



The West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership

Response to Child Safeguarding Practice Review – Hazel and Lilly

In 2021 Hazel tragically died at the age of 16. Hazel, and her youngest sister Lilly, experienced childhood adversity and had received multi-agency services at various points in their lives in response to concerns about maternal care in childhood and in response to their emerging mental ill health in adolescence.

A Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) was commissioned by West Sussex Safeguarding Children's Partnership (WSSCP) to look at interactions from multiple agencies prior to Hazel's death, covering a period of two years which included Hazel and Lilly's move from another distant local authority area to West Sussex.

The independent reviewer found that multi-agency services responded to the needs of Hazel and Lilly as they arose, and practitioners worked hard to try to provide support. Excellent support was proved by the schools that Hazel and Lilly attended in West Sussex and the other local authority area.

The reviewer also identified several learning points, which included the importance of better service engagement with schools and extended family members when safeguarding children.

The WSSCP fully accepts the findings and learning arising from the Child Safeguarding Practice Review and has taken actions to address its recommendations.

Since Hazel's death, £1.4 million has been invested in service developments to improve the safeguarding of children across multi-agency boundaries. It is recognised that the need for a joined-up multi-agency working in response to children with mental ill health is a national concern.

A multi-agency team was formed in October 2021 and has triaged over 1,000 children since this date. This team supports schools to consider the needs of children with complex mental health presentations ensuring they are receiving a timely and comprehensive response.

The WSSCP is delivering training about suicide prevention and how to support children who have experienced trauma.¹

Suicide prevention training has also been provided to 200 social workers and a new course has been established for practitioners in West Sussex to help improve care for children with past trauma.

¹ [Working definition of trauma-informed practice](#) (published November 2022).

New plans have been co-produced by Children and Young People to help support coping and resilience. The 'My Wellbeing Plans' are co-created with the young person and schools are included in the implementation of the plans.

The findings and the learning from this review has been shared with all agencies.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Hazel's family and in particular her sisters who courageously shared their reflections with the independent reviewer, giving invaluable insights to help us to learn from the saddest of family losses. Our thoughts are with Hazel's family.