



**Chief Officer Team  
Briefing For PCC**

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**Title:** HMIC Child Protection Post-Inspection Update

**Chief Officer Team Sponsor:** ACC Mr Foster

**Report Author:** D. Supt Darren Minton

**Report Details**

**August 2015 HMIC Child protection Post Inspection**

The below report highlights Inspection findings from August 2015 and the work in place to address the issues that were raised.

**Examples of original inspection findings not addressed:**

- Recording standards remained very poor
- Children continued to be detained unnecessarily in police custody
- Timeliness of specialist medical examinations of children had not improved
- Important information about children was not always available to frontline officers
- The force was not recording the views of children in child protection matter

The report breaks the areas of concern into the below headings and in each area, key issues have been highlighted below. There are also several positive comments throughout the report which are again documented below, along with the critical issues identified and what has been implemented to address the issues highlighted.

**INITIAL CONTACT**

**Key issues:**

- Improve staff awareness of the importance of understanding and assessing a child's demeanour. Record it in domestic abuse situations and use it to assess risk/need.

**TIMESCALE - WITHIN 3 MONTHS**

**Positive Comments:**

- Daily risk management reviews (Leeds and Bradford)

**Critical issues to address:**

- All districts to have a domestic abuse hub with partners involved
- Consistent completion of the child's demeanour on the DASH Risk Assessment

**In place:**

4 out of 5 areas have a domestic abuse hub. Only Wakefield haven't and they do have a general daily meeting but are working towards structuring it better.

Child demeanour work, Forcewide video and Local Accountability Meeting (LAM) scrutiny has led to much improved picture with audits. 'Voice of the child' also heard within investigation finalisation templates now and is used in daily business.

**ASSESSMENTS AND HELP**

**Key issues:**

- Attendance at and recording/communicating decision from child protection conferences.  
**TIMESCALE - IMMEDIATE REVIEW**
- Range of responses for high risk domestic abuse victims and children and providing information on children prior to Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) taking place  
**TIMESCALE - WITHIN 3 MONTHS**
- Improve missing from home (MFH) awareness with staff. Better understanding of Intelligence gathering sources of MFH, sharing this with other agencies and Identifying responses and actions from multi-agency plans for protecting children in these cases.  
**TIMESCALE - WITHIN 3 MONTHS**

**Positive Comments:**

- Kirklees child protection conference liaison/structure
- Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) implementation
- Improved MFH practices

**Critical issues to address:**

- Same service at child protection conferences force wide and does the criteria for attendance work?
- Risk assessment for MFH – no flags/information not centralised

**In place:**

The Safeguarding Review has recommended that ALL child protection conferences will be attended in all districts. Staff are working towards this and 3 out of 5 district achieved 100% last month with others improving their picture. Bradford have been trialling the 100% model and have been attending this figure for the last 6 months.

Children involved in domestic abuse are discussed in MASH on a daily basis with MARACs now taking place daily in 2 areas of the force and other districts adopting this direction of travel. Op Encompass is also embedded in Leeds and being rolled out force wide.

Local and central based training has been undertaken around MFH. Force policy has been revised to ensure compliance around this area and staff briefing and Inspector training is now complete with signs of improvement on recent audits and inspections. MFH is now core business in daily management meetings.

## **INVESTIGATION**

### **Key issues:**

- Improve investigation standards. Better auditing to check skills, supervision, awareness, knowledge  
**TIMESCALE - WITHIN 3 MONTHS**
- Reduce delay in analysis of material to HTCUC  
**TIMESCALE - WITHIN 3 MONTHS**
- Where investigations of Child Abuse go over 3 months, ensure child victims are supported and safeguarded. Measures should also be in place for the suspect to address risks imposed.  
**TIMESCALE - WITHIN 3 MONTHS**
- Monitor and improve timeliness of case reviews and charging decisions with CPS.  
**TIMESCALE - WITHIN 3 MONTHS**

### **Positive Comments:**

- Extra staffing across safeguarding units
- Reduction in backlog of digital media awaiting examination.
- CPS liaison.

