



# Autumn Newsletter

Welcome to our Autumn Newsletter

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Welcome to the latest edition of the Darlington Safeguarding Partnership Newsletter. Whilst the holiday season has been and gone, we continue to reflect on the accomplishments of all our partners in ensuring children, young people and vulnerable adults are kept safe during the continuing Covid-19 Pandemic. We recognise working together across agencies will always be a challenge, however it has to be acknowledged how well services have adapted and flexed the way they deliver services to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.

We can see agencies beginning to look to the future and their road to recovery, with many adapting to a blended way of working using a ‘hybrid’ model that mixes remote working and face to face. Whilst we may continue to live with the Pandemic for some considerable time to come, we recognise the impact this has had both personally and professionally and that all agencies have a duty of care to ensure we all stay safe but also ensuring we keep our children, young people and adults safe.

In this newsletter, we bring together information which we hope you will find useful which highlights how the Partnership continues to communicate and keep in touch with all our partner agencies. In this edition you will find information ranging from domestic abuse, training offers, as well as recently published policies, procedure and practice guidance.



*This newsletter is available on the DSP website;  
<https://darlington-safeguarding-partnership.co.uk/>*

## Darlington's Statutory Safeguarding Partners;

Ann Baxter, Independent Chair/Scrutineer

James Stroyan, Director of Children and Adult Services

Adrian Green, Detective Chief Superintendent

Jean Golightly, Director of Nursing

## National Safeguarding Adults Week 2021

### Safeguarding Adults Week 2021 will take place from 15-21 November

Safeguarding Adults Week is a time for organisations to come together to raise awareness of important safeguarding issues. The aim is to highlight safeguarding key issues, facilitate conversations and to raise awareness of safeguarding best practice, so we can all be better together.

## National Safeguarding Adults Week 2021

15 – 21 November 2021

#SafeguardingAdultsWeek

ann craft trust  
acting against abuse

We hope the week will enable more organisations and individuals to feel confident in recognising signs of abuse and neglect and recording and reporting safeguarding concerns.

Darlington Safeguarding Partnership will be supporting the campaign and promoting the week on its website and encourages all organisations to raise awareness of important safeguarding issues.

Watch this [short video](#) from the Ann Craft Trust to learn more about what safeguarding is.

### This year's theme - 'Creating Safer Cultures'

Promoting safer cultures is all about how organisations and individuals can take steps to minimise harm occurring in the first instance, whilst simultaneously ensuring correct policies and procedures are in place so that safeguarding concerns that are raised, are recognised and responded to effectively.

Each day throughout the week will focus on a specific topic to facilitate conversations around the theme of creating safer cultures.;

<b>Monday:</b>	Emotional Abuse and Safeguarding Mental Health
<b>Tuesday:</b>	The Power of (Respectful) Language
<b>Wednesday:</b>	Digital Safeguarding/Creating Safer Cultures Online
<b>Thursday:</b>	Adult Grooming
<b>Friday:</b>	Creating Safer Organisational Cultures
<b>Saturday &amp; Sunday:</b>	Safeguarding and You (Knowing your Role/Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility)

Further information and resources such as posters & factsheets can be found here:

[Safeguarding Adults Week 2021 - Links, Resources, and More - Ann Craft Trust](#)

## Safer Online Lives: Internet Use and Safety for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities

Many people with intellectual disabilities (ID) have internet access and use social media. Even though the internet use can be very positive, it also comes with risks, such as cyberbullying and exploitation. There is limited research raising the issue of internet use and online safety for this vulnerable population. More research is needed on the positive aspects, as well as the barriers, that this population experiences while online, and the way that social care professionals and family carers respond to online safety issues.

For more information visit <https://www.anncrafttrust.org/safer-online-lives-internet-use-and-safety-for-adults-with-intellectual-disabilities/>

# Serious Incident Notifications

The Department for Education (DfE) has published experimental statistics covering notifications from local authorities in England to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel about serious incidents involving children, including incidents of serious harm and death. Figures show: there were 536 serious incident notifications during 2020/21, an increase of 87 notifications or 19% on 2019/20; 223 of which related to child deaths, an increase of 35 on 2019/20; [Serious incident notifications: 2020 to 2021](#)

## Forced Marriage and FGM

The Home Office and the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office have published annual statistics on cases reported to the Forced Marriage Unit (FMU). Of the cases in 2020 the FMU provided advice or support to, 15% involved victims who were aged 15 or under and 11% involved victims who were aged 16-17. These figures include cases related to forced genital mutilation (FGM), which often involves children. [Forced Marriage Unit statistics](#)

## Safe and Wellbeing Visits

County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS) offer free 'Safe and Wellbeing Visits' to all households in County Durham and Darlington.

