

## Rachel, Andy & Dean 7 Minute Briefing

This 7-minute briefing is information taken from the Child Safeguarding Practice Review.

The structure is designed as a reminder to think about 'application to practice'

The briefing does not have all the answers, it is a tool to enable practitioners to reflect on their practice and systems

### 1. Introduction

In April 2020 Rachel, Andy and Dean were taken into police protection due to concerns that their mother was corresponding online with a male who posed a significant risk to the children and they were at risk of sexual abuse. At the time of removal, the children were known to a range of universal health and educational settings and were generally 'invisible' to professionals involved in their care which was at the start of Covid-19 lockdown.

The children had suffered significant neglect, living in poor conditions. The children required urgent support to address their physical and emotional health needs and the risk of sexual abuse. Since coming into care the children are settled and having their needs addressed

### 2. Background

Family had a history of Children's Social Care (CSC) involvement with four older siblings being removed due to neglect

The children's mother also experienced neglect and was exposed to as a child to men with sexual offending history

Rachel & Andy were of mixed heritage and Dean white British

Nothing was known of the children's father

Maternal grandmother shared the family home and undertook most of the childcare responsibilities

### 3. Risk factors

- Ms M had experienced childhood trauma, neglect and sexual abuse whilst in her mother's care
- History of social services involvement due to neglect
- Services experienced difficulty in engaging with the Ms M who in turn avoided services
- Children not taken to appointments and health needs not met
- The children's voices heard through their mother
- Unresolved health issues not seen as neglect
- Documented reports of ill treatment by grandmother including racial abuse
- Lack of professional curiosity regarding children's distress and behaviour

### How to use this briefing:

7 minute briefings should be delivered face to face to promote discussions and not included with other day to day issues, to ensure impact. Please consider these 3 questions alongside the briefings:

**What are your key thoughts and reflections?**

**How can we ensure the learning is embedded and how will we know this?**

**How can we integrate the learning into team or service improvement plans?**

### 6. Key Findings

- Importance of seeing neglect in the context of family history and multi- generational child abuse neglect
- Professionals in universal services commonly do not know what to do when they are concerned about the quality of care and parenting of children
- Conscious/unconscious bias whereby racist treatment of mixed heritage children by family members is not treated with the same seriousness as racism in other contexts.
- Vacuum in helping parents and children within and across generations address unresolved trauma
- Lack of consistent training or approach to enable professionals to recognise the impact

### 5. Missed Opportunities (cont'd)

- Racism and racial abuse – professionals not exploring with Andy and Rachel what life was like as mixed heritage children living with white ethnicity care givers
- Hearing the children's voices directly or through their presentations and behaviours
- Lack of professional curiosity between the inconsistencies reported by mother and how the children presented at school

### 4. Missed Opportunities

- No evidence that exploration or consideration was given by professionals to understand the multi-generational child abuse and neglect
- Record keeping – giving consideration to change in electronic family systems so that practitioners have access to historical records
- Lack of professional curiosity regarding the children's lived experience
- Professionals not addressing concerns with mother and grandmother