

Audit Highlights Report – November 2018 – September 2020

1. Introduction

The monthly audit programme is a critical element in learning and improvement. Audits provide an opportunity to look at the quality of work undertaken with children and families and inform the ongoing improvement plans. We appreciate the challenges at present with remote working and changing landscape of how we effectively safeguard children in a virtual world. **With that said, audits remain a critical and essential priority in our journey of improvement to good.**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent 'stay-at-home order', the decision was made on 24th March 2020 to place the monthly case audit programme on-hold until June 2020. A further decision was made in late April 2020 that the monthly audit programme would resume on the 1st June 2020 and there have been no further 'pauses' to the auditing activity since then.

Since December 2018 and up to and including September 2020, 1632 children's cases have been allocated to Team Managers. Of the 1632 cases that have been allocated, 1298 audits have been completed. **The audit programme has an overall compliance rate of 80.**

Since March 2019, 456 re-audits have been allocated and 361 completed, **giving an overall re-audit compliance rate of 79%**

2. Practice Recommendations: August & September 2020

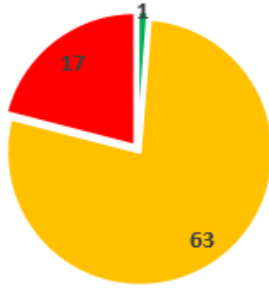
While auditing is key to ensure we 'know ourselves', highlight best practice (that we can learn from) and highlight practice needing improvement it is essential that this is followed through and leads to real change in the quality of frontline practice experienced by the children and families we support.

The high-priority practice recommendations for the months August and September 2020 are:

- Managers to ensure that supervision is held in line with expected timescales and evidences reflective discussion, impact of intervention, proactive decision making where there is drift and delay and review of decision / actions that support driving the plan forward.
- Management oversights / case discussions are recorded to respond to significant events/ changes in circumstances/ how overdue task will be addressed together with the rationale for the decision making and timescales.
- Managers, Social Workers, CPC's and IRO's to ensure that planning and review for children is timely and that any drift or delay is responded to with a clear plan of how this will be managed and addressed.
- All teams to review and reflect on the key learning identified for children that go missing and are vulnerable to exploitation and hidden crimes:
 - a. Response and timeliness to children who go missing;
 - b. Timeliness and quality of CSE risk assessments, so that they are pertinent to the current risks, include a plan of intervention to reduce risks and evidence the child's and parent's contribution;
 - c. Risk assessments for children who are at risk from sexual harm both within and outside their homes and how we engage partner agencies to support the child, their family and us in the resulting plans.

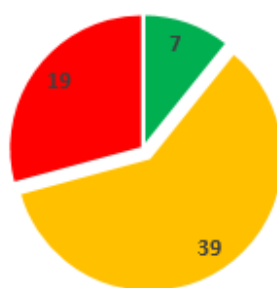
4. Overall Judgements – November 2018 to September 2020

Overall Judgements
November 2018



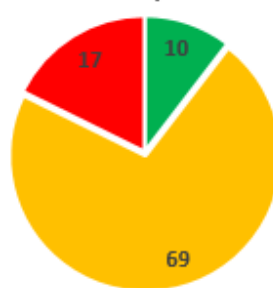
1% Good
63% Requires Improvement
17% Inadequate

Overall Judgements
December 2018



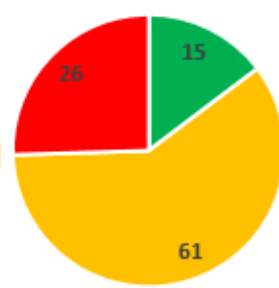
11% Good
60% Requires Improvement
29% Inadequate

Overall Judgements
January 2019



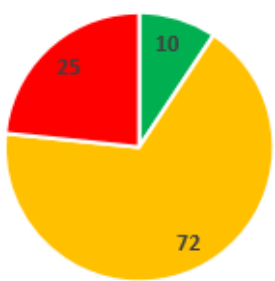
15% Good
60% Requires Improvement
25% Inadequate

