



Gloucestershire County Council Practice Framework and Practice Standards

Helping our social workers, practitioners and managers to provide the best quality help and support to children and families.



I truly believe that working in social care is one of the best jobs in the world. Getting the opportunity to help people make the most of themselves and of their lives is hugely fulfilling. Of course it's hard, and challenging, but that's also what makes it so rewarding. In Gloucestershire, we are ambitious for our families – and we want our practitioners to have the resources, support and guidance to do the best they can for our children.



Our practice framework sets out the principles which guide the way we work – it's how we do things round here. It is grounded in our commitment to systemic approaches, it highlights the importance of recognising and building on strengths, and it reminds us that real change happens best through the power of our relationships with those we are there to help.

I want our vision, values and behaviours to permeate all that we do – to help you to have the confidence to be agents of change for children and their families. It's not only how we behave with those who use our services, but also how we are with each other and with our colleagues across the partnership.

You, our workforce, are the single most important resource we have to achieve the best outcomes for children and families – so let's use this framework to enable our families to be the very best they can.

Paul Shallcross,
Director of Safeguarding and Care

Our Practice Standards

- 01 The voices and experiences of children, young people and families are at the heart of our work, informing everything that we do.
- 02 We will start our work with children and families well, responding quickly and sensitively when help and support is needed.
- 03 We will build positive relationships with children, families and the people that are important to them.
- 04 We will assess children's needs holistically, identifying and building on strengths, addressing risk and helping families find solutions that work for them.
- 05 We will work with children, young people, families and partners to create meaningful plans and achieve good outcomes.
- 06 We will offer interventions that help create and sustain change.
- 07 We will be the best parent for our children in care and care experienced young people.
- 08 We will ensure our recording is child-focused and shows that we care about children and families.
- 09 We will be culturally competent and self-aware in our practice.
- 10 We will ensure that effective supervision and management oversight is driving high quality practice.



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Children's Social Care's Pledge to Children and Families

We Will:

Do

Everything we can to enable children and young people to thrive within their family and community, supporting independence and enabling children to grow up to live remarkable lives,



Collaborate

With parents, families and partners to prevent harm and protect children and young people,

Be

Involved when needed for as long as is needed,

Promote

Inclusion and belonging, helping to make Gloucestershire a place where all our children and young people see their future,

Use

Language that cares,



Act

On what children and young people tell us is needed, developing services with children, young people and families,

Challenge

Discrimination and inequality whenever we see it.

Getting to good roadmap

>>> Continuous improvement >>>

Consolidate

What's good already

Broaden

Spread what's good to all areas

Deepen and Enhance

Innovate and create to deliver better

3 obsessions

1. Timely and skilled interventions
2. Eradicate drift and delay
3. Build sustainable outcomes



Our Practice Framework



Our Vision

Working together to support families and communities to give every child the best chance of a happy and rewarding life, especially those who need more help.

Right Child, right support, right time, every time.

Our Values

We will be accountable for our actions and decisions; be honest, learn and act with integrity; practice in a way that is respectable and empowering for children and families, enabling individuals to create their own solutions and we will be relentless in our pursuit of excellence.

Behaviours

These behaviours help us support families and keep children safe.

Curiosity

Tenacity

Empathy

How we work

Systemic Principles

How we act, think and view the world, seeing patterns and connections, hypothesising developing narratives that support change.

Building on strengths

Building on strengths of the individual, family and community. Reducing dependency, increasing opportunity and sustainable change.

Conditions for excellence

-  Autonomous practice
-  Support and challenge
-  CPD
-  Culture
-  Cohesive teams
-  Workload balance
-  Excellent supervision
-  Family led



Nurturing Relationships

Empathy, trust, positive regard, genuineness, seeing human potential, empowerment, partnership, promoting diversity and inclusion.



01

The voices and experiences of children, young people and families are at the heart of our work, informing everything that we do.



Aims

- + Families feel heard, understood, and respected
by practitioners, allowing them to be open, honest and develop trusting relationships.
- + Sustainable change created through meaningful interventions, which are fully informed by families lived experiences.
- + All service developments are informed by our commitment to voice and influence, reflecting the principle, 'nothing about you, without you'.

- 1.1 We will plan our services using feedback from families about what works for them. We will directly involve children, young people and families through building feedback and consultation into plans.
- 1.2 Interventions that privilege a family-led approach will be offered to all families – this will include family group conferences and family network meetings.
- 1.3 Workers will always explain to families the importance we place upon their voice and our commitment to 'doing with' families, rather than 'doing to'.
- 1.4 Workers will explain to children the importance of their voice. Tools that help children have a voice will be actively promoted.
- 1.5 Workers will use translators, interpreters, and communication tools to meet any sensory or language needs.
- 1.6 Children, young people and families will have the details of our complaints, compliments and feedback procedure explained to them and this will be revisited throughout our intervention.

Outcomes

- + Service developments are explicitly informed by the views of families.
- + Families will tell us that they feel they are heard and listened to.
- + We will see evidence of children and family voices in all aspects of our work.



