Multi Agency Case Audit
6 Step Briefing
Disabled Children

Theme / Cases

- Themes are based on priorities identified by the NSCB.
- QA Sub Group members nominate cases.
- Cases are selected to ensure there is a cross selection of children, their requirements and service intervention.

Process

- Completed chronologies and audit tools submitted for 6 pre-selected cases from each agency.
- Multi agency meeting to examine and analyse each case.
- Learning Summary developed.
- Actions identified as part of MACA Composite Action Plan.

Strengths identified per case

Case 1

- Voice of the Child clearly evidenced through direct involvement with Children's Rights.
- Child settled having remained with same carer since the age of 6 weeks.
- Good multi agency working.
- Whole family approach.
- Good support services to match child's needs.
- Thorough Core Assessment.

Case 2

- Sibling's voice recorded.
- Good inter agency working evidenced.
- CAF initiated by school in 2009.
- Good quality of health records.
- Good continuity of care.
- Parent's voice recorded and listened to.

Case 3

- CAF in place.
- Health reviews undertaken in a timely manner.
- Evidence of multi-agency working.
- Child now safe in foster care.

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Strengths identified per case continued

Case 4

- Good communication by agencies with parents who are separated.
- Thorough Core Assessment undertaken.
- Good quality of care provided to Child and parents.
- Parents listened to.

Case 5

- Excellent daily living intervention and respite care package.
- Evidence of good multi agency working and cross border working.
- Parents listened to.
- Good recording of observations of Child.

Case 6

- Good multi agency working in terms of home visits and communication.
- Careful consideration given to child's physical needs.
- Good evidence of listening to parents.
- Pro-active and good work with child by Psychologists.

Findings identified per case

Case 1

- Although child settled with relatives, they will not consider Special Guardianship as they would lose the current Looked after Child (LAC) support.
- Lack of Early Help footprint.
- Frequent change of Social Worker led to some drift, particularly the Core Assessment being undertaken.
- Lack of information regarding Father.

Case 2

- Lack of Voice of the child by all agencies.
- Mother was asking for help but then declined when offered; how is this managed?
- Focus on parents rather than the child.

Case 3

- Significant drift and delay in undertaking assessment led to child being unsafe.
- Delay in legal planning.
- No evidence of Voice of the Child.
- Focus on the parents' needs (both have learning disabilities) led to the child 'getting lost'.
- Were professionals over optimistic in terms of the parents' capacity and level of understanding?
- No pre-birth assessment.
- No recognition in maternity records of mother's understanding of pregnancy.

Findings identified per case continued

Case 4

- Lack of supervision and managerial oversight by Safeguarding Children's Services.
- Turnover of Social Workers.
- Mother was self harming. Was this considered and taken into account when looking at risk to the child?
- Lots of services were involved but did they all know what each other is doing?
- Lack of Voice of the Child. No observations of child.
- Lack of consideration of Health Visitor input.
- Aware of disabilities from birth, but child not referred to Children's Disabilities Team initially.

Case 5

- Significant gaps in lack of visits to Child due to Social Worker being unwell.
- Significant delay in completing Children in Need plan.
- No S47 outcome; Safeguarding Children's Services did not have a robust plan in place for monitoring the family.
- No risk assessment with regard to Domestic Abuse within the family.
- Lack of understanding of family composition and day-to-day life for the family.
- Cultural issues not considered; English is not this family's first language and there was little evidence of the use of translators.
- Due to the cultural issues, there is very little recording of the Voice of the Child.

Case 6

- Lack of contact from Continuity of Care Team.
- Lack of emotional support for child.
- Mother has significant anxiety issues. Were these considered in terms of risk to the child?
- Lack of recording of the Voice of the Child.

Recommendations – Issues Identified Across Multiple Cases

- **Training and Awareness**
  - Understanding family composition and parental capabilities in terms of risk to the child's complex needs.
  - Balance of understanding of a child's emotional and physical needs.
- **Recording of information**
  - Recording and observation of Voice of the Child.

Good Practice and Evidence as a Result of this Audit and similar Reviews

Careful consideration is given to hearing the voices of Disabled Children; if a child is unable to vocalise their feelings, there was good evidence of the use of observation and of the child having an advocate to represent their voice.

Support packages based on each child's needs and the complexity of their condition.

Siblings views are sought to understand the impact a disabled sibling can have.

Excellent psychiatrist's records following a consultation with one child portrayed the child's feelings at the time extremely well and were valuable in helping other professionals understand the child's strength's and vulnerabilities.

The NSCB offers a 'Safeguarding Disabled Children' training course, through Barnardo's, that is run quarterly. Please click here for further information.