

CHILD O SERIOUS CASE REVIEW

KSCB RESPONSE – WHAT WE HAVE DONE

Knowsley Safeguarding Children Board (KSCB) accepts the findings of the review and is committed to learn the lessons, which are identified in the report.

The report covers a time period from 2012 to 2015. Since the Ofsted inspection in 2014, there have been real improvements in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Knowsley. Ofsted acknowledged the progress we have made in a recent monitoring visit.

Learning from the serious case reviews, practice reviews, audits of multi-agency work and listening to staff working every day with vulnerable children, has improved KSCB's understanding of the need to focus on specific areas of work.

We have identified a number of priorities and actions, which are reflected in the business plan for 2016/2018. These include ensuring children in Knowsley are safeguarded and protected from harm, including abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Knowsley Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) was established in February 2014 and is working well. Within this model of working, Children's Social Care, Police and Health are co-located which means when referrals about children who may be at risk of harm are received, they are now identified promptly and receive a timely service from the Partnership.

The neglect strategy has been reviewed and a working group established, chaired by a senior manager within the local authority. The group will strengthen our strategic and operational response to dealing with child neglect.

A multi-agency domestic abuse action plan has been developed and is being delivered with a clear emphasis on supporting victims and taking positive action against perpetrators. The local authority has committed £150k of additional resources to support this priority.

Merseyside Police and Children's Services have developed new ways of helping children who are living in families, where there may be concerns of domestic violence.

KSCB recognised that they had limited understanding of what was important for children in Knowsley. In response, 1,800 secondary school pupils took part in an anonymised survey on issues such as domestic abuse, sexual exploitation and substance misuse.

This identified what Knowsley children were concerned about and the findings of the survey have influenced the work and priorities of the Board. For example a number of children made disclosures concerning their perception of what constituted 'normal' behaviours in relationships. The Board commissioned in partnership with Public Health a drama company to raise awareness of the aspects of domestic abuse. This production was presented to senior schools in the Borough and the College of further education. The key themes from this learning have been incorporated into the Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) curriculum for schools in Knowsley.

To reflect the Board's commitment to listen to the voices of children, a focus group has been commissioned to explore how we can engage and respond to children's concerns.

Targeted training has continued to be delivered to a wide range of professionals across the agencies. The focus of the training has been aimed at the priorities of the Board and reflects the lessons that are identified within serious case reviews.

The training has been delivered through a number of mediums, including personal briefings, 'e-learning' and seminars. In excess of 2,000 allocated places have been filled.

The Board has promoted the use of the graded care profile, a nationally recognised assessment tool of children who may be exposed to neglect. Healthcare providers within Knowsley have already started implementation of this assessment tool and will closely monitor its use.

Over the past year the 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Foundation Trust has significantly redesigned their clinical services to streamline and integrate the children's and adult services. This has enabled them to respond better to local needs in Knowsley and to strengthen relationships and pathways with partner agencies and services.

Raising awareness concerning the role of the lead professional is an area under development in collaboration with partners from early help. The Board are monitoring the progress of this issue, to ensure there are lead professionals across all the agencies

Early help services have developed guidance concerning persistent non engagement with professionals. The guidance highlights the roles and responsibilities of professionals who manage this issue. It will support practitioners to be more confident when working with parents.

KSCB commissioned a review of the escalation policy. A seven minute briefing was cascaded to partner agencies, highlighting the use of the policy. The use of the

escalation policy is monitored by the Board, which reflects a culture of professional challenge.

The findings of serious case reviews are collated by Merseyside Police Public Protection Unit, who disseminate learning to practitioners across the Merseyside region.

In summary KSCB is determined to deliver our strategic priorities and ensure that children in Knowsley are able to grow up safely, be healthy, feel listened to and are given the right opportunities to achieve their potential.