Useful links and documents

- + *Language that cares 'Glosterary'*
- + Film: *Hearing from children and young people*
- + Reconstruct: *Advocacy for Gloucestershire's young people*
- + Caring for Communities and People: *Family Advocacy Service*
- + MOMO: *Mind of my own website and guidance*
- + *Family Rights Group website*

We will start our work with children and families well, responding quickly and sensitively when help and support is needed.

Aims

- + Children do not experience unnecessary statutory intervention.
- + Families understand why we are involved.
- + Every interaction is an opportunity for positive intervention.
- + Changes between teams are minimised and always managed well, recognising the impact on families.

- 2.1 All requests will focus on a child's needs and the decision about the right service will be informed by Gloucestershire's Graduated Pathway.
- 2.2 We are committed to working with children and families at the lowest level of intervention – we believe this is what families want and it is in line with our values.
- 2.3 Our interventions will be proportionate and recognise that most families benefit from a preventative approach that focuses on providing help early.
- 2.4 We will be open and honest with children and families about our concerns and reasons for our involvement. We will be curious, tenacious and empathic when we talk to families.
- 2.5 Moves between teams will be planned and carefully managed. Families will understand when they are having a change of worker and why.

Outcomes

- + Families know why we are involved and what to expect from us.
- + We start building trusting, purposeful relationships from the earliest point.
- + Families will have a one page profile of their practitioner to ensure we start our work well.



Useful links and documents

- + [Gloucestershire's Graduated Pathway](#)
- + [Gloucestershire family directory](#)
- + [Early Help and Targeted Support Offer](#)

03

We will build positive relationships with children, families and the people that are important to them.

Aims

- + Building meaningful working relationships with children and their families.
- + The relationships we build will be the basis for creating sustainable change.
- + For all practitioners to explore and be curious about family members, seeking to understand who they are, what is important to them and what they would like to change.
- + To ensure we continuously seek and respond to feedback that helps us understand how helpful families find our interventions.

- 3.1 We recognise the importance of the relationship we have with children and their families in creating sustainable change. The importance of relationships is reflected in how we work with families.
- 3.2 We understand that we need to balance empathy with authority to develop effective and meaningful relationships with families.
- 3.3 We position ourselves as agents of change with families, recognising that every interaction can be purposeful and is an opportunity to create change.
- 3.4 We understand that how we build relationships demonstrates and reflects how we value families. We use our relationships to show that we value, respect and care about families. We recognise strengths and are committed to working in partnership. We are kind to families, avoiding blame and shame. We recognise that parents who have had difficult experiences may need someone to sit alongside them and support them whilst they make changes in their lives.

- 3.5 We know that we are often seeking to build relationships with families when they may be feeling vulnerable or afraid. Our approach is sensitive, recognising the power inherent in our roles and we are curious about how differences between us may influence how we relate to each other. We talk openly with families about this.
- 3.6 We are interested in understanding the individual experiences of people within a family and how individuals interact with each other and their community.
- 3.7 We know that getting to know people takes time. To ensure we understand a child and their family, we will get to know them over time, visit them regularly and behave in a way that creates trust and confidence in us.

Outcomes

- + Practitioners reflect our core values and are experienced as empathic, understanding, trusted and resourceful.
- + Families feel respected and empowered.
- + Practitioners feel supported to prioritise relationship building as the foundation of good practice.
- + Families are helped to think about their situations and develop solutions with the support of a trusted practitioner.

Useful links and documents

- + Film: *Building relationships with children and young people*
- + Practising relationship based social work - *knowledge guide for practice supervisors*
- + *What is systemic practice?*
- + Film: *What is relationship based social work*
- + Practice tool: *hearing parents voices - the first assessment visit*
- + Trauma, recovery, resilience podcast: *'Annie' speaks on grooming, being in care and surviving safeguarding*

We will assess children's needs holistically, identifying and building on strengths, addressing risk and helping families find solutions that work for them.

Aims

- + To understand a family's story, patterns of behaviour and how these impact on parents' capacity.
- + To hear directly from children about what their life is like, how they feel about themselves, their family and their community.
- + To find out who is important in a child's life and what support can be drawn upon to help make sure a child is safe and well cared for.
- + To hear the views of other people that know the child and their family and use these to inform our understanding and analysis of what needs to happen.

Being clear about why we are involved:

- 4.1 Children and families need to understand why we are involved with them. We will be open and clear with families to help them understand why we are working with them, recognising the need for empathy and compassion when families find it hard to understand or accept this.
- 4.2 We acknowledge that our involvement can cause families stress and anxiety and that this can make it harder for them to absorb what we tell them. We take opportunities to revisit the reasons for our involvement where this is helpful.
- 4.3 We are clear with families about what would need to change to reduce our worries and end our involvement.
- 4.4 We recognise that assessments lack meaning if families do not fully participate in them. We explain to families that their voices, views and experiences are central to the assessment process.
- 4.5 We know that we are more likely to include the views of mothers and resident parents in assessments than we are fathers and non-resident parents. We will contact both parents at an early point in our work to show that

we value their views. Feeling that we have sufficient information from one parent is not a reason not to include the other parent.

