of children at risk of exploitation in Darlington with a purpose to prevent, disrupt and deter them from being criminally or sexually exploited.

- **Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)**

CDOP is responsible for reviewing the available information on all child deaths, to confirm or clarify the cause of death, to determine any contributory factors and to identify any learning arising from the review, which may prevent future child deaths and share learning, patterns or trends with safeguarding partners.

The work of the Partnership can only be achieved by partnership working and continues to work closely with other key relevant agencies and Strategic Partnership Boards including the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Community Safety Partnership. These links ensure strong joint working arrangements across agencies which coordinate the vision, aims and priorities for Darlington and its population, ensuring the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements for children, young people and adults with needs for care and support are threaded throughout. The links help to promote effective communication and engagement to ensure 'safeguarding is everybody's business'.



# 4. Partnership achievements and impact

## a) Performance Data

The Safeguarding Partnership has developed its own quality assurance framework and developed a suite of performance indicators to build up a profile of the welfare and safety of children and adults at risk in Darlington. A dashboard highlights key performance indicators for agency responses relating to early help, prevention, presenting factors, strategy, child/adult protection, exploitation and missing, Making Safeguarding Personal and is based on data provided by partner agencies. The QAPM group considers issues such as referrals, volume, timeliness, engagement, attendance at multi-agency meetings, quality of practice and outcomes for children and families and adults with needs for care and support to provide assurance to the statutory partners and highlight areas for concern or improvement.

## b) Multi-Agency Audit Activity

### Self- Assessment Audit 2019-20

The Partnership completed a biennial multi-agency safeguarding self-assessment audit, in accordance with the requirements of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and the Care Act 2014. Analysis of the returns provided evidence that the principles of safeguarding are generally embedded in practice and are effective in promoting the safety and welfare of children and adults at risk in Darlington. The responses demonstrate the majority of partners acknowledge the importance of ensuring compliance with the audit and can demonstrate they have appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place which are effective and are compliant with statutory requirements.

### Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) generic self-assessment

A multi-agency forum was established to provide strategic oversight and challenge on how well the local area performs against the multi-agency JTAI criteria. The group was established to oversee organisation preparedness for a JTAI multi-agency inspection and to be assured on how well partners work together on the front line.

### Child Sexual Abuse in the Family Environment

In June 2019, the Partnership conducted a multi-agency audit based on the JTAI guidance on cases of familial child sexual abuse, for the purpose of seeking assurance across the multi-agency partnership that the causes and impact of familial child sexual abuse is understood across the multi-agency partnership. The audit highlighted a number of strengths/areas of good practice as well as areas for development.

### Children Living with Mental Ill Health

In February 2020, the Partnership agreed to focus a multi-agency audit on cases which involved children and young people living with mental ill-health, again the scope was based on the JTAI guidance. The purpose of obtaining an understanding on how services responded to children and their families, when they are identified as living with mental ill health and how well it is understood across the Partnership. Findings highlighted a number of strengths/ areas of good practice and areas for development.

## c) Quality Assurance Activity/Thematic Work

Throughout the year additional quality assurance activity and thematic work is undertaken dependent on issues or concerns that arise.

### Child Protection Conference Observations

Conference observations have been an integral part of quality assurance activity with a purpose of identifying areas of good practice and/or corrective action that may be required. Any themes are taken forward by the QAPM group.

### Strategy meetings - children

A thematic audit into strategies identified appropriate action was taken and there was good evidence of relational approaches. Professionals were clear regarding information they had concerns about and appropriately challenged one another. There were some inconsistencies in invitations for health professionals, scaling and timescales for actions. The audit highlighted a need to focus on current safeguarding concerns and not historic concerns.

### Missing Children

A deep dive into two cases of high risk children who frequently went missing from home across County Durham and Darlington provided feedback to individual agencies and the Partnership on opportunities for improved practice.

### Executive Strategy Process

Executive Strategy processes are held to address all concerns and issues relating to suspected organised or institutional abuse or neglect of adults. In 2019/2020 there was one residential setting in Executive Strategy process, the process is led by Darlington Borough Council and remains ongoing.

