

Cheshire West and Chester Council
 Ellesmere Port Family Support & Children in Need
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Cheshire West and Chester

Core Assessment

Details of Child: AURORA DOBBIE

Family Name	DOBBIE	Given Names	AURORA
Actual DOB	11-Jun-2001	Gender	Female
Ethnicity	White - British	Primary Language	
Primary Address	38 St Asaph Road Great Sutton Ellesmere Port CH66 2GP	Telephone	
		Mobile	07958171481
		CSSR Case No	645349
Secondary Address		Current Address	

Core Assessment Dates

Date Referral Received	29-Jul-2011
Core Assessment Commenced	01-Aug-2011
Core Assessment Due	20-Sep-2011
Core Assessment Completed	20-Sep-2011

Useful Information

Information

Families should be provided with the following information

Complaints procedures	31st August 2011
Information on access to records	31st August 2011

Other relevant/available information (please specify)

Feedback questionnaire for parents/carers

Information for parents/carers

Date(s) child and family members seen/interviewed

Contact Date	Type	Family Members Interviewed	Seen
01-Aug-2011	Visit		Y
09-Aug-2011	Visit		Y
31-Aug-2011	Visit		Y
08-Sep-2011	Visit		N

Agencies currently involved with the child/family (for looked after children details of the following professionals should be recorded: mentor, SENCO, designated teacher).

Role	Key Agency	Professional	Contributed	Details
SCHOOL	CAPENHURST CE PRIMARY SCHOOL		✓ (05-Sep-2011)	Conversation between Jennifer Cruz, teacher, and Barbara Goldsmith
PRACTICE	HOPE FARM MEDICAL CENTRE			

Questionnaire, scales or other instruments used in assessment

Questionnaire, scales or other instruments used in assessment Yes

Questionnaire, scales or other instruments used in assessment	Instrument used	Date used

Details concerning a core assessment

D1-Please give the reason(s) for undertaking the core assessment
 A core assessment is to be completed following a referral dated 01.08.2011. Mr Thomas Dobbie alleged ongoing assaults by Avril Dobbie in regard to their daughter, Aurora. Mr Dobbie stated that these disclosures made to him by Aurora had been new allegations. A joint visit was made to visit Aurora by Barbara Goldsmith, Social Worker and DC Gratton. During the visit Aurora did not disclose any incidents of physical abuse but drew a story informing us that she had heard noises coming from her mother's bedroom. Aurora had entered into the bedroom despite her mother telling her to wait. It appears that a Mr Kevin Redman was in the bedroom which caused Aurora some upset and distress. Aurora did not disclose any incidents of violence towards her by her mother or Ken Redman.

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It is the view of Mr Dobbie that Ken and Avril Dobbie are in a relationship together and that Aurora had over heard them having sex. Avril Dobbie denies this stating that she and Ken are good friends and are not in a relationship.

Key Dates

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D2 Where a child/parent has a disability or where they have specific communication needs (e.g. Impairment affecting communication or English is not the first language), what actions have been taken to address this i.e. use of an Interpreter or a signer, or an advocate to ascertain the child's/parent's views?

Neither the children or the parents have any communication difficulties.

Brief Chronology**Brief Chronology**

2006 - Several police reports involving the family. First involved Thomas Dobbie obtaining a Court Order preventing his wife Avril Dobbie from taking their daughter, Aurora to Scotland. The Police report states that Avril's parents were suffering from ill health; it is clear that Avril was intending to be in Scotland for some time as she had organised a place to live and schooling for Aurora. Later in 2006, Avril called the police to an incident where Thomas was blocking her car in and preventing her taking Aurora to school. When the police attended the vehicle had already been moved. It is noted that the couple were going through a divorce but were living at the same address and were engaged in court proceedings regarding custody of Aurora.

20 October 2006 - Orion Dobbie born. Thomas Dobbie disputes that he is the father.

10th September 2009 - Avril Dobbie e-mailed Jean Davies, health visitor, that she felt she was unable to cope, particularly in managing the children's behaviour.

14th November 2009 - Children's Social Care undertook an Initial Assessment which recommended that the family receive additional support from family support workers and health visitor. A parenting course with primary CAMHS was also recommended and that Mr Dobbie assume the role of main carer to both Aurora and Orion. Case was closed in January 2010 neither Thomas or Avril Dobbie completed the parenting course.

