



Wolverhampton Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Statistics

April 2009 – March 2010

CONTENTS

Paragraph		Page
1	Child Protection Statistics Summary	2
2	Child Protection Plans	3
3	Subsequent Child Protection Plans	4
4	Duration of Child Protection Plans	4
4.1	Duration of Child protection Plans when Discontinued	5
5	Transfer from Child Protection to Looked After Child Status	5
6	Child Protection Plans: Category of Abuse	6
6.1	Category of Abuse: Predisposing Factors	6
7	Children in Family Groups	7
8	Age of Children	8
8.1 – 8.5	Older Children	8
9	Ethnicity	9
10	Gender	10
11	Participation in Child Protection Conferences and Reviews	10
12	Timeliness of Initial and Review Conferences	10
12.1	Child Protection Review Conferences	11

1 Child Protection Statistics Summary

This Report presents statistical information on children and young people who are the subject of Child Protection Plans for the year ending March 2010.

Key Points

- The number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan at the end of March 2010 had increased by 33% from April 2009. This increase is close to that of neighbouring and national Authorities (national figure: 32.9%).
- October 2008 marked the start of a sharp rise in the number of Children becoming subject of a Child Protection Plan. Although signs of stability appeared towards the end of the year, with a lower net increase from September 09 to February 10, a 7% increase in March brought the overall figures to the highest for the year at 243. On average, 25 children became subject of a Child Protection Plan each month throughout the year, compared with 16 in the previous year.
- Of 302 Child Protection Plans that commenced in 2009/10, 41 (16%) are subsequent Child Protection Plans, representing a decrease of 1% on figures for the previous year. Of these, 8 (3%) of children became subject of a subsequent Plan more than three years after the previous episode. The shortest period was 4 years and the longest 9 years.
- A further 32 (11%) children became subject of a subsequent Child Protection Plan in less than three years.
- Subsequent Child Protection Plans within a year of the previous Plan remains low, with one Plan in this category during the year.
- A 3% increase is identified in the number of Child Protection Plans of 6 - 18 months duration, suggesting that children are remaining subject of a Plan marginally longer. Figures for the discontinuation of Plans at three months, at 7%, have also reduced.
- Of all discontinued Child Protection Plans, 77 children (35%) became Looked-after Children. 44% transferred following a period of three months or less; 35% had a plan in place for up to six months; and 21% between six and nine months. A high proportion of children transferring to Care are under 1 year old. This is reflected in statistics for new Looked-After Children, and is consistent with neighbouring authorities.
- Neglect remains the major category for inclusion on a Child Protection Plan. This is notably the case in families of four or more children: of 104 children from 22 families of four or more, 75% were under the category of neglect.
- A small sample of predisposing factors was undertaken during the last quarter of the year. Domestic violence is the largest single category. Substance Abuse and Alcohol are primary factors in a number of cases, but it is also evident that both appear as significant secondary features of Domestic Violence. 87% of cases in the Neglect

category have one of, or a combination of, these key factors. The Mental Health of primary carers also features, and (anecdotal) evidence of poor engagement of mental health services in Conference is to be further explored.

- Large family groups (4+ children) represent 43% of all Child Protection Plans. While there is no evidence to indicate a 'whole family' approach to Conference decision-making, this would benefit from further analysis.
- Apart from slight fluctuations during the year, age band percentages are consistent with the previous year, except for a significant increase in very young children, and in over-14s, which is consistent with neighbouring authorities.
- Initial statistical analysis in relation to the concentration of older children (52 aged 10 - 17 years), is presented in this report and further analysis is planned.
- Figures for parental attendance at Initial and Review Conferences has increased marginally compared to the previous year. Child participation remains low.
- Initial Conferences in respect of 371 children have been convened since April 2009. Of the total, 85% were completed within the 15-day timescale requirement.
- 99.5% of Child Protection Reviews were completed within the required timescale.

