



Dudley Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB)

Annual Report April 2017 to March 2018



September 2018

Dudley Safeguarding Children Board
C/O Safeguarding & Review Service
Directorate of Children's Services
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Foreword

Thank you for taking the time to read our Annual Report which covers the period April 2017 – March 2018 and provides information about the arrangements to safeguard children and young people in Dudley.

This report also sets out the significant amount of work that has been coordinated by the Board to improve how we safeguard children and young people in the borough. A particular strength of the Board's work during 2017-18 has been the implementation of our neglect strategy. A core aim of the neglect strategy is to provide the workforce with the tools to intervene early and to prevent the need for statutory social work involvement. Another important area of work successfully completed in 2017-18 was the revision of our thresholds document. This document provides a framework to help front line practitioners and their safeguarding leads to identify the level at which services should be provided to meet a child's needs. It is particularly pleasing that this work was informed by the direct experiences of front-line practitioners.

Ofsted have conducted several monitoring visits of the Local Authority's Children's Services during 2017-18 and have reported that the Local Authority continues to make "positive progress" in improving the quality and impact of services to safeguard children and young people. Given the critical role that Children's Services play in the safeguarding partnership, this feedback is particularly pleasing and is an important recognition of the hard work and commitment of staff and leaders in Children's Services. The contribution of other agencies including health, education and criminal justice services, as well as the voluntary sector, are equally important to providing an effective safeguarding response to vulnerable children. In my role as Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Board, I have observed various aspects of safeguarding "partnership activity" during the period covered by this report; including Child Protection Conferences, Multi Agency Safeguarding Meetings, an Early Help Allocation and Partnership meeting and the Domestic Abuse Referral Team. These observations have provided me with a direct line of sight on the experiences of Dudley's children and families as well as multi-agency front line practice. I have seen many strengths in how agencies work together to safeguard children including an increased focus of the child's needs in Child Protection Conferences, good evidence of effective working relationships with vulnerable adolescents, appropriate application of the threshold to provide statutory social work services in cases of domestic abuse and a structured system to coordinate multi agency intervention below the threshold for statutory social work services. I have also identified areas for improvement and have reported these to the Safeguarding Board and received assurance that action will be taken by the relevant partners.

In terms of how the Board has delivered its statutory functions during 2017-18, this report details the further progress made and it is particularly pleasing that the Board now has more effective arrangements to conduct Serious Case Reviews and has developed systems to cascade learning from these reviews to front line practitioners; however there is more to do to ensure that there service and practice development is better informed by the learning from either Serious Case Reviews or audits.

We have begun to better use the "voice of children" in our work and examples include young people's engagement with members of the community as part of our neglect strategy, their planning and delivering of a positively evaluated online safety conference and their direct or indirect contribution to DSCB meetings. The assurance session held in respect of children with disabilities also benefited from a young person's contribution.

As we move into 2018-19, a year that we know will see significant changes to the statutory guidance that governs our work, I would highlight a small number of key priorities that need to be addressed so that the partnership is working as effectively as possible to safeguard children and young people. These are:

- Improved delivering of DSCB performance monitoring and quality assurance activity; including the evaluation of the impact of training on front line practice;
- Stronger evidence of learning from reviews and audits, including Serious Case Reviews, informing practice and service development;
- Equipping the workforce to recognise and safeguard children from all forms of exploitation not just sexual exploitation;
- Developing partnership capacity to respond to children and young people who display sexually harmful behaviour;
- Improving the safeguarding response provided to children with disabilities

The above priorities have been included in DSCB Business Plan for 2018-19 and will be key areas of focus for the coming year.

The progress reported in this report has been achieved through the dedication and commitment of front-line staff, their managers/leaders as well as staff in DSCB Business Unit. I would like to take the opportunity to thank each of you for the significant contribution you have further made to further improving the safety and wellbeing of our children: individually and, more importantly collectively, we have made a difference.

I look forward to working with you in 2018-19 so we can continue to make a difference

Liz Murphy

DSCB Independent Chairperson

1. INTRODUCTION

This report is produced by Dudley Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB) in accordance with statutory guidance, Working Together 2015, which requires the DSCB to produce and publish an annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in the local area.

The report for this period summarises key activities from 1st April 2017 through to 31st March 2018, and concentrates on key aspects of the Board's work; notably progress made in complying with the statutory functions, the strategic priorities outlined in the business plan for the stated period and the improvement plan instituted following the Ofsted "Inspection of local authority arrangements for the protection of children" report as a result of the inspection of 2016 which judge the Local Authority services for children and young people and the safeguarding children board to be inadequate.

This report is deliberately shorter than reports of previous years', and its aim is to provide a succinct summary of the Boards work in coordinating and monitoring the local safeguarding systems.

Given the above, this report will cover the extent to which the functions of the DSCB as set out in "Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015" are being effectively discharged, and will include:

- Governance and Accountability of the Board
- DSCB Funding
- Progress against the Improvement Plan
- Progress in relation to the strategic priorities 2017-18.
- Activities of the sub groups of the Board
- Other Monitoring Activities
- Contributions from Partners
- Future challenges

The Annual Report draws upon information presented at DSCB meetings, as well as annual updates provided by the chairs against each of the sub-group, or task and finish group work-plans, and the progress reports provided to the Children Services improvement Board (CSIB).

ABOUT DUDLEY

According to the Office for National Statistics, Dudley Borough has a total population of around 319,400. The population has been growing at a modest but sustained rate in recent years, with 14,300 more people in the Borough now compared to the 2001 estimate.

Map created by Public Health Intelligence, Office of Public Health Dudley.
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As at March 2018, 95.8% of 16 year olds were participating in education, employment or training compared with 95.9% in the West Midlands and 95.1% nationally. 88.7% of 17 year olds were participating compared with 89.7% in the West Midlands and 89.2% nationally. This signifies a slight increase on the previous year for 16 year olds and a decrease for 17 year olds. (Source: Connexions Dudley)

The national metric for reporting young people not in education, training or employment has changed. The new measure reports the NEET status of people aged 16-17 years, rather than the previous age range of 16-18 years. In 2016, Dudley (7.1%) had a statistically significantly higher proportion than England (6.0%), but remains below the regional average (7.3%) although the difference is not statistically significant. The number of NEET 16-17 year olds is calculated to be 520. (Source: NOMIS)

The number of young people (aged 18-24) claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) has fallen sharply, reaching 115 (0.5%). This is lower than both the regional (1.1%) and national (0.9%) percentages. 95 or 83% of all claimants aged 18-24 in the Borough had been claiming JSA for longer than a year, significantly higher than both regional (22%) and national (16%) averages . (Source: NOMIS)

Health Inequalities

The infant mortality rate in Dudley is 5.5 per 1,000 live births for 2014-16. For the first time since 2001-03 the rate is statistically significantly higher than the national rate and for the fourth consecutive year that the rate has increased. There are 2.7 times as many infant deaths in the most deprived quintile compared with the least deprived however that does not take into account differing birth rates or the numbers of infants. (Source: Primary Care Mortality Data (PCMD), NHS Digital)

Smoking in pregnancy rates in 2016/17 was 13.6%, statistically significantly higher than the West Midlands and England average. The most recent data for Dudley shows a small increase, the first since 2013/14. (Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework, Public Health England)

Breastfeeding initiation and continuation rates from 2016/17 show some of the lowest in the country, and rates are fairly consistent although issues with data quality mean the data is less reliable. Rates are particularly poor in the more deprived areas of the borough, and with younger mothers. (Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework, Public Health England)

Primary course immunisation coverage in the first year of life in 2016/17 within Dudley was 96.0% above the England average of 93.4% and the WHO target of 95% and this position had been maintained over time. (Source: Health Profiles, Public Health England)

Emergency hospital admissions has continued to rise in 2016/17 for all age groups, especially in the most deprived areas of Dudley. There is also an over representation of children from deprived areas of Dudley attending A&E with accidental injuries. (Source: Secondary Uses Service, NHS Digital)

Childhood obesity rates in 2016/17 are statistically significantly higher in Dudley than in England, at both Reception (11.7% compared with 10.7% in the West Midlands and 9.6% in England) and Year 6 (23.2% compared with 22.4% in the West Midlands and

20.0% in England). Again, the proportion of obese children is higher in the most deprived areas of Dudley. (Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework, Public Health England)

Teenage pregnancy rates in Dudley have continued their downward trend reaching 20.2 per 1,000 aged 15-17 years in 2016. Dudley is no longer statistically significantly higher and there is now no statistically significant difference between Dudley and England rates (18.8 per 1,000). (Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework, Public Health England)

The proportion of 9 and 11 year olds bullied at or near their school has remained above 25% over the last 8 years, results in March 2018 show that 29% of Primary school pupils said they had been bullied at or near school in the past 12 months. (Source: Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire)

The 2011 census showed the national figure for young carers as 177,918 and 1,333 in Dudley. This was an overall increase of 19% in the ten year period since the last census was conducted. At the end of March 2018, there were 105 young carers receiving support in Dudley with a further 29 cases closed over the last 9 months. The care needs that the young people are supporting are 48.5% mental health, 38% physical restrictions and the remainder covers addiction, illness such as cancer and autism.

