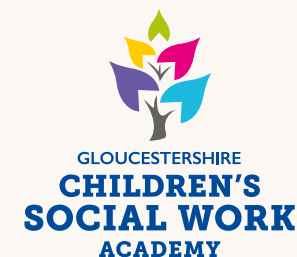




Gloucestershire Children's Social Care **Quality Assurance** Framework

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



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 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.

Our approach to Quality Assurance

The quality of the service that we provide to children and families is everyone's business, and all children's social care employees have a valuable contribution to make to improving outcomes for children. Our expectation is that everyone plays a role in quality assuring our practice. We believe that an inclusive approach is central to the learning culture that is at the heart of our improvement.

We are committed to understanding how families experience our service and will prioritise listening to their perspective. Our quality assurance activities are supported by the involvement of our Ambassadors, who are experts by experience. Their unique perspectives help us to drive continuous improvement in delivering excellent services that improve the lives of children and families.

Systemic Principles

We think about the wider system, actively look to understand what is helping and where there are barriers that restrict change.



Building on strengths

We actively look for good practice. We learn about what we do well, and celebrate this.

Nurturing Relationships

We support the inclusion of all staff in promoting a learning culture, recognising the valuable contribution that each person has to offer.



Behaviours

These behaviours help us support families and keep children safe.