Overall Judgements
February 2019



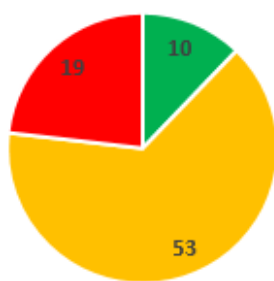
29% Good
51% Requires Improvement
19% Inadequate

Overall Judgements
March 2019



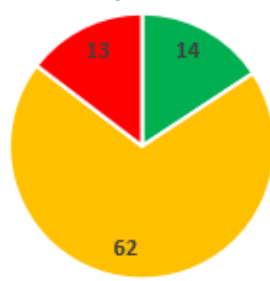
9% Good
67% Requires Improvement
23% Inadequate

Overall Judgements
April 2019



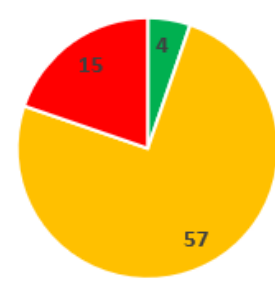
12% Good
65% Requires Improvement
23% Inadequate

Overall Judgements
May 2019



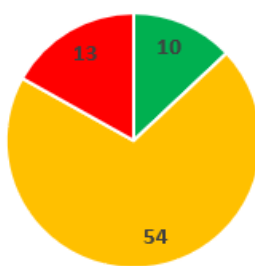
16% Good
70% Requires Improvement
15% Inadequate

Overall Judgements
June 2019



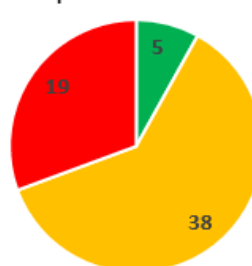
5% Good
75% Requires Improvement
20% Inadequate

Overall Judgements
July/August 2019



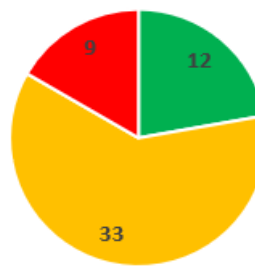
13% Good
70% Requires Improvement
17% Inadequate

Overall Judgements
September 2019



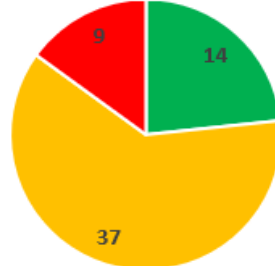
8% Good
61% Requires Improvement
31% Inadequate

Overall Judgements
October 2019



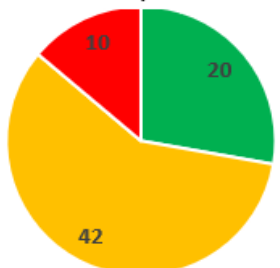
22% Good
61% Requires Improvement
17% Inadequate

Overall Judgements
November 2019



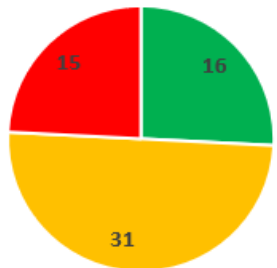
23% Good
52% Requires Improvement
15% Inadequate

