

Multi Agency Quality Assurance Audit: Children Looked After Out of Area March 2022



The audit of 8th March 2022 reviewed the records of nine children who are looked after by the local authority and placed out of area. The aim of the audit was to ascertain whether there were good multi-agency standards for managing cases and whether organisations have implemented a robust and consistent response in line with statutory and good practice guidance, and the Children's Partnership policies and procedures. This audit was to check learning has been embedded from the SCR Georgia

The nine children chosen for this audit were aged between 6 weeks and 16 years old at the time of the audit.

The children have a range of needs including exposure to domestic abuse, missing episodes and exploitation risk, criminal behaviour, seeking asylum, sexual abuse, parental mental health and neglect, substance misuse, parental learning disability.

- What we are worried about?*
- Frequent placement moves, placement breakdowns
 - No transfer document evidenced
 - Missing records – that have been escalated
 - A asylum seeking child identified as an adult and placed with adults initially
 - Exploitation tool not updated
 - Safety plan not shared with school – which would have helped mitigate risk
 - Delay in request for a health assessment
 - Risks not being managed effectively for one child – this has already been escalated

- What Good Practice did we see?*
- Good communication between agencies
 - Voice of the child captured in records
 - Identified the right placement to meet needs for the child
 - Placement found to keep siblings together
 - Consideration of timing of health assessment so that child could be more settled before undertaking it
 - Interpreter used to hear wishes and feelings of the child
 - Prompt notification for a health assessment and referrals to appropriate services
 - Young person has asked to be identified as 'she/her' and appropriate support is in place. Good practice from school, foster carer.
 - Provision of mentoring by school
 - Effective multi agency meetings evident
 - Good practice from Elective Home Education Team



- Themes for Learning – Domestic Abuse while children are in care**
- Issue identified that police do not notify Children's Social Care about Domestic Abuse incidents when the child is not there. This means there is no record for social care about incidents happening once the child is in care.
 - This can also happen should a birth parent present for health care or in hospital
- It is important to close this loop – so that records are still shared. Police agreed to add a flag to records to ensure incidents are still shared.



Thinking Allowed Service information for professionals here

Click here for the processes for children at risk of exploitation

When there is a strategy discussion for a looked after child looked after health team are now included

- Themes for Learning**
- What we found: Asylum Seeking Children information shared with GPs**
Out of area GP is not always aware of the asylum seeking children and the amount of trauma they have experienced, even though they do get a copy of the health assessment.
- What needs to happen?**
BNSSG will take this forward and identify how this information sharing can be improved
- Children Looked After and Criminal Behaviour**
New draft local protocol in place - 'Reducing criminalisation of CLA and Care Leavers' this is led by corporate parenting and with input from Police/ YOT and wider corporate parenting partners. This will ensure that all partners are working together to ensure CLA are not criminalised for behaviour within their care setting and more diversionary/ restorative justice approaches are considered.



Organisations that audited their involvement with the nine children were: GPs, Social Care, Camhs, Sirona, NBT, Police, Education, YOT, EDT and Preventative Services.

If there is a risk of exploitation an EIT should be completed
Click to see the tool

Exploitation Bitesize Learning sessions available here

Off the Record service information here

SCR Georgia learning brief available here