



Family B Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review Addendum

Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership

January 2022

Background

This Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR) was commissioned in 2020, based on an incident which took place in late 2019 in which a child experienced serious harm, in the form of a near fatal stabbing by a sibling. The LCSPR was initiated in the height of the global COVID-19 pandemic, which led to significant delays in the finalisation and publication of this review. The Executive of the Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) were committed to ensuring that learning the lessons from this review and embedding the changes needed in practice would not be impacted by delays in publication. The SSCP have therefore provided this addendum to the report to outline the ways in which the Surrey safeguarding system has already responded to the findings and recommendations of this review.

The Recommendations

The published LCSPR makes eight recommendations for improvements in multi-agency safeguarding practice. These recommendations are:

Recommendation 1: Surrey Police is recommended to review its Standard Operating Protocols, training and management support arrangements for frontline officers who are required to attend and investigate community based or culturally orientated or (organised) violence. The need to consider an assessment of the impact on cohorts of children and young people as potential victims or witnesses of such violence should be included in that review of procedures, training and management supervision.

Recommendation 2: Provision of Specialist Advice to Officers working with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities Surrey Council should consider how best to ensure specialist advice is available to its officers to ensure that they take into account the ethnic and cultural needs of Gypsy, Roma, Traveller service users when undertaking assessments and planning services.

Recommendation 3: Ensuring the correct membership of Core Groups and Child in Need groups The Social Care Department should review the way that Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups and Child in Need Meetings are convened and how their membership is agreed to ensure that services which are essential are aware of the duty to attend or report on their own work, as required.

Recommendation 4: Quality assurance of Core Groups and Child in Need Meetings The Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership should request and monitor quarterly quality assurance reports on the operation of Core Groups and Child in Need meetings, including essential attendance and the oversight of multi-agency child protection and child in need plans

Recommendation 5: Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership and Surrey Children's Services is recommended to review how key Council and District Council Departments and Partner Agencies understand their wider corporate and statutory roles and responsibilities under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 and Working Together 2018; and how this duty reaches down to relevant staff. It is recommended that there should be a register of the named Safeguarding Lead in each relevant department to whom individual cases can be referred and escalated, as needed.

Recommendation 6: The role of the Faith and Voluntary Sector (Strategic) The SSCP should review its structure and processes to ensure that there is adequate representation for the Partnership, at appropriate levels, from the Faith and Voluntary Sectors at a macro-level such

as Diocese or equivalent for other Faith sectors, especially where they provide direct county wide welfare or support services to children, young people and / or vulnerable parents.

Recommendation 7: The role of the Faith and Voluntary Sector (Practice) The Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership should ask Children's Services and Early Help Providers to review and put in place arrangements to ensure that colleague practitioners from the Faith or Voluntary sector, who are working directly with families on Child in Need or Child Protection Plans, or families who have an Early Help assessment, can be included in Core Groups and Team Around the Family Meetings, as appropriate.

Recommendation 8: Priority Rehousing Arrangements Surrey Children's Social Care and District Councils in undertaking the review of the Priority Housing Protocol should seek to ensure that it meets the needs of children in need of safeguarding under Child Protection Plans or subject of Court Orders under the Children Act, where accommodation is a key element of protecting children.

Actions Taken To Address Each Recommendation

Recommendation 1: Surrey Police is recommended to review its Standard Operating Protocols, training and management support arrangements for frontline officers who are required to attend and investigate community based or culturally orientated or (organised) violence.

In response to this recommendation specifically, Surrey Police has circulated a reminder to all officers in April 2021, reminding them of the need to consider the wider aspects of safeguarding when attending incidents; for example the need to think family, think child.

Surrey Police also recognise that this recommendation also highlights the important issue of Contextual Safeguarding and Surrey Police recognise that understanding the specific context of a safeguarding incident is key to adopting the appropriate policing response. Surrey Police is in the process of a significant upgrade to their Child Abuse Policy and Procedure and Officer training programme. The first draft of the enhanced policy document which includes guidance on recognising context has been approved and is currently in its consultation phase before internal publication.

In parallel to this, Surrey Police has specifically included awareness and recognition of cultural issues in child neglect training sessions that have so far been delivered to 1000 officers, with others to follow as the programme progresses. Surrey Police is also in the process of delivering training in Contextualised Safeguarding for both Surrey Police and Children's Services via the Children's Services Academy; and to date, Borough Commanders and members of Child Exploitation Management Unit have been trained. There is a bid currently under consideration to extend this training to all officers and staff in Surrey Police.

Finally, Surrey Police has access to an Independent Advisory Group (IAG) that is made up of members from outside of policing and from different cultures, backgrounds and religions. The IAG are a valuable resource to Surrey Police and provide independent advice and support in raising awareness of cultural and specific community needs so that its services are the best they can be.

Recommendation 2: Provision of Specialist Advice to Officers working with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities.

This review highlighted the need for a cultural awareness and for culturally relevant approaches to working with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) Communities. To address the strategic and practice

issues raised by this recommendation, a range of initiatives have been put in place. These are outlined below.

Surrey County Council has commissioned anti-discrimination and cultural awareness training across Surrey to address the ongoing and established systemic issues that impact the way in which the Surrey system is able to identify and respond to the needs of the GRT communities effectively and a commitment to improving outcomes for GRT communities.

