

Child E Statement from Amanda Boodhoo (to accompany publication)

This review concerns Child E, who was 17 years old at the time of the incident, in 2021. She was a looked after child in the care of the city, and was placed with foster carers, through an Independent Fostering Agency (IFA), in Leicestershire.

Child E made allegations of sexual assault against her male foster carer.

The foster care system is meant to provide a safe and secure environment for children, and when it fails to do this, as was the case for child E, it is important to acknowledge the long-term impact.

Child E left the placement on the same day that she made the disclosure and a rapid review was carried out. This was followed by more in-depth independent review.

At the request of Child E, now an adult, the full report outlining the findings of this review will not be published, but the summary sets out actions taken by LSCP B agencies in response to the report.

These actions include:

- Local policies now make specific reference to ‘thinking the unthinkable’ about foster carers. It now makes explicit reference to the fact that those caring for children, such as foster carers, adoptive parents or special guardians may harm children in their care, and that children who are looked after may have additional vulnerabilities or challenges in disclosing abuse perpetrated by their carers.
- The implementation of the [Lundy model](#) - a framework to help ensure young people can express their voice in a safe and accessible space. Social workers and other professionals see foster children outside the home as well as home visits, to allow space for conversations to develop away from their foster carers.
- Training is regularly offered to social workers on the role of the LADO, the local authority designated officer, so that professionals know they need to inform them even when events take place outside Leicester city’s local authority boundary.
- Staff who work on the ‘front door’ – answering calls and emails that refer new cases to social care – have been trained to ensure they ask the right questions, including identifying regular visitors and other children in a household. Identifying regular visitors and other children in a household is also a key part of the review process social workers carry out for foster carers and foster homes.

All agencies that make up the LSCP B are committed to keeping children safe and to building on the learning from this report. These actions will support practitioners who work with vulnerable children and young people – and they will also help children to feel supported in talking to professionals.

ENDS