23rd July 2010 - Jean Davies, health visitor, made a referral to the Children in Need team following Avril Dobbie disclosing to her that Thomas Dobbie had physically assaulted her. An initial assessment was undertaken with the recommendation of further family support and a core assessment was to be completed. Mr Dobbie was charged with assault and bailed not to approach or contact Avril Dobbie. The Police report of the incident states that Thomas was arrested for assault of Avril while she was holding Orion, who was 3 years old. The next day Thomas made a counter allegation of assault against Avril and stated that he felt his children were at risk from their mother. Police felt this allegation was malicious due to Thomas having been arrested and the fact that Thomas had been away in Scotland the previous week on business, leaving the children in their mother's care, did not add much weight to his concerns of risk for the children.

22nd September 2010 - An Interim Care Order was granted in respect of Aurora and Orion Dobbie; contact was to take place between Mr Thomas Dobbie and his children on alternative weekends.

16th December 2010 - A Section 7 report was submitted by Children's Services - Author of the report was Social Worker Vivian Saunders. The Local Authority recommendation was that it would be in Aurora and Orion's best interests to continue to reside with Avril Dobbie.

January 2011 - Thomas went to the police to renew his complaint of assault in July 2010. Police advised that the original assault on his wife was an on-going matter that had to be completed before his complaint could be dealt with. Thomas stated that he had sent letters to Social Care and ICPP regarding his situation.

February 2011 - Avril contacts police regarding Thomas not returning the children at the allotted time. Thomas claimed Avril had sent a text to Aurora stating that they could stay longer with their father. Both parents were 'advised' by the police. Police officers concerned that children are 'caught up in the middle of their parents' battle'.

01.08.2011 - Mr Dobbie informed the Police that his daughter Aurora had disclosed to him new allegations that her mother had physically abused her by spitting in her face and holding her down on the carpet for long periods of time. A section 47 joint investigation was undertaken by Children's Social Care and the police. Aurora did not disclose any information regarding the physical abuse by her mother during the visit. A core assessment is to be completed.

7 September 2011 - police report of an 'altercation' between Ken Redman and Mr Dobbie, where Mr Dobbie was photographing Mr Redman outside his former matrimonial home. Mr Redman is prevented from being at that address when the children are there but the children were not present. Mr Dobbie and Mr Redman exchanged words and both complained to the police. Police advised Mr Redman not to visit Mrs Dobbie at home, even though they are only friends and Mr Dobbie was warned against harassing Mr Redman.

Child/Young Persons Development Needs

Health

Child's Needs

Apart from normal childhood ailments, Aurora generally enjoys good physical health, although she is a little overweight. She is offered a healthy balanced diet that includes fresh fruit and vegetables. She is registered with a dental practice in Little Sutton and her GP is Dr Kingston at Hope Farm Medical Centre. Dr Kingston is away so the social worker spoke to Dr Entwistle who reports that there are no concerns in regard to Aurora's physical well being and that her immunisations are up to date. Avril Dobbie reports that Aurora has, in the past, had some prescription creams for eczema, however Avril reports that the eczema has got better as Aurora has got older.

Aurora's medical record shows that on three occasions she has been to the GP for panic attacks and anxiety. In 2006 the GP's notes refer to a 'dramatic custody battle' and Aurora attending the GP with her father but there are no further details. In October 2009, Dr Powell made a referral to CAMHS for Aurora who was presenting with high levels of anxiety and panic attacks due to 'background bereavement' and it is further stated that both parents are attending Relate. On 5 August 2011, Mr Dobbie went to the GP (Dr Kingston) with Aurora and the GP's note states that Aurora is "awaiting counselling" and that Mr Dobbie was not keen to discuss what the issues were.

It is further reported in the 2010 Initial Assessment that Aurora has experienced panic attacks and night terrors, which Avril suspected was attention seeking behaviour. According to Helen Dunshie, Psychologist CAMHS, the Home Assessment concluded that "the children's difficulties were more likely to be attributed to the difficulties in the parents' relationship".

Carole Hobson (Aurora's Children's Guardian, CAF/CASS) reports that Aurora is obsessed about her father dying in his sleep and this is impacting on her own sleep at night resulting in her being tired during the day and increasing her anxiety. Aurora has experienced family deaths in a short period of time (grandparents) which have doubtless contributed to her anxiety around her father.

Parenting Capacity

Both parents have an understanding of the importance of a good diet. Avril reports that although she has not taken any advice regarding Aurora's weight she has bought her a bike and encourages her to participate in school activities/sports. Aurora has age appropriate physical activity toys at Mr Dobbie's (eg trampoline, scooter). Aurora has a good dental hygiene regime.

From the age of 4 years Aurora has shown signs of anxiety and both parents have acknowledged this. They also accept that Aurora shows emotional and behavioural difficulties at times, Aurora has been referred to CAMHS in the past and Carol Hobson CAF/CAS has recently requested that Capenhurst Primary School make a further referral.

