

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee – 15 September 2011

Report of the Acting Director of Children's Services

Directorate of Children's Services Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2011/12 & Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2010/11

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2011/12 and the Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2010/11 for the Directorate of Children's Services.

Background

2. The production of an annual equality and diversity action plan and report by each Directorate is an important commitment in the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy. The action plan sets out details of how each Directorate will promote equality in relation to its areas of responsibility during the coming year and responds to the framework established by the Council's Equality Scheme.
3. Overview and scrutiny of Directorate equality and diversity issues is included in the terms of reference of the Scrutiny Committee on Children's Services. Scrutiny committee chairs have agreed that scrutiny of individual Directorate's action plans be split up amongst the five committees.
4. The Directorate of Children's Services Action Plan for 2011/12 is attached and covers:
 - its relationship with other plans
 - the Directorate's vision and values
 - key issues and targets supporting the promotion of equality and diversity
5. The annual report setting out progress with the Directorate's action plan for 2010/11 is also attached. The Report contains data about reported racist incidents in schools.
6. The draft action plan and report have been considered by the Directorate Strategic Leadership Team. Following scrutiny by this committee they will be approved by the appropriate Cabinet Member before publication.

Finance

7. Any costs associated with implementing the action plan will be met from within existing budgets.

Law

8. The relevant equality legislation is:
 - The Equality Act 2010
 - The Children Act 2004.
9. Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council is empowered to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive to, or incidental to the discharge of its functions.

Equality Impact

10. The plan sets out proposed actions for promoting equality and diversity led by the Directorate of Children's Services during 2011/12. The equality impact is expected to be positive for all children and young people especially for those from targeted groups. Some of the actions included in the plan derive from equality impact assessments (EqIAs) that have been carried out on the services or policies of the Directorate or cover EqIAs due to be undertaken in 2011/12. Where practical performance indicators and outcomes are identified against targets so that progress in achieving the action plan can be monitored and reviewed.

Recommendation

11. That the Scrutiny Committee approves the Directorate of Children's Services Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2011/12 and Annual Report of the Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2010/11.



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Jane Porter
Acting Director of Children's Services

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Directorate of Children's Services

Annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2011/12

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council's Equality and Diversity Policy requires all directorates to produce annual equality and diversity action plans and reports. The policy is supported by the detailed arrangements, priorities and actions in the Council's Equality Scheme. The directorate's action plan describes how it will implement the policy and the Scheme in relation to its responsibilities, service areas and employment practices during the year.
- 1.2 The Directorate of Children's Services action plan 2011 -12 will be submitted to the Scrutiny Committee on Children's Services before being approved by the appropriate Cabinet Member.
- 1.3 Progress with implementing the action plan is reported in the equality and diversity annual report. The Directorate of Children's Services annual report for 2011/12 will also be submitted to the Scrutiny Committee on Children's Services.
- 1.4 This action plan covers the period from April 2011 to March 2012 and contains:
 - an explanation of its relationship with other plans
 - a summary of the directorate's equality and diversity vision and values
 - key issues and targets for the plan
 - the action plan summary

2. Relationship with other plans

- 2.1 This action plan responds to priority areas identified in the strategic plan for the Directorate of Children's Services for 2011/12 which in turn responds to the Borough's refreshed Community Strategy 2010-13 and the three year Council plan. It also responds to the Council's overall equality and diversity objectives which are set out in its Equality Scheme. The action plan is closely linked with the priorities for children and young people identified in the refreshed Dudley Children and Young People's Plan.

- 2.2 The overall long-term policy framework for equality and diversity is set out in the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy. The Council's Equality Scheme published in April 2007, which brings together the statutory disability, gender and race equality schemes, provides the overall three-year equality strategy and action plan. A supplement covering age, religion of belief, sexual orientation and transgender equality was approved by the Cabinet in June 2009. The Disability Equality Scheme was revised in December 2009 and the Gender Equality Scheme is currently being reviewed.
- 2.3 Council-wide progress in implementing the Equality Scheme is reported each year in the annual review of equality and diversity, which is submitted to the Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education (as the select committee with responsibility for corporate equality and diversity issues) and the Cabinet for approval.

3. Vision and Values

- 3.1 The Council has agreed a ten year vision for equality, which will contribute to the achievement of the Community Strategy. In ten years the Council will be one:
- which will be recognised nationally as a leading council on equality and diversity
 - which had improved its response to the needs of the Borough's communities
 - whose services receive high satisfaction ratings from across the Borough.
- 3.2 The Directorate of Children's Services is committed to transforming the lives of all children and young people in Dudley by providing a world class education. The Borough will provide inspirational learning environments where:
- Young people value and respect themselves and others, whilst contributing positively to the local, national and global community
 - Where young people successfully build on their individual skills and talents, enabling them all to reach their full potential and to enjoy their learning.
 - Young people are equipped to use emerging technologies creatively to enhance their learning.
 - Young people are supported to make healthy and safe life choices.
 - Young people and their families are supported to access excellent locally provided extended services which support their personal development.

- 3.3 The directorate maintains its commitment to implementing the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy in relation to its services, employment practices and the leadership and support provided to schools. The Assistant Director (Quality and Partnership) leads development work for the directorate.
- 3.4 The aim of the Directorate is to mainstream equality so responsibility for promoting equality and diversity in employment and services rest with all heads of service.
- 3.6 Within the Directorate all employees have a responsibility to comply with the requirements of the Council's equality and diversity policy in all dealings with Members, other employees, job applicants, residents, service users and other members of the public, and with other organisations. Training and development needs of employees in the Directorate are identified in annual performance review and development discussions with their line-managers.

4. Key Issues and Targets

- 4.1 The Council's Equality Scheme is currently being revised – the Disability Equality Scheme element of this was approved by the Cabinet in December 2009.
- 4.2 The Cabinet approved a ten year equality and diversity vision for the Council in June 2009, alongside the Equality Scheme supplement.
- 4.3 The Council's Annual Review of Equality and Diversity identifies corporate priorities and these are reflected in the directorate's action plan, e.g:
- implementing actions aimed at increasing the proportion of the Council's employees who have a disability
 - ensuring equality impact assessments are completed where appropriate, with improved monitoring and reporting arrangements and training provision
 - reviewing the Equality Scheme, in the light of the implications for the Council and its partnerships of the Equality Act 2010
 - progressing work against the Equality Framework and responding to any equality issues arising from external inspection.
- 4.4 For the revised Equality Scheme, directorates also identified overall equality and diversity priorities for their service areas linked to the three years of the Scheme which are to be reflected in their action plans. For the Children's Services Directorate these priorities are:

- Assess the implications of the Equality Bill for the directorate and prepare for the introduction of the Act. (Assistant Directors)
- Implement revised Equality Impact Assessment (to include extended protected characteristics in the 2010 Equality Act (Directorate managers)
- Review the Equality Bill and ensure all equality protected characteristics are properly covered. (Directorate managers)
- Monitor the anti-bullying strategy and support its implementation throughout the Borough (Head of Children's Partnership Support)
- Continue to engage schools and directorate services in preventing violent extremism activity. (Assistant Director for Quality & Partnership)

4.5 In addition the Disability Equality Scheme has been revised and an action plan covering the period 2010 – 2013 has been agreed and the Gender Equality Scheme is currently under review. The actions particular to the Directorate of Children's Services that have been identified in the Disability Equality Scheme are set out below followed by the areas that have been identified for further consideration in relation to the revised Gender Equality Scheme.

Disability Equality Scheme

- Improve progression and participation rates post 16 for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- Develop an accessibility strategy to increase disabled pupils' access to the school curriculum, improve the physical environment and the provision of information to meet the new requirements set out in part 6 of the Equality Act 2010. (Director of Children's Services).

Gender Equality Scheme areas for further action (proposed)

- Educational attainment – Review of evidence focusing on gender differentials in attainment and the effect of multiple disadvantage which includes gender.
- School exclusions – gender differentials in rates and types of exclusion: fixed-term or permanent. Review of the availability, appropriateness and effectiveness of provision for excluded females and males and the overall outcomes for each gender group. Review of gender specific interventions to prevent exclusion by supporting those who may be at risk.
- Sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying – Ensuring that the anti-bullying strategy currently under development addresses issues of prejudice driven bullying that targets people because of their gender. This should

also include transphobic bullying which targets people because of their gender orientation, real or perceived.

- Domestic violence – Continue to review the effectiveness of work to support children and young people affected by domestic violence.
- Violence against women and girls – Preventative measures to address this form of violence through gender specific targeted work identifying effective early intervention strategies from those at increased risk.
- Service provision – Review the take-up of services by children and young people that may be related to their gender or gender orientation.
- Consultation and engagement – Assess the appropriateness of consultation and engagement strategies with respect to different gender groups to ensure girls and boys have an equal opportunity to get involved.

4.6 The Directorate of Children's Services undertakes a range of engagement activity which feeds into its action planning. This includes engagement supporting equality impact assessments. The directorate contributed to the Council-wide BME community consultation event in 2010.

4.7 Much of the work undertaken by the directorate involves partnership with Dudley Children and Young People's Partnership. The main priority of the partnership is to improve life chances for vulnerable children, thereby narrowing equality gaps wherever possible

5. Further equality and diversity activities

5.1 As equality, diversity and cohesion work has developed at local, national and international levels priorities for Dudley have developed in a similar way. This has meant that additional priorities have emerged. There have also been developments in equality law and proposals for further refinements are now in their final stages. To provide a strategic vision of the equality and diversity work pertinent to the directorate in the future, provision for some of these developments is included in this year's action plan. The main additional priorities include:

- Continue to support the Council's community cohesion strategy and tension reduction activities.
- Continue to support the Council's approach to preventing violent extremism
- Implementing the actions arising from equality impact assessments (EqIAs) and undertaking further EqIAs as they provide increasing data and intelligence about the impact of directorate services on the Borough's communities.

- Ensure that action planning is increasingly based on clear evidence about the needs of different communities including that gathered from EqlAs.

