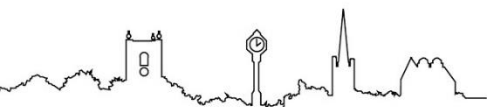


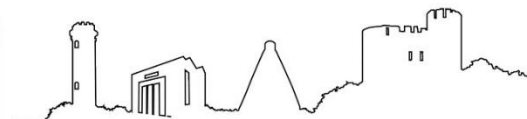
Children first and at the heart of all we do

Dudley Children Improvement Partnership

January 2022 to March 2023



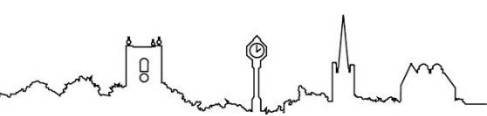
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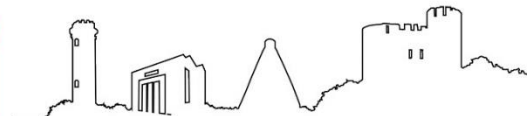
Dudley Children Improvement Partnership

Golden Thread across everything we do.....

1. Voice & Influence of Children and Families
2. Outcomes Focused
3. Working 'With' Children and Families
4. Consistent and Straightforward
5. Building Resilience & Partnership



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Dudley Children Improvement Partnership - Priority 1

Restorative Model of Practice

- We will develop a Child Friendly Dudley, which is a wonderful place for children and young people to grow up, where they will be happy, healthy, safe and enjoy a good inclusive education. Children and families will have consistent restorative relationships
- We will implement a restorative approach, so that our assessments and interventions with children take account of a family's strengths and their vulnerabilities, whilst creating opportunities for families to understand and take ownership of safe decision making and planning for children

What are we trying to do better

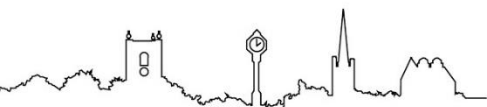
1. Through meaningful relationships, we will work with families, including fathers and wider family networks, to help them make positive changes
2. We will keep the needs of children at the center of our work, engaging with families with high support and high expectations to improve children's care and well being
3. We will work collaboratively with families at the earliest opportunity to find solutions to the challenges they face
4. We will assist with the building of resilient family networks to improve care and support for children. At the beginning of each intervention, we will work with the family to build a secure family plan to meet each child's needs
5. We will treat all families with respect, acknowledging that parents are usually experts in knowing and understanding their children's needs
6. We will listen to the voice of children and parents and reflect them in assessments and plans and they will be fully involved in decisions made about them

Actions we need to take

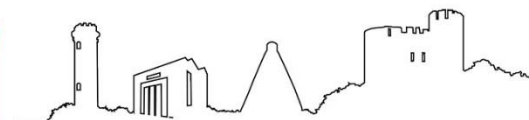
1. We will embed our relational practice to improve our knowledge and understanding of families, their networks, strengths and capacity
2. We will engage with staff and partners to train and promote our Restorative Practice Model
3. We have established a Restorative Practice Steering Group that will drive the implementation of Restorative Practice across the system
4. We will strengthen the quality of our practice by implementing our Restorative Roadmap
5. We will design our quality assurance system to measure the extent to which our work with families is effective and the extent to which it is restorative
6. We will further develop LCS and related systems, so they support practitioners to deliver restorative practice

Impact for Children and Families

1. Children and families are empowered to make 'Family Led' decisions, which will improve children's lived experiences
2. Children and families will have professional help at the lowest effective level of intervention and for only as long as needed
3. More children and young people will remain safely living with families
4. Children and families will develop confidence and resilience and resources to find solutions to meeting their own needs



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Dudley Children Improvement Partnership - Priority 2

Whole System

- We offer the effective support to children and families in the least intrusive way
- Where children's needs change, they and their family can easily access the support they need from the right part of the system

What are we trying to do better?

