

Safeguarding Concerns

Henry's family were living in supported accommodation, and they were receiving targeted early help. There were ongoing concerns about the conditions of the flat, being described as cluttered with overflowing bins, unwashed baby bottles and a strong smell of body odour. Libby experienced an ongoing rash thought to be due to her not being dried thoroughly. She also was reported to have 6 minor injuries to her head and one incident where she was reported to have choked and stopped breathing. Concerns were also raised about Libby's weight gain which was significantly increasing.

Both parents were known to have had significant adverse childhood experiences and had received support from children's social care. Mum continued to experience poor mental health, reduced mobility and pain arising from sciatica and dad was known to use cannabis.

Good Practice

The S17 Assessment of Libby in 2021 appears robust, with clear consideration of parents' history and current situation.

There was evidence of communication and concerns being shared appropriately from health to children's services.

Staff within the supported housing provider built good relationships with both parents and children.

The level of support and care given to the family has been intensive from the targeted early help service.

Staff from both the supported housing provider and the targeted early help service continued to work with parents around helping them recognise concerns about the home conditions.

At the time of the serious incident, the process from admission to strategy meetings identified clear planning and actions.

Professionals worked together to complete all activity and when harm became evident appropriate actions were taken to safeguard both children.

Safeguarding 5 Point Briefing Rapid Review 'Henry'

Background

Henry was born in hospital and went home to live with both parents and their 1 year old sibling, Libby. When they were 2 months old, they were taken to hospital as parents were concerned they could hear cracking sounds coming from their chest. Examinations found that Henry had multiple fractures and a brain bleed, these are thought to be non-accidental.

April 2023



Identified Learning

Within the Team Around the Family (TAF) process for families receiving a targeted early help service, they should periodically review the cumulative chronology and consider any new information received to ensure the correct threshold is being applied.

The [Day in the Life of the Child](#) tools should be used with families to consider the impact upon the lived experience of the child.

All practitioners who work with families should be familiar with the [Unborn/Newborn Baby Protocol](#) and where their work brings them into contact with pre-school aged children, they should be encouraged to attend the training [Empowering Professionals to Effectively Safeguard Children from pre-birth to 3yrs](#) available from the PSCP

Reflections

The reported accidental injuries appear to have been viewed in isolation and not drawn together to gain a holistic view of the impact on Libby. Nor do they appear to have been considered in the context of the concerns about the home conditions and the trip hazards these may have presented.

It is not apparent whether it was considered if these injuries, combined with Libby's ongoing rash and increasing weight, constituted neglectful parenting.

There does not appear to have been a consideration of the impact a second child will have upon family dynamics.

Whilst mother's low mood reduced mobility and pain arising from sciatica were noted, the impact of this on her ability to effectively care for Libby, and subsequently Henry, do not appear to have been explored.

There appear to have been some discrepancies between the early help workers and supported housing staff as to the condition of the flat, and whether this was a safe and suitable environment.

There was no apparent plan for how the family will move on from the supported accommodation into independent accommodation.