



Lancashire Safeguarding Children's Board
Audit 3 Summary Report
Child Sexual Exploitation Audit

Introduction and Background

Lancashire LSCB have recently completed their third multi-agency audit. The theme for this was Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). This topic was identified as an area of interest by Lancashire County Council's Ofsted Improvement Board.

The auditing process adopted by the LSCB centres on multi-agency input from all agencies who were involved with the cases chosen. 15 cases were chosen to be audited from across the Lancashire-12 area, ensuring a mix of cases from across the county (Central, East and North). Where possible, a mix of age, gender and ethnicity was also included. Audit responses were requested from any agency who had involvement with each case, which included returns from Children's Social Care, Health Providers, CCG's, Education, Police, Probation, SEND, YOT, VCFS organisations and wellbeing, prevention and early help.

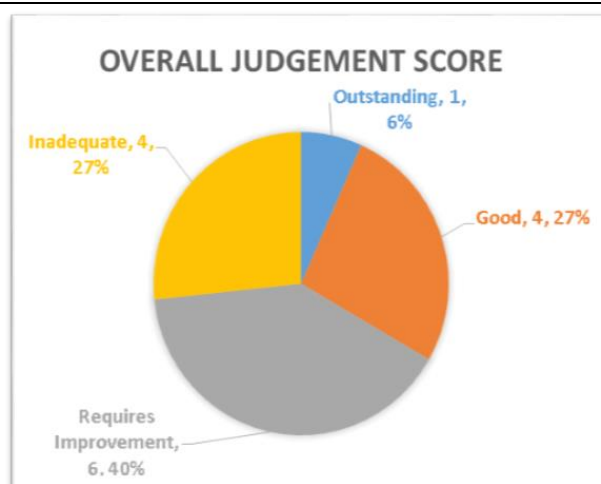
The main themes from the single agency audit returns are combined into a summary for each individual case, this detail is then discussed via a multi-agency audit meeting, accuracy of the information is checked and the group work together to extract key themes from the cases analysed. The audit process offers agencies the opportunity to reflect on their single agencies input in the case by completion of the audit tool and by contributing to multi-agency audit discussions for each case. The findings from the audit meetings and the individual audit summaries form the basis of the full audit report which is ratified by the LSCB quality assurance and performance improvement sub-group and presented to the LSCB Board.

It is the responsibility of single agency representatives to ensure that any single agency learning and immediate action required is escalated appropriately as per individual agency guidelines. An action plan is developed to help ensure that specific recommendations from the key themes within the report are fulfilled. This is monitored via the quality assurance and performance improvement sub-group.

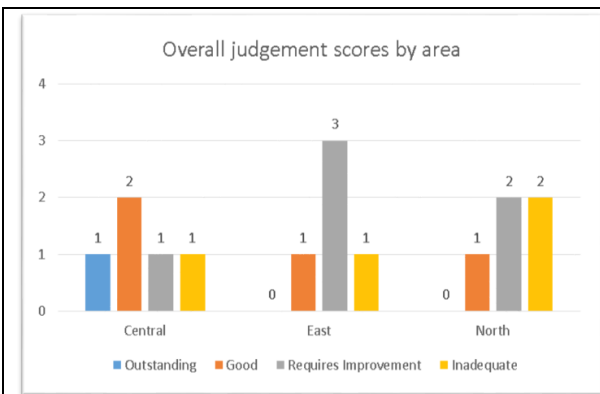
Scoring

Single agencies were asked to rate their involvement with the case by providing an overall grade (in line with CQC and Ofsted grading criteria). The score given was based on the single agency audit returns and was ratified by contributing agencies via the multi-agency audit meetings. The scores give an indication of the quality of work related to CSE undertaken for each of the cases, however scores alone do not fully explain the complexities of the cases considered by the audit.

As the graph to the right indicates, 1 of the 15 cases were graded as outstanding. 4 were classed as good, 6 requiring improvement and 4 inadequate.



The second graph (below) illustrates the overall judgement scores by audit area.



For the 4 cases deemed inadequate, immediate single-agency actions were agreed during the auditor meetings to ensure that the children and young people concerned are safe, where appropriate single agency reviews of practice have also been undertaken. These cases will be monitored by the LSCB's quality assurance and performance improvement sub-group.

Themes

1. Multi-agency approach to CSE risk – The audit demonstrated the importance of multi-agency working and illustrated the progress that can be made when agencies work together to help children and young people. There was evidence of good multi-agency working across Lancashire, with this illustrated by the strong links that exist for collaborative working within the CSE Teams.
2. Capacity of young people to engage and make positive changes – The success of interventions that were offered to help those at risk of / subject to CSE were reliant on the young person being willing and able to engage in the support offered.
3. CSE process alongside Children's Social Care generic involvement – The audit highlighted the value of CSE related need and interventions being managed separately from existing Children's Social Care involvement in a case.
4. Clarification regarding the process for managing the cases of looked after children from out of area who are placed in Lancashire – The audit highlighted the need for clarity in this process.
5. Multi-agency involvement in Child Protection processes – The importance and value of ensuring multi-agency involvement (specifically all relevant facets of health) in Child Protection process.
6. Professional Curiosity – Professional Curiosity (particularly by health), is a useful tool to aid early identification of CSE risk and behaviours.
7. Information Sharing with GP's – Timely and appropriate information sharing to and by GP's can aid early identification of CSE risk and behaviours.
8. Harder to reach communities – The audit acknowledged that there are some harder to reach communities. Despite agencies having worked hard to engage children and young people, there were cases where engagement was difficult and intervention challenging.
9. Working with sexually active young people under the age of 16 – The importance of agencies working with young people to help them understand the implications and legalities of engaging in under age sexual activity.

Next Steps

The findings of the audit have been shared with the LSCB Board and Lancashire County Council's Ofsted Improvement Board. The LSCB quality assurance and performance improvement sub-group have produced a series of recommendations which aim to address the themes outlined above. The action plan will be monitored by the sub-group and progress reported to the LSCB Board.

The sub-group would like to thank all agencies involved in the audits and encourage everyone to consider the themes highlighted by the audit; where appropriate using this report as a tool to aid discussion within teams in relation to CSE.