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Education

Child's Needs

Aurora has attended Capenhurst Primary School for the past year, prior to this she attended Woodlands School. Her parents transferred Aurora due to alleged bullying - the parents had discussed this with Woodlands School but it is reported in the Section 7 report, dated 16 December 2010, that Mrs Murphy (headteacher at Woodlands Primary School) stated there was "no evidence to support this and offered the opinion that as Aurora's parents were undergoing marital strife during this period this would explain Aurora's occasional unsettled behaviour." Mrs Murphy characterised what Auroras's parents describe as panic attacks as "creative outbursts", and that the only outburst she had witnessed Aurora had soon calmed down.

However, Jennifer Cruw (Aurora's teacher last year at Capenhurst) reports that Aurora had good attendance last year but she was occasionally late, with no explanations being provided by her mother. It has since been reported by Jo Jones, Acting Head, that Aurora continues to be late for school and Mr Dobbie provides no explanation as to why. Jennifer reports that Aurora has two friends in school but that she is 'very clingy' and dependent with them and that if there were any falling outs it was usually Aurora who was "in the middle of it". She reports that Aurora has made reasonable progress, has good literacy skills but is a little behind in her numeracy; overall she is achieving her potential and working to her ability. Jennifer reports Aurora as being a quiet child in class, who was far more expressive in the playground where she was observed to be quite vocal and loud. Jo Jones, Acting Head Teacher, has reported that since Aurora has returned back to school following the summer holidays she remains quiet in class. Jo Jones further stated that she has observed Aurora displaying some attention seeking behaviour in the play ground. Aurora is described as never being an outgoing child, but her class teacher has stated that Aurora is not withdrawn or giving her cause for concern. However, Jo Jones reports that she has observed Aurora display some anxious behaviour when Mr Dobbie has dropped and picked her up from school.

Aurora needs to continue to achieve her educational potential and develop her social skills while at school; to do this she needs to have a settled home life. Aurora needs to attend school on time as often children who attend school late then find it difficult to settle into the class routine.

Parenting Capacity

Both parents value an education for Aurora and encourage her to complete any homework tasks. Avril feels that Aurora lacks confidence at times but feels that she is achieving her educational potential and is more settled at Capenhurst School. Mr Dobbie feels that Avril was part of Aurora's difficulties at Woodlands School and that Avril did not deal with situations appropriately. It is reported from Capenhurst School that Mrs Dobbie has attended parents' evenings.

Headteacher Sue Warner at Capenhurst School has reported to Barbara Goldsmith, social worker, that Mr Dobbie had, on bringing Aurora back into school for the new term, wanted to go through the Court paperwork to clarify with the school what Mrs Dobbie could and could not do with regard to contact with her children following the Court direction that Aurora was now to reside with him.

The observation of the social worker is that there is age appropriate reading materials and educational toys in both parents' homes. Aurora is clearly encouraged to develop intellectually and educationally by both parents and they will provide her with any practical help she needs in regard to her homework and educational development. However, Aurora's anxieties and current emotional state is impacting on her social development and could lead to the decline of her education and intellectual development.

Emotional and Behavioural Development

Child's Needs

Aurora is described by her mother as a sensitive child who can become easily upset and can get frustrated with herself if she is struggling with her school work, eg maths. This has also been observed by the social worker, who witnessed Aurora becoming frustrated and closed to suggestions of help when she was struggling to do something, which appeared to relate to cutting a piece of paper, but Aurora did not engage with the social worker who could see her anxiety level rising and she just paced up and down before storming out of the room. Her behaviour then spiraled resulting in her shouting, crying and Mr Dobbie trying to console her for a period of 45 minutes.

It is reported by both parents that Aurora has suffered from 'night terrors' since she was 18 months old. Mrs Dobbie reports that this caused big arguments between her and Mr Dobbie about how Aurora should be comforted. If Mrs Dobbie felt that she could not calm Aurora when she was distressed she would walk away, which Mr Dobbie felt was not meeting Aurora's needs and he would then comfort her.

In the Initial Assessment (Dec 2010) Aurora stated that both parents had smacked her on the legs but she only recalled her father smacking her on the leg when she was 8 and leaving a red mark. When Aurora talked to the social worker and police officer (11 August 2011) about her mother she stated that she would like to stop her mum from hitting her and that her mum would stop losing control. However, she could not remember the last time her mum had smacked her and only remembered an incident when she had spilt some jam from the fridge and her mother had been disappointed in her but her father comforted her. She did state that the "hitting and smacking has affected me and now I hit my brother and will go on to hit my children". Aurora also expressed a lot of anxiety regarding her mum's friend, Ken Redman, and displays a lot of animosity towards him. She stated that she is "ashamed and disappointed" in her mum, as she was seeing Ken when she had told her that she was not seeing him. Aurora also stated that she would "like to see mum in the future, but only when she has changed" and further stated "I'd like her to spilt up with Ken, but I'm not controlling the situation."