- During the visit, the crew will check you have working smoke alarms in your property and if not, provide and fit alarms free of charge
- You will receive home fire safety advice specific to your circumstances
- They will talk through an escape plan with you and advise what to do in the event of a fire
- There are opportunities to talk about wellbeing and if applicable and you provide your consent, the fire crews can refer you to partner agencies for additional help, guidance or support
- Each visit will take around 30 minutes

If you know someone who would benefit from this service, book a visit online by completing the form in this link; [Free Safe and Wellbeing Visit | County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service \(ddfire.gov.uk\)](#) - or alternatively call 0345-2234221. *(Please note this line is monitored Monday to Friday from 08:30-16:00 and a voicemail service is available outside these times.)*

For more information and general fire safety advice, please check out their website [www.ddfire.gov.uk](http://www.ddfire.gov.uk)



## Tackling Violence Against Women & Girls

The Home Office has published the Tackling violence against women and girls' strategy to ensure women and girls are safe everywhere - at home, online and on the streets.

The strategy sets out the government's plan to increase support for victims and survivors, increase the number of perpetrators brought to justice and to reduce the prevalence of violence against women and girls.

Immediate steps to improve safety for women and girls include: a new national policing lead on violence against women and girls; a £5Million 'Safety of Women at Night' Fund focussing on the prevention of violence against women and girls in public spaces at night; and appointing two Violence Against Women and Girls Transport Champions, to tackle the problems faced by female passengers on public transport;

[Tackling violence against women and girls strategy](#)

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) has published an interim report looking at how effectively the police respond to violence against women and girls' offences, including domestic abuse, sexual violence, stalking, and female genital mutilation (FGM). Recommendations include: that the government, police, criminal justice system and public sector should commit to prioritising the response to violence against women and girls, supported by sufficient funding and mandated responsibilities. The report is available here; [Radical action needed to tackle crime epidemic against women and girls](#)



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*"We believe all children and young people should be given the opportunity to flourish and reach their potential, and be advantaged by organisations working together."*

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## Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment in Schools and Colleges

The Department for Education (DfE) has published updated advice on sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges in England. The advice covers children of all ages, from primary through to secondary stage and into colleges and sets out what sexual violence and sexual harassment is, how to minimise the risk of it occurring and what to do when it does occur or is alleged to have occurred.

NSPCC Learning has published a [CASPAR briefing](#) summarising key points in the updated guidance. The guidance is available here; [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges](#)

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## Keeping Children Safe in Education

### Details

This guidance applies to all schools and colleges and is for;

Headteachers, teachers and staff, Governing bodies, proprietors and management committees

The Department for Education (DfE) has published updated Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 statutory guidance for schools and colleges in England. This guidance came into force on 1 September 2021 and replaces Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 (updated January 2021). Substantive changes, outlined in Annexe G, cover areas including: child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment; safeguarding information for all staff; the management of safeguarding; safer recruitment; and allegations made against or concerns raised in relation to teachers. NSPCC Learning has published a CASPAR briefing summarising key points in the updated guidance;

[Keeping children safe in education](#)

[CASPAR briefing: Keeping children safe in education 2021](#)

## Elective Home Education

The House of Commons Education Committee has published a report on Elective Home Education (EHE) in England. Recommendations include: the setting up of a statutory register of children who do not receive their principal education in a mainstream school; and a call to reconsider the creation of an independent role to support parents and carers of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities who are forced into home schooling partly due to a lack of support.

The BBC reports that responses to Freedom of Information (Fol) requests show the number of children registering for home education in the UK rose by 75% in the first 8 months of the current school year, with more than 40,000 pupils formally taken out of school in the UK between September 2020 and April 2021; compared with an average of 23,000 over the previous two years.

