



PRACTICE GUIDANCE: SUPPORTING AUDIT CONSISTENCY

Contents

Introduction	2
Expectations for gradings of Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement and Inadequate	2
Contact / Referral	2
Recording / Information	3
Assessment	4
Planning	5
Reviews	6
Management oversight	7
Outcomes	8

Introduction

This guidance has been developed to promote consistent audit standards and to support staff completing audits in determining the most appropriate grading. This guidance does not replace the comprehensive template completed by auditors, but provides a framework for agreeing the gradings reached, in individual areas and as a whole.

- Auditing is guided by the comprehensive prompts within the template but also involves a degree of subjectivity in interpretation when making judgements.
- Involving the allocated worker in the audit process can increase the understanding of the auditor but the file should 'speak for itself'.
- Audits which do not seek the views of the child/young person and /or their family may not fully capture their lived experience or the impact of the intervention.
- The quality, analysis and use of Direct Work should be crucial in deciding judgements
- While helpful prompts on the template already guide the search for evidence – the following principles will inform the grading given and result in a more consistent judgements being given.

Expectations for gradings of Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement and Inadequate

Contact / Referral	
Outstanding	The contact/referral practice is consistently Good or better, expectations are not only met but succeeded in some way, with the auditor's explanation noted in the narrative
Good	Contact /referral is on the agreed format, contains all the relevant information and shows clear understanding of when it is appropriate to refer to social care or Early Help. Response are given within Enfield agreed timescales, with the decisions appropriate to the identified need. Decisions take account of all the previous referrals and contacts. Strengths, risks and safety factors are clearly recorded. Managers rationale for the decision made and the next steps are evidenced and appropriate for the referral and the history. Evidence of allocation and action needed are clearly recorded on Liquid Logic and the Early Help Module.
Requires Improvement	Referral shows enough evidence of when it is appropriate to refer to social care and gives some indication of strengths and risks but lacks behavioural details. The referral is on the right format but not all relevant information is included. There

	is evidence that some previous referrals and contacts have been reviewed, referral is acted upon promptly.
Inadequate	Referral has some gaps with vital information missing and/or should have been made earlier. Either/both strengths and safety boxes are left blank. Consent is missing where it should have been obtained and where it would have been reasonable to have obtained it. There is no evidence that previous contacts/referrals have been reviewed or considered. There is no risk analysis and the rationale for the next steps decision has not been recorded.

Recording / Information	
Outstanding	The recording/information practice is consistently Good or better, expectations are not only met but succeeded in some way, with the auditor's explanation noted in the narrative
Good	Recording/ Information on LL is concise and analytical and contains sufficient details to ensure safeguarding and focussed planning. Demographic information is accurate with names, contact numbers and addresses being current and clear. E mail addresses are on file and clearly accessible. Where appropriate, Danger statements, safety goals and scaling are evident on file and address the specific behaviours that are of concern and impact on the child. Case records are written in plain, jargon free language, that enable a service user to understand their story. Recording is completed in line with the Recording Policy. Files for looked after children include a recent photograph.
Requires Improvement	LL information is timely, concise and allows clear plans to be made which are measurable and understandable. Contact details are current but not easy to find. Not all telephone numbers are listed, and e mail addresses are missing. Where appropriate, Danger statements, safety goals and scaling are evident on file but not clear and concise and do not address specific behaviours. Case file recording is of sufficient quality to be easily understood by a service user if they were to access their file.
Inadequate	LL recording is out of date, unfocussed and does not provide sufficient information to support planning or decision making. Demographic information is incorrect/misleading. Danger statements, safety goals, concerns and scaling are