6. The Action Plan

6.1 The action plan for 2011-12 is set out in the attached appendices.

6.2 Appendix 1:

Equality and diversity actions arising from priorities identified in the Directorate Strategic Plan 2010-11; This table represents the actions required to achieve the equality and diversity outcomes pertinent to the priorities outlined in the Directorate Strategic Plan. All the outcomes included are those that have been prioritised in the Directorate Strategic Plan 2011-12.

6.3 Appendix 2:

Equality and diversity actions arising from directorate/cross-council priorities;

This table represents the directorate action plan from the perspective of the Council's structural approach to developing equality, diversity and community cohesion across the borough. The outcomes which affect children and young people might be tangential rather than direct. Significant drivers for this section of the plan are the Council's Equality Scheme, and its Annual Review of Equality and Diversity. New legislation including, in particular, The Equality Act 2010 will be a significant new driver for the work over the period of the plan.

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Directorate of Children's Services – Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2011/12

Appendix 1: Equality and diversity actions arising from Directorate Strategic Plan 2011/12 priorities.

Every Child Matters (ECM) Outcome: Stay Safe			DSLT AD Lead for Outcome: Pauline Sharratt	
ECM Aim: Safe from maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual exploitation				
Ref.	Directorate Strategic Plan - Objective			
Ob 1	Ensure that vulnerable children and young people are safe from maltreatment and neglect			
Ref.	Action to achieve DSP objective	Equality action to support DSP objective	Target date/s (and) lead officer	Planned outcome/performance indicator
1h	Reduce the number of first time offenders	Equality monitoring information of first-time entrants to the criminal justice system informs service delivery and prevention work is targeted at equality groups identified as being over represented in youth justice system.	March 2012 Mike Galikowski	Reduction in first-time entrants from groups traditionally over-represented in the criminal justice system.

Every Child Matters (ECM) Outcome: Enjoy and Achieve			DSLT AD Lead for Outcome: Dave Perrett / Jane Porter	
Every Child Matters (ECM) Outcome: Enjoy and Achieve				
ECM Aim: Achieve stretching educational standards at primary school				
Ref.	Directorate Strategic Plan - Objective			
Ob 3	Improve outcomes for children aged 0-11 years (early years and primary)			
Ref.	Action to achieve DSP objective	Equality action to support DSP objective	Target date/s (and) lead officer	Planned outcome/performance indicator
3f	Work with primary schools, pupils, their parents and carers to narrow the gap in achievement between under achieving groups and their peers ie, looked after children, minority and ethnic groups, white boys and those with special educational needs and disabilities	A range of projects are supporting this initiative including the Minority Ethnic Achievement Project (MEAP) and the work of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service and the SEN Team.	March 2012 Dave Perrett	Reduction in achievement gap between different equality groups of children at Key Stage 2.

ECM Aim: Achieve stretching national educational standards at secondary school

Ref.	Directorate Strategic Plan - Objective			
Ob 4	Improve outcomes for children and young people aged 11 – 19 years (or aged 25 for those with disabilities)			
Ref.	Action to achieve DSP objective	Equality action to support DSP objective	Target date/s (and) lead officer	Planned outcome/performance indicator
4c	Work with secondary schools, pupils, their parents and carers to narrow the gap in achievement between under achieving groups and their peers ie, looked after children, minority and ethnic groups, those with learning difficulties or special educational needs and disabilities	A range of projects are supporting this initiative including the Minority Ethnic Achievement Project (MEAP) and the work of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service and the SEN Team.	March 2012 Dave Perrett	Reduction in achievement gap between different equality groups of young people at Key Stage 4.

Every Child Matters (ECM) Outcome: Quality Service Management				DSLT AD Lead for Outcome: Ian McGuff
ECM Aim: Improve service leadership and management				
Ref.	Directorate Strategic Plan - Objective			
Ob 5	Develop, improve and embed strategies and processes to support service delivery			
Ref.	Action to achieve DSP objective	Equality action to support DSP objective	Target date/s (and) lead officer	Planned outcome/performance indicator
5.9	Develop and embed strategies to improve outcomes in targeted areas of the borough	Progress in targeted areas will help to improve life chances for some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children	2012 Ian McGuff	Increased focus on most disadvantaged areas of the borough leading to improved outcomes for children and young people in those areas e.g. child poverty, educational attainment and progress, health and well being.

Directorate of Children's Services – Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2011/12

Appendix 2: Equality and diversity actions arising from directorate/cross-council priorities

Objective	Detailed action/target (and lead officer)	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
Priority 1. Policy development and performance management			
E&D Ob 1. Assess the implications of the Equality Act 2010 for the Directorate and plan for its implementation.	(4) Assess new responsibilities and Identify equality objectives for the Directorate. (Ian McGuff)	April 2011/March 2012	Ensure the Directorate are aware of minimum legal requirements. Key priorities and actions for Directorate identified and included in relevant policies. Directorate and Children's Partnership action planning includes equality actions to improve equality outcomes for children and young people based on sound equality impact assessments
E&D Ob 2. Improve equality performance management.	Ensure appropriate policies, plans and guidance enable the Directorate to be in compliance with statutory responsibilities and locally agreed actions supporting equality and	April 2011/March 2012	Equality and diversity action plan, reports and other relevant documents are produced. The Directorate makes an appropriate contribution to corporate equality and diversity development work.

	diversity. (Ian McGuff)		
E&D Ob 3. The local authority fulfils its statutory responsibilities, collects information, and responds appropriately to racist incidents	Collect, collate and analyse data relating to racist incidents involving children and young people. Provide support as appropriate about recognising and responding to such incidents. Revise/update relevant documentation as and when necessary. (Ian McGuff)	April 2011/March 2012	Racist incidents data is published in the Council's agreed format annually. Appropriate support continues to be delivered to relevant staff when required.
E&D Ob 4. Improve equality data and intelligence	Continue to complete equality impact assessments for all new policies and change programmes. (All)	April 2011/March 2012	Equality impact assessments completed within timescale. Improvement actions identified and scheduled.

Priority 2 Engagement			
E&D Ob 5 Support the development of existing key engagement mechanisms.	(1) Promotion of opportunities for all groups to be engaged in the development of services for children and young people (Mike Wood)	April 2011/March 2012	All staff recognise and act upon their responsibilities in this area. Feedback from children and young people leads to improved understanding and focussed provision.
Priority 3 Improve communications			

E&D Ob 6 Improve access to information.	Further develop and improve communication by including selected equality and diversity information on Dudley's Internet and Intranet websites. Ian McGuff	April 2011/ March 2012	Selected information available on the Council's Internet website is updated at appropriate intervals.
Priority 4 Employees			
E&D Ob 7. Encourage and promote appropriate recruitment of employees with a disability.	Support HR Division implementing action plan arising out of external auditor's review 'supporting people with a disability'. (Ian McGuff and HR team)	April 2011/March 2012	Increased % of employees with a disability.
Priority 5. Promote community safety and community cohesion			
E&D Ob 8.	(2) Work with partners across the Council to promote the engagement of schools in activities to prevent violent extremism (Ian McGuff / Rosina Ottwell)	April 2011/March 2012	Contribute to the development of resilience to violent extremism.

Directorate of Children's Services

Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2010/11

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council's equality and diversity policy requires all directorates to produce an annual equality and diversity action plan to develop their work in implementing the Council's equality and diversity policy in relation to their service areas and employment practices. All directorates also produce an annual report on implementation of the action plan. This is prepared after the end of March so that it can report on a full year's progress on action plan targets. The Directorate of Children's Services equality and diversity action plan for 2011/12 is also considered by this Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.2 This document is the annual report and covers the period from April 2010 to March 2011. The report contains:
- Key facts about the directorate including workforce profile information
 - A report on the annual racist incident data collected from schools
 - Progress on the Council's equality scheme including equality impact assessments
 - Achievements against the directorate's equality and diversity action plan for 2010/11.

2. Key Facts

- 2.1 Each directorate produces a strategic plan which set out its priorities, objectives and targets for the year which encompasses its equality and diversity action plan.

Vision 2025 – A Strategic Plan for Learning - sets out the Directorate of Children's Services commitment to transform the lives of all children and young people in the Borough by providing a world class education.

The Directorate's motto 'Putting children and young people first in Dudley' is supported by the Council's commitment to ensure that learners and learning are at the heart of the Borough's strategic planning. It is the endeavour of Dudley Council Children's Services to provide services that will result in the Borough's children and young people being 'ambitious, confident and committed to learning'.

To achieve this, the Directorate will provide inspirational learning environments where:

- young people value and respect themselves and others, whilst contributing positively to the local, national and global community;

- young people successfully build on their individual skills and talents, enabling them all to reach their full potential and to enjoy their learning;
- young people are equipped to use emerging technologies creatively to enhance their learning;
- young people are supported to make healthy and safe life choices;
- young people and their families are supported to access locally provided extended services which support their personal development.

2.2 The Directorate comprises the following sections each led by an assistant director:

- Children and Families led by Pauline Sharratt
- Education, Play and Learning led by Dave Perrett
- Quality and Partnership led by Ian Mc Guff
- Transforming Futures led by Jane Porter

2.3 The Directorate (head office) employed 1914 staff on 31st March 2011. Its workforce profile is set out in table 1(a) showing a breakdown of staff by grade. The breakdown for Dudley schools who employed 10825 staff on the same date is also included. This profile can be compared with the Council's profile as a whole which is set out in table 1(b). The equivalent figures for the previous two years are shown in italics.

Table 1(a). Directorate of Children's Services workforce profile 31 March 2011 compared with the previous two years.