Overall Judgements
January 2020



28% Good
58% Requires Improvement
14% Inadequate

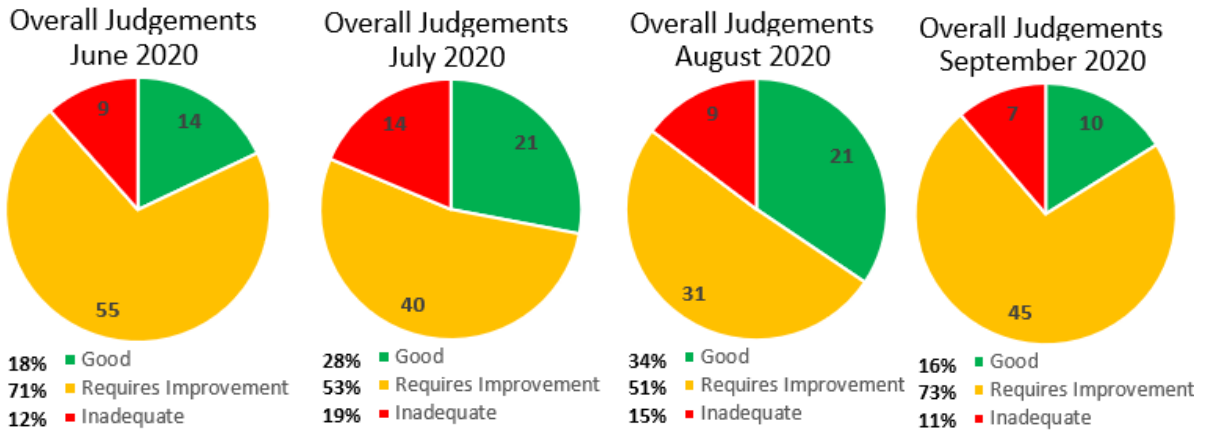
Overall Judgements
February 2020



26% Good
50% Requires Improvement
24% Inadequate

March, April and May 2020

Monthly auditing programme paused. Covid RAG ratings and MOs audited instead

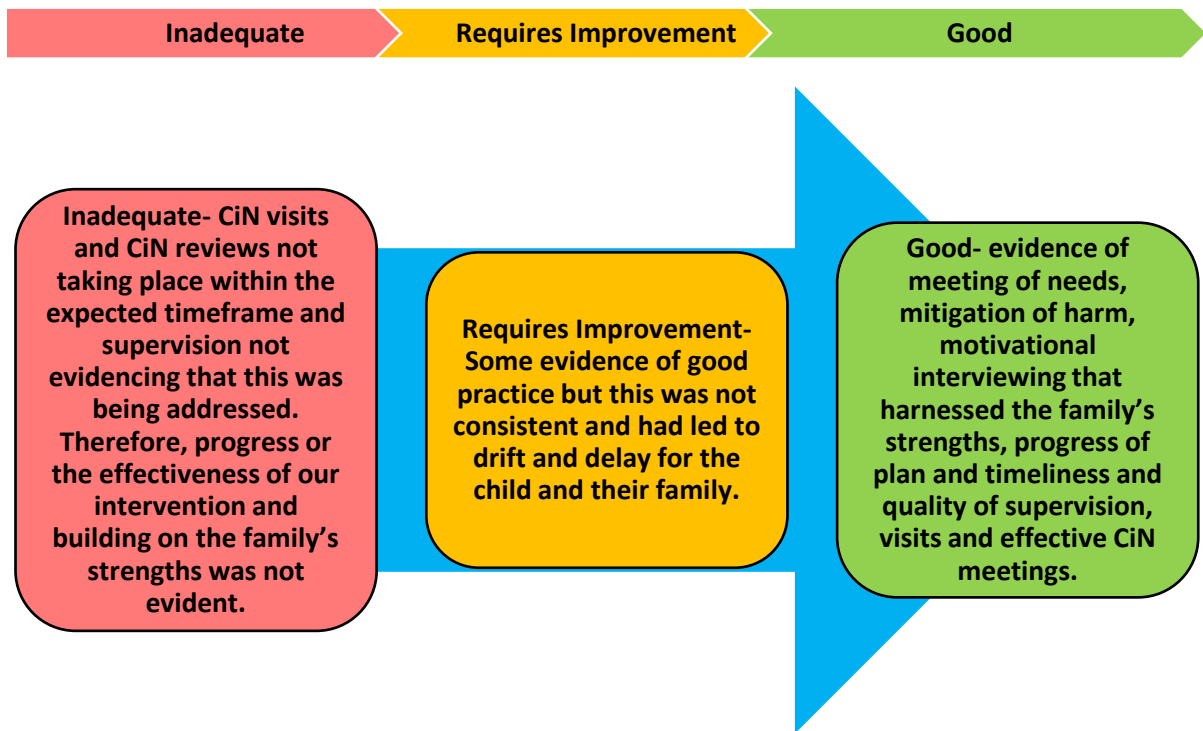


6. Practice Themes

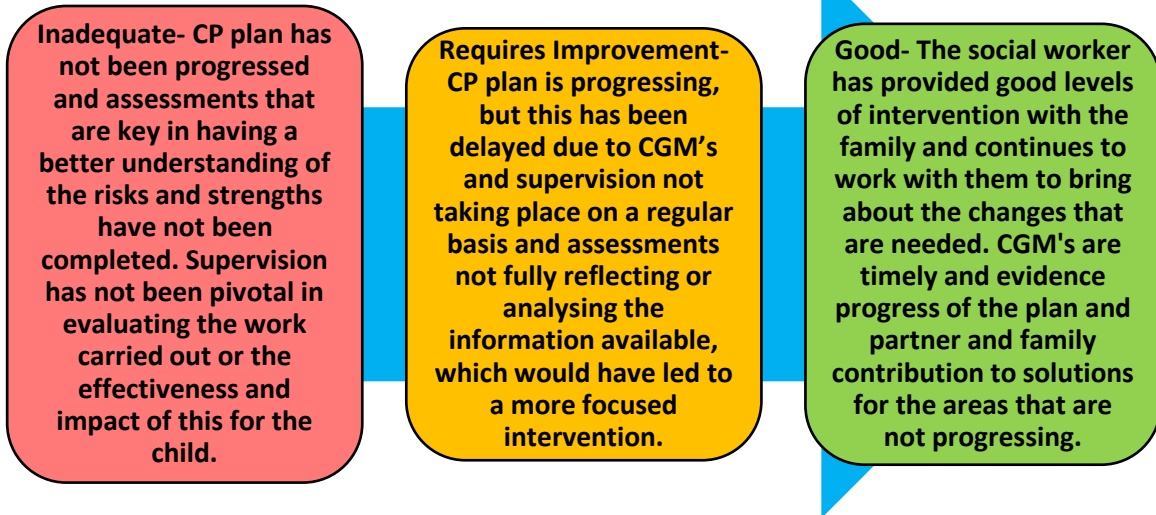
We are still seeing too much ‘Inadequate’ practice with 7% of cases audited in September