


Children Schools and Families Quality Assurance Framework and Approach



Counting
what counts for
children

November 2016

This document will be updated regularly and fully reviewed annually

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Version 1.0



SURREY

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1. Counting what counts for Children

We are all responsible for knowing and understanding the quality and impact of our practice. Leaders, managers and staff at all levels must understand what it is like to receive a service from Surrey, to challenge practice and improve experiences. We must strive to boldly know ourselves, what's working and what we need to change. This framework is our Quality Assurance Process that will provide that insight and the tools to make informed and targeted change. We are committed to our Safer Surrey Practice model which supports this approach, enabling strength based working across all activities.

Our Quality Assurance processes will test our 'Safer Surrey Approach' to ensure we effectively listen to children and families; that decision making is effective and timely; assessments are comprehensive, multiagency, analytical and of high quality; and interventions lead to demonstrable improvement in outcomes. **We are testing quality.** Quality Assurance must be an enabler that supports cultural change. It is the start of the conversation. Quality Assurance provides children's workers with the tools to make this happen.

Senior leaders and Elected Members will dedicate time and energy to this, including visits to different teams to discuss practice. In addition, Senior Leaders and Elected members will hear about, scrutinise and challenge the quality and impact across our services as part of our Quality and Experience reporting cycle.

This will provide confidence that standards are being met, improvements are delivered and we have clear evidence of the impact of our practice for children and families. Our quality assurance processes will also support us to communicate, celebrate our achievements and support strategic decision making.

Our programme of quality assurance activity will deliver an overview of the journey of the child and evidence the delivery of improved outcomes. This is strongly based on our strength based practice model and methods as set out in respective inspection frameworks.

We are creating new arrangements to support us to take a more independent and cross-cutting view of the quality and impact of our work with children, young people and families. Our newly created Quality and Experience Service will be responsible for coordinating this independent view working to ensure we know ourselves and promote a culture of challenge and learning.

The programme will be dynamic and subject to ongoing review and with the analysis of reporting will inform the focus of quality assurance activity, policies, procedures, training and service provision.

2. Introduction – From early help to statutory services

- 2.1 Measuring the quality and impact of service delivery, understanding what is good and supporting staff to learn and improve is central to achieving improved outcomes for children. This requires a strong quality assurance system to be in place that tells us whether our Safer Surrey approach is being delivered effectively and consistently, which enables children's welfare to be **safeguarded and promoted**. We are all responsible – this is a **participatory approach** that includes us all – from our elected members to our front line practitioners. We will boldly and relentlessly focus on the quality of our practice.
- 2.2 Our approach covers the Children Schools and Families Directorate:
- Children's Social Care
 - Early Help and Family Services
 - MASH
 - Commissioning
 - Schools and Learning
 - SEND
- 2.3 An important element of our approach is participatory quality assurance. We understand that improving practice quality is a learning and collaborative process. We have therefore introduced a range of participatory review activities that will enable those taking the action to grow in their practice. In some cases the reviewer and the practitioner to review case work together, bringing together their skills and knowledge to support learning and improved practice.

3. Our Purpose

- 3.1 Our overall purpose is to:
- Bring about improved outcomes for children, young people and their families by improving awareness, professional confidence and practice thus improving the quality of service delivery.
 - Count what counts so that we know and understand quality, consistency and impact of our Safer Surrey approach – boldly knowing ourselves.
 - Identify areas of strength whilst also ensuring short falls in quality are identified and addressed to bring about continuous development and improvement across services.
 - Enable the development of robust whole service, team and individual supervision, training and development plans linked to the findings of quality assurance activity. Quality is everyone's business.
 - Clearly define roles and responsibilities in relation to quality assurance, to strengthen accountability and promote a culture of feedback aimed at driving forward practice, service development and improved outcomes.