- 4.6 We recognise that an assessment is an opportunity to intervene positively in a family's life. We seek to have meaningful conversations with parents, helping them explore their own strengths and challenges. We use our knowledge about trauma to help parents think about, and make sense of, how their own experiences may be impacting on their parenting. We share our worries in a way that is compassionate and empowering, not blaming or shaming.
- 4.7 We use tools to help us explore what life is like for children using their words directly in our assessments. We recognise the different experiences of children in a family, creating assessments that consider individual children's needs as well as the needs of the family as a whole.
- 4.8 Our assessments are written clearly, concisely and using language that cares, showing that we value and respect the family that we are working with. We make sure that the family are aware of what is going to be included in the assessment, including any information shared by others.

Use of tools in our assessments:

- 4.9 We recognise the value of exploring wider family relationships and history and use genograms to help us do this. Drawing a map or family tree with a family helps practitioners to explore family relationships through time, including parents experience of having been parented. Practitioners show curiosity and empathy in exploring family history, exploring the social GRACES and how they inform identity. Acknowledging differences and power imbalances can be helpful in creating an open and trusting relationship with families.
- 4.10 Chronologies are an important part of a child's record and are a helpful tool during the assessment process. Completing a collaborative chronology can help parents think about patterns of behaviour and introduce opportunities to explore past experiences and how they may be impacting on parenting. Talking through a chronology with a family can draw out multiple perspectives on key events and can highlight when things were better, providing an opportunity to create hope.



4.11 An ecomap is a map of important people and can be used to explore family relationships as well as wider social and community relationships. This can help identify where a family may be experiencing social isolation and loneliness and offers an opportunity for practitioners to explore a parent's emotional needs.

Who needs to be spoken to during an assessment?

4.12 Assessments will always include speaking directly to the child and careful consideration will be given to how we can ensure this is meaningful. This will include thinking about where is best to talk to the child, the impact on the child of the visit and their age and stage of development. Seeing children alone is important and will happen regularly as part of our work.

4.13 The role of the practitioner will be explained to the child so they are clear about why they are being spoken to. We will explain why their views are so important and we will invite questions about our role and what the child can expect. It is important to explore with the child what is going well, as well as what they would change, as this helps show that we are interested in them as a person. It may also identify positives that can be used to build support and safety.

4.14 Assessments will include extended family members and friends as well as all professionals working with the child and family. We will explain to families why we seek the views of others. These views will be used to triangulate the information we have from a child and their family and can highlight areas of strength and vulnerability that we may not have considered.

4.15 We work with families with their consent wherever possible. It should be recognised that any intervention will involve information being shared to a greater or lesser extent. If this has been shared without them knowing, this can make families feel disempowered and distrustful towards practitioners. This in turn can make building meaningful relationships more difficult.

Using systemic ideas in our assessments

4.16 As part of the assessment process, we will generate hypotheses about what is going on. It can be really valuable to test these out with families. This can help us sense check our thinking and can also help families to make sense of what is going on for them. We need to invite and embrace healthy challenge from families, ensuring they can tell us what they are thinking and when they do not agree with how we are making sense of their situation. This invites respect and helps families feel that their voices are valued and heard.

4.17 We will bring our hypotheses about families into supervision and case discussions, inviting others to challenge our thinking or offer an alternative perspective. This helps create healthy challenge and can help find solutions when we are feeling stuck in our work with a family.

Sharing assessments:

4.18 Assessments will always be shared with families. Assessments will also be shared with other key people such as a child's school or health visitor. Assessments will be clear, concise, easy to read and follow and use language that cares. Assessments include relevant detail but are analytical rather than descriptive.

4.19 Assessments will be shared with children. Consideration will be given as to how to share an assessment with the child. It is important to see a child and explain to them what the assessment found, what will happen next and whether you will see them again. Agreed safety plans will be shared with a child in a way that is meaningful and makes sense to them – this could include a words and pictures document or a one-page safety plan.

4.20 When ending our work with a family following an assessment, we will talk to them about the importance of key people knowing the outcome of the assessment and we will share a copy of the assessment with relevant professionals and other family members.

4.21 When we plan to end our involvement with a family following an assessment, we will ensure that we rehearse how the family might manage difficulties should they recur. This will include exploring what community professionals could help if needed. This is an opportunity to promote sustainable change and explore support networks.

Outcomes

- + We develop an in-depth understanding of the child, family and community that accurately reflects and balances strengths, needs and risk.
- + Our assessments actively recognise and build on family and network strengths.
- + Our assessments use language that cares, are accessible and shared well.
- + Our recommendations are clear, understandable and directly linked to strengths, needs and risk.

Useful links and documents

- + Online procedures: *guidance and framework - assessment*
- + Local Resources Library - *assessment resources in section 2*
- + 60 second read: *What is professional dangerousness*
- + Practice tool: *The Compass of Shame*
- + Research in Practice: *Practice tool: Drawing a genogram*

05

We will work with children, young people, families and partners to create meaningful plans and achieve good outcomes.