It is both the observations and experience of the school and the social worker that Aurora presents as guarded and closed to conversations. Aurora talks about incidents that have occurred in the past and the social worker's observations are that on speaking to Mr Dobbie the same phrases and views are expressed by Aurora. This could suggest that Aurora is either over-hearing conversations or Mr Dobbie is having conversations directly with Aurora which is over-powering her own perception of reality and events, which means that Aurora does not say what

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	<p>she is thinking and feeling but expresses the views of her father.</p> <p>It has also been reported by Jo Jones, Acting Head Teacher, Capenhurst School, that Aurora has recently begun demonstrating attention seeking behaviour. Aurora is observed going off from her friends to get their attention as the children are puzzled as to what is wrong and then follow her out of concern that something is wrong feeding into Aurora's need for the attention.</p>
<p>Parenting Capacity</p>	<p>In terms of Aurora's mental and emotional well-being she has demonstrated signs of emotional upset and anxiety in the past, resulting in a referral to CAMHS. Despite the concerns raised by Mr Dobbie about Aurora's emotional and mental being now Mr Dobbie did not request a referral for CAMHS during his visit to Dr Kingston on the 05.08.2011. Mr Dobbie had talked to the GP about Aurora's issues but gave limited information. Mr Dobbie stated to Barbara Goldsmith, Social Worker, that there had been some confusion in regard to him requesting a referral to CAMHS. Mr Dobbie stated that Carol Hobson, CAFCAS, had given him the impression that a psychological assessment would be completed in regard to Aurora and would be organised through CAFCAS and this was why he informed the Dr Kingston that Aurora was awaiting counselling. However, Carol Hobson reported to Barbara Goldsmith that she talked on a number of occasions to Mr Dobbie about him requesting a referral for CAMHS. Barbara Goldsmith was also informed by Mr Dobbie that he had requested a referral to CAMHS for Aurora.</p> <p>Mr Dobbie informed the social worker and police constable (DC Gratton) at their meeting on 8 August that he had kept the children with him due to his concerns about the fresh allegations that Aurora had made about Mrs Dobbie abusing her. He talked in depth about Aurora's behavioural difficulties and the emotional distress that she was currently experiencing. Although Mr Dobbie shows insight into Aurora's mental and emotional difficulties the evidence would suggest that his priority is to inform professionals but take no positive action in accessing appropriate help and support for his daughter although Mr Dobbie explanation for this is due to some confusion on his part.</p> <p>Aurora's perception of her mother is that she has abused her and is now causing her upset and emotional distress by continuing to see Ken Redman. Aurora has also been exposed to her parents' disputes and acrimonious relationship which has been ongoing since 2006. It is my professional view and observation that Aurora has and will continue to suffer emotional upset and distress if the situation doesn't change and the evidence is demonstrating that Aurora's behaviour is declining and is far more apparent within the home.</p>
<p>Identity</p>	
<p>Child's Needs</p>	<p>Aurora is white British, with both her parents being Scottish. She is the second eldest of Mr Dobbie's three children; she has an elder half-brother and a younger brother, Orion. Aurora identifies with her gender and dresses in age and gender appropriate clothes, however she has some self image issues relating to her weight. Aurora has been offered lots of activities to participate in such as Brownies, swimming, horse riding, dancing and piano lessons. Aurora likes to play and likes Harry Potter.</p> <p>Mrs Dobbie reports that Aurora has a poor perception of her body image and sense of self and this at times does impact on her self esteem. This has been echoed as a concern by Carol Hobson, CAFCAS, whose view is that Aurora has a poor self image.</p>
<p>Parenting Capacity</p>	<p>Parents are able to promote a gender specific identity and have provided Aurora with opportunities to build her self esteem by taking her to Brownies and activities such as horse riding/dance classes. Parents provide Aurora with the opportunity to see her family in Scotland and this promotes a sense of belonging within her wider family.</p>
<p>Family and Social Relationships</p>	
<p>Child's Needs</p>	<p>Aurora recognises that she does not always get on with her friends. Mrs Dobbie's observation is that Aurora generally gets on well with her peer group and friends since she has moved school. However Jo Jones, head Teacher at Capenhurst Primary School has reports that Aurora doesn't mix well with her peers and has recently been observed displaying self absorbed behaviour with her brother, Orion. Jo Jones stated that Aurora is constantly demanding of his attention in the play ground and then complains that she's unable to play with her friends because of Orion's.</p> <p>Aurora does have friends outside of school and she has informed the social worker that she doesn't always get on well with other children and likes to play with her soft toys and talk to them. Aurora stated that she likes to visit her family in Scotland and enjoys Orion's company but stated that she does hit him at times because her mum has hit her in the past and that's why she does it.</p> <p>Clearly Aurora's parents relationship has diminished with complete break down of communication between them and recently Mr Dobbie stopped both Aurora and her brother from returning home to their mother's care after Aurora had come home "screaming and crying". Aurora has been passing her mother's house riding her bike when she had seen Ken Redman open the front door of her mother's house with a key and then she stated that she saw Ken kiss Avril, Aurora's mother. It was then that Aurora informed her father, Mr Dobbie about the alleged incidents that lead to the Joint Investigation of Children's Services and the Police. Aurora clearly felt that her mother had lied and let her down by telling her that she would not be seeing Ken Redman again and stated that she had felt a sense of anger and felt let down by her mother.</p> <p>Aurora only has her immediate family around her as her wider maternal; and paternal family live in Scotland. All of her grandparents are deceased. Aurora does go to Scotland and visits her relatives and receives Christmas presents from her cousins and aunts.</p> <p>Mr Dobbie however reports that Aurora's relationship with her friends outside of school is problematic and that Mrs Dobbie had sabotaged Aurora's birthday party this year by tell her friends parents not to let their children go to the party (at Mr Dobbie's).</p> <p>Although Aurora lives with her father she has supervised contact with her mother. Aurora has stated that she wants to see her mummy and the rabbits, however following an incident on 7</p>

