



Statement from Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership

RS Child Safeguarding Practice Review

Publication date: Friday 21st January 2022

This Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) followed a baby being taken to hospital with serious injuries. Thankfully the baby survived and has made a good recovery.

The purpose of this independent review was to learn lessons about the way agencies work together to safeguard children and support families. This review has provided learning for agencies in Sandwell, Birmingham and Camden.

Lesley Hagger, Independent Chair of Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP), said: "This was an extremely distressing case which involved a baby receiving multiple injuries.

"The review has highlighted examples of good practice by professionals while concluding that the family undoubtedly would have benefited from additional support from agencies.

"Lack of timely information sharing and family members moving between local authority areas meant no agency had the full understanding of the family's circumstances, including strengths, risks and vulnerabilities.

"Areas for learning have been captured in a number of recommendations which have been accepted and implemented by the partnership, with learning widely shared among professionals.

"I would also like to thank all professionals who contributed to the review, to help with the continual improvements of services to safeguard vulnerable children and support them and their families."

The findings were shared with the Birmingham Safeguarding Children Partnership and Camden Safeguarding Children Partnership to take any required follow-up action.

All of the review recommendations are already in place and the SCSP will continue to monitor progress.

Actions following this review include ongoing work to ensure effective information sharing between agencies, including where individuals and families move between local authority areas and updating policies around non-attendance at appointments. The SCSP has developed a multi agency information sharing protocol to support practitioners with this.

Ongoing promotion of safe sleeping advice remains a priority, with Sandwell recently launching the ICON programme to support new parents to cope with crying babies and meet their needs. Work and training has also taken place to help professionals take a 'whole family' approach to cases, respond appropriately to non-accidental injuries in babies and to audit and update cross-border handover protocols.

A multi agency Was Not Brought guidance and 7 minute briefing has been developed to support practitioners to identify where there may be concerns and actions that can be taken.

Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust recognises the importance of healthcare professionals recording any information in the child's red book and also raising awareness around safe sleeping and what to do if there are concerns.

Both midwives and health visitors undertake a safe sleeping assessment during their contact with families and record this in their records and the child's red book. They regularly send out key messages and information on safer sleeping in line with the Trust's Safe Sleeping Policy. Health professionals from the organisation are actively involved in multidisciplinary team meetings where early concerns can be shared to ensure robust information sharing practices.

GP practices have developed a system to check with mothers of any babies if they are not registered within 12 weeks of their estimated delivery date. Patient registration forms have been adapted to ensure household members are recorded to link family members.

To report a child at risk in Sandwell, call the Sandwell safeguarding team on 0121 569 3100 (this number is available outside normal office hours), call West Midlands Police on 101 (24-hour non-emergency number), or contact the NSPCC helpline 0808 800 5000 (free service, lines open 24 hours a day).

If a child is in immediate danger, contact the police by dialling 999.