### Thematic work

The continuous identification of learning from Serious Case Reviews, Safeguarding Adult Reviews, Learning Lesson Reviews alongside learning highlighted through quality assurance audit activity is important and a priority of the Darlington Safeguarding Partnership. A thematic review was carried out which covered a number of child and adult reviews and audits over the past four years. Whilst each review or audit highlighted specific issues, over time themes started to emerge. The findings of audits echo the findings of reviews and the following key themes were identified:

- a. **Neglect**
- b. **Self-Neglect**
- c. **Communication and Information sharing**
- d. **Voice of the Child/Adult**
- e. **Engagement**
- f. **Family circumstances**
- g. **Professional Responsibility/Practice**
- h. **Specific learning**
- i. **Good practice**

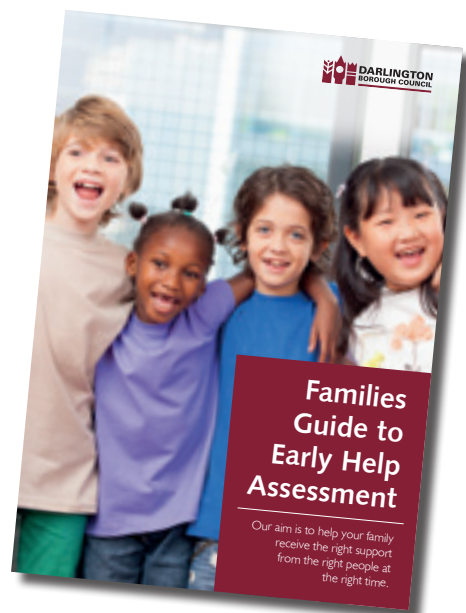
It is widely acknowledged that recommendations of reviews and audits are often neither unexpected nor surprising. The thematic work highlighted a number of key themes for the Partnership to consider and the Learning and Development sub-group is addressing the learning and practice issues.



# 5. Analysis on effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements

## Early Help

The Partnership has recognised early help is much greater than that provided by the local authority and the pressure on 'universal' services such as schools and mental health services has increased year on year. During 2019-20 there were 893 early help assessments completed, 42% of these being completed by external agencies which is evidence of effective partnership working.



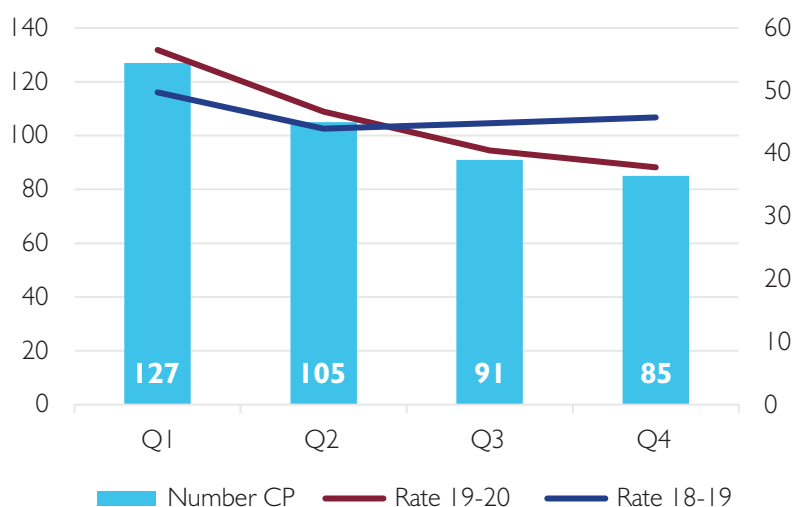
## Children in Need (CiN)

In March 2020, there were 357 children in Darlington identified as CiN, compared to 334 England average.

## Child Protection Plans (CPP)

At the end of March 2020, 85 children were subject to a Child Protection Plan in Darlington (a rate of 37.8 per 10,000). This is lower than: regional average (63.1); statistical neighbour (50.4) and the national average (43.7).

