

# Partner Newsletter

## EDITORS

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## Announced Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked after children Services

### What is the Announced Inspection?

The Announced Inspection forms part of the Inspection Framework for Children's Services. These new inspections have a sharper focus on evaluating outcomes for children and young people and the impact that practice and services have on improving outcomes, including through managing risk and minimising incidence of child abuse and neglect.

The inspections contribute to Ofsted's annual reviews of the performance of each local authority's children's services functions and involve partners from health, police and voluntary, community and private sector.

The notice period for a full inspection of safeguarding and looked after children services is a maximum of ten working days. In certain circumstances, for example where provision has been judged inadequate already or where serious concerns about safeguarding have been raised, a full inspection of safeguarding may be carried out without giving this period of notice.

### How many inspectors will carry out the inspection?

Suitably experienced inspectors from Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission will carry out the inspections of safeguarding and looked after children services. In some cases, they may be joined by inspectors from other inspectorates or commissions, in particular Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary.

Inspection teams will normally consist of at least three Ofsted inspectors and a Care Quality Commission inspector. Inspectors will usually be on site for up to 10 working days.

### What does it mean for me?

As part of the inspection process case files will be reviewed, and inspectors will conduct meetings and hold discussions with users, managers, health professionals and agencies, police, other staff and stakeholders.

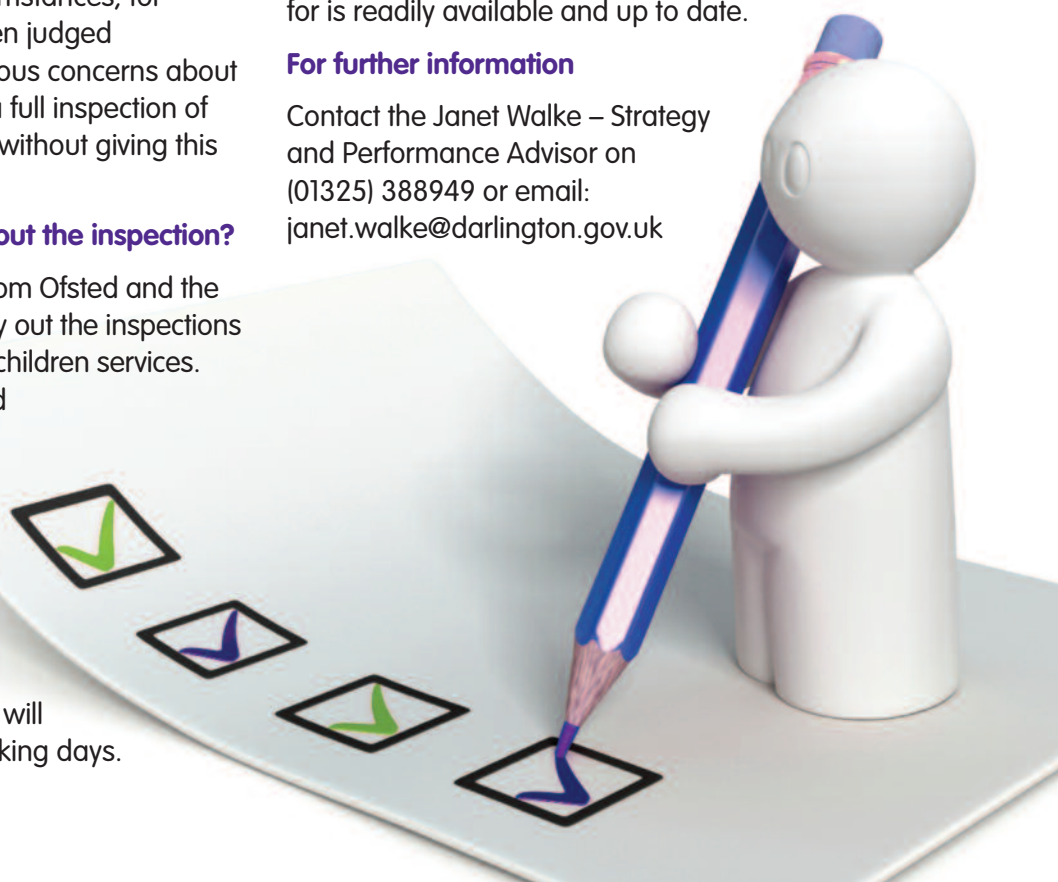
It is important that staff keep up to date with all communications from the department as this is how managers will cascade information to the wider workforce.