Children's Services		Female (%)	Male (%)	BME* (%)	Disabled (%)
Scale point 34 and above (higher grades) (Directly employed staff)	31/03/11	67.8	32.2	15.1	5.0
	31/03/10	67.7	32.3	13.8	3.9
	31/03/09	68.6	31.4	14.5	3.1
Below scale point 34 (lower grades) (Directly employed staff)	31/03/11	82.2	17.8	10.2	2.2
	31/03/10	83.4	16.6	9.7	1.6
	31/03/09	82.9	17.1	8.3	1.7
Total (Directly employed staff)	31/03/11	80.5	19.5	10.7	2.6
	31/03/10	81.6	18.4	10.2	1.9
	31/03/09	81.3	18.7	11.4	1.9
Children's Services (School employed staff)	31/03/11	84.7	15.3	4.5	0.6
	31/03/10	84.8	15.2	4.4	0.6
	31/03/09	84.4	15.6	4.2	0.7

Table 1(b). Dudley MBC workforce profile 31 March 2011- compared with the previous two years.

Dudley MBC		Female (%)	Male (%)	BME* (%)	Disabled (%)
Scale point 34 and above (higher grades) (excluding schools)[#]	31/03/11	52.5	47.4	9.6	4.7
	31/03/10	51.3	48.7	8.8	4.5
	31/03/09	51.1	48.9	9.2	4.5
Below scale point 34 (lower grades) (excluding schools)[#]	31/03/11	68.7	31.3	7.4	3.1
	31/03/10	69.2	30.8	7.0	2.6
	31/03/09	69.3	30.7	6.3	2.6
Total (excluding schools)	31/03/11	80.47	19.53	10.77	2.5
	31/03/10	66.4	33.6	7.3	2.9
	31/03/09	66.5	33.5	6.8	2.9
Total (including schools)	31/03/11	75.0	24.9	6.2	2.0
	31/03/10	75.4	24.6	5.9	1.7
	31/03/09	75.0	25.0	5.6	1.8

Notes: Scale point 34 on 31 March 2010 equates to a salary of £28,500 approx.

*BME figures exclude those employees for whom no ethnic origin data is held

[#]Grade breakdown excludes schools due to the different grading structure for teachers.

- 2.4 As of March 2011 there are 109 schools in the Borough; 1 nursery; 78 primary; 20 secondary; 7 special schools and 3 short stay schools. They cater for over 45,000 pupils of whom 48% are female and 52% male. Children from black/minority backgrounds account for 18% of the overall school population. It is notable that the school population includes a significantly higher proportion of pupils from black/minority ethnic backgrounds than the proportion of pupils found in the Dudley population as a whole. There are a number of demographic explanations for this phenomenon which include the younger age profile of relatively recent arrivals to the UK and higher birth rates amongst some minority ethnic groups.
- 2.6 The percentage of pupils with a special educational need is approximately 22%. Of this group slightly over 3% of the whole school population have a statement of special educational needs. Male pupils account for 74% of those with a statement of special educational need.

3. Racist Incident Reports – Schools

- 3.1 The Standard Operating Procedure for Reporting and Recording Racist Incidents/Complaints was adopted by the Directorate in January 2004, and revised in 2006 & 2008. The SOP provides all staff with a standardised procedure for reporting and recording racist Incidents and complaints that fulfils the requirements of current legislation and relevant national guidance.
- 3.2 Governing bodies are responsible for monitoring incidents in schools and a summary of incidents that have taken place each term should be provided to governors through a standing agenda item on governing body agendas. To help schools comply fully with their statutory responsibilities they have been requested to adopt the process outlined in the Standard Operating Procedure for Reporting and Recording Racist Incidents. Each year the Local Authority requests summary information from schools about any incidents recorded during the previous twelve months. The results of this monitoring for the past five years are detailed below. (Table 2)
- 3.3 Wherever possible racist incident reports are monitored for gender, age and ethnicity with regard to victims/complainants and alleged perpetrators. However, it is not always possible to collect all, or even sometimes any, of this information because specific victims may not be identifiable and perpetrators may be unknown. Racist graffiti is an example of the type of incident that is clearly defined in terms of a 'racist incident' but can frequently come under this category with little or no other evidence available about it other than the fact that it exists.
- 3.4 The figures below represent reported racist incidents for Dudley Borough which has a school population of over forty seven thousand pupils. From the figures available for the year 2009-10 it appears that the number of incidents reported has remained constant for the past three years at a level of fewer than four incidents per thousand pupils for each twelve month period.
- 3.5 Summary of Racist Incident Data (Schools)

Table 2. Racist Incident Data Reported by Dudley Primary, Secondary and Special Schools from 1st April 2006 – 31st March 2011

Annual Racist Incidents	06 - 07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11
Total number of schools making a return				67	74
Schools reporting no incidents	39	32	40	40	27
Total number of incidents	258	175	192	185	139
Support for Victims					
Parental Involvement - victim	66	150	54	51	43
Senior Staff Involvement	174	175	144	141	93
Ethnicity of Victims					

Asian	125	70	68	72	55
Black Groups	40	43	30	33	26
Chinese or Other	7	1	11	17	3
Mixed Race	61	40	46	29	32
White Groups	25	18	34	27	19
Ages of Victims					
Under 8	41	30	20	20	18
Between 8 and 10	106	56	73	71	43
Between 11 and 14	58	54	52	53	46
Between 15 and 17	16	8	11	6	6
Over 18	15	10	11	15	6
Gender of Victims					
Female	67	53	76	63	60
Male	194	121	112	115	75
Ethnicity of Alleged Perpetrators					
Asian	18	16	9	20	10
Black Groups	7	3	5	3	19
Chinese or Other	1	1	1	6	0
Mixed Race	8	11	11	7	7
White Groups	224	173	173	156	93

Ages of Alleged Perpetrators					
Under 8	41	25	19	23	26
Between 8 and 10	97	74	94	85	44
Between 11 and 14	97	64	58	67	25
Between 15 and 17	21	35	17	15	5
Over 18	0	16	1	3	0
Gender of Alleged Perpetrators					
Female	46	38	43	47	28
Male	211	172	159	145	101
Incident Locations					
Closely supervised locations	79	89	75	92	48
Other areas	179	84	121	93	86

- 3.6 In accordance with the Council's Equality Scheme, a number of equality impact assessments were identified for action during 2010/11. In 2010 the Directorate Strategic Leadership Group agreed a recommendation that officers responsible for relevant new policies and policy revisions will be required to undertake equality impact assessments in accordance with guidance. This has resulted in assessments being undertaken on an ongoing basis.

4. Achievements against the Directorate's Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2010/11

- 4.1 The achievements against the Directorate's equality and diversity action plan for 2010/11 are set out below in Appendices 1 & 2. Appendix 1 reports on the progress of equality and diversity initiatives resulting from endeavours which are generally targeted directly at children and young people. Appendix 2 reports on progress against the council-wide equality and diversity priorities some of which will also affect children and young people.

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Directorate of Children's Services – Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2010/11; Progress

Appendix 1: Progress against Equality and diversity actions arising from Directorate Strategic Plan 2010/11 priorities.

Every Child Matters (ECM) Outcome: Stay Safe			DSLT AD Lead for Outcome: Pauline Sharratt	
ECM Aim: Safe from maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual exploitation				
Ref.	Directorate Strategic Plan - Objective			
Ob 1	Improve the effectiveness of early intervention for vulnerable children and young people to be safe from maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual exploitation			
Ref.	Action to achieve DSP objective	Equality action to support DSP objective	Target date/s (and) lead officer	Progress
1a	Increase use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) across the directorate	Re: identifying and referring young people at risk of radicalisation.	March 2011 Mike Wood	The use of the common assessment process has increased considerably with hundreds of children now being supported in this way. However only a small number of individuals (eleven) have been identified as being in need of support because they may have been at risk of radicalisation. In most cases these have been identified via processes other than the common assessment process.
1f	Reduce the number of first time offenders	Equality monitoring information of first-time entrants to the criminal justice system informs service delivery and prevention work is targeted at equality groups identified as being over represented in youth justice system.	March 2011 Mike Galikowski	<p>The rate per 100,000 was 830. The 2007/2008 baseline was 1540, resulting in a -46.1% reduction which far exceeds the 1% reduction required. This is an excellent result.</p> <p>Whilst there has been a significant reduction overall in first time offenders, the proportion of first time offenders who are White/British has increased slightly from 84% in 2008 to 88.6% in 2011. The proportion of first time offenders from Asian and Black groups is falling.</p>

Every Child Matters (ECM) Outcome: Enjoy and Achieve			DSL/T AD Lead for Outcome: Dave Perrett / Jane Porter	
ECM Aim: Achieve stretching educational standards at primary school				
Ref.	Directorate Strategic Plan - Objective			
Ob 4	Improve outcomes for children aged 0-11 years (early years and primary)			
Ref.	Action to achieve DSP objective	Equality action to support DSP objective	Target date/s (and) lead officer	Progress
4a	Improve the quality of leadership and management across the primary sector ie, to support schools to be judged good or outstanding in OFSTED inspection	Support is given to school leaders and governors to help them develop equality and cohesion good practice through regular meetings and workshops.	March 2011 Dave Perrett	All schools have received a judgment of at least good in their inspections for their equality and cohesion activities.
4d	Work with primary schools, pupils, their parents and carers to narrow the gap in achievement between under achieving groups and their peers ie, looked after children, minority and ethnic groups, white boys and those with special educational needs and disabilities	A range of projects are supporting this initiative including the Minority Ethnic Achievement Project (MEAP) and the work of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service and the SEN Team.	March 2011 Dave Perrett	Schools maintained trend over last 3 years of narrowing gap in achievement for all significant groups, including Asian, Black, Indian and Pakistani. Pupils with special educational needs; Schools maintained trend over last 3 years of narrowing gap in achievement especially for girls. Free School Meals; Overall, a slight widening of gap. Gap in achievement for girls continued narrowing trend of last 3 years. However, achievement gap for boys widened significantly.