Curiosity

Tenacity

Empathy

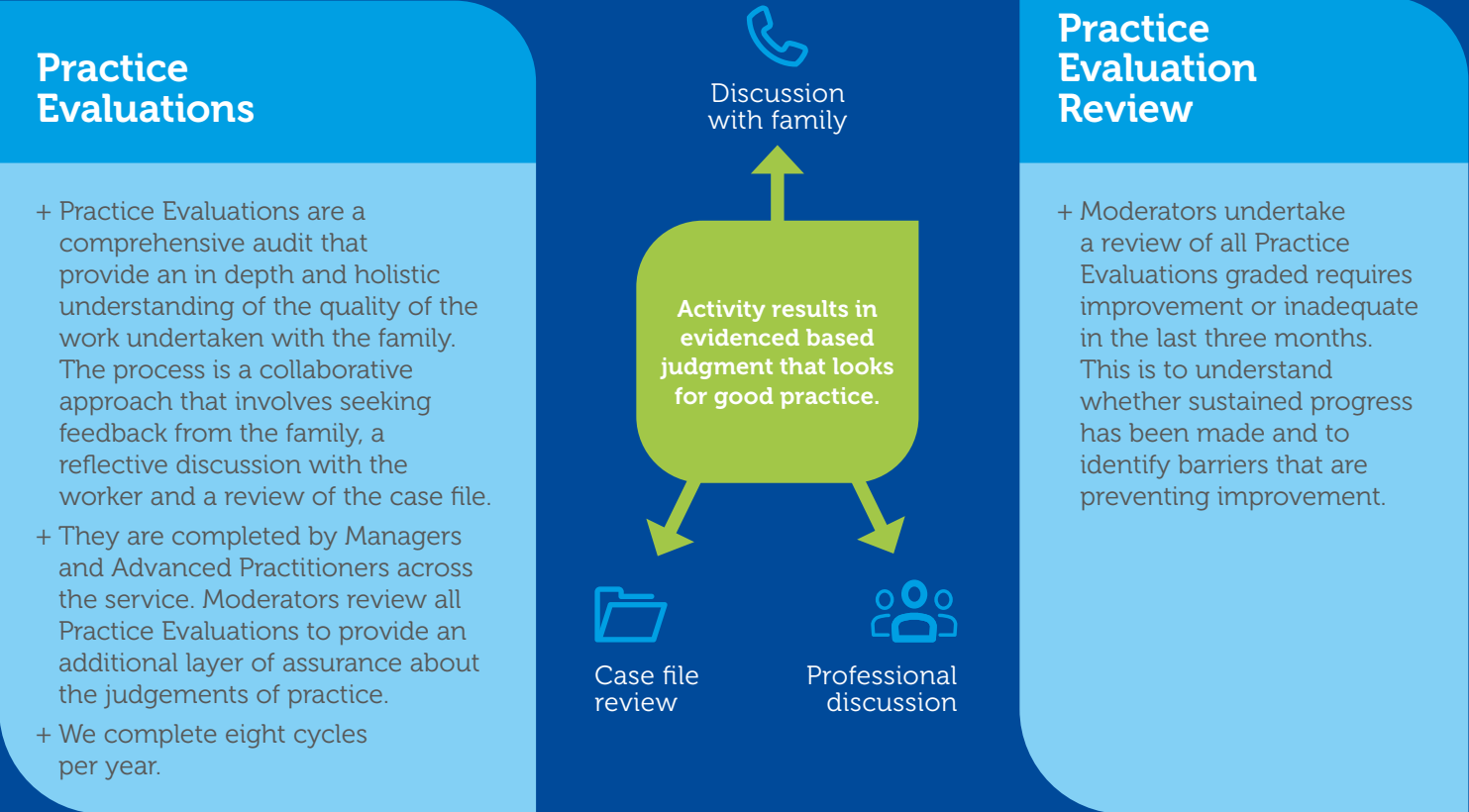
The Quality Assurance cycle

We follow a cycle of quality assurance activity that allows us to understand how well we are meeting our practice standards, and achieving our ambitions for children and families. Our quality assurance activity follows a cycle that allows us to focus on specific groups of children, whilst retaining an overview of service quality. Learning about what we are doing well and celebrating good practice are central to what we do, and how we communicate learning across our service.



Quality assurance activities outline

We undertake a range of activities to provide insight into the quality of practice with families throughout the service. This variety of activities allows us to respond flexibly to emerging themes and take timely action to address areas for improvement and pursue continuous improvement. In addition to the activities outlined in this document we also support reflective discussions or reviews amongst practitioners when events or incidents happen that indicate there is scope for learning. Operational guidance is available locally to provide further details around the processes that support each of these activities.



Getting to good roadmap



>>> Exploration of good practice is a central consideration across all quality assurance activities.

Dip Audit

- + Dip audits provide a focused exploration of a specific aspect of practice.
- + These are completed by Managers and Advanced Practitioners across the service.
- + There are eight planned cycles per year, with additional cycles directed by Service / Group Managers to explore emerging practice themes.



Practice Week

- + Practice Week provides a deep dive approach to exploring a specific theme over the course of one week.
- + Senior leaders and partners observe practice and engage in reflective discussions with staff across the service.
- + This activity takes place twice per year.



Fostering Practice Evaluations

- + The fostering service undertake comprehensive audits to understand the quality of practice with foster families. Foster carers, parents and children are asked to provide feedback as part of this audit. This audit is informed by the National Minimum Standards for fostering.
- + We complete eight cycles per year.



Performance Clinic

- + Team Clinics take place on a monthly basis. These meetings involve the Advanced Practitioner, Team Manager, Group Manager and Assistant Director. The meeting involves a review of performance data, audit findings, audit actions, complaints / compliments. The group highlights areas of good practice and develop action plans to address areas for improvement.

>>> Exploration of good practice is a central consideration across all quality assurance activities.

Feedback


- + Feedback from families about what works for them is a fundamental aspect of practice and as such this is sought at different points within the journey through the service.
- + Families are informed of the compliments and complaint process. Learning from this feedback is considered by managers and leaders within practice development activity, with targeted interventions as required.
- + Feedback is routinely sought from families through the Practice Evaluation process. We complete a quarterly report of themes that have emerged from feedback gathered through this QA activity.

Conference and Reviewing Service Activities

The review service undertakes a range of quality assurance activity to support effective care planning. Their core QA processes include:


- + Entry to care audit: a review that focuses on our planning and intervention when children come into care. This review seeks to understand organisational learning around factors contributed to a child coming into care.
- + Quality Assurance Reviews (QAR): a progress check carried out between formal reviews to focus on progression of the plan and whether practice standards are being met in relation to specific care planning tasks. An escalation process is followed to bring concerns to the attention of relevant managers if there are concerns about progress of the plan or safety of children.
- + Reviewing Service Audit: The team undertaken comprehensive audits around the overall effectiveness of planning, with a clear focus on the impact of the Independent Reviewing Officer / Child Protection Chair.
- + Repeat child protection planning audit: explores factors that may be contributing to repeated periods of child protection planning.
- + Long child protection plan audit: considers any factors that are linked to children having child protection plans in place for prolonged periods of time.