Surrey County Council also works to ensure that all system wide staff working with GRT communities understand and implement their safeguarding and corporate parenting responsibilities. In addition, extensive work has been undertaken to ensure that there is a clear read across between the GRT Strategy and wider system strategies including the First 1000 Days, Family Resilience, Helping Families Early strategies, and the SEND transformation programme.

Further, anti-discrimination and cultural awareness training has been commissioned and delivered across Surrey. Online cultural awareness training is now live via the Olive platform. This is recommended to all staff working with wider communities in Surrey. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is a significant priority for Surrey County Council. A corporate lead for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) within Surrey County Council has been appointed and there is now a new EDI action plan which has been endorsed by Cabinet. Also, an EDI hub has been set up to ensure that all staff have access to training, information and guidance to ensure culturally aware and inclusive practice.

Recommendation 3: Ensuring the correct membership of Core Groups and Child in Need groups

The Child Protection Conference, Core Groups and Child In Need Meetings process has been reviewed. The effectiveness of CP Conferences, Core Groups and Child In Need meetings were audited in August 2020. The audit noted that all agencies have a responsibility to support Surrey Children's Services to help identify which professionals should be invited to child protection conference / core groups. Surrey County Council works to ensure that Conference and Core Group processes have the necessary key professionals identified and contributing to the child protection plan in order to support the monitoring of identified need/risk/change/outcomes. This remains an area of focus to ensure continuous improvement.

As a result of this audit, its findings and recommendations, the Core Groups and Child in Need procedures were updated in July 2021. These updated procedures highlight the need to have the correct membership of core groups and that key agencies are invited and supported to participate in CP processes. The updated procedures also outline clearly the expectations and responsibilities of core group members. This guidance is available via the procedures using the following link: [4.10 Implementation of Child Protection Plans | Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership \(procedures.org.uk\)](https://procedures.org.uk)

Recommendation 4: Quality assurance of Core Groups and Child in Need Meetings

The Quality assurance of Core Groups and Child in Need meetings is an important and ongoing part of the quality assurance and scrutiny function of the SSCP's role under Working Together 2018. To ensure that this function is fulfilled effectively, the SSCP's Learning from Practice Sub-Group receives regular reports regarding attendance and participation in CP processes including attendance and participation in core groups. This remains an area of focus and improvement.

Recommendation 5: Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership and Surrey Children's Services is recommended to review how key Council and District Council Departments and Partner Agencies

understand their wider corporate and statutory roles and responsibilities under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 and Working Together 2018; and how this duty reaches down to relevant staff.

The SSCP along with Children's Services have reviewed how key County Council, Borough Council and District Council Departments understand and fulfil their wider corporate and statutory roles and responsibilities. The District and Borough Council has a representative on the SSCP Executive who provides challenge, oversight and accountability to ensure that Surrey's District and Borough Councils are fully sighted on their safeguarding responsibilities. The SSCP has a District and Borough Safeguarding Network which meets regularly. Each District and Borough has a named safeguarding lead. In addition, there are regular meetings with district and borough council colleagues to ensure the full awareness of these councils of their responsibilities under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 and Working Together 2018, and strong engagement in the county's safeguarding agenda. The District and Borough's Safeguarding Forum is focused on information exchange and on addressing issues where district and borough councils can play important roles in shaping and implementing safeguarding policies and practice at a local level.

Recommendation 6: The role of the Faith and Voluntary Sector (Strategic)

The Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership is continuing to work with Children's Services and Early Help Providers to review and strengthen arrangements to ensure that practitioners from the Faith or Voluntary sector, who work directly with families on Child in Need or Child Protection Plans, or families who have an Early Help assessment, are included in Core Groups and Team Around the Family Meetings, as appropriate.

On a strategic level the SSCP has included faith and third sector representation in our safeguarding arrangements. Surrey has a vibrant network of Third Sector and Voluntary Organisations. To ensure that the voice, experience and professionalism of the Third Sector is fully recognised and represented in our local safeguarding arrangements the SSCP has in place a Third Sector Safeguarding Network. Faith, Community and Voluntary sector representatives currently sit on the Partnership and work as part of the SSCP's Sub-Groups. We will continue to build on the current communications network to strengthen full involvement and leadership of the voluntary, community and faith sector in the work of safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.

Recommendation 7: The role of the Faith and Voluntary Sector (Practice)

The SSCP continues to work closely to ensure that representatives of faith groups and third sector organisations are appropriately included in safeguarding processes at every level of need including early help, Child in Need and Child Protection. To ensure that progress is made, the Learning from Practice Sub-Group is working with the Service Manager responsible for Quality Assurance to have a clear view regarding how faith groups and voluntary organisations are included in Core Groups and Team Around the Child Meetings.

Recommendation 8: Rehousing Arrangements

Through the District and Borough's Safeguarding Forum, the SSCP will continue to work with District and Borough Councils to update and review their respective Priority Housing Protocols as needed to ensure that these protocols continue to meet the needs of children in need of safeguarding under Child Protection Plans or subject of Court Orders under the Children Act, where accommodation is a key element of protecting children.

Each District and Borough Council has in place a housing allocations policy and procedure, which outlines how they will discharge their responsibilities to children in need of help and protection

under the Children Act 1989. This recommendation will be embedded as part of the District and Boroughs Safeguarding Forum's work plan throughout 2021-2022.