Every Child Matters (ECM) Outcome: Enjoy and Achieve **DSLT AD Lead for Outcome: Dave Perrett / Jane Porter**

ECM Aim: Achieve stretching national educational standards at secondary school

Ref.	Directorate Strategic Plan - Objective			
Ob 5	Improve outcomes for children and young people aged 11 – 19 years (or aged 25 for those with disabilities)			
Ref.	Action to achieve DSP objective	Equality action to support DSP objective	Target date/s (and) lead officer	Progress
5a	Improve the quality of leadership and management across the secondary sector ie, to support schools to be judged good or outstanding in OFSTED inspection	Support is given to school leaders and governors to help them develop equality and cohesion good practice through regular meetings and workshops.	March 2011 Dave Perrett	All schools have received a judgment of at least good in their inspections for their equality and cohesion activities.
5f	Work with secondary schools, pupils, their parents and carers to narrow the gap in achievement between under achieving groups and their peers ie, looked after children, minority and ethnic groups, those with learning difficulties or special educational needs and disabilities	A range of projects are supporting this initiative including the Minority Ethnic Achievement Project (MEAP) and the work of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service and the SEN Team.	March 2011 Dave Perrett	<p>Attainment gap for black and minority ethnic pupils in comparison to all Dudley pupils fluctuates. Performance of black pupils improved, For Pakistanis performance remained broadly the same as in 2009. Indian and Chinese pupils do much better than the overall Dudley average.</p> <p>Comparison of Dudley's outcomes with our benchmark authorities shows we have narrowed the gap between SEN and non-SEN pupils at KS4 and have met our target by being below the benchmark authority mean.</p> <p>Free School Meals; Overall, a slight widening of gap. Gap in achievement for boys narrowed. However, achievement gap for girls widened. There is no discernible overall trend in this area.</p>
5h	Further Improve the integrated youth support offer for young people in Dudley to ensure it is accessed by all young people irrespective of their ethnic background, their gender or their disability status.	Ensuring the involvement of targeted young people in the planned further consultation and service development. Targeted young people are those belonging to vulnerable	March 2011 Amanda Grove	Extensive activity has been undertaken to involve young people in the development of the offer e.g. a borough wide survey, and conferences providing young people with the opportunity to develop skills in and awareness of decision making

Every Child Matters (ECM) Outcome: Enjoy and Achieve			DSLT AD Lead for Outcome: Dave Perrett / Jane Porter	
ECM Aim: Achieve stretching national educational standards at secondary school				
		groups as identified within the Statutory Guidance on section 507b Education Act 1996		<p>processes and their ability to shape provision</p> <p>The Education Business Partnership provide a range of services to secondary schools including work related learning and enterprise initiatives that support the development of employability skills and aspirations for young people within a positive activities agenda.</p> <p>An accessibility survey has been developed with the Me2 Panel. Partners have agreed to use returns in order to inform Youth Offer provision in 2011-13. Youth Service and Respect Team have supported NHS Dudley to establish an assessment process and train young people in the 'Your Welcome' Standards. The pilot has now been completed with a phased roll out planned for all providers of young people's health services.</p> <p>In October 70+ disabled young people attended the You Count Conference to provide feedback on services that they access and feed into the borough wide youth survey. Feedback from the young people was very positive and further opportunities to contribute to decision making will be developed.</p> <p>During October, Democratic Services, the Youth Service and Schools provided young people with the opportunity to learn more about the local authority's democratic processes, attending council meetings, receiving briefings by chairs and experiencing some of the 'back room' processes. This was part of on going work to increase young peoples' awareness of and contribution to, decision making and the wider community.</p> <p>Adventure Circle is a youth newsletter developed by young people, the youth service and Dudley Foster</p>

Every Child Matters (ECM) Outcome: Enjoy and Achieve				DSLT AD Lead for Outcome: Dave Perrett / Jane Porter
ECM Aim: Achieve stretching national educational standards at secondary school				
				Carers Association. Their aim is to inform young people, particularly those in care, carers, care homes and social workers about activities in which they can become involved and to enable further access opportunities and to have a greater say and shape services.

Every Child Matters (ECM) Outcome: Quality Service Management				DSLT AD Lead for Outcome: Jane Porter
ECM Aim: Integrated Children's Services				
Ref.	Directorate Strategic Plan - Objective			
6	Develop and implement an effective strategy for the delivery of Vision 2025			
Ref.	Action to achieve DSP objective	Equality action to support DSP objective	Target date/s (and) lead officer	Progress
6a	Strategic place planning for early years, primary and secondary provision	Develop a (disability) accessibility strategy.	March 2011 Ian McGuff	Development of accessibility strategy is underway.
6e	Develop and implement a sustainability strategy for the directorate and schools	Ensure activities related to the three 'gateways' to sustainability in schools that relate to equality and cohesion are developed effectively.	March 2011 Steve Lockwood	Sustainability strategy is being developed.

Every Child Matters (ECM) Outcome: Quality Service Management				DSLT AD Lead for Outcome: Ian McGuff
ECM Aim: Improve service leadership and management				
Ref.	Directorate Strategic Plan - Objective			
Ob 7	Develop, improve and embed strategies and processes to support service delivery			
Ref.	Action to achieve DSP objective	Equality action to support DSP objective	Target date/s (and) lead officer	Progress
7f	Implement and monitor the effectiveness of actions identified in the Directorate Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2010-2011	Equality and Diversity Action Plan published and monitored according to agreed performance management protocols.	March 2011 Ian McGuff	Equality and diversity actions outlined in the plan are being implemented successfully

Every Child Matters (ECM) Outcome: Quality Service Management			DSLTD AD Lead for Outcome: Jane Porter	
ECM Aim: Develop, recruit and retain an effective workforce				
Ref.				
Ob 8	Improve the directorate's approach to workforce planning and development			
Ref.				
8a	Develop and implement a consistent approach to workforce planning and information	Ensure equality impact assessments (EqIAs) are carried out at the appropriate stages	March 2011 Jane Porter	EqIAs are being regularly produced and form an important element of these processes.
8d	Develop a workforce development strategy for DCS that includes schools and the early years workforce in the private, voluntary and independent sector	Address equality and diversity issues related to workforce development activity, including developing a workforce that reflects the community it serves; looking in particular at areas including gender balance; the ethnic composition of the workforce; proportion of and roles of disabled employees	March 2011 Jane Porter	Workforce development strategy which includes actions to advance equality in the directorate is under development

Directorate of Children's Services – Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2010/11

Appendix 2: Equality and diversity actions arising from directorate/cross-council priorities

Objective	<i>Detailed action/target (and lead officer)</i>	<i>Target Date/ milestones</i>	Progress
Priority 1. Policy development and performance management			
E&D Ob 1. Assess the implications of the Equality Act 2010 for schools and the directorate and plan for its implementation.	(1) Assess new responsibilities for schools.	March 2011	Schools and directorate staff have received information about legal requirements. Key priorities and actions for schools and directorate are being identified and included in relevant policies. Directorate and Council action planning includes 3 years equality actions to improve equality outcomes for children and young people based on equality impact assessments.
	(2) Prepare for their implementation through developing appropriate policies and guidance.	September 2010/ March 2011	
	(3) Provide training on their implementation to school leaders including governors.	March 2011	
	(4) Assess new responsibilities and Identify 3 year equality objectives for the directorate.	March 2011	
E&D Ob 2. Improve equality performance management.	Draft and disseminate appropriate policies, plans and guidance to enable the directorate to be in full compliance with statutory responsibilities and locally agreed actions supporting equality and diversity.	June 2010 / March 2011	Equality and diversity action plan, reports and other relevant documents are being developed. The directorate makes an appropriate contribution to corporate equality and diversity development work. The advancement of equality continues in Children's Services.

E&D Ob 3. Schools continue to fulfil their equality & diversity responsibilities through strategic planning.	Continue to support schools to develop their equality work and provide policy development materials, advice and guidance on their use.	<i>March 2011</i>	Schools are aware of their obligations and have access to policy development materials. Relevant documents have been drafted and support has been given to schools.
E&D Ob 4. The local authority and schools fulfil their statutory responsibilities, collect information, process and respond appropriately to racist incidents	Collect, collate and analyse data relating to racist incidents in schools and the directorate. Provide advice, support and training as necessary to school and directorate staff about recognising and responding to such incidents. Revise/update relevant documentation as and when necessary.	June 2011	Racist incidents data is published in the Council's agreed format annually. Support has been delivered to staff where appropriate.
E&D Ob 5. Improve equality data and intelligence	Complete outstanding equality impact assessments (EqIAs).	September 2010	Equality impact assessments are being completed
	Support implementation of agreed Council processes to ensure statutory responsibilities are met including those related to equality impact assessments.	March 2011	Appropriate policies/functions are identified for EqIAs and they are now being completed at the correct stage.

Priority 2 Engagement			
E&D Ob 6. Support the development of existing key engagement mechanisms.	(1) Support the promotion of the Council's BME consultation event (2010) and increase participation of children and young people.	November 2010 (Event) March 2011 (Report)	Event held that included support of the directorate. Feedback from young people regularly taken into account when planning and evaluating directorate services.
	(2) Support Action for Disabled People and Carers group.	March 2011	Involvement and support for families, children and young people living in families which include disabled people has taken place.
	(3) Support the (independent) Dudley LGBT Forum.	March 2011	Support has been provided.
	(3) Develop routes for consultation and engagement on issues of particular concern to LGBT communities with emphasis on young people's concerns.	March 2011	There is an increasing understanding of the impact of Children's Services provision on young people from, or associated with, these communities.
Priority 3 Improve communications			
E&D Ob 7. Improve access to information.	Complete revision of equality and diversity section of the 'idudley' intranet website.	September 2010 / March 2011	Revision of the site is not complete but this forms part of our plan for 2011/12.

	Further develop and improve communication by including selected equality and diversity information on Dudley's Internet website.	September 2010 / March 2011	Revision of the site is not complete but this forms part of our plan for 2011/12.
	Develop smarter methods for communicating with children and young people through use of the schools portal.	September 2010 / March 2011	Schools portal carries selected equality and diversity information and is kept up to date.
E&D Ob 8. Celebrate the diversity of the Borough's community and the Council workforce.	Mark a range of culturally diverse events in support of national good practice and Dudley's community cohesion strategy. Share good practice in promoting community cohesion with school leaders.	March 2011	There is increasing awareness of the Borough's diverse communities, and relevant support is provided to school leaders.
Priority 4 Employees			
E&D Ob 9. Increase % of employees with a disability.	Support HR Division implementing action plan arising out of external auditor's review 'supporting people with a disability'.	Target dates included in action plan.	In 2010 1.9% of the workforce of the Directorate was disabled in some way. By 2011 this figure has risen to 2.6%.
Priority 5. Promote community safety and community cohesion			
E&D Ob 10. Support schools to implement good practice through the 'building resilience' programme.	(1) Provide support for schools using the 'Learning Together to be Safe' toolkit. Share good practice developed through involvement in regional forums	March 2011	Schools have had support in the use of these materials.