4. Our Safer Surrey Principles and Practice Values

- 4.1 [Safer Surrey](#) is our approach to delivering strengths based practice with our children, young people and families. It works on the belief that children and their families have the strengths, resources and ability to recover from adversities. It has its roots in

solution focused brief therapy and creates a common language used by all professionals from universal services through to child protection. It starts from the premise every child and family has resources, assets and strengths

4.2 Our Safer Surrey principles and values were developed directly with 350 staff and service users and form the basis of what we will be measuring to understand the quality of our work.

4.3 Safer Surrey Principles:

- **Collaboration:** Safer Surrey is based on colleagues having a shared language and understanding of risk/need and coming to a shared viewpoint, thereby removing the risks associated with poor communication. The shared language will enable us to establish past harm, danger, and complicating factors which need to be addressed and how we all share in addressing those needs.
- **Professional curiosity and critical thinking:** Safer Surrey promotes a questioning approach; showing professional curiosity to ensure the child is protected.
- **Planning for success:** It is important that we can identify what good practice looks like to achieve a more balanced approach to risk management. The Safer Surrey practice guide provides examples of good practice that we should follow.
- **Supportive organisational culture:** Organisational culture reflects how we want to work with families. We need to be a learning organisation continually reflecting and growing from our experiences.

4.4 Safer Surrey Practice Values:

- We build relationships with children, young people and their families as people
- We believe in children, young people and their families
- We are open and honest, doing the best we can with children and young people to keep them safe and well, without making promises we can't keep
- We respect the skills and resources each person brings to their work, listening to and learning from each other
- We support each other, regardless of team or organisation, and focus on working together in a holistic way (including sharing resources)
- We make processes as simple as possible, allowing some flexibility to change them to meet the needs of children, young people and families
- We take responsibility for mistakes, and say sorry
- We make sure everyone is working with a manageable amount of children, young people and families
- We make sure everyone feels well, safe and secure, reassured we have 'got their back' (especially during difficult times)
- We supervise staff, allowing time to share and reflect on our work, and recognise success stories
- We provide chances to take a next step in a career here, including steps which are not into social work

Surrey County Council's Corporate Values

4.5 This quality assurance framework complements Surrey County Council's corporate values as we are committed to delivering excellent services and support where we treat all our residents well and with respect. The Council's corporate priorities and

values are outlined in the [Confident in Surrey's future: Corporate Strategy 2016-21](#) and our values are:

