



KRSCP Joint Targeted Area Inspection re Early Help dry run Multiagency Audit Workshop Report – Executive Summary

Context

This executive summary report aims to summarise the findings from a multiagency audit workshop which was held virtually on Thursday 16 February 2023.

This workshop was held to facilitate a multiagency discussion of the collaborative work undertaken in respect of four children (selected from the sample generated by Achieving for Children’s Intelligence Team according to the annex A criteria) in supporting them to receive early help, understand impact, and identify key themes and any learning to take forward. Agencies involved in the workshop included the police, children’s social care, and relevant health services.

Prior to the workshop all partner agencies were asked to complete an audit of their own involvement with each child/young person, highlighting what is working well and what the current worries from their perspective are. They were also encouraged to reflect learning both for their own agency, and the wider partnership.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to obtain audits from the GPs for two of the children in the timescale afforded. As the workshop was held during school holidays, there was no attendance possible from education settings involved but audits were received from this sector for each of the four children.

Methodology

The lead professional from children’s services for each child/young person was invited to open each of the four case discussions, with a verbal presentation of each child to give participants a sense of who they are and to bring the child’s lived experience and voice into the room. They then summarised the worries, what work has been undertaken so far and how they have worked collaboratively with partners to ensure the child’s well-being.

The discussion was then opened, inviting partners to contribute their experiences of working with each child/young person and reflect on the effectiveness of multiagency support. Each of the four case discussions were then summarised.

Where issues were identified for urgent attention or action in the individual agency audits, these have been taken forward by the responsible agency. The audits have been shared with the relevant practitioners and their managers to support this.

This executive summary focuses on the learning relating to the appraisal of multiagency practice identified in the workshop and omits the child level detail, so it is appropriate for general readership.

Key Learning

The key themes identified in this audit are as follows:

Identity – the need for all partner agencies to accurately document and explore the impact of identity including ethnicity, culture, language, religious tradition etc on a child and their family. Partners to make use of tools such as genograms and chronologies to support understanding of connected communities. Partners must also consider the accessibility of information they are providing to clients and whether support is needed such as interpreters, translation, easy read etc.

Information sharing – all partners being confident in their systems and multiagency processes for sharing information appropriately particularly in context of non-statutory support. Within this the following elements were highlighted:

- Need for consistent information sharing when child is movement between different statuses.
- Helpful for all partner systems to capture consent, where children are in receipt of non-statutory assistance, to support legitimate information sharing.
- Need for feedback and/or follow up by partners where referrals are made.
- Was not brought need to be shared with and acted upon by the professional network consistently.
- When supporting children and young people information should be sought/shared with all relevant agencies including schools, GPs, and secondary & tertiary healthcare as applicable to support a thorough assessment of their individual needs, and that the professional network is informed and collaborating effectively.

Voice of child – ensuring that all agencies are equipped with relevant training to identify, record, and respond to the voice of the child consistently. In the case of family groups where referring concerns relate to an individual child, siblings/other children in the household must be heard and considered in their own right.

CAMHS – There is a need for all partners to be clear on how CAMHS is organised locally and the different services’ remit, and confident in responding to children’s emotional wellbeing where thresholds are not met, waiting times are ongoing, and/or difficulties with engagement or assessment prevent CAMHS from being accessed. Communication across the professional network needs to improve to ensure all relevant partners record current information as to CAMHS involvement as applicable.

Fathers and other significant adults – it was recognised that fathers and other significant members of the household may be less of a focus in enquiry and assessment, and this may undermine comprehensive analysis of strengths and risks. The partnership should consider how this could be strengthened, including consideration of the national panel’s report on the myth of invisible men

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1017944/The_myth_of_invisible_men_safeguarding_children_under_1_from_non-accidental_injury_caused_by_male_carers.pdf)

Recommendation

The audit workshop recommends this report is shared with the KRSCP Strategic Leadership Group, Early Help Strategic Board, and the subgroup chairs’ meeting, for development of an action plan with agreed leads and timescales across the partnership activities to ensure the cascade of the five key learning themes identified in this audit and agreement as to how impact will be measured.