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	<p>September between Mr Dobbie and Ken Redman (see chronology), Aurora has stated that she is now not sure "because of last night".</p> <p>Mr Dobbie and his former first wife have recently resumed a relationship together which has resulted in her moving into the family home with her son Zac. Aurora did not discuss her relationship with Zac and his mother with the social worker and was very closed and reluctant to want to engage in conversation with her; preoccupied with wanting to write in her book.</p>
<p>Parenting Capacity</p>	<p>Mrs Dobbie stated that she understands and has encouraged Aurora to have friends because Aurora has no wider family around her. Mr Dobbie has also encouraged friendships and takes Aurora to visit the family in Scotland on occasions. Mrs Dobbie has also taken Aurora to Scotland but recent financial restraints has resulted in limiting the times that Avril can afford to travel.</p> <p>Mrs Dobbie informed the social worker that she is not having a relationship with Mr Ken Redman and stated that he is only a friend. Mrs Dobbie stated that she knows that Aurora has expressed a view that she doesn't like him and contributes this to an incident that occurred on evening around 11.45pm. Mr Redman had been sitting in the back garden with Avril when Aurora had woken up following a nightmare. Avril told Aurora to get back into bed and Ken Redman shouted up to Aurora from outside "I can hear you outside be quiet". Mrs Dobbie firmly disputes the accusations that Ken has shouted at Aurora on several occasions but stated that he is not child friendly.</p> <p>Mrs Dobbie has informed the social worker that she continues to see Mr Redman when he's passing by the neighbourhood and he calls in for a coffee. This could be viewed as Mrs Dobbie not showing consideration or sensitivity towards Aurora's needs and allows Aurora's anxieties to raise whether Aurora perception and view of Mr Redman is justified or not.</p> <p>Mr Dobbie informs Children Services that Aurora is frightened of Ken Redman and that he has shouted at her on numerous occasions. Mr Dobbie does not believe that Mrs Dobbie's relationship with Ken Redman is purely platonic and is of the belief that they are having a relationship together.</p>
<p>Social Presentation</p>	
<p>Social Presentation : Child's Needs recorded during Initial Assessment, PFAAR & PFAAR REG8</p>	<p>Aurora presents as a child who clearly has anxieties and emotional difficulties. It has been the social worker's and other professionals observations, experience and view that Aurora is very close to any adult conversation and is now displaying attention seeking behaviours in the playground at school. Aurora presents as a articulate child but can display avoidant techniques such as ignoring and becoming preoccupied in other activity and therefore making it very difficult to engage her in conversation at any level. This has made the assessment difficult to capture and reflect Aurora's voice, wishes, feelings and views.</p> <p>Aurora has presented as clean, tidy and very well groomed. Aurora has been dressed appropriately for the weather conditions and for her gender and age. Aurora has very poor body-image which will "certainly effect her self-esteem and is more likely to increase as she enters her teenage years" according to Carole Hobson (Children's Guardian, Caicass).</p>
<p>Social Presentation : Parenting Capacity recorded during Initial Assessment, PFAAR & PFAAR REG8</p>	<p>Mrs Dobbie has engaged fully with this assessment and has made her self available to the social worker. Mrs Dobbie has been very open with the social worker and has been able to articulate what she feels have been the difficulties. Mrs Dobbie is articulate and able to express herself in a calm and appropriate manner.</p> <p>Mr Dobbie has also engaged well with the assessment and has ensured that the social worker has been able to see and speak with Aurora alone. Mr Dobbie has been very forth coming with his version of events, past family history and functioning. Mr Dobbie presents at times as a man who is angry and frustrated at the Police and Children's Services and feels that professionals are not seeing what is clearly evident to him, that Mrs Dobbie has been abusive mother towards Aurora.</p>
<p>Selfcare Skills</p>	
<p>Selfcare Skills: Child's Needs recorded during Initial Assessment, PFAAR & PFAAR REG8</p>	<p>Aurora is developing self care skills that age appropriate and is developing early independent skills such as calling for her friends in her local neighbourhood.</p> <p>However, there is some evidence that her mental selfcare is impaired in that her coping strategies for dealing with situations are not healthy and impact on her emotional and mental well-being. This needs to be further investigated by CAMHS.</p>
<p>Selfcare Skills : Parenting Capacity recorded during Initial Assessment, PFAAR & PFAAR REG8</p>	<p>Aurora's parents are helping her develop appropriate independent physical selfcare skills. However, both parents are impacting on her ability to develop her mental selfcare through the acrimonious manner in which they interact with each other.</p>
<p>Parents/carers attributes and the impact on their capacity to ensure the child's safety from harm and to respond appropriately to his/her needs</p>	
<p>Social worker's summary of how the above issues impact on the parent/carers capacities to respond appropriately to the child's needs. Social worker's summary.</p>	<p>Helen Dunshie, Psychologist (primary CAMHS) reports that she completed an assessment in December 2009 on both parents and the children; Mr Dobbie is noted as being tokenistic in his engagement with the assessment (by sitting at his computer). She reports that Avril possibly suffered from post natal depression following the birth of Aurora and was prescribed anti-depressants following the birth of Orion. Her report recommended that Avril was to engage with Primary Mental Health Services. Both parents were also recommended to attend Relate and join a Parenting Toolbox course. It was Helen Dunshie's professional view that Aurora's anxieties at the time were caused by anger and conflict within the family home. Mrs Dobbie attended 3 sessions of the parenting tool box, while Mr Dobbie attended only one (and fell asleep during it). The course was offered again in March 2011, but neither parent attended. Mr Dobbie has stated that he was of the view that he attended the first parent course to support Avril not to improve his parenting skills; he wants to know the reason and rationale as to why he needs to attend a parenting course.</p> <p>It is Mr Dobbie's view that Mrs Dobbie's mental health has impacted on her parenting capacity</p>