	not recorded on file. Case file recording is incomplete, outside the timescales within the Recording Policy, difficult to understand and/or inconsistent.
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Assessment	
Outstanding	The assessment practice is consistently Good or better, expectations are not only met but succeeded in some way, with the auditor’s explanation noted in the narrative.
Good	Assessment clearly indicates strengths and areas of concern, provides a detailed analysis and includes all members of the household plus other connected people important to the child/young person. The role of absent fathers is addressed. The assessment is of good quality and identifies a clear plan with relevant analysis of strengths, needs and, where relevant, risks. The assessment refers back to the original concerns and incorporates historical information. There is explicit analysis of the multi-agency context/input and this informs the decision making. The child has been seen alone and their views are recorded and reflected in the assessment. The assessment demonstrates a sense of the child and there is evidence that direct work completed has been analysed to ascertain what life is like for them. Diversity and disability issues are addressed, and support required to address any challenges is identified. Assessments are reviewed, quality assured and approved by the manager within timescales. Assessments are shared with parents and carers promptly and feedback is sought and recorded on the file.
Requires Improvement	The assessment provides some information on strengths, safety and areas of concern, analysis is limited and may not include key members of the household – including fathers and partners. The identified Plan does not fully address risk/need. There is some consideration of the family and friends’ network, but this is not fully explored to enlist their help and support for the child/family. The assessment contains some information from other agencies. It is evident that the child has been seen but there is not a clear record of their lived experience, wishes and feelings or what they say they need to feel safe or improve their current situation as expressed in the referral concern. There is some evidence of direct work with the child and the use of appropriate tools, but this has not been analysed to inform the outcome of the assessment. Disability and diversity issues have been considered but not fully explored. The assessment uses some jargon

	and is not fully written with the family as intended readers. Assessments have been reviewed and approved by managers within required timescales. The file evidences that the assessment and its outcomes have been shared with the family and if appropriate, with the child.
Inadequate	Assessment does not identify strengths and areas of concern and provides no or little analysis. It does not properly include all relevant family members. Risks to the child are not considered. Assessment uses jargon and language which will not be accessible to family members. The assessment does not include a clear conclusion about the needs of the child or whether CIN/CP is the appropriate framework. There is no multi-agency input to the assessment despite it being clear that others are involved. There is no evidence that the child has been seen or that they have been spoken to on their own in a meaningful way. There is no direct work evident on file and no evidence that disability/ diversity issues have been considered. Assessment has not been signed off by the manager. Assessment has not been shared with the family.

Planning	
Outstanding	The planning practice is consistently Good or better, expectations are not only met but succeeded in some way, with the auditor's explanation noted in the narrative.
Good	An up to date Plan is in place and is regularly reviewed within required timescales, including following significant events. Planning evidences a good understanding of the child's needs and shows how these will be met within timescale. There is evidence that the Plan is informed by the analysis of direct work and is making a positive difference to the child's life. The plan outlines the actions that will be taken to ensure the child's safety and well-being, improve the child's life and is not just a list of services. There is strong evidence of the child and family involvement in the development of the Plan. The Plan is progressing and meeting the child's needs and, where this is not the case, the reasons for this are explored and changes made where needed. Visits have taken place in line with required timescales, more frequently where required and recording shows that these were purposeful and focussed. Looked after children are supported to have contact with the people they say are important to them and this is prioritised. Complex

	responses after contact are fully explored, understood and supported. The case file recording tells the child's story and evidences progress.
Requires Improvement	An up to date Plan is in place and is regularly reviewed within required timescales. The Plan is more focussed on tasks and services rather than who within the family (or other key people) will do what to keep them safe and well. There is some consideration of the family and friends' network, but this has not been fully explored to enlist their help and support. Recording indicates that the Plan is having some positive impact on the life of the child and consideration is given to making amendments to improve this still further. Social worker has visited in line with statutory requirements and there is evidence that the child has been seen on their own. Case file recording meets most required standards.
Inadequate	No current Plan on file, where an out of date Plan does exist, it is just a list of tasks and places to go. Family Network Meetings have not taken place despite being indicated. The Plan has not been reviewed despite this being a requirement. There is no evidence of the child/the family/the network being involved in planning or decision making. The planning is drifting and has not been progressed. There is no, or little evidence that the child has been visited in line with statutory/Enfield timescales. LL recording is limited/absent with respect to key issues.

Reviews	
Outstanding	The practice on plans is consistently Good or better, expectations are not only met but succeeded in some way, with the auditor's explanation noted in the narrative.
Good	<u>Reviews of the Plan</u> have been held in line with the appropriate practice framework (CIN, CP, LAC, Leaving Care) and Plans have been responsive to the child's changing needs. Reviews have been convened to allow maximum attendance of family and professionals, and where this has not been appropriate, views has been sought and feedback given regularly. Children have been actively involved including where appropriate, chairing their own reviews and attending meetings. Where reviews have been held in two parts, all relevant people have attended each part and relevant information has been shared in both meetings.

