

# Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership **Strategic Business Plan**

2025-2027



Keeping children Safe

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This Strategic Plan sets out the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership shared vision, priorities and themes that will help keep children and young people safe and protected from harm. Partners work collaboratively to achieve the same end goals. Partner agencies hold one another to account effectively. Learning is promoted and embedded. Information is shared effectively.

Our Vision is simple, it's about 'Keeping Children Safe' on the premise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. It acts as an umbrella covering all that we do and underpinned through our three Core Values:

**Tenacity; Curiosity; Openness.**

Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership has agreed the following priorities to direct its work for 2025 - 2027.



# Priority One: Harm Outside the Home

## Why:

- It is recognised that the children and young people that are at risk of Harm Outside the Home (HOTH) can be children who are not always visible to practitioners. Therefore, how do we strengthen and challenge the partnership to look at increasing the awareness, offer a greater understanding of places and spaces, focus on missing children and disruption

Outcomes	Objectives/Impact	Activity
<p>1.1. Young people, practitioners, parents/ carers and public have increased awareness and are supported and educated to recognise risk.</p> <p>1.2. The Durham offer is clear and understood. Children at risk are identified, assessed and effectively supported.</p> <p>1.3. Targeted approach to Places &amp; Spaces and People of Concern, mapping used to target intervention and activity is disrupted.</p> <p>1.4. Young People are supported to transition into Adult Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase in Partnership intel forms (1.1,1.2)</li> <li>● Schools informed when HOtH episode occurs (1.1, 1.2)</li> <li>● Clear pathway for young people at risk of exploitation approaching adulthood</li> <li>● NRM referrals (1.1)</li> <li>● Dispersal orders (1.3)</li> <li>● Reduction in suicide, criminality 18-24yr olds (1.4)</li> <li>● Increased education, i.e. NEET,</li> <li>● Homelessness/rough sleeping, joint housing (1.4)</li> <li>● Age of children transitioning (1.4)</li> <li>● Adult health care assessment within proximity of 17 years if known to services (1.4)</li> <li>● Evidence of improved language and identification when discussing children as risk of exploitation (1.1-1.4)</li> <li>● Evidence of Durham offer being promoted. (1.2)</li> <li>● Reduction of repeat/CEVT where threshold not met (1.1, 1.2)</li> <li>● Increased number of risk matrix being completed by non-statutory partners. (1.1, 1.2)</li> <li>● Increase in referrals into Early Help. (1.1, 1.2)</li> <li>● How many children discussed in mapping meetings (1.3)</li> <li>● How many children are linked to each location of concern (1.3)</li> <li>● How many areas of concern resolved in a period i.e. 6 months (1.3)</li> <li>● How many are repeat areas of concerns in a period i.e. 12 months" (1.3)</li> <li>● Community disruption plans (1.3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Single Agency Audits</li> <li>● Performance Monitoring (Think Tank)</li> <li>● Assurance reports from Exploitation Groups</li> <li>● Training &amp; Briefing</li> <li>● Voice of the child evidence</li> <li>● Awareness Campaigns</li> </ul>



# Priority Two: Safeguarding Through Early Identification and Intervention

## Why:

- The learning from the past 2 years within the DSCP links to early intervention and missed opportunities at an early stage. There is a focus in the DSCP to drive practice, develop Practitioners understanding of thresholds and have clear safeguarding processes and pathways, which includes cross boundaries and meeting the needs of families. This in turn will reduce cases going into crisis - coming through the correct process and early information sharing is key.
- National Picture: Several reviews and government reports have highlighted the need for a more consistent, effective and well-funded early intervention systems of support for families. These reviews have emphasised the importance of early intervention and prevention to improve outcomes for children and families.

Outcomes	Objectives/Impact	Activity
<p>2.1. All Practitioners across agencies in Durham are confident at identifying risk.</p> <p>2.2. Thresholds, safeguarding processes and pathways for intervention are understood and utilised.</p> <p>2.3. Intervention is targeted and meets the needs of the family, providing the right support at the right time.</p> <p>2.4. Practitioners are confident leading early help assessments and plans</p>	<p>All are shown in 2.1-2.4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence that cases are stepping up and down at the right time</li> <li>• Reduction in re-referrals</li> <li>• Training offer to support Lead Practitioners</li> <li>• Confidence of professional challenge</li> <li>• Increase in Early Help discussion at triage</li> <li>• Decrease in Safeguarding referrals</li> <li>• Reduction in children in crisis, serious incidents, becoming CIC through PPO/S20 not known</li> <li>• Increase in partner Lead Practitioner led intervention</li> <li>• Partners feedback that information sharing is improved</li> <li>• Increase in Early Help assessments/referrals</li> <li>• Evidence of safeguarding medicals being complete at the right time</li> <li>• Evidence of the Enhanced Parent Support Pathway being utilised</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single Agency Audits</li> <li>• Performance Monitoring (Think Tank)</li> <li>• Assurance reports from Exploitation Groups</li> <li>• Training &amp; Briefing</li> <li>• Voice of the child evidence</li> <li>• Awareness Campaigns</li> </ul>



