



Independent Chair's Statement for SCR Child GG

The Surrey Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) has published the Overview Report of a Serious Case Review (SCR) undertaken in 2016 and which was agreed by the SSCB in May 2017.

Child GG was known to a number of agencies in Surrey and several assessments of her psychological and physical needs were undertaken by these agencies, including the child's case being discussed in the Missing and Exploited Child Conference (MAECC). Child GG had difficulty engaging with professionals and there were concerns that she was vulnerable to child sexual exploitation (CSE).

The review examined practice, processes and services during 2015. During that time, there was not heightened awareness and knowledge among professionals and the public about the extent and prevalence of CSE in Surrey. Agencies did not have effective arrangements in place to identify and manage CSE.

CSE has been the subject of much debate and the SSCB has identified this area of work as one of their priorities. The SSCB has increased capacity by recruiting a CSE Partnership Manager to coordinate the response to CSE among the partnership. OFSTED has praised the robust governance following the introduction of the Sexual Exploitation and Assault Management Board (SEAMB) that oversees the work of the partnership around CSE. There is now clear strategic direction and a partnership action plan in place as well as heightened awareness through revised training and engagement with the community. Improvements in practice have also been made with the introduction of the Signs of Safety practice model that, in addition to solution-focused practice, emphasises relationship-based practice and high quality supervision. The SSCB has supported awareness raising of the Signs of Safety model among professionals across the partnership through learning events.

Practitioners are now more confident in identifying and addressing child sexual exploitation and although there has been improvement there is still more to do, particularly to ensure that partner agencies listen to the voice of the child and respond effectively to risk and need.

The SSCB and I are committed to keeping children and their families safe in Surrey and will continue to build on the commitment and increasing knowledge we have developed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elaine Coleridge Smith'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left.

Elaine Coleridge Smith
SSCB Independent Chair