

Children moving out of or into Swindon

Children and young people, especially those assessed to be in need or at risk, are likely to be even more vulnerable as a consequence of the dislocation that moving between local authority areas can cause.

Relationships with relatives and friends, and the support systems of schools and statutory services are liable to become fractured as a result of such moves whilst those seeking to avoid contact from statutory services may take the opportunity to sever relationships.

Guidance on what should happen when children with a Child Protection Plan move to another local authority area can be found at:

<http://www.proceduresonline.com>

Legislation and guidance emphasises the need for Children Services and Housing to work closely together to prevent and manage **homelessness** in relation to young people.

Under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989, councils must treat 16 or 17-year-olds as 'looked-after' if they have no one to take parental responsibility for them and they believe their welfare would otherwise be "likely to be seriously prejudiced". The authority must therefore provide suitable accommodation and support to the young person.

16 & 17 year olds who are homeless are offered a joint assessment with Children Services and Housing to:

- Explore all housing options to prevent homelessness;
- Fulfil the duty of the Local Authority where young people meet the criteria of the Housing Act 1996 part VII, (amended by The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017) by ensuring the young person has appropriate housing available to them

If you are concerned that a young person may be homeless contact the MASH (01793 466903 fcp@swindon.gov.uk) or the Housing Department (01793445503 or hoptions@swindon.gov.uk)

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of child abuse involving children and young people receiving something, such as accommodation, drugs, gifts or affection, as a result of them performing sexual activities, or having others perform sexual activities on them. It can occur without physical contact, when children are groomed to post sexual images of themselves on the internet.

The LSCB [web page on CSE](#) includes the [Professional's Handbook for Tackling CSE](#), the [Child Exploitation Initial Screening Tool](#), information about [underage sexual activity](#), advice on [appropriate language](#) and terms to use when working with CSE and a [briefing paper](#) which summarises the learning on CSE from previous reviews .



Swindon Safeguarding Children Board Case Review Briefing – May 2018

Local Case Review A

In July 2016 child A, aged 16, alleged that she was raped, while staying at a crash pad in another local authority area.

At the time, she was subject to a child protection plan, initiated by Swindon Children's Services, although she had moved out of the Swindon area to be with her family.

Following a review of the case the LSCB is keen to share the learning points that were identified.

An action plan to address the recommendations of the review is in place and is monitored by the LSCB.

Adolescent Neglect:

Maltreatment which begins during adolescence is more damaging than maltreatment which started and ceased during childhood. It causes problems during late adolescence and early adulthood including "involvement in criminal behaviours, substance misuse, health-risking sexual behaviours and suicidal thoughts". Neglect during adolescence is as damaging as other forms of maltreatment - increasing the risk of arrest, offending and violent crime in late adolescence, and the risk of arrest and drug use in early adulthood. (Thornberry et al., 2010)

Swindon LSCBs Neglect Framework includes information to practitioners on how to work with children and families where neglect is a concern.

<http://www.swindonlscb.org.uk/wav>

Learning from reviews has highlighted the need for all practitioners to be clear about their responsibility for professional challenge and to know how to use **escalation** to raise concerns about decisions made about the welfare of a child.

Disagreements are likely to arise around thresholds, roles and responsibilities, the need for action and communication. For example:

- The referral does not meet the eligibility criteria for assessment by children's social care
- Where one professional disagrees with another around a particular course of action, such as closing involvement with a child or family.
- Where one worker or agency considers that another worker or agency has not completed an agreed action for no acceptable or understood reason.
- Where a member of staff or an agency considers that the child's safeguarding needs are better met by a Child Protection Plan and have requested that a Child Protection Conference be called and feel that this has been refused.

The safety of individual children is the paramount consideration in any professional disagreement and any unresolved issues should be addressed with due consideration to the risks that might exist for the child. All workers should feel able to challenge decision-making and to see this as their right and responsibility in order to promote the best multi-agency safeguarding practice.

<http://www.swindonlscb.org.uk/procedures>