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and reports instances of Mrs Dobbie 'loosing it', of slapping fights between Aurora and Avril and that Avril's smacking of Aurora was extreme - he did not report this to the police at the time as he thought it was due to her mental health and he did not acknowledge it as abuse until he was informed by the police that smacking a child can be viewed as assault. Mr Dobbie accepts that he has also smacked Aurora in the past but that this was more a psychological smack (a tap on the bum) rather than a physical smack.

While Mr Dobbie portrays Mrs Dobbie as a poor abusive parent he nevertheless left the children in her care when he went away on business. Mr Dobbie stressed that he reduced the amount of travel which was 1-2 nights every 2-3 weeks. He did however, leave meals prepared to reduce the stress on the family while he was away.

It is my view that during conversations with Mr Dobbie he talks about Mrs Dobbie in very derogatory terms and I have not heard one positive statement in regard to his wife and her parenting or role as a mother or a wife. Mrs Dobbie feels that Mr Dobbie undermined her parenting and would criticise and overrule her authority in front of Aurora. Mrs Dobbie stated that she would place Aurora on the naughty step when she had a tantrum and that Mr Dobbie would often say that Aurora had been sitting on the naughty step too long. Mr Dobbie would then remove Aurora from the step saying "mummy is being nasty". Mrs Dobbie further reports that Mr Dobbie would also project his anxieties onto Aurora telling her that he was worried about his business and having no money and informing her that they would all end up in a council house. It is the view of the social worker and other professionals that Mr and Mrs Dobbie have very different parenting styles and that has impacted on Aurora's view of her mother who's abused her and sees her father as a protector. Mr Dobbie shows insight into this and articulated that Aurora sees him as her protector against her mother and more recently Ken Redman.