Children with disabilities aged 0-14 living with a long term limiting illness or disability in Dudley is 19.8% which is slightly above the national picture of 17.2%.

In terms of Child in Need and Child Protection, at 31st March 2018, 1013 children had been assessed as being formally In Need of a Specialist Children's Service. The number of children on Child Protections plans has for most of the year remained above 400. Whilst we did see decreases at this was not sustainable due to the increases in families with large sibling groups subjected to plans. This has also had a knock on effect on Child Protection rates per 10,000 continues to remain above our statistical neighbour target of 52 with no indication that this will be met due to the increase in plans since July when the rate was close to being in line.

At 31st March 2018, 662 children were being looked after by the Local Authority (LA) this is a reduction from last year's and can be associated with a drive to reduce the number of children looked after by the LA. There is an appetite and scope to reduce this figure further over the coming months. The provisional data for 31/03/2018 shows that the Dudley rate per 10k has dropped to 96 whereas the West Midlands average has increased to 79.

2. STATUTORY FUNCTIONS – LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

What is a Local Safeguarding Children Board?

The Children Act 2004 required each local authority to establish a Safeguarding Children Board, made up of senior representatives from local organisations who provides support and services to children and families.

This strategic board exists to ensure that **ALL organisations working with children and families in Dudley work together to ensure all children are safe, and together ensure the right support is provided at the right time to the 75,634 children in the Borough of Dudley so they are effectively safeguarded**

What does Dudley Safeguarding Children Board do?

The Dudley Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB) was established in May 2006 under Section 14 of the Children Act 2004 which sets out the role and statutory objectives of LSCB's, this provides the DSCB with the remit and responsibility for ensuring that children and young people living in the borough are effectively safeguarded by local agencies. The DSCB seeks assurance that relevant and named partner agencies are working well together and co-operating to promote the welfare of children and young people living in the area. We do this by delivering the core activities, as set out in the 'Children's Act 2004', and detailed in the statutory guidance; Working Together 2015; which require the DSCB to deliver the following functions:

- develop local multi-agency policies and procedures that promote and result in effective multi-agency working to safeguard and protect the children and young people of Dudley;
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what is done by partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advise them on ways to improve
- oversee and challenge partners in carrying out their safeguarding responsibilities under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004, to make sure that they are doing that work effectively.
- plan, co-ordinate, commission and evaluate multi-agency training.
- promote effective multi-agency early help to identify and appropriately support children and their families.
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of partner agencies individually and collectively and advise on ways to improve performance and quality.
- undertake reviews of serious cases and child deaths, advise the Board and our stakeholders of the lessons to be learnt.
- communicate effectively to our stakeholders regarding the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Who are the Members of the DSCB?

DSCB MEMBERSHIP 2017 -2018		
Education including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary Secondary Further Education/Independent 	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC) including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children 's Services Public Health Housing Youth Offending Early Help Cabinet Lead Member for Children Safe and Sound (Community Safety Partnership) 	West Midlands Police including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Protection Local Policing
DUDLEY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD		
Probation including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Probation Service - (NPS) Community Rehabilitation Company - (CRC) 	Health including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clinical Commissioning Group - (CCG) Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust Black Country Partnership Foundation Trust Dudley & Walsall Mental Health Trust Shrop Com 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community and Voluntary Sector Lay Members/ Advisors

In line with the regulations, the DSCB is independently chaired. The appointment and management of this role is the responsibility of the Chief Officer of the local area. DSCB members are the nominated named senior safeguarding officers within their associated organisations.

Who attended the DSCB 2017 -18?

Including the annual development day and an extraordinary meeting, DSCB met six times in 2017/18, the meetings were attended by of a range of senior representatives from partner organisations and lay members. The Council Lead Member for Children and Young People also attends board meetings as a participating observer. For the purposes of the annual report, attendance at DSCB meetings for 2017/18 is illustrated below by agency.

DSCB ATTENDANCE 2017 -18		
Education:	Primary	50%
	Secondary	25%
	Further Education/Independent	25%
DMBC:	Children 's Services	100%
	Public Health	75%
	Housing	100%
	Youth Offending	100%

	Cabinet Lead Member for Children	50%
	Safe & Sound (Community Safety Partnership)	100%
West Midlands Police	Public Protection	100%
	Local Policing	100%
Probation	National Probation Service - (NPS)	50%
	Community Rehabilitation Company – (CRC)	50%
Health	Clinical Commissioning Group -(CCG)	100%
	Dudley Hospital Group NHS Foundation Trust	100%
	Black Country Partnership Foundation Trust	100%
	Dudley & Walsall Mental Health Trust	75%
	Shropshire Health Trust	75%
Community / Voluntary Sector Lay Members	Lay Member/Advisors	75%
	Dudley Community, Voluntary Sector	100%
Other Members/Attendees	CAFCASS	25%
	Substance Misuse Service	50%
	Independent Chair	100%
	Business Unit	100%

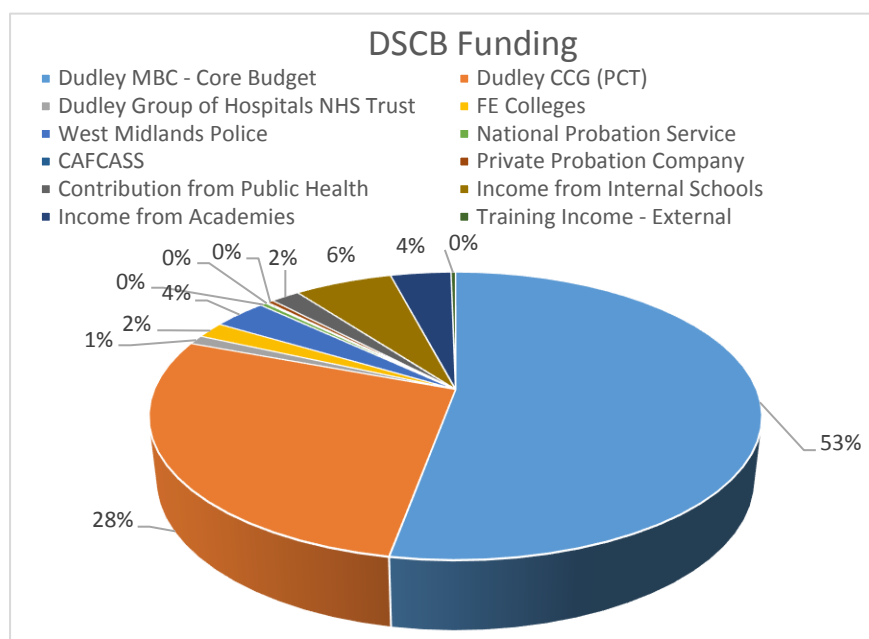
From the above, where attendance is at 50% or below, action has been taken to increase the attendance levels, with this, going into 2018 /19 there are nominated representative for each strand of education, and other agencies have committed to identify senior representatives to deputise where absolutely necessary. In respect of the low attendance attributed to CAFCASS, there are agreements in place to attend one meeting per year, the rate presented is therefore in line with these arrangements.

HOW WAS THE DSCB FUNDED IN 2017 – 2018?

The overall annual income is negotiated with partners to support the delivery of the DSCB functions and business plan objectives. This includes covering the cost of Serious Case Reviews, funding a comprehensive training programme, agreed activities; including annual conferences, annual licenses and subscription costs, and any independently commissioned pieces of work, including the costs for the Independent Chair. The income revenue from partners also supports the resourcing of a specialist business unit made up of a business manager, support officers and adequate administrative support.

