

PROTECTING CHILDREN IN KENT

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Baby Peter

- **Died of non-accidental injuries, aged 17 months**
 - **Had been on child protection register from age 9 months**
 - **Injuries recorded during the period he was on CP register**
 - **Social worker visited regularly (last saw Peter 4 days before death)**
 - **Health services in contact (last saw Peter 2 days before death)**
 - **Mother non-compliant and misled agencies regarding presence of partner**
 - **Lack of authoritative approach by agencies**
 - **Poor supervision**
 - **Poor inter-agency communication**
- [Haringey LSCB Serious Case Review, February 2009]**

Findings of Haringey JAR

- **Weaknesses in safeguarding and child protection procedures and practice**
- **Inadequate leadership and management of safeguarding by local authority and partner agencies**
- **Poor gathering, recording, and sharing of information**
- **Failure to identify those children and young people at immediate risk of harm**
- **Poor child protection plans**
- **Agencies generally working in isolation from one another and without effective co-ordination**
- **Failure to consult with children**
- **Limited evidence of reasons when children were not seen alone**
- **Inadequate serious case review of death of Baby Peter**

Tools for reviewing Kent CSS safeguarding

- **Questionnaire completed by all Children's Social Services teams**
- **Extended audit of 50 current child protection cases**

Main findings from questionnaire and case audit for Kent CSS

- **Children on CSS caseloads are adequately safeguarded**
- **Evidence of sound professional practice by CSS**
- **Effectiveness weakened by caseloads in some teams**
- **Effectiveness weakened by recording requirements of the Integrated Children System (ICS)**
- **Importance of supervision in maintaining quality of child protection work**

Main findings

QUESTIONNAIRE

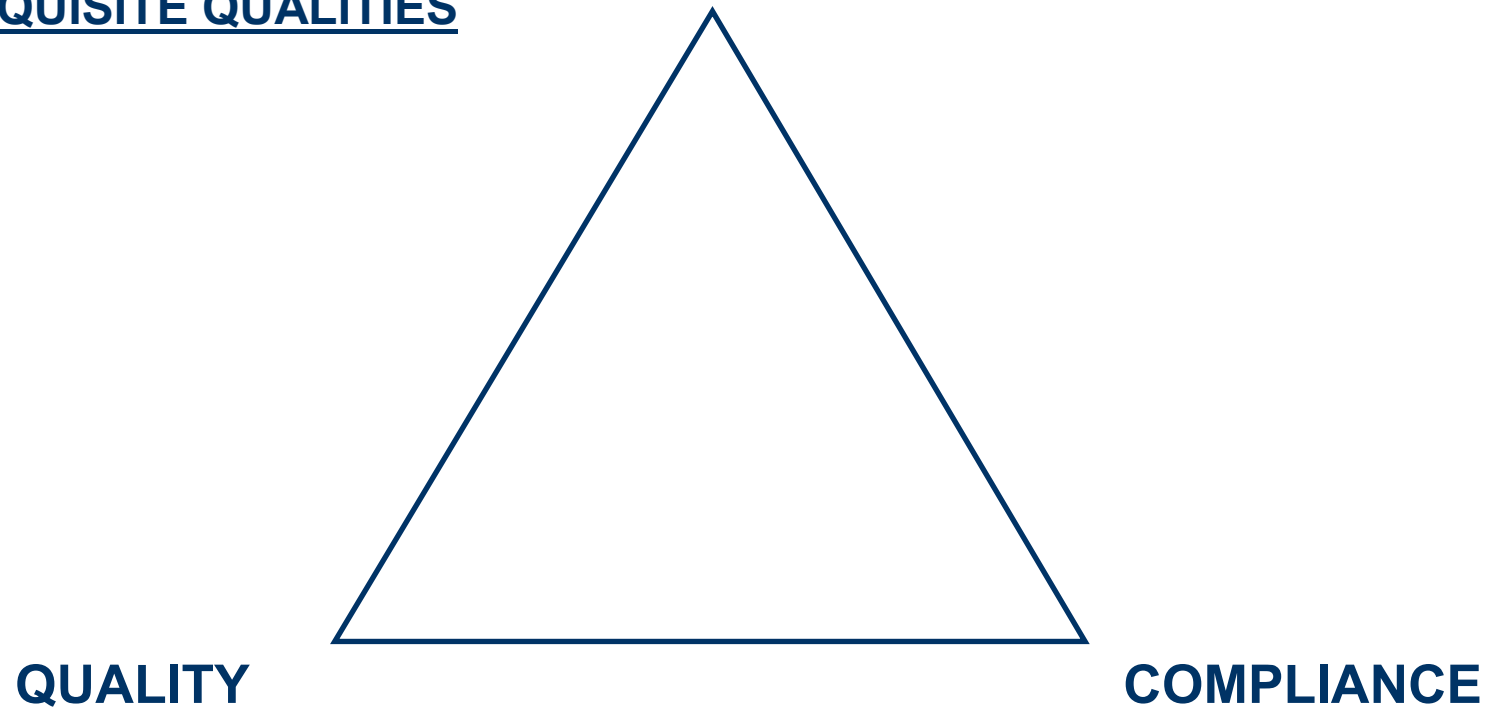
- Kent CSS safeguarding standards are generally safe
- There are some pressures on the safeguarding systems and practice
- Some pressures are county-wide, others are localised
- Localised pressures may change location and focus over time
- Where county-wide and local pressures coincide, there is increased risk that standards may become unsafe