Rate and Number of Children subject of a Child Protection Plan at each quarter end



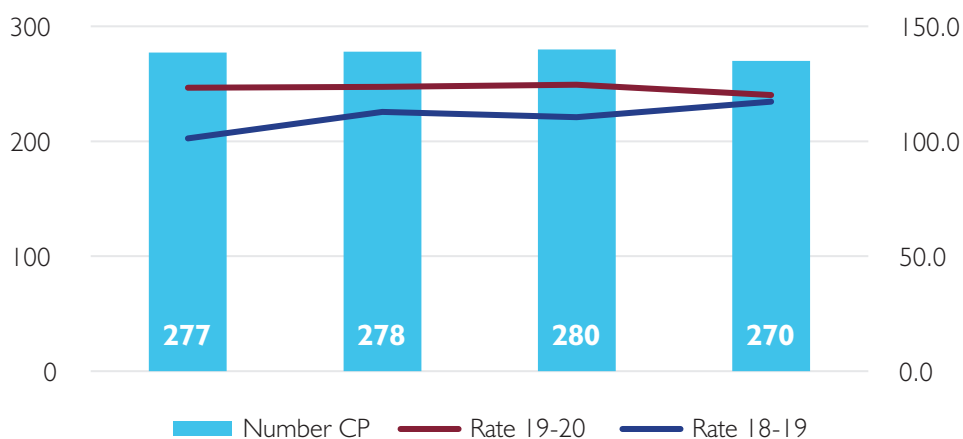


Risk Factors associated with Child Protection were due to:			
Neglect	Emotional Abuse	Physical Abuse	Sexual Abuse
38%	45%	8%	8%

## Looked After Children

The number of Looked After Children (LAC) by the local authority at the end of March 2020 was 270 (120.1 per 10,000). Darlington is not statistically different across a range of measures of concern and difficulties for Looked After Children compared to England.

Rate and Number of Children in Care at each quarter end



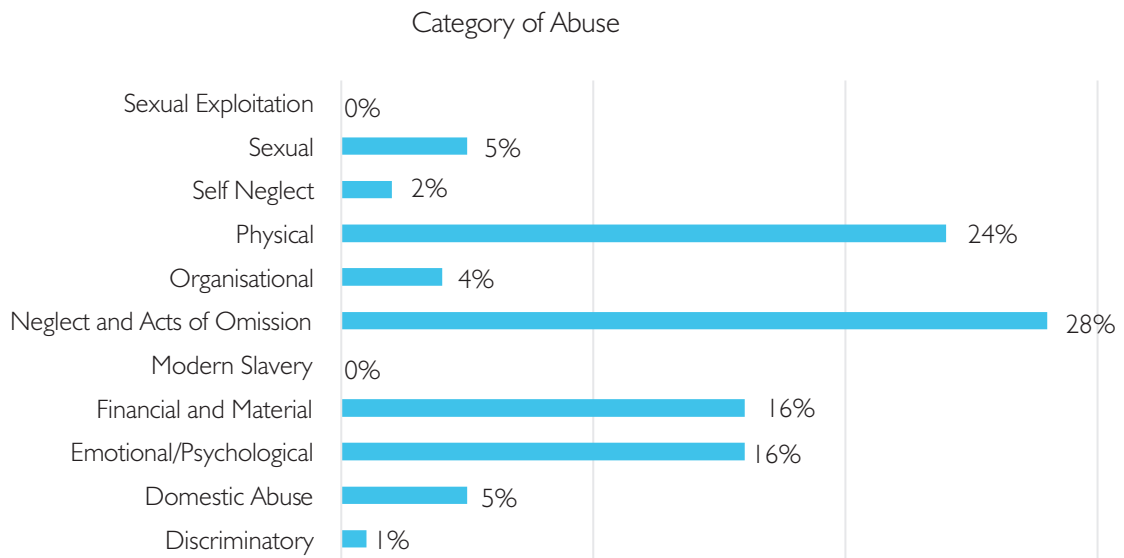
These placements were made up of:							
In house Fostering	Connected Carers	Private Fostering	Residential Care	Placed for adoption	Independent Living	Placed with parent	Other
56	47	99	27	9	4	25	3

## Care Leavers

56 out of 57 care leavers in Darlington were in suitable accommodation by the end of 2019-20 and the percentage of care leavers (aged 19-21) who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) was 28.1%, below the target of 30%, these were either due to disability or illness, pregnancy or parenting or other circumstances.