	Plans have been shared with children/young people/family members as required and this has been recorded on file. Plans for children and young people with disabilities are in an accessible format. Records of reviews are timely – in line with agreed requirements - and comprehensive and provide detailed analysis of the issues and actions that are needed to meet outcomes, including timescales. Other agencies involved in the Plan are held to account for their agreed actions and the impact of these
Requires Improvement	Plans have been reviewed in line with statutory timescales and parents/children have been invited to reviews wherever possible. The review focusses on the needs of the child. Some recording is out of timescale, but this has not affected the planning for the child. Records of the reviews are in place, setting out recommendations and some actions. Not all contributions from other agencies are formally sought and recorded.
Inadequate	Plan has not been reviewed in line with statutory timescales. Key family members/Child/professionals have not been invited to review meetings. Reviews are not meeting the child’s needs and do not act to encourage their engagement. Review records are not sufficiently detailed to ensure clear actions and plans. Plan is not considered to see if it still meets the needs of the child and is not revised to ensure that this happens. There is no involvement of other agencies or, if there is, this is not mentioned in the review.

Management oversight	
Outstanding	The management oversight is consistently Good or better, expectations are not only met but succeeded in some way, with the auditor’s explanation noted in the narrative. Management oversight is confident, innovative and influential in sustaining high quality interventions and ensuring impactful practice.
Good	<u>Management Oversight</u> – Supervision has taken place at required intervals and has met the needs of the supervisee. Supervision is reflective and analytical and addresses issues which have been raised. It considers the effectiveness and progress of the Plan and sets clear perimeters for required actions, contingencies and outstanding work, including timescales. Supervision reviews actions from previous supervisions and these are completed. The use of Signs of Safety is evident. Records are up to date and fit for purpose. There is evidence of reflective

	tools e.g. appreciative enquiry and case mapping. LL shows the manager footprint and evidences that they have reviewed and quality assured records. Gaps highlighted by case file audits have been addressed and completed audits are easy to find in Documents.
Requires Improvement	Supervision has been taking place according to the policy. There is some evidence of the use of Signs of Safety but not an in-depth analysis. Supervision is recorded on LL but there is limited evidence of reflection and evaluation of the work carried out. Supervision reviews tasks from the previous supervisions but there is limited evidence to show that this has prevented drift. Records are mostly up to date and fit for purpose. There is some evidence that the work with the child/family is being reviewed but effectiveness and impact are not fully explored. There is less of a management footprint on file. Gaps highlighted in case file audits have not been fully addressed. Case notes show that the file has been audited but there is no completed template uploaded.
Inadequate	Supervision has not been taking place in accordance with the supervision policy. Supervision records do not provide an outline of decision making and have no evidence of reflection or analysis and/or fail to address concerns. Supervision has not been effective in making sure that actions are progressed. There is a lack of management oversight /quality assurance activity on the file. Gaps highlighted in case file audits have not been addressed. Supervision does not include the principles of Signs of Safety. Supervision notes are incomplete or brief and do not include any appreciative enquiry or solution focussed questioning.

Outcomes	
Outstanding	An Outstanding judgement will be appropriate where the majority of individual sections have been judged to be Outstanding and where the child/young person's wellbeing has been paramount in all the planning and intervention. The plans in place will be ambitious, holistic and be appropriate to promote sustained improvements in the child/young person's life.
Good	A Good judgement will be appropriate where the majority of individual sections have been judged to be Good where the child/young person's wellbeing has been paramount in the planning and intervention. The plans in place will be ambitious,

	holistic and be appropriate to promote sustained improvements in the child/young person's life.
Requires Improvement	A judgement of Requires Improvement will be appropriate where the majority of the sections have been judged Requires Improvement and where the intervention has not been deemed by the audit to be of a Good standard. The wellbeing of the child/young person has not always been paramount in the planning/intervention. The plans in place may not be sufficiently ambitious or holistic to promote sustained improvements in the child/young person's life.
Inadequate	An Inadequate judgement will be appropriate if key areas have been judged to be inadequate. This grading will reflect that the intervention has not been of a sufficient quality to promote/protect the wellbeing of the child/young person. Plans in place will be insufficient to promote sustained improvements in the child/young person's life

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August 2021