2017 – 18 Income	£
Dudley MBC – Core Budget	203,484
Dudley CCG	107,100
FE Colleges	7,000
West Midlands Police	13,074
National Probation Service	1,500
CAFCASS	550
Community Rehabilitation Company - (CRC)	1,500
Training Income - Internal	7,630
Training Income - External	3,222
Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust	£4,000
Contribution from Public Health	£7,000
Income from Internal Schools	£23,762
Income from Academies	£14,662
Total Funding	384,752

As can be seen in the table above and the chart below, the Local Authority is the main



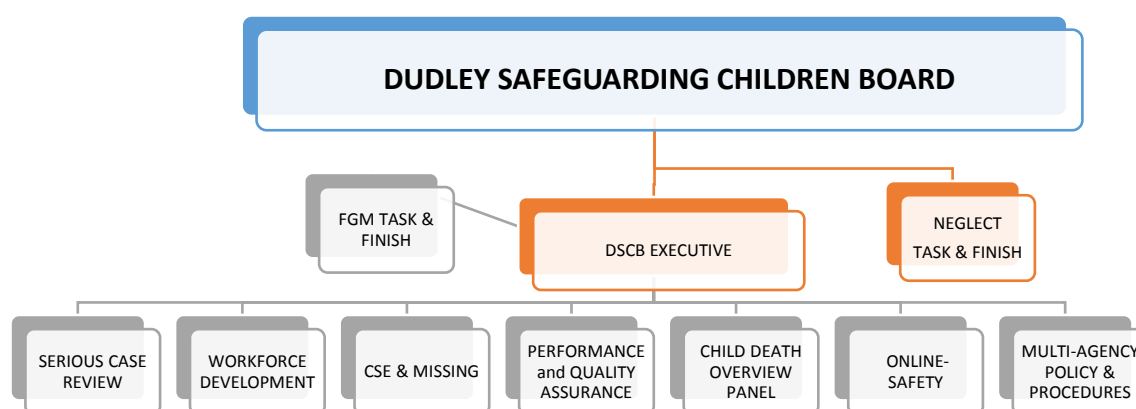
financial contributor, along with the CCG. Whilst this could be perceived as disproportionate, much of the activities of the DSCB centres around and connects heavily with arrangements of these core partners.

The financial year commences on 1st April until 31st March each year. DMBC is the accounting body for the DSCB Budget.

DSCB Structural Arrangements

The structure chart below provides an overview of the Dudley Safeguarding Children Board, and its established subgroups with nominated 'Chairs' leading a portfolio for each strand of the strategic functions of the DSCB.

The main DSCB operates in line with its Constitution which was refreshed in September 2017. As is demonstrated below, the Board is supported by seven sub-groups, and two task and finish groups, each sub-group is chaired by a member of the Executive Group Board, and has a responsibility for progressing the work of the Board. Towards the end of this reporting year, it was agreed that the task and finish groups would be aligned and report the work-stream of other local strategic groups, this sees the FGM agenda under the auspices of the 'Domestic Abuse' Strategic group, and Neglect agenda subsumed within the 'Early Help' Steering group.



Information on the work of the subgroup and task and finish groups detailed above is included further on in this report under the heading of subgroup activities or strategic priorities sections

Relationship with other Partnership Structures

Ensuring that safeguarding children remains high on all agendas, the DSCB has fostered links by way of a formal memorandum of understanding with other local partnership Boards. DSCB are members at; the Health and Wellbeing Board, Safe and Sound (Community Safety Partnership), and the Children and Young People's Alliance. The Dudley Safeguarding Adults Board (DSAB) is also independently chaired by Liz Murphy, this sees cross cutting themes being covered through annual joint meetings of both Boards.

During the reporting year, there were two joint meetings of the Safeguarding Boards, the focus covered; Forced Marriage / Honour Based Abuse, and Modern Slavery. Each resulting in the need for greater understanding and processes to respond to any local issues, with action plans developed to progress these issues.

Relationship and Work with other LSCB's

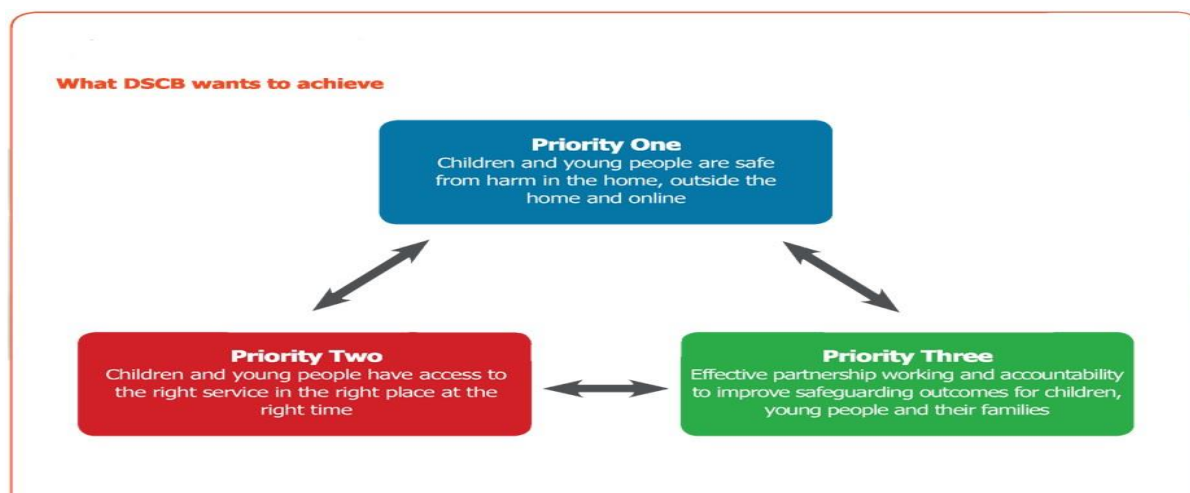
DSCB continues to be members of the West Midlands Regional Safeguarding Procedures Group, contributing to devising and maintaining the West Midlands Multi-agency Safeguarding Procedures. In September 2017, DSCB re-established its Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures Subgroup to ensure the local multi-agency procedures and practice guidance are in line with national, regional and local current practice.

The DSCB Business Manager is a member of the West Midlands LSCB's Business Managers Forum, attending meetings on a quarterly basis to share, support and promote best practice, for safeguarding arrangements across the regional LSCB's border areas.

The DSCB Chair is a member of the Association of Independent LSCB Chairs, which is a national membership organisation for Independent Chairs of Local Safeguarding Children Boards. This sees the Board being abreast of national and regional priorities for action. In addition, the Independent Chair meets with regional LSCB Chairs which provides opportunities for networking.

3. DSCB Strategic Priorities 2017 - 2018

The Business Plan 2017-18 sets out the strategic priorities for the DSCB and how they will be achieved. This provides the mandate for each of the Subgroups whose activities are key to the successful delivery of the Strategic Priorities and Statutory Functions. Over the year, work has focused on progressing the Improvement plan formulated on the back of the Ofsted Inspection of 2016.



3.1 Strategic Priority 1: Children and young people are safe from harm in the home, outside the home and online

There were six specific priority areas identified for increased attention in the 2017/18 Business Plan. These are addressed below indicating that good progress has been made in most areas.

3.1a Identify at an earlier stage the vulnerabilities of children and young people at risk of harm from CSE or missing

During throughout the year we have implemented a range of processes that has enabled better recognition and response to children and young people at risk of harm from CSE and missing, some of which has included:

- The introduction of systems and processes to assist in analysing particular patterns and prevalence of CSE and missing across the borough
- A review and refreshed a common data-set and intelligence for all children and young people referred to the Multi-Agency Support Hub (MASH) when there are alerts in relation to CSE
- We have extended the remit of the CSE Subgroup to include and consider other vulnerabilities of related concerns, including; e.g. gang activity, missing and trafficked children to ensure a comprehensive overview of related concerns
- We have increased and reshaped service provisions to ensure sufficient resources to gather, analyse and report on information regarding children at risk of or involved in CSE and missing.
- We have undertaken two significant external audit/scrutiny events into the local multi-agency response to CSE, overall, these reported good and robust partnership working and systems.
- We have strengthened the weekly Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) meetings

A more comprehensive account of the activities achieved during this period is further on in this report under the heading of the CSE, Missing and Vulnerable Young People Subgroup.

3.1b Reduce the volume of repeat missing incidences

From the table aside, we can see that there is a reduction in the numbers of missing episodes compared to the figures from the previous year. However, we cannot attribute the reduced figure to the volume of missing episodes, as changes in the way information is recorded changed mid-year which is likely impact on these figures.

Where we are able to provide a more accurate account is the as a result of strengthening the processes across the partnership we have seen an increase in knowledge, intelligence and information sharing, all of this has be influenced by:

- ✓ Return interviews completed by a dedicated officer,
- ✓ New thresholds to trigger missing planning and action

Month	2015	2016	2017	2018
January		76	25	19
February		99	31	33
March		88	42	
April	46	77	33	
May	48	76	48	
June	42	69	57	
July	60	88	55	
August	43	69	29	
September	45	60	28	
October	62	98	15	
November	68	65	24	
December	43	39	25	

- ✓ Improved processes that triggers specific responses to missing alerts.
- ✓ Greater daily/weekly/monthly management oversight

3.1c Implement mechanisms to ensure children are safeguarded from neglect without drift and delay

Through the established task and finish group, the activities assigned centred on continuing to deliver the multi-agency neglect strategy.

The work-plan for the group has concentrated on further embedding of the Graded Care Profile Training (GCP2) and the use of the associated GCP2 Neglect Assessment Tool across the multi-agency workforce in the Borough. This has been accomplished resulting in greater focus, coherence and consistency to our activity, and has supported workers in their direct work with families when using the tool or to use the tool as an aid to discuss the level of neglect within supervision, therefore giving a solid basis to work with the family to reduce the likelihood and impact of child neglect.