2 CHILD PROTECTION PLANS

	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR
Total	163	185	203	217	227	232	230	231	232	231	226	243
*CPP Commenced	21 (13)	29 (16)	37 (18)	33 (15)	22 (10)	24 (10)	26 (11)	19 (8)	17 (7)	18 (8)	23 (10)	33 (14)
CPP Ceased	19	7	19	20	12	18	28	18	16	19	28	16
Net Increase Monthly	2	22	18	13	10	6	-2	1	1	1	5	17
Net Increase Quarterly	40 (20%)			29 (6%)			2(1)			12(5%)		

* In brackets - New entrants as a percentage of the total Child Protection Plans.

During the year, 302 children became subject of a Child Protection Plan, compared to 203 in 2008/9. A total of 371 children were presented to Initial Conference during the year and, of these, 67 (18%) were not made subject of a Child Protection Plan.

From September 2010, the monthly net increase remained low. However, an increase of 7% in March brought the overall figures to their highest for the year, at 243 Child Protection Plans. This represents a 33% increase since April 2009. It is of note that, despite the current unprecedented number of Child Protection Plans, the overall percentage increase replicates that of the previous year. October 2008 marked the start of a sharp rise that was to continue throughout the first half of 2009. The reverse is apparent this year, with the net increase each month since October 2009 remaining relatively low.

The number of children subject of a Child Protection Plan has increased by 28% over the last five years.¹

A 33% increase in the number of Child Protection Plans in Wolverhampton is close to that of neighbouring authorities, as well as a recent national survey of Local Authorities² which identified an increase of 32.9%.

3 SUBSEQUENT CHILD PROTECTION PLANS

	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR
Within 1 Year	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Within 3 Years	0	1	4	6	1	11	0	1	8	0	0	0
3 years +	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0
Total	0	4	5	7	1	11	0	3	8	0	2	0
% of New CPP IN M0nth	-	13.8	13.5	21.2	4.5	45.8	-	15.8	47.1	-	8.7	-

The majority of subsequent Plans commenced within three years of the previous Child Protection Plan. The category of neglect is common to all subsequent Child Protection Plans for this period and, in all cases, reflects the category of previous Plans.

Of 302 Child Protection Plans commencing in 2009/10, 41 (16%) are subsequent Child Protection Plans, representing a decrease of 1% on figures for the previous year. Of these, 8 (3%) children became subject of a subsequent plan more than three years after the previous episode, a 6% decrease on the previous year. The shortest period between initial and subsequent Child Protection Plan was 4 years and the longest, 9 years.

A further 32 (11%) children became subject of subsequent Child Protection Plans in less than three years, representing a increase of 7% on the previous year. The high figure in September was biased by the inclusion of one family of six and one family of three children, plus, in December, two families of four children. However, within this group there appears no correlation between the duration of the Plan and duration between Child Protection Plan episodes. All 32 returned under the same category of Abuse, the majority being Neglect.

Subsequent Child Protection Plans within 1 year remains low, with one Plan in this category during the year.

4 DURATION OF CHILD PROTECTION PLANS

Duration	Less than 1 Month	1 Month to less than 3 months	3 Months to less than 10 Months	10 Months to less than 2 years	2 Years or more	End of Quarter Total CPC's
Quarter 1	37	46	94	22	4	203
2	24	49	116	40	3	232
3	17	43	124	44	4	232
4	33	39	103	68	0	243

¹ WSCB Monitoring Report March 2006: CPP's 190

² Association of Directors of Children's Services, 2010. (105 Local Authorities)

Figures relate to the number of children with a Child Protection Plan in place at the end of each quarter.

By the end of the first quarter, 177 (87%) of Child Protection Plans had been in place for the preceding nine months. By the end of the final quarter, 215 (88%) Child Protection Plans had commenced in nine months. Thus, although a reduction in the net increase in Child Protection Plans suggests a degree of stability towards the end of the year, the relatively high number of new entrants each quarter (and associated multi-agency activity) has continued. On average, 25 children became subject of a Child Protection Plan each month throughout the year, compared to a monthly average of 16 in the previous year.