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Family and Environmental Factors which Impact on the Child and Family

<p>Family history and functioning</p>	<p>Mr and Mrs Dobbie are first cousins (their respective mothers are sisters), they have always known each other and used to go on family holidays together. They got together when Avril was 21 and Thomas was 32. Avril states that as a young child she "always had a thing for Tommy". They kept their relationship secret for 12 months until Avril's mother questioned her about her relationship with Tommy. They got married after 18 months of being together and there were mixed reactions from family members. Mrs Dobbie states that the relationship was good at first; she allowed Tommy to make the decisions, but describes herself as naive. Mrs Dobbie felt that the relationship was fine until Aurora was born; Mr Dobbie was working from home which put additional strain on the family. Their relationship ended in January 2006, though they resumed it again in April that year as she was pregnant with Orion. The relationship was fine initially but in July 2010 Mr Dobbie was accused of assaulting Mrs Dobbie; Mr Dobbie moved out of the family home and their relationship continued to deteriorate. Mr Dobbie rented a property round the corner from the family home and continued to see his children regularly. Mrs Dobbie understands the importance of the children seeing their father and would like to see a time when the parents can put their differences behind them. Mr Dobbie view of the family was that Mrs Dobbie suffered long term mental health problems that impacted significantly on their family life. Mr Dobbie states that he would have to prepare meals and constantly tried to support Avril even "allowing Avril to work part time".</p> <p>The couple have been going through a custody battle and the children currently reside with Mr Dobbie, which was the direction of the Court when Mr Dobbie disclosed the allegations made by Aurora that her mother had abused her (spat in her face and held her down on the carpet for long periods of time). These allegations were not been repeated to the social worker and police officer when they met with Aurora.</p> <p>Mr Dobbie was previously married and has a son from that relationship. Recently his first wife and her son (from a different relationship), Zak, moved to the area from Scotland and subsequently moved in with Mr Dobbie and Aurora and Orion. However this did not work out, due to the children squabbling, and his first wife and her son moved out, though they still residing in the local area.</p>
<p>Wider family</p>	<p>Aurora's wider family lives in Scotland. Aurora has direct and indirect contact with them but there are no family members who live locally who can provide support.</p>
<p>Housing</p>	<p>Mrs Dobbie lives in the family home it is suitably furnished and decorated to a reasonable standard and is located in a desirable area. The house is a three bedroomed detached, with nicely maintained front and back gardens.</p> <p>Mr Dobbie has rented a four bedroom detached property near the former family home which is furnished and decorated to a reasonable standard. It provides a secure garden play area for the children.</p>
<p>Employment</p>	<p>Mr Dobbie is a physiotherapist and works full time from home. However he occasionally works away from home. Avril works part time at HMV in the finance department.</p>
<p>Income</p>	<p>There has been no assessment made of the family's income. However, both parents appear to be able to meet the financial needs of their children.</p>
<p>Family's social integration</p>	<p>The family has lived in their local area for over ten years. Mr Dobbie states that he has invited his neighbours for dinner and encourages Aurora and Orion to make friends with the new family in their neighbourhood. Both parents know people in their local area.</p>
<p>Community resources</p>	<p>There are good community resources within the family's local area and they access several children's activities locally.</p>

Risk Analysis

<p>Risk Analysis</p>	<p>Helen Dunshie's assessment in 2009 concluded that much of Aurora's anxiety was caused by the anger and conflict in the family home. These anxieties appear to be continuing and are arguably increasing even though the parents no longer live together. Mr Dobbie's view is clear that this is because of Mrs Dobbie and her abuse of Aurora.</p> <p>Aurora continues to be at risk of emotional upset and distress due to her parents' relationship and how Aurora perceives events. Aurora also has problems sleeping fearing that her father will die. This results in Aurora checking on her father through the night that he is still breathing. Aurora sleeps on her mattress next to her father's bed. Aurora also appears to know too much about what is going on between her parents and gets to know about events such as the recent incident involving Ken Redman and Mr Dobbie and although it was unfortunate that Aurora was told by Zac it's even more unfortunate that the incident occurred at all.</p> <p>Mr Dobbie acknowledge that instigating an assessment by Children's Services required that Aurora be spoken to by professionals but then feels that this is all too much for her and expresses his concerns that there are too many professionals involved who are focussed on policy and procedure rather than focusing on Aurora.</p>
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Analysis of the information gathered during the Core Assessment