Aims

- + Children, families and professional understand *why* practitioners are involved and the reason for an assessment and plan.
- + Plans are developed with children and families.
- + The change needed is clearly explained in outcomes that make sense to children and families, are SMART and easy to understand.
- + Our plans make it clear how we will measure change and what sustainable change looks like.

Developing plans collaboratively

- 5.1 Plans need to focus on meeting needs, reducing risk and creating positive change. Plans are created in collaboration with families and important others as this is most likely to create sustained change.
- 5.2 Plans draw on family strengths to keep children safe and create change.
- 5.3 Plans use language that cares. We recognise that how we write a plan is one way that we can show families that we value them and are committed to empowering them to create change.
- 5.4 Everyone who needs it will have a copy of the plan. The plan will be easy to read and understand. Plans will be translated or simplified as needed. This will include providing a version of the plan for the child, so they understand what is going to happen.



- 5.5 Plans will be SMART and focused on achieving outcomes that promote sustainable change.
- 5.6 A SMART plan is specific, measurable, agreed, realistic and timely. Our plans will describe who is going to do what, how we will understand that progress is being made, what the intended outcomes are and give a timescale for completion that is right for the child. Plans will be needs led, not service or resource led, and focus on what outcomes are needed to improve life for the child and family.

Outcomes

- + Children will have plans that are tailored to them, that create positive, sustainable change in the child's timescale.
- + All children and families will understand what is in their plan and why.
- + All plans will be clear about what needs to be achieved and by when – this will mean we recognise when actions are not being achieved and can do something about this.

Useful links and documents

- + Online Procedures - *Child in need plans and reviews*

We will offer interventions that help create and sustain change.

Aims

- + We will intervene early with families, offering help and support to build on strengths to prevent unnecessary statutory intervention.
- + We will intervene purposefully with families and in proportion to needs.
- + Our interventions will be informed by evidence about what works.

What will our interventions involve?

- 6.1 Our interventions are the activities we undertake and the tools we use to complete the work identified as needed through the assessment and plan.
- 6.2 The purpose of the interventions will be clear and focused on meeting need, reducing risk and creating sustainable change.
- 6.3 We recognise that building a positive relationship provides the foundation for purposeful interventions and so we will work with genuineness, positive regard and empathy.

Visits

- 6.4 Our visits to children and families will be meaningful and purposeful, in line with the interventions agreed in a child's plan.
- 6.5 When we visit, we will usually visit families at home, and we will make sure that children are seen alone on a regular basis.
- 6.6 Some visits will be announced, and some will be unannounced in line with the child's plan.
- 6.7 Our recording of visits will follow our purposeful visiting principles and use language that cares.

Direct work with children

- 6.8 Direct work with children provides the opportunity to build our relationship with them, understand their experiences, wishes and feelings and what they would like to change.

- 6.9 All of our interventions will involve regular direct work – direct work is not a one off. Regular time spent communicating with a child and understanding their life is an integral part of our work and an expectation throughout our involvement.

- 6.10 What we learn from children during direct work will be used to inform our assessments, plans and interventions.

- 6.11 Practitioners will think about a child's wishes, needs and preferences when planning direct work with them. We recognise that every child is a unique individual and our approach to direct work will reflect what we know about their likes, dislikes and what helps them feel safe and comfortable.

- 6.12 We will use simple, age appropriate and clear language and make sure children understand our role and why we are completing direct work with them.

- 6.13 Direct work can be used for a range of purposes with children, parents and other important people.

- To understand the child's experience.
- To learn more about the family through the child's experiences.
- To help the child understand why we are involved.
- To get to know the child, what triggers their emotions and how they handle them and if they have any coping strategies.
- To help identify any interventions that help the child.
- To help the child's parents hear and understand the child's experiences, what makes them happy and what may be frightening for them.

- To complete an intervention with the child agreed in the child's plan.
- To help a child understand their life story.
- To support development of a safety plan.
- To help parents understand their child's needs more fully.
- To help address relationship issues between family members.
- To help family's explore problems from someone else's perspective.

Outcomes

- + Children and families feel that practitioners have taken time to get to know them, their situation and needs.
- + Families feel empowered and part of decision-making and seeking solutions.
- + Parents are supported to understand their child's experiences in a way that avoids blame or shame.
- + Interventions improve family relationships, seeking to restore and repair connections.

Useful links and documents

+ Extensive direct work tools and details of 'Language that Cares' are available in our online 'Local Resources Library' in section 1.2 and 1.3

+ Practice Tool: *Hearing Children's Voices*

+ Family Justice Young People's Board - *top tips for working with young people including trans children, children with autism and siblings*

We will be the best parent for our children in care and care experienced young people.