4.1 DURATION OF CHILD PROTECTION PLANS WHEN DISCONTINUED

Duration	Less than 1 Month	1 Month to less than 3 Months	3 Months*	More than 3 Months less than Six	6 to 10 Months*	10 to 18 Months*	18 Months to 2 Years*	2 + Years	Total
Quarter 1	5	4	1	9	10	12	4	0	45
2	6	13	3	1	16	9	1	1	51
3	2	9	4	6	26	12	2	2	62
4	0	8	8	7	24	10	2	4	63
Total	13	34	16	23	76	43	9	7	221
Percentage	6%	15%	7%	10%	34%	19%	4%	3%	
2008/09	38 (24%)		33 (21%)		84 (54%)			0	155

The table above identifies the length of time children were subject of a Child Protection Plan prior to discontinuation of the Plan. A 3% increase is identified in the number of Child Protection Plans of 6 - 18 months duration, suggesting children are remaining subject of a Plan marginally longer than the previous year. Figures for the discontinuation of Plans at the three-month review, at 16 (7%) over the year, have also reduced.

Periods marked with an asterisk identify the point at which Review Child Protection Conferences should take place. Discontinuation at other periods (columns 1, 2 and 4) would suggest that some reviews were brought forward due to change in the child's circumstances and may explain the reason behind 'short-life' Child Protection Plans: 21% ceased before three months (a slight decrease on last year), and 10% (a reduction by 9% on the previous year) discontinued after 4-5 months duration.

As identified in the table below, a number of children moved directly from Child Protection to Care.

5 TRANSFER FROM CHILD PROTECTION TO LOOKED AFTER CHILD STATUS

Quarter	One	Two	Three	Four
Children	12	16	11	01
	02	09	03	01
	15	02	04	01
Total	29	27	18	3

Between April 2009 and March 2010, 77 children transferred from Child Protection to Looked-After Child status. The figure represents 35% of all Child Protection Plans that ceased during the year.

Of these, 44% transferred following a period of three months or less, while 35% had a Plan in place for up to six months, and 21% for between six and nine months duration.

A high proportion of those transferring to LAC are under 1 year old. This is reflected in the statistics for new Looked-After Children this year, and is also consistent with neighbouring authorities.

6 CHILD PROTECTION PLANS: CATEGORY OF ABUSE*

The primary presenting concerns at the time the child became subject of a Child Protection Plan:

Category	Neglect	Physical	Sexual	Emotional	End of Quarter Total CPC's
Quarter 1	60%	8%	3%	29%	203
2	63%	7%	2%	28%	232
3	58%	8%	5%	30%	232
4	57%	11%	7%	25%	243

*End of quarter percent of all Child Protection Plans.

Across all categories, percentages at the final quarter show a slight variation (in terms of percentage either way) on those for the same period for previous years.

Neglect remains the major category for children in sibling groups of 4+ (table 7). Of 104 children from 22 families in this group, 75% became subject of a Child Protection Plan under the Neglect category. Unsurprisingly, as older children tend to be captured in the large family groups, Neglect is the main category here also (see 8.3).

6.1 CATEGORY OF ABUSE: PREDISPOSING FACTORS

The table below identifies four key factors underlying categories of abuse in respect of 381 children who were subject of either an Initial or Review Child Protection Conference from December to March 09/10:

FACTOR	NEGLECT	PHYSICAL	SEXUAL	EMOTIONAL	TOTAL
Substance Misuse	57 (27%)	6 (14%)		9 (6%)	72 19%
Alcohol	36 (17%)	9 (6%)		25 (18%)	70 18%
Mental Health	30 (14%)	4 (3%)		16 (11%)	50 13%
Domestic Violence	65 (30%)	12 (9%)		68 (49%)	145 38%
Other	27 (13%)	12 (9%)	5	22 (16%)	66 17%

'Other' factors cover a spectrum of issues, generally relating to parenting capacity, where none of the four key factors were present.

