



Records tell us that Michelle is just 16 years old and has been known to agencies for many years in relation to her mother's learning disabilities, mental health problems and substance misuse.

Her mother, Claire, tells us that during a family argument Michelle screamed, 'Anyway, I'll be out of here soon. I'll be moving in with Jim, and we're having a baby!' Claire says she'll need help with the younger children if Michelle moves out.

The nurse from the local surgery tells us that Michelle is 6 months pregnant and has only recently attended the surgery under pressure from her partner, Jim, whom they understand to be a friend of Darren - Claire's partner. Apparently Michelle frequently misses appointments and the records show that she was not brought for appointments as a baby or younger child. On the basis of a couple of short meetings there are already some concerns. Michelle is a heavy smoker, but says she is totally hooked and could never give up, and anyway, it will be an easier birth if the baby is smaller. She also says it helps stop her getting too fat, and Jim wouldn't love her if she was fat. She says she doesn't need any advice about babies because she had to look after her siblings all the time because her mother is a 'junkie'. She is overweight for her height.

The local school records indicate that Michelle had enjoyed primary school, and although was often late, attended regularly. Her attainment was in line with the average for her class. At secondary school her attendance rates fell dramatically. A range of efforts were made by the school to tackle this, with little success. Her reading remained at the level it was when she left primary school and she made minimal progress in other subjects. She virtually ceased attending school from 15.