	(2) Work with partners across the Council to develop a plan for engaging schools in activities addressing issues arising out of the PVE framework.		A plan has been developed and where practicable support is provided to schools in order to build resilience to extremism.
E&D Ob11. Progress community cohesion work in schools and across the Council with a particular focus on children and young people.	Support school leaders, including governors through the production of development materials and training to help them comply with community cohesion duty.	March 2010	Schools have been supported to address issues of community cohesion. School's are generally judged at least good for the community cohesion duty.



Protecting children and young people from significant harm

champions for children

12

Research Briefings for Councillors

Why is this issue important?

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is one of the most important responsibilities of a community. It is one of the key duties placed on local authorities and the Children's Trust partnership, and ensuring that children and young people 'stay safe' is one of the five Every Child Matters Outcomes. Protecting children and young people from harm also protects them from other negative outcomes such as mental health problems or involvement in crime.

Safeguarding is broadly defined and includes preventing impairment of health and development and ensuring that children are growing up in safe and effective care. This briefing concentrates on one particular aspect of safeguarding – that of protecting children from significant harm through abuse and neglect. An earlier briefing has looked at the subject of safeguarding more broadly.

Lead members are politically accountable for ensuring that the local authority fulfils its legal responsibilities for safeguarding children and young people. Following the tragic death of Peter Connelly, the role and accountability of elected members in relation to protecting children from maltreatment and harm has come under almost as much public scrutiny as professional practice in this area. The Laming report noted that 'sustained commitment' from the lead member for children and the leader of the council is essential if the profile and importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is to be understood throughout the authority and the Children's Trust.

Background

Legal framework

Local authorities have a specific duty under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 to make enquiries when ‘they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child ... in their area is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm’. These enquiries may lead to emergency action being taken to protect children or to a child protection conference being convened. If those attending a child protection conference decide that the child is at continuing risk of significant harm then a child protection plan setting out the inter-agency help and support that will be provided to protect the child in the future will be formulated. At any point a local authority may decide, having taken legal advice into consideration, that care proceedings in respect of the child should be started. *Working Together to Safeguard Children* includes detailed guidance on these child protection processes along with wider guidance on safeguarding in general.

Local authorities delegate their child protection duties to children’s social care services. Other agencies have a key role to play as well, which is recognised in legislation and guidance. The police, schools, health and housing services are particularly important in joint work to protect children from significant harm caused by maltreatment.

During the year ending March 2009, 547,000 referrals were made to children’s services authorities. These resulted in 349,000 initial assessments being carried out and 37,900 children becoming the subject of a child protection plan. The majority of children on child protection plans remain living at home.

Local Safeguarding Children’s Boards (LSCB) co-ordinate and monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding activity by their members. From 2010 they will produce an annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding in their area. In order to ensure independence, the LSCB and the Children’s Trust should not be chaired by the same person.

Policy issues

Developments in line with Every Child Matters and the Children Act 2004 are designed to ensure that children and families receive support and services as soon as problems begin to emerge, through the use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and lead professionals co-ordinating the work of the ‘Team around the Child’. Such early intervention is more effective and can also prevent problems becoming more serious. If this system works well it should also help to ensure that children are only referred into the formal child protection system when other forms of targeted support are not sufficient to protect the child or young person from maltreatment.

The recognition of the need for a focus on work with the whole family when parental substance misuse, mental health or other problems are having a negative impact on their children’s welfare has led to the expansion of evidence informed programmes under the Think Family initiative. These will help improve joint working between adult and children’s services.

The government has accepted all the recommendations for the improvement and reform of the social work profession contained in the final report of the Social Work Task Force, which was set up to undertake a comprehensive review of front-line social work practice. This programme of reform will, in the longer term, help to address the problems currently being experienced in relation to the recruitment and retention of competent and experienced front-line staff.

Key research messages

Circumstances that place children at greater risk

There is considerable research evidence about the circumstances that place children at greater risk of suffering significant harm through abuse or neglect. The risk factors for all children are poverty; frequent moves; domestic violence; and parents who lack support from friends or family, have criminal convictions, mental health problems or a learning disability and/or misuse drugs or alcohol. These 'risk factors' do not predict that maltreatment will occur, but the chance of it happening is greater, particularly when more than one risk factor is present. Disabled children are especially vulnerable to abuse and neglect.

Risk to young people

It is important to be aware that adolescents are as much at risk of experiencing significant harm through abuse or neglect as babies and young children, but they are less likely to be referred to child protection services by others, or to refer themselves.

Impact of maltreatment

Maltreatment can lead to death (including by suicide) or serious injury. Experiencing maltreatment increases the risk that children and young people will have poor educational outcomes; develop emotional, behavioural or mental health problems; and become involved in risk taking behaviour such as offending or substance misuse.

Key role of universal services

Health professionals, the police and staff working in children's centres, schools and youth services have a key role to play in child protection. They need to have the skills to identify the situations when the problems being experienced by the child, young person or family require a response through formal child protection processes rather than solely through other forms of targeted support. This is particularly important, and particularly difficult, in cases of neglect. The thresholds for accessing formal child protection processes remain high so it is important that referrals into the system are well founded and appropriate. It is also important that staff from universal services, who have made an appropriate referral into child protection services, have the confidence to challenge decisions of professionals deemed to have greater expertise than them if they consider those decisions likely to place the child at greater risk.

Confidence and understanding in information sharing

Information sharing remains problematic, with continuing confusion around confidentiality. Having protocols and electronic systems for information sharing is helpful but the key issue is the need for different professionals to understand each others' role; to be clear what information is important, why it should be shared and who with; and to have confidence in how the information will be used by others. Good information sharing between children's social care and services supporting parents who are learning disabled or who have mental health or substance misuse problems is particularly important.

Analysis in assessments

Once a referral is accepted, social workers have to carry out assessments and make decisions quickly, sometimes on little initial information and in rapidly changing circumstances. It is crucial that social workers, and other professionals involved in child protection processes, are able to take on board new information, analyse it and constantly question their original hypotheses.

Effective ways of working

A number of specialist programmes have been found to be effective in working with families where abuse or neglect has occurred. Other key messages for effective practice include the importance of both developing a positive relationship with the family and keeping the child's experience of day to day life clearly in mind. Taking account of fathers and father figures is also important. In some cases they may be the source of harm but in others they can be a helpful resource. When working with black and minority ethnic children and families, professionals need to be sensitive to cultural differences, understand the effects of discrimination and racism and guard against stereotypes. Long-term consistent support for families with complex problems is more likely to be effective than short periods of intervention.

Key messages for policy and practice

Understanding the safeguarding issues for your area

A good understanding of local safeguarding issues is crucial. In many areas lead members meet regularly with the Director of Children's Services (DCS) and with senior staff in children's social care with responsibility for safeguarding. Being a member of the LSCB and attending LSCB meetings provides information about safeguarding practice and issues across all the member agencies.

Also important is understanding the difficulties being experienced by children and families in the area. Statistics on the number of children subject to child protection plans are a starting point but equally important will be information from local needs assessments, information from other agencies about the seriousness of the problems facing families, and information from children and families themselves.

Serious case reviews are carried out by LSCBs when a child dies or has sustained serious and permanent harm as a result of abuse or neglect. The purpose of the review is to learn lessons for the future. If such a review has been carried out in the local area, it is important to work with others to ensure that the lessons are disseminated and acted upon.

Understanding the challenges facing front-line staff

Frank and open discussions with front-line practitioners and managers about the reality of practice on the front line, the burdens practitioners are carrying, any barriers or challenges they face in carrying out their work and how services can be improved is important.

Child protection work is complex and demanding, and staff need time and opportunity to reflect on their practice. Access to regular supervision, focused on practice issues, is vital.

Ensuring that front-line staff and managers feel supported in their work should assist in issues of workforce retention. Problems in recruiting staff of sufficient competence are being dealt with in some areas by having multi-agency front-line teams, including specialists such as family therapists; having a small team led by an experienced practitioner working with one family; or bringing in outside specialists to advise on cases.

Good communication with other agencies and adult services

Developing links with elected members responsible for adult social care services is crucial for ensuring that local services are responding to the needs of the whole family when issues such as parental mental health problems or problematic use of drugs or alcohol place children at risk of maltreatment.

In addition, ensure there are systems in place that support good co-ordination of work with other key agencies such as the police, schools, health services and services supporting adults with mental health or substance misuse problems.

Focusing on quality and outcomes and not on process

Focus on the quality of safeguarding services, not just on whether targets have been met. The different outcome focused approaches currently being used – such as Outcomes Based Accountability – provide guidance on doing this.

Ensure that quality assurance systems are in place and providing helpful information. Audits of case files carried out by independent experts or through peer arrangements with a matched local authority are helpful.

Overview and Scrutiny committees have a role to play in reviewing local safeguarding arrangements.

Planning and commissioning

Safeguarding is expensive, and commissioning needs to be well organised and tightly monitored, but there needs to be a sufficient budget to ensure no child is at risk.

Investing in specialist, evidence informed services and interventions is important, but so too is ensuring that there are a range of services able to offer targeted support in different settings. The third sector can often provide targeted support to engage families with complex problems who are resistant to intervention.

Safeguarding issues in your area

- 1 Does your local authority have systems in place for carrying out audits of front-line practice and are you briefed on their findings?
- 2 How does your authority and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board learn from both successes and mistakes in your area?
- 3 What lessons have been learned from serious case reviews in your area? How have these lessons been disseminated through the social care workforce and how have they informed changes in practice?

