

7-minute briefing: summary of findings from LCSPR Baby R

For all those working with adults, children and families

Visit <https://bexleysafeguardingpartnership.co.uk/> for the full report and other useful resources



1. What is a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR)? How was this review carried out? Who was involved?

The purpose of a LCSPR is to look at what happened and why, focusing on the systems that practitioners work within and what action we need to take to change those systems so that practice can be improved.

The agencies involved in this review were Bexley Children's Social Care, South London and Maudsley NHS foundation Trust, Bexley Perinatal Service, Sidcup Hospital, Metropolitan Police Service, Dartford & Gravesham NHS Trust, Kent County Council Children's Services, Bromley Health Care, Oxleas NHS foundation NHS Trust, Lewisham & Greenwich NHS Trust, Kings College Hospital, London Borough of Croydon Leaving Care services, Slade Green GP Surgery, Royal Borough of Greenwich, Lewisham Children Social care. Baby R's family were consulted with as part of the review and have been invited to contribute. At the present time they have chosen not to comment.

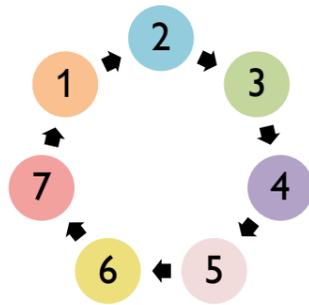
2. What happened for this child and their family?

Baby R and his older sibling were living with their parents in Bexley. The children were subject to child protection plans due to concerns of neglect. Baby R died aged four weeks after presenting to A&E with a potential non-accidental head injury (NAI).

The parents of Baby R had been known to services in Croydon, Lewisham, Greenwich, Bexley and Kent prior to settling permanently in Bexley. The family had moved from Bexley to Kent to temporary housing and subsequently returned to Bexley shortly before Baby R's birth. Services had been involved historically to provide support to the parents, both as young people and first-time parents of their first child.

7. Useful resources

- [Baby R LCSPR Report October 2021.pdf](#)
- [Bexley Bruising Protocol for Pre-Mobile Infants](#)
- [The myth of invisible men: safeguarding children under 1 from non-accidental injury caused by male carers](#), Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel, September 2021



6. Next steps

- The development of a practice forum to invite practitioners to present case studies which may resonate with some of the characteristics and themes of learning identified in the Baby R review (this will provide opportunity for practitioners to consider in more detail the learning from this review and to take forward and develop practice in current cases where relevant).
- LB Bexley Children's Social Care has prioritised training workshops on completing genograms, risk assessments and trauma informed practice (including in inductions and team briefings).
- Bexley S.H.I.E.L.D. to support raising awareness of the importance of completing genograms in order to encourage a Think Family approach.
- Bexley S.H.I.E.L.D.'s Priority 8 – *Identifying and better understanding the mental health of children, young people and families in Bexley in light of Covid-19 and the services available to support them* – is exploring timely support for families where mental health an issue
- Bexley S.H.I.E.L.D. to coordinate the refresh and dissemination of Bexley's pre-birth assessment protocol and practice guidance
- Bexley S.H.I.E.L.D. alongside Bexley Safeguarding Adults Board is developing a Think Family protocol and practice guidance due to be launched in October 2021.
- Learning from Practice Group to produce one-pager practice guidance on 'escalation' and 'resolving professional differences'.
- Bexley S.H.I.E.L.D. and LB Bexley Leaving Care Team to plan and schedule multi-agency audit on how Bexley supports and prepares young care leavers for parenthood considering learning from this review and National Panel findings.
- LB Bexley Professional Standards to refresh practice guidance for case conference chairs and participants of conferences in relation to escalation, Head of Service management oversight and recording dissenting views, and rationale.
- Bexley S.H.I.E.L.D. to share learning from this review with Kent Children's Safeguarding Partnership and Kent Safeguarding Adults Board (and to request the learning is disseminated with Kent Children's Social Care and Housing teams).
- LB Bexley Director of Children's Services to share recommendation for London-wide agreement for housing departments to agree non-transfer of families to temporary housing when children subject to child protection plans.

5. Key learning themes

- Think Family
- Supporting care leavers / young carers
- Transitions between local authorities
- Use of genograms
- Parental mental health
- Understanding neurodiversity
- Effective challenge to parents and professionals
- Escalation
- Information-sharing
- The importance of reflective supervision for practitioners especially when working remotely to ensure peer and management support (child protection work is very complex and those on the front line rely on being able to reflect and check things out with their colleagues and managers)
- The impact of Covid on families in relation to vulnerable under-1's (in the period March-October 2020, Ofsted reported a 20% increase in non-accidental injuries to infants – this was attributed to the added pressure that parents were under, coupled with the complexities of trying to offer support to during the pandemic)



3. What we have learned so far about the effectiveness of multi-agency practice?

- The importance of multi-agency discussions both within statutory meetings and in-between reviews.
- All agencies require understanding of history of both parents and outcomes and analysis of previous assessments to have complete understanding of vulnerabilities, presenting risk and areas of concern which could impact on parenting.
- The importance of all agencies understanding neuro-diversity when making decisions and the impact of this on levels of support needed.
- The importance of being able to challenge parents and professionals when information provided by either does not fit within best practice or guidance.
- The importance of timely escalation when there is differing professional views about levels of need including when there has been dissenting views about whether to place a child on a plan or not.
- The importance of ensuring support plans and monitoring is in place with receiving Local Authority when families have to transfer to another borough permanently and when children are subject to plans.
- The requirement for safety planning to include adequate consideration and assessment of support from family and their wider network.

4. What has changed already as a result of this learning review?

- Bexley S.H.I.E.L.D. has developed a bruising protocol which includes practice guidance for professionals ensuring process for reporting bruises in pre-mobile babies and highlighting importance of the need for full investigation even when explanation has been provided.
- Bexley S.H.I.E.L.D. has coordinated the refresh of Bexley's Neglect Strategy and Toolkit and practice workshops are taking place within LB Bexley Children's Social Care to support practice development.
- LB Bexley Housing has agreed not to transfer any families out of borough to temporary housing if children are subject to child protection plans.
- Bromley Health Care have taken forward a number of practice-related developments:
 - Safeguarding supervision policy amended to give clear and detailed explanations of the 2 supervision models (Signs of Safety model used in Bexley and the Relationship model used in Bromley).
 - Safeguarding policy amended to give more specific information on bruising in non-mobile babies including the local protocol (and protocol issued to all staff)
 - Additional training on injuries in non-mobile babies commenced in September 2020 – 100% of health visiting staff in Bexley and Bromley have received the additional training (the training has also been delivered to staff in Specialist Children Services)
 - Safeguarding Children Update in September 2020 focussed on trends during Covid around skull fractures in children and injuries in non-mobile babies
 - Audit on supervision records provided assurance to Bexley S.H.I.E.L.D.
- Oxleas Perinatal Team now complete a Safeguarding children assessment on RIO for every new service user (and their unborn/baby), this is in addition to a comprehensive mental state assessment. The safeguarding children form includes the following sections:
 - Documentation of children and other significant adults living in the service user's home
 - Documentation of children who are in contact with the service user who do not live in the individual's home
 - Identification of any support a service user/family may require
 - Details of other services/professionals involved with the service user/children/family
 - Completion of a risk assessment (with a prompt of Think Family).

