



Cheshire West and Chester
Safeguarding Children
Partnership



Statement from the Independent Chair of Cheshire West and Chester Safeguarding Children Partnership

Today, 2nd December 2019, we have published the Serious Case Review of Lauren.

Our heartfelt condolences go out to Lauren's family and all whom have been impacted by her untimely and tragic death. The experiences of Lauren's family and her best friend have been central to our review and I wish to thank them personally for the insight and reflection they have provided despite the exceptionally painful circumstances. As a Partnership we are committed to ensuring that the recommendations within this report are embedded in practice and make a lasting and positive impact for children and young people in future; a legacy that both Lauren and her loved ones deserve.

The findings and recommendations of the review were fully accepted by the then Local Safeguarding Children Board in August 2017. At the time the review concluded, the Coroner's Inquest had not taken place, and therefore the report does not refer to a cause of death. Publication of the report was embargoed by the Coroner's Office until conclusion of the Inquest. On 28th November 2019 the Coroner judged that Lauren died by suicide.

Whilst the serious case review concluded that Lauren's death was not predictable and thus not preventable, it makes clear that there were gaps in practice and missed opportunities to better safeguard Lauren, during a period in which she was the victim of bullying and harassment.

Findings from Lauren's review have already led to changes at the school (which has since been taken over by a new Trust), within the police and relevant parts of the NHS. I am confident that those agencies have been robust in their application of learning. However, there is always more that we can do, and now our collective efforts must centre on ensuring that lessons learned can be applied across all schools and organisations within Cheshire West and Chester and hopefully beyond, to ensure there is whole-system change in our response to bullying and other issues identified within the report.

At a local level the Partnership have responded to the recommendations within the report through the following actions:

- Ensuring schools are aware of national guidance in relation to Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017 DfE) and that they reflect these expectation in their Policies and Procedures.
- Working with colleagues in the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Partnership (which includes schools and health organisations) to canvas services available to support young people's emotional and physical wellbeing and influence future commissioning decisions.

- Developed an E-Safety Strategy with input from multi-agency partners and young people which supplements Anti-Bullying Policies and offers guidance to those working with children and young people
- Promoted anti-bullying through presentations by young people to local schools at the Safeguarding Children in Education Annual Conferences each year
- Developed a series of tools to support professionals to capture a child's wishes and feelings in their daily contacts.

Contact Details in the Serious Case Review

If you have any questions about this Serious Case Review please contact Laura Johnson, (Senior Media and Communications Manager) at Laura.Johnson2@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk or via 01244 972216

For NHS media enquiries please contact Chris Amery, Communications and Engagement Manager at chris.amery@nhs.net or via **01244 385 377**.

For Police media enquiries please contact corporate.communications@cheshire.pnn.police.uk or via **01606 365942**

For School media enquiries please contact Julie Morse via jmorse@nwatrust.co.uk

Support Services

If you have been affected by issues within the report; or you are a Parent/Carer concerned about the emotional wellbeing of a child there are services available in Cheshire West and Chester to assist you.

Amparo

Provides support for family members following suicide. Support is provided 1:1 and staff can assist with a range of practical matters such as dealing with Police and Coroners, helping with any media enquiries, help with overcoming isolation experienced and contacting and signposting to other local support services. Amparo accept self-referrals using the details below and the service is completely confidential.

amparo.service@listening-ear.co.uk

Call: 0330 088 9255

HOPElineUK

Is a specialist telephone service staffed by trained professionals who give non-judgmental support, practical advice and information to;

- Children, teenagers and young people up to the age of 35 who are worried about how they are feeling
- Anyone who is concerned about a young person

Call: 0800 068 41 41; **Email:** pat@papyrus-uk.org or **SMS:** 07786 209697

Opening hours - Mon-Fri: 10am-10pm, weekends: 2pm-10pm & bank holidays: 2pm-5pm