- Listen
- Responsibility
- Trust
- Respect

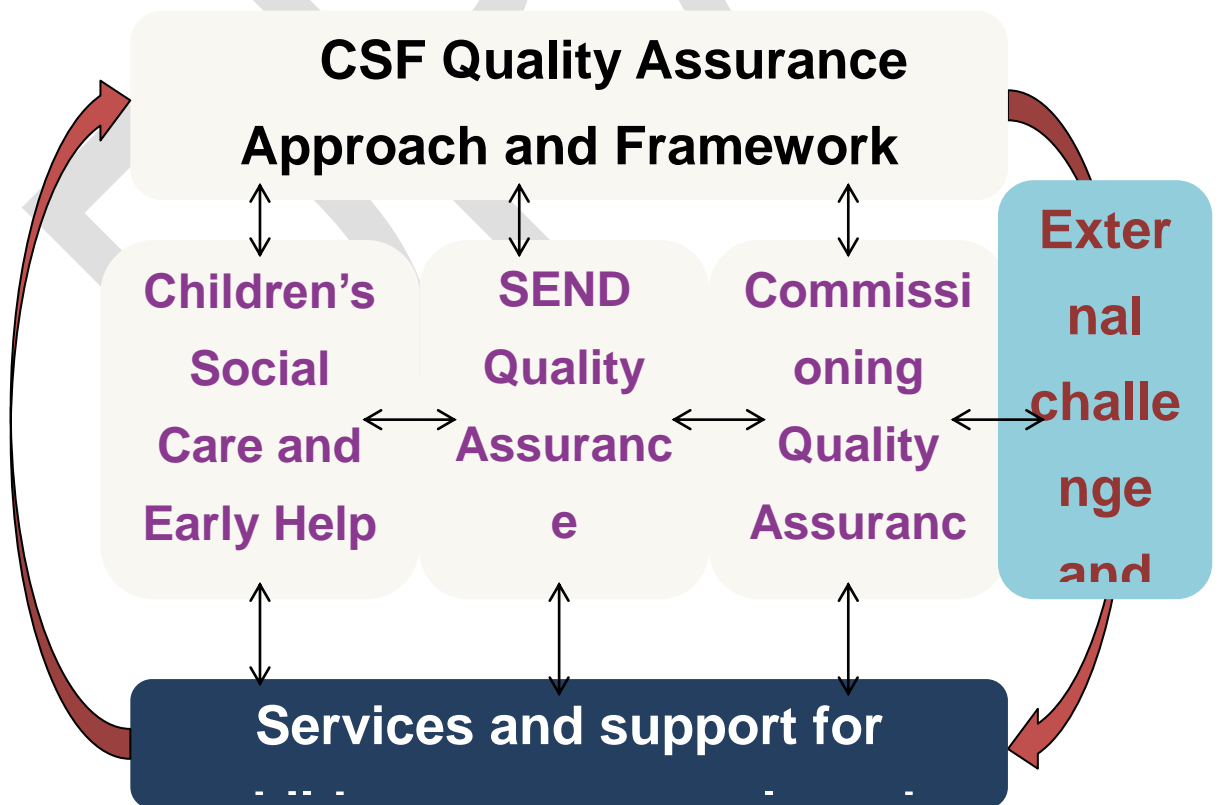
4.6 The Council is also committed to delivering excellent customer service to all our residents and our [Customer Promise](#) outlines this in detail.

5. Independent Quality Assurance

5.1 In Children Schools and Families we see quality assurance as everyone's responsibility. Counting what counts for Children. Each service area; children's services, early help and family services, commissioning and special educational needs and disabilities, has its own range of activities which help us know and understand the quality of our practice.

