

Themes from local serious case reviews and action to take

1. Strategy discussions – use them to effectively coordinate action, include the right people so that informed decisions can be made.
2. Contact with CSC - everyone needs to have a shared view as to how a contact with CSC is being managed i.e. information sharing, advice, referral.
3. Voice of the child - listen to children and help them to be heard. See beyond a child's behaviour and focus on the causes of the behaviour.
4. Resolving professional disagreements - professionals have a duty to try and resolve disagreements and where necessary escalate concerns.
5. Risk factors - be aware of vulnerabilities within certain groups of children e.g.
 - a. Babies and infants - bruising in non-mobile babies – refer to children's social care unless explanation.
 - b. Children with disability – disability can mask signs of abuse or neglect.
 - c. Teenage suicide – be familiar with the risk factors.
6. Neglect - determining levels of neglect and their impact on the child requires professional judgment based on sound assessments and analysis. Drift and delay must be avoided by taking timely and decisive action.
7. Assessments – a sharing of professional expertise provides,
 - a. a full understanding of how the situation is impacting on the child
 - b. a timely recognition of risk
 - c. appropriate categorization of risk
8. Active listening - every professional's viewpoint should be valued when making safeguarding decisions.
9. Poor engagement - be wary of superficial engagement by parents and carers. Be clear about expectations and take positive action when not met.
10. Dealing with uncertainty – all disclosures of abuse and neglect by children need to be taken seriously. Where a previous disclosure is not repeated in a video interview this does not mean that the abuse and neglect did not happen. This is particularly applicable to sexual abuse.