Challenges facing front-line staff

- 4 Do all your front-line staff receive high-quality supervision? Does this supervision encourage reflective practice?
- 5 Do your front-line staff and their managers have enough time to collect and analyse information, reflect and keep up to date with relevant research? If not, what could be done to create more time?
- 6 What opportunities are there for front-line staff to access specialist advice in relation to individual cases?
- 7 Do your front-line staff experience problems with ICT systems, administrative support or access to interview rooms? If they do, what is being done to address these problems?

Inter-agency communication

- 8 Do you have good contacts with elected members with responsibility for adult services and are they aware of their role in safeguarding?
- 9 What systems are supporting co-ordination of safeguarding work with the police, schools, health services and services supporting adults with mental health or substance misuse problems?

Evaluating quality

- 10 What opportunities are there in your area for parents, other family members, children and young people to give feedback on their experience of assessments and/or being involved in child protection processes?
- 11 How does your authority measure quality, rather than process? How is this evaluated?

Planning and commissioning

- 12 How are thresholds for formal child protection intervention set in your area? How do you know if they are set at the right level?
- 13 Are there a range of targeted and specialist services available in your area that provide early intervention support for families with complex needs?

Training for elected members

- 14 What training have elected members in your area had on safeguarding? How could they build on this knowledge?

C4EO – The Centre for Excellence and Outcomes in Children's and Young People's Services has safeguarding as one of its eight key themes. It has produced three briefing papers on this.

www.c4eo.org.uk

DCSF – The Every Child Matters website has a section on safeguarding with helpful information and links to a wide range of relevant documents and resources.

www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters

Also, key messages to emerge from the Quality Matters overview publication, Stein M (2009) *Quality Matters in Children's Services: Messages from Research*, London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, including findings from a study on child protection, are set out in Flood S (2009) *Leading for Quality in Children's Services: A leaflet for local authority elected members*. London/Dartington: DCSF/ research in practice www.ecm.gov.uk/qualitymatters

IDEA – The Improvement and Development Agency for local government is running a sector-led programme on safeguarding to assist local councils in fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities. Guidance and toolkits include *Safeguarding Children: Scrutiny Guide* (2009) a toolkit with 10 key questions for members of scrutiny committees to ask about safeguarding. www.idea.gov.uk

research in practice – The Champions for Children series of research briefings for councillors includes: Ryan M (2006) *Safeguarding*, Ryan M (2008) *Outcomes and why they matter* and Bowyer S (2009) *Thinking Family: Working across children's and adult services*. Dartington: research in practice www.rip.org.uk/champions

SCIE – The Social Care Institute for Excellence has a section on its website devoted to safeguarding with links to a number of helpful practice guides, including guidance on a new model for conducting serious case reviews. www.scie.org.uk/children/childprotection.asp

Brandon M, Bailey S, Belderson P, Gardner R, Sidebotham P, Dodsworth J, Warren C, and Black J (2009) *Understanding Serious Case Reviews and their Impact: A Biennial Analysis of Serious Case Reviews 2005-07*. Nottingham: DCSF www.nspcc.org.uk/inform

Barlow J (forthcoming in 2010) Research review on safeguarding. Dartington: research in practice www.rip.org.uk/publications

Davies C and Ward H (forthcoming in 2010)– *Messages from Research: The Safeguarding Children Research Initiative*. Overview of 11 studies. For information about all the studies and links to published documents. <http://tcru.ioe.ac.uk/scr>

about the 'champions for children' series

This is the twelfth in a series of research briefings for councillors. It may be especially useful to Cabinet and Scrutiny Panel members with lead responsibility for children and family services. The aim is to provide information about key research findings, good practice and policy developments to help you to improve outcomes for children and families in need by ensuring that adequate and effective services are provided. There are also prompts for questions you might want to ask your officers. You can order additional copies through the publications pages of the research in practice website. Here you will also find the full text and all references, and information about how the series is managed and how we gathered and judged the research evidence.

See our website for more information and links to references and resources

www.rip.org.uk/champions

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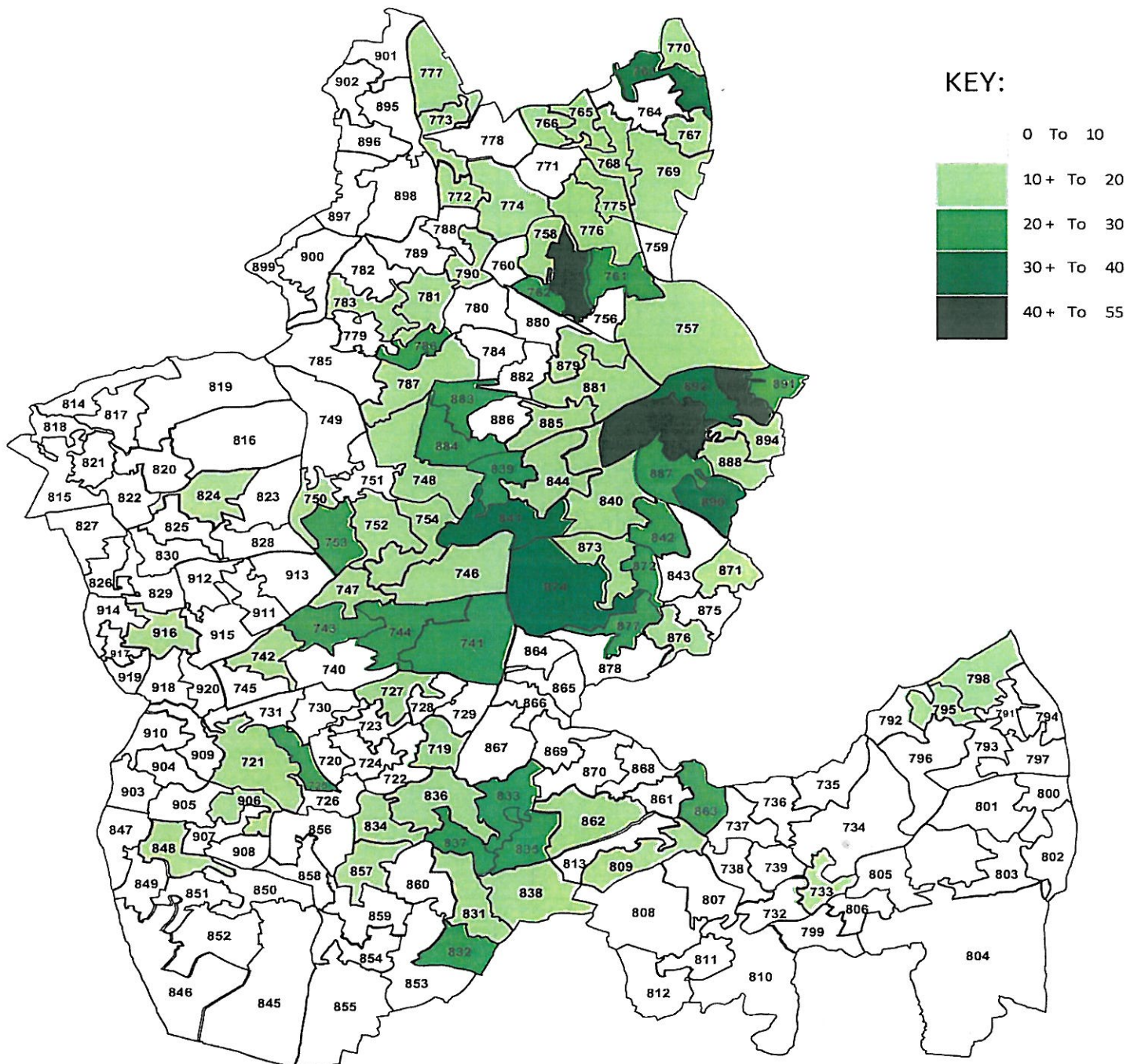
Written by Mary Ryan

Designed by sue snell

Thanks

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MAP OF CHILDREN IN NEED



Comments

The map above shows Children In Need as at 31st March 2011. The numbers of Children In Need are grouped by the postcode from which they were referred and then by SOA (Super Output Areas). The SOA's are numbered in the map above. The key shows the number of children in need from each of the SOAs coloured in various shades of green according to the total number of Children In Need in that area. For instance in SOA "804" there are between 0 and 10 Children In Need as it is shaded in white. In contrast SOA 889 in the centre of Dudley is shaded in the Darkest Green which indicates that between 40 and 55 children come from this area.

Right Services, Right Time, Right Place

Multi-agency Guidance on Access Criteria to help support Children, Young People and their Families in Dudley



Dudley Children & Young People's Partnership



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Dudley's Multi-agency Guidance on getting support services to children, young people and their families – the right service in the right place at the right time.

We aspire to provide support through the provision of flexible and responsive services which provide targeted support at the earliest possible stage, through to specialist and statutory interventions where needs are complex. The aim is always to help children and young people achieve the best possible outcomes.

Many agencies and professionals, parents, carers, children and young people and other family members are involved with providing support. The service criteria and thresholds set out in this document are designed to help all concerned meet children's needs through identifying the best type of support.

Whatever setting you work in, we hope you will find the guidance helpful in supporting you to improve the lives of children and young people and their families.



