

Full Case File Audit Toolkit (CLA and Leaving Care)

Case File Grading (Ofsted Key Judgements)

Outstanding

In addition to meeting the requirements of a 'good' judgement, there is evidence that professional practice exceeds the standard of good and results in sustained improvement to the lives of children, young people and families. Research-informed practice, some of which will be innovative, continues to develop from a strong and confident base, making an exceptional difference to the lives and experiences of children and young people. *In addition for Care Leavers, the local authority is assertive and proactive in keeping in touch with all young people who have left care and, as a result, young people have a sense of security and connection with adults who they know well.*

Good - (Use Detailed Audit Guide as the benchmark for what good looks like)

Decisions about children and young people becoming looked after are made using high-quality assessments about the risk of harm or actual harm to them and the likelihood of change in their family. Thresholds are clear and applied appropriately. Children and young people are listened to by social workers who know them well. Adults working with children and young people help them to understand and manage their early childhood experiences, to progress well and achieve educationally, and to influence decisions about their future. They return home with the support they need and when it is safe for them. If this is not possible, they live in stable placements where they are helped to build positive relationships and maintain contact with their family and friends where this remains in their best interests. Care plans are regularly reviewed to ensure that the child or young persons' current and developing needs continue to be met. Permanent homes and families are found for children and young people without unnecessary delay. Their needs are met and they live with their brothers and sisters if that is assessed as being in their best interests. They do not experience placement moves unless they are part of a planned return home or in accordance with plans for their future. Their education is not disrupted unless it is in their best interests and plans for their schooling provide any extra help they need to make up time and learning that has been missed. They develop safe and secure relationships with adults that persist over time. When support is needed, children, young people and families are able to access it for as long as it is needed throughout their childhood and beyond. In addition, young people who are preparing to leave care receive support and help to assist them in making a successful transition to adulthood. *Plans for them to leave care are effective and address their individual needs. They are safe and feel safe, particularly where they live. Young people acquire the necessary level of skill and emotional resilience to successfully move towards independence. They are able to successfully access education, employment, training and safe housing. They enjoy stable and enduring relationships with staff and carers who meet their needs.*

Requires Improvement

When there are no widespread or serious failures or unnecessary delays that result in the welfare of looked after children *and care leavers* not being safeguarded and promoted. However, the authority is not yet delivering good help and care for looked after children and young people (*including care leavers*) and their families.

Inadequate

If there are widespread or serious failures, including unnecessary delay in identifying permanent solutions for them and which result in their welfare not being safeguarded and promoted.

If there are widespread or serious failure that results in care leavers not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted but the characteristics of a good judgement are not in place.

Notes for Auditor

All comments boxes must be completed – there must be sufficient information to evidence the grades and inform improved practice or comment on good practice. If there are immediate concerns the manager must be notified. **The child must always be at the centre of the audit. What is the child's journey? Does the child have a voice**