## Adult Safeguarding

The number of reported concerns for abuse and neglect in 2019/20 was 1797, with 54% progressing to S42 safeguarding enquiry. Of the concluded S42 enquiries, in 92% of cases the outcome was that the risk was either reduced or removed.



Location of abuse:								
Own home	In the Community	Community Service	Care Home Nursing	Care Home residential	Hospital Acute	Hospital Mental Health	Hospital Community	Other
42%	5%	1%	3%	26%	4%	13%	0%	6%



## Elective Home Education (EHE)

There are effective measures in place for Elective Home Education following a real focus in Darlington with the EHE Advisor building up close working relationships with schools and families, to ensure all children receive suitable education. A local policy has been developed in line with 2019 EHE guidance and all cases have been RAG rated against the statutory guidance on evidence of receiving suitable education. Where there is no evidence of home schooling, additional visits are put in place. As at 31 March 2020, there were 182 EHE with 93 from Gypsy, Roma and Travelling (GRT) community with 94 planned home visits taking place since September 2019 and 80 unannounced visits to GRT site and families who did not respond to letters or calls.

Darlington has a higher than average GRT population, with a high proportion of EHE from this community. The EHE advisor works closely with the GRT teacher and the 'Moving on and Aiming High' project was well attended.

## Children Missing from Home, Care and Education

The total number of children who went missing from home or care during 2019-20 was 270 with 100% of children being offered a return home interview, 85.5% within the 72-hour timescale. Of these young people who went missing, 17.7% were Children in Care.

The Philomena Protocol, aimed to protect children who go missing by promoting a joint investigation with an aim of returning the child to safety, has evidenced that there has been a reduction in children going missing from care homes who may also be at risk of exploitation.

The total number of children missing from education (CME) for 2019-20 were 65 and all children referred have been traced.



## Adults who go missing

Durham Constabulary provides assurance about the functioning of the Herbert Protocol which supports people at high risk of going missing and provides safeguards when people do go missing, which often results in people being found much more quickly.

## Exploitation of children and young people

Multi-agency work around child exploitation is coordinated through the Child Exploitation Group (CEG), which has been extended to reflect a broader focus and includes all forms of Criminal Exploitation, County Lines, Organised Crime and Modern Day Slavery.

In 2019, there was an increased focus on boys and young men at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation through awareness raising sessions and activity to provide focus on them as victims and not perpetrators.

The Partnership continues to obtain an understanding of the risks posed to young people as they grow and become influenced by a whole range of environments and people outside the family home such as school/college, their community, peer groups or online.

A cross agency Child Exploitation Vulnerability Tracker was launched in November 2019, originally designed to track County Lines. The tracker is used across Darlington and County Durham to identify children at risk and has highlighted a number of cases which would not have ordinarily been identified for multi-agency involvement.





## Child Deaths

During 2019/2020 there were a total of four child deaths. Due to the low numbers reported, it is not possible to go into specific detail to avoid any of the data being identifiable. The 2019-20 CDOP Annual report will be available on the DSP website.

## Domestic Abuse

The vision of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is for all agencies to work together to reduce the prevalence of domestic abuse and to provide a co-ordinated community response. It is recognised that domestic abuse is a serious crime that cuts across all social, geographical and cultural groups and can be experienced by any person, although the majority of victims in Darlington are women, many with children.

The safeguarding partnership is committed to reducing the prevalence of domestic abuse in Darlington, including a co-ordinated community response to prevention, support and protection services and services for perpetrators.

Operation Encompass addresses shortcomings in the early sharing of information with schools to enable them to provide proactive support to children and young people who are affected by domestic abuse within the family home. During the period April 2019 to March 2020 there were 309 incidents which involved 362 children, all notified to schools.

Domestic abuse remains a key training module to raise awareness and to ensure frontline practitioners are aware of the impact domestic abuse can have on victims, children and vulnerable adults. It also includes an emphasis on coercion and control.