Aims

- + A safe and stable home for every child in our care and care leaver
- + Every one of our children in our care and care leavers will be supported and enabled to achieve their potential.
- + Children in our care and care leavers, will feel that we go 'above and beyond' in listening to them, supporting them and helping them live meaningful lives. In all that we do for our children in care and care leavers, we will ask 'would this be good enough for my child?'
- + Children in care and care leavers will have their achievements celebrated.
- + Everyone in Gloucestershire County Council will understand why we have made being care experienced a protected characteristic and what this means in their area of responsibility.

Gloucestershire's Corporate Parenting Board

- 7.1 The Corporate Parenting Board will ensure that the council is meeting its responsibilities as a corporate parent fully and effectively.
- 7.2 The Board will be informed by Gloucestershire's Corporate Parenting Strategy and have a number of subgroups that will focus on thematic areas aligned to the aims above to allow for a deep dive focus into key areas to achieve impactful and sustained improvements:
- Your Voice Counts
 - Staying Connected
 - Staying Healthy and Well
 - Stable Homes Built on Love
 - Staying Safe
 - Achieving your potential

Achieving permanence:

- 7.3 Securing stability for children and young people is central to enabling them to achieve their goals. We recognise the impact that instability and having to move homes has on children's lives. It can disrupt friendships, education and connections with a child's community and family. Not having a settled home can have lifelong emotional implications, by undermining a sense of safety and security. We will do everything in our power to promote and achieve permanence for children at the earliest opportunity.

Working with others:

- 7.4 We recognise the importance of working with others to achieve our aspirations for our children in care and care leavers. This will usually include friends, immediate and extended family and community networks as well as colleagues in education, health and the police.
- 7.5 We will work in partnership with all the important people in a child's network to promote feelings of connection, belonging and support children to achieve their potential.
- 7.6 We will recognise and celebrate the dedication and commitment of our foster carers and take every opportunity to thank them for their care of our young people. We will work to ensure foster carers feel well supported and cared for themselves. This will include offering initiatives such as the Mockingbird Model to promote the development of support networks between carers.
- 7.7 We will encourage lifelong connections between our children in care, care leavers and important others including their birth family, foster carers and important professionals.

Promoting potential:

- 7.8 We will promote the potential of our children in care and care leavers wherever we can by working with local education providers, training organisations and employers to facilitate and support a range of opportunities.

- 7.9 We will work with local housing providers and with our corporate housing colleagues to secure stable homes for our young people.
- 7.10 We will work closely with the police to keep children in care and care leavers safe and take a trauma informed approach to managing young people.
- 7.11 We will work closely with colleagues in health to ensure young people have access to the right services to keep them physically, emotionally and mentally healthy and well.

Outcomes

- + Children in our care and our care leavers will feel cared for and understand that they are important to us.
- + Children in our care and our care leavers will feel they can turn to us for help and support.
- + Corporate parents across Gloucestershire will know and understand their responsibilities to children in our care and care leavers and proactively work to be the best corporate parent that they can.

Useful links and documents

- + Full details of procedures can be found in sections 4 of *Gloucestershire's online procedures manual* and sections 14 – 17 of our *Local Resources library*
- + *Gloucestershire's Permanence Policy*
- + *IRO Handbook*
- + *Social Worker visits to looked after children*
- + *The Children Act 1989: Vol 2 care planning, placement and case review*
- + *NAIRO: Child Friendly Care Plan exemplar*

08

We will ensure our recording is child-focused and shows that we care about children and families.

Aims

- + Our records will be meaningful and reflect purposeful work with children and families.
- + Our records will show that we care about the families that we are working with and will use language that cares.
- + Our records will accurately show how decisions were made and why.
- + Our records will ensure that families do not have to repeat their stories multiple times.

- 8.1 Recording essentials: Every child's record will have an up to date:
- Case summary
 - Chronology
 - SMART plan
 - Visit record
 - Supervision record
- 8.2 Records will be clear, concise and accurate. They will be easy to read and understand.
- 8.3 Records will show that we privilege getting to know families and building trusted relationships with them. In line with this, our records will demonstrate that the views of children, young people and parents are central to our work.
- 8.4 Our records will tell the story of our work with the family and make it clear why we have been involved and what work we have been doing.
- 8.5 Good quality recording helps others working with the family understand their history, a family's patterns, stories and what helps has been offered. It is vital that significant events are captured concisely in the child's chronology. This supports accurate assessment and decision making.
- 8.6 A child's case summary will be updated whenever there is a significant change and reviewed at least monthly. It will use the agreed template for case summaries to ensure key information is included. Out of date information will be removed from the case summary and historic information will be summarised concisely.

- 8.7 When recording, we will do so expecting that a young person will read their record in the future. The record will reflect a compassionate and caring perspective on the life of the child and their family and use language that cares.
- 8.8 Assessments, plans and reviews and other important documents will be shared with children, young people and families.
- 8.9 Children, young people and families will be made aware of their rights in terms of accessing their records.
- 8.10 When we end our involvement with a family, our closure record will make it clear why we were involved, what work has been completed and why we are ending our intervention. We will also make sure that the record makes it clear what continuing help and support is available and the expectations around how a family will continue to be supported.



