



Chief Officer Team Briefing For PCC

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Title: HMIC Child protection Post Inspection Review

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Report Details

HMIC Child protection Post Inspection Review – 02.12.16

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

Work undertaken to address these core issues:

- **Recording Standards remained very poor**

The continued development of all five district Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASHs) has meant that referrals have become more consistent. Due to this partnership based way of working, recording of crimes and referrals within the MASH has become a priority, allowing child protection matters to be recorded at the point of contact. Work has also been ongoing to deliver better outcomes by WYP around crime data integrity and this has given a better understanding to front line officers and those working within call centres and other access points to allow no matter to be missed and not be recorded within the Police crime recording system (NICHE).

To move forward further with this, a new version of NICHE will become available within West Yorkshire from January 2017. This will see the introduction of a 'Public Protection Notice'. Other Forces are currently utilising this tool and staff from Safeguarding Central Governance Team have benchmarked against other Forces to understand how this will best work within West Yorkshire. The early indications are that this new tool will further standardise the recording mechanism and referrals to partners, allowing a single document to be completed that is easy to understand and ensure recording processes of both crime and intelligence are consistent.

- **Children Continue to be detained unnecessarily in police custody**

Following on from this recommendation, a working group (now chaired by D/Supt Darren Minton) has been set up. This group meet regularly to discuss numbers of children who have been in custody and what barriers are in place for moving them. Partnership representatives are also present from local authorities who are asked to account for the number of PACE beds they provide (Local Authority temporary care beds for children who have been refused bail for the most serious crimes) and give detail where there has been blockages. Youth Offending Teams are present within this group and have now agreed to undertake audits with Safeguarding Central Governance Unit in December to

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understand 'live' time pictures and decision making within a custody environment. HMIC have also undertaken a full review of West Yorkshire Police custody procedures and this issue will be reported within this Inspection when the results are published. Improvements are expected to have been noted and recorded. The force has seen a significant reduction in the number of children being brought into custody with officers using alternative methods to interview. In fact there has been a 61% percent drop in the number of children being brought into custody for the last five years.

- **Timeliness of specialist medical examinations of children had not improved**

In March 2016, despite extensive consultation, no local health care authority felt they had the capacity to be able to provide a service to children within West Yorkshire that would meet the needs of all partners involved. As a result of swift negotiation, the new provider of specialist adult medical examination (Mountain Healthcare) provided an interim solution to the child examinations as well. From April 2016, Mountain Healthcare have been providing a seven day a week service for all child medical examination and also have on call paediatricians who provide a 24 hours a day strategy discussion service. There is also an option to utilise Mountain Healthcare links with other healthcare providers when an urgent medical examination is required and therefore not leaving children waiting unnecessarily. This service has meant that the provision for medical examination of children is now not only timely but also consistent for every child across West Yorkshire.

- **Important information about children was not always available to frontline officers**

Through the West Yorkshire CSE strategy group (Independently Chaired), in December 2015, a new risk assessment document was introduced for all partners across West Yorkshire. This provides a consistent approach to identifying those at the highest risk. Following this introduction, a new, flagging system has been introduced within West Yorkshire Police, allowing officers to easily understand and see when there is a CSE risk.

A new flagging system is currently being developed to ensure officers are aware of those children who are the most vulnerable through child protection plans and this, again is being developed to be implemented with the new NICHE upgrade in early 2017.

Several pieces of work have also been introduced to ensure the 'voice of the child' is heard throughout incidents and investigations and recent audits indicate a significant improvement in this area.

- **The Force was not recording the views of children in child protection matter**

As above, there have been several pieces of work that have developed to capture the 'voice of the child'. These include a finalisation section that means a crime cannot be finalised without the officer considering the voice of the child and what has been done to listen.