The Domestic and Sexual Violence Executive Group (DASVEG) monitor local arrangements on the role key partners have in tackling domestic abuse in Darlington which provides some assurance about multi-agency response to tackling domestic violence and abuse. Darlington also has a separate plan to address sexual violence.

## Communication, Engagement and Voice of the Child/Adult

The voice of children, young people and adults with needs for care and support and their families is at the heart of all partnership activity. It is a recurring theme highlighted in reviews and audit activity. The Partnership structure includes the provision for actively seeking the voice of children and adults, ensuring their voices are threaded throughout each layer of the structure and to find out what works well for them. Agencies are also expected to provide evidence of how they ensure they have captured the voices of children, young people, adults and their families in their work.

Where possible, the Partnership will involve families in Child and Adult Safeguarding practice/learning reviews, audit activity and events. Information from such engagement is used to inform and develop practice and also helps set the priorities and audit and performance activity.

The Partnership's Communication and Engagement strategy was revisited to embrace the 'Think Family' approach to ensure the work of the Partnership is effectively communicated to relevant audiences which includes: children, young people and adults with needs for care and support, their families as well as practitioners and the wider community in Darlington.

There is some evidence of how the Partnership has engaged and communicated with a broad audience including, children, young people and adults with needs for care and support and their families and practitioners throughout this period, however recognises there is much more that can be achieved.







## Young People Conference 2019

Darlington Safeguarding Partnership held its annual Young People Conference in July 2019 at Darlington College. Over forty young people from six secondary schools in Darlington attended the event which is aimed to engage with young people and to improve their understanding of safeguarding issues which may be relevant to them.

The themes for the conference this year were Internet Safety – the perceptions and consequences of sexting and risk taking behaviour associated with alcohol and drugs. The themes were identified in consultation with young people and following a survey taken at the end of the conference, 93% of those who attended indicated they had learned something new to take back to school to share with their friends and peers.

## Making Safeguarding Personal

Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) is an initiative applicable to all agencies, which aims to develop a person centred and outcomes focus to safeguarding. In Darlington MSP and the involvement of service users or their representative in safeguarding enquiries is measured from the outset and is evaluated as part of the safeguarding process. Significant progress has been made in ensuring the adult at the centre of the enquiry (or their representative or advocate) is fully involved in the discussions about the safeguarding concern. In 2019/2020, 97% of cases consistently involved the individual (or their representative or advocate) in the safeguarding enquiry. The partnership continues to seek assurances that the principles of MSP are embedded within partner agencies.

## Case Study - Self-Neglect, Non-Compliance and Making Safeguarding Personal

A service user with chronic kidney disease required dialysis treatment three times a week and concerns were raised that the service user had failed to attend dialysis treatment and was likely to die as a result of self-neglect. No concerns were highlighted regarding capacity however, the medical team involved in the case found it very difficult to engage the service user in discussions around the deterioration in health and desired outcomes of the safeguarding process. All attempts at communication failed and without the service user's consent, it was not possible to contact a family member who visited daily. Therefore, the progression to a strategy meeting was made without consent, considering the severity of the risk (death). Due to the level of risk involved with the concern raised, it was necessary to look at the options available to safeguard the individual.

It was clear the service user had disengaged from meaningful discussion with health colleagues and had resisted contact from the safeguarding team. Further dialogue with the service user was attempted and the suggestion to involve an advocate was accepted. This proved to be a more successful approach with the individual able to express the desired outcomes. These included:

- being listened to and not always being “told what to do” in relation to health needs
- having more control about treatment
- the opportunity to explore the impact of not receiving treatment.

Shifting the focus from the presenting issue of non-compliance of essential medical treatment to engaging in what was important to the individual was crucial in breaking through barriers the service user had constructed. Highlighting strengths and providing the opportunity to discuss views and wishes clearly, without initiating conversation with concerns about non-attendance, ensured the service user felt more in control.

The introduction of an advocacy worker was a significant factor in allowing the service user to feel able to talk about their fears and anxiety in a safe way and the service user remains engaged in the support from the advocacy worker who acts as a first contact for further service provision.