Dudley Children & Young
People's Partnership



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HOW TO USE THE THRESHOLD FRAMEWORK

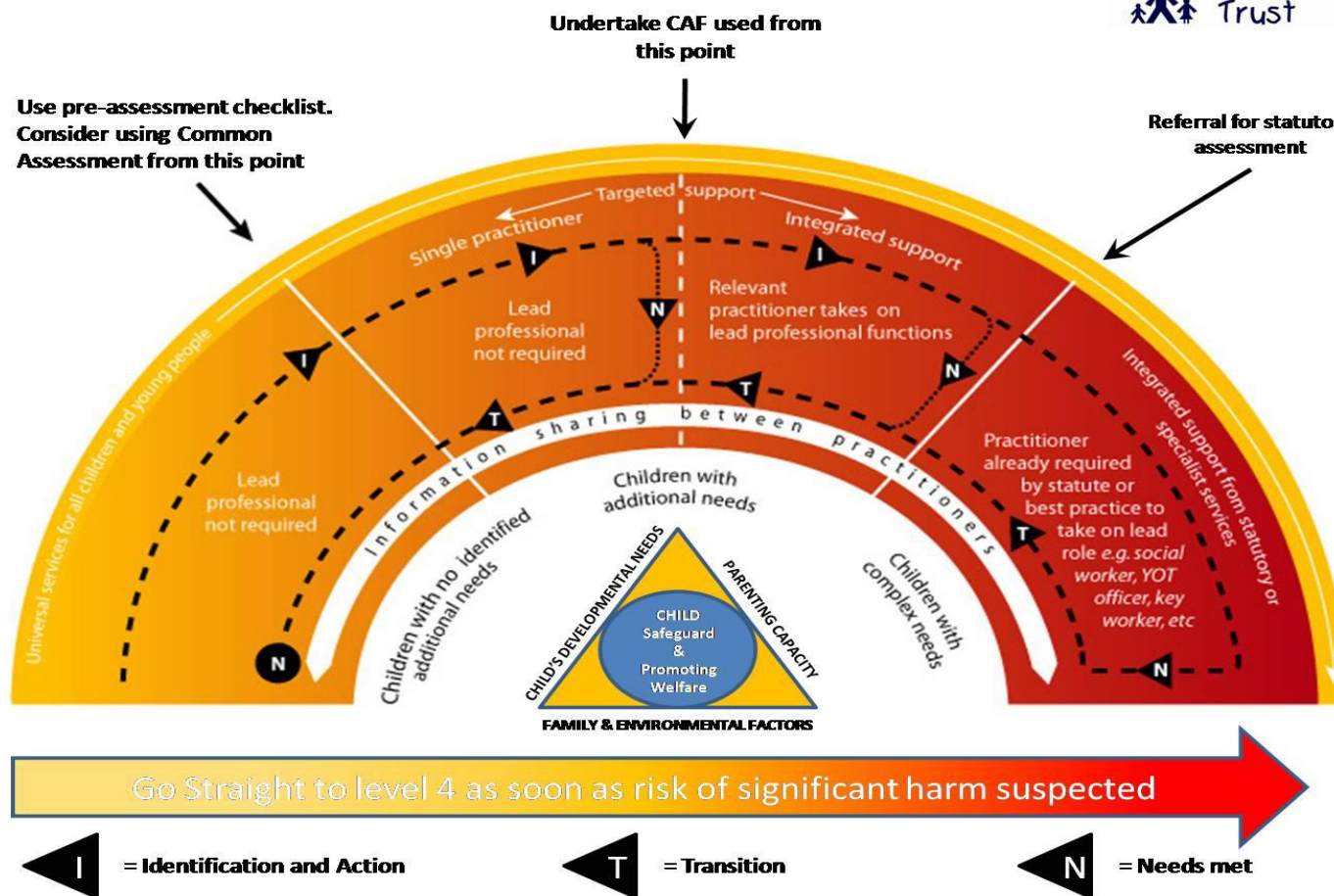
The framework follows the 'windscreen model' which is shown on the following page. It is designed to be a guide and should never be used mechanistically. The model should help everyone to:

- Think clearly and achieve a holistic approach
- Understand the child and young person in the context of their family and wider community
- Develop ideas and solutions with children, young people and their families, in order that children and young people can receive timely additional support whenever this is needed.

The Dudley Family Information Service is a useful source of information about activities, support and childcare provision and can be found at <http://fis.dudley.gov.uk/fsd> (telephone 01384 814398).

It should be noted that Safeguarding Procedures must always be followed and a referral made directly to Children's Social Care where there is a concern that a child might be suffering significant harm. Further guidance can be found in the Safeguarding Procedures which are available at <http://safeguardingchildren.dudley.gov.uk>.

Promoting Children's Wellbeing in Dudley



Level 1 Threshold - Universal

Key Features <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs met within universal provision May need limited help within setting to prevent needs arising Children, young people and parents/carers can access these services directly 	
Child's Developmental Needs	Parents and Carers
Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physically and psychologically well Adequate diet/hygiene/clothing Meeting developmental milestones, including speech and language Accesses health services, including dental and optical care Education and Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good attendance at school/college/training No barriers to learning Achieving key stages Emotional and Behavioural Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good quality early attachments Growing competencies in practical and emotional skills Identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive sense of self and abilities Demonstrates feelings of belonging and acceptance An ability to express needs Family and Social Relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stable and affectionate relationships with care givers Good relationships with siblings Positive relationships with peers Social Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate dress for different settings Good level of personal hygiene Self –care skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age appropriate independent living skills 	Basic Care, Safety and Protection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carers able to provide for the child's physical needs, and protect them from danger and harm. Emotional Warmth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carers able to provide warmth, praise and encouragement Guidance, Boundaries and Stimulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carers provide appropriate guidance and boundaries Carers support development through interaction and play
	Family and Environmental Factors Family History and Functioning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supportive family relationships, including when parents are separated Housing, Employment and Finance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing has basic amenities and appropriate facilities Not living in poverty Appropriate hygiene/ cleanliness maintained Family's Social Integration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good enough social and friendship networks exist Community Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good enough universal services in neighbourhood
Assessment Process <p>Children, young people and families have their needs met through universal services. Universal assessments will apply such as those provided through health and education.</p>	
Key universal services that may provide support at this level are: <p>Schools, Colleges, Training Providers, Connexions, Children's Centres, Early Years Settings, Midwifery Service, Health Visiting Service, School Nursing Service, General Practitioners, NHS Direct, Parenting Programmes, Play Services, Youth Service, Police, Housing Services, Leisure Services, Voluntary and Community Sector</p>	

Level 2 Threshold – Children in Need of Early Intervention

Key Features <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires additional support, usually within the setting Needs are well established and can usually be met within identified resources Children, young people and parents/carers can access these services using the CAF assessment process 	
Child's Developmental Needs	Parents and Carers
Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slow in reaching development milestones Additional health needs Missing health checks/immunisations Susceptible to minor health problems Minor concerns re: diet/dental health, hygiene/clothing Disability requiring support services Starting to have sex (under 16) Previous pregnancy Education and Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasional truanting or non-attendance, poor punctuality At risk of exclusion School action or school action plus Not achieving educational potential Not in education, employment or training Few opportunities for play/socialisation Identified language and communication difficulties Emotional and Behavioural Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low level mental health or emotional issues requiring intervention Some concern about the child's substance misuse Involved in behaviour that is seen as anti-social Poor self esteem Identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some insecurities around identity May experience bullying around perceived difference, or bully others Family and Social Relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some support from family and friends Some difficulties sustaining relationships Undertaking some caring responsibilities Child of a teenage parent Low parental aspirations Social Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be over friendly or withdrawn with strangers Personal hygiene starting to be a problem Self –care skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not always adequate self care – poor hygiene Slow to develop age appropriate self care skills Over protected/unable to develop independence 	Basic Care, Safety and Protection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parental engagement with services is poor Parent requires advice on parenting issues Professionals are beginning to have some concerns around child's basic needs being met Professionals beginning to have some concerns about substance misuse by adults within the home Some exposure to dangerous situations in home/community Teenage parent(s) Inappropriate expectations of child/young person for age/ability Emotional Warmth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistent parenting but development not significantly impaired Post natal depression Perceived to be a problem by parents Guidance, Boundaries and Stimulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May have different carers Inconsistent boundaries offered Can behave in an anti-social way Spends much time alone Child not exposed to new experiences
	Family and Environmental Factors
	Family History and Functioning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents have relationship difficulties which may affect the child Experienced loss of significant adult May look after younger siblings or parent Parents has health difficulties Some support from family and friends Housing, Employment and Finance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family affected by low income or unemployment Parents have limited formal education Adequate/poor housing Family seeking asylum or refugees Family's Social Integration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some social exclusion problems Family may be new to area Community Resources <p>Good enough universal services in neighbourhood but family may have access issues</p>

Assessment Process

Additional needs at this level can be met within the setting with some identified additional support.

Universal assessment procedures may be sufficient. However, the CAF pre-assessment checklist is a useful tool to help identify whether needs can be met within the setting or whether there is a need for a co-ordinated, multi-agency response. If a multi-agency response is needed, a Common Assessment should be offered, with the consent of the family/child/young person.

The Common Assessment Framework is a standard holistic assessment that can be used by all services working with children and young people. It is suitable for use in early intervention work and beyond. It supports practitioners to work in partnership with parents/carers and provide co-ordinated multi-agency support and actions.

Key services that may provide support at this level are:

Schools, Colleges, Training Providers, Connexions, Children's Centres, Early Years Settings, Midwifery Service, Health Visiting Service, School Nursing Service, General Practitioners, NHS Direct, Play Services, Youth Service, Police, Housing Services, Leisure Services, Family Support and Parenting Support Services, Voluntary and Community Sector, Prevention Programmes.

