



RIs & CHISVAs

A Case Study

The Start

RI

The Police request for an Intermediary was received in November 2022. They had already done one VRI but needed more information and realised an RI was needed. My assessment and VRI were completed in February 2023.

Child A was 6 years old. I made recommendations and provided support regarding her inattention, difficulties with understanding certain concepts, and immature speech and sentences.

CHISVA

Referral was received in April 2023, initially there were difficulties in contacting the guardian which resulted in a delayed start to support.

In September 2023 the CHISVA made contact with the guardian and I was allocated to the case in my role as a Project Worker. I met with the client in school and completed an assessment and then provided sessions around Protective Behaviours.

Identification of Support Needs

Strengths:

- Client was well supported in school and had a good relationship with the pastoral lead.
- Pastoral lead was very welcoming of outside support and this enabled us to have a good working relationship.

Needs:

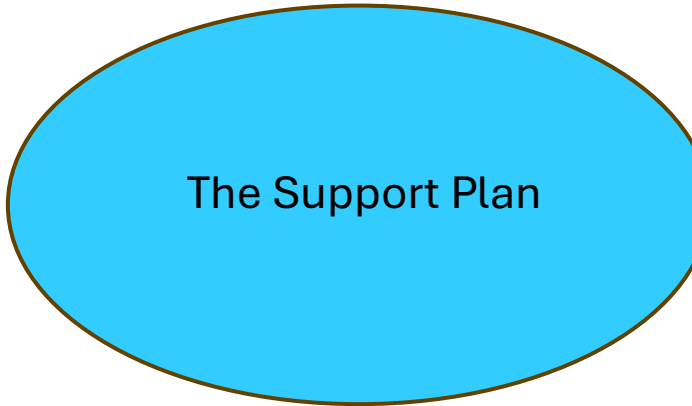
- High level of emotional needs which could lead to dysregulation/demand behaviour
- Short concentration span/ hyperactivity
- Possible learning difficulties
- Highly suspicious of new people and was very guarded
- External factors around housing issues and guardians' mental health needs.
- Communication with the guardian could be very challenging
- Challenges with the investigation- delayed due to multiple changes in the OIC and a lack of communication between police and guardian

Support Plan

Rapport building with client and PB work through weekly sessions

Adaptation of resources to meet need

Keep support network consistent to provide stability



Liaising with school and providing guidance and advice to pastoral lead

Liaising with the CHISVA to try to improve the communication and get case updates.

Signposting guardian to Housing and MH services

Case Milestones 2024-2025

In December 2023 the support work ended and the case was handed back to the CHISVA for support. In January 2024 I took on the CHISVA role and the case was allocated back to me.



January – July 2024
Liaising with school and guardian- contacting OIC for updates- further 2 changes of OIC during this time

August 2024
Case sent to CPS and another OIC assigned

December -January 2025
Charging and Plea Hearings and a sec.28 is scheduled for May

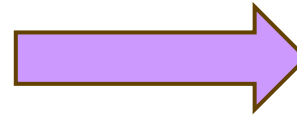
Pre sec.28

RI

CPS Request for Service received February 2025.
Challenge: Need to complete the RI Assessment
but there had been no communication from the
guardian to the OIC

CHISVA

Challenge: Parent not responding to OIC, and was
thinking of withdrawing from court case
Support: Facilitated a meeting with parent and
school to discuss next steps and support.
Met with client to ascertain wishes around going to
court.



March 2025

CHISVA and RI phone
call to discuss needs of
client and ways of
building rapport

Connected OIC and RI to
pastoral lead to arrange
RI assessment in school

RI Assessment and Court Report

- Information from the CHISVA helped me to tailor my assessment activities to the child's needs. I also had advanced information about the involvement of the school pastoral lead.
- A was now 8 years old. In my report I described a range of issues that would affect her ability to understand and answer questions in court. These included; attention skills; poor understanding of long or complex questions; specific difficulties with time and number concepts; sometimes having difficulty thinking of the word she wanted; and immature grammar in her spoken sentences.
- I explained that, without the appropriate support, her ability to engage in the cross-examination would be compromised by her emotional reaction to the situation. I requested the presence of her CHISVA in the area outside the live link room to support A's immature emotional regulation and related behaviour,

Pre sec.28 Continued...

RI- attended the court visit, and the ground rules hearing in preparation for sec.28

May 2025
Court visit
GRH
evidence review
Sec.28

CHISVA- After Easter fortnightly sessions in school with client and pastoral lead to prepare for court visit and sec.28



During RI assessment client engaged well with Lego. So, in CHISVA sessions we built a Lego court room to help her understand who was going to be there and what was going to happen

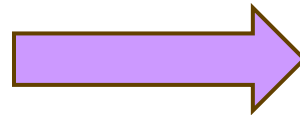
Pre trial court visit

Strengths:

- Client had a good understanding of what would happen and who would be there.
- Client knew who their support network was and had less anxiety when they were there.

Challenges:

- Too many adults led to dysregulation which could affect her ability to give evidence
- Being in the same room as guardian could cause dysregulation
- Waiting would be very stressful for client and potentially lead to dysregulation



RI and CHISVA Support Plan:

- Use the two waiting rooms at court to create a calm space. RI, CHISVA and client to be in one and guardian and pastoral lead to be in the other room.
- Calming and sensory activities
- Appropriate fidget toys
- Meeting the judge first, then the barristers so she's not overwhelmed by new faces.

The Evidence Review

RI

Inside the VRI room with the OIC. Supported A's concentration while she watched her VRI. Observed her asking for the recording to be paused and telling the officer new information about the defendant.

CHISVA

Outside the VRI room, played game of Dobble prior to the review to help the client regulate and provided her with fidget toys.

Challenge: Because of the further disclosure during evidence review, the sec.28 had to be rescheduled to August. There were two attempts at recording a further VRI during which RI and CHISVA worked together to support client, keeping her support network consistent.

The Sec.28

RI and CHISVA enacted the support plan- parent and pastoral lead in one room, client, RI and CHISVA in the second room.

Challenge:
Delay due to the defendant attending the wrong Crown Court.

RI

Went into the court to respond to the Judge's questions about A's needs.
Advised OIC (this was the officer's first sec.28)
Supported the OIC to speak with parent about the delay and options for proceeding

CHISVA

Stayed with client in the waiting room, maintaining a calm environment to ensure she was regulated and able to give best evidence if sec.28 were to go ahead

Client successfully completed sec.28 despite a 2 hour delay

Benefits and Challenges

Benefits:

- Allowed RI and ISVA to focus on their roles and overcome the challenges at the sec,28
- Client was well supported at each stage and ultimately calm and confident when giving evidence in court.
- ISVA felt reassured having the RI be able to go in the courtroom and support OIC and parent.
- RI felt reassured that the witness was getting the consistent support she needed for emotional regulation while waiting in court.

Challenges:

- CHISVA often not informed if there is an intermediary
- RI often not informed if there is an ISVA
- Communication- cjsm email accounts don't allow ISVAs and RIs to email each other.