

V. LESSONS TO BE LEARNED

1. LA-A135 care provides an object lesson in the potentially disastrous consequences of failure to plan/implement plans for children in care. Since the coming into force of the Children Act 1989, Social Services Departments are obliged to provide a Care Plan to the Court hearing an application for a care order. Management level monitoring of the implementation of the Care Plan is essential, in addition to statutory reviews.
2. The Social Services Department should investigate promptly any information which suggests that an accommodated child may be placed in an unsuitable environment, and act promptly to ensure that an unsuitable placement does not continue.
3. There should be a commitment to provide assessment and counselling to any child or young person who is likely to have been sexually abused provided that the requirements of any criminal investigation/prosecution are respected.
4. Consideration should be given to an effective method of collating psychiatric/psychological information concerning young people in care/custody and to the creation of co-ordinated Mental Health Plans.