

1 – Aim of Audit

Working Together 2018 places a statutory duty on safeguarding partners to evaluate multi agency working through case file audits. The QPP subgroup completes 4 multi agency audits per year to gain understanding and assurance that effective multi agency safeguarding processes are in place.

The audit aimed to gain assurance of good systems in place to support practitioners to recognise and respond to exploitation, and of robust multi agency working.

2- Background – why Exploitation?

Recommendation to repeat the October 2019 multi agency audit of Exploitation to test out the effectiveness and impact of the multi agency exploitation hub (Horizons) which was newly established at the time.

The CSPR National Panel published a national report in March 2020 focussing on criminal exploitation and its' impact.

Themes identified in a local SCR which made reference to the involvement of older sibling in exploitation – a supplementary report of this case was completed for the Child Exploitation Board (CEB).

7 – Recommendations

The SCSP to:

Identify alternative approach to engaging with children/young people who will not benefit from the CIN/CP process but where exploitation is a concern.

Ensure the workforce can identify and access available services and support and that practitioners are supported to consider and understand exploitation.

Ensure there is a clear pathway of support for young people who are transitioning to adulthood.

Consider how equality and diversity is included in its' work and the impact of cultural identity on parenting practices

6 – Areas for Improvement

Positive male role models from a BAME background need to be visible across the workforce to engage with young people and enable them to build aspirations.

Greater connectivity with Adult Services is required – in all of the cases discussed, parents were experiencing at least one of the trio of vulnerabilities.

The impact of childhood abuse/ACEs need to be considered by practitioners as factors which could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation.

Greater understanding on the impact of housing issues, and the negative impact of temporary accommodation/frequent house moves.



3 – Overview

6 cases were randomly chosen for scrutiny, comprising 2 females/4 males aged between 13 and 17 involved in exploitation. Services involved ranged from universal to LAC. All were of a BAME background. 4 virtual multi agency discussion forums held attended by 38 practitioners from across partner agencies to gain frontline views. A case file audit tool was completed by agencies involved with the 6 identified cases.

All of the above was scrutinised by the QPP Audit Standing Panel.

5 - Good Practice

Universal praise for the Horizons Team and the quality of relationship based practice they deliver. Frontline practitioners identified Horizons as the 'go to' point for advice and specific case guidance which they felt was clear, trustworthy and beneficial.

Timely early intervention by one school who noticed a child had started to arrive late – they liaised with parents and showed tenacity in raising concerns about the behaviour changes.

A GP recognised when one family was at crisis point and submitted a MARF having identified the concerning indicators, enabling early support to be put in place.

The passion, commitment and willingness to learn and improve was evident from all agencies.

4 - Headlines

Using the principles of relationship based practice and consistency of workers is vital to developing trust and instigating change.

Timely communication and information sharing provided the best chance of diverting a young person away from exploitation.

Perpetrator behaviour is fluid therefore responses need to be adaptable and creative to disrupt their activity.

Housing can have a significant impact on the success of tackling exploitation – temporary accommodation can lead to increased missing episodes and a deterioration in behaviour.

Evidence of timely support particularly in the CIN/CP system, but less evidence of a robust process within the Early Help arena to prevent escalation of concerns.