Assessments made at the scene of domestic abuse incidents by officers (by way of our DASH form - Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harassment and Honour Based Violence) include a section on child demeanour. This is more than the voice of a child and includes how they look, how they feel, surroundings as well as parental attitude towards the children. The completion of this section was underutilised when the HMIC Child Protection Review was undertaken. However, following several briefings, through holding senior leaders to account and by way of an innovative video, recent audits have shown a significant increase in this area of business. The video has also been shared with the domestic abuse national lead (DCC Louisa Rolfe, West Midlands) and is now being utilised by other forces as best practice.

The OPCC also commissioned work through ECORYS to understand a child's view within investigations from those who had been victims in the past (whether reported to Police or not). A draft report has now been received with some recommendations which will further inform and shape Police investigations involving child victims of the future.

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The report then 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 issues to address and work that has been ongoing/implemented since the inspection.

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.

Positive Comments

- Daily risk management reviews (Leeds and Bradford)

Issues to address

- All districts to have a domestic abuse hub with partners involved
- Consistent completion of child demeanour on DASH

Ongoing work/Implementations

Through extensive negotiations with local authorities and third sector partners (including domestic abuse services and IDVA providers) 4 out of 5 local authority areas now have a domestic abuse hub with a Daily Risk Assessment and Management Meeting (DRAMM), these meetings received positive comment from HMIC on their visits for the two areas that were starting to implement them at the time (Leeds and Bradford) and are therefore seen as best practice. This intervention not only looks at the persons who are involved but those who may be affected, including children and formulates a live time plan as to which agencies are going to work with victims and children to provide intervention and where necessary support. Only Wakefield District have yet to finalise a DRAMM due to limited 'buy in' from partners. However, this is expected to develop and be in place by early 2017. In the short term, Wakefield have local authority partners based within the Police Station and they have a morning meeting to discuss overnight offences which works in the same way as other areas, but does not include other agencies who may be able to assist with support and guidance.

Work has been ongoing with the MASHs across the County to deliver a consistent service. Through a safeguarding review, the core principals of all MASHs have been revised and the following have been agreed and understood by all districts. These core principals are now being delivered across West Yorkshire:

- Acting as a single point of entry gather all notifications related to safeguarding in one place.
- Enabling thorough research of each case to identify potential risk (and therefore the opportunity to address that risk)
- Sharing information between agencies, supported by a joint information sharing protocols
- Triaging referrals, exemplified in the use of agreed risk ratings.
- Facilitating early intervention to prevent the need for more intensive interventions at a later stage.
- Managing cases through coordinated interventions.

By maintaining these principles, many of the issues that were identified by HMIC have been embedded into normal business and protected children in a much more effective manner.

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New and easy to understand briefings have been delivered to officers in the form of briefing items and a short video around child demeanour and the 'voice of the child' in investigations. This video has been shared with the NPCC lead for domestic abuse, DCC Louisa Rolfe (West Midlands) and other forces have utilised it as best practice.

'One minute guides' for key areas of safeguarding business, particularly around protecting children have been developed and are being circulated for officers, again to raise awareness.

Crime finalisation now includes a 'Voice of the child' section and the introduction of a new Force Crime Management Unit (FCMU) allows more consistency and a new policy that no crime will be finalised, where there has been a child victim or witness without their voice being considered.

Recent audits have shown significant improvement in understanding child demeanour and them having a voice within an investigation.

Assessments and help

Key issues

- Attendance at and recording/communicating decision from child protection conferences.
- Range of responses for high risk Domestic Abuse victims and children and providing information on children prior to MARACs taking place.
- Improve missing from home 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.

Positive Comments

- Kirklees Child Protection conference liaison/structure
- MASH implementation
- Improved MFH practices

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

Ongoing work/Implementations

A Police Safeguarding Review has recommended that ALL Child Protection Conferences will be attended in all districts. Staff are working towards this and three out of five districts achieved 100% last month with others, who have the greatest demand, improving their picture. Logistical issues as to where the conferences are held and the times are being encountered and through negotiation, overcome.

Bradford have been trialling 100% attendance and have been attending this figure for the last 6 months. An improvement has been made in all areas, however, this clearly requires negotiation with all social care teams, many of whom are hesitant with Police attendance at all conferences.