<p>The analysts should list the factors that have an impact on different aspects of the child's development and parenting capacity, and explore the relationship between them. This process of analysing the information available about the child's needs, parenting capacity and family and environmental factors should result in a clear understanding of the child's needs, and what types of service provision would best address these needs to ensure the</p>	<p>Aurora is clearly suffering from anxiety. Both parents have very different parenting styles and Mr Dobbie appears to undermine Mrs Dobbie's parenting. Aurora did not disclose to Barbara Goldsmith or DC Gratton during our visit any incidents violence towards her by her mother or Ken Redman but drew a story informing us that she had heard noises coming from her mother's bedroom. Aurora had entered into the bedroom despite her mother telling her to wait. It appears that a Mr Kevin Redman was in the bedroom which caused Aurora some upset and distress. Mrs Dobbie categorically denies any abuse but stated that she has smacked Aurora on one occasion. Additional investigation is required to further understand these complex family dynamics, to ascertain whether the abuse allegations are factual and to assess the parents' capacity to meet their children's needs.</p> <p>Neither parent has followed the advice from previous assessments with regard to attending a</p>
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DH

Signature:

Name of Parent / Carer

Signature:

Name of Parent / Carer

Signature:

Recorded Feedback

Summaries

Person		Discussed	If no, when	Given	If no, when	Signed	Date Signed
AURORA DOBBIE, 10 years							
AVRIL DOBBIE, 42 years	Mother						
ORION DOBBIE, 4 years	Brother						
TOMMY DOBBIE, 53 years	Father						

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child has the opportunity to achieve his or her potential.

parenting course and it is unclear whether Mrs Dobbie accessed mental health services.

Mr Dobbie presents as a controlling parent who projects his issues and difficulties with his marital break-up onto his daughter and, given her very sensitive disposition, this increases Aurora's anxieties. Aurora has been too distressed to be effectively assessed by the social worker during this process so far.

CAFCASS is currently involved with Aurora and a full psychological assessment is to be completed in regard to Aurora by 16 October 2011. The outcome of this psychological assessment will assist Children's Services in its understanding of Aurora's mental well being. It is the view of the social worker that there is sufficient evidence to date to raise concerns in regard to Aurora's emotional and mental well being.

Other key areas of concern relate to:

- the long duration of the marital difficulties/breakdown which go back to 2006 and are exacerbated by the differing parenting styles of Mr and Mrs Dobbie and the fact that neither parent has accepted the help offered in developing their parenting.
- the bereavements that the family has experienced have impacted on Aurora, who was already displaying significant anxiety, such that she is now in fear of her father dying in his sleep which is impacting her emotional and physical well being.
- Mr Dobbie shows poor judgement in considering his children's needs; moving his ex-wife and her son to live with him and his children at a time when they were unsettled was addressing his needs not those of his children.
- Mrs Dobbie shows little insight into her daughters' feelings; continuing to openly see Ken Redman, albeit as a friend, when she knows her daughter has displayed anxiety and expressed upset at their relationship was addressing her needs not those of her children.

Aurora needs consistent parenting with appropriate boundaries that are focused on her best interests. From Aurora's perspective the break-up of her parents' marriage linked to inconsistent parenting and parental undermining of Mrs Dobbie by Mr Dobbie must be very difficult for her to understand, leading to anger, confusion and frustration which adds to her anxieties.

It is therefore recommended that the Local Authority remains involved with the family to provide support to Aurora (and Orion) via a s17 Child in Need Plan.

Child/young person and parent/carer comments

Child/Young person's views and comments

It has not been possible to get a view from Aurora in regard to Children's Services involvement. It is hoped that the social worker will be able to build a relationship with Aurora that will enable her to express her views openly and freely.

Parents'/Carers' views and comments

Mr Dobbie understands that assessments need to be completed by Children's Services but feels that Aurora is becoming lost in the process. Mrs Dobbie has stated that she would like to see the day when she and Mr Dobbie can put the children's needs first.

Decisions following the Core Assessment

This Enquiry cannot be completed until the Child/Young Person has been seen.

The Child/Young Person has been seen

Action Taken

Strategy Discussion	No
Legal Action	No
Specialist Assessment	No
Place into Accommodation	No
Provision of Services (s17)	Yes
Referral to Other Agency	No
Other Actions	No
Private Fostering Arrangement Assessment	No
Child Already in CP Process	No
No Further Action (Early Exit due to Early Section 47 End)	No
No Further Action	No

Reasons for these Action Taken

Children's Services, using a multi agency approach, will work with Aurora and her family to identify and reduce any risk of emotional abuse for Aurora and allow her to fulfil her potential.

If this Core Assessment was not completed within 35 working days, please give the reason(s) why

Awaiting information from external agency

Signatures

Name of Social Worker completing assessment

Barbara Goldsmith

Signature:

Name of Manager

Helen Doyle

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