and 15% in August falling into this category. We are re-doubling our efforts on improving this and have identified several key priorities that our frontline managers, social workers and quality assurance staff will be focussing on over the next few months.

For several high-priority areas we have outlined below the critical actions we are asking practitioners and managers to focus on to achieve the needed improvement in practice:

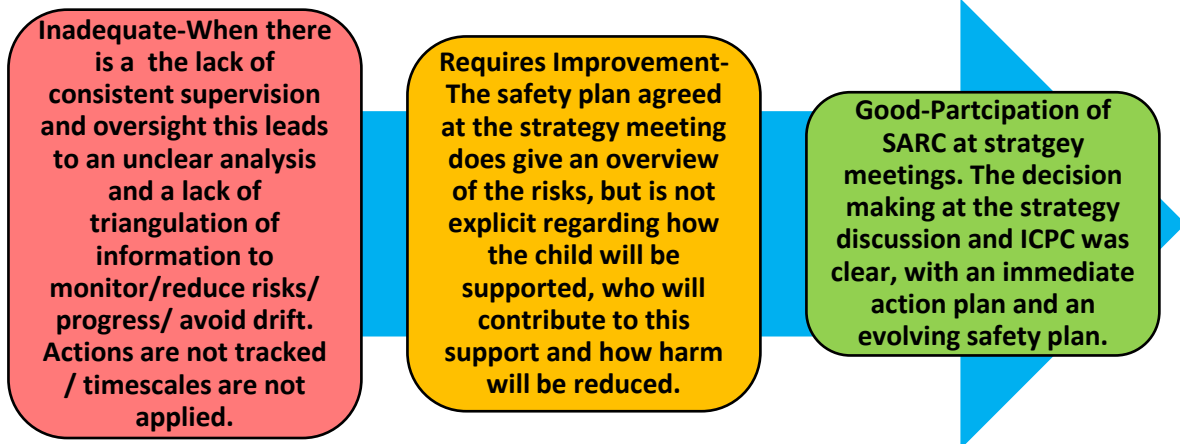
Children in Need (CiN)



