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Many factors can make a child with a disability more vulnerable to abuse than a child without a disability of the same age. Safeguarding children with disabilities demands a greater awareness of their vulnerability, individuality and particular needs.

Therefore, a whole family approach is essential in dealing with safeguarding cases involving children with disabilities, in order that children and their families receive the right type of services when they need them.

2

As part of the SSCB 2017/18 multi-agency audit calendar, a multi-agency audit was undertaken on Monday 16 October 2017 with a focus on how effective safeguarding services are for Children with a Disability.

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Key assurance questions included:

Did agencies respond in a timely and effective manner to safeguard the child with a disability?

Are we avoiding drift & delay in our operational response?

Do agencies work together effectively to protect the child and make sure that they get the services they need to improve outcomes?

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Key strengths include:

Child facing services worked well to provide good outcomes when sighted on and working to the ECHP

Areas of good practice identified i.e. direct work undertaken by the social worker with the Children in two of the cases, taking time to observe, understand and learn a nonverbal child's cues and respond accordingly to meet their needs

The significant 1:1 work undertaken by the SENcO in ensuring that the child's routine was incorporated in to the school day and was working to the EHCP

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Key areas of development include:

More evidence of use of Signs of Safety (SoS) across the partnership

Partner agencies to improve their contribution to a child's EHC Plan as requested by the SEND improvement board

Ensuring the communication needs of the child and family are known and accommodated during any assessment or intervention

Effective management oversight & reflective supervision for practitioners working with safeguarding cases of children with disabilities

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What can we do now?

Ensure you are using SoS in all levels of your practice

Consider whether a professional interpreter is required for parents whose first language is not English

If you are a Manager, ensure there is sufficient progress of the child's plan to prevent drift and delay of interventions for children

Consult the regional safeguarding procedures to utilise the SSCB escalation policy if required

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Next Steps:

Learning to be incorporated into SSCB training programme

Learning from the audit to be widely circulated