

Learning Briefing: 'Ella'

Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead
SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP



Ella is a pseudonym. She ended her own life 5 months before her 18th birthday. The review report is not yet published. It is important that key learning is shared across the safeguarding system at the earliest opportunity to prevent similar harm occurring in the future.

Themes	Drift and delay	Quality of Social Care Assessments	Sharing information between education settings	Accessibility of services	Information sharing/ Confidentiality/ Safeguarding/ Adulthood
What happened?	A previous child protection concern was not dealt with in a timely way	The delayed assessment of risk did not consider the voice of the child sufficiently. Nor did it consider relevant contextual safeguarding risks.	Ella's further education college did not receive her Child Protection file from her previous school	A Mental Health Support Service (MHSS) in county 1 refused to accept a referral from a MHSS in county 2 due to a mistaken understanding of the referral criteria	Health colleagues did not share details of the imminent risk to Ella with her parents or with children's services
What impact did this have?	There was drift and delay in the management of risk in the family	The risks associated with Ella's family life were not informed by the children's input and were therefore minimised	Staff in the College were not sighted on Ella's previous safeguarding concerns and vulnerabilities	It was not possible to put in place effective local support for Ella at a time of crisis	The risks to Ella were not subject to multi-agency consideration as a safeguarding issue. Parents were not aware of the imminent risk.
What has changed?	Children's services have restructured teams, added capacity and reduced workloads to support assessment work, improve response times and minimise delay	Children's social care now see children at least twice during the assessment stage and all young people over the age of 11 are encouraged and supported to attend their Initial Child Protection Conference meeting	Education settings have been reminded of their statutory duty on the transfer of files between education providers	The support available from the MHSS in County 1 is now more accessible. Clinicians (instead of administrators) are now involved in discussions about referrals.	Where high risk mental health concerns reach a safeguarding threshold, NHS services in county 2 are now aware of the need to consult and communicate quickly with parents and education settings