## Strengthening Families Programme – Review of Front Door

Darlington Borough Council implemented its new strengthening families programme which was to see relational and restorative practices at the centre of practice to help make children in Darlington safer and able to remain with their families. A review highlighted families were seeing too many changes in social workers and a disproportionate number of assessments being carried out resulting in cases being either stepped down or closed, causing anxiety for families.

Darlington invested heavily in this programme and saw a shift from the current model of written contacts to a telephone-based service with no requirement to submit a written referral. The changes went live early March 2020. It is still early days and the Partnership will be presented with key findings from interim reviews at specific timelines over the course of the next 12 months.



## Independent Chair Engagement

During the year the Independent Chair held multi-agency meetings with relevant agencies of the Partnership and attended other forums such as primary and secondary forums to talk about current issues, what is working well and what needs to change relating to current safeguarding arrangements.

## Lay Members

Added strength is brought to the Partnership by its Lay Members whose role is to develop links between the Partnership and the community groups to support stronger public engagement in local safeguarding issues as well as helping to improve public understanding of safeguarding.

## DSP website and briefings

In January 2020, the Partnership launched a new website.

The website provides key safeguarding messages to practitioners and to the wider public as well as useful information and resources to not only support those working with children and adults, but the wider community to help keep children, young people and adults with needs for care and support safe. Since the new website was launched in January, there have been over 6000 unique visitors to the site, pages aimed at professionals and training being the most visited.

The Partnership developed a number of briefings to update on national, regional and local information which highlighted the key headlines the Partnership should be sighted on, including bulletins to support partners through the beginning weeks of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

**[www.darlington-safeguarding-partnership.co.uk](http://www.darlington-safeguarding-partnership.co.uk)**



# Training and Development

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of both Children and Adults is one of the key priorities of the Safeguarding Partnership in Darlington and remains the focus of the learning and development activity for learners whether from statutory, voluntary or independent sector.

The Partnership is committed to a culture of learning and this is outlined in the joint training strategy which sets out the strategic aims and objectives of the Partnership’s approach to ensuring that everyone working with children, young people and adults in the Darlington locality has the right skills, increased confidence and knowledge in the work they undertake to protect them from abuse and harm.

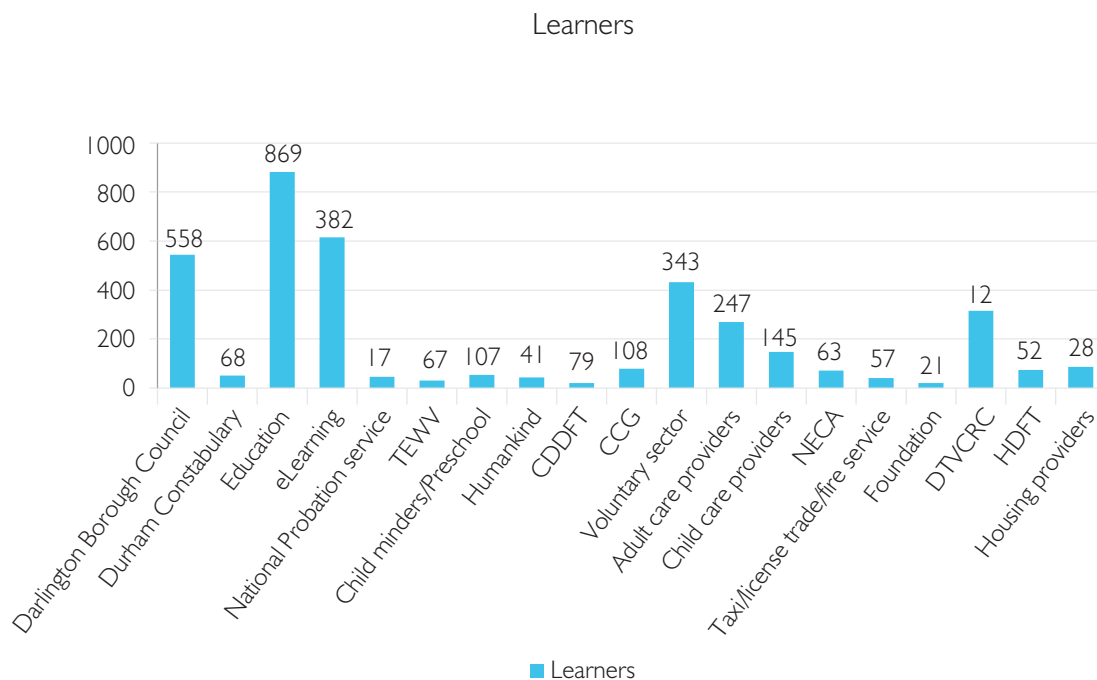
The training programme is updated and revised, based on information provided through the training needs analysis, feedback from the training delivered and post course evaluation of impact for both learners and the organisation. The multi-agency trainer has full access to performance data, information from lessons learnt reviews and audits, to ensure the training programme is regularly updated to meet the needs of practitioners. Courses are delivered through face to face training and the provision of eLearning modules. The Partnership receives an annual training report which for 2019 - 2020 highlighted:

