



## **PARTNERSHIP STATEMENT**

Ref no: BSCB 2018-19/01

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### **Publication of a Serious Case Review**

**Date:** 21st February 2024

### **Details: The importance of early planning and continuity of care for children with complex health needs**

Birmingham Safeguarding Children Partnership have today published an independent review which examines the importance of early planning and continuity of care for children with complex health needs. It is important to acknowledge that this has been an unusually challenging and protracted review, and indeed is the last of the former Serious Case Reviews before these were replaced in 2019 by Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews.

This review focuses on a young asylum-seeking couple who were expecting a child, and arrived unsupported in a strange country where they did not speak the language. On arrival in the UK, they moved to Birmingham where their child was born, significantly prematurely in August 2014. They initially lived in temporary accommodation, moving on numerous occasions during this period thus making it difficult to access services. There was a pattern of the child not being brought to planned medical appointments and concerns that the child had suffered several unexplained injuries. In November 2017, the child sustained serious injuries which were thought to be life ending.

Having sustained life changing injuries, the child remained in hospital for a prolonged period of time. Although discharge planning was ongoing as part of a multi-agency plan, the lack of a suitable placement for the family, due to the complexity of the child's health needs, led to a significant delay in the child leaving hospital. Whilst in hospital the child was supported by a multi-agency child in need plan, rather than a child protection plan, which impacted legal planning and subsequent decision making, this was a missed opportunity to ensure the right outcome.

In subsequent years, housing, special education, and family support services have been provided to the family, enabling the child to live at home.

This review has identified important partnership learning from analysis of the events leading up to the incident in November 2017, and the long-term continuity of care for a

child with complex health needs. In the intervening period the findings have led to significant reflection and change, as well as systemic improvements in partnership governance. Significant lessons have been learned and turned into service and practice change.

Developments include:

- Revised National Asylum-Seeking Support Services;
- Improved local discharge planning;
- Development of local Early Help and Family Support;
- Publication of a Birmingham Childhood Neglect Strategy and Delivery Plan;

## **Penny Thompson CBE Independent Chair BSCP**

### **Note to editors:**

The purpose of the Serious Case Review (SCR) is to establish whether any lessons can be learnt by professional services to help ensure children are better protected in future. In 2019 the Department of Education introduced Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, to replace Serious Case Reviews.

The SCR is published on the Birmingham Safeguarding Children Partnership website (<https://lscpbirmingham.org.uk/case-reviews-and-audits/learning-from-reviews>). A copy can be downloaded from the table on the webpage (Case Reference BSCB 2018-19-01). A copy has been forwarded to the National Case Review Repository hosted by the NSPCC.

If you are concerned about a child living in Birmingham, please ring Birmingham Children's Trust's Children's Advice and Support Service on 0121 303 1888.

**For any media enquiries or interview requests please contact Lawrence Vos, Communications Manager.**

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