



The ten children chosen for this audit were aged between 1 and 14 years old at the time of the audit.

The children have a range of needs and experiences including domestic abuse, care experienced parent, substance misuse, neglect, ASD diagnosis for parent, anti social behaviour, parent in prison, speech and language delay, young carers, Elective Home Education

What we are worried about?

- Being able to gather the voice of younger children is challenging for police, and impact on child not recorded
- Nursery not aware of Child Protection plan when child started
- Housing not included in the meetings when dad in temporary accommodation and a second family are in emergency housing
- AWP not invited to meeting when parental mental health is key factor
- Focus on domestic abuse overshadowed mental health
- Reliance on parental reporting
- No DASH completed when DA identified
- Father's GP practice not receiving CP minutes as registered at different practice
- No evidence of use of neglect tool
- Think Family approach missing and lack of join up for family members
- Repeat CP plans for some of the children

If there are concerns about Domestic Abuse there should always be a DASH completed – [click here for DASH](#)

What Good Practice did we see?

- Good information sharing in a timely way
- Liaison between Health Visitor and GP strong
- Well attended multi agency meetings
- Child is considered even when their voice is not heard
- Nursery capturing voice of child through play
- Extensive support provided to one mother by GP
- Mum self referred to take part in Freedom programme once she was ready to work with Next Link
- MARAC to MARAC transfer took place when mum moved
- One example of very small child's 'voice' through behaviour and presentation by police
- Perpetrator engaged with Drive
- Good co-ordination and awareness of safety plan in school for all relevant staff
- Mother included in meetings and contributed to education even while in prison, good links between CSC and school



Themes for Learning: Disguised Compliance

- Look below the surface to identify why a parent is not attending, or bringing child to appointments after agreeing to the date. In one of these audits mum was overwhelmed with the amount of offers of support which were not co-ordinated
- Use supervision to unpick what is happening with a child and their family and use supervision as a reflective space
- Focus on disguised compliance can mean that professionals focus on parental compliance and lose focus on child.



Click here for a briefing about why the term 'disguised compliance' might not be helpful

Consider needs and impact for whole family

Themes for Learning Voice of Child

What we found: Focus on parents

- Complex needs of parents have overshadowed the child
- Voice of child is missing in most of the records of the audit group

What needs to Happen?

- Ensure voice of child is captured – even for very young/non-verbal children through behaviour or play
- Record using child's own words
- Ensure all children are heard – sometimes siblings have a 'louder' voice



Where there are complex issues make sure each child is heard

Think about the 'day in the life' of each child in a family



Over optimism evident without lasting change



Ensure that all organisations are included – housing and nursery missing from key meetings for these children

Neglect Tool and resources [click here](#)

Domestic Abuse Resources [click here](#)

The audit of 9th December 2025 reviewed the records of ten children who are experiencing mental ill-health or are pre-school and experiencing parental mental health.

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.

Organisations that audited their involvement with the ten children were: GPs, Social Care, Sirona, NBT, AWP, Next Link, Police, YJS, EDT, Preventative Services, Education. AWP did not attend the meeting but did complete the audit, this was problematic as the theme is mental health, housing would have been useful to be part of this audit



Multi Agency Quality Assurance Audit: Mental Health Dec 2025