



# Hesley / LADO follow up

Chris Freestone. January 2023.

# Hesley phase 1 report

- Following on from the findings of this report ( as at our last meeting ) the government has ordered a review of the LADO structure and function.
- This was announced by the Education Minister and will involve the DfE and other departments .
- The Hesley group has now closed all three residential special schools and their associated children's homes ( Doncaster area)



# LADO role criticisms

- The review found that the LADO function in Doncaster did not effectively collate information from different sources to analyse patterns of concerns about staff at the settings, meaning children were not adequately safeguarded.
- It said there was a lack of communication about staff conduct between the Doncaster LADO function and those of the placing authorities for the children in the schools.
- Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel chair Annie Hudson said the report's findings showed that the "system of checks and balances which should have detected that things were going wrong simply did not work".



# LADO role criticisms:

- Before the national review was initiated, Doncaster council commissioned an independent review of the town's LADO service – then run by the now defunct Doncaster Children's Services Trust – which recommended a number of improvements.
- These included multi-agency training to raise the service's profile, more consistent applications of thresholds for referral to it and strengthened governance by the Doncaster Children's Safeguarding Partnership. The council told the review these actions had all been completed, and that the review also provided assurance about the current effectiveness of the service.



# Urgent actions re. LADO:

- The investigating / review panel wrote to directors of children's services in August 2022, urging them to carry out a series of actions to provide assurance around the care of disabled children placed in residential special schools registered as children's homes. These were for:
- LADOs to urgently review all referrals, complaints or concerns regarding these settings over the past three years to ensure they have been appropriately dealt with. As part of this, they must inform placing local authorities of any outstanding enquiries regarding staff still working in these establishments.
- Directors of placing authorities to ensure that reviews are carried out of children in these settings to ensure they are in safe placements, with any concerns being shared with the local LADO if the threshold for referral is met.



# Urgent actions re. LADO:

- Directors of children's services are expected to confirm that they have taken these steps in a report to their DfE regional improvement support lead by the end of this month, as well as reporting findings to local safeguarding partners.
- Ongoing Panel / Hesley phase 2 to look at systemic issues
- Point of reflection for RM's / RI's re. their contact with LADO's , responses and outcomes.