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Children involved in domestic abuse are discussed in MASH on a daily basis with MARACs now taking place daily in two areas of the Force and other districts moving towards this as DRAMMs develop and should be in place in 2017. The DRAMMs also allow partners who attend to receive up to date information on children, early intervention and support can then be put in place.

Operation Encompass is a national ambition to inform schools of children involved in domestic abuse situations the morning after the incident occurred. This obviously relies heavily on partnership engagement as well as swift identification by Police of those children involved. The process developed has created a Police computer fix to allow an automated report to be sent through to the appropriate education liaison officer who will then ring or email the schools concerned first thing in the morning. This process has been trialled in Leeds and is now embedded with Calderdale now also live. Bradford have a go live date in December and Kirklees and Wakefield local authorities are now identifying staff for implementation within the next few months. Once this is complete, West Yorkshire will be one of the biggest forces to have achieved this vital intervention.

All Front line Inspectors and their deputies (96 officers) have now been trained by Safeguarding Central Governance Unit around management of Missing From Home incidents and how risk assessment decisions are reached. Local training has also been given to officers as to their initial response. The Force Policy has been substantially revised and the Force now fits with national standards around missing/absent definition as well as the other risk gradings. All officers have been briefed by way of email and a Skype briefing so they understand the changes. Missing From Home investigations are now core business within daily management meetings and senior leaders are held to account.

Recent audits in this area have once again shown improvement of officers understanding and use of the Policy as well as a more consistent approach to risk assessment.

Investigation

Key issues

- Improve investigation standards. Better auditing to check skills, supervision, awareness, knowledge
- Reduce delay in analysis of material to HTCUC
- 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.
- Monitor and improve timeliness of case reviews and charging decisions with CPS.

Positive Comments

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

Issues to address

- High workloads/lack of training/Force inconsistencies 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.

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Ongoing work/Implementations

'Safeguarding: Everybody's Business' courses were initially delivered to give staff a better understanding of key aspects of Safeguarding delivery. The course was a week in length and provided those working within a Safeguarding environment, specific training on issues that will affect them.

A two year programme to ensure all Safeguarding staff have been appropriately trained in both Specialist Child Abuse Investigators Development Programme (SCAIDP) and Initial Crime Investigators Development Programme (ICIDP) is now underway. This process will ensure that there are sufficient specialist investigators to deal with child abuse cases as well as adult protection cases and not only reduce workloads but make sure that the appropriate resource is allocated to the correct investigation.

Force Crime Management Unit (FCMU) has now been launched with a change to the way investigations are managed and finalised. A new investigations management policy is being developed to run alongside this. This includes guidance for officers around who and when supervisory and management interventions should take place within investigations.

Audits have been undertaken with current investigations and found that those which progress longer than six months are well managed by Detective Inspectors and suitable interventions are in place to safeguard all those involved.

The key reason for cases being delayed for more than six months was the requirement for digital evidence through Hi-Tech Crime Unit. This has now been improved and Hi-Tech Crime Unit (HTCU) have a triage procedure and are attempting to get a basic report to staff within 72 hours of the triage. More in depth evidence gathering is now outsourced and takes a standard three months, allowing faster investigations and less delays in child abuse investigations.

A Police Gatekeeper role for CPS Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO) team at Detective Inspector level, is now embedded within Yorkshire and Humber procedures. Any previous Backlog has been reduced and West Yorkshire are seen as good practice across the Region.

To further improve the service provided by CPS, 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 information to partners and that records are kept up to date.

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.

Ongoing work/Implementations

The Welfare and 'voice of the child' improvements have been well documented within other areas of the report, but they remain relevant to this recommendation.

The child demeanour video discussed making children SAFER, thereby asking officer to consider:

S - Surroundings of the child, where they live, is it an appropriate environment for a child to live and develop

A - Ask the child how they are feeling and what they want to happen, not only from an investigation point of view but most importantly for their own welfare.