House of Commons Report; [Strengthening home education](#)

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## Criminal Exploitation

The Department for Education (DfE) has announced plans to support young people at risk of being drawn into crime or gangs in England.

The plans include: alternative provision specialist taskforces in 21 new areas to work directly with young people offering support from experts including mental health professionals, family workers, and speech and language therapists; and a three-year programme led by local schools in ten of the taskforce areas to protect young people at risk of truancy and from being permanently excluded. For more information see;

[Targeted support for vulnerable young people in serious violence hotspots](#)

Barnardo's has recently published an Exploited and Criminalised Report on how children can receive the care and support they need. Read the full report [here](#);



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## County Lines

The Local Government Association (LGA) reports that girls and young women are being deliberately and increasingly recruited into drug-dealing 'county lines' gangs. The LGA is calling for Violence Reduction Units to be extended to all police forces in England and Wales and for them to have five years long-term funding, rather than year-on-year commitments.

Read the news story: [More girls being recruited and horrifically abused by county lines drug gangs](#)

## Child Sexual Abuse

The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) has published a report examining the offending behaviours of perpetrators who sexually abused children across a broad range of institutions in England and Wales from 2017 onwards. Findings from a study of 43 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) case files include: alleged perpetrators across different types of institutional contexts used similar tactics and methods to sexually groom and sexually abuse children; most child sexual abuse took place in physical locations away from the institution, or in private and unsupervised spaces; sexual grooming and child sexual abuse frequently took place using technology or online and via social media.

The study also examined the circumstances relating to how child sexual abuse was perpetrated in a range of institutional contexts, and how institutions and professionals identified, reported and responded to risks of child sexual abuse.

Read the report: [Child sexual abuse in contemporary institutional contexts: an analysis of Disclosure and Barring Service discretionary case files \(PDF\)](#)

An additional report has been published following an investigation into child protection in religious organisations and settings. The report examined evidence from 38 religious organisations and highlights failures to prevent or respond to child sexual abuse. Recommendations include: all religious organisations should have a child protection policy and supporting procedures; and the government should legislate to amend the definition of full-time education to bring any setting that is the pupil's primary place of education within the scope of a registered school and provide Ofsted with sufficient powers to examine the quality of child protection when undertaking inspection of suspected unregistered schools. Read the report: [Child protection in religious organisations and settings: investigation report \(PDF\)](#)

The Bradford Partnership – Working Together to Safeguard Children, has published an independent review into child sexual exploitation (CSE) within the Bradford District. The review looks at CSE cases over two decades since 2001 and considers the impact of learning from two other serious case reviews carried out locally in 2015 and 2016. The review found that: while there had been substantial improvements in practice, not all learning has been fully embedded into practice; evidence of quality of practice was not there in all cases and all agencies; and where risk was identified, changing levels of risk were not always responded to quickly, and there was variance in how different professionals interpreted levels of risk.

[Child sexual exploitation thematic child safeguarding practice review \(PDF\)](#)

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## Child Neglect

NSPCC Learning has published a statistics briefing on child neglect in the UK. It provides an overview of the data on neglect that is available and shares findings including: around 1 in 10 children in the UK have been neglected; concerns around neglect have been identified for half of children who are the subject of a child protection plan or register in the UK; and neglect was the most commonly mentioned form of abuse in contacts to the NSPCC helpline in 2020/21.

Read the briefing here; [Child neglect: statistics briefing](#)

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## Childline and Internet Watch Foundation's Report Remove Tool

Having a sexual image or video of themselves shared online can be a distressing situation for a young person. Any young person under 18 can now use Report Remove, allowing young people to report an image or video shared online to see if it can be taken down. Once the report has been made, it keeps the young person informed at each stage, and provides further support where necessary.

To find out more please visit **Internet Watch Foundation**; [iwf.org.uk](http://iwf.org.uk)





## Spotlight on.... The Domestic Abuse Act

The long-awaited Domestic Abuse Act 2021 marks a significant step in providing enhanced protection and support to the millions of people who experience domestic abuse as well as measures to tackle perpetrators.

### **How will the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 help victims of domestic violence and abuse?**

It sets out a statutory definition of domestic abuse, which goes beyond physical violence and recognises that domestic abuse can be emotional, coercive or controlling, or economic. As part of this, children will also be regarded as victims of domestic abuse, if they see, hear or otherwise suffer the impact of abuse.