To date, 156 delegates have attended the bespoke training, and we are beginning to see an increase in the use of the GCP2 particularly within early intervention services.

Although the GCP2 is still in the early stages of implementation, the advantages of its use was evident in a recent Multi Agency Case Audit (MACFA) where the focus of Neglect was the theme, and where practitioners described the GCP2 tool as:

“The tool is helping us to have a common understanding and language about neglect”

“It supports us to highlight issues of neglect, map progress and monitor sustainable change”

“The tool support me to point out what’s working well and where change is needed and why with the families”.

In addition to the GCP2 training, we have developed and included a Raising Awareness of Child Neglect course to the multi-agency programme. This has been very popular with positive feedback and forms a good foundation for understanding child neglect.

What else have we done to progress the Neglect Strategy?

Through the development of a Communication Plan, we have increased the voice, and volume of the child and community engagement to ensure partnership activity and service provision incorporates an element of the voice and views of children and families. This has included a participatory Appraisal Research activity attended by a total number of 42 community members and professionals and a further 14 young people including Young Health Champions, aged between 14 and 21, taking part in a participatory appraisal training. Over two days, the group learnt exciting and fun ways of working with other young people to explore what it means to thrive, as well as looking at the causes and effects of neglect. The team has been out in force at conferences and community events to ask people to visualise what it means when children and young people thrive and what it looks and feels like when this does not happen. We intend to see increased engagement as this work develops, and be in a position to provide a more intense evaluation of the progress made in progressing the neglect strategy in the coming year

3.1d Recognise and address the safeguarding needs of children who are disabled

Evaluate arrangements to safeguard disabled children and young people

The implementation plan established following on from the 2016 Ofsted Inspection, called for Safeguarding disabled children to be a key area of focus for the DSCB. This transpired in to a multi-agency 'spotlight' round table discussion in February to help us understand how many disabled children are receiving safeguarding services and support; from early support to the identification of, and response to, child protection concerns, and considered whether adequate actions are taken to protect disabled children and young people; therefore, what is working; and the barriers and enablers for promotion, identification, and safeguarding the wellbeing of disabled children.

From this event, what was clear is the fact that improvements in the area had previously been identified and the Council has embarked on a transformation programme which will the launch of a new service model to support children with disabilities in April 2018. Whilst the event was unable to provide the assurance that children with disabilities are receiving the right support according to their individual needs, DSCB will monitor the progress of this new approach and revisit this type of event and at a later date once the new service has been fully established.

3.1e Engage with children and parents/carers to recognise the risks associated with the internet, how to avoid these risks and how best to respond if things go wrong

Delivering the online safety action strategy for 2017/18 has seen much progress, the achievements includes the following:

- Completed Sexting posters that was outstanding from the 16/17 work-plan
- E-safety assessment tools purchased and distributed to school nurses, CAMHs, assessment teams, care management teams, CIC teams, family centres and the Fostering Team
- The multi-agency training was extended to 1.5 days to enable more staff to attend the basic introduction into online safety, and allow more time to focus in depth on specific safeguarding links such as cyberbullying, grooming (including CSE), sexting, domestic abuse, emotional health and well-being and radicalisation.
- Work with parents has been a key piece of work, with a specific action plan being created
- An online safety planning tool has been distributed to agencies to allow them to look at their responses to online safety internally.
- Held a conference in January 2018 which was led by young people.

3.1f Provide learning and development opportunities to enable the workforce to better safeguard children and young people

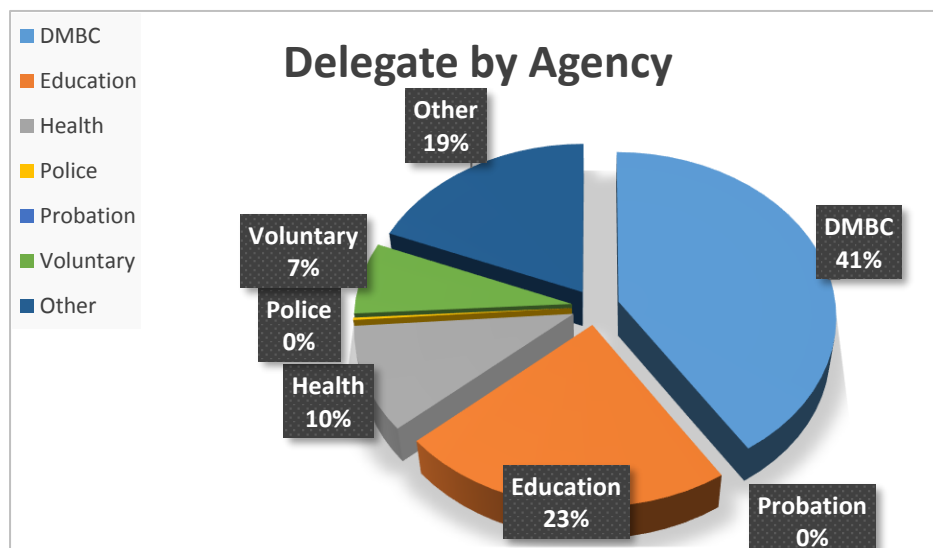
COURSE TITLES	
Attachment and Relationships	6
Child Development: What You Need to Know	5
CSE and Trafficking	4
CSE Awareness Briefing	6
Fabricated and Induced Illness	3
Graded Care Profile 2	15
Graded Care Profile 2 Briefing	2
Management of Allegations	1
Neglect	2
Parental Substance Misuse	2
Safeguarding Children Online	7
Safer Recruitment	7
Protecting Children from Sexual Abuse	4
Thresholds	6
Core Working Together	25
Young People in Abusive Relationships	3
Total	98

DSCB has offered a rich training programme during the reporting period, this was extended to include any safeguarding themes highlighted for awareness from across the region, nationally and/or research. The table illustrates the subject areas offered to the wider children workforce from 1st April 2017 through to the 31st March 2018.

DSCB's training programme for 17/18 featured 16 safeguarding related course titles covering 98 days of training. Course attendance was representative of the DSCB partnership, and the chart below illustrates attendance by agency.

All courses call for delegate feedback, and towards the end of the year, the course evaluation process was extended to assist in understanding the value, impact on practice of Multi-agency training. Whilst we are presently unable to provide concrete evidence of impact,

activities to progress this important aspect of our work is elaborated further under the 'Workforce Development subgroup progress for the year.



Alongside the courses noted above, during the year, we have introduced a monthly newsletter, 'Safer Snippets' and Learning Briefings following on from quarterly Multi-agency Case File Reviews.

Further activities in relation to Learning and Workforce Development is featured further on in this report under Sub-group activities.

3.2 Strategic Priority Two: Children and Young People have access to the right service in the right place at the right time

DSCB identified five specific areas of focus in conjunction with this Strategic Priorities, a summary of the activities undertaken are noted in line with the requirements.

3.2a Professionals report they understand and are confident to apply locally agreed thresholds

In the previous annual report, we said a review of the DSCB Thresholds Guidance (last updated in December 2015) would be undertaken. During 2017 and into early 2018,

What did we do?

- Held two threshold multi-agency focus groups, attended by thirty-eight practitioners from across the partnership, all of whom were familiar with, and use the thresholds guidance on a regular basis within their duties.
- Used the feedback to revise the threshold guidance to ensure it is user friendly and reflects current working practices.
- The re-launch of the threshold guidance is scheduled for **April 2018**
- Remodelled the threshold training, to commence on the back-end of the revised guidance launch. - This will include the use of local anonymised case studies to increase knowledge, reinforce learning and cement the understanding of the application of the thresholds.

3.2b Audit evidences the effective application of locally agreed thresholds

Due to the time taken to refresh and launch the threshold guidance, an audit has not been possible, as a result, this remains outstanding and will be undertaken within 12 months after the revised guidance is launched.

Throughout this period, the Board has received reports and regular updates following themed audits undertaken by Children Services, these include the outcome of dip samples from a number of randomly selected cases to monitor the application of thresholds. In addition, the DSCB Independent Chair has attended and observed four multi-agency meetings led by children services and has reported on steady progress and improvements.

Following on from the inadequate judgment in 2016, Ofsted has undertaken three monitoring visits during this period, these indicate that thresholds are appropriately applied at the 'front-door'.

3.2c Partner agencies coordinate early help services

What have we done?

- Undertaken a number of multi-agency working groups to review, re-design the Early Help Assessment Tool.
- With partners, we have agreed the level for which Early Help support is applied (at Level 2 and Level 3) and ensured it aligns to the local threshold guidance
- Worked with partners to improve the early help process, in line with the revised thresholds model and criteria,
- During the period Early Help has been subjected to a number of rigorous audits, including the Multi-Agency Case File, which identified many strengths, including

'good' multi-agency working, comprehensive package of support afforded to children and families; and services that were responsive to their individual needs. Inspectors during the OFSTED monitoring were pleased with the progress Early Help is making in Dudley and saw marked improvements on the way in which Early Help services were delivered in the borough.