1. Ensure that early help services in the Council and from partner agencies are easily accessible and offer good quality solution-focused support
2. Ensure that our responses to the needs of children and families are consensual and proportionate
3. More children and families will receive timely early help and child in need services and fewer children will require non-consensual statutory intervention
4. When children are in care, links with their family are maintained as far as possible and opportunities for return home or to wider family, are kept open and explored
5. Minimise the number of changes of key worker or social worker in each child's journey through the system, ensuring good handover where necessary, through careful planning and joint visits
6. Where families have achieved changes agreed in their plan we will end our involvement or help them access support from their community network. We will pay attention to respectful endings, recognizing what families have achieved and ensuring they know how to access future support

Actions we need to take

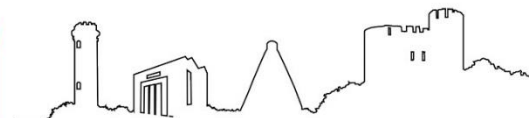
1. The Front Door including MASH will be redesigned so that agencies are offered support before referral, so referrers and families are offered information, advice and guidance and signposting to access support, and only those who require potential social work intervention will become a formal referral
2. We will set out clearly the function and overall purpose of the assessment service, including short-term solution focussed work with families
3. We will review our child protection and PLO work to ensure this is proportionate and effective at driving improved outcomes for children
4. We will strengthen our assessment and care planning including annual assessments of children in care being updated- exploring opportunities for reunification at the earliest opportunity
5. We will redesign and expand our Edge of Care Service so that more immediate support is offered to young people in crisis and their families

Impact for Children and Families

1. Children and families will benefit from timely and effective interventions in response to their needs
2. Children and young people are consistently seen and seen alone with their lived experience fully understood
3. Children and young people are safer and happier as a result of the help they receive
4. Families will grow in confidence and resilience and provide secure boundaries and greater opportunities for their children



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Dudley Children Improvement Partnership - Priority 3

Learning Organisation

- We will develop a culture of continued learning, reflection and innovation at all levels of the service
- Our continuous improvement will be informed by the voices of children, parents and carers
- We will seek to learn from others from peer review, inspection and sector led improvement and draw upon research and evidence to inform practice
- We will encourage learning from QA, feedback, complaints, serious incident, best practice and seek to incorporate this in our practice

What are we trying to do better?

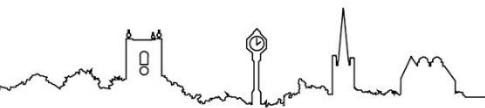
1. Support staff to reflect, debate and learn thinking about practice and listening to children and families
2. Use supervision and observations to help staff be professionally curious and committed to developing skills and knowledge
3. Encourage collaboration, role generosity and mutual support across the service
4. Greater learning from feedback, complaints and compliments, case audit and IRO challenge as well as celebrating and learning from good practice
5. Always thinking about how we can shape the system and support practitioners and innovation, so that we are always improving
6. Ensure that strong management oversight is in place in every service area that provides high support to practitioners and has high expectations of them

Actions we need to take

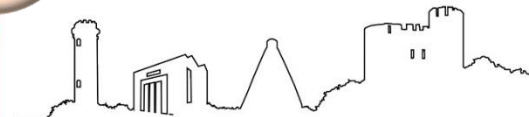
1. Strengthen our supervision of staff so that it is reflective and includes observing practice and coaching – both 1:1 and group supervision
2. Develop an Appreciative Enquiry approach
3. Encourage restorative solving circles
4. Share and disseminate learning in team meetings, practice groups and service development
5. Strengthen self evaluation and learning/action from peer challenge/ sector led improvement and act on
6. Ensure that the workforce development programme and training offer is aligned with and enhances at all times the restorative approach
7. Clarify our expectations of managers in relation to oversight, observation of practice, supervision and delivering the restorative approach

Impact for Children and Families

1. Children and families benefit from high quality focused social work support and challenge that addresses their needs
2. Children and families are encouraged to provide feedback about the quality and effectiveness of the services they receive
3. Social work and early help practice and interventions actively help families to develop their own solutions
4. Practice continually develops and evolves based on learning from children and families and from ideas and innovation



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Dudley Children Improvement Partnership - Priority 4

Partnership

- All children and families benefit from multi-agency support closer to home from early help to children in need/ child protection to children in care and care leavers
- Partners will engage with families in an open, honest and respectful way as soon as they become aware that a child may need additional support, and seek to provide information, advice and signpost to other sources of help
- We are committed to the principles of inclusion and trauma-informed practice with children and young people – meeting needs at the least intrusive effective level and seeking to keep children at home with their family, in school and accessing the normal range of community services
- We will continue to develop and improve access to effective mental health support across the children's services system
- We will continue to build strong and effective partnership relationships at both strategic and operation level, so that we make best of public sector resources to have greatest impact in meeting the needs of Dudley's children to effectively work with children and families

What are we trying to do better?