# Priority Three: Trauma Informed Practice

## Why:

- Increase understanding, identification and impact of trauma affecting our children, young people and parents and to identify joint improvement opportunities e.g. mental and emotional wellbeing, school behaviour and attendance, transitional safeguarding.
- Learning from our Rapid Reviews and CSPRs has highlighted heightened risk for young people who need support in adulthood.
- All Rapid Reviews, CSPRs and Priority work over the last 12 months have included learning around understanding complex trauma and assessing risk. This includes learning on how unaddressed trauma and distress can lead to family relationships breaking down

Outcomes	Objectives/Impact	Activity
<p>3.1. Trauma informed practice is embedded across all agencies working with children and families.</p> <p>3.2. Impact of trauma is identified and understood</p> <p>3.3. Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) in children and parents are understood.</p> <p>3.4. Interventions include support for children, young people, parents and carers allowing trauma to be identified and supported.</p> <p>3.5. Focus on support at the point of incident occurring.</p>	<p>All are shown in 3.1-3.5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Evidence of children and adult practitioners working together</li> <li>● Training offer to support Practitioners to understand trauma informed practice</li> <li>● DSCP to provide ACEs and trauma informed tools/ resources</li> <li>● Evidence of children/young people being offered accessible and flexible support for trauma at the earliest stage</li> <li>● Change in language using behavioural language, context and impact rather than professional terms</li> <li>● Increase in referrals for children into support services</li> <li>● Reduction in mental health trauma support requests</li> <li>● Trauma assessment, planned objectives</li> <li>● Clear offer to parents with unresolved trauma</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Audit Review</li> <li>● Single Agency Audits</li> <li>● Performance Monitoring</li> <li>● Assurance reports</li> <li>● Training &amp; Briefing</li> <li>● Voice of the child</li> </ul>



# Priority Four: Working Together & Towards Reform Action Plan

On 15th December 2023 the government published 'Working together to safeguard children 2023. Statutory guidance on multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children.'

This statutory guidance 'sets out what organisations and agencies who have functions relating to children must and should do to help, protect and promote the welfare of all children and young people under the age of 18 in England. The 2023 edition replaces Working together to safeguard children 2018.

This new edition of Working Together is central to delivering on the strategy set out in Stable homes, built on love (2023), which outlines the Government's commitment to support every child to grow up in a safe, stable and loving home.

Alongside the Working Together statutory guidance, the Government published:

- an updated Working together statutory framework (PDF), which sets out the legislation relevant to safeguarding.
- the Children's social care national framework, which sets out expectations for senior leaders, practice supervisors and practitioners in local authorities.
- guidance on Improving practice with children, young people and families, which provides advice for local areas on embedding the Working together guidance and the Children's social care national framework in practice. NSPCC (2023).

In light of these publications, the DSCP has been requested to undertake a review of their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and publish their revised arrangements.

Outcomes Objectives/Impact	Activity
<p>The objective is for the Executive to provide scrutiny of the arrangements and receive assurance via a number of sources, including comprehensive but useful data sets, the learning from case reviews, and assurance that the DSCP are working towards reform.</p> <p>Stable Homes Built on Love published February 2023 by DfE. The strategy sets out plans to transform Children's Social Care moving away from crisis and focussing more on effective early help</p> <p>DfE established the Pathfinder programme and Family Network Pilots which will test the major reforms to Children's Services and support multi-agency partners to establish how the reform will work in principle.</p> <p>Governance for overall implementation will sit with DCC as part of the Corporate Major Project Board but will require significant multi agency partnership input and support to deliver "Collective Responsibility"</p> <p>We need a plan of "Preparing for Readiness" There are four key Reform Strands.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA)</li> <li>● Family Help</li> <li>● Child Protection</li> <li>● Family Networks</li> </ul>	<p>This is a proposed overarching workplan will be managed through the DSCP Performance and Learning Group.</p> <p>Implementing the required changes in Working Together 2023. This has been linked to the key changes as identified by the Department of Education in Working together to safeguard children 2023: summary of changes (<a href="https://publishing.service.gov.uk">publishing.service.gov.uk</a>) and the summary by the NSPCC. The plan also contains a brief summary of the current position and a proposal to use funding that is linked to the implementation of the changes.</p> <p>2. Prepare for Readiness in relation to the wider Social Care Reform Children's social care: stable homes, built on love - GOV.UK</p>

# Golden Threads

that weave through everything we do....

Child's Voice and Lived Experience

Working Together and Sharing Information Across Partners and Boundaries

Whole Family Approach recognising Networks

Pieces of the Jigsaw through Professional Curiosity and Cumulative Lens

Intersectionality inc SEND

Reflective Strengths Based Practice

Mental Health & Wellbeing