Outcomes

- + We have a clear and comprehensive overview of significant events in a child's life.
- + Records are evidence-based and provide a rationale for decisions made.
- + Records are accessible and use language that cares so they children wanting to read their records can understand what happened and why.
- + Records reflect our values and are written with compassion, demonstrating that we care about families.

Useful links and documents

- + BASW Recording in Social Work: *Ten Top Tips*
- + Social Care Institute for Excellence: *social work recording*
- + Community Care Article: *Tips for social workers on case recording and record keeping*
- + Social Care Inspection blog: *what makes an effective case record - Yvette Stanley, Ofsted Director, Social Care*

09

We will be culturally competent and self-aware in our practice.

Aims

- + Workers recognise the emotional impact of our work on families.
We will acknowledge the fear and anxiety that can be caused by our involvement and take this into consideration at all stages of our work.
- + Practitioners will be culturally inclusive
– being reflective and reflexive and proactively exploring the role of ‘self’ in and on practice.
- + We will use empathy, tenacity and curiosity
to demonstrate to families our authenticity and commitment to supporting them to improve their lives.
- + Workers will be self-aware, recognising and confronting our own biases and assumptions and the impact they have on practice.
- + Workers will invite feedback proactively and use this to inform their practice.

Culturally competent and self-reflexive practice

- 9.1 Cultural competence is the ability to understand and act with empathy towards individuals and groups of people across varied and diverse backgrounds. We will recognise and respond positively to difference.
- 9.2 We will draw on the Social GRRRAACCEESSS to help inform our thinking about differences. We will do this in a way that recognises that identity is complex, evolves through time and that everyone is unique.
- 9.3 At all levels in our organisation, we will be self-aware and model the value of reflexivity. Managers and leaders will actively value difference in our workforce and invite and respond positively to feedback.
- 9.4 We will build a culture that reflects the value we place on self-awareness and cultural competence. We will ensure this is reflected at all levels in our organisation and is modelled by leaders and managers.
- 9.5 We recognise the importance of hearing from children and families about our practice – this is the best way of understanding how what we doing is impacting on families. We will seek out families’ views on how we are working and use this to inform our practice.

Outcomes

- + We will understand how children and families are experiencing our service.
- + Our practitioners will seek out feedback as a way of demonstrating their commitment to keeping the voices of children and families at the heart of everything we do. This feedback will be used to inform and develop our practice.
- + Our work and recording will recognise the uniqueness of each family, and the individuals within in, and seek to empower and build on strengths and assets.



Useful links and documents

- + Systemic concepts: *The Social GRRRAACCEESSS: Video from Camden Children’s Services*
- + Research in Practice Tool: *Social GRRRAACCEESSS and the LUJUTT model*

10

We will ensure that effective supervision and management oversight is driving high quality practice.

Aims

- + Supervision will drive outstanding practice by promoting creativity, offering challenge and setting high aspirations for families.
- + Supervisors will offer excellent supervision, drawing on their practice wisdom to promote interventions that are evidence-based, effective and family-led.
- + Managers will know and understand what good and outstanding practice looks like and agree plans that aim to achieve this for families.
- + Managers will quality assure assessments, plans and reviews to promote good and outstanding practice.

Ensuring effective supervision, management oversight, support and challenge

- 10.1 Managers and supervisors recognise the critical importance of good quality supervision and so will privilege and protect time for supervision. This will demonstrate the value that they place on the worker and gives a critical message about the importance of supervision.
- 10.2 Managers and supervisors recognise that they are responsible for decisions that impact significantly on the lives of children and families and so are committed to excellence in all their work.
- 10.3 Supervision, management oversight and support will play a key role in ensuring that all aspects of practice are either good or outstanding.
- 10.4 Supervision will encourage critical thinking, detailed analysis and a holistic consideration of a family, actively identifying and challenging weaker practice.
- 10.5 Supervision will serve a number of functions but will always be underpinned by a commitment to providing a space where practitioners can think, reflect, bring dilemmas and reflect on their own biases and how this

may be influencing practice. There will be recognition that we work in the space of 'safe uncertainty' and that seeking 'safe certainty' is likely to result in weak and oppressive practice.

- 10.6 Managers at all levels in the service will be responsible for creating the conditions for good practice to flourish and for ensuring that practice in their team or area of service meets the highest standards.
- 10.7 Managers and supervisors will set priority actions and ensure these are completed within agreed timescales. During supervision, actions from previous sessions will be reviewed until complete.

Outcomes

- + Supervision and management oversight ensures practitioners are clear about what needs to happen, why and by when.
- + Practitioners experience supervision that is supportive, helpful and promotes creativity, reflection and challenge.
- + Families benefit from working with practitioners who challenge themselves to achieve the best outcomes, are open minded and think outside the box.