### What happens next?

Colleagues across partner agencies will be asked for updated information about services and procedures to ensure that any information the inspectors may ask for is readily available and up to date.

### For further information

Contact the Janet Walke – Strategy and Performance Advisor on (01325) 388949 or email: [janet.walke@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:janet.walke@darlington.gov.uk)



# 'Our generation, our future, our plan'

## Darlington's young people make their voices heard

Members of Darlington Borough Council Cabinet heard first hand what young people think about Darlington's public services – when a new short film 'our generation, our future, our plan' was screened at the Town Hall at 5pm on Tuesday 19 July 2011.

The film brings to life the new Children's and Young People's Plan developed by young people from across the Borough and sets out a single, overarching plan for the services on offer for young people in the Borough for the next five years.

Around 600 young people aged from under-fives to teenagers, worked on the Plan, producing artwork and literature as well as launching a new 'Facebook' page.

The development of the Plan has involved over 380 young people who took part in detailed focus groups to help shape the priorities laid out in the plan.

These included health, early support, safeguarding and volunteering opportunities - with the key priority being the need to be listened to and for young people's views to be taken on board.

Alongside this, more than 120 children from nurseries, Children's Centres, libraries and primary schools aged 0-10 years old contributed to the plan by submitting artwork detailing what makes them happy.

Now, these views will help to form the priorities for Children's and Young People services as they are developed over the coming year

to ensure the Council and its partners deliver what young people in Darlington feel they need.

Ben Million, Darlington Member of Youth Parliament, said: "The priorities set out in the Plan will help to shape services for children and young people in Darlington in these difficult times.

"One of my main roles will be to ensure that children and young people are receiving these services and play a full role in shaping things for the future."

Councillor Cyndi Hughes, Darlington Borough Council's Cabinet Member for Children and Young People added: "This is a wonderful example of how the Council is listening to those who use its services.

"Young people involved in the consultation have made it clear to us that they do not just want traditional education as in Maths and English lessons; they want information on other issues which affect their lives such as drugs, alcohol and other life issues.

"We're looking forward to the taking part in the on-line conversations about what matters to young people in Darlington and we'd encourage young people to have a voice and get involved in the debate on Facebook."

**For more information please contact Melanie Brown, Darlington Children's Trust Partnership Manager on 01325 388219, [melanie.brown@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:melanie.brown@darlington.gov.uk)**



# Raising of the Participation Age

The Education and Skills Act 2008 increased the minimum age at which young people in England can leave learning, thus requiring them to continue in education or training to the age of 17 from 2013 and to the age of 18 from 2015.

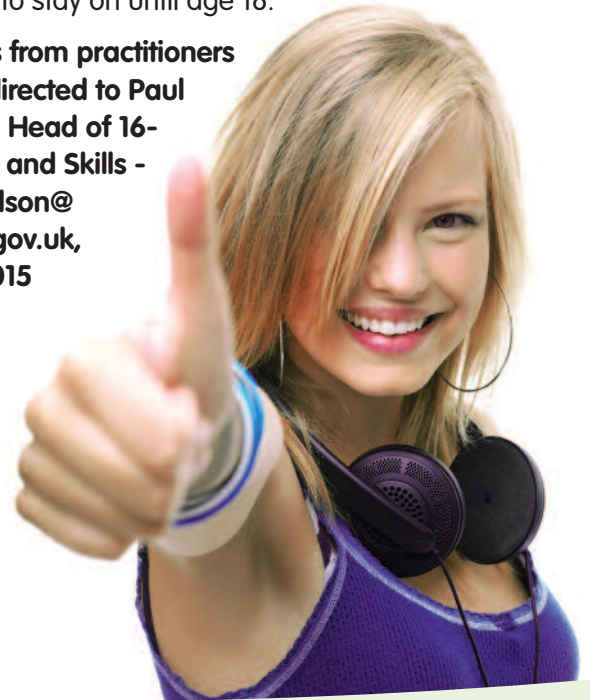
Raising the participation age does not necessarily mean young people must stay in school; they will be able to choose one of the following options:

- full-time education, such as school, college or other training provider
- work-based learning, such as an Apprenticeship
- part-time education or training if they are employed, self-employed or volunteering for more than 20 hours a week.

This means that those pupils who started secondary school in September 2008 and entered Year 10 in September 2011 will be the first group of young people who will be required to stay on until age 17.