3.2d Early help cases end for positive reasons i.e. step down to single agency early help or return to universal services

What did we do?

Undertook an evaluation on the accessibility and impact of the local early help offer from which attention was afforded to strengthening the local recording and reporting capabilities to better understanding the reach and impact of Early help provisions. Although in the early stages, what we do know is that at the end of March 2018, Early Help Services are:

- Working with 855 families across the borough
- Receive on average 179 contacts from MASH each month
- Have initiated 1072 Early Help Assessments- across the partnership since 1st October 2017
- Received 136 self-referrals from the public since 1st October 2017
- Discussed on average 123 cases each month at allocation partnership meetings across the five clusters of Dudley.

Since the launch of the Early Help model there has been a 38.8% reduction in referrals to statutory Social Care Services.

3.2e Children, young people and parents/carers report the support they have received has made a positive difference

Throughout 2017 and into 2018, the DSCB, through the Performance and Quality Assurance (PQA) Subgroup, have undertaken a number of audits which has enable the scrutiny of the provision and early help services, this has included some positive feedback from children and families in respect of the difference support has made. During this reporting period each meeting of the DSCB has included case studies presented by young people, practitioners or via reports. This has in part, offered some assurance of the difference and impact the local multi-agency early help offer is making to support children, young people and families. Further work will continue in the coming year to further strengthen the voice and visibility of children and families in respect of the local early help provision.

3.3 Strategic Priority Three - Effective partnership working and accountability to improve safeguarding outcomes for children, young people and their families

Six areas of focus have been aligned to this priority area, and progress made are surmised as follows:

3.3a Children and young people are engaged and influence Board business and activity:

- Through engagement with children and young people, DSCB aims to standardise the voice of children and young people, including the use of case studies to inform our work;

Following a review of DSCB arrangements in 2016/17, the Board saw the need to increase its use of the voice of children and young people to inform strategic business planning, priorities, learning and development activities and sub-group work.

In an attempt not to duplicate, but build on existing work streams, during 2017/18 the Independent Chair and Business Manager consulted with Youth Council to gather their views on how best the DSCB could engage with children and young people in and raise the profile of safeguarding to children in Dudley. The consultation saw the Youth Council reaching and liaising with children and young people of varying ages, ethnicity, status and background, and plans to share the findings from this wide consultation will be presented by young people at the meeting of the DSCB in April 2017.

In addition, to the above, during throughout this reporting year, we have seen case studies being received at each Board meeting; this, where appropriate has seen the attendance of young people, practitioners and carers.

3.3b Introduce a SCR Process Toolkit to ensure a transparent and robust pathway for cases that may meet Serious Case Review threshold and as required carry out learning reviews in a timely way.

During the first quarter of the reporting year, the SCR subgroup organised a workshop to refocus and clarify the role, remit and responsibility of the groups mandated activities, this saw a refresh of the terms of reference, membership and its work-plan. The group embarked on devising a SCR toolkit to dictate and inform on each aspect of its work, and they have used the model to conduct the SCR's commissioned during this period. With improved processes, the SCR subgroup has provided regular quarterly updates on progress to the Executive group. This has commented on the responses and timeliness of the requirements for undertaking SCR's. In summarising the groups response to this strategic priority, the achievements include; publishing two historical SCR's (commissioned in 2015/16), and the commissioning of a further three SCR's. All reports were concluded and approved by November 2017, and are scheduled for publication (criminal proceedings permitting) in the coming months.

More detailed account of other activities driven by the SCR subgroup is available further on in this report.

3.3c Develop a multi-agency performance dataset to expand the Board's oversight, scrutiny and assurance of the multi-agency safeguarding system

LSCBs have a duty to monitor and challenge the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements (Working Together 2015). This work is mandated to the Performance and Quality Assurance (PQA) Subgroup, who are responsible for monitoring and challenging the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements of partners of the DSCB.

The 2016 OFSTED inspection found the Performance Dataset was not robust enough and the *"Board had not been receiving adequate performance management data of safeguarding activity from partners and it is therefore unable to hold agencies effectively to account"*.

During the year the performance dataset and analysis was refined, however, whilst there has been increased effort made to this area of the PQA work activities, it is frustrating and disappointing to report that the Board still lacks meaningful performance data other than that

provided by Dudley MBC. We are just beginning to see some data from across the partnership. This is seen as a move in the right direction however, we will need to expand our performance monitoring activity to ensure the Board's oversight, and ability to scrutinise and seek assurance of the multi-agency safeguarding systems. For this, we not only need data, but also the inclusion of qualitative analysis and appropriate commentary to enable the board to fully satisfy this statutory duty. The Board has employed a dedicated officer within its business unit to concentrate and develop its performance, scrutiny and quality assurance functions, and intends to be in a better position to report significant progress made in the next year.

3.3d Develop supervision standards and support managers to provide reflective practice

In November 2017, the Policy and Procedures Subgroup introduced a supervision standards and guidance process to support the multi-agency workforce. This was presented to the Executive Group for ratification in February 2018, and has since been circulated to partners and is also available on the DSCB website. Work to promote this resource will be undertaken in the coming months.

3.3e Implement the DSCB section of the Dudley Children's Services Improvement Plan

What have we achieved since OFSTED Inspection in 2016?

In April 2016, the published Ofsted report on the provisions for children in need of help and protection, children looked after, care leavers in the local authority area, and the effectiveness of DSCB, judged to be inadequate.

Under the auspices and governance of the established Children Services Improvement Board (CSIB), a post inspection improvement plan was put in place to drive the recommendations. The DSCB became accountable to this Independently Chaired Board, and a summary of the progress made two years on, are as follows:

WHAT DID OFSTED SAY in 2016?	What was accomplished in 2017?	Where are we now in 2018?
The local authority and partner agencies should ensure that the Board business unit is appropriately structured and resourced to provide effective management oversight and sufficient capacity to support the business of the Board.	Increased the DSCB budget by 37% Reviewed / restructured the DSCB Business Unit to increase staffing levels to support each area of DSCB statutory functions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased the budget further with additional income from education. An increased in staffing levels within the Business Unit. The revised staffing structure includes; a Performance and Quality Assurance Officer and a CDOP / SCR Administrator.
The structure of and processes supporting the Board should be reviewed by the partnership and developed to ensure that	Reviewed the membership of the Board and it Subgroups, Refreshed its Constitution,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A revised Constitution, strengthening the governance processes, with each subgroup providing quarterly progress report at the executive group.

there is outcome-focused, timely and effective activity linked to the Board's priorities. This includes engagement with children and young people	aligned its work with that of other partnership boards, whilst at the same time seeking new ways to increase the engagement and involvement with children and have signed up to a participation strategy to drive this initiative.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement /visibility of young people in the work of the DSCB is evident, with 'the voice of the child' case study, tabled at each meeting of the DSCB. Involvement of young people in online safety, FGM and neglect work-streams Young person evident in attended/contributed to a recent review spotlight on Children with Disabilities
The Board should ensure the implementation of an effective quality assurance framework, embedding robust single- and multi-agency auditing of practice, effective scrutiny of multi-agency performance data and feedback processes from children and young people, families and staff.	The Board has agreed and increased its quality assurance functions, and is implementing a programme of quality assurance activities including receiving performance data at each Board meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality Assurance Framework, revised, implemented and disseminated. Multi agency audit guidance introduced and quarterly programme commenced in June 2017 Performance reports presented to every DSCB meeting (NB data is LA heavy) Ongoing work to further develop DSCB dataset and receive findings from single agency audits, Establishment of Safeguarding Quality Review Meetings (health) Visits/observations of multi-agency forums by DSCB Chair Focus group engagement of multi-agency staff in reviewing of DSCB thresholds document Reports on Private Fostering, Managing Allegations, PREVENT, Female Genital Mutilation, Looked after children. During 2017, DSCB introduced and maintained a challenge log and risk register.
The Board should revise and implement the training strategy to ensure that training is delivered in line with identified priorities and needs and that effective evaluation processes are in place for single- and multi-agency training.	The DSCB forged links with neighbouring LSCB's for the delivery of much of its multi-agency training programme. A Black Country wide approach to evaluating multi-agency training has been agreed and adopted by DSCB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A review and refresh of the Training Strategy (Sept 2017) DSCB has maintained a multi-agency training programme Introduced an approach to support the DSCB to evaluate the impact of training on frontline practice Questionnaire issued to DSCB members to provide assurance

		of single agency training in Jan 2018.
The Board should ensure that clear links are in place between the learning and improvement framework, training and quality assurance processes to identify, disseminate, evaluate and monitor effectively the impact of learning and improvement on the quality of service delivery.	DSCB has agreed an updated Learning and Improvement Framework and the training programme has been informed by local and national learning. Further work is planned to embed arrangements to ensure DSCB is a 'learning' Board and also to test out the impact of previous learning through its scrutiny and challenge functions. The DSCB expects that in all of its learning activities, the voice of children and families is a golden thread, with consultation taking place at every level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning and Improvement Framework refreshed and released in February 2018 • Publication of 2 SCRs • 5 SCRs commissioned. • Learning briefings for each published SCR devised and disseminated to front line staff.
The Board should ensure the prompt completion of the section 11 and section 175 audit processes and evaluate whether further work is required to support partner agencies to fulfil their statutory safeguarding requirements.	The Board has conducted a full s175 audit across the local authority's maintained schools, and the academies, and has undertaken a 'challenge' event of partners under the section 11 arrangements, with a full self-assessment due in the coming year in line with the bi-annual schedule.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S175 audit (maintained schools, and the academies) completed with action plan programme implemented. • Review visits with some partners in respect of some elements of the 2015 s11 compliance • S157 audit undertaken in January 2018, with the outcome reported to the DSCB
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new West Midlands wide approach planned to be locally released to partners in January 18 until the summer term.