Part 3 of the Act places new duties on local authorities to:

- provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children within refuges and other forms of safe accommodation
- assess the need for accommodation-based domestic abuse support for all victims (and their children) who reside in relevant safe accommodation, including those who come from outside their area
- Publish a domestic abuse strategy
- Appoint a multi-agency Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board

To accompany the new duties the government is providing statutory guidance and regulations to support local authorities.

### **Darlington's Response to the Act and New Duties**

There is already an established multi-agency Partnership Board - Darlington and Durham Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Executive Group (DASVEG) which focusses on Domestic Abuse issues across Durham and Darlington local authority areas.

Darlington Borough Council has set up a fortnightly Task and Finish Group to develop robust actions to achieve compliance with local authority duties under the Act and appointed a Domestic Abuse Commissioning Officer. The group is looking at what Domestic Abuse services are currently available and what is required in the future to meet the needs of the community, identify solutions, training gaps and appropriate referral pathways for current and future provision which will be commissioned in response to the new duties under the legislation.

Domestic Abuse affects all parts of our society and is widespread in our community and has been referred to as the 'shadow pandemic' It can be a difficult subject to discuss. The local authority carried out a consultation in the summer, hearing from a wide cross-section of voices in the community on this subject. This will enable the local authority to develop a fuller, more accurate picture of how things could be improved.

A briefing document is being developed to raise awareness of the Act and the new duties and how the local authority is responding, this will be rolled out across partner agencies shortly.

Meanwhile, if you require further information please contact **Bronwyn Lilley**, Darlington's Commissioning officer via email: [bronwyn.lilley@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:bronwyn.lilley@darlington.gov.uk) or find details of how you can access multi-agency domestic abuse training, visit the [DSP Website](#).

## Training Opportunities

### Child and Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse (CAPVA) training opportunity

These CAPVA training opportunities are open to wider partner agencies across Darlington and Durham and are free of charge and will be delivered by RESPECT.

**Respect**

The full day awareness raising training; Ask and Act session is aimed at professionals who have contact with children, young people and families in a range of settings to increase their ability to recognise CAPVA, to understand the dynamic involved and provide the confidence to approach the subject of CAPVA with families. This training will help practitioners identify families who will benefit from the RYPP as outlined in the information provided.

The training is an online blended training course, made up of self-directed learning via the On-line Moodle Learning Platform plus a 3 hour live interactive session which you must complete before accessing the half day interactive session.

Delivery of the Ask and Act Training will start 23/11/21, there are a number of dates available, however we recommend you book early. Further information and details of dates and how to book the training are available [here](#).

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## Multi-Agency Safeguarding Training Opportunities

The Darlington Safeguarding Partnership continues to provide training around how to recognise concerns, develop confidence in sharing information with other agencies, awareness of some of the challenges presented by multi-agency working as well as the real benefits for working together to safeguard children and adults. The training has been updated to incorporate the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and other changes to practice and procedures.

Between 1 April 2021 and 30 September, over 1000 delegates have accessed the training virtually or face to face and 280 have completed the eLearning modules.

Details of safeguarding training can be found at on the Safeguarding Partnership Website <https://www.darlington-safeguarding-partnership.co.uk/>

### Darlington Borough Council Training Opportunities

Darlington's Workforce Development team also offer free and accessible training to our partner agencies, which is updated weekly and can also be found on the Partnership's website above—or you can access via their own link; <https://www.darlington.gov.uk/jobs-and-careers/workforce-development/workforce-development-training-directory/>



## Partnership Working—Behind the Scenes

The Statutory Safeguarding Partners continue to meet monthly to have oversight on safeguarding issues. Child and adult safeguarding data for the 2020/2021 period provided partners with assurance that there were no real exceptions or problems being highlighted with trends and patterns being monitored by relevant groups.

Partners met with Mark Gurrey, a member of the (National) Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel to help understand variances in application of thresholds that trigger Serious Incident Notifications (SiNs) across the Country as Darlington was highlighted as an outlier with very few submitted. Partners highlighted the robust process and systems that are in place to ensure SiNs are embedded within safeguarding policy and procedure and that all cases that do not meet the criteria for notification are referred into the Learning and Development Sub Group for consideration. The same process applies for any Safeguarding Adult Review referrals.

