

7 Minute Brief – ‘Why Doesn’t Anything Change’?

Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews ‘Lola’, ‘Liam’, ‘Willow Children’ & the thematic review ‘Why Doesn’t Anything Change,’ were commissioned after several serious incidents involving child neglect were reported in 2025, alongside earlier Partnership case reviews showing similar concerns. The reviews aimed to understand why neglect continues despite repeated professional involvement, and why learning from previous cases has not led to lasting change. The focus has been on identifying system-wide barriers and improving the effectiveness of the multi-agency response.

Key message:

Neglect remains one of the most harmful and persistent forms of abuse, with long-term impacts on children’s development, wellbeing, and life chances.

What the children experienced

- Poor home conditions and neglect
- Missed health and education needs
- Emotional harm/Sexual Abuse
- Repeated involvement with no improvement

➔ Always ask: *What is daily life like for this child?*

✓ Reflect: is the child experiencing multiple harm?

Useful Resources

[Neglect Toolkit](#) – including day in the life of a child tools

[Professional Curiosity](#)

[Right Help at the Right Time Threshold Guidance](#)

[Escalation Process](#)

[Short video - Recurring Learning Themes](#)



What practice needs to improve

Get the basics right

- Use chronologies
- Keep assessments child-focused
- Ensure plans lead to change

See patterns, not incidents

- Neglect can be cumulative
- Connect school absence, missed appointments, home conditions

Be professionally curious

- Don’t rely on parental self-reporting
- Test and triangulate information

Act, don’t wait

- You can share information **without consent** if there is risk
- If concerns remain → **ESCALATE**

Work together

- No single agency fixes neglect
- Value input from all (siblings, family members, schools, housing, health, neighbours)

System barriers identified

The review found wider system challenges impacting practice:

- Workforce instability
- Organisational culture/conditions
- Inconsistent thresholds and systems
- Normalisation of neglect
- Low confidence in practice

Neglect persists not because we don’t know what to do but because we don’t do it consistently, confidently, and together.

✓ Reflect:

What would we do differently tomorrow for this child?