

Children's Social Care

Practice Guidance



Case Recording

Your case recording is capturing the child or young person's story of what has happened and why. It is as important as the relationship you build with them and any intervention you undertake to improve their lived experience and outcomes.

As part of their 80-20 campaign – supporting social workers to spend more time with children and families and less time in front of computer screens - BASW England have produced an excellent guide to good recording practice.

BASW CASE RECORDING TOP TIPS

1. Include the child throughout the recording
2. Write records as if writing to the child or family members
3. Make records purposeful and analytical
4. Include memory objects (e.g. photos) sensitively and critically
5. Make sure records reflect the whole of the child's story and why decisions were made
6. Chart the child's journey with a chronology supported by a genogram
7. Include different views and opinions
8. Make records easy to access
9. Make sure recording is balanced and meaningful
10. Avoid jargon and vague language, do not record every piece of communication

[BASW.CO.UK](https://www.basw.co.uk)

Please follow the link and read the BASW guidance in full.

BASW Guide to Good Recording Practice

In Wandsworth learning from case audit tells us managers and social workers need to put the child or young person at the centre of practice and recording in 4 key areas - Chronology; Identity; Smart Plans; meaningful management oversight. This is what good case recording looks like:

SMART Plans - Specific Measurable Agreed Realistic Time limited – the plan clearly names what everyone involved is trying to achieve for the child or young person; what they are going to do; how

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they will know when they have achieved it; everyone agrees or if not, disagreement is out in the open and resolved where possible; actions and timescales are informed by expert knowledge of how long it takes to change some behaviours; time scales are set and everyone is held accountable for their actions to avoid drift in improving the child or young person's lived experience.

Chronologies are at the start and heart of our work with children, young people and their families.

Comprehensive assessments lead to SMART plans that meet children and young people's needs.

Case recording has an ongoing and up to date record of the **child's voice** commenting on how the plan is **making a difference** for them or not.

Case **supervision** is recorded every 4 weeks and constantly references the plan.

In between supervision any events or new information that impact on the plan or lead to decisions that impact on the child or young person are recorded as **management oversight**.

Managers only sign off recording that meets the standards set out in the BASW guidance and this quick guide. They share examples of good case recording to develop consistently good recording practice across teams.

Case note recording is purposeful. Case note titles give an indication of the content to create a comprehensive overview of social work activity over a period of time. They add value to recording. **Full names** are used at least once in a record along with the person's role as family member or professional. Initials can be used after that. The use of **pronouns**, he/she/they, is sensitive to the child or young person's wishes.

Cut and paste can be used purposefully to save time, but it must not be used to repeat the same information as work with the child or young person progresses. Case recording should demonstrate progress against the child's plan. For example, the record of the reason for a strategy meeting should add new information to the record of the reason for the referral.

A **three-month summary** pulls together an analysis of activity and its impact on progress in delivering the plan.

Transfer summaries provide a safe bridge when a child moves between social workers or services so progress in achieving their plan is not lost. As well as being accountable to the child or young person **colleagues** are accountable and respectful to each other by handing over up to date, comprehensive, carefully written records.

Closing summaries are clear how the child or young person's needs have been met, what the plan has delivered for them, why they no longer need statutory social work intervention in their lives, what support is available to help them sustain the positive changes to their lived experience.

Child Protection Coordinators and Independent Reviewing Officers record midway reviews of progress for children on **child protection plans** or **care plans**.

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Core Groups and **Child in Need Review meetings** are regularly recorded to assess progress in achieving plans with other involved professionals and the family.

Genograms are constructed and recorded with parents, carers, children and young people. They begin a discussion with the family about their history, their values and beliefs particularly in relation to raising children and family life

Identity is explored in a sensitive and supportive conversation with parents, carers, children and young people and the impact of what it means for their lived experience is recorded in all key documents. What does their race, colour, culture, religion, disability, gender, sexuality mean to them? How does it affect their day to day life? Diversity is significant in understanding children's lived experience.

Case recording is **evidence based**. It differentiates between fact and professional opinion. **Analysis** uses evidence and professional opinion to move from what is happening to a hypothesis about why it may be happening. Genograms, ecomaps, chronologies, up to date assessment records help to organise and analyse information.

Social workers use the Learn Mosaic guides and videos available in resources and take up training to make best use of **Mosaic**, the electronic social care recording system and keep up to date with changes.

[Mosaic Guides](#) [Mosaic video training guides](#)

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