Those pupils who started secondary school in September 2009 and entered Year 9 in September 2011 will be the first group of young people who will be required to stay on until age 18.

**Any queries from practitioners should be directed to Paul Richardson, Head of 16-19 Learning and Skills - paul.richardson@darlington.gov.uk, 01325 406015**



## Young Leaders

**Darlington Association on Disability (DAD) Young Leaders was set up two years ago to give young disabled people aged 14 to 25 opportunities to have a say in decisions made about services that affect them, and to support the development of leadership skills vital to user led organisations such as DAD**

Over the past two years members of the group have experienced both personal achievements such as speaking in public for the first time people, and achievements as a group, including delivering a presentation to Disabled People's Organisations from across the country, and at a North East Parents Forum Conference about their involvement in DAD. One Young Leader has spoken at a rally in Westminster about his experiences as a young person in the current economic climate. Young Leaders have influenced the way that DAD works with young people and were involved in DAD achieving Investing in Children status.

Group members have been involved in community projects such as planning and researching accessible play equipment for Eastbourne Sports Complex, and

by meeting local influential figures to discuss their views on Darlington and have their opinions heard by people who can make a difference. Some Young Leaders were part of Young Inspectors Programme run by the YMCA, supporting young people to inspect and improve local services such as the library. Members are passionate about making local services better for young people and attended a Talking Together event focused on children and families at which they spoke eloquently about their experiences.

The project also has a social element, involving plenty of pizza eating! Activities such as bowling, a trip to Alton Towers and meals out are also regular occurrences.

The Young Leaders are keen to expand, and to extend opportunities for involvement to other young disabled people, and have plans to develop activities for younger teenagers and those with complex communication impairments.

**To find out more about Young Leaders contact chyps@darlingtondisability.org, telephone 01325 254848 or text 07624 818780**

# Safeguarding Children Training

Darlington Safeguarding Children Board is committed to responding to local and national issues through the development and delivery of multi agency training.

- Courses currently available include: Safeguarding Levels 1 and 2. (Level 2 is also available as an Open College Network accredited unit).
- Subject specific courses include: Domestic Abuse, Neglect, MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference), Hidden Harm (considering the impact of parental substance misuse on children), Parental Mental Health, Bullying and E Safety.

Additional training is available or commissioned as required. This includes MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements), Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking, Thinkuknow (E safety) and Managing Allegations against staff, carers and volunteers.

The courses are made available to statutory, voluntary and independent organisations that have direct or indirect contact with children and young people, and the programme is constantly updated to incorporate new developments. All training is free to organisations that contribute financially to the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

**Further information, including diary of training, course aims and objectives, booking forms can be found at [www.darlington.gov.uk/lscb](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/lscb) or contact Jan Turner- LSCB Designated and Development Officer (01325) 388040 [janet.turner@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:janet.turner@darlington.gov.uk)**



## Lay Members- Representing the Community on Local Safeguarding Children Boards

**Since the introduction of the 'The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act' in 2009, all Local Safeguarding Children Boards must appoint 2 lay members, who act as "representatives of the local community".**

Darlington Safeguarding Children Board appointed their lay members at the beginning of 2011. As their roles and responsibilities developed it became apparent a networking event, which explores the requirements of the role, with neighbouring Local Safeguarding Children Boards would be of benefit.

Due to the links that one of the lay members has with Co-operative North East, they agreed to fund a regional event, which was attended by representatives from all of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards across the whole of the region.

The event was led by Darlington Safeguarding Children Board and included an insightful presentation from Stephen Shaw, who shared his views on what constitutes being a lay member. Stephen is currently the Health Ombudsman, but has experience of monitoring prisons, including the deaths of children and young people in prison service custody and was involved in the inquiry of the death of Harold Shipman.

The development in establishing how lay members can be effective members of Local Safeguarding Children Boards continues; any relevant updates and initiatives will be shared via this newsletter.

**However if you want further details regarding our lay members, or have ideas on how they can best represent the local community please contact Odette Sanderson, LSCB Business Manager on (01325) 388940 or e-mail: [Odette.sanderson@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:Odette.sanderson@darlington.gov.uk)**

# What do you know about the ISA?

The Independent Safeguarding Authority's (ISA) role is to prevent unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable adults.