The reviewing service provide a quarterly summary of learning from all the QA activities described above. This informs learning and development within their own team, as well as across the wider service.



Early Help Audits

- + Early help teams undertake 8 cycles of dip audits and comprehensive audits per year. The purpose of this activity is to understand the overall quality of practice being delivered to families, hear from families about their perspectives and explore specific focused themes as required.
- + Early help also participate in 6 monthly practice week activities.



Wider partnership and regulatory activity

Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (GSCP)

The GSCP undertakes a range of activity that provides important insights into the quality of partnership work with children and families, their core activity is detailed below:

Multi-Agency Case Based Review: This focuses on a child or family where the partnership identify a circumstance when a review is likely to identify learning, but a serious incident notification threshold has not been met and a rapid review / local child safeguarding practice review will not be conducted.

Multi-Agency Thematic Audits: This focuses on a specific process or theme identified by the partnership. This looks at the service provided for multiple children / families but focuses on a specific process within the overall service. This process will fall across multiple agencies. This audit may include a critical friend from external experts (e.g. NSPCC & Centre of Expertise). The focus of these audits is agreed at the relevant subgroup of the partnership.

Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub Audit: This regular audit activity focuses on the quality of multi-agency practice and decision making at the earliest stages of involvement.

Annual Audits:

- + Keeping Children Safe in Education Assurance Declaration
- + Early Years Foundation Stage Assurance Declaration
- + Section 11 Assurance declaration and focus day.

Safeguarding Reviews:

- + Rapid reviews: If the Serious Incident Notification (SIN) panel agree that the SIN threshold has been met then a rapid review must be undertaken, the partnership has 15 working days to submit a report to the national panel. The rapid review meeting is chaired by an independent reviewer who then authors the report. From the report, a practice briefing is created and circulated for staff learning. Recommendations from the report distributed across the Partnership.
- + Local child safeguarding practice reviews (LCSPRs): If the rapid review panel does not believe that all of the learning has been identified within the rapid review then a LCSPR is agreed. The same process is undertaken with a more detailed review into specific line(s) of enquiry. The LCSPR has a deadline of 6 months to be reported to the national panel.

Further development is underway to support increased multi-agency quality assurance work.



Local Authority Designated Officer

The allegations management service provides a quarterly dashboard report which is evaluated by the team at quarterly performance clinics. The LADOs are part of the South West LADO Network and the National LADO Network. They engage in peer reviews with LADOs from neighbouring Local Authorities. An annual report is provided to the GSCP executive. Links to the report and how to make requests for advice and guidance as well as their referral forms can be found on their webpage.

Children's Homes

Quality assurance activity for children living in residential children's homes is subject to specific processes. This includes twice-yearly quality assurance reporting under regulation 45, and robust scrutiny and oversight of regulation 44 reporting by the independent person in line with the Children's Home (England) Regulations 2015. In addition, there is a wider analysis of complaints, and internal auditing work as directed by the responsible individual for the service.

SEND Integrated Area Partnership

The SEND Integrated Area Partnership oversees multi-agency quality assurance activity in relation to Education Health and Care (EHC) plan and multi-agency contributions to those plans.

The partnership undertakes work to seek the voices and perspectives children, young people, their parents and carers.

The SEND Quality Assurance lead works closely with the Head of Quality and Advanced Educator for SEND, to share learning and plan and deliver improvement activity within Children's Social Care.



Routes for communication

Practice Quality Learning Group

A quarterly meeting of senior operational managers and leaders to understand and learn from the range of quality assurance taking place across the service. The group leads on coordinating responsive development work, to implement the learning from quality assurance activity, including themes derived from family feedback. The group monitors the impact of this activity and agrees any responsive quality assurance activity required.

Quality and Performance Review Meeting

A quarterly meeting where senior managers present a summary of the performance of their service. This meeting allows for a service wide understanding of cross cutting themes and challenges. Participants offer challenge and support in the spirit of appreciative enquiry, highlighting good practice and learning from across the service.

Cracking Quality

A regular webinar and newsletter that provides an overview of learning from quality assurance activity, including a focus on good or outstanding practice identified from quality assurance.

Connecting Practice Newsletter

A monthly newsletter to share awareness of key themes from quality assurance, learning opportunities and local and national practice developments.

