



## **CHILD R 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 2011 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 quickly identified and receive a timely service from the Partnership.

The neglect strategy has been reviewed and a working group has been 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 serious case review identified the need to be very clear with parents that children's social care implement written agreements. As a result we have strengthened how we do this and will be monitoring improvements.

The impact of co-sleeping has been considered by KSCB, who supported the Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) Safe Sleeping Campaign. This included distribution of leaflets, posters, banners etc. An electronic version of the literature was posted on the KSCB website to help all who work with young children and their families.

The 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Foundation Trust has commissioned a review of the information provided by health professionals concerning sleeping arrangements for infants.

Further work has been supported by the Clinical Commissioning Group and Public health in relation to the introduction of an initiative known as 'Baby Box.' aimed at enhancing safe sleeping. The initiative will be phased in across Merseyside. It has been developed as a result of international research that was undertaken to reduce this potential area of risk to infants.

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.

The Trust has also developed and is currently implementing a living life well transformation programme to improve the quality of service to the community of Knowsley. This includes a review of working practices and pathways, with an emphasis on actions to improve the "think family" approach and parenting within adult mental health services. The Think Family agenda is a national initiative that recognises and promotes the importance of a whole-family approach to address this issue.

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.

The MASH is developing research around multi agency thresholds to assist in recognising the longer term impact on children following incidents of domestic abuse. The purpose of this research is to establish whether referrals are being made at the appropriate time and identifying the appropriate levels of risk to children.

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.