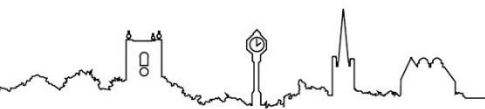
1. Provide joined up and restorative multi-agency support to children who will benefit from early help, or a child in need, child protection or child in care plan, to young people in danger of exploitation or in need of support, as they enter adult life in need of protection
2. Improve the stability, health and well-being and learning of Dudley children and young people, including children with a disability or special education needs, children in need of protection or in care and young people who have left care
3. Build more inclusive and trauma-informed responses to children and young people with special needs or who are vulnerable to exploitation

Actions we need to take

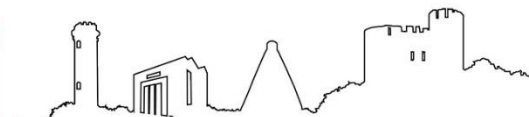
1. Develop our multi-agency restorative approach to support children and families experiencing neglect, domestic abuse, or exploitation, including pre-birth support to vulnerable mothers with local and regional partners
2. Develop better support and collaborative working with Health commissioners and providers, including public health, for children and young people in Dudley and including joint assessment, funding arrangements and planning
3. Support the Virtual School and the wider education network to ensure children in our care or on CIN/CP plans to have high aspirations and a good inclusive education
4. There is good partnership working across Dudley Council and partners to meet the housing needs of young homeless people and care leavers, and work opportunities and apprenticeships are developed for these young people

Impact for Children and Families

1. Children and their family receive proportionate advice and support as soon as any additional need is identified
2. Children and young people are protected from abuse and neglect and feel safer
3. Children and young people are happy and healthy and receive an inclusive education where they learn and enjoy
4. Young people receive the support and guidance they need, including mental health, housing, and employment opportunity to become responsible adults
5. Children and young people's voices influence the development and quality of services across the partnerships



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Dudley Children Improvement Partnership - Priority 5

Workforce

- We recognise that our workforce is the foundation to our success in making a positive difference and therefore, we are putting the conditions in place where professional expertise can flourish
- We seek to be the employer of choice for children's social care where Dudley is a great place to practice.
- We are developing a stable workforce that is sufficient, suitably qualified and accredited to deliver high quality services to children and their families
- Managers and practitioners will be skilled, able to learn, experienced, effectively trained and able to deliver high quality restorative practice which improves the lives of vulnerable children, young people and families.

What are we trying to do better?

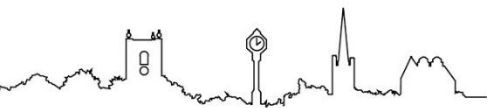
1. Recruitment and Retention Strategy will ensure practitioners have manageable workloads to ensure they have the capacity to build meaningful relationships with children and families
2. Pay and Career Progression is on par with neighbouring local authorities
3. Grow Our Own Workforce
4. Retain and Develop an experienced Workforce
5. Recovery from Covid and increase face to face and hybrid meetings

Actions we need to take

1. Workforce Board chaired by DCS supported by the Workforce Development Action Plan to enhance our Recruitment and Retention Offer
2. Offer Market Forces Supplement and drive Career Progression Panel ensuring we review the skills and compliment of staff to enhance opportunities for advanced practitioners
3. Offer student placements including fast track, apprenticeships and more traditional routes to social work, provide proactive responses to candidates and enhance the Practice Educators offer
4. Good quality ASYE learning and support programme and good continued professional development offer for all

Impact for Children and Families

1. Children and families benefit from consistent and meaningful relationships
2. Children and families tell their story by 'saying it once'.
3. Children and families receive support and intervention, from the partnership, that is impactful and timely
4. Staff have capacity to undertake meaningful focussed work with children and families



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