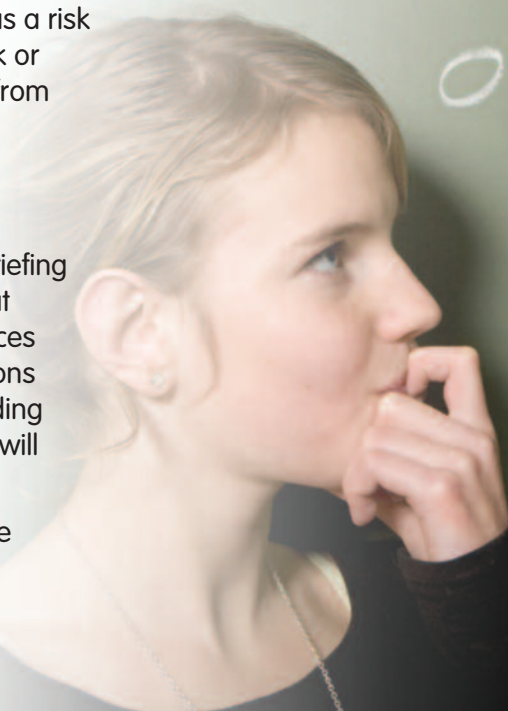
Referrals are made to the ISA when an employer or organisation has concerns that a person has caused harm or poses a future risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults. They currently manage the vetting and barring scheme.

Certain employers (those working in 'regulated activity') have a legal duty to refer people to the ISA (usually following their own disciplinary processes) when they have harmed a child or vulnerable adult, or there was a risk of harm. Anyone barred by the ISA cannot work or volunteer with the vulnerable group or groups from which they are barred.

## Do you feel you need to know more?

Darlington Safeguarding Children Board has arranged with the ISA a set of briefings (each briefing will last a couple of hours), that will take place at Morton Park, 10th and 11th November 2011. Places are available free of charge to those organisations that contribute financially to the Local Safeguarding Children Board, for those don't contribute there will be a charge of £10 per person.

For further information and to confirm your place at this informative event please contact Nicola Forster- LSCB Business Support Officer on (01325) 388940 or e-mail: [nicola.forster@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:nicola.forster@darlington.gov.uk)



## 16-25 year old Enquiry group launched

Darlington Children's Trust has followed up on the concerns raised by young people during the development of the new CYPP who have highlighted that they are worried about the impacts of national policy changes on their aspirations to enter or remain in employment, training or education.

The Children's Trust has agreed to undertake research about this area in Darlington and to ensure young people are engaged in this research too. The Children's Trust Participation group will lead in ensuring young people's experiences are captured as part of this research.

The Children's Trust has also asked the members of Darlington Partnership to support the development of a 'hardship' fund for young people facing financial challenges to achieve their goals.

For more information about this please contact **Melanie Brown, Darlington Children's Trust Partnership Manager** on 01325 388219, [melanie.brown@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:melanie.brown@darlington.gov.uk)



# Quality in Play

Darlington Play Service has received the Quality in Play Accreditation from Play England, which is a quality assurance scheme for out-of-school play provision, raising the standards of staffed play provision across the country. It was developed by playwork practitioners and based on well-established good practice. The Service was assessed against 11 Quality Areas and received an outstanding final report. Play England assessor Penny Sparrow described the play sessions she visited: "The atmosphere as I walk in is lively, happy and busy with children running, dancing, singing, playing on their own and in groups, moving freely from one place to another". Penny went on to describe the staff as "energetic, caring and friendly and able to communicate at all levels and provide excellent role models for the children. Excellent teamwork and respect for everyone in the community".

"The whole team were thrilled to receive the Quality In Play accreditation, which is a well-deserved reward in recognition of the staff commitment and dedication to ensure children and young people have access to good quality play provision, in a safe and stimulating environment. The team are excellent advocates for children and their right to play, and they will continue to maintain a positive advocacy role through the Play Service"

**Sarah Small Play Co-ordinator.**

Darlington Play Service delivered through Groundwork North East is commissioned by Darlington Children's Trust delivering open access inclusive play provision to children and young people aged 5 to 13 years, across 11 wards within the town. The service delivers 15 play sessions per week and a variety of holiday provision. Play sessions include activities such as arts and crafts, role play, messy play, games, sports and lots more.

During the summer holidays the Play Team will be delivering a total of 30 play sessions per week, working in partnership with Darlington Arts, the Sports Development Team and the Youth Service to provide a summer packed with exciting and innovative activities for children and young people to take part in. Information can be found at [www.clicktodo.co.uk](http://www.clicktodo.co.uk)

**For further information about the Play Service and play sessions please contact Sarah Small on 01325 353791.**

