

Rapid Reviews: Family F



Background

- Family F was a large family with a wide range of concerns and challenges.
- The main concerns relate to 2 of the children, Child A and Child B. Concerns included poor school attendance over 3 years; outstanding health appointments; evidence of dental decay and speech and language delay.
- Family F had sometimes struggled to work with professionals, though have engaged with family support services in the past and shown some levels of insight. They have reported children as missing (though not always in a timely fashion). They also had times when they did not need support from Children's Services.
- Both children are regularly missing from home. There were reports of the children being involved in assaulting other children in the community, anti-social behaviour, and racial abuse.
- There are also unsubstantiated reports of them posing a serious risk to the community and despite their age both children were considered for a period of time under MAPPA (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements).
- The children were placed on a Child Protection Plan in summer 2019, then on a care order in late 2021 and moved to live with extended family. Both children have seen a significant reduction to the concerns. No recent issues of anti-social behaviour, missing episodes or concerns in the community. Outstanding health concerns are being met.
- Parents are now engaging in an assessment and support.

Learning

- Family F did not find professionals easy to trust or build relationships with. They often felt persecuted which stopped them from working with professionals.
- Parents did not show consistent insight into the problems and downplayed and minimised concerns. They struggled to set and maintain consistent routines and boundaries for the children.
- Mum may have an undiagnosed learning need.
- There was tension between different agencies, specifically in terms of responding to the welfare needs of the children against the possible risks they posed in the community. These were resolved through interagency dialogue. Be aware of the [Escalating Professional Differences and Escalation Process](#) .
- Both Child A and B were referred to MAPPA which risked both labelling them as a serious risk and potentially focussing attention away from their welfare needs and vulnerability.
- There was evidence that the focus on offending and the behaviour of Child A and Child B by some agencies reduced the focus on their welfare.
- Due to the size of the family and the number of presenting problems the Child Protection Plan became overly complex.
- Professionals struggled to build trusting relationships with the parents but when Child A and Child B were removed from their care parents began to engage in assessment and support.
- The extended family was able to provide support and could have been involved safeguarding the children at an earlier stage.

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