Useful links and documents

+ Yvette Stanley, Ofsted Blog - *Supervision and effective social work practice*

Practice Supervisors Development Programme: One-minute guides for middle managers:

- + *Understanding the Lived Experience of Children and Families*
- + *Your journey to being a practice supervisor*
- + *Safe Uncertainty*
- + *Developing a culture of excellent social work practice*
- + *Emotions, relationships and resilience*
- + *Talking about practice in supervision*

Practice Supervisors Development Programme Resources: Knowledge briefings:

- + *The role and functions of supervision*
- + *Promoting evidence informed practice as a middle leader*
- + *Using a systemic lens in supervision*
- + *Understanding the lived experiences of black and ethnic minority children and families*
- + *Using the supervision relationship to promote reflection*

Practice Supervisors Development Programme Resources: Films:

- + Film: *Becoming an anti-racist supervisor and ally*
- + Film: *Using genograms in supervision*
- + Film: *Anti-racist supervision - Practice Supervisor Development Programme Repository (rip.org.uk)*
- + Film: *Bells that ring systemic model of supervision*
- + Film: *You can tell if social workers have had supervision*

Knowledge and standards for social workers, practice supervisors and practice leaders:

- + *Post qualifying knowledge and standards for practice supervisors*
- + *Knowledge and Skills Statements for Practice Leaders*

Key timescales

Seeing children

- + **Early help** – within **10 days** of request
- + **Children subject to a s47 enquiry** – within a **maximum of 48 hours** but within a timescale proportionate to risk/need.
- + **Children in need** – initial visit to family within **5 days** of referral. Child seen within a maximum of **10 days** in line with need and then at least every **20 working days**.
- + **Children subject of a child protection plan** – within **48 hours** of conference and then last least **every 10** working days.
- + **Children in care** – On the day of and again within **1 week** of a move and then at least **6 weekly** until long term matched when visits can reduce to a minimum of **3 monthly** as agreed with IRO. Visits to children in foster homes will be undertaken jointly with a supervising social worker at least **3 monthly**.
- + **Children receiving a short break** – Within **7 days**, then within **3 months** and **6 monthly** thereafter.
- + **Children placed with prospective adopters** – At least **weekly** until first review then as agreed at child in care review to a **minimum of 6 weekly**.
- + **Privately fostered children** – within **7 days** of notification, then at least 6 weekly for 12 months, reducing to 3 monthly thereafter.
- + **Children reported missing** – Within **72 hours** of missing episode.
- + **Care experienced young people 16- 20** – Within **5 days** of leaving care and at least 8 weekly thereafter.
- + **Care experienced young people 21+** - At least **every 6 months**.

Assessment, review & planning:

- + **Early help** – Initial plan agreed at allocation – full plan within **40 days**.
- + **Assessment** – Within a maximum of 45 working days.
- + **Child in need plans** – Within 10 days of completion of assessment, reviewed within 1 month and at a minimum of 3 monthly thereafter.

- + **Child protection plans** – Drafted in conference and developed in core group within **10 working days**.
- + **Care plans** – Within **10 days** of entry to care and prior to entry where possible. Must be updated in line with need and as a minimum for every child in care review.
- + **Child in care reviews:** Within **20 working days** of entry to care, then within **3 months** and **6 monthly** thereafter.
- + **Permanence plans** – Required for 2nd child in care review (4m).
- + **Pathway plans** – Must be in place by 16 years 3m, reviewed via child in care review at least 6 monthly until 18.
- + **Pathway plans post 18** – Must be updated and reviewed at least **6 monthly**.
- + **Children receiving short breaks** – As per child in need plan timescales.

Supervision

If the Supervisee or Supervisor feels that the level of risk or complexity requires a more frequent discussion, then this should be agreed between both parties and actioned.

- + **Families First Early Help** – At a minimum of **3-monthly**.
- + **Children in need** – At a minimum of **3-monthly**.
- + **Children subject of a child protection plan** – At a minimum of **2-monthly**.
- + **Children subject of care proceedings** – At a minimum of **2-monthly**.
- + **Children in care** – At a minimum of **2-monthly/3-monthly** when long-term matched.
- + **Children receiving short breaks** – At a minimum of **3-monthly**.
- + **Care experienced young people** – At least **3-monthly**.
- + **Children receiving adoption support** – As per child in need timescales.

Helpful links and resources



Keeping up to date

- + **Gloucestershire Children’s Social Care Procedures Manual** – includes national policy and local resources
 - + **Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership** – Includes local safeguarding partnership published arrangements, multi-agency procedures plus reports from rapid reviews, local safeguarding partnership reviews and historical serious case reviews
 - + **Nuffield Family Justice Observatory:** - Research into family justice issues – option to receive regular newsletter
 - + **Research in practice:** - evidence based resources for work with children and families – all Gloucestershire practitioners can create an account and get access
 - + **Ofsted Children’s social care blog:** Includes regular updates from Ofsted on current social care issues
 - + **Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel:** National, independent panel reviewing all national and local rapid reviews – includes an annual report of findings from reviews
 - + **Foundations: What Works Centre for Children and Families:** Replaces the What Works Centre for Children’s Social Care Focuses on research into the effectiveness of social care
- ### Podcasts
- + **British Association of Social Workers:** Let’s talk Social Work
 - + **Social Work Stories:** Wide-ranging focus from Australia
 - + **Helpful Social Work:** UK based podcast
 - + **Social Work England** - This is Social Work
 - + **Social Work Sorted**
 - + **NSPCC:** Child protection and safeguarding podcast