- 99% of delegates who completed the post course evaluation, three months after the course stated that their confidence and skills were now very good/outstanding.
- 281 delegates completed the newly introduced programme of Neglect workshops which were developed to reflect learning from reviews multi-agency neglect audit where it was highlighted neglect may not be fully understood.

The total attendance on face to face training for 2019 – 2020 was 2,861. A total of 383 delegates accessed and successfully completed eLearning modules provided by the Partnership.

Further information and a breakdown of the training figures can be found in the training annual report 2019/2020 available on the Safeguarding Partnership website.

The chart below outlines the attendance for face to face training accessed by partner agencies during the period April 2019 – March 2020.







## Policy and Procedure

Enabling continual improvement and learning for partners and practitioners is important to the Partnership. The development of local multi-agency policy, procedure and practice guidance is undertaken through the Learning and Development sub-group which ensures that learning points from case reviews and audits as well as changes to national policy and identified good practice are captured. The ongoing review of policies, procedures and guidance documents is important to support front line practitioners with both prevention, early intervention and awareness raising.

During 2019/20, there was a focus on revisiting policy, procedure and practice guidance documents to support and strengthen partnership working across adults and children's services. With an aim of promoting a 'whole family approach' to safeguarding to improve outcomes for children, adults and their families. Information on the DSP website

provides support to front line practitioners to enable them to easily access multi-agency safeguarding procedures and practice guidance as well as providing advice and guidance to members of the public on how to report safeguarding concerns. A number of policies were revised which include:

- Multi Agency Child Protection Procedures and Adult Safeguarding Procedures
- Multi-Agency Practice Guidance on Domestic Abuse and Safeguarding to incorporate referral pathways, Honour Based Abuse, Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Child and Adolescent Violence towards Parents (CAPVA), a less understood form of Domestic Abuse
- Practice Guidance on Fabricated and Induced Illness (FII)
- Joint child and adult Professional Challenge Procedure and guidance
- Partnership Information Sharing Protocol
- Child Safeguarding Practice Review Procedure and the Serious Child Safeguarding Incident Procedure - to reflect legislative changes and the introduction of the requirement to notify the national panel
- The Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) protocol - to improve timescales and to reflect similar process for children where appropriate
- A joint Communications and Engagement strategy

Revised policies specifically on Honour Based Abuse and Forced Marriage and transitional ages are currently in development and due to rising concerns nationally in childhood obesity, a local policy on Childhood Obesity and Safeguarding is currently being developed.



# 6. Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and Safeguarding Adult Reviews

Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR) were introduced in 2019, and replaced Serious Case Reviews. During 2019-20 there were no new Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews or Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SAR). There were two ongoing reviews carried forward from the Children's Board, one Serious Case Review and a Local Learning Lessons Review. The reviews were completed and signed off by Statutory Safeguarding Partners in October 2019.

