

BOLTON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP
LEARNING FROM REVIEW -
SYSTEM CHALLENGES AND PRACTICE
REFLECTIONS



This is a summary of the significant multi-agency challenges identified from three local reviews, with reflective questions to help translate the learning into practice.

SYSTEM CHALLENGE	PRACTICE REFLECTIONS
Children are referred to and accessing specialist provision without any underpinning holistic multi-agency assessment or planning. This can lead to the wrong or ineffective help being provided.	Do your assessments effectively capture the child's journey and the impact of key points, factors and experiences in their life? Do your plans address clearly how need and risk will be responded to?
Language is powerful and the terms we use can skew perceptions of children or attach labels that often stick through to adulthood. There is a need to change our terminology.	How can you reflect on the language and terms you use? We talk about children as 'cases', we label them 'liars', we describe them as 'challenging or disruptive'. Are these terms we would apply to children in our own family network?
Analysis of significant/critical incidents is essential in identifying and understanding patterns in a child's life, rather than responding to isolated incidents. This approach can support more effective interventions.	How do you ensure you can see the patterns, both from your own agency perspective and from the wider system?
There is a need to better understand and respond to children who experience emotional distress and how they express this in their daily life.	How well do you link a child's actions and responses in their daily life to their emotional experiences? Do you routinely consider the factors that influence and inform how a child is learning to recognise and manage their emotions?
Understanding and responding to harm and vulnerability for adolescents is inconsistent across the local safeguarding system.	We often jump in with advice, suggestions and reassurance before finding out what is really going on for a young person. We try to make things better before we really have the details. To help effectively, you need to be more curious than you think and be prepared to challenge assumptions that adolescents are more resilient and able to cope with situations.
Information about children and their families, including significant historical events, can get lost during transition points.	How do you ensure that you are identifying and making best use of all available information sources?
This incident escalated quickly from conflict on social media. As a system there are gaps in how we understand the role of social media platforms in adolescent conflicts and how specific features contribute to sometimes violent escalations.	Do you enquire and understand the influence of social media in the lives of children you are helping? Are you curious about a child's online world and its influence on the actions/decisions they may make?