As is evident from the above, significant progress has been made in delivering the improvement plan, designed to address the findings of the 2016 Ofsted inspection. Further work is required for the DSCB to be compliant in all areas. In particular, there is a drift in releasing the full S11 assessment, this is due to securing a platform to accommodate the tool is easily accessible and user friendly to all DSCB partners. This issue is close to a resolution and a reschedule timetable is under consideration.

In respect of the Learning and Improvement framework and activity, work is required to embed the process further so this becomes common practice. There is greater commitment from across the partnership in relation to responding to the outcomes from SCR's, however, this should also include organised briefing events, merging with, and be evident in training, supervision. This will create a more visible link between the Board's activities and improve frontline practice and service delivery.

The Board has made significant improvement in respect of its quality assurance activities, however, it is recognised that much of the data collected relates to local authority provision only. This is much the same in respect of receiving single agency audits. Ongoing work is in place to create a multi-agency dataset, and programme to obtain single agency audits to enable the Board to effectively scrutinise multi-agency performance.

4. SUBGROUP ACTIVITIES

The DSCB delivers much of its function via a published Business Plan, this is underpinned by national and local guidance and priorities. It set out measurable objectives and outcomes and is refreshed annually and work-plans are created for each sub-group to implement and oversee.

4.1 PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY ASSURANCE SUBGROUP

Ultimately, this subgroup conducts much of the DSCB's monitoring and scrutiny functions, including; driving forward the development of a robust multi-agency performance data set and managing the annual programme of multi-agency audits on behalf on the Board. Through the Performance and Quality Assurance Subgroup (PQA), DSCB has received quarterly reports to better monitor and challenge the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements across the DSCB partnership.

Highlights of achievements in the last 12 months up to March 2017

- Implemented the revised Quality Assurance Framework
- Made some improvements to the multi-agency Performance dataset
- Introduced quarterly themed Multi agency case file audits (MACFA). In 2017/18 we scrutinised multi agency practice against the following areas: CSE, Early Help, Neglect, and Domestic Abuse,
- Undertaken a multi-agency spotlight discussion to understand the local provision and services for Children with Disabilities; this saw the attendance and contribution of a young person.
- Completed a S157 Audit of colleges and independent schools
- Presented performance reports at each DSCB meeting which includes:
 - Review of multi-agency performance
 - Review other information and emerging issues (Horizon Scanning)
 - Recommendations to the board

Key Challenges - Priorities for 2018/19

- In order for the DSCB to monitor the effectiveness of the local multi agency working, the performance dataset needs to include intelligence from all partners. Work has commenced to enhance the dataset to this effect.
- We are beginning to see the presence of children in the work of the Board, though in its infancy, further attention will be afforded to exploring a range of avenues to further extend this activity as well as to include the views of family members on the impact of services received.
- Over the year, briefing sessions and notices have followed on from SCR's that have been published and each MACFA undertaken. Over the next year, further attention will be given in ensuring that staff across the children's workforce are fully conversant of the areas identified for practice improvements arising from the full range of reviews audits, inspections and performance data.
- DSCB has been instrumental in the development of a regional section 11 template. In the coming year, this model will be used for conducting a full section 11 evaluation of partner agencies safeguarding arrangements.

- There is an appetite to increase engagement and communication channels to and from frontline practitioners, whilst such events have commenced, this will need to continue and be cemented as a routine activity in the work programme for this group.

4.2 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC SUB GROUP

The overarching role of this sub-group is to raise awareness of safeguarding and the profile of the Board. It also supports and monitors the multi-agency learning and development programme and support the implementation of the Learning and Improvement Framework. During the year, the Workforce Development sub-group have revised its business plan in line with DSCB priorities and identified an ambitious 2 year work-plan covering 2017 through to 2019.

By and large, through the work and activities of this group, the DSCB has continued to deliver a rich multi-agency programme informed by the priorities of the strategic business plan, the findings of local, regional and national Serious Case Reviews and areas identified at a local level that require heightened awareness.

Key Achievements against the delivery of the Business Plan priorities for 2017/18



- (a) During 2017 and 2018 a process of reviewing individual training courses commenced to better streamline, shape and align the 2018/19 programme to the DSCB priorities.
- (b) In partnership with the Safeguarding Adults Board, a new booking system has been identified for training and will launched in the coming months
- (c) Implemented the Learning and Improvement Framework to ensure a comprehensive coordinated approach for disseminating findings from all reviews, including Serious Case Reviews across the workforce.
- (d) The process of obtaining evidence of impact of training was modified with the intention of gaining more qualitative data to ascertain the impact of training on frontline practice. This work is ongoing; however, initial steps have led to an increase in the number of responding participants. Further attention is necessary to support this process by obtaining information from delegates and their managers.
- (e) Following a number of focus groups with frontline practitioners, the threshold guidance was revised and the new document will be launched in the first quarter of 2018. This will be further supported by a series of bespoke training/briefing sessions throughout 2018.
- (f) The Learning and Development Strategy 2017-2019 was refreshed and circulated to partners in December 2017
- (g) We have increased membership of Workforce Development Sub Group in the second part of the financial year
- (h) Maintained regular updates to the DSCB Website to provide a point of reference for findings from reviews, SCRs and safeguarding updates
- (i) Introduced a newsletter containing key safeguarding messages and DSCB updates is now disseminated regularly to partner agencies.
- (j) Undertaken a joint Single Agency Training Assurance Audit in conjunction with Dudley Safeguarding Adult Board. This activity evaluated whether the safeguarding training arrangements within partner agencies were sufficiently robust and established.



Developments for 2018/19

- Revitalise the Training Pool to ensure the delivery of the training programme is facilitated by local /frontline practitioners.
- Continue to strengthen the evaluation process to better evidence and measure the impact of training in respect of practice development/improvements.
- Respond to the forthcoming S11 assessment findings
- Update the Training Needs Analysis
- Implement a work-plan that is aligned to the DSCB strategic priorities, outcomes from all types of learning reviews, and other local, regional and national areas of notable interest.

4.3 SERIOUS CASE REVIEW SUB GROUP

The Serious Case Review Subgroup is responsible for coordinating serious case reviews and learning reviews on the behalf of the DSCB.

A Serious Case is one where

- (a) abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected;
and (b) either –
- (i) the child has died; or
 - (ii) the child has been seriously harmed and there is cause for concern as to the way in which the Authority, their Board partners or other relevant persons have worked together to safeguard the child.

Key Achievements against the delivery of the Business Plan priorities for 2017/18

- Three SCRs have been published within the timescales. These are awaiting publication and two local reviews (below the statutory threshold) are planned for dissemination in the coming month.
- Attendance continues to be consistent with all partners attending regularly or sending a nominated deputy.
- A SCR workshop was undertaken and considered the following issues:-
 - 1) Understanding of the SCR commissioning process and how SCR's are funded
 - 2) To agree consistency in the interpretation of the concept of Serious Harm
 - 3) Clarity around the escalation process
 - 4) Review of membership to ensure appropriate representation.
 - 5) Review of current documentation and guidance.
- SCR sub group have strengthened the links with Workforce Development Group in order to embed the learning and improvement framework as a dissemination strategy to share lessons from reviews with practitioners.
- Learning lessons briefings (both written and presentations) have been introduced to follow on from the publication of SCRs. "Bite size" or "lunch and learn" teaching sessions are being considered to extend the approaches to be accessible to all.
- IMR Training was commissioned by the CCG and offered across the partnership specific to report authors; this training included the expectations for SCR/SAR/DHR and Learning Disability Deaths report writing and evaluated very well.
- Undertaken an audit of the quality of SCR referrals
- Explored the use of alternative models to undertake SCR's with the latest 2 SCR's have employed the Welsh Model of Child Practice Review (CPR).

