**Guidance Note on Effective Recording and being Purposeful Planned and Focussed.**

Some of the Content taken from a blog written by Yvette Stanley <https://socialcareinspection.blog.gov.uk/2019/07/24/what-makes-an-effective-case-record/>

1. A good record needs to stand up to the scrutiny of many stakeholders, your manager, quality assurance colleagues ,the courts, Ofsted, changes in social worker but most importantly the child themselves. A good record leads to responses that are tailored to the needs of the child. The same record will be used in future years when as an adult s/he seeks to understand their childhood and how they came to be brought up as and where they were.

The record needs to tell the person

*-this is what I saw when I looked at you*

*-this is what was worrying others and myself*

*-this is what seemed to be working really well for you*

*-this is what we all thought might be happening*

*-this is what we decided to do about it*

1. The record should clearly and succinctly explain what has happened to, and for, the child.
2. High-quality recording lets the quality of the relationship between social worker and child, and the social worker’s aspirations for that child, shine through. How important that must be to any care-experienced person looking at their childhood records in later adulthood.
3. Social workers and other practitioners who support children need to think about the purpose of each piece of recording. For example, when recording a visit to the child, the record is about the reason for the visit itself as well as its contribution to the whole assessment. The importance of not just what happened or was said, but what that means for the child
4. Language is so important. Anything that implies victims were to blame for any abuse they suffered during childhood can compound the impact of that abuse. So can casual statements about ‘lifestyle choices’ by vulnerable teenagers. Times have changed, but we still sometimes see inappropriate language in case records

**Things to Avoid**

* Records that are not up to date (including assessments and plans following changes in circumstances), and have gaps or lack analysis
* Records that only focus on the very negative things that happen to children, rather than their lives as a whole
* Recording that is not bespoke to each child or use too much professional jargon
* Recordings that show a lack of care and attention, or are just poorly written
* Records that lack parents’ views or the level of their engagement
* Records that do not show clear decision-making
* Recording that is not age appropriate
* Records that mix up information about brothers or sisters
* Records that do not show purpose for visits to children and families and do not influence the plan or the next steps
* Recording that fails to capture disabled children’s views

**What is a Purposeful Planned and Focussed (PPF) approach?**

-It is having clear **purpose** of why we are involved and doing what we are doing. Defining what it is we are aiming to achieve (outcomes) and defining the strength/risk/issue/problem we are addressing. Agreeing what needs to change and what we will see when change has occurred.  
  
-It is having a clear **plan** to achieve it. How will we meet the purpose, who needs to do what and by when and how this will be done? How will you get feedback to know the plan has achieved its purpose  
  
-It is remaining  **focussed** on the plan by ensuring we privilege the story as told by the child and reflect and analyse what the child’s story means. Hypotheses and alternative explanations will help us to decide what needs to be the focus of the intervention going forward and planning what we will do in each contact will help us to stay focussed on the plan.