Partners were provided an overview of the evaluation of the 52-week review of the Children's Front Door. Findings highlighted the conversion rate from contacts to referrals is showing a downward trend which demonstrates agencies have taken the new processes on board. Partners were assured to see practice is changing which demonstrates there is a cultural shift in Darlington which can only improve outcomes for children and families.

The partnership is finalising the revisions to its governance arrangements and details will be shared in due course. The DSP website continues to provide information and updates on key safeguarding guidance; <https://www.darlington-safeguarding-partnership.co.uk/>

The Darlington Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report for 2020/21 has been published and can be accessed [here](#).



## Current Awareness for Policy, Practice & Research

### **Managing Allegations against Staff and Volunteers Working with Children**

Darlington Safeguarding Partnership has recently updated the [Procedure and Practice Guidance for Managing Allegations against Staff and Volunteers who Work with Children](#) to reflect a recent amendment of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, changes to the referral process and a new e mail address. Anyone wishing to make a referral or seek advice should contact the Designated Officer by telephone on **01325 406451**. Any subsequent correspondence or general enquiries should be forwarded to the new secure email address; [designatedofficer@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:designatedofficer@darlington.gov.uk)

### **Self Neglect and Hoarding Practice Guidance**

Following the focus on self-neglect in the Summer Newsletter, new practice guidance on Self-Neglect and Hoarding and a briefing document have been developed and published on the DSP website, [click here to access](#).

### **Childhood Obesity Police and Practice Guidance (Safeguarding response in the Context of Neglect)**

A procedure and practice guidance document has been developed to support practitioners who may have concerns that a child is obese and neglect is considered to be a factor. [Click here to view](#)

## Survey for Practitioners

Darlington Safeguarding Partnership is carrying out a survey to find out what practitioners know about the Partnership, seek opinions on our website and to find out what practitioners know about adult and child safeguarding reviews and whether the learning from reviews is widely shared within organisations.

We value your opinions and constantly seek feedback, so please take the time to complete the survey which will take only a few minutes of your time.

The survey will be available until **14 December 2021**.

**[PLEASE CLICK HERE TO TAKE SURVEY](#)**



## Key Safeguarding Campaigns

Date	Campaign	Agency	Weblinks
11-14 Nov 2021	Anti-Bullying Week	Anti Bullying Alliance	<a href="https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/">https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/</a>
11-16 Nov 2021	Alcohol Awareness Week	Alcohol Change UK	<a href="https://alcoholchange.org.uk/getinvolved/campaigns/alcohol-awarenessweek">https://alcoholchange.org.uk/getinvolved/campaigns/alcohol-awarenessweek</a>
15-21 Nov 21	National Safeguarding Adults Week	Ann Craft Trust	<a href="https://www.anncrafttrust.org/events/national-safeguarding-adults-week-2021/">https://www.anncrafttrust.org/events/national-safeguarding-adults-week-2021/</a>
19 Nov 2021	International Men's Day	International Men's Day	<a href="https://internationalmensday.com/">https://internationalmensday.com/</a>
20 Nov 2021	World Children's Day	UNICEF	<a href="https://www.unicef.org/world-childrens-day">https://www.unicef.org/world-childrens-day</a>
25 Nov 2021	International Day for the Eradication of Violence against Women	White Ribbon UK	<a href="https://www.whiteribbon.org.uk/">https://www.whiteribbon.org.uk/</a>

## How to contact the Safeguarding Partnership

We would love to hear your suggestions on communications and engagement with our partners. If you wish to share any articles, good news stories or have any comments for the next publication, please drop the Business Unit an email;

[DSP@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:DSP@darlington.gov.uk)

Amanda Hugill  
DSP Business Manager

Marian Garland  
Business Development Officer

Chris Ashford  
Multi-Agency Trainer

Joyce Bowler  
Business Support Officer

Are you concerned about a child?

Contact the Children's Initial Advice Team

Professionals on 01325 406252, Public on 01325 406222 or Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team on 01642 524552.

Are you concerned about an adult?

Contact the First Point of Contact Team

on 01325 406111 or the Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team on 01642 524552.