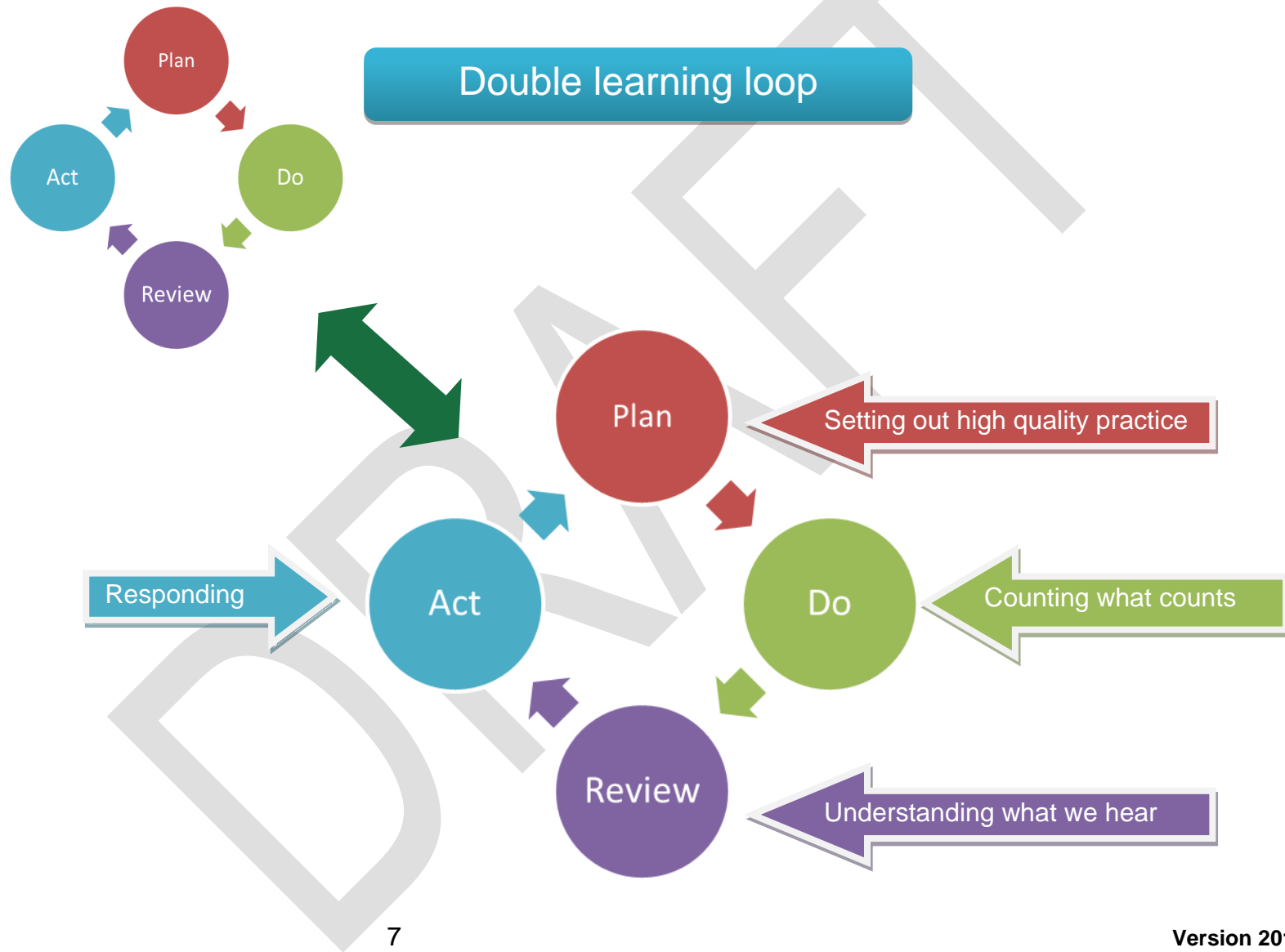
5.2 The Quality and Experience part of the directorate has been created to provide an independent view of the quality of practice right across CSF. Quality and Experience will use a range of measures and activity to help challenge and support the directorate to continue to meet and exceed our standards. This will ensure we collectively learn, develop and ultimately improve outcomes for children, young people and their families in Surrey.

Figure 1: Our Quality Assurance set up



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6. Our Approach to making a difference to the experiences and outcomes for children



Stage in cycle	Activity
Plan	This sets the scenes for our expectations of good practice through Safer Surrey and policies, procedures and roles and responsibilities that reflect current statutory requirements and guidance, National, Regional and Local policy, in relation to a particular topic or issue.
Do	Quantitative and qualitative information is gathered: performance indicators and outcomes measures, audits, compliments and complaints, feedback from staff, partners, children, young people and their families, and from policy, reviews and inspections (including monitoring visits).
Review	The quantitative and qualitative information gathered is analysed to understand the quality of practice and the experience of children, young people and families. It will tell us how well embedded and consistent our Safer Surrey approach is and will tell us what the key strengths and areas for improvement are.
Act	<p>Feedback to all staff about the outcome of the quality assurance activity on a regular basis with a focus on actions, owned by relevant leads, needed to improve outcomes and experience children and young people.</p> <p>These actions can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness raising • Practice developments • Training, learning and development plans • Changes to guidance and local policy, procedures, standards etc. <p>Monitoring of the effectiveness of the agreed actions in improving outcomes perpetuates the cycle of continuous improvement and is captured through our double learning loop cycle (in green in diagram above).</p>
Double Learning Loop	Our approach will systematically understand where we need to improve and put actions in place to make those improvements. The double learning loop refers to planning and reviewing the learning we put in place to ensure it has the desired improvement, and helping to ensure that improvement is embedded.