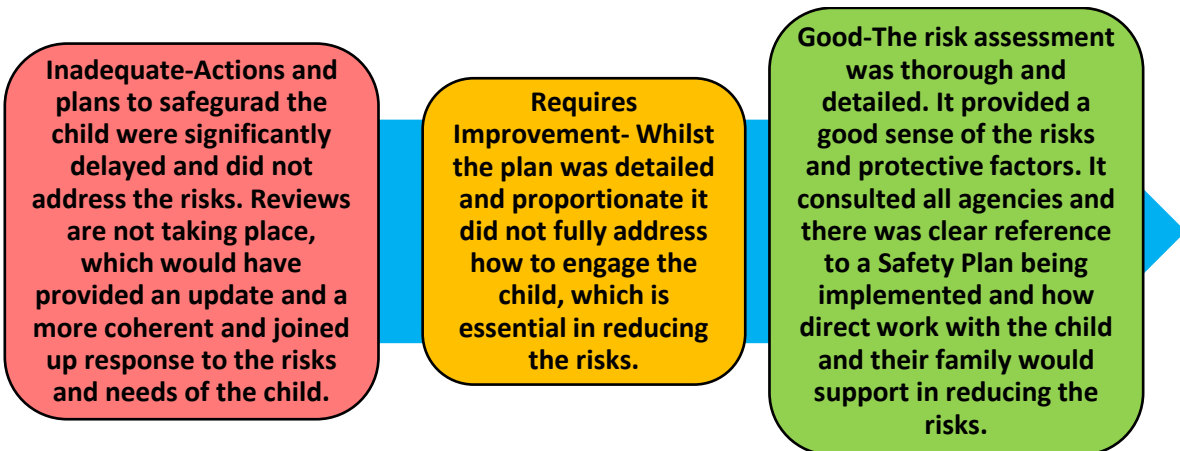
Children under 5 subject to a Child Protection plan



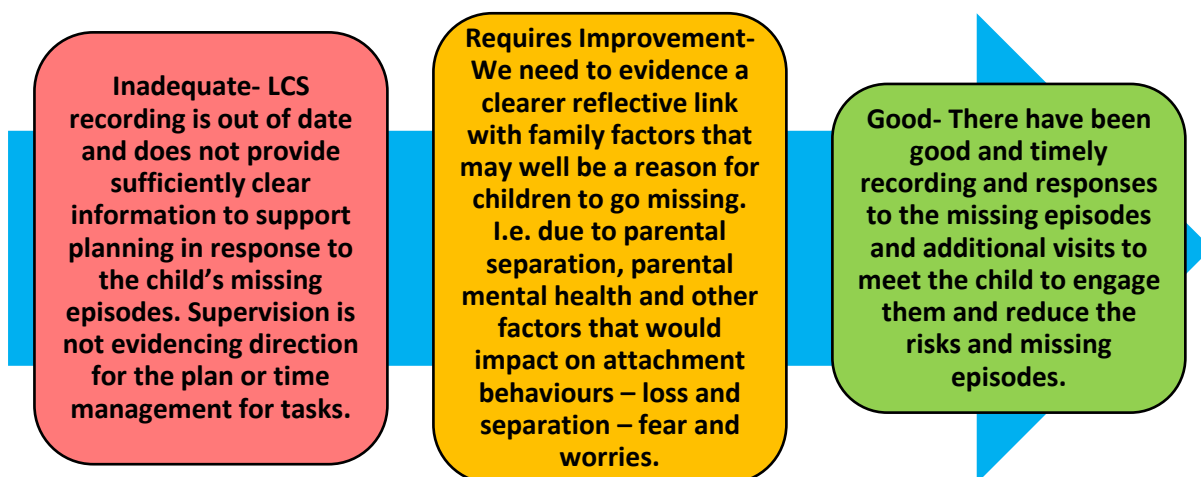
Children who are subject to a CP plan under the category of sexual abuse



