Rapid Review 16 Learning Briefing

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15 agencies took part in the review.

A rapid review reflective learning meeting was held with multi-agency safeguarding leads supported by a combined chronology and genogram.

The recommendation was made to commission a full Child Safeguarding Practice Review

This rapid review was conducted in September 2022 following a serious incident notification being made in response to the death of a young baby. The baby was born into a large family who were being supported under a child in need plan at the time of baby's death.

Previous issues included concerns around domestic abuse, the neglect and discipline of children in the home and children having caring roles for younger siblings. Professionals also highlighted that parents did not always seek or follow medical advice when needed.

The family were living overcrowded accommodation which resulted in children having to share bedrooms and beds, with younger children and the baby at times co-sleeping with parents.

The rapid review has considered the needs of the family and the support that they received in the antenatal and initial postnatal period by universal services.

ICON stands for:

Infant crying is normal

Comforting methods can help

It's OK to walk away

Never, ever shake a baby.

What's working well

- Good emotional and educational development supported by trauma informed and inclusive approach of nursery & school staff
- Domestic abuse was explored by GP and midwife in antenatal appointments (IRIS)
- Additional visits made by health visiting (HV) staff due to premature birth of baby and good information sharing between HVs and midwifery services
- Appropriate advice around smoking cessation for parents and child immunisations was given by health staff
- Information on safe sleeping and the ICON programme was provided to parents by health staff
- Good information sharing between the school nurse and social care and timely decisions-based risk assessments undertaken
- School attendance of children and timelessness improved due to the school offering thrive groups, parental support and attendance plans
- Timely responses and decision making by school and social work teams following allegations of physical abuse
- Access to youth services such as creative youth network and Southmead development trust for the children has been positive and fostered good relationships with parents
- Good risk assessments undertaken by school nurse following children requesting sexual health advice e.g. completion of Fraser checklist and Child Sexual Exploitation
- The continued pilot of Think Family database in schools to further improve the identification and information sharing of families history and current circumstances was deemed to be beneficial

What needs to improve

- Universal services taking a Lead Professional approach in the coordination of Early Help for complex families would have been beneficial and continues to be highlighted in reviews.
- The formal recording of strategy meetings, including decisions and clear next steps needs improvement as does the need for clear multiagency safety plans which do not over generalise the needs of other children within the family unit.
- There is a need to ensure the right agencies and education are invited to strategy meetings to gain a full understanding of the family's needs and to provide appropriate responses. Legal representation should also be invited to the strategy meeting following a child's unexplained death to consider legal thresholds for other children in the home.
- There is a need to ensure significant changes to safety plans are clearly communicated in a timely way amongst statutory partners e.g. social care and the police.
- Practitioners' awareness of unconscious bias and improved cultural understanding in providing support to families from minoritised communities
- GPs need to reiterate the importance of safer sleeping practices and the ICON programme to support parents who may have different understanding of sleeping positions.
- Agencies & educational settings to promote a Think Family approach and consider all siblings within the family.
- The role of a young carer needs to be recognised when working with large and complex families, to ensure appropriate support is provided
- Agencies to increase use of tools such as genograms, ecomaps etc to improve understanding and dynamics of large and complex families, and in providing more effective services and responses
- Educational settings to improve knowledge of family networks and social care involvement through implementation of think family database