Domestic Violence is the greatest single category. Although the statistics identify Substance and Alcohol misuse as primary factors in a number of cases, it is also evident that both are also significant secondary features in domestic violence. As can be seen, 87% of cases in the category of Neglect have one of, or a combination of, the key factors underlying the identified need for a Child Protection Plan. A similar picture emerges under the category of Emotional Abuse, at 84%.

The Mental Health of one or more primary carers is a contributory factor in 13% of cases. Anecdotal evidence suggests a number of concerns surrounding the support available to children where parents have mental health needs, and of adult mental health services' representation at Conference and Core Groups. This issue will be picked up in Conference participation figures due to be presented to the Board in July.

7 CHILDREN IN FAMILY GROUPS

Children in Family	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
1	36	40	40	41	44	46	48	47	46	44	41	42
2	18	23	25	27	32	34	33	35	35	36	32	29
3	9	9	12	12	13	13	13	11	10	11	10	13
4	8	10	10	9	10	10	11	12	12	11	12	14
5	4	4	5	6	4	4	4	4	5	5	6	7
6	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
7				1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Families Total	77	88	94	98	106	110	111	111	110	109	103	107
CPP Total	163	185	203	216	226	232	230	231	232	230	226	243

By March, family groups of four or more children represent 43% of all Child Protection Plans. Taken over the year, the average is 37%. These larger sibling groups represent 10% of the increase in overall Child Protection Plans from January to March 2010. While interesting to note the number and size of families (as this clearly impacts on the rise and fall in numbers overall), individual needs and concerns in relation to each child are the main factors for inclusion on a Child Protection Plan.

While there is no evidence to indicate a 'whole family' approach to assessment outcome and/or Conference decision-making, this might be an area that would benefit from more detailed analysis, particularly in relation to the concentration of young people aged 10 and above (26%), who are currently subject of a Child Protection Plan.

8 AGE OF CHILDREN

Age	0<3	3 <10	10 <14	14 <18	Total CPP
April 2009	29%	44%	18%	9%	162
March 2010	32%	42%	16%	10%	243
% of all WCC ³ Child Population	17%	24%	20%	23%	

Apart from slight fluctuations during the year, age band percentages have remained consistent with the previous year. Significant increases in the under 1 year olds, and over 14s, is most noticeable from late 2008 onwards, which is consistent with the findings of neighbouring authorities.

8.1 Older Children

A detailed analysis of children and young people age 11 and above is under way. An overview of initial work is reported below:

At March 31 2010, 52 young people aged between 11 and 17 years were subject of a Child Protection Plan.

Age	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Young People	13	10	5	11	7	5	1

8.2 Duration of Plan:

Of the total, 39% have had a Plan in place for between 10 and 23 months duration.

Less than 1 Month	1 Month to less than 3 months	3 Months to less than 6 Months	6 Months to less than 10 Months	10 Months to less than 18 Months	18 Months to 2 years	Total
1 (2%)	5 (10%)	10 (19%)	16 (31%)	18(35%)	2(4%)	52

8.3 Categories

	Neglect	Emotional	Sexual	Physical
Cohort Percentage	48%	36%	8%	8%
Percentage of all CPP's with Category	10%	29%	22%	15%

³ Source: Office of the Chief Executive Wolverhampton City Council Population Statistics 2007

The category in respect of just one young person is different to that of his siblings.

8.4 Family Size

Children in Family	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Cohort	2	12	17	8	5	4	4

73% of young people in the cohort are from families where 3 or more children are subject of a Child Protection Plan.

8.5 Siblings

Of the 52 young people, 32 have at least one sibling in the cohort; 46 have a younger sibling (under 10 years old), subject of a Child Protection Plan; while only 4 young people have no other sibling.