CASE AUDIT

- Children in review are adequately protected
- Some elements of reviewed cases fell short of best practice
- Mixed recording processes create difficulty in gaining a speedy and comprehensive overview of cases
- Good quality supervision is associated with good child protection

Good child protection organisations

REQUISITE QUALITIES



Haringey JAR - Weaknesses in safeguarding and child protection procedures and practice

KENT CHILDREN'S SOCIAL SERVICES

- Policies are generally well implemented and followed [Q27]
- Quality audits are used to evaluate outcomes and compliance [Q28]
- Performance indicators are used to assess quality of practice [Q29]

Haringey JAR - Inadequate leadership and management of safeguarding by local authority and partner agencies

KENT CHILDREN'S SOCIAL SERVICES

Children's Social Services management has been positive in its actions in response to the Secretary of State's request to review safeguarding services and in taking action in response to the findings of this review

Review of other agencies' management and leadership will be undertaken by the Kent Local Safeguarding Children Board

Haringey JAR - Poor gathering, recording, and sharing of information

KENT CHILDREN'S SOCIAL SERVICES

- Information gathering is satisfactory [Q2]
- Account is taken of historical concerns [Q16]
- Child protection reviews involve a range of agencies [Q19]

Haringey JAR - Failure to identify those children and young people at immediate risk of harm

KENT CHILDREN'S SOCIAL SERVICES

- **Thresholds are clearly defined [Q1]**
- **Strategy discussions are held according to *Working Together* requirements [Para 9.1]**
- **Child protection conferences are generally held within timescales and according to *Working Together* requirements [Para 9.1]**
- **Where appropriate, legal processes are used promptly to protect children [Para 8.1]**

Haringey JAR - Poor child protection plans

KENT CHILDREN'S SOCIAL SERVICES

- Care planning and assessment is satisfactory [Q15&17]
- Child protection plans are clear [Q22]
- There is evidence that child protection plans are successful [Q23]
- Children are usually consulted about their child protection plans [Q24]
- Child protection plans are in place and monitored and most show evidence of progress [Para 9.1]
- Core Group meetings are normally held within stipulated timescales and are well-attended and implement child protection plans [Para 9.1]
- Independent chairpersons of child protection conferences maintain focus on child and progress of plans [Para 9.1]

Haringey JAR - Agencies generally working in isolation from one another and without effective co-ordination

To be reviewed with partner agencies on Kent Local Safeguarding Children Board

Haringey JAR - Failure to consult with children

KENT CHILDREN'S SOCIAL SERVICES

- Children are seen and spoken to [Q12]
- Children are visited within agreed timescales [Q21]
- Children are visited regularly and seen and spoken to [Para 9.1]
- Children are usually consulted about their child protection plans [Q24]

Haringey JAR - Limited evidence of reasons when children were not seen alone

KENT CHILDREN'S SOCIAL SERVICES

- Managers address reasons when children are not seen alone [Q13]

Haringey JAR - Inadequate serious case review of death of Baby Peter

Haringey LSCB produced a second serious case review in February 2009

All recent serious case reviews conducted by Kent LSCB have been appraised and accepted by Ofsted

CONCLUSION

“... there can be no guarantee that a single case within Children’s Social Services may not be in a state of risk. Standards of child protection work, overall, can only be assured by regular supervision and self-monitoring.” [Para 10.2]

“Regular, high-quality, organised supervision is critical.” [Lord Laming]