

Family H

Learning identified at a multi
agency event
29th September 2025



Family H includes three children
under the age of 5 and the
concerns identified were of neglect.
The learning event included input from all
organisations involved with the family

Click for Resolution
of professional
differences
(Escalation)

Theme: Working with Complexity

What is working well?

- Family dog assessed by professionals, deterioration happened when additional dogs arrived
- Tenacity of professionals involved

What are we worried about?

- Professional fear was evident because of aggression and complaints of parents and also multiple large 'protection trained' dogs, dogs were kept against tenancy rules.
- Reliance on parental reporting without triangulation.
- Difficulty continuing to have focus on children when there are multiple adult complexities, balancing multiple risks and ensuring that one issue doesn't lead to minimisation of others

What needs to happen?

- Triangulation of information needs to happen, including thinking whole family, consider additional complications and needs, care experienced adult, mental health
- Sharing of uncertainty and risk with other professionals and in supervision.

Theme: Response to Neglect

What is working Well?

- Children were seen by professionals even if not in the home.
- Creative opportunities were made by professionals
- GP continuity of care was good, child and parent asked about home life
- Tenacious work by health visitor to get into the home and see the family
- Evidence that history was sometimes taken into account
- Lots of practical support offered to the family
- Development reviews for children all took place on time
- Good ante-natal attendance and continuity of midwifery through the pregnancies
- Referral following gas engineer attending property

What are we worried about?

- Neglect described in records but not named
- No evidence of neglect tool being used – although this was an action on the child protection plan
- Evidence of neglect not always seen – home seen by different professionals as being 'good enough'
- Children not attending identified early years setting
- Parents could see home wasn't good, but not the impact of neglect for the children
- Cumulative impact of ongoing neglect

What needs to happen?

- Practitioners should consider a multi-agency meeting to undertake the neglect tool together and see the whole picture, especially when parents don't want to complete one
- Consider group supervision and c-allocation/joint working
- Consider having a lead professional
- Use of a combined (multi-agency) impact chronology to prevent having to 'start again'

Theme: Multi Agency Working

What is Working Well?

- Good collaboration between organisations
- Flexible and creative working
- Evidence of professional challenge – dissent in CP conference and at end of CiN plan
- Neglect named clearly at initial CP conference

What are we worried about?

- Family 'sacked' workers and demanded a new professional as part of deflection
- Repeat CP plans – no evidence of escalation when lack of sustained change, clarity of expectations for change
- Not enough 'think family' work to consider whole family
- Police undertaking a welfare check did not enter property – children brought to the door
- Not enough understanding of each organisations thresholds and roles

What needs to happen?

- Explicit evidence needs to be included in recording
- Use of police powers alongside curiosity and professional understanding of the powers

Theme: Resistance

What is Working Well?

- Children were being seen for medical appointments appropriately
- Maintaining some engagement – 'enough'

What are we worried about?

- Challenges of working with denial, there were multiple distractions to prevent access to the home
- Doing just enough – parent enrolled child in nursery although they never attended. Recognising disguised compliance.
- Interactions were controlled by parents, required negotiation and challenge
- Professional fatigue and feeling stuck impacting on curiosity

What needs to happen?

- Consider creative ways to complete neglect tool with other professionals
- Consider all routes open – and not just CP
- Confidence building to have challenging conversations

Children's behaviour should be seen as their voice and give insight into their lived experience. This may be aggression, being quiet, delayed language

The children
were *hidden*
in plain sight

Theme: Domestic Abuse

What is working well?

- Routine domestic abuse questions were asked frequently across organisations
- Referrals made to Next Link

What are we worried about?

- Isolation and wider family fears, maternal grandmother aware of abuse and scared of dad, coercive control, unclear how much grandmother was listened to.
- No MARAC to MARAC transfer when family moved from out of area

What needs to happen?

- Refer to MARAC, consent is not a requirement for referral. Look at ways to increase confidence of professionals

Neglect Tool and
resources
Click Here

Bitesize MARAC
sessions click here