7. Reporting Cycle

Monthly reporting cycle for Children’s Social Care and Early Help

- 7.1 There will be a monthly cycle of reporting to Children’s Services Management Team (including Head of Early Help and MASH) and CSF Leadership Team, which will subsequently be made available to all staff. This will be on the quality and consistency of our Practice (Safer Surrey) and the experience of children and families.
- 7.2 Whilst under improvement measures the Children’s Improvement Board will also receive these reports monthly.
- 7.3 This reporting approach will be extended to all parts of the directorate as quality assurance arrangements are developed.

Quarterly Report

- 7.4 Each quarter a quality and performance report for the whole directorate will be produced and presented to the leadership team, providing cross cutting insight and analysis on ‘how we are doing’.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Elected Members	<p>Democratically elected by the residents of Surrey, all elected members are corporate parents to all of Surrey’s children and young people, including those that most need our help. Surrey has two cabinet members and an associate cabinet member who play a leading role in holding officers to account and challenging and supporting improved outcomes. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holding the DCS and CSF leadership team to account • Playing an active role in key governance boards such as the Children’s Improvement Board, Corporate Parenting Board etc. • Conducting visits to teams to observe and understand practice • Being a key voice of residents <p>The council’s scrutiny function also provides challenge and support to officers and Elected member over quality and performance of practice and will do this formally at Social Care Services Board at least once a year.</p>
Chief Executive	<p>Holds the DCS and CSF Leadership Team to account for the overall performance and quality across CSF, and plays a key role working with Elected Members and strengthening strategic relationship across the Partnership.</p>

	The Chief Executive chairs the Corporate Parenting Board and is involved in audit activity.
DCS and CSF Leadership Team	The DCS and CSF leadership team will lead and be accountable for the quality and performance of the whole directorate, supporting and challenging staff at all levels to ensure children and young people improve outcomes and have a good experience of the support they receive. This will be conducted in many different ways including 1-1 meetings, chairing and representation on governance boards and conducting visits and audit activity of case work.
Managers	Managers at all levels across CSF take responsibility for working together with practitioners to improve practice. They are heavily involved in audit activity and are a key component to creating better ways of doing things and supporting staff to embed learning.
Practitioners	Practitioners deliver the practice to children and families day in, day out. Every individual is responsible for their own quality and performance. They will work with children and families and their managers to improve practice and improve outcomes as well as being heavily involved in audit activity.

Annex 1: Roles and Responsibilities

This is a comprehensive table of quality assurance activity for Children's Services. Some of the activity could naturally fall under more than one heading – for the purposes of not duplicating each activity only appears once within the table. All activity outcomes will feed into the learning loop.

1. Counting what counts

1.1 Children's Social Care and Early Help

Role	Frequency	Purpose	Reporting
Chief Executive	Average one case per month (minimum)	To seek assurance about compliance with service standards and quality of practice across Children's Social Care and Early Help.	
Director of Children's Services	Average one case per month (minimum)	To seek assurance about compliance with service standards and quality of practice across Children's Social Care and Early Help.	
Assistant Director, Children's Services Assistant Director, Commissioning and Prevention	Average four cases per month (minimum) on a team rotational basis.	To seek assurance about compliance with service standards and quality of practice across Children's Social Care and Early Help.	
Assistant Director, Schools and Learning	One case per quarter	To seek assurance about compliance with service standards and quality of practice across Children's Social Care and Early Help.	
Area Heads of Children's Services, and Head of Countywide Services and Head of Safeguarding	Two cases each per month (minimum).	These senior managers will at random select cases audited by Team Managers and cross audit them. This cross audit process is designed to strengthen consistency by ascertaining that the case file audit protocol is being adhered to, that the practice standards are being applied appropriately and that required	