Evidence of the Voice/Contribution of Children and Young People

Prior to the publication of SCR's where possible and appropriate, the family and or the child/ren are visited, prior to the publication of an SCR in 2017. The child was seen and the SCR process explained, in child friendly terms. In response the child stated:

"I tried to talk to the neighbour out of the window about what had been happening but mom stopped me" (These were her exact words)

When asked if she had any thoughts or views on the report being written she said

"It was ok, as more people will know about looking after little people and might know that children cannot be treated like it says in the report" (again these were her exact words).

SCR sub-group Priorities for 2018/19 – Next Steps

- That the SCR sub group moves forward with the planned developments to SCR work that is expected on the release of the updated "Working Together" document due for publication in May 2018
- Completion and publication of three SCR's by the end of August 2018
- To ensure that all reviews are completed to an excellent standard and within timescales and that there is clarity of role and function of sub group, including membership across the partnership
- Ensuring that the SCR referral process is understood and embedded across the partnership
- Interface and exchange of information is embedded between the SCR Sub-Group, Performance and Quality Assurance Sub-Group and Workforce Development Sub-Group in respect of shared learning
- Learning outcomes from all reviews are disseminated without delay across the partnerships to improve practice outcomes and is shared with front line practitioners
- Children, young people and their parents contribute to the review and learning process where possible
- Single-agency and multi-agency action plans are robustly monitored and followed up to ensure improved outcomes for children and young people

4.4 Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)

The Child Death Overview Panel carries out child death reviews as set out in **Chapter 5 of the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015** guidance. This statutory responsibility sees the group reviewing ALL child deaths (from 0 up to 18 years) of any child who is resident within Dudley. It undertakes a systematic review of child deaths to help understand why children die. By focusing on the unexpected deaths of children, it can recommend any interventions it considers appropriate to help improve child safety and welfare to prevent future deaths. When a child dies unexpectedly, a process is set in motion to review the circumstances of the child's death, which includes the support in place for the bereaved family.

Key Achievements against the delivery of the Business Plan priorities for 2017/18

In continuing with our advocacy role as detailed above;

- CDOP continues to oversee the delivery of water safety campaign every summer and button battery campaign around Christmas time.

- As a result of the increase seen in the number of Sudden Infant Deaths, attention has been turned to raising the awareness of the risks of co-sleeping and the link between passive smoking and Sudden Infant Death among front line providers such as midwives and health visitors, and we are exploring differing ways of promoting safe sleep practice.
- We have also influenced the development of SID subgroup to explore options to reduce the problem in Dudley , including different ways of promoting safe sleeping
- For the first time since the development of CDOP in 2008, the Borough had a death due to suicide. The case was referred to the Serious Case Review panel for consideration but it did not meet the criteria for a serious case review. As cyber bullying was a contributory factor in this case CDOP has asked Education to work with schools to raise awareness of the risk of cyber bullying and develop and implement interventions to reduce its occurrence

The following Priorities have been for 18/19:

- The development of the bereavement pathway
- Reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome
- To continue to monitor the link between consanguinity and child death in Dudley
- Continue to raise awareness of water safety and the risk of button batteries via population based campaigns
- Continue to raise awareness of danger of co-sleeping
- Consider and implement any changes on the release of the awaited Working Together 2018 Guidance
- Contribute to the process of amalgamating Dudley and Sandwell CDOP's and the development of a Black Country CDOP

4.5 ON-LINE SAFETY SUBGROUP

On-Line Safety is an area of concerns for Dudley's children and young people. For this reason, the DSCB has elevated this issue as a themed area of focus and the delivery of the work is reported within the DSCB's Strategic Priorities section of this report.

4.6 CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION & MISSING SUBGROUP

The sub-group coordinates the partnership approach to combatting Child Sexual Exploitation in has continued to monitor the implementation of the CSE strategy and action plan in 2017/18. The action plan has evolved and developed as the understanding of the needs and requirements in Dudley have grown. Following the completion of the commissioned CSE/Missing Task and Finish Group established in August 2017, and a DfE facilitated Missing Summit in September 2017, a series of recommendations were devised. This has led to a refresh of the scope of the group, which has extended to:

- Integrate the Children Missing Education Group.
- Integrate the CMOG (Children Missing from Home or Care, Operational Group)
- Integrate YPSE (Young People Sexually Exploited).
- Receive and review regular reports from each of the above groups against an agreed template, which will focus on Prevent, Protect and Pursue.
- Develop a multi-agency problem profile.
- Review and recommend service models of intervention.
- Reproduce a work programme to include the work of all above work strands.
- To design a QA Framework and MACFA programme.

- To include emerging vulnerabilities (weapons, substance misuse, trafficking etc.) and to recognise the vulnerabilities associated with Absent from School.

Through the Local Authority and support from the CCG there is a dedicated team providing local support and services to young people exposed to CSE by way of:

- direct support for young people affected by CSE
- shared young people's feedback of their experiences and advocate their views
- provide 'CSE', training included within the DSCB training programme

Through the CSE team there is a coordinated Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation Panel (MASE) which focusses on ensuring robust plans are in place to protect children and young people who are at the highest risk of sexual exploitation. MASE reports its activity to the Board through the CSE sub-group. During the last quarter of this reporting year, processes have been strengthened in the use of intelligence, which should result in increased confidence in understanding the prevalence of CSE

We are now beginning to see improved data in the last quarter of the year, and know that:-

- Referrals to the CSE Team are remaining consistent at 2 – 3 referrals per week
- The most referrals received in any one week in the final quarter has been **5**; the majority of these were received from Police and Social Care.
- There are 5 serious risk cases, all female.
- 17 significant risk cases, 16 of which are female, 1 male
- 77 at risk cases 62 female and 15 male

The CSE team have raised concerns due to consistently receiving referrals for children where there are concerns of criminal exploitation as there is currently no other clearly identifiable referral route for them.

Via an exception report by the Sub-group Chair, this issue was considered. It was identified that there was no local provision to support vulnerable young people at risk of harm from criminal exploitation. To address this, it was agreed that the remit of this sub-group would be extended with the aim of overseeing the most vulnerable and at risk adolescents in Dudley, such as those who are:

- missing from home, care and/or education;
- involved in gangs, offending and/or violent activity;
- at risk of exploitation, including Child Sexual Exploitation or exploitation through gangs, drugs or radicalisation); and/or
- young people who are at risk/have been trafficked

Going forward into 18/19, Plans for this group will include:

- Improve the understanding and local issues on the broader vulnerabilities of young people subjected to other types of exploitation.
- Increase the awareness of and provide direct training around Trafficking
- Greater emphasis on the Missing aspect of the agenda
- Work within communities to raise awareness of CSE, and other areas of particular vulnerabilities
- Improved and extend the CSE dataset
- Develop family work; specific support for parents around understanding what CSE is.
- Produce a CSE problem profile of the area.

4.7 POLICIES and PROCEDURES

The sub-group was re-established in September 2017 to ensure the Board is able to undertake its duty; to develop and review the local multi-agency safeguarding policies and procedures.

To support this function DSCB are member of the Regional Procedures Group, formed in September 2016 and launched the first West Midlands safeguarding Procedures on the 1st April 2017.

One year on, the group are meeting and updating these on a quarterly basis.

Within the membership agreement for the Regional group, a decision was made that each area would be responsible for producing and maintaining assigned procedures on behalf of the region and also review and maintain any supplementary protocols, procedures and practice guidance at a local level.

During 2017/18, a review of the local safeguarding policies and procedures was undertaken. The review matched policies against aspects of the regional procedures from which the subgroup work-plan for the year was forged. This enable the group to review and refresh a number of policies as well as to introduce new procedures as recommended from focus groups, practice and learning reviews, including Serious Case Reviews.

This work will continue throughout the coming year.

A review of the DSCB Thresholds Guidance (last updated in December 2016) began during 2016/17.

4.8 FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION – (FGM)

Preventing female genital mutilation (FGM) has been an area of focus for DSCB since January 2016 when the FGM Task and Finish Group was established. The remit of this group was to identify and address gaps in service provision to ensure a safe and effective response to FGM. This has included progressing the action plan devised in line with the 'Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance on FGM' (2016).

Whilst there have been no confirmed cases of FGM in under 18's in Dudley, the difference this group have made during this reporting period, are as follows:-

- There is now a subject related programme for schools in order that FGM awareness can be delivered to children and young people in the Dudley area.
- Initial discussions have taken place for the development of a bespoke training course for school nurses incorporating FGM awareness into the primary and year 7 secondary puberty sessions
- The FGM screening tool has been ratified by the Regional FGM task and Finish Group and disseminated across the partnership.
- The FGM screening tool has been presented to MASH ops group following ratification from the Regional FGM task and Finish Group for information and dissemination.
- The refreshed performance dataset will include referred confirmed cases of FGM in under 18's. This has now been amended to reflect the fact that the cases recorded refer to those over the age of 18.

