

### 1. What is a National Panel Briefing?

In March 2025, the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel published a thematic review examining the impact of race, ethnicity and culture on multi-agency practice where children have suffered serious harm or died. This briefing from the LSCP summarises the key findings and aims to aid professional discussion and reflection within team meetings and staff briefings. You can read the full report [here](#).

### 2. How did the panel explore the theme?

The panel considered 40 Rapid Reviews & 14 Child Safeguarding Practice reviews where children from Black, Asian and Mixed Heritage backgrounds had suffered serious harm or died. Almost 50% of these reviews related to children from London.

### 3. What was the key message?

There was a very evident silence about racism and a hesitancy to name it and the ways it can be manifested. In turn, the safeguarding needs of Black, Asian and Mixed Heritage children and families are too often rendered invisible.

### 4. What did we learn about the impact of race, ethnicity and culture in multiagency practice?

There was a **limited recognition** of race, ethnicity and culture causing a poor understanding of how this impacted on children’s lived experience, vulnerability and risk. E.g. not exploring the impact for children growing up in dual heritage households.

**Faith and religion** were not always considered as an important aspect of children’s identities.

Different parts of children and family’s identities were not always identified and, when they were, were not viewed through an **intersectional lens**. E.g. not exploring the impact of a potential conflict between a child’s religious and gender identities.

Services did not always consider their role and responsibility to **recognise and remove service barriers** for Black, Asian and Mixed Heritage children. Barriers could include racialised trauma from previous professional interactions and cultural perceptions that asking for help means you can’t cope. White British practitioners might also be reluctant to challenge parents for fear of being perceived as racist.

**Children’s voices**, which include their spoken words, actions and behaviour, were not centralised within practice creating the risk that the uniqueness and individuality of these children were lost and lived experiences not fully understood.

There was a limited and narrow understanding of **community** and the impact on children’s lives. There was a focus on geography and older children at risk of contextual harm, but less understanding of social groups organised around common characteristics, e.g. religion.

Risk did not always translate into a **professional response**. E.g. girls from Asian and Mixed Asian Heritages who disclosed sexual abuse were not always believed or risks acted upon.

The term ‘**racism**’ was not named and there was lack of reflection as to how racial bias factors into professional responses and decision making. Black, Asian and Mixed Heritage children were both **hyper-visible** as a potential cause of harm to others and **invisible** as children needing protection.

### 5. Reflective questions for safeguarding practitioners and leaders

Recognition of, and attention to, race, culture and ethnicity is at the heart of multiagency safeguarding practice. We all have a professional responsibility to take ownership of developing our own confidence and capacity to address these important issues effectively. The panel invites both practitioners and leaders to consider your own practice when engaging children and families. The panel asks you to reflect on 6 questions to help consider what support you may need. **Access these on page 47 of the Panel’s Report**