		actions are appropriate and have been followed up.	
Service Managers and Team Managers (EH and Social Care)	Four cases per month (Minimum)	Service managers will at random across practitioners select four cases each month to be audited ensuring compliance with service standards, practice guidance and to reflect on in supervision.	
Nominated Social Workers including NQSWs and from Academy.	Two cases per month	Nominated social workers will progress specific audits and/or themed audits as identified the quality assurance findings. Group activity to support learning.	
Responsive thematic focus	Quarterly	<p>Themed audits will be undertaken by staff from the internal QA pool. The aim of themed audits will be to consider specific areas of practice.</p> <p>These themes will be identified through our quality assurance activity as areas that need specific focus or are areas of good practice.</p>	
APSWs, Practice Coaches, Family Group Conference	Monthly	Feedback reports observation.	Safer Surrey Report
Head of Early Help	Two cases per month (minimum).	The head of Early Help will at random select cases audited by Area Managers and cross audit them. This cross audit process is designed to strengthen consistency by ascertaining that the case file audit protocol is being adhered to, that the practice standards are being applied appropriately and that required actions are appropriate and have been followed up.	
Virtual School Head Teacher	One case per month	Provided as part of the AD Children's/ AD Commissioning and Prevention Audit	
Early Help	Two cases		

Area Managers	each per month (minimum).		
Early Help borough managers	Four cases each per month (minimum)		
LADO	Two cases a month		

1.2 Quality and Experience Service

Role	Frequency	Purpose	Reporting
Independent Reviewing Officers	Monthly reports to feed into the QA reporting cycle – will use Safer Surrey Model, including identifying and affirming good practice. Casework issues escalated as usual	To quality assure case management and practice.	
Child Protection Chairs	Monthly reports to feed into the QA reporting cycle – will use Safer Surrey Model. Casework issues escalated as usual	To quality assure case management and practice.	
QA team	5 per team member – Children's and Early Help	Flexible and responsive dip-sampling - Quality assurance of audits, directed from monthly reporting	
QA team	Rapid response from agreeing forward activity following QA report – via Continuous improvement team	Review impact of improvements as per areas of improvements identified.	
QA team	In line with partnership priorities and Ofsted interest - Children's and Early Help	Themed audits	
Independent	Monthly reports to feed into		

Visitors	the QA reporting cycle – will use Safer Surrey Model. Casework issues escalated as usual		
Head of Quality and Experience	Monthly	Compile report on quality of practice across children's social care and early help	

1.3 Surrey Safeguarding Children's Board Contribution.

Sub Group	Frequency	Purpose	Reporting
Learning and Improvement Sub Group	Attendance at monthly meetings and engagement in all case reviews.	To recommend whether a Serious Case Review should be held, to keep under review procedures for Serious Case Reviews and action plans and to undertaken Near Miss reviews.	
Learning from Serious Case Reviews			
Multi Agency Audit Group	Quarterly	To undertake single and multi agency audits, to review and monitor the effectiveness of processes in respect of individual cases or specific issues..	

2. Elected Members Responsibility

Named Role and Associated Activity	Frequency	Purpose	Reporting

Lead Member for Children Visit or shadowing frontline social work teams and Early Help	As available – to 6 teams a year	Supported by the relevant Senior Manager, visits to frontline social work and the safeguarding and quality assurance service will be undertaken. This will provide the Lead Member with the opportunity to hear and understand first-hand about positives in practice as well as pressures and issues that social workers are facing	
Social Care Services Board		Directorate Annual Report.	
Annex A Information	Feeds into monthly narrative report	Produced by insight and innovation.	

3. Chief Executive Responsibility

Activity	Frequency	Purpose	Reporting
1:1 meeting with Director of Children's Services	Monthly	Service discussion with focus on quality of practice, strategic objectives and development.	
Individual Performance Appraisal meetings with the Director of Children's Services.	Six monthly	To monitor and evaluate quality of practice against agreed objectives and plans.	
Individual meeting with Independent Chair of Surrey Safeguarding Children's Board.	Quarterly	To discuss Children's Services contribution to board activity and to ascertain the Independent Chair's views about how Children's Services are contributing to multi agency safeguarding.	
Meeting with Independent	TBC	Head of Quality and Experience and Head of Continuous Improvement to	

Chair of Surrey Safeguarding Children's Board and Director of Children's Services		attend meeting with the Chair and Director of Children's Services to test common understanding of progress and impact	
Meeting with Principal Social Worker	TBC		

4. Complaints

Activity	Frequency	Purpose	Reporting
Surrey CSF Complaints Team produce information on complaints and compliments received.	Monthly/six weekly Annual report	Emerging themes from complaints/compliments are used together with all quality assurance information and user feedback to inform training and development plans, advance practice and influence and shape service development.	