In order to further progress the work on preventing FGM the Safe and Sound (Community Safety Partnership) has agreed to lead and take forward the work due to them leading on domestic abuse and their community links/work. The DSCB will continue to seek assurance that further work is progressing in relation to FGM

5. OTHER SAFEGUARDING AREAS OF RELEVANCE TO DSCB:

During the year, DSCB monitors the progress and receives annual reports and updates in other areas of notable interest to the safeguarding board agenda. The following and final section of this feature summaries from each of these specific areas.

5.1 LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER (LADO)

The DSCB has a responsibility to ensure that there is an effective multi-agency protocol in place for dealing with allegations against professionals who work with children. The Board monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of this protocol via the quarterly performance dataset, and receiving and reviewing an annual report from the LADO (also known as a Local Authority Designated Officer) on the overall effectiveness of the service.

The LADO is responsible for providing advice, information and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations around allegations and concerns regarding paid and unpaid workers. The LADO manages and oversees individual cases from all partner organisations ensuring there is a consistent, fair and thorough process. DSCB receives the LADO Annual report in September of each year.

During the period 1st April 2017 through to 31st March 2018, the number of referrals/enquires to the LADO are as follows:

TOTAL CONTACTS	resulted in consultation/advice/guidance	progressed to positions of trust meetings
279	238 - 85%	41 - 15%

DSCB has included within its multi-agency training programme a 'Managing Allegations made Against Staff or Volunteers' course. This training is for those who work with children in a professional or voluntary capacity in Dudley.

The LADO has actively led the delivery of this training course in addition to providing briefings directly to partner agencies.

Areas identified for development in the coming year have been drawn from the course feedback. Common themes emerging include:

- the need for the development of staff training in areas such as physical intervention and restraint
- the need for clarity of roles and responsibilities in relation to managing allegations and timescales
- ensuring staff are updated on safeguarding policies and procedures
- ensuring staff are provided with safeguarding and allegation management training to enable staff to differentiate between allegations and child protection concerns

5.2 SAFEGUARDING LEAD FOR EDUCATION

During the autumn of this reporting year, Dudley MBC recruited a 'Safeguarding Lead for Education' (SLE). This has enabled greater oversight of the safeguarding arrangements across the educational providers in the area. In January 2018, the S157 self-assessment audit was issued and completed by the private, independent and FE establishments in the area. The outcome of this was reported as very positive, with an action plan implemented to address areas for improvement/developments.

To further support providers of education, work has commenced to develop a Schools Case Management file, which will encompass alerts/concerns/complaints from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Children's Social Care, Education and OFSTED about the quality of safeguarding practice in individual schools. This will include regularly meetings with key

individuals across the partnership, to allow a collective approach to support schools safeguarding improvements.

5.3 PRIVATE FOSTERING ARRANGEMENTS IN DUDLEY

Since 2003 from the Victoria Climbié Enquiry, recommendations were endorsed by the Government to take steps to strengthen Private Fostering arrangements which subsequently made private fostering a safeguarding issue.

Ultimately, Local Authorities are charged with several duties, and provide an annual update report to the DSCB. In line with legislation, all partner agencies of the DSCB have duties to ensure that privately fostered children are identified and protected.

A summary of the annual activity for Private Fostering Arrangements in Dudley was presented to the DSCB in October 2017. This informed that the number of identified private fostering arrangements in the local area remain consistently low.

Publicity campaigns and activities to raise awareness of Private Fostering has continued across the borough; and resources refreshed by way of new leaflets and the addition of a Private Fostering booklet have been created to raise awareness of Private Fostering

A presentation to the DSCB supported:

- An invitation to the Private Fostering Team to present information at the Schools Designated Safeguarding Lead Forum
- Information to raise awareness of 'Private Fostering Arrangements' to be included in the Core Working Together Training course
- The CCG to continue to raise awareness with General Practitioners on how to identify and refer Private Fostering cases to MASH
- A question to be added to the Section 11 and 175/157 audit 2017/18 to quantify the level of knowledge about Private Fostering across the workforce

Academic Year	Total Number of Elective Home Education children
2010/2011	187
2011/2012	197
2012/2013	196
2013/2014	236
2014/2015	260
2015/2016	257
2016/2017	307
2017/2018	372

5.4 ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION (EHE)

The local authority has a statutory duty under Section 436A of The Education Act 1996 to make arrangements to identify children who are not receiving a suitable education. It has no statutory duties in relation to monitoring the quality of home education on a routine basis.

However, under Section 437(1) of the Education Act 1996, local authorities shall intervene if it appears that parents are not providing a suitable education. As it only has to 'appear' there may be a problem, the local authority does have the power to take action.

Under current arrangements, the Local Authority's Officer for EHE and GRT (Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller) Services reviews each child coming to EHE to identify if there are any indications that the child may not receive/is not receiving a suitable education at home or if there are any potential safeguarding risks. This is done via database checks, contact with the school and contact with any other agencies known to have current or historical contact with the child.

The DSCB monitors these arrangements and receives annual updates in regards to the local activities. This year it was reported that EHE numbers have been increasing steadily year on

year (see table). This reflects the national and regional trend. There has been a noticeable shift from the primary reason for EHE being ideological, religious or cultural to other reasons such as; avoidance of fines/prosecution for non-attendance, risk of exclusion, special educational needs and mental health problems. There is also a greater awareness of EHE due to wider reporting in the media and information shared on social networking sites.

5.5 PREVENT DUTIES

Under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 specified authorities have a legal duty to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. Government Guidance also sets out that specified authorities should work in partnership to agree risk and coordinate activity

Partnership Prevent activity has been taking place in Dudley since 2007 and Dudley is committed to delivering good outcomes against this duty and has established a ‘Prevent Delivery Group’ made up of those partners with a remit of particular interest in this area to oversee the work done locally and to carry out the actions in the delivery plan, thereby safeguarding our communities from extremism.

The annual account for this work-stream is also presented to the DSCB in January of each year.

Delivery Plan & Strategic and objectives of the 2017 /18 detailed:

- To raise awareness of Prevent to ensure that vulnerable individuals are appropriately safeguarded
- To encourage and equip partners to appropriately refer and support individuals of concern into ‘Channel’
- To support schools and other educational settings in fulfilling their statutory duties in respect of prevent
- To engage with businesses and community organisations to ensure that their resources are not used to promote extremism
- To engage with young people aged 16-25¹ who are vulnerable to extremism in order to provide safeguarding support

6. CONCLUSION

Whilst we have produced a condense account of the activities undertaken by the DSCB for the period, this report describes a year of much progress.

The work of the Board is heavily reliant up on the sub-groups' contribution to the Board's work, and provides the evidence to suggest that there we have made a difference to the safety and wellbeing of Dudley's children.

The Ofsted Review of the effectiveness of the DSCB conducted in 2016 and the subsequent action plan required the Board to address fundamental areas of deficit. The report describes the work undertaken in terms of progressing the improvement plan.

We have published two outstanding SCR's, including acquiring the voices of children young people and families and carers in that work. Extending this to provide a range of outlets to disseminate the learning to frontline practitioners indicates a partnership that is open and committed to learn and improve safeguards for children and young people.

We have introduced the MACFA's which has been instrumental in supporting the review of multi-agency practice, and have made attempts to further develop and expand the range of performance information through a revised dataset.

We have extended the remit of the CSE Subgroup to incorporate other areas of significant concerns, whilst also strengthening the existing processes to respond to such needs.

The recent investment in a new training booking platform will provide improved avenues to monitor and evaluate the impact of training on practice.

We have started to cleanse, and bring up to date the local multi-agency policy and procedures component of the procedures platform to ensure accurate guidance is available to the multi-agency workforce.

We are beginning to see the presence and voices of children and young people and families in our work, we aim to build on this in the coming months.

Looking ahead into 2017/18

All of the above describes work in progress and a journey well underway. Throughout the coming year DSCB will continue to progress its work to ensure all partners continue to understand and fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities and play a key role in supporting the effectiveness of Board. This should place us in a good position to respond to the awaited revised Working Together 2018, which we know will be changing the shape and landscape of local safeguarding activities. In addition to all that is mentioned above, DSCB will also need to focus its attention to:

- Progressing its Multi-agency Performance Data set
- Implement the biennial Section 11 audit process across the partnership
- Raising the visibility and profile of the DSCB across the local area
- Redesigning the safeguarding website
- Finalising the outstanding action in response to the Ofsted inspection improvement plan
- Progressing the negotiations with the neighbouring LSCB's about how to implement closer working relationships
- Increasing the engagement of children and young people with the work of the Board