

Communication and Information Sharing;

Communication between agencies can be disjointed and there is evidence of gaps in communication between organisations. It is important for agencies to **maintain clear, timely lines of communication** and keep the focus on the needs of the child. Since the introduction of GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) many agencies have updated their information sharing protocols but this should not cause difficulties when relating to the safeguarding of children, [Information Sharing Advice for practitioners](#) is a useful guide to assist with this. There was a particular issue with sharing info under s17 intervention following this case review local information sharing protocols have been updated with the [‘Seven Golden rules for information sharing’](#)

It is also important to recognise that children who are cared for by adults who are themselves in receipt of support may need additional support. Support plans for these children (at whatever level) are likely to be more effective where there is joined up working and communication between services that support adults and services that support their children.

Adult Services within the organisation should ensure that staff are aware of their duties in relation to the [‘See the Adult, See the Child’](#) protocol and the [South West Child Protection Procedures](#) and that each service has a way of monitoring the safeguarding processes.

Children moving out of or into Swindon

Children and young people, especially those assessed to be in need or at risk, are likely to be even more vulnerable as a consequence of the dislocation that moving between local authority areas can cause. Relationships with relatives and friends, and the support systems of schools and statutory services are liable to become fractured as a result of such moves whilst those seeking to avoid contact from statutory services may take the opportunity to sever relationships.

A key learning point from this review being local authorities should identify current approaches to the transfer in and out of their authority areas of child in need cases and others that fall below the threshold of child protection (i.e. under Section 47 investigation or subject to child protection plan or care proceedings) Following this case review the Protocol for protecting children who move across local authorities (link to be added) has been developed, this includes information relating to statutory and non-statutory transfer of cases.

Serious Case Review – Child M

A serious case review was published by Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children’s board in 2019, relating to Child M who moved from Swindon to the Oxfordshire area and was subsequently killed by his mother.

Despite its tragic outcome, this was a case where the main agencies with responsibility to work with children were rightly focused on the needs of the child. The SCR identified strengths in professional practice and service provision which would contribute to good outcomes for children in other cases. The review also identified learning which is set out in this leaflet. An action plan is in place by the SSP to address the recommendations and monitor them.

Engaging with families Research and evidence shows that engaging families including extended family members, using a ‘think family approach’ being mindful that child and parental issues do not sit in isolation. The Munro (2012) review highlighted the importance of professional relationships in improving outcomes for children, young people and their families and the skills and experience of workers in being able to achieve this. Use persistent, assertive and proactive approaches to engage the family: persistent message that you are there to help; persistently challenging parents’ behaviour. The SSP will explore with respect of working with extended families around development of any advice or toolkits.

Swindon Safeguarding Partnership Serious Case Review briefing: September 2019 Serious Case review: Child M

Joint assessments and a multi-agency approach

[Children’s Needs & Parenting Capacity](#) – A published research paper looking at Child abuse: Parental mental illness, learning disability, substance misuse and domestic violence identifies the importance of joint collaborative working between children services at assessment with other partner agencies with expertise of with adults. Mental illness, learning disability, problem alcohol and drug use and domestic violence affect adults’ parenting capacity and impact on their children in variable ways. Skilled, holistic assessments which focus on the outcomes for children, involve children and family members and place equal emphasis on the child, family and their environment are essential. Assessments should identify not only the child’s developmental needs but also parents’ acute and chronic difficulties which have an impact on their parenting capacity. The [SCIE website](#) have a useful guide for working with families with mental health: a template for partnership working.

Joint training in the use of assessments in being devised and due to be implemented in Swindon by January 2020.

**Concerned about a child? Contact the
Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH);
01793 466903 / fcpswindon.gov.uk**