F - Feeling, Officers are asked to use their own intuition and skills to understanding when something within the home is not right and record why it isn't before sharing this information further.

E- Emotions are running high in these types of situations and so Officers may sometimes need to look beyond what is being said and more at how emotions are being displayed within the family unit.

R- Record everything so that is available to Officers who may attend in future and so that appropriate referrals can be made when and where necessary.

This more in depth understanding, gives Officers the necessary prompts to make informed decisions on children and identify where there may be problems, before recording and sharing the information when appropriate.

MASH and DRAMM developments have given clearer referral pathways. This, along with the development of a Public Protection Notice, for implementation in January 2017, will give a consistent approach to notification to partners where there are concerns.

New reports such as Op Encompass (as above) and missing person referrals for children are now part of daily business with all local authorities receiving Police information in a timely manner. Further developments of Police computer system are expected to make further reports automated and easier to deliver to local authorities throughout 2107.

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

Regular checks with local authorities indicates the information that is required is sent to them very quickly and the MASH and DRAMMs prevent any delays.

Trusted Adult

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.

Positive Comments

- DASH in place and well used

Issues to address

- Little progress made

Ongoing work/Implementations

At the time of the Inspection, the child demeanour had only just been introduced and officers did not understand the importance. Now, with the interventions that have been indicated, audits have been undertaken with significant improvements noted. Officers are clearly aware as to requirements and are taking their responsibilities to protect children seriously.

Child Safeguarding Detective Inspectors (DIs) have had changes around 'outcome for a child' finalisations communicated to them and staff are now finalising crimes via a DI with an outcome of the child within the finalisation paragraph. As mentioned previously, the FCMU has now started and are ensuring that crimes are not finalised where this is not completed.

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. This will give a better understanding of what young people who may or may not have reported crimes to the police felt was either a blockage to reporting or could have been done better during the investigation. Once these results have been finalised, it is expected to shape and improve investigations and communication option for the future.

Police Detention

Key issues

- Review of how children in detention are managed so they are only detained where necessary.
- Work with Social Care to achieve best options for children, Custody staff comply with statutory duties and actions are recorded.
- PACE detention certificates

Positive Comments

- Social Care liaison

Issues to address

- Lack of understanding amongst Custody Sergeants re: PACE in this area.
- Lack of recording of decisions.

Ongoing work/Implementations

To better understand this problem, a new protocol was introduced November '15. This enabled monthly scrutiny of children and young people's detention overnight and now identifies feedback to Custody Officers where needed.

Supt Darren Minton now chairs a panel with Youth Offending Team (YOT) and Local Authority attendance and involvement. This panel/group not only look at all options but also share best practice to minimise children in custody overnight. Audits are now planned for YOT with Police in December to test Police responses and understanding.

HMIC also undertook a review of West Yorkshire Police custody processes earlier this year and once the results are published, improvements in this area are expected to be noted.

Leadership, management and governance

Key issues

- Force wide good practice around child protection to be implemented.

Issues to address

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

Ongoing work / Implementations

A wide range of standard operating procedures for all matters involving vulnerability have now been implemented across West Yorkshire. Audit and Inspection is now undertaken by Safeguarding Central Governance Unit (SCGU) on a rolling programme to examine how well the different Districts comply with these procedures. The six monthly rolling programme has a key theme each month on the following programme:

Month 1 - Missing From Home

Month 2- Domestic Abuse

Month 3- Child Sexual Exploitation

Month 4 - Serious Sexual Offences

Month 5 - Mental Health and Vulnerable Adults

Month 6- Forced Marriage, Honour Based Abuse and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Through implementation of this programme, Partners have been invited to attend and it has delivered a better understanding of how the Force performs in terms of its response to vulnerability.

A Safeguarding review is now ongoing to look at recommendations from the first round of these audits as well as the outstanding actions from this report to ensure the correct delivery, resources and processes are in place to achieve success.

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