



Child LB Serious Case Review Learning Brief **Published 12th January 2017**

Case Summary

Lancashire LSCB has undertaken a Serious Case Review (SCR) about a child known as Child LB who lived with carers since the age of one under a residency order. Child LB had no contact with their biological mother. The re-constituted family moved to Lancashire in 2010, it was during 2010 that concerns were first raised regarding LB being subjected to emotional abuse. Between 2010 and 2013, carers engaged intermittently with selected professionals at their chosen times which provided just enough 'reassurance' for agencies involved to prevent their concerns escalating. Eventually in March 2013, Child LB disclosed significant physical and emotional abuse to a school counsellor with whom they had been working closely for ten months.

The SCR clearly highlighted learning for all agencies. There were a number of missed opportunities to speak to the child alone, albeit under difficult circumstances. However, when child LB was provided with a constant supportive professional relationship (via the counsellor) LB was able to make a disclosure.

The review highlighted key themes which are listed below:

- The voice of the child was not heard by agencies. Children should be given opportunities to have their voices heard in a safe environment as soon as possible;
- Professionals should always provide parents/ carers opportunities to consider a CAF and attempt to gain parental consent to instigate a CAF;
- Resistance and non-engagement should be included as a key area of concern when assessing risk to a child and therefore be included in supervision discussions;
- Prior to discharging/ closing a referral, the referrer should be notified to enable appropriate multi-agency discussion and challenge;
- Being professionally inquisitive is crucial to ascertain whether explanations of injuries (however minor) are plausible. It is also important for professionals to view minor injuries collectively with other information about a child which together could give cause for greater concern;
- All assessments should include multi-agency clarification of concerns, the voice of the child and consideration of a strategy discussion with clear decisions documented within records;
- All professionals should be familiar with the LSCBs escalation policy [Resolving Professional Disagreements Guidance](#) and have the confidence to use it;
- Detailed and timely recording of **all** interactions (including what might appear to be minor contacts) with parents and carers in circumstances where safeguarding concerns are known or suspected is vital to provide an accurate picture of the family;

Good Practice Highlighted:

- Providing Child LB with the same consistent counsellor which enabled them to build trust and a rapport which eventually led to the disclosure.
- The School Nurse was tenacious in pursuing opportunities and strategies, including with other professionals, to try to enable the child to be seen in a safe environment.
- Both schools involved worked hard in their recording of concerns and incidents involving LB, and tried continuously to engage the carers, encouraging some communication under challenging circumstances.

The full SCR report will be published to the [LSCB website](#) once all other investigations are completed.