



01 Why the review?

SC was a 17 year old Black British male who was murdered in May 2021. An 18 year old peer was jailed for life for SC's murder. SC had been known to statutory services since the age of 8 months and had involvement with multiple partner agencies throughout his life. Concerns escalated from 2015 with increasing evidence of links to local gangs, county lines and increased criminal incidents.

Key themes identified were exploring how black children are seen by the safeguarding system, how information on exploited children is shared and the additional vulnerability of children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

02 The findings/recommendations

There are gaps in data that need to be addressed to build up a full picture of how children from black and minoritised ethnic groups are offered services and support across agencies in Sandwell. Improved processes and systems are required to ensure that appropriate action by way of referrals are made when children present to ED with injuries linked to serious youth violence. Consistency is needed in use of behaviour policies and experiences of alternative provision.

Need for improved understanding of the challenges and barriers which prevent families from black and minoritised ethnic groups from accessing Early Help support

A steer from central government is required to drive improvements supported by legislation and clear guidance

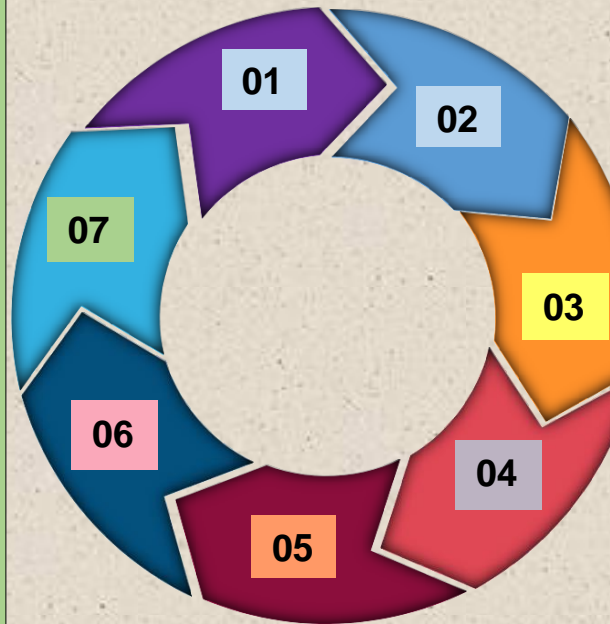
07 What needs to change in practice?

For agencies to support staff development to create a culturally competent workforce.

The evidence in the LCSPR shows disparity including over exclusion of black boys from school and a stark over-representation of black youth in the youth justice system, with black children being at least four times more likely to be criminalised than their white British counterparts.

For example, a Black Caribbean boy eligible for free school meals and who has SEN is **168x more likely to be excluded** than a White British girl with no SEN and not eligible for free school meals

This is a local and national issue that EVERYONE needs to contribute to in order to make change happen.



03 What needs to change in practice?

Early Help services and agencies should work with children and families from black and minoritised ethnic backgrounds to ensure the offer of support addresses their needs at the earliest point.

Professionals need to be 'culturally competent' and engage families in creative ways, understanding and supporting their cultural differences.

How do you engage black children and families?

Services, practitioners and managers need to understand and take ownership within their area of work to make change happen and understand what the barriers are so these can be overcome.

06 What needs to change in practice?

Prevention of school exclusions – agencies need to work together to prevent school exclusions and work with children and their families to understand the root cause of the behaviour.

There is a direct connection between school exclusions, exploitation, knife crime and youth imprisonment: our systems need to work together to keep children in mainstream school and increase offers of mediation intervention from services who are equipped to engage where possible and ensure all children have the same chances within their education journey.

05 What needs to change in practice?

Practitioners need to understand contextual risks, how to join these up and be reflective to understand exploitation indicators and measure risk.

04 What needs to change in practice?

Understanding what culture, faith and race means to every family, their values and how it might impact on their parenting and choices. This will help with informed decision making and tailored interventions.