

1. Background and Concerns

A Line of Sight was held in relation to a 3 year old child who was subject to Police Powers of Protection and a subsequent Interim Care Order. This was due to observed physical injury and concerns raised of emotional harm to the child.

A child protection medical was held which revealed further injuries to the child, which were indicative of physical abuse.

Additional factors within the review included domestic abuse, parental substance use, parental mental health, parental criminality, and difficulties with engaging family.

2. Purpose of the Review

A review was requested to consider the partnership response to a young child who suffered significant physical and emotional harm. The purpose of the review was to explore the multi-agency response, and whether this was timely, proportionate, and responsive to their needs. Consideration was given to the effectiveness of ensuring the child's safety and wellbeing by all agencies and whether there were any opportunities for earlier intervention.

3. Key Lines of Enquiry

- Opportunities for earlier intervention, including during the antenatal period.
- Understanding the child's lived experiences.
- The multi-agency coordination, including the effectiveness and timeliness of intervention.
- Consideration to parental needs and any underlying factors which may have impacted on engagement.

7. Further Information -links

- Unseen men: learning from case reviews - [Unseen men: learning from case reviews \(nspcc.org.uk\)](https://www.nspcc.org.uk)
- Information sharing guidance- [DfE non statutory information sharing advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services for children, young people, parents and carers \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk)
- Trauma-informed knowledge and practice hub - [Trauma-informed knowledge and practice hub | Childrens \(ccinform.co.uk\)](https://www.ccinform.co.uk)
- Good practice service delivery standards for the management of children referred for child protection medical assessments [Child-Protection-service-delivery-standards-2020.pdf \(hubble-live-assets.s3.amazonaws.com\)](https://www.hubble-live-assets.s3.amazonaws.com)
- HSCP - [Escalation and Resolution - Professional Resolutions... \(trixonline.co.uk\)](https://www.trixonline.co.uk)
- Perinatal Mental Health Team - <https://www.humber.nhs.uk/services/perinatal-mental-health.htm>
- The myth of invisible men - [The Myth of Invisible Men \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk)
- HSCP Pre-birth pathway - [unborn-pre-birth-pathway.pdf \(trixonline.co.uk\)](https://www.trixonline.co.uk)
- Hull Signs of Safety - [Signs of Safety Leaflet for Professionals \(hull.gov.uk\)](https://www.hull.gov.uk)
- Institute of Health Visiting links – detail on CHCP enhanced pathway including allocated HV and extra HV home visits
- Family hubs [Home – Family Hubs \(familyhubshull.org.uk\)](https://www.familyhubshull.org.uk)
- [Injury and Bruising to non-mobile Infants \(trixonline.co.uk\)](https://www.trixonline.co.uk)
- [Training courses – Hull Collaborative Partnership](https://www.hullcollaborativepartnership.org.uk)

4. Key Learning

- **Professional Curiosity** –The review highlighted the importance of exercising professional curiosity to explore potential hypotheses and consideration for non-engagement/non-attendance. Further exploration is required when there is a lack of engagement/ lack of consent, it is crucial practitioners understand underlying factors to overcome these barriers or reduce crisis and risk driven intervention. It is also vital that practitioners do not accept information at face value, and this is explored in more detail and triangulated with all agencies. Utilising supervision for support and guidance can elicit curious thinking.
- **Child's Lived Experiences** – It is essential that the child's day to day lived experiences are understood. There are various methods to ascertain the wishes and feelings of a child. The use of different skills is particularly relevant when working with non-verbal or very young children and babies, this includes, observing parent-child interaction, interaction with peers, body language and expressive behaviour. It is good practice to triangulate this information with other professionals. It is important to consider the role of attachment and the impact this has on young children and their brain development.
- **Information Sharing** – The review revealed that multi-agency information sharing is integral to practice, specifically the triangulation of information to have a better understanding of needs, strengths, and risks. No single agency can have a full picture of a child's life, the collaboration of information from different sources strengthens understanding which allows for considered decision making.
- **Multi-agency coordination** – Early intervention for children and families is key, support needs should be considered at all stages, including during antenatal periods for example utilising the prebirth pathway or perinatal mental health services. It is essential that incidents are viewed in line with historical information and chronologies as opposed to a focus on isolated incidents. It is crucial to consider when agencies are closing or at any transition points that this is communicated with all agencies involved to ensure that safety planning is robust and contingency plans are in place. This will inform understanding of the right interventions and clarify who the most appropriate practitioner is to support the family. Multi agency meetings should make use of Hull's practice model Signs of Safety, which allows for practitioners to scale their viewpoint and to understand the extent of the worries and what is working well.
- **Understanding family network** – The review highlighted the importance of considering the whole family network. It is crucial to understand family functioning and the role adults play in children's lives. Understanding who is in the family network, allows for a greater understanding of strengths and risks to support safety planning. This includes the role of men/fathers and partners, it is crucial to include fathers' views and not focus solely on mothers' perspectives. Research indicates 'The involvement of prospective and new fathers in a child's life is important for maximising the life- long wellbeing and outcomes of the child regardless of whether the father is resident or not' (National Service Framework, 2004).
- **Trauma Informed Approach** – It is vital that parental history, including any underlying factors, such as experiences domestic abuse, mental health, or substance use are understood and viewed through a trauma-informed lens. This is an approach that explores attachment and outlines possible connections to generational trauma, adverse childhood experiences and repeated family scripts. This can allow for a deeper understanding of parenting capacity and the impact on children, which subsequently can lead to more effective care and support plans.

6. Next Steps

- This 7-minute guide will be shared across the partnership.
- Training to support practitioners with key learning points is available through the HSCP learning programme 2024/25 and attached links (detailed above)
- All key safeguarding agencies to share learning across their own organisations.



5. Good Practice

- The Health Visitor and Social Worker shared information efficiently, this effective communication was a positive example of multi-agency working and triangulation of information.
- Additional care and support were identified during the antenatal period and mother was allocated to a Vulnerability Midwife to support throughout pregnancy.
- Child Protection medical examination was carried out within 24 hours of the child being taken into Police Powers of Protection, which aligns with best practice standards.