

A guide to auditing

Introduction:

Team and Service Managers, IRO's and CP Chairs are required to undertake management case file audits each month. These audits are used to establish an understanding of the quality of practice across teams within Children's Social Care in Hillingdon. In order to achieve consistency across the auditing process, working with managers, the QA team have developed some good practice pointers for auditing. These also include some advice on agreed indicators of good or outstanding practice with regards to assessments, plans, reviewing and undertaking home visits.

Auditors are asked to complete their audits within a specified timescale (10 working days for Part A).

Good practice in auditing:

For a completed audit to be most effective and useful the auditor should:

- Be curious and thorough
- Provide accurate detail and information, which demonstrates that the case file has been read with care
- Include an assessment of the quality of the case file and the work undertaken with the child/family, not simply look for compliance
- Provide the reader with a clear understanding of the child's journey and the work undertaken by CSC
- Provide a professional analysis of the information gained
- Look for evidence of the child's lived experience/journey within the case file and comment on this
- Be aware of what is required within assessments, plans, reviews and visits to be able to accurately rate the case file and work with the child/young person as inadequate, requiring improvement, good or outstanding
- Provide evidence for the rating given, expand on assessment of quality
- Be written in the auditors own words not copying sections of the case file
- Provide suggestions and potential solutions where areas for development are highlighted
- Identify where immediate action is required to address poor or unsafe practice (the auditor is responsible for raising concerns directly with the relevant team managers as soon as possible)

Indicators of good or outstanding practice:

Home visits: What does good look like?

Records should clearly demonstrate:

- What is the purpose of the visit
- Who was there
- Evidence of observing and/or seeing the children
- Comments on the general home environment (including for CIC)
- Voice of the child:
 - Spoken to alone
 - Expressed their wishes and feelings
 - Practitioner able to demonstrate a knowledge of their lived experience
- Analysis of the visit

Moving to Outstanding:

- Evidence of the direct work undertaken with the child/tools used etc
- Evidence of how the visit is contributing to the implementation of the care plan
- Clear evidence of actions arising out of the visit

Assessments: what does good look like?

- Wide range of information gathered including historical evidence and from a number of sources - multi agency and multi disciplinary
- Clearly able to hear the voice of the child, wishes and feelings, lived experience in the assessment
- Views of parents clearly stated
- Review of historical information to inform current intervention
- Identification of strengths and needs
- Identification of patterns
- Use of chronology
- Clear identification of risk and categorisation when relevant
- Clear links made between information, analysis and recommendations for action and planning - evidence of systematic thinking
- Use of research and theory to provide independent and objective evidence to support analysis and recommendations
- Management authorisation and analysis evident

Moving to outstanding:

- Evidence of feedback to the family
- Family response to assessment included within it
- Evidence of direct work done with children/tools used
- Clear evidence of how diversity issues are responded to and impact on the assessment e.g. religion, ethnicity, language, special needs or disability of child or parent, use of interpreters etc

Plans: What does good look like?

- Plans are SMART
- Clear analysis of the aim of the plan - clearly stated
- Clear links between actions on the plan with the stated aim
- Direct correlation between the assessment outcome and the plan
- Multi agency involvement in delivering the plan
- Voice of the child evident in the actions within the plan
- Evidence of management authorisation
- Clear targets that can be assessed for progress
- Clearly stated outcomes that will demonstrate whether or not a specific action has been achieved, whether progress is being made in the lived experience of the child as a result of the implementation of the plan.

Moving to outstanding:

- Plans that are clearly updated with new information at each review rather than carrying forward previous plans
- Evidence provided of how actions have been achieved and the outcomes produced
- Evidence of lived experience for child improving through implementation of plan

Reviews: What does good look like?

- Timescales met
- Reviews records demonstrate how the plan is being implemented and how the plan is contributing to improvements for the child/young person
- Analysis evident regarding the plan - implementation and success in achieving stated aim
- Risk assessment updated as part of review
- All relevant and significant people spoke to for the review
- Child's voice evident in reviewing success of plan

- Family members contribution evidenced in reviewing the success of the plan
- Active review and updating of plan - not repeating same plan ongoing - removal of actions completed and addition of new actions
- Safety plan evident as part of overall plan

Moving towards outstanding:

- Evidence of review documents being shared with child/family before review
- Evidence of child/young person's active engagement in the review process /meeting
- Evidence of offer of advocacy for children/young people and/or parents/carers where relevant, to support them in the review process
- Evidence of management oversight and direction

QA Nov 2016