

Report summary

The voice of the child: learning lessons from serious case reviews

A thematic report of Ofsted's evaluation of serious case reviews from 1 April to 30 September 2010

This report covers the evaluations carried out between April and the end of September 2010 of 67 serious case reviews. The main focus of this report is on the importance of listening to the voice of the child. Previous Ofsted reports have analysed serious case reviews and identified this as a recurrent theme. This report provides an opportunity to explore this key issue in more depth and draw out detailed practice implications.

Key findings

There are five main messages with regard to the voice of the child. In too many cases:

- the child was not seen frequently enough by the professionals involved, or was not asked about their views and feelings
- agencies did not listen to adults who tried to speak on behalf of the child and who had important information to contribute
- parents and carers prevented professionals from seeing and listening to the child
- practitioners focused too much on the needs of the parents, especially on vulnerable parents, and overlooked the implications for the child
- agencies did not interpret their findings well enough to protect the child.

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