6. Listening to staff

Activity	Frequency	Purpose	Format
Annual Staff Survey	Annual	To listen to staff about their experiences working in SCC	On line
Big Survey	Annual	To listen to staff views and experiences of working in their roles	Annual survey
Mighty Meetings – led by Assistant Director for Children's Services. Cross section of staff attend	Quarterly	To listen to staff views and experiences, and do shared development and learning	Face to face
Director of Children's Services lead focus group/visits to front-	Quarterly	To focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is working well? • What are you worried 	Face to face

line social care and early help staff		<p>about?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What percentage of your time is spent working directly with children? • Safer Surrey in practice – is it working? • Capacity • Training • Management and supervision 	
Communities of Practice	?	For practitioners to share learning and tackle improvements together	Face to face
Practice coaches	Monthly/six-weekly	To feedback what is working and what is worrying staff and also what actions are being taken to address improvements	Face to face and monthly report.
Exit interviews	In the month prior to staff leaving	To identify strengths and deficits worker experienced in working in Surrey.	Face to Face or Online ?
Self-Assessment	Ongoing?	Commitment to self-assessment? To be picked up in supervisions??	
Recognition Scheme	Monthly	Recognition to front line staff for good work identified by the audit. Box to be added onto audit tool in order for audit team to collate	

Children Looked After and Care Leavers			
Forum	Frequency	Purpose	Lead
Statutory Visits	6 weekly – maximum. May be more frequent.	The Child's views and feelings have been sought. The Child is seen and spoken to away from their carer, where this is age appropriate.	Social Worker
Children Looked After Review	Within 20 working days after being looked after, thereafter within 3 months of the Initial review. Subsequent reviews are conducted at no more than 6 monthly intervals	The statutory CLA Reviews review arrangements for Children looked after in accordance with review procedures	Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)
Surrey Care Council	Monthly	Children in Care are engaged in meaningful activities aimed at enabling them to contribute their view, opinions and influence practice and service development	Children's Rights Service
Care Council Juniors	Quarterly	Care Leavers engage in meaningful activities aimed at enabling them to contribute their view, opinions and influence practice and service development	Children's Rights Service
Corporate Parent Board (CPB)	Every other meeting	Care Council members and Children's Rights Staff attend part of the Corporate Parent Board to engage in discussion about the monitoring and ensuring the well-being of CLA and to scrutinise all aspects of services to CLA and Care Leavers	Lead Member for Children
Feedback Form to CLA	Sent out to children and young people with "Who Cares?" Newsletter quarterly	Offers the opportunity for Children Looked After to give feedback	IRO Manager and participation apprentice IROs
Foster Carer Reviews – Consultation Document	Consultation document sent out to children and young people in advance of the Foster care review annually.	Children and young people are invited to contribute feedback to the review via the consultation document.	Fostering Social Worker
Foster Carer Reviews – Social Workers	Annually	Child's Social Worker's report reflects the views of children, young people and their parents about the placement	Social Worker

