



# Parenting Assessments and Beyond

# Introduction to St Michael's

- Aim to give every child the best start
- Believe in the capacity of parents to make changes in their lives
- Keep the child at the centre
- Run 4 residential family assessment centres, an outreach service for young mums and dads and a contact centre

# Ensuring families have a voice

- Contributing to placement plan
- How do they like to receive information?
- What is their learning style?
- Daily log surgeries
- Feedback to weekly team meeting with plan for following week
- Preparation for reviews

# Keeping families together

[redacted] 2016

When I got here to L6 I hated it, I couldn't wait to get out of here every second I could, I thought they just wanted to take my baby off of us, I couldn't off been so wrong it took 9 weeks to make me release they wanted the best for us, they helped us so much, we home

Now pushed our assessment and we are now home, without L6 I think we would off lost our baby girl [redacted], So all I can say is be honest about everything, L6 is here to help you like they did us.

# Keeping families together

- ‘You have helped me to understand my partner’s learning difficulties and mental health much better and my role as my daughter’s main carer. I want to let others know the great work that St M’s does with families and I have been doing this in the fathers’ group and local children’s centre where I have been asked to be part of the planning team for the fathers’ group.’

# Keeping families together

‘This assessment has been the first time in years in which I have had to care for my 4 children instead of leaving it to them. It has shown me that I need to sort myself out before I can look after them properly.’

- It is not possible to keep all families together but giving parents a real opportunity is important.

# Changes to Make-up of Families

- Up to 40% of families are couples
- 64% of babies were under 3 months with 68% of that group new born
- 27% were 1 year or more with 83% of that group being part of larger sibling groups
- 20 families had 37 children removed from their care before coming to St Michaels, of that group 10 families left with their current child.

# Changing demands of LAs

- Following 26 week ruling LA's requested shorter assessments but that has returned to 12 weeks
- Request to keep families beyond 12 weeks until the date of the final hearing, so 15% stayed between 15 and 29 weeks.
- LA not putting plans in place for family to move on leading to delays
- Requesting CCTV



# Why Securing Change?

- Lack of support available to parents who leave our service without their child.
- Have used the experiences and suggestions of mothers to inform the work;

*'It's not like just having a kidney removed, you're having your heart taken away from you, you're having your life... you've been given a sentence.'*

*'I spiralled out of control, drinking, just to forget.'*

# Parents' suggestions

- One to one talking therapy
- Help to understand what has happened and come to terms with loss
- Support to be individualised and service user led – content and length to be determined by parent.
- Support group with peers
- Collaboration on goals for change, education, teaching of new skills: parenting in the future, managing emotions
- An opportunity to rebuild lost trust
- A certificate to celebrate successful completion
- All were positive about new service: 'saving lives', preventing repeat removals, being able to demonstrate change, help preparing for future contact with child