Quarterly Quality Assurance Report

A quarterly summary report prepared by the academy, that draws together learning from all the activity that has been undertaken within the last quarter.

Team Meetings

Managers and Advanced Practitioners utilise space in team meetings at least once per quarter to reflect on messages from quality assurance and how they can implement the learning on a local level.

Reviewing the progress

Ambitions Board

The children's social care ambitions plan is overseen by the ambitions board. It sets out the activity required to achieve good and outstanding practice. The board is jointly chaired by the deputy chief executive of the council and an ambassador with lived experience. The board includes multiagency representation and provides scrutiny and challenge to service planning and outcomes.

Independent Reviewing Officer and Child Protection Chair Oversight

The reviewing service has a key function in overseeing progress for individual children, and reviewing the effectiveness of their plans. They also provide oversight of the overall quality of services being delivered, identifying trends and themes and supporting improvement. The service works with operational teams to offer increased oversight to especially vulnerable children.

Supervision

Supervision is used as an opportunity to apply the wider learning from recent quality assurance activity. Supervisors ensure any actions are addressed for individual children / young people who have recently had a Practice Evaluation.

Child / Young Person of Concern Process

Any Practice Evaluations graded inadequate are reviewed within 2 working days by the Group Manager, who will ensure relevant action is taken to ensure the safety of the child / young person. Weekly reviews are undertaken by the Assistant Director until they are assured that an appropriate plan has been established to address the concerns.

>>>> Continuous improvement >>>>

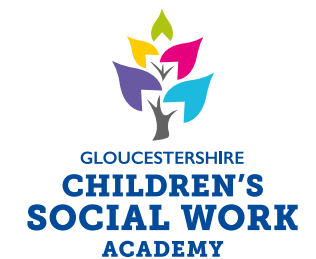
Communicating the learning from quality assurance across the system and reviewing progress for families is central to supporting continuous improvement. This enables us to ensure our quality assurance activity supports us to deliver our vision and has a positive impact for children, young peoples and their families.



The Quality Assurance timetable

	January	February	March	April	May	June
QA activity	Practice Evaluation : CiC 0-11	Practice Evaluation : CP & CiN 11-18		Practice Evaluation : CP & CiN 0-11	Practice Evaluation : CIC and Care Leavers 11-25 years	
	Early Help Audit	Early Help Audit		Early Help Audit	Early Help Audit	
	Dip Audit	Dip Audit		Dip Audit	Dip Audit	
	Fostering Practice Evaluation	Fostering Practice Evaluation		Fostering Practice Evaluation	Fostering Practice Evaluation	
				Practice week		
	Performance clinic	Performance clinic	Performance clinic	Performance clinic	Performance clinic	Performance clinic
Learning and communication		Conference and Reviewing Service Summary			Conference and Reviewing Service Summary	
			Quarterly assurance report			Quarterly assurance report
		Practice Quality Learning Group			Practice Quality Learning Group	
	Quality Performance and Review meeting – whole service			Quality Performance and Review meeting – whole service		
	Cracking quality briefing	Cracking quality briefing		Cracking quality briefing	Cracking quality briefing	

	July	August	September	October	November	December
QA activity	Practice Evaluation : CP & CiN 11-18	Practice Evaluation : CiC 0-11		Practice Evaluation : CiN and CP 0-18 open <6 months	Practice Evaluation : CiC and Care Leavers 11-25	
	Early Help Audit	Early Help Audit		Early Help Audit	Early Help Audit	
	Dip Audit	Dip Audit		Dip Audit	Dip Audit	
	Fostering Practice Evaluation	Fostering Practice Evaluation		Fostering Practice Evaluation	Fostering Practice Evaluation	
				Practice week		
	Performance clinic	Performance clinic	Performance clinic	Performance clinic	Performance clinic	Performance clinic
Learning and communication		Conference and Reviewing Service Summary			Conference and Reviewing Service Summary	
			Quarterly assurance report			Quarterly assurance report
		Practice Quality Learning Group			Practice Quality Learning Group	
	Quality Performance and Review meeting – whole service			Quality Performance and Review meeting – whole service		
	Cracking quality briefing	Cracking quality briefing		Cracking quality briefing	Cracking quality briefing	



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 local resources library