Level 3 Threshold – Children with complex needs

Key Features <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires co-ordinated multi-agency response Lead professional required High level of unmet need 	
Child's Developmental Needs	Parents and Carers
Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has some chronic/recurring health problems or terminal illness Concerns around mental health, self harm Missing routine and non-routine health appointments Concerns about diet/hygiene/clothing Conception to a child under 16 Inappropriate sexual behaviour Substance misuse impacts negatively on their risk taking behaviour Disability requiring significant support services to be maintained in mainstream provision Education and Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short term exclusion, persistent truanting or poor school attendance Previous permanent exclusions Persistent NEET Statement of Special Educational Needs Emotional and Behavioural Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical and emotional development raising significant concerns Difficulty coping with anger, frustration and upset Early onset of sexual activity (13 to 14) Problematic substance misuse Inappropriate sexual behaviour/risk of sexual exploitation Offending or regular anti-social behaviour Identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject to discrimination Extremist views Family and Social Relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peers also involved in challenging behaviour Regularly needed to care for another family member Involved in conflicts with parents/siblings Social Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inappropriate in behaviour and appearance – unwashed, hygiene problems, provocative behaviour/appearance Self –care skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor self care for age – hygiene Takes inappropriate risks in self care 	Basic Care, Safety and Protection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent is struggling to provide adequate care Substance misuse (including alcohol) is impacting on parenting ability Parental learning disability is impacting on ability to provide care Teenage parents Previously subject to Child Protection Plan or Looked After Private fostering or young carer Emotional Warmth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child is often scapegoated Child receives inconsistent care/has multiple care givers Child is rarely comforted when distressed Parents have no other positive relationships Parents have lack of empathy for child Guidance, Boundaries and Stimulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erratic or inadequate guidance provided Parent rarely manages disputes between siblings Inconsistent parenting which impairs emotional or behavioural development Family and Environmental Factors Family History and Functioning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of domestic violence, potential honour based violence, forced marriage Acrimonious relationships Family members have physical and mental health difficulties Parental involvement in crime Parental involvement in problematic substance misuse Housing, Employment and Finance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overcrowding, temporary accommodation, homelessness Serious debts/poverty impacting on ability to care for the child Family's Social Integration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family social excluded Escalating victimisation Community Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents socially excluded with access problems to local facilities and targeted services Children from families experiencing a crisis likely to result in a breakdown of care arrangements

Assessment Process

Additional needs at this level will need a "Team Around the Child/Family" approach. The child may already be known to a statutory service. If not, the pre-assessment checklist and a Common Assessment (using the Common Assessment Framework) should be completed. Completion of a Common Assessment should not delay any appropriate referral to a statutory service.

A "Team Around the Child/Family" at Level 3 may be appropriate as a "step down" from statutory intervention at Level 4. For example, when a child is no longer in need of social care services, with consent from the family, a new lead professional can be identified to enable continued support when social care is no longer involved. The Level 4 Assessments and Plans will inform this approach rather than completing a further assessment.

Key services that may provide support at this level are:

SEN Services, Special Schools, CAMHS, Schools, Colleges, Connexions, Training Providers, Children's Centres, Early Years Settings, Midwifery Service, Health Visiting Service, Paediatric Services, Speech and Language Therapy, School Nursing Service, General Practitioners, NHS Direct, Play Services, Youth Service, Drug and Alcohol Services, Family Support and Parenting Support Services, Voluntary and Community Sector, Children with Disabilities Services, Inclusion Services, Children's Social Care.

Level 4 Threshold – Children with acute specialist needs

Key Features <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At risk of becoming, or has become, a child in care Multi-agency plan failing In need of a formal Child Protection Plan Often poor co-operation 	
Child's Developmental Needs	Parents and Carers
Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has severe chronic/recurring health problems, including severe obesity and dental decay Fabricated/induced illness Non-organic failure to thrive Sexual exploitation/abuse Sexual activity under the age of 13 Serious/complex mental health issues requiring specialist intervention Disability requiring the highest level of support Persistent substance misuse Education and Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permanently excluded from school or at risk of permanent exclusion Significant development delay due to neglect/poor parenting Emotional and Behavioural Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Puts self or others in danger Failure to address serious (re)offending/anti-social behaviour Endangers own life through self harm, suicide attempts, substance misuse and eating disorder Child abuses others Frequently missing from home for long periods Presenting sexualised behaviour Identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates extremist views Socially isolated and lacking appropriate role models Alienates self from others Participates in gang activity Family and Social Relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child in care or care leaver Family breakdown related in some way to behavioural difficulties Subject to physical, emotional or sexual abuse/neglect Is main carer for family member Adoption breakdown Forced marriage of a minor Social Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor/inappropriate self presentation Self –care skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neglects to use self-care skills due to alternative priorities e.g. substance misuse Severe lack of age appropriate behaviour and independent living skills likely to result in harm Takes inappropriate risks in self care 	Basic Care, Safety and Protection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent unable to provide 'good enough parenting' that is adequate and safe Parents unable to care for previous children Parents' mental health problems or substance misuse significantly affects care of child Child subject to public law proceedings in the family court Continuous instability and violence in the home Parents unable to keep the child safe Parents involved in criminal activity Emotional Warmth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents inconsistent, highly critical or apathetic towards child Child is rejected or abandoned Parents are negative and abusive (verbally, emotionally, mentally) towards the child Guidance, Boundaries and Stimulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No effective boundaries set by parents Regularly behaves in an anti-social way in the neighbourhood Inconsistent and violent discipline Subject to a parenting order which may be related to their child's criminal behaviour, anti-social behaviour or persistent absence from school. Family and Environmental Factors Family History and Functioning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant parent discord, domestic violence/honour based violence/forced marriage Child privately fostered (cared for by non-relative) Destructive relationships in extended family Parents deceased and no family/friends options Parents are in prison and there are no family/friends options Housing, Employment and Finance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical accommodation places child in danger No fixed abode or homeless Extreme poverty/debt impacting on ability to care for child Family's Social Integration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family chronically socially excluded Community Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non engagement with services

Assessment Process

Additional needs at this level will need a "Team Around the Child/Family" approach led by a statutory/specialist service (Social Worker, Youth Offending Service, Education and Inclusion Staff, CAMHS, specialist Health etc). The child may be the subject of a formal Child Protection Plan or a Child in Care Plan.

The types of assessments will include:

- National Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families
- Child Protection Investigation
- Other specialist assessments including health and education

These assessments may build on earlier assessments under the Common Assessment Framework

Key services that may provide support at this level are:

Children's Social Care, CAMHS, specialist Health Services, Children with Disabilities Services, Education Inclusion Services, Connexions, Parenting Programmes, Substance Misuse Services, Youth Offending Service, working in partnership with other services including the voluntary and community sector.

Children's Social Care Thresholds

1. This section of the guidance relates specifically to Children's Social Care. It outlines the thresholds, assessment processes and key services for children and young people in need of Children's Social Care intervention.
2. The majority of children, young people have a number of basic needs that can be supported through a range of universal services. These services include education, early years, health, housing, youth services, leisure facilities and services provided by voluntary organisations. However, some children may have additional needs for which they need support in order to achieve good outcomes. Within this group, a small proportion will have more complex needs which meet the threshold for statutory involvement by Children's Social Care. These are:
 - children and young people who need a child protection assessment or are the subject of a child protection plan
 - looked-after children and young people
 - care leavers
 - children and young people for whom adoption is the plan
 - children and young people with complex disabilities or complex health needs
 - children and young people who are privately fostered
3. **Child in Need of Children's Social Care Intervention**
 - 3.1 The provision of services at **Level 3** occurs after an Initial Assessment has been completed and indicates one of the following levels of need:
 - Child in need of specialist support from children's social care
 - Child in need of protection
 - Child in need of care
 - 3.2 The key factors taken into account in deciding whether a child is in need under the Children Act 1989 are:
 - What will happen to the child's health and development without services being provided; and
 - The likely effect the services will have on the child's standard of health and development
 - 3.3 **Child Protection:** It should be noted that Safeguarding Board Procedures must always be followed and a referral made to Children's Social Care where there is concern that a child is suffering or is a risk of suffering significant harm. Further guidance can be found in the Safeguarding Procedures which are available at <http://safeguardingchildren.dudley.gov.uk>.
 - 3.4 Children in Need of Services at **Level 4** are those who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and those who are in need of care or are in the care of the Local Authority
 - 3.5 A summary of the levels of need and threshold criteria is shown on the following chart.

Thresholds for Children's Social Care		
Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Key Features <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for early intervention Parents seeking community services Child registered as having a disability 	Key Features <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highly complex High level multi-agency support to work with compromised parenting Significant risk of family breakdown or harm Likelihood of significant harm but where Initial Assessment suggests the risk can be managed outside a Protection Plan 	Key Features <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child suffering or likely to suffer significant harm Child in need of care or who has previously been in care
Criteria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No major concerns 	Criteria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issues not resolved by other interventions at Level 3 Significant parenting capacity problems which impact to the extent of the child being on the 'threshold of care' Child posing a risk to self or others that without intervention may result in significant harm and the consequent need for a Protection Plan or Care Adoption breakdown Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Complex needs relating to disability Request for a Court report where there is significant current/previous social care involvement Homeless and vulnerable 16/17 year olds 	Criteria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actual or likely significant harm through abuse/neglect Reported pregnancy where there have been previous child protection concerns Forced Marriage of child Parents involved in serious criminal acts which may impact on the child Sexual exploitation Adult assessed as having a risk to children having contact with a child Child witnessing violence, including sexual violence Child abandoned – no family or friends options Parents in prison – no family or friends options Welfare can only be safeguarded through care Unaccompanied asylum seeker Remanded to care Child placing him/herself at serious risk Eligible and relevant care leavers Specialist short breaks for disabled children
Level of Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informal Possible Common Assessment by another agency Non-statutory 	Level of Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial Assessment Possible Core Assessment 	Level of Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core Assessment Section 47 Reports for Reviews/Conferences

What to do if you think a child is at risk of abuse/neglect

If you have concern that a child is being harmed as a result of abuse or neglect, you must not keep these concerns to yourself. Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility.

You need to ensure that you speak to the appropriate organisations who can listen to and record your concern, and then take appropriate action.

In Dudley, these are the numbers that you can ring for advice and to make a referral:

During office hours (9.00 - 5.00 Monday to Friday) call Children's Services District Offices:

Brierley Hill Area Office

Cottage Street
Brierley Hill
DY5 1RE
Telephone: 01384 813000

Dudley, Sedgley and Coseley Area Office

Dudley Area Office
25 St James's Rd
Dudley
DY1 3JD
Telephone: 01384 813200

Halesowen and Stourbridge Area Office

Council House
Great Cornbow
Halesowen
B63 3AF
Telephone: 01384 815902

- At all other times, Emergency Duty Team - 0300 555 8574
 - If you have reason to believe that a child is at **immediate risk of harm**, contact the police on **999**
-