Report			
Independent visitor to SCC children's homes	Monthly	Under regulation 33 independent visits in accordance of the Children's Homes Regulations This is to meet children and young people living in the residential unit to hear their views and opinions about the care that they are receiving.	Independent provider
Children Subject to Child Protection and Child in Need Plans			
Statutory Visits	Monthly – maximum. May be more frequent.	The Child's views and feelings have been sought. The child is seen and spoken to away from their carer, where this is age appropriate.	Social Worker
Initial Child Protection Conference and Reviews	Every initial Child Protection Conference and Review	The Child/ Young Person is invited to contribute their views and opinions and if they wish to do so, is either represented by their advocate or attends with them. The Social Worker completes a report for every conference including the child/ young person's views and opinions	Social Worker Child Protection Chair Promise Advocate
Child in Need Initial and Review meetings	3 monthly	Children and young people's views and opinions are ascertained in advance of CIN meetings	Social Worker
Assessment			
Children and Families Assessments	Continually Assessment	The child/ young person's views, opinions, wishes and feelings are sought and recorded in the assessment	Social Worker

8. Listening to Parents and Carers

Forum	Frequency	Purpose	Lead
Foster Carer Reviews - Consultation document	Consultation document sent out to parents/carers in advance of the Foster care review annually.	Parents are invited to contribute feedback to the review via the consultation document.	IRO
Foster Carer Reviews - Social	Annual	Social Workers report reflects the views and opinions of	Social Worker

Workers Report		parents.	
Annual Consultation with Foster Carers	Consultation with Foster Carers carried out on in during April/May each year.	Consultation process aimed at seeking feedback from foster carers about their experience of fostering for Surrey, how well they are supported and any thoughts they have about how practice and the service could be developed and improved.	Team Manager
Regulation 44 & 45	Monthly & bi-annually	<p>Regulation 44 visits in accordance with Regulation 44 of the Children's Homes Regulations 2015 will be conducted by an independent provider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to meet children and young people living in the residential unit and hear their views and opinions about the care they are receiving. • capture the views of staff and parents. • to review compliance with policy and procedures. <p>Regulation 45 produces a Children's Homes Managers report completed twice yearly which captures the main themes.</p>	Independent provider
Looked After Children's Reviews	First review a minimum of 20 days of being looked after, thereafter within 3 months of the Initial review and subsequent reviews are conducted at no more than six monthly intervals.	Statutory LAC Reviews are held in accordance with the review procedures to review arrangements for Looked After Children, parents and carers are invited to contribute fully to these.	IRO
Child Looked After Review - Consultation form	Is sent out to parents/ carers in advance of the first or subsequent reviews.	Ascertain the parents and carers views about their child's placement and care plan.	IRO
Social Workers	The allocated social	The views, opinions and	Social Worker

report to Children Looked After Reviews	worker submits a report to each review.	wishes of parents and carers are sought and reflected in this report.	
Initial Child Protection Conference and reviews	Every Initial Child Protection Conference and reviews.	Social worker completes a report for every conference and the views and opinions of parents/ carers are included.	Social Worker
Initial Child Protection Conference and reviews	Every Initial Child Protection Conference and review.	Parents/ carers are invited to attend each review and contribute their views and opinions.	Child Protection Safeguarding Chair
Child Protection Safeguarding Chair - Consultation Form	Every Initial Child Protection Conference and review.	Child Protection Safeguarding Chair sends out a consultation document to parents and carers prior to each conference; this is designed to elicit their views, opinions and ascertainable wishes and feelings.	Child Protection Safeguarding Chair
Core Groups	Held monthly in relation to every child subject to a child protection plan.	Core Group is multi agency, this group exists to develop, implement, monitor and review the Child Protection plan. Parents and carers are an importance member of the Core Group and are encouraged to contribute fully to all aspects.	Social Worker
Child in Need Initial and Review meetings	6 weekly	Parents and carers are encouraged to contribute fully to Child in Need meetings and their views and opinions are sought.	Social Worker
All Assessments, S47, Children and Family Assessments	During any assessment process	The views and opinions of parents are sought and reflected in the assessment.	Social Worker
Reports on complaints and compliments received from parents and carers.	Quarterly reports produced.	Emerging themes from complaints/compliments are used to inform training and development plans, advance practice and inform service development.	Children's Rights Team

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