### **Critical issues to address:**

- High workloads/lack of training/force inconsistent for child abuse investigators.
- Review of child abuse cases over 6 months old
- Supervision of child abuse cases
- Delays in obtaining material for children's services.

### **In place:**

'Safeguarding: Everybody's Business' courses have been delivered. A two year programme to ensure all Safeguarding staff have been appropriately trained for both Specialist Child Abuse Investigators Development Programme (SCAIDP) or Initial Crime Investigators Development Programme (ICIDP) is now underway.

Force Crime Management Unit (FCMU) about to be launched with a change to the way investigations are managed and finalised and a new investigations management policy is being developed to run alongside this.

Hi-Tech Crime Unit (HTCU) has a triage procedure and is attempting to get a basic report to staff within 72 hours of the triage. More in depth evidence gathering is outsourced and takes a standard 3 months.

Gatekeeper role for CPS Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO) team is now embedded within Yorkshire and Humber procedures. Backlog has been reduced and West Yorkshire are seen as good practice across the Region.

From 21/10/15 West Yorkshire consortium has developed an information sharing agreement that has been implemented across all districts.

## **DECISION MAKING**

### **Key issues:**

- Staff guidance on concerns/welfare of children. Particularly around what should be recorded/where, importance of sending info to partners and records are kept up to date.

**TIMESCALE - WITHIN 3 MONTHS**

### **Critical issues to address:**

- Grave concerns around progress. Varied referral processes.
- Lack of understanding on how and where to record concerns.
- Standard recording on police systems, poor and inconsistent.

### **In place:**

Intranet briefing to all staff has been undertaken.

Child demeanour briefing video has been rolled out and further work around the SAFER child process being undertaken.

'Voice of the child' is within finalisation template on niche and is being used.

Audits show child demeanour within Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harrassment (DASH) risk assessment is now completed in majority of cases.

## **TRUSTED AUDIT**

### **Key issues:**

- Staff record views of children, outcome of child at the end of investigation and inform children of decision made about them. Information about children's needs is available on a regular basis for consideration by the PCC.

**TIMESCALE - WITHIN 6 MONTHS**

### **Positive Comments:**

- DASH in place and well used

### **Critical issues to address:**

- Little progress made

### **In place:**

At the time of the Inspection, progress was commencing, however, audits on DASH and child demeanour have been undertaken with improvements. Officers are clearly aware as to requirements.

Child Safeguarding Detective Inspectors(DIs) have had changes around 'outcome for a child' communicated to them and are finalising crimes via a DI with an outcome of the child within the finalisation paragraph.

OPCC has appointed ECORYS to support children and research 'voice of the child' across West Yorkshire. A draft report is now available with full results by November.

## **POLICE DETENTION**

### **Key issues:**

- Review of how children in detention are managed so they are only detained where necessary.  
**TIMESCALE - WITHIN 3 MONTHS**
- Work with social care to achieve best options for children, custody staff comply with statutory duties and actions are recorded.  
**TIMESCALE - WITHIN 3 MONTHS**
- PACE detention certificates  
**TIMESCALE - WITHIN 3 MONTHS**

### **Positive Comments:**

- Social care liaison

### **Critical issues to address:**

- Lack of understanding amongst custody sergeants re: PACE in this area.
- Lack of recording of decisions.

### **In place:**

New protocol introduced November '15. Monthly scrutiny of children and young people detention overnight now identifies feedback to custody officers where needed. PACE beds are now available in all Local Authority areas.

Supt Minton now chairs panel with Youth Offending Team (YOT) involvement to ensure best opportunities to minimise children in custody overnight. Audits are also planned for YOT with Police in December to test Police responses and understanding.

## **LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE**

### **Key issues:**

- Force wide good practice around child protection to be implemented.  
**TIMESCALE - WITHIN 6 MONTHS**

### **Positive Comments:**

### **Critical issues to address:**

- Inconsistencies across the force. Different level of service dependant on area.

### **In place:**

Standard operating procedures have now been implemented across West Yorkshire. Audit and Inspection is now undertaken by Safeguarding Central Governance Unit (SCGU) on a rolling programme.

New SCGU structure has been devised and now implemented to standardise procedures across West Yorkshire.

Safeguarding Review 2 completed.

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