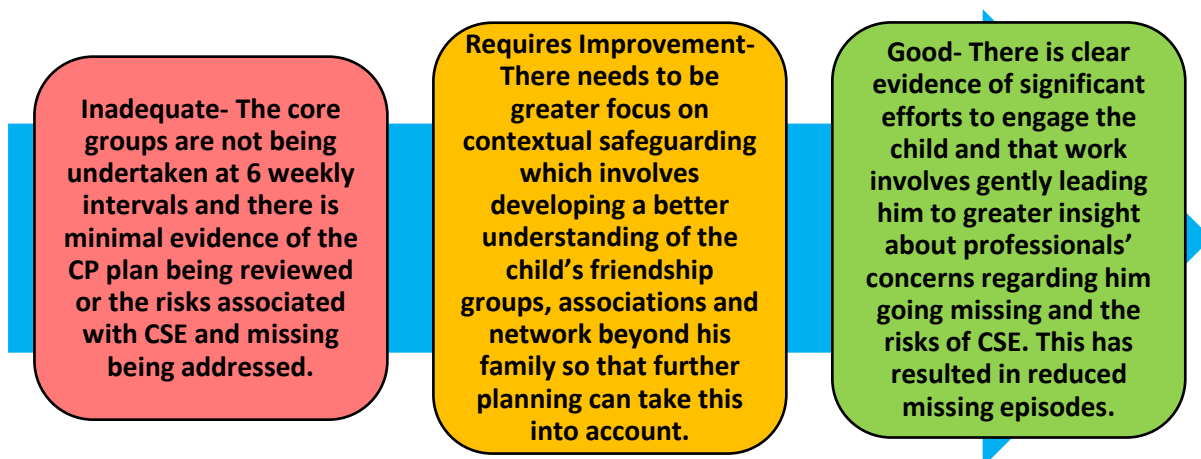
Children identified at risk of CSE under the categories of; experiencing, emerging, significant



Children identified as being reported missing in the last 6 months



Children identified as being reported missing in the last 6 months and at risk of CSE



10. Parent / Child / Partner Agency Feedback

A key part of our work to quality assure frontline practice is seeking feedback from parents, carers, partners and children (where appropriate). This feedback is shared with individual social workers and their managers to build on positive feedback and to learn from the areas identified as need improvement.

11.1 Practice Strengths:

- ✚ “Mother spoke positively about the SW stating she had an open transparent relationship with him, and he is proactive in his support of the family. Prior to this she had 14 other SW’s who worked with her son”.
- ✚ “A young person reported that he had the best social worker in the world. She had just taken him and his grandmother to view a residential unit where he would be going. Both his grandmother and the young person were pleased with the social workers commitment to their family”.
- ✚ “Generally positive feedback for the social worker and the intervention. Child and her father praised the social worker for enabling them to have contact after 10yrs and supporting

reunification. Foster carer reported having a good relationship with the social worker who she finds supportive”.

- ✚ Extremely positive feedback received from mum and child's mentor about work undertaken by social worker.
- ✚ “Mother was very complimentary about both SW and DA practitioner and their approach to working with her. She said that she has found the SW so easy to work with as she talks to her like she is an adult and spends time explaining the work so that she understands what is happening. Mother is also enjoying the sessions with DA practitioner and finding them very helpful. Mother was very positive about the service and motivated to make changes to her parenting and move towards being independent in the future”.
- ✚ “Mother felt that she had got the right support to help her end her relationship with her violent partner when she was pregnant. She praised the social worker for the help support and direction she has now obtained and feel that she can really enjoy focusing on her child and her future”.

11.2 Areas for improvement:

- ✚ A theme that was identified was from education who identified communication from the social worker as an area which could be improved.
- ✚ A Foster carer stated that they “would have benefited from more information about a child at the start of placement”.
- ✚ One child told us that he has had “several different social workers”. For this child, he has not yet achieved permanency or stability and has an inadequate audit.
- ✚ A theme that was repeatedly commented on was the “frustration” that both parents and partner agencies feel due “social workers not responding to them and they then have to chase them up for updates”.
- ✚ Two different parents reported they have children with significant special needs. One with behavioural problems and the other with mental health issues. Both parents reported that they received “poor support at the early intervention stage which lead to their children suffering needless delay of services”.
- ✚ A common theme running through feedback was that communication from the social work team needed to improve.

10. Social Worker Reflection Feedback

It is the expectation that in completing an audit that this includes meeting with the social worker. As part of this process it is the expectation that the auditor completes a reflection sheet that entails 4 questions focused on practice.