Advocacy for children and young people

- + **Reconstruct:** Local commissioned advocacy service for children in care, care leavers, children subject to a CP plan and any young person that wants to make a complaint
- + **Coram voice:** Independent support and information for children in care, care leavers and children on the edge of care

Support for Children and Families

- + **Family Rights Group:** Includes advice line for parents involved with children’s services
- + **Home | Gingerbread:** Support for single parents.
- + **Help for Households** - Government financial support
- + **Gloucestershire Early Help** and Targeted Support offer
- + **GloSFamilies Directory** – Directory of Services for Families in Gloucestershire
- + **Caring for Communities and People:** Local organisation offering a range of services
- + **Young Gloucestershire:** Offering a range of local support services.
- + **NHS Support for parents** – NHS website offering advice and support for new parents

Mental health

- + **YoungMinds** | Mental Health Charity For Children And Young People | YoungMinds
- + **Useful contacts** - 11-18 year old’s mental health - Mind
- + **Self-care tips videos for young people** - Every Mind Matters - NHS (www.nhs.uk)
- + **Anna Freud** | For children and young people
- + **Our Time** | For children of parents with a mental illness
- + **Childline**
- + **Mental health support in a crisis** - local support
- + **Teens in crisis**

Resource for Black Young People

- + **HOME | Bayo** – Directory of support for and by the Black Community
- + **Home | Kids of Colour** – Project for Young People of Colour to explore ‘race’, identity and culture

- + **Young Minds** | Responding to Black young people looking for support
- + **Rethink** | Supporting Young Black People with Wellbeing (rethink.org)

Resources for Muslim Young People

- + **Home - Muslim Youth Helpline** – Helpline specifically for Muslim Young People.
- + **YoungMinds** | Mental health advice for young Muslims

Gender, identity and sexuality

- + **http://www.bgiok.org.uk/** - Being gay is ok, support and resources.
- + **Gender identity | NSPCC** – Advice for professionals
- + **Stonewall Young Futures Digital Hub** – Hub for LGBTQ+ young people

Support and resources around drugs

- + **FRANK (talktofrank.com)** | Honest information about drugs
- + **Young Minds:** Support for young people, parents and professionals

Domestic abuse support

- + **https://www.refuge.org.uk**
- + **https://www.safeline.org.uk**
- + **https://www.stophateuk.org**
- + **https://www.womensaid.org.uk**
- + **Domestic Abuse Helpline for Men** | Men’s Advice Line UK (mensadviceline.org.uk)
- + **What Is Domestic Abuse?** | The Children’s Society (childrenssociety.org.uk)
- + **Teenage Relationship Abuse** | The Children’s Society (childrenssociety.org.uk)

Support for children in care and care leavers

- + **https://becomecharity.org.uk**
- + **https://coramvoice.org.uk/get-help**
- + **Care leavers Foundation**

Young carers resources

- + **https://carers.org**
- + **https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/information/young-people/young-carers**
- + **NHS support and advice for Young Carers**
- + **The Children’s Society:** Advice and support for young carers
- + **Carers UK website**

Support for young people that have run away

- + **https://www.runawayhelpline.org.uk**
- + **Childline:** resources and support for children that have run away

Housing advice and guidance

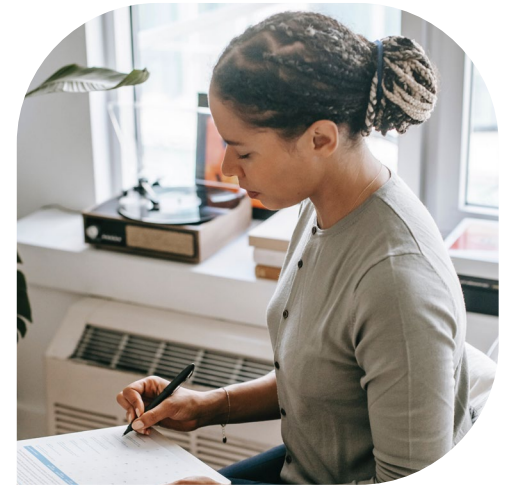
- + **Shelter** | http://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/housing_for_young_people
- + **Pohwer** | https://www.pohwer.net/childrens-and-young-peoples-advocacy

Sexual abuse resources and support

- + **SARSAS** | SARSAS self-help guides
- + **Stop It Now** | Preventing child sexual abuse
- + **Lucy Faithfull Foundation** - Preventing Child Sex Abuse
- + **NSPCC** | Let’s talk PANTS
- + **Gloucestershire Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre**

Gloucestershire complaints and Subject Access Requests

- + **Gloucestershire complaints team**
- + **Requests for information** - FOI, SAR & police disclosures | Gloucestershire County Council



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local resources library

