



Learning Together: Staff Briefing

How do we know we are working together well to safeguard children & young people?

Child Neglect

Child Neglect continues to be a priority area for Brighton & Hove Local Safeguarding Children Board in our 2016-19 Business Plan. The definition of Neglect from Working Together 2015 is:

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

An in depth multi-agency audit of the effectiveness of arrangements to safeguard children who experience neglect was completed in March 2017. It was agreed that the audit would focus on the following areas of enquiry:

- identification and initial responses to neglect;
- assessment, planning and intervention;
- the impact of the work undertaken by agencies in protecting and meeting the needs of children who are or have experienced neglect.

The recommendations and best practice examples from the Ofsted thematic inspection: *'In the child's time: professional responses to neglect', March 2014* were considered in the audit alongside the areas of enquiry proposed by Ofsted for future *Joint Targeted Area Inspections: 'Deep Dive' - Children Living with Neglect, Nov 2016*.

This short briefing is aimed at professionals who work with children and families in Brighton & Hove. It presents the key findings and recommendations from a recent multi agency Deep Dive audit on **Child Neglect**. A full report is also available for professionals working in partner agencies in Brighton & Hove upon request. If you would like a copy of this report please contact us at LSCB@Brighton-hove.gov.uk

Methodology

Nine cases were selected for audit, covering three age ranges: 0-5; 6-11 and 12-18. These were selected from cases open to Early Help, Child in Need and Child Protection, including those open to the Children with Disabilities Team, where neglect had been highlighted as a concern. Altogether, 53 audit forms were completed for 9 children

The audit team comprised of representatives from:

- Clinical Commissioning Group (GPs)
- Children's Social Work
- Sussex Police
- Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust (FNP, School Nurses & Health Visitors)
- Brighton & Sussex University Hospitals (Midwifery & RACH)
- Schools
- Early Help Engagement Team
- Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

Agencies completed audit tools separately and were then brought together in a moderation day chaired by the Named Nurse for Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust and the Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children from, Brighton & Hove CCG.

Overall Judgements

The final judgements for the cases rated 1 as 'Good', 4 as 'Requires Improvement with good features, 4 as 'Requires Improvement'. No audits were judged to be inadequate.

What is working well?



Agency referrals to MASH are sufficiently clear as to the precise nature and extent of the neglect (for MASH to make a decision about appropriate next steps).



In all cases the assessment (social work) addresses the cumulative impact on the child and the parent's capacity and motivation to change.



The assessments completed by the Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) are judged to be very good



In one case, the action taken by Sussex Police following a child neglect incident led to the immediate protection of the child



There is evidence of effective joint working in most (67%) cases which has led to positive outcomes for the child(ren).



The child and family's identity and cultural needs are sufficiently considered and addressed in the majority of cases



In all cases relevant agencies are invited to participate in strategy discussions and/or meetings and agencies agree that the outcome of the strategy meeting was appropriate to the concerns identified in the case



Where applicable, there is evidence that the needs related to the child's disability have been taken into account when assessing the level and impact of neglect and this is judged to be good overall

What do we need to improve?

The areas in need of improvement have been considered by the audit group and the following recommendations are made:



Genograms and chronologies/significant events to be used to inform assessments and plans as a routine part of safeguarding practice across all agencies



Promote the use of the Quality of Care tool to practitioners via the internal intranet (all relevant agencies) and LSCB website



Early Help Plans and Strengthening Families Plans need to be clearer in relation to the outcomes sought for the children and timescales



Ensure that there is robust management oversight of neglect cases so that drift and delay are identified and appropriate remedial action is taken



Set up a Multi-Agency Child Neglect Consultation Group to offer a safe reflective space to practitioners and their managers to bring complex and stuck cases where neglect of children is considered to be a primary issue



The LSCB to raise awareness about neglect with all partners and agencies, including adult services



Each agency involved in the audit to share and embed the learning with front line staff and report back to Monitoring & Evaluation Subcommittee on progress

The findings from this audit have been fed into the development of the LSCB Neglect Strategy and embedded in our training offer



Local Support

If you are concerned about a child in Brighton & Hove contact the **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** through the Front Door for Families by telephoning **01273 290400** or complete the [online referral form](#) or email FrontDoorForFamilies@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk

Further Reading

- [LSCB Neglect Strategy 2017-19](#)
- [Neglect - Learning Together from Case Reviews](#) in 2017 the LSCB conducted a local learning review on a family with long standing concerns around neglect. Read the key findings in our professionals briefing
- [NSPCC Spotlight on Preventing Child Neglect \(Oct 2015\)](#)
- [Action for Children Neglect Research Evidence to Inform Practice](#)

Feedback

We would like to hear your thoughts, feedback and comments on findings presented to you in this briefing and any feedback on the style of the briefing itself, please contact us at LSCB@Brighton-Hove.gov.uk to ensure your voice is heard.

LSCB Multi Agency Training:

The LSCB offers a day long course on Child Neglect to broaden participants' understanding of child neglect and explore local multi-agency responses through scenarios and discussion. Book through the Learning Gateway [here](#) or visit the LSCB Website to view our full training offer: www.brightonandhovelscb.org.uk/events

We also have an interactive eLearning course that provides an introduction to child neglect for those members of the workforce who are new to role, or those agencies who are less frequently involved in safeguarding work. The course takes about one hour and has been produced in partnership with the Social Care Institute for Excellence. If you are interested in taking part in this training, or would like further information, please email us at LSCB@Brighton-hove.gov.uk

www.brightonandhovelscb.org.uk



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