



Learning from a Rapid Safeguarding Review (July 2025)

7 Minute Briefing

1. Purpose

This briefing shares key learning from a recent safeguarding review to support reflection, strengthen professional practice and help keep children and young people safe.

2. Type of Review

Rapid Review July 2025

3. Reason for Review:

The review was commissioned following the tragic death of a young person in a railway incident, to understand what could strengthen safeguarding responses.

4. Key Learning Themes

- Children Missing and Exploitation meetings need to be better integrated with Children in Need and Child Protection planning, to recognise escalating risk and support timely multi-agency action.
- The child's voice should be given significant weight when assessing risk, alongside parental views and professional judgement, particularly where experiences differ.
- A greater understanding of Healthy Relationship work, peer influence and pressure needs to be developed as part of the response to contextual safeguarding.
- Where there are escalating concerns relating to suicide risk and neurodiversity, responses need to be timely, coordinated and proportionate to vulnerability, this includes sharing information following mental health assessments in the community and when in custody. Pathways for accessing CYPMHS and ADHD assessments needs to be aligned, so that there is consistency across Cheshire East.
- Training across all agencies in Cheshire East should be put in place around how to work with neurodiverse young people whether diagnosed, suspected or self-identified.
- Training and development across all agencies is required to enhance the understanding of County Lines, online abuse by peers and contextual safeguarding- including developing a consistent approach where young people are identified as high risk of death on railways.
- Continued improvement in data sharing across Cheshire, Manchester and British Transport Police is important to enable a timely understanding of risk.

5. What Good Practice Looks Like

- ✓ The child's voice was clearly captured and shared by multiple professionals, including education, police, health and children's services.
- ✓ Multi-agency partners proactively shared and connected information across geographical boundaries to build a fuller picture of risk.

6. Actions for Practitioners



- ✓ **Act early when risk is escalating** Be alert to changes in behaviour, patterns of missing episodes, peer associations or online activity. Concerns should be shared early, even where thresholds may not yet be met.
- ✓ **Use meetings purposefully and ensure follow through** When attending Children Missing, Exploitation, CIN or CP meetings, come prepared with up-to-date information and actions. If you cannot attend, ensure relevant information is shared and actions are followed up within your agency.
- ✓ **Strengthen chronologies and assessments** Contribute to combined chronologies at the earliest opportunity and ensure your information is accurate, timely and contextual. Use assessments to look beyond single incidents and build a holistic picture of risk.
- ✓ **Go beyond risk labels** When completing contextual risk assessments, include narrative detail about peer relationships, locations, online spaces, neurodiversity, mental health and recent changes in behaviour – not just a high/medium/low grading.
- ✓ **Prioritise the child's voice** Actively seek and record the child's views, worries and wishes, even when these differ from parental perspectives or professional opinions. Use the child's lived experience to inform risk planning.
- ✓ **Be curious about peer influence and relationships** Explore healthy and unhealthy relationships, peer pressure and exploitation in conversations with children and young people. Avoid assumptions and seek to understand who influences them and why.
- ✓ **Respond promptly to neurodiversity and mental health concerns** Where neurodiversity, emotional distress or suicidal ideation is suspected or identified, escalate concerns promptly, share information following mental health assessments, and ensure plans reflect additional vulnerability.

7. Resources & Support

- Further learning and development: [Safeguarding Children's Partnership Training offer](#)

8. Points for consideration

- How does this learning apply to your role/agency?
- What changes can you make to strengthen your practice and partnership working?