

Multi Agency Quality Assurance Audit: Children Looked After (Out of Area) December 2020



The ten children chosen for this audit were aged between 3 months and 16 years at the time of the audit. Six are boys and four are girls.

The children were living in a range of placements including foster placements, children's homes and residential care homes. The children were accommodated under Section 20, Interim and Full Care Orders and one placement order.

What we are worried about?

The audit identified that when a child has an emergency placement it is harder for all the processes and information sharing to take place. This was particularly evident for a nursery who remained unaware the child was now looked after.

What can I do differently?

- Ask curious questions to help identify who else is involved with the child who may need information
- Keep in mind the child is still placed 'out of authority' even if they are living in a very close neighbouring authority

What Good Practice did we see?

- Evidence of listening to the voice of the child including use of words and pictures
- Continuation of BASE involvement even though child moved out of area
- Exceptional work by hospital for a preterm delivery with a family whose previous children have been removed.

Organisations that audited their involvement with the three children were: Children's Social Care, GPs, Sirona, NBT, Police, YOT, EDT, Preventative Services, Camhs, BNSSG CCG.



Themes for Learning – Child's Voice overwhelmed by voice of parent

- Barrier for effective working, when a parent speaks for their child and restricts access for professionals to speak to a child about issues and risks

What can I do Differently?

- Trust your professional curiosity if something does not feel right
- Make use of tools to help capture the child's view in creative ways
- Make use of supervision



Watch the powerful poem I LAC Nothing by Aimee Williams here



USE OF LANGUAGE

Children in South Gloucestershire have specifically requested that they are not referred to as LAC – but instead have chosen the phrase **Children Looked After** and this should be adopted by all practitioners with immediate effect



Ensure information and paperwork is shared with the local authority the child is placed in

Themes for Learning: Georgia

What we found:

There was evidence that the learning from the Georgia SCR is being embedded and there was evidence of multi agency information sharing across boundaries. The audit group found lots of positive practice.

What still needs to happen?

It was not always clear, who the lead professional for a child is, and the primary point of contact.



The audit identified that there is a gap in provision and therapeutic support for mothers who have had children removed previously and who are expecting another baby

Read the Learning Brief for SCR 'Georgia' here