What do you think you have done well on this case?

Worker's feel that they are building open and honest relationships with children and their parents /carers. However, as one of the cohorts was children who go missing, it was identified that this can impact the SW building a relationship and supporting the child and their plan.

Working closely with partner agencies with regards to CSE and missing.

“Regular risk intervention meetings support me as the worker and ensures a cohesive multiagency response and support plan for the child”.

Non statutory organisations support in working with children who are at risk of CSE and go missing. I.e. “The culturally matched mentor from Sporting Chances

What have been the challenges in this case?

“A clear and consistent transfer process”

This is a reoccurring theme being feedback through audit reflection.

“The impact of high caseloads on direct work, ensuring LCS is up to date and progressing intervention in a meaningful way” ***This is a reoccurring theme being feedback through audit reflection.***

“Children and their families having visits from different SW’s due to people leaving, isolating or being unwell”.

“Positive partner agency support/response (police) regarding children who go missing on multiple occasions”.

“Getting CAMHS/ ACT/ Wise on board at critical times of trauma and disruption to support the child, family, their placement and the plan”.

Do you have the enough tools to enable you to undertake your role?

Overall worker’s feel that they have the necessary tools, skills, support and training to undertake their roles. However, a theme in this month’s reflective feedback is regarding more training and information for SW’s on how to improve their practice.

Life story work training.

If you had a case like this again, what would you do differently?

More shadowing experiences so that I have a greater understanding of the processes.

Thinking outside of the usual for engaging children who frequently go missing.

“Earlier and more purposeful intervention to prevent placement breakdown”

“Gain a greater knowledge of different cultural backgrounds to support my engagement with children”

Recommendations and Practice Standards for August 2020:

1. Managers to ensure that supervision is held in line with expected timescales and evidences reflective discussion, impact of intervention, proactive decision making where there is drift and delay and review of decision / actions that support driving the plan forward.
2. Management oversights / case discussions are recorded to respond to significant events/ changes in circumstances/ how overdue task will be addressed together with the rationale for the decision making and timescales.
3. Managers, Social Workers, CPC’s and IRO’s to ensure that planning and review for children is timely and that any drift or delay is responded to with a clear plan of how this will be managed and addressed.
4. All other teams to review and reflect on how to improve the quality and timeliness of recording within their teams. I.e. updating of case summaries, chronologies, involvement and family relationships.
5. Team Managers and Social Workers to raise any concerns with the quality of audits to the APS Team as soon as possible.

6. Team Managers to block out time for the audit each month, plan for the case reflection meeting, and request exemptions and extensions via the correct process and in a timely way.
7. Monthly highlight reports to be shared with Directors, Assistant Directors and all frontline teams in order to be used and discussed in area meetings.

Recommendations and Practice Standards for September 2020:

1. All teams to review and reflect on the key learning identified in this month's highlight report and to raise any feedback, service needs, or key barriers to Kasey Senior, Audit and Practice Standards Manager or Mike Hall, Child Exploitation and Hidden Crimes Manager:
 - Response and timeliness to children who go missing, with increased confidence in the use of missing procedure.
 - Timeliness and quality of CSE risk assessments, so that they are pertinent to the current risks, include a plan of intervention to reduce risks and evidence the child's and parent's contribution.
 - Risk assessments for children who are at risk from sexual harm both within and outside their homes and how we engage partner agencies to support the child, their family and us in the resulting plans.
2. Review and signpost practitioners to the following key resources for CSE and Missing procedures.
 - [SSCP Safeguarding Children from Sexual Exploitation](#)
 - [Procedure for Children Missing from Home and Care 2019](#)
 - [Tri X Procedures and Documents for Missing](#)
 - [Return Home Interviews](#)
 - [CSE information on Healthy Surrey website](#)
3. Team Managers and Social Workers to raise any concerns with the quality of audits to the APS Team as soon as possible.
4. Team Managers to block out time for the audit each month, plan for the case reflection meeting, and request exemptions and extensions via the correct process and in a timely way.
5. Further Workbook training and workshops to establish a consistent standard of practice when completing. [Remember to utilise Workbook champions per area and video training guides on Share point].

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