Multi Agency Case File Audit Findings....at a glance 2016-17/Early Help—Neglect focus
5 cases of children who were in receipt of early help in September 2016 (undertaken in May 2017)

What we saw

Early identification
- Good Practice
  - A range of sources identified the need for support including midwife, health visitor, school, police.
- Issues Identified
  - Needs identified & actions recommended, but actions are not always progressed resulting in delays.

Assessment & Intervention
- Good Practice
  - Single agency and multi-agency assessments are evidenced
    - At least 1 CAF completed in 4 of 5 cases
  - Intensive interventions can be seen in 2 of 5 cases
  - Appropriate professional challenge resulted in better outcomes for the child in 1 case
  - Good working relationship between the parent(s) & worker
  - Good communication & sharing of information is reported
- Issues Identified
  - Use of CAF/GCP when recommended not always evident & 3 of 5 cases do not evidence the completion of a GCP
  - Historical information for the same concerns not visible in assessments
  - Inconsistent parental engagement and/or ability to sustain improvements has resulted in the escalation of cases
  - Analysis does not consider key risks (toxic trio) and the impact on the young person.

Planning
- Good Practice
  - Good engagement from parents in two cases
  - Range of services, beyond core services, engaged for children to meet their identified needs
  - Young person’s input into their own care planning is evident
  - Multi-agency planning visible through both formal & informal processes
  - Allocation of a worker who could communicate with parents in their first language was significant & improved outcomes
  - Work ‘above and beyond’ service expectations is demonstrated
  - Risk factors considered & Smart Planning evidenced
- Issues Identified
  - Disguised compliance in 2 cases
  - Current & historical needs should be considered within planning
  - Some agencies’ contribution to the GCP not always obvious
  - Action Plans and/or minutes of meetings not available to some key agencies

Review
- Good Practice
  - Exit Plan evidenced in 1 case
  - ‘Evidence of challenges & evidence of respectful resolutions’
  - Timely review meetings
  - Excellent multi-agency working responding to evolving & changing concerns
- Issues Identified
  - 2/5 cases evidence long periods of acceptance before cases escalated
  - ‘The child was very much at the centre of the assessment’

Case management
- Good Practice
  - ‘I feel that the case management is an excellent example of how the service has supported the needs of the child and family in a holistic and structured way.’
  - Agencies evidence access to the relevant minutes from meetings in most cases
  - A variety of safeguarding supervision arrangements can be seen
  - Cases are reviewed regularly by managers

Issues Identified
- Some inconsistencies in the availability of action plans
- The importance of sharing & evidencing early interventions undertaken to prevent gaps in understanding of the impact of any previous interventions on effecting & sustaining changes
- Gaps in significant and relevant historical information from other LA’s noted in one case
- One case reports a gap in the recording of relationships
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Multi Agency Recommendations

- Sustainability & lengthy periods of acceptance of support before escalating cases. These findings reflect similar learning from the Child L SCR. The Chair of the SCR subgroup to be asked for an impact update from the multiagency SCR action plan.

- The evidence of inconsistent use of the Graded Care Profile to be communicated to the Neglect Work group to inform strategy and work plan development and implementation.

- Communication/sharing of early help assessments and a plan with partners becomes standard practice.

Key messages for practitioners

- The Graded Care Profile should be used in all cases where neglect has been identified.
- Actions to support families should be implemented without delay.
- Ensure that Action Plans are shared with all agencies involved.
- Assess and monitor parents’ ability to sustain improvements.
- Disguised compliance is visible in 60% of cases in this audit.
- Escalate cases where change is not evident.