9 ETHNICITY

As expected, the majority of children are White British, with Asian-British and White/Black Caribbean the next highest. Figures for March 2010, month-average for the year and percentages for Wolverhampton child population in each ethnic group, are detailed below:

Ethnicity	March Total	Percentage	Month Average
Asian / British – Indian	15	6% (13%)	19
Asian/British – Pakistani	4	2% (3%)	6
Black /British – African	1	1% (1%)	3
Black /British – Caribbean	8	3% (3%)	6
Black /British – Other Black	3	1% (.5%)	3
Mixed Other	7	3% (1%)	9
Mixed – White /Asian	2	1% (1.5%)	2
Mixed –White Black Caribbean	14	6% (5%)	17
White British	146	60% (69%)	29
White Other	7	3% (1%)	3
Information not yet obtained	9	4%	
No Record	27	11%	
Total	244		

In Brackets – Percentage of Wolverhampton children with this ethnicity. ⁴

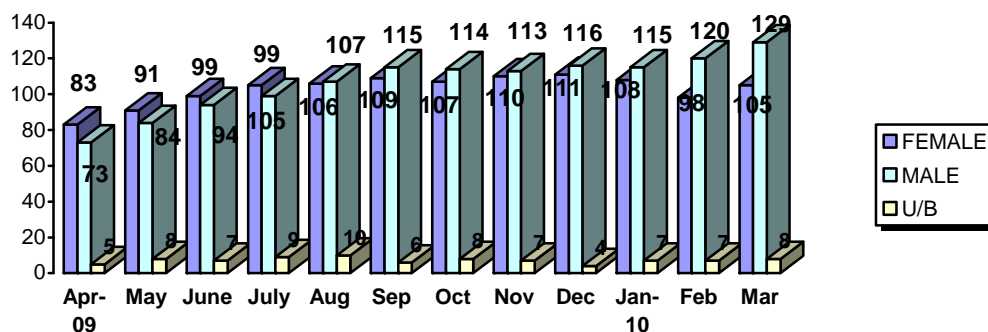
Of the range of ethnicity statistics collected, no children of the following ethnic groups were subject to a Child Protection Plan at any point in the year:

- Chinese, Mixed Asian/ British-Bangladeshi, Mixed White/Black African, Irish, Gypsy Roma, or Traveller of Irish heritage.

⁴ Source: Office of the Chief Executive Wolverhampton City Council Population Statistics 2007

Greater depth of analysis is required. Cross-referencing against other baseline child protection data and outcomes (transfer from Child Protection to Looked-After status) may identify areas for specific attention.

10 GENDER



A marginally higher proportion of boys represents a change on previous figures. The most significant rise is noted in the number of pre-birth Child Protection Plans: from an average per month of 2.75 last year compared to 6.25 in the current year.

11 PARTICIPATION IN CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES AND REVIEWS

Parent participation in Initial and Review Child Protection Conferences remains positive, at 89% and 76% respectively. The poor participation of children and young people is of long-standing concern. Safeguarding Service is currently developing a protocol to support and improve child contribution / attendance, and this will be available for consultation shortly.

Multi-agency participation is due to be included in the figures for June and quarterly thereafter.

12 TIMELINESS OF INITIAL CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES

Standard:

- the initial Child Protection Conference should take place within 15 working days of the strategy discussion, or the last strategy discussion if more than one has taken place⁵;
- where children who are subject of a Child Protection Plan transfer from one local authority to another, the receiving-in Conference should take place no later than 15 working days of the request being made.

Initial Child Protection Conferences in respect of 371 children (including 30 transfer-in Conferences) have been convened since April 2009. Of the total, 85% were completed within fifteen days of the strategy discussion, representing a 14% improvement on the previous year. Five Conferences (9%) convened out of time due to late notification/requests; 3 (6%) were due to the original Conference being stood down and reconvened; 7 (13%) were delayed at the request of the social worker; and 42 (74%) were delayed due to volume of initial and review Conferences throughout the year.

⁵ Working Together to Safeguard Children. DCSF 2010

12.1 CHILD PROTECTION REVIEW CONFERENCES

National Indicator 67: Children with a Child Protection Plan in place for more than three months have had all of their Reviews completed within required timescales (first Review at 3 months, subsequent Reviews no later than 6 months).

The Child Protection Plans in respect of 621 children were reviewed during the year. The review in respect of one child in January resulted in a 99.4% figure in March 2010.

Safeguarding Service
May 2010