It is acknowledged the number of Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews or Safeguarding Adult Reviews in Darlington is low, however the processes have been reviewed and revised over the course of the year. All reviews are reported to the Statutory Safeguarding Partners and Independent Scrutineer/Chair and they use this information to determine and direct the work. All cases are referred to the Learning and Development sub-group in the interests of openness and transparency and to enable the group to discuss and analyse processes to determine if appropriate decisions have been made. The group will consider whether there may be single or multi-agency learning or whether practice issues have been highlighted which may need to be explored further through quality assurance processes. The group will oversee and monitor cases to ensure that identified improvement actions are completed and any barriers or slippage in achieving outcomes are responded to or escalated where appropriate. It also has responsibility for embedding learning and the quality assurance of recommendations for improving safeguarding practice by all partner organisations.

Although there is no requirement for formal notification for an adult review (SAR), it was agreed it would be beneficial to adopt a similar process and timelines as is in place for Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

The Serious Case Review was published in line with Statutory Guidance on the DSP website. The learning from these reviews were shared using a range of methods, including the development of briefing documents and themed workshops. Partners were asked to use these tools within their own organisation to support and improve learning and practice.

Moving forward, the Partnership is considering how it is going to take forward the learning on the themes identified into the next year. The Chairs of the two sub groups (Learning and Development and Quality Assurance and Performance Management) will be undertaking a mapping exercise to determine the areas the Partnership needs to focus on during the next reporting period.



# 7. Looking Ahead

Darlington begins the year 2020-21 with the challenge of responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic and of ensuring vulnerable children and adults remain the focus of all organisations. The partners began working together to develop new ways of working to ensure there was a strong collective oversight of all safeguarding arrangements to seek the assurance that everyone is working closely together to get through this and appropriately adapting ways of working to ensure the most vulnerable are supported and safeguarded.

Darlington Safeguarding Partnership will continue to invest in its children, young people and adults with needs for care and support and their families. Our vision of ensuring Darlington is a safe place for children and adults to live will be paramount in the work we do. We recognise there is still much to do and have identified gaps and areas for learning, however are assured that there is multi-agency commitment by all agencies to work collaboratively to address these and strengthen existing practice with a focus on a 'whole family approach'.



# Appendix 1

## Staffing and Budget

Darlington Safeguarding Partnership is supported by the following staff within the Business Unit:

- Business Manager
- Development Officer/Designated Officer
- Multi-Agency Trainer
- Business Support Officer
- Analyst (seconded from Durham Constabulary to work jointly across Durham and Darlington Safeguarding Partnerships)

Contributions from Partner Agencies for 2019-20 period	
Darlington Borough Council	£115,616
Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group	£41,310
Durham Constabulary	£34,404
Schools Forum	£10,000
Darlington College	£2,525
County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust	£16,973
Queen Elizabeth 6th Form College	£1,515
Community Rehabilitation Company	£1,000
National Probation Service	£770
Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust	£2,000
CAFCASS	£550
Course and Training Fees	£7,025
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>£233,666</b>

# Appendix 2

## Relevant Agencies

The Partnership is led by the Statutory Safeguarding Partners which is the key Statutory Leads. The Multi-Agency Partnership Group is the wider partnership group which includes representative from the relevant agencies. Details of relevant Agencies as shown below:

- Darlington Local Authority - Housing, Public Health, Youth Offending
- Health agencies – County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust (CDDFT), Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV), Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust (HDFT), North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust, North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (NEAS)
- Children and Families Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS)
- Care Quality Commission (CQC)
- Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (DDFRS)
- Early Years Settings
- Education (Primary, Secondary, Further Education, SEN)
- Support organisations for issues such as Substance Misuse/Domestic Abuse/Sexual Exploitation/Sexual Abuse (SARC)
- Family Justice Board (FJB)
- National Probation Service (NPS)
- Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC)
- Voluntary and third sector organisations (including Healthwatch)
- Primary Care Darlington General Practices
- Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group
- NHS England (pharmacy, dentist and optometrists)
- Independent providers including private hospitals, children's homes, nursing and care homes, domiciliary providers
- Youth groups – e.g. sport, scouts, brownies
- Faith settings
- Minority Communities
- British Transport Police (BTP)
- Chairs of other key local boards
- Representatives of other National Partners
- Darlington Partnership – which includes business and community organisations
- Coroner





